



Presiding officer at a meeting with the polling officials at a city centre yesterday.

— Star photo

Habibur greets Fidel Ramos

Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman yesterday greeted Fidel V Ramos, President of the Republic of the Philippines on the occasion of the national day of his country, reports BSS.

In a message to President Ramos, the Chief Adviser said, "on behalf of the government and the people of Bangladesh and on my own behalf, I convey our warmest greetings and felicitations to you and through you to the friendly people of the Philippines."

"It is my firm conviction that the friendship and cooperation that mark the relations between our two countries will continue to grow in strength and substance in the years ahead to the mutual benefit of the peoples of two friendly countries," he said.

The Chief Adviser said, "May I take this opportunity also to convey my best wishes for your excellency's good health, happiness and long life, and for the friendly people of the Philippines continued peace, progress and prosperity."

Guidelines for FEMA observers

By Staff Correspondent
The Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) has urged all its local chapters committee and volunteers to ensure strictly their non-partisan role and observe the guidelines already circulated in this regard.

In an instruction issued Monday the national committee of FEMA also urged them not to make any statement regarding the conduct of the election.

FEMA has also advised the volunteers to observe the voting from around the polling centre and send reports as directed.

Meanwhile, FEMA has re-issued an article published in a local weekly under the headline "A Gallup Poll for the Coming Contest," saying that FEMA had not conducted any such survey. In a rejoinder FEMA said, the findings printed in the weekly were baseless, and it was done only to damage the independent image of the organisation.

DU student injured in bomb blast

By DU Correspondent
A student of the Dhaka University was admitted in the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday with bomb injury.

The victim identified as Parvej, 25, was injured in a bomb blast at 7 am inside the Shahidullah Hall of the university, sources said.

When contacted last night the provost of the hall said that the hall authority did not have any report of such incident within the last twenty four hours.

PATC workshop concludes

A workshop on management development concluded at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre yesterday, reports BSS.

Sixteen officers from various government, semi-government and autonomous organisations took part in the workshop.

The objective of the workshop was to develop human relations and managerial skill.

41973 cases filed for violating traffic rules

By Staff Correspondent
Traffic police in the city during last nine weeks, till Monday, filed 41,973 cases for violating traffic rules while realised Tk 42.06 lakh as fines in this connection.

During the same period last year, 30,051 cases were lodged for such violation and Tk 24.04 lakh were realised, said a police press release.

US students team visits BOU

A six-member delegation of under-graduate students of Wake Forest University of the United States led by Prof. Charles H Kennedy, now visiting Bangladesh, yesterday met the teachers and officials of Bangladesh Open University (BOU), says a press release.

The treasurer of the university Prof. Dr. Anwar Hossain explained the members of the delegation the objective and activities of the university. He was assisted by the Deans of six schools and Directors of Finance, Media and Adviser Information. The delegation showed keen interest in the overall activities of the university.

Unicef report discloses 23000 die of pregnancy disorder a year

By Staff Correspondent

An estimated 23,000 women die each year during pregnancy or child birth and about 600,000 suffer from after-effects of childbirth and pregnancy-related complications in the country, according to the Unicef's report of Progress of Nations 1996, released here yesterday as elsewhere in the world.

Although persistent malnutrition affects 67 per cent of the under-five population in Bangladesh, the country is rated as having higher than expected levels of achievement in reducing under five mortality and primary school completion," said Rolf C Carriere, Unicef Representative in Dhaka, who released the report at a city hotel.

The launching ceremony of the fourth issue of this report was addressed by Planning Commission Member Qazi Shamsul Alam and Local Government Secretary Syed Alamgir Farouk Chowdhury as the chief guest and special guest respectively.

The report shows that half of the malnourished children are found in three South Asian countries — Bangladesh, India and Pakistan — where malnutrition rates are twice as high as in the poor countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

According to government statistics, 97 per cent of salt used by the people are iodised while Unicef report put it to 62 per cent in the country, where even in the recent past 60 million people were at risk of iodine deficiency.

The report puts the example of community schools in the country started by an NGO whose 70 per cent students are girls.

In the breast feeding league mentioned in the report, the country stands second among Asia and the Pacific.

Referring to the higher proportion of malnutrition in South Asia, Qazi Shamsul Alam said, "The countries of this region must now face up to the fact that the roots of malnutrition run deep in to social soils, and to reduce malnutrition requires an all-out attack on different fronts: health, education, nutrition for women, low birth weight, access to basic services, control over fertility and quality of women's lives."

Pointing that the past experience does not give a "very bright prospect" for international assistance, the Planning Commission Member said that the official development assistance (ODA) of OECD countries fell from 0.34 per cent in 1970 to 0.30 per cent of GNP in 1993 while almost 30 years ago the industrial countries agreed to provide at least 0.7 per of their GNP.

"The net bilateral flows to low income economies in terms of percentage of donor GNP dropped from 0.11 per cent in 1980 to 0.09 per cent in 1993," he added.

Referring to the new country programme between Unicef and the Government, Alam said, "This is a strategy to achieve the goals for children and women in all districts of the country. It will allow service delivery to target and redress local level disparities through processes which will simultaneously contribute to greater sustainability, transparency and accountability."

Local Government Secretary Syed Alamgir Farouk Chowdhury said that his ministry had been working in collaboration with the education sector to ensure supply of pure water, and separate sanitary latrines for boys and girls in the primary schools. Selections of schools are no longer done by the ministry, but by a representative of district committee, he added.

Chowdhury said currently 47 per cent of population use what may be termed as relatively hygienic latrines.

The improved statistics should in no way make us feel elated because the data also include those who use home made latrines," he added.

Praising the work of the network of union water supply and sanitation committees, the LGSD Secretary added "increasing awareness has to be associated with increased supply of latrines at affordable rates."

Even though the goal of universal access to safe drinking water is close to being achieved in the country, the LGSD Secretary said, "Groundwater levels in 38 districts are falling."

The need of the hour is to forge and strengthen among all societal stakeholders and partners, a true alliance for the

neglected sectors of society — children and women," he observed.

Unicef Representative in Dhaka Rolf C Carriere said that Bangladesh had shown what could be done when everyone come together in support of a common cause.

"Bangladesh has the capacity, the know how and the innovative ability to achieve the human development goals and beyond. Bangladesh has the partnership of donor countries and development agencies," he added.

Dispelling the conventional thought that industrial nations are looking with concern, Carriere said, "I would like to turn that notion on its head and suggest that they could also be looking for answers."

In this connection, he mentioned about the replication of expanded immunisation programme in industrialised countries.



Adviser for Environment Dr Mohammad Yunus speaking at a press conference prior to the Jatiya Sangsad election yesterday.

— Star photo

Polls to usher in new era of peace, says BIP

The Bangladesh Institute of Peace (BIP) yesterday at a meeting hoped that the June 12 election will usher in a new era of peace and prosperity in the country, says a press release.

The meeting, held at the residence of late President Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury, was presided over by Abul Kashem Chowdhury, chairman of the institute. It was also addressed by Advocate K M Huq Kaiser, Visiting Scholar, Georgetown University, USA.

The present neutral non-partisan caretaker government is committed to ensure a free and fair election which will certainly institutionalise the process of democracy in Bangladesh, the meeting observed.

The speakers hoped that whatever the election results are, every political party would accept the reality with a spirit of mutual respect, trust and sincerity which will mark the post election phase of Bangladesh by stability.

Russian leaders felicitated

President Abdur Rahman Biswas has felicitated Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation on the occasion of the state day of his country, reports BSS.

In a message President Biswas expressed his belief that the existing friendly relations between the two countries would be further consolidated in the years to come.

He wished Yeltsin's good health, well-being and long life and the continued peace and progress of the people of the Russian Federation.

Meanwhile, Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman has greeted Victor S Chernomyrdin, Prime Minister of the Russian Federation on the same occasion.

In a separate message the Chief Adviser expressed his confidence that the friendly relations existing between the two countries would be further strengthened in the years ahead.

He wished Chernomyrdin's good health, happiness and long life and the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the people of the Russian Federation.



French guitar duo to perform June 19

French guitar duo of brothers Boulou and Ferre will perform at the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, 26 Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi on June 19 at 7:00 pm, says a press release.

The concert is being sponsored by Hoechst.

Pak polls observers meet AG

The visiting four-member official delegation of election observers from Pakistan led by senator Masood Kausar yesterday called on Attorney General of Bangladesh M Nurullah at the latter's office here, reports BSS.

Other members of the delegation: Senator Imdad Awan, Dr Khalid Ranjha, president Lahore High Court Bar Association and Maqbool Awan, president Sukkur Bar Association were present on the occasion.

They discussed matters of mutual and professional interest during the meeting.

The Pakistan delegation visited the High Court and appellate divisions of the Supreme Court.

The delegation also met head of the Commonwealth Secretariat team and legal adviser of the secretariat, Prof Reg Austin, now visiting Dhaka to oversee the election.

The Pakistan's delegation will visit some polling stations in and outside Dhaka today.



Serguei M Foshkin, First Secretary and Head of the Cultural Department, Embassy of the Russian Federation, called on Prof M Shahjahan, Vice-Chancellor, BUET on Monday at latter's office in the city yesterday. — Star photo



Members of the advisory council committee of the caretaker government on Law and Order and Media yesterday visited the media centre set up by Press Information Department (PID) at Hotel Sonargaon in connection with the JS polls today.

What's on tomorrow...

Lecture on museum dev: The Bangladesh national committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) will host a lecture on "Museum Development in Victoria, Australia." Speaker Eelco Schepers, Consultant, DHV, Holland. Dr Enamul Haque, former DG, Bangladesh National Museum and president of the ICOM, Asia-Pacific Organisation will preside. Venue: ICOM Office, House 32-E, Road 17/A, Banani. Time: 5pm.

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