

# Congress' meeting this week to discuss key strategy

NEW DELHI, Sept 2: India's main opposition Congress Party will hold a key strategy meeting this week to discuss the party's future and a possible challenge to oust the Hindu nationalist-led government, reports AFP.

Officials have described the closed-door meeting, under the leadership of Italian-born Congress president Sonia Gandhi, as the party's most important gathering in decades.

Some 200 national and regional Congress leaders will attend the three-day summit beginning Friday at a hill resort in central India.

The main talking point, officials say, will be how India's oldest political party, which has ruled the country for all but six of its 50 years since independence in 1947, can forge a path back to government.

"It is going to be a concentrated session to thrash out a variety of issues, to assess that has happened in recent times and what one can look forward to," said Ambika Soni, who heads the women's chapter of Congress.

Things will be discussed frankly. New ideas will be mooted. Public support for Congress has gradually fallen away in the past 10 years, with its share of the vote plummeting to an all-time low of barely 30 per cent in the February-

March general elections. It has also lost control of most of India's 25 states — a far cry from its dominant position just a decade ago.

Congress leaders admit the party has lost touch with its traditional voters — the millions of poor, low-caste Hindus, as well as the Muslims who make up India's largest minority.

"It will be a very important party meeting," said analyst Deepak Kumar, adding it would also decide whether the party should help topple the government.

Congress has come under intense pressure from other opposition parties to string together an alternative administration to challenge the five-month-old ruling coalition, led by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party).

However, many Congress officials are wary of ending up with the same sort of multi-party coalition that the BJP now finds itself steering from crisis to crisis amid intense bickering between coalition partners.

The three-day meeting will also provide a crucial opportunity for Sonia Gandhi — the widow of former premier Rajiv Gandhi — to cement her six-month-old leadership.

She faces her first electoral

test as party president later this year when New Delhi city and three Indian states hold polls to elect new local governments.

But all is not well within the Congress. Despite the Hindu nationalists' failure to fulfil their electoral pledge of providing stable government, the party has been unable to push itself forward as a viable alternative.

Some opposition leaders blame the inexperience of Sonia Gandhi, who remained out of active politics until late last year when she stunned India by deciding to campaign for the Congress in the 1998 elections.

Although talk about her "foreign" origin has almost subsided, not everyone in the Congress — including veterans — seem to be at ease with her style of leadership.

These critics accuse Sonia Gandhi of forming a coterie which controls her accessibility and of failing to regularly meet party members from across the country.

But party leader Ambika Soni scoffed at the accusations. "Sonia Gandhi has just started her career," she told AFP. "She realises the Congress has lost a certain cohesiveness and discipline. The challenges are much more difficult today."

Sonia Gandhi has the capability to rebuild the Congress.



A floating hawk selling chickens at marooned Bashabo area in the city on Tuesday. — AP/UNB photo

## 82 DU teachers demand All-Party Relief body

By DU Correspondent  
Eighty-two teachers of the Dhaka University yesterday demanded formation of an All-Party National Relief Committee to face the extensive damage caused by the massive flood across the country.

In a statement they said that a concerted effort was needed to face the situation. They said that the proposed national committee would ensure proper distribution of relief materials among the affected people.

The national committee would also encourage the people to join spontaneously in the relief work irrespective of their party affiliation, the statement said.

The signatories include, among others, Dr A F M Eusuf Haider, Prof Sirajul Islam Khan, Prof Momataj Uddin Ahmed, Prof Abul Kalam Monjur Morshed, Prof Mohammad Tahmidul Anwar.

## Special radio programme on flood Sept 5

Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka will broadcast a special programme on floods on September 5, an official hadout said yesterday, reports BSS.

The programme titled "Shatabdr Banya (flood of the century)" will be aired from Betar's Dhaka-Kha in its weekly programme "Shatabdr Parikrama."

Produced by Touhid Chowdhury, the programme will include natural causes for different floods in the twentieth century, its affects and solutions.

## Garments workers urge payment of advance salary

Bangladesh Combined Garments Workers and Employees League (BCGWEL) has urged the garments factory owners to give the workers two months' salary in advance to overcome the difficulties caused by the flooding, reports UNB.

A meeting of BCGWEL yesterday said the poor workers were living in inhuman condition. The meeting observed that about 25 per cent factories in the country were closed down, leaving thousands of workers jobless.

It urged the rich people, government and non-government organisations and foreign donors to extend help to the flood affected garment workers.

## Call to help flood victims

By Staff Correspondent  
Bangabandhu Jubo Parishad has urged young generation of the society to come forward in aid of flood affected people.

The urge was made at a meeting of the Dhaka Bar unit of the Parishad held in the city yesterday with the convenor of the unit, Advocate S M Zahid Hossain in the chair, says a press release.

Parishad's central committee general secretary Md Rezaul Karim Khan addressed the meeting as chief guest while other speakers include, its Dhaka City unit president Selim Reza, Dhaka Bar unit joint convenor Advocate Emad Hossain and member-secretary Advocate Zahurul Haq.

## AL continues relief operation

Awami League continued its relief distribution programme among the flood-hit people of the city yesterday, reports BSS.

State Minister for Jute A K Faezul Huq accompanied by city Awami League leaders including Akhterul Alam, M A Salam and Krishak League leader M A Karim distributed relief goods among the distressed people at Fulbaria Railway flood shelter and Mirpur rehabilitation centre.

## BFUJ, DUJ protest killing of editor of The Runner

A joint rally of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) protesting the killing of the editor of The Daily Runner of Jessore Saiful Alam Mukul was held at the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Presided over by the president of BFUJ Amanullah Kabir the rally urged the people of all strata and professions to be vocal against this brutal killing.

The rally demanded arrest of the killers of Mukul by September 9 otherwise, the union would announce fresh programme.

The rally decided to hold a meeting jointly organised by BFUJ and DUJ with the editors and senior journalists of the national dailies and the news agencies at 4 pm on September 5 at the Jatiya Press Club VIP lounge to exchange views.

## PM to receive donations today

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will receive donations towards Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the flood-affected people of the country at her office today at 1 pm, reports BSS.

## Guardians' plea

By Staff Correspondent  
Some guardians of child artists who participated in the "National Education Week Music Competition" under Rajshahi division recently, have demanded of the authorities to hold the competitions in educational institutions instead of Rajshahi Shilpakala Academy from next year, says a press release.

In a complaint lodged with the Deputy Director for Secondary and Higher Education the guardians said, "The judges of the competition this year were biased against their children, who earlier topped the divisional competitions and had a brilliant performance at national level."

"Prospective participants could not attend the national level competitions as they did not qualify this year due to unfair judgments," the statement said.

"The competitions of Education Week should be held in educational institutions and teachers having good command in arts and culture must be appointed judges for the competitions," the guardians demanded.

## Abandoned petrol bomb recovered

By DU Correspondent  
Police recovered an abandoned petrol bomb from a garage beside the Arts Building of Dhaka University yesterday.

The hand-made petrol bomb was wrapped by packing tape. Some employees of the university found it at the rooftop of the garage in the morning.



US Ambassador to Bangladesh John C. Holzman being briefed on the flood situation by David Neff, Assistant Country Director of CARE-Bangladesh, the United States has been the largest donor of flood relief supplies to Bangladesh, having pledged 200,000 metric tons of foodgrains worth \$32 million and \$812,000 for emergency food rations and to combat diarrhoeal disease. — USIS photo

## 5.25cr EC aid for flood victims More countries respond to govt appeal

The European Commission has given a grant for humanitarian aid worth one million ECU equivalent to Tk 5.25 crore for the flood victims of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The aid, managed by the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), will enable humanitarian organisations to provide emergency relief to the victims of the floods in the coming months.

ECHO's programme will focus on food and medical support for the vulnerable, in particular women and children, purification of water supplies and the provision of sanitation services.

ECHO's partners for this programme are Oxfam (UK) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh missions abroad are receiving encouraging responses from most countries and donor organisations to the government's appeal to help the post-flood rehabilitation programme in the country.

A Foreign Ministry source yesterday said Bangladesh Ambassador in Sweden Syed Noor Hossain is taking up the flood situation with the Foreign Ministers of the Nordic governments for emergency relief and post-flood rehabilitation programme.

Bangladesh High Commissioner in Ottawa Aminul Islam discussed with the Canadian Foreign Ministry the present position of the Bangladesh government regarding post-flood rehabilitation programme.

The Canadian government has announced a sum of 1.60,000 Canadian dollar as an immediate grant for providing succour to the flood-hit people. The Ambassador is keeping up the discussion and trying for additional grants.

The French Foreign Ministry, at the request of Bangladesh Ambassador in Paris, T K Haider, has agreed to convene an inter-departmental meeting of its own within this week to decide on a package of recommendations of assistance to Bangladesh next week.

France has earmarked 22,000 tons of wheat as food aid to Bangladesh for 1998. The Ambassador requested the French side to expedite the process to ensure delivery of this 22,000 tons at the earliest. The French government has agreed to initiate appropriate measures.

The Bangladesh Mission in Paris has sought an additional food aid grant which will be discussed at the next inter-ministerial meeting of the French government.

The Mission is arranging to dispatch a large consignment of emergency medicines and medical food supplements/substitutes for women and children being donated by the Association of French Pharmaceutical Manufacturers.

The Portuguese government and Portugal's Red Cross are being approached for possible assistance.

Qatar has expressed deep concern at the grave flood situation in Bangladesh. The Qatar government is already considering contribution towards the relief and rehabilitation efforts of the Bangladesh government.

Bangladesh Ambassador in Washington K M Shehabuddin and High Commissioner in London A H Mahmood Ali have approached the host governments for additional food aid and logistic support for distribution as relief goods.

China pledges to donate initially 20,000 US dollars to the flood affected people of Bangladesh.

The Danish Foreign Ministry announced Tuesday it has allocated 1.5 million kroner (223,880 dollars) in aid for the flood victims of Bangladesh, according to AFP.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will administer the donations in conjunction with the Red Crescent in Bangladesh, a statement from the ministry said.

## Outsider beaten up at DU hall

By DU Correspondent  
An outsider in Bangabandhu Hall on Dhaka University was beaten by the resident students on Tuesday night. The incident occurred behind the hall canteen.

The outsider, Shukkur Ali alias Shuvo, is a member of an 'armed' group known as the Gopalganj group of Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League.

According to Bangabandhu Hall sources, Shuvo was beaten up allegedly by Apu and his associates. The reason for beating up could not be known immediately. But sources close to the group claimed it was a sequel to earlier conflicts.

## GCO protests alleged rape incidents at JU

By DU Correspondent  
Ganatrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) a platform of five left leaning student bodies protested the alleged rape incident and assault of a teacher in Jahangirnagar University on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

The GCO brought out a procession and held a rally at the DUCSU premises at noon. The leaders of the GCO demanded immediate trial of the incident.

The GCO rally was addressed among others by Hasan Hafizur Rahman Soheil, Monjur-E-Khoda Torik and Mohsin Sarker.

## Body of teenaged boy recovered

By Star Correspondent  
The body of a teenaged boy was found floating in the north end of Dhanmondi Lake Tuesday.

Being informed, police recovered the body of the still unidentified boy, aged about 15, from the lake near Road-32 at about 11:30 am.

Police said there was no external sign of injury on the body in a lungi and a shirt. The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

An unnatural death case was filed with Dhanmondi thana in this regard.

## Time for amending voters' list extended

The Election Commission has extended the time-limit to amend the voters' list for providing identity cards at field levels for another one month due to prolonged flood in the country, reports UNB.

The time-limit has been extended up to September 30 following receiving applications from various sections as the work to include, correct and delete the names of many voters was not completed by August 31.

## Write-ups invited

By Staff Correspondent  
Kamalkuri, a monthly magazine for children has invited write ups from children for publication, says a press release.

Children have been asked to send in stories, poems, rhymes, satires, sports news, puzzles, general knowledge and biographical writings on the lives of dignitaries to the Editor, Kamalkuri, 105, University Market, Kataban, Dhaka 1000.

The magazine, Kamalkuri, will be published on the first day of every month.

## Shafiq Rehman granted bail

Shafiq Rehman, Editor of weekly Jai Jai Din was granted bail in a defamation case when he appeared before the CMM court yesterday, reports UNB.

SS Raisuddin, a local leader of Jamaat-e-Islami in Sutrapur, Dhaka, filed the case against Shafiq Rehman for publishing an article in the weekly on June 1, 1998 under caption "Martial Law Acid Test."

The contents of the article, the petitioner said, were false, fabricated and intended to malign Jamaat-e-Islami and its workers.

## Sonargaon Hotel celebrates 18th anniversary

The Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel has celebrated its 18th anniversary through two-day programmes in the city, says a press release.

Vice-President of Pan Pacific Hotels & Resorts Shozo Kita and Managing Director of Hotels International Ltd Adiluzzaman jointly inaugurated the celebration at the Lobby Lounge of the hotel on Tuesday.

Donation of used crockeries to four orphanages was arranged on the occasion. Shozo Kita, who came here from Singapore Monday night, handed over the packets to the Superintendents of Kawran Bazar Orphanage, Sultana Shishu Niloy, Bottomly Homes — Holy Cross College and Dhaka Orphanage (Hindu Asram).

A 50% discount is offered in all outlets on the occasion of 18th anniversary, such as — Cafe Bazar, Lobby Lounge, Jhama (Sea Food Restaurant), Ciao (Italian Restaurant), Aroma (Pastry Shop), Balcony Bar and Laundry Shop. Besides Hi-Tea with Snacks Buffet at Cafe Bazar from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm is arranged daily for only Taka 250/- per person.

## HERE and THERE

### Shaheed Muktijoddha Paribar Sangsad

By Staff Correspondent  
A 41-member committee of Bangladesh Shaheed Muktijoddha Paribar Sangsad was formed at its council recently, says a press release.

Presided over by Khalilur Rahman the council was attended by a number of family members of the martyred freedom fighters from all over the country.

Abu Musa Mohammad Masuduzzaman and Mosharrar Hossain Farazi were elected chairman and general secretary of the Sangsad respectively.

Mohammad Shahjahan, Bhashani Bhattacharya and Mohan Roy were elected vice chairmen while Bindu Roy was made the joint secretary of the Sangsad, the release said.

### FEMA

Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) has strongly condemned the robbery at the office of Mnobik Shahaajya Sangstha (MSS) which also functions as FEMA secretariat, reports UNB.

In a statement yesterday FEMA leaders expressed surprise and profound indignation at "the failure of the authority" in recovering the looted money and nabbing the robbers even after a week of the incident.

They said that the "incident of this nature confirm serious deterioration of law and order situation in the country and failure of the administration to contain the rampant occurrence of acts of dacoity, terrorism and extortion."

### Bhasani Party

Chairman of Bhasani Party, Abul Kalam Azad yesterday congratulated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her address to the nation asking all to work unitedly for mitigating the sufferings of the flood victims, reports BSS.

In a statement, Azad described the prime minister's appeal as timely and realistic and observed that none should have any reservation to work together for the flood victims when prime minister herself has taken the initiative.

### Seminar postponed

A seminar on 'Film in education curriculum' scheduled for today, organised by the Bangladesh Federation of Film Society, has been postponed in view of deteriorating flood situation in the country, says a press release. It will however, be organised later.

### Obituary

Srimat Sugata Bangsha Mahathero, president of Rangunia Sangharaj Vihikhu Samity, died Tuesday evening at his Ghatcheck village Dharmarita Vihar.

He was 87, reports BSS. Author of several religious books, Mahathero left behind innumerable disciples. A sanghadana will be held on Friday to help the deceased attain enlightenment.

Moulana Shah Sufi Alhaj Abul Hasan Muhammad Abdul Quayum, will conduct the mahfil.

**INSTALLATION CEREMONY**  
**CLUB OF DHAKA SUPREME**  
 A SUPREME GARDEN SUPREME VIEW  
 DISTRICT-3151, BANGLADESH  
 BLE POET SHAMSUR RAHMAN  
 I. M. A. HADI, DISTRICT GOVERNOR, DISTRICT-3151, BANGLADESH  
 N. SULTANA SHAHEDA ISLAM, VICE DIST. GOVERNOR  
 KA CLUB  
 DATE: AUGUST 29, 1998

The installation ceremony of three Lions Clubs — Lions Club of Supreme, Lions Club of Dhaka Supreme Garden and Lions Club of Supreme View — was held at the Dhaka Club in the city recently. Poet Shamsur Rahman attended the ceremony as chief guest.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
 Office of the Executive Engineer, R&H  
 Narayanganj Road Division  
 Shimrail, Narayanganj

**R&H Tender Invitation Notice**

- Tender Notice No: 18/Narayanganj Road Division, year 1998-99.
- Name of work: Work of painting of island, railing and centre line on the 9th kilometre (Langolbandh Bridge) in Dhaka-Daudkandi Road under Bhitikandi Road Sub-Division during 1998-99 fiscal year.
- Estimated cost: Tk 1,36,299/-
- Earnest money: Tk 2,726/- in favour of the undersigned in form of Bank Draft/Treasury Chalan/Protirakha Sanchaypatra/5-year Bangladesh Sanchaypatra and Bonus Sanchaypatra.
- Time allotted for work: 15 (fifteen) days.
- Eligibility of contractors: From 'A' to 'E' general category contractors enlisted with R&H Directorate.
- Offices where tenders will be available: Executive Engineer (R&H) Road Division, Dhaka/Manikganj/Munshiganj/Gazipur/Narsingdi/Narayanganj/Planning and Design Division, Dhaka Zone, Sarak Bhaban, Dhaka and Sub-Divisional Engineer (R&H), Bhitikandi/ Narayanganj, Road Sub-Division, Shimrail, Narayanganj.
- Offices to receive tenders: Superintendent Engineer (R&H), Dhaka Road Circle, Dhaka/Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Circle, Dhaka Zone, Sarak Bhaban, Dhaka and Executive Engineer (R&H), Narayanganj Road Division, Shimrail, Narayanganj.
- Last date and time of sending tender: 13-9-98 during office hours.
- Date and time of receiving tender: 14-9-98 at 12:30 PM.
- Date and time of opening tender: 16-9-98 at 1:00 PM Executive Engineer (R&H), Narayanganj Road Division.
- Date and time of lottery: 17-9-98 at 1:00 PM.
- Official to approve estimate: Superintendent Engineer (R&H), Dhaka Road Circle, Dhaka.
- Cost of tender: Taka 500/- per set (non-refundable).
- Head of expenditure: 168-Repair.

**Shahabuddin**  
 Executive Engineer, R&H  
 Narayanganj Road Division

DFP-18547-30/8/98  
 G-1978

**NOTICE**  
**POWER CELL**  
 MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES  
 GOVT. OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

**NOTICE FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF SPONSORS FOR REHABILITATE-OPERATE-MAINTAIN (ROM) OF 110 MW THERMAL POWER PLANT AT KHULNA, 60 MW THERMAL POWER PLANT AT SHIKALBAHA AND 20 MW COMBUSTION TURBINE POWER PLANT AT SYLHET AND SAIDPUR IN BANGLADESH**

Power Cell, M/O Energy and Mineral Resources intends to select a potential sponsor (The "Sponsor") through International Competitive Bidding (ICB) based on a Request for Proposal (RFP) and negotiate the agreements under which the above four plants can be run through ROM basis in private sector. The plants are currently operated by Bangladesh Power Development Board. 110 MW plant at Khulna and 20 MW plant at Saidpur use liquid fuel to generate electricity but gas will be available at Khulna after 3-5 years from now. Other two plant use natural gas.

Now Power Cell seeks to pre-qualify interested sponsors who have previous international experience in implementing ROM power projects, preferably in developing countries and invites "Qualification Statements" from them. The pre-qualification will be made in two groups as follows:

**Group A:** Khulna 110 MW oil fired and Shikalbaha 60 MW gas fired steam thermal plants.

**Group B:** Saidpur 20 MW oil fired and Sylhet 20 MW gas fired combustion turbine plants.

The pre-qualification document that contains the required "Qualification Statement" form and the evaluation criteria will be available at a cost of Tk. 4,800.00 (four thousand eight hundred) or US Dollar 100.00 (one hundred) for Group A and at a cost of 2,400.00 (two thousand four hundred) or US\$ 50.00 (fifty) for Group B from 05 September 1998 during office hour from:

**Director (Private Power & Sector Reforms)**  
 Power Cell  
 Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources  
 Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
 BTMC Bhaban (8<sup>th</sup> Level)  
 7-9 Kawran Bazar, Dhaka - 1215  
 Bangladesh.

Fax No. : 880-2-912673  
 880-2-818941  
 E-Mail : dggpcmemr@citechco.net  
 Tel. No. : 880-2-822440

Potential sponsor's "Qualification Statements" will be received till 1500 hours BST (Bangladesh Standard Time), on before 05 November 1998 at above address. G-1978  
 DFP-18547-30/8/98