

Students of the Institute of Fine Arts rendering songs at the inaugural ceremony of the Golden Jubilee celebrations yesterday. (Right) DU VC Prof AK Azad Chowdhury pays tribute to five late artists on the occasion. —Star photo

Golden Jubilee celebrations of IFA begins

The Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Institute of Fine Arts of Dhaka University got off to a jubilant start to yesterday giving the festivity an artistic blend, reports UNB.

Poet Shamsur Rahman, Artist Shafuddin Ahmed and architect Mazharul Islam formally inaugurated the 55-day-long programme at 9:30 am.

The 50th anniversary opening ceremony was heralded by songs rendered by the student-crooners of the institute.

Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof AK Azad Chowdhury was chief guest at the inaugural function.

Shilpacharya Jainul Abedin (posthumous), Artist Kamrul Hasan (posthumous), Anwarul Haque (posthumous), Syed Ali Ahsan (posthumous), Habibur Rahman (posthumous), Artist Shafuddin Ahmed, Artist Shafiqul Amin and Architect

Mazharul Islam were given the institute awards at the function.

Dr Syed Azizul Haque read out a condolence proposal commemorating the teachers and students of the institute who have died in the last 50 years. One-minute silence was also observed in memory of those killed in bombings at a cultural function of Udichi in Jessore on March 7.

Art works and sculptures of various departments of the institute were put on display. The exhibition will remain open from 10 am to 7:30 pm till May 6 marking the celebrations.

Besides, cultural functions will be presented at 6:30 pm every day till March 16 and seminars on various subjects at 11 am from March 16 to May 6.

The Golden Jubilee programmes will conclude on May 6.

Independence & Nat'l Day programmes

As the Independence and National Day comes closer, the government has drawn up an elaborate programme to observe the day on March 26 in a befitting manner, reports UNB.

The day is a public holiday. President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will issue messages on the occasion.

The day will be heralded in with 31 gun salutes in the capital.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will lay wreaths of Savar National Mausoleum at 5:57 in the morning.

National flags will be hoisted at all government and private buildings. Main roads and islands in the capital will be decorated elegantly by flags while important buildings will be illuminated.

Wreaths will be placed at the portrait of Father of the Nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at 7:30 am at Bangabandhu Museum.

Except Dhaka, children and school-college student gatherings, rallies and sports will be held at all district and thana headquarters.

Boat race and other sports programmes will also be arranged elsewhere of the districts and thanas across the country.

Band parties of Army, Navy, Air Force, BDR, Police, Ansar and VDP will play bands at different places of the capital at 4 pm on the day.

Cultural Affairs Ministry will organise functions of patriotic songs and cultural soirees based on the Liberation War.

Bangladesh Television and

Bangladesh Betar will put up special programmes highlighting the significance of the day while newspapers will publish colourful supplements.

Discussions and seminars will be held on self-reliance in every sector of national life giving emphasis on the spirit of the Liberation War and the use of local products.

Industries Ministry will hold fairs in different areas with an aim to popularise local products.

Special prayers will be offered at mosques and all other worship places seeking divine blessings for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the nation.

Special diets will be served at all hospitals, jails, orphanages and vagrant and children centres.

Bangladesh missions abroad will also hoist national flags and hold discussions and cultural functions. They will also hold receptions, publish supplements in newspapers, present the speeches of ambassadors of high commissioners and exhibit films on Bangladesh.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed will host a reception for elite and important personalities at Bangabhaban at 4:45 pm on the day.

Ships of Bangladesh Navy will remain open for public from 2 pm to 5:30 pm at Chittagong, Khulna, Mongla, Dhaka Sadarghat, Narayanganj and Barisal.

Women and Children Affairs Ministry will organise women rallies, discussions and cultural functions.

New body of Projonmo '71 for next tenure

Projonmo '71, a body of the children of Liberation War martyrs, has formed a new 25-member executive committee for the next two years, reports UNB.

Shaheen Rezanur has been elected president while Farzana Choudhury Neepa general secretary and Mizanur Rahman Talukdar organising secretary.

The new committee, formed with consent of all units, was announced at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday afternoon.

The three vice-presidents of the committee are Asif Muneer Tommy, Nadeem Qadir and Shomi Kaiser.

Other office-bearers are joint secretary — Babul Chandra Dey, Publicity secretary — Noto Kishore Aditya, assistant publicity secretary — Syed Sazzad Hossain Nishi, office secretary — Ashrafur Haq Nishan, finance secretary — Syed Ali Mortuza, publication and research secretary — Kazi Saifuddin Abbas, literary and cultural secretary — Nahid Gulshan Soma and welfare secretary — Fahmida Khanam.

The new office-bearers were present at the press conference where they also placed a 15-point demand.

Muggers snatch Tk 75 thousand in two incidents

By Staff Correspondent

Muggers snatched Tk 75.5 thousand in two separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Nil Miah, an employee of Al Dasher, a recruiting agency, was travelling from airport to Paltan by a public bus. When the vehicle slowed down near Kakrail, a group of six men forced their way into the bus and snatched Tk 70 thousand from him at gunpoint.

The passengers forced the driver to drive on to Tejgaon Thana but the police there refused to accept the case as the incident had taken place in an area under Gulshan Thana.

When contacted, Gulshan Thana officials said that they were not aware of any such incident. Tejgaon police also said no case has been lodged in this connection.

In another incident, Mannan, a taxi driver, was robbed of Tk 5.5 thousand by a group of passengers at Madartek under Sabujbagh Thana in the city yesterday morning.

According to witnesses, a group of six led by one Abdul Mannan hired the taxi cab. But on the way to Madartek, the group snatched the money and fled away.

AL programmes on Bangabandhu's birth anniversary

Bangladesh Awami League has chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the 80th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 17, reports UNB.

The day's programme will begin at 5:30 am through hoisting national and party flags at the party central office at Bangabandhu Avenue and Bangabandhu Bhaban.

Leaders and workers will start for Tungipara after placing wreaths at the portrait of the Father of the Nation at Bangabandhu Bhaban at 6 am.

The day-long programmes also include playing public addresses of Bangabandhu on microphone and joining different programmes undertaken by the government in observance of the day, said a press release.

The party will place wreaths and offer *fateha* at the mazaar of Bangabandhu at Tungipara. Besides arranging *milad mahfil* and discussion, the party leaders and workers will also participate in the government programmes there.

The countrywide programmes include hoisting national and party flags at all offices of the organisation, placing wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu, arranging rallies and discussion, and playing addresses of the father of the nation on microphones.

Power problem worsens water crisis in city

Low-voltage, loadshedding and other power problems has gripped the already fragile water supply system of Dhaka WASA leading to severe water crisis in the capital, reports UNB.

With the hot days setting in, this has aggravated the prevailing situation in the city.

WASA officials, however, mainly blamed it on their unexpected clients like huge under-construction high-rise building complexes and garment-washing plants across the capital.

The Dhaka WASA supplies about 95 lakh litres of water against a projected demand of 140 lakh litres for some 80 lakh inhabitants of the city in their count.

According to the WASA data from 6 am Thursday to 6 am Friday, operation of 30 pumps had been disrupted for 147

hours due to low voltage of electricity.

The worst-affected areas are Mirpur, Pallabi and Bishil in Zone 4, Rampura, Goran, Malibagh, Khilgaon, Kakrail, Shantinagar and Medical College areas in Zone 1 and Narinda, Motijheel, Arambagh and Gendaria in Zone 6.

However, the other zones were also affected to some extent for power disruptions.

According to WASA, due to loadshedding and other power problems, operation of 18 pumps was disrupted for 38 hours. For mechanical faults, operation of 4 pumps was disrupted for 57 hours.

The total operation time of the 245 WASA pumps is 5780 hours a day.

Meanwhile, two pumps — one at Madartek and the other at Simpson road — have been closed down. WASA officials said that setting up of two new

pumps in these areas was at final stages.

When contacted, Dhaka WASA Managing Director Dr Khandaker Azharul Haq told UNB last afternoon that they were aware of the public sufferings.

He said WASA supplies water for domestic use, not for industrial or construction work. "But, huge quantity of water is being used for construction purposes or at the industrial plants in the capital. Unauthorised connections are also another problem of the WASA."

Meanwhile, several hundred demonstrators brought out a procession and chanted slogans asking government authorities to alleviate the severe water crisis in the city's Roy Saheb Bazar area as they said there had been prevailing a total or partial water supply disruptions for last few days.

Sayed deplors Khaleda's remarks on Jessore killing

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed yesterday deplored the observation of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia that the Jessore killing was an "arranged drama of the government," reports BSS.

It was an abortive effort of Khaleda Zia to divert the attention of people and to protect the killers, Sayeed said.

He said such observation was possible only on the part of leader of a party that owed its origin to the current and cross-currents of murders, coup and conspiracy.

Khaleda Zia has exposed her "ugly and mean political face" to the nation by terming the inhuman, brutal and subversive act of bombing the function of the Udichi cultural group at Jessore as an "arranged drama."

Prof Sayeed said it is well-known to the countrymen that Udichi is a progressive and pro-liberation cultural organisation. The people can easily understand who are the enemies of this organisation, he added.

The countrymen also know it well who have created an anarchic situation through murders, robbery and subversive activities to please their foreign mentors by joining hands with the anti-revolutionary and anti-liberation forces.

Under the project, 100 new shallow tubewells will be set up, 750 hand driven tubewells will be reinstalled, 2,893 tubewells will be repaired and 1,400 latrines will be distributed among the poor families of these thanas.

Besides, the Forum will test the waters of 1,000 tube-wells to determine the level of arsenic content in order to ensure supply of safe water to the rural people.

The implementation of the project has already started and is expected to complete by mid-July. It will cost about Tk 36 lakh, said the forum officials.

Under the programme, 35 NGOs will provide water and sanitation service to 18,132 families in 65 villages in these thanas.

Drawing competition for children held

A drawing competition for children was held at the Shishu Academy premises in the city yesterday, marking the 79th birthday of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, reports UNB.

Organised by Joybanta Sangkritik Okiya Jote, the competition was inaugurated by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad.

Several hundred children, including a good number of deaf boys and girls, took part in the competition titled 'Father of the Nation Bangabandhu and Bangladesh'.

Chaired by Okiya Jote president Shafuddin Ehsan, the function was addressed among others, by Jote general secretary Sheikh Abdul Quader.

JU unit of SCF executive body

By JU Correspondent

A 22-member executive committee of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF) Jahangirnagar University (JU) unit for the year 1999 was announced Wednesday with Anful Haq and Afana Ayub Anney as its president and general secretary respectively at the 8th conference.

The other members of the executive committee are: Sabina Monir Chitti — vice-president, Shahed Reza Sohel — assistant secretary, Shamim Al Bashir Shimul — organising secretary, Shashanka Baran Roy — office secretary, Mahfuzul Islam — treasurer, Rashedul Hasan Al Mazi — publicity and publication secretary, Sikandar Shaikh Abu Zafar — library secretary, Zayed Shahmin Shaurya — school affairs and Masum Ahmad, Kabir Ahmed, Firoj Uddin, Musfer Khan, Morshed Sohel, Badrunnahr Poly, Israt Zahan, Fahmida Mojumdar, Seema Elizabeth, Soma Saha, Masum Akhtar and Khondokar Nasim Ahmed — members.

The committee was announced at a discussion held at the Mukta Mancha of the university the evening. With president Rakibul Hasan in the chair, the discussion was participated, among others, by Khalequzzaman, convenor of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Saifur Rahman Tapan, general secretary of SCF central unit and Afana Ayub.

Earlier, Nurul Islam inaugurated the conference at central cafeteria at 11 am. SCF brought out a colorful procession on the campus after the inaugural session.

Obituary

Abdur Rob Majumder, an inspector of the Customs, Excise and VAT Department, died of cardiac arrest at his Shahjahanpur residence in the city on Thursday night. He was 55, reports UNB.

He left behind his wife, two daughters and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Rob was buried at Shahjahanpur graveyard after *Namaz-e-Janaza* at Shahjahanpur Amlati Mosque after *Jumma* prayers yesterday.

Notre Dame College golden jubilee celebrations in Nov

By Staff Correspondent

Notre Dame College has chalked out a three-week-long programme in observance of its golden jubilee celebration beginning in the first week of November.

Notre Dame College, one of the oldest educational institutions of the country was established in 1949.

All former teachers and students of the college have been requested to register their names and to make the programme a success.

2nd Dhaka Int'l Environment Video festival begins

By DU Correspondent

The Second Dhaka International Environment Video Festival '99 began in the city yesterday with a call to make the people more aware about environmental issues.

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed formally inaugurated the six-day long festival at the Community Department Library (CDL) auditorium as the chief guest.

Addressing the ceremony, Abu Sayeed said the government is very sincere about the preservation of the environment. "We have taken various steps to ensure a polluted-free environment," he said.

David Lockwood, UNDP regional representative to Bangladesh, said that mass media could play a vital role to make the people more conscious about the issue.

Presided over by CDL chairman Mohiuddin Ahmed, the inauguration session was also attended by British High Commissioner David C Walker and Television Trust International regional co-ordinator Nalak Gunawadena. Director of the CDL Harun-ur-Rasheed delivered the welcome speech.

Some 20 foreign video films on environment will be screened on the occasion.

An international seminar on "From Environment to Human Rights" will also be held on Sunday.

Khaleda at reception to Oli Ahad Unite against this anti-people govt

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon all to further strengthen the national unity that has been forged against the "anti-people, anti-Constitution" government, reports UNB.

"If we can strengthen the national unity against this anti-people, anti-Constitution government, it will mean a great honour for Oli Ahad, a veteran and courageous politician, and also lead to the success of the current anti-government agitation," she said.

Khaleda was addressing a national reception in honour of Democratic League President Oli Ahad at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium in the afternoon.

The National Committee for Reception to Oli Ahad organised the function for his contribution to the Language Movement of 1952.

The BNP chairperson commended the glorious and courageous role of the veteran politician over the decades since 1940. "Oli Ahad was a heroic leader of the great Language Movement and none can deny this despite an evil design to distort the history," she said.

The former prime minister said that in the first five years of this decade, "we reestablished democracy and upheld the dignity of the Constitution... the people-oriented economy also made progress during this period."

She lamented that "whatever we could achieve was shattered after the capture of power by national traitors and democracy killers through an arranged general election in 1996."

Khaleda, who is also the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, alleged that everything — independence, integrity, Constitution, democracy, economy, culture and religious values — is now at stake under the present government.

Praying for long life of Oli Ahad, she handed over a shawl and crest to the veteran leader.

Speaking on the occasion, Oli Ahad said now is time for launching the anti-government movement from a single platform, discarding simultaneous movement from isolated places.

The platform may be called national front," he suggested and said Khaleda Zia is the appropriate leader to carry out the united movement.

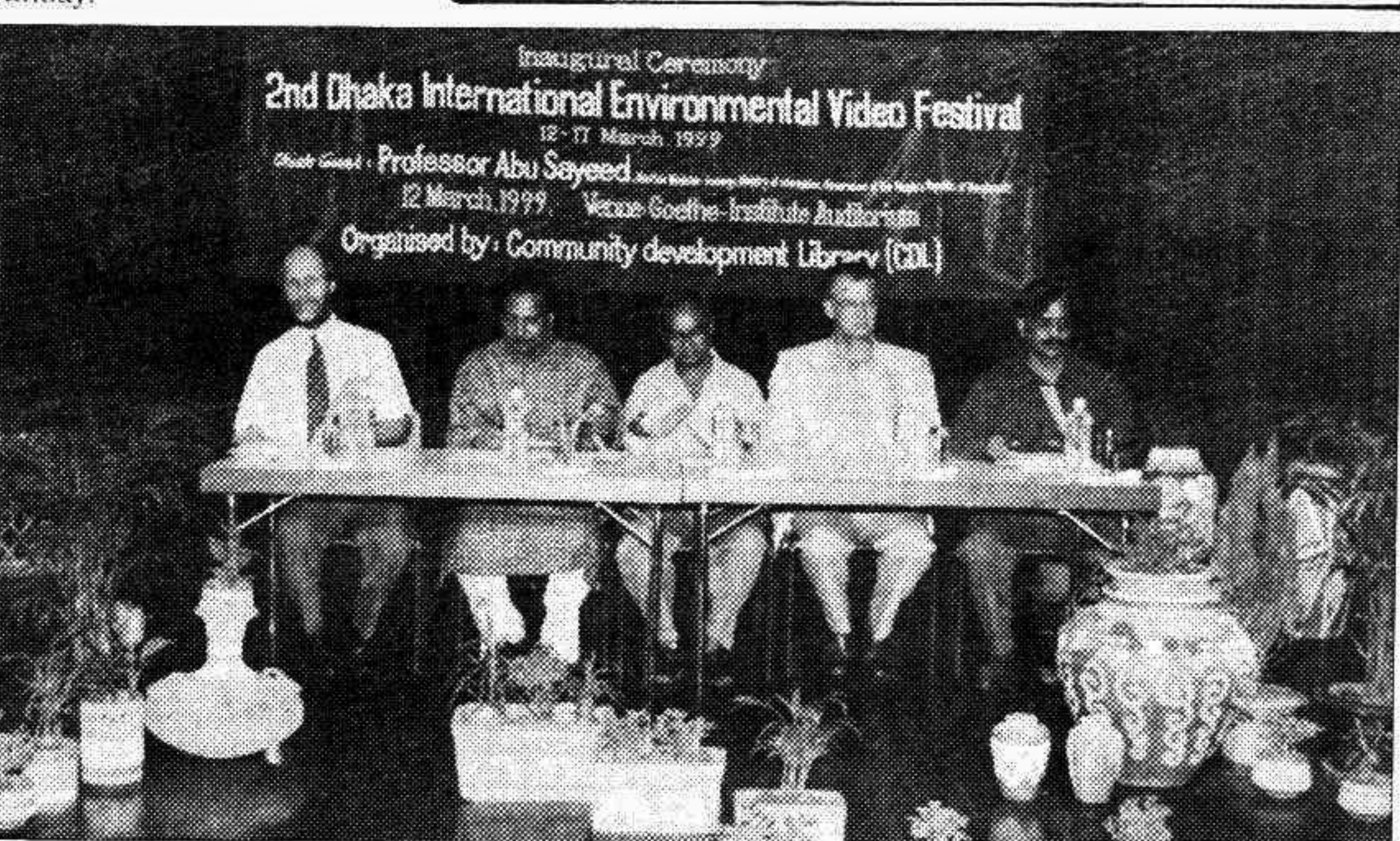
Presided over by Chashi Nazrul Islam, the function was also addressed by Jatiya Party leader Kazi Zafar Ahmed, National Professor Syed Ali Ahsan, Prof Emajuddin Ahmed and Prof Mahbubullah.

India, Pakistan to liberalise visa rule

NEW DELHI, Mar 12: As part of India's efforts to further improve relations with Pakistan following Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's bus journey to Lahore, the two countries have proposed to liberalise the visa regime for specific categories of people by granting it for five years without police report, says PTI.

Announcing this at a function to felicitate the prime minister by the minorities cell of BJP here yesterday, Vajpayee said "we are going to give five-year visa to certain categories of persons and there would be no need for police reporting by them."

On the moratorium on nuclear weapons and no-first-use, the prime minister said his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif did not seem ready for such an agreement on the grounds that India was a bigger country.



UNDP Resident Mission Chief David Lockwood, State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed and British High Commissioner attended the inaugural session of the second International Environmental Video Festival at the Goethe Institute in the city yesterday.

What's on today

Drama: Inner Wheel Club of Dhaka Buriganga will host a drama show 'Circus Circus', a production of the Franchiya Nat, to raise fund for the community services of the club. Venue: Mahila Samity auditorium, Baily Road. Time: 7 pm.

Drama Festival: 'Shishu Suvaro', 'Dukghon' and 'Anirban' will be staged on the 10th day of the National Child-Juvenile Drama Festival '99. Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in collaboration with the People's Theatre Institute. Venue: Central Public Library auditorium. Time: 4:30 pm, 6 pm and 7:30 pm respectively.

Workshop: A 3-day long Debate Workshop '99, organised by Institute of Science and Technology, will begin. Venue: IST auditorium, House No 54, Road No 15/A (New), Dhanmondi. Time: 9 am.

Discussion meet: Sammilita Samajik Andolon has organised a discussion meeting on different issues like violence, terrorism, blackmoney, arms and communal politics. Politicians and people from all walks of life will take part in the discussion. Venue: VIP Lounge, National Press Club. Time: 3 pm.

Club meet: The weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Surma, Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30 pm.

CDL seminar: A national seminar on 'Environment and Gender', organised by the Community Development Library, will be held. Prof Syed Anwar Husan, Director General of Bangla Academy will inaugurate the seminar. Venue: German Cultural Centre, House No 10, Road No 9, Dhanmondi. Time: 10 am.

Seminar: A seminar on 'Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (1995-2015): Implementation situation' will be held. Organisers: RAJUK, POROSH, CEN, BCAS, BELA, CFSD, BEN and IED. Venue: RAJUK auditorium, RAJUK Bhaban. Time: 10 am.

Club meet: The weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Metropolitan Dhaka will be held. Venue: Run Mahubul Talukder's house, House No 8A, Road No 7, Dhanmondi. Time: 8 pm.

Weather

Thundershowers likely

Temporary rain or thundershowers accompanied by gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Rajshahi, Pabna, Bogra, Jessore, Kushtia, Comilla and Noakhali during the next 12 hours, reports UNB.

Met Office said weather may remain mainly dry with temporary cloudy sky elsewhere over the country during the period. Yesterday's highest temperature of 36.4 degree Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi and the lowest 18.2 degree at Rangpur.

The sun sets today at 6:07 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:09 am. Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in Percentage
	Max	Min	
Dhaka	33.8	25.8	82
Chittagong	30.0	24.0	84
Rajshahi	36.4	19.6	55
Khulna	35.0	23.4	80
Barisal	35.8	23.5	80
Sylhet	33.0	22.5	77
Cox's Bazar	32.0	23.0	74