

● What's on today.... ●

Recitation programme: Abrtee Academy will present a recitation programme on the adaptation of *Surja Dighol Bari*, a famous novel by Abu Ishak. Venue: Shawkat Osman Memorial auditorium of Public Library. Time: 7:00 pm.

BIDS seminar: Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) will hold a seminar on "Inequality and its Sources in Bangladesh." Venue: BIDS conference room. Time: 2:00 pm-4:00 pm.

DESCO memorial meet: Dhaka Electric Supply Company Ltd (DESCO) will hold a memorial meeting and *milad maifil* on Bangabandhu. Venue: Green Building (Power House), Mirpur 13. Time: 5:00 pm.

● and tomorrow ●

Seminar: Satanagarik Committee will hold a seminar on "the government's anti-people decision to give corridor to India." Venue: Engineers Institution auditorium. Time: 3:30 pm.

Weather

Light rain likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers with temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over Rajshahi, Chittagong and Barisal divisions and at many places over Khulna, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls may occur at places over Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions during the period. Met Office said.

Met Office also predicted slight rise in day temperature over the country.

The country's highest temperature was recorded 35.1 degree Celsius at Sylhet and the lowest 24.4 degrees at Dinajpur and Srimangal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.19 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.40 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	31.0	26.5	92	90
Chittagong	32.5	25.3	80	85
Rajshahi	31.3	25.0	93	92
Khulna	31.8	26.0	89	98
Barisal	29.0	25.0	92	92
Sylhet	35.1	24.8	82	71
Cox's Bazar	31.5	24.8	85	89

JS session begins

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tending the session to press their demand for withdrawal of a Cabinet decision to provide transportation facility to India.

At the beginning of the session, the Speaker nominated five members to the panel of chairmen, who will preside over the sittings in order of precedence in the absence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker.

They are: Ali Ashraf (AL), Shawkat Ali (AL), Rahmat Ali (AL), Begum Kursidah Jahan Beg (BNP) and Zulfiquar Ali Bhutto (JP-Manju).

The Speaker then moved an obituary reference on some distinguished persons included Awami League MP Mohammad Mosharraf Hossain, former minister and BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder, former state minister Mohammad Nurunnabi Chand and King Hasan of Morocco. The House unanimously adopted a condolence resolution.

The House also adopted a resolution expressing profound shock at the loss of life and property in the recent earthquake in Turkey.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and six other MPs took part in the discussion on the obituary reference.

Others who spoke are: Water Resources Minister Abdur Razak, Forest and Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Fisheries and Livestock Minister A S M Abdur Rab, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim (AL), Abdul Latif Siddique (AL) and Advocate Farzle (JP).

Sheikh Hasina in her speech said the greatest achievement of a politician is love, confidence

Andhra blast

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Fernandes, socialist leader in Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpeyi's Hindu nationalist-led coalition government, had "stooped to a new low" in his attack at a rally ahead of next month's national polls.

What is her contribution to the nation? Yes, there are one contribution... the two children she gave birth to. She has contributed two people to the 100 crore population," the Express quoted him as saying.

Fernandes made the remarks Saturday during an election tour of the southern constituency of Bellary, where the Italian-born Gandhi is contesting. He called her supporters "eunuchs" for not choosing a leader born of Indian parents.

The outspoken Fernandes also alleged that Sonia Gandhi only became an Indian citizen after her brother-in-law died in a plane crash and she "was sure that her husband will succeed her mother-in-law as prime minister."

"Is this her love for the country?"

Information Minister Pramod Mahajan, meanwhile, appeared to attack Gandhi after rejecting media reports that he had allegedly compared her to White House intern Monica Lewinsky. But he apologised for any distress the report might have caused.

"Our motherland has not turned so infertile so that we have to be ruled by some foreigner... Nobody can become an Indian by merely wearing a sari," the Press Trust of India quoted Mahajan as saying.

Film director dead

Feroz Al Mamun, a noted film director and dramatist, died of a heart attack at his Malibagh residence yesterday, a press release says.

Mamun, who was a freedom fighter, was 47 years old.

Ishrat wants to be a doctor

Ishrat Quader (Urmei) stood 2nd among girls in Science group in the HSC Examination under Dhaka board, says a press release.

A student of Viquarunnisa Noon College, Ishrat also stood 10th in the combined merit list. She secured 926 marks with letter marks in 4 subjects.

Ishrat is the daughter of Dr Quader Nawaz. She wishes to be a doctor in future.



Sylhet Bibhag Unnayan Parishad held a token hunger strike at Osmany Udyan yesterday to press for their demand to observe the birth and death anniversaries of Bangabir M A G Osmany at the national level.

— Star photo

Two-day World Bank sponsored workshop concludes

Municipalities should be free from political influence

By Staff Correspondent

The two-day workshop on the Bangladeshi National Urban Strategy concluded yesterday with special emphasis on addressing an increasing rate of urban poverty with larger participation.

The workshop on urban service delivery mechanism suggested that the municipalities should be free from political influence. In his paper, the Chief Engineer of the Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED), said that weak institutional and financial capacity of municipalities contribute to poor service delivery and maintenance systems.

Poor resource mobilisation efforts in many municipalities is caused by the lack of timely reassessment and undervaluation of property and inadequate revenue collection, the LGED engineer said.

The poor services of the municipalities are also due to the current legal framework. Many rules and provisions are no longer relevant to municipal affairs and do not provide the flexibility for alternative ways to provide services.

The workshop organised by the World Bank also observed that notwithstanding the positive contribution of urbanisation to economic growth, rapid haphazard growth has also led to increasing urban poverty.

According to a recent GOB-ADB study, more than 60 per cent of the country's urban population are poor with a monthly income of less than Tk 2,500. But among the urban poor, around 96 per cent of the heads of households have some form of employment, mostly in the informal sector.

Calcutta City Corporation Commissioner, Ashim Barman said that the problem of Dhaka's slums were equally the same with Calcutta. But in Calcutta the authorities recognised the roles of the slum dwellers which dramatically enhanced the service delivery to improve living condition.

Commenting on the DCC's solid waste management and its line of hierarchy, Barman said it is simply pathetic. The workforce lack rational distribution in the field level. For instance, for a small area the DCC has the same number of sweepers and

inspectors than a big ward. It must be decided whether the Corporation should be a political, charitable or a service-oriented institution, he said.

World Bank's Country Director for Bangladesh, Frederick T Temple said that the workshop would help formulate a national strategy as the WB is endowed with comparative advantage of inter-linking global experiences with local innovations.

The workshop will also help the WB design its future strategy in assistance.

"In Bangladesh urban challenge is a big one and the WB is thinking of committing more of its resources in the future," Temple said.

The Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation, Mizanur Rahman Minu said that the 21st century can better be characterised as the new urban century. "We are convinced that in our society where government resources are scarce, urban services cannot be provided by the government alone. We are now realising the needs for building partnership with non-government sectors," the RCC Mayor said.

FBCCI demands

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statement said.

FBCCI, however, expressed its satisfaction over the immediate steps taken by the government and the Bangladesh Bank to keep UCBL running.

"The sudden incident appears to be a deep-rooted and far-reaching conspiracy against the private sector," the statement said.

"It is now necessary to take immediate action so that such incidents do not take place in the future," FBCCI said.

Meanwhile, talking to newsmen, FBCCI President Abdul Awal Mintoo said different institutions of the country have become inactive because of "excessive politicisation resulting in erosion of social values".

He said the private banks were not being able to perform according to expectations because of excessive and unnecessary regulation. "This has weakened management infrastructure of different banks and also made the boards inoperative."

"The private banks are not being able to hold their annual general meetings (AGM) smoothly. Because despite making profits they cannot give dividends as per the central bank's circular."

The FBCCI president said he had contacted Home Minister Mohammad Nasim and the home secretary after the incident and requested them to take action against the accused.

"But both of them told me that he (Babul) has been absconding since the incident."

But Babul told The Daily Star Saturday that he had met Finance Minister SAMS Kibria on the day. Babul also met two Star journalists at his suite at Sonargaon Hotel Saturday night.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB) also demanded exemplary punishment against those involved in the UCBL incident.

An emergency meeting of the executive committee of BAB was held yesterday. The meeting also demanded proper investigation into the incident.

The BAB members expressed their view that the legally-constituted board of directors can only be removed through a legal process.

The EC members termed the incident most undesirable and urged the government to take stern action to maintain discipline in the financial sector.

The incident may impair the confidence of the customers over the bank and recurrence of such incident will adversely affect the public confidence in the banking sector," the BAB members said.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) also expressed grave concern over the suspension of the activities of Board of Directors of UCBL by the Bangladesh Bank following the unfortunate incident.

In a statement, BGMEA president Anisur Rahman Sinha feared that an anarchic situation could be created in the entire banking sector if the UCBL crisis was not properly handled.

Fire fighters were learnt to be trying to bring the fire under control till writing of the report at 9 pm. Chief Engineer of Power Development Board's eastern zone M B Barua rushed to the spot.

He said the amount will come from the income accrued by the local transports carrying Indian goods from one border point to another and the wages of the labourers.

He was speaking in an open discussion on transhipment in the Senate Room at Rajshahi University.

Power disruption in port city

CHITTAGONG, Aug 29: The port city plunged into darkness as power supply snapped after transmission line at Hathazari caught fire at about 7:45 pm today, reports UNB.

Power officials here said the transmission line tripped following the fire, disrupting power supply from 420 MW Raazani Power Plant and 350 MW Kapital Hydroelectric Plant to the National Grid.

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He was speaking in an open discussion on transhipment in the Senate Room at Rajshahi University.

Leaders with Begum Zia in the chair, a senior BNP leader told The Daily Star at 10:15 pm.

He said the BNP procession will terminate at the Bangla Motor crossing.

Meanwhile, it was learnt that the authorities reportedly closed the western gate of Paltan Maidan because of the ongoing Bangabandhu Cup Football Tournament.

Two others were included in the probe body following a Daily Star report on August 9. They are Nazrul Islam, an engineer from NEMEW (member) and Prof Taher Ali of BUET. Prof Ali is technical advisor to the probe body.

When contacted last night, a committee member on condition of anonymity said, "We have finalised our findings. The delay is caused due to 'non-co-operation' from Bangladesh Oxygen Ltd (BOC), the company that installed the liquid oxygen tank at the hospital."

Prof Ali had asked BOC to produce some documents but it is yet to do this. We will submit our report as soon as we get the papers.

Shandhani National Eye Donation Society, Ctg Zone has organised the seminar.

Farjana wants to be a magistrate

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Aug 29: Farjana Akter of Barendra College in the city stood first in the merit list of Humanities group in HSC examination under Rajshahi Education Board.

She secured a total of 867 marks with letters in three subjects. She thanked her private tutors for their brilliant results. Farjana said she studied for about eight hours each day.

Farjana, whose favourite personality is Mother Teresa, wants to be a magistrate in future.

Farjana is the third child of Ruhul Ameen, Auditor, Field Pay Office of Rajshahi Cantonment and Zesmin Ara, a housewife.

She was speaking in an open discussion on transhipment in the Senate Room at Rajshahi University.

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BNP to hold rally

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telephone. But she did not do so.

BNP leaders M Shamsul Islam MP, Mosharraf Hossain MP and Anwar Zahid met Ershad yesterday afternoon and requested him to shift the meeting venue from Paltan Maidan.

BNP MP Mahbubur Rahman also met Ershad on Saturday with the same request.

Representatives of the Lajmaan Committee of the alliance also met Ershad at his Baridhara residence yesterday evening but failed to persuade him. Ershad proposed that BNP and BNP could hold pre-procession