

What's on today . . .

National workshop: USC Canada-Bangladesh in association with Adolescent Development Forum-Bangladesh will hold the 3rd day of a 4-day long national workshop on 'Adolescent development and Gender'. Venue: VHSS/USCC-B compound, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Time: 9:00 am.

Film show: Swaborni will screen 4 movies on the third day of its Millennium Films show. The movies are *The Fugitive*, *Pretty Woman*, *The Munny and Armageddon*. Venue: The Public Library auditorium. Time: 10:00 am, 1:00 pm, 4:00 pm, and 6:30 pm.

Discussion meeting: Bangladesh-China Friendship Centre will hold a discussion meeting followed by a cultural show in observance of the golden jubilee of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Venue: Shishu Academy premises. Time: 4:00 pm.

Gathering: Gano Forum will hold a gathering followed by a procession to protest against price hike of essentials, repression on women, deterioration of law and order in the country, terrorism and other issues. Venue: Mukhtangon. Time: 4:00 pm.

Exhibition: An exhibition of solo drawing and painting by Uttam Karmaker will be inaugurated. Chief guest: Prof Abu Sayeed, State Minister for Information. Venue: Gallery-21, Dhanmondi. Time: 5:00 pm.

Film show: Tanvir Mokammel's *Chitra Nadir Pare* will be screened. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, House no 510, Road no 7, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 3:00 pm, 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm.

..... and tomorrow

National workshop: USC Canada-Bangladesh in association with Adolescent Development Forum-Bangladesh will hold the last day's programme of its national workshop on 'Adolescent development and Gender'. Venue: VHSS/USCC-B compound, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Time: 9:30 am.

Film show: Swaborni will screen 5 movies on the third day of its Millennium Films show. The movies are *The Great Expectation*, *Never Been Kissed*, *Runaway Bride*, *Species-2* and *Saving Private Ryan*. Venue: The Public Library auditorium. Time: 9:30 am, 12:00 pm, 2:30 pm, 5:15 pm and 7:00 pm.

Seminar: Centre for Scientific and Technological Information (CESTI) of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka will hold a seminar on 'Geotextiles, technical textiles and the new biotechnologies used in the textile industries'. Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Dhanmondi. Time: 11:00 am.

Seminar: UNICEF in collaboration with Alliance Francaise de Dhaka will present a photo exhibition followed by a seminar on 'Acid Violence'. The photographs are by MAP photo Agency. Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 2:00 pm.

Film show: Tanvir Mokammel's *Chitra Nadir Pare* will be screened. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, House no 510, Road no 7, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 3:00 pm, 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm.

Weather

Light rain likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers with temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Chittagong division and weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloud elsewhere over the country till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met Office said day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period.

The country's highest temperature yesterday 34.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Khulna and Jessore and the lowest 23.4 degree Celsius at Barisal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:36 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:54 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	33.0	24.5
Chittagong	32.5	25.0
Rajshahi	32.8	24.4
Khulna	34.0	24.4
Barisal	32.4	23.4
Sylhet	32.0	25.1
Cox's Bazar	32.5	24.4
	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	77	77
Chittagong	82	80
Rajshahi	85	86
Khulna	84	84
Barisal	83	87
Sylhet	82	80
Cox's Bazar	85	89

HERE and THERE

BSME

Prof Dr Md Anwar Hossain, Director General, Islamic Institute of Technology (IIT), Gazipur, and Prof Dr A K M Sadruddin, former Head of Department of Mechanical Engineering, BUET have been elected president and secretary general respectively of the 19-member executive committee of Bangladesh Society of Mechanical Engineers (BSME), says a press release.

The election was held at BUET on Friday at the first annual general meeting of the Society. Prof Dr M H Khan, Vice-Chancellor, AUST, conducted the election as Election Commissioner.

Other office bearers of the executive committee are: Vice-presidents (Admin and Academic) — Engr Sqn Ldr (Retd) Khawaja Mueyenuddin and Prof Dr A S W Kurny, treasurer — Prof Dr Maglub Al Nur. Fourteen members are: Md Amirul Momen, Khabirul Haque Chowdhury, Aminur Rahman, SK Abdul Sattar, Dr Mahiuddin Ahmed, Dr Akram Hossain, Dr A K M Mohiuddin, Md Kamrul Islam, Mosbah Alam, Engr Shahiduzzaman, Dr Zohurul Haq, Engr Capt (ex) Nasir Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury, Prof A M Aziz-ul-Huq (ex-officio) and Prof Dr Imtiaz Hossain (ex-officio).

BCS (Economic) Officers' Assoc

The election of executive committee of the BCS (Economic) Officers' Association for the year 1999-2001 was held in the city on Saturday, says a press release.

M A Sattar Bhuiyan, Md Abdul Hye Talukder and Md Nurul Islam Mollah were elected as president, general secretary and treasurer respectively of the Association.

Other office bearers are: Nesar Ahmed Khan, Mir Md Abul Bashar, Abdul Huq Mia, S A S M Taifur, Khaleda Akhter vice presidents, Sarder Elias Hussain, K M Mozammel Huq, Sheikh Nazrul Islam, Ahsanul Karim, Swapnan Kumar Ghose joint secretaries, Md Helaluddin, office secretary, Golam Shafiuddin, literary secretary, Farid Aziz, publicity secretary, Md Shoel, cultural secretary, Md Mahbubur Rab, sports secretary, and Shamima Akter, woman affairs secretary.

Narcotics Control Board

The National Narcotics Control Board has expressed serious concern at the rising trend of drug abuse among the youths and urged the conscious citizens to help check it strictly, reports UNB.



Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal activists brought out a procession on the DU campus yesterday demanding release of its arrested members. — Star photo

Week-long cultural competition begins to mark Russel's birthday

A week-long cultural competition began yesterday at the Shishu Academy auditorium in observance of the 35th birth anniversary of Sheikh Russel, the youngest son of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, reports BSS.

Russel was brutally killed along with his other family members on the fateful night of August 15, 1975.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader formally inaugurated the competition organised by Russel Jatiya Shishu Kishore Parishad.

Children and juveniles belonging to three age groups are taking part in the competition in music, dance, acting, drawing and recitation.

Robber arrested in Chittagong

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 10: An accused in three robbery and killing cases was arrested yesterday along with Tk 1.63 lakh he looted and the microbus used in the robbery were recovered within 12 hours after the robbery took place.

The arrested was identified as Md. Iddris, 27.

The arrested along with his accomplices on a microbus looted Tk 3.50 lakh from one businessman named Md. Iqbal from Kodomtoli crossing area under Kotoali thana at around 11:30 am yesterday. DB police of the city, acting on a tip, arrested Iddris with the microbus used in the looting from Moulipara under Chandgaon thana at around 11 pm and recovered Tk 1.63 lakh 9 hundred from his possession.

Later in a confessional statement the arrested, reportedly admitted that he and his accomplices had also been involved in murder and jewellery robbery case of Sitakunda, Joragang Bazar and in another robbery that took place at GEC crossing area on September 18.

Tk 9.98 cr Udyan to be built in Rangamati

RANGAMATI, Oct 10: A 13000-acre park, 'Kapali Jatiya Udyan', will be set up in the district at a cost of Tk 9.98 crore in a bid to protect the environment and attract tourists, reports UNB.

Officials said the Chittagong Hill Tracts Forest Department (South) has put forward a plan to the government in this regard.

The aims of the ambitious project also include creating biodiversity by protecting the wildlife and facilitate research works.

ACSR holds discussion meet

Association for Correction and Social Reclamation (ACSR) observed the 19th death anniversary of its founder Begum Tahera Kabir at Mirpur Daresalam Road office recently, says a press release.

A *milad mahfil* and discussion meeting were held in commemoration of Begum Tahera who founded the organisation in 1965 to help rehabilitate destitute women.

2 crore children to be immunised National Immunisation Day Nov 2, Dec 2

The 6th National Immunisation Day (NID) will be observed throughout the country on November 2 and December 2 this year in fulfillment of the present government's commitment to eradicating polio from the country by the year 2000, reports BSS.

Nearly two crore under-five children will be given polio vaccine drops during the first round on November 2 and all the children aged between one to five years will be served with Vitamin-A capsules during the second round on December 2, it was informed at the National Meeting on NID at the head office of Expanded Programme of Immunisation (EPI) yesterday.

Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Salahuddin Yusuf, who was the chief guest on the occasion, reiterated the present government's commitment to ensuring improved health services for all including mothers and children and said a lot of work had already been done since 1996 to uproot diseases like polio from the country.

He said polio had already been eradicated from many countries of the world as per the commitment made at the WHO conference held in Geneva in 1998 and Bangladesh had also achieved at least 90 per cent success by now through the five NID programmes observed earlier.

"It is not possible to eradicate polio totally within the year 2000 since a good number of children are still being attacked by the disease due to

non-administering vaccines with them," he said adding such disruption in administering polio vaccines to 15 to 20 lakh children are being caused as NID programmes cannot be reached them for social reasons and their living in inaccessible areas.

The minister said the left-out children would now be detected for their total coverage under the 6th NID programme. At least 50,000 health and family planning workers and 6 lakh volunteers will be on round-the-clock duty to make this year's NID a success keeping in view the national importance in this particular field.

He said the present government, despite resource constraints had been frantically trying to reach health services at the doorstep of the people with maximum emphasis on mothers and child care under the existing health and family planning infrastructure. He thanked the donors for extending their all-out cooperation towards the government's health and family planning services.

The function was also addressed by Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare M M Reza, Director General of Health Services Prof A B M Ahasanullah, Director General of Family Planning Directorate D K Nath and representatives of donor agencies including JICA, USAID, Rotary International, UNICEF and WHO. They lauded the government's role in the health and described the EPI activities as a globally acclaimed programme in Bangladesh.

More organisations blast bomb attack in Khulna

By Staff Correspondent

More organisations yesterday condemned Friday's bomb explosion at a mosque of the Ahmadiya Muslim sect in Khulna, that claimed six lives and demanded immediate arrests and stern action against the culprits and their collaborators.

Separate statements issued by the organisations also expressed deep concerns over the recovery of bombs from another mosque at Mirpur and from the daily Janakantha office in the capital.

The Left Democratic Front said all the incidents taking place on the same day indicated that reactionary forces were engaged in deep-rooted conspiracy. The Front asked the government to involve the state mechanism in full strength and built up a strong resistance against such conspiracy.

The Gano Forum statement also demanded a neutral inquiry into all the incidents to identify the culprits and give them exemplary punishment. Otherwise, it warned, the situation might worsen if such attempts to create anarchy were not severely dealt with.

Bangladesh Juba Union in its statement denounced the "provocative statement" from a rally of the Khatra Majlis about the killings in Khulna and the recovery of bombs in Dhaka.

Government's failure in maintaining law and order has

reached such an extent that religious fanatics have dared to make a grenade attack at a place of worship in a country of communal harmony, the statement observed.

The Juba Union also asked the government to ban fundamentalist political groups for spreading religious fanaticism in the country.

UNB adds: A group of 16 noted personalities yesterday expressed concern over the current bomb orgy, saying that explosion and recovery of same types of devices prove to be pre-planned chain actions.

Prof Kabir Chowdhury, Dr Moazzaf Ahmed, Waheedul Haq, Abed Khan, Prof Hayat Mahmood, Kushi Kabir, Principal Moazzaf Hossain, Rokeya Kabir, Rashid A Hasan, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Rawshan Jahan Sathi, Tarek Ali, Bidhan Krishna Sen, Abul Barakat Dulal, Syed Anwarul Haq and Ajoy Roy, in a joint statement, blamed the incidents on fundamentalist extremists.

"This is certainly worrisome in the context of the fundamentalist extremists' recent activity designed to push the country into a pit of conflicts," says the statement.

They demanded of the government to take punitive action against the real culprits behind the explosions.

'They are now returning to JP'

Jatiya Party chairman Ershad has said those who deserted his party are returning to JP after realising their mistakes, reports UNB.

Welcoming a group of JP (Mizan-Manzu) leaders of Shaghata Upazila of Gaibandha at his Baridhara office, Ershad hoped that many more misguided JP leaders and workers would come back in future.

Those who have come back to JP include convenor of Shaghata Upazila Jatiya Juba Sanghati Ahsan Kabir, Mohammad Ali, Abdul Hamid, Matiar Rahman and ex-chairman of Kachua Abdur Razzak Pradhan.

JP presidium members Dr T I M Fazle Rabbi Chowdhury MP, Abdur Rashid Sarkar MP, organising secretary Lutfor Rahman Chowdhury MP, Adv Salauddin Gaderi, Adv Golam Shahid Ranzu, Mahbub Alam Chowdhury, Hasan Kabir Tota, Shah Mansur Rahman, Shaiful Islam Kiron were among other present.

2 more bombs

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have been planted by some one who knows the area very well". Another top police official said that an organised gang might be involved in it. Both the officials talked to The Daily Star seeking anonymity.

When asked whether it was a failure on the part of the police at the mosque, DMP Commissioner AKM Shamsuddin said, "I do not think so".

No action was taken against any of the policemen deployed at the mosque. A departmental inquiry is underway, the DMP Commissioner said.

Asked about the incident, some leaders of the community said people opposed to them might be involved in it, but did not make any organisation.

Panic spread among students in Bakhshibazar and Labagh areas and students of Aliya madrasah, Badrunnessa College and Medical College Hostel nearby after the incident.

Nabuwat

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a Khatme Nabuwat rally at Manik Mia Avenue in the city had earlier resolved "to destroy the Ahmadiyas". On September 24 last, it added, this organisation along with other fundamentalist groups announced at a public rally at Paltan Maidan "to destroy, put on fire and occupy the Ahmadiya mosques".

"Therefore, there is no scope for confusion over the bomb explosion at the Khulna mosque or planting bombs in the Dhaka mosque. It's now clear that those who made public announcement about destroying the Ahmadiya mosques and killing the Ahmadiyas are responsible for the heinous incidents. They are self-proclaimed attackers and are guilty of the crimes," said the statement.

Security alert

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yesterday at police headquarters.

Investigation is also underway to find out the organisers of the Khulna bombing and the subsequent recovery of the anti-tank mine from Janakantha newspaper office and grenade from a Mirpur mosque.

Extra security has been ordered around the Hindu temples and places of worship during the Durga Puja festival beginning October 15. Police along with 75,000 Ansars will be deployed in these places, officials said.

Police sources told The Star last night that suspected religious extremists who had earlier demanded a ban on the activities of the Ahmadiya sect describing them as non-Muslims have also been under watch.

"Important persons, especially free and progressive thinkers, would also be given security cover," said a top police source.

UNB quoted Home Secretary Shaifur Rahman to have said Sunday night that "a vested quarter was out to create unrest disturbing law-and-order situation".

"Investigation is on by the different law-enforcing agencies to find out who managed to get such powerful explosives and from where," he said referring to the anti-tank mine and the bombs. He did not elaborate.

Vajpayee govt

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Nearly 300 lawmakers have pledged support to Vajpayee in 545-seat Lok Sabha, according to AP.

Meanwhile, Vajpayee faced hectic lobbying for key portfolios. "I don't visualise any problem and all will be accommodated," Vajpayee told reporters here today.

Two major southern partners have said they will support the NDA in crucial parliamentary votes but will decide later in the week whether to join the government.

Major coalition partners want the key portfolios of finance, defense, railways and industry for their legislators.

Vajpayee's government collapsed when Jayaram Jayalalitha, a quirky leader of a southern party pulled out of the coalition.

This time, Vajpayee has included more regional powerhouses, including Jayalalitha's rivals, in the coalition so he could reach out to more voters. His group won 296 seats, more than the required one-half majority.

On the other hand, Congress aligned with parties led by Jayalalitha and Laloo Prasad Yadav, two politicians on trial for corruption.

Meanwhile Pranab Kumar Mukherjee, former finance minister and a close supporter of Sonia, resigned today from a top party position, owning up responsibility for the defeat for party's nominees in the northern state of Haryana. He was the first Congress leader to step down after the party's worst showing in more than five decades.

Council of JCD CU unit postponed

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 10: The annual conference and council of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Chittagong University unit scheduled to be held on October 13 will not be held on the campus as the CU authority did not permit it there.

CU authority imposed a ban on all kind of political activities including meeting, procession, rally on the campus on Friday due to tense situation prevailing on the campus following a clash between Shibir and Chhatra League on Thursday.

JCD laid a siege to the CU VC office today protesting the decision.

40th Convocation of DU

11 sub-committees formed

By DU Correspondent

Eleven sub-committees were formed yesterday for successful holding of the forthcoming 40th Convocation programme of Dhaka University on December 18.

The bodies were formed at a meeting of the Executive Committee for the convocation held at the Administrative Building of the university yesterday with Vice-Chancellor Prof A K Azad Chowdhury in the chair, said a DU press release.

Committee convenor Pro-VC Prof M Shahadat Ali, members of the Syndicate, Faculty Deans, Hall Provosts and president and general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association were present at the meeting.

Eminent economist and Nobel laureate Prof. Amartya Sen will be present as chief guest at the Convocation.

UNB adds: The sub-committees are: Budget, souvenir, seating arrangements and stage, reception, reception to graduates and medal recipients, costume making, tie, scarf and coat-pin making, certificate and basket, medal making and distribution, costume distribution, and security.

The 40th convocation programme of the university will be held on December 18 after a break of 30 years. The last convocation programme was held in 1970.

Day-long programmes marking the convocation will be held at the DU Physical Health Complex beginning at 10 am.

Hasina: Ctg

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Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury, the meeting was also addressed by Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, Housing and Public Works Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain, Labour and Employment Minister M A Mannan, Chittagong City Mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury and local leaders M A Salam, Sadeq Chowdhury and Sadeq Noor Shikder.

Military police

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revived army's Traffic Control Monitoring Cell which would be responsible for monitoring measures taken by different departments in view of the attempts to solve the city traffic problem, the sources said.

The army has also carried out a survey on "bad intersections" in the city and has chalked out an action plan involving the DMP's traffic department. Besides, the sources said, the army has identified an unspecified number of rickshaw factories and will forward the list to Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) today for the corporation to take action.

Army engineers are also constructing a Bailey Bridge near Jatarabari, Saidabad to ease the congestion there. The work on the bridge would be completed within three to four days, the sources said.

An army source told The Daily Star that this time measures were taken "to do something permanently".

"In the past we have seen that as soon as the army withdrew from the streets the traffic mess returned," said a government source.

One more dies

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The Inspector General of Police today visited the place of occurrence. When asked, the IGP said preliminary investigation suggests that the explosive device might have been kept inside the mosque by some members of the Ahmadiya Community.

"Further investigation is going on, but I am almost sure that none planted the explosive device from outside," he said. Whatever may be the case, such an incident would be severely dealt with, he said.

The KMP authorities said some security passes were recovered from a thatched house in the mosque complex. The security passes were issued by the authorities concerned during the prime minister's visit on October 3 to attend the handing over ceremony of the Khulna Shipyard from the Ministry of Industry to Bangladesh Navy.

How the activists of Ahmadiya community got these security passes is being investigated, said a source in the KMP. The source also said the report of Army explosive experts is expected here in a day or two.

Local leaders of the Ahmadiya community have been kept under constant vigil. The mosque complex is still under police cordon. None of the Ahmadiya community has so far claimed responsibility for the blast.

Meanwhile, bodies of four persons including Dr Mazed were buried today in their native villages in Satkhira district.

The university authorities fixed November 15 as the last date for registration.

The graduates and the medal recipients who will be eligible to take part in the convocation programmes are: Masters degree of 1996, Honours degree 1997, Honours and Masters degree of 1996 and 1997 of various institutes, M Phil (January 1995 to June 1998), PhD (after 39th convocation in 1970 to date), MBBS and BDS of 1997 and 1998, BSc in Textile Technology of 1997, BSc in Nursing Science of 1997 and 1998, BSc (Pass) in Home Economics of 1997, Post Graduate degree in Health Science and Research of 1997 and 1998 and those who have been awarded Gold Medals after 1992.

The DU authorities asked the graduates and medal recipients to attend the 40th convocation programme attired in dresses to be provided by the authorities.

Interested students, who already received their original certificate, will have to fill-up two prescribed forms for convocation 1999 kept at the Controller of Examinations' office at the Administrative Building of the university.

The forms for the 40th Convocation 1999 will be distributed from today from the Controller of Examinations' office.

After filling the forms, each student will have to deposit Tk 1,000 as Registration fee at the TSC Branch of Janata Bank or the Curzon Hall Branch of Agrani Bank by November 15.

Taliban reject US criticism over women's rights

KABUL, Oct 10: The ruling Taliban militia today rejected US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's criticism of women's rights in Afghanistan as slander, reports AFP.

Albright was spreading "slanders" by frequently raising the issue of the Afghan women in a bid to pursue her own political objectives, the militia's official organ, the Shariat weekly, said.

"It will be true if we say that she uses human rights as a political shield and politically manipulates the issue," it said.

Albright, addressing the California Governor's Conference for Women last Tuesday, accused the Taliban of treating women as chattel.

She condemned the Taliban for being "determined to drag Afghan women back from the dawn of the 21st century to somewhere closer to the 13th".

Shariat argued that women in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan commanded respect.

"She should understand that the Afghan woman is the most dignified woman in the world over. In the light of the Islamic Shariah law she is kept in high esteem."

"She enjoys complete dignity and protection and is not used as an animal, which was the status of women in the medieval west," it claimed.

Dhanmondi lake