

What's on today

IT Day: Department of Computer Science of Dhaka University will observe IT Day 1999. Chief guest: Science and Technology Minister Lt Gen (Retd) Noor Uddin Khan. Venue: Science Complex Bhaban, DU campus. Time: 9:00 am.
Rally: National Committee for Protection of Oil-Gas Resources will hold a rally, followed by a procession towards the Prime Minister's office. Venue: Muktagong. Time: 11:00 am.
Prize distribution: The declaration of the Anyadin Eid Fashion Competition 2000 and its prize distribution will be held. Chief guest: Prof Abu Sayeed. State Minister for Information. Venue: Surma Hall, Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 10:00 am.
Meeting: A meeting of the organising committee for the International Conference on Bangladesh Environment (ICBEN) will be held. Organisers: Poribesh Rokkha Sopoth (POROSH), Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Bangladesh Environment Network (BEN) and Coalition of Environmental NGOs (CEN). Venue: ITN conference room, Civil building, BUET. Time: 3:30 pm.
Film show: Muktir katha, a documentary by Tareque Masud and Catherine Masud, will be screened. Venue: Shishu Academy premises. Time: 5:30 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Memorial meeting: Shahidul Islam Smriti Parishad will hold a memorial meeting on poet and freedom fighter Shahidul Islam. Venue: Liberation War Museum auditorium. Time: 3:00 pm.
Lecture: A lecture will be held on "Role of Science Museums in Mass Education in the 21st Century in Developing Situation." Organisers: Science and Technology Ministry and Museum of National Science and Technology. Venue: Museum premises, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Time: 2:30 PM.
Film show: Muktir Katha, a documentary by Tareque Masud and Catherine Masud will be screened. Venue: Shishu Academy premises. Time : 5.30 PM.

Weather

Light rain likely in Ctg
Light rain is likely to occur at a few places over Chittagong division and at one or two places over Barisal and Sylhet divisions during next 24 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.
Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country during the period the Met Office said.
Yesterday's highest temperature of 29.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Bogra and the lowest 15.5 degrees at Dinajpur.
The sun sets in the capital today at 5:13 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:32 am.
Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Death anniversary

By DU Correspondent
The third death anniversary of noted journalist Mujibur Rahman Badal will be observed today. During his two-decade of illustrious professional life, Badal worked for Bangla daily Sangbad, Morning Post and weekly Sakal Barta and Chittrali, said a press release.
He was also the president of Narayanjan Press Club and associated with various socio-cultural organisations including Rotary Club.
Family of Badal will organise a Milad Mahfil at Dewogh Madrassah after Asr prayers today. An iftar party will also be held and funds will be distributed among destitutes on the occasion.

Death anniversary of Nizamuddin Ahmed today
By DU Correspondent
The 28th death anniversary of Shaheed Nizamuddin Ahmed, a gallant journalist during the turmoil days of liberation struggle, will be observed today.
Nizamuddin Ahmed was kidnapped and killed by the Pakistan Occupation Army in 1971, said a press release.
He started his career as a journalist in student life and played an important role in the War of Liberation. His contribution will be ever remembered in the history.
Besides a number of national dailies and agencies, Nizamuddin worked for a good number of international news agencies in his illustrious career.
He was the first and only correspondent of the then "Pakistan Press International" and established the agency in the then East Pakistan with his relentless effort. Later, he became the editor of the agency.
Nizamuddin was also the Dhaka correspondent of BBC, APA and UPI and covered various national and international events.
He was elected to the Provincial Assembly in 1965 and visited a number of countries as member of various delegations.
He obtained his graduate degree from the Economics Department of Dhaka University in 1952.

Death anniversary
By DU Correspondent
The second death anniversary of Komol Bhushan Roy Chowdhury, former DUSCU VP and noted social worker will be observed today, says a press release.
K B Roy Chowdhury Smriti Sangsad in a statement yesterday recalled Roy's contribution towards helping Bangladeshis stranded in Pakistan after the Liberation War.

Death anniversary
By DU Correspondent
The 29th anniversary of martyrdom of four brothers and their brother-in-law in the country's War of Liberation will be observed today.
The five valiant freedom fighters embraced martyrdom at the end of struggle for independence in 1971.
The Pakistani occupation forces with the help of their local collaborators abducted the three brothers Mokarram Hossain Mukul, Monsur Hossain Monju, Mostak Hossain Anju and their brother-in-law Yusuf Ali from their Maghbazar residence in the city and killed all of them at Dhaka Cantonment on December 11.
Another brother Mosharrif Hossain Ranju was killed while fighting against Pak army in a march to Dhaka from Rujganj of Narayanjan on December 12.
In observance of the day, a milad mahfil and Quran Khatuani will be held at 74/F New Airport Road, Mohakhali residence of freedom fighter Capt (Retd) M Mozammel Hossain, the eldest brother of the martyrs after Magreb prayers today.
Relatives, friend and freedom fighters of the martyrs have been requested to attend.

25 held in Chittagong
CHITTAGONG, Dec 11: Twenty-five miscreants, including three terrorists and toll extortionists, were arrested by Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) from different parts of the city during the past 24 hours ending at 6 pm today, reports BSS.
CMP detectives arrested illegal arms holder and terrorist Hasan from a city hotel last night. A 01-7 mark-4 cut-rifle was recovered from his possession.

Myensingh JP office ransacked
MYENSINGH, Dec 11: District Jatiya Party office was ransacked today by a procession of JSD-backed Chhatra League protesting comments of JP Chairman HM Ershad against Rashed Khan Menon and Hasanul Haq came under attack by the JP activists, reports UNB.
Witnesses said the procession of BCL (C-K) came under attack twice when it was passing by JP office near Natun Bazar in the town provoking angry protesters to unleash an attack.

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Mrs Carmen Z Lamagna, vice-chancellor of the AMA International University-Bangladesh (AIUB) giving away certificate to a graduate at the first Convocation ceremony of the University at the Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday. Dr Anwarul Abedin chairman of Board of Trustees of the university is also seen.

Left Front leaders blast Khaleda for 'unholy alliance' Inu, Menon may sue Ershad

Two main Left Front leaders Hasanul Haque Inu and Rashed Khan Menon yesterday said they are contemplating to sue former autocrat and Jatiya Party leader Gen H M Ershad for his recent 'libelous comments' against them.
In their reactions to BSS, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader Inu and Workers' Party leader Menon said they have already consulted with senior legal experts to sue Gen Ershad who recently made public remarks about 'bribery' allegations against them.
They said their legal action would come soon after consultation with Dr Kamal Hossain.
They also expressed their dismay over the recent four party opposition summit posing a question as to why the former Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia had to take the 'burden of Razakar and Shairachar' (collaborator and autocrat) whom the nation would never allow to visit the sacred places of the nation including the Shaheed Minar, National Mausoleum and National Intellectuals' Graveyard.
Criticising the ceremonial alliance of rightists, fundamentalists and autocrats, the JSD leader said there is no justification of co-opting Ershad as political partner of BNP to oust a democratically elected government. "Ershad is popularly known as a killer, autocrat and enemy of democracy," he pointed out.
"The politics of conspiracies and killings will continue as there is existence of evil forces like Ershad in political arena," he remarked.
Urging the Prime Minister to arrest Ershad for his misdeeds, Inu ridiculed him (Ershad) as "a proven betrayer." He also urged the Prime Minister to take Ershad into custody and put him to trial for his illegal takeover in 1982.
Criticising Begum Khaleda Zia, Inu said the politics of democracy and development cannot go together having "unholy alliance with autocrat Ershad and collaborator Golam Azam."
JSD leader urged the opposition to launch constructive programmes instead of 'destructive politics of hartal' which has already taken a clearly toll from the country's economy.
Inu said, "It is surprising as to how Begum Khaleda Zia has begun carrying such burdens like Ershad and Golam Azam who were rejected by the nation and condemned in history."
"The fall of the present government is not the ultimate goal of the BNP-led alliance... they have some secret agenda which Begum Khaleda Zia is hiding for gaining some unknown goals," said Inu.
He urged Begum Khaleda Zia to dump autocrat Ershad and collaborator Golam Azam and return to the main stream of democratic politics.
Workers' Party leader Rashed Khan Menon said the formation of the four-party alliance can not help democratic polity. "The unholy alliance of fundamentalists and rightists is another retreat for the nation from the path of democracy and progressiveness," he remarked.
"We had criticised the similar alliance with Awami League in the past... that also failed to bring welfare for the nation," he added.



A glimpse from the catwalk of the fashion show of Anannya Eid Fashion Competition 2000 winners held at Hotel Abakash yesterday. — Star photo

Roundtable on child rights told National consensus exists on abolishing child labour

Government leaders, leading opposition lawmakers, senior officials and representatives of the concerned agencies yesterday called for taking measures to uplift condition of children by abolishing child labour as far as possible, reports BSS.
They said that national consensus existed on such an innocuous issue and it was necessary to spare no efforts through innovative ideas for all-out development of the children.
Held under the aegis of the Media Group of Child's Rights, the roundtable was attended by Political Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr SA Malek, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofal Ahmed, State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Prof Zinnatunnessa Talukdar, former Commerce and Industries Minister Shamul Islam, MP, former Planning Minister Air Vice Marshal (retd) AK Khandker, MP, and former state minister for civil aviation MA Mannan MP.
Presided over by Shaiful Amin Ferdousi, president of the committee, it was also addressed by its secretary general Kazi Omar Khayyam. Journalist and columnist Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury moderated the roundtable.
Finance Secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan, Primary Education Division Secretary Dr Saddam Hossain, Joint Secretary of Labour Ministry Daliluddin Mondal, ILO Director in Bangladesh Anees Hossain, UNICEF official Shampe Lgalumpa, At Siddiqui of 'Sishu Adikhar Forum' and Dr Maswood Rahman, a child health specialist also attended the roundtable.
Dr Malek said that improvement in the working conditions of children is very important and stressed that be-

havioural pattern towards children and women working in houses and other areas need to be changed.
He said that only the raising per capita income is not desirable but establishment of social justice and equity are necessary. He called upon the civil societies to come forward to assist the government and implementers of programmes designed to promote the interest of children.
Tofal Ahmed said there is no differences among political parties on the promotion of children's rights and added that a national consensus exists on the issue.
He said it is an age of trade and commerce, and it is necessary to judge things from that perspective.
He said Bangladesh would become a prosperous middle-level income nation by 2020 when the per capita income is expected to go up to \$2,000, but reminded that social justice is just as important for a happy and healthy society.
The commerce minister said the Seattle conference discussed 'labour standard' where there was no unanimity because nothing was accepted which could further marginalise the developing and least developed nations.
Dr Alamgir said children's rights are being seriously taken care of in the fifth five-year plan and added that it is necessary for the state and society to provide the children with nutritious food along with education and medicines.
Shamul Islam said a solution to the child labour problem has to be found out in Bangladesh context and added that the previous BNP government initiated several measures, especially in the ready-made garments sector for the abolition of child labour.
M Mannan said even when child labour exists, technological advancement can be used to reduce their rigours.
He suggested that government and other organisations consider providing some equipment to carry goods instead of forcing children to take them on their heads which is quite dangerous for their health in the long-run.

8 get Jatiya Sangbadik Kalyan Samity award
State Minister for Shipping Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya yesterday said the press is now enjoying full freedom in the country, and this would continue in the interest of democracy and the rule of law, reports BSS.
The state minister was speaking at a function to mark the fourth founding anniversary of Jatiya Sangbadik Kalyan Samity in the National Sports Council auditorium in the city yesterday.
Chaired by samity president Delwar Bin Siraj, the function was addressed by lawmakers Mustafizur Rahman and Ahaj Mokbul Hossain.
On the occasion, the samity awarded medals and certificates among eight persons for their contributions in different fields.
The recipients of the medals are: S M Ali (journalism) (posthumously), Mokbul Hossain (social welfare), Mohammad Enamul Huj (literature), Noor Hossain Balbi (film-making), Subrata Sengupta (music), Sohel Rama (film acting), Diti (film acting) and Ruksi (singer).

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PM: Non-MP leaders

From page 1
BBC Bangla Service yesterday broadcast a report based on key-points of the interview taken recently.
Hasina said she is willing to talk with all concerned including her friends and foes to resolve the political crisis. "But a section of the BNP leadership, now deciding matters in the party, is opposing a consensus (between the government and the Opposition)."
About the demands of four opposition parties -- BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and IOJ -- Hasina told the newspaper: "These four parties had always been identical in their thoughts, ideologies and activities."
Asked about her party Awami League's alliance with JP and Jamaat (against the then BNP government), she said the unity was forged on parliamentary affairs and the parties then represented in the Parliament launched an agitation from inside the House.
The prime minister defended formation of her government in coalition with former general Ershad's JP, saying her party "adopted a successful tactic maintaining differences of ideals and principles."
She claimed that the AL had emerged as majority party in parliament with an edge of only one seat in the 1996 general elections, but the party feared that some of its MPs might be killed or kidnapped.
To be on the safe side, we reconfirmed our majority in the Parliament with the support of (Ershad) of Jatiya Party and ASM Rab (of JSD)."
Hasina denied BNP allegation that some 70,000 cases had been filed against more than 10,000 activists of the party and asked it to give a list of such cases.
"Earlier investigation into such allegations revealed that cases had been filed against many BNP leaders and workers during the rule of that party."
She also denied the allegation that the Opposition lawmakers were not allowed to speak on the floor of the House. "Proceedings of the Parliament will show that the Leader of the Opposition was given the floor whenever she had asked for it."
Asked about AL's election pledge to grant autonomy to Radio and TV, Hasina feared that it could trigger work stoppage in those.
She, however, mentioned that her government allowed a private TV channel to operate.
The prime minister denied that the country lacked a defence policy and said "We can't disclose our war strategy."
Brushing aside allegations that AL is a pro-India party, Hasina said, "BNP and JP are the two parties most liked by India."

Brigadier's death

From page 1
right to know when the body of a senior military officer is found in a pool of blood in broad day light in the heart of one of the country's biggest cantonments. Though delayed, the Army Court of Inquiry, which has started functioning, is a welcome step.
The Court of Inquiry needs to address certain questions. These include why the body of the deceased was not sent to the Combined Military Hospital under the supervision of the Military Police or regular police even if it was beyond hope.
According to all reports, the incident occurred after 3pm on December 8. However, the body of the deceased was kept at the place of the occurrence till the following day when it was taken to the Chittagong General Hospital for autopsy, which as press reports said was done in a hurry. There are hardly any known examples when in peacetime a soldier's body is taken for autopsy to a civil hospital whereas a military hospital is located nearby.
Normally officers of his rank are given personal side arms, known as service revolver or service pistol; which one would be inclined to use if one wanted to indulge in an act of suicide. Even if he was not carrying his personal weapon, access to a personal weapon of an under-command officer was not difficult. Of all means, a sub-machine gun (SMG) was used, so was it said by the ISFR.
The place of the incident should have been sealed off after removal of the body and the weapon believed to have been used should have been confiscated. That it was not sealed at least till the following day was evident from the decision to take the body to the civil hospital a day after the occurrence. The weapon was seized only yesterday, four days after the incident, and that too by the police team under Panchlaish thana where the UD case has been filed.
The death of Brigadier Ashfaq has something to do with the glory and valour of the Bangladesh Army. The death of such an accomplished soldier, who was adjudged the best cadet in his batch while being commissioned in 1970, cannot be seen in isolation. One also points to the fact that he was the most senior serving officer of his rank at the time of his death. It is also important to note that he was being tipped to be sent to the Bangladesh mission in Islamabad as defence attaché, something the ISFR confirmed.
Any death by design is ominous. Of course, death by suicide is cowardice.

DCC makes blunder

From page 1
any application from the DCC to register the insecticide, an official said.
But the DCC has floated tender at least thrice so far to procure the insecticide.
DCC sources said the decision to buy the spray machines was taken by its Mosquito Control Committee (MCC) despite warnings by entomologists about non-availability of proper insecticide.
After they found out that the machines could not be used, they tried to run those with other kinds of insecticide, but it failed in field level efficacy tests," said one source.
The efficacy tests were conducted by the MCC which included the Assistant Director of DCC's Mosquito Control Department as Member Secretary and its Chief Health Officer, representatives from PPV, Institute of Epidemiological Research and Diseases Control (IEDCR) and Humayun Kabir Commissioner of Ward-59 as members.
The initiative to buy the spray machines was taken by Kamal Chowdhury, Convener of MCC and Commissioner of Ward-36 (Motijheel area), the sources said.
They also alleged that the procurement price of the machines was shown at a much higher rate than the actual price. In the international market, the price of such a machine is 5,000 to 6,000 US dollars, equivalent to Tk 2.5 lakh to 3 lakh, they claimed.
When contacted, Kamal Chowdhury first admitted that the machines could not be run due to non-availability of proper insecticide in the country. But he insisted that mosquito menace was not so grave in recent times to use those machines.
When asked whether those machines would be useful in fighting the persistent threat of Dengue fever in the city, he replied in the negative saying, "Mosquitoes carrying the Dengue germ could be found only inside houses, not in open spaces."
When asked why the machines were bought ignoring warnings by entomologists, Chowdhury replied, "Now that we have the machines, the insecticide would be imported."
The MCC Convener however said they have decided that the ULV spray machines would use "SICOFLYING, an adulticide now being used in hand fogging machines. The tests have been satisfactory and we will soon start the drive," he said.
Asked about the price, Chowdhury said, "I will have to look into the files to tell you the price."

Ctg: Jubo Dal

From page 1
Selim is wanted in a number of cases, including five murder cases, police said.
The killing sparked off violence as the agitated supporters of Selim went on the rampage and put up barricades on various city roads.
They also damaged some 150 vehicles and set fire to five cars.

Shikdar

From page 1
Besides, he frequently used to threaten different police officials for intensifying patrol in Skid Ghat and railway colony areas.
Police further alleged that Sharif Hannan has been obstructing government's revenue earning from Skid Ghat. His bail prayer was rejected by the court the afternoon and he was sent to district jail.
According to police and eye witnesses, Sharif Abdul Hannan is the arch rival of Shikdar. Ershad Shikdar brutally killed four persons for supporting Sharif Hannan in capturing leadership of Khulna Bazar handling workers' union.
But few days after arrest of Shikdar, Hannan tried to capture Skid Ghat in the same style which Shikdar had done.
A tense situation is prevailing in the city following arrest of Hannan. Supporters of his group in the party brought out a procession, in the morning to protest arrest and demand his unconditional release.
Handling workers of his group in the Awami League have threatened to paralyse all activities at Skid Ghat and Khulna Bazar.
Meanwhile, police recovered a sawed-off rifle from Skid Ghat today.
A combing operation will be resumed tomorrow to evict those who have been resettled by Sharif Hannan in the Skid Ghat and railway colony areas said a source in the KMP.

25 drown

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and fishing boats.
Hundreds of people including relatives of those missing were seen on both banks of Meghna at the disaster site and at Daulatkhan thana till last night in search of the victims.
The magistrate said the top of the sunken launch could be seen till about 4 pm, but it disappeared later in high tide, making rescue operation impossible.
BIWTA Chairman Abdul Karim, when contacted last night, said salvage ship ML Hamja left Barisal for Majherchar yesterday evening and it will begin operation this morning to salvage the launch.
This launch (ML Falguni) did not have any route permit and the route in which the launch sank is not a classified route," he said in Dhaka.

AIUB convocation ceremony held

The first convocation ceremony of AMA International University - Bangladesh (AIUB) was held yesterday at the Sonargaon Hotel Grand Ball Room, says a press release.
Forty-four students were awarded Bachelor degrees in their respective disciplines of Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Electronics & Computer Engineering, and Business Administration (MIS).
The convocation programme was presided over by the university Vice-Chancellor Carmen Z Lamagna as authorised by the Chancellor Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed.
Chief Justice Mustafa Kamal attended the convocation as the Chief Guest.
Kim H Willis of California Riverside University, Fro-Vice-Chancellor Dr. T Hossain, UGC Chairman Prof ATM Zahurul Huj, Trustee Board Chairman Dr. Anwarul Abedin, Honorary President Qazi Jalal Ahmed, Dean Prof Anwar Hossain spoke on the occasion and congratulated the graduates.
Parents, guardians and distinguished guests from home and abroad attended the ceremony.

Call for protection of migrant workers' rights abroad

By Staff Correspondent
Justice Habibur Rahman has called for adherence to the International Convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families.
He was speaking as the chief guest at the Democracy Auditorium of Khan Foundation on Rights of Immigrant Workers and Human Rights organised by Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees (WARBE).
Joint secretary AMM Reza-E-Rabbi, of Labour and works ministry, emphasised to prepared static and a Database directory to utilised experienced repatriated workers.
The key note papers were read out by general secretary of WARBE, Anisur Rahman Khan and Vice-President Syed Saiful Haq Asif.
Syed Nazimul Haq Nasin of Ain-O-Salishi Kendra demanded proper initiatives by Bangladesh high commissions abroad to fight against the repression of Bangladeshi migrant workers.
Among others Advocate Rokshana Khandaker, Victor Gomez of CCEB also spoke at the seminar.

Seminar on admn reforms today

A seminar will be held on "Policy Research: A Review of Administrative Reforms with Women's Development Implications" at the conference room of Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) in New Eskaton at 9.30 am today, says a press release.
This is one of the six research studies undertaken by Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equality (PLAGE) Project of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.
The programme is divided into 2 sessions, the first will commence at 9.30 am and the second at 11.35 am.

Ctg doctors

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press conference here today.
"We have been compelled to go for the second phase of programmes including suspension of hospital services here, as we did not get proper response from the law enforcing agency. Terrorists responsible for the attack on Dr Nilkanta have not yet been arrested," Kaderi said.
"Police is playing a silent role in this regard," he said.
Other programmes included token strike by doctors in all government and non-government clinics and boycott of classes and demonstration by CMC students for two hours from 11 am everyday.
The movement will continue till the arrest of the culprits, he said.
However, private practice by doctors and services in private clinics resumed today after four days.
Vice-president of central BMA Dr Nurjahan Bhuiyan and General Secretary of Chittagong BMA Dr. AQM Sirajul Islam also spoke at the press conference.
Some doctors also came under attack by terrorists and toll collectors on different occasions earlier but no action was taken by the law enforcing agencies, they added.

Tudjman dead

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Franjo Tudjman ceased to beat.
Flags were lowered to half-staff, and all cultural, sporting and entertainment events were canceled for a three-day mourning period. New presidential elections are to be held within 60 days.
At a European Union summit in Helsinki, Finland, the EU foreign policy chief said Tudjman's death should open the way for change not only in Croatia but throughout the troubled Balkans.
"A major figure of Croatia and the Balkans has disappeared," Javier Solana said. "We have to hope that the elections that will now take place in Croatia, the new political situation, will help Croatia in the direction of a democratic country."
Tudjman retained his virtual one-man rule to the end despite a reputation for corruption, cronyism and inefficiency that plagued his ruling Croatian Democratic Union.