

● What's on today . . . ●

Dress exhibition: Rakha's creation opens its 3-day-long dress exhibition. Venue: Gallery of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Exhibition: Kay Kraft opens an 11-day-long exhibition of its Eid-ul-Fitr collection. Venue: Conference room of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Seminar: A week-long seminar on 'Role of women in the changing society' will be inaugurated. Organiser: Sanjukta Mohila Parishad. Venue: BSSF Support Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 10 am.

Seminar: A seminar titled 'Power Sector Reforms: Bangladesh Perspectives' will be held. Bangladesh Water and Power Diploma Engineers' Association has organised the seminar on the occasion of its 10th National and 16th council conference. Venue: WAPDA auditorium.

..... and tomorrow

Jewellery Show: A week-long exhibition by Abrar Rahman will begin. Abrar, a graduate of Industrial Arts from Chittagong University, experimented with different forms and medium for bringing out the excellence in jewellery. Mahbub Jamil, President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, will inaugurate the exhibition. Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 3 pm to 8 pm.

Weather

Dry weather likely

Prevailing dry weather will continue over the country during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, according to Met Office.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 29.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Cox's Bazar and lowest of 10 degree at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:17 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:38 am.

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

City/town Temperature in Celsius Max Min Morning Evening percentage

City/town	Temperature in Celsius	Max	Min	Morning	Evening	percentage
Dhaka	26.1	13.0	72	57		
Chittagong	27.9	16.1	81	70		
Rajshahi	25.6	12.8	84	75		
Khulna	27.6	13.7	78	76		
Barisal	27.0	12.0	94	79		
Sylhet	26.8	13.1	70	70		
Cox's Bazar	29.0	16.0	65	70		

HERE and THERE

IEB workshop

A workshop on 'Foundation Equipments and Foundation Technique' organised by the Civil Engineering Division, IEB, was held at the Engineering Staff College in Munshiganj on December 21, says a press release.

Prof Dr AMM Saifiullah, Dean, Department of Civil Engineering, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Prof Nurul Amin, Managing Director, Foundation Consultants Ltd, Biprodash Rajbongshi of House Building Research Institute were present in the workshop.

SM Shahidullah, Managing Director, Shahidullah and New Associates Ltd, was present as special guest while Md Mesar Ali Khan, Chairman, Civil Engineering Division, IEB, presided over the inaugural ceremony.

Sixty-two delegates from government, semi-government, autonomous and private organisations participated in the workshop.

Bangladesh Scouts A day-long orientation course on leprosy was held at the Shams Hall of Bangladesh Scout Bhaban in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Bangladesh Scouts, Dhaka Metropolitan Scouts and Leprosy Control Programme jointly organised the course.

M Fazlur Rahman, National Commissioner (Community Development and Health) and Secretary to the Ministry of Science and Technology, attended the inaugural ceremony as chief guest while Mohammad Lutfar Rahman, Civil Surgeon, Dhaka was present as special guest.

Habibul Alam, Bir Protik, National Commissioner (Programme) and Mohammad Abul Hossain Sikder, Executive

Secretary (In-charge) of Bangladesh Scouts also spoke on the occasion.

Dr Jalaluddin Ahmed, Deputy Programme Manager of Leprosy Control Programme, was the course coordinator while Mihir Kanti Majumder, Deputy National Commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts, presided. A total of 70 professionals, unit leaders and Scouting took part in the course.

Khelaghara

A 15-member team of Kheleghara led by its Chairman Prof Panna Kalsar yesterday called on State Minister for Children Affairs Prof Zinnatunnesa Talukdar, reports BSS.

The team will attend a week-long camp beginning December 24 in Nadia district of India at the invitation of the all-India members organisation 'Sab Peeychir Asar', said an official handout.

Talking to the team, the state minister said the government has taken a long-term programme to help blossom the latent talents of children.

DAB

By Staff Correspondent

Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) has condemned what it dubbed 'harrassing transfer of the doctors throughout the country since after the last elections of the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA).

A DAB press release issued yesterday by its member secretary Dr A Z M Zahid Hossain also condemned five-time transfers of Khulna unit general secretary of BMA Dr Rafiqul Haq within a span of two years time and latest release order on him.

DAB noted that BMA leadership should rise above political allegiance and redress such transfers under duress.

Dhaka eagerly waiting to give hearty reception to Clinton: Sayeed

WASHINGTON, Dec 22: Bangladesh is eagerly waiting to give a hearty reception to President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Clinton, State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed told Karl F Inderfurth, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, reports BSS.

Prof Sayeed, who is now on a visit to the United States, had a discussion with Inderfurth yesterday on a wide range of issues including the forthcoming visit of President Clinton to Bangladesh and US-Bangladesh business relations.

The visit of President Clinton will make significant contribution to the relations between the two countries, Prof Sayeed commented.

Reiterating Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's appeal to the US companies to make more investments in Bangladesh and also to diversify those, Prof Sayeed said telecommunications, computer software and leather could be the probably areas where the US companies will find investment attractive.

The Information Minister briefed Inderfurth on various steps taken by the present government to improve standard of living, strengthen democratic institutions, alleviate poverty and remove illiteracy.

Referring to cultural invasion through satellite, the State

Minister said appropriate measures should be taken to protect one's own cultural heritage. He said cultural aggression is posing a threat to the protection and promotion of one's values, culture, heritage, history and tradition.

Prof Sayeed informed Inderfurth that Bangladesh was going to enact laws to deal with cultural invasion and sought US assistance in the form of legislative document if they have any.

On the question of the press and publication, the Information Minister said the present government has ensured total freedom of the press. As a result there has been a geometric growth in the number of dailies and weeklies in the last few years. We neither censor nor issue instructions as were done in the past, he mentioned.

Haripur project

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trend in power sector investment and so PDB had to reschedule the bid closing deadline twice.

PDB recently took up several small and medium size power projects and is also pursuing private power projects. PDB will set up two gas-based power plants in Baghabari and Kushia in near future, the sources

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Bangladesh Astronomical Association set up a telescope at the BUET playground yesterday to watch the last unusually bright full-moon of the millennium.

— Star photo

BOI employees

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of an organogram for BOI. OEWG leaders claimed that the promotions were due for years and that an organogram for the BOI could not be finalised in the last ten years.

The officials and employees were staging demonstration and chanting slogans against Haque when this correspondent visited the BOI office at Jibon Bima Tower at Dilkusha at about 2 pm. Haque was holding a meeting with senior executives in his room at that time.

Police was guarding the office.

Talking to this correspondent OEWG Convenor Mahmud Hasan Mia alleged that the executive chairman's decisions and actions were affecting chain of command and working atmosphere in BOI and foreign and local investments as well.

Citing examples, other leaders said immediately after take over, the executive chairman raised the company registration fee with BOI to Tk 100,000 from Tk 100 and introduced a work permit fee of Tk 500 for foreign nationals. Such decisions affected investment, they claimed.

The executive chairman over-exercises his powers and misbehaves with officials and employees, they alleged.

The OEWG was holding a meeting on its four-point demand at the BOI conference room at about 1 pm. Haque entered the room all of a sudden and started abusing them, the

OEWC leaders alleged. The officials and employees came out immediately and started chanting slogans against the executive chairman, they said.

The BOI Executive Chairman who enjoys the rank and status of a minister denied all the allegations and claimed that the protests were instigated by some vested quarters outside the BOI. But he was reluctant to name those.

He said the decisions to increase the company registration fee and introduce work permit fee for foreign nationals were taken by the BOI Executive Council, not by him.

The decisions were taken in the interest of BOI and to give incentives to its employees, he claimed.

"No complaint was received from any investor or foreign worker. These are nominal charges", he said.

Asked about the demands, he said he also wanted a solution. "These are long-drawn issues and can not be solved in a day".

Haque later offered a dialogue but the OEWG leaders rejected it, sources said.

Some senior executives said they were trying to find out a solution.

Haque left the office under police protection at about 3:00 pm.

Later, a press release issued by the OEWG said a memorandum will be submitted to the Prime Minister for his removal.

9 posts of envoys

From page 1

China and South Korea. Besides, tenures of the Bangladesh Ambassador to the US and the Permanent Representative to the UN are also due to expire shortly.

It was however learnt that the government has decided to extend or contract the services of the envoys to the US and UN. They are K M Shehabuddin, Ambassador to Washington and Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Permanent Representative to the UN. The government have found track record of both the envoys "satisfactory", according to sources. Both of them are likely to receive a two-year service extension.

Private sector experts concerned about the millennium bug problem said the FIDS may be a minor system, but the believed step proved "how serious they are on the matter and what bluff the government officials gave earlier saying everything of the CAAB is Y2K compliant".

While both the CAAB and the Y2K Emergency Centre on December 14 said except radar everything of the Civil Aviation system is geared up to deal with the millennium problem, a tender was floated only this week to make its Flight Information Data System (FIDS) Y2K compliant.

The tender was floated on Dec. 20 for upgrading and Y2K compliance of the FIDS at Zia International Airport. Among the firms taking part, one will be given the work on Dec. 27 with only four days in hand to complete the job.

After this visit, officials at the CAAB also gave similar

"We are hopeful the concerned party will be able to make the FIDS Y2K compliant by Dec. 31," CAAB chairman Group Captain Iqbal Hossain told.

The FIDS is not something big that might be a cause for a disaster in controlling flights," he said when asked about the belated step to make a system Y2K compliant at the end of the year.

Government officials are everyday describing their success in making systems and microchips as Y2K compliant with optimism that nothing will happen in Bangladesh, reports

opinion. Despite the decision of suspending radar operation in the early days of the next year as it was not Y2K compliant, it was surprising that they officially said that the radar operation would not be suspended unless and until any trouble is found.

Meanwhile, a release of the Y2K Emergency Centre said that the government has decided to extend or contract the services of the envoys to the US and UN. They are K M Shehabuddin, Ambassador to Washington and Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Permanent Representative to the UN. The government have found track record of both the envoys "satisfactory", according to sources. Both of them are likely to receive a two-year service extension.

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