

## What's on today....

**Discussion meeting:** Bangladesh Anti Drug Federation of NGOs (BAF) in association with international federation of Non-govt Organisations for prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse (IFNGO) will hold a discussion meeting on "The role of religion in prevention of Drug Abuse." Chief guest: Abdul Matin Khasru, Minister for Law Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Dhaka. Venue: Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) auditorium, Motiheed C/A. Time: 3:00 pm.

**Lecture:** The Salcha Khanam Trust Fund Lecture 1999 will be held. Topic is "Attaining Food Security in Bangladesh: Constraints and prospects." Organiser: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh. Venue: Seminar room of the Society, 5 Old Secretariat Rd. Nimital, Ramna. Time: 3:00 pm.

## ..... and tomorrow

**Film show:** Three movies *Ma femme est formidable* (My wife is wonderful), *Le Seme element* (The fifth element) and *Gabbeh* will be screened. Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 11:00 am, 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm.

**Demonstration:** Sammilito Sanskritik Jote (SSJ) will stage a demonstration to protest the activities of anti-liberation forces centering the renaming of different residential halls of Sylhet Chhatralaya University of Science and Technology. SSJ will also bring out a procession. Venue: TSC of DU. Time: 3:00 pm.

## Weather

## Night temperature may fall

Weather may remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, report UNB.

Night temperature may fall slightly over the country. Met office said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 28.0 degree Celsius at Sitakunda and the lowest 8.8 degrees at Sirimongal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:21 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:41 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	26.0	67
Chittagong	26.5	118
Rajshahi	24.9	130
Khulna	26.6	134
Barisal	26.5	118
Sylhet	25.7	130
Cox's Bazar	26.8	162

## HERE and THERE

## East West University

The students of East West University (EWU) have recently formed an Environmental Society (ES) with the aim of creating environmental awareness among people, conducting research and working for the betterment of social and physical environment of the country, says a press release.

Firdaus Ali, Acting Registrar of East West University is the chief advisor and SSM Sadrul Huda, is the coordinator of the society.

## BCSIR Scientists Association

A farewell reception for thirteen retired scientists and engineers of Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) was held in the auditorium of the Institute of Food Science & Technology (IFST), BCSIR yesterday, says a press release.

Organised by the BCSIR Scientists Association the reception ceremony was attended by Dr Md Moshur Rahman, Chairman, BCSIR as chief guest while Azizur Rahman, President of the Association presided.

MM Golam Hossein, General Secretary of the Association and Dr Md Abdul Awal spoke on the occasion on behalf of the working and retired scientists.

The thirteen retired scientists and engineers are Dr Md Nurul Islam, Ex-Director, Dr Md Nizamuddin, CSO, Dr Md Abdul Awal, PSO, Anwar Hossain, PSO, Lutfun Nahar Rashid, PSO, Shazeda Begum, PSO, Shaikh Abdullah, SSO, Shaikh Rahmat Ullah, Sr Engr, Md Ahsanullah Miah, Principal Engr, Md Shamsul Huque, Research Coordinator, Md Shahjahan, CSO, Md Shahjahan Khan, SSO and M A Gafur, CSO.

## Muslim Unity for Human Rights

Acting President of Muslim Unity for Human Rights (MUHR) Advocate M A Gafur Majumder and Secretary General Adv Quazi Raquibul Islam have condemned the Russian military attack on Chechnya which is a flagrant violation of human rights, says a press release.

In a statement they said, "Russia has accepted self-determination to their deferent provinces whereas they didn't accept self-determination to Chechnya and their recent armed attack is a clear violation of international human rights."

## Plane hijack

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They also are insisting on the Pakistani cleric Masood Azhar's freedom.

Indian negotiators opened talks with the hijackers late on Monday — four days into the hijacking — after the hijackers threatened to start killing passengers.

Talks are making progress. Negotiations are give and take," said A R Ghanashyam, an Indian diplomat in Kandahar.

In India, the government said it had given an "appropriate" reply to the hijackers' demands, but did not elaborate.

Inside the control tower at the Kandahar airport where the Indian Airlines Airbus A300 is parked with 160 people on board, Indian negotiators talked by radio to the hijackers.

On the tarmac at Kandahar airport Taliban soldiers, their heads wrapped in bulky turbans, periodically laid out their blankets and offered their prayers, some bowed in prayer beneath the wing of the parked aircraft.

## Epsilon Blood Donor's Club

By Staff Correspondent

A blood donation campaign aiming at raising awareness among the people particularly youths for blood donation was organised yesterday, says a press release.

A total of 25 bags of blood were collected at the programme organised by Epsilon Blood Donor's Club sponsored by Rotary International.

Epsilon President Nirmal Kanti Mitra inaugurated the programme, while Rotarian Ahmed Paroque, Red Crescent Blood Centre Director Zakaria Khaled and Bangladesh Scout's National Commissioner Habibul Alam were present as guests at the programme held at the Red Crescent Society Blood Donation Centre.

## Islamic Preaching Society

Islamic Preaching Society held a discussion on Eternal Teachings of Al Quran and the Challenge of the 21st Century on Monday at the auditorium of Jatiya Press Club, says a press release.

Libyan Charge d' Affaires in Bangladesh Mahfuz Rajab Rahman attended the function as chief guest while Justice M A Rouf was present as special guest.

President of Bangladesh Libyan Friendship Society Advocate HK Abdul Hye, Prof ANM Abdul Mannan Khan, prof ANM Raisuddin, and vice president of Islamic Preaching Society M Habibur Rahman, among others, spoke on the occasion.

## Shibchar Thana Jatiyatabadi Forum

Shibchar Thana Jatiyatabadi Forum in Dhaka held a discussion followed by an iftar party on Tuesday at the auditorium of the Jatiya Press Club, says a press release.

Former minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, attended the discussion as special guest while general secretary of Jatiyatabadi Sanajik Sangskritik Sangstha (JASAS) Washimul Bari Rajib, Abdus Salam, Joint Convenor of Dhaka Metro Politan BNP, among others, took part in the discussion.

Forum President Motiur Rahman Surjo presided over the meeting.

## 12,880 families rehabilitated under Ashrayan projects this year

Some 12,880 destitute families have so far been rehabilitated under 1,258 barrack houses under the Ashrayan projects in the current year, reports UNB.

Another 7,270 families will soon be rehabilitated in 727 barrack houses.

This was disclosed at a review meeting held at the Prime Minister's office yesterday with the Principal Secretary to the prime minister in the chair.

Apart from this, 34,000 metric tonnes of wheat has been allocated for earth filling work at 1,030 barrack houses to rehabilitate 10,300 families.

Under VGF programme, food assistance has been provided to a total of 11,930 families and over Tk 2 crore has been distributed among the people rehabilitated under the Ashrayan project.



Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Minister for Environment and Forest, speaking at the inaugural session of a two-day 'Global Workshop of Environmental Journalists' organised by FEJB, CEJA, AFEJ at the CIRDAP auditorium, Wednesday.

## Bangladeshi student killed in Bangalore road accident

NEW DELHI, Dec 29: A Bangladeshi student, identified as Mohammed Syedul Kareem was killed in a road accident on Monday night in Bangalore. Bangladesh High Commission sources said here today, reports BSS.

Syedul Kareem, son of Habibur Rahman, Section-10, Block-B lane-13, quarter-6, Pallabi, Mirpur, Dhaka was killed when the motorbike he was driving collided with a bus in Bangalore.

The body has been kept at the Bowring Hospital in Bangalore, the source said.

The Bangladesh High Commission, according to sources, was trying to inform the incident to Syedul's father who is working in Kuwait.

## Shibir, BCL continue siege programme at CU

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 29: Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) CU unit continued its siege programme at the varsity for the third day today.

Shibir enforced the programme to press home its demands, including arrest of those involved in the killing of two Shibir leaders and immediate reopening of the university halls.

Shibir leaders — Rahimuddin, a second year student of Bengali Department and Mahabubul Alam, a fourth year student of Finance Department — were killed in a clash between Chhatra League and Shibir on the campus on December 19.

Meanwhile, a faction of Chhatra League has been observing a separate siege programme on CU campus since December 27 protesting arrest of some of its activists in connection with December 19 incident.

## Siddique

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he launched his Bangladesh Krishak Samik Janata League (BKSJL). It was foiled allegedly by activists of Chhatra League, ruling Awami League's student front.

Meanwhile, police yesterday arrested three workers of BKSJL while they were making publicity for today's meeting. Ramna police said they were arrested on charge of "creating public nuisance" and will be produced in court today.

## Khaleda

From page 1

the agreement signed with the government, the withdrawal of all false cases filed against opposition MPs and former ministers and the implementation of the four-point agreement signed with the government earlier.

(2) the withdrawal of the "indecent" remarks made about Khaleda Zia by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in parliament, accompanied by an unconditional apology for the remarks.

(3) The indecent remarks must be expunged from the parliamentary records.

(4) The Prime Minister must assure the nation she won't make indecent remarks about Khaleda Zia again, and

(5) The Speakers must be neutral and transparent.

Sources said the BNP Chairperson asked Prof. A.Q.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury, the opposition's deputy leader, to draft a response to the Speaker's letter.

They said they expect Khaleda Zia to sit with some top ranking party leaders today to discuss the Speaker's letter and the response. They suggested the reply could be short, since the Speaker wrote his second letter without taking steps to address the BNP's five preconditions.

A top BNP leader told The Daily Star that the government showed a "non-serious effort" prior to the beginning of Sangsad session and called the Speaker's initiative "eye wash."

For the last three and a half year, the Speaker hasn't made an effort to implement the four-point agreement that he mediated and was signed twice by the BNP and the government, he said.

"The Speaker could at least convene a meeting to determine the status of the 4-point agreement. But he didn't call the ruling party or the opposition to discuss the issues," the BNP leader added.

The chiefs of the four parties declared at a post-iftar meeting on Dec. 22 that they would not join the upcoming parliament session, which begins Jan. 1, 2000.

## Int'l workshop on environment opens

Some 100 journalists and experts from more than 20 countries and international organisations joined a two-day workshop in the capital yesterday to discuss media strategies to reverse degradation of nature in the new millennium, reports UNB.

Forest and Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury inaugurated the workshop urging journalists to use their "green pen" to raise awareness among the people across the world, particularly in Bangladesh.

"The challenges we are likely to face in the coming days are implementation of plans and policies and enforcement of regulations. Here, besides government efforts, we seek cooperation and support of civil society, NGOs and you, the journalists community of Bangladesh," she told the inaugural session of the workshop.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, Ministry of Environment and Forest, and several development agencies are supporting the international meet.

Sajeda Chowdhury identified rapid growth of population as the prime challenge for the country's environment and said Bangladesh has to continue

with the efforts to contain its ever-increasing populace.

"The country has to provide safe air although unplanned urbanisation and industrialisation continue unabated. In the midst of arsenic invasion, fight for safe water to its population will continue."

## Tk 10 lakh snatched in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 29: A group of muggers snatched Tk 10 lakh from the employees of a private oil refinery in the city's Badarpur area today, police said.

The incident occurred at around 1:30 pm when three employees of the refinery were going to deposit the money with Agrani Bank Agrabad branch in a car.

The muggers intercepted the car and snatched a bag containing the amount from the employees at gunpoint, police said.

On receipt of information, police rushed to the spot and brought the three to Kotwali thana for interrogation.

A case was recorded with the thana in this connection.

## IT students form Y2K monitoring team

Students of Daffodil Institute of Information Technology (DIIT) have formed a monitoring team to detect Y2K problems in computers at midnight on Friday, reports UNB.

The DIIT surveillance team will remain alert overnight, as the world apprehends a massive computer crash at the dawn of the new millennium.

DIIT has asked the computer users to contact the team in the event of any trouble. Phone No. 8115986 and 8119209.

The DIIT students will also bring out a colorful procession on the first day of the new millennium from its Dhanmondi campus.

## Garments workers federation demand release of arrested leaders

By Staff Correspondent

The National Garments Workers Federation held a protest rally and procession yesterday demanding immediate release of their leaders and payment of Eid bonus and due salaries.

They demanded immediate release of garment worker leaders — Majibur Rahman Pintu and Dulal Hossain and withdrawal of false cases filed against eight of the federation leaders.

The Malibagh branch of the federation in a press release, said, "Certain garments factory owners' hired brokers are trying to intrude on the workers' movement. We will resist this by any means."

## Body formed to find new place for shifting Dhaka dist courts

A nine-member technical sub-committee to find out a suitable location to shift the district courts of Dhaka was constituted yesterday with Prof Golam Rahman of the Urban Planning Department of BUET as its convenor, reports UNB.

The decision to shift the courts was taken at a meeting of the committee formed to shift the Dhaka District Courts held today with Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru in the chair.

The sub-committee will find out a suitable location in this regard and submit a detailed report by January 31, 2000. The committee will meet again in the first of week of February next.

Attorney General Mahmudul Islam, Law Secretary NK Chakraborty and representatives of Urban Development, PWD, Works Ministry, President of the Supreme Court Bar Association, Barrister Shafique Ahmad also attended the meeting, said an official handout.

Massive dev takes place in communications sector: Anwar

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain yesterday said a massive development had taken place in the field of communication during the three and a half year rule of the Awami League government, reports BSS.

"There has been a qualitative change in the transport sector under the present government. Several organisations introduced taxi cab services which brought a positive trend in this field," he said while inaugurating taxi cab service in the city.

Chairman of Orion Taxi Cab Company Limited Tawhid Kamal presided over the function which was also addressed by State Minister for Textile AKM Jahangir Hussain, Chairman of Phoenix Leasing Company Limited Din Mohammad and Managing Director of Orion Habib Hassan.

Orion Taxi cab service has introduced 20 Taxi cab in the Dhaka city with a fare of Taka 20.00 for the first two kilometers. The fare for every kilometer next has been fixed at Taka eight.

The minister said the government was providing all-out assistance to the entrepreneurs of cab services. He also called upon the private entrepreneurs to invest more in the sector.

## Hijacking of Indian Airlines condemned

Bangladesh yesterday strongly condemned the hijacking of an aircraft of Indian Airlines and hoped that the ordeal of the passengers would soon be over without any further loss of life, reports BSS.

It expressed her readiness to cooperate in combating terrorism.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, in a message to his Indian counterpart Jaswant Singh, said Bangladesh was "shocked and gravely concerned by the hijacking of the Indian Airlines flight that has already caused the death of an innocent passenger".

"Bangladesh unequivocally condemns all such acts of terrorism and hopes that the continuing ordeal of the passengers will come to an end quickly without any further loss of life," the message added.

An A-300 aircraft of Indian Airlines was hijacked on Friday during a flight from Kathmandu to New Delhi. The aircraft with 160 passengers later landed in Kandahar, Afghanistan where negotiations began Tuesday between hijackers and the Indian authorities. Body of one passenger who was killed by the hijackers, later handed over in Dubai.

Azad said a people of Bangladesh 'share the anguish' of Indian people and reiterated country's 'assurance of full cooperation in combating terrorism so that this sinister threat to civil society is eradicated'.

## AUB concerned

By DU Correspondent

Association of Universities of Bangladesh (AUB) has expressed concern over the anarchic situation in Shahjalal University of Science and Technology and Sylhet town.

"We are deeply concerned over the situation of the entire Sylhet district which was created by an identified evil forces. They want to change the names of different halls and buildings of the university," said a AUB statement yesterday.

The naming of a building or a dormitory of any university is under the jurisdiction of university authorities or Syndicate. So, any interference in this regard from outside is unwarranted," the statement said.

It urged all to refrain from interfering in the affairs of the university and called upon the government to take necessary steps against those responsible for creating anarchy in Sylhet town as well as the university.

The signatories to the statement included Prof AK Azad Chowdhury of Dhaka University, Prof Saidur Rahman of Rajshahi University, Prof Mohammad Hossain of Agricultural University, Prof Abdul Bayes of Jahangirnagar University, and Prof Aminul Islam of National University.

JCD demands release of its President, GS before Eid

By DU Correspondent

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) staged a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding release of its activists, including president Habib-un-Nabi Sohel and general secretary Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu before Eid-ul-Fitr.

JCD unit in Jagannath University College brought out a procession in the city and held a rally on the college campus to protest the police 'atrocities' on the opposition student activists.

Kazi Rownakul Islam Tipu, president of the JCD unit, chaired the rally, which was addressed by Monjur Elahi, Munsir Bazul Basit Anjum, Muzaffar Hossain Zakir, AM Nuruzzaman, ABM Mosharrar Hossain, Shamsuzzaman Suruj, Forhad Hossain Azad, Abdus Sattar and Kamrul Islam.

Condemning the government for resorting to repression, Monjur Elahi said we will bring such undemocratic activities to an end by ousting the "autocrat" Hasina government.

He called upon the conscious people and student community to join the 'oust government' movement.

Tejgaon thana unit of JCD also brought out a procession and held a rally in its area yesterday demanding release of all leaders and workers before the Eid.

Arrest of family members of Jubodal leaders condemned

By Staff Correspondent

Jubodal President Mirza Abbas and general secretary Gayewar Chandra Roy have strongly protested arrest of family members in absence of the party leaders wanted by the police.

In a statement yesterday, they said police raided the residence of city unit Jubodal leader Kazi Ataur Rahman and misbehaved with the family members in his absence. Moreover, police arrested his elder brother Kazi Mahbubur Rahman without any reason and filed false case against him.

The police also arrested Jubodal leaders Shaimur, Habib, Nizamuddin, Saidur Rahman and Kamal Hossain, who reside at the Kazi Ataur's house as tenant.

The statement also claimed that police raided the house of Jubodal member Kazi Atiqullah Nabil and arrested his elder brother Atiqullah Atiq in absence of Nabil.

The Jubodal leaders demanded immediate release of Ataur and Nabil's elder brothers and withdrawal of false cases filed against them.

## Criminals thrive

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A teacher of Chittagong Medical College, Dr Nilkanta Bhat-tacharya, came under attack by armed terrorists at his chamber on December 6. It sparked stormy protests from doctors in the city, who observed strike at government hospitals and suspending private practice. Police is yet to arrest these terrorists.

A riskshawpuller was killed in a cross fire during a gunfight between police and terrorists on the night of December 7 at Gopahar when the terrorists attempted to loot a bank.

Vice-president of Lalkhanbazar Jatiyatabadi Jubodal, Md Selim, was gunned down by his rivals on December 11 at Pahartoli.

Journalists who went to cover an opposition rally at Laldighi maidan on December 12, were assaulted by activists in front of Chittagong Metropolitan Police headquarters, leaving two of them seriously injured. But police did little to round up the attackers, it is alleged.

Three days ago, Chhatra League leader Kaisar Hossain was shot dead at Lalkhanbazar by his rivals. Police so far could not arrest the killers.

At least 20 people including a policeman were injured on December 12 in an incident of violence near Laldighi Maidan. Over 50 people including a policeman were injured in sporadic clashes between police and opposition political party activists during hartal on December 13, the day of filing of nomination papers for the city

programme.

In a press release signed by the 10 officers and employees comprising leaders and representatives of all sections of the board said that the existing crisis had been solved and they agreed to work together to brighten the image of the board as well as for the greater interest of the country.

The meeting also decided to start dialogue with the authorities within fifteen days for realising the demands of the employees and officers. The chairman also assured them of finalising an organogram and resolving the problems regarding promotion of the officers within three months.

The press release also regretted the recent incidents at the board and vowed to resolve all disputes and misunderstanding among the employees and officers.

"As the Prime Minister assured us our demands would be considered, we have withdrawn the work stoppage and agreed to withdraw the action programme," said a leader of the employees.

He said that they had also withdrawn all allegations including those of corruption and misappropriation of money, made earlier by them against the executive chairman. The leader was the former convenor of the Officers and Employees Welfare Council (OEWC) under whose banner the workers had begun their movement.

In the absence of leaders, apparently for avoiding arrest, the former leaders played a key role in resolving the deadlock. The leaders, however, denied having made such an allegation of misappropriation of money against the chairman.

The employees and officers of the board had been agitating since Thursday last demanding removal of the executive

Cabinet

From page 1

istry. Abdur Rouf Chowdhury will share responsibilities with Mohammad Nasim as state minister for post and telecommunications, while Dr. Mohammad Alauddin will share power with Engineer Mosharrar Hossain as state minister for housing and public works.

Engineer Hossain will continue to be in charge of two ministries — civil aviation and tourism and housing and public works.

H N Ashiqueur Rahman has been made the state minister for environment and forest, a ministry which has so far been run solely by Sajeda Chowdhury.

Abdul Quddus has been made state minister for fisheries and livestock, where Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leader A S M Rob is the Cabinet minister.

Anisul Huq Chowdhury has been made state minister for communications. Leader of his faction of Jatiya Party, Anwar Hossain Manju will share the job with a state minister for the first time since he joined Sheikh Hasina's "consensus" Cabinet in 1996.

Manju may not have been happy but was not willing to say much about it. "It is the sole jurisdiction of the chief executive to shape and reshape his or her cabinet. I have seen it in the past too. The minister and the state minister should work as a team to strengthen the hands of the Prime Minister," he told The Daily Star last night.

However, Manju refused to say if he had any prior knowledge of the development.

Until yesterday afternoon, the former health minister had no idea of what was coming. "I came to know about the development this evening. Someone told me after he had watched the BTV news," Yusuf told The Daily Star last night. "Well, I have taken it in a sporting spirit," he added.

Fisheries minister Rob was not asked for comment on the reshuffle. He started with shipping in 1996 and then shared power with deputy minister Saber Ahmed Chowdhury with a dampened spirit. Then, he was moved to fisheries in December last year with no junior minister around.

Corruption case

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than Tk 65 lakh.

"During its investigation, the Bureau found that about Tk 53.29 lakh was grabbed in realising charge from publishers and printers for printing books for 1998," said an official.

The five officials charged with corruption are N