

What's on today....

Meeting: Neophytes will hold a meeting to bid farewell to the 20th century and welcome the 21st. Venue: School premises at House No 43, Rd No 1, Dhanmondi, R/A. Time: 3:00 pm.

Poetry reading session: Poetry magazine Kabitika will hold a poetry reading session to welcome the new millennium. Venue: Kabitika office at 62 Purana Paltan. Time: After Iftar.

Seminar: Al Quds Committee Bangladesh will hold a seminar on 'Liberation of Al Quds and duties of the Muslim Ummah'. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium, Chameli House, 17 Topkhana Rd. Time: 10:00 am.

Film show: Three movies *Ma femme est formidable* (*My wife is wonderful*), *Le Seine 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 Shahjalal University of Science and Technology. SSJ will also bring out a procession. Venue: TSC of DU. Time: 3:00 pm.

JPC EGM: An extra-ordinary general meeting (EGM) of the Jatiya Press Club (JPC) will be held. Venue: JPC auditorium. Time: 2:00 pm.

Exhibition: Altamira begins as exclusive Eid and Millennium Collection Exhibition of sarees and salwar kameez designed by Mridul and Moni. Venue: Gallery of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 3:00 pm - 8:00 pm.

Publication ceremony: The publication ceremony of Dr Arup Ratan Chowdhury's *Tanak Pata O Dhumpur* will be held. Venue: BIRDEM auditorium. Time: 3:00 pm.

DAB discussion: Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) will hold a discussion meeting on 'Role of Professionals in Present Political Situation'. Venue: Eskaton Ladies Club. Time: 4:00 pm.

Exhibition: Kari, a fashion house, will begin a 4-day long exhibition of its Eid collection designed by Kawser Mahmud. Venue: Women's Voluntary Association (WVA) auditorium, House no 20, Road no 27 (Old), Dhanmondi, R/A.

..... and tomorrow

Millennium prayer: March For Millennium will hold a 'Millennium Prayer'. Venue: In front of Jatiya Press Club. Time: 12:01 am.

Prayer: Bangladesh Buddhist Federation will hold a special prayer to mark the new millennium. Venue: Dhaka International Buddhist Bihari. Time: 5:00 am.

Competition: The prize distribution ceremony of the Kendro Kanchi Kanchar Mela's painting and recitation competition for children, organised to mark Zainul Abedin and Jasimuddin's birth anniversaries, will be held. Venue: 37/A, Segun Bagicha. Time: 9:30 am.

Rally: Anti-terrorist Peace Movement will hold a rally. Venue: Ramma Batamul. Time: 10:00 am.

Dress exposition: The inaugural session of a dress exposition by Karna Subarna will be held. Venue: DRIK gallery, House no 58, RD 15/A, Dhanmondi. Time: 3:00 pm.

DRU Iftar: Dhaka Reporters Unity will hold an *Iftar* party. Venue: DRU premises at 8/4A Topkhana Rd. Segun Bagicha.

Art exhibition: Amateur art students of Benuka Lalikala Academy has organised an art exhibition titled 'Welcome Millennium Art Exhibition'. Chief guest: TV artist Afzal Hossain. Venue: House-40B, Road-11, Dhanmondi. Time: 10 am to 8 pm.

Weather

Dry weather likely

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

Slight fall in night temperature is expected over the country during the period, Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 27.4 degree Celsius at Sitakunda and Cox's Bazar, and the lowest 8.3 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:22 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	Morning Evening
	Max	Min		
Dhaka	25.3	11.0	62	55
Chittagong	27.2	14.5	79	67
Rajshahi	18.5	12.6	98	89
Burial	25.6	12.5	86	71
Sylhet	25.5	11.0	87	85
Cox's Bazar	25.9	12.6	75	73
	27.4	15.0	65	58

HERE and THERE

ICAB Council

Abul Khair Chowdhury, a founder council member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh (ICAB), has been elected ICAB President for the year 2000, reports UNB.

The election was held at a meeting of the ICAB Council here on Wednesday. Mohammad Alamgir, M Nurul Haque and ASM Nayee were also elected Vice Presidents for the same year.

Abul Khair Chowdhury, an FCA, had earlier served as ICAB Vice President for six times and also served in the first council of ICAB (1972-76) and consecutive terms since 1989, said a press release yesterday.

Discussion on

Prof Razzaq

By JU Correspondent
Speakers at a discussion meeting recalled the contributions of Prof Abdur Razzaq to the improvement of education in the country.

The International Relations Department of Jahangirnagar University organised the discussion in memory of Prof Abdur Razzaq on Tuesday.

Renowned educationist Prof Sardar Fazlul Karim took part in the discussion as chief guest.

Prof Ataur Rahman Khan presented an essay on Prof Abdur Razzaq and read out excerpts from Prof Razzaq's write-up.

JCD discussion

meeting

By DU Correspondent
BNP-backed student organisation Jatiyatatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) held a discussion meeting and an *Iftar* party at the Shamsunnahar Hall of the Dhaka University.

AKM Mosharaf Hossain MP addressed the programme as chief guest while Ziauddin Ahmed Murad was present as special guest.

Presided over by Halima Khanom Lusi, the hall unit president, the programme was addressed by the statement.

According to the statement, vigilantes, corruption, superstition, illiteracy and fascism create the different types of terrorism that grip society. Intolerable political and social unrest is hindering the development of Bangladesh, it added.

Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Mahbubul Alam, Kazi Shahed Ahmed, Syed Ahmed, Abdul Salam Talukder, Shamul Huda, Abdul Kalam Azad and Abu Abdulla, among others, also addressed the programme.



Krishok Sramik Janata League brought out a procession in the city yesterday to protest the attack by BCL activists on its convention earlier this week.

Govt taken to task for not rehabilitating sex workers

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion meeting yesterday accused the government of failing to live up to its pledges to rehabilitate sex workers from two of the country's oldest brothels in Tan Bazar and Nimgtoli.

The accusation was made following the release of a survey conducted by Mass-Line Media Centre (MMC), a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

The speakers said that the government had evicted the sex workers in the name of rehabilitation and had virtually forced them to the streets.

About 77.28 per cent of the respondents in the opinion poll carried out by MMC opined that the human rights of the sex workers had been violated through the so called rehabilitation programme.

About 68 per cent thought that the rehabilitation had been unnecessary and the sex workers should remain where they were.

About 61.23 per cent were of the opinion that the sex workers should continue with their profession while 36.69 per cent were against it.

A total of 405 people participated in the survey conducted on the eviction of Tanbazar and its rehabilitation process.

The release of the survey results was followed by a discussion, which was attended among others by Dr. Ahmed Kamal of Department of History of Dhaka University, Dr. Helaluddin Khan Arefin, Chairman of Anthropology of Dhaka University, Sipra Bose, Gender advisor of CARE Bangladesh, Shireen Haque and Kamru Hassan Manju, Executive Director of MMC. Quazi Moushumi Hossain presented the key note paper.

The speakers said these ill-fated sex workers following their eviction from Tan Bazar and Nimgtoli brothels had again begun their operation in limited forms and now their main clients were police, night guards and security guards of different office buildings and residences.

A random survey showed that the number of floating prostitutes in the capital had increased to more than double during the last one and half month, speakers said. This is mainly the result of the abrupt eviction at the two centres, they said.

The MMC in a recommendation urged the government to undertake a realistic approach to resolve the sex worker issue. It also suggested introduction of compulsory sex education in school, compulsory test for clients of brothels.

About 6,000 sex workers and their several hundred dependents were evicted from two city slums by the government in July. There are 16 government recognised brothels in the country.

BCU stages demonstration in city

By DU Correspondent

Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU) yesterday staged a demonstration at the Palfan intersection to protest the 'irregularities' in publishing of textbooks of secondary school.

Earlier, police intercepted the BCU procession on its way to the Textbook Board Office where they had to hold a sit-in.

The demonstration was followed by a rally at Muktangan in the city.

Addressing the rally, the BCU leaders threatened to launch a student movement if the textbooks of secondary level were not published within a week.

They also demanded exemplary punishment of those involved in the 'irregularities'.

Among others, Monjur-e-Khoda Torik, Hasan Tarik Chowdhury Sohel, Sharifuzzaman Sharif, Sajedul Haq Rubel and Firoz Alam Mamun spoke at the rally.

Observing that the BNP led opposition's movement was not based on any socio-economic programme, the Premier said that there was no reason for the people to support the alliance.

Urging the party leaders to

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Army pack awaits shuffle

Akbar, Brig. Muniruzzaman, Brig. Farooq Ashfaq, Brig. Abdul Mannan Miah, Brig. Jalaluddin Siddique, Brig. S M Iqbal Hossain and Brig. Muhammad Ali.

In September, Anwar Hossain, a senior major general, was removed from the post of GOC, Bogra and his services were put under the foreign ministry for appointment as envoy. He was named as ambassador to Morocco a few days back.

Extortionists

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Prakash were arrested, but the menace has not stopped. Their accomplices are now active, they said. Some incidents of chase and counter chase also took place between the gangs belonging to Zulu and Prakash to establish their 'control' in the area.

When contacted, Tejgaon police said they usually deploy a patrol team there during tender bidding, but it is not possible to keep a team there permanently due to shortage of manpower.

Earlier, 70 to 80 contractors would participate in bidding and get work orders for PWD projects under its Agargaon office.

But when the 2.5 crore taka work for the trade fair was floated last month, about 2400 contractors participated in the bidding as the gang leaders Zulu and Prakash were behind the bars. Out of them, about 80 have got work orders, PWD sources said. Participation by more bidders increased government's revenue this time, they added.

Tenders for work involving Tk 7 to 8 crore are floated from the Agargaon PWD office every year and extortionists realise Tk 20 to 30 lakh from the contractors, they said.

'Seasonal birds'

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reacrauts, the meeting sources said.

Leaders from Sirajganj, Rangpur, Chittagong, Narayanganj, Barisal, Khulna and Hatiabganj districts addressed the gathering, while three thana level leaders who spoke on the occasion came from Kalkini, Srinagar and Khagrachhari thanas.

In her 90-minute speech, the PM castigated the BNP led four party opposition alliance, told the meeting of the achievements of her government and put forward certain political guidelines to the local level leaders of her party.

Referring to a large number of development programmes the government had already launched, she said that her party needed to go to power for another term for proper implementation of the programmes. She then asked the workers to launch political and organisational drives to increase the margin of votes with the nearest political rivals at every constituency.

She observed that a large number of 'new faces' are seen around the party these days. Terming the new faces as 'seasonal birds', she advised her ministers and MPs not to entertain them. In this regard, she reminded the ministers of the contributions that the original workers had made to take the party to power.

Blasting the four-party alliance for its efforts to revive the spirit of 1947, the PM asked her party-men to join hands to fight back the 'evil design'. There might have been some misunderstandings among the party workers. But you have to put the bickering aside for the greater cause of the people, Sheikh Hasina told the meeting.

Observing that the BNP led opposition's movement was not based on any socio-economic programme, the Premier said that there was no reason for the people to support the alliance.

Urging the party leaders to

Tofail

From page 1

"This has severed the continuity of a great deal of work in the commerce ministry," said a top chamber leader on condition of anonymity. The reshuffling decision was abrupt and untimely. This would not bring any good for the country," he said.

Tofail had already developed a sense of direction and had a commendable grasp over the burning issues ahead of us. The crucial WTO next round is going to start soon in Geneva, where Bangladesh is supposed to lead the LDCs and Tofail's leadership was necessary there," said an official of a chamber which was involved in chalking out strategies for Bangladesh in the ensuing world trade talks.

There are non-tariff issues like labour and environment standards, intellectual property rights, agricultural subsidy and the like, where the country needs to formulate its plans carefully because these would affect our future course of business. Bangladesh also needed to mull over its institutional needs for carrying out the obligations of the world trade pacts. For example, it needs to have in place proper organisations to execute anti-dumping measures and monitor the intellectual property rights. For this, a minister having full knowledge of the affairs was critically needed.

Moreover, business circles feel that for the South Asian Free Trade Arrangement (SAFTA) to take a final shape and to tackle the trade union demand in the EPZs, Tofail could have handled the matters better.

Sources close to the Minister, however, said that he himself had opted for industries, when he was asked to choose between the two portfolios.

"We have no power to take action against the encroachers," said the board official.

The official with the Water Development Board said the government decided recently to place all rivers under its jurisdiction.

"We have no power to take action against the encroachers," said the board official.

Freed from the curse

Moazzem making progress

By Naimul Haq