

What's on today . . .

**Open discussion:** Health for All will hold an open discussion on 'HIV/AIDS'. Venue: Ganashasthya Nagar Bhaban, (5th floor), House no 14E, Rd no 6, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 5-30 pm.

**Exhibition:** A weeklong solo painting exhibition by Kajoj titled 'A Painting Show' will begin. Venue: 13, Eskaton Garden road (1st floor). Time: 5:00 pm.

Weather

Thundershowers likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers is likely to occur at one or two places over Dhaka, Sylhet, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and weather may remain mainly dry over Rajshahi division in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Night temperature may fall by 1 to 2 degree Celsius over Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions and the regions of Jessore and Kushtia and remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over Rajshahi division and river basins of the country and light to moderate fog elsewhere over the country.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 28.5 degree Celsius at Barisal and Patuakhali and the lowest 10.6 degrees at Faridpur.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5.38 pm and rises tomorrow at 6.42 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	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.6	16.4	92	59
Chittagong	24.4	17.8	80	80
Rajshahi	26.7	12.4	89	70
Khulna	26.8	18.9	78	81
Barisal	28.5	18.5	56	75
Sylhet	24.4	15.4	79	81
Cox's Bazar	28.0	16.8	79	85

HERE and THERE

SCF rally

By DU Correspondent

Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF), a left leaning student organisation yesterday brought out a procession on the Dhaka University campus in protest of the government order to postpone syndicate decision to name different halls after some eminent citizens at Shahjalal University.

Following the procession, the SCF held a rally in front of the DUCSU building at noon.

Addressing the rally, SCF leaders condemned the recent activities of 'religious fanatics' of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student organisation Shibir at the Shahjalal University.

They also demanded immediate withdrawal of the government decision and solution of the 'problems created by Shibir activists' at Chittagong University.

Among others, Ashrafuddin Akash, Khokan Das and Sajedul Haq Romel addressed the rally.

Buddist BSA, JU

By DU Correspondent

A 27-member executive committee of Buddhist Students' Association (BSA), Jagannath University College unit was formed yesterday with Hiru Barua and Sukumar Barua Rabi as president and general secretary respectively.

The committee for the year 2000-2001 was formed by an election.

Worldview int'l

An international training workshop on developing nutrition communication programme strategies to combat nutritional deficiencies in Asia and African region was organised by Worldview International, Headquarters in Sri Lanka, on January 22 in the city, says a press release.

13 participants from African Asian countries such as Botswana, Gambia, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, India, Nepal and host country Bangladesh are attending the course.

The inaugural session was chaired by M Sirajul Islam, Project Director, Worldview, Bangladesh.

The chief guest in the session

SEHD workshop

A five-day workshop on in-depth Reporting opened in Jessore town yesterday, reports BSS.

Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD), a non-governmental organisation, has organised the workshop in which 25 journalists from different southwestern districts are taking part.

Apart from tidbits of Investigative Reporting, the workshop will deal with subtler aspects of environmental concerns of the southwest region of the country," Philip Gain, Director of SEHD said.

He said a professor of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism at Dhaka University, senior journalists from the capital and writers on environmental issues, among others, will participate in the workshop as resource persons.

Twenty-nine journalists from dailies of Jessore, Kushtia, Chuadanga, Jhenidha and Narail and local correspondents of the national dailies are taking part in the workshop, a SEHD press release said.

Obituary

By Staff Correspondent

Bashir A Khan Babu, former East Pakistan pole vault champion, died of cardiac arrest on Thursday morning. He was 56.

He was buried at their family graveyard in Kishoreganj. His qukhwan will be held on January 28 at 84, Nazimuddin Road after Asr prayers.

Bashir A Khan Babu, a former East Pakistan pole vault champion, died of heart failure here on Thursday morning. He was 56, reports UNB.

Qukhwan of late Bashir A Khan will be held on January 28 after Asr prayers at 84 Nazimuddin Road.

State minister visits Baily Bridge over Kamrangirchar

State Minister for Communications Mohammad Anisul Hoque Chowdhury yesterday visited the bailey bridge over Kamrangirchar canal here and directed the concerned department to take immediate steps to expand it, reports BSS.

Haji Selim MP and engineers of the Roads and Highways Department accompanied the state minister.

The 460 feet long and 11 feet wide bailey bridge is too narrow to make passage for a truck,

Cult members Kidnap Shoko Asahara's son

TOKYO, Jan 22: Disciples of Japan's Aum Supreme Truth, led by cult leader Shoko Asahara, police said today, reports AFP.

"Six members of a sect took the eldest son away," said a police official responsible for Asahi village, 100 km north-east of Tokyo, where the boy was snatched.

Physicians slate govt approval of Public Safety Bill

By Staff Correspondent

A group of 351 physicians yesterday criticised the government for endorsing the 'Public Safety' Bill and observed that it was quite possible to punish all types of criminals in the society through just and impartial implementation of the existing laws.

Describing the proposed law as 'anti-fundamental human rights' in a statement signed by M Zahid Hossain, they alleged that the government was striving to formulate anti-people black laws instead of properly implementing existing laws.

Referring to the incidents of assault of a woman at TSC, killing of a joint secretary in broad day light and harassment of a physician also alleged that the administration had been playing the role of a silent spectator knowing well who the culprits were.

They also urged all conscious citizens of the society to join the ongoing no more black laws, rather proper application of the existing laws' movement.

Bar Council to provide legal aid to Badhon

Bangladesh Bar Council at a meeting yesterday decided to provide legal assistance to Shaon Akhter Badhon who was assaulted by a group of unruly youths at TSC area on 31st night, reports BSS.

Presided over by Vice-Chairman of the Bar Council Barrister Amir-Ul-Islam, the meeting took unanimous decision to provide all kinds of help to Badhon.

The meeting was attended, among others, by President of Supreme Court Bar Association Barrister Shaifque Ahmed, Advocate Syed Rezaul Rahman, Advocate Sigma Huda, Advocate Salma Ali, Advocate Golam Arif Tipu, Advocate Abdur Razzak Khan, Advocate Mohammad Ismail, Advocate Elna Khan, Barrister Tania Amir and Advocate Abu Bakar Farhad.

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Mannan Bhuiyan blasts Maulana Islam's remarks

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has protested and condemned the incident and false comment by State Minister for Religious Affairs about a dead leader of the party, reports UNB.

In a statement yesterday Bhuiyan questioned the audacity of Maulana Nurul Islam, holding the portfolio of religious affairs, in dishing out such falsehood about late Abdus Salam Talukdar.

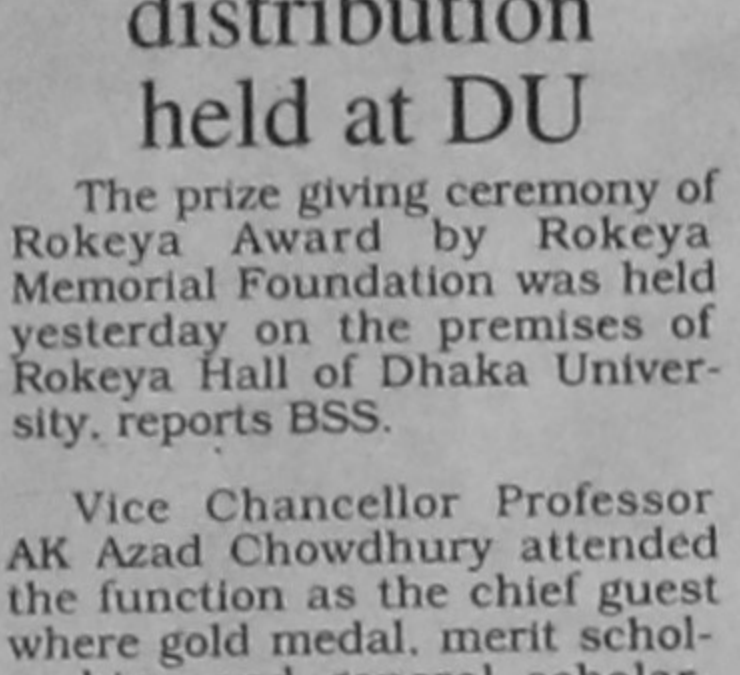
Describing Maulana Islam as a leader of terrorists and an anti-liberation element, Bhuiyan said the minister's constituency of Sarishabari area was in the grip of terrorism let loose by him.

Rokeya Award distribution held at DU

The prize giving ceremony of Rokeya Award by Rokeya Memorial Foundation was held yesterday on the premises of Rokeya Hall of Dhaka University, reports BSS.

Vice Chancellor Professor AK Azad Chowdhury attended the function as the chief guest where gold medal, merit scholarships and general scholarships were formally given to awarded students of the university.

Police recovered 10 bags of phensidyl syrup yesterday hidden beneath the floor of a shop at Dayaganj Bazar under Sutrapur thana.



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FM lends support to steer ahead IOR-ARC objectives

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad yesterday expressed the hope that the member countries of IOR-ARC could immensely exploit their untapped potential to promote their speedy economic growth, reports BSS from Muskat.

Delivering his speech at the Extraordinary Meeting of Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC (Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation) here, Azad lent Bangladesh's full support and cooperation in implementing aims and objectives of the regional body.

Bangladesh along with four other countries joined the new regional body, which was floated in 1997 in Mauritius. With the entry of Bangladesh, Iran, Seychelles, Thailand and Oman, the membership of the Association now rose to 19.

The Foreign Minister, who is leading a six member delegation, said Bangladesh attaches high priority on the trade and investment agenda of the IOR-ARC.

Water Resources Minister Razzak opens construction of road

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak yesterday formally inaugurated the construction of Mohammadpur-Badamtoli Road under the Integrated Flood Control Programme, reports BSS.

The minister announced the inauguration of the construction at a meeting at Rayer Bazar here.

Bangladesh Water Development Board is implementing the eight-kilometer road construction at a cost of Taka 13 crore. It will be completed by June this year.

Through the construction of the road, the maintenance of Dhaka Integrated Flood Control Programmes would be more easier and at least 20 lakh people of Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur and Lalbagh areas would be benefited.

The road will help reduce the city traffic congestion and improve socio-economic condition of the people of those areas.

The minister said the government has been relentlessly trying to eradicate poverty and improve socio-economic condition of the people.

Presided over by the Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Dr ATM Shamsul Huda, the function was addressed, among others, by Alhaj Mokbul Hossain, MP, Haji Mohammad Selim, MP, Chairman of Bangladesh Water Development Board Golam Sarwar.

Abdur Razzak said the government wants overall development of the country and welfare of the common people.

He instructed the Water Development Board to complete the construction of the road within the scheduled time.

Language Activist & Political Prisoner Council renamed

The Language Activist and Political Prisoners Council was renamed yesterday as 'Matribhasa Sannik Parishad', a press release of the organisation said, reports BSS.

The decision was taken following a two-day meeting in view of recent UNESCO declaration announcing the 21st February as International Mother Language Day.

The meeting, with the chief of the organisation Gaziul Haque in the chair, also decided to hold a grand conference of the language movement veterans in February next.

It also appointed Syed Anwar Hossain as acting convener for publishing a book to commemorate the event.

Nirmul demands trial of war criminals

Ekatturer Ghatak Dal Nirmul Jatiya Samanya Committee yesterday reiterated its demand for immediate trial of the war criminals of 1971 in a special tribunal, reports BSS.

The Nirmul Committee leaders at a rally at the central Shaheed Minar said the criminals, most of whom belonged to the Jamaat-Shibir clique, not as 'anti-fundamental human rights' in a statement signed by M Zahid Hossain, they alleged that the government was striving to formulate anti-people black laws instead of properly implementing existing laws.

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Clashes at textile mill in Gazipur: 20 injured

GAZIPUR, Jan 22: A textile mill in Konabari BSCIC industrial estate remained closed for the last three days following capture of the mill by arrival group of workers, reports UNB.

Witnesses said 20 people were injured in a chase and counter chase of the feuding groups who attacked each other with bombs and bricksbats today.

The clash ensued over the groups' supremacy in Tamujuddin Textile Mill that employed about 1000 workers.

The group opposed to the owner of the mill finally captured the mill. They said armed terrorists had attacked them on Wednesday night which left 15 people injured.

Mill owners meanwhile complained that they had become hostages of unruly workers.

Additional police were deployed in the mill to avert any further clashes.

Nasim visits residence of late Nikunja Bihari Nath

By Staff Correspondent

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday visited the Azimpur Govt Colony residence of late joint secretary Nikunja Bihari Nath who was stabbed to death by a gang of muggers near the Swadhinata Sangam (struggle for independence) sculpture inside Dhaka University campus on January 11, said a government hand out last night.

Expressing his sympathy to the family members, the minister said that seven of the culprits involved in the tragic incident have already been arrested. Rest of the culprits will be arrested and punished soon, he said.

Mohammad Nasim assured all out cooperation to the family members. Inspector General of Police AYBI Siddique and Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Matiar Rahman accompanied the minister during the visit, it added.

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Dhaka-Agartala bus

From page 1

discussions on movement of passenger trains between the two countries and expressed the hope that it would be possible to operate train communications shortly.

The Indian minister said that discussions on two outstanding issues would be held between the officials of the two countries shortly.

The issues of cross-border terrorism, smuggling of goods, narcotics, illegal arms movement and border demarcation would be discussed in the officials' meeting. The official level meeting in Dhaka would be followed by meeting of home secretaries of the two countries in Delhi, the minister told newsmen.

Responding to a question, Ajit Panja said his country was 'quite sincere' about narrowing the trade gap with Bangladesh and said that officials of the two countries will sit to find ways to resolve the problem. The minister however, did not give any timeframe for resolving the problem.

Abul Hasan Chowdhury expressed happiness at the outcome of the talks and hoped that both countries would be able to reap the benefit through cooperation in the era of globalisation.

A joint statement issued at the end of the Indian minister's visit said that the two sides felt the need for expanding multimodal transportation and communication links and increase cultural and educational exchanges.

A meeting of the Joint Economic Commission is expected to be held at an early date in Dhaka, the statement said.

Greater collaboration for improving border management,

Nikunja murder

From page 1

tion of S.M. and Jagannath Hall on the morning of January 11.

The CID took over the case from the Ramna Police on January 16 after the thana force became embroiled in controversy.

Ramna police are alleged to have arrested over 100 suspects in the case, only to release them after accepting bribes.

Ramna Police are also alleged to have forced Shukur Ali to make a confessional statement in the case.

In other developments, the search continued for the knife used in the killing. Investigators are combing the areas near the site of the killing without success.

UN working group adopts a draft ban on child-soldier

GENEVA, Jan 22: A UN working group on Friday adopted a draft ban on armies using soldiers under the age of 18, UN spokesman Jamel Ben Yahmed said, reports AFP.

Officials hope that any ban will boost the chances of reducing the estimated 300,000 child-soldiers employed in conflicts around.

"State parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that members of the armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities," said the key part of the text.

The spokesman said the 70 national delegations that took part in the two-week meeting had agreed to ban all under-18s from taking part in combat.

But each state will now have to decide whether to agree to the protocol, which amends the current age threshold