

What's on tomorrow...

Discussion meeting: A discussion meeting in memory of A H M Yunus Chowdhury will be held on the occasion of his first death anniversary. Prof Syeda Feroza Begum will preside over the meeting. Poet Shamsur Rahman, A Z M Obaidullah Khan, Saadek Khan, columnist Saadullah, and Prof Muzaffar Ahmed will speak on the occasion. Venue: Dhaka Club Swimming Pool area. Time: 6:30 pm. Date: Feb 3.

Weather

Dry weather to continue

Light rain may occur over the regions of Rangpur and Dinajpur in next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB. Weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country with partly cloudy sky over Chittagong division. Met office predicted. Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period. The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 28.2 degree Celsius at Sitakunda and the lowest 10.0 degrees at Sakthira. The sun sets in the capital today at 5.45 pm and rises tomorrow at 6.39 am. Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

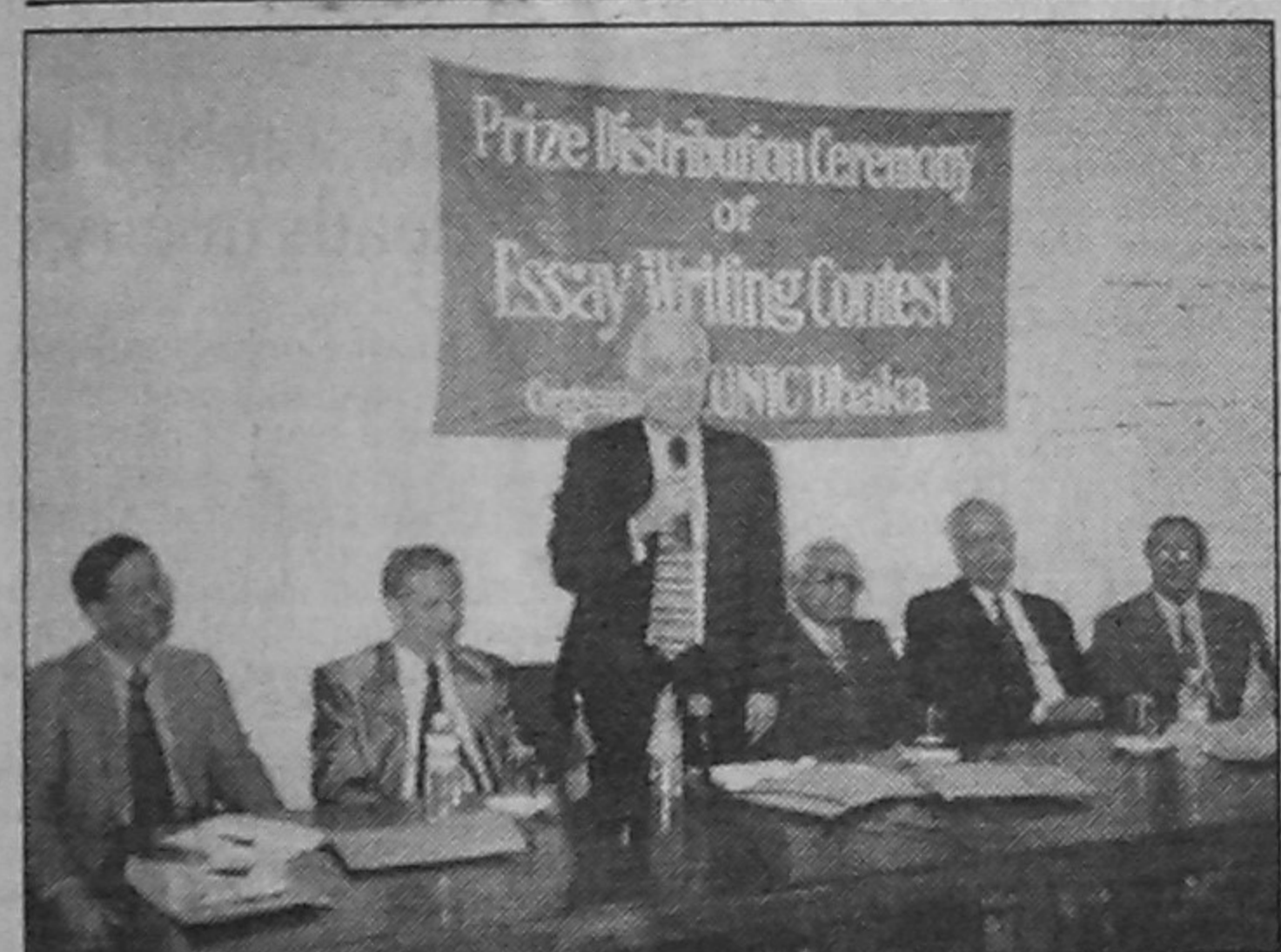
City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.0	13.5	73	55
Chittagong	27.0	14.0	70	60
Rajshahi	26.2	10.4	85	65
Khulna	27.6	11.0	82	55
Barisal	26.6	12.2	90	90
Sylhet	25.8	13.6	73	65
Cox's Bazar	28.0	13.5	73	64

HERE and THERE

UNIC
The prize distribution ceremony of the essay writing competition, organised by United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), Dhaka in observance of the 25th anniversary of Bangladesh's entry into the United Nations, was held on Monday at the UN conference room, says a press release.

Justice K M Sobhan attended as the chief guest. Presided over by the UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh Werner Kiene the function was attended among others by Hemyatuddin, Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Professor Nurul Momen of Dhaka University as special guests. Dr Ansar Ali Khan, UNESCO Representative in Bangladesh was present as a guest of honour. Vote of thanks was given by the Officer-in-Charge of UNIC Kazi Ali Reza.

A total of ten cash prizes and certificates were awarded to the winners. Written in vernacular Bangla the title of the essay was the Role of United Nations in the Development Efforts of Bangladesh. Students from fifty-one colleges and universities of Bangladesh took part in the competition.



UN Resident Coordinator Werner Kiene seen addressing the prize distribution ceremony of an essay writing contest held by UNIC, Dhaka in observance of the silver jubilee of Bangladesh's entry into UN.

Two dacoits arrested in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Feb 1: A team of Detective Branch of police arrested an alleged gang leader and one of his accomplices from Kanchpur area under Shiddhirganj thana on Monday night. The two dacoits were identified as Raza Mia, 30, and Shahjahan alias Shaza, 28. Police said on October 10 last year the arrested two along with other 6 to 7 accomplices looted 124 bags of rice from a truck near Shamrup Match Factory on Dhaka-Narayanganj highway. Police managed to arrest one Kabir and also the truck driver and according to their confessional statement, police later arrested the gang leader Raza Mia on Monday night. Raza and his gang were involved in robbery for years together on Dhaka-Chittagong highway.



North South University (NSU) opened two spacious air-conditioned students' lounges decorated with modern furniture and equipment. NSU Foundation chairman M A Kasher (right) and NSU pro-vice chancellor Prof Hafiz G A Siddiqi (left) seen inaugurating the lounge recently.

2 killed in separate accidents in Barisal

BARISAL, Feb 1: Two people were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents in the district in last 48-hours, reports UNB.

Police said the first accident took place at about 8:30 pm on Monday when a bus ramed into a tempo on Dhaka-Barisal highway. Saiful Khan, 25, and Matunga Moni Chakma, 23, succumbed to their injuries at Gouranadi Thana Health Complex and Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital Monday night. The injured, identified as Bhabatosh Nandi, 45, and Indrojit Nandi, 25, were admitted to the hospital in a critical condition.

Besides, three other accidents took place on Dhaka-Barisal highway today leaving three people injured. The injured — Bilkis Begum, 4, Jahangir, 55, and Moksed, 45, were admitted to hospital.

JCD procession on JU campus in support of hartal

By JU Correspondent

BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal yesterday brought out a procession on the Jahangirnagar University campus in support of the 36-hour hartal beginning 6 am today protesting the passage of the Public Safety Act.

The procession paraded different roads and corridors on the campus chanting various slogans against the new law.

A rally was also held in front of the Arts Faculty after the procession. Addressing the rally, JCD leaders strongly condemned the new law and termed it as 'black one.' They said the motive behind the introduction of the 'repressive' law is to harass the political opponents and suppress the current 'oust-government' movement.

JCD president Elim Nazmul Hossain, while addressing the rally, alleged that government's motive behind introducing the law is not to ensure safety of the people, rather to harass and oppress the leaders and activists of opposition parties who are fighting for ensuring the rights of people.

JCD leaders threatened to launch a countrywide greater movement to dethrone the Awami League government if it does not withdraw the Public Safety Act immediately.

They also demanded immediate release of all JCD leaders and activists including its central committee president Habibunnabi Sohel, vice president Monwar Hossain Rana and general secretary Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu.

JCD general secretary Abdur Rahman Babul, Shawkat Ali Tutul, Motiur Rahim, Mazharul Islam and Anwar Zaid also addressed the rally.



Japanese diplomat new DG of UNESCO

UNESCO's 58-member Executive Board has selected Japanese diplomat Koichiro Matsuura, 63, as its new Director-General, says a press release.

Matsuura replaces Federico Mayor of Spain who ended his second six year mandate at the end of 1999.

Married with two sons, Matsuura is the first Asian ever to be nominated for the organization's top job. He was elected with an absolute majority of 34, after three rounds of voting, ahead of ten other candidates in a fiercely fought campaign. The runners up were Ghazi Al-gosabli of Saudi Arabia and Lawrence Carrington of Trinidad and Tobago. Matsuura said he was "very happy" with the result. The outgoing director-general was the first to congratulate his successor and wish him well in his labours as UNESCO chief.

A career diplomat with a sound reputation for management Matsuura trained in law at Tokyo University, and economics at Haverford College in the United States. He began his career at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1959, where he has served as Director-General of the Economic Cooperation Bureau, Director-General of the North American Affairs Bureau, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to France, Andorra and Djibouti. In 1992 and 1993 he was named Japan's "Sherpa" to prepare for the G7 summits. Matsuura is also the author of six books on Japanese diplomacy, economics and on relations between Japan and France and Japan and the United States. Since 1998 he has chaired UNESCO's World Heritage Committee and is also a counselor for the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan.

20 hurt during police-public clash in N'ganj

NARAYANGANJ, Feb 1: At least 20 people, most of them women, were injured in a police-public clash at Deobhog in the port town today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said that the clash erupted as plainclothes policemen arrested Jubo Dal leader Baduzzaman Badu near his house on LNA road in the morning. Local people, mostly women, attacked the plainclothes policemen after it was announced from the local mosque that terrorists had attacked their area.

Police constable Abdul Kadir was injured in the attack. Additional police rushed to the spot but Badu managed to flee. Police later arrested Alam, 28, from the scene.

Local women later brought out a procession in the town alleging that policemen had assaulted them physically during the trouble. Police denied the allegation, saying that the women had attacked them and helped Badu to escape.

Wayside dramas can help combat fundamentalism: Prof Sayeed

Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation begins week-long festival

State Minister for Information Prof Sayeed yesterday said wayside drama could play a significant role in rooting out fundamentalism and autocracy from the country's soil, reports BSS.

"Street dramas can forge an effective social movement to abate every national crisis in the political and social sectors like spat in terrorism, extortion, religious fanaticism and every kind of social discrimination," he said this while inaugurating a week-long wayside drama festival 2000 in the Central Shaheed Minar premises.

The function is organised by Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation.

Presided over by federation's chairperson Sara Zaker it was addressed, among others, by noted educationist Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam. Sammillito Sangskritik Jote president Ramendu Majumdar, drama personality and freedom fighter Nasir Uddin Yusuf, Pjush Bandyopadhyay, general secretary of the Group Theatre Federation Liakat Ali Lucky, convener of the wayside drama celebration committee M Hamid and Keramat Maula.

"Anti-liberation fundamentalist forces with the help of autocrats and vote dacoit are working to foil development activities of the country so that the nation can never become self-reliant," he said.

Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam said whenever national crises come, people irrespective of party affiliation resort to the wayside dramas to express their views in solving the crises. He said the Bangladeshes on different occasions as part national movement in 1952, 1970, 1980 and also in the autocrat movement in 1990 they organised wayside dramas.

He wished success of the festival and added that the drama activists will play a pioneering role to attain the cherished goals of progress.

A total of 32 theatre groups from across the country are taking part in the festival.



A sequence from a street drama organised by Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) on DU campus yesterday. The organisation is holding a series of such dramas on street corners to raise public awareness about repression of women and other terrorism in the country. — Star photo

Esha Khan Memorial Prize '99 announced

Soery Sultana of Dhaka Home Economics College, Ferdous Zahar of Mymensingh Samurta Zahan Women's College and Muhammad Abdul Manik of Rajshahi University became first, second and third respectively in the Essay Writing Competition under Esha Khan Memorial Prize '99, reports BSS.

Names of the winners were announced yesterday at a function at Medicine Department of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital, a press release said. The prize was introduced in 1998 after the name of Esha Khan, a founding member of voluntary blood donation organisation Bandhan and Student Anti-Smoking Committee. Esha, meritorious student of English Department of Dhaka University died in 1997.

The title of the essay writing competition for this year was "The role of students in favour of voluntary blood donation and anti-smoking."

Among others, Convener of the Prize Committee Ali Ni-amot, Eye Specialist Dr Muhammad Harun-or-Rashid, Maksudah Khan Niamot, Boby Zamila, Prof Ashraf-ul-Alam, Faisal Murad and Sakhawat Hussain addressed the function while Dr Rawshan was in the chair.

Special prayers were offered for early recovery of the ailing Chief Election Commissioner Muhammad Abu Hena, who is also the Chief Patron of the Esha Khan Memorial Prize Committee.

World Bank assures assistance to combat arsenic problem

The World Bank has assured all possible cooperation and assistance to combat arsenic problem and prevent HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

World Bank Country Director Frederick T Temple gave the assurance when he called on Health and Family Welfare Minister Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim at his office yesterday.

Temple was leading a delegation during the meeting with the minister. The health minister apprised the World Bank delegation regarding the on-going projects initiated by the present government including the establishment of village community clinics.

The World Bank team emphasised the need for continuing efforts for successful implementation of health and population sector programme (HPSP) with firm commitment with a view to rendering improved health services to the rural people.

The bank is deeply concerned over the arsenic problem, which is a great threat to the public health, and also concerned at the spreading of HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh.

Mahfuzul Huq's death anniversary

CHITTAGONG, Feb 1: The 35th death anniversary of Dr Mahfuzul Huq, an eminent educationist and language movement hero, will be observed here tomorrow in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

Discussion, *Quran Khwani* and *milad mahfil* have been arranged in observance of the day, a press release of Dr Mahfuzul Huq Smriti Sangsad said. Dr Huq died in a helicopter accident on February 2, 1966, near Faridpur while going to attend a meeting of the committee of university curriculum, the press release said.

Shato Nagorik Committee terms Public Safety Act anti-human

By Staff Correspondent

The Shato Nagorik Committee has termed the Public Safety Act as 'anti-human, unconstitutional and vindictive,' and demanded its immediate scrapping.

Prof. Emazuddin Ahmed, president of the committee and its 115 members in a joint statement yesterday said this type of anti-human law can not be passed in a civil society.

Law and order in the country has deteriorated not because of lack of legal support, but because of negligence in applying certain laws by the judicial department, the statement said.

Providing shelter to criminals by ruling party leaders is also responsible for this, it noted. The committee alleged that the law was enacted to suppress leaders and workers of opposition political parties.

The government is trying to establish autocracy in the country by enacting such a law, it said. The committee hoped that the government would follow norms of democracy and scrap it. Otherwise, this will have a negative impact on politics in the country.

Signatories to the statement included Dr. M A Mazed, Prof. Asker Ibne Shaikh, Prof. Syed Ali Ahsan, Prof. R I Chowdhury, Prof. M Moniruzzaman Mian, Prof. M Shahjahan, Prof. Anwarullah Chowdhury, Aman Ullah Kabir, Reazuddin Ahmed, Abu Saleh, Dr. Iqbal Hasan Mahmud, Mosharrar Karim and Dr. Nazrul Islam.

Bangladeshi wins 1st prize in int'l Hefzul Quran competition

A Bangladeshi national has won the first prize of the international Hefzul Quran competition held in Egypt recently, reports UNB.

Mohammad Emdadullah of Badarpur village in Kachua thana of Chandpur district received US Dollar 2,000 and a certificate clinching the first position.

Complications of induced abortion is also one of the major causes of maternal morbidity and mortality in Bangladesh, the seminar observed.

The BIRPERHT study shows a tendency that women who undergo abortions do not use contraceptives for protecting themselves from unwanted pregnancy.

Women living in rural areas and featuring low on education and socio-economic ladder are the worst sufferers of induced abortion, the report said.

BIRPERHT, DAC and TREE (Theatre for Research Education and Empowerment) have taken a folk theatrical communication approach to disseminate health awareness messages.

Rickshaw van puller run over by bus

PANCHAGARH, Feb 1: A rickshaw van puller was run over by a mini-bus on Panchagarh-Tunirhat road at Jalashi under the sadar thana on Monday, reports BSS.

The victim was identified as Abdul Karim, 33. Eyewitnesses said a Panchagarh-bound mini-bus (Dhaka-Cha-8334) knocked him down on the road and he died on the spot.

Shopowners call on opposition to keep markets out of purview of hartal

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Dokan Malik Samity Chairman Amir Hossain Khan, Senior Vice-Chairman M A Zaman Monju and Secretary General S A Kader Kiron expressed concern over the opposition called 36-hour hartal that begins today.

In a joint statement yesterday they said that if the shopowners would suffer by the hartal because sales were yet to pick up following the long Eid vacation.

They called on the opposition leaders to declare the market and shops out of hartal purview from 3 pm in the afternoon.

Rafiq receives SEAAT Flame at Benapole

BENAPOLE, Jessore, Feb 1: State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Prof Rafiqul Islam today received the SEAAT (South East Asia Anti-Tobacco) Flame at no-man's land adjacent to Benapole Immigration check-post, reports BSS.

Dr Anup Swarup, executive director of Neheru Youth Centre handed over the SEAAT Flame to the Bangladesh state minister on behalf of the government of India.

World Health Organisation (WHO), in the move against use of tobacco all over the world, in the first phase has launched a year-long programme on January 7 in New Delhi, India to travel it to nine countries of South East Asia. After moving different regions of India the flame got its entry into Bangladesh today.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim will formally receive the SEAAT Flame at the Dhaka outer stadium tomorrow. After moving different parts of Bangladesh the flame will be sent to Nepal on April 1.

The SEAAT Flame, the organisers said, after moving nine South Asian countries will again return to India in January 2001.

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Court awards life-term RI to three

A court in the city has sentenced three people to life-term rigorous imprisonment in a woman repression case, reports UNB.

The judge also fined the accused, Kazi Rafiqul Islam Masud, Esker Molla and Zahid Kazi, Tk 10,000 each, in default, to suffer five years more RI.

According to the prosecution, Masud and two of his associates threw acid on Nazrin Begum, 17, of village Takhalpur in Sreepur thana on January 15, 1998 when she declined to an 'indecent' proposal by him.

Judge Zahiduddin Ahmed delivered the judgement on Sunday after examining records and witnesses.

Another report from Habiganj adds: A man was sentenced to seven years in jail for forcing a schoolgirl to marry him.

In his verdict on January 30, Assistant Sessions Judge K M Mostafa Dewan also fined the convict Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer another one year in jail.

Ful Mia of Jaddapur village in Bahubal thana picked up Shafia Khatun on June 20, 1987 while she was returning home from school and married her forcibly. He then demanded dowry from Shafia's family and also tortured her regularly to press his demands.

In yet another case, an Assistant Sessions Judge Court sentenced a man to 10 years RI in an arms case.

According to the prosecution, police arrested Ahad Mia of Ramrur village in Chunarughat thana on July 8, 1998 while he was trying to enter the district Cognizance (3) Court with a weapon.

Old man killed in road accident in Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Feb 1: An old man was killed in a road accident in Harinakunda thana of Jhenidah district on January 29 last, reports BSS.

Hospital and police sources said, an old man, Moheuddin, 70, of village Amarchara under Harinakunda thana met the tragic end of his life when a speeding bus knocked him down near Amarchara on January 28 last.

Passage of Public Safety Bill hailed

Bangladesh Land Port Porter-workers Federation in a statement yesterday welcomed the unanimous passage of the Public Safety Bill (special Provision) 1999 in the Jatiya Sangsad recently, reports BSS.

The federation leaders at a meeting held at its head office in Dinajpur on Monday resolved that this law would ensure the safety and security of country's peace-loving people against the anarchists and destructive elements.

They congratulated the government for helping passage of this bill in the recent session of the Jatiya Sangsad.

Federation leader Md Mafizullah presided over the meeting. It was addressed, among others, by the main patron of the organization Shahjahan Kabir and leaders Mokhesur Rahman, Atiar Rahman, Md Ismail and Mantu Mia.

Chairman of Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Sangstha (JMS) Begum Ivy Rahman yesterday welcomed the passage of Women and Child Repression Prevention Bill, 1999 in the Jatiya Sangsad recently, reports BSS.

She congratulated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, ministers, members of parliament and all other concerned who helped passage of the bill unanimously in the greater interest of the safety and security of women and children in the country.

The JMS chairman said it would remain as a milestone in the history of women emancipation in Bangladesh.

Indian wine, phensidyl seized in C'nawabganj

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Feb 1: Police in raid recovered 24 bottles of Indian wine and 20 bottles of phensidyl from Kamalakantapur village in Shibganj thana on Saturday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the house of one Enamul Huq and recovered the contrabands. None was arrested.



Swedish embassy in Dhaka has awarded Medal of Merit to two local staff recently. Seen in the picture is the Swedish Ambassador Anders Johnson (middle) with the two recipients Narayan Shaha and Harun-ur Rashid.