

What's on today.....

Reunion: Students of Jessore studying in Dhaka will hold a grand reunion titled 'Millennium Get Together'.

GLCC meena bazar: Gulshan Ladies Club (GLCC) will hold a Meena Bazar.

Seminar: Ganoshasthya Nagar Hospital will hold a seminar on 'Preventive Cardiology and Interventional Cardiology'.

Inauguration: The inaugural ceremony of a painting exhibition by Murtaja Baser will be held.

Film show: Three French movies Les perles de la couronne, Un indien dans la ville and le petit soldat will be screened.

Exhibition: The inaugural ceremony of the 3rd solo painting exhibition by Zinat Sattar will be held.

Scientific conference: The inaugural ceremony of the Ninth Annual Scientific Conference (ASCON) of ICDDR,B: Centre for Health and Population Research will be held.

Film festival: Chalachitram Film Society will hold the 3rd programme of its series 'A Tribute to the great filmmakers of the century: A Selection of Films III'.

Discussion meeting: Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) in collaboration with Study and Research Group (SRG) of Manabik Sahajya Sangstha (MSS) will hold a meeting on 'Present Political Impasse'.

Inaugural session: The Inaugural session of 'National Seminar on Meeting Science and Technology Challenges for the 21st Century: WCS Imperatives for Bangladesh' will be held.

Memorial meeting: Bangladesh Foundation for the Handicapped and Social Development Association will hold a memorial meet on late poetress Begum Sufia Kamal.

Cultural programme: The annual cultural programme of East West University will be held.

Film show: Chalachitram Film Society will screen 'The Wall' (Turkish) as part of the 3rd programme of its series 'A Tribute to the Great Filmmakers of the Century: A Selection of Films'.

Computer art exhibition: The computer galaxy and design circle begins a computer art and graphics design exhibition.

Power plants

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rector Zafar Umid Khan.
The state minister said that the installation cost of 110 MW Haripur NEPC power plant was 1000 dollars per kilowatt.

Power from these small plants would also be cheaper than that from the barge-mounted plants. While the private barge-mounted plants charge 4.79 cents per kilowatt hour, the 11 MW plants would charge 3.49 cents (for Tk 1.65).

REB, which usually purchases power from Power Development Board (PDB) at a rate of Tk 1.77 per kilowatt hour and sells at around Tk 3, is likely to benefit greatly from these deals.

The state minister said the government is negotiating with other companies for a further 11 MW power plants. Agreements for these plants are expected to be signed by April.

"We may note that this is the first time a power plant is being set up by a local company itself. We encourage local investments in this sector side by side with foreign investments," he added.

Only 15 per cent people of the country have access to power. Of the power generated, only six per cent is used in rural areas.

TUs in EPZs

From page 1
and Congress of Industrial Organisation that alleged Bangladesh violated the rights of workers in June of last year. It urged the U.S. government to revoke Bangladesh's preferential access to its markets.

Following the petition and U.S. pressure, a series of discussions were held between the government, the U.S. ambassador and EPZ investors.

However, South Korea and Japan, the two largest investors in the Bangladesh's EPZs, expressed concern about the plan to open the EPZs to unions.

There are over 90,000 people employed by factories located in the Dhaka and Chittagong EPZs.

Another two lakh are expected to find jobs in the four EPZs under construction in Comilla, Khulna, Ishwardi and Syedpur. The EPZs will cost more than Tk 275 crore and should be completed by 2001.

115 DU teachers say PSA indifferent towards fundamental rights of people

By Staff Correspondent

More than one hundred Dhaka University teachers have protested against the recently enacted Public Safety (Special Provision) Act, on the ground that the law is devoid of democratic values and indifferent towards fundamental rights of people.

In a statement, signed by 115 teachers of the university said, they have reasons to believe that law has been made with an ill intention of punishing opposition activists.

Signatories to the statement included Prof Talukder Maniruzzaman of the Political Science, Prof Khalilur Rahman of the Biochemistry, Prof Anwarullah Choudhury of Anthropology, Prof Dr Mamtazuddin Ahmed of Economic, Prof Dr Tahmidia Begum of Botany and Prof Dr Sirajul Islam of Management Department.

Death anniversary of Poet Moniruddin Yusuf today

The thirteenth death anniversary of Poet Moniruddin Yusuf will be observed throughout the country today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his Mohammadpur residence after Magrib prayers.

Poet Yusuf is remembered for his immortal works & valuable contributions to Bangla literature. He won Ekushey Padak (Posthumous) and many other literary awards for his work. Greater Mymensingh Cultural Forum will hold a discussion programme at Kabi Sufia Kamal National Library seminar room at 5 pm. Others socio-cultural organisations have taken up separate programmes.

A milad mahfil will also be held in his village Boulal under Kishoreganj district today.

Swaraswati Puja celebrated at Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Feb 10: Members of the Hindu Community especially the students celebrated Swaraswati Puja here today seeking blessings of the goddess of learning for their academic pursuits, reports BSS.

The main attraction of the puja was on JM Sen Hall premises where students of six educational institutions including Chittagong University, Chittagong Government Commerce College, Chittagong Polytechnic Institute erected puja mandaps.

Six altars of the Goddess Swaraswati were set up side by side on the premises of the hall where a large number of the Hindu devotees including men, women and children gathered for offering their prayers to the Goddess.



A still from Drabir's kaler shakhi performed at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday as part of Sammito Sanskritik Jote's Ekushey February celebration programmes. — Star photo

PSA itself will check its misuse: Nasim

As part of a government campaign for Public Safety Act, Home Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday told Jatiya Party (M-M) leaders that the Act itself would check misuse of the law, reports UNB.

Besides, a monitoring cell will monitor everything when the law will come into force after the President assents to the bill, the Home Minister told a JP delegation at his office.

Talking to newsmen after the meeting, Jatiya Party leader Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury said on principle they support enactment of such law. "But we told the minister that it should in no way be used for political vengeance."

Mizan, who led the JP delegation, said there was deterioration of law and order and "I have seen psychological effect of the law which has already got started."

The delegation included JP Secretary General and Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju, Sheikh Shahid, Munirul Haq Chowdhury, Sardar Amzad Hossain, Tajul Islam Chowdhury MP and Sharfuddin Ahmed Jhantu MP.

The Home Minister later told newsmen that he had explained various provisions of the law and the Jatiya Party leaders extended their support to it. "They, however, told us to see that none can abuse the law."

He said that the law would be applied only to criminals and not for any political retaliation. The law would only deal with some specific offences and there are provisions in the law to check misuse of it, he added.

Nasim said he is contacting with other political parties and said 11-party leaders will have a meeting with him.

About Wednesday's killing in the city, the Home Minister said Sumon was killed during a crossfire between police and terrorists.

Journalist Enayetullah Khan addressing the concluding session of the two-day workshop on Environment Reporting held at the National Press Club yesterday.

Workshop on Environmental Reporting Organized by Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) with support from Ministry of Environment and Forest (MOEF) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Dhaka, 9-10 February 2000

Launch green movement to protect ecology Speakers at FEJB workshop

Speakers at a workshop yesterday laid importance on launching a massive green movement in the country for protecting the environmental rights of mankind and also other living beings from the aggression of the profit-monger multi-nationals, encroachers and politically and economically powerful groups, reports BSS.

They were addressing the concluding session of the two-day workshop on Environmental Reporting, organised by Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) at the National Press Club.

Presided over by FEJB Chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, it was addressed, among others, by eminent journalist and Holiday Editor-in-Chief Enayetullah Khan, News Editor of Daily Ittefaq Abdul Baten, Coordinator of Sustainable Environment Management Programme of Environment Ministry Dr Mahfuzul Haque, Daily Banglar Bani News Editor and FEJB Vice Chairman Anwar Hussain Manju, FEJB General Secretary Mofizur Rahman, Bangladesh Television News Editor D K Fuad Hasan, UNB News Editor Bakhtiar Rana, FEJB Joint Secretary and Daily Star Shift-in-Charge Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, FEJB members Afiya Raihana, Sharif Shahabuddin and Giasuddin Ahmed.

Enayetullah Khan said environment is no longer a development programme, rather it has turned into a political agenda across the globe as the mother Earth is threatened by the multi-nationals, politico-economic powers and encroachers.

Bangladesh is a victim. Our nature, citizens, farmers, rivers, lands, air and forests are adversely affected," he told environmental journalists and advised them to acquire knowledge, raise professional skills

and efficiency in combating the forces responsible for environmental degradation by launching green movement.

Khan pointed out that in the age of bio-technology, the nation should have to fight out the aggression of Monsanto (Hybrid) seeds which were damaging the backbone of the farmers, who were known for their traditional and high-yielding seeds.

He said patent rights of our seeds and plants are being taken over by the multi-nationals of other countries only to keep us poor and the environmental journalists should focus those issues so that the nation could take a firm stand against this conspiracy.

Abdul Baten said Dhaka has become a highly polluted city while all water bodies, including the river Buriganga, have been encroached upon by a handful influential people.

Quamrul Chowdhury said rural and urban environmental problems have been deteriorating so fast that the nation needs a massive programme to avert those problems involving all political parties, organisations of civil society, professionals and civil servants.

Dr Mahfuz listed measures undertaken by the Ministry of Environment and Forest to face environmental problems in the country.

Fifth Cub Camporee begins tomorrow

The Fifth Bangladesh Club Camporee, 2000 is going to be held at National Scout Training Centre, Mouchak, Gazipur from February 12-16, says a press release.

The camporee will be attended by five thousand cubs from different primary schools and one thousand officials from different parts of the country.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the camporee on February 13 at 10 am as chief guest, the press release said.

Obituary

Begum Noorjahan, wife of late Ataul Haq Chowdhury from village Chhatragasa, Kusthia, died at her Lalmeta residence recently, says a press release.

She is survived by two sons and daughters.

A milad mahfil will be held today at her Lalmeta residence after Asr prayers, friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend.

Nazmul Haq, former deputy director of the Mohammadpur Fertility Service and Training Centre, died at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases in the city in the early hours of yesterday. He was 74, says a press release.

He was buried at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectual Graveyard.

His gulkhwani will be held today after Asr prayers at 13/1, West End Street, Central Road, Dhanmondi.

Odhikar demands judicial probe into Sumon killing

By Staff Correspondent

Odhikar, a human rights coalition based in Dhaka, has demanded a judicial enquiry into the killing of Ahmed Hossain Sumon allegedly by the Detective Branch of police on Wednesday.

In a statement issued to the press yesterday the director of the Odhikar also condemned the incident in which Sumon was killed and two other injured by the police firing.

Sumon was a member of the Odhikar and was engaged in a peaceful protest against the government's policy of privatisation.

The Odhikar has also demanded a judicial probe into the killing of Sumon.

Jurists' memo

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pose it of as per constitutional provision.

A money bill is presented in parliament with President's prior consent and he cannot send it back to the House.

Article 80 (3) of the Constitution states: "The President within 15 days after a Bill is presented to him, shall assent to the Bill."

Or in the case of a Bill 'other than a Money Bill' may return it to Parliament with a message requesting that the Bill or any particular provisions thereof be reconsidered, and that any amendments specified by him in the message be considered; and if he fails to do so he shall be deemed to have assented to the Bill at the expiration of that period.

The PSA bill, designed to come to grips with serious crimes that are on the rise, was passed in parliament on January 30 amid opposition boycott of the session.

It triggered widespread criticism and opposition parties' street protests, calling for its scrapping.

Ctg Port

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demanding booking of 12 workers in each gang instead of 10 workers in two bitumen carrying ships.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Master Stevedores Association has called off their proposed decision of stopping gang booking as the Port Authority sorted out the problems of the labourers in today's meeting.

PSA for welfare of people, says Khasru

COX'S BAZAR, Feb 10: Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Motin Khasru has said that the Public Safety Act (PSA) was passed for the welfare of the people, reports BSS.

It was not promulgated to protect the interest of any particular group, party or individual, he said while inaugurating the newly built District Bar Council Building here yesterday.

"The government will be very much sincere in enforcing the new act and checking any misuse of the law. Besides, there is no scope to use the law for group interest."

Terming the PSA as an exceptional law, the minister said that immense safeguards were included in the law which is the first of its kind in Bangladesh, to refrain it from any sort of misuse.

He said according to Clause 11(6) of the PSA, there is provision of punishment against the Sub Inspector of Police or the concerned Investigation Officer for their misapplication of the law.

Even, as per the Clause 18(6) of the law, Criminal Cases could be filed against the Sub Inspector of Police or the concerned Investigation officer, if he or she is found guilty of harassing any persons under the

new law, Khasru observed. Rejecting the misinterpretation of the opposition political parties that accused person under the law will not get bail for a certain period, the minister said no one should be unhappy if a terrorist does not get bail for some time under proper legal system.

A lot of persons were harassed under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, enacted during the BNP regime, as the law was broadly misused. The law also provided provisions of not giving bail to an accused person. But no one would be harassed under the PSA," he added.

Referring to the Special Powers Act, he said the then Awami League government had to formulate the law considering the national interest, but it was too unfortunate that the military and autocratic governments after post 1975 period abused the law. In most of the cases, it was misused against the leaders and activists of Awami League," he said.

Among others, Vice-chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council Barrister Amirul Islam, local Member of the Parliament Muhammad Ali and president of the District Bar Council Shahjalal Chowdhury addressed the function.

Dhaleshwari dying

From page 1

factory owners promised to install effluent treatment system, or at least discharge them within their factory compounds in lagoons, others simply ignored the final notices."

The law provides for the DOE to take stern actions including closure of the factories, cutting off their supply of utilities and so forth.

The factories at Savar are a part of 1,176 industrial units that the DOE has, over the years, identified as 'polluters' having no waste treatment systems.

Apart from overseeing the 'rogue units' that violated the law, the DOE has also been entrusted with the responsibilities of permitting new industries, power plants and high-rises in urban areas to approve their environmental impact assessment (EIA).

Of late, it has been entrusted with the job of ensuring clean air and keeping noise pollution within permissible limits.

Government, meantime, has already taken a decision to ban the production of black, plastic shopping bags.

But the DOE does not have the manpower or authority to enforce the law. A senior official of DOE described the situation in his department as a policeman without his shield and sword.

Only 173 people work at DOE under a Director General of the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MOEF), the official said on terms of anonymity.

It has offices in four out of six divisions in the country, but these have no officials in the district towns to supervise the work of monitoring environmental pollution.

Nor has the government decision to set up Environmental Courts steps implemented so far, making it much too difficult to prosecute the violators, who take advantage of the existing legal lacunas and remain outside the safety net, the official said.

Another example of the DOE's inability to function happens to be the air quality project for the metropolitan cities and cleaning of the Buriganga due to 'inter-departmental coordination', leaving the projects limping for the last two years.

Asked to comment on the situation, highly placed MOEF officials said that a meeting of the National Environmental Committee with representatives from various ministries and non-governmental organisations have been called upon to take stock of the situation on February 13.

"We are going to discuss all the issues and hope to find out urgent steps for improving the situation, like better policing and prosecution to protect the environment, thus making the DOE's work in its watchdog role more effective", a top MOEF official told the Star.

Textbook trouble

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When contacted, officials of the NCTB admitted that such old-edition textbooks on at least six subjects for class IX and X have been published by some unscrupulous publishers. These are being supplied with new covers, they said.

They (publishers) did it to mislead the students and make them by old books to increase their profit. They even used low quality paper and ink to earn more profit," one official said.

The NCTB is also being deprived of huge income in terms of royalty from the publishers.

DB excesses

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'um tried to save himself but did not shoot at his attackers. The police's refusal to accept a case filed by the victim's family also suggests they have something to hide.

However, Abdul Hannan Khan, the branch's DC, refused to draw comparisons between Sumon's killing and the two previous cases.

"This is totally a different case," said Khan. "Sumon died during a shoot out when we went to catch miscreants."

Khan also brushed aside charges the detective were accompanied by masked men during the operation.

Weather

Cloudy sky likely

Light rain or drizzle may occur at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country with partly cloudy sky over Dhaka division in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Night temperature may fall by 1 to 2 degree celsius over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions and may remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country. Met office said adding that mild cold wave may sweep over Rajshahi division during the period.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 29.9 degree Celsius was at Khepupara and the lowest 10.0 degree Celsius at Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5.51 pm and rises on Saturday at 6.34 am.

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

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in Percentage (Morning, Evening)

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Experts stress on ratification of UN convention for migrants

By Staff Correspondent

Developed and democratic countries, who continuously advocating for upholding human rights, very often maintain double standards with the migrant workers of the poor countries like Bangladesh.

These countries offer different types of salary for migrant workers. But the poor migrants can say nothing as many of them don't have valid documents permitting their stay.

This was the crux of the deliberations conveyed yesterday by the speakers at a consultation meeting on "Ratification of UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers" at the CIR-DAP auditorium in the city.

Organised by Refugee and Migrant Movement Research Unit (RMMRU) of Dhaka University, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Khasru, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abdul Hasan Chowdhury, Dr Tasnim Arefa Siddiqui with Dr C R Abrar of RMMRU in the chair.

Addressing the meeting, Khasru said that those who are champions in propagating human rights themselves maintain double standard with mi-

grant workers. He said that not only non-democratic countries but also the democratic countries don't maintain uniform treatment with the migrants from the poor countries like Bangladesh.

... even I, as a minister, whenever visit those countries, they treat me as a politician of a 'beggar' country. This is very unfortunate, this is very shameful," he regretted.

Abul Hasan Chowdhury said the present government is aware of the problems of the Bangladesh workers in abroad.

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and efficiency in combating the forces responsible for environmental degradation by launching green movement.



The management of Dhaka Sheraton Hotel extended a warm welcome to Air Chief Marshal A Y Tipnis, Chief of the Air Staff of Indian Air Force and Mrs. Tipnis on Monday. Acting General Manager K Shafiq Alam, Director Sales Saeed Ahmed and Director Public Relations of the hotel greeted the distinguished guests. — Sheraton photo