What's on today....

BWP consultation : Bangladesh water partnership (BWP) will hold a consultation on "Sustainable agriculture in flood prone areas". Venue : BIAM conference room, 63, New Eskaton. Time : 9.30 am.

Founding anniversary: The 20th founding anniversary of Deep-Shikha Education-cum-Vocational Training Centre for women and children will be held. Venue : Samaj Unnayan Sangstha Bhaban, 413 Gulbag Road. Time : 10.30 am.

Film show: Three movies, *La vie est un long fleuve tranquille* (life is a long quiet river), *Diva and Schindlers list*, will be screened. Venue : Auditorium of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time : 11.00 am, 4.00 pm and 6.00 pm.

Drama: Aranyak Natya Dal will present *Ora Kadam Ali* on the last day of Mamunur Rashid Retrospective. Earlier a seminar will be held. Venue: Mahila Samity auditorium. Time : Seminar - 10.00 am, drama - 7.00 pm.

Monthly meeting : The monthly meeting of the central executive committee of Sandhani Jatiya Chokkhu Dan Samity will be held. Venue: Samity office premises. Time: 10.00 am.

Discussion meeting: Jatiya Sramik Jote will hold a discussion meeting on the upcoming trade union congress. Venue : Press Club auditorium. Time: 3.00 pm.

Meeting: A preparatory meeting for holding of the first writers, poet conference by Jagroto Bibek will be held. Venue : TSC. Time : 3.00 pm.

Bharatnatyam dance : The High Commission of India presents a Bharatnatyam dance performance by Prof C V Chandrasekhar and his disciples. Venue : Indian Cultural Centre, House No 754, Satmasjid Rd, Dhanmondi. Time : 7.00 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Inauguration: Bangabandhu Square will be inaugurated. Chief guest: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Venue : Bangabandhu Square. Time : 11.30 am.

Roundtable on CHT : Centre for Human Rights will hold a roundtable on "Rights of Citizens in CHT: Past, Present and Future". Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time : 9.00 am.

Open discussion: An open discussion will be held on "Hazards and disputes of using polythene shopping bags and looking for alternatives." Venue : CDL auditorium, House No 39, Rd no 14A, Dhanmondi R/A. Time : 3.30 pm.

Weather

Light rain likely

Light to moderate rain and thundershowers are likely to occur at a few places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Barisal, Khulna and Chittagong divisions in next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged during the period, Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature was recorded yesterday at 33.0 degree Celsius was at Mongla and the lowest 13.6 degree Celsius at Rangpur.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.02 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:18 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	29.4	22.4	87	44
Chittagong	28.5	20.0	82	78
Rajshahi	29.1	15.6	90	61
Khulna	31.5	20.8	85	55
Barisal	31.5	21.7	86	78
Sylhet	21.4	17.0	94	90
Cox's Bazar	29.2	18.3	76	70

HERE and THERE

Anti-Fascism Democratic Committee

By Staff Correspondent

The Anti-Fascism Democratic Committee yesterday staged a demonstration in the city to protest the alleged attempt to handover Bangladesh's natural resources to multi-national companies in the name of foreign investment.

The committee organised a rally at Muktangan also to protest US President Bill Clinton's visit to Bangladesh and the "evil design" to loot oil and gas resources as well as to occupy the Chittagong Port by foreign companies.

Presided over by Faizul Hakim, it was addressed, among others, by Uzzal Balo, Champanan Chakma, Farhad Hossain, Hasan Fakori, Masudur Rahman and Manjurul Haq Babu.

The said the government is conspiring to hand over the oil and gas resources to foreign multi-national companies although there are local expertise, technology and manpower to extract the resources in the country. The imperialist forces have divided the country into 23 blocs and have already started looting the country's natural resources, they alleged.

BCL

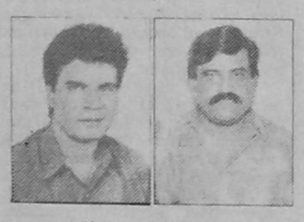
By DU Correspondent

JSD-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday brought out a procession in the city making its 'Flag Hoisting Day'.

On this day in 1971, A S M Abdur Rob the then vice-president of DUCSU hoisted the national flag at Battala on the Dhaka University campus.

Earlier, the BCL held a rally at the TSC intersection on the campus at around 4 pm.

Among others, Obaidur Rahman Chunnu, Karim Siker, Mirza Mohammad Anwarul Haq and Emran Al Amin addressed the rally.



Nirapad Sarak Chai

The central executive committee of Nirapad Sarak Chai for the year 2000-2001 was formed in a meeting recently, says a press release.

Members from across the country attended the meeting. A-41 member central committee with Ilias Kanchan as the chairman and Golam Kibrea as the secretary general was formed. Other office-bearers include — Rafiquazzaman, Siddik Jamal Nantu, Naresh Bhuiya, Mizu Ahmed, Abdur Rahman.

Light norwester likely to hit this month

Following the heavier than usual rainfall in February, light to moderate nonwestern may sweep the country this month as weather conditions already indicate inclemency, reports UNB.

Met office forecasts that there is also possibility of a depression on the Bay of Bengal towards the end of March.

A meeting of the expert committee of the Meteorological Department yesterday reviewed the climate conditions and came up with the conclusion that light to moderate tropical storms (norwester) might hit Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and northern part of Khulna division for three to five days.

The weather experts also predict light *kalbaishakhi* (norwester) for two to three days in other parts of the country during this month.

"A depression is already brewing in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and adjoining areas ... And the Indian Ocean is comparatively warm," the Met office said.

Analysing the weather data and map, climate regression and analogue model and satellite photographs, the experts forecast 45-55 millimeter of rain in Dhaka, 40-50 mm in Chittagong, 90-100 mm in Sylhet, 30-40 mm in Rajshahi, 35-45 mm in Khulna and 40-50 mm in Barisal division in March.

The experts observed that in February there has been "abnormally heavy rainfall recorded in Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions while 'abnormally less rain in Chittagong and Sylhet divisions."

The average rainfall recorded in Dhaka division in February was 38 mm and 36 mm in Rajshahi while it was 9 mm in Chittagong, 17 mm in Sylhet, 27 mm in Khulna and 12 mm in Barisal divisions.

Appointment at NSU: SC grants leave to appeal against HC order

By Court Correspondent

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has granted leave to appeal against the judgement and order passed by the High Court division regarding the appointment of Moslehuddin Ahmed as Vice Chancellor of the North South University (NSU) in place of its President.

The Supreme Court also stayed the High Court order in this regard on February 22, said a press release issued by north South University.

The Appellate Division consisted of Chief Justice Latifur Rahman, Justice Bimalendu Bikash Ray Chowdhury, Justice A M Mahmudur Rahman and Justice Mahmudul Amin who heard both the parties before coming to the judgement.

GrameenPhone's EASY pre-paid service launched

The new EASY pre-paid service of GrameenPhone has received overwhelming response from customers, says a press release.

The launching of the service on Thursday saw enormous interest from people all around the country. GrameenPhone Hotline received more than 15,000 calls during the day making enquiries about the service.

The EASY pre-paid service is the first mobile subscription, which can be used in all six divisions of the country for a flat, single rate of Tk 6 per minute. It provides a subscriber true mobility.

All existing GP pre-paid subscribers get the same facility. EASY zonal subscriptions will automatically be converted to the new service. Moreover, any existing GP subscriber can also migrate to the new EASY prepaid service, the release added.

Local species of orchids handed over to BARI

By Staff Correspondent

Development of Biotechnology and Environmental Conservation Centre (DFBTEC), a private research institute, handed over 13 species of homegrown orchids to Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) yesterday.

Executive Director of DEBTEC Dr Ferdousi Begum handed over the orchids to Sanaullah Mollah, a principal scientific officer of Horticulture Division of BARI at the DEBTEC office in the city, says a press release.

This is for the first time in Bangladesh, a private biotechnology institute has handed over research findings on orchids to a public sector institute under an agreement signed in 1999 between the DEBTEC and Bangladesh Agriculture Research Centre (BARC).

Scientists of DEBTEC worked extensively for exploration of native orchids from natural habitat and have grown tissue culture plants in the laboratory.

The press release added that DEBTEC is producing many varieties of plants through tissue culture which, otherwise, could become extinct. DEBTEC is also working on tissue culture of varieties of banana, potato, medicinal plants, bamboo, neem, different horticultural and floriculture plants.

HC orders govt to return Naziur's passport

The High Court yesterday directed the government to return the passport of Naziur Rahman Manzur, secretary general of Jatiya Party (Ershad), to him within 15 days from the date of the receipt of the order, reports BSS.

A High Court Division bench comprising Justice Mohammad Mozammel Haque and Justice Mohammad Abdur Rashid declared that the seizure of the passport of Manzur by the police of the immigration at Zia International Airport (ZIA) on August 21, 1999 is illegal.

The court pronounced the judgement upon a writ petition filed by Manzur challenging the seizure of his passport.

Rosy Ara, Inspector of Police, Immigration at ZIA, seized Manzur's passport for special reason on August 21, 1999 when he returned to Dhaka from Singapore. Barrister Rafique-Ul Haque and Advocate Faheemul Haque appeared for the writ petitioner.

Additional Attorney General Mahbubey Alam and Deputy Attorney General Syed Mahmud Hasan appeared for the state.

Obituary

Md Taslim Uddin Ahmed died on Thursday at his Shahsthitala residence in Dinajpur of old age ailments. He was 84, says a press release. He is survived by his wife, four sons, one daughter and host of admirers and well-wishers to mourn his death.

Kibria, his adviser

From Page 1

ing period last fiscal year.

Opposing Bhattacharya's view that industrial production has declined by 11 per cent in the first four months of this fiscal year, Kibria said it has rather increased by 5.23 per cent. During the first four months of fiscal 1998-99, the industrial indices stood at 196.93, which increased to 207.23 this year. The minister observed that the confusion was created as Bhattacharya compared June, 1999 indices (226.62) with that of October, 1999 (199.68).

About ADP implementation, the minister said during the first three months of this fiscal year, Tk 1727 crore was utilised against the target of Tk 2723 crore, indicating that 63 per cent of the target was achieved.

About Bhattacharya's remark that hardly any foreign direct investment (FDI) came to the country during the first four to five months of this fiscal year, Kibria said the FDI figures for this year are still not available. However, a major portion of the FDI projects which were in the pipeline last year will be implemented this year.

On the government's borrowing, the minister contradicted Bhattacharya's figures. The economist had claimed that the government borrowings increased by Tk 4000 crore. But the minister said during July-December, 1999, the government borrowed Tk 2508 crore against Tk 469.30 crore during the same period last year. So, the borrowing increased by Tk 2038 crore.

Bhattacharya however stood by his figures and gave a detailed explanation.

According to him, term-lending in the first quarter of this fiscal year was Tk 272 crore.

"If this trend continues, the lending would stand at Tk 594.20 crore during the first six months of the current fiscal year, 10 per cent below Tk 603.99 crore lending during the same period of last fiscal year," he said.

"But last year was a flood year and the first quarter of 1998-99 is not comparable with this year. It should have rather increased this year."

About industrial production, Bhattacharya said the claim of 5.2 per cent growth this year is not meaningful as floods hit production last year. "The indice was 228.68 in June, 1999, which declined steadily to 199.80 in October, 1999. This reflects an 11 per cent decline."

About ADP implementation, he said the finance minister's own figures show a 37 per cent shortfall. "I rather quoted a lesser shortfall figure," he said.

On FDI, the economist said that during fiscal 1998-99, the net FDI flow (Direct, portfolio and EPZ investment) was 26.21 crore which was 18.03 per cent lower than that in the previous year. "The total FDI figures for this year are not available till now. But up to October, it was less than one crore dollars in the EPZs. This is about one seventh of the FDI in EPZs last year. Had it been one third of last year's figure, we could call it satisfactory."

About government borrowing, Bhattacharya said balance of the total borrowing in December, 1998 was Tk 9741.30 crore, which stood at Tk 13797 crore in December, 1999, showing a Tk 4000 crore increase. "This comparison was made to assess the revenue implication of flood in 1998 vis-à-vis this year."

GSS

From Page 12

chairman and executive director of GSS Justice (retd) K M Sobhan and F R Mahmood Hasan Challenging the order.

The Director General of Social Services on June 15, 1999 suspended the GSS governing with an allegation of misappropriation of foreign fund, mismanagement of GSS and sexual harassment against executive director F R Mahmood Hasan along with other office bearers of the governing body.

He also formed a caretaker body in place of the governing body as per provision of the voluntary social welfare agencies.

During pendency of the writ, stay was granted upon the suspension order and the governing body headed by its chairman Justice (retd) Sobhan and Executive Director Hasan terminated 6,000 employees and workers of the NGO without paying their five months' salary.

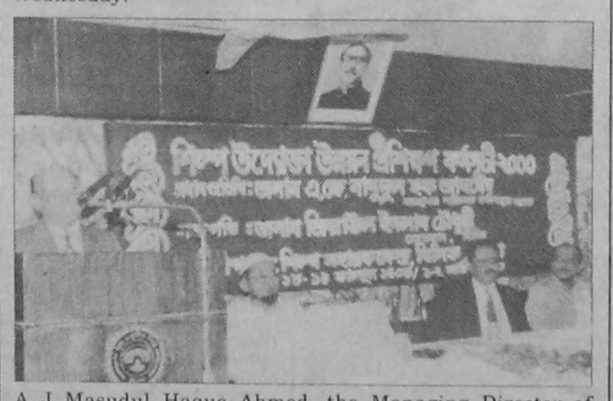
In both the courts, the government case was contested by Attorney General Mahmudul Islam with Deputy Attorney General Obaidur Rahman Mostafa and Barister Amirul Islam for the terminated workers. Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed and Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud were for the writ and subsequent leave petition.

In the Appellate Division, the Attorney General submitted that taking advantage of the stay order of the High Court 6,000 employees and workers were sacked by the governing body in an unusual manner. The writ was liable to be discharged as motivated termination took place during the pendency of the writ, he told the court.

Islam further argued that no illegality was done in suspending the governing body of GSS relying upon an inquiry report of the NGO Bureau.

Executive Director of DEBTEC, Dr Ferdousi Begum (right) seen handing over orchids to a BARI official, Sanaullah Mollah, (centre) at the DEBTEC office at Sangsad Avenue in the city yesterday.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between LGED and Shimizu Corporation for constructing 21 multipurpose cyclone shelters at the coastal belt of Bangladesh. The construction will begin this month and expected to be completed next March. Chief Engineer, LGED, Md Monowar Hossain Chowdhury and Soeda of Shimizu Corporation seen signing the MOU on Wednesday.



A J Masudul Haque Ahmed, the Managing Director of Karma Sangsthan Bank addressing as the chief guest the two-day training course for the entrepreneurs at the Bangladesh Small & Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) conference room on Wednesday. Ziaul Islam Chowdhury (middle) BSCIC Chairman was in the chair. Industrial Service Centre, BSCIC organised the course.

Stampede

From Page 1

sit for the examination at the sub-centre yesterday.

UNB said 18 examinees, including eight girls, could not appear at the examination due to injuries they suffered in the incident.

Things became worse when some youths started molesting the female examinees and other women taking advantage of the situation. Hundreds of panic-stricken people then rushed downstairs to get out of the building, but by this time police locked the only gate.

Shamsunnahar Lipi, Asadullah and Kashem, the examinees, and Fazila Khatun, the teacher, died on the spot while Mamunur Rahman, and Habibur Rahman died on way to hospital.

The mob confined Rasuddin, the TNO, to the thana health complex for about five hours following the incident. The DC of Satkhira along with Additional IG of Khulna range rescued the TNO at about 5 p.m. yesterday.

People of Kalaroa brought out processions and held a rally where the demanded withdrawal of the TNO. They threatened to paralyse life in Kalaroa if their demand was not met by this evening.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Teachers' Association, Kalaroa chapter, has decided not to function during the examinations from Saturday until their security aspect is taken care of.

Old wounds

From Page 1

ernment, but fortunately "we succeeded in preventing her from taking such a suicidal decision".

The hard liners have now started hectic lobbying for inclusion of their men in the Standing Committee, the highest decision making body of BNP; the Executive Committee of the party and for bringing changes in the front organisations and promotion of some leaders.

Two posts have been lying vacant in the 15-member Standing Committee for long due to the 'absence' of Maj Gen (Retd) Majidul Haq and death of Abdus Salam Talukder.

Some influential party leaders are trying to bring back Majidul Haq in the party politics. He has no contact with the party after the June 12, 1996 parliamentary polls.

Both the groups are trying to persuade the party Chairperson to include their men in the Standing Committee, Advisory Council and the Executive Committee.

The leaders whose names figure prominently for the Standing Committee posts are Barrister Nazmul Huda MP, Col (Retd) Akbar Hossain MP, M Shamsul Islam MP, Tariqul Islam and Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury MP.

Nazmul Huda was previously member of the Standing Committee, Akbar Hossain refused to accept the post of vice chairman of the party and Salahuddin Qader is not holding any important party post.

Both the hard liners and moderates, however, blamed Khaleda for 'not taking quick decisions' on changes of leadership and other issues and for 'not evaluating' dedicated leaders and activists.

Some sources in BNP said the 'leadership conflict' and Khaleda's 'go slow' policy are responsible for 'stagnation' in activities of the party and its front organisations and are creating crises one after another.

A close aide of Khaleda Zia said there is no possibility of inclusion of members in the Standing Committee and dropping of any one from any important post in the near future.

"Nothing will happen immediately ... She is now hearing everybody and gathering information on activities of both the hard liners and moderates. She has been leading the party for over a decade and is well aware of her responsibilities," he added

Some sources, however, apprehended that the conflict within the party may take a serious turn if the issues are not settled immediately.

Kamal Majumder

From Page 1

Naim, followers of Kochi's ransacked vehicles in the area yesterday morning, witnesses said, adding that they also had constructed a blockade on the Mirpur road during that time.

Talking to The Daily Star over telephone yesterday, Kamal Majumder threatened to resign within three months if his attackers were not arrested within the specified period.

"They want to kill me and make one for them MP from Mirpur", Majumder said, pointing out that the attack on him was 'pre-planned'.

Kochi comes from Gopalganj district and is allegedly 'patronised by people at the top,' alleged sources close to Majumder. Kochi could not be contacted for his comments but his supporters denied the allegation.

Regarding the case filed against Kochi, the MP said his brother had filed a case in regard to the incident under the Penal Code, but he himself would sue the accused under the Public Safety Act, soon after he recovered from his injuries.

Majumder was hit while waiting to receive the home minister, who was scheduled to attend the programme of workers and employees of Milk Vita factory Tuesday afternoon.

Majumder fell on the ground when a motor bike hit him near the factory at about 3:45 pm. Another motorbike hit him shortly afterwards injuring him on his back and legs, Pallabi Police said.

A death-knell for Khan

From Page 12

Rahela Begum suffers from similar problems. Her left leg was amputated two years ago after the onset of gangrene. Now her right leg and her hands are beginning to show the same signs of deterioration.

"Three months ago, all the people in my village were in a panic," said Rahela, who arrived at the Dhaka Community Hospital from Dayalnagar, Bera thana, last month. "No one knew what caused this terrible disease but we were very scared.

"Then some officials from Kashinathpur thana came and tested a water sample from the tube-well shared by at least ten families. They sealed off the well and told us not to drink from it anymore. Since then we have had to walk a long way to fetch water."

There is no treatment for arsenic poisoning, although experts suggest a diet rich in vitamins and uncontaminated water could counteract the poisoning process. However, most villagers are still not aware of the danger, much less the treatment.

The results of an emergency arsenic mitigation project in 200 villages provides solid evidence of the horrific conditions the people face.

Three in every thousand villagers in the 200 villages surveyed were affected by arsenic poisoning. More than 60 per cent of all tube-wells tested exhibited arsenic levels exceeding the permissible level of 0.05 mg/L.

Dhaka Community Hospital tested water samples from tube-wells in 60 districts and found over 66 per cent of the wells were contaminated.

Hair, nail and skin samples also showed very high level of arsenic toxicity. About 98 per cent nail samples and 89 per cent of hair samples contained toxic levels of arsenic.

The Department of Public Health Engineering, the government agency responsible for supplying clean drinking water to remote regions, is still sinking new tube-wells even though it admits it can't guarantee the water will be arsenic free.

The department has installed about 11 lakh wells, while another 20 lakh wells have been installed by private initiatives.

The United Nations and the World Bank are accessing the contaminated tube-wells and patients while they search for new ways to provide safe drinking water.

"I admit arsenic accumulation into the bodies of the patients is a long term issue," said Deepak Bajracharya, UNICEF's chief of water and environmental sanitation chief, in an interview with The Daily Star last year. "We can not deny the fact we are partially responsible for the consequences."

Pinochet

From Page 1

certain bitter taste" at the 84-year-old general's newfound freedom.

He said Pinochet's 16-month-long arrest — and international attention to the case — will "serve as a warning signal for all those who don't respect human rights."

Spain's Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar had long made clear his opposition to Pinochet standing trial in Madrid, saying it would ruffle political sensitivities in Chile, already deeply divided by the legacy of the Pinochet dictatorship.

Spanish lawyers for victims of Pinochet's regime repeatedly accused the government of working to impede the general's extradition.

Moratilla

From Page 1

Home to a mixed tribal population of Chakmas, Tripuras, Marmas and settlers from the plains, the Moratilla has very little farmland on the foot of the hills below, forcing the tribes people use the hills for their ancient slash and burn agriculture.

But the vanishing forests too make it difficult for them to practice the art.

So the trees remain the only resource for us, Mayarani said as she trudged up and down the hills along with her husband, who was lucky to return with a log of, not so mature, *sil koroi* (a raintree).

The firewood she gathered and the log would bring the family some respite. To buy food, mainly rice which still sells at Tk 11 per kg.

Barni Kumar Tripura, a middle aged man was smoking a tribal long pipe at a makeshift tea house on a bend of the road approaching Mayarani's village.

Barni offered a stoic but simple answer to our query . There is forest and hills and nothing else for us to work on.

"No one offers us a job other than the traders who come with trucks every day to collect the woods," he said.

Usha Marma, a 45-year-old man resting for a cup of tea nodded his approval. He was carrying a log which he reckons would fetch him Tk 100 per cubic feet.

What happens if the forests are no more? Barni took a long drag on the long pipe and amidst the mist of smoke which covered his face in pointed his fingers upward to say God will take care.

Jaan Bikash Chakma, a local coordinator of the Sustainable Environment Management Programme (SEMP) run by the Ministry of Forests and Environment with help from UNDP is worried about his future.

Unless the people are provided with help they would continue to get help from the forest which is on the verge of saturation, he said. "We need to provide them with alternatives," he added.

The tribes people however, have their own answers. Dev Ranjan, a youth without job, feels that if they are provided with help in the form of seeds for horticulture, saplings to raise trees at homes they would have a chance to try their luck.

But water remains a big problem for any such venture. Surya Kumar, also carrying a log waiting for wood collectors' truck, said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Letter of Re-Invitation

1. The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has built a hospital on its own land with the assistance of the Kuwait Relief Committee and intends to contract out the management through franchising the hospital.
2. The GOB now invites proposals (two envelopes: technical and financial from bonafide firms or organization or individual or agencies to run the hospital (Bangladesh-Kuwait Maitree Hospital) under the following basic principles:
   — The hospital will be guided by the general principles, laws, regulation and other orders to be issued from time to time by the Government in relation to management and operation of private clinics and hospitals;
   — It will be a General Hospital with provision for high quality services. It should also have provision for specialized care for Burn/Plastic Surgery, Neurosurgery and other such specialty;
   — It will provide free services to very poor patients as a pre-agreed proportion of its services.

   More details on the services are provided in the Terms of Reference (TOR).
3. The firm/organization/agencies/individual will be selected as per procedures described in this request for proposal (RFP).
4. The RFP includes the following documents:
   Section 1 — Information to Firm/Agency/Organization.
   Section 2 — Technical Proposal-Standard forms.
   Section 3 — Financial Proposal-Standard forms.
   Section 4 — Terms of Reference.
5. The RFP with TOR can be obtained with submission of a Bank Draft of Tk. 25,000 (twenty five thousand) or equivalent amount of US $ from the following by 01-03-2000 to 17-04-2000. The Bank Draft should be made in favour of the Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Bangladesh.
6. Proposals must be submitted no later than the following date and time: 18th April, 2000, 5 PM Bangladesh time.

Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
email: secmohfw@citechco.net

DFP-4505-27/2 G-390