

What's on today . . . .

**Lecture:** Bangladesh Paediatric Association will hold two lectures on "Childhood epilepsies" and "cerebral palsy". Venue: British Council auditorium, Fuller Road. Time: 9.30 am - 1.00 pm.

**Discussion:** Ganomadhym Kendro will hold a discussion on the recently televised programme "Deshbahir Mukhukhul". Venue: Mukhtuddha Jadughar, Segunbagicha. Time: 5.30 pm.

**Closing ceremony:** The concluding ceremony of the two and a half week long workshop on "Innovative Radio Programmes for Children" will be held. Deutsche Welle Radio Training Centre, Germany is conducting the workshop sponsored by UNICEF and organised by NIMC. Venue: National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMC), 125/A, Darus-Salam, Mirpur. Time: 10.30 am.

**Publication ceremony:** Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) in association with ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) has recently completed a study regarding situation analysis on Disaster and Disability Issues in the Coastal Belt of Bangladesh. The publication ceremony of report of the study "Unveiling Darkness" will be held. Venue: WVA auditorium, House #20, Road #27 Old (16 New), Dhanmondi. Time: 3.30 pm.

..... and tomorrow

**Documentary film show:** Four documentary films by A Masud Chowdhury Pitu will be screened. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre auditorium, House No: 510, Road No: 7, Dhanmondi. Time: 4 pm.

**Inaugural ceremony:** The inaugural ceremony of the first national conference and scientific session of the Bangladesh Perinatal Society will be held. Chief guest: Minister for Industry Tofail Ahmed. Venue: Hotel Sheraton Ballroom. Time: 9 am.

**Publication ceremony:** The publication ceremony of "Capital Flows, Saving and Investment in the World Economy" by economist Dr Showkat Ali, Professor of New York City University, USA, will be held. Bangladesh Journalists and Writers Association of North America, New York has organised the publication ceremony. Venue: VIP Lounge, National Press Club. Time: 4 pm.

**Film show:** Alliance Francaise de Dhaka will screen 3 films at its auditorium. The film are: "Sans toit ni loi/Vagabond" at 11 am, "Schindler's List" at 4 pm and "Le Colonel Chabert" at 6 pm.

**Election:** The first election of Sakhawat Memorial Girls' High School (Calcutta) Alumnae Association will be held. Venue: 3, Farbag. Time: 4 pm.

**Dress exhibition:** Designer Mamata Islam Mumu of Design Roots will present her Eid collection of fashion apparels for men and women. Venue: Cafeteria of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, 26 Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi. The exhibition will remain open daily from 5 pm to 8 pm till March 12.

Weather

Thundershowers likely

Light rain or thundershowers is likely to occur at few places over Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi division and the regions of Kushtia and Comilla in next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period. Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature 33.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Mongla and the lowest 18.4 degree Celsius at Mymensingh.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.05 pm and rises on Friday at 6:12 am.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in Percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	27.9	23.0	58	74
Chittagong	29.8	21.5	93	82
Rajshahi	31.4	19.4	75	79
Khulna	32.5	22.2	86	-
Barisal	31.4	21.0	90	67
Sylhet	20.4	19.3	96	79
Cox's Bazar	31.8	20.8	91	94

HERE and THERE

Motlab Sudhi Samaj, Dhaka

The biennial general meeting of the Motlab Sudhi Samaj (civil society), Dhaka was held recently, says a press release.

A 31-member Executive Committee and 11-member Advisory Council were formed at the meeting on March 4 and both the committees were elected unanimously for the next two years.

Members of the Executive Committee are: President - Maj Gen (Retd) Mozammel Hossain, Vice President - Md Fazlul Haq and MA Hannan, General Secretary - Ln Benazir Ahmed, Treasurer - Md Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary - Dr MA Based, Organising Secretary - Dr Noor-e-Alam Patowari, Social Welfare Secretary - Wing Commander Shahid Ullah, Publicity Secretary - M Shamsul Alam, Office Secretary Ln MA Salam.

Bangladesh Krishak Samity

Bangladesh Krishak Samity, Gazipur district unit, held a general meeting on Monday with its President Ayet Ali in the chair, says a press release.

The leaders decided that a memorandum will be submitted to the DC on March 9 to press for their different demands. It was also decided that they will form thana committees to make its national council in May a success.

The meeting was addressed by Hari Sadhan Deb, Dr MA Khasem, A Razzak Master, Jahangir Hossain, Taibur Rahman and others.

Bangabandhu Mahila Parishad

Bangabandhu Mahila Parishad observed the International Women's Day yesterday in a befitting manner with special programmes, says a press release.

To mark the occasion the members of the parishad held a discussion at the Central Shaheed Minar. The speakers lauded the role of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her endeavours towards the emancipation of women folk and hoped that political, educational and administrative empowerment of women will be achieved soon. Later pigeons and balloons were released.

The members of Bangabandhu Mahila Parishad also brought out a colourful procession during which songs depicting the theme of Women's Day were rendered. The procession started from Central Shaheed Minar and concluded at the National Press Club.

Mummi murder: Hearing Mar 15

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Mar 8: The district and sessions Judge's Court Narayanganj adjourned the proceedings of the sensational Mahmuda Sultana Mummi Murder Case until March 15.

The court adjourned the proceedings of the case as one of the main arrested accused, Monawara Begum, mother-in-law of the victim, was not produced before the court during yesterday's proceedings. The hearing will be held on March 15.

Cattle markets

From Page 1 lease holders have already begun erecting structures that obstruct traffic.

Estate Department officials said Eid cattle markets would be held in 16 places, including the thoroughfares. Other markets will be set up at Jhigatola, Hazaribagh grounds, Mughlagra Playgroud, Golsagha Playgroud, Dhupkhola Playgroud, Rahmatganga Playgroud, Khilkhet Tanpara, the open space in Uttara Sector 12, Rayer Bazar Playgroud, the open space in Merul Kacha Bazar and Shaheednagar Playgroud near Ward 83.

Int'l Women's Day observed



The World Bank Office Dhaka brought out a procession in the city.



The United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Dhaka and Mohammadpur Central University College jointly organised a big rally in observance of the International Women's Day yesterday.



An ADAB procession. — Star photo



A motorcycle procession by BRAC. — Star photo

'AL conspiring to hold elections unilaterally to cling to power'

By DU Correspondent

BNP leaders at a rally in the city yesterday alleged that the ruling Awami League government is destroying the country's education, economy and deteriorating the law and order situation in a pre-planned manner. Criticising government's failure in running the country, they also alleged that the "autocratic" Awami League government was conspiring to cling to power by holding the next election unilaterally and keeping the opposition leaders in jail.

"People of the country would reject the Awami League as it failed to fulfill all the pledges made to the countrymen during the last general election campaign," said BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan while addressing the rally as chief guest.

BNP's student front Jatya-atabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) organised the rally to press home their demand to immediately release all the JCD activists including its president Habib-un-Nabi Sohel and General Secretary Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu.

He strongly criticised the recently enacted Public Safety Act and alleged that the law would only be used to intensify the current repression on the opposition leaders and workers.

"There are so many killers, rapists, and extortionists in the ruling party but none of them arrested or punished so far. Besides, the government arrested hundreds of opposition

activists under false cases and sent them to the jail," Bhuiyan regretted.

Turning to the on-going SSC examinations, the BNP leader said that the government has entirely failed to check adoptions of unfair means in the examinations. "This failure once again proved its inability to run the country properly."

He said, the students of various educational institutions of the country are now suffering from sense of insecurity as the government has turned these institutions into "arms factory".

Mannan Bhuiyan urged Sheikh Hasina to immediately resign and hand over power to a neutral caretaker government for holding a free and fair election. Otherwise, people of the country who are now united against you (Hasina) would launch a mass upsurge and oust you from the power, he added.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed condemned the ruling party for enacting the "controversial" Public Safety Act and said that the "black law" would ensure the ouster of the government.

He called upon the countrymen to join the present "ouster government" movement and force the Hasina government to resign and call for an early election. "Don't be afraid of the government's repression, rather intensify the on-going movement under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia."

Amanullah Aman MP condemned the government for its continued repression on the JCD activists and their frequent detention. "This is nothing but a deep-conspiracy to foil the current 'ouster-government' movement," Aman alleged urging the JCD leaders and activists to remain in streets and force Hasina government to resign.

He warned the government against further repression and demanded immediate release of all JCD leaders and workers including Habib-un-Nabi Sohel and Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu.

Women are hungry

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were impeding their progress. "The real target has to be the political parties," IPU Secretary General Anders Johnson told a news conference.

The study, "Politics: Women's Insights", showed that the parliaments of only eight countries — the five Nordic states, Germany, The Netherlands and South Africa — had a membership including 30 per cent or more women.

Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway are four countries in the world with the closest balance between men and women in parliament, according to a 1995 UN survey.

Sweden has the highest proportion, with 43 per cent. In stark contrast, only one in ten parliamentarians in France are women — the lowest proportion of any EU country.

The French parliament is this week considering an electoral law that would require candidate lists at some elections to include at least 50 per cent women, but many women are still furious that female politicians in their 'macho' country still face being branded "frustrated" or "whore" if they dare speak their minds.

The "Guard Bitches" movement was set up last year after

SNS: Politics

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bers of Union Parishad. The rally was addressed by, among others, Alena Khan Farida Akther, Sultana Akther Rubi, Hazera Sultana, Sima Das Shimmu, Dr. Naila Khan, Advocate Rawshan Zamil Parveen and Zahanara Parveen.

The procession, brought out from the premises of National Museum on the DU campus, was led by Shahin Anam and Alena Khan. The processionists paraded the DU campus.

The DU unit of Nari Progati, another women's rights body, also brought out a procession from in front of Rokeya Hall of Dhaka University, paraded the campus and submitted a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor demanding solution of girl students' problems. In the memorandum, they also urged the DU authorities to take measures against harassment of girl students and open a 'complaint cell' to lodge complaints.

Samima Sultana, Saida Inayat, Subarna Khandoker and Soheli Munnat address the rally.

PM: Women

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there are also such cells at district, thana and union levels. Hasina said a multi-sectoral project, aided by Danida, has been taken up to stop women repression. Besides, women aid centres have been set up in six divisional headquarters, including Dhaka, to provide legal aid, shelter, treatment and impart vocational training to the women.

Referring to massive government programmes for development of women, she said it is not possible for the government alone to implement the women development policy and working plan.

For this, cooperation of all including women's organisations, NGOs, UN agencies and development partners is needed. She called for intensifying their existing programmes.

The prime minister said this year's theme of the international women's day is "Women and Peace", which is very much relevant in the present context. She said women have always worked for peace and their love for peace is very strong.

State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Prof Zinatunnesa Talukder, UN system resident coordinator Warner Kiene, UNICEF resident representative Shahida Azfar, and Women and Children Affairs Secretary Prof Tehmina Husain also addressed the function.

Speakers at the seminar discussed various aspects of women rights and status of the women in the country.

Clinton: Pakistan

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the Indian capital from Dhaka the same day. His official visit to India begins on March 21.

The US President is slated to address a joint sitting of both the houses of Indian parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) on March 22. The same day, he will go to Agra and Jaipur. President Clinton then will visit Hyderabad and Mumbai. He will leave India on March 25.

Reuters from Washington adds: After agonizing for months on the political and diplomatic implications, President Clinton announced yesterday that he would include Pakistan on his South Asian tour.

"The president's decision reflects the importance of making efforts to continue dialogue with an important nation of the region despite our serious concern about the lack of an elected government there," a White House statement said.

The White House statement said the president would meet with Pakistani leaders to discuss a return to civilian democratic rule, the need to fight terrorism, and measures to avoid a nuclear and missile arms race in the region.

Clinton has offered to mediate between India and Pakistan in their conflict over Kashmir, but a White House official said that was not the purpose of the trip and he saw no mediation role for the United States coming out of the visit.

Pakistan has encouraged the idea of such mediation, but India has turned it down.

**Pakistan hails** AFP says, Islamabad today welcomed Clinton's decision to visit Pakistan, saying it was important for peace in South Asia.

"Because of our historical ties with the United States, we welcome the visit of President Bill Clinton," said Javed Jabbar, advisor on national affairs to Pakistan's military ruler General Pervez Musharraf.

Clinton's decision "is important for peace and progress in South Asia and it justifies our stand," Jabbar said, speaking to reporters in the city of Multan in Punjab province.

He said the decision was a "severe blow" to Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee who "has been continuously trying to malign Pakistan and encourage the US to declare it a terrorist state."

Pakistan's generals have been pressing for Clinton to visit as part of their campaign to win international support for the military government since the coup in October.

Jabbar said the US leader would meet with both President Muhammad Rafiq Tarar and Musharraf and will attend a luncheon in his honour.

"The talks between Pakistani and US leaders will focus on basic issues like the situation in Kashmir," he said.

According to Reuters, the White House did not give a date for the Pakistan visit, but officials said the President would stop over for several hours on March 25 before heading back to Washington and would not stay overnight.

It will be the first visit by an American president to Pakistan since Richard Nixon visited in 1969. President Jimmy Carter visited India in January 1978 without visiting Pakistan.

Planning for the visit, which was postponed in 1998 after India staged a nuclear test and Pakistan quickly followed suit, has been disrupted by the coup that ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Washington imposed new sanctions on Pakistan after the coup and has since pushed Musharraf to take steps to restore democracy and rein in what Washington calls supports for "terrorism" in the region.

Pakistan has maintained

PM: DCs

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tion," she said asking the DCs to work for national development. Cabinet Secretary Kazi Shamsul Alam, Barisal Divisional Commissioner Yahia Mollah, DC Dhaka Abdus Sattar Khan, DC Habiganj Mohammad Abdul Aziz, DC Patuakhali Abdus Samad, DC Laxmipur Mahbulul Alam, DC Rangpur Moazzem Hossain, DC Bagerhat Nurul Islam and DC Mymensingh Mohammad Rafiqul Islam also spoke at the inaugural session of the 3-day conference.

They mentioned various problems faced at the district level and appealed to the Prime Minister to increase communication and logistic facilities. They also stressed the need for introducing modern land management system.

About the problems, the Prime Minister said the government has already taken steps for modernising the land management system and to provide computer, wireless and fax facilities to the district administration. The government will also provide internet facilities.

**CMM: Shad** From Page 12 his age was about 15 years and should be treated under the Children Act, 1974.

But in his supplementary affidavit Ershad said that Shad's age was below 16 years.

Against this, the state counsels produced a certificate issued by the principal of Shad's school as newspaper reports in 1983. They argued that Shad's date of birth was January 18, 1983 and that his age in above 17 years now.

Barrister Rafiqul Haque moved for Ershad while DAGs Ferooque Ahmed and Syed Mahmud Hasan represented the state.

2 tribal youths

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The United People's Democratic Front, in a statement today, accused the JSS activists for the killing.

The two organisations had been at loggerheads since they split in 1998.

good relations with neighbouring Afghanistan, whose Taliban rulers give haven to Osama bin Laden, a Saudi-born militant accused by Washington of masterminding attacks on US targets around the world.

In recent months, there has even been pressure in some US circles to declare Pakistan a state supporter of terrorism, particularly after the hijacking of an Indian airliner was linked to Pakistan-based Kashmiri militants.

**Need for balance** But Clinton is acutely conscious of the need to strike a balance between Pakistan, Washington's long-time ally during the Cold War, and India, with whom the United States has begun to develop closer ties.

He is also eager to encourage the two countries personally to rein in their nuclear ambitions and sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

"The president believes it is crucial that he carry a message of restraint and dialogue to both capitals on this trip," an administration official told reporters.

Sharif

From Page 1

Pakistan International Airlines flight.

Sharif said the feud with Musharraf was the result of last summer's dangerous dispute in Kargil in the disputed Kashmir region. At the time the international community worried that the dispute would erupt into an all-out war between Pakistan and India.

Then Sharif met with US President Bill Clinton on July 4 in Washington. After that meeting Sharif ordered the guerrilla fighters to withdraw from Indian territory bringing an end to the dispute.

The military grumbled at Sharif's concessions. "All of this goes back to Kargil," Sharif told the court. "Kargil was the most serious crisis. It necessitated a resolution which saved the country, to which I had to respond."

He accused Musharraf of creating dissension as a result of the pull back. "He tried to create misgivings," Sharif said of Musharraf. "I saved the country from a grave crisis but unfortunately I could not save myself."

CTBT

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ratification of any treaty. He explained that the government is supposed to ratify such a treaty and then place it before the parliament. "Since the CTBT has been ratified by the government, it has to be laid before the Parliament," the Speaker said. "We never ratified any such treaty in parliament."

Article 145A reads, "All treaties with foreign countries shall be submitted to the President, who shall cause them to be laid before Parliament."

Provided that any such treaty connected with national security shall be laid in a secret session of Parliament."

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday signed an executive order ratifying the CTBT. Foreign Secretary C M Shafi Sami told a hurriedly called press conference in the city later on the day.

The foreign secretary further said that the government had announced in September 1999 that Bangladesh would ratify the CTBT. "Now the process has been completed and we have ratified it," he had said at the press conference.

Yesterday, when his attention was drawn to the issue, the foreign secretary told journalists that the government completed the "entire legal process" to ratify the treaty. He however did not elaborate.

Dr Moeven argued that the prime minister may sign such treaties as the Chief Executive of a government. The ratification should be in accordance with the procedures laid down in Article 145A of the Constitution.

He further said the process of ratification followed in the case of CTBT is in fact a duplication of the signing exercise by the government's Executive Branch.

Dhaka's ratification of the CTBT came just 13 days ahead of US President Bill Clinton's visit to Bangladesh.

One hundred fifty-five countries had signed the treaty but only 53 ratified it. The US failed to ratify the CTBT as the parliament voted it out. Four other countries -- UK, Russia, France and China -- had initiated the CTBT but had yet to ratify it.

Bangladesh was the first country in South Asia to sign the treaty in October 1996.

US advance team

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Both teams will stay until the end of Clinton's visit to Bangladesh.

DG E.P. Hossain Komol said Clinton will hold official talk with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and attend a banquet. However, the final itinerary will be based on security, convenience, political consideration and maximum promotional appeal, sources said.

White House politicians and political advisors will scrutinise the itinerary before it is cleared.

US advance team

From Page 1

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