

News

What's on today....

Seminar: Bangladesh National Atomic Energy Commission and Society of Nuclear Medicine, Bangladesh will hold a national seminar on "Congenital Hypothyroidism". Chief guest: Minister for Science and Technology Lt Gen Mohammad Noor Uddin Khan FSC. Venue: Auditorium of Atomic Energy Centre, 4 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Ramna. Time: 9.00 am.

Presentation of UNICEF report: Unicef Bangladesh has organised a session on 'Highlights of report for Unicef on Child Labour in the bidi sector'. Presenter: Dr T Blanchet. Venue: JPG conference room, 6th floor, Unicef. Time: 10 am.

CPD dialogue: On State of Governance and Budget Responses 2000, organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan will make the keynote presentation. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium, 17, Topkhana Road. Time: 2 pm.

CPD dialogue: The 2nd session of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) on "State of Governance and Budget Responses 2000" will be held. Chief guest: Minister for Finance Shah AMS Kibria. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium, 17, Topkhana Road. Time: 2.00 pm-6.00 pm.

CAB discussion meet: Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) is holding a post budget discussion meeting. Venue: VIP lounge of Jatiya Press Club. Time: 4.00 pm.

Handing over ceremony: The original manuscripts of the very popular programme "Choropat" broadcast from Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra will be formally handed over to the National Museum. Chief guest: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Venue: Main auditorium of National Museum, Shahbag. Time: 5.00 pm.

Satyajit Ray Retrospective: Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen *Aparajita* (The Unvanquished). Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium, Rd No 2, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6.15 pm.

Folk Music Festival 2000: Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy begins the 4-day long Folk Music Festival 2000 which will be participated by leading artists of the country. Venue: Shawkat Osman Memorial auditorium of Begum Sufia Kamal Library Directorate (Public Library Auditorium), Shahbag. Time: 7.00 pm.

PIB workshop: Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) will inaugurate a weeklong workshop on "Reporting on Gender issues". Chief guest: State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed.

..... and tomorrow

Discussion: Darul Ihsan University will hold a discussion on Eid-e-MiladunNabi. Venue: University premises, No 21, Road No 9/A (New), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 5.00 pm.

Satyajit Ray Retrospective: Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen a documentary "Ziya Mohyuddin Discusses The World of Apu" which will be followed by *Apur Sansar* (The World of Apu). Venue: Indian High Commission Auditorium, Road No 2, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6.15 pm.

Folk Music Festival 2000: An evening of different folk songs will be presented on the 2nd day of the folk festival. Venue: Shawkat Osman Memorial auditorium of Begum Sufia Kamal Library Directorate (Public Library auditorium), Shahbag. Time: 7.00 pm.

Weather

Thundershowers likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Moderately heavy falls at places over Chittagong and Sylhet divisions is also expected during the period. Met office said, adding day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 35.6 degree Celsius at Sayedpur and the lowest 23.8 degree Celsius at Dhaka.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.48 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.12 am.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity percentage		
Max	Min	Morning	Evening	
Dhaka	34.2	23.8	80	63
Chittagong	33.0	24.6	78	79
Rajshahi	34.7	25.7	75	74
Khulna	35.4	25.4	86	69
Barisal	34.0	25.0	81	78
Sylhet	35.0	26.4	78	73
Cox's Bazar	33.0	26.0	73	98

HERE and THERE

Krishibid Institution of Bangladesh

A 30-member committee of Krishibid Institution of Bangladesh Agricultural University unit has been elected unopposed recently, reports UNB.

Mohammad Montazur Rahman and Dr Abdul Khader were elected as its president and general secretary respectively while Dr M Sayeedur Rahman and Dr Mohammad Moijibur Rahman vice presidents.

Dr G M Moijibur Rahman has been made assistant general secretary. Mohammad Azharul Haq social welfare secretary. Mohammad Niaz Uddin Pasha

sports and cultural secretary and Dr Mohammad Solaiman Ali Fakir treasurer.

The other office-bearers elected are members and councilors, said a press release.

NKSC

By DU Correspondent

Dhaka University authorities at an emergency meeting of its Provost Standing Committee yesterday claimed that there is no outsider or terrorist on the campus now.

They said that the campus is now favorable for education and is almost terrorism-free, following authorities measures taken against it.

They contradicted a report published in a national daily yesterday and alleged that some newspapers are publishing fake, fabricated, baseless and motivated reports to disgrace the image of the university.

Presiding over the meeting, Vice-Chancellor A K Azad Chowdhury said, "we will immediately book any killer or criminal on the campus, if there is still any."

The VC requested all quarters to inform the university authorities if any troublemaker is found on the campus or at any hall.

The Pro-VC, Treasurer, Hall Provosts and Proctor of the university were present at the meeting.

Impress

Impress Telefilm and World View Foundation has signed a contract recently under which Channel-i and Young Asia Television (YAT) will exchange television programmes.

Quirkhwan

Quirkhwan of Abdur Rahman (Shadab), an industrialist who died on June 16, will be held tomorrow after Asr prayers

at his residence at House No 9, Road No 14, Gulshan 1, says a press release.

Abdur Rahman, founder of Swantex Ltd, died of a cerebral hemorrhage.

He is survived by his wife, four sons, grandchildren and relatives to mourn his death.

10 PBCP members held with arms

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, June 17: Dumuria thana police arrested on Friday 10 members of outlawed Purbo Bangali Communist Party from Shalpur and Mikshamil villages. They also recovered a foreign revolver, a shutter gun and two live cartridges from their possession.

Garments villages

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ter very soon.

He said that other industrial areas like Demra, Gazipur and Narayanganj are also in their consideration for setting up of garment villages.

Manna said around 70 bighas of land are needed for a garment village comprising at least 50 factories. There should also be access roads, better communications and other facilities like mosque, club, labour quarters and medical centre.

There are 1855 garment factories in Dhaka City Corporation area and 356 in Narayanganj pourashava. More than 60 per cent of these are located in residential areas.

About 14 lakh workers of these factories are also living in the city and in Narayanganj in too unhygienic condition.

The situation also reflects that the government is failing

to ensure security of life and property of the citizens, which is its basic responsibility," he told this correspondent.

Human rights activist and lawyer Alina Khan said, "Since people have lost confidence in the law enforcers, cases of beating to death are on the increase, reflecting the existing anarchy in the society. The situation reflects that people are now very desperate and they themselves want to take the wrong doors to task. In such a situation, innocent people may also be victimised."

A top police official requested anonymity said, "Incidents of beating to death are increasing as the level of tolerance of people is going down and faith in law enforcers is also on the wane."

Bill placed

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said in his statement on the objectives and reasons for the bill. "Such a situation will be shameful for the nation."

Seats for women should be preserved for another 10 years in the interests of social advancement and political empowerment of womenfolk, he stressed.

Considering the need for ensuring women's participation in all spheres of national life as envisaged in the Constitution, the minister noted, it is a national and constitutional duty to continue the existing provision.

Women constitute about half of the country's population but their participation in the general elections is far less than that of men because of many social, economic and other factors.

Strong monetary policy needed

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Kibria said Bangladesh had a long period of over five per cent growth. In the last four years, the growth was recorded at 5.5 per cent according to the old series and 5.1 per cent based on the new series. Bangladesh never had witnessed such sustained growth rate.

"But most importantly, this was a non-inflationary growth, which is the dream of any finance minister," he said. "By any international standard, inflation rate is very satisfactory."

"We also had four years of steady agriculture growth. Isn't it a contribution of government policy? Money has not been syphoned out from the agriculture sector. Rather, we injected fresh credit. The volume of agriculture credit has enabled farmers to buy inputs, which were made duty-free in the budget. We also ensured uninterrupted power supply for farmers at night. We had reduced corruption in agriculture credit disbursement. We have set an example of governance."

Kibria also defended the budget deficit estimation as a percentage of GDP, saying that his figures were correct. The budget deficit figures of 5.8 per cent of GDP for this year and 5.9 per cent for the next year were calculated as per the IMF guidelines. Contrary to what Dr Bhattacharya said, there is no such safe limit for deficit for any country, he added.

Kibria also said there is no need to worry about government borrowing as latest figures are indicating that it has decreased in recent times. Till June 10, the government borrowing from the banking system has come down from Tk 3700 crore to Tk 3385 crore.

Regarding increase in classified loans, Kibria said this happened because of implementation of an international standard of classification.

"We implemented the new system without considering the local situation," Kibria said. "I hope the Bangladesh Bank will reconsider the local context in loan classification."

Defending industrial performance, he said the mindless liberalisation in the early 1990s had thrown thousands of industries into distress. "We have set up a committee to look into the distressed units and the committee has so far rehabilitated 1100 industries."

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud said what many may find missing in the finance minister's budget speech is a vision for the future and in particular, an outline of the tasks he is leaving for the next finance minister.

Explaining the high government borrowing, Dr Mahmud said the main underlying reason for this is that while foreign funding has been declining, we have sought to keep the size of the development budget constant.

As a consequence, import-led, leading to low collection of revenue. The fragile fiscal balance may come under increasing pressure if the emerging stress in the balance of payment situation deepens, he added.

The current state of revenue collection suggests governance problems in tax administration process. The government failed to give full effect to the Large Taxpayers Unit (LTU) in the NBR. Moreover, weakness in implementing the declared reforms in the tax inspection system also did not allow plugging the holes of tax evasion and leakages.

"Revenue expenditure, in comparison to revenue income is growing at a faster pace, thereby reducing the capacity of the government to finance development expenditure with revenue surplus."

If the current trend of mounting public domestic debt is not reversed, it might soon become unsustainable. There are reasons to feel alarmed about it if we take into account the strength and weakness of other variables of the economy.

He also claimed a net outflow of resources from the agriculture sector this year as against a recovery of Tk 21.47 billion, Tk 20.1 billion was disbursed.

In contrast to the agriculture sector, growth in the manufacturing sector continues to remain depressed.

One observes a process of creeping deindustrialisation in the economy as the share of the manufacturing sector continues to slide in the GDP.

Later, during the open discussion, BNP lawmaker and former state minister for planning Moyer Khan said

he also termed the measure to whitewash black money by paying 10 per cent tax as politically and economically unethical and said this is a distortion in the fiscal policy.

26 beaten to death

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Besides an 11-year-old girl, Urmi, was beaten to death by some miscreants in the city's Sherwara area as a sequel to a fight involving her family.

On May 17, Kali Mian, 20, was beaten to death allegedly by toll collectors at Devarpar near Lalkhan Bazar, Chittagong. The toll collectors were reportedly from the local MES College.

On the same day, a mob at Latiferhat in Chittagong beat to death three alleged dacoits - Farid, Arif and Nasiruddin.

Another three alleged dacoits were beaten to death at Halishahar in Chittagong on May 16.

A five-year old domestic help, Roshina, was beaten to death allegedly by her employer at North Goran in the city on May 15. An unnatural death case was filed in this regard. The autopsy report, however, said the victim died due to assault injuries.

A gang of miscreants beat to death Shahidul Islam, 19, an electrician, at Mausundi in the old part of city on May 7.

An accused in a case, Abu Hossain Nasir, 20, was beaten to death at Eskaton on May 6 and Maiful Islam, 20, at Natun Road under Kotwali thana in the city on May 5.

Two alleged muggers - Montu, 35, and Mobarak, 29 - were killed in mob beating in the city's Gantighar area under Sutrapur thana on May 2.

Increasing reports of mob attacks on individuals or groups actually portray that people are gradually losing confidence in the government machinery," said Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, Chairman of Psychology department, Dhaka University.

The situation also reflects that the government is failing

to ensure security of life and property of the citizens, which is its basic responsibility," he told this correspondent.

Human rights activist and lawyer Alina Khan said, "Since people have lost confidence in the law enforcers, cases of beating to death are on the increase, reflecting the existing anarchy in the society. The situation reflects that people are now very desperate and they themselves want to take the wrong doors to task. In such a situation, innocent people may also be victimised."

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