

What's on today

Discussion: Darul Ihsan University will hold a discussion on Eid-e-Miladun Nabi. Venue: University premises, House No 21, Road No 9/A (New), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 5:00 pm.

Folk Music Festival 2000: An evening of different folk songs will be presented on the 2nd day of the folk film festival. Venue: Shawkat Osman Memorial auditorium of Begum Sufia Kamal Library Directorate (Public Library auditorium). Shabbag. Time: 7:00 pm.

Satyajit Ray Retrospective: 'Apur Sangsar' (The World of Apur) will be screened as part of the session on films by Satyajit Ray, organised by Zahir Raihan Film Society in association with the High Commission of India. Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium, Road-2, Dhanmondi. Time: 6:15 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Sufia Kamal memorial lecture: Bangladesh Mohila Parishad has arranged a memorial lecture and a musical programme to mark the 89th birth anniversary of Poet Sufia Kamal. Prof Sardar Fazlul Karim will deliver the lecture. Venue: Teacher-Student Centre, Dhaka University. Time: 4:30 pm.

Film show: As part of Satyajit Ray Retrospective, Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen a documentary on Rabindranath Tagore, and a film, 'Parash Pathar' (The Philosopher's Stone). Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium, Road-2, Dhanmondi. Time: 6:15 pm.

Discussion: The Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran has arranged a discussion meeting on the occasion of the Eid-e-Miladun Nabi and Islamic Unity Week. Venue: The Iranian Cultural Centre auditorium, House-54, Road-8/A, Dhanmondi. Time: 5 pm.

Weather

Moderate rain forecast

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

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

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 35.5 degree Celsius at Sayedpur and the lowest 24.8 degree Celsius at Ranganati.

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		Humidity	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.0	26.3	67	67
Chittagong	33.4	25.0	71	68
Rajshahi	33.8	26.0	75	68
Khulna	33.0	26.3	74	98
Barisal	32.0	26.2	82	83
Sylhet	33.8	27.2	72	73
Cox's Bazar	30.5	25.5	92	85

HERE and THERE

Karwan Bazar traders' cooperative society

By Staff Correspondent

Karwan Bazar Kanchamal Arat Bayasayee-Malik Bahumukhi Samabaya Samity Ltd (cooperative society of wholesale traders and owners) elected a new committee for the next three years (2000-2003).

Khan Shahabuddin and Sundar Ali were elected president and secretary general respectively.

Other office bearers are M A Latif (vice president), Abul Bashir Bhuiyan (treasurer), M Mokhtar Hossain (executive member) and Abdul Kuddus (executive member).

The installation ceremony of the new committee will be held at 11 am today, says a press release.

Bangladesh Bar Council

A day-long workshop on 'Teaching Methodology for Bar Vocational Course' organised by Bangladesh Bar Council (BBC) was held at its premises Saturday with vice chairman of the council Barrister Muhammad Amir-ul-Islam in the

Obituary

MAM Mohiuddin Ahmed of Chakhar in Barisal district died in Dhaka yesterday due to old age complications. He was 96, reports UNB.

Mohiuddin, a close relative of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazul Hui, held responsible posts including Deputy Secretary to the then Pakistan government.

He left behind one son, some grand children and a host of relatives.

The body of late Mohiuddin will be buried at his family graveyard at Chakhar today.

Malancha Begum, mother of Advocate Abdur Rahman Howader, organising secretary of Bangladesh Awami Ainul Parishad, died on Saturday at her residence in Rajoir, Madaripur. She was 85, says a press release.

She left behind her husband, four sons, four daughters and a host of relatives and admirers. Ainuljib Parishad president Adv Sahara Khatun and general secretary Adv Abdullah Abu expressed condolence at her death.

FARIDPUR, June 18: Advocate Alij Zahurul Huq, a noted social worker of the district, died of cardiac arrest at a hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He was 81, reports UNB.

Advocate Huq, also a retired Deputy Superintendent of Police, is survived by his wife, four sons and a host of relatives and well-wishers.

He will be buried at a local graveyard after the arrival of his two sons living abroad.

APSU announce's protest programme in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, June 18: All-party Student Unity has announced a protest programme demanding release of the two leaders of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and withdrawal of cases filed against them under Public Safety Act, reports UNB.

The programme included demonstrations in Panchlala, Chandraona, Pahartali and Lalidighi and submission of memorandum to the deputy commissioner.

Russian envoy calls on FM

Newly-appointed Ambassador of the Russian Federation Nikolai Grigorovich Shevchenko called on Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at his office yesterday, reports UNB.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on matters relating to mutual interests.

Congratulations

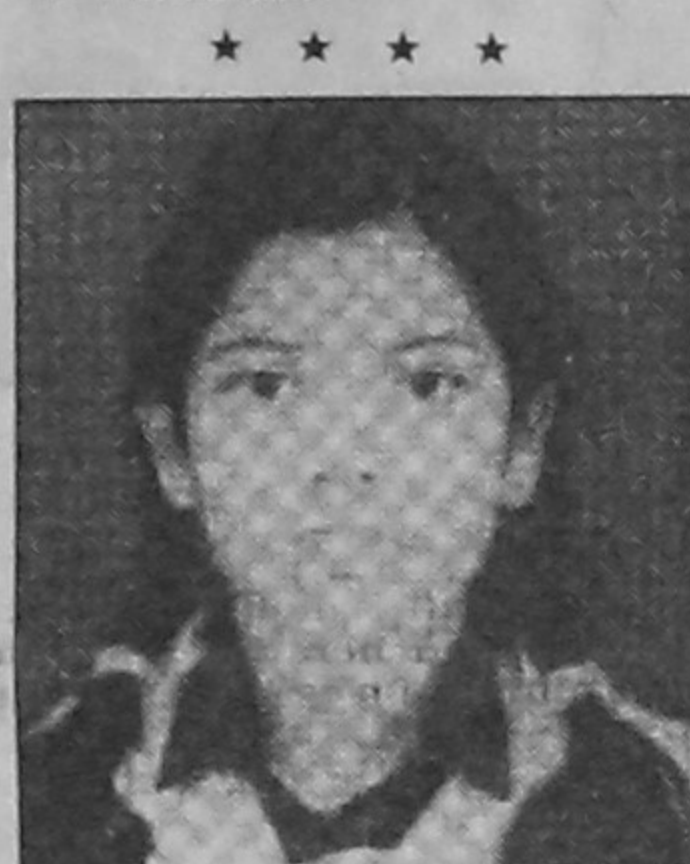


Tasneema Afreen (Shweta) clinched the 5th position in the SSC Humanities Group merit list under Dhaka Board from Agrani School and College, says a press release.

She secured 848 marks with distinctions in 8 subjects.

Tasneema is the daughter of Humayun Kabir, Academic Programme Advisor of the United States Information Centre (USIS) and Dilruba Kabir, a teacher of Agrani School and College.

She wants to pursue higher studies in economics and do her MBA in future.



Mahjabeen Akhand (Jessy) has secured the 7th position in the combined SSC merit list, 2nd among girls, from Humanities Group of this year's SSC examination under Comilla Board, says a press release.

She was a student of Chandpur Government Matiripith School. She obtained 809 marks along with distinction marks in three subjects.

Mahjabeen is the only daughter of Afroze Jahan and Jahangir Akand Selim, a prominent business personality and the president of Chandpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

She enjoys reading varieties of books and watching cricket on TV and wishes to pursue higher studies in English literature.

Saifur

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Prof Sobhan said Saifur Rahman came to attend the programme but went back from the door as he felt 'uncomfortable' for unknown reasons.

He also asked Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed what sort of politics they were doing where leading people of the two major parties do not talk to each other or even hesitate to attend a common programme.

"Bangladesh is probably the only country where two leading political personalities do not talk or even discuss major issues."

"How can you run the country if you don't have civilised political dialogue between you?" Prof Sobhan asked.

5 die in separate incidents at Manikganj

MANIKGANJ, June 18: Five people died in separate incidents in the district on Saturday night and today, reports UNB.

Police recovered the body of Surja Banu, 17, of Barandi village in Sadar thana from a paddy field today. The body bore several marks of injuries.

Shefali, 17, of Ulabari village in Daulatpur thana allegedly committed suicide by taking poison today. Ratna Begum of Vaghi village under Singair upazila also took her life by taking poison following a quarrel with her husband Salim, police said.

Witnesses said an Aricha bound bus hit a rickshaw on Dhaka-Aricha highway at Mula, throwing it into a roadside ditch killing Suman, 18, on the spot and injuring three others on Saturday night.

In another incident on the same night, a pedestrian identified as Israfil, 28, was run over by a truck at Golda in Satura upazila.

Captain Rafiqul Hoque, DFO, opted out of the process to design the question paper since his own son was a candidate, the clarification added while giving details of the examination process and the need for hiring cadet pilots. The last recruitment took place in 1994.

Budgetary allocation for parties

From page 1

fingers at the politicians for their misdeeds. Tofail said, "Don't mistrust politicians all the time. There are good as well as bad elements in politics as is the case in other fields." everybody should not be blamed for the misdeeds of a few politicians, he added.

As most of the participants including some politicians mentioned that a large number of people of questionable background have been elected to parliament, Tofail said the entire political system and specially morality of the people have greatly changed in the last two or two and a half decades.

"Money has become a factor in today's politics. Even the voters today ask whether the candidate has enough money and wealth to contest the election properly," he said.

When the speakers pointed out the deteriorating law and order, the Industries Minister also expressed his concern and said political parties have to work unitedly to improve the situation.

Earlier, Prof Rehman Sobhan said the emergence of the *mastaans* as a political as well as governance factor has been accompanied by the growing presence of money as a factor in Bangladesh's politics. Elections have over the years become a costly process and have increasingly become a rich man's game.

"The main difference lies in the growing presence in Bangladesh politics of a class of people who view politics as a business investment and will spend large sums of money in the electoral process which needs to be recouped when their preferred party comes to power," he noted.

"Such a commercialised perspective on politics is encouraged by the lack of transparency in the system of electoral and political financing or the protection of law, as in the US, to enforce such transparency."

Prof Sobhan said the increasing presence of politicians as indentors, traders, contractors and term loan borrowers from the banks to finance investment projects has already made its contribution to the perpetuation of default culture.

Many politicians now increasingly use *mastaans* as a political resource in the contention for political office and state patronage to have access to public resources, he said. The resultant nexus between politicians, business, the *mastaans* and the law enforcement agencies is now becoming embedded into the social structure of Bangladesh.

"The BNP, when in office, heavily depended on *mastaans* to capture the institutions of education and to enforce their political presence in particular constituencies. The law was used ineffectively against these elements and was instead directed to detain *mastaans* in the

service of the opposition."

In office, the Awami League treatment of opposition workers is the 'mirror image' of the behaviour of the BNP when in office. Both parties have abused the system of law enforcement to protect their own workers and to persecute those of their opponent, the CPD Chairman observed.

He said party workers intervene with the machinery for enforcement of law and order to ensure that it is not deployed against party workers who violate the law or participate in criminal activities.

"In many areas, the claims of the *mastaans* have become a recurrent cost of doing business. This politically patronised *mastaan* culture has institutionalised itself over successive regimes."

The dysfunctional nature of the political system is increasingly impacting the functioning of the machinery of government. Prof Sobhan said, suggesting that different professional bodies should give priority to their role as citizens rather than party loyalists.

"A proactive civil society can seek to influence the notions of political rationality on the part of political parties. An inclination by the government to surrender to the power of bank defaulters or unions of bank employees should be open to challenge by civil society," Prof Sobhan said.

However, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir said it would not be possible to curb crimes if the country can't achieve high growth rate, reduce poverty and create scope for productive employment.

Tofail mentioned that a 'peculiar culture' has developed that whenever a known criminal is arrested, opposition parties claim him to be their worker.

Referring to the Opposition's decision to join parliament session for a brief period, Tofail said it would undermine credibility of the politicians as people would think that they are joining the session just to continue as MPs to enjoy various benefits.

Alamgir said the major reason behind 'criminalisation of politics' is the degradation of values in the society. He blamed a section of intelligentsia for this.

He underscored the for establishment independence of the judiciary, bureaucracy and media for good governance.

Former finance minister M Syeduzzaman said good politics creates an atmosphere for good governance as well as good economy.

AMA Muhi, also a former finance minister, said political parties can be funded through budgetary provision. The result would be much better if there is allocation to fund political parties.

Former foreign secretary Faruque Sobhan said time has come to reorient the armed

Implementation of Wage Commission awards soon

Minister for Labour and Employment M A Mannan yesterday said the government will soon implement the awards of Wage Commission for the workers, reports BSS.

Responding to an urgent call attention notice from Kazi Sekander Ali of Awami League from Khulna in the Jatiya Sangsad, he said the government will implement the wards as part of its commitment to the workers.

The minister said that the government has formulated the Wage Commission in 1998 and took due measures for its implementation as soon as possible. The recommendations of the commission were handed over to the government recently with minimum wage at Taka 1000, he told the Jatiya Sangsad.

He said the Wage Commission had particularly worked in three sector corporations, while wage fixation at the private sector was now under process.

President of Bangladesh Employers' Federation Abul Quasem said the present government had earlier committed that power supply situation would be improved within 10 months but there is no sign of any improvement even in 48 months.

Laws should be enforced properly and those who are supposed to govern should be accountable, he added.

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Opposition MPs

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meeting. "The Speaker may adjourn the session instantly if he can guess our plan."

The BNP-led opposition alliance has been abstaining from attending Sangsad sessions since July 8 last year to protest various government activities and the Speaker's 'partisan role' and to press home their various demands. It has now decided to attend session for some time as a good number of MPs including BNP chief Khaleda Zia and JP chief H M Ershad are about to lose parliament membership on the ground of 90-day absence from the House.

Yesterday's BNPP meeting began at 11:05 am with Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia in the chair at her JS office and continued till 12:20pm. Whip Zainal Abedin Faruq and Amanullah Aman told newsmen that 102 MPs out of 108 were present.

Khaleda Zia informed the party MPs about the alliance's latest decision to return to the House and some "evil designs" of the government. She, however, refrained from saying whether they would continue to attend session or not. Sources concerned said almost all MPs attending the meeting supported the decision to attend session and appreciated Khaleda's 'positive move'.

Earlier, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof A Q M Badruddza Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Nazmul Huda and major (Retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed briefly addressed the meeting.

According to the sources, Khaleda Zia said many opposition MPs would lose membership on the ground of 90-day absence from the House and that the ruling Awami League and the Speaker are conspiring

to cancel membership on this ground and hold by-election to those vacant seats.

She said the AL government has hatched a conspiracy to achieve two-third majority in parliament and go for major Constitutional amendments including repeal of the provision for caretaker government and introduce more black laws with the motive to cling to power.

The Leader of the Opposition warned that after those amendments, the present rulers would force all parties to go for the next parliamentary polls under them, forcibly capture opposition's seats and then introduce one-party system.

She also hinted that there was a possibility of the opposition's return to the House yesterday but it didn't happen as the JP chief requested for one more day so that all his party MPs could attend.

Sources said Barrister Nazmul Huda expressed the view that BNP should take part in the proposed constitutional amendment for extending the period of reserved seats for women in the sangsad. He said this is a very crucial issue and it would not be wise for BNP to avoid it.

Khaleda Zia said then said her party would definitely consider it and take appropriate decision through discussion, the sources added.

Meanwhile, many of the BNP MPs, particularly those known as liberals, were heard saying before and after the BNPP meeting that Khaleda Zia took the positive decision regarding return to the JS as she was now apparently out of the grip of "rajaks and hard-liners" who had influenced her to take "unrealistic and imprudent" decisions on various vital issues.

pointment to meet her there.

Meeting sources said at this stage former finance minister and BNP Standing Committee member M Saifur Rahman wanted to know whether he would be allowed to enter the office.

"You will be allowed to enter the office if you have an appointment," Khaleda replied without any elaboration.

An influential leader who was present at the meeting told the Daily Star that most MPs were pleased at Khaleda's statement about the new office and believe that she might be able to take correct and realistic decision on important issues in future.

He said the MPs also think the party chief will now stay far from the party hardliners, who misguiding her on important issues, including boycotting municipal polls, parliament session and launching an untimely oust-government movement.

Referring to BNP's decision to return to parliament session, the MP said the new office helped her take this positive decision as she took opinion and suggestion from a number of MPs there.

A good number of MPs also thanked Khaleda's eldest son Tareq Rahman for setting up this office.

Calcutta police

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phone that arrest of a Bangladeshi citizen in Calcutta was reported in the press there.

The mission was trying its best to ascertain the identity of the arrested person and resolve the issue at the earliest, he said without elaboration.

The Bangladesh mission in Calcutta did not make any formal request for arrest of any criminal wanted in Dhaka, sources said.

The DB took up the Shipu murder case on June 4 and arrested two persons -- Sagar and Joy Habib -- on June 13. The two are likely to be produced before court today for fresh remand. Their three-day ends today, police said yesterday.

The two confessed their involvement in the murder, police said. Besides, the blood-stained shirts of two of the FIR-listed accused were also recovered from their possession, police added.

Taltala Park

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easy for the government to demolish and recover the land". About 100 such structures have sprang up on public lands and thoroughfares in the city, he added.

"We have written to DCC to return Taltala park to us but they say they can not do anything unless the policymakers decide to evict the illegal occupiers," said the Rajuk source.

Several hundred families of DCC sweepers live in the park. They have consolidated their grip on the open space over the years. In late 80s, the angry sweepers forced an eviction drive in which a sweeper was injured under a pay-loader.

DCC officials said the Mayor is aware of the problem but nothing can be done unless a rehabilitation scheme is chalked out. Over the years, none came up with any such move.

About the orphanage, DCC officials said they are not aware of any such complex.

"If they can demolish the Shahjalal Market in Uttara and give the public land why can't they do the same here?" asked a Rajuk official.

When contacted, Housing and Works Ministry Secretary Sohel Ahmed said since the park was handed over to DCC, it is their duty to clean it of illegal occupation.

Agriculture

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Commission, constituted by the government, had recommended for channeling money saved from subsidy-cut to agricultural researches. But there has been no reflection in the proposed budget to that end, he added.

Others who took part in the discussion included Zahurul Karim, executive chairman of Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC), Prof A M Moazzem Hossain of Mysmeningh Agriculture University, Dr Abul Kashem, senior research fellow of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Dr Md Ilyas, director general of Bangladesh Jute Research Institute (BJRI), Dr M A Jabbar of Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BIRRI), Dr M A Razzak of BARC, A B M Siddique, general secretary of BAEA, H M Monirul Haque, Honue of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADCO) and Abdul Mannan, secretary-general of Krishibid Institution.

They expressed concern at diminishing rate of return from agricultural fields due to fast degradation in soil health, rapid sacrificing of cultivable land for fast development of industries and housings, and absence of prioritisation in public resource allocation.

PARC

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"For the long term solutions, we have proposed for three groups -- functional and generalist, infrastructure which includes doctors, engineers and other professionals and economic cadres to cut down the inter-cadre rivalry and complexities."

He also said government employees cannot function like blue collar workers to use their welfare associations as trade unions and cited recent High Court rulings in this regard in the case of Bangladesh Bank Association.

Shamsul Huq further said the PARC has finalised its three volume recommendations which would be submitted to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by June 30.

The PARC has prepared the report to make the administration modern and dynamic to serve the needs of people, where everyone including the main opposition had been consulted, he said and hoped that the commission would continue to function as a permanent body.

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