

What's on today....

Discussion meeting: Dhaka Ahsania Mission will hold a discussion meeting on International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. Venue: Mission's auditorium, House No 19, Road No 12, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 4:00 pm.

BAF discussion meeting: Bangladesh Anti-Drug Federation of NGOs (BAF) will hold a discussion meeting on the occasion of 'International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking'. Chief guest: Minister for Home, Post and Telecommunications Mohammad Nasim. Venue: Hotel Sundarban. Time: 5:00 pm.

MPCL debate programme: The ATN School debate competition will be held. Organiser: Multimedia Production Company Ltd (MPCL). Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, Road No 7, Dhanmondi R/A.

UNAB symposium: United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will hold a symposium. Scientist Prof A M Harun or Rashid will be the keynote speaker at the function. Venue: Hotel Purbani International. Time: 5:30 pm.

Weather

Light rain forecast

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at most places over the country with heavy falls at places over Chittagong, Sylhet and Barisal divisions till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met office said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 36.5 degree Celsius at Chuadanga and the lowest 22.1 degree Celsius at Kutubdia.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.50 pm and rises tomorrow 5.13 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
Dhaka	29.6	24.2
Chittagong	29.5	23.0
Rajshahi	36.1	24.2
Khulna	31.8	22.6
Barisal	30.5	24.0
Sylhet	28.3	24.0
Cox's Bazar	30.0	23.2

HERE and THERE

East West University

The 'Environmental Society' (ES) of East West University (EWU) organised a certificate giving ceremony at the university premises on Saturday for the students who participated in the 'International Conference on Bangladesh Environment' (ICBEN) as volunteers from December '99 to January '00, says a press release.

The students received their certificates from the pro-Vice Chancellor Dr Mohammad Musa of EWU.

Registrar Firdaus Ali, Joint Registrar Suraiya Ahmad, lecturers of Business Administration, S M Sadul Huda and Ziaul Haq and Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr Mohammad Musa delivered speeches at the ceremony.

BUET

A seminar on 'Cellular Communication in Bangladesh' was held on Saturday at seminar room of BUET, says a press release.

A R Saber, director and M A Rafiq, manager of Grameen-Phone talked about various technical aspects of mobile communication in the country at the seminar. They stressed on the need for a regulatory commission in the communication sector.

Prof Dr A B M Siddique Hossain of EEE Dept, BUET discussed the latest developments in mobile communication technology.

Prof Dr Shahidul I Khan, Head, EEE Dept, BUET and Chairman, IEEE Bangladesh Section presided over the function. He distributed certificates among the participants of a short course on Computer Net-

working and E-commerce. The short course was jointly organised by SMARTNET, an IT firm and BUET student branch.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Inc, NY is the largest professional organization of electrical engineers in the world. The IEEE Bangladesh section has over 200 members and two student branches in BUET and IIT Gazipur.

Prabartak Sangha

CHITTAGONG, June 25: Prabartak Sangha, a welfare organisation, has announced a Tk 25.94 lakh budget for fiscal 2000-2001 to implement its education programme for help-

less children, reports UNB. The budget was announced in its annual general meeting on Friday.

Chaired by Advocate Suvash Chandra Nala, the meeting also decided to take legal steps to recover 135 acres land of the organisation which has allegedly been occupied by an 'influential' quarter.

A 15-member executive committee of Prabartak was formed at the meeting for a five-year term.

SCF

A 16-member new central committee of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF) has been formed with Nurul Islam as president and Khokan Das as general secretary, reports UNB.

The committee was formed at the 10th Central Council of the SCF, held on June 21-24 at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, a press release said yesterday.



Leader of Opposition in the Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia offering *muna-jat* along with family members of party activists Ismail Hossain Miah at his *qulkhwani* yesterday. Miah died of a cardiac arrest while taking part in a procession in the city.

— Star photo

Involvement of sex workers in govt, NGO activities demanded

By Staff Correspondent

Sex workers should be involved in all activities taken up either by the government or by the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to address their problems.

A steering committee should be formed by sex workers which will ultimately set a plan of action and implement various programmes of their welfare.

The above recommendations were made on the concluding day of a two-day workshop on 'Experience sharing and participatory future programme planning for sex workers' yesterday.

The workshop, organised by Concern Bangladesh at the IDB Bhaban in city's Agargaon, also recommended that sex workers be involved in advocacy programmes and health projects aimed at their welfare. It also said that sex workers should set up their own organisations across the country for their well-being.

The participants also identified some major problems including politicisation of issues concerning sex workers or socially disadvantaged people, their shelter, torture, arrest of floating sex workers and violation of their human rights in general.

The sex workers, numbering over 60, who came from across the country to take part in the event, strongly voiced their concern over neglect of themselves and their children by the common people.

"What has the government done so far to enable education of our children or find shelter for us?" asked a sex worker in tearful eyes.

She said, "We are most hated and neglected people here, it seems we have no place in the society. In fact, many of us commit suicide being unable to bear repeated physical and mental torture."

They recommended that

since sex workers' faces are affected by various facial diseases including HIV/AIDS, appropriate healthcare programmes should be taken up on emergency basis by the government or NGOs.

"We know about healthcare facilities by NGOs in some brotels but that's not enough for all the sex workers at risk. We call upon the officials concerned in the government to look into the matter immediately," said another sex worker who did not want to be identified.

Two NGO representatives (Durbur) and two sex workers from Indian state of West Bengal also participated at the two-day long workshop. Other participants included members of the UN body, government and non-government officials.

Dr Rudaba Khondhker, director of Concern Bangladesh, moderated the workshop.



BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan speaking at a discussion meeting titled "Four years of Awami misrule" organised by Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha (JASAS) at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium yesterday.

— Star photo

Court Reporters Assoc executives elected



Md Shahjada of Dainik Dinkal and Enadadul Haq Lal of Aker Kagoj have been elected as President and General Secretary respectively of the Dhaka District Court Reporters Association yesterday, says a press release.

Md Khairul Islam was the Election Commissioner at the association polls.

The other elected office bearers are: Prakash Biswas of Prothom Alo (Vice-President), Manjur Alam of Daily Independent (Assistant General Secretary), Chaitanya Chandra Halder of The Daily Star (Treasurer) and Samul Karim Alamgir of Bhorer Kagoj (Publicity and Office Secretary). Members of the Executive Committee are: Md Khairul Islam, Sheikh Rezaul Karim, Ali Azgar Shapon, Shahidullah Khan, Farid Ahmed Munshi and Saffur Rahman.

Abdul Haq Bhuiyan of Manab Zamin was elected Chief Advisor of the association.

Zaker Party meet today

A public meeting of Zaker Party will be held at Golapbag Sports Ground today at 3 pm instead of June 24, reports BSS.

OIC FMs

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ister Abdulouahed Belkeziz. Bangladesh has been tight-lipped about its prospects of winning the elections. It was the first country to announce its candidature for the post this time.

Initially, Dhaka was banking on the support of Saudi Arabia for its candidate and Riyadh's support was extended "in writing" months ago, foreign ministry officials claimed. At that time, the incumbent secretary general was learnt not to be seeking a second term and it did not look that Rabat would field a new one, the said.

Some observers noted that one of the major reasons that prompted Rabat to put up a new candidate is to garner Saudi support. Royal relations between Saudi Arabia and Morocco changed after the death of King Hassan. Rabat fielded a new candidate as Riyadh has reservations about incumbent Azeddine Laraki and in an attempt to improve bilateral ties, they further said.

Considering Saudi support as crucial, Dhaka again sent State Minister Abul Hasan Chowdhury to Riyadh. He was given Riyadh's assurance of "highest consideration" but not "unequivocal support," a highly placed source said.

Turkey's Under Secretary Faruk Logoglu came to Dhaka with its candidature to seek support. Bangladesh pleaded that Turkey instead support its candidature. Till yesterday, nothing more could be known about the two sides' latest stand as well as the Saudi position.

If the ICFM meet fails to arrive at a decision regarding the post of new Secretary General, the issue will be resolved at the next OIC Summit in Doha, Qatar, in November this year.

Cargo

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tal compensation to the 50 ships staying at Chittagong port now, would be deducted from the wages of dock workers gradually as per decision of today's meeting. Besides, the meeting urged the stevedores to hire private workers for gang booking if the port's dock workers decline to take booking from 8 pm tonight, he said. An investigation also would be carried out in this connection, he added.

Till filing of this report gang-booking did not resume, port and stevedore sources said.

Police-mob

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came more furious when police intercepted them again.

The UNO sent emergency message to the district headquarters seeking police reinforcements and the situation came under control at about 1 pm.

Police fired 15 shots and five tear gas shells.

When contacted, the UNO told UNB that he was not responsible for the mistake concerning SSC examination.

Deputy Commissioner Nurul Huq told UNB that the incident was undesirable but the situation was now under control.

More than 1000 students, including some brilliant ones in the area failed in the SSC examination due to unknown reasons and the matter was revealed when tabulation sheets reached the centres on June 22.

All of them failed only in 'Islam Dharma' due to use of a wrong set of questions in the examination.

Meanwhile, the government has ordered inquiry into the faults and failure of the students.

Phensidyl seized in Chakaria

COX'S BAZAR, June 25: The Narcotics Department seized 74 bottles of Phensidyl syrup from Chakaria Upazila here on Friday, reports BSS.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of the department searched a passenger bus and recovered the contraband goods. One person was arrested in this connection and the goods handed over to the customs authority.

A case has been filed with Chakaria thana.

Assam

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level. "Several thousands are in relief camps," he said. "Temporary shelters are being provided to flood-hit people."

The world's largest river island of Majuli in eastern Assam was inundated and locals were marooned. "Almost 80 percent of the 70,000-square kilometre (2,800-square mile) island is under water," a local government official told AFP over the telephone.

Rangers at the Kaziranga National Park in Assam, home to the one-horned Indian rhinoceros, were on guard with floodwaters threatening the wildlife sanctuary.

"One third of the 430-square km park is under water and the endangered wildlife is migrating to nearby hills," the official added.

PDB, plants

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Bank (ADB) and the other with China for projects involving 200 million dollars to increase its power distribution capacity to 1400 MW.

But these projects will take at least two years to be completed. By that time, 1400 MW will be needed as the demand is growing by 8 to 10 per cent per year.

"By next summer, we will add 130 MW power as the 70 MW second unit and three other 10 MW units of Rural Power Company and another 30 MW unit at Shahjibazar power plant will start operation."

"But officially, the demand for power will increase to 3040 MW from 2800 MW now. So the demand-production gap will continue to widen," he added.

"The only hope is that the 360 MW Haripur private power plant of AES will start partial operation in June-July next year. That may improve the situation," he pointed out.

PDB always gives a partial picture of the load shedding scenario, the source claimed. "The Finance Minister in his budget speech said there is 500 MW captive power generation as more and more people are relying on their own generators," the source argued. "This means there is actually a big gap between the projected demand and the real demand. If people could afford generators, probably the captive generation would have been much higher."

Floods

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the incessant rain since last few days.

In Netrokona, ten out of 14 unions of the bordering Durgapur and Kalkandaha upazilas have been submerged. Flood water also washed away about 500 kutchas houses.

The most affected unions are: Birishiri, Kakayergor, Bakoljura and Gaokandia in Durgapur upazila and Karnai, Rangchati, Kalkandaha Sadar, Langura, Pulga and Barkapon in Kalkandaha.

Many areas of southern districts in Chittagong Division also went under water following torrential rain that left over a dozen people dead in hill and house collapse Saturday.

Flash floods triggered by heavy rain and onrush of hill water inundated hundreds of dwellings in 30 unions of Chokoria, Sadar and Ramu upazilas of Cox's Bazar.

Road links between the southeastern border Teknaf and the district headquarters remained snapped since Sunday morning as the Cox's Bazar-Teknaf road went under water.

Newsprint

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The KNM needs about Tk 10 crore urgently to climb out of the financial crisis. It also needs huge funds to purchase chemicals, oil and spare parts.

The PDB, which has Tk 12 crore due from the KNM, is threatening to cut off power supply connection any moment, said Abdul Baten, managing director of the mills. He said the shortage of a working capital has forced them to slash production to the minimum although they have three papering machines ready for production.

Meanwhile, editors of all local dailies and a central leader of Bangladesh Sangbadpatrika Parishad have sought immediate intervention by the prime minister in the crisis. They urged her to arrange necessary funds to keep the mill in operation and thus save newspaper industry.

UNB adds: The KNM authorities today suspended 16 employees for "unleashing terrorism" in the mill compound on June 21.

The suspension order takes effect from today, said the general manager of the mill.

A group of agitating employees ransacked the GM's office and residences of some CBA (collective bargaining agent) leaders, creating panic in the compound on that day.

Later, an inquiry committee was formed to probe the incident. Twenty-two KNM employees were accused in a case in this regard.

4 Opposition MPs

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leagues briefly attended the parliament session on June 20 to evade a law that stripes an MP of his/her seat for absence for 90 consecutive working days.

Abdul Mannan and Golam Mohammad Siraj of BNP entered the House at around 10 a.m. As they attempted to leave a few minutes after, Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid smilingly said, "Please stay back and participate in the business." But they walked out silently.

After about 45 minutes came another BNP legislator, Harunur Rashid Khan Monno. As he moved to depart after a brief stay, ruling party MP Jalaluddin Talukdar shouted to draw the Chair's attention.

"The Opposition member is leaving, honourable Speaker. Please, allow him to speak," Talukdar said jokingly without microphone.

As Monno was walking out, the Deputy Speaker replied, "Mr. Harunur Rashid Khan Monno is leaving now to come back later."

ICC to decide

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Bangladesh's bid for elevation to a Full Member.

Having won the one-day status in 1997, Bangladesh saw its hope of getting the Test status dashed by 5-4 votes last year. It requires seven out of the nine votes.

But this time around Bangladesh emerged stronger than ever with Australia, South Africa and New Zealand, who opposed last year, supporting outright its cause.

Besides, Bangladesh's bid got an official momentum at Saturday when the Associated Members of the ICC renewed their unanimous pledge for the cause of the ICC Trophy champions.

So if everything goes as expected then June 26, 2000 could spring another big occasion for Bangladesh to cheer about.

Ekushey Television beams an international live news operation today dubbed *Bangladesh Swagner Din* to cover the historic event.

Apart from Ekushey, Bangladesh Television and Channel I take preparation to provide the news to its viewers instantly.

Dock workers

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spondent today.

He said already Chittagong port is facing a severe congestion as arrival of ships has increased from last month and disruption of ship movement in the channel coupled with suspension of cargo handling works due to rain.

Thirty-two feeder vessels as against 22 earlier, were operating in the Chittagong-Singapore-Colombo route with the increase of trade activities the resulted in arrival of more ships at this premier port of the country, port sources said.

"In such a situation, the piloting of ships had to suspend for two days from June 19 due to rough sea, worsening the congestion," port sources said.

Ship movement and cargo handling were disrupted yesterday due to heavy downpour and strong current in the channel.

Meanwhile, Chittagong Port Authority increased the number of berths for container ships from 5 to 6 to cope with the situation.

But the wildcat strike by the dock workers aggravated the situation.

Huge export cargo including garments were stockpiled at port jetties due to congestion.

Chittagong port handles over 1200 vessels annually, port sources said.

Land

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last 10 years, ground water level has gone down by 50 to 60 feet depending on the area.

The expert further said, "If we extract water from a very low level, there are two problems. Cost of extraction will go up and the water may contain harmful minerals."

The WASA Managing Director however said 'system loss' through underground water pipes is a 'blessing in disguise.' It is preventing a perching situation and also keeping a layer of clay wet. To reach a situation of land subsidence, the 250-feet clay layer between the surface and the ground water reservoir must dry up first. In the case of Motijheel BB area, about 150 feet of the clay layer has dried up, he pointed out.

"In some areas, water leakage from WASA pipes is helping this layer of clay keep wet and also trees to survive without spreading its roots to extract natural ground water," Haq said.

Is a bid to switch over to surface water, WASA plans to seal about 50 deep tubewells in the city as soon as Syedabad water treatment plant, scheduled to be completed in less than two years, goes into operation.

The city requires around 150 crore litres of water every day and the WASA with its existing infrastructure supplies about 120 crore litres of ground water daily.

An expert said ground water level in the city is falling at a rate of about 1.5 metres a year. Unless a massive switchover to surface water takes place, Dhaka will have a water crisis in the foreseeable future, he warned.

"Remember, many big cities have gone into history books due to shortage of water. In our case, the situation would be worse since the waters of many of our rivers are already toxic due to pollution," the expert noted.

"Why are you going?" Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked smilingly.

But the businessman-turned-politician continued walking out. He however looked back to say good bye to the Prime Minister.

Ershad-led Jatiya Party lawmaker Nasiruddin Choudhury's entrance at noon was almost unnoticed by ruling party lawmakers as his seat was close to the Treasury Bench.

Nevertheless, he failed in his apparent attempt not to draw attention as Prof. Ali Ashraf who was in the Chair pointed out his arrival.

"I see Mr. Nasiruddin Choudhury shuffling his documents. I think, he will take part in the budget discussion," Prof. Ashraf said.

But this apparently hastened Choudhury's departure.

UNB adds: About 19 MPs of BNP and Jatiya Party, including Sheikh Razzak Ali, Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury, MA Mannan and Barrister Rabeya Bhuiyan could not show up in the House on June 20.

BNP leader's qulkhwani held

By Staff Correspondent

The *qulkhwani* of late city BNP leader Ismail Hossain Miah was held yesterday at his Dholaikhal residence. He died of heart attack on Thursday.

BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, BNP's joint secretary general Sheikh Rahman, Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, Abdus Salam, Kazi Abul Bashar, Abul Khair Bhuiyan, Shirin Sultana and a large number of BNP leaders and activists attended the *qulkhwani*.

The BNP chairperson also met the family members of late Ismail Hossain Miah.

Jahanara Imam

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recipients of Jahanara Imam Memorial Award, 2000, selected by a five-member board headed by National Professor Kabir Chowdhury.

The awards will be conferred on Dr. Kazi Faruq Ahmed, President of Proshika Human Development Centre and Uchichi, a cultural organisation, at a ceremony on July 7 when the Jahanara Imam Memorial Lecture '2000 will also be held.

The awards are given every year since 1995 to persons and organisations for contributions in the movement against communalism and fundamentalism.

UNB adds: President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed paid rich tribute to Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam who launched a crusade for trial of the "war criminals" of 1971.

"Begum Imam waged a countrywide movement to unite pro-liberation forces upholding the spirit of the Liberation War," the President recalled in a message marking her death anniversary.

"Ekatturer Dinguli," a book written by her is a unique document portraying the horrendous wartime scenario, the President said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called upon the people to come forward to fulfil the dreams of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam.

"Shaheed Janani led the nation to be inspired with a renewed spirit of the Liberation War," she said in a message yesterday.

Eminent educationist and litterateur Jahanara Imam, through her writings, portrayed the feelings of a mother who lost her child in the Liberation War. As well as her wartime experiences, Hasina said.

Mango fair

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Amrapali and Mallika."

The fair organisers also had a team from Chapainawabganj at the venue to perform music highlighting the cultural affinity of mango in rural livelihood.

Folklore researcher Sabir Ahmed, economist Dr. Abdulah, journalist Sylvia Murtoza