

## What's on today....

**BIP seminar:** Bangladesh Institute of Peace (BIP) will hold a seminar on "Bangladesh in the 21st century: Hopes and Prospects" in observation of its 5th founding anniversary. Chief guest: Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed. Venue: National Museum. Time: 5:00 pm.

**Publication ceremony:** The publication ceremony of two books — 'Ava' and 'The Stage in Yours' by Sayema T Hasan Tori will be held. Chief guest: Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria. Publisher: National Publication. Venue: VIP Lounge, National Press Club. Time: 4:30 pm.

**Lecture:** A lecture on 'Global Energy Scenario and Bangladesh Situation' will be delivered by Prof Dr M Nurul Islam, IAT Director. Venue: Seminar Room (1st floor) of Institute of Appropriate Technology (IAT) on BUET campus. Time: 3 pm.

**Opening ceremony:** The opening ceremony of BRAC Limb and Brace Fitting Centre will be held. Venue: 22/11, Block-B, Mohammadpur Housing Estate, Mirpur Road. Time: 10 am.

## ..... and tomorrow

**Seminar:** A day-long study based seminar on "Problem and Prospect of Women Union Parishad Member in exercising their role in Union Parishad for the empowerment of women" will be held. Organiser: Mass-line Media Centre (MMC). Keynote paper: Quazi Mousumi Hossain and Zamnatul Ferdous Snigdha. Venue: LGED Seminar Room. Time: 10 am.

**Ghazal evening:** Alliance Francaise de Dhaka will present a live Ghazal evening by Mesbah. Venue: Alliance Francaise premises. Time: 7 pm.

**Film festival:** Chalchitram Film Society in association with Information and Culture Department of the Indian High Commission inaugurates a week-long film festival titled 'The Glorious Past of Our Films.' Megher Onek Rang by Hannur Rashid will be screened on the first day. Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium. House No. 25, Road No. 2, Dhammondi R/A. Time: 5:00 pm.

## Weather

## Light rain likely

Light rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Sylhet division and at one or two places over Chittagong, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Barisal and Khulna 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 35.8 degree Celsius at Jessore and Iswardi and the lowest 25.2 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:50 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:16 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	35.0	29.0
Chittagong	34.3	26.7
Rajshahi	35.1	27.4
Khulna	35.6	26.4
Barisal	34.8	26.4
Sylhet	34.2	27.0
Cox's Bazar	34.8	26.0

## HERE and THERE

## Maizbhandari Foundation

Maizbhandari Rahmania Moinia Foundation (RMF), a voluntary organisation, recently launched a rickshaw project under which it will provide rickshaws to destitute and poor people in the outskirts of the capital, reports BSS.

The chief patron of the foundation and president of Ahle Sunnat Al Jamat Shah Sufi Moulana Syed Moinuddin Ahmed Maizbhandari inaugurated the project on Sunday at Uttarkhan Katrchakra by handing over five rickshaws to the poor people.

Speaking briefly on the occasion, Syed Moinuddin Ahmed said Islam is religion of humanity not of leading a luxurious life. The Awlad-e-keram always works to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor he said adding that RMF has launched the rickshaw project with a view to creating income generating opportunities for the poor people.



Five Rotary Clubs of Rotary International District 3280, Bangladesh were adjudged outstanding clubs for their performance in 1999-2000. Seen in the picture are Rotarian Golam Mostofa, president of Rotary Club of Dhaka Cosmopolitan (L) and Rotarian Mamun Chowdhury, president of Rotary Club of Dhaka Mid City (R) with assistant governor of Zone-10 Rotarian A K M Shamsuddin (C).



## Obituary

Dr Khandakar Shahidul Azim died on Monday night at the Bangladesh Medical University Hospital. He was 51, says a press release.

Dr Azim was suffering from viral fever.

His funeral will be held on July 7 at his residence at House No 826, Road No 4B, Baitul Aman Housing Society, Shyamoli after Asr prayers.

## Two shot in city

By Staff Correspondent

A school student and a housewife were shot in separate incidents in the city yesterday. The victims were identified as Bayazid Islam, 15, a student of class ten in St. Gregory School and Jahanara, 22, wife of Shahidul Islam.

The incident took place when Bayazid was returning to his home at about 5 pm yesterday. At that time two local gang of miscreants started firing each other and Bayazid received bullet in his waist.

The victim was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In another incident, housewife Jahanara of North Golapbagh in the city received bullet while she was going to a nearby stationery to purchase oil yesterday morning.

## Health insurance for all poor people soon: Selim

Health Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim yesterday said the government is actively considering the introduction of health insurance throughout the country to ensure better health for all, reports BSS.

"We are actually now working on introduction of health insurance particularly for those below the poverty line and with that end in view we are currently examining the experiences of the South and South Asian countries," he said adding that those countries had successfully provided insurance facilities for their peoples.

The minister was inaugurating a three-day international conference on the "Health Sector Reform: Equity Efficiency and Sustainability" at a hotel yesterday morning. Leading health and demographic experts of 14 countries of the world are taking part in the conference.

"We have already taken programme-based approach under the Health and Population Sector Programme (HPSP) since 1998 on the basis of three fundamental principles like reducing maternal mortality rate and illness, expanding and

continuing the present reproductive health effort, and reducing the infectious diseases rate," he said.

Referring to the expansion of health service activities and cost-effectiveness, the health minister said construction work of the community clinics, one each for 6,000 people at village-level is going on in full swing to make available primary health care at the doorsteps of the rural people.

Health Secretary Sayed Alamgir Farouk Chowdhury presided over the inaugural function of the conference while State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr M Amanullah, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof A K Azad Chowdhury, British High Commissioner Dr David Carter, Additional Health Secretary Dhiraj Kumar Nath and Dr Kaemthong Indaratna from Chulalongkorn University of Thailand spoke on the occasion as special guests.

State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Professor Dr M Amanullah said priority has been given to adequate funding for maternal health service to increase its access of

poor women for safe child birth.

"We already recognised deadly diseases like HIV/AIDS, arsenic, tuberculosis and leprosy," Amanullah said, adding that significant programmes have already been taken to create awareness among the people to prevent these diseases.

Referring to the subject of the conference and the negative impact of globalisation Vice Chancellor Prof Chowdhury said this is the proper time to take significant initiatives to ensure safe health for all.

Referring to lack of education of masses, British envoy Dr David Carter laid emphasis on conducive academic atmosphere in educational institutions from where people will get proper knowledge which in turn will help them understand the health situation.

A total of 350 persons, from home and abroad, are taking part in the international conference. USA, UK, Nepal, India, Thailand, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, South Africa, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Japan, China and Switzerland are taking part.

## Rallies at DU protesting sexual harassment

By Staff Correspondent

A number of student organisations yesterday held rallies and brought out processions on the Dhaka University campus protesting sexual harassment of girl students.

They demanded trial and punishment of those who were involved in the sexual abuse of a girl student on the campus last month.

The student organisations also demanded establishment of a cell on the campus for registering complaints on sexual harassment.

The organisations include Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, Kendrio Gonotantrik Chhatra Oikya and Platform for Resisting Sexual Harassment and Terrorism.

Alliance of Five Student Organisations will also bring out procession on the campus today protesting sexual harassment.

Phensidyl seized

From Our Correspondent

Sonargaon Thana police recovered 375 bottles of phensidyl from a bus near Kanchpur bridge on Dhaka-Sylhet highway on Tuesday morning.

They said, that the bottles were discovered when around 6 am the police searched a Dhaka bound passenger bus near Sonargaon filling station.

Police seized the phensidyl bottles and arrested the driver Nasiruddin, 30, and another passenger, Sirajul Islam, in this connection.



Bangladesh Chhatra Federation held a protest procession in the city yesterday to denounce the recent rape incident on DU campus.

— Star photo



Gonotantrik Chhatra Oikya brought out a procession on the DU campus yesterday denouncing the recent rape incident on the campus.

— Star photo

## Wild species of animals on verge of extinction: Sajeda

Threat to bio-diversity of Sundarbans

Environment and Forest Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury has said that different species of wild animals of the Sundarbans were on the verge of extinction, threatening its bio-diversity, reports UNB.

"Two species of amphibians, 14 of reptiles, 25 species of birds and five mammals are facing extinction from the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest," she told an inception report presentation ceremony of the Sundarbans Biodiversity Conservation Project (SBCP) yesterday.

The minister called upon local and foreign scientists and experts to contribute more to the sustainable scientific management development of the

Sundarbans, which was declared a world heritage zone by the UNESCO.

She said that the project was taken up in 17 thanas within 20 kilometres from the Sundarbans, considering the threat to bio-diversity and ecological balance.

"The government has taken up several effective steps for the development of the Sundarbans as trees and animals in the forest are no more safe," she said.

She said the beauty and biodiversity of Sundarbans are being damaged due to theft of forest resources by illegal intruders and ecological balance is being destroyed by cutting down of trees, especially Sundari trees.

Referring to the government decision to stop felling of trees from natural forests in the next five years, the minister hoped that the government will be able to play a positive role in this regard in the future.

State Minister for Environment and Forest H N Ashiqur Rahman has said that forest land of the country is being reduced gradually to meet the demand for firewood and agricultural land of the increasing population.

Deputy Resident Representative of Asian Development Bank, Omkar Seresta, team leader of SBCP Robert Ellis and Project Director A Z M Shamsul Huda also took part in the discussion.

## US most vital trading partner of Bangladesh

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad yesterday said that the United States is the most important trading partner of Bangladesh, reports BSS.

"Our bilateral trade is rapidly growing and the trade volume between the two countries has increased from a mere US dollar 654 million in 1991-92 to over US dollar 2.2 billion in the fiscal 1998-99," he said at a function held in the city to celebrate the 224th Independence Day of the United States of America.

He said that the United States has also increased its investment in Bangladesh substantially. From a paltry US dollar 20 million in 1995, the US investments have exceeded US dollar 750 million and, hopefully, many more millions are in the pipeline, Azad said, adding most of the US investments have been in the vital energy and power sector.

The Foreign Minister also said Bangladesh and the United States enjoy excellent relations.

"I should say that in the wake of the visit of President Clinton to Bangladesh, our relations are now better than ever before."

However, later replying to Mir Shakhwat Ali Daru (AL), Zillur Rahman said that the government was also sealing the arsenic contaminated tubewells.

Meanwhile, the project au-

## Govt identifies 3,119 persons infected by arsenic poisoning

The government so far identified 3,119 persons infected by arsenic poisoning, reports UNB. The government is conducting a phase-wise countrywide survey to identify arsenic contaminated tubewells and arsenic affected patients under the ongoing Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project.

Deputy Leader of the House and LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman told this in parliament yesterday, replying to two separate questions of Alamgir Haider Khan (BNP) and Kazi Sekandar Ali (AL). Both MPs were absent from the House.

Haji Mohammad Selim of AL introduced Kazi Sekandar Ali's question while Alamgir Haider's question remained tabled.

"If the arsenic level of the water of a tubewell crosses 0.05 MC/litre, we take precautionary measure marking it with red paint and if the level is lower we mark it with green paint," said the minister.

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Yasmin Zaman Brett has been elected the Deputy Mayor of Enfield, London recently. Her election has received great prominence in the Turkish media and the European edition of the largest circulated, Turkish daily Hurriyet. Yasmin is a Turkish mother and her father is a former ambassador of Bangladesh and a columnist of The Daily Star.

## Faulty transformer causes power disruption in city

By Staff Correspondent

The DESA control room claimed that there was no loadshedding in the city yesterday but residents of many areas complained that they faced power disruption several times for hours together.

"Officially we did not maintain any loadshedding in the areas under DESA command yesterday but there was some disruption in power supply due to poor lines and over loading," said an official.

He further said that due to weak lines power supply was disrupted in some areas causing around 20 megawatt loadshedding, he claimed.

The worst affected areas were Tejgaon, Kakrail, Paribagh, Elephant Road and Dhanmondi residential areas, he said. The main reason of disruption in power supply was mechanical problem at a transformer at Ulan.

The transformer will be replaced very soon and situation will improve following that, the official added.

## Kashmir

From page 1

ter the Cabinet meeting. Farooq Abdullah, the top elected official of Jammu-Kashmir, met with Vajpayee just before the meeting. Details of their talks were not immediately known.

Vajpayee's BJP and the main opposition Congress party have both opposed the autonomy demand. The plan also has been rejected by Kashmiri militant groups in the state as well as by neighbouring Pakistan — which says Kashmir is part of its territory.

Since 1989, militant groups in the Indian-held region have been fighting to separate the state from India. Some of them want it annexed with Pakistan, others favor an independent status.

The All Party Hurriyat Conference, an umbrella group of 32 political parties, religious groups and former rebel organisations, wants Kashmiris to determine the status of their region, which was guaranteed in a United Nations resolution in 1948.

The Hurriyat wants the dispute to be resolved through talks involving India, Pakistan and Kashmiris — whom it claims to represent.

## Nasim

From page 1

she kept mum when terrorists fought gun battle at Dhaka University, leaving one killed.

"How could she give a statement when Chhatra Dal workers shed blood on the campus and when one person, while making bomb, dies at the BNP central office?" asked Nasim.

He accused the BNP hierarchy of deploying outsiders to rehabilitate the Pintu group against the Laltu group in the JCD at the DU.

Quoting the DU authorities, the home minister told the House that the university suffered most from terrorism during the regime of Khaleida Zia. "The Chhatra Dal gunfight interrupted four years of peace at Dhaka University."

Citing DU statistics, he said at least 12 people were killed in factional fights in the JCD and more than 100 incidents of armed terrorism took place during the regime of Khaleida Zia.

Nasim said the opposition leader has joined hands with the killers of Bangabandhu who are financing the current street agitation of her party.

## Night guard

From page 1

tal, where he died at about 2:30 am, hospital sources said.

Some sources at the hospital claimed that Ali died due to lack of proper treatment. Despite repeated attempts, DMCH authorities could not be contacted for their comments in that regard.

None could be arrested in connection with the incident, police said last night.

Mirpur police recovered the body of Aliz Rahman, 15, from a passenger bus at Gabaal yesterday afternoon. He was the son of Mona Malik of Bhagalpur in Rajbari Sadar. The bus came from Faridpur.

The body was sent DMCH for autopsy, police said.

## Relocate sectt

From page 1  
cities. However, Dhaka suffers from serious traffic congestion largely due to the absolute lack of roads, inadequate road network configuration and inefficient traffic management.

The Japanese experts suggested for short-term and long-term measures to improve air quality. Replacement of two-stroke engine vehicles and introduction of compressed natural gas (CNG)-operated public bus could be a remedy, they said.

"There is an increasing demand of public mass transportation in Dhaka and an environmentally sound option is to introduce CNG-operated bus," said Md. Masud Karim, a JBIC consultant, in his keynote paper on the status of air quality and state-of-the-art control measures in Dhaka.

He recommended for renovation of Eastern Refinery to facilitate supply of lead-free petrol and low-sulphur diesel, as a long-term measure. The government can go for conversion of vehicles and refuelling station into CNG-based ones and development of transportation infrastructure, added Karim.

The Bangladesh-born Japanese expert also suggested for implementation of a green agenda for the citizens of Dhaka and an integrated approach to improve the capital city's environment.

The experts said coordination among development partners is necessary to avoid duplication of approaches. Immediate replacement of two-stroke engine vehicles by four-stroke engines, reduction of lead and sulphur content in fuel, use of natural gas in urban traffic fleets and encouraging transport infrastructure development in private finance can do the trick.

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain, who attended the inaugural function as the chief guest, identified exodus of rural people to the capital as one of the most serious urban problems.

He said the government was under tremendous pressure to let the two-stroke engine vehicles ply in rural areas when it banned those. But that alone would not solve the gigantic problem, Hossain said.

He said the government is implementing a set of components under the Dhaka Urban Transport Project to improve the city's transportation and environment.

Japanese Ambassador in Bangladesh Kazuyoshi Urabe in his speech said Japanese investors in Dhaka mostly complain about Dhaka's transportation problem.

ERD Secretary Mashiur Rahman and the chief representative of JBIC also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier, Kazuo Hishida, Technical Advisor of JBIC, presented a keynote paper titled 'Experience on Air Pollution Control in Tokyo Metropolis.'

CFTC concerned

From page 12

posed container charge hike, the business community in Dhaka today said they would oppose the move.

"We are already charged much higher compared to other areas of the world," said a garments exporter. "Any additional charge will seriously affect our export, and we shall oppose it."

The details of the proposal were yet to be known. The business community will take necessary steps once details are available, he added.

Repatriation

From page 12

said.

Efforts are on to take up the issue of repatriation of 369 Myanmar nationals at foreign ministry level, they added.

Meanwhile, over 500 other Myanmar nationals are reportedly staying in different jails as under-trial prisoners after arrest on different charges.

Goods train

From page 1

pur and Darshana-Gethe, through which Bangladesh Railway (BR) carried 63,000 metric tons of export items and 17 lakh metric tons of imported goods last year.

Soon after the agreement both the sides said with the revival of the agreement transportation costs will come down remarkably. "Traffic congestion at Benapole border and port will be eased as businessmen are expected to prefer rail rather than trucks," Abdul Rahim DG, BR, said. Replying to a question on introduction of passenger train on the route he said "it depends on two governments."

KNM

From page 1

transported to the mill undisturbed.

"It is definitely a sabotage. Agents of saboteurs are active to ruin Asia's biggest newsprint mill at Khulna, which once produced 120 tonnes of export quality newsprint daily," said a local member of parliament from the ruling party. "Any sort of conspiracy against the mill will be crushed at any cost."

Meanwhile, Alhaj Liaquat Ali, Editor of Dainik Purbanchal and a central leader of Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad, appealed to the Prime Minister to intervene to resolve the crisis in KNM and save the newspapers. He also appealed the government to probe the suspension of production.

PM: PARC

From page 12

ernment Employees Provision, 1979.

Upazilas

The Prime Minister informed the House that new upazilas were created at Dumki in Patuakhali, Mujibnagar in Meherpur and Meghna in Comilla. A decision was taken to set up two more new upazilas at Ashuganj in Brahmanbaria and Matlab (uttar) in Chandpur as part of the decentralisation programme.

Besides, 32 new police stations and 50 police inquiry centres were set up during the present government, she said.

In reply to a supplementary question from Abul Kashem (AL), the Prime Minister said upazila administration would be provided with computers after district administration. She said computers are given to educational institutions for basic computer training of school children.