

What's on today.....

**Lecture:** Syed Ali Ashraf Memorial Lecture will be held. Venue: Hotel Sundarban. Time: 9:30 am-12:30 pm, 2:00 pm-5:00 pm.

**Seminar:** Health for All (Shobar Jonnya Shasthya) will hold a seminar on "Facts about Dengue fever." Keynote speaker Dr. Pabir Hossain. Venue: Ganashasthya Nagar Bhaban, House No 14/E, Rd No 6, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 5:30 pm.

**NMST lecture:** National Museum of Science and Technology (NMST) will hold a lecture on "Production of Rare Sugars and Enzymes from Streptomyces SPP" as part of its Lectures on Popular Sciences Series. Speaker: Dr Md Mahfuzul Huq. Venue: NMST auditorium, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Time: 4:00 pm.

**Meeting:** Supreme Court Lawyers' Unit of Bangabandhu Parishad will hold an emergency meeting. Venue: SC Lawyers' Bhaban, Hall No 2. Time: 4:30 pm.

**Discussion meeting:** Amra Surjumukhi, a socio-cultural organisation will hold a discussion meeting and recitation programme titled *Katha, Kabita O Abriti* on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Venue: Central Public Library auditorium, Shabbagh. Time: 5:30 pm.

**Meeting:** The regular monthly meeting of Pabna Samity in Dhaka will be held. Venue: Ramna Chinese Restaurant. Time: 6:00 pm.

**Uttam Kumar Retrospective:** Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen *Banpalasher Padabali* starring Uttam Kumar and Supriya. Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium, House No 25, Rd No 2, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6:15 pm.

**Play:** Department of Theatre and Music of Dhaka University presents a play *Karnala Ranir Sagar Dighi*. Organiser: Indian High Commission. Venue: Indian Cultural Centre auditorium, 754 Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi. Time: 7:00 pm.

**PIB workshop:** Publication and Feature Department of Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) begins a 3-day long workshop on 'Personality: Method to write features' for young children. Venue: PIB.

..... and tomorrow

**PIB discussion meeting:** Bangladesh Press Institute (PIB) will hold a discussion meeting on "Bangabandhu in the memory of contemporary journalists." Venue: PIB auditorium. Time: 10:30 am.

**Press conference:** Bangladesh Society of Haematology will hold a press conference on "Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever and its Treatment." Venue: Seminar Room, Block C (9th floor), Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Shabbagh. Time: 10:30 am.

**Discussion meeting:** Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will hold a discussion meeting to mark the Rabindra-Nazrul Jayanti. Venue: Sufia Kamal auditorium of National Museum, Shabbagh. Time: 4:00 pm.

**Rally and human chain:** SANGAT - South Asian Network for Gender Activist and Trainer - will hold a rally and human chain formation to mark Hiroshima Day. Venue: Central Shahid Minar. Time: 5:00 pm.

**Rally and discussion:** National Adivasi Coordination Committee Bangladesh will hold a *adivasi* (Indigenous) in the morning and a discussion in the afternoon on occasion of International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Venue: Rally - Central Shahid Minar. Discussion - TSC auditorium. Cultural programme - TSC auditorium. Time: Rally 10:00 am, discussion: 4:00 pm and cultural show: 6:00 pm.

**Film show:** The official launching ceremony of the countrywide screening of *Muktitte Kotha*, a documentary on ordinary people's contributions in 1971, by Tareque and Catherine Masud will be held. Chief guest: State Minister for Information Prof Abu Syeed. Venue: British Council auditorium, Nilkhet. Time: 6:00 pm.

**Uttam Kumar Retrospective:** Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen *Shadhu Ekti Bochor* starring Uttam Kumar and Supriya. Venue: Auditorium of Indian High Commission, House No 25, Rd No 2, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6:15 pm.

**Play:** Department of Theatre and Music of Dhaka University presents a play *Tobatek Singh*. Organiser: Indian High Commission. Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, House No 754, Satmasjid Rd, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 7:00 pm.

Weather

Moderate rain likely

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

Day temperature may rise slightly over Rajshahi, Sylhet and Dhaka divisions and may remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country. Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature 35.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Khulna and the lowest 23.5 degree Celsius in Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:37 pm and rises on Wednesday at 5:31 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	32.3	25.9	76	74
Chittagong	32.8	25.0	72	85
Rajshahi	35.0	26.5	80	83
Khulna	35.2	26.4	80	74
Barisal	33.2	26.5	78	69
Sylhet	30.8	23.5	96	75
Cox's Bazar	32.2	26.2	76	86

Freedom Fighters Council formed

By Staff Correspondent

A new forum of the country's freedom fighters named Freedom Fighters Council (FFC) was formed yesterday with a view to enhance freedom fighters' contributions in the country's overall development.

The FFC, formed at a meeting of freedom fighters with veteran freedom fighter Lt Col (Retd) Kazi Noorzaman in the chair, will enhance communication and cooperate among freedom fighters families.

All sector troops, KS Force, Z Force, under the exile Bangladesh government and all freedom fighters will be able to become a member of the forum, a press release said yesterday.

A 13-member committee was formed with Lt Col (Retd) Kazi Noorzaman as convener, Noyem Jahangir and Major (Retd) Syed Munir Rahman as joint convener. Other members of the committee are: Dr Zafarullah Chowdhury, Maj Gen (Retd) Ezzal Ahmed Chowdhury, Maj Gen (Retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim Bir Profik (BP), Farook-e-Azam, BP, Sadek Ahmed Khan, Abdullah Hil Safi, Md Sayed Rahman, Habibur Rahman Khoka, BP, Nasiruddin Ahmed and Ameer Hossain Mollah.

The FFC will hold a council in January 2001 on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the country's liberation movement.

The council will hold regular monthly meeting on the first Saturday of each month at 5:00 pm at the seminar room of Gausshastha Kendro.



Police personnel guarding the entrance to Baitul Mukarram Mosque in the city yesterday. The police were deployed in various parts of the city yesterday following the clash with the 4-party Alliance in the city on Sunday. — Star photo

Film stars' melodrama I don't know why Shakil harassing me: Poppy

By Staff Correspondent



Film star Poppy held a press conference in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Film star Sadika Parveen Poppy at a press conference yesterday failed to provide any evidence that justified her allegations that Shakil Khan had physically assaulted her.

The starlet arranged the press conference at the Jatiya Press Club following news reports of Shakil Khan's arrest on charges of assaulting and abducting her and forcibly keeping her at his residence in Moghbazar Wednesday last. Shakil Khan, on the other hand, had claimed that Poppy was his wife, a charge that Poppy denied.

"I do not have any idea why Shakil keeps on harassing me again and again," the starlet said adding, that Shakil had also attacked her several times in the past.

However, the actress visibly appeared embarrassed when journalists asked her to provide evidences of any assault on her, including medical documents. "I did not bring any," she said. "It did not occur to me that I should bring in some evidence."

"I have not married Shakil," Poppy said and denied Shakil's claims that she had spent nights with him.

News reports said that Shakil had confined her at his Moghbazar residence for few hours from where her mother rescued her. The following day Shakil filed a case with Ramna police accusing Poppy's mother of ransacking his residence.

Poppy filed a counter case with Ramna police on Friday night and Shakil Khan was arrested the following morning.

When asked why she had gone directly to her shooting spot instead of going to a doctor after her mother rescued her from Shakil's house, Poppy said that she thought she would be more secured at the shooting spot than her home.

"I did not file any case immediately," Poppy said, "because my father was not home. I filed the case on Friday after he returned."

Film Director Motajur Rahman Akber, Shaikat Jamil, Mohammed Anran and Abu Sayed Khan also attended the conference.

Injured Feni JCD leader dies on way to DMCH

From Our Correspondent

FENI, Aug 7: An injured JCD leader died last night at Kauchpur on way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The victim was identified as Mohammed Shipon, 18, son of Mohammed Ishaque Mia of village Babanipur under Daganbhuyyan upazila and Organising Secretary, Rajapur Union JCD.

He was kidnapped by some unidentified gunmen on Thursday morning and taken to Amubhayan Bazar where he was mercilessly beaten.

Local people sent him to Feni Hospital on Friday in a critical condition. Doctor referred Shipon to Dhaka Medical College Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

He died on way to Dhaka near Kanchpur. The body was sent to Feni Hospital Morgue today for autopsy.

A case was filed with Daganbhuyyan thana in this connection.

City AL

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damage to vehicles or properties by opposition activists during the half-day hartal.

The meeting resolved that party workers would bring out anti-hartal processions from different parts of the city today in an effort to mobilize public opinion against the opposition sponsored hartal programme.

Some of the city unit leaders and party lawmakers also vowed to make their respective localities hartal-free.

Awami League MPs from different city constituencies, leaders of city unit and front organisations attended the meeting.

Reform parties to stop 'sick politics'

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Coalition, a platform of six organisations, arranged the seminar at the IDB Bhaban conference room.

Feroz M Hassan of the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance and Manzoor Hassan of Transparency International prepared the keynote paper and the former presented it.

Professor Rehman Sobhan of the Centre for Policy Dialogue attended the seminar as chief guest, while renowned lawyer and Gana Forum President Dr. Kamal Hossain, FBCCI President Abdul Awal Mintoo and Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kori, an NGO, were special guests. Mahfuz Anam, Editor of the Daily Star, moderated the seminar.

Economists Debapriya Bhattacharya and Hussain Zillur Rahman discussed on the keynote paper. Later on, the audience was invited in the discussion.

Feisal Hussain, on behalf of the coalition, gave an address of welcome while Taleyia Rahman gave the vote of thanks.

Termining the political culture as "peculiar," Prof. Sobhan said the political parties are more interested in their own well-being than the nation's values and ideologies are largely absent, while major parties are failing to accommodate each other's views.

"Once our businessmen used to finance political parties, then they started buying politicians and now they themselves are becoming politicians," he said.

Prof. Sobhan regretted that the civil society, too, is now politically divided in the context of a confrontational politics involving hoodlums. "The armed thugs have no political colour... they float from one party to another - from Awami League to BNP and vice versa."

"The bipolar polity has, however, also contributed to the confrontational style of our national politics which is undermining the working of the parliamentary system. The emergence of two parties of equal strength has also contributed to the emergence of a duopoly over the national political system. This duopoly has served to stifle any challenge by smaller parties," read a paper presented at the seminar.

The paper further said the duopolistic structure has thus eroded the pluralism as well as

challenge within the political system, contributing to the emergence of structural weakness within the two parties as choices available to the electorate were reduced.

Dr Kamal Hossain strongly suggested that the members of civil society should immediately launch a campaign against the political parties sheltering and promoting the armed criminals for their vested interests.

Describing the current state of national politics as sick, he said the politics has made the people so sick that they are in the intensive Care Unit. It has failed to give the people a sense of security. "Political parties should not divide the society."

Noting the contributions of the vast majority in building up the civil society, Dr Kamal said, "We are betraying those people who have built us."

About the presence of armed goons and black money in the politics, he said it should be the most urgent agenda before the civil society.

Normal legitimate expectations of every citizen are not being understood by the political government, he said, referring to the law and order situation. "We are concerned, but we don't know what we can do," said the noted jurist.

Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya said in terms of democracy and development, the situation in the 90s than the 80s and there was stagnancy in the 80s while the 90s passed through unfulfilled potentials.

Abdul Awal Mintoo stressed the need for a check and balance in the executive branch. He suggested that the President enjoy more executive powers to play an effective role in the crucial political situation.

The business leader also viewed that the local government bodies should be given more powers to make the local administration accountable and effective.

Hussain Zillur Rahman refused to say that the nation is stagnated. "People are struggling to advance, we should go for self-criticism to get rid of the confrontational situation."

Khushi Kabir said that lack of accountability is resulting in the social and political confrontation. "Like the government, the opposition should also prove their accountability."

The keynote paper suggested that all elections be held under the caretaker government and the provision of by-election abolished. In case a seat falls vacant, it should be filled up through nomination of a person belonging to the party that earlier won the seat, the paper observed.

The paper proposed that the term of a government should be reduced from five years to four years because a five-year term makes the ruling party "despotic" and the opposition "desperate."

To make the role of the Speaker neutral, it recommended that the Speaker should resign from his party as soon as he/she is elected to the position and be given the opportunity to win the next election unopposed.

The keynote paper said the country's politics is increasingly becoming confrontational and unstable. "The situation is such that whatever democratic institutions we now have could break down. The major political parties have boycotted the parliament on such pretext that they are not being given fair time to talk and all unable to bring their motions. Today, for all practical purposes parliament is non-functional. The major political parties have also abstained from elections on the pretext that the ruling party would rig the elections."

It said, the country's problems largely stem from lack of commitment by the political parties to basic norms of democracy. The civil society seriously needs to explore the possibilities of strengthening the democratic institutions and demand from the politicians for greater social and economic development, it added.

The paper made a set of recommendations for reforms of the political parties, which include: registration of the parties with the Election Commission, practice of intra-party democracy, transparency of financial accounts, discarding armed cadres from the parties etc.

Awami League lawmaker MS Akbar and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Farhad Mazhar, Mohammad Jahangir, Maj Gen (retd.) Ibrahim, Dr. Enamul Haq, Dr. Md. Yusuf, Shamsun Nessa, Nilufar Banu, Md. Zakaria and Dr. Atiq were, among others, who participated in the discussion.

BB not biased

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Inspector specialised in foreign trade to a bank dealing in foreign trade.

"An inspector specialised in Islamic banking is sent to an Islamic bank. Bangladesh Bank never sends a Muslim or a Hindu to any bank for inspection, it sends banking inspectors," Khaled said.

The central bank is well equipped and has all capabilities and skills to supervise all types of banking including Islamic banking, he affirmed.

"Islamic Bank is not a religious institution. It is a banking institution operating under the Banking Company Act. So all the citizens have access to this bank and there is no law or rule which restricts entry of a non-Muslim to Islamic Bank."

The central bank does not know existence of any law that restricts a non-Muslim from being its employee or client. Bank monitoring is not a religious ritual. Rather, it is a professional job. Only professionals perform this job. The question to consider religion does not arise at all."

Khaled said there are Islamic banks in non-Muslim countries and a good number of non-Muslims deposit their money with those banks just to earn more profit. In those countries, all the monitoring officials of central banks are non-Muslims. But sponsors of those banks never raised any question regarding this, he added.

He said conventional commercial banks can also introduce Islamic banking services and for this they don't have to take any prior approval.

For example, Prime Bank is a conventional commercial bank which has two types of banking, one based on interest and the other on Islamic banking system. When central bank officials go to Prime Bank for inspection, they monitor all activities of the bank including Islamic banking. In this case, only professionalism works, there is no scope to consider religion, he said.

There are some Islamic banks such as Islamic Bank, BD Ltd and Al-Baraka Bank Ltd, which introduced diversified systems. Most of the high officials including chief executives of these banks worked in conventional commercial banks for long with professional competence before joining those banks. They are doing a good job and they never raised any such question, he said.

Two rice mills, 3 godowns gutted in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 7: Two rice mills, two rice and one firewood godowns were gutted in a fire in Chaktal area this morning. Fire Brigade sources said.

The fire broke out at 5 am and continued till 9 am, sources added. Cause of the fire could not be ascertained till filing of this report at 7 pm today.

On receipt of information, firefighting units rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze. According to Fire Brigade the loss of property was estimated at Tk 30 lakh.

DCC runs out

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could not procure SICOFLYING now due to its failure to clear an outstanding amount of crores of taka. The supplier has expressed inability to supply this pesticide any more.

The crisis has been triggered mainly due to demand for the insecticide at a time which is normally an "off season" for vector fighters. Never in the past, DCC needed so much of insecticide during the rainy season.

It is only in the dry season when DCC's mosquito control drives are planned and its budget is also fixed accordingly. In the last one week, DCC sprayed about 10,000 litres of SICOFLYING in and around the city, exhausting almost all its stock.

DCC sources said that from Dhanmondi area alone, they received more than 200 requests from residents yesterday for spraying insecticide. It is now impossible for the DCC to cope with the requests.

In 1998, DCC purchased eight ULV machines from the US at a controversial price of Tk 13.93 lakh each. Two of the machines are already out of order and the rest six could not be used due to non-availability of ULV insecticide.

Lawyers

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of such a suit, the sources added. Meanwhile, the Ainjibi Oikkyo Parishad yesterday held a rally at the Supreme Court Bar Association office and brought out a procession in the city protesting the PM's remarks. Carrying placards and banners, the lawyers marched up to Mukhtangan.

Presided over by Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, the rally was addressed by, among others, Barrister Maudud Ahmed, Nurul Huq Majumder, Mohsin Mia, Secretary of Dhaka Bar Association Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia, Advocate Adilur Rahman Khan of Jatiya Ainjibi Parishad and Sheikh Ansar Ali.

The speakers termed the PM's remarks "unfortunate and an attack on the judiciary and its independence." Her remarks undermined the Constitution, they said.

Dengue

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Of them, 29 were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, two to Mitford Hospital, seven each to Dhaka Shishu Hospital and BIRDEM, one each to Suhrawardi Hospital and National Hospital, four each to Red Crescent Holy Family Hospital and Ibne Sina Clinic, five to Bangladesh Medical College Hospital, three each to Monwara, Al-Raji Hospital and Samaria and two each were admitted to Central Hospital, Comfort, and Dhaka Community Hospital.

KEPZ

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone of the KEPZ on October 30, 1999. The project, undertaken by a Korean company, Youngone Corporation, aims to draw an investment of one billion US dollars for some 250 industries the zone is expected to accommodate. Youngone Corporation has 13 industries in Chittagong and Dhaka.

The KEPZ authorities have paid the government 64 crores taka for the land including the compensation money for the affected last year. The government was supposed to hand over the entire land to KEPZ immediately after payment, which it hasn't as yet.

The KEPZ project received government's approval in 1996.



Adjutant General of Bangladesh Army Major General Ahsan Nazmul Amin handing over a cheque yesterday at Army Headquarters received from the UN to Major Mohammad Zahurul Islam who was injured while serving as UN Military Observer in Georgia. — ISPR photo

Army officer gets UN compensation for his injuries

By Staff Correspondent

An officer of Bangladesh Army, who sustained injuries while serving in the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, received compensation yesterday from the UN, says an ISPR release.

Major Mohammad Zahurul Islam received the UN compensation amounting 35,000 US dollars from Adjutant General of Bangladesh Army Major General Nazmul Amin at a simple ceremony in the army headquarters.

Major Islam sustained injuries in his spinal cord and arm in a rebel ambush paralyzing his lower part of the body, the release added.

The Adjutant General prayed for early recovery and long life of the injured officer and assured him of further assistance in future.

Senior army officers, father and brother of the injured officer were, among others, present on the occasion.