

What's on today....

Roundtable: Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) will hold its "Roundtable meeting of media professionals". Venue: VIP lounge of Jatiya Press Club. Time: 10:00 am.

Foundation laying ceremony: The foundation stone of SM Sultan Sunrif Shangraha Shala will be laid. Chief guest: State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs, Obaidul Kader. Venue: Narail residence of the artist. Time: 10:00 am.

Handover ceremony: The handing over ceremony of 4 multinational government industries to the private sector will be held. Venue: Ballroom of Hotel Sheraton. Time: 11:30 am.

CDRB seminar: Centre for Development Research, Bangladesh (CDRB), representative of American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS), will hold a seminar on "Baul Women in Bangladesh: Constructions of Identity." Venue: WVA auditorium, House No 20 (new) 405 A (old), Rd No 16 (new) 27 (old), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 5:00 pm.

Discussion: Bangabandhu Jubo Parishad will hold a discussion in observance of 25th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Venue: Jatiya Press Club. Time: 4:00 pm.

Lecture: Bigyan Chetona Parishad will hold a lecture on "Ways to overcome hindrance towards truth and logic". Venue: Parishad office at 51 Aziz Super Market (2nd floor), Shahbagh. Time: 5:30 pm.

Uttam Kumar Retrospective: Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen *Nayak* starring Uttam Kumar and Sharmila Tagore on the last day of the 1st part of its Retrospective on Uttam Kumar. Venue: Auditorium of Indian High Commission, House No 25, Road no 2, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6:15 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Discussion: Swadesh Chinta Sangha will hold a lecture on Dr Lutfur Rahman's "Ummata Jibon". Venue: Dhanmondi Residence of late Prof Ahmed Sharif. Time: 10:00 am.

Film show: Three French movies, *Adieu, ma Concubine* (farewell my concubine), *Le Reine Margot* (The Queen Margot) and *Le Feme Element* (The fifth element). Venue: Auditorium of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 11:00 am, 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm.

Discussion meeting: Col Taher Sangsad will hold a discussion on Shaheed Khudiram. The meeting will be followed by a presentation of music. Venue: TSC seminar room at Dhaka University. Time: 5:00 pm.

Installation ceremony: Leo District Council and Lions Clubs International Dist-315A1 Bangladesh will hold the installation ceremony of the office bearers of the session 2000-2001. Venue: WVA auditorium, House No 20, Rd# 27(Old), 16 (New), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6:00 pm.

Weather

Light rain likely

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

Slight fall in day temperature is expected over the country during the period, Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 33.5 degree Celsius at Chittagong and the lowest 24.0 degree at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.36 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.32 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	31.5	27.3
Chittagong	33.8	25.5
Rajshahi	30.3	27.0
Khulna	32.4	26.0
Barisal	32.4	27.0
Sylhet	31.4	24.0
Cox's Bazar	33.4	25.5

Regional cooperation

From page 12

there would not be any problem if there is inter-dependence.

He suggested that political expediency for short-term gains be left behind and a bold political decision for long-term gains be made. "We must not forget the economic benefit of transport integration and regional trade for the sake of posterity," he added.

Dr Alamgir further said that apart from road and rail links, air traffic should also be considered to promote trade involving Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, China and Nepal.

As regards informal trade or smuggling, he said that it will continue as long as the imperfect trade policies are not fine-tuned.

Dr Karen L. Casper, Representative of the Asia Foundation, Dhaka, Mohammad Omar Hadi, former Civil Aviation secretary, Professor Mustafizur Rahman, Research Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dr Forrest E. Cookson, Country Director, DID, Inc., Abul Ahsan, former foreign secretary, Major General Jamil Ahsan, Director General, BISS, and Dr Abdus Sattar and Shamsuddoha took part in discussions. Dr Abdur Rob Khan, Research Director, and Shamsur Rahman, Research Fellow, of BISS presented the study.

Dr Karen L. Casper said Bangladesh will benefit from an integration of transport systems and suggested further study on it.

Mohammad Hadi stressed on developing infrastructure, especially the rail and roads and a third port at Galachipa on Tetulia river linked by the Mawa-Dhaka-Tamabil road.

Prof. Mustafizur Rahman said that inter-regional trade would increase by 11 per cent and cost of transportation would come down if transport infrastructure was integrated.

Dr Forrest Cookson said huge income from the integrated transport system could be diverted to infrastructure development.

Major General Jamil Ahsan noted that Chittagong and Mongla ports, and roads and rail systems in Bangladesh need to be upgraded.

Dr Abdus Sattar called for taking an overall look into the security situation in the north-

eastern India before taking any decision on integration. He also called for looking into ways to reduce the trade deficit with India, cut down the tariff barrier and sort out the informal trade.

Abul Ahsan, former SAARC secretary-general, called for allaying the fears and suspicions that stand in the way of regional cooperation, along with red-tapism and other problems.

One killed, 30 hurt as villagers clash in Narsingdi

NARSINGDI, Aug 9: A fierce clash between two rival groups of villagers left a youth dead and 30 people, including four women, injured at Shambadi village in Raipura upazila today, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Dhan Mia, 22, son of Rupa Mia and a supporter of Wahid member.

Villagers said the clash between the supporters of former UP member Lokman and sitting member Wahid took place over establishing supremacy in the area.

At least 30 houses of the village were looted during the incident.

Four of the injured were admitted to Sadar hospital.

Electoral alliance

From page 12

After coming to power in June 1996, AL used to have exchange of views with some other parties, particularly left-leaning ones time to time. But that practice is stalled for quite long.

Meanwhile, AL is trying to mobilise freedom fighters (FFs) in its favour. An adviser to the Prime Minister has taken the responsibility of organising the FFs to take a firm stand against religion-based politics, sources said.

Party leaders may start visiting different constituencies make a primary assessment of political developments across the country.

AL leadership is happy at the party position at grassroots levels following the elections in some tiers of local governments in which opposition parties did not participate, one source noted.



Bangladesh Medical Association brought out a procession in the city yesterday with a call for 'Nuclear Weapons-free South Asia.'

— Star photo

Sayedabad Water Treatment Plant

43 pc work of first phase ends

The work on the Sayedabad Water Treatment Plant is progressing fast and 43 per cent work of the first phase of the project has been completed.

Officials of WASA told BSS yesterday that the first phase of three-phase project will be completed by April 2002 which would add 22.50 crore litres more water per day with the WASA's present daily production strength of 120 crore litres.

Engineer K Azharul Huq, Managing Director of WASA said the growing demand of pure drinking water of the city dwellers could be met through the production of pure drinking water from this plant. The daily requirement of water in the city now is about 142.50 crore litres.

"The construction work of the plant would be completed seven month ahead of the schedule," Huq said, adding that the schedule stipulates completion of the plant by December 2002.

The construction work of Sayedabad Plant actually started in 1997 after signing of an agreement with the World Bank (WB). The World Bank, Government of France, Japan and Bangladesh have been implementing the work jointly at a cost of Taka 750.43 crore.

LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman yesterday visited the plant site at Sayedabad to see the progress of work of the project.

The minister went round different sections of the project

and inquired about the progress of work. Managing Director of WASA, Engineer K Azharul Huq briefed the minister about the progress of the work at the project site.

During the visit, the minister expressed satisfaction over the progress of the work and hoped that the work would be completed much ahead of the stipulated time.

The minister said the present government of Sheikh Hasina has undertaken various pragmatic efforts to meet the growing demand of pure drinking waters of the city people.

Senior officials of the WASA were present during the visit of the minister.



All Party Students' Unity brought out a procession in the city yesterday protesting state-sponsored terrorism, harassment of opposition activists and anti-people role of the government.

— Star photo

PM: Dengue

From page 12

conducting a cleanliness drive and spraying insecticide to kill the larva of Aedes mosquito.

The government officials said special training on Dengue fever has been given to 120 physicians, and the government intends to continue such training programmes.

The government has also taken up regular programmes in the media concerning public responsibilities in regard of prevention of the disease.

The officials said that steps have been taken to bring foreign experts. Steps have also been taken to test blood, free of cost, at 10 government hospitals of the city, including Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital, Shishu Hospital, BIRDEM, Suhrawardy Hospital, ICDDR, B. Government Employees Hospital, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, and Mahanagar General Hospital.

In these hospitals, blood is being tested on emergency basis to detect the Dengue virus and specialist physicians are available for necessary suggestions, they said.

In addition to the government measures, steps have been taken to involve various NGOs and voluntary organisations in preventing the Dengue virus.

Dengue

From page 1

mitted five and six patients respectively.

Central Hospital and Monwar Hospital admitted seven patients each while Samarita and Al-Raji admitted three each.

Ibn Sina, Comfort and Ma-O-Shishu clinics admitted 4, 2 and 2 patients respectively.



Children's Congress of Resource Bangladesh staged a dengue prevention campaign at North Adabor and Tikkapara area of Shamoly.

— Star photo

Kingshuk's solo exhibition opens tomorrow

The 3rd solo art exhibition of artist Kingshuk Das Chowdhury titled "Life & Vision" will be inaugurated tomorrow at the gallery of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka at 5:00 pm, says a press release.

The exhibition is a continuation of an earlier show by the artist held from May 5-13 at the Minmoy Art Gallery at Chittagong.

Minister for Education A S H K Sadique will inaugurate the exhibition at chief guest.



BCL bans Shibir politics at Sundarban College in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 9: Khulna district and city units of Chhatra League have banned political activities of Islami Chhatra Shibir at Sundarban College.

The decision was taken at a meeting of BCL today on the college campus.

German Alexander-von-Humboldt-Foundation donated some scientific appliances on Monday to the Department of Soil Sciences at Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) in Mymensingh, says a press release.

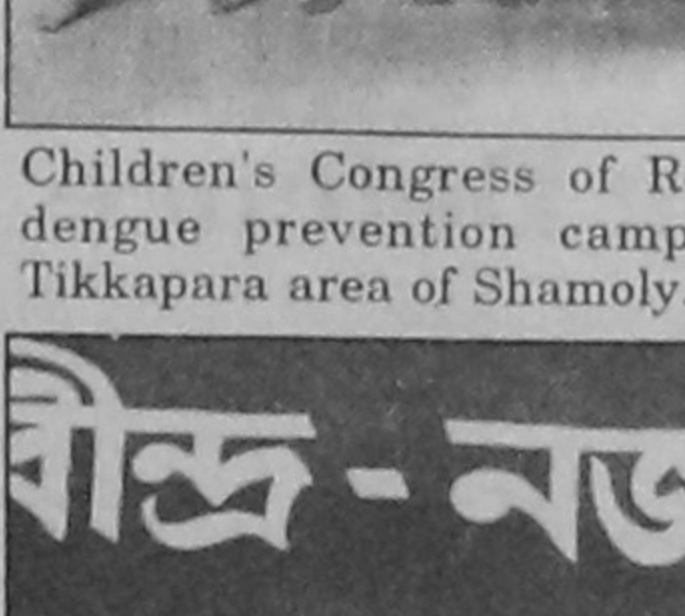
The appliances will extend BAU's capacities to conduct long-term fertility studies and help improve the conditions and yield of Bangladesh's agricultural production. These will be used at the Humboldt Soil Testing Laboratory of the university.

Death anniversary

The first death anniversary of Md Amir Faisal alias Robin will be observed today, says a press release.

Faisal died of cancer at the Virginia Inova Fair Fax Hospital in the United States on August 10, 1999. He was 23. He went there to study Computer Engineering and Science in 1995.

A milad mahfil will be held at his 37/C Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur residence on Friday after Asr prayers to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.



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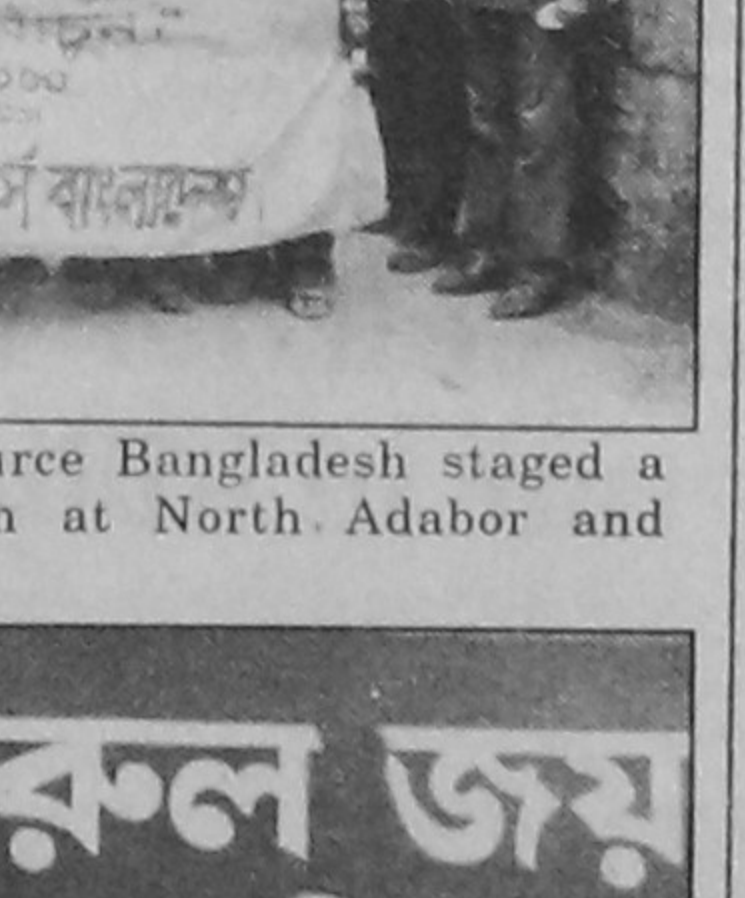
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Khaleda visits party leaders, AL MP

Leader of the opposition in parliament and BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday visited her two party leaders and an Awami League MP at Suhrawardy Hospital, reports UNB.

She spent sometime beside city BNP general secretary Abdus Salam at 8 pm. He was admitted to the hospital few days back.

The BNP chairperson enquired about his treatment.

Later, she went to see Shajahan Khan, ruling party MP, in the hospital bed and talked with his wife and inquired about his treatment.

She then visited Sutrapur Thana BNP leader Aziz Chakrader at the same hospital.

Begum Zia was accompanied by Mirza Abbas, city BNP president Sadek Hossain Khoka MP and Chowdhury Alam.



76th birth anniversary of S M Sultan today

Elaborate programmes have been chalked out by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in collaboration with the local organisers at Narail today to observe the 76th birth anniversary of noted painter S M Sultan, reports BSS.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs, Obaidul Quader will attend the function as chief guest. He will lay the foundation stone of "S M Sultan Memorial Gallery" at the internationally acclaimed artist's own residence.

The gallery will be built in on 2.77 acres of land at a cost of Taka 1.95 crore to preserve his works. The historic boat of Sultan, "Shishu Shargo," will also be renovated and preserved for exhibition.

The 3-day programme includes pricing of wreaths at the artist's grave, Sultan's Mela, painting competition and exhibition, discussion on the life of the artist, cultural functions, boat race and sports competition including Ha-du-du and Lathi Khela.

Dhirendra Nath Saha MP and artist Rafiqunnabi will, among others, attend the function as special guests.

Naik Aziz laid to rest with military honour

Naik Abdul Aziz Mia of the Bangladesh Army was buried with military honours at the Military Graveyard at Banani yesterday, says an ISPR press release.

Naik Abdul Aziz Mia was killed by a grenade blast while he engaged in clearing explosives from a sea beach near Dili in Indonesian on August 3. He was a member of the United Nations Transition Assistance in East Timor (UNTAET).

Aziz's body was flown home yesterday and received by the army authorities.

Khaleda

From page 1

However, there was no explanation available from BNP on the abnormal number of voters registered at Khaleda's residence. The opposition party is looking into the matter and is likely to come up with an explanation today, said a BNP source.

Shazneen

From page 12

mastermind.

All the accused — Shahid, Hasan, Badal, Shanir, Minu and Parveen — were present at the court during the proceedings.

Special Public Prosecutors — A B M Shauddin Khan Mukul and Mahibul Alam — appeared for the state while Advocate M A Kamrul Hasan Khan Aslam for the accused.

SAMI

From page 1

During his talks with the Indian foreign minister and the foreign secretary, it was agreed that both sides should meet "at a mutually convenient time at the earliest."

There was also discussion on how to intensify relations and how to address outstanding issues, he said.

While talking about the recent incidents of border clashes, both sides agreed that there should be frequent flag meetings to reduce tension, Sati told newsmen.

Gas export

On media report on Indian insistence on gas export through pipeline, the foreign secretary said, "It is not correct. The Indian policy has already been elaborated by former Prime Minister I K Gujral. India understands our position on conservation of our resources and has always said it would always be Bangladesh's decision whether to sell or not."

Sami said Dhaka's decision on gas export to Delhi be in accordance with the policy enunciated by the Prime Minister.

"Our reserve will be assessed, ratio between utilisation and a capacity determined. A reservation for 50 years ensured and attempt for value addition made before any decision is reached as regards export. A study is on to determine the quantum of gas reserve in Bangladesh by the United States Geological Survey (USGS)," he stated.

HR Monitoring Cell formed

By Staff Correspondent

The Supreme Court Bar Association yesterday formed the seven-member Human Rights Monitoring Cell for the year 2000-2001 with Barrister Motinul Hossain and SM Aminul Islam Shanu as presidents and secretary respectively.

The other office bearers are Md Shahidul Karim Siddik (vice president), Ziauddin Ahmed Mamun, Md. Khasruzzaman, Danesh Chandra Das and Shahanaara Begum.

Dhaka-Thimpu transit

From page 1

sider to reap economic benefits. Presently, goods from Bhutan to Bangladesh have to be transhipped which does not allow cargo to be taken directly to the destination. If the new agreement can create the scope for direct passage for the shipment after proper checking or sealing at border points, Bhutan will be in a position to send more cargo straight to either Mongla or Chittagong ports. That will minimise transportation costs and fetch revenue for Bangladesh.

Due to existing restrictions and limitations, Bhutan is forced to use the Calcutta Port for all its external trade, something Bangladesh can handle consuming less expense and time.

The prospect for initiating a direct bus link between Bangladesh and Bhutan was also raised by newsmen in Dhaka during Thimphu's trip. Although the Bhutanese foreign minister did not make any comment on the issue, Communications Ministry officials in Dhaka, when contacted, said, "There was tremendous potential for launching of a Dhaka-Thimpu bus service."

Bhutan currently enjoys an overwhelming surplus balance of trade. Dhaka's exports last year were worth only one million dollars against Thimpu's nearly six million.

Bhutan exports fresh fruits and canned fruit products, wood products and marble to Bangladesh. It has several exportable items of world class including marble, wood, wood pulp products, ferro-silicon, limestone and coal.

"Perhaps, we could market together the great sandy shore and bright sunshine in your country and the scenic mountains of ours to encourage people to visit both countries," Thimphu had said then.

Bangladesh is one of the three countries that enjoys visa-free facilities from Bhutan, the two others being India and Maldives.

Experts believe that there is a huge area in Bhutan's fast growing market for the country's business community to tap.

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