

What's on today....

Discussion meeting: Ex-students of Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University will hold a discussion meeting on Durga Puja. Chief guest: Provost of Jagannath Hall Dr Durgadas Bhat-tacharya. Venue: Praying room of the hall. Time: 6:00 pm.

Painting exhibition: A six-day solo exhibition of paintings by Uttam Sen will be inaugurated by artist Prof Raghun-Nabi. Venue: Drik Gallery (House-58, Road-15A, Dhaka-mondir). Time: 5 pm. The exhibition will remain open from 3 pm to 8 pm daily till September 30.

Kathak demonstration: The High Commission of India and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in association with Nitya Shilpi Goshit is organising a lecture-demonstration by Dhvani Kathak Group led by Vaswati Misra & Krishna Mohan Misra. Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, 754 Satmosjid Road, Dhaka-mondir. Time: 6 pm.

Seminar: On 'Health System Research,' organised by the Centre for Medical Education Dr Don Bandarnayak of WHO will present the topic. Venue: Conference room of the Centre. Time: 2:30 pm.

Weather

Temperature may rise

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Khulna divisions and at one or two places over Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country during the period, Met office said. Yesterday's highest temperature of 33.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Patuakhali and the lowest of 23.0 degree Celsius at Dhaka and Ishwardi.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:52 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:48 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	31.9	23.0
Chittagong	32.6	23.5
Rajshahi	31.8	24.2
Khulna	32.8	24.0
Barisal	32.5	24.2
Sylhet	30.0	24.4
Cox's Bazar	33.5	24.0

HERE and THERE

EFL course

An eight week training course on English for Law (EFL) organised by Legal Education Training Institute (LETI) ended in city yesterday, a press release said, reports BSS.

The course, seventh of its kind, was participated by 30 lawyers from different bars of the country. Instructor Junaid Sadeque conducted the course held at Bangladesh Bar Council.

Justice Tofazzal Hossain will distribute certificates among the participants at a function tomorrow as the chief guest while director of LETI Justice A K M Sadeque will chair the occasion.

DU Social Welfare Alumni Assoc

Abdus Sobhan and Abdus Shabid Mahmud have been elected President and General Secretary respectively of the Social Welfare Alumni Association of Dhaka University, a press release said yesterday, reports BSS.

A 31-member executive committee was formed recently at the annual conference.

Humayun Zahir

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The investigation officer of the case submitted a charge-sheet before the CMM's Court against seven accused including Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu.

Babu and Abdul Matin who were granted ad-interim bail by the High Court Division of the Supreme Court in 1997, appeared before the trial court yesterday.

District PP Mohammad Ali appeared for the state while Advocate Mahbub Ahmed, Shamun Ahsan, Abdur Rashid and Saikua Ferdous for the accused.



Appeal for help

By DU Correspondent
Mehedi Hasan, a student of Mymensingh Polytechnic Institute, who has been suffering from blood cancer, urged the affluent section of the society to extend financial help for his treatment.

A meritorious student, 19-year-old Mehedi needs Tk 20 lakh for bone marrow transplantation in two months. His father is a farmer. He could not afford to pay for his son's treatment abroad.

To raise fund for his treatment, a charity concert was held at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on September 15. Pepsi and Apteche were the main sponsors of the show. Earlier, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina donated Tk 25,000 for his treatment.

Interested persons have been requested to send contributions to the following bank account:

Savings Account no. 34031449, Sonali Bank, Jitika Sangsad Branch, Dhaka, or Savings Account no. 130620, Janata Bank, Chhargata Branch, Mymensingh.

triennial conference of the association held in the ADAB auditorium with Abdus Sobhan in the chair.

Other members of the committee are: Treasurer Ezaz Ahmed, Secretary for Publicity and Publication Jahangir Morshed and Cultural Secretary Lutfi Begum.

Samajtantrik Mohila Forum

By DU Correspondent
Samajtantrik Mohila Forum (SMF) yesterday held a rally on the road island near Teacher and Student Centre of the Dhaka University to mark the 68th death anniversary of Premilata Waddar, a veteran of anti-British movement.

Addressing the rally, speakers demanded an end to violence against women. They also called for ensuring the equal rights of women in the family.

Presided over by Raushan Ara Rusho, the rally was addressed, among others, by Mubiniul Haider Chowdhury, Bashir Al Helal, Mamunur Rashid, Sultana Akhter Rubi and Manjura Haq Nila.

Mystery shrouds death of young man

By Staff Correspondent
Mystery shrouds the death of a young man whose body was recovered from Badda Lake in the city yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Kamal, a resident of WASA Staff Quarters, Sukrabad. Police said he fell into the lake but could not swim to the bank. But his family claimed that he was drowned in the lake.

No cases were filed with the Badda police till writing of this report last night.

According to police, Kamal went to the residence of his former girlfriend at Badda on Saturday. Since the girl was pregnant, a negotiation between the two sides was taking place for a compromise. But Kamal walked out of the meeting and tried to flee. He fell into the lake while he was running along it.

The victim's family claimed that Kamal was called out by the Sukrabad residence on Saturday morning and taken to Boveri under Badda police station. Later, he was thrown into the lake where he drowned.

Death threat to journalist condemned

By Staff Correspondent
Tokai Sagar, an alleged criminal, is threatening to kill a staff correspondent of a Bangla daily who is also president of Bangladesh Human Rights Journalist Forum and joint-secretary of Bangladesh Crime Reporters' Association, police said quoting a general diary lodged with Tejgaon police station yesterday.

Sagar is calling Tauludul Islam, a reporter of The Daily Inqilab and also his family members over land and mobile phones and threatening to kill them, police said quoting the GD.

The callers have also threatening to attack the residence of the journalist at Nakhalpara in the city, police said.

Anwarul Haq and Monowarul Islam, President and General Secretary of Dhaka Reporter Unity in a joint statement condemned the incident and demanded immediate action against it.



Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Dhaka city unit staged a protest rally in the city yesterday demanding trial of the killers of Advocate Habibur Rahman Mandol and also seeking release of kidnapped Laxmipur BNP leader Advocate Nurul Islam. —Star photo

Govt pledge-bound to raise blood donation by 1pc a yr

Selim tells workshop

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim said here yesterday that the government was committed to ensuring institutional facilities for screening of blood and also increase voluntary blood donation by one per cent a year, reports BSS.

Inaugurating the "Inter-country workshop on strategies for blood donor recruitment" here, Selim said that the government would soon introduce "safe blood transfusion legislation, 2000".

The Minister laid stress on sensitizing and motivating the people to help increase the number of voluntary blood donors in Bangladesh, where the percentage is very low.

While expressing the present administration's commitment to upgrade the blood unit with mandatory screening facilities and ban on professional or non-screened blood donation, the Minister called for upholding the spirit of voluntary blood

donation. In order to encourage the people, he said, the Ministry will observe voluntary blood donation day.

Organised by World Health Organisation (WHO), the workshop was addressed, among others, by State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr M Amanullah, Health Secretary Syed Alamgir Farouk Chowdhury, WHO representative in Bangladesh Dr W Hardjotanojo, UNDP resident representative Jorgen Lissner and Director General of Health Services Dr ABM Ahsanullah.

Blood transfusion experts from 10 countries are attending the five-day long workshop to exchange ideas among themselves.

The minister said though started in 1950, blood transfusion services had not yet been recognised as a specialty in the country's national health care system.

The present government, he

said, has steered the blood transfusion services programme in the right direction.

Depicting a situation of AIDS in the region, Selim said there are 40 lakh HIV carriers in India and 14 lakh in Thailand.

In Bangladesh 126 HIV infected patients have so far been detected and 10 of them have already died, he pointed out.

The minister said necessary measures have been taken to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS.

Referring to the launching of blood screening programme for safe blood transfusion in Bangladesh, Selim said, there are now 97 blood transfusion centres in the country.

The minister expressed the hope that the workshop would formulate a draft action plan on national blood donation programme and discuss various strategies of blood donor recruitment.

Rain dampens spirit

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The rain teamed down, leaving the relatively obscure 26-year-old Russian a surprise winner.

Sotomayor had only been allowed to compete after a two-year ban imposed for failing a drugs test for cocaine was reduced by the sport's governing body on compassionate grounds.

The hot favourite for the event, world champion Vyacheslav Voronin of Russia, who had cleared 2.40 metres this year, struggled with the conditions and failed at 2.32 metres.

It was the same story in the women's triple jump where Marinova was fortunate to put in a winning 15.20 metre leap with her first effort just before the rain began to fall.

Her last five jumps were all fouls but overwhelming favourite Tatyana Lebedeva of Russia, who had won 13 of 14 competitions this season, could not cope with the conditions and took silver.

Briton Denise Lewis won the heptathlon after French world champion Eunice Barber withdrew before the last two events because of a thigh injury.

PGCB

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higher transmission tariff and exemption of income tax. "But the National Board of Revenue (NBR) did not agree to tax exemption. We have to give 30 per cent corporate tax to the government," said a top official of PGCB.

PGB has so far handed over Hapur, Comilla (North) and Tongi-Hasnabad transmission lines in two phases to PGCB. "Efforts are now on to transfer most part of the eastern grid with four executive engineers' offices in third phase," he said.

Meanwhile, PGB is planning to push almost all of its 2,600 employees working in the transmission sector to avoid conflicts with different trade unions. But PGCB has provision to absorb some 1,615 employees in its manpower structure. This would further worsen the situation in power sector.

ADB has been pressing for handing over of power transmission by PDB to minimise system loss which is crippling the power sector, one source pointed out.

ADB had tagged the idea of PGCB with the financing of two PGB projects. PDB had long been reluctant to implement it on the ground that in the past, a similar idea of the World Bank led to the creation of DESA and it proved to be totally counter-productive.

But PDB finally bowed to ADB pressure and agreed to hand over assets of two distribution areas.

PDB's power transmission component was the only filed where system loss was low (around four per cent) and the loss was entirely attributed to technical reasons.

The country has a total of 3,500 km power transmission line of which PDB owns 3,000 km and DESA owns 500 km. PDB also has 84 sub-stations.

Flood

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villages of Deopara, Gogam, Basudevpur and Matika unions.

In Poba upazila, new areas in Hujuripara, Haripur, Dambara and Parla unions have been submerged.

About three lakh people in the district have been affected. District administration has so far distributed 38 metric tonnes of rice among the affected people.

In Chapainawabganj, flood water has inundated new areas in the district.

Twenty-one shelters have been opened in the district and 19 medical teams are working. More than two lakh people have been affected by flood in the district, the district administration sources said.

In Meherpur, flood situation in sadar and Mujibnagar upazilas has taken a serious turn as River Bhairab is flowing above its danger mark.

Most of the areas in the district town have gone under area.

Some 60 unions along with 28 wards in Nawabganj and Shibganj municipalities have been inundated. Crops, including transplanted Aman paddy on 26,000 acres of land, have been damaged.

Road communications of Sadar with Gomastapur upazila have been snapped as some places on Nawabganj-Rahanpur road have gone under water.

Our Kushtia Correspondent adds: With the rise of water levels in the Padma and the Gorai, overall flood situation in the district worsened further inundating more low-lying areas.

Raita Mohiskundi Flood Protection Embankment came under threat while 15,000 people in Mirpur upazila remained marooned.

Rice import

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missing of MV Hafina and supply of substandard rice by another ship to Chittagong.

Reviewing the report submitted by the sub-committee, the Standing Committee in its meeting yesterday decided to place the report before the House in next session.

Presided over by its chairman Md Abdul Hakim, the meeting recommended stern action against the officials concerned blamed for the scandal.

It also discussed allegation of corruption and mismanagement in purchasing rice without any allotment letters by one top official of the ministry and suggested action against the scam.

The meeting also suggested measures to change the process of giving husking allotment to rice mills from divisional level to thana level to ensure more transparency.

Members of the committee Food Minister Anir Hossain, Amu, Dr Abuddin Ahmed, Mirza Azam, Srinati Bharati Nandi (Sarkar), Md Joydul Abedin and Prof Md Shahajam were present in the meeting. Deputy Minister for Food Dharendra Nath Shambu also attended the meeting on special invitation.

One to die for killing wife, 2 minor daughters in Chittagong

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 24: One person was sentenced to death today for killing his wife and two daughters here today.

ASA Mahfuz 4th Additional Session Judge, gave the death penalty to one Ahmad Siddiq alias Abu Siddiq for the murders.

Abu Siddiq of Char Khidirpur of Boalkhali thana of the district took the victims on a boat on a plea on October 23 in 1994. When the boat reached near Kalurghat bridge, Siddiq strangled his wife Kulsuma Khatun and his two minor daughters - Jyotsna, 2.5, and Ferdousi, 9.

Next morning, the bodies were found hanging from the bridge.

The court gave the verdict after hearing 11 witnesses in the case.

The case was filed by Kulsuma's maternal uncle Abdur Razzak.

Fenchuganj plant

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be completed within a week, sources said. Spares and equipment for the second unit (GT-II) from UK and USA are in the pipeline. A Tk 19 crore rehabilitation work on the units is also expected to be completed by December this year. The cooling tower of the third unit (ST) has already been replaced at a cost of Tk 40 crore, the sources informed.

The 90 MW combined cycle power plant was installed at Fenchuganj with Japanese assistance. The first unit (GT-I) of the plant was put into test operation on December 27, 1994 while the second unit (GT-II) in January, 1995 and the third unit in June 1995.

Chandpur polls

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21 presiding officers, 96 assistant presiding officers and 192 polling officers have been appointed for 21 polling centres.

Meanwhile, all preparations have been completed for holding the election peacefully. Army, BDR, police, Ansars will be deployed during the election time to maintain law and order, EC sources said.

On September 26, elections in 12 other municipalities will take place. They are Tongi, Dohar, Comilla, Jaganathpore, Bagha, Najipur, Bangura, Badarganj, Sariakandi, Maksudpur, Gopalpur and Kulichar pourashavas.

In addition to deployment of BDR, police and Ansars, the Election Commission has ordered deployment of three platoons of army at each of the two municipalities - Comilla and Tongi - and one platoon each at Chandpur, Dohar and Jaganathpur.

The Election Commission on the basis of complaints from rival candidates at Comilla asked Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru, Whip Mojibul Huq and Chairman of Mobile Administration Reform Commission A T M Shamsul Huq to refrain from violating the election code of conduct while enjoying government protocol and facilities.

BNP protests

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who addressed the rally. City unit BNP President Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP presided over the rally.

Sadek Hossain Khoka said incidences of killing and abduction have been going on since the Awami League came to office in 1996. "We all know that the AL is not capable of running the state affairs."

Accusing the government of using the police forces for party interests, he said that the killers and abductors will not be brought to book unless and until the police are allowed to discharge their duties neutrally.

Khoka urged the opposition activists to wage tougher agitation programmes against the tyranny of government and compel it to quit to pave the way for a general election through which a democratic government will be formed under the leadership of Khaleda Zia.

Pak FM

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"I have too much respect for Bangladesh to even think of such a thing," said the Pak FM clarifying his position to his Bangladesh counterpart.

Talking to UNB, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury yesterday said Bangladesh would continue its efforts to bring about a reduction in tensions in South Asia.

"We will wait on events," he said, indicating apparent strain on Dhaka's peace initiative after Pakistan Chief Executive Gen. Pervez Musharraf did not turn up at the scheduled meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in New York on September 8.

Asked about reports of a possible visit to Dhaka by Gen. Musharraf's envoy to pacify the situation, he said: "Let's wait and see."

59 fishermen

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Sylhet and Mymensingh. On the other hand, 300 foreign nationals are in different jails of the country as under-trial prisoners, sources said.

However, vessels from neighbouring countries frequently enter Bangladesh territorial water for illegal fishing, sources said. Such vessels were seized by navy patrol ships on different occasions.

DSE: Freak deals

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Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) management, sensing foul play by brokers.

The DSE management assured the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) that it will conduct an investigation and file a report within a week.

At around 10:45 am yesterday, a flicker flashed on the traders' work stations stating that two brokers deal in 151295 shares of Chittagong Cement at a market price of Tk 1295 per share.

The trading amounted to Tk 19.59 crore -- a very large amount for a single trading in a particular stock -- raising widespread apprehensions that the brokers were playing foul.

Many brokers were seen rushing to the two brokerage firms housed in adjacent rooms at the DSE annex building. But they found that the trading was a mistake by both the sellers and the buyers.

The broker on the selling side, NR Islam & Co, intended to make a sale order for 15 shares of Chittagong Cement at Tk 1295 per share. But he mistakenly punched a sale order for 151295 shares on his computer.

The broker, while quoting the number of shares in quantity box, typed the price in the same box, resulting in the mistaken figure, a broker clarified.

On the other hand, another brokerage house, Azam Securities Ltd, opted to buy 15 shares of the same company at a market price of Tk 1295.

"My operator chose 15 shares from the screen, but as he highlighted 15 shares and clicked the button, offers were already sold out and replaced by the wrong 151295-share

sale offer within a micro-second. As a result, my operator ended up buying 151295 shares instead of 15 scrips," said MG Azam Chowdhury, owner of Azam Securities Ltd.

The broker on the selling side later realised that he had made a 'mistake' and did not have the huge stocks in possession. So, he suddenly started buying all the Chittagong Cement stocks from the market to settle his sale, said market operators.

The indiscriminate buying pushed the share price of Chittagong Cement to as high as Tk 1421.

As senior brokers and councillors asked them to explain the situation, brokers of both the buyer and seller later admitted that the whole thing was a 'mistake'.

Both the brokers then agreed to reverse their trade to avoid depositing huge amount of money and shares to the DSE clearing house.

But by that time, share prices of Chittagong Cement had gone much higher and the deal swapping still meant financial losses for the dealers.

So, at the advice of senior brokers and some councillors, they agreed to conduct a second trading at Tk 1311 without pushing down the price of the stocks much.

As a result of the second trading, the net trading of Chittagong Cement shares for the two brokers became nil. The brokers later wrote to the DSE management informing it about the 'mistakes'.

However, the DSE management did not take any decision about the fate of other investors who also purchased shares on the day on false notional prices.

Gas reserve

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meetings with Petrobangla counterparts, sources said.

Seven Bangladesh experts visited the USA last month to take part in the training programme as part of the US-Bangladesh energy cooperation and the assessment of Bangladesh's gas resources.

The USGS and Petrobangla are conducting a gas resource study, which is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

During the visit, Bangladesh experts discussed the gas reserve and resource dilemma with USGS counterparts.

Petrobangla maintains that Bangladesh has a proven gas reserve of 10 trillion cubic feet (TCF). However, the oil companies operating in Bangladesh, which want the country to export gas, say the reserve is much higher.

European oil giant Shell Oil and US company Unocal have been saying that Bangladesh has a gas resource of around 38 TCF and 50 TCF respectively. Both the companies recommended pipeline export of gas on the basis of this reserve.

These resource forecasts were presented in such a manner that these should be used as the basis of our decision on gas utilisation, including gas

export," said an official, "but actually, such decision should be taken on the basis of proven gas reserve."

The USGS agreed with the visiting Bangladesh energy experts that the proven gas reserve was estimated on the basis of drilling of exploratory and appraisal gas wells and analysis of hard geological data.

"The United States itself follows this practice. They chalk out their utilisation plans on the basis of the proven gas reserve -- not on the basis of the possible or probable gas reserves," the source added.

The gas study is being done to help the government take vital decisions regarding future investment in the gas sector.

The USGS has been working on assessing the gas resource of Bangladesh since last year. It offered the training programme with the view to involve the best possible local participation so that the study becomes acceptable to all.

The gas resource study would be based on all existing seismic and drilling data as well as an analysis of the geological structures of the country that scientifically indicates how much oil and gas the country might have.

PM: Peacekeeping

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institution would contribute to the development of skills needed for discharging responsibilities by the participants of the UN peacekeeping operations.

About her government's commitment to peace, Hasina said the signing of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord for the sake of internal peace has been acclaimed globally.

She said Bangladesh has ratified the ATP CTBT, Anti Land Mine Treaty and Anti Chemical Weapon Treaty. Bangladesh has also been elected a member of the UN Security Council.

Sheikh Hasina said the increased participation of Bangladesh in the UN peace