

## What's on today....

**Dance and Music festival:** A Kathak recital by Diwan Kathak group led by Vaswati Misra will be held. Venue: National Museum auditorium. Time: 7 pm.

**Meet The Reporters:** Aftabul Islam, President, DCCI, Latifur Rahman, President, MCCI and Anisur Rahman Sinha, President, BGMEA, will deliver a talk on "State of Business in Bangladesh". Venue: DRU auditorium. Time: 10:55 am.

## Weather

### Light rain likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Khulna divisions during the next 12 hours till 6 am 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 33.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Syedpur and the lowest of 22.0 degree Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:51 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:49 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	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.0	26.0	80	76
Chittagong	31.9	23.1	85	88
Rajshahi	32.2	25.5	86	90
Khulna	33.7	24.9	78	82
Barisal	33.0	24.5	87	92
Sylhet	31.5	22.0	100	83
Cox's Bazar	33.5	24.0	85	85

## Flood situation

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Flood gripped 16 unions under Damudhara in Chuadanga when embankments of Khari river in Indian West Bengal state collapsed on September 23.

Onrush of water from upstream points and incessant monsoon rain has deteriorated the flood situation in Rajshahi area. Official sources confirmed two deaths and said that over 300,000 people were affected.

Diarrhoea broke out in many areas.

The overall flood situation in Jhenaidah district also worsened.

Srinathpur, Mathpara, Largaitha, Narayanpara, Tangulpara villages of Shyamun union, Mailbaria, Khosaldanga and Seja villages of Napa union, Jinnanagar and Baghadanga villages of Kazerbar union and Pipulbaria, Benipur, Kusumpur and Swaruppur villages of Swaruppur unions went under water during last 24 hours.

Thousands of people have taken shelter on the bank of canals near Dattaganj bazar.

Road communication between Jinnanagar and Jibanagar has been snapped.

In Jhenaidah, some 1.25 lakh people of Nepa, Kazerbar, Shyamkur, Banshabaria,

Swarupdaha and Pantapara unions were rendered homeless while standing crops on 28,000 hectares of land damaged by the floodwaters.

Officials of Chapainawabganj said with continued rise in water levels in Padma and Mahananda affected 1,60,665 people in 62 unions under the district.

At least 2.5 kilometres embankment and 15 kilometres road were completely damaged and standing crops on 8,890 acres washed away, they said.

Flood situation in Netrokona deteriorated further. Thousands of people in 12 unions under two upazilas have been marooned.

A Sirajganj report adds: Jamuna continued to swell worsening flood situation in 10 upazilas of Pabna and Sirajganj districts further.

The worst affected upazilas are: Kaziupur, Belkuchi, Chouhali, Shahjadpur, Tarash and Ullapara of Sirajganj, and Chalmohar, Bhanga, Faridpur and Bera of Pabna districts.

Some 5 lakh people of the two districts have been marooned.

An embankment at Shahjadpur collapsed inundating more low-lying areas in five upazilas of the two districts.

## Koreas agree to work to ease military tensions

CHEJU, South Korea, Sept 25: Defence ministers from the rival Koreas agreed to work to ease military tensions today in their first talks since the peninsula was divided in 1945, the South's government said, reports AFP.

The two sides agreed in principle that they should give military support for efforts to carry through the June 15 North-South Declaration, said a government statement.

No specific measures were announced to ease military hostilities that have endured since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

But the statement said the South's Defence Minister Cho Sung-Tae and the North's Armed Forces Minister Vice Marshall Kim Il-Chol held "sincere talks" in their first official meeting on the resort island of Cheju.

The talks are most important since the South's President Kim Dae-Jung and the North's supreme leader Kim Jong-Il agreed to move toward peace and eventual reunification at a historic summit in June.

The two sides also started economic talks on Monday in Seoul.

But there is growing international pressure for the two to make a concrete military gesture. A US government report released Friday said North Korea was still a major military threat.

The two ministers agreed their discussions would focus on military work, including the clearing of thousands of landmines, needed to reconnect a railway link through the demilitarised zone, said the statement.

The severed railway links Seoul and the North Korean city of Shinuiju, near the border with China. The two are also to build a road through the heavily fortified border.

But a defence ministry spokesman said the two ministers also agreed that they should discuss other issues of mutual concern related to tension reduction.

The South repeated proposals to build military confidence, the spokesman said.

South Korea has proposed a military hotline, the mutual notification of drills, sending observers to each other's training exercises and routine defence minister talks.

## 'Iraq in strong position to erode sanctions'

NICOSIA, Sept 25: Iraqi Oil Minister Amer Rashid said Baghdad was in a strong position to help erode the crippling sanctions imposed on the country after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, in an interview published today, reports AFP.

"Sanctions will be eroded, disintegrated, due to the will and steadfastness of the Iraqi people, the wisdom of our leadership in managing this crisis situation, the unjust cause that our enemy, the US administration, is following and the support of friendly countries that are fully aware of the situation," Rashid said.

"We are moving ahead with our own plans to increase, diversify and widen our trade relationships with neighbouring countries, as well as with others," Rashid told the Cyprus-based Middle East Economic Survey (MEES).

"We have solidified our political unity. We are improving our economic system. This puts us in a strong position. The whole policy of America towards Iraq has failed," Rashid said.

Do we expect the United States to lift sanctions? This is

absolutely not our policy," the minister said. "What has happened during the last two years is that the moves to destroy Iraq are finished."

Iraq has been under embargo ever since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait but is authorised to export crude under UN supervision to finance imports of food, medicine and essential goods.

## Jakarta extends disarmament in West Timor

JAKARTA, Sept 25: Indonesia has extended until Wednesday the first phase of an operation to disarm East Timorese militias, blamed for the killings of three UN workers, the country's top security minister said today, reports AFP.

"It is hoped that they will hand over more weapons voluntarily," said Coordinating Minister for Security and Socio-political Affairs Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

## Polls in 12 other municipalities today

By Staff Correspondent

After Chandpur polls yesterday, elections in 12 other municipalities will be held today.

The municipalities where polling will take place today are at Dohar in Dhaka, Tongi in Gazipur, Comilla Sadar, Kullarchar in Kishoreganj, Maksudpur in Gopalganj, Jagannathpur in Sunamganj, Bagha in Rajshahi, Nalpur in Naogaon, Bhanga in Pabna, Badarganj in Rangpur, Sariakandi in Bogra and Gopalpur in Natore.

Authorities are considering most of the 176 polling centres in the 12 municipalities as venerable and have stepped up security in those places.

Chairman of the Kullarchar municipality in Kishoreganj has already been elected unopposed while election to the posts of commissioner of the municipality will be held today.

Elections to 136 municipalities were held during February 23-25 last year. Besides, elections in 18 other municipalities were also held later that year. But polling in 19 municipalities could not be held due to cases over various disputed issues.

## Gunman Azad taken to Khagrachhari

KHAGRACHHARI, Sept 25: Abul Kalam Azad, the hostage drama hero was today brought back here from Dhaka where he was grilled by the joint interrogation cell during the 9-day police manhunt, reports UNB.

Informed sources said no new information was available about outside force behind Azad in his taking 14 people hostage including Army Majors in DC's office here on September 11 with gun and bomb in his hand. He had surrendered after 24 hours.

Police said he would be produced before the court tomorrow. Dejected and frustrated by the prevailing situation in the country, Azad earlier told the police that his action was intended to realise demands including eradication of high level corruption, realisation of huge defaulting loans, check harassment and corruption of police and ban tobacco.

## Dacoity in Khulna town: 3 injured

From Staff Correspondent

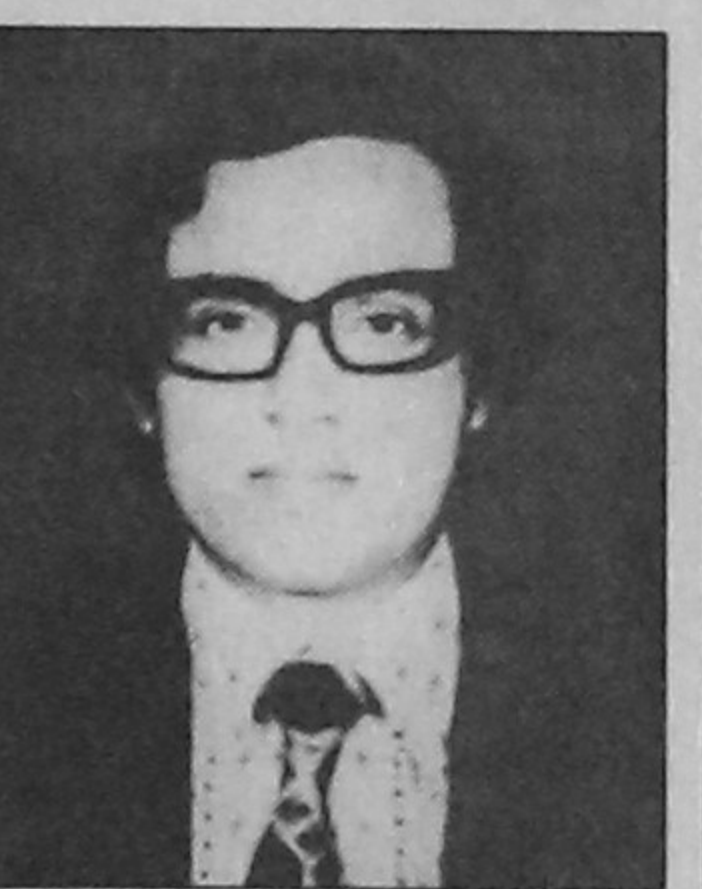
KHULNA, Sept 25: Three people were severely injured and a foreign-made SBL gun was looted during a dacoity at the Nazirhat residence of a physician on Sunday night.

According to FIR lodged with Sonadanga thana, a group of six masked young men entered the house scaling boundary wall from outside.

The dacoits kept all inmates confined in a room at gun point and looted Tk 19,000, gold ornaments worth Tk 50,000 and a single barrel gun made in England.

Dr Abul Kashem and his sons Ejaz, 24, and Riaz, 22, were severely injured when they tried to resist dacoits. The dacoits exploded two bombs while fleeing with booties.

A case was lodged in this connection this afternoon.

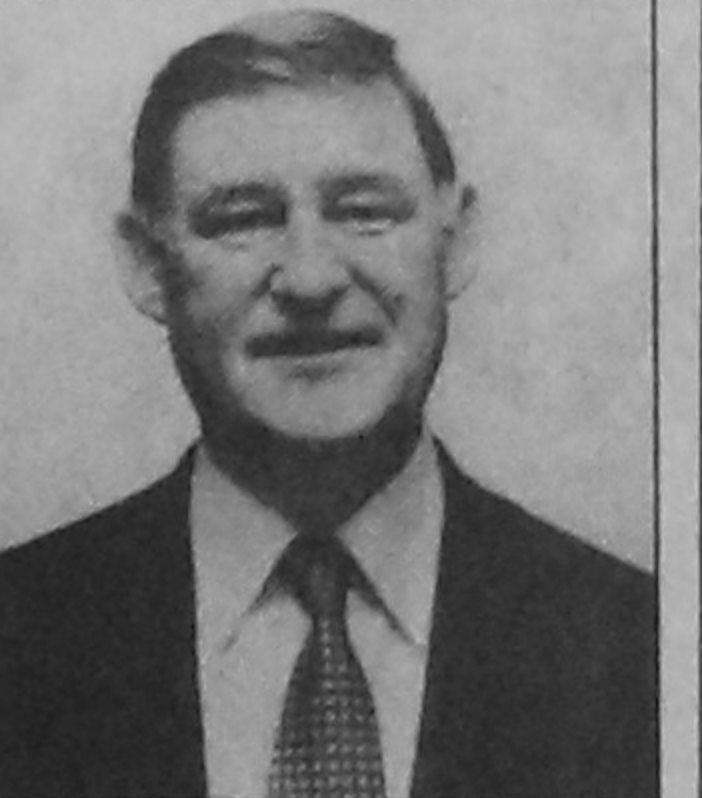


## Obituary

Sachindra Kumar Sarker, Asst. Vice President of National Bank Ltd., Brahmanbaria branch, died from kidney ailments on September 24 at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital. He was 48, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Rafiqul Islam Khan, Managing Director and executives, officers and staff of National Bank Ltd expressed deep shock at his death.



## Obituary

Dr John Howard Wilson, former Managing Director of KAPCO, passed away in the UK on September 22, says a press release.

Dr. Wilson served as MD of KAPCO from March 1998 to June 2000, and was succeeded by Richard William Arnold in July of this year. Dr. Wilson will be fondly remembered by employees and friends alike.



A cultural team from Bangladesh participated in the Fourth Rabindra Conference, organised by Rabi Anurag, held in Agartala, India, from September 19 to 21. The team members include Nargis Chowdhury, Mokbul Hossain and Mahadev Ghose. Selim Shamsul Huda Chowdhury was the team leader. The artistes presented Tagore songs on the last day of the conference. Jitendra Chowdhury, Minister for Information and Cultural affairs of the Tripura State, accorded a reception to the Bangladesh team members at the function.

## Discussion on Bangladeshi migrants in S'pore Country losing huge revenue for 'hundi' system

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a roundtable discussion in the city yesterday identified different informal channels including the 'hundi' for sending remittances to the country as 'black economy' and said 'the country is losing huge revenue each year due to these systems.'

The discussion on 'Externalities, Market Failures and Policy Failures in Migration: A Case Study of Bangladesh Migrants in Singapore' was organised by the Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP).

Prof. Mainul Islam, director general of Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management presented a synopsis on the study while Kazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmed, president of BUP, chaired the function.

The remittance behaviour of the Bangladeshi migrants in Singapore was the issue of the study, which is helping enormously a lucrative phenomenon of smuggling and some other activities, which may be deemed as harmful for the Bangladesh economy and explained as 'negative externalities of overseas migration'.

The study revealed that "an allegedly large portion of the

remittance money collected by the hundi rackets of Singapore is being diverted to the smuggling of goods and gold to Bangladesh and another portion is reportedly used to pay off the Singaporean recruiting agencies."

According to the study, the Bangladeshi migrant workers and professionals staying at Singapore have been creating a serious negative externality because of migrants' overwhelming use of informal channels for sending remittances to Bangladesh.

This has been fuelling a rampant illegal trade of goods as well as gold and drugs into Bangladesh, the study said.

In order to confront the problem of diversion of remittances, to the 'black economy' through the intermediation of the hundi system and other informal channels of remittance, the policies should be directed on the demand side of the remittance money, the speakers suggested.

The survey of the study was conducted among 100 Bangladeshi migrants in Singapore from December 1996 to January 1997.

According to the study the Bangladeshi workers are the most poorly paid persons in the Singaporean society, engaged in D jobs - dirty, dangerous and demanding.

It said that many of the migrants do not operate bank account in Singapore and normally use either their suitcase or the accounts of a few educated fellow countrymen to keep their saving in safe custody before remitting the money to Bangladesh.

All the respondents of the survey remit their savings through hundi traders.

The revolutionary changes in the information and communication technologies have made the hundi rackets so dynamic and efficient that the formal channels are at a distinct disadvantage currently in the unequal competition with these institutionalised operators for migrants' remittances, the study said.

Among others, AMA Muhi, Abdullah Siddique, Dr. Satter Mandal, Prof. Abrar Ahmed, Dr. Fatema Zohra, Prof. Saleh Ahmed, Dr. Ikhtial Mahmud and Dr. Mahmudul Alam took part in the discussion.

## Freeman makes history

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crown, China's Liu Xuan won the balance beam, China's Li Xiaopeng won on parallel bars and Gervasio Deferr, 19, won Spain's first-ever Olympic gymnastics medal, taking gold in the vault.

China remained in total control of the Olympic table tennis, Kong Linghui securing a second consecutive Olympic table tennis clean sweep with his victory over Sweden's Jan Ove Waldner in a thrilling men's singles final.

Kong succeeded compatriot Liu Guoliang as Olympic champion as China made it four gold medals in four table tennis events.

But it required all of the top seed's guile to defeat Sweden's Barcelona Games gold medalist, 21-16, 21-19, 17-21, 14-21, 21-13 after 62 minutes.

Kerri Pottharst and Natalie Cook gave hosts Australia another gold as they up-ended Brazilian second seeds Adriana Behar and Shelda Bede in straight sets to win the women's beach volleyball gold medal.

Finland's president turned out to watch Thomas Johansson and Jyrki Jarvi, who secured

the gold medal on Saturday, complete the formalities in the Olympic 49er class.

They cruised home in 13<sup>th</sup> place in the last fleet race, in which British pair Ian Barker and Simon Hiscocks secured silver with a third-place finish and race-winners Jonathana and Charlie McKee ended up with bronze.

Alan Tsagaev won his battle to represent Bulgaria in the Olympic weightlifting competition, after positive drug tests results on three Bulgarian lifters prompted Games officials to throw out the entire six-man team.

But Tsagaev couldn't win his battle against Iranian Hossein Tavakoli, who snatched the 105kg title with a lift of 235kg.

Tsagaev had a last chance to win, but failed at 237.5 kg. Qatar's Said Salf Asaad, who as Angel Popov, formerly represented Bulgaria, took the bronze. It was just the second medal won by Qatar in Olympic competition.

"I am not disappointed at only winning silver," he said. "I am more disappointed that the other two lifters did not compete."

## Khaleda for jt polls

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Golam Azam and Islami Iokkya Jote Chairman Azizul Haq also addressed the meeting.

Khaleda Zia announced programmes for a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal on October 2 to protest 'terrorism and anarchy of the government' and demonstrations on October 5 to protest enhancement of prices of fuel, gas and electricity.

She also announced that the next joint public meeting of the alliance would be held at Dinaipur on October 10.

Tens of thousands of people including women and children from far and near attended the meeting. The huge circuit house ground was packed.

Local people said today's meeting was the biggest ever in the district in recent memory. Addressing the grand meeting, the BNP Chairperson alleged that the Awami League government looted hundreds of crores of taka of the people and is now planning to utilise the money to buy vote in the next parliamentary polls.

Citing examples, she claimed that they misappropriated about Tk 400 crore in the MIG deal and another Tk 200 crore in Frigate purchase.

Awami League is now conspiring to cling to power by snatching away peoples' verdict as they did in the 1996 election through rigging and use of black money and arms, she alleged. But the people will foil the conspiracies.

The former prime minister said today's mammoth public meeting again proved that people are with the nationalist forces and will vote for the opposition candidates for the sake of peace, rule of law, development and consolidation of democracy.

Bitterly criticising the AL government, Khaleda Zia said it did not fulfil any of its election pledges in the last four years. Rather, it has created new problems and crises in the country.

It betrayed with people of all walks of life, especially the professionals, government employees and teachers.

In its four-year rule, the AL government completely ruined the economy and the education sector. A number of Madrasahs has been closed and conspiracy is on to close Islamic education in the country, she alleged.

Ministers and ruling party leaders and their sons and relatives are involved in grabbing people's property, she alleged. They even do not hesitate to occupy lands of temples and burial places.

Khaleda Zia mentioned the killing of advocate Habibur Rahman Mandal and advocate Kalidas Baral and kidnapping of Laxminur BNP leader advocate Nurul Islam and blamed the ruling party for those.

"None -- Hindu, Muslim, Christian or Buddhist -- is safe in the hands of Awami League government as terrorism, toll extortion, killing and such other crimes are now going on under its protection."

The opposition leader said the Prime Minister took over charge of the energy ministry as the minister failed to manage the power sector. Now that the power supply situation has deteriorated further after her takeover, she should resign, Khaleda said.

She alleged that the government was also conspiring to sell gas and warned of 'dreadful consequence' for any secret deal in this regard.

Ershad said the AL government had hatched a conspiracy to eliminate him from politics by putting him behind the bars, but it failed.

He claimed that people never voted AL to power except in 1973. They will not vote for AL in future also, he said.

## TIB report

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There were large scale misuse of power, bribery, negligence of duty and extortion of money by police.

The report also said high government officials were more corrupted than their juniors.

Incidents of corruption were the highest in Dhaka district followed by Chittagong and Patuakhali.

The report mentioned that Bangladesh Railway was the most corrupt in the communication sector and health complexes were at the top in health sector.

## Shibir attacks police camp in Satkania: 1 held

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 25: A police camp was attacked at Chittagong University in Satkania thana last night after arrest of a Shibir activist.

Shibir cadre Md Shahadat was arrested "along with" a walkie-talkie set from the village at 8 pm, police said.

The arrest angered Shibir activists and at one stage they fired on Ghatidanga police camp.

However, no casualty was reported, police said.

Additional police force were deployed. Later, police raided the village. None was arrested during the raid.

## Gunshots at CU

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 25: Unidentified gunmen fired several rounds of shots at Chittagong University (CU) at around 9 last night, creating panic among students.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Islami Chhatra Shibir blamed each other for the incident.

Shibir submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor in this regard today while BCL brought out a procession defying ban on rallies and processions on the campus. No casualty was reported, however.

Meanwhile, some unruly CU students damaged a bus on Chittagong-Khagrachhari route in front of the University Gate No. 1.

The agitating transport workers protesting the incident put up barricades on the road, forcing vehicles to come to a halt for about two hours. The barricade was removed after a meeting between transport workers and police administration.

## Armed Forces

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army officers and that all documents regarding the trial be handed over to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence Ministry who will make it public. He maintained that the Army Act is not above the Constitution.

"Democracy will remain weak unless transparency and accountability are ensured," he said.

Prof. Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir, Pro-Vice-chancellor of the National University, blamed the armed forces for many mishaps in the country's journey. "The civil society has every right to know the truth behind the killings in army."

Columnist Abed Khan said the government should also launch probe into the killing of the army officers who fought in the War of Independence and who had been hanged with for 'treason'.

Former Ambassador Waliur Rahman and economist Dr. Atiur Rahman also spoke on the occasion. Begum Noorjahan Delwar and Major Rezauddin Karim Reza, President and General Secretary respectively of 23rd September Society, Sangsad conducted the function.