

What's on today....

Dance and Music festival: As part of the 'Dance and Music Festival' organised by the High Commission of India, Deepak Choudhury will present a Sitar recital. Venue: National Museum auditorium. Time: 7 pm.

Weather

Rain likely

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

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period. Met office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 34.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Khulna and Jessore and the lowest of 22.5 degree at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5.50 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	33.2	26.5	78	71
Chittagong	31.3	24.0	92	85
Rajshahi	33.6	25.6	85	83
Khulna	34.2	24.8	81	80
Barisal	32.6	24.6	80	89
Sylhet	29.0	22.5	97	92
Cox's Bazar	30.4	24.6	96	85



Students of BAF Shaheen College and School handed over a cheque for Tk 1 lakh and 18 thousand to the father of Saikat Rahman, a victim of rare wild polio disease, for his treatment yesterday. -ISPR photo

Khoka calls for strong resistance against criminal activities

By Staff Correspondent

City BNP president Sadek Hossain Khoka MP yesterday asked the city dwellers to build up a resistance in every ward and give a befitting reply to those involved in terrorism, murder, rape, kidnapping, toll extortion and forcible occupation of people's properties.

He alleged that leaders and activists of the ruling Awami League are directly involved with criminal activities and unleashed a reign of terror on innocent people and opposition activists.

Khoka was addressing a way side rally in front of Tikatuli Jame Mosque organised to press home the demand of arrest and death sentence of the killers of Advocate Habibur Rahman Mondal. BNP's ward no-75 unit organised the rally and brought out a procession.

City BNP to meet Friday

By Staff Correspondent

A joint meeting of the city BNP and its front organisations will be held at 6:30pm on Friday at the party central office at Nayapalton.

City BNP President Sadek Hossain Khoka MP will preside over the meeting, said a press release.

All leaders of the city committee, BNP-supported ward commissioners at the Dhaka City Corporation, presidents and general secretaries or convenors of all thana committees, presidents and general secretaries of all front organisations of the city unit have been asked to attend the meeting on time.

Poura polls

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Bogra in the first election to the new municipality.

He got 3,471 votes while his nearest rival Abdul Wahed 1,782 in the election held peacefully.

Some 85 per cent voters out of total 7,059 cast their ballots in nine centres.

Manjural Islam Binol of BNP was unofficially elected chairman of the newly formed Gopalpur municipality in Natore.

Islam, who got 4,005 votes, beat his rival Awami League candidate Alhaj Shamsuddin Shadhu with a margin of 1,162 votes.

Polling took place peacefully in all the nine centres with voters' turnout of over 85 per cent. The total voters were 10,204.

Uttam Kumar Saha was unofficially elected chairman of Baduganj pourashava in Rangpur.

He polled 3,490 votes while his nearest rival Mohammad Mosharraf Hossain 2,645 votes.

Ishaq Hossain was unofficially elected chairman in Naogaur pourashava in Naogaon.

He got 1,748 votes while his nearest rival Mohammad Anwar Hossain 1,224 votes in the election.

Speakers call for formulating 'alternative' health policy

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers on the concluding day of a two-day seminar yesterday called for formulating an 'alternative' national health policy acceptable to people of all walks of life.

They said the marginal section of our society are directly affected by the dominant medical notion of 'health' of the elite and the donor-driven policies.

Shasthya Shonglap organised the seminar on 'Critique of the National Health Policy: In Search of a People's Policy on Health'.

"We reject the existing national health policy. It does not represent the views of the common people," said one of the speakers.

"Any health policy must address the health problems of every citizen. Assessment of each and every aspect of life and health should have been mandatory before launching the

National Health Policy (NHP)."

They also proposed to include other issues such as legal aspects related to health and environment, disabled and indigenous people's health needs, and health of people working in factories and industries.

The seminar also recommended covering areas like production of food, reproductive health, neonatal and child health, private healthcare services, referral system, role of the doctors, nurses and health workers, disaster management, role of the international organisations and inter-ministerial relationship.

The concluding session of the seminar was chaired by Farhad Mazhar of UBINIG while Mahfuz Anam, Editor of The Daily Star, Enaytullah Khan, Editor of the Weekly Holiday, and Dr Quasem Choudhury attended the seminar as distinguished guests.

The speakers recommended that the 'alternative' health policy should focus on topics like primary healthcare services, immunisation programme, and environmental health.

Govt ignores JS body

73 additional jute purchasing centres open

The parliamentary standing committee on Jute Ministry yesterday resented the opening of 73 additional jute purchasing centres by government bypassing the lawmakers' earlier decision, reports UNB.

The committee at its earlier meeting approved 100 purchasing centres for the current season to procure jute for the mills under Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation, but some 173 have been opened so far.

The meeting decided to implement the committee's earlier recommendation by cutting down the additional centres, said a press release.

In the last season, 176 centres were opened to procure 40 lakh bales of jute.

Committee Chairman Mohammad Shamsul Huq presided over the meeting at Sangsad Bhaban. Its members State Minister for Jute A K Faezul Huq, Dr S M Moklesur Rahman, Sharif Khasruzzaman, Mohammad Emdadul Huq Bhuiyan, Mohammad Mojibur Rahman, Dr Mohammad Salek Chowdhury and officials concerned were present.

The additional centres were opened in the face of socio-economic and political pressures," State Minister for Jute A K Faezul Huq told UNB.

He said he already directed the BJMC officials to stop opening more centres until further directive. The committee called for documents of three years' performance of the government buying centres to re-

view in its next meeting on October 10.

"We honour the committee decision, but I'll talk to the Prime Minister about cutting down the additional centres as the issue is very sensitive," he said.

He said there is a procurement target of 30-35 lakh bales during the current season which would require Tk 250 crore to Tk 270 crore. Some 8-9 lakh bales will be carried over from previous stock to meet the demand of the BJMC mills.

There is a commitment to provide a loan of Tk 100 crore at an interest rate of 18 per cent of which Tk 75 crore has already been released to start procurement, he said.

The minister said Tk 93 crore remained outstanding with the jute traders and farmers. There is a common practice that every year BJMC maintains an outstanding amount between Tk 30 crore and Tk 50 crore.

The meeting extended the deadline for down payment of Tk 1.44 crore by the Workers' Employees Welfare Association to October 30 for offloading the Mymensingh Jute Mills at Shambhuganj.

In default, the ministry was asked to take alternative measures to re-run the mills.

Faezul Huq said the cooperative of the workers and employees tried to collect the funds following the issuance of the letter of intent, but failed.

DU admission test from Nov 3

By DU Correspondent

The tests for admission into first year honours courses under different departments of the Dhaka University for 2000-2001 academic year will begin on November 3.

The test for 'Ka' unit (Science group) will be held on November 10, 'Kha' unit (Humanities group) on November 17, 'Ga' unit (Commerce group) on November 3 and 'Gha' unit (all groups) on November 24.

The university authorities announced the test schedule yesterday.

The distribution of admission forms will begin on October 9. The forms will be available at different branches of banks on the DU campus. The last date for submitting the forms is October 24.

Those who have passed the Higher Secondary (HSC) examinations in 1999 or 2000 are eligible to apply for the tests.

Shamsur Rahman

From page 12

ali Bank was handed over to Russel by Nasir Uddin Kalu, Kothandapur Awami League President, about two months back.

Russel also confessed to the joint investigation cell that he got the check from Kalu. The cell comprises officials from DGFI, NSI, SB and CID.

The ring leaders might have forced Russel not to encash the cheque, the investigators said.

The four accused in their judicial statements confessed that ten persons were involved in the killing. Of them, six have been arrested.

PM

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starting from school to university level.

Responding to the office and accommodation problems of the PSC members, the Prime Minister said 2.9 acres of land has been allocated for construction of PSC Bhaban near Agargaon, where a housing complex can be built with modern architecture to meet the accommodation problem.

In the memorandum, the PSC members appraised the Prime Minister of their problems including status, salary, allowances, accommodation transport.

They also appraised the Prime Minister of the latest activities of the Public Service Commission.

The students who have passed O' level in four subjects and A' level in two subjects in 1999 or 2000 and obtained at least B grade in four subjects and C grade in two other subjects are also eligible to take part in the admission test. The admission test will be held under MCQ system and the pass number is 40.

Flood

From page 1

reports: With the fall of water level in the rivers Padma and Gorai, the flood situation in the district improved slightly yesterday.

Ganges recorded a fall of 15 and Gorai 11 centimetres respectively during the last 24 hours ending at 2 pm yesterday.

In absence of adequate relief materials, the sufferings of the flood-hit people have increased. A large number of people are pour into upazila headquarters and Kushtia town in search of food and jobs.

All the educational institutions have been turned into flood shelters.

The worst affected upazila is Daulatpur. The Padma has engulfed a vast area of the upazila, rendering many people homeless.

Diarrhoea and other intestinal diseases have broken out in the upazila.

Members of parliament from the district have urged the government to provide relief for the affected people.

The flood situation in five other districts remained static yesterday.

The affected people in those districts have been passing their days in great hardship for want of food, drinking water, medicine and other necessities.

Death anniversary

The first death anniversary of Mostafa Abdul Hai Al-Azad, former Deputy Chief of Planning and Secretary of Bangladesh Tea Ass-

sociation, will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a *milad mahfil* will be held after Magrib prayers today at his residence at Karobi Flat No 103, House No 3, Road No 7, Gulshan-1.

The body was sent to Chittagong Combined Military Hospital for autopsy.

NAM Summit

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deferral of the 13th NAM Summit.

First, there will be 'weather instability' in the months of September and October and November.

Second, a caretaker government would be in place in September next year. So it would not be possible to hold the summit, as there will be no elected government at that time. Third, it would take some time for the newly elected government to be ready to hold such a summit of the 114-member organisation. And fourth, the month of Ramadan will fall at the end of next year.

Therefore, the best time to hold the NAM Summit would be in the end of January," the foreign minister said.

Responding to a question as to when the government took these factors into consideration and asked for the deferral, Azad replied, "These factors were always there. But since the time of the summit has now come nearer, we have made a request for the deferral."

He declined to comment on whether lack of preparations had anything to do with the request for the deferral.

Calcutta flood

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tion of around 1,100 inmates, Basu said.

Eight more deaths were reported today from the eastern Indian state of Bihar, which adds to the current flooding there to 116.

In Bangladesh, which began to receive overspill from the Indian floods at the weekend, the official toll stood at eight dead, with more than a million people in six border districts next to West Bengal affected.

Relief Commissioner Ingty said four helicopters had been deployed to drop food, milk powder and medicines in the worst-hit areas of West Bengal.

"Four major districts are more or less cut off and we need money, more boats and helicopters to make inroads and step up rescue work," a top official said.

Reports of looting had earlier come in from all of West Bengal's affected districts, as desperate villagers ransacked relief trucks for foodstuffs.

Military officials said they had managed to rescue 250,000 people at the weekend who had been marooned on rooftops and rafts without food for four days in West Bengal's Murshidabad.

Diamond cutting

From page 1

Lanka, which owns and manages the largest cutting and polishing factory in the world in Colombo, will be the overseas partner.

The project partners are optimistic that the factory will go into commercial production in January next year. However, they plan to start test production in November this year.

The diamonds will be imported in coarse forms referred to as cuttable rough. Sri Lankan experts will transfer diamond cutting technology to Bangladesh, train local workers and supervise the polishing operation.

The finished diamonds, which fetch around US\$ 490 a carat, will be packed and air-freighted to Europe for sale to the international diamond market.

Bus fare rates

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should be under government control.

About transport strike in different routes, Enayet Ullah alleged that it was due to the local administration's non-cooperation with transport owners in implementing the new government rate.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, another member of the Expert Committee said that one of its recommendations was to deregulate the transport fare altogether, allowing market forces to play.

The government deregulated the fare rate for goods-carrying trucks in 1975, he mentioned.

Road accident

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Police said Anwar Begum, 50, wife of Abdul Rahman of Charnaghara village, was injured seriously as the Aricha-bound truck hit her at about 11am. She succumbed to her injuries on way to the sadar hospital.

Police seized the truck but its driver managed to flee.

One person was killed and five others were injured in a collision between a truck and a tempo at Belia on Jamalpur-Tangail road Monday night.

Witnesses said Harun-Al-Rashid, 35, of Baluata village in Sadar upazila died on the spot at about 10 pm.

Injured Hazrat Ali, Abdul Khaleq, Nur Islam, Dulla and Abdul Haq were admitted to Jamalpur General Hospital. Of them, Nur Islam, Hazrat Ali and Abdul Haq were shifted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

A sepy of the Army was killed in a road accident near Chokoria College in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Shafiqul Islam of 41 Bengal Regiment met the accident when an Army truck bound for Chittagong at Al Kadam overturned at 11:30 am.

He was rushed to Chokoria Jam Jam Hospital where the doctor declared him dead.

Army sources said Shafiqul joined 41 Bengal Regiment stationed in Bandarban on Sunday from Jessore Cantonment.

The body was sent to Chittagong Combined Military Hospital for autopsy.

3 leading trade bodies

From page 1

oriented ones, to build capacity to repay," he said.

The DCCI president said lack of enthusiasm among domestic investors is apparent because of political instability and law and order situation. "This sends a wrong signal to foreign investors who follow the locals."

To increase investment, good governance based on transparency and accountability should be established along with accelerated administrative, banking and legal reforms.

MCCI President Latifur Rahman said the economy is showing signs of improvement during the current financial year.

In the first two months, export earnings grew by 23 per cent and remittances by 16 per cent. The agriculture sector is also showing signs of positive performance, he said.

"But against these favourable signs, there are overwhelming threats of higher fuel prices, fall in foreign exchange reserve, increase in non-development expenditure of the government, stalemate in the capital market, increasing smuggling, unabated political uncertainties, and non-integration of the economy with regional and global markets," Rahman said.

He said local enterprises are in a serious disadvantageous position in the face of increasing imports from India and denial of market access there due to tariff and non-tariff barriers.

He said the government should address this issue as its top priority, providing meaningful support to business enterprises to increase their competitiveness.

But very little has been done to improve the situation, resulting in decline in investment.

He said that almost 40 per cent of the foreign exchange reserve has to be spent for service amortisation and interest payment on debts.

He said delay in turnaround of the economy will continue to aggravate the social problems. There is already a huge unemployment in the country, which is increasing every year.

The MCCI president said it will be possible to avail the opportunities provided by globalisation of markets if enterprise competitiveness can be bettered, infrastructural services are modernised, law and order problems are effectively tackled, level of governance is improved and there is a qualitative changes in the political situation.

BGMEA President Anisur Rahman Sinha said garments account for about 76 per cent

to the total export earnings, which is good and at the same time dangerous. "If the garments sector is affected at any time then the entire economy will be severely affected".

So other sectors should be developed and the number of items on the export list should be increased. The new millennium is bringing new challenges for developing countries because by 2005, the quota regime will be over and there will be no protection, he said.

He said garments export depends on three factors - low price, good quality and timely delivery.

Timely delivery is not always possible due to problems at ports, which also increases the cost.

Sinha said frequent power failure also increases cost of production. He urged the government for providing a level playing field for increasing garments export.

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