

Britain top spot for investment into Europe

AFP, London
Britain is the number one port of call for foreign investors channeling funds into Europe, according to a new survey by accountants Ernst and Young.
Britain boosted its share of Europe's foreign direct investment (FDI) to 26 per cent in 2000. France was its nearest rival with 15 per cent of FDI projects, with Germany and Spain further back on seven and six per cent respectively, the survey said.
The United States is the main investor in Europe, with 44 per cent of all projects in 2000. Britain is particularly reliant on US investment, which accounts for 57 per cent of all FDI flows to Britain.
"The UK recovered its market share on 1999's figures when inward investment into manufacturing was hit," said Ernst and Young corporate location adviser Mark Hughes. "Foreign direct investment in telecoms, software and business services has taken up the slack."

ASEAN holds trade link talks with China, ROK, Japan

AFP, Siem Reap, Cambodia
Southeast Asian economic ministers were in talks yesterday with counterparts from China, Japan and South Korea to strengthen trade ties in the region.
The consultations followed a retreat by ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Thursday during which they agreed to step up efforts to expand free trade links with the three countries as well as with Australia and New Zealand.
ASEAN ministers said boosting trade ties with other economies outside Southeast Asia, as well as forging greater economic integration within ASEAN itself, were crucial to reducing risks from global developments such as the US-led economic slowdown.
"We realise that growth of economic links with our neighbours -

particularly in Northeast Asia - is vital to our long-term growth and development," said Thai Commerce Minister Adisai Bodharamik at a news briefing late Thursday.
Aside from enhancing trade links, projects that would further boost cooperation are expected to be discussed, Adisai said.
Friday's meeting with the Chinese, Japanese and South Koreans comes under the ASEAN plus three dialogue process, which provides for regular talks between the countries' leaders as well as foreign, finance and trade ministers.
Chinese Minister for Trade and Economic Cooperation Shi Guangsheng and South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Hwang Doo-yun flew in Thursday for the meeting at a luxury hotel near the world-famous Angkor Wat temples.

Japan, where a new prime minister and cabinet have just been appointed, sent vice minister for international affairs at the finance ministry, Hidehito Kono.
ASEAN groups economic backwaters Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam with Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
Domestic matters kept the ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam busy at home, leaving only six ministers of the 10-member ASEAN to attend Cambodia's first hosting of a ministerial meeting since admission to ASEAN two years ago.
ASEAN said it has formed a working group to focus on how to expand trade links with its three Northeast Asian neighbours as well as with Australia and New Zealand.
The working group has already

met with officials from China to study the implications of Beijing's entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and explore the possibility of an ASEAN-China Free Trade Area - a potential market of 1.7 billion people.
Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji proposed the establishment of an ASEAN-China free trade area during a summit of East Asian leaders in Singapore last November.
ASEAN is also discussing with Japan about the formation of a group of experts to study the setting up of a similar free trade arrangement with Tokyo, which is currently negotiating a free trade agreement with Singapore.
The working group is scheduled to meet with senior officials from Australia and New Zealand to finalise plans for more open trade.



US President George W. Bush answers a few questions from the media during a meeting with advisors on energy policy in the Cabinet Room of the White House on Thursday. Seen in the picture (from left to right) are Economic Policy Advisor Lawrence Lindsey, US Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz, Bush, and US Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham.

DCCI course on shipping procedure ends

The 5-day training course on "Shipping Procedures for Export & Import" organised by the DCCI Business Institute (DBI) concluded at the institute premises on Monday, says a press release.
DCCI Director Sayedur Rahman distributed certificates among the participants.
The course aimed at familiarising the participants with topics like banking procedures for import & export, customs procedures for import & export, shipping procedures for import & export (containerised) air procedures for import & export and shipping procedures for import & export.
DBI Acting Executive Director Md Emdadul Haque also spoke on the occasion. Deputy Secretary (Training) Hasanur Rahman Chowdhury and Shahzada Basunia, Deputy Secretary (Training), who acted as the Course Co-ordinators, were also present on the occasion.



A Thai woman cosmetic vendor arranges local cosmetic products at a market in Bangkok yesterday. Thailand has ordered state agencies to slash spending on projects that rely on imports in a bid to reinvigorate the fragile domestic economy. The government is concerned that the imports of luxury goods such as cosmetics, clothes and watches could take a toll on the country as it struggles to overcome its huge public and private debt. Luxury goods imports totalled 22.5 billion Baht (500 million USD) in 2000.

Aristopharma trains Nepalese pharmacists

Aristopharma Ltd, a leading export-oriented pharmaceutical manufacturing company of the country, is giving training to two pharmacists, says a press release.
The 3-week training began at the company's plant at Shampur-Kadamtali in the city on Sunday.
They will be imparted training on 'quality management in the pharmaceutical industry'.
The two trainees: Lessa Manadhar, a Master in Organic Chemistry from Tribhuvan University of Kathmandu, and Sarita Khanal, a Master in Pharmacy from Kharkov State Pharmacy Institute of Ukraine in Russia, both working in Lomus Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd. in Kathmandu, are in Bangladesh under WNF (World Network of Friendship) programme sponsored by AOTS (Association of Overseas Technical Scholarship), Japan and BAAS (Bangladesh AOTS Alumni Society), Dhaka.

New Russian tax regime put to test as deadline runs out

AFP, Moscow
As a deadline for income tax declarations ran out Thursday, Russia's fiscal inspectorate came under pressure to make a success of sweeping reforms that President Vladimir Putin introduced at the start of the year.
Posters have been up in Russia's major cities for several weeks warning citizens starkly that they should pay up fairly and squarely or face a visit from the tax police.
Time will tell if the posters have been effective, and the early signals were mixed.
Some 3.1 million citizens handed in their income declarations for fiscal 2000 on time, 200,000 fewer than last year, the tax ministry said Thursday.
However the ministry, quoted by the ITAR-TASS news agency, said that on the basis of previous years a further 300,000 to 400,000 tax returns could be expected to arrive in the next few days.
In Russia only independent workers or people with more than one source of income are required to make a personal tax declaration.
In other cases tax declarations are made by the employer, and Russia's army of tax inspectors will have 57 million individual cases to consider.
The new tax regime that came into force on January 1, seen by some as the single most important piece of economic reform introduced under Putin, controversially slashed tax rates and introduced modest flat levy of 13 per cent, aiming to put an end to years of chronic fraud.
Putin himself described the new tax regime as "an important event in the life of the country," and economic ministers have reported early signs that it is paying off.
"Tax receipts in the first quarter of 2001 were 36 per cent higher than in the first quarter of 2000," Economic Development Minister German Gref told a meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in London last month.
"With income tax ... the total amount collected grew in the first quarter of 2001 by 63 per cent from the first quarter of last year."
However tax evasion is endemic in post-Communist Russia, both personal and corporate, with tens of billions of dollars either remaining in the pockets of individual wage-earners or escaping to offshore or foreign banks through a variety of scams.
Many Russians justify the non-payment of tax by arguing that government officials are corrupt and tax revenues would go to waste.

METROPOLITAN

Death anniversary

The 30th death anniversary of Shaheed Saif Mizanur Rahman will be observed today, says a press release.
Shaheed Mizanur Rahman Smriti Foundation will hold a *Qurankhwanii, Milad Mahfil* and discussion meeting to mark the day.
He was killed by the Pak army during the War of Liberation.

2 new DU halls open May 7

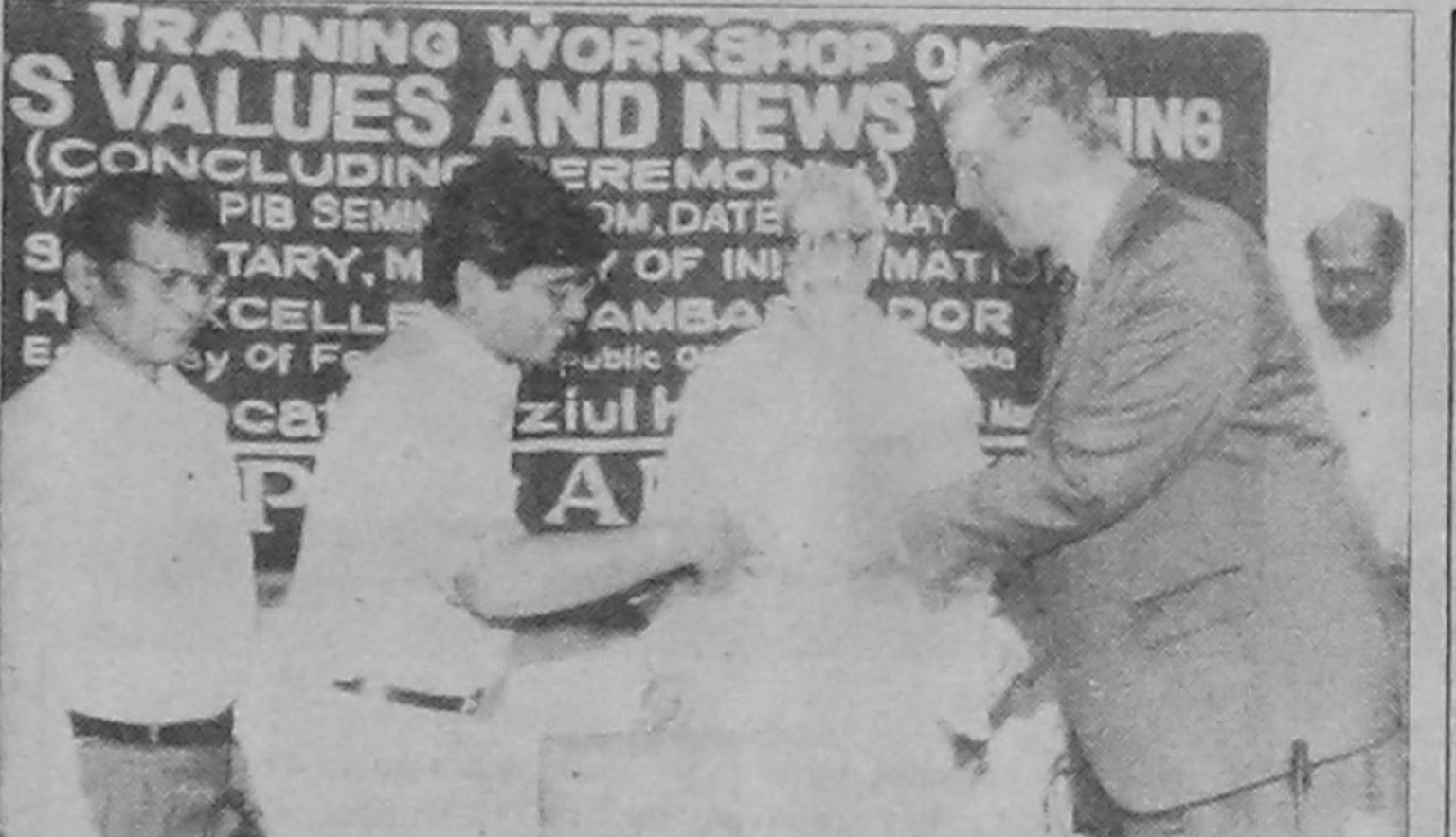
DU CORRESPONDENT
Two new dormitories of Dhaka University will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on May 7.
Of the two halls, Begum Fazilatunnesa Hall is for the female students and Ekushey Hall for the male students.

Death anniversary

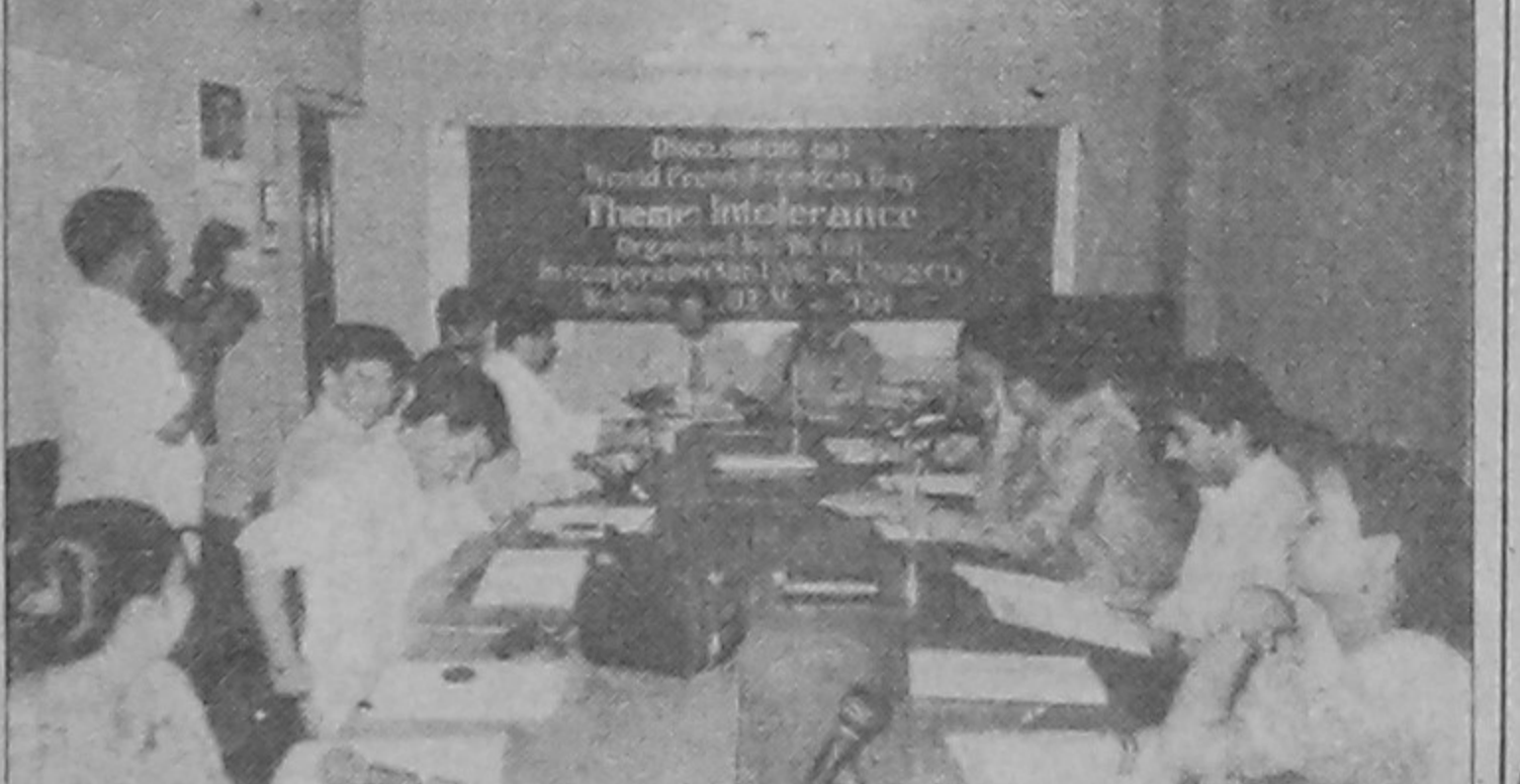
The 30th death anniversary of freedom fighter Shaheed ABM Abdur Rahim will be observed today, says a press release.
A *doa mahfil* will be held by his family to mark the day.
Rahim was a personnel manager of Ujala Match Factory and leading trade union activist. He was arrested by the Pak army during the war and was killed thereafter.

Death anniversary

The death anniversary of Lt. Mohammad Anwarul Azim and 200 officers and employees of North Bengal Sugar Mill will be observed today, says a press release.
Lt. Mohammad Anwarul Azim, the then Administrator of North Bengal Sugar Mill, along with officers and employees of the mill were killed by the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971.
On the occasion, a *milad mahfil, Qurankhwanii* and discussion meeting will be held at Azim Nagar, in Gopalpur under Natore district.



German Ambassador Uwe Schramm distributing certificates among participants of the workshop on "News Values and News Writing" in the city yesterday. The workshop was organised by Press Institute of Bangladesh in association with AMIC and IJ.

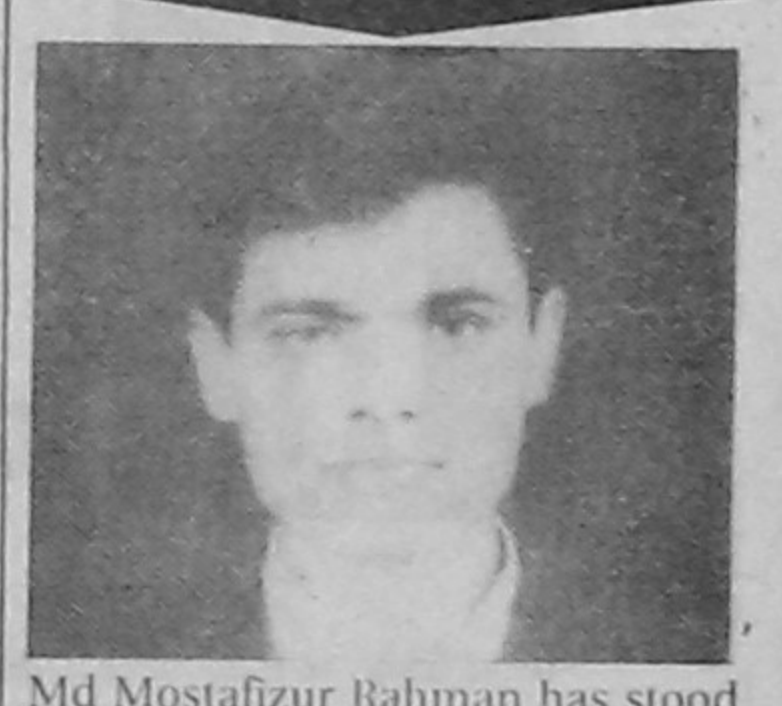


Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) in cooperation with UNIC and UNESCO organised a discussion on "Intolerance: on Wednesday."

Teachers suggest suspending student union activities during examinations

UNB, Dhaka
Suspending activities of the student unions during the public exams is an effective way to check cheating in the examinations, leading teachers said.
Leaders of the Bangladesh College Teachers' Association (BCTA) observed that political influence is a major incentive for the examinees to go for copying.
As the HSC examinations begin on May 10, the BCTA in a press conference yesterday urged parliamentarians and political leaders to restrain their activists from visiting exam centres.
The student activists always play a key role in forcing invigilators and administrations to allow the examinees to adopt unfair means. In case of refusal, the teachers are attacked physically and mentally.
During the last SSC examinations, two teachers - Ananda Kumar and Ashutosh Pal of Baharbagh High School in Magura - were seriously injured for trying to resist such elements.
"Teachers alone are not able to stop copying in the exams. Roles of students, guardians, administration and local elite are vital in this regard," said BCTA president Principal Kazi Faruq Ahmed.
To check copying, exam centers should be selected carefully, he said, adding that it should also be ensured that no centre is set up under the political or regional influence.
"Urging all teachers to discharge their responsibilities with utmost honesty and sincerity, the BCTA president, however, said like in other professions, some people also intruded into teaching who are not eligible for the noble profession.
"We have no hesitation to criticise ourselves or demand punishment if anyone of us plays foul," Kazi Faruq said referring to the seven-point suggestion of the teachers' federation on how to stop copying in the exams.
He, however, said ensuring human resources depends on quality teachers. He demanded separate pay scale for the teachers and placed some other demands relating to their salaries.
A total of 571,074 examinees will sit for the HSC exams under the seven education boards this year. Following are the numbers of board-wise examinees: Dhaka - 164,534, Rajshahi - 169,441, Comilla - 69,235, Jessore - 71,458, Chittagong - 45,230, Barisal - 34,085 and Sylhet - 17,091.
Harun-ur-Rashid joins PDB
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Joint Secretary Harun-Ur-Rashid joined Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) as member administration recently, said a press release of PDB.
Harun-Ur-Rashid replaced his predecessor Jamaluddin Ahmed.

Congratulations



Md Mostafizur Rahman has stood First Class First in MA examination of 1998 (held in 2000) from the department of Islamic Studies of Dhaka University, says a press release.

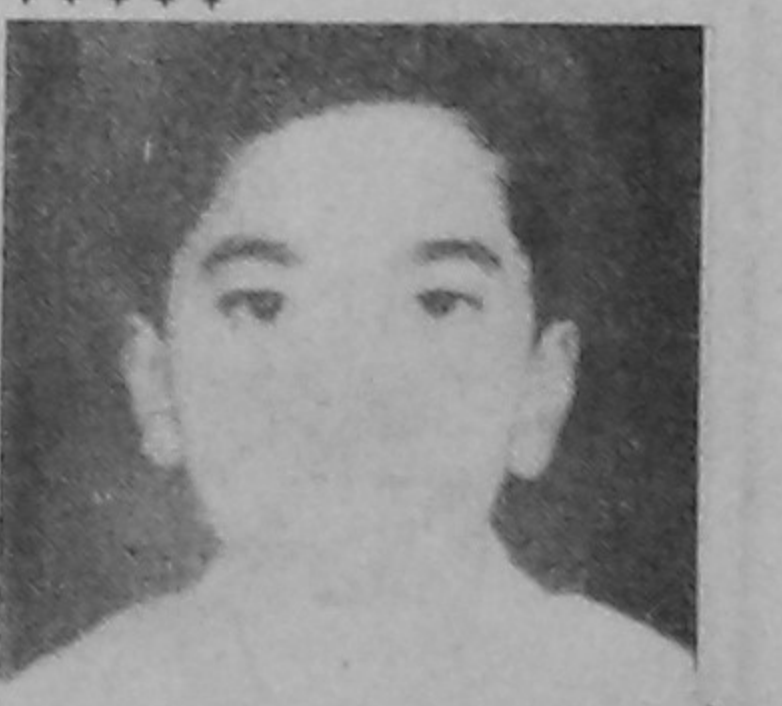
He is the son of Al-Haj Kia-muddin and Moniza Akhter of Village Kathora of Salna Bazar of Gazipur.

He wishes to pursue higher studies in Comparative Study of Religions.



Mohammad Abdullah-Al-Asad has stood First Class Second in MA examination of 1998 (held in 2000) from the department of Islamic Studies of Dhaka University, says a press release.

Asad is the second son of Muhammad Anwar Ullah, a retired manager of BTMC and Setara Begum of Aanchpara, Tongi.



Anik has obtained the primary scholarship in Talent Pool from Moqsudha Govt. Primary School, Companiganj of Noakhali, says a press release.
He is the youngest son of Abdul Hai Murad and Parvin Akhtar Kusun.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely
UNB, Dhaka
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Khulna, Dhaka, Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions, at a few places over Sylhet division and at one or two places over Barisal division in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today.
Met office said a little change in day temperature is expected over the country during the period.
The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 33.2 degree Celsius at Jessore and the lowest 18.0 degree Celsius at Tetulia.
The sun sets in the capital today at 6.29 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.21 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	29.1	21.4	94	75
Chittagong	26.2	23.0	76	79
Rajshahi	32.4	21.3	74	65
Khulna	29.4	22.0	82	71
Barisal	29.6	20.5	82	83
Sylhet	29.0	23.6	79	75
Cox's Bazar	33.0	22.6	76	91

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim at the launching ceremony of the "Performance Audit Manual" prepared under the UNDP funded Strengthening the Office of the CAG (STAG) project at Hotel Sheraton on Wednesday. Syed Yusuf Hossain, Comptroller and Auditor General, is also seen.

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DHAKA TODAY

Seminar on software
Transworld Infotech Limited in association with MEGA Cybertech Limited, India, will hold a day-long seminar on "Software Development and Medical Transcription". Venue: Vasker Novera Hall, National Museum, Shabbagh. Time: 10 am.

Discussion
Ekattur Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee will hold a discussion meeting on "Campaign of Jahanara Imam and trial of war criminals" to mark the 72nd birth anniversary of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam. Venue: Planning and Development Academy auditorium. Time: 4 pm.

Reception and cultural function
Koli, a social and cultural organisation, will accord a reception to the eminent personalities and a cultural function to mark the 30 years of independence. Venue: Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib auditorium, 145 New Bailey Road. Time: 4 pm.

AIBS seminar
The American Institute of Bangladesh Studies will hold a seminar on "Military in Pakistan Politics: 1947-1970". Venue: WVA auditorium, House No 20, Rd No 27 (old), 16 (new), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 4:30 pm.

Workshop
The inaugural ceremony of the national dissemination workshop on "Sector Policy and Quality Assurance Programmes" under SESIP. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 9:00 am.

Seminar
Goethe Institut will hold a seminar on the "Future of Dhaka City". Venue: Goethe Institut, House No 10, Rd No 9, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

Reception
Alhaj Makbul Hossain Foundation will accord a reception to meritorious students of Dhanmondi-Mohammadpur area. Venue: Osmani Memorial Hall, Abdul Gani Rd. Time: 3:30 pm.

Fair
Dhaka Bashi will hold a mini-fair. Venue: Hazarbag Park. Time: 4:00 pm.

Musical evening
The Russian Cultural will hold a children's musical evening. Venue: Music Salon of the centre, House No 510, Rd No 7, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 4:30 pm.

Slide show
Goethe Institut will present a slide show on the New Architecture of Berlin. Venue: Goethe Institut, House No 10, Rd No 9, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 5:00 pm.

Prize distribution
Bangladesh Photographic Society will hold the prize distribution ceremony of its annual photography competition 2000. Chief guest: DCC Mayor Mohammad Hanif. Venue: Shilpakala Academy. Time: 3:05 pm.