



Chief of Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Jamal Uddin handing over the Sword of Honour for best all round performance to Flight Cadet Wing under Officer Md Towhidul Islam at BAF's summer graduation ceremony yesterday.

Summer graduation ceremony of BAF Academy held

The Summer Graduation Ceremony of the No-13 GD(P) No-10 & No-11 GD(N) and No-46 Ground Branch Courses of the Bangladesh Air Force was held at the BAF Academy Parade Square in Jessore yesterday, says an ISPR press release.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed attended the ceremony as chief guest. He reviewed the parade and took salute. He handed over awards, certificates and trophies to the outstanding cadets and also distributed flying badges amongst the Flight Cadets.

Flight Cadet Wing Under Officer Md Towhidul Islam was presented with the coveted Sword of Honour for best all round performance. He also got the Osmani Gold Medal for best performance in academic training. The Chief of the Air Staff Trophy was given to Cadet Sergeant Md Abdul Baten for best all-round performance in the ground branch training while Flight Cadet Under Officer Abni Rabbani Mohammad Golum Farooque received the Commandant's Trophy for best performance in General Service Training. Meanwhile, the No-2 Squadron was adjudged the Champion Squadron and was given the academy colours.

Addressing the newly commis-

sioned officers, the Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed said that the newly commissioned officers would be able to build their future career with the combination of their devotion, perseverance, dutifulness and discipline.

BSFS meet held

A meeting of Bangladesh-Sweden Friendship Society (BSFS) Executive Committee was held in the city on Thursday, says a press release.

President of BSFS and noted folklorist Dr Ashraf Siddiqui addressed the meeting.

The assembly was also addressed by senior vice president of BSFS Mahbuba Chowdhury, Editor of Daily Manabjama, vice president Binoy Barman, Feature Editor of the New Nation and Literary Secretary Farida Yasmin, Woman Page-in-Charge of the Daily Ittefaq. They stressed the need for strengthening relation between the two countries through cultural and literary exchange.

Other members who were present in the meeting include Babar Ashraf, Mizanur Rahman Sakar, H.M. Jamal Uddin, Tanzina Ahin Beauty and Sumon Kaiser.

Arsenic mitigation Regular exchange of knowledge required, experts say

International and national experts engaged in pioneering research work on various aspects of arsenic contamination yesterday stressed the urgency for regular exchange of knowledge and experience on the "menacing problem" to better understand its impact on crops, nutrition and food chain, says a press release.

The experts were responding to Commonwealth Research Organisation's Dr Ravi Naidu's presentation on "Geogenic arsenic and associated toxicity problems in the ground water-soil-plant-animal-human continuum".

Arsenic contamination issue is being discussed in the context of its full implication at the two-day Expert group meeting that meets a genuine need for grasping the problem of arsenic contamination.

Ravi Naidu said that arsenic contamination is not an issue in Bangladesh alone but has come to surface in Mongolia, Taiwan, Viet-

nam and even Australia. "All of us have to get together to come out with a solution," he urged experts who represented a good blend of soil scientists, nutritionists and health and agricultural professionals.

In his opening address, Dr Shoaib Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture said the government attaches a high priority to mitigating arsenic contamination as it threatens to undermine the gains made by the country in the provision of safe drinking water, self sufficiency in food production and nutrition.

The Expert Group meeting organised by UNICEF, he said is a step in the right direction and we are keen to understand all the factors behind contamination of ground water that is a critical input for sustaining crop production, livestock and the economy itself.

UNICEF Country Representative Shahida Azfar said given the

gravity and seriousness of the situation, "We cannot wait but need to move ahead". The area of arsenic, nutrition and food chain needs a collaborative effort and UNICEF is eager to facilitate interaction among all the stakeholders, she said.

The two-day meeting of the leading international and national experts drawn from the field of soil, crops nutrition, and health is taking place to share professional insight, research and development agenda and contemporary knowledge for examining the possible consequences of arsenic contamination of soil, crop, and food.

As a prelude to the experts' presentations and discussion, Colin Davis, UNICEF Chief of Water and Sanitation shared the efforts to address different aspects of the arsenic contamination of drinking water. Dr Shoaib Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture chaired the first session.

Power supply to Demra, AJM areas to be disrupted on Friday

Power supply to Demra Industrial Area, Adamjee Jute Mills Ltd. and its surrounding areas - Matuail, Kajla, Shanapur, Chittagong Road, Mijmiji, Siddhirganj, Sonamia Market, Moon Light Cinema Hall and nearby areas will be disrupted on Friday from 7-00 am to 5-00 pm, says a PDB press release.

Power supply will be disrupted due to height raising work of a 132 KV transmission line under 210 MW Siddhirganj Thermal Power Station Construction Project.

For practical reasons, the duration of the planned disruption may stagger.

The PDB authority regrets the inconvenience to be caused to its valued consumers for disruption.

Mcian-1962 Club meet held

BSS, Dhaka

A meeting of the 1962 batch students of Marichand College (MC) of Sylhet, known as "Mcian-62 Club", was held at the Family Lounge of Dhaka Club on Saturday.

Noted students of "Mcian-1962 Club" are Foreign Secretary Syed Muazzem Ali, former information secretary MI Chowdhury, member of the Planning Commission Anisul Hoque Chowdhury, former secretary Dr MA Mubin, former director general of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) Major General (Ret) Azizur Rahman, Secretary AB Chowdhury and general secretary of the club Syed Monwar Hossain.

Prof M Alauddin a BSMU presided over the meeting which approved a constitution for the club. The club will initiate various social programmes which includes welfare of the family members of the club, restoration of social values and assistance for destitute and poor people.

The club would also provide scholarship for meritorious students.

Japan donates tetanus, measles vaccines

BSS, Dhaka

The government has taken up a massive programme to attain the goal of neonatal tetanus elimination and control of measles by the year 2005.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim said this while receiving tetanus and measles vaccines by the Ambassador of Japan in Dhaka, Jiro Kobayashi, at his office in the city yesterday.

He said 189 upazilas, 27 municipalities of 65 districts and slum areas of four city corporations will be brought under the programme, which will be launched on August 26 and continue till September 4, an official press release said.

The Health Minister thanked the Japan government for cooperation and assistance and requested the envoy to continue such cooperation in future.

Japan provided 4,74,000 vial of 20 doses tetanus vaccines and 1,46,200 vial of 10 doses measles vaccine in three phases which cost 15 crore Taka, the release added.



Prokiti, a nature preservation and environment development organisation, launched a cleaning campaign in the city's Gulshan and Banani areas on Wednesday. Picture shows Prokiti workers cleaning side walks in those areas.

Safe Motherhood Day today

UNB, Dhaka

The Safe Motherhood Day will be observed in the capital city as elsewhere in the country in a befitting manner today.

This year's theme is "Avoid the three delays during pregnancy and take timely action".

These are: delay in deciding to seek care, the delay in reaching an emergency obstetric facility centre and delay in starting treatment in the facility centre.

To mark the day, Health and Family Welfare Ministry and Directorate of Family Planning in collaboration with UNICEF have chalked out an elaborate programme.

The programmes include bringing out procession, holding discussion and staging displays in the streets and folk songs. In addition, Bangladesh Television and

Bangladesh Betar will broadcast TV and Radio spots respectively.

May 28 has been declared as Safe Motherhood Day by the initiative of the present government in 1997 to ensure the rights of safe motherhood for every woman in the country.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for creating awareness among the people about the importance of safe motherhood.

"Good health for mothers and safe motherhood are the essential ingredients in building a healthy and able nation," she said in her message on the eve of "Safe Motherhood Day".

Sheikh Hasina said her government has taken up social motivation programme to reduce mortality rate of mother and resist oppression on women.

She expressed the hope that

the rate of maternal mortality and women repression will be reduced significantly if the programme was implemented.

The prime minister said the government has been making all out efforts to set up an emergency maternity service network across the country.

She said there are centres at the field level to reach all kinds of primary health services to the doorsteps of the people.

She said that the work on setting up of one community clinic for every 6,000 people is progressing well and the current situation would improve significantly if essential services can be obtained from such clinics.

The prime minister expressed her firm conviction to reduce the maternal mortality rate to fifty percent by the year 2005 through social movement.

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Venue : The Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel Dhaka	Venue : Engineer's Institution Building S S Khaled Road, Chittagong

Interviews

Dhaka	Chittagong
Date : 30th - 31st May & 4th June 2001	Date : 3rd June 2001
Time : 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (30-31 May) and 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. (4th June)	Time : 10a.m. - 6 p.m.
Venue : The Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel Dhaka	Venue : Engineer's Institution Building S.S. Khaled Road, Chittagong

For further information or an interview, contact either **Shajeda Khatun** at your local British Council on Tel: 8618905 - 7, or email bangladesh@unl.ac.uk.

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