

DHAKA TODAY

Children's competition

A four-day long competition of the children in painting, recitation, Nazrul sangeet and dance based on Nazrul sangeet will begin. The competition has been organised by Nazrul Institute in observance of the death anniversary of the national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. Venue: Kabi Bhaban, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.00pm daily.

Open day

HURDCO International School will host an Open Day to present the school as a whole to the parents, visitors and the community. The attractions of the day include science projects, musical shows, food, merchandise and raffle draw. Venue: Bashundhara main gate, Bashundhara. Time: 10.00am.

Bonsai display

A two-day long Bonsai display, organised by Bangladesh Bonsai Society, will begin. Venue: BRAC Inn Centre, Mohakhali. Time: From 10.00am to 8.00pm daily.

Exhibition

A 3-day international exhibition for garment and textile in Bangladesh titled '3rd Tex-Tech International 2002' will begin with Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury as chief guest. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: From 10.00am to 8.30pm daily.

Blood and eye donation programme

Srijani Mukta Scout Group, in cooperation with Sandhani Bangladesh, Dhaka Medical College, organises a voluntary blood donation and posthumous eye donation programme. Venue: Commissioner Office auditorium, Ward no 44, Mohammadpur. Time: 9.00am.

Blood donation

Quantum Foundation organises a voluntary blood donation programme in cooperation with Rotaract Club of Metro Dhaka. Venue: T&T Club, Motijheel. Time: 8.00am.

Anti-dengue programme

Genesis, a children and juvenile organisation will arrange an anti-dengue programme that includes distribution of dengue-preventive medicine and a procession to raise public awareness about dengue. Venue: Shishu Academy. Time: 10.00am.

Discussion

Bangladesh Mahila Awami League will hold a discussion titled 'The nation wants to see the execution of the killers of Bangabandhu'. Venue: 23, Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 4.00pm.

General meeting

The 10th biennial general meeting of Chuadanga Zila Samity, Dhaka, will be held. Venue: ICMAB auditorium, Nikhet. Time: 5.00pm.

Prize distribution ceremony

The prize distribution ceremony of Midubhashan-Senti Security World Cup Quiz will be held with former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4.00pm.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Film Show

Bangladesh Short Film Forum will celebrate its 16th founding anniversary by holding a four-day long festival of South Asian documentaries titled 'Travelling Film South Asia (TFSA), Dhaka-2002. Syed Shujauddin Ahmed, director general, NIMCO will inaugurate the festival. Venue: Goethe-Institut, Dhanmondi. Time: 6.00pm.

Workshop

A two-day workshop on 'Lessons Learned from Credit Losses', organised by the City Bank will begin with Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury as chief guest. Venue: MCCI conference hall. Time: 10.00am.

Blood donation

Orca blood for life organises a voluntary blood donation programme. Venue: Daffodil Institute of IT. Time: 10.00am.

BCACP rally

Bangladesh Chartered Accountancy Chhatra Parishad (BCACP) will hold a rally to realise their various demands. Venue: BCACP office, Motijheel. Time: 5.30pm.

Rotary meeting

Regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: RAOWA Club, Mohakhali. Time: 1.30pm.

'Find ways to reduce trade gap between SAARC nations'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday stressed the need for finding ways of reducing the trade gap between the South Asian countries.

They identified tariff barriers, political tension, different exchange rates, informal trade and restriction of trade and investment as the main impediments to sub-regional and regional economic cooperation.

The discussion was held as part of the launching-ceremony of a book titled 'Towards Greater Sub-regional Economic Co-operation' published by the Asia Foundation at a hotel in the city.

Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury

attended the function as chief guest, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman as special guest.

Chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Prof. Rehman Sobhan, President of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industries Yussuf Abdullah Harun, Commerce Secretary Suhel Ahmed Chowdhury, Kazi Zaforullah, MP, team leader of Regional Co-operation Study Forrest E. Cookson, Asia Foundation Resident Representative Karen L. Casper, among others, spoke on the occasion. Former Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan chaired the function.

Greater sub-regional cooperation among Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and the eastern states of India in trade and investment can benefit all, said the commerce minister.

He expressed optimism despite tariff and non-tariff barriers and different exchange rates between different countries.

The FBCCI president said Bangladesh could move forward with its resources like gas, hydro-electricity and agricultural products.

There has been a little progress in bilateral trade and cooperation since the inception of SAARC back in 1985, he said.

Harun said the trade gap between India and Bangladesh stood at US\$2.3 billion.

editor of the book, said the imbalance in economic power between India and its neighbouring countries is a continuing difficulty.

India is increasingly taking up the role as a regional leader. So, it is expected that the obligations of leadership will be acknowledged and acted accordingly.

Without co-operative efforts to use natural resources and encourage specialisation through trade, the standard of living in the sub-region can hardly improve, he added.

Prof. Rehman Sobhan in his brief speech has expressed optimism that there are huge trade potentials among the countries of the sub-region.

Blood cell lab for leukemia opens at CMCH

BSS, Dhaka

A newly set up blood cell laboratory for leukemia patients was inaugurated by Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury at the Paediatrics Department of the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) yesterday.

The Laboratory run by 'CLASS' (Children Leukemia Assistance and Support Services), a voluntary organisation, is working for the children suffering from the deadly disease.

The Laboratory is the third one after the 'Isolation Block' and 'Children Play Corner,' established at a cost of about Tk three lakh mostly contributed by two industrialist -- Yasin Ali and Hasan Mahmud Raja -- said CLASS chairman Osman Gani Mansoor.

Presided over by Head of the Paediatrics Department CMC Dr Chowdhury B Mahmood, the function was also addressed by the principal of the CMH Prof. Abdul Mannan Sikder, CMCH Director Brig. General Shah-E-Alam and Osman Gani Mansoor.

Tk 684cr SIDA projects in Faridpur

BSS, Faridpur

Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has taken up a new development strategy under the style of Local Capacity Development Initiatives (LCDI) in four union parishads of greater Faridpur at an estimated cost of Tk 684 crore.

According to an official source, the object of LCDI is to strengthen the local government institutions with the participation of local elected people and social leaders both male and female. In broader view the local people will be directly involved with the implementation of the schemes selected by them. The fund for the projects has been placed directly to the union parishads, the source said.

According to the source, out of the total fund Tk 347 crore was placed in last fiscal year and 337 crore has been allocated for the current fiscal year. The selected unions are Alibad of Faridpur district, Sultanpur of Rajbari district, Kamarhali of Faridpur district and Amgram of Madaripur district.

The projects included health, infrastructures (roads, culverts), education and income generating activities (IGA).

According to the source, so far 83 schemes were taken up in 4 unions for implementation during the last fiscal year and of them 14 have been completed. The implemented schemes completed so far are mostly of health sector. Under this sector 10 arsenic free tubewells with mini treatment plants have been set up by LCDI.



Committee for Resistance to Acid Throwing formed a human chain near the High Court in the city yesterday to create mass awareness against acid throwing.

Crimes against women, children have taken serious turn

BSAF study says

BSS, Dhaka

A coalition of child rights organisations at a meeting here yesterday said the nature of crimes against women and children have taken a serious turn due to omnipresence of brutality, cruelty and violence.

Bangladesh Shishu Odhikar Forum (BSAF) organised the opinion-sharing meeting where the speakers said the child killing has gone up over the years due to these reasons.

"The number of child killing has gone up drastically over the years. But in recent time, the nature of such crimes has taken a serious turn due to omnipresence of brutality, cruelty and violence against women and children," Shahin Ara Begum, research officer of BSAF, told the meeting.

She said some 418 children were killed in last seven months in different parts of the country. Out of the total victims, 59 were killed after rape, 17 for dowry and 342 for other reasons.

Shahin Ara, whose research was basically based on newspaper reports, said lives of 16 other children were saved during the period (January-July) even after attempts to kill them. She, however, lauded government's role in dealing with the cases of brutal killings like schoolboy Shihab with iron hands.

Explaining the reasons behind such killings, including the recent gruesome ones, she said social deviations, lack of rapid police actions as well as absence of exemplary punishment to the killers have made the lives of children vulnerable.

Quoting members of some vic-

tims' families, she said they want to see capital punishment of the killers in public before dying their emotion.

Mahmuda Chowdhury of the Daily Dinkal said vulgar films, both of local and foreign, as well as some writings of the contemporary writers of the country have been pushing children and juveniles to be arrogant, ferocious and perverted.

"Should Baker Bhai or Himu be the ideal characters for our future generations?" she asked and requested writer like Humayun Ahmed to stop writing such novels and dramas that allure children into illusion from reality.

BSAF Chairperson Dr Hamidul Haq, Treasurer Khairulaman Kamal and journalists from different dailies and news agencies were present in the meeting.

'Invest in industrial parks'

BSS, Dhaka

Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury last night urged the entrepreneurs to invest in the industrial parks to be set up soon under joint sponsorship of the government and the private sector.

Addressing the inauguration of a joint venture company for manufacturing plastic moulded luggage and furniture at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, the minister said the government would welcome investment in the industrial parks to be established in the Adamjee

Jute Mills compound, Chittagong and other parts of the country.

VIP-Nitol Industries Ltd, a Bangladesh-India joint venture initiative in private sector, has established its factory in Baimail of Gazipur.

He said it is true that Bangladesh's export earning has come down recently due to downturn of global economy. The country's exports, especially the RMG products will face a tough competition in 2005, but there should be no major concern that RMG sector will not be able to withstand the

challenge, he said.

Executive Chairman of Board of Investment (BOI) Mahmudur Rahman, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh ML Tirpathi, Vice Chairman of the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) Abu Saleh and President of Bangladesh Plastic Goods Manufacturers Association Yousuf Ashraf and Chairman of the VIP Group of Industries, India, Dilip G Piramal addressed the function as special guests.

Chairman of Nitol Group Abdul Maltub Ahmed presided over the function.

India responsible for environmental degradation in Bangladesh: Moudud

BSS, Dhaka

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday held India responsible for severe environmental degradation in Bangladesh through lifting waters from the cross-border rivers.

"Neighbouring India is mainly responsible for our environmental degradation. It has pushed Bangladesh into severe environmental problems through building dykes and barrages in the upstream of 54 cross-border rivers," he said at a function here.

So if we want to protect our environment, he cautioned, things must be solved relating to realisation of our due shares of waters of the cross-border rivers with India. Moudud was speaking as the

chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of the first national conference of 'Sabar Jonyo Paribesh', a front organisation of the Centre for Sustainable Development, at Shishu Academy here.

State Minister for Agriculture Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir attended the function as the special guest, while Secretary General of the organisation Mahfuz Ullah chaired it.

Eminent water expert Ainun Nishat, lawmakers Gazi Nazrul Islam, Nazir Hossain, GM Quader, Dr Mohammad Abdur Razzak and Zahir Uddin Swapan spoke on the occasion.

Moudud said development without having link with the environment can never be termed sustainable. He also opined that every development activity should

be implemented after carefully weighing the environmental aspects.

The law minister observed that environmental degradation has become the number one problem across the globe threatening the existence of mankind and other species. He said the almighty Allah has created the universe balanced, but it is the human being that has jeopardised the natural balance by their injudicious and reckless deeds.

He blamed the developed world for destroying the natural balance through massive and unplanned industrialisation. Development in the industrialised countries like ours are not responsible for it, but unfortunately "we are becoming its first victims," he said.

Underscoring the need for a joint effort among Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar to protect the environment, the law minister said economic development is also a must in this respect.

He said: "Apart from the Western outlooks, we have to look into the development models of the ASEAN countries like Myanmar, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia."

Mirza Alamgir said excessive dependence on donor agencies as well as their defective development guidelines should be branded as one of the major reasons for the environmental degradation in the country.

He said the bio-diversity is at stake now due to the random use of chemical fertilisers and insecticides being prescribed by donors.

WEATHER TODAY

Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions today.

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

Country's highest temperature 35.8 degree Celsius and lowest 23.6 degree Celsius were recorded at Srirangal yesterday.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:25pm today and rises at 5:37am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest 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	32.7	24.5	68	63
Chittagong	32.6	25.6	78	81
Rajshahi	34.0	26.2	75	71
Khulna	32.0	26.6	78	77
Barisal	31.5	26.4	81	84
Sylhet	34.8	26.2	68	68
Cox's Bazar	32.7	25.2	74	82

Sanjida's music album released in Kolkata

PTI, Kolkata

Picking 13 Tagore songs from a rare private collection of an ardent fan, a music album of legendary Bangladeshi Rabindrasangeet exponent Sanjida Khatun was released here yesterday.

'Jahan Bristi Namlo' (When it rained), recorded by Sanjida's admirer Arundhati Deb from a household function at her home in eastern Indian metropolis Kolkata and brought out by Saregama Ltd, has been woven around Rabindranath Tagore's rain songs.

"Rain songs by Tagore have probably no match anywhere in the world. This cassette comes as a pleasant surprise since I had never given a formal recording. I was just singing from the heart to a learned audience," the 69-year-old Sanjida said.

Sanjida, who considers herself a self-taught singer, said she was introduced to Rabindranath's literature from where she arrived at her songs in her youth.

The singer, who drew national attention by taking the lead in having 'Amar Shonar Bangla', now the national anthem of Bangladesh, recorded in chorus, said her new album would build bridges between her country and India.

Despite being the moving force behind propagation of Tagore and his music in the then East Pakistan, Sanjida's collection of recorded music is limited.

Many years ago, two of her songs were recorded by EMI, Pakistan in Karachi from where her first solo extended play was also published. Recently, the Bengal Foundation published three CDs and Cassettes 'Karuna Dharai Esho', 'Abar Ashi Phire' and 'Chutir Banshi Bajlo'.

Sylhet Div Action Council to observe hunger strike today

UNB, Dhaka

Sylhet Division Development Action Council will observe a token hunger strike at city's Osmani Udyan today at 3:30pm to realise their various demands.

Their demands include free treatment of Dengue patients in all hospitals and clinics, preserving the memories of Bangabir Gen Osmani, and protecting the country's all udyans, including the Osmani Udyan.

TCL observes its founding anniversary

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Computers Limited (TCL) took up various programmes in the port city yesterday to mark its 19th founding anniversary.

The programmes included blood donation and tree plantation in cooperation with the British American Tobacco Company, Bangladesh.

A procession was also brought out in the city and a seminar on 'Making IT Education Relevant for Bangladesh' was held at the auditorium of Apteck, Lalkhan Bazar centre on this occasion.

K Atique-e-Rabbani, managing director of TCL, presented the keynote paper at the seminar.

Engineer M Shahjahan, chairman of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), Chittagong centre attended the seminar as chief guest. He also distributed certificates among the successful students.

The programme was rounded off with a cultural function.

Obituary

Dr Ruhul Amin, eldest son of late Nurul Amin, died of a cardiac arrest in the city yesterday at the age of 73, says a press release.

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

His namaj-e-janaza was held at Gulshan Jame Mosque after Zohr prayers.

Quilkhvani of late Ruhul Amin will be held at his residence at House-10, Road-6, Gulshan-1 after Asr prayers on Sunday.

Death anniversary

The ninth death anniversary of A Hakim will be observed today, says a press release.

Milad mahfil and quaran-khwani has been arranged to mark the day. Hakim Khan hailed from village Rajpara of Nawabganj thana under Dhaka and founder of Hakim Motors.

Quilkhvani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The quilkhvani of M Farazi, a retired foreign ministry official, will be held today at his residence.

M Farazi died of cardiac arrest on Saturday last at the age of 62. He is survived by his wife, three daughters and one son. He was buried at his village home at Kapasia in Gazipur.

One of his daughters Muneera Parveen, who is now in London used to work for The Daily Star.

Friends and relatives are requested to attend the quilkhvani at his Eastern Housing Apartment at 26/B Topkhana Road after the Asr prayers.

Chehlum

Chehlum of theatre activist Muhammad Rafiqul Islam will be held at his Pallabi residence in the city after Juma prayers today, said a press release.

Rafiq, who was suffering from hepatitis-B, dengue and malignant malaria, died at Shamorita Hospital in the city on July 14 last.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the chehlum.

As a member Padatik Natya Sangsad, Rafiq earned appreciation for his role in the waiside drama "Taramon Bibi" and stage drama "Khetmajur Khoimuddin".

Gulam Mustafa

The chehlum of Alhaj Gulam Mustafa, a businessman of Chapainawabganj will be held today after Asr prayers in Chapainawabganj.

(Fakir Para Mosque) and at 3/9/D, Lalmafia in Dhaka, says a press release.

He died on July 15 at the age of 84 due to old age complications. He left behind four sons, one daughter and host of admirers.

Relations and friends are requested to attend the chehlum.



Centre for Policy Research (CPR) and International University of Business Agriculture and Technology (IUBAT) jointly organised a dialogue on rural electrification in the city yesterday.



The First Secretary of the Swedish Embassy Johan Norqvist handed over 12 sewing machines to the destitute women in Alibad union under Faridpur Sadar upazila on August 20. The SIDA funded Local Capacity Development Initiative Project LCDI of LGED.



Lions Club of Dhaka Golden, Dist 315 B-2, with the support of local people of Elenga, Tangail organised a day long "Gandhina Medical & Eye Camp" on August 16. Over 290 doctors under the guidance of Prof Mirza Mazharul Islam, an eminent physician of the country, treated 32,000 patients. Fifty patients underwent general surgery on the spot and 300 patients were selected to undergo major eye surgery at the Lions Eye Hospital in Dhaka.