

Political Parties' Confce begins in Bangkok tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A delegation of BNP led by its Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan left for Bangkok last night to attend the Second International Conference of Political Parties in Asia beginning tomorrow.

Thai Prime Minister Dr Thaksin Shinawatra, who is also the chief of Thailand's Rak Thai Party, will inaugurate the two-day conference.

Mannan Bhuiyan, who is also the minister for LGRD and Cooperatives, will address the conference on behalf of BNP.

The Thai PM invited Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to attend the conference but she could not attend the programme due to her preoccupation and nominated Bhuiyan to lead the BNP delegation.

Other members of the delegation are: Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, BNP Chairperson's Advisor MM Rezaul Karim and BNP's Office Secretary and General Secretary of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal Nazrul Islam Khan.

A BNP press release said the

members of the delegation would take part in different preparatory meetings today and join other workshops, discussions and seminars during the conference.

During his stay in Bangkok, Bhuiyan will meet government leaders and politicians of Thailand and discuss about bilateral, regional and international issues of common concern, the release added.

More than 220 representatives of 72 political parties from 26 Asian countries will take part in the conference.

Bhuiyan is expected to return home on November 24.

Earlier, the members of the delegation were seen-off at the Zia International Airport by State and Deputy Ministers for LGRD and Cooperatives Ziaul Haq Zia and Ruhul Quddus Talukder, BNP leader Syed Emran Saleh Prince, Secretary of the Local Government Division AYBI Siddiqi, Secretary of the Rural Development and Cooperative Division Dhiraj Kumar Nath and other high officials of the ministry and its various departments.



The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority bulldozed unauthorised structures along the river Buriganga in Babupura area yesterday during its ongoing drive to remove encroachments on the river.

Campaign to combat trafficking in women, children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Trafficking Prevention Campaign Package was launched yesterday to combat trafficking in children and women across the country.

Action Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children (ASTEC), Bangladesh Chapter, launched the campaign at a function held at the CIRDAP auditorium in the city.

The campaign will be conducted in twenty districts by the ASTEC involving about four hundred grassroots level NGOs.

Financed by the USAID and produced by Bangladesh Center for Communication Programme (BCCP), the materials of the campaign package include TV and radio spot, billboard and poster, leaflet and street drama.

Begum Towhida Faruki, director general, Department of Women Affairs, was present at the function as chief guest and Gene V. George, mission director,

USAID as special guest.

Ekrumul Haq Chowdhury, coordinator, ASTEC Bangladesh Chapter, chaired the function.

Begum Towhida Faruki gave emphasis on the coordination of government and NGO programmes to prevent trafficking.

"To stop trafficking of women and children we have to work jointly", she added.

Gene V. George said repression, both physical and mental, on children and women is a complete violation of human rights.

Carol Horning, director, governance and education and Mathew S. Friedman, advisor, USAID, Mohammad Shajahan, director, BCCP and representatives of government, non-government and donor agencies were present at the function.

Later, the BCCP formally handed over the campaign materials and a street drama was staged under the package programme.

State of Sundarbans bio-diversity reviewed

BSS, Dhaka

The Sundarbans Stewardship Commission at a meeting here yesterday reviewed the state of bio-diversity and observed that proliferation of endangered species like Royal Bengal Tigers, crocodiles, deer, fish and birds apart from regeneration of extinct species like rhinoceros and wild buffaloes is a must for protection of the quality of mangrove forest.

Environment and Forest Minister Shahjahan Siraj presided over the meeting which also examined overall state of management of forest and indiscriminate use of forest resources.

Members of the commission-Secretary of the Ministry of Forest and Environment Sabihuddin Ahmed, Justice M A Karim, former ambassador Mohammad Akmal Quader, Prof Mohammad Ali, Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Anwar Faruque, Prof. Mohammad

Ashraf Ali, Chairman of the Forum of the Environmental Journalists (FEJ) Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, Assistant Professor of the Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University Syed Munir Khasru, Executive Director of ESDO Hossain Shahriar, Director of Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (BELA) Syeda Rezwana Hasan and Project Director of Sundarbans bio-diversity project Mohammad Shamsul Huda and senior ministry officials were present in the meeting.

Shahjahan Siraj said Sundarbans is integral part of the environmental heritage of the country and it is known across the world as a world heritage site.

He said we will try in every possible way to protect the forest.

The minister said we can promote eco-tourism in the Sundarbans and earn huge revenues for the country.

Direct air service with Thailand from Sunday

UNB, Dhaka

Direct air service between Bangladesh and Thailand begins Sunday with arrival of a flight of Phuket Air, a private Biman of Thailand, at the Chittagong Shah Amanat Airport.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin will be present as chief guest in the inaugural ceremony at 12pm on the day.

The first flight of Phuket Air will land at the Shah Amanat Airport at 9am on the day with 60 passengers, including 16 senators of Thai Parliament, businessmen, journalists and government and non-government officials.

Senior vice-president of Phuket Air Kanin Puvasint; CCCI president Amir Humayun Mahmud Chowdhury, FBCCI president Yusuf Abdullah Harun, American Chamber of Commerce president Aftab-ul-Islam, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce president Matiur Rahman and Board of Investment chairman Mahmudur Rahman will also be present at the ceremony, a press release said.

Restructuring of education management suggested

BSS, Dhaka

An expert committee of the education ministry has suggested upgrading the nine zonal educational offices to zonal educational authorities with better physical infrastructures and more administrative powers.

The offices to be headed by a zonal director could then be entrusted with the overall management of secondary and higher secondary education to make the country's school and college level education management more effective, the committee report said.

The committee suggested that the zonal directors should have the authority to make transfers at the secondary and higher secondary levels and recommend educational institutions for MPO coverage along with overseeing the SSC and HSC examinations, supervision of schools, colleges and madrassahs.

They could recommend the establishment of new schools or colleges or their renovations after assessing the local requirement.

The committee also suggested creation of posts of an Upazila Secondary Education Officer and an Assistant Upazila Secondary Education Officer who would be backed by required number of staffs.

The committee report said that a service rule and the annual confidential report (ACR) system should be introduced for the teachers of private schools, colleges and madrassahs.

A system could be evolved to evaluate the overall performance of schools, colleges and madrassahs and to categorise those according to their performance, the committee report said.

The Director General of the Directorate of Secondary Education may be authorised to appoint lecturers and demonstrators on the adhoc basis for up to six months, in case of urgent requirements.

The report said appointment has to be given on the appointment of teachers for specific subjects and an urgent in-service training programme for teachers of subjects like mathematics, science and English has to be undertaken.

It also suggested revision and updating of mathematics and science books for the secondary level immediately.

The madrasah curriculum has to be modernised and updated in such a manner that the students after attaining degrees at different levels can sit for the civil service and other competitive examinations and get jobs in the public and private sectors alike, it said.

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The national committee for protection of oil and gas resources and power and port took out a procession in the city yesterday protesting the move to export gas.

Obituary



S A M Rezaul Karim, former Director of ISPR and former First Secretary, Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi, died of a cardiac arrest in Florida, USA, on November 18 at the age of 61, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, two daughters, a son and two grandchildren.

A milad mahfil will be held at his brother-in-law's residence at 44 Park Road, Baridhara, after Asr prayers today to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Obayed Ullah

BSS, Dhaka

Mohammad Obayed Ullah, father of Khondoker Tareq, a photojournalist of the fortnightly Krira Jagat, died of old-age complications in the city on Wednesday at the age of 80.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters.

Obayed Ullah, father-in-law of former national badminton player Syeda Mariam Tareq, was buried at Azimpur graveyard the same day.

His quikhwani will be held tomorrow at 36 Home Builders Plaza after Asr prayers.

Birth anniversary

BSS, Ctg

The 94th birth anniversary of noted Hindu priest Sri Math Swami Joytishwarananda Giri Moharaj will be celebrated at Shankar Math and Mission in Sitakunda here today.

Day-long programmes including religious congregation and Gita Jugya have been chalked out on the occasion, a press release said.

Water Resources Minister Engineer L K Siddiki will attend the function as chief guest while Justice Gour Gopal Saha will be the special guest. Principal of Dhaka Ram Krishna Mission Swami Aksharananda Moharaj will inaugurate it.

Press, JS can help ensure good governance

UNB, Dhaka

Press and parliament can effectively ensure transparency and accountability of the administration that are the prerequisites for good governance.

The view was expressed at a daylong workshop on human rights, good governance and role of media, organised by the UNB for its district correspondents of Dhaka division at the news agency's conference hall yesterday.

The participants at the workshop discussed the country's socio-economic situation, especially following the army crackdown on crimes, and came up with suggestions about the media's role in promoting human rights and good governance.

Opening the workshop, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed said transparency and accountability of the government, the parliament, the opposition, free press and independent judiciary are the main pillars of good governance and protection of human rights.

"There are some preconditions for ensuring human rights and good governance -- there must be transparency and accountability of the political government, which is ensured by parliament," he said.

Justice Abdur Rouf, chairman of the Bureau of Human Rights-Bangladesh (BHRB), UNB Chairman Amanullah Khan and Dr Shahden Malik, a Supreme Court lawyer, also spoke at the inaugural session.

Moudud Ahmed said a parliament, elected through free and fair polls, is a mechanism through which accountability and transparency of the government is ensured. In this regard, he underscored the role the opposition has to play in parliament.

"A minister cannot find out all the irregularities... So, there must be a free press through which irregularities will be highlighted and good governance will be ensured."

The law minister also said the press now enjoys maximum freedom. He, however, reminded the journalists that whenever the question of press freedom arises, there also comes the question of self-restraint, as freedom and self-restraint go together.

He said rule of law is another vital precondition for ensuring good governance.

The role of NGOs, private sector and the civil society, including journalists' associations, are also important in ensuring advancement of human rights and good governance in the country, Moudud said.

Iajuddin greets Lebanese president

BSS, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday greeted the President of Lebanon General Emile Lahoud on the occasion of his country's National Day.

Iajuddin, in a message to his Lebanese counterpart, expressed his strong belief that the relations between the two countries which are characterised by the close bonds of cooperation would be further deepened and diversified in the years ahead.

He wished good health, long life and personal well-being of Gen. Lahoud and continued peace, progress and prosperity of the people of Lebanon.

GAVI meeting begins at Dakar

The second GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunisation) Partners' meeting began at Dakar, Senegal, on Wednesday, says a press release.

Inaugurating the meeting, President of Senegal Abdoulaye Wade assured his full support for the well-being of the children of the world.

The meeting will review the progress of GAVI and chart out future plan to ensure good health by introducing new vaccines for children.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain represented Bangladesh at the meeting attended by more than 300 participants from 61 countries.

1561 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,561 people, including 10 listed criminals, from different parts of the country in last 24 hours till 6am yesterday.

They also seized nine firearms, three other weapons and 62 rounds of bullets during the period and filed nine cases under the Arms Act, said a police press release.

'Govt to promote IT-based society'

BSS, Dhaka

Science, Information and Communication Technology Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan has said the government undertook all measures to promote a IT-based society.

The minister was addressing the inaugural session of the International Conference on Implementing E-Government at the State Department in Washington, DC on Wednesday.

He said the government was trying to make itself accessible to the people through information technology to ensure transparency and accountability.

Representatives from some forty countries are taking part in the conference sponsored by the State Department, US Trade Development Agency and USAID.

The inaugural session of the conference commenced with an address by Secretary of State Colin Powell.

In his presentation at the plenary, Dr Moyeen Khan stressed the need for increasing citizen and business participation in implementing e-government.

Referring to the progress made so far in Bangladesh in the information and communication technology, he said the government attached utmost importance to the sector and working for formulation of the National Policy on ICT and its implementation.

The minister also discussed threedare the problems being faced by Bangladesh at the grassroots level in the advancement of information technology and the measures taken by the government in addressing the issues.

DHAKA TODAY

Film show
Bishwa Sahitya Kendra will screen a film titled 'Father of the Bird' directed by Vincent Minelli. Venue: Bishwa Sahitya Kendra auditorium. Time: 6:00pm.

French film show
Alliance Francaise will screen a film titled 'Boudou sauve des eaux' directed by Jean Renoir. Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 6:00pm.

Cultural programme
Nature Conservation Committee and Bangladesh Bird Watchers' Society jointly organise a cultural programme comprising recitation, music, dance, exhibition and discussion on bird. Venue: Mirpur Ceramic Lake. Time: 9:00am.

Dress exhibition
Henry's Heritage organises a dress exhibition on the occasion of holy Eid. Venue: House-285, R-27 (Old), Dhanmondi. Time: 4:00pm. The exhibition will remain open till Ramadan 29 from 9:00am to 10:00pm daily.

Seminar
Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Associations organises a seminar titled 'Possible reforms of grading system for evaluation of examination results'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

10:00am.

Human chain
Bangladesh Chhatra Union will form a human chain to protest the export of gas to India. Venue: Muktagang, Ramna. Time: 11:00am.

Qirat competition
A Qirat competition, organised by Old Rajshahi Cadets Association, will be held. Venue: Ullas Community Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:00pm.

Rally
Bangladesh Environment Movement organises a rally demanding demolition of all illegal structures on the bank of the river Buriganga. Venue: Babu Bazar. Time: 9:30am.

Meeting
A meeting of the central committee of Students Congress will be held. Venue: 4, Dikusha. Time: 3:00pm.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Seminar
Chittagong Journalists Forum, Dhaka, organises a seminar on 'Asian Highway Network in Bangladesh' with Communications Minister Nazmul Huda as chief guest. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

দখিন হাওয়া, জাগো জাগো

কার্ণাটিক যন্ত্রসঙ্গীত প্রশিক্ষণ

চেন্নাই (মাদ্রাজ) এর বিশিষ্ট যন্ত্রসঙ্গীত শিল্পীদের (ওধু বেহালা ও মৃদঙ্গম) কাছে ৪-৬ সপ্তাহের প্রশিক্ষণ নিতে আগ্রহী যন্ত্রসঙ্গীত শিল্পীদের অতিসত্বুর যোগাযোগ করতে আহবান জানানো হচ্ছে।

সর্বশ্রী (Sarva Sree) সংগীত কেন্দ্র

ফোনঃ ৮৮২ ৯৫১১, ০২৭১ ৬৭৯৭৮৬

প্রশিক্ষণ ফিঃ ১ সপ্তাহিক ১০০০ টাকা (প্রতি সপ্তাহে ৪টি ক্লাস)

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WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country today.

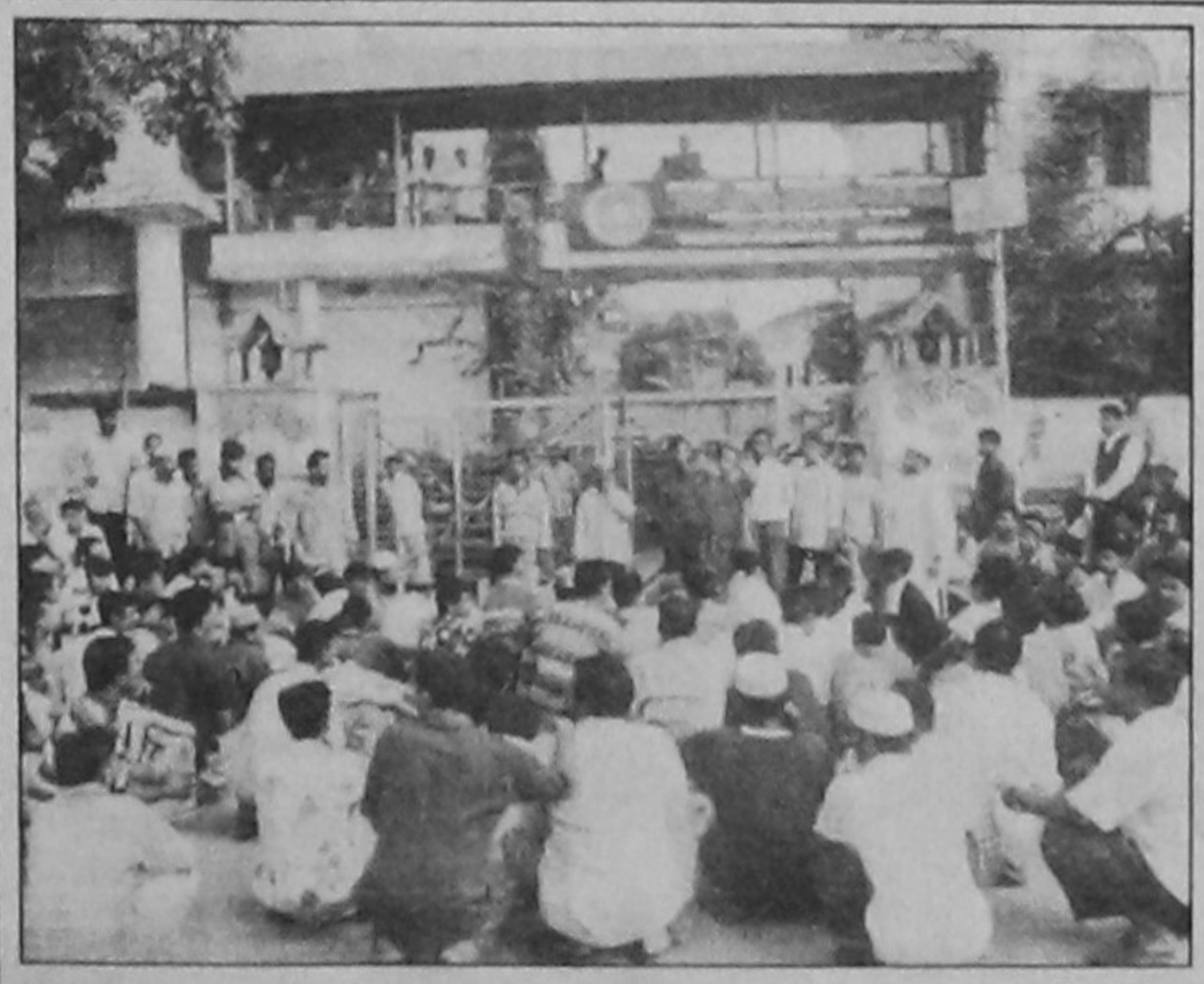
Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Country's highest temperature 30.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and lowest 14.2 degree at Srirongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:11 pm today and rises at 6:19 am 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 | 27.6 | 18.6 | 70 | 67 |
| Chittagong | 30.7 | 17.5 | 74 | 63 |
| Rajshahi | 27.7 | 15.0 | 96 | 87 |
| Khulna | 29.0 | 17.3 | 81 | 74 |
| Barisal | 28.5 | 17.8 | 81 | 89 |
| Sylhet | 29.0 | 18.3 | 62 | 74 |
| Cox's Bazar | 29.3 | 18.5 | 68 | 74 |



Hawkers staged a sit-in in front of municipality office at Narayanganj yesterday protesting their eviction from different footpaths ahead of Eid.