

PM's directive to monitor river situation

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at a meeting yesterday directed all ministries concerned to closely monitor the situation of the rivers in the country.

The meeting held at the prime minister's office reviewed the available data of the rivers' position and reached the conclusion that the situation was not alarming.

The prime minister, however, directed the officials concerned to be prepared to face any eventuality caused by rise in the water level of the rivers.

The meeting was told that repair of breaches on the embankments, wherever necessary, was on and protection ensured to food godowns in the flood-prone areas.

Officials assured the meeting that everything was normal and under control, and there was

enough resources to swing into action in any odd situation.

Agriculture Minister MK Anwar, Food Minister Abdullah Al Noman and Minister for Relief and Disaster Management Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf were present at the meeting.

Get-together

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A get-together of former students of Dhaka College (batch 1963-65) will be held on July 18.

Interested students have been requested to contact the following persons for details: Salehuddin Ahmed (P.h. 9140246), Mesbauddin Ahmed (8916412), Quazi Abdul Mannan (9892838), Pulak (9553918), Wahidul Islam (8614415) and Moniruzzaman (8616448).



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presides over a meeting at her office yesterday. The meeting reviewed river situation across the country.

PHOTO: PID

20.5m benefited from rural electrification

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday underscored the need for extensive rural electrification for rapid economic development of the country.

They said 20.5 million people of the country have so far been benefited from rural electrification.

The seminar on 'Economic and social impact of rural electrification programme in Bangladesh' was held at a city hotel.

State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharrif Hossain, State Minister for Power Iqbal Hassan Mahmud, World Bank's Country Director Christine Wallich, Secretary of Power Division Shamsul Alam and Chairman of Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) Ziaul Islam Chowdhury addressed the seminar.

Prof Abul Barakat of economics department of Dhaka University presented a study report at the seminar.

The USAID, BREB and NRECA International Ltd jointly sponsored the study.

The report revealed that during the last 20 years, the total number of domestic consumers of rural electricity has increased almost 12 times from 2,852 in 1983 to

3,413,825 in 2002.

The estimated average annual growth rate is 42.53 per cent, it added.

"In agriculture, an estimated 1.1 million people are using rural electricity for irrigation while 63,200 industries are employing 983,829 people," the report said on the impact of employment.

AKM Mosharrif Hossain lauded the role of the BREB and suggested that the organisation should adjust its expansion plan taking into account the quick changes that is now sweeping the country side.

He said the overall economic development of Bangladesh depends largely on extensive rural electrification.

Iqbal Hassan Mahmud said the DESA and the PDB could learn a lot from the BREB's experience on low cost supply management.

Christine Wallich laid emphasis on independent regulatory body for power sector.

BCL submits memo to DU vice-chancellor

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the Awami League, submitted a memorandum to Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof. SMA Faiz demanding more allocation in the university budget for students' welfare.

In the memorandum, the BCL urged the university authorities to increase allocations for education, health, transport and information technology.

It also demanded construction of new student halls and purchase of more books and journals for the library.

Earlier, the BCL brought out a procession and held a rally on the campus.

Prof Ali nominated as member of NU Academic Council

Prof. Mohammad Ali, Vice-Chancellor of Northern University, Bangladesh (NUB), has been nominated as a member of Academic Council of National University (NU) for two years, says a press release.

Born in Chittagong in 1934, Prof. Ali was also a vice-chancellor of Chittagong University and a member of the University Grants Commission.

A member of the Sundarbans Stewardship Commission, he co-authored many books on English literature.

DPHE tree plantation drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) launched its tree plantation programme yesterday aiming at protecting environment.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan inaugurated the programme, a part of ongoing 'National Tree Plantation Movement-2003'.

He called on the DPHE officials and staff to make sanitation and conservation of environment a social campaign through plantation.

DPHE Chief Engineer Fareed Uddin Ahmed said if each DPHE employee at division and district levels plants two fruit and timber trees, at least 30,000 trees would be planted.

"Massive plantation of fruit and medicinal trees could also earn foreign exchange," he said.

Birth centenary of Abul Fazal celebrated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

The birth centenary of Abul Fazal, a renowned educationist and litterateur, was celebrated in the port city on July 1.

Different organisations paid rich tributes to this illustrious personality by holding various programmes including seminar, recitation, and placing of wreaths at his portrait.

Udichi Shilpi Gosthi, Chittagong chapter, organised a seminar titled 'Social thoughts of Abul Fazal' at Zila Parishad auditorium in the evening.

Prof Abul Mansur, Udichi president and son of Abul Fazal, chaired the seminar.

Prof Dr Shipra Dastider presented the keynote paper while Prof Abul Kashem of Bangla department of Chittagong University and Muhammad Idris, assistant editor of the Purbokone, were the discussants.

In her paper, Dr Shipra Dastider said Abul Fazal was a humanist who held high the religion of humanity above all religions.

She said Abul Fazal believed in the emancipation of thought and to him intellect was inert.

The speakers said Abul Fazal was a pioneer of free-thinking and an intellect who never compromised with what he believed.

His works reveal the scent of free mind, intellect and progressive trend of thinking, they added. Earlier in the morning, different organisations placed wreaths at the portrait of Abul Fazal at his residence.

The organisations included Abul Fazal Birth Centenary Ujjapon Parishad, Jatiya Rabindra Sangeet Sammilan Parishad, Onoma Sangskritik Gosthi, Mastarda Surya Sen Memorial Protection Sangsad, Bangladesh College University Teachers' Association, Proma, Abrittee Jote and Khelaghar.

Besides, writers, journalists, teachers, intellectuals, cultural activists and politicians including Binod Bihari Chowdhury, a veteran revolutionist, also paid homage to the memory of Abul Fazal individually.

1,385 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,385 people including nine listed criminals during its countrywide drive in the last 24 hours ending at 6am yesterday.

They also recovered 11 firearms, three other weapons, and 1,763 bullets and filed eight cases against eight people under the Arms Act, says a press release.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

Highest temperature 34.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sayedpur and the lowest 25.4 degree at Rangamati.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50 pm today and rises at 5:17am 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	33.0	27.2	75	73
Chittagong	32.5	26.2	77	75
Rajshahi	33.7	26.6	80	76
Khulna	33.5	27.2	74	74
Barisal	33.0	26.6	89	84
Sylhet	31.0	25.6	97	86
Cox's Bazar	32.5	25.7	75	76

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Thai fair

The inaugural ceremony of Thai Fair will be held with Ambassador Pithak Phrombpha as chief guest. Different consumer products of Thailand will be on display. Venue: Mina Bazar Department Stores, Satmosjid Road, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.00am.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'Spellbound'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of two books titled 'The Threatened Wildlife in Bangladesh' and 'Bio-ecological Zones of Bangladesh' organised jointly by Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) and World Conservation Union, will be held. Environment and Forest Minister Shajahan Siraj will be the chief guest. Venue: FEJB conference room, Tophkana Road. Time: 9.30am.

BRAC seminar

A seminar on 'Scientific and technological aspects of globalisation', organised by BRAC University, will be held. Venue: University campus, Mohakhali. Time: 4.30pm.

WSF seminar

A seminar on 'World Trade Organisation, Globalisation and Peoples' interest', organised by WSF,

will be held. Venue: WVA auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.00am.

Human chain

Sylhet Division Development Action Council will form a human chain to protest the setting up of CNG Station at Osmani Uddyan. Venue: Uddyan premises. Time: 4.30pm.



UNESCO exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of UNESCO Books and Publications exhibition-2003, organised by National Association of UNESCO Clubs, will be held with Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof SMA Faiz as chief guest. Venue: Central Public Library, Shahbagh. Time: 11.00am.

Seminar

A seminar on 'Appropriate Management Options of Medical Waste for Developing Countries' will be held with City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka as chief guest. Venue: BRAC Centre auditorium, Mohakhali. Time: 10.00am.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an Indian film titled 'Mystic Masseur'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.



Mahabur Rahman, president of International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh, gives away certificates to the participants of a workshop on 'Modern Human Resource Management' on Baridhara campus of the Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) on Saturday. The Extension and Continuing Education Centre of IUB organised the two-day workshop.