

50 pc brickfields set up in 2002 illegal

Air quality has improved following intensive drive: DoE

BSS, Dhaka

The number of illegal brick-fields had come down significantly during the past six months leading to a gradual improvement in environment.

The reduction in the air polluting unauthorised brick-fields was attributed to an intensive drive by the Directorate of Environment (DoE).

Authorities had taken drastic action against the illegal establishments during 2003 bringing down the rate of pollution in the air, the DoE sources said.

Illegal brick-fields had been halved in one year following the drive, the sources said.

Disaster Forum, a voluntary organisation, in a recent report, said almost 50 per cent of the 2684 brick-fields were set up in 2002 without any permission from the authorities concerned creating serious environmental pollution.

The report said the brick-fields are operating without proper permission as owners are influen-

tial people. In most of the cases, the owners run a good number of brick-kilns though they have permission for only one.

The number of illegal brick-fields was over 1000 last year which could be reduced to a significant number following the special drive, sources said.

The recent drive was launched following widespread pollution created by the brick-fields. The brick-fields use leather, burned lubricants, tubes and other pollutants as fuels.

The emission of poisonous gas caused deadly diseases like respiratory problem and skin diseases to the inhabitants of the areas.

The report said most of the illegal brick-fields did not use the specified 120 feet chimney. As a result, the poisonous gas spread to the breathing air circulation of the inhabitants of the area, it said.

The DoE was now encouraging the people to use environment-friendly block bricks, manufactured by computerised machines in the country.



Visitors at the photography exhibition of A B M Salahuddin at the Shilpakala Academy yesterday. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Embassy of Vietnam organised the weeklong exhibition.

'Form S Asian civil-police force to fight terrorism'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday called for strengthening regional cooperation and creating a 'South Asian civil-police force' to fight terrorism effectively.

They also suggested raising awareness to curb money laundering and illegal small arms dealing.

The two-day national workshop was organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS).

Intiaz Ahmed, professor and chair of the department of International Relation of Dhaka University, presented the keynote paper titled 'The Impact of the War on Terrorism on Small States: The South Asian Context with Special Reference to Bangladesh'.

He said the war against terrorism is very important in Bangladesh's context as the United States listed it as 'high-risk' country.

But he feared that the current nature of fight against terrorism

would breed more terrorism.

Maj. Gen. (ret'd) Moinal Hussain Chowdhury, former advisor to the caretaker government, said good governance is a prerequisite for curbing violence and terrorism within a country.

Brig. Gen. (Rtd) Muhammad Shahedul Anam Khan, MA Mukit of BISS, Amina Mohsin, professor of department of International Relations of Dhaka University, and Ismail Hossain, former IGP, also spoke.

Petroleum dealers refute adulteration charge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of petroleum dealers and filling station owners yesterday refuted the allegation of fuel adulteration levelled at them, terming it 'sweeping and one-sided'.

At a press conference, leaders of the Bangladesh Petroleum Dealers and Tank-Lorry Owners Association (BPTLO) said adulteration of fuel is not done in consultation with the business community concerned, who have extensive practical experience in this regard.

Abdur Rahman, Mahbubur Rahman Chowdhury, Md Selim, Nurul Amin Dulal, and Rezaul Karim were also present at the press conference.

byroad.

"We bring the fuel to the filling stations from the depots in tank lorries," Sajjadul Karim said.

"And fuel adulteration does not take place at the filling stations, but at its source, if at all," he added.

On the move to privatise petroleum sector, Sajjadul said that it would bring about a disaster if not done in consultation with the business community concerned, who have extensive practical experience in this regard.

Abdur Rahman, Mahbubur Rahman Chowdhury, Md Selim, Nurul Amin Dulal, and Rezaul Karim were also present at the press conference.

Bangladeshi brigade joins UN force in DRC

AFP, Bunia

The first 140 UN soldiers of a brigade from Bangladesh have arrived in the battle-scarred town of Bunia in northeast Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a UN official said Tuesday.

"For now about 140 have arrived, but they are still coming," said Leo Salmeron, spokesman for the UN's military mission in DRC, called MONUC.

Some 3,800 Bangladeshi troops are expected to join MONUC's Bunia contingent by September 1.

As well as about 700 Uruguayan military guards deployed under MONUC in the town, around 1,000 mostly French troops are there under the flag of the European Union to protect civilians from inter-ethnic clashes that killed hundreds of civilians in May.

The multinational EU force is due to leave once the Bangladeshi MONUC contingent

is operational.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's new special representative to DRC, William Swing said during a July 6 visit to Bunia that Nepalese soldiers and a team of Indonesian engineers would also be part of the MONUC presence in the northeastern Ituri region, which is known as Task Force II.

The mandate to Task Force II is due to be decided by a UN Security Council resolution before the end of July.

There is considerable pressure for UN troops in Ituri to have their mandate beefed up. When Bunia turned into a battleground in May, the Uruguayans, beyond giving sanctuary to some civilians in the MONUC headquarters, did little to intervene.

While their mandate did not, strictly speaking, prevent them from opening fire, they lacked the resources, military background and political support to do so.

BNP-Jamaat trying to destroy edn sector: Jalil

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League general secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday alleged that corruption in the name of buying extracurricular books for children was going on in various government projects.

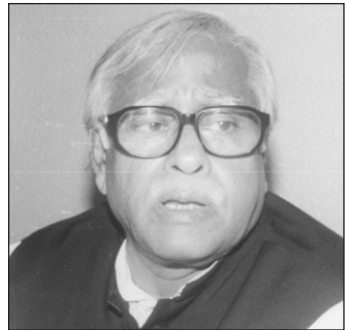
"There have been widespread nepotism, politicisation, irregularities, corruption and loot in the name of buying extracurricular books and this must be stopped immediately. We also call for an immediate end to purchase of unnecessary biographical books on Zia and Khaleda," Jalil said.

Addressing a press conference at Bangabandhu Avenue party office in the afternoon, Jalil also demanded an end to buying books written by Moulana Moududi and take steps for proper selection, purchase and distribution of the extracurricular books.

Jalil alleged that the BNP-Jamaat alliance has been trying to destroy the education sector in a planned way and misappropriate project funds.

He demanded formulation of a "pro-people and modern" education policy immediately.

Also present at the press conference were AL presidium member



Awami League general secretary Abdul Jalil speaking at a press conference.

Matia Chowdhury, AL leaders Obaidul Kader, Sultan M Mansur, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, KM Jahangir, Mukul Bose and Ashim Kumar Ukil.

1579 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested a total of 1,579 people including two listed criminals during their countrywide drive in last 24 hours ending at 6am yesterday.

Mild tremor shakes country

BSS, Dhaka

The country experienced a mild earthquake on Tuesday night.

According to the Meteorological Department, the quake hit the country at 22 hours 54 minutes and 35 seconds and lasted 14 seconds.

The epicenter was 124 km off Chittagong Seismic Observatory Centre. The magnitude of the quake was 3.21 in the Richter Scale, sources said.

Shrimp trader gunned down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Shrimp trader Zafar Jamaddar, 45, of Baharbania village under Morrelganj Upazila of Bagerhat was gunned down by unidentified assailants on Tuesday.

According to witnesses, a gang of five stormed into Zafar's shrimp enclosure at about 4:00 pm and dragged him out of a makeshift house. They severed his hands and legs and then shot him. He died on the spot.

Police recovered the body at 5:30 pm and sent it to the Bagerhat General Hospital for autopsy.

Locals said the slain shrimp trader was earlier given death threats by a gang of miscreants for refusing to pay toll of Tk 10 lakh.

Mirpur Girls Ideal Lab best college

DU CORRESPONDENT

Mirpur Girls Ideal Laboratory Institute (MGILI) was adjudged the best college in Dhaka division according to the BA (pass) course results of 2001, says a press release.

National University announces the name of the best college every year with a prize of Tk one lakh.

The college authorities have decided to buy books from the prize money for its library.

MGILI was set up in 1978 and the BA (pass) course was introduced from 1989-1990 session. The college got three merit lists including 2nd, 5th and 14th and the percentage of pass was 85.13.

The pass percentage in 2002 year's BA (pass) course was 69.

Ashfaqur new envoy to China

BSS, Dhaka

The government has decided to appoint Ashfaqur Rahman, present ambassador of Bangladesh to Germany, as the next ambassador to China, a press release said yesterday.

A career diplomat Ashfaqur Rahman got seniority in the Bangladesh Foreign Service in October 1970.

Earlier, he served as high commissioner of the country to Brunei and Singapore.

He also served in different categories in Bangladesh missions in London, Tehran, Stockholm and Moscow.

Humayun Kabir made envoy to Nepal

BSS, Dhaka

The government has decided to appoint M Humayun Kabir, Director General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the next ambassador of Bangladesh to the Kingdom of Nepal.

A press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday said Kabir joined Bangladesh Civil Service (Foreign Affairs) in 1981.

Earlier, he served as a lecturer of Political Science and Law Department in Dhaka University (DU). He served in Bangladesh missions in Washington, Kathmandu, Kolkata and Permanent Mission in New York in various categories.

Qulkhwani



The qulkhwani of Abdullah Al-Mamun Dipu, a director of the Merchants Limited and second son of Haji Arshad Ali, a noted industrialist, will be held today after Asr prayers at his father's residence at Uttara, says a press release.

Friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for the departed soul.

Mamun, 40, died of a cardiac arrest on Monday.

EWU scholarship award ceremony

The Merit Scholarship Award Ceremony of the East West University (EWU) was held on its campus in the city yesterday, says a press release.

A total of 19 students received certificates for their outstanding academic performance.

Prof. M Asaduzzaman, chairman, University Grants Commission (UGC), was present as chief guest and gave away certificates among the students.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Asaduzzaman said, "The unhealthy competition prevailing among the private universities should be stopped and they should concentrate on ensuring quality education."

Dr Mohammed Farashuddin, president, Board of Directors of EWU, congratulated the students and hoped that they would continue to excel in their future endeavours.

Syed Manzur Elahi, acting vice-chancellor and treasurer, also spoke.

DHAKA TODAY

Drama festival

As part of the five-day drama festival organised by Mohakal Natya Sampraday to mark its 20th founding anniversary, Theatre will stage 'Meraj Fakirer Maa'. Venue: Mohila Samity auditorium, Baily Road. Time: 6.00pm.

Evening of Nazrul songs

Jatiya Rabindra Sangeet Sammilan Parishad organises an evening of Nazrul songs. Venue: Bengal Shilpalaya, Road # 27, Dhanmondi. Time: 7.00pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen two films titled 'Kamsutra' and 'Days of Haven'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 3.30pm and 6.30pm.

Art competition

An art competition for working children will be held. The 'Prevention and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Urban Informal Economy' a project of ILO-IPEC, has organised the competition. Venue: National Press Club auditorium. Time: 9.00am.

Workshop on AQI

A media workshop on Dhaka Air Quality Index (AQI) will be held. Air Quality Management Project, Department of Environment, organises the event in cooperation with the Forum of

Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh. Venue: BEMP conference room, Paribesh Bhaban, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Time: 11.00am.

Blood donation camp

The Quantum Foundation organises a voluntary blood donation camp. Venue: TSC, Dhaka University. Time: 10.00am to 4.00pm.

Opening ceremony

The opening ceremony of Sarina Hotel, Dhaka's only Boutique hotel, will be held, with Foreign Minister Morshed Khan as chief guest. Venue: Plot # 27, Road # 17, Banani.

Inauguration

A1 Motors, Volvo Car International AB, will inaugurate its show room and service centre. Venue: 242 Tejgaon Industrial Area. Time: 7.00pm.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Film show

The Alliance Francaise will screen 'Beaumarchais l'insolent' directed by Edouard Molinaro. Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium. Time: 10.30am and 6.00pm.

WEATHER TODAY

Moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet and Chittagong divisions and one or two few places over Rajshahi division with moderately heavy falls at places till 6.00pm today.

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

Yesterday's highest temperature of 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Rangamati and the lowest of 24.7 degree at Majdee Court.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:46pm today and rises at 5:21am tomorrow.

The 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	27.6	78	79
Chittagong	33.0	26.3	71	73
Rajshahi	32.0	26.5	87	87
Khulna	32.3	25.5	98	75
Barisal	31.5	26.2	88	89
Sylhet	32.5	24.8	92	--
Cox's Bazar	32.7	25.5	75	85



Recipients of Merit Scholarship Awards of East West University pose with the guests at the award ceremony held on its campus yesterday.