

INDIAN RIVER-LINKING PROJECT

'Conduct studies to assess impact on Bangladesh'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Water experts at a roundtable yesterday urged the government to conduct studies immediately to assess the impact of the Indian river-linking project on Bangladesh.

They said these assessments will help the country bargain with India and inform the international community about the adverse effects of the project.

The experts said the problem has to be solved politically and as such Bangladesh needs scientific and technical data to strengthen its position.

The roundtable on 'The Impact of the Indian River-linking Project on Bangladesh' was organised by the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) to mark its 50th founding anniversary.

State Minister for Water Resources Advocate Gautam Chakraborty attended the roundtable as chief guest.

He said the government under a task force is watching the project plan of India. But all political parties have to be

united and public awareness must be raised on this issue.

Prof Jahir Uddin Chowdhury of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) presented a keynote paper while Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, vice-chancellor of BRAC University, moderated the roundtable.

Prof Jahir said the withdrawal of water from the Brahmaputra and the Ganges under the river-linking project will leave serious impact on the country's agriculture, fisheries, ecology, navigation, wetlands and groundwater.

He said the Indian plan proposes a transfer of 224 billion cubic metre of water equivalent to about 25 percent of the annual flow that enters Bangladesh through the Brahmaputra and the Ganges.

Prof Jahir said if the flow of the Brahmaputra is reduced, salinity intrusion will be increased in the south-central and the south-east regions as the Brahmaputra contributes nearly 90 percent of the total water to control

salinity intrusion.

Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury said the government should immediately inform India that the water transferring under the river-linking project will make serious adverse impact on Bangladesh.

Prof Anun Nishat, country representative of the IUCN- the World Conservation Union, said the entire matter is a political process and to make it effective, solid technical data is needed.

Dr Hasna Moudud said the government should sensitise the issue and arrange a debate in parliament.

A national unity must be forged on this issue, she added.

World Red Crescent Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day will be observed today with a call for positive attitude to life and respect for human values.

This year's slogan of the day is 'No discrimination'.

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BRCS) has drawn up programmes to mark the day.

The programmes include procession, drawing competition, voluntary blood donation, special fund collection, discussion and cultural programme, said BRCS Chairman Z A Khan at a press conference yesterday.

Federation of Film Societies executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The film societies have unanimously elected a 14-member executive committee of Bangladesh Federation of Film Societies (BFFS).

The committee was elected at a meeting of the film societies on Thursday, with filmmaker Morshedul Islam in the chair.

Zahirul Islam of Dhaka Film Society was elected general secretary and Ahmed Muztaba Zamil of Rainbow Film Society and Sabir Chowdhury of Zahir Raihan Film Society were elected vice-presidents.

Other office-bearers are Rashedul Hafiz (Dhaka University Film Society) -- joint secretary; Humayun Kabir (Jamalpur Film Society) -- finance secretary; Fakhrul Arefin (Jahangirnagar Students Film Society) -- organising secretary; Masudul Hasan (Jahangirnagar Film Society) -- office secretary; and Rafiqul Anwar (Chittagong University Film Society) -- press and publication secretary.

And the members are Alam Quoreshi (Dhaka Film Club), Sushil Sutradhar (Chapchhas), Morshedul Islam (Chalachitram Film Society), Rahman Mostafiz (Sergei Bondarchuk Film Club), Qazi Jahidul Islam (Narayanganj Film Society) and Biplob Mostafiz (Bangladesh Film Society).

The president will be elected in the first meeting of the executive committee.



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon formed a human chain demanding measures to check air pollution at Shahbagh in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Govt criticised for delay in forming anti-corruption commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Platform for Unity (NPU) President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday criticised the government for its dilly-dallying tactics on the formation of an independent anti-corruption commission.

"There is widespread concern among the people over the dilatory tactics of the government in taking steps to combat the rampant corruption which is damaging the national economy, impeding investment and negating good governance," said Dr Kamal in a statement.

He said this delay is undue since the law passed on February 24 for forming the commission is a self-contained law stating that it will override other laws.

Dr Kamal said this is the same dilatory approach that the govern-

ment has taken in implementing the Supreme Court verdict for separating the judiciary from the executive within a stipulate period.

College student dies in Sylhet road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Death of a college student in a road accident triggered a violent protest at Tilagarh on Sylhet-Tamabil Highway yesterday.

Rezaul Hasan Joy, a first year student of MC College, died on the spot when a speeding truck hit his motorcycle in Pinerbazar area at about 1.00am. Two others were also injured. The truck sped away soon after the incident.

CUET teachers demand appointment of vice-chancellor

CU CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET) yesterday demanded immediate appointment of a vice-chancellor to infuse dynamism into academic and administrative activities of the university.

They sought the intervention of the prime minister and education minister in this regard.

The government upgraded four Bangladesh Institutes of Technology to universities last year but appointed VCs to three universities, the leaders of the teachers' association said at a press conference.

An acting VC has been running the CUET since September 1 last year, association President Md Abdul Wazed said.

The leaders said they have earlier sent two fax messages to the prime minister and urged her to appoint a noted engineer as the VC, but they have not got any response yet.

The leaders also threatened to launch a tough movement after May 10 to realise their demand.

Association General Secretary Mir Mohammed Swaki Kawsar and Vice-President Md Ibrahim Khan were also present.

Obituary

UNB, Dhaka

Mostafa Golam Haider, managing director of Noami Group, died of a cardiac arrest at Sikder Medical College Hospital here yesterday at the age of 47.

Haider, younger brother of former president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association Mostafa Golam Qudus, was also a member of the association.

The BGMEA has expressed profound shock at the death of Haider.

Mathematics Olympiad held in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The Dutch-Bangla Bank-Prothom Alo Mathematics Olympiad of Khulna division was held at Khulna Zilla School yesterday.

Over 1,500 students from different schools and colleges took part in the olympiad inaugurated by Headmaster Abu Saeed Ahmed.

The institutions are Khulna Zilla School, Govt Coronation Girls' High School, Khulna Public School and College, Navy School and College, Khulna Collegiate School, Khulna Girls' School, St. Joseph High School, Cantonment Public College, Khulna City College, Sundarban College, Kushtia Zilla School, Jessoro Cantonment College, Jhenidah Cadet College, Bagerhat Govt High School and Sathkira Govt College.

The daylong programme included math drill, math booth, spot quiz, book fair, health camp, open discussion, opinion exchange meeting between teachers and guardians and certificate awarding

ceremony. Sheikh Abu Hasan, bureau chief of the Prothom Alo, conducted the olympiad.

Vice-Chancellor of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology Prof Dr Nawsher Ali, Vice-President of Bangladesh Mathematics Olympiad Committee Dr M Zafar Iqbal and Deputy Editor of the Prothom Alo Anisul Huq were present on the occasion.

Torture of Iraqi prisoners condemned

UNB, Chittagong

Political leaders and civil society members at a rally here yesterday strongly condemned the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by American soldiers and decided to send relief materials for the distressed people of the war-ravaged country.



A woman greets Kalim Sharafi, a noted Tagore song exponent, with a bouquet at a function at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the city yesterday on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

PHOTO: STAR

WEATHER TODAY Heat wave may continue UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country during the next 12 hours till 6.00pm today, with chances of rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty to squally wind at one or two places over Sylhet divisions.

Prevailing mild to moderate heat wave over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions may continue, Met office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 41 degree Celsius was recorded at Chuadanga and the lowest of 22.1 degree at Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:31pm today and rises at 5:19am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature, Humidity in Celsius, percentage Morning, Evening. Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

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