

Ensure food, nutrition security of growing Asian population

MK Anwar at the ACD workshop on agriculture development in Beijing

UNB, Dhaka Bangladesh called for harmonising agricultural research and development activities in Asia to ensure food and nutrition security of the growing population of the continent.

and coordinated efforts of all the stakeholders could only face the great challenge. Chaired by Chinese Agriculture Minister Du Qinglin, the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) workshop, first of its kind, was also addressed by the relevant ministers from the Asian countries.

close cooperation among the member countries could avert such threats and help achieve the millennium development goals. He proposed a number of areas for Asian cooperation. The areas are zoning of land resources of the country for optimum land use, use of geographical information system and remote sensing, weather forecasting and early warning systems for natural calamity, phytosanitary and animal and plant quarantine, bio-technology and genetic engineering, mechanisation of agriculture and human resource development.

DU teachers condemn blast at shrine

STAFF CORRESPONDENT A total of 160 teachers of Dhaka University yesterday condemned the bomb blast at Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine in Sylhet on Friday in which three people were killed and about 70 others including British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury injured.

used their condemnation of the bomb blast. Sylhet Division Development Action Council yesterday formed a human chain demanding arrest of the miscreants responsible for the attack. National Federation of Youth Organisations in Bangladesh and Jatiya Juba Sanghati also condemned the blast.



Lions Clubs Int'l, District 315 B3 executives

Ln. Rukshana Nazir and Ln KM Akhtaruzzaman MJF have been elected District Governor and Vice District Governor of Lions Clubs International, District 315 B3 Bangladesh for 2004 2005 at its annual convention on May 20 and 21 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, says a press release.

Correction

In a news story headlined 'Star Search contest launched' published in The Daily Star on May 22, the designation of Mahmudur Rahman was inadvertently mentioned as head of BATB (British American Tobacco Bangladesh) but, in fact, he is the head of Corporate and Regulatory Affairs of BATB.

4 get life for killing brick field owner

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka Court on Saturday sentenced four persons to life term for killing one Saleh Mohammad on January 22 in 2001 at Savar Upazila in Dhaka district. The convicts are Bhasani, Sayem alias Shamim, Mohammad Israfil and Mustaqin. All the convicts except Mustaqin were present in the court during the pronouncement of the judgement. Mustaqin is absconding since the incident.

arrest or surrender, the judgement said. Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 21 out of 28 prosecution witnesses. Saleh, 48, a brick field owner of Hizla under Savar Upazila in Dhaka district, was knifed to death by a gang of miscreants at his brick field at about 6:00pm on January 21 in 2001. The victim's elder brother Deen Mohammad filed a murder case with Savar Police Station accusing Bhasani and four others the same day. The investigation officer of the case pressed charges against Bhasani and four on April 30 in 2002. The court framed charges against them on January 26 this year and trial was completed in 107 working days.

Rice Knowledge Bank launched at BRRRI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Rice Knowledge Bank (BRKB) (www.brkb.org), a web based tool to make up-to-date rice related information available online and in CD-ROM, was launched on the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRRI) campus yesterday. State Minister for Agriculture Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir inaugurated BRKB, first of its kind in the country, on the sideline of a two-day workshop on 'Technology Development' jointly organised by the Poverty Elimination Through Rice Research Institute (PETRRA) project of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and BRRRI.

technologies in future. Inaugurating the workshop, Mirza Fakhrul hoped that the workshop would help in understanding the rice based farming technologies developed by PETRRA partners from national and international research institutes, NGOs, universities of home and abroad and private sector. PETRRA has made considerable progress towards the development of technologies that are diverse in nature and suitable for both male and female resource-poor farmers applicable in different parts of the country, he added. IRRI Representative Dr. Noel P. Magor, BRRRI Director General Dr. M. Mahiul Haque and Director Research of BRRRI Dr. A. R. Gomosta also spoke.

Rice Knowledge Bank, highly relevant to Bangladeshi farmers and GO-NGO field-level extension workers, is a treasure of rice knowledge. This is a dynamic source of knowledge that will be updated regularly to keep consistency with the latest innovations and users' feedback. The Bank contains rice knowledge to address the regional as well as national issues associated with rice production and training. It started with rice but extends promise to be expanded to non-rice ofland.

Dr. Mahiul said establishment of BRKB is a significant initiative of PETRRA project. It is a unique innovation because it ensures access to the knowledge system to the public immediately, he said. Thereby, the time gap between the development of technology and its dissemination will be greatly reduced, he added. Principal Investigators and National Coordinators of the PETRRA Technology Development sub-projects will present research findings, farmer responses and recommendations in the two-day workshop.

BRDB driver stabbed to death

Md Danesh Ali, driver of the Rural Development Board, succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College College Hospital early hours of Saturday, says a press release. Danesh, 50, was stabbed by the local hoodlums in front of his residence at Pagla in Narayanganj on Friday. He left behind his wife and six

1526 more held

UNB, Dhaka Police arrested 1,526 people from different parts of the country on various charges in the last 24 hours till 6.00am yesterday. During the drive, they also recovered three firearms and five bullets and filed three cases against four people under the Arms Act, says a police headquarters press release.

7 dead, 240 missing

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Ananda Bazar of Chandpur at about 3:15am, our Comilla correspondent reports from Chandpur. Another double-decker launch, MV Digonto, with 40 passengers aboard, and a cement-loaded cargo vessel capsized after being hit by a twister on the Meghna between Ekhlaspur and Kanudi near Chandpur, 169 kilometres east of Dhaka. At least 20 passengers were reported missing from MV Digonto. The launch was carrying more than 200 passengers but most of them disembarked in Chandpur, according to our Barisal correspondent. Villagers and fishermen on engine boats cut the hull of the overturned MV Lighting Sun and pulled another seven alive. They are Jahanara, 38, Nurunnahar, 8, Mansura, 8, Rosy, 8, Ahidul Islam, 15, Ajhar Bepari, 70, and Mintu, 25. Chandpur district administration officials fear that some passengers are still trapped inside the launch and that strong currents of the mighty Meghna might have swept many downstream, which may push the number of casualties.

Rescue ship MV Rustam, meanwhile, reached the scene from Narayanganj at 3:45pm and started a full-scale rescue operation, reports our staff correspondent. The shipping minister and officials of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) reached the spot at 4:00pm. Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain said they had taken precautions to resist launch capsizing on Meghna near Chandpur. He claimed that it was an unusual incident and they could not help it. "We do not know as yet whether they (MV Lighting Sun and MV Digonto) have legal route permit and fitness certificate. We have to look into it after salvaging the launches," he said. "Before retrieving all the bodies we cannot say anything about the number of the dead," he said. "It will take two to three more days to get the accurate casualty figure," he added. He however said the families of the dead and the injured will be compensated, but would not say anything about those missing. "If we want to offer compensation

to the missing persons, their number will reach 14 crore," he said wearing a smile. "Everyone will demand compensation," he added. "There was a little bit of oxygen in the launch that helped some survive," said BIWTA diver Abdur Razzak, who along with Sabir Sarkar, were helping out rescue operations. FERRY OPERATIONS DISRUPTED Ferry and launch movement on Paturia-Daulatdia route remained suspended for two hours as a twister lashed the area capsizing at least two moored launches, six motor boats and a ferry pounce at Paturia Ghat early yesterday. No casualties were immediately reported. Officials of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) at Paturia said ferry movement was disrupted from 2:00am to 4:00am early yesterday due to heavy storm. The BIWTC's floating workshop was driven two kilometres downstream from Paturia Ghat. The two launches that sank at the Ghat are MV Amanat and MV Anika.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6.00pm today. Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country, Met Office said. Highest temperature 32.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and the lowest 18.8 degree Celsius at Comilla. The sun sets in the capital at 6:39pm today and rises at 5:12am tomorrow. Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were: City/Town Temperature Humidity in in Celsius percentage Morning Evening Dhaka 25.9 20.2 89 77 Chittagong 26.0 24.8 89 86 Rajshahi 28.8 21.5 94 75 Khulna 26.4 22.5 98 84 Barisal 27.6 23.0 96 79 Sylhet 26.0 21.9 95 84 Cox's Bazar 28.5 22.0 98 80

Launch operation on all routes from Barisal remained suspended from 12 to 3:00PM yesterday after the capsizing but resumed in the afternoon. RESCUE STARTS IN FULL SWING

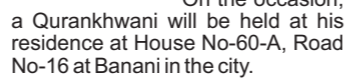
Proshika chief

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organisation for his son Enayet Karim to study in an Australian university. Poverty alleviation aid was spent, shown an operational cost and then turned into general fund. Tk 2 lakh was provided from the Proshika general fund to the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh showing mass contact fund against BNP government in 1996. Tk 50,000 was taken by Faruque as loan against provident fund showing 'false' deposit statement. Mahbulul in collusion with Faruque 'misappropriated' Tk 23.80 lakh. Faruque and his wife Shahana Ahmed visited a hospital in Singapore for treatment without doctors' advice. Faruque, Mahbulul and another Vice President David William Biswas misused their power as Proshika executives to upgrade their salary scale. Faruque, Mahbulul and David 'misappropriated' office money by paying taxes from Proshika funds. Faruque embezzled Proshika money to maintain dog for personal security, beautify his house and pay utility bills. Faruque caused financial loss to the government by appointing 12 foreign consultants without inviting tender notices. He dodged VAT while buying educational accessories. Faruque issued illegal work order to a firm for buying motorcycles that caused a loss of Tk 5.60 lakh to the government. He misappropriated Tk 6.50 lakh by setting up a dummy plant in the name of arsenic mitigation project for his own interest. Faruque caused a loss of Tk 1.14 lakh to the government in the last five years by spending money without attaching revenue stamps.

Death anniversary

Today is the 21st death anniversary of former law maker Barrister Sayed Quamrul Islam Mohammed Saleh Uddin, says a press release. On the occasion, a Qurankhwani will be held at his residence at House No-60-A, Road No-16 at Banani in the city.



Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Nazera Begum, wife of engineer ARM Inamul Haque, will be held at her Dhankhundi residence, House No-50, Road-2/A in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Installation ceremony

The installation ceremony of newly elected executive committee of Karwan Bazar No. 2 Group Kancha Maler Arat Malik Baybasyee Bahumukhi Samabaya Samity was held in the city on Saturday, says a press release. Md Sahab Uddin Khan and Md A Mannan have been elected president and general secretary of the Samity for 2004-2007. Other office-bearers are Md A Latif and Md Aman Ullah - vice-presidents, Md Rafiqul Islam - joint secretary, Md Abul Bashar - treasurer, Md Shamsul Haque - organising secretary and Moktar Hossain - office secretary. The directors are Delwar Hossain, Md Yasin (Mayna), Md Anwar Hossain and Delwar Hossain (Kusum).



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DHAKA TODAY DHAKA TOMORROW German film show Academy film show Workshop Discussion Prize giving ceremony Publication ceremony CAPA conference