

# Fair on disaster risk reduction begins

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

A seven-day knowledge fair began at Dhanmondi in the city on Thursday to raise public awareness about vulnerability and disaster risk reduction.

The Sustainable Development Resource Centre (SDRC), a non-governmental organisation, arranged the fair titled 'Know risk - No risk' to mark the International Day for Disaster Reduction observed globally on October 13. This year's theme is 'Learning from today's disasters for tomorrow's hazards'.

Students of more than 600 schools, eight national and six international organisations are taking part in the fair to exchange knowledge about disaster management. The fair is being held at House #11, Road #4, Dhanmondi.

Some of the activities organised as part of the fair are youth dialogues, art competition, risk and game contests, workshops, discussions, songs and drama.

The organisers have requested all schools to submit art works to the SDRC office where 12 entries will be selected. These selections will be electronically transferred to the UN-ISDR (International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) which would in return select 12 entries from all over

the world for the 2005 calendar to be printed for the world conference on disaster reduction to be held in Kobe, Japan in January next.

All the entries will also be exhibited on the SDRC website, said Nasimul Haque, chairman of SDRC.

"Public awareness and understanding are key components in the achievement of disaster risk reduction," he said.

This seven-day exhibition is a stepping stone to a three-year campaign, which hopes to draw participants from all over the world.

The SDRC will also organise and facilitate a series of dialogues among adolescents in sharing knowledge and concerns regarding disaster risk reduction in schools, colleges and at community level across the country with the help of partner organisations, Arif Ul Islam, director of SDRC, told The Daily Star.

## Govt urged to check noise pollution

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Speakers at a meeting called on the government to take necessary steps to check increasing noise pollution that are causing hearing loss for the city dwellers.

The worst victims of noise pollution are children, students, drivers and traffic police, said Amit Ranjan, project officer of Working for A Better Bangladesh.

He was speaking at a meeting organised by the Noise Pollution Prevention Coordination Committee at Dhanmondi in the city on Wednesday.

Quoting a study conducted on 312 people, he said 11 percent of them have been suffering from serious hearing disabilities because of noise pollution and 66 percent have developed moderate hearing impairment.

## Obituary

Afroz Jahan Sultana, wife of businessman Syed Moshaq Haider, died at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital on October 14 at the age of 70, says a press release.

Daughter of Enayet Hossain Chowdhury Tara Mia of Faridpur, she was buried at Alipur graveyard in Faridpur yesterday.

Her quikhwani will be held at House # 53, Road # 7B, Block # 8, Banani, Dhaka.



STAR PHOTO

The National Blind Welfare Organisation took out a procession in the city yesterday to mark the World White Cane Day.



PHOTO: STAR

Artists perform at a cultural show organised at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday on the occasion of World Rural Women's Day.

# Preserve indigenous seeds to protect farmers

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Speakers at a rally yesterday called for preserving indigenous seeds to protect the farmers and agriculture.

They said the rural women of the country have played a crucial role in preserving the seeds for hundreds of years.

But their rights on local bio-resources as social property are being threatened in view of the expanding multinational markets under the cover of patent rights, they added.

The rally was organised by Bishwa Grameen Nari Dibas Ujjapon Jatiya Committee at the Central Shaheed Minar to mark the World Rural Women's Day.

This year the theme of the day internationally was 'Demand your rights in decision making process'.

In Bangladesh, the committee observed the day with a slogan 'Preserve indigenous seeds to protect the farmers and the agriculture'.

The speakers called for resisting multinational companies to market the hybrid seeds as it is not possible to reproduce seeds from the crops of hybrid seeds.

They also urged the government to revive Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation to produce seeds locally.

Swapan Guha, chief executive of Rupantar, a non-government

organisation, said it is possible to produce enough crops to meet the need of the country if government promotes the researchers and their seeds across the country.

"The tradition of preserving seeds locally must not be stopped for the sake of our farmers, and our women must be allowed to play their important role of conserving the seeds for next plantation," he added.

Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, member-secretary of Supra, said there are more than 40 companies are now working for the expansion of hybrid seeds specially under the flood rehabilitation programme.

Shahadat Islam Chowdhury, executive director of the Project for Rural Area Development and Improvement of Poor People (PRADIP), Dr Jesmine Ara Sultana, deputy director of TMSS, and Arjuman Ara, assistant secretary of Ubining also spoke at the rally.

The committee also organised an exhibition of indigenous seeds and medicinal plants along with a cultural show at the Shaheed Minar and 57 districts across the country.

## 2 get life in acid throwing case in Comilla

**UNB, Comilla**

A court here sentenced two people to life term imprisonment on Thursday for throwing acid on three women and a child two years ago.

The Women and Children Repression Prevention Court also fined the two -- Babul Hossain, son of Fazlur Rahaman of Uttamagar village in Daudkandi upazila, and Goutam Mallik, a goldsmith -- Tk 10,000 each. The convicts will have to suffer another one year's RI if they fail to pay.

Goutam was tried in absentia. According to the prosecution, Babul threw acid on three daughters and a grandson of Anukul Chandra Sarker of the same village when they were in sleep at about 5:30am on January 11, 2002.

Anukul filed a case against Babul and his father Fazlur Rahman and acid supplier Goutam.

After examining the records and 15 witnesses, Judge Nirmal Kanti Chowdhury handed down the verdict. Fazlur Rahman, however, was acquitted.

## DU Mourning Day observed

**UNB, Dhaka**

Dhaka University authorities and different student organisations yesterday paid homage to the memories of those killed in a building collapse at Jagannath Hall 19 years ago.

Thirty-nine students and employees and their relatives died in the building collapse on October 15 in 1985.

The DU authorities and other organisations arranged different programmes to observe the Dhaka University Mourning Day.

Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz, DU Teachers' Association General Secretary Dr M Akhtaruzzaman, Jagannath Hall Provost Dr Nim Chandra Bhowmick, provosts of others halls and student organisations placed wreaths at the memorial inside the hall in the morning.

The programmes also included hoisting black flags at the administrative buildings and halls, wearing black badges, arrangement of special prayers and blood donation.

A daylong exhibition of oil paintings was also organised at the hall. A commemorative meeting will be held at the Jagannath Hall premises on November 25.



## Moderate rain likely

**UNB, Dhaka**

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours till 6.00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged during the period, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 30.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Bogra and the lowest of 21.7 degrees at Hatiya.

**The sun sets in the capital at 5:30pm today and rises at 5:57am 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	29.0	24.2	82	81
Chittagong	27.3	23.3	92	82
Rajshahi	30.2	23.5	80	75
Khulna	29.5	23.9	76	87
Barisal	26.0	23.0	97	97
Sylhet	25.6	22.2	96	89
Cox's Bazar	--	23.5	100	--

## CPB calls for reforms of electoral system

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) has called for total reforms in present electoral system to ensure free and fair election.

The call was made by CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim in a statement yesterday.

They said the entire election process in the country has practically turned into a farce.

The CPB leaders said mere reforms in caretaker government or any other cosmetic change will not be enough to upgrade the electoral system.

In fact, the election process will have to be free from the influence of money and muscle to hold an impartial and transparent polls, they added.

The CPB also called on all political parties to begin immediately a national dialogue on electoral reforms.

It said the dialogue could begin on the basis of 26-point recommendations, as put forwarded by left-leaning 11-party alliance earlier.

The recommendations included renewal of the voters' list on regular basis, introduction of identity cards for the voters, and mandatory property statements by the candidates.

Under the recommendations, a retired government servant could take part in the election only five years after his retirement.



PHOTO: STAR

Samajtantrik Dal of Bangladesh stages a demonstration at Mukhtangan in the city yesterday protesting price spiral of essentials.

## 64 closed-circuit cameras to be set up in Khulna

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

Closed-circuit cameras will be set up at 64 vulnerable points in Khulna city to check crimes and ease traffic congestion.

The installation work will begin soon after the funds for the project is allocated.

The entire metropolitan area will be monitored from a control room after the installation of cameras, said DC (South) Akbar Ali.

This system will play a vital role in nabbing the criminals, he added.

## CU vacation begins today

**BSS, Chittagong**

Chittagong University (CU) will remain closed for 35 days from today on the occasion of Ramadan, Eid-ul-Fitr and Durga puja, said a press release.

No classes and examinations will be held during the vacation. However, offices will remain closed from November 12 to 20.

Classes will resume on November 21.

## Marine Fisheries Academy Allegations of corruption against principal

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

The 24th batch cadets of Chittagong Marine Fisheries Academy yesterday brought allegations of corruption and torture against its principal.

At a press conference at the Chittagong Press Club, they urged the authorities concerned to take actions against the principal after an inquiry into the allegations.

The cadets also said they would not take part in any academic activities as long as he remains there as principal.

Later, they formed a human chain in front of the press club.

The principal was not available for comments despite repeated attempts.

## Santi to step up efforts to promote HR

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

South Asian Network Against Torture and Impunity (Santi), a network of human rights organisations of South Asia, has decided to step up its efforts to institutionalise human rights in South Asia.

The decision was taken at a meeting of some NGOs of South Asia on Thursday. Odhikar, a human rights group, organised the meeting and a discussion on 'Criminal responsibility for torture' in the city.

The Santi decided to carry out a campaign in the region to make human rights commissions more effective and easily accessible to people. It will also advocate setting up of human rights commission in countries where it does not exist.

The Santi was formed in 2003 but it could not continue its activities due to lack of communications among the members.

**Art exhibition**  
The opening ceremony of a group art exhibition titled 'Appointment 2004' will be held. The participating artists are Hamiduzzaman Khan, Abdus Shakoor, Ranjit Das, Iffat Ara Dewan, Ivy Zaman, Rashid Aman, Javed Jalil and Anukul Chandra Mojumder. Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, House-25, Road-5, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.00pm. The exhibition will remain open till October 25 from 10.00am to 1.00pm and from 5.00pm to 9.00pm daily.

**Seminar**  
Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs will hold a seminar on 'Gandhian values and their contemporary relevance'. Venue: Institute Auditorium, House-22, Road-7, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.30am.

**Discussion**  
Rudra Sangsad will hold a discussion to mark the 48th birth anniversary of poet Rudra Mohammad Shahidullah. Venue: Writers' Club, 18 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. Time: 7.00pm.

**Rotary Dhaka Central**  
Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Centre for Developing Management, House-12, Road-15, Dhanmondi. Time: 3.30pm.

**Rotary Dhaka North West**  
Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held.

**Human chain**  
Projonmer Chetona, a self-accountable social organisation, will form a human chain demanding a ban on the use of toxicants and adulterated oil in preparing food items during the holy month of Ramadan. Venue: Mukhtangan, Ramna. Time: 12.00 noon.

**Solo exhibition**  
The opening ceremony of second solo exhibition by Shaheli will be held with Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan as chief guest. The main theme of the present show is house decorative products. Venue: Drik Gallery, House-58, Road-15A (New), Dhanmondi. Time: 11.30am. The exhibition will remain open till October 24 from 11.30am to 8.30pm daily.

**Inauguration**  
The inauguration of Multiplan Centre, an international standard shopping cum commercial complex, will be held with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as chief guest. Venue: 69-71, New Elephant Road. Time: 3.30pm.



Winners of Jubok Phone Logo Design Competition pose with the guests at the prize distribution ceremony in the city on Wednesday. Renowned cultural personality Mustafa Zaman Abbasi was present as chief guest.