



Save Environment Movement forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday demanding recovery of 43 city canals from the grabbers. PHOTO: STAR

Recover 43 city canals from grabbers before monsoon

Speakers say at rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday called for the recovery of 43 canals in and around the city from the grabbers before the ensuing rainy season.

They said a total of 215 kilometer-long water bodies in the city have already dried out.

The rally was organised by Save Environment Movement at Shahbagh crossing yesterday.

The speakers said government negligence had helped encroachers

Dorji visits SAIC

BSS, Dhaka

Saarc Secretary General Chenkeyab Dorji visited the Saarc Agricultural Information Centre (SAIC) on Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) Campus here yesterday.

He was received by SAIC chairman Dr M Nurul Alam and Director Dr Wais Kabir.



Members of the Christian community offer prayer at the Kakrail Catholic Church in the city yesterday evening at the death of Pope John Paul II. PHOTO: STAR

Death anniversary

The eighth death anniversary of Dr Ashiqul Alam, an organiser of the 'Mass Upsurge of 69' and former general secretary of the Dhaka Medical College Students Union, will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, Dr Ashiqul Alam Foundation will hold different programmes, including a visit to his grave at the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard at Mirpur at 7:00am and a milad mahfil at his residence after Maghrib prayers today.

Capt Abul Kashem

Today is the sixth death anniversary of Dr Captain Abul Kashem, a freedom fighter and a former Awami League leader.

Captain Abul Kashem was a member of the then Gono Parishad and National Parliament.



WEATHER TODAY

No change in day temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Sylhet and Chittagong divisions and one or two places of Barisal division till 6:00pm today.

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

Highest temperature 37.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and lowest 17.0 degree Celsius at Srirangam.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:16pm today and rises at 5:46am.

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	34.6	23.4	63	47
Chittagong	36.5	22.0	41	47
Rajshahi	34.2	20.2	75	60
Khulna	34.5	21.0	72	65
Barisal	35.2	22.4	72	63
Sylhet	33.5	21.9	50	49
Cox's Bazar	37.0	25.0	47	39

Most private universities have no proper campus

President tells AUST convocation

BSS, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday said most private universities in Bangladesh have practically no proper campus and are yet to create an atmosphere conducive to good educational requirement.

"We must not compromise on quality education, proper environment, a teaching staff of excellence, moral values and on discipline. It is a responsibility of the university authorities to see that the students are groomed up with the latest knowledge, strong character and an uncompromising patriotism" he said.

"The private university authorities should develop pleasant campus with absolute necessity and pride for the teachers, students and guardians," the president said while addressing the 2nd convocation of Ahsanullah University of Science

and Technology (AUST) at Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre here.

Iajuddin Ahmed, also Chancellor of the AUST, said the private universities in the West and in the neighbouring countries have a long record of success and they attract students from home and abroad by ways of their excellence and peaceful campus atmosphere.

Compared to the West and many other countries in the East, he said the concept of establishing university in the private sector is rather belated in this part of the world.

"Still it is a good sign that the academics in cooperation with resourceful persons have come together with specific goal of spreading higher education in the society through establishing private universities," he said.

Despite the commercial propensities of some private universities,

the president said these seats of higher learning both specialised and general, have an ideal approach of targeting production of enlightened and qualified citizen for the country.

"The ultimate fact is that there is distinctly visible trend now among the entrepreneurs to go ahead for establishing universities in the private sector which was absent before 1992, when The Private University Act was passed at the initiative of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia," he said.

Considering this short period, the success has been quite distinct and positive, he added.

Iajuddin said education is costly but it should not be so costly that the general mass of our country can not avail it to groom their children as educational personalities.

"Let us hope that we could accommodate in our private universities students from all walks of life,"

he said. He suggested formation of a transparent body immediately by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to evaluate academic and financial activities of the universities for their own good and progress.

Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology and President of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh Prof. Dr. M Anwarul Azim addressed the function as the convocation speaker.

Vice-Chancellor of AUST Professor MH Khan, President and Chief Executive of Dhaka Ahsania Mission Kazi Rafiqul Alam and Chairman of the University Syndicate Kazi Fazlur Rahman also spoke on the occasion.

Civil society donates Tk 3.78 crore for tsunami victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh usually gets assistance from other countries because of its frequent natural disasters and calamities affecting millions of people.

But yesterday, the country turned into a donor when the common people of this disaster-prone nation extended a helping hand to the victims of tsunami that affected a number of Asian countries recently.

In addition to government assistance, the civil society of Bangladesh collected Tk 3.78 crore as general contribution of the ordinary people for tsunami victims in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Maldives.

Hundreds of school children took part in fund collection campaigns and contributed to the fund by saving money from their tiffin and birthday budget.

Poor village women and micro-credit borrowers of non-government organisations also contributed to the fund as a gesture of fellow feelings for the victims who lost their relatives, houses and other properties in the disaster.

Ambassador of Indonesia Warmas

Hasan Saputra, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka Gamini S Munasinghe, and a high official of Indian High Commission Ajit Kumar formally accepted the money at a simple ceremony at Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation (PKSF) boardroom.

They expressed their heart-felt gratitude to the common people of Bangladesh for standing beside the victims during their sufferings.

CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan, PKSF Managing Director Salehuddin Ahmed, and Brac Executive Director Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury also spoke on the occasion.

South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACFPS) and Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) took the initiative to raise the funds from civil society of Bangladesh in support of the tsunami victims.

Brac, PKSF, CPD, DCCI, ICCB, Citibank and Sunbeams School widely took part in the donation. Orchi, a schoolgirl from Kalabagan, alone contributed Tk 1,000 from her personal savings.

A total of 125 NGOs participated in fund collection under the leadership of the PKSF.



Sri Lankan High Commissioner Warmas Hasan Saputra receives a cheque of donation for the tsunami affected people of Sri Lanka from a student of Sunbeams School in the city yesterday. The civil society raised the money. PHOTO: STAR

'Empower women to cut gender inequality'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday said gender sensitisation in the budget making process and social empowerment of women are necessary to reduce the gender inequality in the country.

They said women are being denied different social facilities, including health and nutrition facilities, due to absence of proper gender governance.

North South University (NSU) organised the seminar on 'Gender Budget Study' at city's Cirdap auditorium.

While presenting a paper titled 'Gender desegregating public expenditure in health and nutrition', economist Dr. Abul Barkat said poor state of pre-natal and maternal health care services only intensify women's health problems.

He said 14 per cent maternal death takes place due to violence on women in different forms and 45 per cent

women are suffering from nutrition problem.

Dr. Barkat also pointed out that combination of different approaches, including NGO-government partnership, is needed to improve public health service.

Dr AKM Atiqur Rahman, in another keynote paper titled 'Gender budget in general administration', said improvement of gender governance is vital to establish gender equity in the country.

He said increased participation of women in the economic activities and stricter enforcement of law relating to women repression will help a lot reduce violence against women.

Dr Atique also pointed out that gender sensitisation in budget making process and congenial judicial system for women are also necessary to combat violence against women.

Dr Hafiz GA Siddique, Vice Chancellor of the NSU, also spoke.

SELECTION OF TEACHERS

JU syndicate meet held amid protest

JU CORRESPONDENT

The students of botany department of Jahangirnagar University (JU) yesterday besieged the administrative building, where the syndicate was holding a meeting, demanding cancellation of the selection of two "less-qualified" teachers without any advertisement.

Over 100 students of the department participated in the protest at around 3:30pm. Later, Prगतishil Chhatra Jote (PCJ), a combine of the left leaning students' organisations, and Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) led by its JU unit president and general secretary expressed solidarity with the programme.

The PCJ and JCD also demanded cancellation of all selections and appointments given without any advertisement at different departments in the university since Vice-Chancellor Prof Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman took over.

The syndicate meeting was continuing at the administrative building till writing of the report amid students' protest.

CCC polls gain momentum

Mohiuddin pledges free edn for poor students, Mir Nasir to make CCC service-oriented

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Awami League (AL) nominated candidate ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury yesterday said he would continue the efforts Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) made in the last ten years of his tenure for the education of the city dwellers.

"During my time, CCC set up a good number of educational institutes giving education to the topmost priority, and if elected, I would provide the poor and meritorious students with free educational and related materials to inspire them in acquiring knowledge", he said.

He was addressing two different rallies organised by local units of AL at Lalkhan Bazar Ispahani and Dewan Bazar Khalifa Patti area.

Mohiuddin Chowdhury is contesting the May 9 CCC election under the banner of Chattagram Nagorik Forum to retain the mayoral post for the third consecutive time.

Apart from the educational institutes, vocational training centres to

conduct different foreign language courses, would also be set up, he said.

Addressing the rallies as chief guest, former minister and Chittagong city AL President MA Mannan said the concept of City Government and expansion of the city area are demands of the time to fulfill the needs of the city dwellers.

He termed Mohiuddin Chowdhury as the architect of modern Chittagong and called for reelecting him for implementation of those projects.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) nominated candidate Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin at a public meeting at Patenga yesterday said if elected, he would turn CCC into a centre to provide services to the city dwellers and implement the Healthy City Project he took up during his tenure.

Addressing the rally as chief guest, Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk called for electing the alliance nominated mayoral candidate Mir Nasir for the development of the port city that badly needs to be upgraded as the commercial capital in true sense.

Mir Nasir at another meeting with the city professionals on Saturday night said he was ready to resign from the post of a minister as he never craved for power and wanted to work for the development of the city and serve the city dwellers.

He said the present CCC discarded the "vision and mission" he started working with for overall development of the city during his tenure till 1994.

Now, CCC appears to be a commercial centre good for only real estate. This trend has to be changed, Mir said, adding all the activities of CCC would aim at serving the city dwellers, if elected.

Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor (VC) AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury was the chief guest at the meeting organised by Chittagong City Gono Okya Parishad at Enesel Mansion.

Chittagong University Pro-VC Prof Dr Muhammad Shamsuddin chaired the meeting.

DHAKA TODAY

Film show

Satyajit Ray Film Society in association with Rush Film Society has organised a session of Contemporary Asian Film Session. Under the programme, three films will be screened. These are 'Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon' by Ang Lee of China, 'Osama' by Siddiqi Barkam of Afghanistan, and 'Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring' by Kim Ki Dik of South Korea. Venue: World Literacy Centre, Bangla Motor. Time: 3:00pm, 5:00pm and 7:30pm.

Venue: Vaskar Novera Hall of National Museum, Shahbagh. Time: 4:00pm.

Installation ceremony

The installation ceremony of the newly-elected executive committee of Bangladesh Society for Total Quality Management will be held. Venue: Santoor Restaurant, Dhanmondi. Time: 11:30am.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Boishakhi fair

The inaugural ceremony of Boishakhi fair, organised by Jatiya Mahila Sangstha on the occasion of Bengali New Year 1412, will be held with Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Zahan Haque as chief guest. Venue: JMS Complex. Time: From 10:00am to 8:00pm till April 14.

Matir Moina

An internationally acclaimed film titled 'Matir Moina' (The Clay Bird) by Tareque Masud will be screened. Venue: British Council Auditorium, Fuller Road. Time: 4:45pm.

Cultural function

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organises a discussion and cultural function to mark its 35th founding anniversary. Venue: National Press Club Auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Workshop

A two-day workshop titled 'Millennium Development Goals: Target 2015 and Bangladesh', organised jointly by Democracywatch and Centre for Sustainable Development, will be inaugurated. Venue: Cirdap Auditorium, Tophkana Road. Time: 9:30am.

Roundtable

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute organises a roundtable titled 'Women as agents of change in the community: Opportunities and challenges' with Baroness Shreea Flather, member of House of Lords, as chief guest. Venue: Conference room of the institute, Gulshan-1. Time: 3:00pm.

Medal distribution ceremony

The distribution ceremony of Sajidunnessa Khatun Chowdhurani Medal will be held with Deputy Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddique as chief guest.

Film show

Satyajit Roy Film Society in association with Rush Film Society has organised a session of Contemporary Asian Film Session. Under the programme, three films will be screened. These are 'Swing my swing high, my darling' by U-Wei Bin Hajsaaari of Malaysia, 'August Sun' by Prasanna Vithanage of Sri Lanka, and 'Travellers and Magician' by Khyentse Norbu of Bhutan. Venue: World Literacy Centre, Bangla Motor. Time: 3:00pm, 5:00pm and 7:30pm.

AL meeting

A meeting of the central working committee of Bangladesh Awami League will be held. Venue: Dhanmondi office of the party chief. Time: 10:30am.

Award giving ceremony

Bangla Academy organises the distribution ceremony of Kabir Chowdhury Shishu Sahitya Award 2004. Venue: Seminar room of the academy. Time: 4:00pm.

Seminar

Mass-line Media Centre organises a seminar on the security of journalists with Law Minister Moudud Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.