

Advanced tech a must to build knowledge-based society

PM tells BCC Bhaban inaugural function

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said her government is giving importance to nurturing and flourishing the advanced technology to build up a knowledge-based society to cope with the global competition and move ahead.

"We will be able to overcome overpopulation and resource constraints through creation of knowledge-based social framework," she said while inaugurating the newly constructed Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) Bhaban and Bangladesh-Korea Institute of Information and Communication Technology (BKICT).

She unveiled the plaques of BCC Bhaban and BKICT at Agargaon in the city.

The five-storied BCC Bhaban with a 15-storey foundation was built at a cost of Tk 18.18 crore provided by the government.

The Korean government provided 1 million US dollar and the

government 0.5 million US dollar for procurement of equipment for the BKICT at the ground floor of BCC Bhaban.

The short courses at the BKICT started in April while long course will begin September.

Six modern computer training laboratories and network have been set up in the Institute, where 120 people can avail training at a time. Course curriculum has been formulated with the cooperation of Korean IT experts.

Addressing the function, Khaleda said the government has taken the initiative to join the super highway of Information Technology (IT), which will make easier the scope for expansion of high-speed electronic communication as well as reducing the expenses of international communication and internet usage.

This connection has already reached the landing station at Cox's Bazar, she said, adding that the infrastructure for full-scale usage

will be installed very soon.

Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas, president of Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Kim Suk-Hyun, Korean Ambassador Park Seong-Ung and executive director of BCC Dr AM Chowdhury also addressed the function.

Khaleda said the government has plans for application and expansion of computers and information technology. The plans will be implemented in phases.

Dr Moyeen said Bangladesh is now ranked among the top 20 in the list of successful software development countries when "our position was at the bottom of the list three years back."

KOICA president Suk-Hyun said the BKICT will not only make significant contribution in flourishing the ICT in Bangladesh, it would also enhance bilateral relations between the two countries.

KIBRIA KILLING Govt's inaction to bring killers to justice resented

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria yesterday expressed profound resentment at the government's inaction to bring the real killers under trial even after six months of the killing.

"Six months have passed, but the government has so far done nothing to find out the killers," said Rina Sultana Kibria, wife of Kibria's son Dr Reza Kibria.

She was speaking at "Blue for Peace" programme initiated by Asma Kibria, widow of the former finance minister, in front of Kibria's residence at Dhanmondi in the city.

Rina said the ongoing protest programme will continue until the real killers are arrested and brought to justice.

"I don't believe that the government will take any measures to bring the killers to justice as it has done nothing in case of other political killings," said Asma Kibria in great frustration.

"I never thought that my brother who served the country throughout his life had to die in such a way," said Sharifa Mosabbir in an emotion-choked voice.

Kibria's three other sisters Safia Rahman, Fouzia Shahed and Ashrafi Siddique, Awami League (AL) Joint General Secretary Obaidul Kader, Jubo League Chairman Jahangir Kabir Nanok and General Secretary Mirza Azam MP, Dhaka University Teachers' Association President AAMS Arefin Siddique, economist Dr Atiur Rahman and other family members of the deceased took part in the programme.

Kibria, also an AL lawmaker, was killed in a grenade attack in his hometown Habiganj on January 27.

Japan internal affairs minister arrives Aug 21

UNB, Dhaka

Japan's Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Taro Aso will visit Bangladesh August 21-22.

Aso, considered the most powerful minister after Prime Minister Koizumi, is coming to Dhaka as a follow-up to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's visit to Tokyo July 11-15.

A senior official of the foreign ministry yesterday said the trip is being seen important after the successful visit by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia who had sought more Japanese investment and financial support, particularly to the construction of \$ 1.5 billion Padma Bridge.

The official said during official talks, Prime Minister Koizumi had clearly indicated Japan's support to the Padma Bridge. Once the World Bank and the IMF take the decision of extending credits, Japan will obviously come up to form a consortium, as cost of the proposed bridge is much higher than that of the Jamuna Bridge.

US to help in capacity building of law enforcers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security Randy Beardsworth has appreciated the progress made by Bangladesh in improving the law and order situation and assured that the US will provide all possible support for capacity building of the law enforcement personnel.

The assurance came when State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar met him at his office in Washington on Wednesday. They discussed the US assistance to combat terrorism and strengthen border security.

The state minister, now on an official visit to the USA, has welcomed the US support for modernising the Coastguard and updating the equipment for port safety, said a Bangladesh Embassy press release received in Dhaka yesterday.

Later, the state minister attended a lunch at the Capitol Hill hosted by Congressman Mark Kirk, Republican co-chair of Bangladesh Caucus, and Congressman Joseph Crowley, Democratic co-chair of the Caucus.

The Caucus members lauded the Bangladesh's progress in law and order situation and assured Babar of their continued support for the country's economic and democratic progress.

Congressman Jim McDermott, an influential member of the House Ways and Means Committee, was also present at the lunch.

Babar also met senior Congressmen from Massachusetts, John F Tierney and Barney Frank, at their offices and apprised them of the progress in law and order situation.

The state minister said the Bangladesh government is committed to carrying out thorough and transparent investigation into all killings, including the killing of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria, an Awami League lawmaker, and bringing the perpetrators to justice as early as possible.

Bangladesh Ambassador Shamsur M Chowdhury and other members of Bangladesh delegation were also present at the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR

The International Food Security Network Bangladesh organised a national conference on 'Impact of Globalisation: Agriculture, Food and Trade Security in Bangladesh' at the Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. From left are columnist Farhad Mazhar, Shishir Shil, former adviser to a caretaker government Rokia A Rahman, Awami League MP Lt. Col. (ret'd.) Faruk Khan, Agriculture Minister MK Anwar and Nasreen Huq.

Madrasa student 'tortured to death' by teacher

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A madrasa student was tortured to death allegedly by his teacher at Munshipara in the town Wednesday night.

Locals and family sources said Maulana Moniruzzaman, a teacher of Ashraf Ulum Qawmi Madrasa, asked his student Nazir Hossain, 11, to carry bricks from a nearby place. As the boy refused to do it saying he was ill, the teacher became furious and started beating him up.

Later, the teacher forced the boy to keep his head under a table for an hour. The boy fell seriously sick and died that night.

Police could not arrest the accused teacher who went into hiding after the boy's death.

The madrasa authorities hurriedly sent the body to the boy's village home at Dhana Ruha in Saghata upazila.

Assistant Headmaster of the madrasa Noor Mohammad however said the boy had been suffering from hydrophobia for the last three months and he might have died of this.

BNP suspends Sylhet body over MP row

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling BNP on Wednesday withheld its Sylhet district convening committee following a long discord between Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman and other local BNP lawmakers.

The BNP high command in an order on Wednesday night postponed all activities of the party until further decision, said a press release bearing signature of BNP's Assistant Publicity Secretary Ahmed Musa.

The press release, however, did not mention any reason for the postponement. But sources said the decision was taken following a "situation" arising over BNP MP Syed Mokbul Hossain's insulting comment about Saifur Rahman made at a meeting at Bianibazar on Saturday in presence of convener of the committee and BNP MP Ilias Ali.

Hearing the news of the postponement, Saifur's supporters were jubilant and brought out processions in different areas in the district protesting Mokbul Hossain's comment on Saifur.

"The central command has taken a timely decision by postponing the activities of the committee," said district BNP leader Imdad Hossain Chowdhury.

Meanwhile, the supporters of the Ilias-Mokbul group also brought out separate processions condemning Saifur Rahman's role in the party.

Earlier on Wednesday, Mokbul Hossain in a written statement expressed his resentment against the finance minister, alleging that Saifur in connivance with his APS Qaiyum Chowdhury was making all-out effort to marginalise the three main "girders" of Sylhet BNP--Ilias Ali, Shafi Ahmad Chowdhury and Mokbul.

He also alleged that the APS took BNP leaders to meetings and rallies in the area to spread propaganda against him. Saifur's son and the APS were paving the way for victory of the opposition by destroying BNP's image in Sylhet and Moulvibazar, he said.

Mokbul said the finance minister insulted them when he and others went to inform him about this.



PHOTO: STAR

Police intercept a procession of Jubo League at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday as the demonstrators were marching towards the Bangabhaban to lay a siege in protest against the presidential amnesty granted to BNP leader Mohiuddin Ahmed Jhantu, a convict of capital punishment.

PRESIDENTIAL AMNESTY Police intercept procession towards Bangabhaban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday barred a procession towards Bangabhaban brought out by Awami Jubo League, a youth wing of main opposition Awami League (AL), protesting the Presidential amnesty to a ruling party man convicted in a double murder case.

A large number of police blocked the procession when it reached Bangabandhu Square in Gullistan.

Earlier at a rally, the Jubo League leaders demanded immediate removal of the law minister and state minister for home for their involvement in securing presidential amnesty for the convict.

Addressing the rally AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil accused Law Minister Moudud Ahmed of engineering the amnesty of Mohiuddin Jhantu during his visit to Sweden.

"We live in a country where the criminals are at large but the innocent people are oppressed frequently," Jalil said, adding the leaders of the ruling alliances have no faith in the rule of law.

"How a convicted person got the presidential clemency within 12 days of his return to the country?" he questioned.

AL Joint Secretary Obaidul Kader alleged that the president has violated the constitution and breached his oath of office by giving a clemency to a convicted person on political ground.

Jubo League Chairman Jahangir Kabir Nanok and General Secretary Mirza Azam MP, Mahanagar South President Mohiuddin Ahmed Mohi also spoke at the rally.

Illegal structures demolished at N'ganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Authorities demolished several illegal structures, including thatched and semi-pucca houses, and removed blockages in the Jalkuri drainage canal at Narayanganj yesterday to make the area free from waterlogging.

The Narayanganj district administration and the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) jointly conducted the drive for the third consecutive day.

The drive will continue until all the encroachers are evicted, said the officials. The decision to this end was taken at an inter-ministerial meeting on Sunday.

Sirajul Haq, sub-divisional engineer of BWDB, said, "We have dismantled several structures at the Jalkuri drainage canal and removed some blockages to ensure free flow of water."

Pull out of AL-led movement

CPB asks 7 left parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday asked the seven parties of the left 11-Party alliance to pull out from the Awami League-led movement and strengthen the Left Democratic Front.

"The seven parties have deviated from the ideology of creating a strong platform of the left-leaning parties against the bipolar politics of the BNP and the Awami League," said CPB General Secretary Muzahidul Islam Selim at a press conference.

The CPB, one of the main components of the 11-Party alliance, did not join the AL-led united movement for reforms in the caretaker government and the Election Commission, though most of the components of the 11-Party joined it.

However, the CPB leaders said, they would continue to carry out their movement separately -- and sometimes in synchronisation with the mainstream opposition parties -- to force the BNP-led alliance to step down.

The BNP-Jamaat alliance government has pushed the country into an alarming situation, Muzahidul Islam said, adding that the government must be toppled through an all-out movement to save the country.

"But it is unfortunate that not all the opposition parties are sincere in

launching an all-out movement to stop the government. Rather, they want to grab the state power with the help of foreigners," he said.

The CPB leaders also announced that the party's month-long programme to press for its 11-point demand will begin tomorrow.

The demands include immediate steps to check price hike of essentials and protect the interest of the industrial workers, farmers and farm labourers.

The party also demanded reforms of the electoral system in order to make the elections free from the influence of black money and muscle power as well as administrative fraud and communal propaganda.

The party will also hold rallies in all the districts on August 15, demanding execution of the verdict in the Bangabandhu Murder Case.

It will observe the "Bomb Killing Trial Day" on August 21, demanding trial of all bomb and grenade attacks.

Other programmes include mass demonstration day, day against communalism and imperialism, discussions, seminar, processions.

CPB President Manzurul Ahsan Khan also addressed the press conference at the party's central office in the city.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at a few places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places during the period, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 35.6 degree Celsius was recorded today at Sylhet and lowest 24.8 degree Celsius at Rangamat.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:43pm today and rises at 5:27am tomorrow.

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	33.3	26.6	74	68
Chittagong	33.0	25.8	76	74
Rajshahi	33.3	26.9	81	67
Khulna	33.0	27.3	85	80
Barisal	31.6	26.0	86	90
Sylhet	35.6	25.3	75	55
Cox's Bazar	32.0	25.0	82	92

Seminar on "Rapid Analysis of Soil, Water, Plant & Fertilizer by Automated Equipment"

Venue: BARI Auditorium, Joydebpur, Gazipur. Date: July 26, 2005

Jointly Organized by: Agri Analytical B.V., The Netherlands & Overseas Marketing Corporation (Pvt) Ltd, Bangladesh.

A seminar on "Rapid Analysis of Soil, Water, Plant and Fertiliser by Automated Equipment" was held on July 26 at the BARI auditorium in Joydebpur. The seminar was jointly organised by Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), Skalar BV, The Netherlands and Overseas Marketing Corporation (Pvt.) Ltd, Dhaka.

Rab nabs PBCP leader, seizes 2kg heroin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) has arrested a leader of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) with arms and ammunition in Chuadanga and seized two kilograms of heroin in the capital.

The Rab-6 (Khulna) yesterday nabbed Mohammad Shakhawat Hossain, chief of PBCP's Janajuddha faction from a rented house in Adarshapara.

The elite force also seized one sawn-off rifle, three foreign pistols, one shutter-gun, 54 bullets, four home-made bombs, four packets of bomb-making materials and two sacks of books of the outfit.

The Rab was quizzing him at its Khulna office about his accomplices and firearms.

Meantime, the intelligence wing of the Rab nabbed drug peddler Mohammad Jahangir from Nandapara in Badda with one kilo heroin on Wednesday.

Following his statement, the Rab raided another drug peddler's den at 2:00am yesterday and seized one kilo heroine.

Seminar

Iranian Cultural Centre organises a seminar on 'Women's Rights in Islam' to mark the birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatema Zahra (AS). Venue: Auditorium of the cultural centre, House-54, Road-8/A, Dhanmondi. Time: 5:00pm.

Liberation war festival

The programme of Liberation War Festival: Bangladesh titled 'Listen to the stories of the liberation war' will be inaugurated with Air Vice Marshal Abdul Karim Khandaker Bir Uttam as chief guest. Venue: Liberation War Museum premises, Segun Bagicha. Time: 5:00pm.

Citizens' rally

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon organises a citizens' rally demanding further strengthening of current drive against adulterated foods. Venue: Shahbagh crossing. Time: 10:30am.

Alumni meeting

The general meeting of MBA 2nd Batch Alumni of Dhaka University will be held. Venue: Teachers' Conference Room of the Department of Accounting and Information System. Time: 6:00pm.

Chhatra Parishad

A discussion will be held to mark the tenth founding anniversary of Chhatra Parishad. Venue: Ducsu Cafeteria, Dhaka University. Time: 3:00pm.

SOFEN

The concluding function of the month-long festival of SOFEN, an education, culture and social welfare organisation, will be held with Deputy Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui as chief guest. Venue: National Museum, Shahbagh. Time: 6:30pm.

Protest rally

VISA- World Wide Admission organises a rally to protest the bomb blasts in London. Venue: Muktagong, Ramna. Time: 10:00am.

CNC seminar

The Centre for National Culture will hold its monthly seminar and cultural evening. Venue: Dewan Monjil Hall, 60/E, Purana Paltan. Time: 5:00pm.

Inauguration

The inaugural ceremony of Baitul Amanat Multipurpose Co-operative Society Ltd will be held. Venue: Bangladesh Photojournalists Association Auditorium, Purana Paltan. Time: 4:00pm.

Rotary meeting

Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka Kawran Bazar will be held. Venue: Best Western La Vinci Hotel, Kawran Bazar. Time: 7:00pm.

Obituary

UNB, Dhaka

Khandaker Shamsul Huda, a freedom fighter and general manager of Bangladesh Bank Khulna branch, passed away due to cardiac arrest at his residence in Khulna on Wednesday night at the age of 54.

He left behind his wife, one son and one daughter.

He was buried with state honour at the Martyred Intellectuals Graveyard in Mirpur in the city yesterday after namaz-e-janaza on the Bangladesh Bank premises in the city. Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Salehuddin Ahmed and other officials and employees have expressed their deep shock at the death of Huda.

Sheikh Nurul Islam

UNB, Dhaka

Sheikh Mohammed Nurul Islam, a senior assistant editor of the daily Dinkal, passed away due to cardiac arrest at the Lab Aid Cardiac Hospital in the city on Wednesday night at the age of 61.

He left behind his wife, one son and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Jatiya Press Club president Reazuddin Ahmed and General Secretary Shaukat Mahmud, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) President Gias Kamal Chowdhury and Secretary General Ruhul Amin Gazi and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) President Elahi Newaz Khan and General Secretary Farid Ahmed Sardar condoled the death of Nurul Islam.

They prayed for the peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Aftab Uddin Ahmed



Aftab Uddin Ahmed, senior engineer of sthapatishangshad limited, passed away at Combined Medical Hospital in the city yesterday morning at the age of 62, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and one daughter. He will be buried in his hometown in Sylhet.

Dr MA Zaman



Dr MA Zaman, former health ministry director general of government in exile during the War of Liberation, passed away due to old age complications on Monday at the age of 75, says a press release.

He was buried at his village Kodalia in Kishorganj with state honour.

Azizur Rahman

Lieutenant Colonel (Rtd) Azizur Rahman passed away at the Combined Military Hospital in the capital on Tuesday night at the age of 80, says a press release.

He was buried at Banani army graveyard in Dhaka. He left behind his two sons, three daughters and a host of relatives.

Relatives and friends are requested to attend the qulkhwani to be held at the new DOHS mosque in the city on Sunday after Magrib prayers.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Monjur Morshed Sachchu, a freedom fighter, vice-president of Rajbari district Awami League and former Area Commander of "Mujib Bahini", will be held at his residence at Pangsra in Rajbari after Juma prayers today, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for his departed soul.

Monjur Morshed died on July 21.

Chehlum



Chehlum of Md Ashraf, a social worker, will be held at his residence at G-7 Zakir Hossain Road at Block-E, Mohammadpur in the capital after Juma prayers today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad-mahfil and Qurankhwani will be held at his residence. Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the chehlum.

Ashraf died on June 18 at Daudkandi when an engine-boat capsized.

He left behind his wife, one son and two daughters.