

President hosts reception for Hindus

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed and his wife Dr Anwara Begum hosted a reception yesterday at Banga-bhaban in the city for members of the Hindu community on the occasion of the Durga Puja, the greatest festival of the Hindus.

The President and his wife welcomed the guests and exchanged pleasantries with them on the occasion.

State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharef Hossain Shahjahan and State Minister for Water Resources Advocate Goutam Chakravarty were present on the occasion.

Ambassador of Nepal, Cirdap DG, Defence attaché of Indian High Commission, professors of universities and medical colleges, political and religious leaders, freedom fighters, recipients of national awards, high officials, lawyers, doctors, journalists, artists, leaders and members of Hindu Welfare Trust, businessmen and other professionals attended the reception.

Secretary to the President M Abu Solaiman Chowdhury, MSP Major General ANM Muni-ruzzaman, Press Secretary M Mukhlesur Rahman Chowdhury, Religious Secretary Rafiqul Islam and Hindu community leaders Maj Gen (Retd) CR Datta and Gautam Mitra were present.

THREAT TO PROSHIKA

Adab demands security of NGOs

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (Adab), a coordinating organisation for the NGOs, yesterday urged the government to ensure security for all NGO offices and its workers in Chittagong.

Adab President SM Nazer Hossain made the appeal in the wake of a threat to blow up the local office of Proshika.

Unidentified miscreants in an anonymous letter on Wednesday threatened to blow up the Proshika office in Chittagong, demanding a toll of Tk 10 lakh in a month.

Nazer said, "After the series bomb blast across the country on August 17, we requested the district and upazila administrations to ensure security of the NGOs' offices but nothing has been done in this regard yet."

"At least 10,000 workers of Adab-enlisted 80 NGOs have been working for health, nutrition, education, micro credit, environmental development, disaster management and income raising projects at remote areas of the district," he added.

He hinted foreign donors might close down the projects unless the government ensures their security.

SHARING OF WATER OF INTERNATIONAL RIVERS

Regional cooperation a must to resolve dispute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-Jamaat alliance government has failed to realise the just share of water of common rivers, particularly with India, speakers at a discussion said yesterday.

After the Ganges Water Treaty in 1996 during the Awami League rule, scopes were created to strike similar

deals with India for sharing of water, but the present government failed to do so, they said.

They also called for regional cooperation to resolve long-standing dispute over sharing of water of international rivers.

The Awami League (AL) organised the seminar titled 'Water management in Bangladesh: Successes, failure and

future directions' attended by water experts, economists and political leaders.

AL presidium member and former water resources minister Abdur Razzak said the previous AL government had taken all-out measures for water management and irrigation, leading to bumper production of rice and other crops.

It's a matter of regret that the present government has even failed to review the Ganges Water Treaty, he said, adding that the alliance government has also halted the process of a number of water sharing treaties with India.

"We would have been able to sign the Teesta river water sharing treaty if we had got another three months' time as the treaty was in the final stage," the former water resources minister said.

Besides, he said, the ruling alliance loyalists have grabbed all the low-lying lands around Dhaka city, causing environmental disasters, including waterlogging.

AL leader Tofail Ahmed said the ruling party men have been making brisk money in the name of projects to check river erosion in different districts.

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon stressed the need for cooperation among Bangladesh, India and Nepal to resolve long-standing dispute over water sharing.

AL leader Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir called for building dams and water reservoirs to facilitate irrigation in the dry season.

Presenting the keynote paper, Dr Kholiquzzman Ahmad said Bangladesh should be involved in the 'Saptakoshi River Dam Project', jointly taken up by India and Nepal, to ensure proper sharing of water of the common international rivers.

"We have legal right to get share of the water as the Saptakoshi is part of the inter-country Ganges River system," he said. "Some 3500-4000 MW power will be generated and water flow of Ganges River during dry season could increase, once the project is implemented. So, involvement of Bangladesh in the scheme is a must."

Bangladesh will face adverse consequences if it is not involved in any such inter-country project in the future, he added.

Senior journalist ABM Musa said the sharing of water with the neighbour is a political issue and the politicians should address it in meetings with their counterparts.

Dr Habibur Rahman of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) and Gono Forum leader Advocate Zahidul Islam also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

AL presidium member and former water resources minister Abdur Razzak speaks at a seminar on 'Water management in Bangladesh: Successes, failure and future directions' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Jalil visits flood-hit Naogaon

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil MP yesterday visited flood-affected areas of Naogaon and adjoining villages and distributed relief goods among the victims, said a party press release.

Jalil went round Tilakpur, Baktarpur, Kirtipur, Barshile, Hapania, Dubalhati, Hashaigari, Sholgaji, Patnitola, Manda, Ramu, Raninagar, Bodolgachi and Mahadebpur areas of Naogaon.

Naogaon district Awami League President Advocate Fazle Rabbi and General Secretary Abdul Malek accompanied him during the visit.

RURAL WOMEN'S DAY

Ensure accountability of politicians for women's rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Rural Women's day will be observed today in the country as elsewhere in the world.

This year's theme of the Day is 'Accountability of politicians will expedite women's right'.

We have to work together to ensure accountability of our politicians regarding women's rights, said the members of the National Observance Committee of World Rural Women's Day at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

They also pointed out that empowerment of women's rights is in the documents of International Human Rights Convention and Convention on Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) but we do not find any significant implementation of these treaties in our country.

This year the Day will be observed in all districts with rallies, meetings, human chains, video exhibitions and cultural programmes, said the Committee members.

On the occasion, a meeting and a rally will also be held at the Central Shahid Minar in the city, they added.

Members of the Committee - Dunai Pru Neli, Shahadat Hossain Chowdhury, Shamima Islam Daisy, Sharmin Chowdhury, Rafikul Islam Khokon and Ahmed Shawpan Mahmud- were present at the conference.



PHOTO: STAR

Abida, a four-year-old girl, abducted on Wednesday from an apartment at Shantinagar in Dhaka, was rescued in Munshiganj yesterday. A policeman returns the girl to her parents at the Paltan Police Station. Abida, daughter of Faruq Ahmed, owner of the Hotel Al-Faruq International, was kidnapped by an employee of the hotel, who was dismissed recently.

36th World Standard Day today

UNB, Dhaka

The 36th World Standard Day will be observed in the country as elsewhere across the globe today focusing on high standard of commodities considered important for improvement of lifestyle of the people.

On the occasion, Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI), the country's only watchdog body that monitors the standards of industrial and agricultural products, has chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the day.

The programmes include holding discussion meetings, airing special programmes on TV channels and bringing out supplements in newspapers.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Industries Minister Motiur Rahman Nizami issued special messages on the occasion highlighting the standard of commodities to ensure a world free from manmade hazards.



PHOTO: STAR

As a police sergeant seizes unauthorised rickshaws during a drive at Mouchak intersection in the city yesterday, a rickshawpuller begs him to return his rickshaw.