



PHOTO: PID

(From left) Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom left Dhaka on Sunday while Nepalese King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev and Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup left Dhaka yesterday. They were seen off at Zia International Airport in the city.

Take up massive plan to eradicate Monga

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Economists, experts and legislators yesterday suggested taking up a massive plan to eradicate Monga, a near-famine situation prevailing in the northern region.

A coordinating committee, comprising representatives from the government and NGOs and people from all walks of life, should be formed to implement the plan, they said at a roundtable in the city.

They also recommended a four-pronged approach to averting Monga, which hits the northern districts every year. The recommendations include creating alternative income-generating opportunities, promoting crops diversification, ensuring protection from floods and raising awareness about Monga.

Short-term, medium-term and long-term programmes should be taken in implementing the massive plan, they pointed out.

The Prothom Alo, a leading Bangla daily, organised the roundtable titled 'How can Monga be eliminated' at its office.

"Monga is a perennial problem which could be solved by creating scope for employment, diversifying non-farm jobs, utilising government safety net programmes more effectively and creating awareness among the people," said Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC).

He also said that about 400 small schemes can be taken up to offset the impact of Monga.

Dr Uttam Kumar Deb of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) said that



PHOTO: STAR

Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of Power and Participation Research Centre, speaks at a roundtable titled 'How can Monga be eliminated' at the Prothom Alo office in the city yesterday. The Prothom Alo organised the event.

Monga can be eliminated within seven to ten years through an effective plan. At the same time, the government should also take necessary steps considering it a national problem, he added.

He said people in the Monga-affected region can cultivate Biri-33, a new variety of rice, which ripens within 100 days, whereas other varieties of rice ripens in 120 to 130 days.

Moderating the roundtable, Matiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo, called for identifying Monga-affected areas first before implementing the massive plan in order to address the suffering of the people.

He also assured that his daily would

highlight Monga-related news and take initiative to launch a massive plan to eradicate the problem.

Asaduzzaman Noor, an Awami League lawmaker from Gaibandha, said local leaders and workers of the ruling party have misused a huge quantity of government aid sent for the Monga-affected people.

Food grains from the government safety net programmes, including VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding) and VGD (Vulnerable Group Development), also do not reach the targeted group due to corruption of local government and politicisation, he added.

Abdul Motalib Akanda, a BNP

lawmaker from Gaibandha, said it is impossible for the government alone to tackle the Monga.

He urged the local and international NGOs to supplement the government efforts in this regard.

Aminul Alam, deputy executive director of BRAC, Saidul Islam Shishir, executive director of Gonosasthya Kendra, Dipal Chandra Barua, deputy managing director of Grameen Bank, Anthoni De Croj, project co-ordinator of RDRS, and Mohammad Ashraf Ali, managing director of Rajshahi Agricultural Development Bank, also spoke.

13TH SAARC SUMMIT PM thanks people for cooperation

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday thanked the people, particularly the city-dwellers, for their cooperation in successfully hosting and completing the 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka.

"The credit for this success goes to the countrymen. It's a national pride...it reflected national solidarity and unity," she said in a statement.

Thanking those who were involved directly or indirectly in successfully holding the regional summit at the forum's birthplace, Khaleda thanked the Dhaka city residents for their sincere cooperation in upholding the country's tradition of hospitality to the distinguished guests of the Saarc countries.

She also thanked all tiers of security and law-enforcement agencies in Dhaka and other parts of the country for their sincere efforts, providing a fool-proof security for the summit.

The prime minister thanked the rank and file of the foreign ministry and other ministries concerned, departments, directorates as well as Dhaka City Corporation for their relentless service to make the South Asian summit a success.

She also thanked the political parties for their cooperation.

The prime minister's thanks also went to small traders for their cooperation in successfully holding and ending the event, accepting inconvenience in running their business.

She also expressed gratitude to private organisations and institutions for their voluntary cooperation under the initiative of the government in well illuminating and decorating the capital city in honor of Saarc guests on the occasion of the summit.

The prime minister appreciated the country's electronic and print media for widely covering the summit and thanked the journalists for their hard work despite some constraints.

Concerted efforts a must to fight terrorism

Says British minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Dr Kim Howells yesterday called for concerted efforts to fight terrorism everywhere.

No-one can brush aside the threat of terrorism, he said, adding that the terrorists are the enemy of democracy and humanity.

Talking to reporters, Dr Howells also said Bangladesh has potential human resources, but it needs better governance.

He also termed the UK-Bangladesh relations very good.

The British state minister, who flew to Sylhet yesterday morning, visited the Sylhet Liaison office of the British High Commission, Kotwali Police Station and Burjan Tea Garden.

He lauded the role of Bangladesh community in the UK, saying that

about half a million people of Bangladeshi origin have been contributing to the British economy as well as to every sphere of the British society to a large extent.

Deputy Inspector General of Police Syed Shah Zaman Raj and Deputy Commissioner Md Faisal Alam welcomed Dr Howells when he visited the Kotwali Police Station to see for himself the working process.

He went around to different rooms in the police station and talked to the officials who briefed him on the policing system here.

Dr Howells later joined a gathering of senior expatriates at the Burjan Tea Garden, where Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran and owner of the garden Mohammad Rafique welcomed him.

Talking to reporters, he said the expatriates, who have already proved their capability in the British society,

can also play a vital role in Bangladesh.

There is an ample scope for investment in different sectors in Bangladesh, he said, adding that the huge gas resources in Sylhet need to be exploited properly.

The hydrocarbon exploration gets top priority in today's world, he said.

The British government is keen to provide more assistance for Bangladesh, he said, adding that it is considering some sectors for future assistance programme.

On the services of the British High Commission, Dr Howells said the consular and other services have improved greatly in recent years. There would be a spacious office for the Sylhet Liaison office, he added.

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury and other officials accompanied the state minister. They went back to Dhaka in the afternoon.



PHOTO: STAR

Namaz-e-janaza of Enayetullah Khan, editor of the daily New Age and editor-in-chief of the weekly Holiday, was held on the National Press Club premises in the city yesterday.

Killing of judges condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Minister, leaders of different political parties, socio-political and rights organisations yesterday in separate statements expressed deep shock and condemned the killing of the two senior judges in Jhalakathi District Court in bomb attack.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed at a statement expressed profound shock at the death of senior judges Sohel Ahmed, 35, and Jagannath Parey, 38 on the eve of their going to the court.

Condemning the atrocity the minister said the criminals would be arrested and brought to justice.

"The government will take stern actions as it took before to root out the conspiracy against the state, constitution, sovereignty and democracy," he added.

Awami League (AL) Presidium member and former minister Amir Hossain Amu condemning the killing said governmental support is lying behind the repeated bomb blasts across the country time to time.

Amu demanded prevention of recurring bomb blasts, immediate arrest of as well as exemplary punishment to the criminals and ensuring security of people.

President of the central executive parishad of Democratic Lawyers'

Association of Bangladesh Barrister Shafiq Ahmed and General Secretary Advocate Zahidul Bari at a statement demanded adequate security to the judges and the court premises. They also urged the lawyers' community and the people to resist the fundamentalist forces.

Bangladesh Awami League, Jatiya Party, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, Workers Party of Bangladesh, Jatiya Shamajtantrik Dal, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Left Democratic Front, Bangladesh Shamajtantrik Dal, Gonoforum also condemned the atrocity.

Supreme Court Reporters' Association, Jatiyatrabadi Ainjibi Forum, Bangladesh Bar Council, Ain O Salish Kendra, Court Reporters' Association,

Madaripur Ainjibi Samity, Narayanganj Samity, Sylhet Ainjibi Samity, Sammilito Ainjibi Shamannay Parishad, Jatiyatrabadi Ainjibi Forum, Bangladesh Minority Lawyers' Association also slammed the killing of the judges and expressed sympathy for the bereaved family.

Others condemned the bomb attack include Dhaka University Teachers' Association, United Labour Forum, Bangladesh Chhatra Maitri, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Jatiya Sramik League, Mahila Gonoforum, youth gonoforum, Jatiya Nari Oikya Mancha.

Protesting the killing Bangladesh Awami Shechhashebak League brought out a rally yesterday.

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK

3 arrestees on fresh remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Three youths, arrested in connection with the August 21 grenade attack on the Bangabandhu Avenue rally of Awami League (AL) last year, were placed on a five-day fresh remand yesterday.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced the three Shafiqul Islam Shafiq, Shah Alam and Abul Hashem Ranabero before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka on completion of their seven-day remand.

The investigation officer (IO), Assistant Superintendent of Police of CID Abdur Rashid, sought an eight-day remand for further interrogation.

The forwarding report placed before the court by the IO said the arrestees admitted their involvement in the August 21 grenade attack on the AL rally and they disclosed names of some of their accomplices involved in the attack. But they did not know their addresses. So they need to be quizzed to find out the vital clue about the attacks and identify their whereabouts, the report said.

After hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rouf Khan granted them a five-day remand for further interrogation.

The three were arrested from different places of the country and taken on a seven-day remand.

Twenty-one people have been arrested in the case so far, of them, Saibal Saha Partha and 11 others were granted bail by the High Court.

The August 21 grenade attack left 22 AL leaders and workers dead, including Ivy Rahman, and 200 others injured. Hasina narrowly escaped the attack.

Prime suspect in Joypurhat serial bomb blast dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A prime suspect in August 17 Joypurhat serial bomb blast died of a heart attack in Dhaka on Sunday.

Hafizar Rahman, also a leader of the Ahle Hadith Movement, had been at large since the bomb attack. He died at the Suhrawardi Hospital, police sources said.

Three unknown people, who were believed to have been sheltering him, took his body to Joypurhat by a microbus and disappeared soon after handing over the body to an Imam of the Ahab mosque in the town.

However, the police let his family members bury the dead without an autopsy after they were shown the death certificate.

Hafizar was one of 29 accused in Joypurhat blast case. Police also submitted a charge sheet against him.

He collected TK 50,000 in toll from traders at an Ahab complex before he went into hiding.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Chan Mia, member of Advisory Committee of Dhaka City Awami League, will be held at his residence at 10, Dhakeshwari road, Lalbagh after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and Awami League leaders and activists have been requested to attend the qulkhwani. Chan Mia died on Saturday.

70pc foot amputations occur in people with diabetes

Reveal global studies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Launch countrywide health education programmes to prevent and reduce the burden of diabetes, said the speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They said an estimated 50 lakh people in the country suffer from various stages of the chronic disease caused by the body's inability to produce a hormone called insulin.

The deficiency of this hormone results in increased concentrations of glucose in the blood which in turn damage many of the body's systems including ulceration and subsequent limb amputation one of the major outcomes of the slow but fatal disease, they added.

The discussion was organised by the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (Dab) on the occasion of World Diabetes Day at Birdem in the city yesterday.

The speakers said it is possible to reduce amputation rates by up to 80 percent through a care strategy that combines prevention, treatment of foot ulcers, close monitoring, and education of people with diabetes and healthcare professionals.

They called for increased attention to the rising nationwide burden of diabetes that not only leads to loss of productivity but also to huge financial loss due to healthcare costs.

The speakers pointed out that

almost 80 percent of these lower limb amputations could be prevented with adequate health education, detection and appropriate care.

Speaking as chief guest, Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said, "Changing food habit and taking balanced diet could actually prevent and reduce the burden of diabetes which is said to be increasing every year that too due to certain factors like lack of physical exercise, rich diet and rapid urbanisation."

In her speech Dr Duangvadee Sungkhobol, WHO Representative in Bangladesh, said, "Diabetes and its numerous complications are extremely burdensome on the health and economies of countries worldwide. It is estimated that treatment of diabetic foot diseases accounts for as much as 40 percent of healthcare resources available for diabetes in developing countries."

"Health education focusing on prevention side of the disease is very crucial. We should encourage simple behaviours among the people with diabetes such as regular foot examination to check development of ulcers, not walking barefoot and maintaining cleanliness of the foot," she added.

The discussion revealed some global studies which said up to 70 percent of all foot amputations occur in people with diabetes mellitus most of which begin with foot ulcers.

Many serious complications, such as kidney failure or blindness can affect individuals with diabetes, but it is the complications of the foot that are one of the most serious and costly complications of diabetes.

With this year's World Diabetes Day slogan "Put feet first: Prevent amputations", the health ministry and Dab are working together to raise awareness about this preventable complication and promote integrated treatment and care.

In observance of the day, Bangladesh Diabetes Samity (BDS) also organised a press conference at its conference room at Birdem.

Citing a study of International Diabetes Federation, the speakers said in every three seconds a leg is cut in the globe and in 70 percent cases this amputation is caused by diabetes.

They said around five percent of the total population of Bangladesh is affected by diabetes and most of them are at high risk as they are careless or ignorant of foot care.

Director General of Birdem Prof Dr Mirza Mazharul Islam, BDS Chairman Major General Dr A R Khan, Secretary Ahsanul Kabir, Joint General Secretary Dr Sultan Aziz, Dr Arup Ratan Chowdhury and Dr J R Wadud spoke at the press conference.

DHAKA TODAY

AL protest rally
Dhaka City Awami League will hold a rally protesting killing of two judges in Jhalakathi. Venue: Mukhtangon. Time: 3:00pm.

Human chain
Olama-Mashayekh Smannaya Parishad, an organisation of Islamic scholars, will form a human chain wearing Ithram dress (white piece of unstitched cloth worn during Hajj) demanding immediate resolution of airfare crisis of non-ballotee pilgrims. Venue: Mukhtangon. Time: 3:00pm.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely
UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country with chances and a light rain or drizzle at one or two places over Sylhet division till 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 30.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 14.4 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:13pm today and rises at 6:14am 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	28.6	18.4	58	71
Chittagong	30.3	17.5	84	84
Rajshahi	29.4	16.0	90	86
Khulna	30.2	18.8	81	78
Barisal	29.5	18.4	96	89
Sylhet	29.9	18.3	80	73
Cox's Bazar	29.2	18.5	61	68