

TSUNAMI Need for early warning systems underscored

The chaotic scenes following the tsunami warning on September 12 in Southern Bangladesh as well as in other Indian Ocean littoral states demonstrate the importance of improving both early warning systems and community preparedness.

The observation came at a dialogue to disseminate the results of a pilot project in Sri Lanka at Bangladesh University of Science and Technology (BUST) yesterday says a press release.

Bangladesh can be proud of having reduced the fatalities from cyclones in the past decades, but increasing geological instability in the ocean south of the country poses a new challenge in the form of tsunamis, a rapid-onset hazard that can destroy lives and livelihoods on a massive scale unless the necessary preparations are made.

Under current technology, authorities have 2-3 days to issue warning and evacuate people from the path of dangerous cyclones. Tsunamis allow only a few hours to prepare.

In Sri Lanka, a nation that suffered greatly from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, researchers and community leaders have been working diligently to find technological and organisational solutions for the challenges posed by tsunamis and other rapid-onset hazards.

The perception has been that if

the challenges posed by tsunamis can be met, the risks from other hazards can also be minimised.

Intergovernmental and governmental organisations are improving the tsunami detection and monitoring systems in the Indian Ocean. But each government in the region must develop faster and more reliable methods to decide on the issuance of watch, warning and evacuation messages and to communicate such messages to first responders and the media.

Communities must prepare themselves to receive these messages as well as generate their own information. To devise and implement effective last-mile warning systems and to maintain disaster response plans while successfully implementing them. The tasks are complex and large, requiring the cooperation of government, the private sector and communities.

Saravodaya, Sri Lanka's largest community-based organisation, and LIRNEasia, a regional ICT policy think-tank, collaborated on a 32-village pilot project that sought to identify the best technologies for reaching villages; to identify the significance of organisational strength and training for risk reduction; and to assess the participation of women in these activities.

The community-based approach implemented in the project is different from a public-

warning approach, but has lessons for government communications with first responders and for community organisation and training as well.

For example, the project field tested addressable and remotely activated satellite radios that have coverage over the entire Bay of Bengal region. Other equipment deployed included Java and Symbian enabled mobile handsets capable of generating loud alarms and multi-language alert messages.

The Bangladesh Network Office for Urban Safety (BNUS) of the Department of Civil Engineering, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) is co-organising a workshop with LIRNEasia entitled "Sharing Knowledge on Disaster Warning: Community-based Last Mile Warning Systems" to discuss the findings of the Last Mile Hazard Warning System (Hazinfo) Pilot Project as well as share the lessons of community-based last mile warning systems in Bangladesh.

The workshop is part of a series of dissemination workshops that aims to gather experts, community volunteers and community organisations involved in early warning activities from the South Asian Region.

This workshop will be held at ITN Centre, Buet on October 25.

York College to launch 'Yunus Scholarship'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

York College in New York City is going to launch a scholarship named after Nobel laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus.

Dr Yunus gave his consent to 'Dr Yunus Scholarship' at a meeting with Jerald Posman, vice-president of the college, in New York on September 27, according to a report of News World, a New-York based news agency.

According to the detailed plan of the scholarship, an exchange programme with Grameen Bank will also be introduced.

As part of the exchange programme, selected students of York College will be sent to Bangladesh to observe the activities of Grameen Bank while students of different schools associated with the Grameen Bank will visit York College.

Writer Rashidul Bari, one of the initiators of the scholarship, Dr Shawkat Ali, president of Bangladesh Journalist and Writers' Association, Abu Taher, secretary general of the association, and Monica Yunus, daughter of Dr Yunus, were present at the meeting.

2 get life in double murder case

BSS, Rajshahi

A trial court has sentenced two persons to rigorous imprisonment (RI) for life and three others to 10 years' RI in a double murder case in the district.

Additional District and Sessions Judge-2 Rezaul Islam pronounced the verdict in a crowded courtroom yesterday.

The convicts jailed for life are Abul Kalam and Abdus Samad. The court also fined them Tk 10,000 each, in default, to suffer one year more RI.

Three other convicts Shahidul, Salam and Baztullah were also fined Tk 10,000 each, in default, to suffer one year more in jail.

The judge acquitted five accused Javed Ali, Habibur Rahman, Riaz Uddin, Momena Khatun and Mojibur Rahman of the charges as the prosecution could not prove the allegation brought against them.

The prosecution story, in brief, is that the convicts, armed with lethal weapons attacked the residence of one Rahmatullah Pramanik at Telipukur village under Bagmara upazila and beat his family members indiscriminately as sequel to previous enmity over a piece of disputed land on January 22, 2005.

In the attack, many of the family members were injured seriously. Of them, Pramanik's son Rafiqul Islam and grandson Zaker Ali succumbed to their injuries at Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital.

Rahmatullah lodged a case with Bagmara Police Station on the same day.

On completion of investigation, police pressed charges accusing 10 people.

After examining the prosecution witnesses and other relevant documents, the trial court handed down the verdict.

Arunabh wins poetry prize



Tangail Sahitya Sangsad has selected Arunabh Sarkar for its poetry prize for 2007, says a press release.

The executive committee of the Sangsad took the decision at a meeting recently.

The award giving ceremony will be held on December 15.

The award carries a citation and Tk 10,000 from the 'Dinesh-Bani Gold Medal Award Committee'.

Arunabh has three collections of poems to his credit - 'Nagare Baul', 'Kau Kichhui Jane Na' and 'Narira Fere Na'. He also edited Eshika, a poetry magazine.

Tangail Sahitya Sangsad has been giving the poetry prize every year since 2004 to eminent poets of the district for their outstanding contribution to poetry.

AFP, Jakarta

A 21-year-old man from the Indonesian capital Jakarta died from bird flu last week, the health ministry said yesterday, bringing the toll in the world's worst-affected nation to 86.

"This confirmed case puts the number now at 107 infected, including 86 dead," Ningrum, a doctor from Indonesia's bird flu information centre, told AFP.



Former public works secretary SM Jafarullah, former chairmen Shahidul Alam and Iqbal Hossain and Rajuk official Golam Nabi are being taken to jail after they surrendered to a court in connection with a graft case yesterday.

Mugger beaten to death in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

A mob beat a mugger to death and injured two others near the United Nations Park in the port city in the early hours of yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mafiz Uddin, 28, and the injured are Mohammad Kamal, 30, and Saheb Ali, 28.

Sources said the gang of three intercepted a pedestrian and tried to snatch valuables from him at around 2:00am.

When the pedestrian raised an alarm, local people rushed to his aid and caught the muggers. They also beat up the three, leaving them badly injured.

The muggers were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where Mafiz succumbed to his injuries about one hour later, the sources said.

Road crashes kill 4

UNB, Dhaka

At least four people, including a schoolgirl were killed and eight others injured in separate road accidents in Magura and Jhenidah yesterday and on Sunday night.

A report from Magura says: Three people were killed and seven others injured when a truck hit a tempo in Sadar upazila on Jessore-Magura road Sunday night.

Police said the Khulna-bound truck, loaded with thread, dashed the Magura-bound tempo at Khechadubi at about 8:00pm, leaving three of its passengers dead on the spot.

The deceased were identified as Manirul Islam, 35, of Habala village, Rabiul Islam, 25, of Beroakandi and Abdur Razzak, 38,

of Chhoychar village, in Sadar upazila. The bodies were sent to morgue for autopsy.

The injured were rushed to Magura Sadar Hospital.

Another report from Jhenidah reports: A schoolgirl was killed and a college girl injured when a speedy bus hit a van they were on board near Madandanga Bazar on Jhenidah-Kushtia road yesterday.

Witnesses said Jannatul Ferdous, student of class X, died on the spot and badly wounded Poppy Khatun, a first year student of DM College, was rushed to the hospital.

The killer bus of Gangchil Paribahan managed to flee leaving behind the victims lying in a pool of blood on the road.



Awami League (AL) holds a meeting with the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leaders at the residence of AL acting president Zillur Rahman at Gulshan in the city yesterday.

AL, JSD for not registering religion-based parties

FROM PAGE 1

possibility of damaging religious and communal harmony or pushing the country towards insurgency due to the party's name, flag or symbol.

At the meeting, both the AL and JSD leaders expressed surprise at the Chief Election Commissioner's (CEC) remark over the issue.

The CEC on Sunday said disqualifying religion-based political parties for registration is a political matter, which is beyond the jurisdiction of the EC and politicians should solve the matter politically.

The meeting decided that both the AL and JSD would ask the EC to declare war criminals, patrons of religious extremism, and communal forces disqualified from contesting the elections in the country.

The meeting also criticised some of the EC proposals including the one that intends to make any criticism of the EC tantamount to contempt of court.

Both the parties agreed in principle that they would help the EC in implementing its announced roadmap.

Leaders of the both parties, however, said the government as well as the EC should not take any decision that might hinder the implementation of the roadmap.

Leaders of the two allies observed that the roadmap would be weighed down if the EC tries to control political parties or politics by imposing any conditions.

The leaders from both parties highly praised the chief adviser's recent speeches in the United States including the one at the 62nd General Assembly of the United Nations.

The leaders, however, were surprised as political parties were randomly blamed for the current situation of the country.

The meeting was part of a series of talks among allies of the 14-party alliance to forge a common stance for the dialogue with the EC.

Both the AL and the JSD decided that they would hold dialogues with the EC and stick to their 31-point reform proposal that the 14-party alliance had already placed.

AL presidium member Tofail

Ahmed and JSD President Hasanul Haque Inu briefed the journalists following the meeting that lasted an hour.

Tofail, also coordinator of the 14-party alliance, said, "I congratulate the chief adviser as he has assured of holding the next parliamentary election by 2008 in a bid to hand over power to an elected government."

"But we have to regret it when they [the government] mix us with the tenure of the previous BNP-Jamaat coalition government," said the AL leader.

Demanding immediate lifting of the ban on indoor politics across the country, Tofail said if the government lifts the ban on indoor politics, leaders and workers of the 14-party alliance would be able to help in the preparation of photo voterroll.

AL Acting President Zillur Rahman, Acting General Secretary Mukul Bose, Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Akhteruzzaman, Sultan

Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, advocate Rahmat Ali, Abdul Mannan Khan, Abdul Latif Siddiqui, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Dr Abdur Razzak, Dr Dipu Moni and Maj Gen (Retd) Subid Ali Bhuiyan were present at the meeting on behalf of the AL.

JSD leaders Mainuddin Khan Badol, Syed Jafar Sazzad, Sharif Nurul Ambia, Shirin Akhtar, Rezaul Karim Tansen and Mir Hossain Akhtar were present among others at the meeting.

Retired army officials meet Zillur Gen (retd) KM Shafiqullah, Maj Gen (retd) Subid Ali Bhuiyan, Maj Gen (retd) Amsa Amin, Rear Adm (retd) Nurul Islam, Brig (retd) Baker, Brig (retd) Golam Mawla and Col (retd) Faruk Khan in a meeting with AL Acting President Zillur Rahman offered their active services to the AL.

Zillur praised their effort and asked them to continue their support for the AL.



Channel i Managing Director Faridur Reza Sagar, Director (news) Shykh Seraj and others cut a cake at the Channel i office in the city yesterday celebrating the 9th founding anniversary of the satellite channel.

Taiwan accuses Beijing of threatening peace

AFP, Taipei

Taiwan yesterday rejected Chinese accusations that Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian's efforts to host a referendum on UN membership are threatening regional stability.

Instead, Taiwan's foreign ministry in a statement denounced Beijing's stockpiling of nearly 1,000 ballistic and cruise missiles aimed at the island.

"It is China not Taiwan which pulls the two sides ever away... the fact that it has kept deploying more missiles targeting Taiwan has gravely threatened peace in the Strait," it said.

It also denied Beijing's "one China principle" - that Taiwan is a province of China and not a separate state.

"Taiwan and China have governed themselves separately since 1949 (at the end of a civil war). They do not belong to each other. The Chinese government has never exercised its rights of ruling on the island, nor has it ever collected a single penny in tax from Taiwan," it said.

Reinstatement of laid-off journo, staffs of Ittefaq demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Newspaper Employees Federation (BNEF) yesterday expressed deep concern over the lay off of a large number of journalists and employees of the Ittefaq and demanded their reinstatement.

With Federation Senior Vice-president Salim Uddin Selim in the chair, the meeting observed that such indiscriminate lay off before the Eid had created panic among the employees of the newspaper industry.

The meeting, held at Observer Bhaban, also regretted the lay off of BNEF President Motiur Rahman Talukder, who is also the member of the 6th Wage Board and joint member-secretary of Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmochari Oikya Parishad.

Media has important role to play: Mainul

BSS, Dhaka

Information Adviser Mainul Hossain yesterday said the media has a very important role to play in disseminating the present government's efforts to reestablish democracy in the country.

"The present government is playing a constructive role towards mass media," he said while speaking at the 9th founding anniversary of Channel i, a private TV channel, at its office.

He said the government considered media's role "very important" in nation building.

The nation, he said, needed honest and capable leadership to reestablish democracy in the country. The adviser said that Channel i had been playing a significant role in that respect.

He described the role of Channel i as "laudable" in creating

mass awareness as well as in inspiring people in constructive activities.

He congratulated all personnel of the channel for earning the people's admiration for it through objective dissemination of news and views.

The Channel i, he said, was devoted to its personal responsibilities and aware of the need of the hour in the discharge of its obligations.

The adviser cut a cake to inaugurate the anniversary celebration and wished the channel uninterrupted progress.

Agriculture Adviser Dr CS Karim, Energy Adviser Tapan Chowdhury, the channel's Managing Director Faridur Reza Sagar, its Chief of News Shykh Seraj, politicians, journalists and cultural activists were also present on the occasion.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

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

Highest temperature 35.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakundi and lowest 24.0 degree Celsius at Rangamati.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:45pm today and rises at 5:51am 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	33.8	26.4	73	79
Chittagong	32.5	25.5	76	76
Rajshahi	34.5	26.0	79	80
Khulna	33.0	26.4	77	71
Barisal	33.3	25.5	78	89
Sylhet	30.2	25.0	100	88
Cox's Bazar	33.4	24.5	69	86

Obituary

UNB, Sherpur

Delwara Begum, mother of the daily Sangbad Editor Bazlur Rahman, passed away due to old age complications at her village home in Nakla upazila yesterday at the age of 75.

She was buried at her family graveyard after namaz-e-janaza after the Maghrib prayers yesterday.

Abu Mohammad Abdus Sattar



says a press release.

He was also a former president of Mymensingh district Awami League.

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

Dr Ambrose Davis

Dr Ambrose Davis, a retired dean of Foreign Students Admissions, University of Pennsylvania, passed away on September 30 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, says a press release.

He left behind his wife Najma, daughter Kaya, family and many friends to mourn his death.

Mostuba Tehjibul Arif Tipu



Mostuba Tehjibul Arif Tipu, an architect and freedom fighter, passed away at the Metropolitan Hospital in the city yesterday following a brain operation at the age of 56, says a press release.

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

Tipu was buried at the Azimpur graveyard after his second namaz-e-janaza at Azimpur Jame Mosque in the city.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held at Kathal Bagh Jame Mosque at Mirpur in the city.

His qukhwan will be held at Hossain Road-3a Block-D, Mirpur-2 in the city today.

Tipu suffered a serious head injury in a road accident on September 20.

Kazi Anwara Begum

BSS, Dhaka

Kazi Anwara Begum, mother of founder joint convener of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal Khorsheed Alam, passed away due to kidney failure yesterday at the age of 68.

She left behind her two sons and two daughters to mourn her death.

She will be buried today at Banani graveyard after the arrival of her younger son from Canada.

Death anniversary



Today is the 4th death anniversary of Alhaj Mohammed Hashem, former Member of Constituent Assembly (MCA) and freedom fighter, says a press release.

Doa and milad mahfil will be arranged to mark his death anniversary by the madrasa he founded at Muchagara in Comilla and also at his residence at Green Road in the city.

Comrade Tafazzul Hossain

Today is the first death anniversary of Comrade Tafazzul Hossain, president of Gonotantrik Mojdoor Party, says a press release.

He was also the president of Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik Federation.

On the occasion, Mojdoor Party leaders would pay tribute to his memory at his graveyard at Hajiganj in Chandpur at 8:00am. A discussion will also be held at Moni Singh-Ford Memorial Trust Building at 2:00pm.

Sheikh Alema Khatun



Today is the 8th death anniversary of Sheikh Alema Khatun, former chairperson of 'Solidarity Bangladesh', a voluntary organisation, says a press release.

On the occasion, Quankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at Nalkura in Sakthira and in Dhaka. Foods will also be distributed among the destitute.

The organisation will also provide financial assistance for distressed women and award scholarships to the students.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar
Centre for Health, Population and Development of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) organises a seminar on 'Tracking progress in health MDGs: Addressing inequalities'. Venue: Library building, IUB. Time: 2:00pm.

Documentary launching
Save the Children Sweden Denmark and Together with Working Children jointly will launch a video documentary 'Sromojibi Shishuder Shathe Amra'. Venue: LGED conference room. Time: 9:00am.

Reception
UCC Group will accord a reception to GPA-5 achievers in HSC examination 2007. Venue: Engineers Institute auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Discussion
Swadhinata Sangsad will organise a

discussion on enlighten society and education. Venue: Pesta Restaurant, Kakrail. Time: 4:00pm.

Award giving
Gandhi Peace Award giving ceremony organised by Mhahatma Gandhi Research Council will be held. Venue: China-Bangladesh Friendship Conference Centre. Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion
Jatiya Ganatantrik Shakti organises a discussion on 'One eleven: present day perspective and responsibilities'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion
Bhashani Nap organises a discussion on 'Maulana Bhashani and today's Bangladesh'. Venue: Dhaka Taxes Bar Association hall. Time: 4:30pm.