

Charter of Saarc Dev Fund to be signed at Colombo summit

South Asian University to open by 2009

UNB, Dhaka

The charter of Saarc Development Fund (SDF) will be signed at the upcoming summit of the forum in Colombo on August 2-3 while the South Asian University in New Delhi will start operation by 2009.

Visiting South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Secretary General Dr Sheel Kant Sharma apprised Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed of the matters when he paid a courtesy call on the CA at his office in the city.

The chief adviser wanted to know the implementation status of various decisions taken at the last Saarc summit in New Delhi in April

2007.

The Saarc secretary general said the SDF charter and bylaws are "almost in the stage of finalisation". As the CA wanted to know about Saarc Food Bank, Dr Sharma said the Saarc Secretariat is following it up. Two member-countries, including Bangladesh, have already ratified it.

On energy, water and environment issues that were endorsed by the last summit, the secretary general said, "A study on energy trade is being carried out by ADB which would be completed in December."

On water, he said the water issue, particularly in relation to

agricultural field, is also being followed up.

"Projects should be quickly shifted into implementation," the CA said.

He emphasised time-bound implementation-oriented action to meet the expectation of the people of the region and the Saarc "should be people-centric for meaningful cooperation".

He said Bangladesh attaches high importance to the regional cooperation in South Asia and considers Saarc as catalyst for regional cooperation, according to CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim, who was present at the meeting.

Two fallen Bangladeshi peacekeepers get UN award

BSS, Dhaka

The United Nations (UN) has awarded 'Dag Hammarskjöld Medal' to 90 fallen peacekeepers from 42 countries in the world, including two from Bangladesh.

The troops lost their lives while serving in the UN peacekeeping missions in 2007, says an ISPR press release yesterday.

The medals were distributed by Under-Secretary General of the UN Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guehenno at the Dag Hammarskjöld auditorium of the UN headquarters in New York on May 30.

Defence Adviser of Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN Brig Gen Ilyas Iftikhar Rasul received the medals on behalf of Captain Md Razibul Kabir and Sainik Md Shahab Uddin, who died while performing their duties in UN peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Democratic Republic of Congo respectively.

While handing over the medals to the Bangladesh representative, Guehenno highly praised the performance of Bangladeshi officers and men and thanked the country for its active support in the peacekeeping operations.

In response, Brig Gen Ilyas assured him of Bangladesh's continuous support and cooperation to the UN peacekeeping operations.

In his statement, the under-secretary general said these brave individuals lost their lives during deployment at some of the most dangerous places in the world.

On the occasion of the International Day of UN Peacekeepers on May 29, a wreath-laying ceremony took place in the UN headquarters honouring the fallen peacekeepers.

A poster was also published showing a Bangladeshi soldier on duty in Congo, which reflects the true recognition of the country's contribution to the UN peacekeeping operations.

In a statement marking the day, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said, "Peacekeeping has developed into a flagship enterprise of our organisation. Today, we have more than 110,000 men and women deployed in conflict zones around the world. They continue to nearly 120 countries -- an all-time high, reflecting confidence in UN peacekeeping."

Bangladesh is currently the world's second largest provider of troops and police to the UN with more than 9,000 serving in 14 peacekeeping operations, the release added.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) President Farooq Sobhan speaks at a roundtable on 'Saarc: Short window of opportunity' at BEI conference room in the city yesterday while Dr Sheel Kant Sharma, secretary general of Saarc, looks on. (Story on Page 16)

'Quality edn a must to develop skilled manpower'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed on ensuring quality education at the higher level at home and abroad to develop skilled manpower across the globe to keep pace with the competitive era.

There are a lot of institutions for higher education at private, public, national and international levels but questions have been raised on their excellence, they added.

University and Industry Alliance (U&I Alliance), a centre for delivering high-quality management and educational consulting services at Dhaka University (DU), organised the seminar on 'Academic governance: Quality assurance and collegiality' at the senate building.

DU Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof SMA Faiz was present at the function as the chief guest, while Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Waliur Rahman Bhuiyan was present as the special guest with U&I Alliance President Prof GM Chowdhury in the chair.

Deputy VC of Central Queensland University in Australia Prof Angela C Delves presented a keynote paper at the seminar.

She upheld various components of quality assurance in higher education and an overview of academic governance at the universities in Australia.

BARISAL GRUESOME MURDERS Shahjahan confesses to his involvement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Shahjahan Siraj Bairagi, brother of Tanjila Begum who along with her four daughters was slaughtered on Monday night, has confessed that the murder plan was worked out to trap his rival group over a land dispute.

"The plan, which was chalked out three days before the incident, was designed to kill one, but the hired goons killed five members incidentally," said Shahjahan, also a former police officer, in presence of high officials, relatives and locals yesterday.

On Monday night, some unknown assailants killed Tanjila and her four daughters Anjuman Ara, Sathi, Jannatul and Ferdousi by slitting their throats.

The gruesome murder took place at Khalisha village under Bahanchar union of Mehendiganj upazila in Barisal.

Tanjila's one and a half year-old daughter Saragika however was unharmed.

Barisal Police Super Tawfiq Mahbub Chowdhury said the deputy inspector general of police of Barisal range, police commissioner and other officials visited the spot yesterday and talked to the local residents about the murder.

Tanjila's two brothers Shahjahan Siraj Bairagi and Shahidul Islam Bairagi, arrested on

suspicion of being involved in the murder, were also taken to the spot.

In presence of everyone, Shahjahan said he could not subdue his rivals, rather, they became more arrogant after police had arrested three of the rival group.

To implicate them in a case, Shahjahan said, he chalked out the plan at Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital where he along with his neighbour Sultan Kha and his son Samir went to see one of their patients.

According to the plan Tanjila's eldest daughter Anjuman Ara, who was a mentally challenged girl, was supposed to be killed alone, he said, adding that he could not understand how the five were killed.

Shahidul also admitted that he had a discussion with his brother regarding the murder and forbade him, but he did not pay any heed to him, said the police.

Jahangir Hossain, a night guard (chokidar), filed a murder case with Mehendiganj Police Station.

Meanwhile, police wanted to talk to Tanjila's husband Jahangir Hossain, who arrived here on Tuesday evening from Dhaka, but could not as he was quite upset both physically and mentally.

The five bodies were not taken back to the village after being postmortemmed in the hospital as of yesterday afternoon.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Awami League acting General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam speaks at a meeting of Jubo League at the party office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday.

Jamaat to take part in local govt polls on condition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday said they will participate in the local government election if their five-point demand, including release of its chief Matiur Rahman Nizami and BNP Chairperson Khaleida Zia, is met.

They said this at the meeting of Majlis-e-Shura, the highest policymaking body of Jamaat, in the city.

"We have decided to take part in the local body election if the caretaker government fulfils our five-point demand," said Assistant Secretary General Mohammad Kamaruzzaman.

The four-party alliance wants to take part in the election, but the government will have to meet the demands of the alliance, says a press release of Jamaat, adding that the government will have to create a pro-election environment.

Brac seminar on health rights and litigation

An interactive seminar on 'Strengthening health rights through litigation' was held at Brac Centre Inn in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Human rights activist Dr Vineeta Gupta was present at the seminar as the guest speaker, which was hosted by Brac Human Rights and Legal Services (HRLS).

The speakers at the seminar highlighted some cases from the selected countries around the world where litigation has worked and how health rights challenges were addressed.

They underscored the need for people's access to healthcare services and explored the potentials of using legal strategies to advance health rights in Bangladesh.

Dr Vineeta Gupta stressed on providing healthcare facilities and proper education to the children while sharing her experiences in investigating and litigating human rights cases.

HRLS Director Dr Faustina Pereira expressed hope that concerted efforts would be made in the country to tackle these issues, which would require close cooperation among legal aid providers, health and law practitioners, regulatory authorities, media and academics.

A diverse audience, including senior officials of Brac, human and health rights activists, Supreme Court advocates, doctors, academics and researchers were present at the seminar.

Trader shot, robbed of Tk 1.5 lakh in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of muggers took away Tk 1.50 lakh from the owner of a money exchange after shooting and injuring him in the city's Sutrapura area last night.

The victim, Mohammad Nasiruddin, owner of 'Welcome Money Exchange' at Dilkusha Commercial Area, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with bullet wounds in the abdomen and right thigh.

The police said four muggers riding on two motorbikes intercepted Nasir at around 7:30pm when he was going to his home at Banianagar by a rickshaw.

The gang then demanded the handbag Nasir was carrying with him. As he refused to comply, the muggers fired gunshots at him and fled away with the handbag containing the money.

However, none was arrested in this connection.

In another incident, muggers took away Tk 11,800 from a trader after stabbing him in Mirpur yesterday evening.

The victim, Saiful Islam, 50, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The muggers stabbed Saiful in different parts of his body and snatched his money at around 6:00pm.



PHOTO: STAR

Dr Faustina Pereira, director of Brac Human Rights and Legal Services, speaks at a seminar on 'Health rights and litigation' at Brac Centre Inn in the city yesterday while Dr Vineeta Gupta looks on.



Heavy rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy rainfalls are also likely at places over Chittagong, Rajshahi Dhaka, Khulna and Barisal divisions, Met Office said, predicting that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 33.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 23.3 degrees at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:16am tomorrow.

The 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	30.4	25.4	87	90
Chittagong	26.5	24.5	97	98
Rajshahi	31.9	25.0	97	85
Khulna	30.6	25.5	84	95
Barisal	33.0	24.8	82	95
Sylhet	31.0	25.4	86	88
Cox's Bazar	26.7	24.4	97	96



Justice Tafazzal new chair of Judicial Service Commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Justice Md Tafazzal Islam, a judge of the Appellate Division, has been appointed chairman of Bangladesh Judicial Service Commission recently, says a press release.

The position fell vacant after immediate past chairman Justice MM Ruhul Amin was appointed chief justice.

Justice Tafazzal Islam was born in Comilla in 1943. A graduate from Dhaka University, he obtained Bar-at-Law from London's Lincolns Inn in 1967 and started practicing law in the High Court.

Two suspected thieves stabbed to death

UNB, Gopalganj

Two alleged thieves were stabbed to death at Barni village under Tungpara upazila early yesterday.

The dead were identified as Yar Ali, 40, son of Mobarak Ali and Awlad Biswas, 45, son on Bayelut Biswas of the village.

Police said the two thieves broke into Binoy Majhi's house at about 4:00am and started stealing valuables.

Binoy's wife woke up sensing the presence of the thieves and cried for help. Hearing scream, locals rushed to the spot and caught the thieves.

They beat up the thieves and stabbed them, resulting in death of the two on the spot.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal brings out a procession on the Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding release of BNP Chairperson Khaleida Zia.

2 more CAAB staffs held for helping smugglers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police yesterday arrested two more employees of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) on charges of helping the smugglers take electronics goods out of Zia International Airport through green channel on June 22.

The arrestees are identified as lounge room attendants Abdul Mannan and Faizur Islam.

On June 23, the police arrested CAAB security guards Golam Kibria and Salauddin Ahmed on the same charges.

Customs sources said detective branch (DB) of police identified them from the footage of the closed-circuit television (CCTV) set up at the Green Channel.

On June 17, the customs officials seized four luggage containing mobile phone sets and various other electronics goods worth about Tk one crore.

The footage showed that the arrested CAAB employees helped the smugglers take the goods out of the airport, the customs officials said.

However, the smugglers could not be identified.

COMPENSATION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS Campaign to begin on July 10

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to creating awareness among the youths to realise the compensation for climate change effects, Nagorik Sanghati (NS), a citizens' forum, has arranged a six-month-long campaign in educational institutions.

The campaign, starting on July 10, includes mass signature collection, seminars, human chains, and publication of wall magazines.

The signatures will be submitted to the government and the embassies of G-8 countries.

The NS announced the programme at a press conference at the Dhaka University Journalists Association office on the campus yesterday.

In a written statement, NS General Secretary Sharifuzzaman Sharif said the developed countries are mostly responsible for natural calamities due to climate change caused by the emission of greenhouse gas.

"So they should compensate us as we are the worst sufferers of climate change and the youth of the country should raise their voice in realising the compensation," he added.

"We are launching the campaign to create this awareness among the youths of the country," Sharif said.

The NS will form human chain in Dhaka on August 1 to urge the Saarc countries to place the compensation issue before the international community by including it in the Saarc declaration.

Besides, seminars will be held at the divisional headquarters in October, and photography exhibition in November commemorating the victims of cyclone Sidr.

NS President ASM Atiq said, "The issue of climate change was so long confined only to academics and intellectuals, but we now want to spread the issue to common people of the country."

"We also urge all political parties to include the compensation issue in their election manifestoes," he added.

The NS also demanded allocation of more funds to meet the effects of climate change.

Chairman of geography and environment department of Dhaka University AQM Mahabub and Prof Mokaddem Hossain of sociology department were also present at the press conference.

Youth beaten to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered the body of a youth from the rooftop of a building at Kotwali in old part of the city 10 hours after two youths called him out of his residence at Mahutuli in the area on Tuesday night.

Police said the victim, Lutfar Rahman Shyamol, was first beaten severely and then thrown on the roof of the one-storey building from the rooftop of another nearby five-storey building.

Lutfar's brother-in-law Mohammad Masum told The Daily Star over phone that Lutfar went out of their residence at around 9:00pm with the youths after they told him that one Daud, owner of a hardware shop at Nawabpur, had asked him to meet him.

Smuggled parts of fax machines seized at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A surveillance team seized parts of fax machines worth Tk 2.50 lakh at Zia International Airport (ZIA) in the city yesterday as they were smuggled in from Singapore.

Customs sources said they found the parts inside a television carton during the scanning at the Green Channel at about 7:00am.

The passenger who brought the machine parts illegally was given a detention memorandum.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Md Abdul Jalil, former member of the parliament from Haluaghat constituency in Mymensingh, passed away due to old age complications at his residence at Haluaghat upazila yesterday at the age of 95.

He left behind his 11 sons, five daughters and host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

He was buried at his village graveyard under Sadar upazila after two namaz-e-janasas -- one at Model High School ground in Haluaghat and another at his village home after Zohr prayers.

Moulid Bakht Chowdhury

Moulid Bakht Chowdhury, former official of United States Information Service (USIS), passed away yesterday at the age of 72, says a press release.

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

Death anniversary



Computer Jagat, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at Dhanmondi (Road-6, House-29) in the city.

Relatives and friends are requested to pray for his departed soul.

DHAKA TODAY

Media award

The 3rd ASF Media Award 2007 giving ceremony will be held. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Time: 4:30pm.

Roundtable

A roundtable on candidates for the local government elections and a website launching ceremony will be held. Sujon will organise the event. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:30am.

Seminar

The Royal Thai Embassy organises a seminar on 'Flying SME's to Thai suppliers'. Venue: The Westin. Time: 9:00am.

Award giving ceremony

Moulana Bhasani Research Academy will accord a reception to eminent persons and hands over Moulana Bhasani Padak. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:30pm.

Education fair

The inaugural ceremony of the third Dhaka International Education Fair 2008 will be held. Venue: Bashundhara Expo Centre. Time: 11:00am. The fair will remain open till July 6 from 10:00am to 8:00pm everyday.

Exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of a solo exhibition titled 'Labyrinth of abstraction' will be held. Alliance Francaise de Dacca organises the event. Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dacca. Time: 6:00pm. The exhibition will remain open till July 16 from 5:00pm to 8:00pm everyday.