

EXHIBITION ON WHALES AND DOLPHINS BEGINS

'Save rare mammals of cetacean diversity'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dolphins have long been living in many of the rivers across the country, but the matter of sorrow is that the mammals, especially known for their intelligence, are not very familiar to the local people.

The presence of this rare animal called "Shushuk" in Bangladesh, of which the countrymen should be proud, however, is declining rapidly because of serious pollution in the rivers and killing due to lack of public awareness on the species.

Though dolphins and whales live in the water, they come above water for breathing, have temperature similar to what human beings have, but feed milk to their babies in water, said cetacean experts during the official opening of a first ever Dolphin Exhibition at Bangladesh Shishu Academy in the city yesterday.

The four-day exhibition titled "Introducing whales and dolphins of Bangladesh" is being organised by Bangladesh Cetacean Diversity Project (BCDP) and sponsored by the Wildlife Conservation Society, a US-based NGO.

The exhibition, which opens from 9:30am to 8:30pm, includes photographs, films and games of whales and dolphins to create the feeling of pride in the visitors so that they come forward to help conserve the rare mammals of the country.

BCDP will also present the proposed "Protected Area Network for Cetacean Diversity," the goal of which is to conserve cetacean diversity in the country. Parallel to

the exhibition, a series of seminar will also be held focusing on research and conservation efforts carried out in the country so far.

The most well-known dolphins in the country are the Ganges River Dolphins who have extraordinary long snouts, tiny dorsal fins and large flippers. They live throughout the Padma, Meghna, Jamuna, Karnaphuli and Sangu rivers.

Irrawaddy dolphins are found in rivers and in coastal waters that receive freshwater from rivers. They share habitat with the Gangetic dolphins in the waterways of the Sundarbans mangrove forest.

Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins and finless porpoises are occasional visitors to the mangrove forest but they live mostly in open coastal waters that receive freshwater flows from the Padma, Meghna and Jamuna rivers.

Spinner dolphins, Dan Tropical spotted dolphins and Omdo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins are also the species living in the sea areas of the country. But, all these are today endangered.

Elizabeth Mansur of BCDP said, "Man needs fish to get protein and dolphins and whales also need the same. But, when they got caught in fishing nets, they cannot breathe and consequently die. If we continue to kill them, these beautiful animals will extinct soon."

The good news for Bangladesh, however, is that a study identified a 120-kilometre belt of estuarine, coastal and pelagic waters in Bangladesh that extends across the Sundarbans and offshore to a 900-plus metre deep undersea canyon

as a hotspot of global cetacean diversity and abundance.

"This means the rivers and coastal river bodies are used as various species of dolphins, and even whales. The number of them is even more than that of the other Asian countries," according to a paper distributed to newsmen at the programme.

"I had an idea of setting up a dolphin corner in Dhaka Zoo, but later I was later convinced that it is such an animal that should be left in its own habitat -- the rivers and the sea," said Water Resources Adviser Dr CS Karim, while speaking as the chief guest at the programme.

Dr Karim said he saw many dolphins in the rivers in his childhood, but now they are almost out of sight. "We can get back the dolphins if we can take some efforts to conserve them," he said.

According to a documentary film by Tanzilur Rahman, the number of dolphins decreased seriously in the last one and a half decades because of pollution in the rivers.

"Presence of the dolphins indicates the lives of the rivers," said Prof AKM Aminul Haque, former vice chancellor of Bangladesh Agriculture University, who first conducted researches on cetaceans in the country.

BCDP Programme Director Brian D Smith said, "Dolphins and whales are important for our existence. There will be both fish for human being and the mammals if the rivers are kept alive. So, we should take care of the dolphins and whales of Bangladesh."

Man dies after taking milk, pineapple at a time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man died yesterday after drinking milk and eating pineapple at the same time at a wedding ceremony after betting with his friends at Kamrangirchar in the city.

The deceased was identified as Nannu Sheikh, 28, a shop owner at West Rasulpur at Kamrangirchar.

Family members said the victim was also drunk at the wedding party.

Quoting her husband before death, Eti Akter said he drank at the wedding of his neighbour Nur Hossain and then bet with his friends that he would drink milk and take pineapple at the same time.

According to the bet, he was forced to eat pineapple and drink milk. Just after 15 minutes, he felt sick and died on way to the hospital at around 2:30am.

Police said the body of Nannu was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue to find out the causes behind his death.

Meanwhile, a rickshaw van driver in Munshiganj drank pesticide and succumbed to his poisoning at DMCH.

The deceased was identified as Monir Hossain, 40.

Momtaz Begum, wife of the victim, said he drank pesticide on Wednesday at 1:30pm after beating his son a class-1 student Antor, who did not study properly, which made Monir angry.

Restore CCC image

Mayor Mohiuddin urges councillors

DU CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, who was released on bail on Wednesday from the prison cell of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), held a meeting with the councillors of the corporation in the capital yesterday to know the overall situation of the corporation.

Sources said the meeting was held in a BSMMU room although the venue for the meeting was earlier fixed at resthouse at Tophkana Road.

Around 35 councillors took part in the meeting. Sources said the councillors received emergency call over phone from Mohiuddin on Wednesday night to join the meeting.

Acting mayor M Manjur Alam and some other councillors could not attend the meeting due to their scheduled programmes of Durga Puja, the sources added.

Mohiuddin nominated Manjur as the acting mayor when he was last arrested.

At the meeting Mohiuddin called on the councillors to work unitedly to restore, what he said, the lost image of the corporation.

Paturia-Kazirhat ferry service resumes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Paturia-Kazirhat ferry service will resume today for facilitating communication in the North Bengal, a press release of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) said.

Two ferries will operate in the route regularly. The ferries will leave Paturia for Kazirhat at 8:00am, 12:00noon and 6:00pm and leave Kazirhat for Paturia at 11:00am, 3:00pm and 9:00pm everyday.

Qulkhwani

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Qulkhwani of advocate Mohammad Ali, former member of Manikganj Bar Association, will be held at his village home at Susunda under Sadar upazila in Manikganj today after Juma prayers.

He was also the former project implementation officer (PIO) of the government.

Family members of the deceased have requested family friends and relatives to join the programme and pray for the salvation of the departed soul and ask Allah to grant him eternal peace in the afterlife.

Ali passed away at a city hospital on August 16 at the age of 70.

Afzal Hossain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Qulkhwani of Afzal Hossain, an expatriate businessman, will be held at his village home at Demra today after Asr prayers, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the programme to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Afzal Hossain, son of late Ekhlas Uddin Khan, of Amulia village at Demra, passed away at his residence in New York in the US on October 1.



University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam speaks at a press conference on an exhibition of artworks by noted artist Abdur Razzaque at Bengal Shilpalaya in the city yesterday. On his right is Director General of the foundation Luva Nahid Chowdhury and on his left are the artist's wife Mushtari Begum, Director of Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts Subir Chowdhury and the artist's son Asif Ahmed.

Germany wants peaceful transition to democracy

UNB, Dhaka

German Ambassador Frank Meyke has said his country wishes Bangladesh a peaceful and successful transition to parliamentary government in December as general election here is scheduled for this month.

"We will expect and hope that the elections will ensure sustainable democracy for Bangladesh, free from confrontational politics of the past," he said at a reception of the Day of German Unity at a local hotel yesterday.

Meyke hoped that political parties would successfully work together for a stable, democratic and prosperous

Bangladesh, and Germany would continue to be a reliable partner on this way.

Commerce and Education Adviser Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman was the guest of honour at the reception largely attended by politicians, diplomats, businessmen, editors, academics, high officials and the elite of the city.

The European diplomat said democracy and human rights are core values for the Germans and the people of Bangladesh alike and these values form the foundation of Bangladesh-Germany relations, which he said are expanding.

On the economic front, he said

German Trade Show would take place in Dhaka November 5-8. He said the Germany-Bangladesh trade volume increased by 16 percent in the first seven months of 2008.

The Ambassador said last year German shipping companies ordered 10 ships worth US\$150 million to be built by Bangladesh shipyards.

Within next few days, he said, a second order of another 10 ships is in the pipeline.

Meyke said he would soon put forward comprehensive proposals to the Bangladesh government for expanding links between German and Bangladesh schools and their students.

Four muggers beaten up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four muggers received beating from a mob when they were trying to flee after stabbing and snatching a taxi driver at Mirpur in the city on Wednesday night.

Police said local people at Ahmednagar Paikpara caught the muggers red-handed when they along with another associate were trying to flee with the cab after stabbing its driver Babul Hossain.

The locals then handed over them to the local police. The arrestees were identified as Shaheen, Shamim, Babul and Jumman.

Police said the muggers board the cab as passengers from Mirpur 1 at around 11:00pm and tried to snatch the cab when they arrived in Paikpara area.

Two cases were filed with Mirpur Police Station in this connection.

Road crashes kill 4

METRO DESK

Four people were killed and 17 others injured in separate road accidents in Mymensingh and Munshiganj yesterday.

Our correspondent in Mymensingh reports: Two people were killed and 15 others injured in two separate road accidents at Tarakanda and Gouripur in Mymensingh yesterday.

A Tarakanda-bound human hauler from Dhubaura lost control on Tarakanda-Dhubaura road at Guatala Bazar and fell into a roadside ditch at about 10:15am, injuring six.

Critically injured Salim, 21, succumbed to his injuries on the way to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH).

In another accident Mokbul Hossain, 24, died on the spot when a Mymensingh-bound passenger bus from Gouripur skidded off and fell into a roadside ditch at 12:00noon.

Ten people were also injured in the accident.

The bodies were sent to MMCH morgue for autopsy.

A correspondent in Munshiganj adds: Two people were killed and two others injured in separate road accidents in Munshiganj yesterday.

Masud, 16, a helper of a truck died on the spot after falling from a running truck at Isapur in Sirajdikhan upazila early in the morning.

In another accident, Snigdha, 7, was crushed under the wheels of a bus while getting down from the vehicle with her mother Roksana on Digheerpar road in Tongbari upazila at noon.

Meanwhile, two people were seriously injured as a Dhaka-bound bus from Khulna lost control and drove into a roadside fish depot at Srinagar upazila on Dhaka-Mawa highway in the early hours of yesterday.

AL to keep associated organisations

FROM PAGE 1

The central working committee of the party - its highest decision making body - will sit at party chief Sheikh Hasina's political office in Dhanmondi on Saturday to bring the amendments in a bid to get registered with the Election Commission (EC).

"The associated organisations must stay with the Awami League and there is no scope for misunderstanding because these organisations are the party's heritage," acting AL President Zillur Rahman said last night.

The working committee will, however, take decision on the matter, he told reporters after a meeting with all of the party's associated bodies at his Gulshan residence.

The AL meanwhile filled in the EC registration form yesterday. The form will be submitted to the EC along with a resolution of the meeting of the working committee.

AL sources said the meeting would also discuss the party's election manifesto, election preparation and campaign, and formation of the grand electoral alliance, among others.

They said the central working committee would take a resolution not to sever links with its associated organisations and urge the EC to amend the rules related to the matter in the Representation of the People Order (RPO).

"We will obviously amend some of the clauses in our constitution for registration," said acting AL General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam, adding that the amendments would be brought after an intense discussion at the working committee's meeting.

Replying to a query, he said getting registered in line with the

RPO rules would not reduce Hasina's power.

AL Organising Secretary Abdul Mannan said, "We will take a resolution at the meeting to keep the associated organisations in the party constitution and the resolution will be sent to the Election Commission along with the application form."

While talking to reporters after a meeting in Dhanmondi office, Syed Ashraf said keeping of the associated organisations in the party constitution, giving party nominations based on recommendations from the party's grassroots level leaders and fulfilling 33 percent quota for women, among other issues, would get priority at the working committee meeting.

Asked about his earlier speech that they would cut links with the associated organisations, Ashraf said they told the EC that the associated organisations would exist and their names would be present in the party constitution and that the EC accepted their demand.

Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda said on Wednesday that political parties do not need to completely sever ties with all front or associated organisations to meet the registration criteria.

"Only dissolve the organisations formed with students, teachers and labourers in the party constitution and make separate rules and by-laws, if necessary, regarding these bodies," Huda said.

According to clause 27(c) of the AL constitution, nominations have to be given by the party's Parliamentary Board on the basis of recommendations of district, upazila or thana level executive committees. After amending the

constitution their recommendations would get more priority.

"We have reviewed the nominations of the stalled January 22 parliamentary election and two other previous polls. We are also receiving suggestions from the grassroots level leaders and their recommendations would be given importance while selecting candidates this year," said Ashraf.

Meanwhile, AL Advisory Council member HT Imam told The Daily Star that the party's election manifesto would be completed by this month.

Ashraf said food autarky, bringing essentials' prices within people's reach, improvement of law and order, continuing anti-corruption drive, creating employment, and increasing local and international investment, among other important issues, would be incorporated in the manifesto.

Urging the government and the EC to ensure participation of all political parties in the upcoming parliamentary election, he also pledged to reinstate the 1972 constitution if voted to power with two-thirds majority.

If any political party shows reluctance in taking part in the election and getting registered with the EC, the government and the EC should find out the reasons and solve those through discussion, he said, expressing interest to hold dialogues with both the EC and the government to resolve any crisis created before the election.

Ashraf said there is no need to keep the state of emergency in force during the election as the existing law enforcement agencies are enough to maintain law and order.

Homage paid to Comrade Farhad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 21st death anniversary of Comrade Mohammad Farhad, freedom fighter and former general secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), was observed with due respect in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Comrade Farhad, also a former lawmaker, died on October 9 in 1987 at Moscow at the age of 49.

CPB and other socio-political organisations placed wreaths at his grave at Banani in the city at 7:30am.

CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan, General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim, central committee members Mahub Alam, Ruhin Hossain Prince, Ahsan Habib Lablu, Kafi Rahman and its Jatiya Parishad member Jayed Al Malum were present wreath placing programme.

Besides, General Secretary Sohel Ahmed of Bangladesh Land Workers' Association, General Secretary Hasan Hafizur Rahman Sohel of Bangladesh Juba Union and leaders of some organisations, including Bangladesh Krishak Samity and Bangladesh Chhatra Union, paid homage to the memory of Comrade Farhad.

A milad mahfil was held at the Azimpur Colony residence in the city.

To mark the day, CPB will hold a discussion at its office in the city at 5:00pm today.

Born in Dinajpur in 1938, Farhad played a vital role during different movements in the country, including the Language Movement, Education Movement in 1962, Mass Uprising of 1969, liberation war and the anti-autocratic movement.

During his 35-year long political life, he had suffered a lot for the sake of humanity. During the Pakistani regime and the reign of Zia and Ershad, he was put behind the bar on several occasions.

He was one of masterminds of the special guerrilla forces jointly formed by the Communist Party, NAP and Chhatra Union during the liberation war.

Murtaza Reza Chy

METRO DESK

Today is the 50th death anniversary of Murtaza Reza Chowdhury, former member of Pakistan legislative assembly, says a press release.

He was also the state minister for finance and deputy high commissioner of Pakistan to Kolkata.

Sons, daughters, grandchildren and great grandchildren of Murtaza have requested family friends and relatives to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Dr Md Tawhidul Anwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 8th death anniversary of Dr Md Tawhidul Anwar, former professor of Mass Communication and Journalism department at Dhaka University, says a press release.

He was also an ex-director general of the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB).

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at DU central mosque after Juma prayers today.

Relatives, friends, colleagues and students are requested to attend the milad to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Dr Mosharef Hossain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 1st death anniversary of Dr Mosharef Hossain, father of AIM Golam Kibria, acting chairman of planning of RAJUK, says a press release.

A milad mahfil will be held at his son's Azimpur residence in the city after Asr prayers to mark the day.

Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the programme to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Obituary

METRO DESK

Merina Yasmin, younger sister of Dr Aminul Islam, chief orthopedic surgeon of United Hospital, died of liver cancer recently at the age of 44, said a press release.

She left behind her mother, five brothers and two sisters to mourn her death.

Her kulkhwani was held at her Kalyanpur residence after Asr prayers yesterday.

Trader shot dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A trader was shot dead in the city's Mirpur area last night.

The victim was identified as Mohammad Imon, 30, a Jhut (garment wasteage cloth) trader.

Local people said several assailants sprayed bullets on Imon at about 7:30pm near the Sony Cinema Hall at Mirpur-4.

They rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead at 10:00pm.

Police sources said Imon was killed over the garments wasteage trading in his area.

None was arrested in this connection till filing this report at 12:10am today.

Kulaura BNP expels Ebadur

UNB, Sylhet

BNP reformist leader Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury was expelled from the party yesterday.

Kulaura unit of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) at a meeting adopted a resolution expelling Ebadur, former state minister, for his activities against the interest of the party.

The meeting also recommended to the district and central committee to take disciplinary measures against Ebadur Rahman.

Papia returns from hiding

OUR CORRESPONDENT, C'ganj

Chapainawabganj Sadar upazila BNP President Syeda Ashifa Ashraf Papia returned to her Pathanpara residence with motorcades yesterday after absconding for about 18 months to avoid arrest in an extortion case.

Although she was escorted by party leaders and activists, police said emergency was not violated.

Following her return, Papia, wife of former lawmaker Harunur Rashid Harun, addressed party leaders and activists.

ANSAR ADJUTANT MURDER

6 suspected killers arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six suspected killers were arrested in connection with the murder of Assistant Adjutant of Ansar Nasirullah Khan, police said at a press conference.

Detective Branch (DB) of Police organised the press conference at its office in the city yesterday.

The arrestees are Razul Karim, 26, Abdus Salam, 55, Sheikh Abu, Rahman Khan, 35, Nurul Alam alias Nura Dacoi and Golam Mostafa, 37. Police said the murder of Nasirullah occurred in an act of robbery on September 27 at Uttar Khan in the city.

Train derails in Jamalpur

UNB, Jamalpur

Train communications on the Jamalpur-Mymensingh route remained snapped for hours as a freight train derailed at Piarpur railway station here yesterday.

Railway sources said the engine of the Jamalpur-bound 'Jamalpur Special Goods Train' veered off the tracks at about 10:00am at the down point of Piarpur station.

On information, a relief train from Mymensingh reached the spot to remove the engine from the track.

"Rail communications on the route could resume at 4:00pm," said a railway source.

Four trains, including inter-district Teesta and Brahmaputra expresses, got stranded on both sides, causing suffering to thousand of passengers.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

Highest temperature 34.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and Patuakhali and lowest 22.5 degrees Celsius at Rangamati.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:36pm today and rises at 5:54am 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	31.9	23.0	95	85
Chittagong	30.2	24.6	80	85
Rajshahi	32.2	23.9	87	87
Khulna	33.8	26.5	84	77
Barisal	32.6	26.0	84	87
Sylhet	27.8	23.2	98	87
Cox's Bazar	3			