

# FM calls for demand-driven regional projects

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday stressed the need for demand-driven and time-bound regional and sub-regional projects for implementation.

She also called for rationalisation of SAFTA sensitive lists and dismantling of non-tariff and para-tariff trade barriers and a balanced focus on mitigation as well as adaptation as the region meets the challenges of climate change.

Dipu said this while participating in the discussions at the 32nd session of the Saarc Council of Ministers in Thimphu, Bhutan, said a press release.

She underscored the need for harmonisation of educational curricula and mutual recognition of degrees among the Saarc countries.

The Bangladesh delegation attached high priority to food security, poverty

alleviation, environment and climate change, and education while maintaining focus on trade, energy and connectivity.

In the context of inclusive and democratic governments representing truly the peoples, she said Bangladesh floated the idea of a Saarc Charter of Democracy to underline the relevance of a regional support for democracy and democratic practices.

The country also floated the idea of a Regional Bank.

The Declaration of the Sixteenth Saarc Summit has been finalised and a draft statement was adopted. A draft of a statement on climate change would be issued as 'Thimphu Statement on Climate Change'.

The summit statement articulates a collective determination to face the impacts of climate change and suggests numerous initiatives in the areas of environment and climate change.

The council approved all arrangements for full operationalisation of Saarc Development Fund (SDF) and endorsed the decision to declare the next decade as the Saarc Decade for Connectivity.

It also approved signing of the Saarc Agreement on Trade in Services and Saarc Convention on Cooperation on Environment and the Summit.

Earlier on Monday, the standing committee recommended the creation of a South Asia Forum for debate and exchange of ideas on South Asia and its future development.

It approved the rules and business plan for South Asian University and endorsed its plan to commence its academic session in August this year.

The committee also approved some projects, including trans-boundary animal diseases, food security, customs automation and energy connectivity.



A scuffle breaks out between toll collectors aided by ansar members and car drivers over car parking at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

# WTB to build 'Noazesh Knowledge Centre'

UNB, Dhaka

The trustees of Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh (WTB) in their 6th annual meeting recently decided to build a 'Noazesh Knowledge Centre' this year.

Dr Noazesh Ahmed, an eminent naturalist and photographer who died on November 24 in 2009, was the founder vice chairman of WTB.

The Knowledge Centre will be first data bank on the status, distribution and history of the country's natural resources. It will be situated at WTB's Cosmos Centre office at Malibagh in the city.

It will be opened to the researchers, educators and students soon.

WTB members re-elected Enayetullah Khan as its chairman.

Enam Ul Haque, Dr Md Abdur Razzaque Mia and Prof Md Anwarul Islam have been elected vice chairman, treasurer and general secretary (CEO), respectively.

# Body to probe death of 2 patients at NICVD

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A body was formed yesterday to probe two patients' deaths at National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases of Cardiac Diseases on early Monday that prompted demonstrations by their relatives on the NICVD premises.

The investigation committee headed by Prof Nasiruddin of surgery has been asked to submit the report within three days.

Prof Dr Abdul Khaleq Beg of anaesthesia, Dr Abdus Sabur of cardiac surgery and perfusionist Dr Bilkiy Banu are the other members of the committee.

The hospital sources said Md Quaium Bepari, 62, underwent bypass surgery under Dr Suneel Kumar Sarkar, an associate professor of cardiac surgery, and died around 2:30am on Monday.

One Nilufer aged around 50 who went through a valve replacement under the same surgeon also died half an hour later, sparking fury among the relatives of the patients.

They brought out a procession inside the hospital and pasted posters on its walls saying the deaths happened due to the negligence of the

doctor and demanded his punishment.

Talking to The Daily Star, NICVD Director Dr Abul Hossain Khan Chowdhury said, "The investigation committee will submit the report within three days and then we'll take steps accordingly."

Dr Abul Hossain also said the decision to dissolve four units of the institute has been halted.

Earlier on April 20, the director announced to dissolve four of its 12 units referring a verbal order of the health minister.

According to the announcement, four cardiology units were supposed to be merged with the others from May 1, which were headed by Prof Mahhub Ali, Associate Prof (in-charge) Nazir Ahmed Chowdhury, Associate Prof (in-charge) Gouranga Kumar Saha and Dr Md Nazrul Islam (in-charge).

However, it drew mixed reactions and on Sunday at a meeting at the health ministry with the health minister and leaders of Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad and Bangladesh Medical Association it was decided to cancel the previous decision, said the NICVD director.

# Bhutanese opposition leader meets Hasina

UNB, Thimphu

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said both ruling and opposition parties have to work for the betterment of a democratic country.

She made the remark when Bhutanese Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Tshering Tobgay called on the PM at Bangladesh House in Saarc Village.

She said democracy is the prerequisite for all developments of a country and for this coordination between the ruling and the opposition parties is essential.

Hasina said for their constructive role in democracy, the government party has to provide proper scope to the opposition party.

The PM said all parties in the Saarc region have to work together for eradicating poverty from this region, as poverty is the principal enemy of the region. She also emphasised strengthening democracy in this region.

Tshering Tobgay, who is the chairman of People's Democratic Party of Bhutan, praised the leadership of Sheikh Hasina.

# Zimbabwean DPM calls on Shirin Sharmin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputy Prime Minister of Zimbabwe Thokozani Thupe yesterday said her country would benefit from the good practices of Bangladesh in the area of economic and political empowerment of women.

She called on State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Shirin Sharmin Choudhury along with her nine-member team.

Thupe said women in Africa are lagging behind in general. Stressing equal distribution of wealth, she mentioned that only one percent of women in Africa have property by their names.

Shirin gave details of the activities of her ministry during the visit.

She said many women here in the country are emerging as entrepreneurs. Different banks are also boosting women with special loan services.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## FFs for trial of war criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Muktijuddha Sangsad at a rally yesterday demanded immediate trial of the war criminals.

They also said a vested quarter is hatching conspiracy against Muktijuddha Sangsad to make divisions among the freedom fighters.

Majid Ahmed Jalal, Joynal Abedin and Zafar Ullah Majumder were also present at the rally Presided over by Convener of Dhaka city unit command Abdur Rahim.

## BNP Barisal grand rally May 12

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP has undertaken an elaborate programme to make the May 12 grand rally of grassroots party leaders and activists in Barisal division a success.

The rally supposed to be addressed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will be a show-down for BNP after the Bhola-3 by-poll.

The grand rally preparatory committee at a meeting at the party's central office at Naya Paltan yesterday formed eight teams to organise meetings and rallies in eight organisational districts in Barisal division.

## BSBI executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Dr Syed Shamsuddin Ahmed of Dhaka Medical College Hospital and Dr Bijay Krishna Das have been made president and general secretary of the first executive committee of Bangladesh Society for Burn Injuries (BSBI), says a press release.

## History Assoc conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 16th biannual national conference of Bangladesh History Association will begin at Palli Unnayan Academy in Bogra tomorrow, says a press release.

Participated by 300 members from home and abroad, the programme will be inaugurated by Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid.

## City school celebrates new year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shining Stars International School, an English medium school at Uttara in the city, yesterday organised a colourful function as part of their programme to celebrate Pehela Baishakh, the first day of Bangla New Year.

The students and teachers rendered patriotic songs and recited poetry. They also staged a fashion show wearing traditional dresses while a pitha (cake) exhibition was also held.

School Principal Abdul Alim, Director (administration) Saiful Islam Azad and Director (academic) Hemayet Akbar Tipu also spoke.

## BNP protests renaming

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday condemned the renaming of Zia Fertiliser Industries Ltd.

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain in a statement said, "Wiping out the name of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman from different institutions bear testimony to the mean-mindedness of the government."

He urged the government to concentrate on fulfilling the election pledges instead of changing the names of different organisations.

# PILKHANA CARNAGE CASE

## Bail prayers of two accused rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected bail prayers of two accused including a Jatiyatbadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader in a case filed for the carnage at Pilkhana headquarters of BDR in February 2009.

Judge (in-charge) Mohammad Ismail Hossain of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order after JCD leader Mohammad Ullah Palash and one Arab Ali appealed against rejection orders by a lower court.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court had earlier rejected their bails on different dates saying that they were directly or indirectly involved with the carnage.

The Criminal Investigation Department, which is probing the case, arrested Palash, Hazaribagh JCD unit president, at his home on October 19 last year.

Palash was arrested for his alleged involvement in making provocative statements at a

procession against the government during the February 25-26 Pilkhana carnage.

The bloodbath that took place at Bangladesh Rifles headquarters on February 25-26 left a number of BDR high officials including its director general dead.

Earlier, former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu was arrested in this connection and later he was placed on remand for several days. He is now in jail and his bail was earlier rejected by the High Court.

Awami League leader Torab Ali was also arrested for allegedly helping the BDR mutineers. He later gave confessional statements.

A total of 2,284 BDR personnel and 34 civilians have been shown arrested for their alleged involvement in the incidents.

The CID has so far taken 2,267 border guards and civilians on remand and 539 have so far given confessional statements before magistrates.

# MPOs in a week: Nahid

UNB, Dhaka

The Monthly Pay Order (MPO) for the non-government schools, colleges and madrasa, cancelled during the 4-party alliance government, will be finalised within a week.

"This is being done in accordance with the rules and following transparency," Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said while addressing a function marking the distribution of Sher-e-Bangla memorial scholarships at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Nahid, however, requested the people concerned not to give bribes to the MPOs. "Don't give bribe to anybody for MPO," he said.

Barisal Kalyan Sangstha organised the function with its president Dr Abdul Latif in the chair.

Speaking as the chief guest, Nahid said Sher-e-Bangla was a vanguard of Bengali Muslim society's advancement during the undivided Bengal and it was through him that education made progress in this region.



The family members of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque offer munajat after placing wreaths at his mazar in the city yesterday.

# Sher-e-Bangla's anniversary of death observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 48th death anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque was observed in the city and elsewhere across the country in a befitting manner yesterday.

Different socio-political and cultural organisations observed the day with a number of programmes, including placing of wreaths at his mazar, doa mahfils and discussions.

Members of Sher-e-Bangla National Memorial Council placed wreaths at his mazar in the morning and organised a discussion there, says a press release.

Addressing the seminar, they proposed naming the Padma Multi-purpose Bridge after Sher-e-Bangla and establishing a library after his name.

Awami League president member Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Obaidul Kader, Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique and lawmaker AKM Mujammel Haque spoke at the function, among others.

# DHAKA TODAY

SEMINAR

The Civil Engineering Department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) and Caritas Bangladesh will jointly organise a seminar on global and local perspective of low-cost housing. Venue: Civil Engineering Building. Time: 8:30am.

ROUNDTABLE

ICT Development and Research Foundation organises a roundtable titled 'The role of media in establishing digital Bangladesh'. Venue: Bangladesh Computer Council. Time: 11:30am.

WORKSHOP

The inception workshop of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (Phase II) will be held. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 9:30am.

SEMINAR

The Institute of Microfinance and Save the Children UK will jointly organise a seminar titled 'Regional differences in poverty levels and trends in Bangladesh - Are we asking the right questions?' Venue: LGED auditorium. Time: 9:00am.

MEETING

Brac in association with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health will organise a special meeting titled 'Mothers and babies speak: Moving forward with lessons on maternal, newborn and child health'. Venue: Brac Centre Inn. Time: 10:00am.

WORKSHOP

Alliance for Women Workers Rights organises a workshop with trade unions on gender equality and sexual harassment at workplace. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 9:30am.

# JU senate polls tomorrow

A CORRESPONDENT, JU

The senate election of Jahangirnagar University (JU) will be held tomorrow.

A total of 450 voters will cast their votes in the election. The election will be held between 9:00am and 2:00pm without any break at JU Teachers' Club.

A total of 66 candidates are contesting against 33 posts from two panels of AL-backed Muktijuddher Swapakkher Shakti and the pro-BNP Democratic Nationalist Teachers' Forum.



# Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over all the six divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

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

The sun sets in the capital at 6:26pm today and rises at 5:27am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 36.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Mongla and lowest 18.4 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

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	33.7	21.8	58	61
Chittagong	31.8	24.0	72	71
Rajshahi	32.7	21.8	81	67
Khulna	35.0	21.0	61	59
Barisal	34.6	21.0	64	74
Sylhet	26.1	20.1	68	77
Cox's Bazar	35.0	24.5	58	63

# Safma concerned at adverse impacts of climate change

UNB, Paro, Bhutan

Journalists from South Asia having met at the Saarc Journalists Summit-V here yesterday resolved to save the planet, mother South Asia and its natural resources and ecosystems from climatic and environmental degradation.

South Asian Free Media Association (Safma), South Asian Women in Media (SAWM) and South Asia Media Commission (SAMC) organised the summit on April 26-27 April.

Bhutanese Prime Minister Jigmi Thinley inaugurated the summit on Monday.

In a declaration issued yesterday, the Safma expressed deep concern at the adverse impact of climate change on human and ecosystems and natural resources in the South Asian region and a lack of adequate action at national, regional and international levels to preserve our climate, natural resources and the planet.

It also expressed concern

about the Himalayan glaciers' retreat at an alarming rate for the past few decades, eroding one of the major sources of the existence, and the melting of the Siachen glacier due to an absurd conflict.

The declaration noted that rising sea levels means that the Maldives will submerge and 20 percent of low-lying areas of Bangladesh may sink in the Bay of Bengal displacing 25 million people.

It called for upholding principles of equity and human and ecological rights in all processes of decision-making and implementation of policies, laws and programmes on climate change.

The declaration sought an effective management and conservation of natural resources that curb ostentatious consumption and promote eco-friendly sustainable development beneficial to humankind.

It invited the international community, Saarc member countries and the people to establish the Saarc Green

Climate Fund to support projects, scientific research, programmes, policies and other activities related to mitigation, adaptation, capacity-building, technology development and transfer of funding for adaptation by the most vulnerable countries and small islands.

It called for lobbying to make advanced developing countries like India and China to meet mandatory mitigation targets as well.

The declaration also called for raising a unified voice for adaptation funding that is adequate, predictable, additional and sustainable to ODA [Official Development Aid] and targeted to meet the adaptation needs of the most vulnerable groups and communities. Adaptation needs must be country-driven and the funds must be governed under the UN processes.

It urged India and Pakistan to resolve their conflict over Siachen. Not only is this conflict adding to environmental degradation, sea level rise and changing climate pattern but it

is also consuming one billion dollars every year, the declaration said.

It said the two countries should follow the vision of environmental cooperation to establish a jointly managed conservation area or "peace park" there and preserve our glaciers.

# Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Today is the 30th death anniversary of Nurul Islam Shams, former chief national

commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts, says a press release.

On the occasion, a discussion and milad mahfil will be held at the National Headquarters of Bangladesh Scouts at Kakrail in the city at 5:00pm.