

CICA Summit begins tomorrow

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The two-day 3rd Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) will begin in the Turkish city of Istanbul tomorrow.

Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni will attend the summit. CICA is a multi-national forum for enhancing cooperation towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia.

According to an official announcement by Turkish government that heads of state and government, ministers and other senior officials from nearly 40 countries will participate in the meeting to be held in Ciragan Palace.

The member states, while affirming their commitment to the UN Charter, believe that peace and security in Asia can be achieved through dialogue and cooperation leading to a common indivisible area of security in Asia where all states co-exist peacefully and their peoples live in peace, freedom and prosperity.

A declaration on regional and global developments will be issued at the end of the summit, official sources said.

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, presidents of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Palestine, vice presidents of Iraq and Vietnam as well as high-level officials from Kuwait, China and other countries will participate in the summit.

On the sidelines of the summit, Dipu Moni will have meeting with Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al-Thani and Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu on June 8, according to a foreign ministry release.

Dipu Moni will hold a bilateral meeting with vice president of Vietnam Nguyen Thi doan on June 9 and Foreign Minister of Jordan Naser Joudeh. She is expected to return Dhaka on June 10.

The summit will most likely focus on the current crisis on the Korean peninsula, following the alleged sinking of a South Korean warship by a North Korean submarine.

Turkey will take over the rotating presidency of the organisation from Kazakhstan until 2012.

PM asks police to be impartial, not to give in to any pressure

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the police personnel to be impartial while performing their duties.

"Criminals must not be spared even if they belong to my party. Don't succumb to any pressure," she told members of the police force at a function after inaugurating the newly constructed DMP Headquarters building.

Home Minister Sahara Khatun, State Minister for Home Affairs Shamsul Haque Tuku, State Minister for Housing and Public Works Abdul Mannan Khan, local MP Rashed Khan Menon and Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikdar were present as the special guests at the function.

Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad presided over the function while DMP Commissioner AKM Shahidul Huq gave the address of welcome.

The prime minister said criminals are a cancer of the society... of no use to society and their families. "Don't spare the criminals," she directed the police.

She also said members of the police force must remember their salaries and wages come from the taxes paid by the people. "Don't be negligent in ensuring their security."

Hasina said police would have to be friends of the people. Their main goal would be nursing the good and punishing the evil. "You've to look after all



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offers munajat after inaugurating newly constructed DMP Headquarters building in the city yesterday.

people irrespective of gender and religion, and whether they are literate or illiterate, rich or poor."

The PM congratulated the police force for their great achievement in curbing terrorism and militancy despite limited resources. She also conveyed her good wishes to the police force for showing unprecedented patience following Thursday night's fire at Nimtoli in the city.

She said the members of the police force would have to learn to use the modern facilities and the fast growing technology to catch and track down the criminals.

Hasina said good environment is the prerequisite for a person to deliver good works in the office. She hoped

that with the newly constructed DMP Headquarters Building at a cost of 11.42 crore the police force in the capital would perform their duties more efficiently.

She said the people want secure life, peaceful environment, normal movement and a job for their livelihood.

They want to sleep in peace and move safely on the road.

"We are committed to providing these to the people. You've the highest responsibility as members of the law enforcing agency in fulfilling such demands of the people," she said.

"I believe the police personnel will act accordingly," she added.

"Militancy and extremism pose a

great threat for the security of the people, but you (police) have shown great successes in curbing militancy and extremism after we assumed power," Hasina said.

"You've to be alert all the time to maintain law and order and improve it," she said adding, "You've to show your highest professionalism to maintain law and order and also show highest respect towards human rights."

She directed them to be more careful and show compassion towards women, children, elderly people, and members of the disadvantaged community.

Referring to the oppression unleashed by the criminals after 2001 election, she said at that time the oppressed people were not allowed to file case. "I don't want to see such things during the tenure of the current government."

She said the police have to lodge the case if anyone wants to do so. "This will be unethical to refuse anyone from lodging a case."

The government has formed a committee to look after the time-scale problems of the police constables she said, adding that it is also working to upgrade the posts of ASI, sergeant and sub-inspector from class III to class II and upgrade inspectors from class II to class I.

"We are fully aware of your demands and are working on it," the PM said amidst applause from the police officials.

'Help distressed humanity'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rotary Governor AKM Shamsul Huda on Saturday urged the well-off section of the society to come forward to help the distressed humanity.

He made the call at a function marking the 25th founding anniversary of Rotary Club of Dhaka Cosmopolitan at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city.

The well-off people should stand beside the people who have been affected by inferno at Nimtoli and building collapse at Begunbari, he said.

Former Rotary governors MA Wahab, Jalal U Ahmed, Dr M Mosharrar Hossain, M Hafizullah, former president Golam Mostafa spoke at the function with Club President SM Saiful Haque in the chair.

Golam Mostafa was declared 'Best President' at the function.

The Rotarians also expressed deep shock at loss of lives in the blaze and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Their meeting decided to provide assistance for treatment of the injured.



Workers start demolishing a tilted house at Begunbari in the city yesterday after Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha served a notice to its owner for demolition of the house. The seven-storey building tilted on Friday, creating panic among its residents and their neighbours.

'60m people in Bangladesh don't have sufficient food'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 60 million people in Bangladesh still do not have sufficient food to eat, Michael Dumford, WFP deputy country director in Bangladesh, said at a programme yesterday.

He also said three million children under five years suffer from acute malnutrition.

He was speaking at the event titled 'End Hunger, Walk the World' organised by the World Food Programme (WFP).

Some 4,000 people, including around 2000 school-going children, took to the streets in the capital expressing their solidarity with the work of the United Nations' WFP in a fight against global hunger.

The walk started from Bangabandhu International Conference Center and ended at the WFP office at the IDB Bhaban in the city.

Every citizen has the right to get his basic need of food and it is the responsibility of the government along with organisations like the United Nations and others to help people to realise this right, said Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury at the programme.

ATN News goes on air today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ATN News, a 24-hour news channel, begins its new-fledged broadcast today, says a press release.

The channel authorities, however, decided not to hold any ceremonial programme to mark the occasion in view of Begunbari and Nimtoli tragedies, says a press release.

They also cancelled all its today's scheduled programmes and events.

Time to bring Fire Service under disaster management Says minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzaque yesterday said it is high time to bring the Fire Service and Civil Defence department under his ministry from the home ministry.

Addressing a discussion on disaster risk reduction, he said, the department is directly linked to disaster management, which has been given the highest priority lately in the wake of recent manmade disasters.

Referring to the recent inferno at Nimtoli that claimed lives of 117 people, the minister said, the government is preparing itself to tackle manmade disasters and earthquakes, which pose tremendous threats to Dhaka dwellers.

The minister informed that to reduce the number of casualty in manmade hazards and earthquakes, the government has procured sophisticated fire-fighting equipments worth Tk 70 crores in an effort to modernise the

department and carry out rescue operations more effectively.

Urging the people to become aware of their behaviour and habit of defying laws during extreme circumstances, he said there are plans to train community people for tackling any unexpected events.

Speaking about frequent natural disasters taking place in the country, Razzaque also said, the government has failed to repair the embankments damaged by Cyclone Aila last year that left affected people to face further adversities.

"The damage of the embankment is so severe that the repair work has become tremendously difficult. But there was no lack of effort from the government side," he noted.

According to the Disaster Management Bureau, Aila on May 25 damaged 213 kilometres of embankments fully and 1,128 kilometres partially on the southwest coast mainly in Satkhira and Khulna.

CCC ELECTION

AL move to woo Hindu votes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Central joint team of Awami League led by AL visiting Central Secretary Mahubul Alam has taken initiatives to get support for Mohiuddin in June 17 Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) polls from the people who have long-term distances and conflicts with Mohiuddin.

The team met influential Hindu community leader Advocate Rana Das Gupta and veteran anti-British revolutionary Binod Bihari Chowdhury at their residences yesterday and sought support for Mohiuddin.

Mentionable, Mohiuddin, during his tenure as mayor, developed conflicts with both of them over grabbing a two-acre land known as 'Poshu Shala', bought by non-Bengali Hindu traders back in 1951 to build a cattle farm, and now owned by Animal Protection Society.

Hindu community leaders also nominated Binod Bihari to vie the postponed 2007 parliamentary election following the conflict.

Unlike in previous elections, most of the people of the Hindu community here from the beginning were unwilling to support Mohiuddin in the CCC poll this time.

Rana Das Gupta in an interview with The Daily Star on May 22 also said that this time they would cast their vote keeping all the previous incidents in mind as none in the last years tried to cure the wound they got.

Considering the matter, BNP backed mayoral candidate Manjur visited both Binod and Rana on May 22 at the very beginning of his

informal electioneering and sought support.

AL leaders yesterday talked with both the leaders for a long time and discussed many issues over the upcoming election.

Local Hindu leaders who gathered at Binod's residence at the time expressed their resentment over different issues in presence of the AL team who ensured them of resolving the conflicts.

Later Binod assured the visiting leaders to extend support to Mohiuddin as part of supporting non-communal force in the poll.

Rana Das Gupta told The Daily Star that such move to cure their wound is belated but positive.

"We clearly expressed our resentment to the AL leaders while they assured us of addressing the matters," Rana said.

AL central Organising Secretary Ahmad Hossain, leaders Ashim Kumar Ukil, Pankaj Devnath, among others, were present at the meeting.

MOHIUDDIN'S CAMPAIGN AL and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) central leaders and professionals yesterday took part in election campaigns in support of Mohiuddin.

Hanif joined a street rally in the Chittagong Export Processing Zone area where he urged the dwellers to vote for Mohiuddin in order to keep the on going development works continued.

Eminent historian Muntasir Mamun accompanied Mohiuddin in several areas in Halishahar, Boropole and Pahartali in the morning.

BNP conspiring to create instability Says Matia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition BNP is conspiring to create instability in the country by calling hartal for June 27 at a time when the present government was running the country smoothly after overcoming many problems, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said yesterday.

"While in power, she [BNP chairperson] pledged not to call any hartal, but she reneged on her promise," Matia said at a programme marking the World Environment Day.

The Awami League organised the discussion at its central office on Bangabandhu Avenue, with State Minister for Forest and Environment Hasan Mahmud in the chair.

Hasan Mahmud said BNP has called hartal as it is envious of the government's success.

KHALEDA'S HOUSE

Final hearing begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The final hearing of the writ petition filed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia challenging the legality of a government notice concerning the cantonment house began at a High Court (HC) bench yesterday.

After concluding the hearing for the first day, the bench of Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana and Justice Sheikh Hasan Arif adjourned the hearing till 2:00pm today.

During hearing, petitioner's counsel TH Khan told the court that the deed of the allotment of cantonment house to his client (Khaleda) was registered in accordance with due process of the law, and the government notice asking her to leave the house is illegal and mala fide.

Earlier on May 23, Chief Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim sent the writ petition filed by Khaleda to this bench for its hearing.

JS body team returns home after India visit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of the parliamentary return committee on law, justice and parliamentary affairs returned home on Saturday night after a nine-day visit to India.

The team led by the standing committee President Suranjit Sengupta called on Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, Law Minister Robilal Moitra and Chief minister of West Bengal Buddhadev Bhattacharya during the state, said a government handout.

The meeting focused on mutual interests of the country, especially implementation of the water treaty signed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with her counterpart recently and Indian Prime Minister's visit to Bangladesh.

The team also met solicitor General of India, chairman of Delhi bar council and lawyers of Tamilnadu and discussed judicial reforms in both the countries and backlog of cases in the court.

Other members of the team include lawmaster Nurul Islam Sujon and advocate Ziaul Haque Mridha.

Proper investigation into Nimtoli fire demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More organisations yesterday expressed profound shock at the loss of numerous lives in the devastating fire at Nimtoli in old Dhaka on Thursday night.

Demanding proper investigation into the fire incident within a specific time, they urged the government to take necessary steps to prevent recurrence of such disasters.

In a statement, Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) mentioned some recent accidents -- fire at Garib & Garib Garment and Japan Garden City, building collapse at Begunbari and the latest fire in Nimtoli -- and said that these accidents took place as safety rules were not followed.

They also called on the authorities concerned to take effective measures to enforce existing laws.

Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF), in its statement, said that apart from inflammable chemicals, acids are also being sold in the open market in old Dhaka, which may lead to tragic incidents like Nimtoli fire.

Storing inflammable chemicals in houses is a punishable crime under the Acid Control Act, it said.

The ASF will form a human chain in front of

emergency department gate of Dhaka Medical College demanding proper investigation into the fire incident and punishment to the persons responsible.

North South University also expressed profound shock and grief at the loss of lives in the fire and Begunbari building collapse.

Meanwhile, organisations of film producers, directors, artists and distributors handed over medicines to Dr Samanta Lal Sen, head of burn unit at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, for the people injured in the Nimtoli fire, says a press release.

AUSTRALIAN ENVOY Australian High Commissioner in Dhaka Dr Justin Lee has expressed profound shock at the loss of lives in the Nimtoli fire.

In a condolence message yesterday, Dr Lee said, "The Australian High Commission extends its deepest condolences to the people of Bangladesh following the devastating fires in old Dhaka on 3 June."

"The enormity of the tragedy is deeply saddening and our thoughts and sympathies are with the victims and their families," he added.

The Australian government will also be extending its condolences to the government of Bangladesh, the statement added.

Move to check pilferage of drugs in govt hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to preventing pilferage of drugs, the health ministry has introduced new packaging for the drugs supplied to the government hospitals for distribution among the patients free of charge.

The drugs with red and green labels on the packaging have already been sent to the district and upazila level hospitals, Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque said at the formal launch of the new packaging at the conference room of his ministry.

"If drugs in this special packaging are found in any drug stores, legal action will be taken

against them, as these drugs are not for sale," he said.

The minister also said that the government has supplied some 500 types of drugs worth Tk 58 crore in new packaging to the district, upazila and thana level hospitals. Later, all the public hospitals would receive drugs in new packaging.

The government has been procuring these drugs from some selected 25 companies. "The drugs cost one fourth the market price," said the minister.

Secretary Sheikh Altaf Ali and Director General of Health Services Prof Shah Monir Hossain were present at the launching ceremony.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Firoza Begum, wife of late Mesbah Uddin Ahmed and mother of Helemul Alam Biplob, Senior Reporter of The Daily Star, passed away due to old age complications at Ayesha Memorial Hospital at Mohakhali in the city yesterday at the age of 67, says a press release.

She left behind her four sons, five daughters and grand children to mourn her death.

She will be laid to rest at Mirpur 12 graveyard in the city after her namaz-e-janaza after Fazr prayers today.

Relatives and admirers are requested to pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Tahera Huq

METRO DESK

Tahera Huq, wife of late Nurul Huq of 30 Karim Cottage at Rokonpur, passed away at her Gulshan residence in the city on June 5 at the age of 78, says a press release.

She left behind her two sons and two daughters to mourn her death. She was laid to rest at the Banani graveyard.

Her Quikhwani will be held at her son's residence at Gulshan 2 in the city after Maghrib prayers tomorrow (Tuesday).

Well-wishers are requested to join her family members in prayer for the eternal peace of her departed soul.

Nasir Uddin Ahmed

DU CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Nasir Uddin Ahmed, father of Lt Col Ziaul Ahsan, director of the intelligence wing of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), passed away due to cancer at the Combined Military Hospital in the city on Saturday at the age of 79, says a press release.

He left behind his three sons and five daughters to mourn his death.

Born on February 15 in 1931, he had served as the Shekherhat Union Parishad chairman in Jhalakathi district for 30 years.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Khulna, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places over Chittagong, Dhaka, Barisal and Sylhet divisions, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:44pm today and rises at 5:10am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 37.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 21.8 degrees Celsius at Sitakunda.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening)