

Saarc FMs' meet from Feb 5

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Foreign Ministers meeting, scheduled for December in Thimphu, has been shifted to February as it coincides with the International Climate Summit in Cancun, Mexico.

The meeting was scheduled for December 5 to 9 in Thimphu.

Officials at the foreign ministry told The Daily Star that Bhutan, the current Saarc chair, informed the member countries that the meeting of the Council of Ministers has been rescheduled for February 5-9 in Thimphu.

The council comprises all eight foreign ministers of the Saarc.

They said foreign ministers of most of the Saarc member states, including Bangladesh and Bhutan, would attend the International Climate Summit COP-16 in Cancun. So it would not be possible for them to attend the inter-summit meeting of the Saarc.

The meeting of the Council of Ministers will review various agendas endorsed by the 16th Saarc Summit held in Bhutan last April.

The Thimphu Summit underscored the need to cope with the challenges of climate change and global warming and also ratified Saarc Development Fund (SDF) for financing regional infrastructure development, among others.

3-day debate contest begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day debate competition for the college and school students started at the Rajuk College in the capital yesterday.

A total of 48 debate teams from 19 schools and colleges are competing in the event with the slogan of Jukti Hok Muktir Sopan [let logic be the stairs of freedom].

The title of the competition is Prothom Alo, Daily Star, Rajuk College Debate Competition 2010. The organisations jointly arranged the competition for the second time at the college auditorium.

Attending the inaugural session, former debater and Managing Director of Trust Bank Limited Shah A Sarwar said many problems of the country are raised beautifully through logic in debates. He said urging the participants to analyse the problems with truth.

Debaters said they learn logic and many matters through debate and it gives them pleasure too.

Joint editor of the daily Prothom Alo Abdul Kaiyum said Prothom Alo and The Daily Star want a healthy culture will be built in the country.

He called on debaters to love and respect the country for the achieving expected development.

Principal of Rajuk College completed his speech giving thanks to Prothom Alo and The Daily Star for providing support.

After declaring the competition open, a model debate was staged between the debaters of Manarat International School and Master Mind School.

Hasina emphasises ties with China

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has underscored the need for collaboration with China in the field of science and technology, energy, power, culture, sports, health, education, communication and human resources development.

She emphasised cooperation between the two countries when a Chinese delegation led by Chen Haosu, president of Chinese Peoples Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, paid a courtesy call on the prime minister at her office yesterday. PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed reporters about the meeting.



PHOTO: PID

Chen Haosu, president of Chinese Peoples Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

Hasina told the delegation that Bangladesh has a historic relation with China and expressed hope that the friendship between two peoples will be deepened through multi-

faceted public diplomacy programmes and enhanced people to people contacts.

She said exchange of visits at different levels would enhance bilateral trade and business and boost Chinese investment here.

Referring to Bangladesh's plan to establish direct road link with Chinese city Kunming, she expressed confidence that there will be maximum interaction between the two countries through Chittagong-Kunming road. The proposed Sister-City relationship between Dhaka and Chengdu will also enhance.

She said both countries could work together to make Bangladesh-China-Myanmar road link or the Kunming initiative a success.

In response, the Chinese delegation leader recalled the leadership of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the War of Liberation in 1971.

ROW OVER PUJA ARRANGEMENT

Sec 144 on abandoned house in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police yesterday imposed section 144 on an abandoned house on Tipu Sultan Road in Sutrapur following a conflict between two groups of Hindus.

Mohammad Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Sutrapur police, said some Hindus led by Bidhu Babu and Chandan Babu decided to arrange a programme at the abandoned house Wednesday evening on the occasion of the Durga Puja.

The OC added some people took an idol of the Goddess Durga to the house the same evening.

On information, another group of Hindus rushed there and opposed the decision saying no such programme was arranged at the house in the last 40 years.

A tense situation was created as both the sides stuck to their decision.

To ward off any untoward incident Additional Deputy Commissioner (Wari Zone) Mohammad Alamgir Hossain clamped the section 144 around 12:30am.

Locals say the three-storey house is situated on a piece of about 17 katha land, which is vested property.

Earlier in 2000, three journalists took the house on lease for one year from the district administration and occupied it in the end of the last Awami League rule. Though their lease expired they did not vacate the house and continued maintaining their possession on it.

After the BNP-Jamaat alliance government assumed power in 2001 a BNP leader from Manikganj occupied the land claiming he had purchased it. He also rented out rooms of the house for setting up shops.

Joint Secretary of Mahanagar Puja Committee Nirmal Chatterjee told The Daily Star the house was declared vested property in 1913. Puja was arranged on its premises on regular basis, he added.

The Puja Committee condemned the incident that occurred on the eve of the Puja. Nirmal Chatterjee demanded that the land be freed from occupation by all illegal grabbers.

Agreement on reproductive health signed

METRO DESK

Swedish Sida and Reproductive Health Services Training and Education Programme (RHSTEP) signed an agreement on "Sexual and reproductive health and rights programme" in the city yesterday, says a press release.

On behalf of the development partner, Swedish Ambassador in Dhaka Anneli Lindahl-Kenny and on behalf of the SRHR consortium, RHSTEP Executive Director Quazi Suraiya Sultana signed the agreement.

Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) consortium of Bangladesh comprises of two organisations, RHSTEP and Bangladesh Association for Prevention of Septic Abortion (BAPSA), will implement the project on "Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Program focusing on Safe MR and reduction of Unsafe MR in Bangladesh".

The three-year project will begin today (October 15).

The project will contribute to improving sexual and reproductive health rights of the women and adolescents and reduction in maternal mortality and thus helping to fulfil the targets to achieve the health related MDGs 4 and 5.

This programme will be financed by Swedish Sida and co-financed by CordAid.

First Secretary Ylva Sörman Nath and Program Officer-Health Dr Mohammad Zahirul Islam of Embassy of Sweden, BAPSA Director Dr Altat Hossain, and RHSTEP Director Md Ashiqul Islam were present at the agreement signing ceremony.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Swedish Ambassador in Dhaka Anneli Lindahl-Kenny, third from right, and RHSTEP Executive Director Quazi Suraiya Sultana, third from left, exchange documents after signing an agreement.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Dr Md Alauddin, pro-vice chancellor of Chittagong University, speaks at the inaugural ceremony of two-day long Daily Star-Bank Asia-Drishly Science Festival 2010 at Ispahani Public School & College in Chittagong city yesterday.

DAILY STAR-BANK ASIA-DRISHTY Science festival kicks off

A CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The third Daily Star-Bank Asia-Drishly science festival began at Ispahani Public School & College in Chittagong city yesterday.

Principal of the college Mahabul Alam Chowdhury inaugurated the two-day long programme at the institution's auditorium.

Enthusiastic students yesterday were seen queuing on the school premises to sign up for workshops and exhibitions. Drishly President Masud Bakul said over 1,200 students from a hundred schools in Chittagong attended the festival, and 200 science exhibitions were enlisted for show.

Participants in the three workshops on genetic engineering, DNA and biotechnology have set to exhibit their innovation projects today.

At the inaugural session, speakers expressed concern over the decline of science students in SSC level and h

ailed Drishly for their continued efforts to make students interested in science.

Prof Dr Md Alauddin, pro-vice chancellor of Chittagong University, stressed the importance of science education without which the dream of a prosperous Bangladesh will remain unrealised.

The world is for the fittest and a nation without skilled professionals in every field can never prosper in today's world, said Prof Syed Ahsanul Parvez, chairman of marketing department, CU.

A participant and student of Cider International School, Shahawata, told the Daily Star that she is happy for joining the festival and wished for frequent festivals like this one in future.

Sadia Kazi Rahman, principal of Sunshine Grammar School, and Amir Ali Chowdhury, founder adviser of Drishly were also present at the inaugural session chaired by Masud Bakul.

Bakul thanked The Daily Star, Bank Asia Ltd and Chittagong Online Ltd for their cooperation in arranging the programme.

Today Dr Afsarul Ameen, minister for primary and mass education, will inaugurate day second of the festival.

Chittagong Bureau Chief Raisul Haq Bahar of The Daily Star, and Zonal Head & SEVP Md Roshangir of Bank Asia Ltd are to attend the event as special guests.

In the afternoon, Moinuddin Khan Badal, MP from Boalkhali constituency and Abul Momen, resident editor of the daily Prothom Alo will be present at the award giving ceremony.

Pink Ribbon Day tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Samity will observe Pink Ribbon Day tomorrow on the occasion of the world breast cancer protection month, says a press release.

Experts provide free service at the breast-screening centre run by the Samity from 12:00pm to 4:00pm three days a week, Monday to Wednesday.

The samity has got 5,870 women registered under its free service for breast cancer detection since 2003.

The samity has been running the programme, as the disease is impossible to prevent unless its symptoms are known. A patient with breast cancer can have a longer life if the disease is diagnosed timely.



Manchester University to honour Prof Jamilur Reza

METRO DESK

Manchester University, UK will confer Honorary Doctor of Engineering degree on Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury, former vice chancellor of Brac University, in a special ceremony to be held on October 20, 2010.

He will be the first Bangladeshi to receive the degree from a British university. The conferment of the degree is in recognition of Prof Jamilur's immense service to the academic world and the nation, provided for nearly a half a century.

Prof Jamilur has an illustrious career in the field of engineering.

Prof Jamilur was a member of Panel of Experts for the Bangabandhu (Jamuna) Bridge and is now heading the Panel of Experts for the Padma Bridge in Bangladesh.

He was an adviser (Minister) in the first non-party caretaker government in 1996 and was in charge of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the Ministry of Water Resources.

Prof Choudhury held office in Brac University from March 2001 to February 2010.

DHAKA TODAY

Art exhibition Galleri Kaya will organise a solo art exhibition of artist Aminul Islam Soyel. Venue: House-20, Road-16, Sector-4, Uttara, Time: 5:30pm.	Seminar World University of Bangladesh will organise an international seminar. Venue: Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), Ramna, Time: 3:30pm.
Discussion Janatar Pratyasha will arrange a discussion. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity, Time: 10:30am.	Art exhibition A group art exhibition will be inaugurated. Venue: Drik Gallery, Time: 5:00pm.
Meeting National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled will organise a meeting. Venue: Directorate of Social Service auditorium, Time: 3:00pm.	Hunger strike National Garments Workers Federation will observe a token hunger strike. Venue: Mukhtangan, Time: 11:00am.
Roundtable Bangladesh Islamic Law Research	and Legal Aid Centre will arrange a roundtable. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 3:30pm.

US embassy closed Oct 17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United States Embassy will be closed on October 17 in observance of Durga Puja, said a press release.

This closure includes the Consular Section and the American Center's Archer K. Blood Library and Student Advising Center.

American citizens are requested to contact the duty officer over the phone at 885-5500 if necessary.

British HC

The British High Commission in Dhaka, its office in Sylhet and DFID Bangladesh will be closed to the public on October 17 for Durga Puja, said a press release.

Bangladesh wins!

Through the relentless effort of the Ministry of Posts & Telecommunications and BTRC, Bangladesh is elected Member of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Council with the votes and recognition of 123 countries.

A H M Noman Khan is awarded with the Ramon Magsaysay Award 2010, for his pioneering leadership in mainstreaming disabled persons in the development process of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Cricket Team wins a historic victory against New Zealand in a 5 match ODI series, the first ever win against a full strength full member opponent.

Bangladesh marches ahead with indomitable spirit in every sphere. We congratulate every Bangladeshi on the occasion of these significant achievements. Ignite the power within.

an axiata company

COMMERCIAL BUILDING SALE / RENT

A twelve (12) storied newly built building (corner plot) at Shymoli, Mirpur Road is readily available for sale / rent. First Six floors of 87,000 sft is for sale and next five floors of 90000 sft is for rent with grand reception at ground floor. Internal constructional changes to suit the requirements of Hospital, University, NGO and other offices can be accommodated.

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