

NEWS IN *brief*

Dhaka for massive afforestation

UNB, Kathmandu
Dhaka has called for urgent cooperation among Saarc nations to effectively face the emerging climate change challenges, suggesting massive afforestation in the region.

"We must have a clear understanding and take proper steps to face the climate change. Cooperation among countries is urgently needed as it's a gigantic job for one country to face," State Minister for Forest and Environment Dr Hasan Mahmud told a ministerial meeting here yesterday. Hasan Mahmud also sought cooperation of all Saarc countries in ensuring food security and water for all in the region and meeting the electricity crisis by producing hydroelectric power using the potentials that Nepal and Bhutan have.

Beautician found dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Police recovered the body of a beautician from her house in the city's Khilgaon yesterday. The deceased Aklima Khatun Trishna, 35, wife of Humayun Kabir of Tilpapara of Khilgaon, used to run a beauty parlor in Shibpur, Narsingdi and got married for the second time one year ago, said Trishna's niece Doly Begum.

Sub-Inspector Sajedul Islam of Khilgaon Police Station said they also recovered some sleeping pills from Trishna's room. Khuku Moni, another beautician who was sleeping in the same room with Trishna the night before, told police that she heard Trishna groaning around midnight and informed other members of the family. Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Rahat's musical soiree postponed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A musical soiree featuring noted Pakistani singer Rahat Fateh Ali Khan scheduled for today in Dhaka was postponed due to unavoidable circumstances. The organiser Mirror Media and Production Ltd said a rescheduled date would be announced later.

Hospital fined Tk 2.5 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday fined Al-Helal Specialised Heart Hospital in the city a sum of Tk 2.5 lakh for careless dumping of hospital waste causing environment pollution and health hazards to the public, said a press release yesterday. A team led by Mohammad Munir Chowdhury, DoE director (Monitoring and Enforcement), ordered the hospital authorities in Mirpur section 10 to remove all wastes in its vicinity and to keep the hospital drain and compound clean.

Valuables worth Tk 8 lakh looted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Burglars looted gold ornaments, cash and valuables worth around Tk 8 lakh from a rented house of a media person in the city's Padma residential area on Tuesday night. Police said the burglars entered into the house after cutting the window-grill around 8:00pm and they took away 10 tola of gold ornaments, cash Tk 13,000 and other valuables. The house owner Mir Muhammad Hasan Abdullah, a communication specialist of LGED and his wife Sabiha Shobnom, an official of Mass Line Media Center, were not in the house during the burglary.



Founders of Autism Speak Bob Wright and Mrs Suzanne Wright call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her hotel suite in New York on Tuesday. PHOTO: PMO

Autism experts call on PM

BSS, New York
Autism expert David Sternfield and founders of Autism Speaks Bob Wright and Mrs Suzanne Wright separately called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her hotel suite here on Tuesday night. During the meeting, they exchanged views with the prime minister on various aspects of autism and ways of handling the brain disorder of human beings, particularly the children.

Autism expert of Chicago David Sternfield highly praised the PM's initiative to arrange regional autism conference in Dhaka in July 2011 to make people aware about the disorder, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad told newsmen. Hasina said the regional conference in Dhaka has ushered in a new hope to fight autism which affects normal development of children.

Health Minister Dr AFM Ruhul Haque, Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni, Bangladesh's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Dr Abdul Momen and chair of Bangladesh's national autism committee and PM's daughter Saima Hossain were present. Hasina said the government has already set up an autistic centre at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, country's lone medical university. She said her government is sincerely working to create massive awareness in society about autism with steps taken for providing effective assistance for autistic children and jobs to autistic persons.

Deliver \$40b pledged for healthcare improvement

Hasina urges global campaign partners

UNB, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called for early release of US \$40 billion pledged by campaign partners in the Global Strategy last year to help improve healthcare facilities in Bangladesh.

She made the call while addressing the plenary session of the "Every Woman Every Child" project at ECOSOC Chamber. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon chaired the session.

Hasina said the campaign partners pledged to provide US\$ 40 billion when the "Global Campaign and the Strategy for Women's and Children's Health" was launched last year.

Emphasising early fulfilment of the \$ 40 billion pledge, the prime minister said we need more assistance for improving healthcare facilities.

She said her government aims to graduate Bangladesh to a middle-income country by 2021 with facilities for better education, health, nutrition and empowerment of every woman and child.

In this connection, Hasina mentioned that Bangladesh has already achieved a remarkable success in several areas of women and child healthcare.

She said Bangladesh has reduced Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) by 45 percent since 1990, reduced Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) by 66 percent since 1990, and kept HIV/AIDS prevalence, especially in woman, to less than 0.01 percent.

About last year's Global Campaign, the prime minister said Bangladesh made some pledges including one to double the percentage of healthy births by 2015 with the assistance of skilled health workers.

"Therefore, under our National Health, Population and Nutrition Development Programme, a midwifery course has been introduced with about 100 midwives already trained. Our aim is to have 3000 trained midwives by 2015."

Hasina mentioned that the government has revised the National Women Development Policy, the National Children Policy, and the National Education Policy and will revise the National Health Policy soon.

National budget not women-friendly
Says CPD researcher

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The national budget is not women-friendly and it has little focus on the development and empowerment of women, said Dr Fahmida Khatun, head of research at Centre for Policy Dialogue.

"The national budget is formulated in a way where discrimination between men and women is evident in all sectors. This creates a barrier for the empowerment and development of women," she said.

She said this while presenting a keynote paper at a workshop on "Empowering women: data collection, analysis and use" organised by Bangladesh Alliance for Women Leadership (BDAWL) in a city hotel yesterday.

Speakers at the workshop said the government has initiated a plan to accelerate the empowerment process of women from this year, which involves participation from some 20 ministries.

However, the amount of budget allocated for the plan is insufficient and should be increased, they said.

They also urged the government to reduce the income tax collected from women.

Spanish Ambassador to Bangladesh Luis Tajeda suggested the government to take initiatives to increase participation of women representatives in the parliament. He also assured to assist the government for this purpose.

Riti Ibrahim, secretary to statistics division of planning ministry, Saifullah Shovon, head of information analysis of ACILimited, also addressed the occasion.

DEATH OF MU AHMED
Lawyers' agitations Monday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP lawyers will stage demonstrations and hold rallies at all district bars of the country on Monday demanding arrest of Home Minister Shahara Khatun and five government officials in connection with the death of lawyer MU Ahmed.

Ahmed, a pro-BNP lawyer of Supreme Court, died in the city's Square Hospital on August 26, sixteen days after he suffered a heart attack in police custody.

Rafiqul Islam Mia, president of Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum (JAF), a body of pro-BNP lawyers, yesterday announced the agitation programme at a press conference at the South Hall of Supreme Court Bar Association.

The five others are Attorney General Mahbubey Alam, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Benazir Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner concerned of Detective Branch of Police and Shahbag Police Station Officer-in-Charge Rezaul Karim.

Doa mahfil

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



A doa and m i l a d mahfil for Fahimur Rahman Sayem, son of State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Jahangir Kabir Nanak, will be held on Shaheed Park premises at Town Hall of Mohammadpur in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Jubo League of Mohammadpur, Adabor and Sher-e-Bangla Nagar organised the programme. Sayem was killed in a road crash on September 6.



Nasim Firdaus addresses a workshop on women empowerment organised by Bangladesh Alliance for Women Leadership at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Forge collective voice to fight challenges

Dipu Moni urges Asian countries

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni has stressed Asian solidarity to collectively address common challenges and called for forging a strong Asian voice at various global levels.

She made the call while making her statement at the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Breakfast Meeting held on the sideline of the 66th UN General Assembly on Tuesday.

Pointing out the extensive experience of Bangladesh in social sector particularly in poverty alleviation and women empowerment, Dipu Moni informed that Bangladesh intends to host an event on poverty alleviation in future.

In this regard, she specially stressed forging a strong Asian voice at the global level, including at the forthcoming COP-17 and Rio+20.

The foreign minister also attended at the high-level meeting on desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of the sustainable development and poverty eradication yesterday.

On climate change issue she said, "We should respond collectively based on equity and historical responsibility to save our planet."

President of UN General Assembly Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser also spoke at the event.

Earlier Dipu Moni, yesterday attended at the "Ministerial Breakfast: Increase Peace through Mediation," co-hosted by the foreign ministers of Turkey and Finland.

Meanwhile, Dipu Moni had a meeting with Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic yesterday.

She stressed that both countries could work together to gainfully cooperate in various areas.

She sought support of Serbia for its candidature for a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council (2016-17), UN Human Rights Council and Council of International Maritime Organisation (2011-2012).

The Serbian minister assured that the candidature of Bangladesh will receive positive consideration by their government.

WAR CRIMES TRIAL
Charges not specific

Says Sayedee's lawyer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The lawyer of detained Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee yesterday argued before the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) that the prosecutors have brought "vague and hypothetical" allegations against his client.

Defence lawyer Tajul Islam told the tribunal that the charges brought against Sayedee are not specific as these are not defined in the ICT Act of 1973. So trying him under this act would be unjustified.

The defence also pleaded for not issuing order to frame charge against the Jamaat leader who is accused of committing crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.

"It was not made clear when, how and whom he [Sayedee] killed in 1971," Sayedee's lawyer told the tribunal.

The defence lawyer also argued that the details of the witnesses were not mentioned in the documents, which the prosecutors have submitted to them.

Sayedee was produced before the tribunal around 10:30am yesterday, a day after he was reported 'unfit to travel' to court room from jail. After around three hours of hearing, the three-member judges' panel headed by Justice Nizamul Haque adjourned the hearing till September 25.

The judges also rejected the defence prayer to recall the tribunal's July 14 order, which took Sayedee's crimes against humanity into cognisance. Arrested on July 30 last year, Sayedee is accused of killing, torching houses and other war crimes in 1971 war.

DHAKA TODAY

Discussion
Theatre Art Unit will hold a discussion.
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Time: 5:30pm.

Workshop
Department of Public Health Engineering, WHO Water and Sanitation Programme and WaterAid will jointly organise a workshop.

Conference
Handicap International, Bangladesh will arrange a national conference.

Venue: LGED auditorium, Agargaon, Time: 10:00am.

WEATHER TODAY

Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka
Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over all the seven divisions in 12 hours till 6:00pm today.
Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places over the country, Met Office said.
Day temperature may rise slightly over the country.
The sun sets in the capital at 5:56pm today and rises at 5:48am tomorrow.
Country's highest temperature 33.9 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 24.7 degrees Celsius at Rangamati and 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	32.7	25.5	76	65
Chittagong	31.0	25.3	76	81
Rajshahi	33.0	26.4	89	84
Rangpur	33.0	27.0	79	82
Khulna	31.5	25.4	88	83
Barisal	31.5	26.0	88	83