

NEWS IN *brief*

Geneticist Maqsudul Alam, team hailed for discovery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital and Onushandhani Science Club yesterday greeted Bangladeshi geneticist Dr Maqsudul Alam and his team for decoding the genome of a most deadly fungus that causes havoc to jute and other 500 crop and non-crop species.

Decoding the genome of the fungus -- macrophomina phaseolina -- will set a unique example of Bangladesh scientists in the world, they said in a statement.

Dr Alam and his team's success in decoding fungus genome came just two years after he had

Two commit 'suicide' in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two female students allegedly committed suicide in separate incidents in the capital yesterday.

Mahmuda Sultana Tonni, 17, a student at Khilgaon Model College, committed suicide by taking poison at her residence in Banasree area around 3:00am.

She was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead.

In another incident, Sadia Tabassum, 18, a student at Uttara branch of Asian University, hanged herself from a ceiling fan in her room at Faidabad of Dakkhin

Heart-screening programme launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital has launched a countrywide heart-screening programme to create mass awareness to prevent cardiac diseases.

The seven-day event started with the heart-screening of journalists, officials and employees of the daily Prothom Alo in the capital yesterday, says a press release.

A 15-member medical team were working for the programme. Some 10,000 people across the country will come under the programme marking the World

A grief-stricken mother cries for her two children whom she had locked in the house at the capital's Begunbari slum before a violent fire burned down at least 400 shanties there yesterday. A speech impaired Rowshan Ara neither did know what had happened to her children nor could vent her grief in words. The Daily Star could not learn more about Rowshan Ara's children but fire officials said there was no report of casualty in the fire. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: STAR



Rajuk designing new Dhaka master plan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajdhani Unnyan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) is set to frame a new 20-year master plan for the capital, its chief said at a workshop yesterday.

The organisation has already started designing the structural plan and the detailed area plan, two parts of a master plan, as the present master plan period expires in 2015, said M Nurul Huda, chairman of Rajuk.

The structural plan is being prepared with Asian Development Bank (ADB) finance, he told the workshop on the draft report of a study, "Strengthening Regional Planning and Governance (SRPG)", conducted by ADB.

Huda said they wanted the new plan ready for implementation from 2016.

Rajuk and ADB country office jointly organised the workshop at the capital's Ruposhi Bangla Hotel.

Rajuk is also going to set up four local offices with one each in Savar, Gazipur, Keraniganj and Narayanganj in addition to existing four within the capital to deliver

speedy services at local levels.

With the new 1980-member workforce approved for Rajuk, the local offices will be independent to deliver day-to-day services except for major projects.

Abdul Mannan Khan, state minister for housing and public works, however, said urban plan and development in Dhaka city were fragmented and uncoordinated, as around half of a hundred government agencies were involved with them, and they did not always comply with the master plan.

JR Wood, team leader of SRPG study, suggested institutional strengthening and empowerment of Rajuk and updating of relevant laws for planned development in the capital, where the problems must be addressed now.

Dhaka city was blessed with abundant wetlands around it until the seventies but those are disappearing fast with unplanned development, which also resulted in ground water depletion and frequent urban flooding, said Swapan Kumar Sarkar, additional secretary to Local Government Division.



A group of 18 students from Bangladesh Navy School and College visit US salvage ship USNS Safeguard at Chittagong port yesterday. The ship arrived in Chittagong to take part in Bangladesh-US joint naval exercise CARAT, which began on Monday.

PHOTO: STAR

Beaten youth dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A youth, who was beaten by locals in the capital's Badda a week ago, succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Mohammad Sujon, 20, son of Siddique Miah, died at DMCH at about 10:00am.

Family members said Sujon was beaten up because of a previous enmity but they could not say what the hostility was about.

However, officer-in-charge of Badda Police Station said Sujon had been beaten for breaking and entering a house for theft.

No complaint has been lodged with police in this regard.

The body has been sent to DMCH for an autopsy.

MANPOWER EXPORT Mosharraf defends state arrangement with Malaysia

UNB, Dhaka

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday defended the government's decision to bar private recruiting agencies from exporting manpower to Malaysia.

Now only the government will send workers to Malaysia under its own arrangement, according to an agreement reached by Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur.

Following the move, Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira), the platform of private recruiting agencies, on Wednesday threatened to stop manpower export to other countries to press for change of the decision.

"The government will send workers to Malaysia as Kuala Lumpur wants it this way," Mosharraf told journalists at his office in the capital.

"The two countries have signed minutes before signing a formal accord. So, there is no scope to review the decision. There is no scope for recruiting agencies to send manpower to Malaysia," he said.

He hoped that the decision will benefit the workers. "The migrant workers were cheated earlier, but in this way, there is no scope to be cheated. But we are not terminating Baira as fraud," he added.

He said the government is not a rival of Baira. "We have not employed them as contractors, but we have given licence to them as recruiting agencies. So, Baira has to follow the government rules and regulations," said the minister.

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Workshop

Dhaka University and the Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (Buet) will arrange a workshop; Venue: Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel; Time: 3:30pm.

Roundtable

United Nations Information Centre, Dhaka and Centre for Development Dialogue will hold a seminar; Venue: BIJEM Conference Room, 257/8 Elephant Road; Time: 11:00am.

Lecture

Dhaka University (DU) will organise a lecture; Venue: Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban, DU; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Bangladesh Nationalist British Law Students Alliance will hold a

discussion; Venue: Wings Centre, Road No-4/A, Dhanmondi; Time: 3:00pm.

Rally

Islamic Ain Bastobayan Committee will organise a rally; Venue: North Gate, Baitul Mokarram National Mosque; Time: 2:00pm.

Conference

Jatiya Samik Jote will arrange its biennial conference; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Reunion

Bangladesh Jubo Samity and Bangladesh Chhatra Samity will organise an Eid reunion; Venue: RC Majumder Arts Auditorium, Dhaka University; Time: 3:00pm.

Roundtable

Bangladesh Chalachchitra Sangbadik Samity will arrange a

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WEATHER
TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:56pm and rises tomorrow at 5:48am.

Country's highest temperature 35.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 24.0 degrees at Rangpur.

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	33.2	27.3	75	76
Chittagong	31.4	26.0	87	82
Rajshahi	34.2	27.0	86	88
Rangpur	31.2	24.0	95	85
Khulna	34.5	27.0	88	95
Barisal	32.9	26.5	80	86