

## Amal Sen passes away

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Communist leader Amal Sen died of old-age complications at the Dhaka Community Hospital at 2:25pm yesterday. He was 90.  
A revolutionary, Sen fought for socialism for about 70 years. He was born in Afra village in Narail in 1912.  
A graduate student of chemistry at the Daulatpur College in Khulna, Sen was involved with the Communist Party in 1933.  
He took part in the anti-British movement, Tebhaga Andolon and

# Wild elephants go wild in CHT

### Twenty killed in last two months

**NURUL ALAM, Chittagong**

Wild elephants killed around 20 people in the hilly areas of Chittagong and Kaptai in Rangamati in the last two months, according to unofficial sources.  
Official sources confirmed the death of at least four, including a child. And over 100 people were injured in the attacks by the elephants.  
Forest officials expressed concern over frequent attacks by the wild elephants from the deep forests of the Indian border.  
Police were asked to guard the hilly villages in Chittagong and Rangamati. "We have asked police to take measures to protect the villagers," said Abdul Khaleque, assistant superintendent of police of Chittagong.  
Fearing attacks by elephants, many fled home in Dongnala, Bangalhalia, Raikhali, Jongnala, Karigarhpara, Balukhali and Purbo

Kodala in Rangamati at the end of last month, the forest officials said.  
However, most of them returned home after police beefed up patrol, they said.  
Abul Bashar, a forest official of the Kaptai zone, told The Daily Star that the elephants had migrated

## Prisoner dies at KMCH

**UNB, Khulna**

A convicted prisoner of Jessore Central Jail died at Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) on Wednesday.  
Noor Islam, 30, of Debraj village in Morelganj upazila of Bagerhat district, was admitted to the KMCH on January 3. Islam, who was sentenced to life term in a murder case, was suffering from heart ailment.

from the deep forests of Assam and other Indian border areas in search of food.  
The elephants homed in on paddy fields and homesteads in hilly villages of Raozan, Fatikhari and Rangunia bordering the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), sources said.  
Last year, forest officials and villagers backed by police chased a herd of wild elephants out of the Brindabon area in Raozan.  
Shamsul Alam, Rangamati district forest official (DFD), said habitat destruction angered the wild elephants.

## 2 held as they go to receive Tuhin's body at DMCH

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Police yesterday arrested two members of a gang, when they went to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) to receive the body of Tuhin Sarkar, the gang leader.  
Tejgaon police arrested Sagar and Sakil who went to the DMCH along with Tuhin's younger brother Shaheen Sarkar.  
Tuhin, accused in seven cases including murder, was arrested by the members of the joint forces from Tejgaon area, and was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail on October 21. He was given one-month detention on October 27 under the Special Powers Act.  
Tuhin fell sick at about 2:00pm Thursday and was rushed to the jail hospital. He was shifted to the DMCH as his condition deteriorated at about 3:00pm and the on-duty doctors declared him dead.  
Tuhin's family members received the body from the hospital, after postmortem yesterday night.



Hundreds of students stream out of a Dhaka University examination hall after their Honours admission test under the Faculty of Commerce yesterday. (Story on page 3)

## DOWN TO EARTH

# Craze for soft drinks among urban youths

**ASM NURUNNABI**

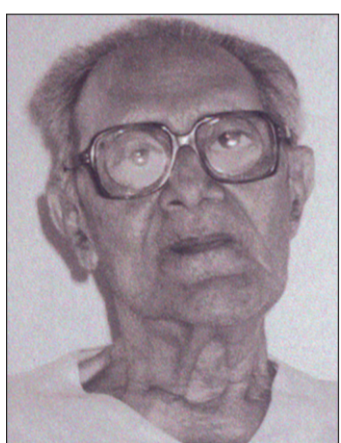
A new craze for some popular brands of soft drinks among the urban young is sweeping the country, thanks to the high-pitched publicity both in electronic and print media. This publicity blitz has been so successful that even the older generation is drawn to it.  
Lately, this phenomenon has become so pervasive that it will be hard to find any kid without detail

knowledge of the list of soft drinks available on the market and their relative merits. These soft drinks have become so popular that they are now household names.  
American soft-drink giants Coca-Cola and Pepsi have sold their products in this country for many years now although they were not as diversified in the past as they are at present. Thirty years ago, Coca-Cola, Fanta, 7-UP,

Crush, Pepsi were the only names that popped up in mind when it came to choosing soft drinks. That's not the same case today as a plethora of soft drinks under different brand names have flooded the market.  
The big name soft-drink companies now hope to make a splash in the overseas markets with colourful new drinks. And given the craze for



Workers head-load stones and sand extracted from a quarry on the Sylhet border unsettling ecological balance and (right) a makeshift signpost in place of a missing border pillar shows the invisible borderline. Encroachment and mindless stone collection are changing the borderline and river course.



## Khwaja Zakiuddin passes away

Khwaja Zakiuddin, the eldest son of late Khwaja Shahabuddin and late Begum Farhat Shahabuddin, died peacefully at home in Karachi on Thursday. He was 85, says a press release.  
Zakiuddin was the most senior banker of the then East Pakistan, having joined the ANZ Grindlays Bank in 1943.  
Later, he joined the State Bank of Pakistan and retired as its executive director.  
He is survived by his wife, Begum Binoo Zakiuddin, son Zahed Zakiuddin and daughters Almas Zakiuddin and Yasmeen Murshed.

# Unplanned extraction of stone threatens ecology

### Disappearance of pillars from Sylhet border areas sparks dispute

**IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet**

Unplanned extraction of stone from the six quarries in Sylhet border areas is destroying the ecology and causing serious environmental degradation.  
This is also changing in the country's borderline and course of rivers flowing in from Meghalaya in India, causing loss of territory.  
Two embankments constructed on the banks of Piani and Dauki rivers by the Water Development Board (WDB) have almost disappeared because of the unplanned extraction of stone and encroach-

ment by Indians allegedly backed by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF).  
Sources said at least 65 border pillars in the quarry areas have disappeared due to the encroachment and unplanned stone collection, often creating dispute between BDR and BSF.  
BDR sources said at least 25 people were killed by BSF in the last few years. Two of them were killed recently.  
The government recently restricted lease of government land within 150 yards of the Zero Line for sand and stone collection. But

allegations have it that this is not enforced properly.  
Even, the Bangladesh Mineral Development Corporation (BMDC) cancelled lease of two persons in Bishnakandi quarry in Gowainghat upazila, but illegal stone collection continues, sources in the area claimed.  
The six quarries are at Bholaganj and Uthma in Companyganj upazila, Bishnakandi in Gowainghat upazila, and Borogram, Lobachhara and Sangram in Jaintapur upazila. All these are located along the border with

## Road accidents kill five in Gazipur, Magura

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

At least five people were killed in separate road accidents in Gazipur and Magura districts yesterday.  
Of them, three were killed in Gazipur and the rest two in Magura.  
In Gazipur, three people were killed in separate road accidents on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway yesterday, according to UNB.  
All the victims, identified as Taijuddin, 70, Saiful Islam, 40, and Suruj Mia, 22, were crushed under the wheels of speeding buses.  
Police said Taijuddin met the accident near Gazipur Square at about noon, Saiful at Soydana and Suruj at Mastarbari in the morning.  
Our Magura Correspondent reports: Two people were killed when a Jessore-bound pick up van hit a rickshaw near Garai Bridge on

# Aspirants start campaign for Barisal city corp'n polls

**A CORRESPONDENT, Barisal**

Barisal town is getting warmed up as a good number of aspirant candidates from both ruling BNP and opposition Awami League have started campaign for the first city corporation polls, scheduled for March 20.  
But the aspirant mayoral and ward commissioner candidates are in great anxiety over who will get the party nod. The candidates have already started moving from door to door seeking vote.  
Political parties are not officially allowed to nominate candidates in the local body polls, but they throw their full weight behind the selected party men.

The district BNP is in serious problem in selecting candidates for the lone post of mayor and 40 posts of ward commissioner, 10 of which are reserved for women.  
Party sources said its city unit president and acting mayor AH Kamal hopes to get the party nod but his hobnobbing with Awami League during its rule and allegations of corruption are "obstacles". He held different posts like ward commissioner, chairman and administrator of the municipality for long 18 years.  
Whip Mojibur Rahman Sarwar, who is also minister in charge of the district, is a mayoral aspirant. Some party sources said holding three

posts will make him 'too powerful' in the district.  
Ebadul Huq Chan, District BNP secretary and BCCI president, is another mayoral aspirant and started campaign long ago. He is known in the party rank and file as a dedicated politician and sufferer during AL rule.  
BNP's ally Jamaat-e-Islami is far away in the mayoral race but are demanding a large number of ward commissioner posts, the sources said.  
Awami League also has at least five aspirants for the post of mayor. They are former superintendent of police Mahub (known as SP

## Liner service 4 of 5 steamers out of order

**A CORRESPONDENT, Barisal**

The state-owned liner service on the Dhaka-Barisal-Khulna river route has been reduced to two days from six days a week, as most steamers are now out of order.  
Of the five steamers on the route, only PS Masud is operating. As a result, the passengers are facing troubles.  
The Lepcha went out of service due to gear trouble last October and the Turn, the Shela and the Ostrich stopped their services on January 4, 8 and 12.  
However, the authorities hope that the Turn would be back in service in a week. But the operation

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 18		5-35 pm
Jan 19	6-43 am	

Prayer Timings		
Jan 18		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-43	5-48
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation