IEB turns 56 today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) will celebrate its 55th found ing anniversary by observing Engineers Day today.

To mark the occasion, IEB has organised various programmes spanning seven days, which include discussions, meetings, seminars and workshops.

The main objective of celebrating Engineers Day is to enhance professional skills and disseminate engineering knowledge to people, said IEB leaders at a press confer-ence yesterday at the IEB headquar-

Highlighting the various initiatives by the IEB to develop a skilled workforce, IEB General Secretary Mohammad Nurul Huda said, to stay afloat in the competitive market of tomorrow, work transparency and accountability should

The World Bank, the Asian Development Bank or other foreign organisation funds most of the large projects in our country. As such foreign engineers are employed. So in spite of our engineers' skills, they get no opportunity to work in large projects, explained Huda.

"Professional engineers, therefore, are now leaving the country as their opportunities get limited everyday," he added.

Engineers Mohammad Manwar Hossain Chowdhury, SM Khabirzzaman, Mohammad Kamruzzaman, Farid Ahmed and Mohammad Abdus Sabur were also present while IEB Vice-president Dr. MAK Ajad presided over the conference.

Villagers go on rampage as accident kills 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Angry villagers damaged 30 transport vehicles of the Islamic University (IU) following a road accident that killed two people in the Satmile area on the Kushtia-Khulna highway in the district

At least 20 IU students were also injured by rampaging villagers who holding up traffic for about four

Police said a campus-bound students knocked down Chiarunnessa, 65, and Shuvo, 6, of Satmile at about 9:00am, killing both grandmother and grandson.

After the incident, the villagers blocked traffic and demanded punishment to the killer and compensation for the victims' families.

Police was dispatched to the spot but failed to control the angry mob who attacked IU vehicles injuring 20 student commuters.

Later at around noon, an additional police force brought the situation under control. The damage was estimated at Tk 50 lakh.

PWD engr jailed for 7 years in corruption case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A PWD engineer has been sentenced to seven years imprisonment in a corruption case.

Mohammad Majnul Ahsan, Judge of Khulna Divisional Special Court, pronounced the verdict on

The court also fined the accused Tk 3.20 lakh, in default, he has to suffer two more years in jail.

According to the prosecution, sub-assistant engineer Tajuddin misappropriated construction materials worth Tk 3.15 lakh from Charerhat PWD warehouse during his tenure from September 21, 1989 to December 17, 1994.

A corruption case was recorded with Khalishpur thana on May 31,

 $Thirteen\ prosecution\ witnesses\\ gave\ their\ deposition\ in\ the\ court.$

Sun Rises Sun Sets

May 7		6-30 pm
May 8	5-20 am	
Prayer Timings		
May 7		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15

5-00

8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

5-15

8-30

Strong local government needed to halve poverty

Prof. Yunus at city discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has no alternative to strengthening the local govern-ment if it wants to halve poverty by 2015, Grameen Bank Chairman Professor Muhammad Yunus said yesterday.

"There has to be a clear mention of the local government's role in verty reduction in the PRSP Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper). The central government alone cannot attain the target of halving poverty by 2015," Prof. Yunus told a discussion meeting at the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED).

The Local Government Consultative Group (LGCG), an independent platform of experts and civil society members who

believe in empowering the local government, organised the discussion to release finds of a survey on newly elected Union Parishad (UP)

"Only the existence of a local government ministry and minister not enough. We need leaders working for the cause of local government institutions," said Prof. Yunus, also LGCG convenor. He invited ideas from other participants so that the LGCG can put forward an agenda to the govern-ment to make local government bodies more functional and effec-

If the government holds the Upazila Parishad polls this year, it will give a complete shape to local administration tiers, he said.

Other participants also called

Manjurul Ahsan Khan, a leader of the Communist Party of Bangladesh, speaks at the eighth congress of the party in

Jamaat-BNP regime to

the party's Dhanmondi office in

the misrule of the alliance govern-

ment marked by violence, murder,

rape and price hike of essentials,'

"People are already fed up with

The leader of the opposition

Hasina alleged that the wrong

urged the lawyers to support the

Awami League's movement for

policies of the government have led to price hike of essentials,

although the people's income did

claimed that during the Awami

League's reign prices of essentials

The former prime minister

unseating the government.

not rise correspondingly.

fall flat on misrule

the city yesterday.

Hasina tells lawyers

for shoring up local government institutions. They suggested the institutions be independent in terms of budget allocation and relieved of unnecessary intervention of lawmakers.

The LGCG member secretary, Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, presented the finds where he said young, relatively honest and active leadership have emerged because of the recent UP polls to over 4,000

According to the survey conducted by the Power and Participation Research Centre on 1,349 UP chairmen in 53 districts, 33 per cent of the newly elected chairmen are below 40 years of age.

The dominant social images of the chairmen are, influential -- 53 per cent, good and honest -- 48 per

remained stable and in some cases

dropped, while the income of the

people went up. "Where is the

taxpayers' money going now?'

Without giving any proof, she

also accused that the prime minis-

ter and her family members

siphoned off funds from the state-

owned banks. She also brought

unsubstantiated allegations of link

between some major bomb blasts

The former prime minister

claimed that her government had

pushed the country to a certain

stage of development, while the

present regime is engaged in loot

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

and the prime minister.

Hasina asked the government.

cent and rich and wealthy -- 43 per cent. Twenty-six per cent of the chairmen are considered promising. The encouraging feature is that only seven per cent of them are dubbed criminals and two per cent

Money power to win the polls roved to be a major factor, which is evident in the fact that each winner spent Tk 6.8 lakh on aver-

Only eight per cent of the chairmen have no political affiliation, while 42.8 per cent are affiliated with the BNP and 30.3 per cent with the Awami League.

BRAC Executive Director Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, former minis SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



Police club activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League, who were demonstrating against shortage of water, gas and electricity, in front of the High Court, At least 50 of them were wounded vesterday.

butts. Gaffar, who had already

been ill, soon succumbed to his

At around 11:00am, as police prepared to bury the body with-

out an autopsy or filing a case, a

group of journalists reached the

spot to report the incident. At this

time, a police officer took the

victim's elder son Shahin away

with him and returned a few

hours later with the Additional

District Magistrate (ADM) Reaz

Ahmed's permission to bury the

ADM Reaz Ahmed told jour-

The discussion recommended

nine points for police reforms that

include incorporation of interna-

tional human rights declarations,

conventions, covenants and

treaties in the police curriculum,

and setting up of a special division

by police.

to investigate crimes committed

Human rights activists, law-

yers, academicians, former

bureaucrats, journalists and NGO

others, was addressed by S M

Ibrahim, Nurul Kabir, Public

Prosecutor Abdullah Mahmud

Hassan, Hasan Shahid Ferdous

executives were present.

and Iftekher Ahmed.

nalists that he gave the permis-

sion following a request by the

body without autopsy.

Victim of police 'brutality' Top law ministry official made HC judge despite Dead day-labourer allegedly buried without autopsy

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

witnesses said.

A day labourer died due to alleged

police brutality at Ekbarpur vil-

Mohonpur upazila here yester-

lage in Mougachhi union of

The body of the victim Abdul

Gaffar, 45, son of late Abdul

Jabbar of Ekbarpur village, bore a

deep cut on the forehead and a

bruise on the lower abdomen,

Gaffar's burial was also per-

formed in a hurry without any

autopsy due to alleged coercion

by police although an unnatural

They said a group of eight

death case was filed, sources said.

policemen led by Sub-inspector

Sanaullah and Assistant Sub-

inspector Fayezur Rahman went

to the village at around 1:00am

yesterday to arrest one Abdul

Mannan, an absconding accused

They called Gaffar out of his

house and asked him to lead them

to Mannan's house. They beat

Gaffar up with batons and rifle

UNB, Dhaka

A top official of the law ministry facing charge of contempt of court for violating a Supreme Court order has been made judge of the

contempt case

"It's unprecedented and shows lack of sense and profundity of the government," observed an eminent lawyer while commenting on the induction of the official, who faces the contempt charge, as additional judge of the High Court. "It's simply a pick-and-choose matter," he added requesting While he was the secretary of the

aw ministry, the High Court served a show-cause notice on him and two others on March 23 asking them to explain why contempt proceedings should not be brought against them for violating its judgement that was affirmed by the

He was however granted seven days' time yesterday to clarify his position by a bench comprising Justice Hamidul Haq and Justice

Journalist abduction Agitating pressmen attacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Criminals yesterday swooped on journalists at Sitakunda who were demonstrating for rescue of abducted local Press Club President and correspondent of the Ittefaq Atahar Siddiq Khosru.

As Khosru remained missing for six days since his abduction, his eldest brother Azhar Siddiq Jahangir filed a case with the Double Mooring Police Station yesterday afternoon.

He named four persons including a local influential political leader as suspects.

Khosru was abducted while going to a relative's house at Maderbari from Dewanhut at around 10:00pm Wednesday. Local journalists yesterday

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Cops in the dock

Human rights seminar bashes police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday branded the police as repressors, corrupt and human rights viola-

Organised by the Freedom Foundation and Odhikar, a nongovernment organisation, the discussion on "The role of lawenforcing agencies in relation to the protection of human rights in Bangladesh" was held at CIRDAP auditorium. The discussion centred on

police affinity to bribery, tendency to tamper with evidences and various such issues. "They are neither custodians of

human rights nor friends of the

people. Rather, they are considered as patrons of criminals," said Masood Alam Ragib Ahsan who presented the keynote The speakers suggested imme-

diate reforms in the police force to turn them into effective law enforcers and protectors of human rights.

"This long pending problem cannot not be changed overnight," said Law Minister Moudud Ahmed, who addressed the discussion as chief guest. "The police should not be

blamed alone for corruption. Are we not corrupt as well?" he asked, adding that the police were very much part of this society.

The discussion also covered lack of training and accountability of the police and non-of implementation of recommendations made by various police reforms

Meanwhile, villagers drawn to The Mougachhi UP chairman told newsmen that he brokered a the spot by the commotion were agitated to find Gaffar's body. settlement between the police and the victim's family considering that "it would be good for the

victim's son and there was "no

objection" from the police or the

They confined the policemen inside the village all night and let them go at about 9:00am. The letfamily". up followed assurances by Overwhelmed at her hus-Mougachhi Union Parishad band's death, a wailing Rizia Chairman Abul Hossain that the Khatun told this correspondent victim's family will get justice and that her husband died as police by police that the victim's wife beat him up black and blue. Rizia Khatun would get Tk 50,000.

UP chairman.

None of the senior officers of the Mohonpur Police Station could be contacted. Duty Officer Khater Ali claimed that none of the eight policemen were responsible for the victim's death, and said that Gaffar died "after developing some problems in the

He denied that the eight policemen were confined by villagers and said the body was buried without autopsy as desired by the victim's family.

Top 'criminals' nabbed in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two notorious criminals including a listed one were held in the city vesterday and Monday. A police contingent of Double

Mooring thana conducted a raid

following a tip off and arrested Shakhawat Hossain alias Babul, 32, from Mogoltuli area on Monday Babul has nine criminal cases

and three general diaries_lodged against him with the Double Mooring, Panchlaish and Bayezid police stations.

Meanwhile, Chandgaon thana police took in a wanted robber Md. Presided over by Dr. Tasneem Musa alias Kala Musa yesterday Siddiqui, the discussion, among afternoon.

Musa is believed to be the second-in-command of Payeenya Jamal who is the leader of an infamous gang of pirates. Musa is an accused in four criminal cases including murder.

Researchers race to patent SARS virus

Dhaka vesterday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League President Sheikh

Hasina has said the BNP-Jamaat

regime is digging its own grave

bly failed to run the country and it

has no right to cling to power any

more", she said reiterating her

demand for immediate exit of the

this repressive and corrupt regime

will crumble under a mass

upsurge," Hasina said at a view

exchange meeting with the newly

elected executives of the

Mymensingh Bar Association at

"The day is not far away when

"The ruling alliance has misera-

through misrule and misdeeds.

Researchers around the world are racing to patent the SARS virus and its genetic material.

Several biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, the federal government and researchers in Canada and Hong Kong have filed SARS-related patent applica-tions in recent weeks, claiming ownership of everything from bits of genetic material to the virus itself.

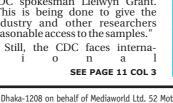
Nonprofit and government agencies said their applications are intended to keep the SARS work in the public domain while private companies said patents will protect their research and develop-

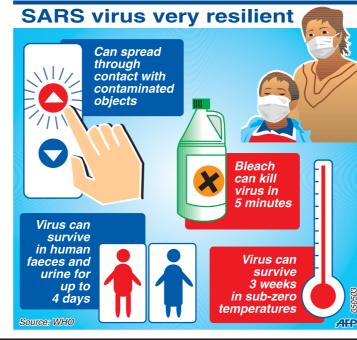
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for instance, claims ownership of the virus and its entire genetic content.

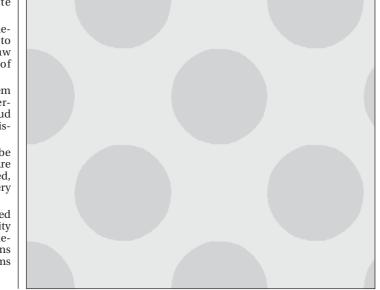
Rather than trying to profit if such a patent were awarded, the CDC says its application is to prevent others from monopolizing the

"The whole purpose of the patent is to prevent folks from controlling the technology," said CDC spokesman Llelwyn Grant. This is being done to give the industry and other researchers reasonable access to the samples."

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EDITOR: MAHFUZ ANAM-Published by the Editor from Transcraft Ltd., 229 Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1205, 8124956, 8124966, Fax: 8125155, 8126154, GPO Box No: 3257, www.dailystarnews.com, E-mail: dseditor@gononet.com, dsreport@gononet.com, dsreport@gononet.com