



PHOTO: STAR

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman launched a musical CD of lyricist KG Mostofa at a function at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Govt mulls 20pc subsidy for solar power units

UNB, Moulvibazar

Finance Minister Saifur Rahman yesterday said the government was considering 20 percent subsidy for solar power units to bring 50,000 families under electricity coverage by next five years.

"The whole country will never come under electricity coverage through the Rural Electrification Board (REB). Solar power is an epoch-making step in this regard," he told a function here.

The finance and planning minister was inaugurating a private solar power unit at village Korney in Rajnagar Upazila.

With this new one, total solar power units across the country stood at 10,000, each costing around Tk 27,000. Any individual can have a unit of solar power in an installment system of payment in three years.

The minister considered the unit cost high and disclosed the

government's plan for providing subsidy. He said 70 percent of the population remained without electricity.

At another function yesterday afternoon, Saifur accused the opposition political parties of spreading propaganda despite the country having a robust economic situation.

He was inaugurating the Saifur Rahman Bhaban at Rajnagar Degree College in the Upazila headquarters.

"The opposition is hindering the ongoing development process through calling 'hartal' and peddling propaganda at home and abroad," the minister said.

He told his audience that hartal is being called without any logic behind such disruptive action.

The main opposition Awami League has called a countrywide dawn-to-dusk shutdown for January 3.



Mild cold wave may continue

UNB, Dhaka

Dry weather will prevail over the country and mild cold wave may continue over Rajshahi and Khulna divisions and it may spread over Sylhet division and the regions of Mymensingh, Tangail, Comilla and Sitakunda during the next 12 hours till 6.00pm today.

Slight fall in night temperature is expected over the country, Met office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 27.7 degree Celsius was recorded at Teknaf and the lowest of 8.8 degree at Ishwardi and Chuadanga.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:19pm today and rises at 6:40am tomorrow. The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major

City/Town	Temperature In Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	25.1	13.3	57	53
Chittagong	27.5	14.2	68	45
Rajshahi	25.0	9.6	70	67
Khulna	25.2	11.2	78	69
Barisal	25.2	10.8	78	84
Sylhet	26.6	14.6	77	74
Cox's Bazar	27.4	17.8	66	70

Face wrongdoers unitedly, says Dr Kamal

UNB, Munshiganj

Gono Forum President Kamal Hossain yesterday urged people to unite to banish vices like godfather, black money, corruption and crime.

"The main objective of unity is to ensure the rule of law by healing the sick politics," he told a gathering organised by district Gono Forum in the town.

Dr Kamal, who is campaigning for a third stream in politics on the basis of a national unity, said the lists of criminals and extortionists and those creating instability in society would be published at upazila and district levels after identifying them.

The former foreign minister said that he would remain with people to face the wrongdoers unitedly.

Chaired by District Gono Forum President Mohammad Hossain Babul, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Adv Fazlur Rahman, Ranesh Moitra, Umme Kulsum Rekha and Adv Shamsul Alam Dudu.

"The entire nation is utterly helpless as there is no security and rights to the people. The government is continually violating the constitution," Dr Kamal alleged.

Terming the foiling of a conference of a political party here by the ruling party supporters as violation of the constitution, he said, "I will ultimately look into the case whether proper trial and inquiry are held."

BUET Teachers' Assoc executives

UNB, Dhaka

Dr Aminul Haque and Dr M Nazrul Islam were elected president and secretary of the BUET Teachers' Association unopposed for 2004.

The other office-bearers, also elected unopposed, are Dr M Monimul Hoque (vice-president), Dr K Shahariar Iqbal (joint-secretary), Dr ABM Faruquzzaman Bhuiyan (treasurer), M Zahidul Islam (magazine secretary) and Salina Begum (entertainment secretary).

And members of the committee are Dr M Afer Ali, Dr Sharif Mohammad Maminuzzaman, Dr M Shamsul Hoque, Dr M Masud Karim, M Abdul Hasheeb Chowdhury and Dr M Rafiqullah.

Uttara Club executives

UNB, Dhaka

Rezaul Haque Tapan has been elected president of Uttara Club Ltd for 2003-04.

The election was held yesterday.

Other executive members are Liaqat Ali, Tariqul Islam Milon, Jahangir Parvez, Zabeed Islam, Ahsan Karim Mohammad Jinnah, Selim Gaffar, Masud Alam Tapan, Selim Shahed, Masudur Rahman Bappi and Nisar Quadir.

Poet Anwar Ahmed

passes away



Anwar Ahmed, a renowned poet and writer, died of a cardiac arrest at his Lalmatia residence in the city on Wednesday at 62, says a press release.

He was the editor of two literary magazines -- 'Kichudhwani' and 'Rupam'. He received several awards, including Jatiya Sahitya Parishad Padak 2003, Bogra Lekhak Chakra Award and Jibanananda Prakashani Award, for his contribution to literature.

He is survived by two sons, one daughter and a number of grandchildren.

A doa mahfil will be held at the residence of his elder brother at Plot No. # 4, Ring Road, Mohammadpur after Asr prayers today.

Sanatan Biswas



Sanatan Biswas, a student of the Institute of Fine Arts, died on December 23 at the age of 31, says a press release.

He was in coma for seven days after he had suffered a stroke.

Sanatan, who hailed from Khulna, successfully completed his Masters from the institute.

Kamal Uddin Ahmed

UNB, Munshiganj

Kamal Uddin Ahmed, assistant director of National Security Intelligence and a freedom fighter, died of a cardiac arrest at his official residence at Collectorate Bhaban here on Wednesday at 53.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held at local Kachari Balu maidan. Two other janaza prayers were held at the NSI head office and Agargaon in Dhaka.



The 15th annual general meeting of the Underprivileged Children's Educational Programmes Association was held at the UCEP Head Office at Mirpur in the city on Tuesday, with its Chairperson A Matin Chowdhury (sixth from left) in the chair.

Seminar on VoIP at BRAC University

A seminar on 'VoIP and its Applications' was held at BRAC University (BU) in the city on December 24, says a press release.

Dr Muhammad A Kalam, Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Texas, Dallas, USA, was the keynote speaker.

He said Voice over IP is a modern tool of information technology and is used mainly by the multinational companies like IBM, CISCO and others.

It is a system which is cost-effective and user-friendly, he added.

Dr Kalam also talked about the technical aspects of the VoIP.

BU Vice-Chancellor Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury said, "We look forward to future cooperation between the two universities."

He said the BU is planning to introduce a Post Graduate Course on telecommunications.

Earlier, Dr Yousuf M Islam, chairperson of Computer Science and Engineering of BU, introduced Dr Kalam.

Chairpersons of other departments, senior faculty members, and students were present at the seminar.



PHOTO: ISPR

Commandant of Ordnance Centre and School Brigadier General Muhammad Bashirul Anam hands over a crest to the best recruit Md Robiul Islam at the attestation parade of 48th batch of recruit of the school at Shaheed Hasib Parade Square at Rajendrapur Cantonment on Wednesday.

Magnesium may lower diabetes risk

REUTERS, New York

An apple a day may keep the doctor away, but new research suggests that nuts, grains, leafy green vegetables and other foods high in magnesium may keep diabetes at bay.

In two new studies, people who consumed the most magnesium in their diets were less likely to develop type 2 diabetes. This type of diabetes occurs when the body becomes resistant to the effect of the glucose-processing hormone insulin.

Until now, very few large studies have directly examined the long-term effects of dietary magnesium on diabetes, Dr. Simin Liu of the Harvard Medical School and School of Public Health in Boston told Reuters Health.

"Our studies provided some direct evidence that greater intake of dietary magnesium may have a long-term protective effect on lowering risk," said Liu, who was involved in both studies.

"The take-home message for the public is that a diet rich in plant-based foods such as nuts, whole grains and vegetables that are high in magnesium may be beneficial for prevention," Liu said.

In one of the studies, researchers evaluated the nutrition of about 85,000 female nurses and more than 42,000 male health professionals every 2 to 4 years. Women were followed for 18 years and the men for 12 years.

In both men and women, those who consumed the most magne-

sium in their diet were least likely to develop type 2 diabetes during the study, according to a report in the January issue of the journal Diabetes Care. This risk reduction was still present even after researchers adjusted for factors that could have influenced the results, including age, total caloric consumption, family history of diabetes, physical activity and alcohol consumption.

Body mass index (BMI), a measure of obesity that takes into account weight and height, did have some effect, but the link between magnesium and a lower risk of diabetes was still statistically significant.

Most of the participants got their magnesium from food, not vitamin supplements. Less than 5 percent took magnesium supplements.

The second study involved more than 39,000 women who had no history of diabetes, heart disease or cancer. The women were followed for 6 years to see if the amount of magnesium they consumed affected the odds of developing diabetes.

Indeed, women who consumed more magnesium in their diet were less likely to develop diabetes, the researchers report. But the link between magnesium and diabetes risk was seen only in women who had a BMI of 25 or higher.

Individuals with a BMI of 25 to 29.9 are considered overweight, while those with a BMI of 30 or higher are considered obese.