



US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Christina Rocca, second from left, meets Asma Kibria, wife of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria, and her son Reza Kibria at their Dhanmondi residence in the city yesterday. US Charge d' Affaires Judith Chammas, left, accompanied Rocca during her visit.

Jute, textile workers begin fast unto death tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

Jute and textile workers will begin a 'fast unto death' programme at Muktangan in the city at 10:00am tomorrow to press for their 10-point demand.

The demands include national minimum wage of Tk 3,000 for the workers of private mills and factories, payment of group insurance to 360 dead workers of Adamjee Jute Mills and reopening of closed mills and factories.

The workers will join the programme under the banner of 'Bangladesh Sanjukta Chat, Suta O Bastrakal Sramik Federation'.

In a joint statement, Federation President Md Faiz Ullah Khandaker and General Secretary Wahid Murad have called on the people of all professions to extend their cooperation to the 'fast-unto-death' programme.

They also urged the government and authorities concerned to resolve the problems through discussion.

Implement int'l action plan to save migratory birds

Experts urge govt

UNB, Dhaka

Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh (WTB) has urged the government to immediately implement the international action plan as per the Convention of Migratory Species (CMS) of Wild Animals to save the migratory birds.

The call came from a seminar on 'The status of the globally threatened Spoon-billed Sandpiper' held at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

WTB and Bangladesh Birds Club jointly organised the seminar to disclose the report of a survey carried out in the country on the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, an endangered species of migratory bird.

Some internationally acclaimed ornithologists from Russia, Germany, UK and Bangladesh conducted the survey from January 17 to 25 at three spots along the country's coastal belt to find out the reasons behind the sharp degradation of population of this species.

Bangladesh is the abode of

some 700 species of birds, among which around 300 are migrants. Experts apprehend that some 50 species of birds in the country are now on the verge of extinction, facing a multitude of threats including human greed.

Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz was the chief guest at the seminar where ornithologist Prof Zaker Hussain and country representative of IUCN Bangladesh Dr Ainun Nishat were present as special guests.

WTB chairman Enayetullah Khan presided over the seminar addressed by Dr Christopher Zockler, leader of the survey team, Enamul Haque, national coordinator of waterfowl census in Bangladesh, and Prof Anwarul Islam, chief executive of WTB.

The surveyors, who found some 11 Spoon-billed Sandpipers in the three coastal spots, said it indicated the health condition of the coastal area.

"Visits of these birds indicate that the health of our ecosystems is

still liveable," said Enayetullah Khan.

He termed habitat loss and fragmentation as the major threats that were causing degradation of birds' population across the globe.

Dr Christopher Zockler said the ecosystem of Bangladesh, which is still at a sustainable level for the birds, needs immediate conservation to keep the nature liveable for human in the long run as bird is one of the major components of the ecosystem.

He also pointed out some key objects to keep the country's ecological balance sustainable. These include protection of key sites like Sonadia and Bodur Mukam; halting of further coastal degradation; creation of a far-reaching national action plan to conserve the ecosystem and developing an understanding under the CMS.

Prof SMA Faiz said there is an urgent need for social and political awareness to save the nature from the damage being caused by vested quarters.

4 policemen, 3 ansars closed for snatching money in Ctg

UNB, Chittagong

Four policemen and three ansars of Chandanaish thana were closed yesterday on charge of snatching Tk 50,000 from homebound day-labourers.

They are SI Nurun Nabi, constables Shahidul Islam, Mainuddin and Mohammad Hanif, and ansars Keka Mia, Abdus Salam and Mahub Ali.

Sources said around 70 day-labourers complained to the Police Supper of the district that some policemen and ansars held them at Barkal police lines on Thursday afternoon and snatched Tk 50,000 from them.

On enquiry, the Police Supper withdrew them from the police station, and sent them to the district police lines.

New JU BCL body formed

BDNEWS, Savar

A 28-member committee of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) was formed at the Jahangirnagar University (JU).

BCL President Liakat Sikder and General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu announced the committee on Thursday night.

Sohel Parvez and Mahmud Naser were made president and general secretary of the committee respectively.

Microbiology deptt opens at JU

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Jahangirnagar University has opened microbiology department under the biological science faculty.

With this, the total number of departments in the university stood at 25.

Prof M Sahabuddin Kabir Chaudhury has been made chairman of the new department while Dr Ali Azam Talukdar joined it as assistant professor.

Admission to the microbiology department will start in 2006-2007 academic session.



Bikkhubdha Deshbasi (aggrieved countrymen) took out a national flag procession in the city yesterday to protest fundamentalism, communalism and militancy across the country.

Robbers loot valuables from bus passengers, stab three

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Highway robbers looted valuables of the passengers of a bus and stabbed the driver and two others on Dhaka-Aricha highway on Thursday night.

The injured are driver Bacchu and passengers Saiful Islam and his wife Keya.

Witnesses said about eight robbers travelling in the guise of

passengers first stabbed the driver of the Faridpur-bound bus of Ananda Paribahan after it crossed the Tora bridge at around 8:30pm.

The gang also threatened to blow up the bus and took away the valuables, including gold ornaments, mobile phones and money, from the passengers.

They decamped with the valuables when the bus reached Musuria area of Shibhalaya.

National flag procession protests fanaticism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A national flag procession was brought out by Bikkhubdha Deshbasi (aggrieved countrymen) in the city yesterday to protest fundamentalism, communalism and militancy across the country.

The forum made an announcement on the Martyred Intellectuals' Day of 2005 that a flag procession would be taken out from the Central Shaheed Minar on every Friday morning until March 26 to uphold the dignity of the national flag.

Starting with the national anthem, the procession with national flag and banners marched through different roads of Dhaka University.

Reading out a statement, Advocate Taposh Kanti Pal said, "It is high time to organise a mass movement like 1971 to protect the dignity of the national flag achieved at the cost of blood."

He also called for organising such processions at district, thana and union levels that should start from their respective Shaheed Minar.

Leaders and members of different social organisations, including Ain O Salish Kendra, Karmojibi Nari and Nijera Kori, and civil society members took part in the procession.



Save the Environment Movement and Jana Udoyg form a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday to protest environmental damage caused by industrial waste.

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