

## BNP won't get more than 30 seats in next polls

### Says Badruddoza Chowdhury

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said more than 30 BNP lawmakers may join his party before the caretaker government takes over.

He said 30 ruling party MPs have already contacted him and expressed their interest in joining the BDB.

He also said the BNP would not get more than 30 seats in the next general election if they accept the reform proposals placed by the BDB and Gono Forum jointly and the election is held in a free and fair

manner.

Badruddoza was speaking at a token hunger strike programme of Bikalpa Juba Dhara at Muktangan in the city. The hunger strike was observed from 11:00am to 5:00pm in protest against repression on leaders and activists of the BDB and its front organisations by the government.

The BDB chief said the government has resorted to repression on the party men in a bid to prevent the BNP lawmakers from joining the BDB.

He also criticised the BNP-led alliance government for its failure in all sectors and repression on the

people.

BDB Secretary General Major (ret.) MA Mannan said the BDB will continue to carry out its movement peacefully until the demands of the people are realised.

BDB Organising Secretary Mahi B Chowdhury MP, Bikalpa Juba Dhara convenor ATM Kamal and BDB leaders Firoz M Hasan, Wazed Ali Chowdhury Pervaz, Azizur Rahman Akanda and Azmeri Begum Swarna also spoke.

The BDB will also stage a demonstration in the city on April 9 to protest the repression on BDB leaders and activists by the government.



PHOTO: STAR  
Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh observes a token hunger strike at Muktangan in the city yesterday protesting false cases and harassment of its leaders and activists.

## Ban on 7 human haulers urged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Western Motors, sole distributor of Bajaj Tempo Ltd, in Bangladesh has urged the police to impose a ban on seven passenger carrying human haulers in Gulshan and Baridhara area, which are plying without valid documents.

Afzal Hossain, proprietor of western motors in a letter to the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), urged for imposing a ban as those are plying through managing some police officials.

He told the Daily Star that his company owns the vehicles and those were given to some drivers on contact with some conditions. But the drivers of those human haulers have running the vehicles without any fitness certificate, tax token and insurance coverage for years.

The documents of the vehicles were not renewed in the last two years, he alleged. Disclaiming his liability, he said as he has no control over those vehicles, he has no responsibility for any violation of the government rules.

Afzal hossain further said he could not establish his control over those vehicles even after lodging complaint with police several times.

The vehicles are bearing registration Number Dhaka metro cha-11-2152, 11-2287, 11-2326, 11-2187, 11-2288, 11-2271 and 11-2313.

## Schoolteacher assaulted at Gournadi

### Students, guardians call strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Students and guardians of Palardi School at Gournadi here yesterday called strike for indefinite period in the school protesting indecent behaviour with a girl student and assault on a teacher. Kamruzzaman, a boy of class nine of the school, assaulted his classmate and forcibly kissed her last week.

Md Ilyus, a senior teacher of the school, beat Kamruzzaman as punishment after the girl had complained to him about the matter.

In retaliation, Kamruzzaman and his relative and also a local Awami League leader Khokan Molla, and their associates, allegedly assaulted teacher Ilyus in front of the students during school hours on Thursday.

Hundreds of agitated students and guardians of the school boycotted classes, monthly examinations and staged demonstrations on the roads and held a rally at the Ashokati bus stand yesterday.

Shahidul Islam, Joynal Matubbar, Nurul Islam Paik, Sabuj Gomasta, Paran Khan, Mizanur Rahman Akbar, Nur Alam, Nazmul, Rashed spoke at the rally.

The speakers at the rally demanded expulsion of the student from the school and punishment to the persons involved in the attack.

## Establish separate deptt of children affairs

### Speakers say at workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a workshop yesterday called for establishing a separate department of children affairs to ensure better coordination among the government and non-governmental organisations for the welfare of disadvantaged children.

They also stressed the need for inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination in allocation of funds and technical support for implementation of the programmes meant for the children.

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs organised the daylong workshop on 'The development of socially disadvantaged children (SDC)' at the LGED conference room in the city.

Presenting a keynote paper, Nurul Islam Khan, a consultant, said there were 6,74,148 street children in 11 major cities and towns in 2004 and the number will rise to 7,59,655 in 2014.

Among the socially disadvantaged children, those who are growing up in brothels and the brothel children under institutional care are the most distressed children, he said, adding that necessary steps should be taken immediately to address their needs.

Expressing concern over the increasing number of disadvantaged children, Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui, principal secretary to the prime minister, called on the organisations working for the children to raise awareness about family planning programme alongside the gov-

ernment's efforts to this end.

He also called for specific recommendations with regard to funds, manpower and other factors needed to implement the programmes for the children.

Speaking as the chief guest, Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Jahan Haque called for initiating a 'compulsory primary education' programme for the disadvantaged children.

Government officials, civil society members and representatives of Unicef, Save The Children, CARE and BRAC and took part in the workshop.

## Youth found dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police found a body of an unidentified youth, 26, in the city under Turag Police Station yesterday morning.

Police recovered the body with its hands and legs tied up with rope and neck with towel, from an open ground at Tarartek area.

Police said the man was killed at night.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

## New sub-regional economic forum floated

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

In what is considered a key initiative at the Track Two level diplomacy, foreign policy think-tanks of Bangladesh and India are working on a new sub-regional economic grouping that also includes China and Myanmar.

Experts of Dhaka-based Centre for Policy Dialogue, New Delhi-based Centre for Policy Research and the Institute of Chinese Studies along with former Bangladesh foreign secretary Farooq Sobhan have floated the grouping styled 'Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM)', which has so far held six meetings.

Diplomatic sources here said the fact that the BCIM has so far met six times testifies to the utility of the Track Two initiative in exploring sub-regional economic cooperation among the four countries.

India recognises that the BCIM has the potential to bring three most important neighbouring countries closer in a common pursuit of prosperity through increased use of mechanisms of regional integration.

The ideas of the scholars have provided substantive inputs for policy-makers in the four countries.

New Delhi, however, reckons that the conceptual framework offered by the BCIM initiative is "already subsumed within the existing collaborative architecture in the region".

Already, a web of regional and sub-regional groupings are in place such as SAARC, Bay of Bengal Initiative For Multi Sectoral and Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, ASEAN Summit, East Asia Summit and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation where more than one country of BCIM are present.

The farm owners cautioned that any apathy on the part of government agencies in this regard might damage the entire poultry sector involving an investment of Tk 5000 crore and livelihood of 50 lakh people.

The country has around 1,50,000 poultry farms with an annual turnover of \$750 million, said Wapsa Secretary Moshir Rahman.

"Production of chicks have fallen from five million to four million

## Prof Sitara Parvin Trust Fund set up at DU

BSS, Dhaka

A new trust fund titled 'Professor Sitara Parvin Trust Fund' has been established at Dhaka University.

In memory of former chairman of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism Prof Dr Sitara Parvin, her husband Prof Dr. Ahaduzzaman Mohammad Ali handed over a cheque for taka 20 lakh to Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz yesterday.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof AFM Yusuf Haider, Treasurer Prof Syed Abul Kalam Azad, Registrar Anwar Hussain, Chairman of Mass Communication and Journalism Department Prof M Golam Rahman, eminent cultural personality Asaduzzaman Noor, MP, and family members of Dr Sitara Parvin were present on the occasion.

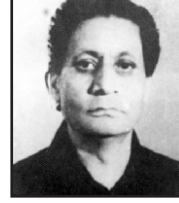
Out of the income of this fund, ten meritorious students, who will secure top ten positions in BSS (Hons) examinations from the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University, will be awarded scholarship every year.

Prof Faiz thanked the family members of late Prof Sitara for such a generous donation to set up this trust fund.

Prof Sitara, daughter of former president Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, died in a tragic road accident on June 23, 2005 in USA.

Those who contributed to this trust fund are Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and Mrs. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prof Dr. Ahaduzzaman Mohammad Ali and Esha Shraboni, Asaduzzaman Noor, MP, and Dr Shahin Akhter, Dr Mohammad Moniruzzaman, Samia Parvin, Michel Smith and Shahana Parvin, Shibli Ahmed, Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, Dr Kawser Afsana and Mr. and Mrs Sohel Ahmed. All of them are family members and close relatives of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed.

## Death anniversary



Today is the 20th death anniversary of Justice Syed Muhammad Hussain, former chairman of the Bangladesh chapter of International Law Association, Amnesty International and International Commission of Jurists, says a press release.

Amin Lashkar



Today is the 9th death anniversary of Amin Lashkar, former president of Bangladesh Chemist and Druggist and founder member of Saarc Chamber of Commerce, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held at the Baridhara DOHS Mosque after Magrib prayers.

## SMUGGLING OF INDIAN CHICKS AND EGGS

# Maintain strict vigilance against bird flu

## Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Local poultry farm owners have called for strict vigilance against possible presence of lethal bird flu virus in the country following 'rampant smuggling of Indian chicks and eggs' through the borders and their sale by customs officials.

They expressed their apprehension at a seminar organised jointly by Brac, World Poultry Science Association (Wapsa) and Live Stock Department in Rajshahi yesterday.

The farm owners cautioned that any apathy on the part of government agencies in this regard might damage the entire poultry sector involving an investment of Tk 5000 crore and livelihood of 50 lakh people.

The country has around 1,50,000 poultry farms with an annual turnover of \$750 million, said Wapsa Secretary Moshir Rahman.

"Production of chicks have fallen from five million to four million

per week following bird flu epidemic in different countries," he said.

SM Mahfuzur Rahman, owner of Sraboni Khamarbari, said, "Only few farms are engaged in smuggling suspected avian flu carriers, but the authorities are turning a blind eye to those elements."

Ragib Ahsan Munna, owner of a Dhaka poultry farm, said they suspect that Al Raji, Al Tawfik and Al Jami farms of Selim Enterprise are engaged in smuggling and it would be clear if their daily production capacity is examined.

Abdul Awal, owner of Rakib Farm, said smuggling is going on despite the government ban on the import of parent stock, chicks and eggs from 25 bird flu-hit countries including India as a precaution.

He asked border forces to crack down on the smuggling of poultry birds.

"Rajshahi is most vulnerable to bird flu as it is a close neighbour of India which is already infected by the fatal virus," Awal added.

Meanwhile, members of Bangladesh Rifles seized some

11,500 smuggled Indian chicks in Rajshahi on March 22, but customs officials sold those by auction at Tk 5.55 per piece against its actual price at Tk 30.

Natore police on March 31 seized 5,500 Indian chicks belonging to Al Jami farm and arrested three people in this connection.

According to Rajshahi BDR, Indian borders with Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj and Naogaon have been tightened following the outbreak of bird flu in India.

"There have so far been no reported outbreak of H5N1 virus in Bangladesh, but we are closely monitoring all poultry birds," said deputy director of health in Rajshahi.

The avian influenza virus has spread among the birds at an alarming rate in recent months sweeping through parts of Europe into Africa and flaring anew in Asia.

The virus has killed at least 105 people since it re-emerged in late 2003.

## Alleged smuggler arrested in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday arrested an alleged smuggler at the Sonadanga residential area.

DB police said Shaikh Ferdous Alam alias Feroze is a smuggler and also involved in drug trafficking. There are two separate cases against him with Benapole Police Station and Gopalganj Sadar Police Station on charge of smuggling drugs from India. He was on bail in the cases.

Ferdous runs a syndicate of smugglers and drug traffickers, said AC Zahur Chowdhury. Besides, he is also involved in trafficking in women, he said.

Ferdous is also a listed smuggler, said city Special Branch of Khulna metropolitan police.

## ALLEGATION OF MURDER BY FATHER

# Body of baby girl exhumed for autopsy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Doctors of Dhaka Medical College morgue conducted a post-mortem on a ten-month old baby girl yesterday, two days after police disinterred her body from a graveyard in the city's Mirpur area.

Police exhumed the body following a court order issued after Fatema Begum, mother of the infant, Rabeya, had filed a murder case with Mirpur Police Station on March 28.

In the complaint, Fatema mentioned that her husband Rafiq, his first wife and five others killed the infant on March 28.

She also mentioned in the case that Rafiq, a construction contractor, married her five years back concealing his first marriage. She said Rafiq sent her to her father's house in Bhola about one year ago where she gave birth to the baby.

Fatema also said her husband snatched the girl from her on March 13 after she had come back to Dhaka and put the girl at the house where he lives with his first wife.

She alleged that her husband, his first wife and other accused buried Rabeya even without informing her.

Dr Kamrul Hasan Sarker who performed the autopsy of Rabeya said they have sent the sample for pathological test to ascertain whether the infant was killed.

Mirpur police said they could not arrest anyone in this connection as all the accused fled their Shewrapara house.

## 20 houses gutted

UNB, Nilphamari

At least 20 houses were gutted in a devastating fire at Pramanikpara village in Domar upazila yesterday leaving five families homeless.

Residents said the fire originated from an oven in the afternoon soon engulfed the adjacent houses.

Three people received burn injuries during the efforts to extinguish the fire.

## DU teacher Imtiaz Ahmed passes away

DU CORRESPONDENT

Syed Imtiaz Ahmed, an assistant professor at the Department of International Relations, Dhaka University (DU), passed away due to a cardiac arrest at his Uttara residence yesterday at the age of 33.

He was also a researcher and human rights activist.

Imtiaz, son of late SM Ahmed Humayun, former editor of the now-defunct Daily Bangla and former director general of Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB), is survived by his mother, wife and a brother.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at the central mosque of DU after Zohr prayers on Monday after the arrival of his wife Lailufar Yasmin, who is also a teacher at the same department of DU, from China where she is pursuing higher studies.

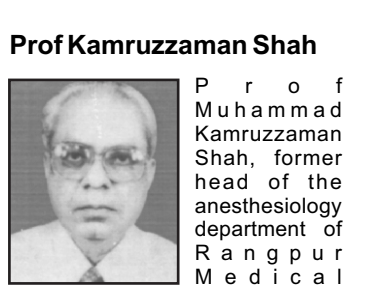
His body has been kept at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) mortuary, said journalist Syed Eraz Ahmed, elder brother of Imtiaz.

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) and Odhakar, a human rights organisation, expressed deep shock at the death of Imtiaz Ahmed.

In a condolence message, Duta President Prof Sharif Ullah Bhuiyan and General Secretary Prof Dr Md Akhtaruzzaman said Imtiaz Ahmed was a brilliant student, researcher and dedicated teacher. His death is an irreparable loss to the university as well as the country, they added.

SM Azmal Hossain, member secretary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall Alumni Association, also condoled the death of Imtiaz.

## Prof Kamruzzaman Shah



former principal of the now defunct Northern Private Medical College, passed away due to old-age ailment on March 22 in Rajshahi at the age of 69, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters.

Sirajul Islam

BSS, Dhaka

Sirajul Islam Khan, father of Shahidul Islam Kabul, vice-president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) passed away due to cancer at his Faridpur residence at the age of 71.

JCD Dhaka University unit President Hasan Munun and General Secretary Saiful Islam Firoz condoled the death.

## Special bus service for women in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Women-only bus service was launched in the port city yesterday amid enthusiasm.

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) introduced the much-awaited special city bus service for women through a ceremony at city's Anderkilla intersection.

City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury formally inaugurated the service as chief guest terming it a fulfillment of his electoral pledge.

Over four hundred women, who gathered at the ceremony, gave the mayor a rousing ovation when he declared the launch of the service.

CCC Female Commissioner Sabiha Musa presided over the ceremony while senior journalist Obaidul Hoque, CCC Chief Executive Officer Mostafa Kamal Uddin, former Chief Engineer of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Mamudul Islam and wife of city mayor Hasina Mohiuddin spoke on the occasion.

The service started with 10 buses that would ply in two routes including route no. 1 and route no. 2 out of the scheduled four routes.

Sources said the service would start with 10 more buses in the other two routes in a week.

Mayor Mohiuddin in his speech said it was one of my electoral pledges to arrange hassle free travel for female passengers of the city who had long been suffering and facing harassments while travelling in the general city buses, rangers and tempos.

He declared that CCC would gradually recruit female supervisors for these buses and employ female staff in the ticket counters.

Sources said the bus fare was fixed at Tk 3 per passenger for travelling first one kilometre and it would rise by Tk 2 for every additional kilometre.

It is two times higher than the existing special city service buses, which charge Tk 2 for first 3 kilometers, and Tk 1 for every additional kilometre. Despite the higher fare, I appreciate the service as it brings comfort for us at last, said Purabi Chakraborty, a passenger.



PHOTO: STAR  
Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury formally inaugurates the special city bus service for women at a ceremony at Anderkilla intersection in Chittagong city yesterday.

## ASSAULT ON RU JOURNO

Cop's punishment demanded

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) journalists yesterday staged a demonstration in front of the central library demanding exemplary punishment to police constable who mercilessly beat Ali Asgor Khokon, university correspondent of the daily Janata, on Thursday.

The constable beat Khokon when he was engaged in collecting information of a clash between police and JCD activists on that day.

The journalists took out a procession that paraded different campus roads demanding security of journalists and general students.

Later addressing a rally, the speakers slated police as well as university administration for failing to ensure security of journalists on the campus.

They also demanded immediate withdrawal of police camp from the campus and compensation for the injured journalist.

RU journalists will form a human chain in front of the central library today and submit a memorandum to RU VC to realise their three-point demand.

## DHAKA TODAY

### National dialogue on militancy

The Visible Studies organises a national dialogue on 'Rise of Militancy in Bangladesh: Problem and Solutions'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

### Seminar on Bangabangha

A seminar on 'Bangladesh is marching forward' will be held to mark the centenary of Bengal partition. Venue: Institute of Engineers. Time: 10:00am.

### Discussion on Prophet

A discussion on the life of Prophet Muhammad (SM) will be held to mark the birthday of the Prophet. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

### Discussion on Bangabandhu

Sonar Bangla Jubo Parishad organises a discussion on 'Bangabandhu

Bangladesh' with Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:30pm.

### Discussion on liberation war

Srijan organises a discussion on 'Liberation War: Context and Achievement'. Venue: Aziz Super Market (Second floor). Time: 6:00pm.

### Discussion on Nepal

Solidarity Committee for Democratic Nepal will hold a discussion on the situation in Nepal. Venue: CDL, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:00pm.

### Jubo Sanghati discussion

Jatiya Jubo Sanghati will hold a discussion to mark its 23rd founding anniversary with former president HM Ershad as chief guest. Venue: Hotel Sundarban. Time: 5:00pm.

## WEATHER TODAY

# Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Jessore and Kushtia in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said in a forecast. It said that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 37.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 19.1 degree Celsius at Dinajpur.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:15pm today and rises at 5:49am tomorrow.**

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	34.5	24.7	71	45
Chittagong	31.6	23.0	76	74
Rajshahi	37.6	22.1	76	-
Khulna	34.5	24.2	74	55
Barisal	34.6	23.0	88	69
Sylhet	34.0	22.5	64	62
Cox's Bazar	32.5	22.4	69	80