

## Rearrangement in top civil administration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday made some rearrangements in the top civil administration and assigned ministries to the newly promoted officials.

Secretary of Ministry of Youth and Sports Firoz Ahmed has been appointed as the Secretary of Commerce.

Ministry assignments of the four newly promoted secretaries, who were additional secretaries before, are: Aminul Islam Bhuiyan, Secretary of Ministry of Social Welfare; Sirajul Islam, Secretary of Ministry of Youth and Sports; Shaikh AK Motahar Hossain, Secretary of Ministry of Food and Disaster Management and Abdul Hye Hawlader, Member of the Planning Commission.

Meanwhile, the government in an order yesterday placed Akmal Hossain Azad, DG of Directorate General of Family Planning, as an Officer on Special Duty (OSD).

## Cloths worth Tk 50 lakh seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Officials of Customs Intelligence and Investigations Directorate seized cloths worth around Tk 50 lakh from Islampur and Rayerbagh in the city yesterday.

Acting on a tip off, officials of the directorate seized a pick-up van laden with Indian sari at Rayerbagh on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at around 3:00am.

Later they raided Islampur in Old Dhaka and seized a covered van filled with garments cloths.

However, none was arrested in this connection.

## Production suspended at CUFL for lack of gas supply

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Production at Chittagong Urea Fertilizer Limited remained suspended for around six hours on Monday due to an abrupt halt of gas supply.

According to CUFL sources, an interruption in gas supply caused suspension of fertilizer production at the factory at 7:15pm.

They further said that with the flow of gas supply remaining below the required level, CUFL could not go into full production till yesterday afternoon. They could only produce 812 M tons of fertilizer yesterday while the normal daily production is some 1700 M tons, they added.

However, the officials of Bakharabad Gas Supply Limited claimed that no incident of sudden interruption in gas supply was reported till Monday.

The reported interruption in gas supply at CUFL probably happened due to a problem in its internal supply line, said a BGSL official.

## 'Bangladesh Dialogue' goes on air in Sept

BBC Bangla, Channel i sign agreement

BBC Bangla is going to introduce 'Bangladesh Dialogue' in the form of open discussion and debate to further strengthen the democratic practice and culture in the country, says a press release.

The programme will address current issues confronting the country and society as a whole. This 45-minute programme will be telecast on Channel i in 16 episodes.

An agreement to this effect was signed recently between BBC Bangla represented by Sabir Mustafa, head of Bengali Department, and Channel i represented by Esrarul Huq, executive director (Sales & Marketing).

Faridur Reza Sagar, managing director, Channel i, Shykh Seraj, director and head of News, Channel i, and Kader Kallol, BBC correspondent in Bangladesh, were present on the occasion.

As per agreement, the programme will be recorded in nine districts -- Dhaka, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Khulna, Barisal, Rangpur, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Rangamati -- with the participation of general people, teachers, students, professionals and NGO representatives.

Political leaders and civil society representatives will be on the panel of discussants. The programme will go on air in September.

In the recent past, BBC Bangla organised a programme titled 'Bangladesh Sanglap', which was telecast on Channel i. The programme was highly acclaimed at home and abroad.



Bangabandhu Avenue area in the city during hartal hours yesterday. The 14-party opposition combine enforced a country-wide dawn-to-dusk hartal to protest the death of an activist in police action during Sunday's blockade programme.

## 231 Rab members punished so far

Babar tells JS

UNB, Dhaka

Since the formation of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), 231 of its members have been punished for different offences until June 26 this year, parliament was told yesterday.

Rab was formed on March 26, 2004.

State Minister for Home Affairs

## China presents meteorological equipment

UNB, Dhaka

China yesterday provided a set of meteorological satellite equipment (PCVSAT) to Bangladesh as complement.

Chinese Charge d' Affaires to Bangladesh He Lanjing handed over the PCVSAT set to joint secretary of Defence Ministry Brigadier General Shah Sultan Uddin Iqbal at the Chinese Embassy in the city.

Chinese Meteorological Administration donated this set of PCVSAT to Bangladesh Meteorological Department under the Voluntary Cooperation Programme (VCP) of the World Meteorological Organisation.



Sabir Mustafa of BBC Bangla and Esrarul Huq of Channel i sign an agreement on telecast of 'Bangladesh Dialogue' recently.

## Bullet-hit city trader dies in hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A trader of Sabujbagh, who was shot by miscreants last month for refusing to pay extortion, succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) on Monday night.

Being furious at his death news, locals staged a demonstration at Sabujbagh in the city after his janaza demanding trial and exemplary punishment of the killers.

On June 12, local hoodlums Wasim, Ripon and their gang shot Delwar Hossain, 25, owner of Pardo Medicine House in Manda in Sabujbagh, at his head, said family members of the victim.

He was admitted to DMCH where he died on Monday night after about one-month fighting for life.

Family members alleged that local hoodlum Uzzal demanded Tk 1 lakh from Delwar.

As he refused to pay them the amount, the miscreants killed him, family members added.

MAZEDA MURDER

## Ex-husband, 3 others get 31 years' RI

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced an ex-husband and three others to 31 years' rigorous imprisonment for killing Mazeda Begum, a housewife at Savar, in June 1998.

The convicts are ex-husband Badsha Miah alias Lal Badsha and his brother Mohammad Ali, sons of late Abdul Hamid, and Khokan Miah, son of Mohammad Ali, and Shahjahan, son of Sumon Bepari, of Ghaserdia.

Judge Kamrul Hossain Mollah of the Fifth Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court handed down the sentence in their absence.

The court also acquitted Abdur Rahman and Afsar Uddin, as the charges brought against them were not proved.

The punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender, the judge said.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 23 prosecution witnesses.

According to the prosecution, a gang of miscreants led by Lal Badsha called Mazeda Begum out of her house at Maniknagar in Savar at about 8:00pm on June 1 and killed her as she married another person when Lal Badsha was abroad.

An murder case was filed with Savar Police Station accusing Lal Badsha and five others the same day.

## Agri officials asked to raise quality seed production

BSS, Dhaka

Agriculture Minister MK Anwar yesterday asked agriculture officials to take up more projects to increase quality seed production, expand irrigation coverage and reduce the 'yield gap'.

The minister was addressing a meeting aimed at preparing a roadmap ensuring full and timely implementation of the development projects under the Annual Development Program of 2006-07, said a press release.

The agriculture ministry will implement 55 spill-over projects at a cost of Tk. 580 crore under the current ADP. Another Tk. 641 crore has been allocated for 62 new projects which are at different stages of approval.

Member of the Planning Division Ali Imam Mazumder, Agriculture Secretary Kazi Abul Kashem, chief executives of all the 16 agriculture organisations, representatives of the Ministries concerned and officials of the agriculture ministry attended the meeting.

Emphasising the need for successful implementation of the development projects, the minister said, "you will have to make forward planning to implement different components of the projects. Don't wait for fund release to start the work under the projects".

The minister said quality seed supply should be strengthened to increase production. He said, "we will have to take steps to reduce loss of irrigation water, apart from expansion of irrigation coverage". He asked the BADC and Barind Multipurpose Development Authority to take a coordinated approach to increase irrigation facilities uniformly across the country.

The minister also said research and extension organisations should take coordinated steps to reduce huge yield-gap, which is above 30 percent in some crops.

The meeting decided to increase seed storage capacity of BADC. It also decided to expedite research on all fibre crops such as jute and cotton at one place.



Family members of language movement martyrs pose with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at the monthly allowance distribution ceremony at her office in the city yesterday.

FIRST SEDITION CASE

## Charges not framed against 8 JMB leaders, activists

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court could not frame charges of the first sedition case against eight JMB leaders and activists of Dhamrai area, as the lone accused Rafiqul Islam alias Sentu, now in jail, was not produced before it yesterday due to hartal.

Judge Mohammad Golam Hossain of the Additional District Judge and Bankruptcy Court fixed August 3 for the next hearing and directed the jail authorities to produce Sentu before the court on that day.

The accused are Mohammad Rafiqul Islam alias Sentu, 22, Mohammad Wahab, 26, Yaqub Ali, 21, Anwar Hossain, 23, Faruq Hossain

alias Kosai Faruq, 25, Mohammad Wahiduzzaman alias Pintu, 20, Abdus Salam, 22, and Nurul Islam, 23. Of them, Sentu is now in custody while the others are still at large.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Iqbal Hossain, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet on December 27 last year against the accused to a first class magistrate's court in the city, showing 25 people as prosecution witnesses.

On February 20, 2005 Dhamrai police arrested Sentu, Wahab, Yaqub, Anwar, Faruq and Salam with nine manuals on bomb making and other contraband materials on the Dhaka-Archa Highway.

They showed the six men arrested under Section 54 of the Criminal

Procedure Code and produced them before a first class magistrate's court in Dhaka on February 22, 2005 with prayer for a seven-day remand to interrogate them. The court granted a two-day remand.

Thirteen days into their arrest, the arrestees were released on bail.

Investigating the case, Dhamrai police found that the activities of the accused were seditious.

With approval from the home ministry, SI Zehad Hossain of the police station filed the sedition case against the accused on September 11 last year.

Sentu was re-arrested in November while the others have been absconding.



US Ambassador Patricia A Butenis visits the patients of US Navy hospital ship at Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday. The USNS Mercy arrived and anchored off the coast of Cox's Bazar on July 1 to provide humanitarian assistance.