

# Plea to raise literacy rates in Sylhet

By Staff Correspondent

Jalalabad Association on Friday urged its members and concerned persons to extend all out help for increasing literacy rate in Sylhet and encouraging Sylheti students in higher studies.

In its General Meeting held at Engineers Institution, President of the Association, Abdul Malek Chowdhury said the Association's education fund is now only about Tk one lakh. He stressed that the fund should be raised at least up to Taka five lakh. He called upon all to donate for the education fund.

F.R. Chowdhury, Secretary of External Resource Department (ERD) said male literacy rate in Sylhet is now only about 18 per cent and female literacy rate is about seven per cent. He said the Association should play vital role in literacy drive.

Matin Uddin Ahmed, Vice President of Al-Baraka Bank, said the resource from Sylhet is being spent in other areas of the country. He said steps should be taken to reinvest Sylhet's resource in its soil to eradicate unemployment in the region. M.A. Haq, former President of the Association, said a vacuum would be created for Sylhet as there is only one MP from Sylhet for the future government. He said the Association should come forward to fill the vacuum. He said the Association should play active role in realising different demands of the Sylheti people.

Special guest of the meeting Professor Shahed Ali said the Association should create movement or solving different problems of Sylhet. He also suggested for introducing some annual prizes for the renowned personalities of Sylhet.

Later, prizes were distributed among the child singers of the Annual cultural competition.

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## Ctg Press Club polls held

CHITTAGONG, Mar 8: Election of office-bearers of Chittagong Press Club was held at its temporary office Friday, says a press release, reports BSS.

Seven out of eleven executive posts were elected unopposed while polling was held for the post of Sports Secretary and three Executive Body members.

Joyantha Bonik of Naya Bangla was elected Sports Secretary defeating Osmanul Haq of Daily Azadi. Saiful Alam of Dainik Bangla, Saifuddin Mohammed Khaled of Daily Azadi and Kalim Sarwar of Daily Purbokone were elected Executive Committee members.

The office-bearers elected unopposed were: President: Ataul Hakim of Daily Purbokone. Senior-Vice President: Mohammed Moslem Khan, Editor, Daily Desher Katha, Vice-President: Shamir Bhatlacharya of Daily Azadi, General Secretary: Abu Sufian, Executive Editor, Daily Purbokone, Joint Secretary: Helaluddin Chowdhury; Daily Azadi, Treasurer: Moazzemul Haq, News Editor Daily Naya Bangla, Library and Publication Secretary: Biswajit Chowdhury of Daily Purbokone.

## Taxi driver killed

A baby taxi driver was killed when his taxi collided with a speeding truck at Chanmaribag on Friday at 4 a.m.

The driver of the taxi (Dhaka Metro Ta-4259) succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College hospital.



The President of Jalalabad Association Abdul Malek Chowdhury (seated centre), Vice President Muhibul Haasan (left) and M.A. Haq (right), former President with prize-winners at the Association's meeting in Dhaka on Friday— Star photo

## Quarantine barriers to be overcome

# First irradiation plant to start operation in July next

Country's first demonstration plant with multipurpose irradiation facilities for food items and medical supplies at Faujdarhat, Chittagong is expected to go into operation in July next.

The project is being implemented by Gamma Tech Limited, a joint venture company of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) and Bangladesh Export Import Company (BEXIMCO) at a cost of about Taka seven crore. Official sources told BSS. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was providing technical assistance to the project including equipment and Gamma ray radiation sources worth Taka 2.79 crore. Techno Export of the USSR is supplying the source for IAEA.

All necessary equipment for the project have already arrived and the civil works would be completed by June next, they said.

They said the first radiation source of 1,10,000 curie capacity has already been manufactured and was expected to reach Bangladesh soon. In the second year another source of 1,00,000 curie capacity would be added from IAEA grant.

Initially annual irradiation capacity of the plant would be 6000 tons frozen shrimp and sea food, 1000 tons fresh water fish, 400 tons dry fish, 15,000 tons potato and onions and 45,000 cubic feet medical and pharmaceutical products. The capacity would be about double with the addition of the second source in the second year when food grains, pulses, fruits, vegetables and onions also would be irradiated.

Concerned scientists at the Institute of Food and Radiation Biology (IFRB), at BAEC, Savar said for the last two decades they were working with food irradiation and had conducted pilot and semi-commercial scale studies of some selected number of foods of immediate economic importance to the country. They said on the basis of these studies technical and operational feasibility of the technology for commercial exploitation had been established.

They said scientific studies had confirmed that very low dose radiation treatment could inhibit sprouting of potatoes and onions,

disinfest dried fish, pulses, oil seeds and cereals, extend shelflife of fresh fish under refrigerated storage, delay ripening of tropical fruits, and decontaminate spices and animal feeds.

Scientific studies at BAEC and abroad showed that irradiated food retain their original taste, nutritional values and wholesomeness while saves them from wastages by rotting, sprouting and insectation. At present commercial irradiation plants are in operation in Thailand, Pakistan, India and Japan in the Asian region. Within one year the plants in Vietnam, Bangladesh and Malaysia are expected to go into operation.

In 1983 Bangladesh has accorded clearance to 13 different irradiated food items for human consumption following adoption of the codex international standards of irradiated foods.

The clearance was based on the accumulated results at home and abroad on food irradiation studies and examination of the same by a national expert committee formed for the purpose by IAEA, the scientists said. Bangladesh has also adopted

the code of practice for operation of radiation facilities used for treatment of food items as recommended by the Codex Commission.

An international expert group meeting of the FAO, WHO and IAEA held in Washington in January this year, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), has urged governments to adopt the use of radiation processing to rid fruits and vegetables of insects to overcome quarantine barriers.

The group also recommended administrative protocols and processing requirements to effectively control treated commodities entering international trade.

Worldwide, 36 government included Bangladesh have approved irradiation for treating one or more food items for quarantine or other purposes.

## Moscow for better ties with new government

The Soviet Union received with satisfaction the reports about the successful holding of the parliamentary elections in Bangladesh, the USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman V. Churkin told the media representatives on Thursday in Moscow, according to a message received in Dhaka, said official sources.

Undoubtedly the efforts of the interim administration and in particular of the Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed were instrumental in holding the elections in an undisturbed and peaceful atmosphere, stressed Mr. Churkin.

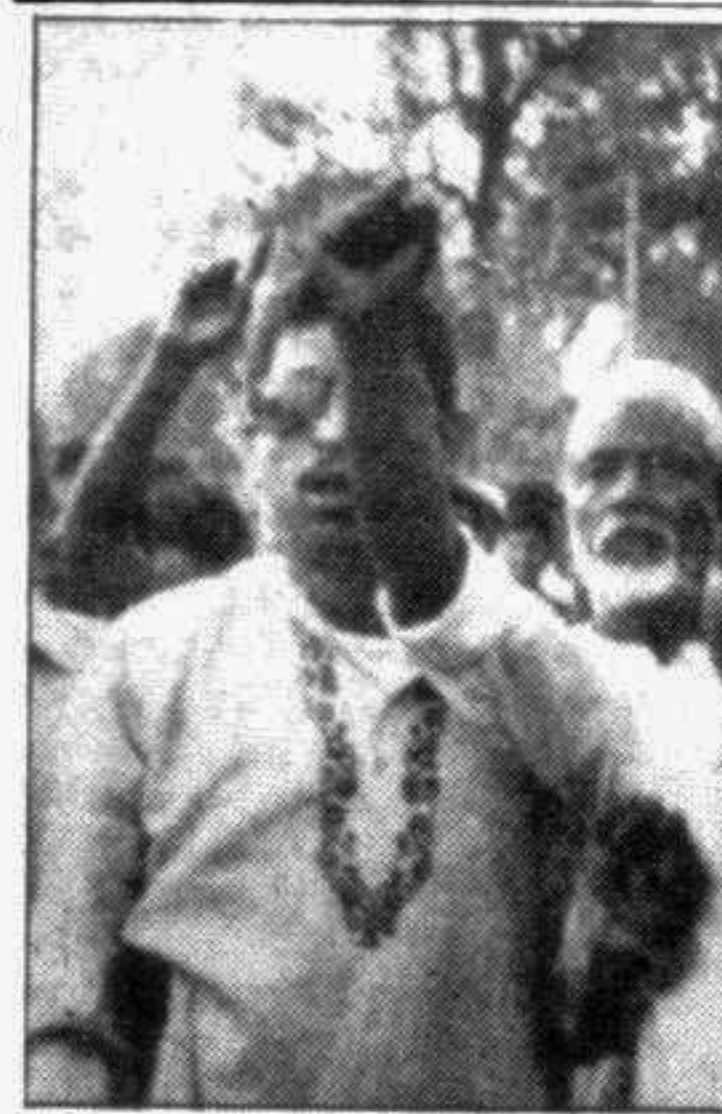
He wished a successful completion of the democratization process in the country and every success to the legitimately elected Jatiya Sangsad.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman expressed the hope that after the new government in Dhaka is formed the Soviet-Bangladeshi relations will be given new impulses for their progressive development in the interests of creating in Asia and in the world an atmosphere of security and stability.

## Muktadhara book fair

CHITTAGONG, Mar 8: A fortnight-long book fair under the auspices of Muktadhara Publishing House, was inaugurated at the Divisional Public Library premises here today, reports BSS.

Elderly writer and widow of celebrated literature Prof. Abul Fazal, Begum Umratul Fazal inaugurated the fair at a simple function which was presided over by Prof. Kabir Chowdhury. The function was addressed, among others, by Prof. Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Syed Abul Maksud, Hashem Khan, Prof. Abdul Mannan and Akhtarun Nabi, noted literary figures and artists.



Residents of the Ward No 64 of City Corporation brought out a procession in the city on Friday protesting alleged ransacking of shops by the AL activists on Thursday — Star photo.

## Dateline Chittagong

# Repolling in 11 centres today

The Chief Election Commissioner Justice Abdur Rouf flew out to Chittagong on Wednesday to personally examine the complaints received from the contesting candidates in two parliamentary constituencies where elections were suspended in eleven centres on February 27 and repolling ordered for March 9, reports BSS.

Accompanied by the Election Commissioner Justice Naimuddin Ahmed, the Chief Election Commissioner went straight to Raizan and interviewed 50 Presiding Officers from Anwara, Banskhali and Rouzan (Chittagong 6 and 12 Constituencies) individually in close-door.

After examining the complaints and reports from the officers engaged in election duty, the Chief Election Commissioner upheld the de-

cision to hold repolling in eleven polling centres today. Eight candidates are in race in Chittagong-6 Constituency covering Raizan Upazila while 12 candidates in Chittagong-12 Constituency covering Anwara Upazila and five unions of Patiya Upazila.

## 37 held on various charges

Panchlath Police Thursday night arrested one Sheikh Bahuddin Bulbul, principal accused in the murder case of transport workers leader Oli Meah, a press release of Chittagong Metropolitan police said.

The accused, son of one late Jomal Abedin of Bechpara Jessore, was arrested from his Nazirpara house here. The murder took place near the Oxygen Factory area here last

month. Metropolitan Police arrested 36 persons on various charges from different areas in the last 24 hours.

## One killed in road mishap

One person was killed and four others were injured when a truck rammmed a car near the Mazar of Shere Bangla at Hathazari on Wednesday midnight, police said.

The victims were travelling in the car belonged to a motorcade of a bridal party, the police said but gave no others details.

## Sajeda depllores ban on telecast of Mujib's speech

Bangladesh Awami League General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury described the restriction imposed on Bangladesh Television and Radio in telecasting the historic March 7 speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on Thursday as unfortunate and sad, reports BSS.

In a press statement she said the historic speech of Bangabandhu on March 7 had given a sense of direction to the freedom-loving people of this country for the struggle for independence. After the fall of autocracy through a

bloody struggle it was the expectation of the nation that the true history of the Liberation War would be projected objectively by all including the state controlled media. It was also the earnest belief of the people that the Acting President heading the neutral government would look into this significant chapter of the national life in its real perspective, she added.

She was critical of the role of the Acting President on this issue and demanded an explanation for putting restriction on Radio and TV in telecasting the historic speech of the great leader of the Liberation War.

Begum Sajeda Chowdhury criticized the police action on the workers of Awami League and its front organisations Thursday night in front of the TV station.

## Political commitment pre-condition for development

The Adviser for Food and Cultural Affairs, Prof. Tajuddin Ahmed on Friday said that firm political commitments were pre-conditions for national development.

No well being for the people could be ensured without proper planning and political will he said while speaking as chief guest at the silver jubilee function of the Psychology Department of the Dhaka University at the Teacher-Student Centre auditorium.

Presided over by Dr Ilamida Begum, the inaugural session was also addressed, by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof. Oakil Ahmed, former Vice-Chancellor Prof. Shamsul Huq, Dr Sultana Sarwar Ara Zaman and wife of Mir Fakruzzaman, the first head of the department.

## New GM of Bangladesh Railway

By Staff Correspondent Md. Lutfur Rahman has taken over the charge as General Manager of Bangladesh Railway (Eastern Zone) on Wednesday.

Prior to his present appointment Rahman held different high posts including General Manager, Railway (Western Zone), Chairman, Railway Recruitment Bureau, Chief Operating Superintendent of eastern zone and Secretary of Railway Board.

He has visited many countries including U.K., South Korea, India and Nepal on official duty.

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