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In his work of art Iftikhar Uddin depicts his concern for society and country, free from complacency but full of sympathy
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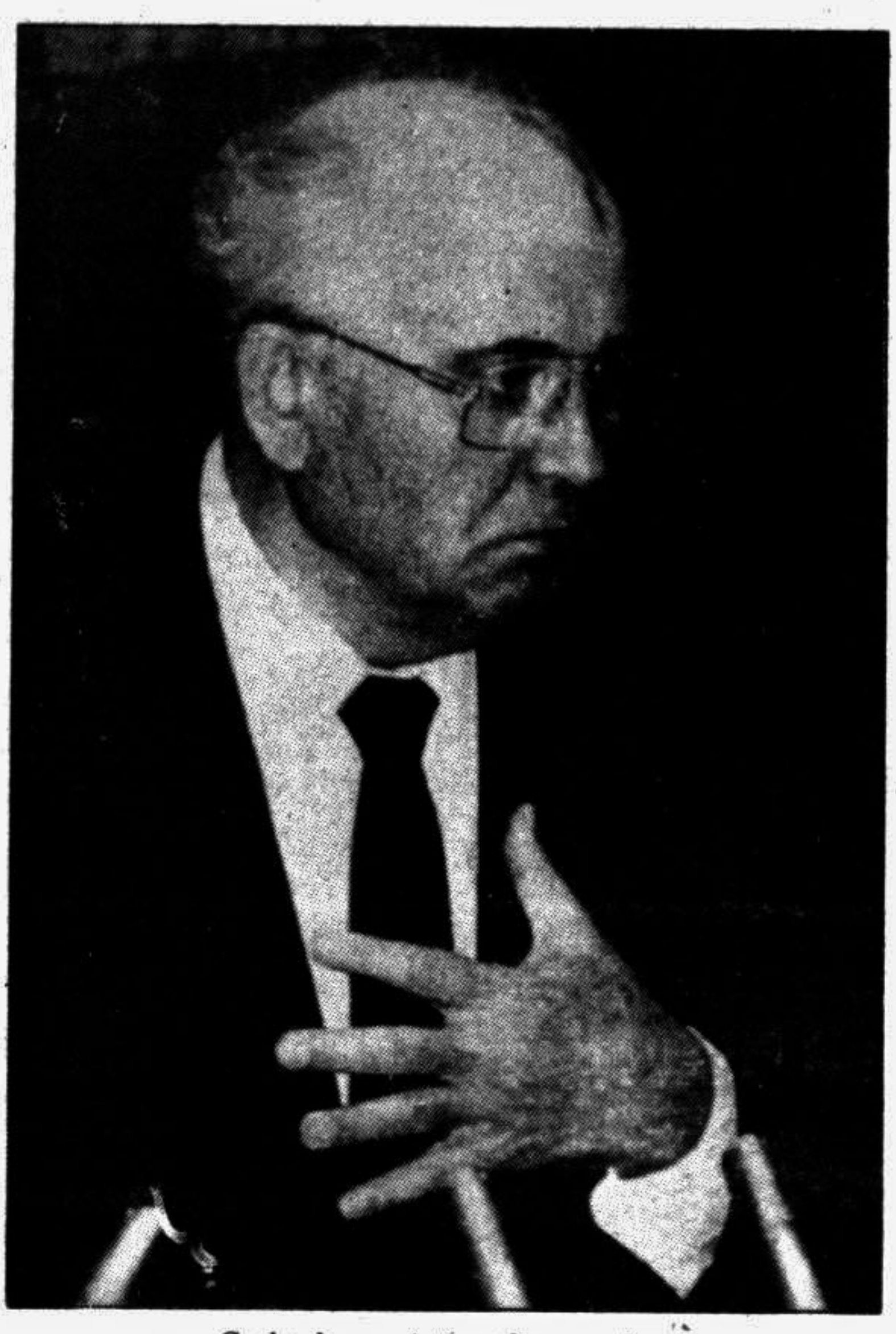
Indian sarees seized
CHITTAGONG, Dec 25: Detective branch of Kotwali police seized one hundred pieces of Indian sarees at Batali road here today. According to police, the sarees were seized from two persons who were carrying those in two bags on Batali road. They were taken into custody and a case was filed with Kotwali police.

Launch capsizes in Pashur river
KHULNA, Dec 25: Two people were missing after a launch capsized Tuesday night in the midstream of Pashur river at Sheola Buntia in Mongla upazila, 25 km of the port city. Police said the Patharghata-bound ML Lovely carrying about 50 passengers capsized after colliding with a barge at about 12.30 am. The rest of the passengers swam ashore, reports UNB.

2 electrocuted in Bogra
BOGRA, Dec 25: Two brothers were electrocuted at Godarpara area of the town Tuesday night, hospital sources said. Nur Hasan (23) and Nur Alam (24) of Chotokumra died on the spot when they came to remove water logged in their land by heavy downpour. A live electricity wire snapped by a storm of 50 to 60 km per hour earlier, fell into the logged water, reports UNB.

82 arrested in city
Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has arrested 82 persons on various charges from different parts of the city during the last 24 hours. According to a DMP press release, all the arrested persons were sent to court, reports BSS.

Storm kills one in Sirajganj
SIRAJGANJ, Dec 25: One person was killed and two others were injured in a storm that swept over the district Tuesday night, reports UNB.



Gorbachev: victim of own reform

Gorbachev goes

MOSCOW, Dec 25: Mikhail S Gorbachev, the eighth and final leader of the Soviet Union, resigned Wednesday night as president of the now-dissolved Communist empire, reports AP.

The red Soviet flag was lowered over the Kremlin and the white, red and blue Russian flag was raised at 7:45 pm (1945 GMT).

In a speech on nationwide television, Gorbachev said, "I cease my activities as president of the USSR."

After the speech, Gorbachev signed a decree that made Russian President Boris Yeltsin commander of the Soviet nuclear arsenal.

He outlined his successes during his nearly seven years in power, saying he had never become "a Czar."

"Society acquired freedom, liberated itself politically and spiritually, and this is the foremost achievement," Gorbachev said.

Speaking in front of a red Soviet flag in a room near his Kremlin office, Gorbachev blamed the failed August coup against his government for bringing the "general crisis to its limit."

"The worst thing about this crisis is the collapse of statehood," he said.

"I am leaving my post with great concern, but also confidence" in the new leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States. He did not mention Yeltsin by name.

He thanked those "who stood by me in good will. Sooner or later our common efforts will bear fruit."

"I wish all the best to all of Soviet empire to the new commonwealth, which has been proclaimed by 11 of the 12 former Soviet republics."

Gorbachev, who came to power in March 1985 and unleashed sweeping political, social and economic reforms in the Communist superpower, was unable in the end to halt the union's disintegration.

When he tried to reshape the 15 Soviet republics into a new, looser union, hard-liners on Dec 1.

One week later, Yeltsin and the leaders of Ukraine and Byelorussia — meeting without Gorbachev — formed the new Commonwealth of Independent States and proclaimed the death of the Soviet Union. On Saturday, the Commonwealth grew to all of the remaining Soviet republics except Georgia, and Gorbachev was left without a country to govern.

Earlier, Gorbachev informed US President George Bush today that he was handing control of Soviet nuclear forces over to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the Tass news agency reported.

Gorbachev held a telephone conversation with the American President around 5:00 pm (1500 GMT), Tass said.

Reuters says President George Bush will make a nationally televised address tonight about the changes in the Soviet Union, the White House said.

Bush will cut short his Christmas holiday at Camp David, Maryland, to return to the White House for the

Chronology of career

Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev was born March 2, 1931, in Privolnoye, a poor farming village 125 miles (200 kilometers) from Stavropol on the southern Russian plains between the Black and Caspian seas, reports AP.

On March 11, 1985, Gorbachev was named general-secretary of the ruling Communist Party, one day after the death of Konstantin Chernenko, a Leonid Brezhnev protégé.

The health and energy of Gorbachev, at 54 the country's youngest leader since Stalin, set him apart from his three immediate predecessors — Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov and Chernenko. All three had been ailing and were laid to rest under the Kremlin wall in the space of 28 months.

Since assuming the Soviet leadership, other key Gorbachev dates are:

1985: Nov 18: Meets with President Reagan in Geneva for the first of five times and concludes an agreement to eliminate the two countries' medium- and short-range nuclear missiles.

1986: Feb 11: Anatoly Shcharansky, Jewish activist and dissident, is released, stripped of his Soviet citizenship and flown to the West as

Flag meeting yet to take place

Burma continues troops build-up, begins drafting

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Dec 25: Tension prevailed at the remote villages along the border dividing Bangladesh and Myanmar (Burma) Wednesday as mobilisation of Burmese troops continued.

Villagers in Naikyangchhari, Lama, Alikadam reported that Burmese steamers ferrying soldiers from Mongdu and Akyab province in Burma offloaded them at different military positions in Kuanhsong and Tebatinna areas inside the Burmese territory.

The flag meeting, proposed by Bangladesh Monday, could not take place till Wednesday because of apathy of the Burmese authorities, according to district officials.

Troops build-up of the Burmese military continued since Friday after Burmese border guards made a surprise attack on a Bangladesh Rifles outpost in Rijupara village at Naikyangchhari upazila of the district which left two Bangladeshis killed and another 22 injured.

Villagers of Gundhum at Naikyangchhari upazila reported that the gun mounting steamers offloaded huge number of troops at different military positions inside the Burmese border.

Meanwhile, reports trickling in across the border said the Burmese troops had continued to strengthen its positions by conscripting local Burmese youths.

Mohammad Siddiq, a Rohingya Muslim youth of Arakan province of Burma, said the Burmese soldiers were seizing rice, cattle and chicken from the Burmese border-side villages and storing at different military positions.

Siddiq, of Majherpara village in Bushidong thana, who managed to escape to Cox's Bazar mid-night Monday, said the Burmese military forces were conscripting Rohingya Muslim youths and forcing them at different positions to do menial work.

Bangladeshi citizens at the frontier areas have also reported hearing gunshots and bomb explosions on Monday.

Move for garment policy

Workers - govt talks today

By Nurul Kabir

The government will sit with the leaders of garment workers today afternoon in a bid to solve the problems disturbing the garment sector, official sources said.

The meeting will be held between the Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuyian and the leaders of both the Garments Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad and the Garments Sramik Karmachari Otkya Parishad at the Labour Minister's office.

The Sangram Parishad and the Otkya Parishad are separately struggling to press an identical five-point charter of demand.

The 5-point charter includes implementation of the Factory Law and the Labour Employment Standing Order-65, ban on work in garment units before 7 am and after 8 pm as per the ILO convention.

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37.33 pc pass Rajshahi Board HSC exam

RAJSHAH, Dec 25: The results of Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSC) examination of 1991 under Rajshahi Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board were announced today, reports BSS.

The percentage of pass is 37.33.

A total of 63,800 students appeared in the examination, of whom 23,820 came out successful. 1,905 students were placed in the first division while 7,159 in the second division and 14,976 in the third division.

In the Science Group, 18,265 candidates appeared in the examination, of whom 8,515 came out successful. The percentage of pass is 46.61. 1,295 students got first division, 3,170 second division and 4,050 third division.

In the Humanities Group, 11,189 students passed out of a total candidates of 34,524. The percentage of pass is 32.40. A total of 292 students were placed in first division, 2,742 in the second division and 8,155 in the third division.

In the Commerce Group 11,011 students appeared in the examination of whom 4,116 came out successful. The percentage of pass is 37.38. Ninety eight students got first division, 1,247 second division and 2,771 third division.

In the combined merit list Shamim Ahmed Alia, Roll-Raj 604, of Rajshahi College, stood first securing 978 marks while Md Salehur Rahman, Roll No-Raj 602, got the second position getting 957 marks and Tawfik Hasan, Roll No-Raj 603, belonging to the same college secured third place getting 924 marks.

In the Humanities Group, Prodeep Kumar Pandey, Roll No-Raj 275, of Rajshahi College stood first getting 858

City road death rises by 28 pc

By Staff Correspondent

Deaths from road accidents in the city jumped by 28 per cent from 250 in 1990 to this year's 350. The number of people injured has also recorded a rise — 35.5 per cent — over the last year's figure of 666 to 896.

The number of cases registered with different police stations in Dhaka metropolitan areas in connection with road accidents till December 15 was 1244, DMP records say.

Of the total cases, 856 were recorded with incidents of deaths and serious injuries by road mishaps — others with minor cases.

The experts at a seminar on accident prevention recently observed that drivers were responsible for more than 80 per cent road accidents whereas mechanical trouble of vehicles accounted for about seven per cent mishaps and circumstantial causes were behind nine per cent accidents.

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AL, BNP should revive spirit of united movement: Kamal

Star Special

Awami League leader Dr Kamal Hossain has said his party and the ruling BNP should revive the spirit of the anti-Ershad united movement to work together for consolidating a fledgling democracy.

In an exclusive interview with the Daily Star in Dhaka on Tuesday Dr Hossain said all political parties should sit together to identify the areas of national consensus where urgent action is needed in the national interest.

"I do not want to blame anyone. The citizens would like to see a congenial democratic atmosphere in which all political parties — within government or in opposition — should respect each other in depth on national issues," said Dr Hossain in the 90-minute interview, his first to any Bangladesh newspaper after his return home from a special UN assignment early this month.

Asked if by all political parties he also means the Awami League and BNP, he replied: "Yes, that's right."

Dr Hossain, an eminent lawyer, was in New York for four months as a special advisor to the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporation, a specialised body

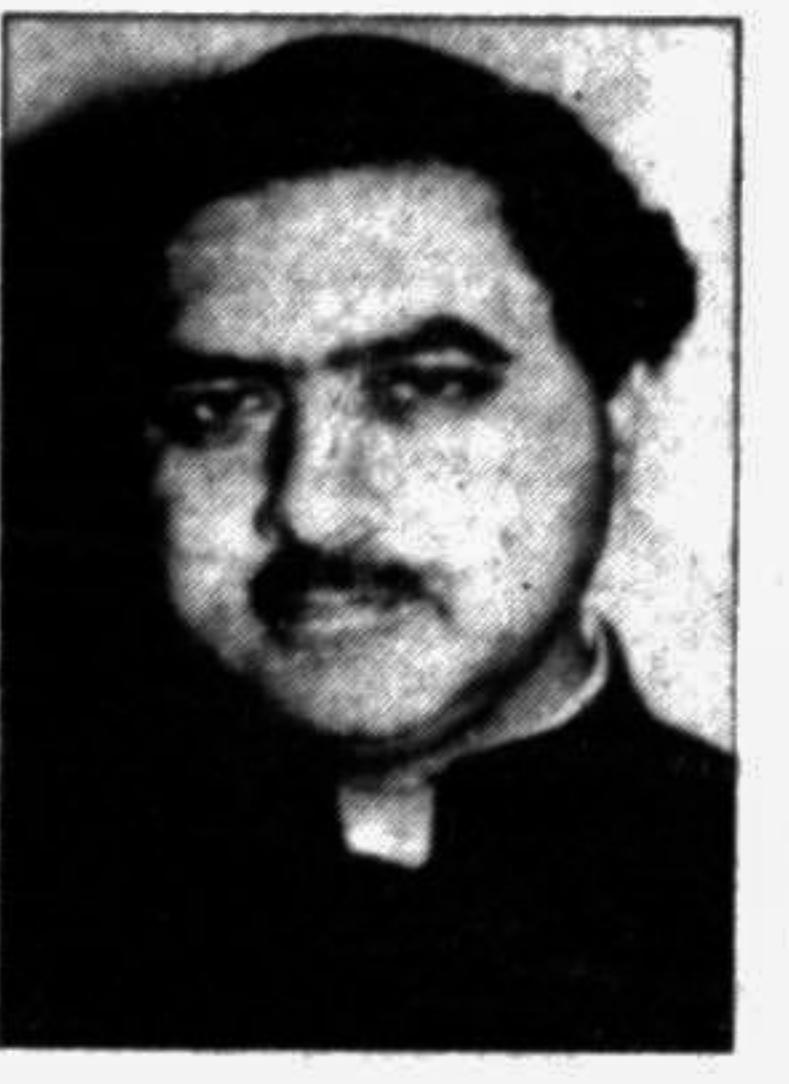
Conference on Environment and Development in next June.

The Awami League president member, who insists that he has no plan to retire from politics, said, "There is a consensus among our people in favour of united action to create more congenial social environment."

Such environment, he said, is essential to free the society from "mastans, terrorism, the influence of black money and illegal arms" which people can engage in productive activity and young people can seriously pursue studies.

According to him the political parties should not give lip service to cooperation with each other. "They must begin to work seriously together and agree on measures that are needed to restore normalcy in universities and colleges, maintain neutrality of the law enforcing agencies, revive the economy and stimulate productive activities."

"The rebuilding of democracy and the rule of law as well as revitalising an economy



under the UN Economic and Social Council. His job involved legal issues relating to the operation of the Transnational Corporations and certain proposals that will be placed before the UN

Jamuna fertilizer factory begins production today

JAMALPUR, Dec 25: Jamuna Fertilizer Factory, the largest in the country, goes into urea production tomorrow (Thursday), reports UNB.

This was announced today at the inaugural function of Tarakandi railway station set up for smooth transportation of fertilizer from the factory, situated on the eastern side of river Jamuna in Sharishabari upazila.

LORD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar inaugurated the railway station this afternoon.

The second largest urea factory in Asia, it started on December 8 the production of ammonia and carbon-di-oxide, the main ingredients of urea.

It will produce 1700 metric tons of granulated urea daily. Its produce goes into market on January 1.

BCIC Commercial Manager MM Yunus told the function that the urea produced in Jamuna factory would be sold at Tk 4,025 per metric ton, about Tk 3,000 less than the present market rate. A ton of urea now sells at Tk 7,000.

The use of highly modern



Part of a city street after yesterday's rain. — Star photo

Rain brings chill across country

By Staff Correspondent

Intermittent rainfall and strong wind brought in chilling cold all over Bangladesh on Wednesday. Meteorological Department sources said.

The weather will continue to be colder for another couple of days, the sources informed.

The present rainfall caused by a westerly disturbance from Arabian Sea, is expected to be followed by a cold spell and the temperature may fall to 7 degree Celsius in the northern part of the country.

In Dhaka and rest of Bangladesh the minimum night temperature may range between 8 degrees to 10 degrees Celsius during the cold wave.

The situation is expected to continue for about a week. After a small break another cold spell is likely to sweep in the second week of January, according to Hamiduzzaman Khan Chowdhury, Director, Bangladesh Meteorological department.

He said that the present disturbance was relatively active, so the rainfall will be longer than previous years.

Meanwhile, Dhaka experienced 67 mm of rainfall in 24 hours ending 6 pm Wednesday.

During the period the minimum night temperature in city fell from 20.1 degree to 16.4 degree Celsius.

Temperature may further fall by 1-3 degree Celsius during the next 36 hours over the country.

Due to intermittent rain and strong breeze life in the capital yesterday was partially paralysed.

Pedestrians and vehicular traffic were thin in the city. Some of the streets went under ankle-deep water due to poor drainage system. Many slum-dwellers took shelter in railway stations bus terminals and other public buildings.

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Kim's son made chief of armed forces

TOKYO, Dec 25: Kim Jong Il, the enigmatic son of North Korean President Kim Il Sung and heir apparent, has been promoted to supreme commander of the military, official media reported Wednesday, reports AP.

North Korea's 182-member Central Committee of the ruling Workers Party on Tuesday elected Kim, 49, to replace his father as head of the 1 million-member armed forces, according to the Korean Central News Agency monitored in Tokyo.

Kim Il Sung remains the nation's president and head of the 2.4 million-member Workers Party. His son is No. 2 in the ruling party but holds no government post.

In Seoul, South Korean analysts generally believe the move indicates the first hereditary succession of power in a Communist nation is nearing completion. Analysts said it was unusual because the North Korean constitution stipulates the president shall serve as supreme commander.

The appointment "indicates North Korea badly needs a younger and yet strong supreme commander at a time when it worries about possible preemptive strikes against its nuclear facilities," said Katsumi Sato, managing editor of the monthly magazine Korea Today in Tokyo.

Kim Il Sung, who has ruled since Korea was divided at the end of World War II in 1945, turns 80 on April 15. His right-hand man and armed forces minister, Vice Marshal O Jin U, is 80.

Intelligence reports that North Korea is nearing the capability to produce nuclear weapons has focused international attention on the bitterly divided and heavily militarized Korean peninsula.

US and South Korean officials believe that North Korea will soon be able to produce a crude atomic weapon. The North says its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes.

South Korean officials have hinted that a limited military action against the North's nuclear facility at Yongbyon, 90 kilometres (60 miles) north of Pyongyang, was possible if the North continues to refuse to allow international inspections.

On Monday, the North announced that it would sign a nuclear accord allowing in-