

## Varsity officials go on strike from Jan 17

By Masud Arif

Some 1,000 administrative officials of seven universities in the country will observe a 13-day strike from January 17 demanding implementation of their two-point demands.

The demands are higher pay scale for them and inclusion of the officers' representatives in the University Senate, the Syndicate, the Finance Committee and the Academic Council in all universities of the country.

The Bangladesh Inter-University Officers' Federation at a meeting recently also decided to boycott examinations and keep the libraries closed during the last five days of the 13-day strike, according to sources.

The administrative officers earlier observed a ten-day strike from December 18 last.

The federation leaders would

meet the Education Secretary tomorrow (January 11) and the Education Minister within a couple of days to discuss the implementation of their demands.

Some leaders of the Dhaka University Officers' Association, talking to this correspondent, said a high-powered committee of the government had already recommended implementation of their demands. But the demands had not yet been fulfilled, the leaders added.

The administrative officers of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Jahangirnagar, BUET, Islamic and Agricultural universities have been agitating for the last six years for the implementation of their demands. The officers on several occasions observed strikes for over 20 days last year.

## Lawyers' conference

From Page 1 Col 8

Nazmul Huda, Education Minister Jamiruddin Sirkar, member-secretary of the Forum Abdul Wadud Khandker, Ziaur Rahman Khan, MP and representatives from the five divisions of the country.

The Prime Minister said, "We have restored democracy in the country and now we are trying to establish the rule of law. The lawyers have always played a constructive role in the struggle for democracy."

She informed the audience that a bill to separate the judiciary from the administration was now under scrutiny. Efforts are also on to amend the laws, formulated during the colonial period.

"The people have lost confidence in the country's judiciary. It's the lawyers who can help restore the confidence and can also help the courts in quick dispensation of justice," she pointed out.

She announced that an academy would be set up for training of the lawyers to standardise the legal practice in the country.

In order to clear off pending cases in different courts, she also announced that more judges, at all levels, will be appointed shortly.

"In addition, we have sanctioned money for the purchase of books for the Bar libraries across the country," she said.

Criticising the role of a section of lawyers, the Prime Minister said, "There are some lawyers who are creating confusion by misinterpreting the constitution. The nationalist lawyers should resist them."

Speaking on the occasion, Mirza Gohar Hossain said: "We need good lawyers to ensure the rule of law."

At the initiative of the government, some two lakh twenty three thousand pending cases, mostly in Dhaka district, have been disposed of, he said.

He said, the government had improved the service conditions of the judges, increased the pay scales of the Sub-Judges and

District Judges and erected new court buildings. Stressing the need for standardising the legal practice in the country, he said the curriculum of the honours course in law and the LLB degree course were not consistent and the merit and learning of the students of the two courses differed qualitatively.

Justice T H Khan, in his speech, demanded appointment of a substantial number of judges in the High Court Division.

"In order to restore the people's confidence in the lower courts and to make the courts more prestigious, we urge the government to introduce a screening system and in-service training for the subordinate judges, to improve their efficiency," T H Khan said.

He also suggested to the government to appoint Additional District and Sessions Judges directly from among the members of the Bar. In this connection he cited the examples of some leading members of the bench — both past and present — who were inducted in such manner from the Bar.

The conference was attended by some 1000 lawyers from different parts of the country. The Forum was set up two years ago.

## Clash over Rohingya refugee: 10 hurt

COX'S BAZAR, Jan 11: At least 10 villagers were injured during a clash with the Ansars near Damdama Rohingya refugee camp in Teknaf thana of the district today, reports UNB.

Police said the clash erupted at around 3 pm when a group of villagers attacked Damdama-2 refugee camp in a bid to snatch away Mirhajuddin Prokash alias Miranga, an inmate of the camp.

The refugees of the camp put up resistance against the attacking villagers.

## Mostafiz: Diplomats

From Page 1 Col 7

that specially the ready-made garments of Bangladesh were facing serious problems of market access in some major markets.

These market access problems are directly related to unfair quota restrictions, he said, adding, "our hopes for export led growth are being frustrated."

He said that Bangladesh hoped that its trading partners would fully honour the special concessions it (Bangladesh) had been given as a least developed country under the Uruguay Round agreement.

The Foreign Minister stressed the need for better addressing of fundamental aspects of human rights by creating "a democratic polity, establishing the rule of law, an independent judiciary and fair opportunities for all segments of the population."

He called for a collective response to curb terrorism and insurgency anywhere in the world.

Explaining various aspects of human rights, Mostafiz said: "External interest in the matter of human rights, without proper understanding of the national factors of history and culture, can cause considerable misunderstanding in the public mind in a free society."

Referring to the incident at Naniachar in Rangamati hill district that claimed 12 lives, the Foreign Minister told the envoys "we are awaiting the official report of the commission" headed by Justice Habibur Rahman.

On the outcome of the 13th meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers in Dhaka early last month, he said the Ministers

of the member countries had reiterated their social mandate of the association.

The seventh summit meeting in Dhaka in April, 1993, marked the completion of the first cycle of summits and beginning of the second", he added.

Mostafiz said the next SAARC summit is expected to take place in India towards the end of this year.

## Import list

From Page 1 Col 7

the locally produced ones. Industrial entrepreneurs, in this regard cited the example of the fluorescent light factories which are facing serious problems. They said the country's three fluorescent light industries — one in the public sector and two in private ownership — can meet country's annual requirement of 20 lakh tube lights. But the ban on import of tube lights was withdrawn last April and since then imported lights have flooded the country.

"These imported tube lights, mostly from India, are cheap because the duty and taxes are comparatively lower than those on the locally produced ones," said an entrepreneur. He mentioned that huge stocks of finished products are lying unsold in the tube light factories, which have already reduced their production substantially. But although the prices of the local products have also been reduced, yet these are unable to compete with the imported lights, he said, claiming that the quality of the locally produced lights are better than the imported ones.

Local ceiling fan and electric switch manufacturers are also facing similar situations.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia waving to the audience during a public meeting at Nazipur in Naogaon yesterday. — PID photo

## JMB foundation

From Page 1 Col 4

constructing the much-expected Jamuna Multi-purpose Bridge, a milestone in the development of the country's communications network. Begum Zia said with the beginning of the construction work tens of thousand would get jobs there.

Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, State Minister for Establishment Barrister Aminul Haq, Alamgir Kabir MP, Shamsuddin Ahmed MP, Aktar Hamid Siddiqi MP, Roads Secretary Syed Rezaul Hayat, Local BNP leaders Abdul Rouf Mannan, Begum Surifa also spoke. Local BNP leader Abu Taher Mintu presided.

## Hanif to turn DCC into a welfare centre

Awami League mayor candidate Mohammad Hanif yesterday promised that, if elected, he would cut expenditures on unproductive sectors and turn the Dhaka city corporation into a welfare centre, reports UNB.

"It is possible to run the city corporation in a planned way without imposing fresh taxes in next five years," Hanif told crowds during his electioneering in Ramna and Lalbagh areas.

He said the city corporation had been made a white elephant. The wastage of money must be reduced to engage the corporation for the well-being of the city dwellers, he told election rallies during the campaign.

City Awami League general secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Akhtarul Alam, Foizuddin Mia and local commissioner candidates joined the electioneering.



The road near the Foreign Ministry, along with several other vantage points of the metropolis, getting a face lift ahead of the January 30 City Corporation polls. — Star photo

## Top aide to BCCI founder may 'unveil secrets'

WASHINGTON, Jan 11: Experts say a key figure in the BCCI banking scandal being brought to the United States to face fraud charges could provide important information on the institution's secret takeovers of four US banks, reports AP.

However, the credibility of Saleh Naqvi, the Pakistani banker who was the top deputy to BCCI's founder, is likely to be questioned.

Jack Blum, a former Senate investigator who pieced together key pieces of the BCCI puzzle, said Monday that Naqvi is "a man who knows a lot," but acknowledged that his role as a cooperating witness "is going to raise issues of his own credibility."

Under a new agreement between the United States and the Persian Gulf emirate of Abu Dhabi, Justice Department officials expect Naqvi to be brought to the United States within four months to face bank fraud charges.

## Govt to review demands Druggists call off strike

The Bangladesh Chemists and Druggists Society (BCDS) yesterday decided to withdraw its country-wide strike — which began yesterday — following assurances by the government to solve its problems, reports BSS.

The assurance was given by the Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf at a meeting with the representatives of the association, held in Dhaka yesterday.

According to a press release issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, a proposal for increasing the commission for selling medicine at the rate of 25 per cent will be placed in the coming meeting of the committee for fixation of price of medicines.

The Health and Family Welfare Minister will take steps for the withdrawal of drug licence renewal fee by 50 per cent after discussing the matter with the Finance Minister.

The Bangladesh Chemists and Druggists Society will take up necessary measures for training pharmacists at all district headquarters. The Pharmacists' Council will approve and publish the syllabus immediately and start holding examinations from March this year.

The new drug licence can be issued as per rules. But regarding the issuance of licences to about 20,000 drugs shops, submitted by the samity, where there are no registered pharmacists but owners have been trading in drugs for at least three years, provisional licences will be issued to them for a two-year term on the recommendation of the samity.

However, there will be a condition that the shop-owners or representatives will have to procure certificates recognised by the Pharmacy Council within two years. Otherwise the provisional licences would automatically be cancelled.

The Bangladesh Chemists and Druggists Society would encourage all drug traders to become the members of the samity.

The meeting was attended by Barkatullah Bhulu MP, Health Secretary Syed Shamim Ahsan, Joint Secretary Khalilullah, Director of Drug Administration, Prof Chowdhury Mahmud Hasan, President of the Bangladesh Drug Chemists and Druggists Samity Mohammad Sadeque Rahman, central committee members and other regional representatives.

## Big fire in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 11: A big fire broke out at Kalirbazar on AC Dhar Road here tonight. Fire brigade engines rushed to the spot from different fire stations but were unable to extinguish the fire, which started at 8:45 pm, till filing of this report at 11:30 pm.

The blaze, at a chemical factory, soon spread, gutting several adjoining cloth shops. The loss, according to preliminary estimates, has been put around Tk 15 lakh.

According to witnesses, the fire engines reached the spot nearly half an hour after the fire broke out.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia last night expressed her profound grief at the death of Justice Chowdhury.

In his death the country had lost an illustrious patriotic son and distinguished personality, she said.

Recalling the courageous role of Justice Chowdhury in the historic Language Movement, the Prime Minister said, he had played a significant role in forging unity among the nationalist forces.

Begum Zia prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul, and expressed her heart-felt sympathies to the members of the bereaved family.

— Star photo

## Justice Chowdhury

From Page 1 Col 8

1948, and a signatory to the historic Language Agreement, signed on March 15, 1948.

The then Chief Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin was also a signatory.

Justice Chowdhury was an excellent debater, who had led the Dhaka University debating team against in Oxford University in 1949. He also led the Pakistan youth delegation in the Asian Youth Conference in 1948, and also in Washington in 1955.

A leading Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Chowdhury was the first Bengali to be elected as the general secretary of the All Pakistan Bar Council, and vice president of the Dhaka High Court Bar.

He was elevated as a Judge of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh in 1973, and held the post till 1983. He was also the chairman of the Bangla Academy. Justice Chowdhury was the founder president of the International Human Rights



Justice A R Chowdhury

and Legal Affairs Chapter in Bangladesh, and founder chairman of the Liberty Forum. He was also associated with many human rights and legal organisations till his death. He was the Deputy Leader of the Bangladesh team in the UNGA in 1978, when Bangladesh was first elected to the Security Council.

He left behind his widow, two daughters and two sons. His namaz-e-janaza will be held today after Zohr prayers at the Baitul Mokarram Mosque. He will be buried at the Banani Graveyard.

President shocked President Abdur Rahman Biswas expressed his deep shock and sorrow at the sad demise of Justice Chowdhury.

In a condolence message President Biswas, said "Justice Chowdhury was a very learned lawyer and highly talented judge. The profundity of his legal knowledge, power of oration and his quality of head and heart could hardly be matched. In his death, the country has lost an illustrious patriotic son and distinguished personality."

President Biswas conveyed his heart-felt sympathies to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for peace of the departed soul.

PM shocked Meanwhile, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia last night expressed her profound grief at the death of Justice Chowdhury.

In his death the country had lost an illustrious patriotic son and distinguished personality, she said.

Recalling the courageous role of Justice Chowdhury in the historic Language Movement, the Prime Minister said, he had played a significant role in forging unity among the nationalist forces.

Begum Zia prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul, and expressed her heart-felt sympathies to the members of the bereaved family.

— Star photo

## Cabinet body

From Page 1 Col 7

terested in the regions of Sylhet and Mymensingh. French oil giants Total will also send their representative on January 24 to sign an accord, Total is keen to explore the regions of Comilla, Noakhali and Chittagong.

"If the government really wants to utilise the hidden resources of the country, it should reciprocate the interest shown by all these foreign companies because it had invited them," a source commented.

## Correction

In our news item, "Khaleda to tour SAARC countries," published yesterday, there was a printing error in the ninth para.

The paragraph should read as follows: "When a correspondent wanted to know about the follow-up action of the water issue after it was raised by the Prime Minister at the UN General Assembly and commented that there seemed to be no progress at the bilateral or multilateral level, the Foreign Secretary replied: 'It is a question of perception,' and added, 'may be that is your own view.' The error is regretted."

## The Midnight File

### Mandela rules out White homeland

PRETORIA, Jan 11: ANC leader Nelson Mandela ruled out the possibility of a White homeland Tuesday, but said he was confident pro-apartheid Whites would return to negotiations with the black group. Mandela spoke after four hours of private talks with President FW de Klerk, which focused on the problem of political violence in black townships. They also discussed how to deal with pro-apartheid parties opposed to plans for the country's first multiracial election April 27, reports AP.

### Airlift of supplies to Sarajevo suspended

GENEVA, Jan 11: The UN High Commissioner for Refugees today suspended the airlift of supplies to Sarajevo after a rocket landed in the middle of the runway. UNHCR spokesman Ron Redmond said. No one was hurt and two aircraft preparing to take off were able to do so, but Redmond said: "It looks like a very deliberate attack and we are very concerned," reports AP.

### Rebels attack air force base in Kashmir, kill nine

SRINAGAR, Jan 11: Muslim separatists attacked an Indian air force base in Kashmir, killing nine guards and wounding one, police officials said Tuesday. It was an unusually fierce assault against a military base by the guerrillas, who are better known for ambushing patrols or sniping at small bunkers with gunfire or hand grenades. Inspector General of Police Ashok Kumar Suri said the militants escaped after killing the guards at the Awantipora base in the district of Pulwama Monday, taking eight light machine guns, eight self-loading rifles and a stengun from the position, reports AP.

### Iranian women's team in city

A two-member Iranian delegation, led by Women's Affairs Advisor Shahla Habibi, arrived here yesterday on a four-day good will visit to Bangladesh, reports UNB.

State Minister for Women's Affairs Sarwari Rahman received the delegation at the Zia International Airport in the morning. Begum Selima Rahman, MP was also present.

The other member of the delegation is Parvin Salahi, a member of the Iranian Majlis (Parliament).

The delegation later called on Sarwari Rahman at her office in the afternoon.

During the meeting they discussed matters relating to women's participation in the development process of Iran and Bangladesh.

### New BSRS MD takes charge

By Staff Correspondent

Al-Amin Chowdhury, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, has taken over charge as Managing Director of the Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS) yesterday.

He will act as the MD of the BSRS in addition to his duties as Joint Secretary of the ministry.

Al-Amin Chowdhury was a member of the erstwhile Pakistan Taxation Service batch of 1968 and after Liberation he held many important positions in various ministries. He was also the Member-Director of the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADCO) for a year.

Chowdhury got his diploma in Development Finance in 1983-84 from the Birmingham University, UK and attended a high level executive course on Financial Analysis and Programming at the IMF headquarters in Washington.

### Mangrove

From Page 1 Col 4

The Second Forestry Project was launched in 1986 to continue the process of mangrove afforestation and, once afforestation targets are met, to maintain the mangrove plantations. The World Bank provided 2.8 crore dollars as soft credit to support the project. The project ended in 1992, one year later than originally scheduled. Around 90 per cent of the target for afforestation under the project was met.

However, institutional development to enhance forest management capacity lagged behind. According to a source, the computerised Resource Information Management System developed under this project to update forest resource information is largely lying idle.

The World Bank is unhappy about the economic rate of return on investment in mangrove plantation under the Second Forestry Project. Sources say that the Bank has informed the government that a 4-6 per cent rate of return is not adequate for the Bank to be able to continue its support for mangrove afforestation.

The World Bank's finding about economic viability of mangrove afforestation can place the future for current plans for afforestation of newly accreted land in the Bay of Bengal in jeopardy. The government is implementing a plan to plant mangrove in 23,800 hectares of such land under an ongoing Third Forestry Project. The World Bank is assisting the project through a 5 crore dollar credit. Seventy-eight lakh dollars of the credit amount is allocated for mangrove afforestation. The Bank is unlikely to disburse this amount if the Ministry of Environment and Forests cannot demonstrate that an adequate return on the investment can be achieved.

He pointed out that the code of conduct formulated by the Election Commission is only confined to the books, but of not much use here because the candidates are spending huge sums of money for poster and campaigning.

### Professionals

From Page 1 Col 8

come hostage in the hands of the bureaucrats who had consistently been opposing administrative reforms in the country. The leaders termed the bureaucrats 'permanent enemies of democracy' and demanded that the 17-point demand of non-administrative government officials and professional be immediately met for the sake of democracy.

The three-day strike was called to press home the 17-point charter of demands and register their protest against the recent government decision of sending a few non-administrative officials, including secretary general of the coordination council Abu Hena, on forced retirement.

The leaders who addressed the rally included, Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Ruhul Matin and Akhter Hossain.

Meanwhile, a press release of the coordination council said the agitating professionals also held rallies at different places of the city including the Dhaka Medical College Hospital premises, and the Khamarbari at Farm Gate.

### US bombers

From Page 1 Col 7

up plans to ensure that a rotation of UN peacekeepers in the besieged Muslim enclave of Srebrenica can take place and that the airport in the north-central Bosnian city of Tuzla can be opened to aid flights.

"We remain ready to use air strikes in support of (UN) forces and to prevent the strangulation of Sarajevo and other threatened areas in Bosnia," Woerner said at the summit's conclusion.

"What I see is a stronger determination to implement and get rid of obstacles," he said. "We will remain ready to use air strikes" if necessary.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic warned Tuesday that any talk of NATO air strikes against his troops could doom peace negotiations.

### Heavy fog disrupts Aricha ferry services

ARICHA (Manikganj), Jan 11: Ferry services between Aricha-Daulatdia and Aricha-Nagarbari ghats were disrupted from midnight to 8 am today due to heavy fog on the river route causing untold suffering to several thousand passengers, reports UNB.

Moreover, launch services from 16 districts to the capital were also disrupted.

### Afsar

From Page 1 Col 4

enjoy more civic amenities. He alleged that Chittagong was neglected and deprived of its rights, both in the past and present, because those who were hand-picked in the administration from Chittagong did everything for their own interests instead of the welfare of the people of this city.

Also, the pledges made in the past regarding development of Chittagong were never fulfilled, Afsar added.

"Even the promises made by the Prime Minister during the last parliamentary elections, for declaring Chittagong as the commercial capital and upgrading the Chittagong airport, have not yet been materialised," the Jamaat candidate alleged.

"Chittagong is now facing a trade vacuum, the main business centres — Chakalti and Khatunganj — look dull while the businessmen there are sitting with hands on their heads," Afsar lamented.

He pointed out that the code of conduct formulated by the Election Commission is only confined to the books, but of not much use here because the candidates are spending huge sums of money for poster and campaigning.