

Nasim reiterates call to terrorists

Surrender arms or face action

SINGRA, Magura, May 10: Home Minister Mohammad Nasim today reiterated his assurance of rehabilitation of the extremists of South-Western region if they returned to normal life by surrendering arms, reports BSS.

"Come back to normal life... we will rehabilitate you. If you don't do so, your dens will be demolished," he said addressing a rally at Tinkhari High School premises here.

Sounding a note of warning to the terrorists, the minister said, "You cannot exist in this soil by killing people and unleashing a reign of terror and looting."

Presided over by Shalikka Thana Awami League president Tarapada Biswas, the rally was also addressed, among others, by Dr M S Akbar, MP, Advocate Biren Sikder, MP, district Awami League general secretary Altaf Hossain, Women MP Rehana Akhter Hira and Ganeswargati Union Parishad Chairman Subodh Kumar Roy.

Citing various steps taken by the government to curb terrorism in the country's South-Western region, the Home Minister said the setting up of 150 permanent police camps in the region have proved their effectiveness to contain terrorism.

Nasim pointed out that law enforcing agencies arrested nearly twenty thousand terrorists within less than one month. The joint combing operations of Police, BDR and Ansar will continue until terrorism is totally wiped out.

Urging police to take strict measures against terrorists, the minister said there is no compromise with those who are killing people.

"We have launched a crusade against terrorists and we must achieve victory," he said.

Earlier, the minister laid the foundation stones of Singra and Sripur thana police camps and offered munajat there.

Among others, Members of Parliament Dr M S Akbar, Biren Sikder and Rehana Akhter, IGP Borhan Siddique and Additional IGP Abdur Rahim were present at the function.

Addressing a rally at Nakol Bazar under Sripur thana, Mohammad Nasim said, "Five camps have already been set up in Magura district to root out terrorism and if necessary, more camps would be put up."

Chaired by Sripur thana

Awami League leader Akbar Hossain, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Mollah Nubuat Ali, legislators Dr M S Akbar and Biren Sikder and district Awami League general secretary Altaf Hossain.

Nasim said the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has presented an illiteracy-free Magura to the nation. "We will also give more assistance for the development of Magura if you help us to eradicate terrorism," he said.

Referring to the voterless election in Magura during the BNP regime, the Home Minister said Awami League along with the people ensured people's franchise by holding election under a neutral caretaker administration.

He said the forces that were voted down in the last general elections, have joined forces to oust the government, disrupting various development activities and hatching conspiracies. But, he said, the government is committed to uprooting terrorism with the help of people.

Nasim flayed Begum Khaleda Zia for demanding release of the killers of Kazi Aref, adding such a statement by a responsible leader is highly regrettable.



Employees of Gano Sahajya Sangstha (GSS) yesterday observed a token hunger strike protesting the prevailing situation in the organisation. —Star photo

DU graduate representative polls: GOP holds projection meet

By DU Correspondent
Ganotrik Oikya Parotid (GOP) yesterday introduced its candidates for the election of Registered Graduates in Dhaka University Senate in a projection meeting at the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of the university.

Prof Aminul Islam, Vice Chancellor of the Bangladesh Open University (BOU), introduced the candidates while, A B M Musa, Principal Abdul Ahad Chowdhury, Syed Ahmed and Prof S M Imamul Haq addressed the meeting.

The candidates are Syed Ahmed, Dr M Akhtaruzzaman, Dr Rangal Sen, Syed Badrudin Hossain, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Dr Syed Modasser Ali, Dr Kazi Faruque Ahmed, Ramendu Majumder, A K M Shamsuzzaman Khan, Dr Harun-Rashid, M A Salam Talukder, Prof. Mahfuza Khanom, Nilufer Begum, Abul Kalam Azad, Shamsul Haq Bhuiyan, Dr Md Anwar Hossain, A F M Mesbah Uddin, Begum Khaleda Habib, Ismat Kadir Gama, S M Bahaulul Majnun, Md Ohiduzzaman, Laila Hasan, Golam Quddus, Habibur Rahman Khan and Md Aljal Hossain.

Voting will begin on June 6 in different centres in 19 colleges and a university across the country. On June 10, the polling will be held in 15 centres.

In Dhaka, there are two centres — TSC and Physical Education Centre — where polling will be held on June 15 and 16 from 9 am to 5 pm.

Husband held for killing wife

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, May 10: A man was arrested on charge of killing his second wife at Telikhali village under sadar thana of Patnakhali district yesterday.

Kohinur Begum, 30, a mother of two children, died on the spot when her husband Majid Sharif hit him with sharp object during a quarrel between them in the evening.

Hearing a hue and cry, neighbours rushed to the spot and caught Majid red-handed. He was later handed over to the police.

Majid, 45, has three more wives. A case has been lodged with local thana.

432 residential quarters for DMCH employees

The government has constructed 432 residential quarters for the fourth class employees of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at Elephant Road in the city, reports UNB.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Salah Uddin Yusuf yesterday inaugurated the quarters, constructed on 182 acres of land at a cost of Tk 11.38 crore.

Addressing the function, the Minister said the government was sympathetic to low-paid employees and trying its best to bring an end to their accommodation problem.

The government has a plan to establish more residential staff quarters for the low-paid employees, he said.

The health minister urged the employees to work with honesty and sincerity for rendering quality services to the patients.

BMA Secretary General Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Director of DMCH Brig Badrul Monir, among others, addressed the inaugural function.

DAB protests transfer of doctors

By Staff Correspondent
Leaders of Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB) at a meeting yesterday protested the transfer of doctors for participation in Medical Teachers' Association (MTA) federation election.

They were addressing a meeting of DAB, National Hospital unit with Dr Zulfiqar Haider in the chair. The meeting was attended by Prof M A Hadi, convener of the DAB central committee as the chief guest.

The DAB leaders urged the authorities to refrain from taking such "unjust" action.

Bangladeshi workers to get preference: Brunei

In response to Bangladesh's request for recruitment of more workers from Bangladesh, Brunei has assured to give priority to Bangladeshis in recruiting skilled and semi-skilled overseas workers, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister of Brunei Darussalam Prince Mohammed Balkiah gave the assurance during an official talk with his Bangladesh counterpart Abdus Samad Azad in Brunei Saturday, according to a message received in city yesterday.

Samad Azad urged the Foreign Minister of Brunei to recruit more Bangladeshi workers in their new projects.

He also sought the support of Brunei government for the post of the Commonwealth Secretary General, the election for which would be held soon.

He also requested the foreign minister of Brunei to open a resident mission in Bangladesh.

During the talks, Samad Azad briefed his counterpart that the present government of Bangladesh maintains friendly relations with the neighbouring countries of South Asia and South East Asia.

He said the present government has liberalised the economic policy to attract the foreign investors and urged the investors of Brunei to avail of the opportunity to invest in Bangladesh.

In reply, Brunei's Foreign Minister appreciated the role played by the government of Bangladesh in pursuing the policy of friendly relations and mutual cooperation with India and other neighbouring countries.

Later, Samad Azad called on Sultan of Brunei Sultan Haji Hassanalkhalid at the Royal Palace and discussed with him various issues of mutual interests.

He also raised the issue of opening a resident mission of Brunei in Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister sought the assistance and cooperation of the Sultan of Brunei in holding the 'NAM summit' scheduled to be held in Dhaka in 2001.

The Foreign Minister on behalf of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina invited him to visit Bangladesh. In response, the Sultan said he would visit Bangladesh at a convenient time.

The Foreign Minister is now in Vietnam on a two-day official visit.

BEF urged to monitor health condition in factories

Labour and Employment Minister M A Mannan yesterday called upon the Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) to monitor the overall health situation of their respective factories, reports BSS.

He also called for appropriate enforcement of the Factory Act 1965 which fixes working hours, weekly and compulsory holidays and benefits of the factory workers.

"There are enough laws to protect occupational safety and health hazard of the labourers in the country and every factory owners should follow these rules," the minister said while addressing the inaugural ceremony of a two-day workshop on "Occupational Safety and Health" in the conference hall of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI).

The workshop was organised by the Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Director of ILO area office M A Hassanein, BEF acting president A S M Quasem, BGMEA president Anisur Rahman Sinha and secretary general of BEF C K Hyder also addressed the function.

The minister said to prevent occupational hazards proper care and sympathetic handling are always needed. He said, every factory owners should take care of their employees.

ILO Director M A Hassanein said, Bangladesh has labour laws to cover the labours' health, safety, and working conditions. But shortage of resources as well as manpower make it difficult to enforce those properly, he said.

A S M Quasem said, Employers' Federation has chosen four sensitive sectors which are prone to safety and health hazard. These are garments, knitwear, textiles and leather.

Reception to new Spanish envoy

Alberto Escudero Claramunt, the new Spanish Ambassador to Bangladesh, was accorded a reception in the city on Saturday by the Honorary Consul of Spain for Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Arranged by the consul M Jalaluddin, the reception was attended, among others, by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, State Minister for Shipping Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Bir Bikram, members of the diplomatic corps and the elite of the city.

Claramunt, who is resident in New Delhi, presented his credentials to President Shahabuddin Ahmed Monday morning at Banghaban.

Bangladesh resident mission in the Spanish capital of Madrid was established in November in 1996 and Spanish Ambassador based in New Delhi has been concurrently accredited to Bangladesh since the beginning of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Spain is one of the development partners of Bangladesh and a participant in the construction of Gangabandhu Bridge over the Jamuna River.

Three statues recovered in Munshiganj

MUNSHIGANJ, May 10: The sadar thana police recovered a statue of Hindu Goddess Manasha, made of black stone, from Kazi Kasba in Rampal union yesterday, reports BSS.

Two more statues one Shivalinga made of black stone and the other a brass image of Goddess Durga, were also recovered last week from Tangbari and Louhajang areas of the district, police said.

All these statues were found when the villagers were digging earth in those localities, the source added.

Steps taken to keep city free from water-logging

Dhaka city will remain free from water-logging except a few places if there is no flood during the coming rainy season, WASA officials said yesterday.

They said the water-logging might create problem in comparatively low-lying areas and some parts of Old Dhaka for one or two hours in case of incessant monsoon rainfall.

"But the larger part of Dhaka city will hopefully remain free from water-logging during the period," Abdul Quader Chowdhury, Superintendent Engineer of the Dhaka WASA (Drainage Circle) told BSS.

He said the situation was expected to improve following the completion of a broad-based integrated flood control project in the capital city. "At least 93 per cent of the Taka 196 crore ADB-financed project has already been completed," he said.

Chowdhury said 6-km box culverts and 50-km storm sewerage lines were built and new 40-km open channel developed under the project with a view to ensuring the speedy sewerage disposal in the city.

Dhaka WASA sewerage network now comprises 185-km storm sewerage lines, 6-km box culverts and 60-km open channel while Dhaka City Corporation has 300-km storm sewerage lines in the whole network, another WASA official said.

He said three WASA pumping stations at Kalyanpur, Narinda and Dholaikhal with a total of 41.6 cubic meter per second pumping capacity under the city sewerage system would

be able to remove the water-logging problem.

Abdul Quader Chowdhury said Dhaka WASA was now cleaning its own sewerage network spending an additional Tk five crore besides its regular maintenance service and also sewerage lines of Dhaka City Corporation.

The ongoing cleanliness drive is expected to be completed by June 15 but the main sewerage lines will be cleaned by May 15, he said.

The WASA officials said places like Shantinagar, Paltan area, Rajarbag, Fakirapool, Bangladesh Secretariat and some areas of Motijheel were expected to remain free from water-logging problem this year.

"In case of heavy rainfall or excessive rise in river water level, these areas and low-lying areas in Old Dhaka may go under water because of pressure on pumping stations," an executive engineer of the WASA told the agency.

Meanwhile, the Mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif issued an order upon the concerned department of the city corporation to clean up the surface drains and sewerage channels in the city on an urgent basis.

He also gave a directive for an alternate arrangement to ensure easy passage of surface rain water towards the Narinda Pump House in Old Dhaka by diverting its course from the Dholaikhal canal, city corporation sources said.

BTTB launches spl drive to realise outstanding bills

Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) launched a special drive yesterday to cut off telephone lines across the country to realise outstanding bills, said an official press release, reports BSS.

At the initial stage of the move, Post and Telecommunications Secretary Nazmul Ahsan Chowdhury visited the EMD Exchange and One Point Service Centre at Ramna Telephone and Telephone Bhaban.

The secretary instructed the concerned officials to be cautious while cutting off the telephone lines so that the subscribers who have already paid bills are not harassed.

He also urged them to help brighten the image of the BTTB through providing better service.

BTTB Chairman M A Mannan Chowdhury and other senior officials were present during the visit.

The subscribers, who are yet to receive their bills, have been requested to collect those from the concerned revenue offices

Upgradation of satellite clinics suggested

Health experts and NGO representatives at a workshop yesterday suggested establishing community clinics by upgrading the existing satellite clinics and EPI centres in the country's vast rural areas, reports BSS.

The health experts including 33 thana health officers also stressed the need for strengthening the service of community clinics.

They were participating at a dissemination workshop of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, funded by the European Commission at the auditorium of Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC).

They said there could be limited field visits at the thana-level and below especially for newly-married couples and new-born children and their mothers. "But these visits should be confined to providing information and registration of

death, birth and pregnancies" Rahmat Ali, a health expert from Dima said. "Community clinics should be the focal point of all health care services of a community," he viewed.

Thana Functional Improvement Pilot Project (TFIPP), a project for strengthening health and family welfare services of 55 thanas in the district of Rangpur, Nilphamari, Sunamganj, Comilla, Barisal and Bagerhat, organised the two-day workshop to disseminate its findings in the health and family planning field during the last 5 years.

The experts underlined the need for motivation of the rural people to go for static services (community clinics) instead of depending on visits by the health personnel. Some experts were of the views of increased coordination between community clinics and field workers for the desired results.

Nepal considering to open consulate office in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, May 10: Nepal is actively considering to open a consulate office in Chittagong for promotion of trade, commerce and for offering visa facilities, reports BSS.

This was disclosed by Nepalese Ambassador to Bangladesh Madhurman Acharyia when he paid a courtesy call on President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) Kamaluddin Ahmed at the latter's office here today, a Chamber press release said.

Madhurman said, Chittagong is an ideal place with vast potentials for setting up joint venture industries, besides offering transit facility, increasing trade and commerce between the two countries, especially in the fields of agricultural products, tourism and education.

Welcoming the Nepalese envoy the Chamber President said, there are bright prospects for enhancement of bilateral trade and commerce. He said if necessary facilities for customs and immigration are extended, the trade and commerce between the two SAARC countries would be further strengthened in the coming days.

Senior Vice-President of the Chamber Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed and Deputy Chief of the Nepalese embassy Dr RP Thacker were, among others, present on the occasion.

Housewife shot in city

By Staff Correspondent
A housewife was shot by a gang of armed robbers who stormed into her residence at Mahakhali in the city yesterday.

Masuda Begum, 40, wife of Jaimal Abedin, sustained bullet injury in her left leg as she tried to resist them. She is now undergoing treatment at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Sources said that the incident occurred at about 7:15 am when the gang of three youths entered the house and asked her to hand over the key of almirah.

As she raised an alarm, her husband came out of the bathroom, but the miscreants fled the scene after firing on her.

Gulshan police said they have heard about the incident but no case has been filed.

Obituary

COMILLA, May 10: M Anwar Hossain (Kenu Mia), a valiant freedom fighter and an Awami League member died of a heart attack on Friday. He was 55, reports BSS.

He left behind his wife, two sons, one daughter, mother, two brothers and host of admirers to mourn his death.

His namaj-e-janaza was held at Chotara Meleka Montaj Girls' High School premises and he was buried at the Chotara Graveyard.

Public Administration Reform Commission Chairman ATM Shamsul Hogue, Mukti Joddha Sangsad, Comilla District Unit Commander Saiful Ahmed Babul and district Awami League, Juba League and Chhatra League leaders expressed their deep shock at the sudden death of Anwar Hossain.

Former deputy secretary Darajuddin Ahmed died of old age complications in the city last night. He was 83, reports BSS.

He is survived by his wife, three sons, two daughters and a host of relatives, friends and admirers.

The namaz-e-janaza of Darajuddin Ahmed will be held at Awlad Hossain Market Mosque after Zohr prayers today, family sources said.

The eldest son of the deceased, Masud Ahmed Rumi, is a senior journalist of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS).

British State Minister Fatchett dead

LONDON, May 10: British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Derek Fatchett died Sunday in London at the age of 53, the Foreign Office announced, reports AFP.

The cause of death was not given.

Fatchett had held his job since Prime Minister Tony Blair's Labour government came to power in May 1997.

In particular, he was responsible for the Middle East, Iran and Asian affairs.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook deplored Fatchett's "tragic and early death," adding that "he was not just a colleague but a close friend."

He said Fatchett had been "a real asset" to the government.

Hasina condoles death

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her deep shock at the sudden demise of Derek Fatchett MP, British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, reports BSS.

In a message to British Premier Tony Blair, the Prime Minister said "The Government and the people of Bangladesh join me in conveying our sincerest condolence to your excellency and to the members of his family."

Sheikh Hasina said Fatchett was a committed friend of Bangladesh. He will be remembered for his help and support to the Bangladesh community in Britain.



Filthy water submerges the roads due to faulty drainage system in the Ananda Bazar area in the city. —Star photo

Road work progressing fast in Bandarban

BANDARBAN, May 10: The construction work of the much expected Chimbuk-Thanchi road is progressing fast, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Army is constructing the 50-km road at a cost of Tk 60 crore which will pave the way for development in the remote areas of the district.

An official source said about 50 per cent of the work has already been completed. The earthwork of some sections is going on while the rest has already been completed.

After the completion of the road, it would take only eight hours to reach the thana headquarters from the district town, which earlier required eight days through waterways, the only means of transportation in the remote part of the district.

The road will help create opportunity in the fields of education, health, communication, business and other sectors.

The plying of vehicles have already started on the completed portion of the road. The marketing of agriculture products will be easier after completion of the road.

The officials said the road, being construction over 2,000 feet of the sea plain, will be an added attraction to the tourists from both home and abroad.

Besides, the law and order situation of the thana would be

Razzak visits Gaibandha town protection project

GAIBANDHA, May 10: Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak yesterday visited the Taka 15.46 crore project for protecting Gaibandha town and adjacent areas from flooding of the Ghaghot River, executed by the Bangladesh Water Development Board.

The work of the project, initiated under FAP-2 in fiscal 1996-97, is now progressing fast and 45 per cent work has already been completed by April, said a PID handout issued Monday.

He was informed that project work would be completed by the year 2001 and would protect the Gaibandha town and adjacent areas from the flooding of the Ghaghot River.

The Deputy Commissioner of Gaibandha district and Water Board officials were present.



The renovation and repairing work of drains at city's Segunbagicha area is on progress amidst the rains. —Star photo