

Anxious guardians waiting outside a school in the city while their wards sit for admission tests inside. — Star photo.

A tale of 'admission season' at schools

Star Report

As intense competition goes on for admission against a limited number of seats in the city schools parents are worried about the fate of their children.

This year's admission season started in November last. A good number of public and private schools have already finished enrollment while admission is still on in other schools.

Admission into 24 government high schools in Dhaka ended yesterday.

"I cannot sleep at night when I think about admission of my son," said Hosne Ara Begum, a housewife at Arambagh. She had her son sat for admission tests at a number of schools in the capital.

There are 325 government primary schools in Dhaka. Besides, there are 200 high schools, both public and private, 50 primary schools and some 500 kindergarten schools, according to an unofficial estimate.

The Government Laboratory High School which can accommodate only 240 students received 2500 applications for admission to class one and class six.

Four thousand children took part in the admission test of the Motijheel Government

Investors' conference

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Participants have registered with Euromoney in London while another 19 have registered locally, and most of the local invited participants are also expected to attend the conference.

"This is a grand opportunity to promote the investment opportunities in the country," said a senior BOI official yesterday.

The objective of the conference, as Euromoney put it in an outline of the conference, is linked to the government's overall marketing strategy to promote international business, finance and investment in the country.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is scheduled to inaugurate the conference at the Sonargaon Hotel. The conference is designed to look into all economic aspects of the country and is expected to provide an opportunity to potential investors to exchange views with the policy-makers.

The objective of the conference, as Euromoney put it in an outline of the conference, is linked to the government's overall marketing strategy to promote international business, finance and investment in the country.

Foreign investors and traders alike know little about Bangladesh but are more eager than ever to learn about new opportunities. Bangladesh is at the fringe of the emerging markets," it said.

"Visitors also need to be shown how investment in Bangladesh can function as a springboard for operations in India, as well as South East Asia and the Middle East."

It is important to persuade the international financial and business community to visit Bangladesh so that they can realise firsthand how welcome foreign investment now is and how the economic management team is speeding up economic liberalisation, Euromoney, also part of the Economist group, added.

The conference would also enable senior government officials to meet face to face with top-level executives from international institutions and would also provide an opportunity to identify and meet with new institutions who wish to develop business in Bangladesh, it said.

"The targeted audience should be senior investors, fund managers, corporate executives, investment bankers, commercial bankers, trading companies, accountants and lawyers, selected because they have, or should have, a real interest in Bangladesh," Euromoney explained in the conference plan.

The conference is being sponsored by six foreign and 12 local institutions, splitting the 120,000 pound sterling cost among them.

The foreign sponsors include Citibank NA and five other international fund man-

AL stages padajatra

The Awami League staged a padajatra in the city yesterday for the second time in the last two days with party chief Sheikh Hasina reaffirming her determination to oust the government if it failed to meet the demand for holding elections under a neutral caretaker government.

"We resigned from Parliament to establish the people's right to franchise which is endangered in the hands of the BNP government," Hasina told a rally at Basabo Maidan prior to the padajatra.

The Awami League organised the padajatra as part of the opposition's 9-day programme to press for dissolution of Parliament and elections under a caretaker government.

The major opposition parties — Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami — would enforce a day long road-blockade on January 19 and bring out torch processions on January 18 throughout the country.

The rally was also addressed by Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, KM Jahangir and Mozaffar Hossain Chowdhury Maya.

The rally over, Hasina led the padajatra which ended near the Mouchak Market in the evening.

BOU introduces SSC course

For the first time the Bangladesh Open University (BOU) is introducing SSC course for this year and admission will begin on February 1 and continue till February 15, reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, Vice-Chancellor of the Open University, Prof M Shamsur Ali said in the first year 50,000 students will be enrolled from all over the country.

He said anyone who is at least 14 years old and has passed class eight from any recognised secondary school is eligible for admission to the SSC course but there is no maximum age limit. Women and elderly candidates would be given preference for admission, he said.

He said application form for admission are available in the high schools in each thana sadar specified by BOU and the names of these schools can be gathered from the respective Thana Education Officer.

8 hurt in Khulna gunbattle

From Our Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 15: At least eight persons were wounded in a fierce gunbattle between two groups of workers around the Boyra CSD godown this morning. Police lobbed tear gas shells to bring the situation under control.

Eye witnesses said, the two rival groups, known as Aslam group and the Nazem Aslam group were fighting over the leadership of the CSD handling workers union that has so far claimed six lives in the last four years.

The two groups used firearms and hand bombs during the clash.

Advance tax

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Telegraph Board (T&T) to facilitate the date entry and computer software export business in the country and asked the Commerce Ministry to look into the arrangement with the T and T Board.

The meeting, held after a gap of nearly a year, was also attended by cabinet ministers, senior government officials and chamber representatives.

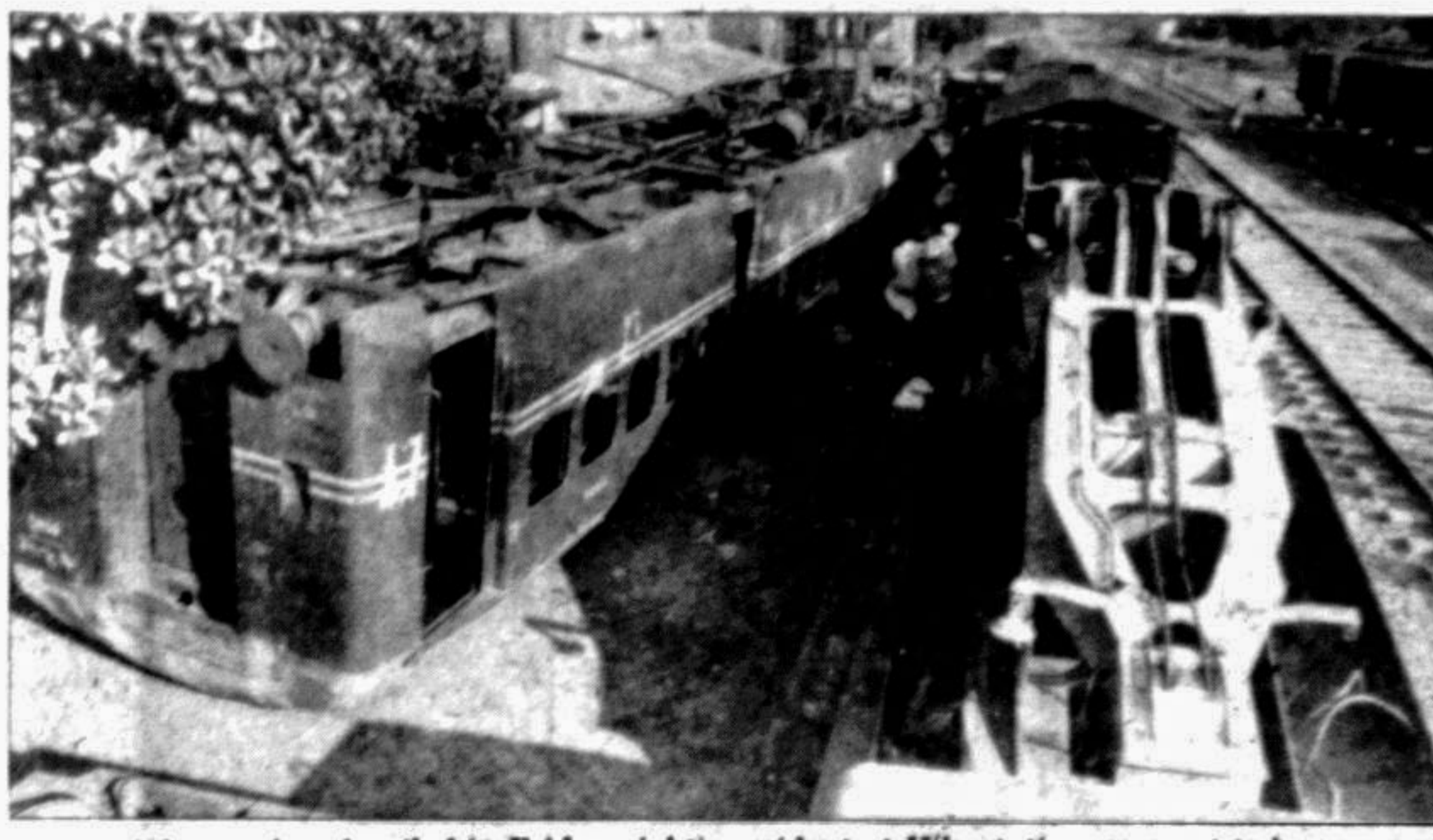
The meeting instructed the banks and insurance companies concerned to jointly discuss ways of reducing the bank debt burden of the frozen food industries in the coastal areas which were affected by the 1991 cyclone.

The commerce ministry was also asked to look into the feasibility of providing reduced airfreight rates for the export of fruits, vegetables and cut flowers, included in the export promotion crash programme.

The meeting decided to consider a jute sector demand to reduce the bank interest rate to the sector from 12.5 per cent to nine per cent. But it did not consider a request by the export oriented industrial sector to reduce bank interest rates to the sector, the commerce ministry sources added.

The decision to reduce the advance income tax at source was taken amid continued demand by the country's export sectors, although the Finance Ministry was initially opposed to the idea, the sources said.

The National Board of Revenue is expected to issue an order within the next few weeks regarding the reduction of advance income tax at source and providing warehouse facilities for leather sector imports, they added.



Some of the coaches derailed in Friday night's accident at Hili station were yet to be removed when this picture was taken yesterday. — Star photo by Anisur Rahman

Hili station master, two pointsmen still at large

From Naimul Haq

HILI, Jan 15: Three employees from nearby railway stations have been deputed to run the Hili station which came to a standstill following Friday night's accident.

One station master from Parbatipur and two pointsmen from other stations were brought in to replace the absconding employees.

The station master Abdul Khaleq and the pointsmen, Noor Mohammed Fakir of Hili station are still absconding after two trains collided head-on, leaving at least 26 persons dead and more than a hundred injured.

More than 57 injured passengers were under treatment in different hospitals at Dinajpur, Fulbari, Joypurhat and Itakimpur.

The microwave link with

New formula underway

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of a party in Parliament played the key role in the negotiation between the ruling party and the Opposition.

Meanwhile, Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali has already prepared his ruling regarding the resignation letters of 147 opposition MPs. He delayed announcing it apparently to give the rival camps the scope to reach a consensus, one source said.

The source further said that the Speaker was in touch with both the sides about the latest development.

A source close to the Speaker said that he (Speaker) had identified a number of faults in the resignation letters and is likely to declare those invalid. He (Speaker) would substantiate his decision with a number of legal provisions, the source added.

The announcement of the consensus and the Speaker's ruling may come simultaneously on January 17, a top political leader told The Daily Star.

Shaikh Razzak Ali and Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain had a meeting with senior BNP leader and Communications Minister Oli Ahmed at the latter's residence yesterday evening.

The spokesmen of all the parties maintained silence about the progress of the negotiations.

Mr Khan, Sufia made Nat'l Professors

The government yesterday appointed noted educationists Dr M R Khan and Dr Sufia Ahmed National Professors for a period of five years, reports BSS.

JS boycott case

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The extension of the order, given on December 12 last, was granted upon a prayer by Rafiqul Haq, Bar-at-Law, counsel for Jatiya Party parliamentary leader Moudud Ahmed, one of the three respondents named in the writ.

The counsel for the writ petitioner Mohammad Ali, Bar at Law, opposed the prayer for extension of stay for an uncertain period and submitted that since the Opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) had already submitted their resignations on December 28, 1994 and since there was no chance of immediate implementation of the High Court order, there was nothing to stay.

After hearing both sides Justice ATM Afzal granted the prayer and extended the stay till hearing of the appeal.

Justice Afzal directed the appellants to make the paper book of the appeal ready within one month from yesterday. He also said that on expiry of that date the writ petitioner's counsel will be at liberty to mention the case before the Appellate Division for fixing the date for an early hearing of the appeal.

PM witnesses jt winter exercise of army, air force in Comilla

From Page 1 Col 7

MODAFFARGANJ (Comilla), Jan 15: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today said the government is determined to build a strong and modern army in a continuing environment of economic development, reports UNB.

Begum Zia was addressing members of the 33 Infantry Division after witnessing a joint winter exercise of Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Air Force at village Bijora near Modaffarganj Bazar in Comilla district this morning.

Lauding the timely step taken by the armed forces in avoiding loss of life and limbs in the flood affected Gumbi area, the Prime Minister said the Army had always stood beside the people in times of need.

She mentioned the glorious role of the armed forces in the Liberation War, in serving distressed people, and restoring peace and order in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

When contacted over telephone, Oli Ahmed told The Daily Star it would be wise not to write anything about the progress of the negotiation process.

"If you want to help any negotiation process, don't write anything," Oli Ahmed said.

"From my side, I have no comment. I have no comment," he concluded.

BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder said that he was isolated from the whole process since he was out of the capital for the past three days.

"Something may happen but I have no knowledge," he added.

When contacted over telephone, Mohammad Nasim of the Awami League told The Daily Star last night "it is the ruling party which can resolve the crisis."

Hasina

From Page 1 Col 5

caretaker administration and finally resigned from Parliament to realise the demand. But the Prime Minister understood (the need for quitting power) the day after the Opposition lawmakers resigned, Hasina said.

The AL chief regretted that the Speaker was yet to give his decision on the resignation of the Opposition MPs even 17 days after the submission of the resignation letters.

Mentioning her latest proposal for elections under a neutral advisory council headed by the president, she said the BNP government could not still respond to it.

The ruling BNP has now become a "minority party in Parliament after 149 out of the 300-elected MPs resigned and this had put an end to the legitimacy of the Leader of the House and the Prime Minister and her government," Hasina claimed.

"Yet, there is time to give up power and accept the demand for polls under a neutral caretaker government by dissolving the present Parliament," she said.

The AL chief called upon the people to get prepared for further intensifying the current Opposition agitation and asked the BCL activists to stand by the people.

Rashed Suhrawardy, son of HS Suhrawardy who was also present, in his speech said the national politics was now at a crossroad and said "we must be prepared to contest a fresh general election."

The reunion was also attended by the present and former BCL leaders.

Anti-mosquito

From Page 1 Col 5

programme at the field level. "We always continue mosquito control measures, this time we are gearing up our activities," he added.

The Midnight File

Chechen war could last longer than Afghan war, warns Dudayev

BONN, Jan 15: Russia's war in Chechnya could last longer than its 10-year involvement in Afghanistan, Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev warned in an interview with the German Sunday newspaper Die Welt Am Sonntag. "It could last a very long time, perhaps longer than the war in Afghanistan," Dudayev said in the 15-minute interview by satellite telephone which the paper said took place on Saturday, reports AFP.

Two arrested for murder

By Staff Correspondent

Two brothers were arrested for their alleged involvement in the murder of a youngman in the city's Lal Mohan Street area yesterday.

Mohammad Matin, 20, accused of stealing a bicycle, was beaten to death by some youths Saturday evening.

The two brothers — imam Hossain, 20, and Jahir Uddin, 22, were detained by police for interrogation yesterday afternoon.

Matin had reportedly brought a youngman who wanted to buy imam's bicycle but fled away with the cycle, according to police.

Green panel sweeps RUTA polls

RAJSHAHI, Jan 15: The 'green' panel today swept the Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA) polls bagging 12 seats including the president of the 15-member executive committee for 1995, reports UNB.

Prof M Aminul Islam of the green panel known as the nationalist force and Dr Mizan Uddin of yellow panel were elected president and general secretary respectively of RUTA.

The elections to deans and teachers' representatives for the syndicate, academic council, finance committee, and planning and development committee were also held today. Nationalist force candidates bagged 15 out of 19 seats.

The green panel secured all the six seats of the academic council, all five of the syndicate, three posts of deans and the only seat of finance committee.

On the other hand, the yellow panel got three posts of deans and a post of planning and development committee.

Duration of trade fair extended

The ongoing Dhaka International Trade Fair will now end on January 28, instead of Jan 21 as scheduled earlier, official sources said yesterday, reports BSS.

A real bull

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Finally a hot chase by local police, assisted by stick-wielding policemen of Narayanganj thana, succeeded in bringing the runaway bull under control. Two bus drivers also helped by blocking the way of the charging bull by parking their vehicles in its path. Earlier attempts to stop the frightened animal by rolling empty oil barrels in its path had failed to impede it.

When contacted, the police could not say whether the 'prisoner' would be granted 'bail' or satisfy the palates of its uniformed captors.



পত ১২ই জানুয়ারী সকাল সোয়া ১১ টায় ১২৬৭ নম্বরের আলী রোড, চট্টগ্রাম-এ ফেডারেল ইন্স্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেডের চাকরি শাখার আনুষ্ঠানিক উদ্বোধন করা হয়। উদ্বোধন করেন কোম্পানীর ভারপ্রাপ্ত চেয়ারম্যান আলহাজ্ব আহমদ শফি।

কোম্পানীর ভারপ্রাপ্ত চেয়ারম্যানের সভাপতিত্বে এ উপলক্ষে আয়োজিত সভায় সন্ত্রাসবৃত্তি বন্ধকরণ প্রক্রিয়াকর্মী এ. এ. বাসেক, আলহাজ্ব এনামুল হক, ভারপ্রাপ্ত মুখ্য নির্বাহী এ. কে. এম. সোহরাওয়ার্দী চৌধুরী এবং শাখা ব্যবস্থাপক মিনন কান্তি বিশ্বাস।

সভায় পরিচালকবৃন্দ মধুে স্বিকল্পন হক, জসিম উদ্দিন, দুলাল আমিন মোঃ লোকমান, চৌধুরী এবং চট্টগ্রামের বিশিষ্ট শিক্ষার্থী, ব্যাকসারী ও গণমাধ্যম ব্যক্তিবর্গ উপস্থিত ছিলেন।

সভায় পরিচালক এম. এ. বাসেক বিপত্ত বহরগুলাতে ব্যবসা জরুরের পরিকল্পনা উন্নয়নের সাক্ষাৎ সত্বে প্রকাশ করেন এবং পরিচালক আলহাজ্ব এনামুল হক কোম্পানীর বর্তমান উন্নয়ন গ্রাহক সেবা স্ববাহিত শাখার প্রতিশ্রুতি ব্যক্ত করে গ্রাহকদের আর্থিক সহযোগিতা কামনা করেন।

সভাপতির ভাষণে আলহাজ্ব আহমদ শফি বলেন, গত বছর আমাদের কোম্পানী ১৫ কোটি টাকার নতুন প্রিমিয়াম সংগ্রহ করেছে। এর মূল কারণ কোম্পানীর উন্নয়ন গ্রাহকদের সুপরিষেবা আনা এবং নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিতকরণে কোম্পানীর দৃষ্টি রাখা দাবী নিশ্চিত।

তিনি আরো বলেন, আমাদের ২৪টি শাখা ইতিমধ্যেই সারা দেশে গ্রাহক সেবার নিয়োজিত। চট্টগ্রামের চট্টগ্রাম জেলা বাসাবাধিকার জন্ম বিহীন। এখানকার ব্যবসায়ীদের নিরাপত্তা এবং সেবার ইচ্ছা আমাদের কোম্পানীর দীর্ঘদিনের। আমাদের ২৫ তম শাখা উদ্বোধনের মাধ্যমে তা বাস্তবায়িত হল।

পরিষেবে তিনি এখানকার সকল শ্রেণীর ব্যবসায়ীদের সহযোগিতা এবং আর্থিক সহায়তা গ্রহণের কামনা করেন।

Editor: Mahfuz Anam