



### Rob's mother passes away

Begum Majeda Khatun, mother of Shipping Minister and JSD Secretary General ASM Abdur Rob, died at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the city yesterday. She was 75, reports UNB.

Begum Majeda had been suffering from brain stroke, heart disease, diabetes and other old age complications for a long time.

The first namaz-e-Janaza of the deceased was held at the Shipping Minister's official residence at Gulshan. Another janaza was held at Charbadam. Hazi A Gafur Memorial High School under Ramgati Thana in Laxmipur, where she was buried at her family graveyard.

### PM, ministers condole death

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of Begum Mazeda Khatun, mother of Shipping Minister ASM Abdur Rob.

In a message of condolence yesterday, the Prime Minister expressed heartfelt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul.

Meanwhile, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister and General Secretary of Awami League Zilur Rahman, Agriculture, Food, Disaster Management and Relief Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim, Communications Minister Anwar Hossain, State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader and State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana Mohammad Nurul Islam yesterday condoled the death of Begum Majeda Khatun.

Dhaka City Mayor Mohammad Hanif also expressed shock at the death of Rob's mother, says a PID handout.

BSS adds: BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday expressed his deep condolence at the death of Begum Majeda Khatun.

In a condolence message, Mannan Bhuiyan conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul.

## Seminar on transit to India 'National interest first'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday said Bangladesh should first estimate its economic benefits before agreeing to give transit facilities to India.

They said transit facilities have two implications: India would be benefited both economically and strategically. They observed that by getting the transit facilities India would be able to save Rs 4000 crore annually. The transit facilities will lead to the creation of some infrastructural facilities in Bangladesh but these facilities will only benefit India, they said.

The seminar on "Economic Perspective of Transit" organised by Jana Samaj was held at the National Press Club. With Barrister Lutfar Rahman Shahjahan in the chair, the seminar was attended by among others, Prof AKM Monwar ur Uddin, Dr Nasrin Khandker, AFM Mahbulul Haq, Abdul Haq and Ahmed Hasan.

Sadek Khan and Ahmed Hossain in their paper on transit said has transit agreements for eight points in Bangladesh. If it can avail of transit facilities in 54 more points, India would not only be benefited economically, it would also be benefited strategically.

They said the Indians were actually focusing on using the Chittagong Port. But Bangladesh could not sustain the pressure of the local exporters and importers and required huge investment to expand the port facilities just to sustain the local pressure.

According to them, Bangladesh Railway might be benefited by the transit facilities as its income might increase by Tk 60 crore annually.

The paper said, since the SAPTA agreement already provides for increased economic cooperation between the two countries, the demand for trans-

sit facilities is extraneous. It noted that since independence, India had always followed a "big brother" policy regarding water sharing, Tin Bigha corridor, Dahagram-Angorporta and other issues. Over the years, India has failed to win the trust of Bangladesh and as such the proposal for transit has created suspicion in the minds of the people of this country.

In the paper of Abul Hasib Khan, Ferdous Hossain and Nurul Islam, it was pointed out that if the proposal for transit exclusively aimed at making a shortcut between the eastern and the western part of eastern India, Bangladesh should consider a substitute. The paper proposed that Bangladesh could use its own transport system to carry the Indian transit goods from the western point to the eastern point.

It said, the substitute for the transit would benefit the local rail and road transport workers and create additional facilities. It would also help develop a new infrastructure which would serve both Bangladesh and India.

The paper said although the main purpose of transit is expansion of regional trade, in reality it would only expand Indian trade in Bangladesh.

The paper observed that in seven states in east and north India, Bangladesh has a good market for its products than the Indian goods due to its advantageous geographical position. The transit facilities would shrink that market, the paper added.

### FS assembles country's first water tender

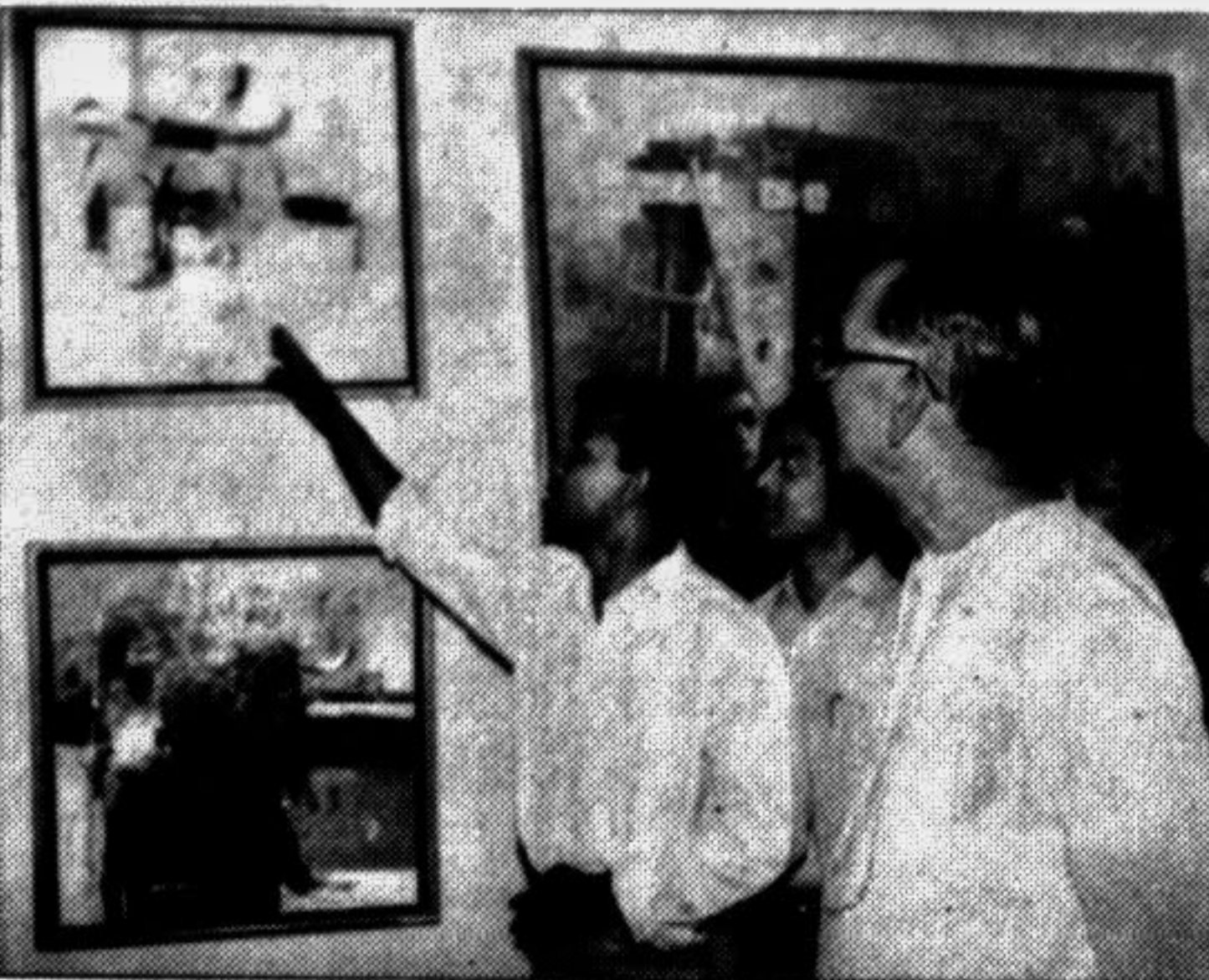
The Fire Service (FS) has successfully assembled Fire Fighting Water Tender at its headquarters workshop by utilising old machinery with the skill of the local engineers, reports UNB.

Terming this an indigenous achievement for the first time in the country's history, the officials said the water vehicle with a capacity of 800 gallons of water would be operative primarily for experiment and research.

Director General of Fire Service Brig Mahtab Uddin Ahmed, at a function yesterday, handed over the water tender to Mirpur fire station.

Import of an 800-gallon water tender requires about Tk 1 crore. But the locally assembled one, using chassis of FS's old vehicle and a pump set with it, only cost Tk 40,000 to 50,000.

According to the local version, the tender's pump can also be removed if it water exhausts and refilled.



The 5th solo painting exhibition by Mohammad Iqbal was inaugurated by former Chief Justice and Chief Advisor of the last caretaker government Muhammad Habibur Rahman at Devine Art Gallery in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

### What's on today . . .

**BLS convention:** On the occasion of the 21st founding anniversary of Bangladesh Literacy Society, a special convention will be held. Chief guest: Finance Minister SAMS Kibria. Venue: Planning and Development Academy auditorium, Nilkhet. Time: 4:30 pm.

**Photo exhibition on Dhaka city:** An exhibition of photographs on 'the heritage of glorious Dhaka city' by Sukur Salek, editor of fortnightly 'Dhaka Basi,' will be held. Venue: Khalil Sarder Community Centre, Hazaribagh. Time: 3 pm.

**Khelaghar function:** The concluding ceremony of a three-day cultural competition, organised by Khelaghar Dhaka Mahangari, will be held. Chief guest: Dr Neelima Ibrahim. Venue: Khelaghar auditorium, 278/3 Elephant Road. Time: 4 pm.

**Zahir Raihan Film Society:** As part of a retrospective of British filmmaker Peter Greenaway, the following films will be screened: 'Dear Phone', 'Drowning by Numbers' and 'The Cook, the thief, his wife and her lover'. Time: 5 pm, 5:15 pm and 7:15 pm respectively. Venue: German Cultural Centre, House: 10, Rd: 9, Dhanmondi.



Brigadier Mahtab Uddin Ahmed, Director General, Fire Service and Civil Defence, handing over a locally assembled water tender to the officer in charge of the Mirpur Fire Station in the city yesterday.

### Two notorious criminals held

Police arrested two notorious criminals in separate operations in the last 48 hours, reports UNB.

Lipton, a fugitive, was arrested from city's Saadabad bus terminal area Sunday night while Mostafizur Rahman alias Shashu from airport area yesterday.

Lipton is wanted in connection with seven cases, including two murder cases. Rahman is also charged with several cases, said a DMP release.

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