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The Daily Star

Prof Shahjahan's
Ekushey Padak
withheld at the
last moment

By Staff Correspondent

Dr Mohammad Shahjahan, former Vice Chancellor of the BUET, who was officially invited to the Ekushey Padak giving ceremony yesterday as a recipient was not given the award as his name was dropped at the last moment.

Later, at night, an official announcement said that although Dr. Mohammad Shahjahan was nominated for the Ekushey Padak '96 but due to some specific serious allegations against him, the award was withheld.

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs had earlier invited Dr Mohammad Shahjahan to the Osmany Memorial auditorium to receive the Ekushey Padak '96, yesterday for his contribution in the field of education.

Dr Shahjahan along with his wife went there to receive award, but he found that his name was not printed in the list

See Page 12 Col 4

**Tofael, B Chy
argue over
withholding
award.**

By Staff Correspondent

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed said in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that Prof Mohammad Shahjahan an water expert and former Vice Chancellor of the BUET was not awarded the Ekushey Padak '96 as this could influence the trial of the corruption case against him.

Tofael made the statement when BNP lawmaker Khan-daker Mosharraf Hussain raised the issue rising on a point of order.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury also took part in the debate on the issue.

See Page 12 Col 3

**Kushtia university
college closed**

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Feb 20: Kushtia Government University College has been closed sine die following violent incidents on the campus today.

Centring around the admission into honours first year classes, a group of students ransacked the office of the Principal and created a reign of terror on the campus. Today was the last date for admission.

The college authorities at a meeting decided to close the college for an indefinite period to avoid further untoward incidents.

Police have been deployed on the campus.

Holiday

The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today (Friday) on account of Shahid Day.

Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow.

Inside Today

Article

Language Movement

Some Reflections on Recent History

Column : Currents and
Crosscurrents
By M M Rezaul Karim
Page 4

International

300 feared dead in
Peruvian mudslide
Israel orders demolition
of UN building in WB
Page 5

Business

LC opening declines
during July-December
in '96

DSE price index edges
higher
Pages 6, 7

Rising Stars

A tribute to 1952
Page 9

Teens and Twenties

Experience of a
lifetime; and In favo
of child labour
Page 8



President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed placing wreath at the Central Shaheed Minar at 12:01 last night

— Star photo

Ekushey returns to inspire nation

By Staff Correspondent

The nation observes Amar Ekushey today to pay homage to the heroes of the Language Movement and to pledge afresh to translate their ideals into reality.

On this day in 1952, Salam, Rafiq, Barkat, Jabbar and many other unknown brave sons of the soil made supreme sacrifices for giving Bangla the status of state language of the then Pakistan and for the attempt to make Urdu the only state language.

On that historic day, they were marching in a procession towards the then provincial assembly housed in the present Jagannath Hall premises of Dhaka University.

Their sacrifices led to the

movement for self-determination which culminated into independence through the Liberation War.

The day's official programmes began with the placing of wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar at one minute

Editorial on page 4

past zero hour last night by the President, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed to the strains of the famous song 'Amar bhaer rokeye rangano Ekushey February amiki bhalite pari'. The President was followed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

After the Prime Minister, the Speaker, Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad, Ministers, Mayor of the Dhaka City Cor-

poration and Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) placed wreaths at the Shahid Minar one by one.

Breaking the tradition, the Speaker, ministers and the mayor placed wreaths before the DUCSU this year.

The Vice-Chancellor of the Dhaka University and other members of the Shaheed Dibosh Observance Committee welcomed the President and the Prime Minister at the premises of the Shahid Minar.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed in a message on the occasion said the language movement ultimately inspired us in building an independent and sovereign

See Page 12 col 6

25 hurt in JCD-BCL clash

Shahjalal Varsity closed sine die

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Feb 20: The Shahjalal University of Science and Technology has been closed sine die and the residential halls have been vacated following violent clashes between rival student groups.

The university syndicate met in an emergency session after 25 persons were injured in clashes between the activists of the Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal and the Bangladesh Chhatra League (S-P) last night.

Fifteen rooms in the Shah Paron Hall were ransacked and valuables were either thrown out or set on fire.

Of the injured, eight were admitted to the Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College Hospital.

The university authorities

Now mosquitoes are called Hanif Mosha'

By Staff Correspondent

A back bencher earned applause from sides in the House yesterday, thanks to his humorous presentation of the mosquito menace in the city.

Speaking on a call attention notice, Haji Md Selim a ruling party MP from Dhaka wondered how a tiny insect like mosquito posed a threat to the lives of the people and described many funny stories on mosquito.

Referring to some former mayors of Dhaka, Haji Selim said, in the past, Dhaka's mosquitoes were popularly known as 'Barrister Mosha', 'Mahmud Mosha', and 'Monju Mosha'. Now these are called 'Hanif Mosha'.

The Deputy Speaker, who was in the chair, told Selim, 'Mr MP, remember that mosquitoes in Lalbagh area will be called 'Selim Mosha'.

He recalled that Motia Chowdhury, now a minister,

See Page 12 Col 4

11 awarded Ekushey Padak '97

The government has awarded Ekushey Padak '97 to eleven persons in recognition of their contribution in their respective fields, reports UNB.

They will be given Tk 20,000 each along with a gold medal and a certificate, said an official handout yesterday.

The awarded personalities are: Abu Ishaque (literature), Begum Movera Ahmed and Nitin Kundu (sculpture), Debu Bhattacharya (music-posthumously), Rumu Biswas (dance-posthumously), Dr Razia Khan and Dr Sirajul Haq (education), Begum Shabnam Mushtari (music), Santosh Gupta and Monajat Uddin (journalism) and Momtaj Uddin Ahmed (drama).

Two get Bangla Academy Award

Litterateur Moinul Ahsan Saber and Prof Syed Manzurul Islam of Dhaka University won the Bangla Academy Literary Award '96, reports BSS.

— Star photo

Bangabandhu murder trial Lawyers exchange abusive language: Next date Mar 1

Star Report

The six chargesheeted accused in the Bangabandhu murder case were produced before the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) yesterday.

They were Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farookur Rahman; Lt Col (relieved) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan; Taheruddin Thakur, former minister of state for information; Lt Col. Mohiuddin Ahmed, Acting Director, BNCC, Dhaka; Capt (Hon) Abdul Wahab Joarder and Begum Zobaida Rashid, wife of Lt Col (dismissed) A. Rashid Khandaker.

They were produced before the court at about 1:20 pm.

During the proceedings of the case which continued for

about an hour, lawyers from both the prosecution and the defence sides exchanged abusive language against each other in the packed court room. This interrupted the proceedings.

As the case was not yet ready for trial, the court fixed March 1 for production of the accused in the same court.

When the accused were escorted out to the prison van, a group of people were seen chanting slogans outside the court building demanding capital punishment to the accused.

Police in riot gear was deployed inside the court premises and also around the court room.

During the proceedings, See Page 12 Col 1

Khulna Newsprint Mills closed

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, Feb 20: The Khulna Newsprint Mills has been closed from Wednesday evening because of frequent load shedding, low quality of products and financial problems.

According to sources of the mills, over five thousand tonnes of newsprint are lying unsold in the godown creating serious space problem. Dealers are also reluctant to buy the newsprint as most of the newspapers are using imported white print due to low quality of Khulna newsprint.

Meanwhile, the employees and workers have criticised the authorities for closing the mills without giving prior notice. They said they were planning to start an agitation if the mills is not reopened within 24 hours.

Landslide kills 4 in Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, Feb 20: Four construction workers were killed in a landslide at Ghoonerpara in the town today, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as Mohammad Arif, 40, son of Momin Uddin of Charfassion, Bola; Moslem Khan, 34, son of Hason Ali, and Abul Hossain, 35, son of Mostafa Ali of Mohipur, Patuakhali, and Dev Chandra Dhar, 45, son of Kalabash Dhar of Ramu, Cox's Bazar.

Local people said a big chunk of earth of a 300-foot hill fell down on the labourers when they were constructing the wall of 'Krishna Dham' temple at Ghoonerpara here at 5 pm.

Seven workers were engaged in wall construction. Three of them with minor injuries were rescued by the local people.

Yasmin murder

7 witnesses cross-examined

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Feb 20: Seven prosecution witnesses of the Yasmin Rape and Murder Case were cross-examined by the defence counsels in the District and Sessions Judge's Court here today.

The witnesses are Reazul Hossain, a former MP of Dina-jpur, Azizul Islam, an advocate and district secretary of the Human Rights Implementation Sangsads, Zahedul Islam, Dina-jpur Pauroshava ward commissioner and four members of the *adivasi* community.

Sukumani, an *adivasi*, in her deposition told the court that when she woke up in the early hours of August 24 in 1995, she saw 9 police van leaving the police near the house in a hurry. Later, in the morning she, along with thousand other people, found a young girl lying dead.

The court will sit again on Saturday.

Afsar resigned at PM's request, Zillur tells JS

By Staff Correspondent

Deputy Leader of the House and LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that the State Minister for Housing and Public Works Afsaruddin Ahmad Khan was dropped from the cabinet in accordance with the relevant rules.

He was giving a statement on the issue after BNP lawmaker Mashirul Rahman, quoting press reports, had alleged that the Constitution was violated in handling the case of the state minister.

See Page 12 Col 8

BNP's gayebana janaza for Shima Chowdhury

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 20: The BNP, Chittagong city unit, held a gayebana janaza for Shima Chowdhury here this afternoon.

BNP leaders said, Shima Chowdhury had embraced Islam after marrying her fiance Abdul Hafiz.

They also expressed resentment for cremating the body of Shima.

Meanwhile, the viscera report on Shima has not yet reached here from Dhaka. Police sources said the viscera report will be sent to the court directly.

In the meantime, one magistrate, Md Mostafa has taken over as acting superintendent of Chittagong Jail. A new doctor has also joined the jail.

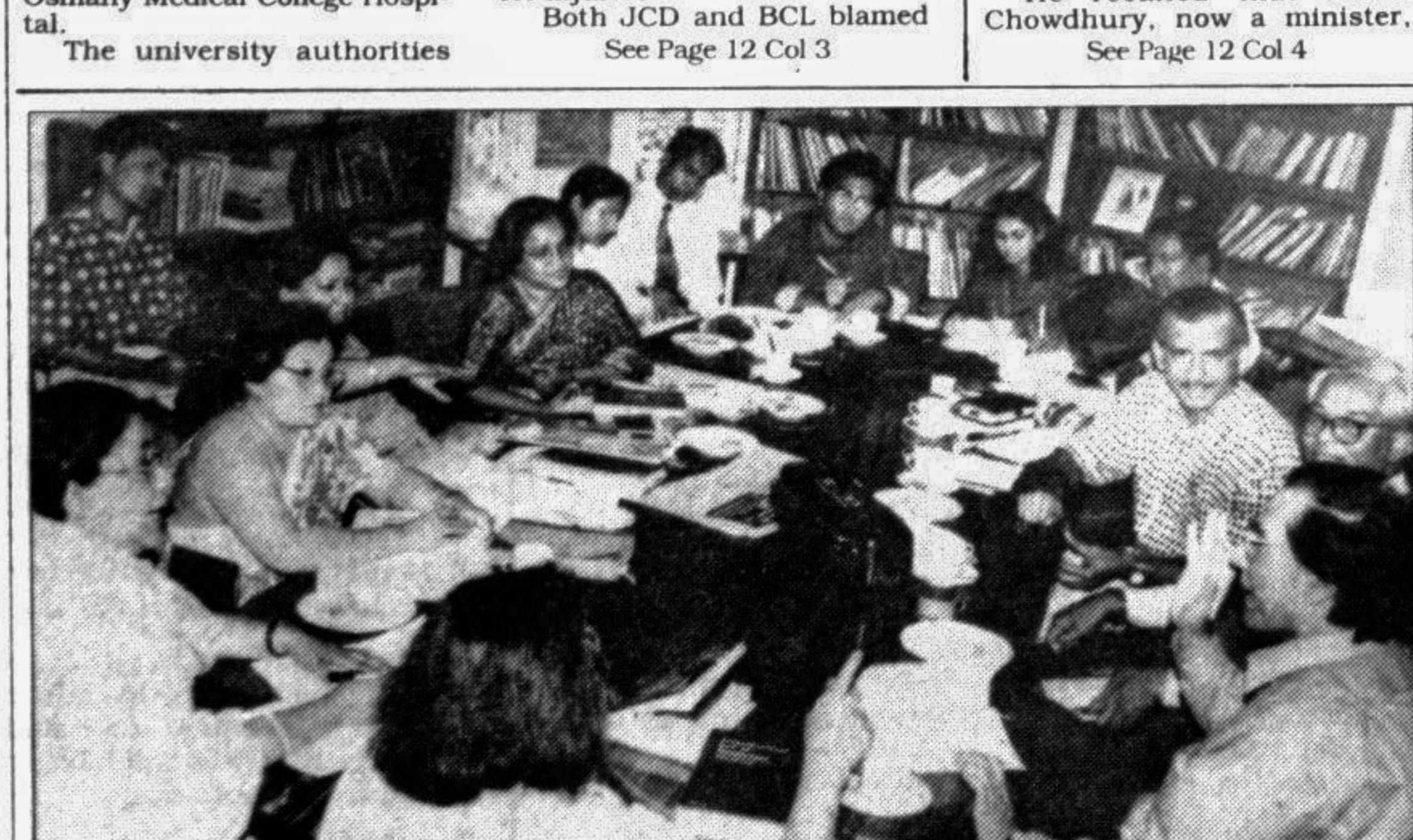
Fire at Baridhara: Two injured

By Staff Correspondent

Two labourers sustained burn injuries when a fire broke out in a building at Baridhara in the city yesterday afternoon.

The labourers were engaged in making partex ceiling on the ground floor of the six-storey building on Road No 10 of Block-A at about 1:30 pm, fire service sources said.

The cause of the fire could not be known immediately.



— Star photo

The Daily Star open discussion 'Separate homes' for safety of women in custody suggested

By Staff Correspondent

Shima was raped in police station and then sent off to 'safe custody' in the jail where she had a tragic end.

'Law does not say that a woman should be put in jail for her safety. In Shima's case, it is strange because she was put in the same jail as her rapists,' one of the discussants said. The participants recommended that custodial rape should be specifically defined in the Penal Code.

Judicial custody is imposed on rescued victims of trafficking and rape, witnesses to be produced in court or else when they have no safe place to go to. For lack of homes, these women are sent to jail, sometimes in the same jail as the perpetrators.

Referring to Shima's case, Advocate Sarah Hossain said that Shima was arrested on grounds of suspicion on nine separate grounds have been specially repressive to women, they said.

Speaking on Shima's case, Advocate Sarah Hossain said that Shima was arrested on grounds of suspicion on nine separate grounds have been specially repressive to women, they said.