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Down to Earth

Conservation of Historical Relics

By ASM Nurunnabi

A recent report in The Daily Star stated that Chhoto Katra and Boro Katra, two famous remains of the Mughal era in the city, face extinction as they are yet to be protected officially as historical sites. It can hardly be overemphasised that preservation of past culture is important to nourish a sense of identity, national pride and self-esteem. There is, therefore, an overwhelming need for creating a general consciousness among the people for participation in conservation activities relating to the past heritage.

Those who have made studies in this regard sadly note that we have so far failed to adopt comprehensive programmes to conserve old important marks as a whole of the capital city of Dhaka. According to one researcher, Dhaka's spectacular expansion in area and population since 1947 had been the appropriate time to conserve the old plan of the city in the new one, with its architectural and cultural wealth. It was remarked that this could have easily been done with some restrictions in the old areas only, with little obstruction in modern planning. Since this was not done and since things have progressed far, their is little left now to conserve.

According to a research study, 259 sites and monuments now stand in the country as protected monuments and the Department of Archaeology is entrusted with the task of looking after them by carrying out necessary repairs and restorations. It is reported that simultaneously with the works of preservation, conservation and restoration of the enlisted

In this context, it has been

monuments, the Department of Archaeology continues to add more and more monuments to the protection list. The addition of new monuments is definitely a positive step forward. It, however, needs to be supported with the provision of adequate funds and urgent acquisition of such old property, were necessary. It needs no emphasis that all buildings, old or new, need maintenance. The need of the older buildings is obviously greater.

Experts stress that monuments for effective preservation need careful maintenance not only of their structural remains but also of their original environment, but sadly enough, though the Antiquity Act of 1968 prohibits construction on or near a monument, we find much of the original surroundings of our monuments had disappeared long ago and there has been a lot of additional constructions even on the monuments and within the premises as well as outside.

It is understood that, besides Chhoto Katra and Boro Katra, mentioned in the newspaper report, there are other monuments in the Dhaka city, proposed for inclusion in the protection list after careful field investigation, studies and research. These include North Brooke Hall, Rupali House, Rose Garden, Sutrapur Zamindar Bari, Shankha Nidhi Bhaban, Radha Krishna Mandir and Bhaja Hari Lodge. The problem in this case is reportedly that the ownership of all these monuments in most cases has not been transferred to the Department of Archaeology.

In this context, it has been

Ansars

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a scale of 10.

The change from regulation to overall management is an indication that the reforms are continuing and will continue.

Chidambaram, however, warned India was facing problems with its rising oil demand and its underperforming power sector.

Chidambaram said: "Two areas of great concern are the sharp drop in domestic crude oil production and the sluggish performance of the power sector.

He said it was a 'great concern,' adding: "The country's demand for petroleum products is growing at over eight per cent per annum, which is faster than the growth of domestic supply. We cannot choke this growth."

He slashed taxes across the board, cutting maximum personal income tax from 40 per cent to 30, promised to cut government expenditure and took steps to boost share markets.

A member of an eight-party minority coalition, Chidambaram also pledged to pump 1.8 billion dollars of credit into agriculture, "the lifeblood of the economy."

He also began chipping away the country's insurance monopoly by allowing selected Indian companies to compete in the health insurance sector.

Chidambaram also said that he was determined to bring the fiscal deficit down to under four per cent in the long term. It currently stands at about 18.7 billion dollars, or six per cent of gross domestic product.

He said the fiscal deficit would come down to 4.5 per cent during the fiscal, adding: "I have not wavered in my commitment to continue on the course of fiscal correction."

Former Confederation of India Industry president Subodh Bhargava, who heads leading Indian car maker Maruti Udyog, said: "It's a very good growth-oriented budget, it should boost the capital markets and investment."

KG Ramanathan, chief of the state-run India Petrochemicals Ltd, said: "It is a very positive budget. I gave it eight points on

Lack of funds

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date replacement. "We have an electron microscope of 1940s," she said.

"I cannot keep post-graduate students in my department as their allowance is too low to sustain in the costly Dhaka city," said Rebecca. Most of the post-graduate students go abroad for higher studies because they get significant amounts there," her Pharmacy Department does not enrol M Phil and PhD students every year due to lack of fund, she said here.

Shafiq Chowdhury said there should be "close interaction" between the universities and the policy-makers and funds should be provided to encourage research-based works.

"Our curriculum is modern but laboratory instruments are old," said Abu Shara Shamsur Rouf of Pharmacy department.

The chairpersons said that they have written representations highlighting the problems but to no effect.

Some students of these departments, talking to the correspondent, said that they did not get necessary equipment and teachers to supervise their work in the laboratories. Sometimes they have to work in groups, some of them said.

The Iranian minister said that for greater economic benefits, it was imperative to open up the 'frontiers of communication' between countries. He said Iran had signed a 20 billion dollar agreement with Turkey for

oil transmission. The link will extend into Turkmenistan. Negotiations between India and Pakistan for laying of gas pipeline connecting Iran and Turkey were to yet to break ground as Pakistan was not agreeable to India's plan to lay an offshore line bypassing the surface route, for security reasons, he added.

Asked about Iran's relations with India and Pakistan, Brjerdi said his country has "excellent links with both."

When his attention was drawn to sectarian violence in Pakistan, he said Iran condemned all kinds of sectarian violence which, he observed, undermined the unity of the Muslim Ummah. He alleged that the United States was behind such acts of violence.

The Iranian minister said that the OIC has failed to play an effective role in solving the crises in Muslim countries and cited the examples of Palestine, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. It is a good idea to have a permanent seat representing the Muslim countries in the Security Council of the UN but it has to be mooted at the OIC meetings, he stressed.

Chakma: Tripura assures help

From Page 1

mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury, ruling party MPs Kalparajan Chakma, Dipankar Talukdar and Bir Bahadur, Jatiya Party whip advocate Fazle Rabbi MP, and Awami League leader Ataur Rahman Khan Kaiser.

The delegation also included Special Affairs Division Secretary Kazi Golam Rahman, DG of South-Asian Desk at the Foreign Ministry Shamim Ahmed, Joint Secretary at the Home Ministry Anwarul Islam and Special Affairs Division Director M Mashru Rahman.

BSS from Delhi adds: The visiting Bangladesh delegation yesterday met the tribal refugees staying in six camps.

The delegation accompanied by senior Indian officials, held a series of meetings with the refugee leaders. Such meetings would continue till March 2.

The delegation explained to the tribal refugees and their leaders about the Bangladeshi government's fresh initiative to

The Daily Star

Release BNP men or face agitation: Mannan

KISHOREGANJ, Feb 28: BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan today said the jails in Bangladesh are crammed with opposition leaders and workers while 'false' cases are hanging on hundreds of others, reports UNB.

Addressing a public meeting at Gouranga Bazar in the town, he alleged that the Awami League government had arrested unspecified number of BNP supporters in last eight months on 'false' charges, creating unprecedented accommodation crisis in prisons.

"With false cases hanging on their heads, hundreds of BNP men are now forced to lead the life of fugitive to avoid arrest," Bhuiyan said, alleging that the government was abusing the Special Powers Act frequently to harass political opponents.

He said so far, more than 100 BNP members were killed in attacks by the Awami League activists across the country. "We don't know how much we've to pay for being in the opposition and how many people will be killed by them (ruling party) in future."

He demanded immediate release of the BNP leaders and activists, and withdrawal of 'false cases' against them. Otherwise, the government will have to face a tough street agitation, he said.

The BNP secretary general said that within only eight months, the government of Sheikh Hasina made the life of common man miserable, endangered independence and

Shima's death
JS probe body
meets today

The second meeting of the parliamentary committee, formed to probe the death of Shima Chowdhury will be held at 11 am today in the No 1 Standing Committee Room at Jatiya Sangsads Bhaban, reports BSS.

Chairman of the committee Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad will preside over the meeting.

The parliamentary committee was formed on February 18 last. Shima Chowdhury, a garments worker died in 'safe custody' in Chittagong Jail on February 7.

RAF captain
From Page 1

tasted last night.

Extra police force was deployed in the area to avert further violence while a tense situation was prevailing there.

No case was lodged and none was arrested in this connection till the filing of this report last night.

UNB quoting unofficial sources put the death toll at seven, but this was denied by the duty officer of Savar thana when reached by telephone from Dhaka.

Local people told the agency that the rest three victims were Ahmedullah, 35, Imamullah, 25, and Mir Ali, 35, also of the same village.

It is only six months that I joined the Royal Airforce," Backer said. Earlier, he had served the Royal Airforce Central Flying School for nine years, he added.

The evacuation operation added feathers to his cap and he became the captain of the C-130 aircraft within the next three months, Backer said.

Cricket
From Page 1

43.2 overs.

The Pakistan total revolved round a brilliant 91 by skipper Asif Mujtaba. The former Pakistan Test cricketer, in his polished 104-ball innings, hit five fours. For India, off-spinner Noel David took three wickets for 32 runs in his quota of nine overs.

In reply, India were 124 for the loss of five wickets before rain ruined their hopes of a chance to retain the title. India had earlier won the second edition of the regional meet in 1994. The first one in 1992 fell through mid-way due to unavoidable circumstances.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited the area and ordered quick emergency relief to the victims.

Pakistan skipper Asif Mujtaba was both the Man-of-the-final and Man-of-the-tournament awards for his brilliant performance.

JEC to meet in Dhaka

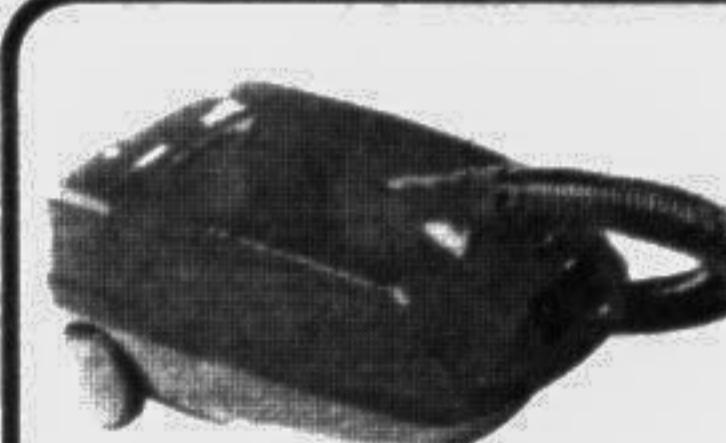
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Let's make
things better.
PHILIPS

Charles opens exhibition on
'Muslims in Britain'
By DU Correspondent

The feuding groups in Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) in Dhaka University reached a preliminary settlement yesterday and went back to their respective halls, sources said.

This is a part of an important attempt to create a link between the West and the Muslim world," Prince Charles said while addressing the distinguished guests and Muslim scholars after the inauguration.

They discussed present political and economic situation of the country in a cordial atmosphere, a BNP press release said.

Prince Charles reiterated BNP's policy to welcome foreign investment in Bangladesh and expand economic cooperation with foreign countries.

She said the ruling party should give up its present policy of "unleashing terrorism and intimidation and refrain from undemocratic activities" so that political parties could work smoothly for promoting democracy and development in the country.

The Opposition Leader apprised the envoy of the deteriorating economic condition for which, she alleged, the ruling party is "solely responsible."

After cutting the tape, the Prince went round the stalls.

JCD factions
at DU reach
'preliminary
settlement'

By DU Correspondent

The meeting reminded the party leaders and workers that the support given to Awami League

cord a 'public reception' to Ershad at the Manik Miah Avenue in the city on March 18. A programme for similar receptions in Khulna and Barisal has been scheduled for April 2 and April 3 respectively, the sources said.

HM Ershad in his speech at the meeting reminded the party leaders and workers that the support given to Awami League was "not unconditional" and that it would "vary from issue to issue."

According to Ershad, withdrawal of tariff on certain Indian goods by the government would adversely affect the growth of industries in the country. He also said it would be "impractical" to allow the facilities at the Chittagong port for other countries without increasing its existing capacity.

Some of the important presidential members like Kazi Farid Ahmed, Shah Moazzam Hossain, Roushan Ershad, Sheikh Shahidul Islam were seen present on the occasion but they did not speak. Anwar Hossain Manju and Nazir Rahman Manju, secretary general and additional secretary general respectively of the party were also present, the sources said.

The three groups in Zia, Mujib and Surya Sen Halls are known as Tangail-Kishoreganj group led by Benazir Ahmed Titu, a central leader of the JCD. This group is trying to eliminate Barisal group from the campus, some insiders said.

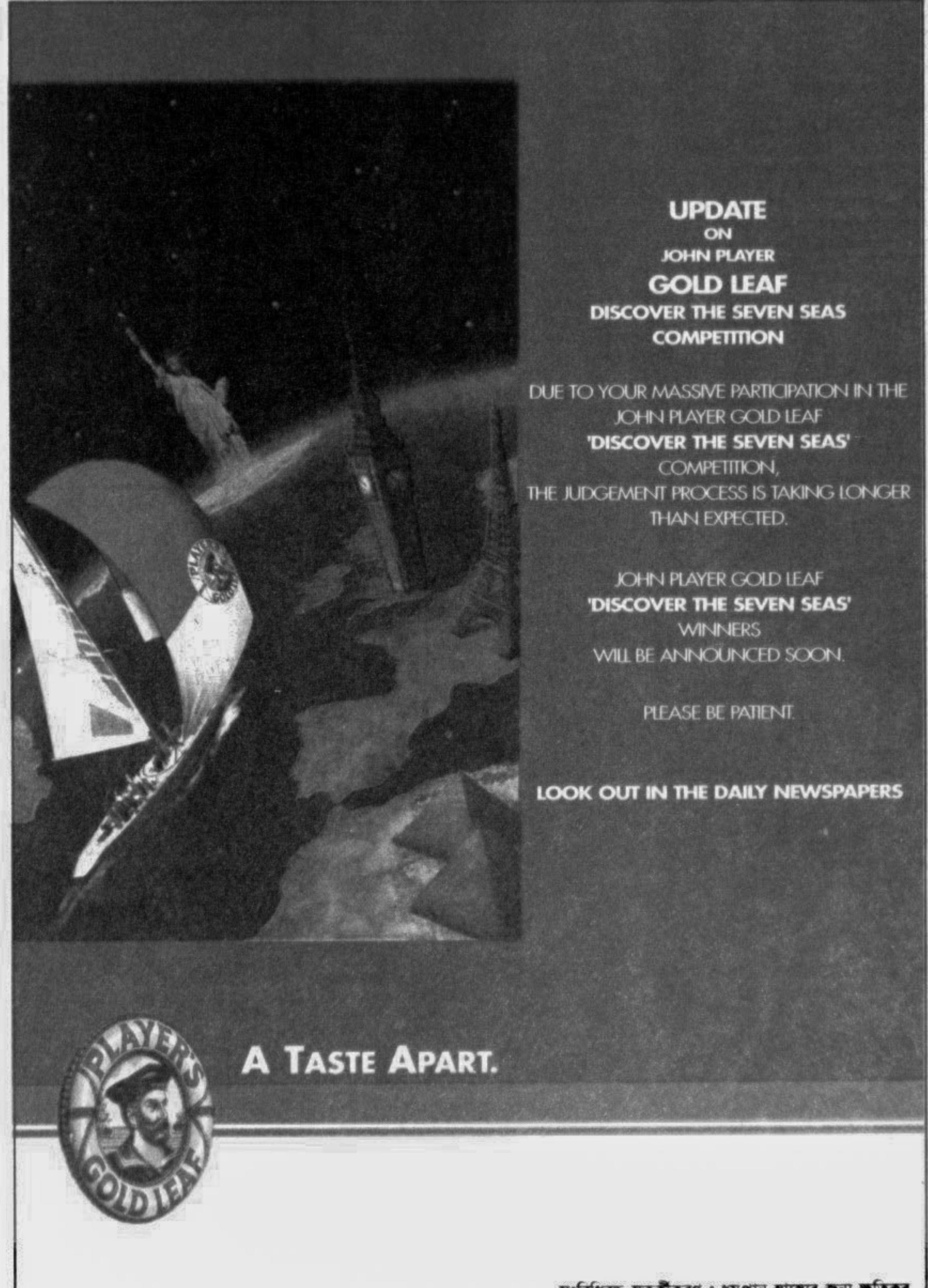
Barisal group is determined to continue its hold on the close ties between Britain and the Muslim world, and expressed his happiness that Muslims in Britain have been contributing to the economic growth of the Kingdom.

After cutting the tape, the Prince went round the stalls.



A ten-day Dance Festival organised by Shadonna began at the National Museum auditorium in the city yesterday with the superb rendering of Tagore dance drama 'Chandalika'.

— Star photo



Editor : Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90, Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4. Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257. Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Email: dstar@bangla.net