

Prize-distribution ceremony of Ctg Women's College held

The prize-giving ceremony of the annual cultural programme of Chittagong Government Women's College was held on Saturday, says a press release. Chittagong City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury distributed prizes among the winners as the chief guest. Praising the progress in education at the college, the mayor assured to extend his all-out efforts in establishing an academic building, students' hostel and fund for study tours.

Shakhawat Hossain, Division Commissioner, Chittagong was present as the special guest.

Principal of the college Prof Fauzia Ally presided. In her speech, she expressed her dissatisfaction over the poor progress of the age-old college and sought cooperation of the Mayor as well as the city-dwellers in this regard.

Among others, Secretary of the Teachers' Council and Convener of the Cultural Committee, Prof Mahmuda Khanam also spoke.

Rukhsana Begum and Farzana Sultana received the 'Champion Prizes'.



Chittagong City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury and Principal of Chittagong Government Women's College Prof Fauzia Ally at the prize-giving ceremony of the college on Saturday.

Memorial meet on Aminul Huq

A commemoration meeting on former attorney general late Aminul Huq on the occasion of his second death anniversary was held in the south hall of the Supreme Court Bar Association building yesterday, reports BSS.

Addressing the meeting, State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed said late Aminul Huq was a man of commitment. He was firm to his commitment but not vindictive, he added.

The meeting was presided over by senior advocate SR Paul and addressed, among others, by Justice Abdul Mannan, Attorney General Barrister KS Nazim, Barrister Shaikat Ali, Barrister Amir-ul Islam, Col (retd) Shaikat Ali, SS Haldar, Hasan Arif and secretary of the Supreme Court Bar Association Zainal Abedin and late Aminul Huq's brother Mahbubul Haq.

Prof Sayeed said Aminul Huq never compromised with injustice and autocratic rule. He was a brave person and a dedicated freedom fighter. Huq fought for restoration of the spirit of the War of Liberation, he added.

In this connection, the minister urged upon all to cooperate with the government in building the nation.

Kaiser Rasheed Chowdhury laid to rest

The *namaz-e-janaza* of Kaiser Rasheed Chowdhury held at the Mosque of Dhanmondi Road No 7, reports BSS.

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury, Finance Minister SAMS Kibria, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, leaders of the Awami League, BNP and other parties, a host of friends and relations of the deceased attended the *janaza*.

A second *janaza* was held in the Kurmitola Golf Course Ground and another *janaza* took place in Sylhet where the body was flown for burial.

Kaiser Rasheed died of a massive heart attack in the city on Friday and his body was preserved for the arrival of his daughters from abroad. Two daughters arrived yesterday, family sources said.

Meanwhile reports from Sylhet said, Rasheed was buried at the premises of the *dargah* of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA) after the *Maghreb* prayers.

A big number of people attended the *janaza* and the burial.

ADAB's concern over activities of 'vested quarter'

The Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) yesterday expressed concern over the activities of vested quarter against the performance of the NGOs on different pretexts, reports BSS.

A meeting of the central members of the ADAB under the presidency of ADAB director Shamsul Huda condemned the arson on July 5 at the 'Froshika' office in Kularchar thana under Kishoreganj district and demanded exemplary punishment to those responsible for this act, a press release said.

The meeting in another resolution expressed anxiety over the growing tendency of repression and raping of the women in different places of the country. It also said that the poverty alleviation programmes of the NGOs are being severely affected in many places due to terrorism and extortions by a group of people.

The meeting expressed deep shock at the deaths of five people in road accident on July 5 and agreed that the ADAB will make every effort for rehabilitation of the families of the deceased.

Author of book on Bangabandhu murder gets death threats

Siddiqur Rahman, author of the book 'The Killers: A new book on Bangabandhu's murder', has received death threats from an anonymous caller, reports BSS.

He made a general diary with Dhanmondi thana in this connection on Saturday. Rahman said that the unknown person also threatened to burn his factory.



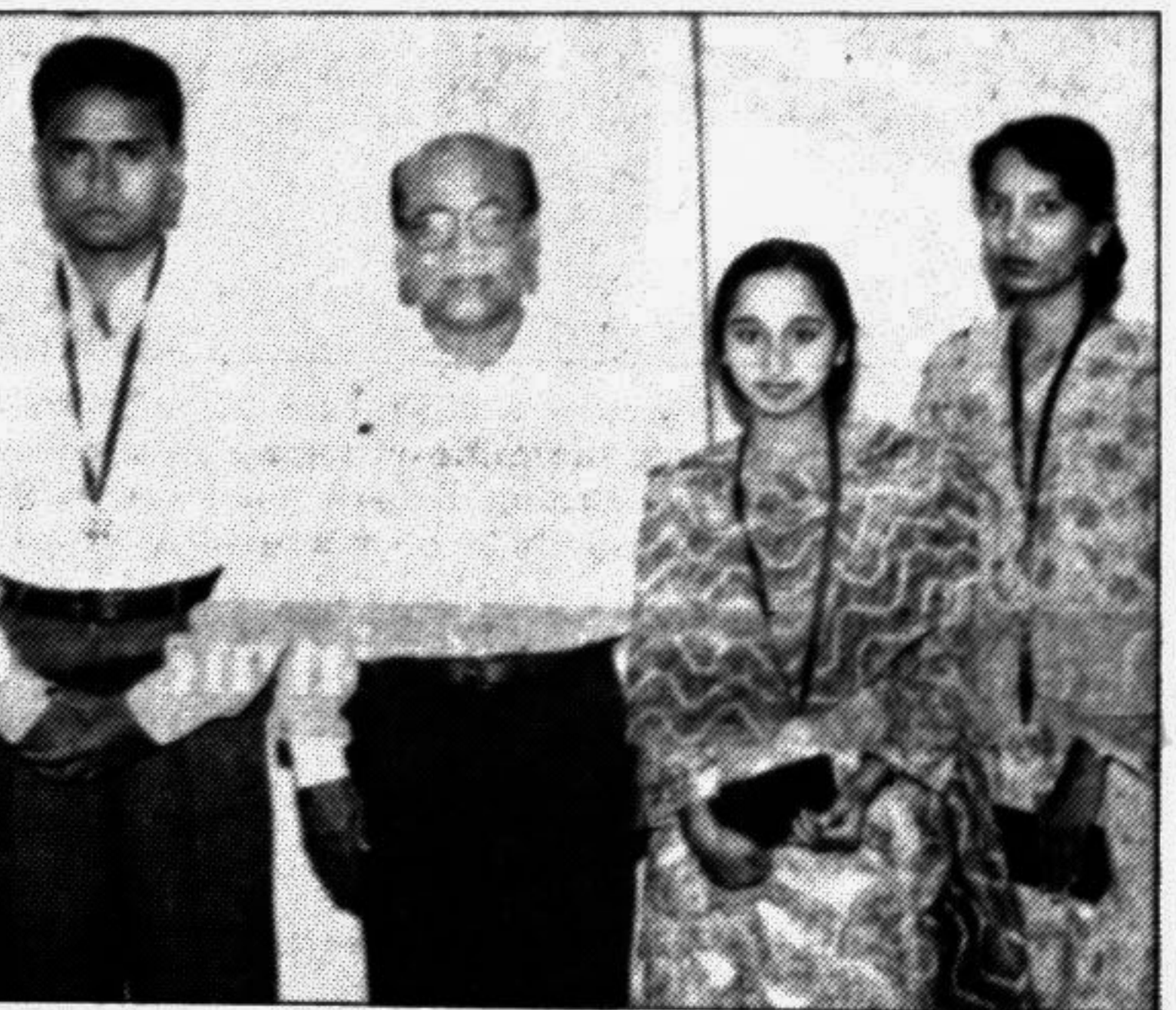
Islami Bank Hospital Rajshahi was inaugurated on Friday at Laxmipur, Rajshahi. Prof Abu Ahmed Ashraf Ali (4th R), Principal, Bogra Medical College and Kazi Farid Ahmed (2nd R), Deputy Commissioner, Rajshahi, Sponsor and ex-Director of the Bank (3rd R) and M Nurul Islam, Senior Vice President and in-charge of Bogra Zone were present on the occasion.



A M Anisuzzaman, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Uttara Bank Limited addressing the regional heads conference on Friday at the head office. The Managing Director M Aminuzzaman and other high officials are also seen.



The publication ceremony of an album of memoirs, 'Smriti', by students of the 22nd batch of Public Administration Department, Dhaka University (DU), was held at the TSC recently. Prof AKA Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor, DU was present as the chief guest.



A J Masudul Hoq Ahamed, Managing Director, Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) with the meritorious students (children of BKB officers and employees) who were honoured with gold medals at a reception held in the bank's conference room recently.

Bangladesh boy awarded



Syed Saadat Ali has received a gold medal in the 9th Kanagawa Biennial World Children's Art Exhibition, held in Japan recently, says a press release.

Syed, aged 5, is the son of Mr and Mrs Syed Tareq Ally of Mohona Art School, Chittagong.

'Tista,'Ekota' to run July 14, 15

The inter-city trains, Tista and Ekota, will make their journey towards northern destinations on July 14 and 15 (Monday and Tuesday) to facilitate travel of the stranded passengers, a railways press release said yesterday, reports BSS.

Bangladesh Railway has decided to run these two inter-city trains on their weekly off-days considering the sufferings of the stranded passengers following disruption of road link between Dhaka and northern districts due to heavy rains.

Rajshahi JP leaders meet Ershad

Four district leaders of Jatiya Party (JP) from greater Rajshahi meet the party Chairman HM Ershad at his Baridhara office yesterday, reports UNB.

Among others, party leaders Nazir Rahman Manzu, Sardar Amjad Hossain, Dr Azizur Rahman, Majibur Rahman Sentu and Ruhul Amin and former RCC mayors Abdul Hadi and Nurul Huda were present.

Giving emphasis on strengthening the party from central to grassroot levels, Ershad called upon all to make the JP more dynamic and intensify the unity with leaders and workers.

Referring to his planned visit to greater Rajshahi, the JP Chairman said he could not go there due to illness and hoped that he would visit the region on his return from abroad after medical treatment.

Ershad sought good wishes of the party leaders as well as the countrymen for his early recovery. Responding to his call, the district leaders prayed for him.

AL leaders begin tours from July 24

Awami League central leaders will begin a six-day tours in different parts of the country from July 24, a party press release said yesterday, reports BSS.

During the tours, the central leaders will address rallies and take part in the mass-contact programmes in thana and district levels.

The central leaders, who will participate in the programmes in 13 groups, are: Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Mannan, Zillur Rahman, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Begum Motia Chowdhury, Mohammad Nasim, Tofael Ahmed, Abdur Razzak, Abdul Momen, Dewan Farid Gazi, Prof. Abu Sayeed, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Ataur Rahman Khan, Kaiser, Dr. Mohammad Selim, Abdul Jalil, Shamsur Rahman Khan, KM Jahangir, Mirza Sultan Raja, Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Dr. Mustafa Jalal, Mohiuddin and Abdul Kader Siddiqui.

Distribution of RU admission forms begins

RAJSHAH, July 13: The distribution of primary application forms of different departments for admission into the first year honours classes for the session 1996-97 under Rajshahi University began today, a press release of the university said, reports BSS.

The distribution of forms and their submission to the proper authorities will continue till July 31.

The admission test will start on August 9 and continue till Aug 20.

On the eve of the distribution of the primary admission forms, Vice Chancellor Prof. Abdul Khaleque urged the students, teachers, officials and employees of the university and local residents to extend their support and cooperation for successful completion of the admission tests.

Meanwhile, in a notification, Proctor Prof. Mukhlesur Rahman advised all concerned not to distribute hand bills and hang banners and posters near the bank and adjacent areas during distribution of the application forms, the release said.

The university authorities earlier banned meetings, processions, making wall writings, poster and distribution of hand bills on the campus without prior permission of the proctor.

Re-examination of paper demanded

Unsuccessful candidates in the last year's masters examination of Psychology Department in Jagannath University College have demanded to re-examine their papers for finding out lapses, reports UNB.

The students raised the demand at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday with the allegations that some lapses, irregularities and wrongs were committed in conducting the examination, first time under the National University.

Muhammad Khairul Hasan, on behalf of the students, pointed out that the percentages of the department's successful candidates in 1995 and 1994 examinations, which were held under the Dhaka University, were 77.17 and 92.13 per cent respectively, but the percentage was 39.2 in 1996.

FM Greeted newly appointed Turkish FM

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad yesterday greeted Ismail Cem on his appointment as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, reports UNB.

He also wished him good health, happiness, long life and continued success.

Azad hoped that the fraternal relations between the two countries would be further strengthened in the days ahead.



Pedestrians negotiating a water-logged road near Gabtoli Bus Terminal in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Repair work may cost crores Rain washes away top layer of most city roads

By Staff Correspondent

The incessant rain has washed away the top layer of most of the city roads, leaving them scarred with pot-holes.

Dhaka City Corporation's engineering department fears that the repair cost might run into crores.

Parts of all major roads at Mirpur, Shamoly, Dhanmondi, Ramna, Shahbag, Shantinagar, Malibagh, Mouchak, Shahjapur, Motijheel, Gulistan and the old town were yesterday seen with large pot-holes and long cracks. Several broken down vehicles were found at different places. They had fallen into the large pot-holes camouflaged by water logging, the drivers said.

"We have reports that most of the city roads have been damaged by the non-stop downpour, but the actual impact of the rain is yet to be assessed," said DCC's acting chief engineer.

He said DCC was now preparing a list of roads which needed urgent repairing. "We will temporarily repair the roads with sand and brick-chips," he added.

The Chief Engineer said the bitumen used for the top layer of the city roads could not sustain the pressure of the rain and heavy traffic. "I have asked other officials to also make a list of roads which were built recently but got damaged."

"We cannot fully repair these roads until the rainy season is over," the DCC chief engineer said.

The establishment of a permanent BOU Regional Resource Centre (RRC) in Mymensingh has become uncertain due to non-availability of a suitable plot in Mymensingh town, says a press release.

The ADB-funded BOU project, including all its regional resource centres, has release to be completed by June 1998. But despite continued efforts by the University, no suitable plot has yet been available in the town for the purpose.

Concerned at the delay in getting a plot of land, BOU Vice-Chancellor Dr M Aminul Islam visited Mymensingh on July 9 and had meetings with the district authority, Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agriculture University and teachers of Mymensingh Teachers Training College.

He urged the deputy commissioner to take immediate steps to acquire a plot of land in Mymensingh town for construction of the proposed BOU Centre. The district authority gave him the assurance that it would extend all-out cooperation in this respect.

Youngman mugged

A young employee of Brothers Union Club was robbed of near Gopibagh level-crossing in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said, a group of muggers stabbed Masir, 26, from behind and took away Tk 3,000 when he was going to the club at about 6 pm.

Masir was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.



Bosnian cadets joined Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA) for a training course yesterday. —ISPR photo

'Top-dying' disease threatening 50 pc of Sundari trees

By Kazi Motahar Rahman

KHULNA, July 13: An unknown disease has struck the world's largest mangrove forest.

More worrying is that the disease is killing the species which make up more than half the tree population of the Sundarbans of the Khulna coast.

The disease afflicts the Sundari trees, after which the forest is named, from the top. It makes the leaves and branches wither first before finally choking the roots, to the bewilderment of experts.

Scientists have named the disease 'top-dying' but failed to pinpoint, despite series of studies, what really causes it.

"The cause is yet to be identified," says Latifur Rahman, a researcher at the Mangrove Culture Centre in Khulna. There are several hypothesis, however, with the growing salinity in rivers along the forest being the major suspect.

As experts are yet to defect the cause and prescribe remedies, Sundari population is fast withering.

According to forest officials, 'top-dying' has already destroyed nearly 20 per cent of the Sundari plantation, while 50 per cent are clearly endangered.

Zinnatul Islam, senior Scientific Officer of Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organisation, recently conducted a study on the Shrankhola range of the Sundarbans. He found 17 per cent of Sundari trees destroyed. He also detected that 50 per cent of the Sundari trees in the range has been afflicted by the disease.

According to a 1956 survey by the Forest Department, Sundari trees covered 60 per cent of the total area of the Sundarbans. The percentage dwindled to 53 per cent in 1983 and 50 per cent in 1984.

The forest department blames the Farakka barrage that India has built on the river Ganges.

The dam severely limits downstream flows of the rivers to the Bay of Bengal along the Sundarbans, causing salinity upstream.

Salinity in the rivers are thus rising, and experts find a logical link between 'top-dying' and rising salinity in Sundarbans rivers.

"Sundarbans is purely a mangrove forest. Salt water flushes most part of it twice a day. So the volume of salt in water must have a great impact on the forest species," said one forest official.

For normal growth of Sundari trees, the water must contain 12 parts per trillion (a measurement of salt in water and soil) and soil must contain between 8 and 10 PPT. But the latest study shows that Sundarbans rivers now contain up to 28 PPT salt, specially during dry season, while the soil contains between 16 and 20 PPT.

Experts find the salt ratio dangerous for survival of the sensitive mangrove species.

One foreign expert, Dr Gibson, said repeated natural calamity, excess salinity and massive situation in and around the forest might be causes of the top-dying disease. He recommends chopping of the

Establishment of BOU centre in Mymensingh uncertain

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Training course for Bosnian cadets begins at BMA

CHITTAGONG, July 13: Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA) has taken up a six-month long short course to provide military training to a group of Bosnian cadets from today (Sunday), says a press release.

The 21-member Bosnian team which included 20 cadets and an interpreter joined the BMA on Friday.

After successful completion of the training course at the BMA, the Bosnian cadets will get commission as officers in the Bosnian Army.

Bangladesh Army will bear the total cost of their training including expenditures of their food, accommodation, training fee, medical treatment, books, stationery, kit allowances, pocket money, term and mid-term vacation allowances etc.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina granted an amount equivalent to 50,000 US dollars from the Prime Minister's Bosnian Solidarity Fund to meet the training costs. The rest of the expenditures will be borne by the Bangladesh Army from its own sources.

Accords signed EC to provide Tk 34cr to 4 NGOs

The European Commission (EC) will provide nearly Tk 34 crore to four leading non-government organisations (NGOs) for implementing different development programmes at grassroots level under the EC's new food security strategy, reports BSS.

The EC yesterday signed contracts with four NGOs. They are: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra, Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service (RDERS) and Care Bangladesh.

Under the programme, BRAC will carry out afforestation and Proshika will implement social forestry under the poverty alleviation programme. RDERS will go for promotion of household food security through home-based income generation activities in six districts of northern Bangladesh, while Care Bangladesh will implement food programmes for locally intensified farming enterprises.

Ambassador of the local delegation of EC, Michael Drury, signed the contracts on behalf of EC. BRAC director Fazle Hossain Abed, Proshika executive director Quazi Faruque Ahmed, RDERS director Kamaluddin Akbar and country director of CARE Bangladesh Patrick Carey signed the contracts on behalf of their respective organisations.

Speaking on the occasion, Drury said the food security strategy has two main objectives, namely improvement of the market supply of food and access of vulnerable groups to food.

He said the EC was committed to helping Bangladesh improve the level of food security and ensure the availability of food for all its people.