

News

Hearing of 'Mass Killing Case' in Ctg postponed

CHITTAGONG, Aug 23: The hearing of the "Mass Killing Case," scheduled to be held today, has been postponed until September 14, reports UNB.

District judge Zahirul Islam postponed the hearing pending a report by the probe committee that was formed following a prosecution prayer to include another 48 police personnel as accused in the case.

The judge asked the committee to submit its report by September 13.

Former CMP commissioner Mirza Rakibul Huda, earlier shown as the only accused in the case, was present in the court today when three of the 148 witnesses were scheduled to make their deposition.

Mirza Rakibul Huda has been accused of the mass killing in the port city of Chittagong on January 24, 1990 following indiscriminate police firing on a procession led by the then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is as witness in the case filed by Shahidul Islam.

Earlier, deposition of two witnesses were taken by the court.

PP Kamaluddin appeared for the prosecution while Advocate Ehsanul Haq Hena for the accused.

4 alleged tribal terrorists held in Rangamati

RANGAMATI, Aug 23: Belaichhari thana police of the district has arrested four alleged tribal terrorists and sent them to the court here today, reports BSS.

They were reportedly caught last night by the peace-loving tribal people at Dukhbari, adjacent to Belaichhari thana headquarters.

The alleged terrorists, sent to Rangamati Jail Hazat today by the court, were identified as: Sumon Chakma, 17, Kammanish Dewan alias Pappu, 18, Kirik Tripura, 17 and Sumon Marma, 19.

Being informed by Khuishari Marma, a shopkeeper of Belaichhari thana, Bhubonjor Tanchangya of Dukhbari, a member of Belaichhari Union Parishad along with other peace-loving tribal villagers caught red-handed the accused last night while they were trying to commit terrorists activity, Officer-in-Charge of Belaichhari Thana Mohammad Khalilur Rahman told BSS this evening over the telephone.



Mahfuz Begum Mahbubunnissa, wife of Khondker Mahbubunnissa, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh and member of Standing Committee of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) died yesterday at around 2:30 pm at the Monowara Hospital in the city. She was 63, says a press release.

She left behind her husband, son, Khondker Shamsuddin Mahmood, three daughters Afzalunnissa (Lina), Faizunnissa (Binu), Amirunnissa (Minu) and several grand children and host of relatives.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held today at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque after Johr prayer and she will be buried at Azimpur graveyard. Her qulkuwan will be held on Wednesday after Asr prayers at her 35, Purana Paltan Lane residence. All well-wishers, friends and relatives are requested to attend the janaza and qulkuwan.

Nepalese agri scientists visit BARC

A four-member delegation of Nepalese agricultural scientists yesterday visited the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), reports UNB.

The delegation from Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC), arrived in the city Saturday on a three-day visit to Bangladesh.

During the visit, the delegation members called on BARC Executive Chairman Dr Zahur Karim and discussed matters relating to human resources development for NARC, possible MOUs and collaborative research between the two apex organisations.

Led by NARC Executive Director Dr Dhruba Joshy, the delegation also visited Bangabandhu Agricultural University in Gazipur and met with its Rector and other faculty members.

They will also visit Bangladesh Agricultural University, Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute and Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture in Mymensingh.

Other members of the Nepalese delegation are Director of Crop and Horticulture Research RN Sapkota, Coordinator of Agricultural Research and Extension KB Shrestha and Project Manager of NARC Agricultural Research and Extension Project SB Panday.



Finance Minister SAMS Kibria opened a five day-long folio publication ceremony titled 'women in the paintings of Quamrul Hasan' at the Shilpakala Academy gallery yesterday.

— Star photo

PM calls for formulating nat'l population policy

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called for formulating a National Population Policy immediately to strengthen the work for controlling population, reports BSS.

Hasina, chairing the 2nd meeting of the reconstituted National Population Council, said the policy should be prepared quickly to achieve more progress in the sector.

She called on the government and non-government officials, politicians and NGO workers to step up the population control and family welfare programme across the country.

The mass people will have to be motivated and involved more into family planning activities, the Prime Minister said.

She suggested the population control activities should be publicised frequently through the mass media effectively for motivating the people.

The Prime Minister said the religious leaders can train up the people if they are educated in population control issues.

Yesterday meeting approved the recommendations of the previous meeting and reviewed the implementation of the recommendations.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria, Education Minister ASH Sadek, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Rabeya Bhuiyan MP, Cabinet Secretary Ataul Huq, Planning Commission member Quazi Shamsul Alam, Finance Secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan, LGRD Secretary Hasnat Abdul Hye and noted physician Prof Nurul Islam took part in the discussion.

Indian NDC team in city

A 19-member team from the Indian National Defence College (NDC) led by its senior directing staff Major General SK Kaushal arrived in the city yesterday on a four-day study-tour to Bangladesh, says a press release.

During their visit, the members of the team are scheduled to call on Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad.

They will also call on the Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Muhammad Mustafizur Rahman, Bir Bikram, Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral Muhammad Nurul Islam, Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Jamaluddin Ahmed, Defence Secretary Syed Yusuf Hossain, Planning Secretary Abdul Hamid Chowdhury and Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Major General Imam Zaman, Bir Bikram.

Major General SK Kaushal will place floral wreaths at the Shikha Anirban at the Dhaka Cantonment in memory of the members of the armed forces who had laid down their lives during the War of Liberation in 71.

The members of the team will also visit different military installations including the Defence Services Command and Staff College, the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies and the National Museum.

WFP work begins in CHT

The World Food Programme (WFP) which supports peace accord in the Chittagong Hills Tracts (CHT) has begun work in CHT to provide food to the hungry and help the tribal people who inhabit the region to recover from almost two decades of conflict, reports BSS.

According to a WFP press release, two teams of WFP field staff, travelling by water in local, unmotorised boats, are visiting isolated villages in the narrow southeastern panhandle of Bangladesh to determine food aid needs and discuss development projects.

The WFP teams are visiting villages in the most seriously affected areas in the north and south of Chittagong Hill Tracts where the level of food insecurity and malnutrition are high. In each village, they ask community leaders and village groups to form a food assistance committee to identify people most in need of food aid, help government officials find the most effective ways to deliver the food supplies and propose development projects to generate economic benefits for the villagers.

Those who are able will be given food assistance in exchange of work in the projects while those who cannot, especially women and children, will also receive food ration. By the beginning of September when the lean season is at its height, WFP will expand the operation to cover the whole of the hill region and to all those food insecure people who are not reached by other programmes," Werner Kiene, WFP representative in Bangladesh, said.

The WFP activities in the Chittagong Hills Tracts are integrated into the government's nationwide food-assisted development programmes and will draw on WFP food stocks and special contributions of 1.5 million dollars from Australia and 20,000 tons of wheat from Canada to support the young peace process.

WFP will continue to cooperate with the government of Bangladesh, the largest recipient of WFP's development food aid, to ensure that food assisted development programmes help those who need food most and can use it best.

The World Food Programme, which has its headquarters in Rome, is the United Nations' front-line agency in the fight against global hunger. Last year WFP fed 53 million people in 84 countries, including most of the world's refugees.

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Golam Mainuddin, Deputy Managing Director of British American Tobacco Company Bangladesh distributing free tree saplings at the inauguration of the company's Bonsai Nursery at Gulshan Central Mosque premises yesterday. Also seen in the picture is Mahmudur Rahman, Head of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs.

Ministers continue relief operation across country

Members of the cabinet and political adviser to the Prime Minister yesterday distributed relief materials among the flood victims of different parts of the country, reports BSS.

Home Minister Rafiqul Islam distributed rice, sarees, lunges and cash among the flood-affected people of Ramganj sadar thana and Balua Choumuhoni and Kanchanpur unions of Laximpur district addressing spontaneous gatherings during the distribution of relief materials. The minister urged all to come forward for the help of the flood victims.

State minister for relief and disaster management Talukdar Abdul Khaled today visited different flood-affected areas of Louhajang thana of Munshiganj district. He distributed relief materials, including rice, sarees and lunges among the flood victims.

Later, he directed the concerned authorities to take all steps for post-flood rehabilitation programme at a meeting of the government officials, representatives of different political parties and Union Parishad members.

Shagufta Yasmin MP and local representatives were present during the distribution of relief goods.

Local Parliament Member Harun-Or-Rashid was also present in the meeting.

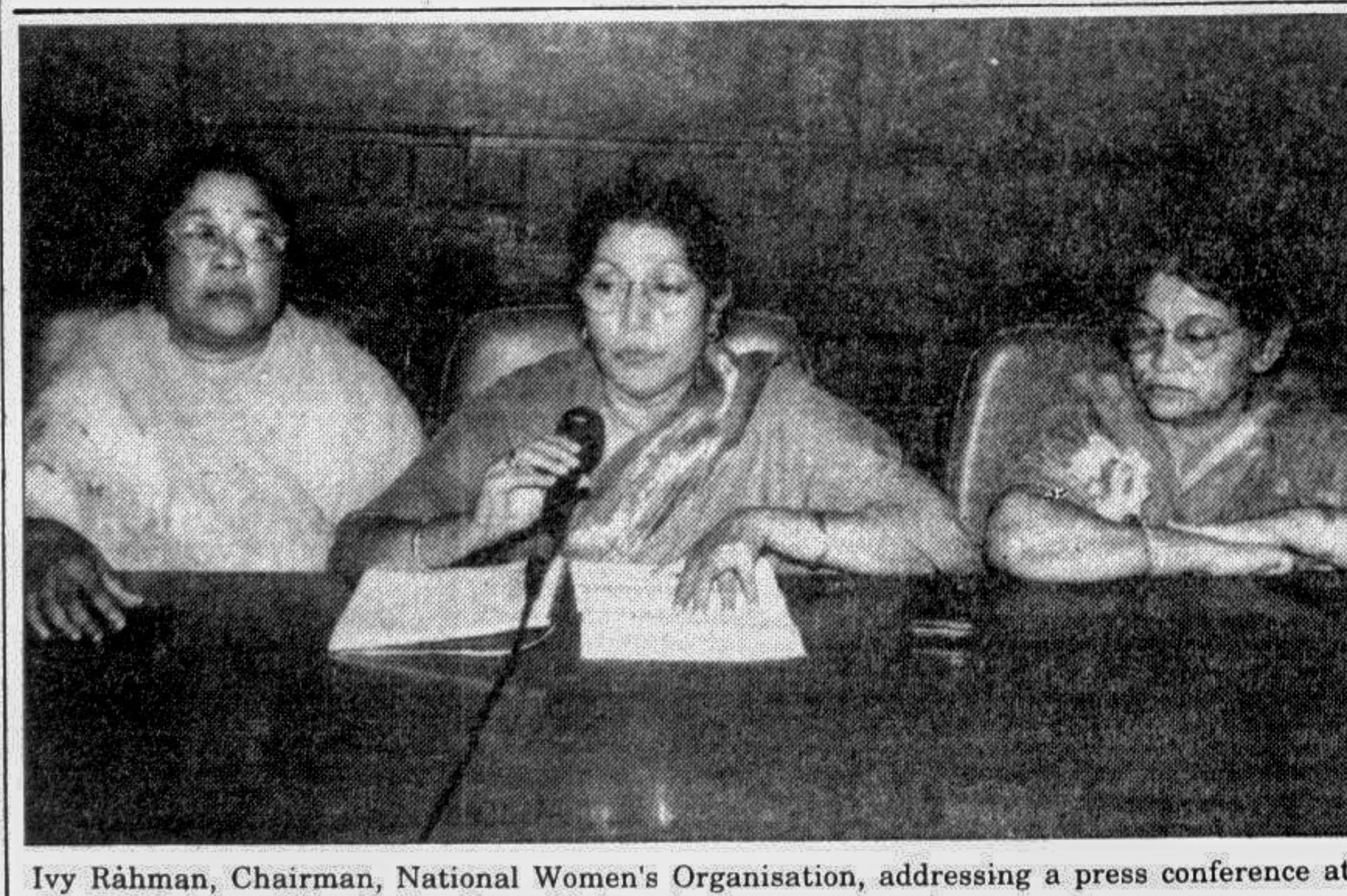
Dr SA Malek, political adviser to the Prime Minister, distributed 3 kgs of rice and cash this morning among the flood victims who took shelter at YMC building and Madhubag High School of the city.

Bangabandhu Parishad, Ramma thana unit, organised the relief programme.

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Ivy Rahman, Chairman, National Women's Organisation, addressing a press conference at the VIP lounge of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Kibria opens folio publication ceremony of Quamrul Hasan's paintings

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy yesterday published a folio with 16 paintings of eminent artist Quamrul Hasan at its gallery in the city, reports BSS.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria formally opened the five-day long folio publication ceremony titled "women in the paintings of Quamrul Hasan."

Shilpakala Academy took the initiative to publish the folio under its project of expansion of fine arts activities and organising mobile art exhibition all over the country.

Inaugurating the folio publication, Kibria described Quamrul Hasan as a pioneer artist of the country and said the work of the legendary artist could be distinguished by his search for identity.

He said the dreams and hopes, frustration and anger of the common people of the country, especially the women, occupied Quamrul Hasan's canvas. He said Quamrul Hasan was born in 1921 and died in 1988, was a conscious artist and played a pivotal role to oust the autocratic government in 1990. His work against the autocracy titled "Desh Aaj Bishay Behay" created democratic zeal among the agitated people," he added.

More donations to PM's Relief Fund

The officers and employees of the Ministry of Environment and Forest and the departments under it yesterday donated their one day's salary amounting to Taka 8,45,926 to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund, reports BSS.

Environment and Forest Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury handed over the cheque to the Prime Minister. Secretary of the Ministry Syed Margub Mursheed and high officials of the ministry and departments were present, a press release of the ministry said.

They had rules and they moved away from the rules. They let me down," said the owner of London's Harrod's department store and the Ritz Hotel, from which Diana and her boyfriend Dodi Fayed left in a black Mercedes before the crash.

Al Fayed's lawyers say the bodyguards should have insisted on a backup car, should not have allowed driver Heri Paul to take the route he did.

Pak govt steps up security for US nationals

ISLAMABAD, Aug 23: The Pakistan government has stepped up security for US nationals and other Westerners amid revenge threats for US missile strikes in Afghanistan, official sources and reports said today, says AFP.

New measures have been put in force after an extensive review of the overall situation at a high-level meeting chaired by Interior Minister Shujaat Hussain, the sources said.

Details were not available, but The News daily said the meeting focused on possible backlash from some groups to hit American facilities and na-

tionals in the country amid anger at Thursday's US cruise missile strikes.

The US Embassy here and other subsidiary missions across the country had already been placed under strict security after 200 American diplomats and staff were hurriedly evacuated from Pakistan two days before the raid.

No incident involving any foreigner has been reported so far anywhere in the country despite a pervasive anti-US sentiment, but an Italian UN military officer in Afghanistan died after being shot in Kabul hours after the missile attacks.

The body of Lieutenant

Colonel Carmine Calo arrived here in a coffin Saturday. The UN evacuated all its foreign staff from Kabul on Friday, and today the Red Cross evacuated non-essential people.

The UN office at Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan was rampaged by a mob on Friday after six bases allegedly run by Saudi dissident multimillionaire Osama Bin Laden were attacked in the surprise strikes.

Bin Laden has called on

Muslims around the world to

take up arms against the United States after the strikes, his spokesman told Knight Ridder News Service in London.

Former Iranian chief prosecutor shot dead

TEHRAN, Aug 23: A former Iranian chief prosecutor was found to death Sunday by unidentified assailants, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported, says AP.

Assadollah Lajevardi, who was also a former head of Iran's Prisons Organisation — was killed by two gunmen at his drapery shop in Tehran's grand bazaar, the agency said.

One of the gunmen opened fire with an Uzi machine gun as Lajevardi, 63, was speaking to them.

Police arrested one of the gunmen. The fate of the other gunman was not immediately known.

An elderly man who tried to intervene was also shot dead, the agency said.

Lajevardi was at one time the head of the notorious Evin prison in northern Tehran.

The Baghdad-based Mujahideen Khalq opposition group claimed responsibility for Lajevardi's assassination.

"At noon today, Mujahideen operational units in Tehran carried out an operation targeting Assadollah Lajevardi, the Butcher of Evin," said a Mujahideen statement telephoned to the Associated Press office in Cairo.

800 hurt while hurling rocks during festival in India

NEW DELHI, Aug 23: An old custom of hurling rocks at each other during a local festival in northern India left some 800 people injured Sunday, a local news agency reported, reports AP.

Twenty-five persons were hospitalised in critical condition after residents of two rival villages hurled rocks at each other during the Gotmar festival in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, United News of India news agency reported.

The origin of the custom is not clear, but residents of the two villages near the town of Chhindwara, 750 kilometres (465 miles) south of New Delhi, consider it a sign of luck if they can conquer a tree at a local shrine in the face of stones.

Every August, residents of the two villages line up across a river and hurl rocks and abuses at each other during the ceremony. Getting injured is considered a good omen. Once the ceremony is over, residents of both villages eat and rejoice together.

HERE and THERE**PKSF, ASA**

A 5-day training course jointly organised by the PKSF and ASA on "Savings and Credit Management" for 25 mid-level managers from PKSF partner organisations began at ASA head office training room on Sunday.

Muslehhuddin Sadek, Training Specialist PKSF and Sushil Roy, Project Coordinator (Management) of ASA are conducting the training course, says a press release.

The training course was inaugurated by the chief guest, Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, Managing Director, PKSF. Md Shafiqul Haque Choudhury, Chief Executive, ASA, presided over the opening ceremony. Md Enamul Haque, Project Coordinator (Credit Operation), ASA, was also present as special guest.

In his opening speech, Dr Salehuddin Ahmed said that it will be very tough to work in a sustainable way and to reach the hardcore poor in future. He also mentioned that