



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leading the victory procession in the city yesterday, organised by Awami League to mark the Victory Day. — PID photo

Hasina asks admn officials at BASA's AGM

Ensure people's participation in development activities

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the administrative officials to find effective ways for improving standard of life of the people in a recast state system with a progressive economy, reports UNB.

"We have to work out ways and means of taking effective steps for changing the lot of the people and framing a modern statecraft, and developed economic and social system," she said inaugurating the annual general meeting of Bangladesh Administrative Service Association (BASA) on Friday afternoon.

"We'll have to ensure people's participation in development activities by increasing people's involvement with the administration," she told them.

The Prime Minister called upon the officials to come forward with a modern, dynamic and people-oriented outlook for building a hunger and poverty-free Bangladesh.

"We would work for building a hunger, poverty and illiteracy-free golden Bangladesh as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with an attitude of servant, not master."

About socio-economic re-

structuring, the Prime Minister said the Administrative Reforms Commission had already been formed as the government and the development partners are considering reform proposals for the welfare of the country.

The commission has put forward some recommendations to the government.

Of those, she informed the meeting, accountability and improved services, letter-receiving system in the Secretariat, time re-fixation for voluntary retirement, Ombudsman, simplification of travelling tax and pension process and transport service to the preferential officials in terms of cash are being considered by the government.

Hasina said creation of dynamism, establishing accountability and people's participation are very crucial when we are facing the challenges of the 21st century after 27 years of independence.

She said administrative officials were performing various important duties, including improvement of law-and-order situation, poverty alleviation, creating employment opportunities, land management and

magistracy, for implementation of government policies.

Hasina said her government wanted to strike coordination among various cadre services and servicemen so that the development activities go ahead smoothly.

She mentioned that her government does not believe in piling up the problems through taking ad-hoc steps. Rather it is effectively trying to solve various problems and the Standing Committee on the Ministry of Establishment has been entrusted with the responsibility of solving the inter-cadre problems.

The Prime Minister paid tributes to the martyrs of the members of the Administrative Cadre Service recalling their contribution to the War of Liberation.

BASA president Mohammad Enamul Haq gave the address of welcome at the auditorium of Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) in the city. BASA secretary general SJM Akramuzzaman also spoke.

BASA vice-presidents Azizur Rahman, Nizam Uddin, Nuruzzaman Mia and Muid Chowdhury were also present.

WB to provide aid for legal, judicial capacity building

Law and Justice Minister Abdul Matin Khairul has said the present government is committed to establishing the rule of law to safeguard democracy and human rights, according to a message received from Washington, reports BSS.

During a meeting on Thursday with the World Bank officials on Bangladesh's efforts to reform legal system, the Law Minister said the government has taken steps to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of the legal framework to facilitate the development of private sector.

Khairul said Bangladesh has an independent judiciary and reforms will make the judicial system more convenient to the people and investors.

The minister said the government is strengthening the legal and regulatory framework and improving court administration along with streamlining the court procedures.

The World Bank will provide assistance to Bangladesh for legal and judicial capacity building. A study of the legal system is underway to identify the steps to be taken to develop legal and judicial capacity.

Bangladesh alternate director in the World Bank Syed Ahmed was present at the meeting. David A Mead, Chief counsel, Akhter Hamid, principal counsel and Judge John Lockhart represented the Bank at the meeting.



Nobel laureate economist Prof Amartya Sen being received by the General Manager of the Sonargaon Hotel, Eldridge J Mac Ewan, upon his arrival at the hotel on Thursday.

New committee of PCP city unit

By Staff Correspondent

A 21-member committee of the city unit of Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) was formed at its ninth council held at the Jagannath Hall auditorium of Dhaka University yesterday, says a press release.

Ashok Kumar Chakma and Jatan Marma were elected president and general secretary of the new committee respectively.

Presided over by Barendra Lal Tripathi, the council was attended, among others, by the PCP central committee president Palash Khisha.

The council renewed the pledge to carry on their programme for realising demands of the hill people.

Picnic party bus falls into ditch, 25 students hurt

SHERPUR, Dec 18: A passenger bus carrying a picnic party fell into a roadside ditch at Varara in Sribradi thana of the district this evening, leaving 25 people injured, reports UNB.

Police said the accident occurred at about 5:30 pm when the bus, carrying the students of Anandamohan College of Mymensingh, was passing by another bus coming from the opposite direction.

The students were going back to Mymensingh from their picnic spot at Lauachapra.

Of the injured, 15 were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital and attending doctors described their conditions as critical.

Bus dacoity on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway

GAZIPUR, Dec 18: Miscellaneous looted cash and goods worth about Tk 1.50 lakh from the passengers of a bus on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway on Thursday night, reports UNB.

About six robbers, who were travelling in the guise of passengers, snatched away valuables of the passengers at gun point at about 8:30 pm when the Dhaka-bound bus from Sirajganj reached Board Bazaar here.

They also attacked a number of passengers who suffered minor injuries.

The driver of the bus filed a case with the police in this connection.



Death anniversary of poet Abdul Quadir today

The 14th death anniversary of poet Abdul Quadir will be observed today, says a press release.

The versatile genius, Abdul Quadir was a poet, essayist, critic, expert on prosody, compiler and editor. For his outstanding contribution in the field of Bengali literature and prosody, the poet received many Gold Medals, literary prizes and national awards.

On the occasion, wreaths will be placed and *fateha* will be offered at the *mazar* of the poet at Banani graveyard. *Qurankhwan* and *milad mahfil* will be held yesterday at the residence of Sultana Quadir, eldest daughter of the poet.

Obituary

By Staff Correspondent

Khandaker Mahtabuddin Ahmed, father-in-law of BNP leader Abdus Salam Talukder, died of old age ailment at Ayesha Memorial Hospital in the city yesterday. He was 74.

He left behind seven sons and five daughters, and a host of relatives and admirers.

In a message of condolence, BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleida Zia expressed deep shock at the death of Khandaker Mahtabuddin, who was the managing director of Mashriki Group of Industries.

She prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

In a separate message, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan also condoled the death of Mahtabuddin.

Death anniversary

The second death anniversary of Humaira Chaudhury, wife of Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman, will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a *milad mahfil* has been arranged at the residence of the deceased at 84 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Farmgate at 4 pm.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the *milad mahfil*.

Three panels to contest DUTA polls

Three panels will contest the election to the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) scheduled for December 30, reports APB.

The panels are Awami League-backed "Blue Panel", opposition BNP-supported "White Panel" and the left leaning "Pink Panel."

The panels of Blue and White were submitted last evening, the last day for filing nomination papers. But the Pink decided to participate at the last moment.

The main polling contest will be between the Blue Panel and White Panel, campus sources said. The last date for withdrawal of candidature is December 20. Polling will be held at the university club from 10 am-2 pm.

PCJSS chief reiterates his demand

RANGAMATI, Dec 18: Shantu Larma today said development of Chittagong Hill Tracts would not be possible if the demographic composition of the region was not taken into consideration, reports APB.

The PCJSS chief reiterated his demand for "proper rehabilitation" of the tribals who returned from India and the internal refugees.

Jyotirmoyi Bodhipriya Larma alias Shantu Larma was addressing as chief guest a conference organised by Forum for Environment and Sustainable Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts at Rangamati Tribal Cultural Institute auditorium in the town today.

"Local representation as well as implementation of the CHT peace accord are the prerequisites for development of the region," the PCJSS leader told the conference.

He warned that lack of sincerity in implementing the peace accord would give birth to complications and hinder development process.

Expressing his frustration over the activities of NGOs in CHT, he said, "they have lost credibility as they tend to ignore the demographic reality of the region."

Rangamati pourasava chairman Kazi Nazrul Islam chaired the conference. Former chairman of Khagrachhari Local Government Council Samiran Dewan, Jeyam Liang Anglai, local BNP leader M Zahir Ahmed, Sudata Bikash Tangchanga and Waching Pru Marma were present at the function. Rangamati (Chakma) Circle chief Barrister Debashish Roy gave welcome address.

Workshop on Y2K today

The second workshop on Y2K (Year 2000 Problem) will be held today at Dhaka Club, says a press release.

Organised by Rapport Bangladesh Limited the workshop will be conducted by IT team of British American Tobacco. Bangladesh headed by its IT Manager MA Matin. The workshop will be inaugurated by M Mosharraf Hossain, Managing Director, Rapport Bangladesh Limited.



A colourful rally at the Bishwa Sahitya Kendra yesterday marking its 20th founding anniversary. — Star photo

Demonstrations against attack on Iraq

By Staff Correspondent

Various political parties and socio-cultural organisations yesterday staged demonstration in the city to protest air and missile strikes on Iraq by the United States and Britain and called for immediate halt to the attack.

Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal brought out a procession in the capital city and paraded through different city streets chanting slogans against the attack. It also held a rally at Topkhana Road, which was addressed, by BSD convener Khalequzzaman and convener Mostafa Faruque.

Khalequzzaman in his speech said the attack is a threat to world peace and security. He expressed solidarity with the people of Iraq and demanded stopping the attack immediately.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) general secretary Hasanul Haq Inu in a statement said this attack is nothing but international terrorism.

Gano Forum at a meeting held yesterday with Dr Kamal Hossain in the chair termed the US-Britain attack on Iraq a clear violation of UN Charter.

The Gano Forum meeting called upon all concerned to immediately halt the attack and resolve the problems through discussion.

Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh brought out a procession after Jumma prayers from Purana Paltan mosque and held a protest rally.

The Jamaat leader termed the attack ahead of holy Ramadan as barbaric and heinous and called upon the US and Britain to stop the attack immediately.

Bangladesh Khelafat Andolon Amir Ahmadullah Ashraf Ine-e-Hafeze Huzur and secretary general Moulana Zafrullah Khan termed the Anglo-American attack on Iraq an act of aggression against the Muslims as a whole.

Housewife stabbed to death

RANGAMATI, Dec 18: A young housewife was stabbed to death allegedly by her husband in Nainachhari under Kaowkhali thana on Friday afternoon, reports UNB.

Police said the husband, Ayub Ali, 22, also injured himself by the same knife. He was immediately rushed to the Sadar Hospital and subsequently to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital under police custody.

Police further said the victim Nazma Begum, 18, was staying at her parents' house after her marriage and her husband who is an employee of a private organisation resided in Chittagong.

Theatre takes part in Calcutta festival

Theatre, one of the leading drama groups of the country, is participating in the National Theatre Festival '98 organised by Nandikar, a front-ranking theatre group in India, says a press release.

A 28-member team of Theatre left for Calcutta on December 16 to perform 'Meraj Fakir Maa', written and directed by Abdullah Al-Mamun.

Invited theatre groups from Switzerland, Bangladesh and Pakistan besides groups from different states of India are participating in the Festival now being held at the Academy of Fine Arts in Calcutta from December, 16 to 25.

Seminar on 'Admn Reforms'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday stressed the need for formation of a free and impartial judiciary as part of administrative reforms.

They were addressing a seminar on "Administrative Reforms" organised by Bangladesh Bar Council (BBC) with its chairman Barrister Ameer-ul Islam in the chair.

The meeting was addressed by Sudhansu Shekhar Haldar, Advocate Sahara Khatun, Nazrul Islam and president and general secretaries of different district bar associations.

The meeting also called for repealing the Vested Property Act to implement smooth land reforms.



Prof Hafiz GA Siddiqi, Pro-Vice Chancellor of North South University, giving away certificate to a student at the convocation ceremony at Osmani Memorial Hall yesterday. — Star photo

Impeachment debate

From Page 1

"It is fundamentally unfair to deny member of this body to vote on a reasonable option. They would do that in Hitler's parliament. And they would do that in Stalin's parliament. But they must not do that in the parliament of the United States," said Rep Tom Lantos, a Hungarian immigrant.

Today's history-making debate would be extraordinary enough just for its legal arguments on whether Clinton committed impeachable offenses in trying to cover up his sexual relationship with a White House intern half his age. But the attacks in Iraq and incoming Speaker Bob Livingston's confession of extramarital affairs clouded the picture.

The White House waged a last-ditch anti-impeachment lobbying campaign, but presidential allies said they expected at least one of four proposed articles to pass, triggering only the second presidential impeachment trial in the Senate in US history.

An Associated Press telephone survey of House members found 198 lawmakers said they would support impeachment, 193 said they would oppose it, 32 remained undecided, and 12 wouldn't answer. The totals include members who said they were leaning toward a position. The undecided and those not responding included 15 Democrats and 29 Republicans.

Republicans, suspicious of the timing of the bombing in

NSU convocation ceremony held

The second convocation ceremony of North South University (NSU) was held at the Osmani Memorial Hall yesterday, reports BSS.

The degrees were conferred on 136 new graduates by Pro-Vice Chancellor of NSU Prof Hafiz GA Siddiqi following ceremonial academic procession led by the University Marshal carrying the NSU flag.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Siddiqi expressed his happiness to note that the government had recognised the important role of private universities in the fifth five-year plan with emphasis to encourage quality education and research in science and technology.

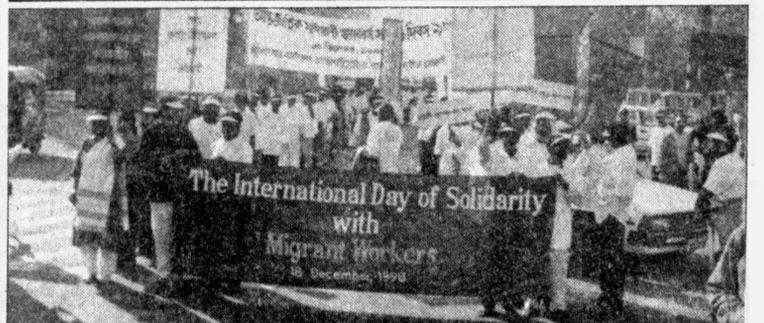
He, however, noted that quality of education cannot be ensured by simply increasing the number of private universities. The process, he pointed out, needs various inputs to enable the private universities to deliver desired services. Besides, he said, a university needs well prepared students enrolled as freshmen to produce good graduates.

Emphasising the need for improving the pre-university education, the NSU Pro-Vice Chancellor said with a view to attaining this objective, quality of education at primary, secondary and higher secondary levels must be improved.

M A Awal, Chairman, Board of Governors of NSU, Dr Peter J Drake, Member, International Advisory Board of NUS and Registrar of the University Zafrul Karim also spoke on the occasion.

What's on today . . . .

- Musical Drama:** To raise funds for the Flood Relief Fund '98, Scholastica presents 'Oliver' (based on the musical by Lionel Bart). Venue: House 200, Gulshan Avenue (North). Time: 5:45 pm. Tickets: Tk 150, available at the venue.
- BSEHR convention:** The 6th national convention of the Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) will be held. Chief guest: President Shahabuddin Ahmed. Venue: LGED auditorium, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Time: 10 am.
- Exhibition:** A 4-day exhibition on "Rabindranath Tagore and the British Press" will begin. Organiser: Bangladesh National Museum, Bangla Academy and Tagore Centre, UK. Chief guest: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Venue: National Museum premises. Time: 10 am.
- Film show:** Zahir Raihan Film Society has organised a session of 5 films on the Indian sub-continent made by foreign filmmakers. "The Lives of a Bengal Lancer" by Henry Hathaway will be screened on the opening day. Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium, Rd-2, Dhanmondi. Time: 6:30 pm.
- Premiere:** The premiere of a tele-film 'Kup' by filmmaker Morshedul Islam will be held. Venue: German Cultural Centre, Rd-9, Dhanmondi. Time: 6 pm.
- Workshop:** A day-long workshop on 'Catastrophic risk mitigation through insurance and reinsurance' will be held. Organiser: Bangladesh Insurance Academy. Venue: Hotel Purbani. Time: 9:30 am.
- Seminar:** The Dev Centre for Philosophical Studies of Dhaka University has organised a seminar on 'Philosophy of Liberation War'. Venue: Room No. 2028, Arts Building, DU. Time: 11 am.
- Lecture:** The 15th Mukarram Hussain Khundkar Memorial Lecture will be held. Prof Avjit Banerji of University College of Science, Calcutta will deliver the lecture on 'Studies on 1, 3-Dipdar Cycloaddition'. Venue: Chemistry Lecture Theatre, Khundkar Bigyan Bhaban, DU. Time: 11 am.
- AGM:** The 5th Annual General Meeting '98 of the Hemophilia Society of Bangladesh will be held. Various aspects of hemophilia (bleeding disorder) will be discussed in the meeting. Venue: 266, Free School Street, Kathalbagan. Time: 10 am.
- Film show:** Dhaka University Film Society will screen 5 films as part of its ongoing 'war film week'. Today's schedule - Hamburger Hill at 10:30 am, The Guns of Navarone at 12:45 pm, Land and Freedom at 2:30 pm, Aguner Paroshmony at 4:30 pm and Schindler's List at 7:15 pm. Venue: Central Public Library auditorium.
- Workshop:** A 16-day training workshop for BCS Information Officers will begin. Venue: Press Institute of Bangladesh premises. Time: ?
- Grand rally:** A grand rally of Bangladesh Gram Police Karmachari Union will be held. Venue: Paltan Maidan. Time: 10 am.
- Certificate awarding ceremony:** South Asian Disaster Management Centre (SADMC) has organised a certificate awarding ceremony of TOT on disaster management for PTI instructors. Venue: Academy for Planning and Development auditorium, Nilkhet. Time: 6:30 pm.
- Recitation evening:** Kazi Arif and Progya Laboni will present a recitation evening. Venue: Muktiyuddha Jadugar Cafe Theatre, 5, Segunbagicha. Time: 6:45 pm.
- Rotary club meet:** The Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will hold its weekly meeting. Venue: Dhaka Club Family Lounge. Time: 1:30 pm.



Welfare Association of the Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees brought out a procession in the city on the International Day of Solidarity with Migrant Workers yesterday.