



LIFE IS NOT THAT EASY: A group of *tokais* earn a living by selling twigs they collect from the Suhrawardy Udyan everyday which sometimes may prove fatal. Recently, a boy died after falling from a tree while collecting twigs.

—Star photo

## BNP, JP, Jamaat activists of Palash thana joins AL

A number of leaders and workers from different political parties under Palash thana of Narsinghdi district yesterday joined Awami League, a press release said, reports BSS.

Activists are of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Ganatantrik Party and a newly elected Commissioner of Ghorashal Paurashabha joined Awami League at the Awami Foundation office in the city.

Speaking on the occasion LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman called upon the newcomers to work together under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to make the country free from poverty and hunger as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Among others, Meher Afroz Chumki, Narsinghdi district Awami League acting president Asaduzzaman Advocate, general secretary Mahbubur Rahman Bhuiyan and Poura Commissioner Matin Sarker spoke on the occasion.

## Clinton's Ramadan greetings to world Muslims

President Clinton has extended his warm greetings and felicitations to Muslims all over the world on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, reports APB.

In a message the US President said Ramadan is a special time of reflection and renewal for Muslims.

"Through fasting and devoted reading of the Quran, Muslims strengthen their faith and deepen the compassion that gives their religion such dignity and power in the eyes of Muslims and non-Muslims alike," President Clinton said.

He said Ramadan is a time for renewing spirituality and recognising the bond of common humanity.

Clinton noted that Islam is becoming one of the fastest growing religions in the world with six million Americans professing it, says a USIS press release.

Describing Ramadan as a time of stock-taking, he said it is a time to remember all that we have done and all that we have yet to do to make the world worthy of its Creator.

Clinton wished health, prosperity and happiness of all Muslims and their families.

## Pragoti Samaj Kalyan Sanghas executives

A 19-member executive committee of Pragoti Samaj Kalyan Sanghas has been elected for 1998-2000 with Md Azizur Rahman and Mahbubur Rahman as president and general secretary respectively, says a press release.

The election was held at the Sanghas's Bangladesh office in the city on December 11.

The other office-bearers of the committee are: Vice Presidents — Md Sultan Ahmed, and Jamal Uddin Babla; Asstt General Secretary — Md Selim; Organising Secretary — Md Zafarullah Zafar; treasurer — Mainuddin Khokon; library secretary — Sarafat Hossain; Publicity Secretary — Aslam Parvez; Cultural Secretary — Mujibar Rahman Sumon; Sports Secretary — Yar Mohammad Babu; office secretary — Saleh Mohammad; and members — Md Ershad, S R Shaheen, Masud Nawaj Liton, Md Liton, Shamsul Alam Arif, Ahsanul Haq and Solaiman Moina.

## 17,00 hectares to be brought under wheat cultivation project

MEHERPUR, Dec 27: District Agriculture Extension Department has taken up a programme to bring 17,000 hectares under wheat cultivation in the two thanas of the district in the current 'Rabi' season, reports BSS.

An official source said, the production target of wheat has been fixed at 42,000 tonnes. The government has already taken all preparations to supply quality seeds, fertilisers and pesticides among the farmers at fair price to make the wheat cultivation programme a success.

## 'Policy to be formulated soon for proper land use'

A policy will soon be formulated for proper land use, planning and its management in the country, reports APB.

Agriculture Secretary Dr AMM Shawkat Ali disclosed this at a national workshop on 'Land Use and Land Degradation Situation in Bangladesh' at the BARC conference room in the city yesterday.

Underpinning the need for proper use, planning and management in view of increasing pressure on land, he said the proposed policy would incorporate modalities of its optimum use.

Dwelling on the relation between land use in agriculture and industry, Dr Ali said low productivity in agriculture was not only due to degradation but also due to other factors like agro-economy and the present state of lack of harmonious

balance in land distribution.

Land for housing, industry and infrastructure in the country are now experiencing conflicting use, he said and called upon the experts to find ways and means to strike a balance between agriculture and infrastructure for ensuring proper land management.

Speaking as the chief guest Agriculture and Food Advisor to the Prime Minister AM Anisuzzaman called upon the agriculturists to identify the problems and suggest appropriate measures for their solution.

He observed that there should be continuous monitoring and analysis in the field. The advisor urged the scientists to evolve suitable strategies through agricultural extension for the benefit of the farmers.

BARC executive chairman

Dr Z Karim, who presided over the closing session said, inventory for soil-testing will be carried out by the Council for analysing the nutrients and help overcome the deficiencies.

Member-Director (Soil) of BARC Dr MS Islam presented a paper on 'land degradation situation and cropping pattern changes in Bangladesh'.

Director of Soil Resources Development Institute (SRDI) Mustafizur Rahman on 'land degradation situation in Bangladesh' and National Project Director, GIS project, BARC, M Anwar Iqbal on 'changes in cropping pattern in Bangladesh over the last two decades'.

Organised by BARC, the workshop was participated by researchers of various agricultural institutions and donor agencies.



On the occasion of Christmas, Dhaka Sheraton organised a 'Dressed as You like' competition for children. Santa Claus gave away attractive prizes to children who took part in the competition.

## Couple injured in clash over land

JHALAKATI, Dec 27: A couple was seriously injured at a village in Rajapur thana on Saturday in a clash over a disputed land, reports APB.

They were identified as Mozammel Hossain, 35, and his wife Mamata Begum, 30, of village Fulbar.

Witnesses said Modasser, brother of Mozammel Hossain, swooped on them with *dao* and sticks over possession of a plot of disputed land.

The couple was taken to Rajapur Thana Health Complex where the condition of Mamata was stated to be critical.

## Killer elephant executed in India

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: An elephant who had rampaged through human settlements and trampled to death 19 people in the last year-and-a-half, was shot dead in northeastern India by orders of the forest department, domestic news agencies reported Sunday, reports AP.

Three hunters especially assigned to the job shot the full grown male tusker Saturday evening in the remote Tinsukhia district in Assam state, the United News of India said. The heavily forested area is 1800 kilometers (1,100 miles) east of the Indian capital, New Delhi.

The elephant, named Gobind Singh, was declared a 'rogue' last month when he killed a forest department doctor who had tranquilized him for a medical check. The elephant suddenly regained consciousness and attacked the veterinarian.

In the past, he has also damaged crops and destroyed more than 150 huts, UNIT said.

Wildlife experts say a shrinking habitat and a disproportionate rise in the number of elephants in the past 15 years have led to change in the elephants' behavior making some of them violent.

## Domestic violence on the rise in India

HYDERABAD, Dec 27: Domestic violence is on the rise in India. Apart from mother-in-law, daughter-in-law syndrome, social torture of children are seeing an upward trend, top doctors from the country have acknowledged here, reports PTI.

Participating in a special symposium on 'torture and the medical profession' at the ongoing seventh National Conference of Indian Medical Association (IMA), doctors said domestic violence in various forms is increasing as more people are becoming upwardly mobile.

Though police torture hit the headlines in newspapers, in the Indian scenario, torture of daughters-in-law occupies the top slot. With financial and social pressures mounting, daughters in law are the biggest torture victims in the country.

Such violence is creating a breed of new medical victims who need special care and attention.

While physical injuries can easily be treated, mental trauma is sometimes life-long. In the later case, apart from the victim, families too need counselling and rehabilitation, doctors said.

While past president of IMA, Dr Parameswar called domestic violence a serious issue that would need medical intervention, Dr A K Chary from Andhra Pradesh termed the issue as a national problem.

Chary also focussed his attention on children being 'tortured' at schools to perform better and sometime even to 'outperform' others. Such types of violence need social intervention, he said.

Two rebel spies burnt alive in Sierra Leone

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone, Dec 27: Fearing an impending rebel assault on Sierra Leone's capital, angry residents surged through the streets and burned alive at least two men accused of being rebel spies, reports AP.

The rebel Revolutionary United Front, meanwhile, reported Saturday that it had killed 60 Nigerian soldiers from a West African intervention force while capturing the town of Makeni, 96 kms east of the capital, Freetown.

Fighting has intensified in recent weeks in the West African nation, settled two centuries ago by freed slaves from the United States, Britain and Jamaica. It has a population of 4.7 million.

The rebels, who controlled Freetown after a bloody May 1997 coup, are seeking revenge for their ouster from the capital in February by the Nigerian-led intervention force which returned President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah to power.

Rebel commander Sam Bockarie said Saturday his forces dragged the bodies of the dead Nigerian soldiers through the streets of Makeni with an armoured car "as an example to everyone."

But Kabbah's government, which has been waging war against the rebels, denied that Makeni had been captured and said the intervention force, known as ECOMOG, continued to fight for the town.

Government troops remained firmly in control of the country, the Information Ministry said in a statement.

## S African minister visits Bangabandhu Memorial Museum

Visiting South African Minister for Law and Justice Dr Abdullah M Omar visited the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday, reports APB.

Dr Omar went round different sections of the museum and was visibly appalled to see the evidences of the tragic and brutal killings of Bangabandhu and his family members.

He signed the visitors' book and placed a wreath on the portrait of Bangabandhu. Dr Omar was also presented with some booklets on the life and works of Sheikh Mujib, said a PID handout.

## BBA admission results published

The results of BBA admission test (1998-99 session) of Dhaka University were published on Saturday, reports UNB.

The interview of the selected candidates will begin on Tuesday.

The authorities have asked the selected candidates to contact the IBA office to know their interview schedule.

Following is the list of candidates selected for interview:

4034 4049 4055 4081 4100 4128 4137 4191 4206 4207 4209 4236 4237 4244 4267 4281 4304 4309 4321 4400 4413 4422 4430 4439 4520 4589 4603 4613 4617 4621 4638 4639 4674 4721 4722 4812 4813 4862 4876 4903 4904 4908 4930 4948 4952 4974 5014 5032 5048 5054 5065 5123 5125 5155 5158 5174 5220 5253 5279 5293 5296 5301 5329 5330 5334 5337 5390 5395 5398 5420 5435 5471 5522 5530 5570 5583 5586 5601 5606 5614 5619 5649 5652 5658 5663 5669 5692 5710 5728 5750 5755 5762 5777 5783 5816 5833 5836 5838 5857 5861 5895 5904 5907 5913 5926 5944 5972 5976 5995 5999 6005 6026 6137 6216 6237 6285 6286 6324 6340 6355 6360 6378 6380 6382 6423 6424 6473 6567 6628 6634 6656 6663 6682 6702 6737 6853 6880 6964 6994 7145 7182 7187 7203 7307 7446 7457 7703 7757 7760 7812 8000 SAT1 SAT2 SAT3 SAT4 SAT5 SAT6 SAT7 SAT8 SAT9 SAT10 SAT11 SAT12

## 15 shops gutted in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Dec 27: At least two power looms and 15 shops were gutted in a fire at the Kali Bari Bazar under Arailhazur thana in the district at around 6:45 pm today, police said.

Local people brought the fire under control after a one-hour effort. Police suspected that the fire started from a stove at a quilt shop.

The damaged shops used to sale cement, quilt, furniture and cosmetics. However, the extent of loss could not be estimated immediately.

## Tributes paid to BSS mechanical supervisor

CHITTAGONG, Dec 27: Speakers at a condolence meeting today paid tribute to late Sirajul Islam, mechanical supervisor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) and recalled his contribution during his service to the agency, reports BSS.

The meeting, organised by BSS Chittagong Unit of BSS Employees Union was presided over by Unit Chief Moniruzzaman Mazumder, a union press release said.

It was addressed, among others, by acting bureau chief Samir Barua and leaders of employees union Prakash Kusum Barua, Mohammad Aslam, Hossain Ahmed, Taher Ahmed, Mohammad Afzal, Abdul Gafur and Adam Shaiful Islam.

The speakers recalled the memories of the association of late Sirajul Islam during his service in Chittagong bureau of BSS.

Earlier, one minute silence was observed seeking eternal peace of the departed soul, the press release added.

## JS body on information ministry meets

A meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Ministry was held at the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday with its chairman Abul Kalam Azad in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed the organisational structure, manpower strength and budgetary allocation of Bangladesh Film Archives, a press release of the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat said.

Matters relating to collection of films for the archives, methods of their preservation, seminars and symposiums on films and film festivals also came up for discussion in the meeting.

The meeting was informed that a project titled Bangladesh Film Archives Restructuring Project is being implemented at Agargaon with modern facilities for preservation of different films as well as books and periodicals relating to films.

The meeting put forward a number of recommendations for properly conducting the activities of the Bangladesh Film Archives.

Members of the committee State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed, Sultan M Mansoor Ahmed, M Mostafizur Rahman (Fizol), Begum Shaheen Monowara Huq, NK Alam Chowdhury, Afzal H Khan and Gazi Mohammad Shahjahan attended the meeting.

Secretary of the Ministry of Information M Akmal Hossain and concerned officials were present.



Visiting South African Law and Justice Minister Dr Abdullah M Omar placing wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu at the Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi yesterday.

—PID photo

## Alleged harassment of female students

## Mahila Parishad submits memo to DU VC, demands fair probe

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP), a leading women's rights organisation, yesterday submitted memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof AK Azad Chowdhury demanding a fair probe into the alleged sexual harassments of students by teachers and stern action against the offenders.

Condemning the incidents of sexual harassments, the BMP memorandum said the teachers who were truly involved in the incidents should be immediately removed, says a press release.

It also urged the authorities to discuss the matter with the female students for appropriate decisions and actions in this

regard, inclusion of female students in the probe body and publication of all probe body reports immediately.

The BMP also demanded of the DU authorities formulation of a code of conduct for sexual repressions and an institutional framework for fearlessly registering allegations of sexual assaults.

The BMP delegation comprising its Vice President Chitra Bhattacharya, MP, general secretary Aisha Khanom, Bela Nabi, Dr Faozia Moslem, Dr Maleka Banu, Advocate Masuda Rehana Begum and Rakhi Das Purakayastha met the VC and discussed various matters relating to the sexual harassments at the university.

## South African minister briefed about ongoing programmes

The visiting South African Minister for Law and Justice Dr Abdullah M Omar called on his Bangladesh counterpart Abdul Matin Khasru at his office here today, an official handout said, reports BSS.

During the meeting, the South African Minister gave a brief outline on various functionalities of judicial and legal system of his country. He showed keen interest in the judicial officers' training programmes and court management procedures of Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Law Minister also briefed his South African counterpart on various ongoing programmes undertaken by the present government in the field of judicial and legal reforms, especially, establishment of Grameen Court and National Human Rights Commission for ensuring access to justice for the poor and transparency and accountability in all spheres of national life.

Khasru told Dr Omar that both Bangladesh and South Africa could be immensely benefited from the experiences achieved in the field of law commission and human rights commission.

Later, Khasru presented two copies of Bangladesh constitution to the visiting minister.

Earlier, Dr Omar called on Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at his office. During the meeting, they discussed matters of mutual interests, especially, expediting the economic and commercial contacts between the two countries at private levels.

Dr Omar expressed his keen interest in the steps undertaken by the present government of Bangladesh for its economic development.

Director General of Foreign Ministry Aminul Islam Sarkar was present on the occasion.

In the afternoon, the South African Law Minister visited the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi.

He went round the different parts of the museum having evidences of the tragic and brutal killing of Father of the Nation along with the most members of his family.

The minister also signed the visitors' comment book and laid wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu. He was also presented with some booklets written on the long-struggling life of Bangabandhu.

Later, Khasru presented two

to Suu Kyi as a tool of foreign powers noting she is married to a Briton, Michael Aris.

Suu Kyi told party members this she is not, however, a British citizen and could not be deported there.

The government statement said that "the regional economic crisis is not improving and this is no time to be playing politics."

"As a nation, we need to work together to develop strong policies on economic development, counter-narcotics ... and the establishment of national security."

The military has ruled Myanmar, also known as Burma, since 1962.

Suu Kyi, daughter of independence hero Aung San, has spent most of the past decade under house arrest or had her movements restricted in a struggle with the military rulers for more democracy.

Though she was under house arrest at the time, her party won parliamentary elections allowed by the military in 1990.

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## Shahjalal University Students boycott classes

SYLHET, Dec 27: Students of Shahjalal Science and Technology University here boycotted their classes today demanding construction of the residential halls and purchase of new buses, reports APB.

Under the banner of All Party Students Unity (APSU), they also brought out a procession and staged demonstration in front of the administration building on the campus.

The demand for procuring additional buses raised following serious injuries sustained by a student as he fell from an overcrowded bus of the university Wednesday.

They submitted a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Habibur Rahman, the next day and demanded two more new buses and construction of new dormitories.

Leaders of APSU told APB that they would continue to observe different programmes until their demands were met.

## Non-govt teachers facing hardship in Rangamati

RANGAMATI, Dec 27: The teachers of non-government educational institutions here are facing hardship as they could not draw the government portion of their salary for the month of October due to unwanted problem in the local Janata Bank branch, reports UNB.

On the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, the government directed the concerned authorities of all the state-run banks to pay salaries to the non-government teachers for the month of October.

The government also asked them to pay salaries to the non-government teachers for the months of November and December before the Eid-ul-Fitr.

But the local Janata Bank expressed its inability to pay salaries to the teachers even for the month of October as it did not receive any letter in this regard from education department in due time.

The last date to draw salary from the banks was December 17 but the education department issued an order to this bank for paying salary on December 20.

So the bank expressed its inability to pay salaries to the teachers until receiving further letter in this regard from the education department.

## Govt distributing blankets among destitutes in northern dists

The government has taken a programme