

Manzur Elahi new president of East West University

By Staff Correspondent
Syed Manzur Elahi, a former Adviser of the caretaker government, has been named President of the East West University for a four-year term, said a press release yesterday.

Prof. Mohammad Musa has also been appointed Pro-Vice Chancellor of the university.

The founder Treasurer of the private university, Elahi was unanimously chosen to succeed Dr. Mohammad Farashuddin as the President of the Board of Directors. Earlier Dr. Farashuddin resigned because of his appointment as Governor of Bangladesh Bank.

Syed Manzur Elahi took over as President of the University on December 22 while Prof. Musa joined his new job yesterday, the release added.

Trial of all 'war criminals' demanded

By Staff Correspondent
Some 50 members of Dhaka Bar Association (DBA) in a statement yesterday demanded trial of all 'war criminals' including Gholam Azam, Abbas Ali Khan and Nizami in a special tribunal.

Hailing the initiative of "Ektattur Juddhaporadhi Bichar Andolan" (Movement for Trial of War Criminals of 1971) to bring the 'war criminals' to book, the lawyers also called for trial of all political killings and of those who illegally captured state power, says a press release.

"It is a matter of regret that the demand for trial of those who opposed the liberation war, killed three million people, violated three lakh women and looted values, is being ignored," the statement said.

The signatories to the statement include Gazi Zillur Rahman, Mahbubur Rahman, Baylet Hossain, Swarup Kanti Dev, Fazle Rabbi and Mashur Rahman.

Biennial meet of Press Club today

Press club meet: The 12th biennial general meeting of the National Press Club will be held in the morning today at the club premises, reports BSS.

Election to the managing committee of the club will be held tomorrow from 9:30 am to 5 pm with a break from 1 pm to 2 pm, a press release said.

RU admission seekers facing problems

RAJSHAHI, Dec 28: Hundreds of students may not be able to appear in the admission tests of Rajshahi University as the authorities have asked for submission of original or provisional certificates of HSC and SSC examinations along with admission forms, reports APB.

Admission seekers say the Rajshahi Education Board is not issuing HSC certificates of 1998.

When contacted, Board officials told APB that they were now issuing original certificates of HSC of 1995. And it will not be possible to issue so many provisional certificates in such a short time, they added.

The last date for submitting admission forms is January 24. Until last year, there was provision for submitting marksheets and testimonials along with admission form.

Attack on Janakantha reporters condemned

Bangladesh Crime Reporters' Association (BCRA) has condemned the attack on three reporters of daily Janakantha and demanded immediate arrest of the attackers, reports UNB.

In a statement yesterday, the BCRA president Zakaria Milon and General secretary Shamsul Salehin termed the attack as a threat to the freedom of press.

They alleged that the miscreants attacked Shankar Kumar Dey, Sunil Banerjee and snatched cash from them and tried to kill Kamrul Hasteen, but police could not yet arrest any miscreants.

Pest attack on ready-for-harvest Amon crop in Naogaon

NAOGAON, Dec 28: Farmers' hopes for a bumper Amon crop have been dashed by a sudden attack of dragonflies in almost ready-for-harvest fields in five thanas of the district, reports APB.

The farmers are at a loss how to control this particular pest. They are in a helpless situation as the number of pests is increasing day by day, and can do nothing but to watch their paddy being devoured.

The seven affected thanas are Porsha, Shapahar, Nayamatpur, Dhamuirhat, Mahadebpur, Patnitala and Badalgachi.

Entomologists of Agricultural Extension Department told APB that nothing much can be done at the moment because if insecticides are used, the paddy will not be consumable.

Indiscriminate use of fertilizer, pesticides

Land losing fertility

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 28: Soil fertility in 47 thanas of five districts in the greater Mymensingh district have been decreasing at an alarming rate due to indiscriminate and disproportionate use of fertilizers and pesticides here, reports UNB.

The districts include Kishoreganj, Mymensingh, Sherpur, Jamalpur and Netrakona.

Crop production has also decreased following the fall of soil fertility in these districts. The use of chemical fertilizer has been going on in the districts without maintaining any proportionate ratio. At present only 16 to 22 maunds of crops have been produced in one bigha of land.

Besides the farmers are growing same crops like-IRRI paddy in the same piece of land for several years which also affects the fertility.

Meanwhile, indiscriminate use to pesticides in the fields by the farmers is also causing some health hazard.

In the absence of organic and green fertilizer use, land productivity is declining fast in

three districts, said local experts.

Rampant use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides also affecting fish production of the areas as rain and flood water carry the poisonous ingredients to pollute the water bodies including rivers, canals and ponds.

The farmers said about 90 kgs of chemical fertilizer including TSP and urea are being used in one bigha of land.

Besides, the soil fertility is also decreasing as underground water of the areas contains heavy iron.

In the river-belts every year floods create and dunes on the cropland which also affects soil fertility.

Moreover, massive deforestation in the districts has been creating desertification in the region.

Experts suggest that use of chemical fertilizer and pesticides at a proportionate rate, alternative crop production and use of organic and composed fertilizers are essential to increase productivity of land.

BISS symposium date shifted

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) will hold a symposium on "Foreign Policy of Bangladesh" at its premises on January 4 instead of December 31 due to unavoidable circumstances, a release of BISS said yesterday.

Timbers worth Tk 60 lakh seized

RANGAMATI, Dec 28: Forest Department personnel seized illegally extracted valuable timbers worth about Tk 60 lakhs while being smuggled out of the district during the last 15 days, reports APB.

They also arrested eight persons and seized seven mechanised boats and two trucks that were carrying the timbers, sources at the district forest office said.

Several incidents of exchange of fire between the Forest Department personnel and armed timber smugglers took place during the period, they said.

The timbers, totalling about 19,000 cft including 8,000 cft of *segun*, were seized in different areas including Kapitai Lake, Barkal and Balaichari. Fifty-five cases have been filed.

JS body discusses Law Commission activities

A meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs yesterday laid stress on total recast of laws for gearing up country's economic activities and ensuring human rights condition, reports UNB.

The meeting, presided over by committee chairman Suranjit Sengupta, discussed the activities of Law Commission, matters relating to solving its various problems, especially increasing manpower of the Commission, for making it more effective.

It also stressed on strengthening the Law Commission for preparing recommendations aimed at upholding the judicial system, making the laws suitable for the present-time need and eliminating inconsistencies in the existing laws.

Committee members Adv. Rahmat Ali, Adv. Sheikh Md. Nurul Haq, Barrister Md. Anisul Haq and Mohammad Khaequzzaman were present at the meeting.

Arafat greets PM

President of the Palestine Authority Yasser Arafat has greeted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on the occasion of holy month of Ramadan, reports APB.

Arafat said in a message of greetings, "I seize this blessed occasion to renew to your country our deep appreciation for your principled brotherly and supportive stand towards our just cause to establish the independent state of Palestine with Al-Quds Al Sharif as its capital."

He said, "Our people who are celebrating the best month in the Palestine, the lands of Isra'a and Mirage, are looking for intensive support of the whole people of Islamic Ummah to re-establish their country and to fulfil the just and comprehensive peace."

The Palestine leader wished good health and happiness of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and more progress and prosperity for the brotherly people of Bangladesh.

Nepalese envoy hosts reception

Ambassador of Nepal Madhu Raman Acharya and Mrs. Acharya yesterday evening hosted a reception on the occasion of the 54th birthday of King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev and the National Day of the Kingdom of Nepal, reports APB.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, Fisheries and Livestock Minister ASM Abdur Rab, political leaders including Jatiya Party chief and former President H M Ershad, Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon, senior officials, heads of diplomatic missions, journalists and the elite of the city attended the reception at the Chancery of the Royal Nepal Embassy at Baridhara.

S African minister meets Suranjit

The visiting South African Law and Justice Minister Dr. AM Omar called on the chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Law Ministry and Advisor to the Prime Minister Suranjit Sengupta at his office yesterday, reports UNB.

During their talks, Sengupta lauded the strong and dynamic leadership of South African President Nelson Mandela. He referred to the theory of consensus followed by Mandela for consolidating national unity in a trouble-torn South Africa, said an official handout.

The South African Law Minister described the policies being pursued by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, her reform programmes, Parliamentary Standing Committee system, introduction of Prime Minister's question and answer hour in the House and activities of the Institute of Parliamentary Studies as highly positive steps.

He underscored the need for exchanging parliamentary delegations to establish good relations between the parliaments of the two countries.

Additional Secretary of Law Ministry and other concerned officials were present on the occasion.

Poultry training course ends

PATUAKHALI, Dec 28: A two-day training course on poultry and cattle rearing, organised jointly by BARD and UNDP, concluded at Kalapara thana recently, reports APB.

Thirty-five farmers from different areas of the thana participated in the course.

The thana livestock officer, thana veterinary surgeon and officials from Community Empowerment Project imparted their training on proper methods of cattle and poultry rearing and preventive measures against various diseases.

Communist leader Hemanta dead

JHENIDAH, Dec 28: Comrade Hemanta Kumar Sarker, a legendary communist leader of the country, died of old-age ailments at his village home at Barendra in Narail sadar thana early today, reports APB.

Born in a zamindar family, Sarker joined the communist movement at an early age.

He was associated with the peasant movement in 1930 and joined Communist party of India the same year.

After the partition, Sarker joined the underground communist movement in the then East Pakistan. Later he got involved with the politics of Revolutionary Communist Party (RCPB)-ML.

His body was brought to the office of Sramajibi Mukti Andolan at Jhenidah town where party followers and people gathered to have a last glimpse of the late leader.

He will be cremated at Puleahal cremation ground at Jessore on Wednesday, party sources said.

Obituary

Gazi Abdul Gani, former Assistant Director, National Security Intelligence (NSI), died of a heart attack on Sunday at his residence. He was 77, reports BSS.

He left behind his wife, three sons and a daughter.

Late Gani hailed from an aristocrat family of the village Sholohar under Srinagar thana of Munshiganj (Vikrampur) district.

He was buried at the Banani graveyard after his *namaz-e-janaza* held at the Tejkunipara Mosque after Asr prayers.

His *qutubani* will be held tomorrow after Asr prayers at his residence at 143, Tejkunipara near Aulad Hossain Market, Tejgaon.

Pro-liberation forces urged to resist vested quarters

State Minister for Information Prof. Abu Sayeed yesterday called upon all pro-liberation and democratic forces to unitedly resist the caucus of the vested quarters who include the anti-liberation elements, autocrats and counter-revolutionaries, reports BSS.

He said when the evil forces are still active to jeopardise the independence of the country, private initiatives along with the government efforts are needed to restore the spirit and values of the War of Liberation.

The state minister was speaking as chief guest at a special projection ceremony of a documentary film on Liberation War — "Muktijuddher Gan" directed by Shahriar Kabir — at the Muktijuddha Museum in the afternoon.

He said, "The history of the War of Liberation is the most precious and glorious pride of the nation. But during the last 21 years the history of independence has been distorted with a view to misleading the young

generation and tarnishing the image of Bangladesh." Prof. Sayeed said truth cannot be concealed for ever and the present government is working towards that end. The government has projected the true history of the liberation through different mass media including Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar, he added.

He thanked Shahriar Kabir and praised the Telefilms Limited for making the documentary and said, "This type of private initiatives will certainly help the government and pro-liberation forces to uphold the history of the country." Shahriar Kabir also spoke on the occasion.

Poet Shamsur Rahman, Prof. Kabir Chowdhury, Awami League president member Johora Tajuddin, poet Syed Shamsul Haq, Fayez Ahmed, Barrister Amirul Islam, and Col (ret'd) Shawkat Ali were present on the occasion.

Smuggled Indian goods worth Tk 27 lakh recovered in Comilla

COMILLA, Dec 28: Law enforcing agencies in separate operations in different thanas of the district recovered a huge quantity of smuggled Indian goods worth about Tk 27 lakh during the current month, reports UNB.

According to official sources, a task force comprising BDR, police, customs officials and magistrate in a drive at Mia Bazar, Choudagram, Moimpur, Salda river, Nayanpur, Khabela, Barojala, Bidhir Bazar, Barura Bazar, Jashpur, Mathurapur, Shiber Bazar, Aman-ganda, Satghoria and Chowdagram frontier lines from December 4 to 20. The value of the recovered goods was estimated at Tk 8.15 lakh.

All the recovered goods were deposited with the local Customs office.

72,700. They also seized five rickshaws and by-cycles engaged in carrying the smuggled goods.

Meanwhile, BDR recovered a substantial quantity of smuggled goods including sugar, cumin, milk powder, wine phensidyle, timber, bamboo, crackers, still-made utensils and by-cycle in separate drives at Sadar, Costa, Moimpur, Salda river, Nayanpur, Khabela, Barojala, Bidhir Bazar, Barura Bazar, Jashpur, Mathurapur, Shiber Bazar, Aman-ganda, Satghoria and Chowdagram frontier lines from December 4 to 20. The value of the recovered goods was estimated at Tk 8.15 lakh.

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Legal action against owners of 'Eishan' demanded

CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) today called upon the government to take legal action against the owners of the "Daily Eishan" published from here for violating the agreement signed between the management and the CUJ, a press release said, reports BSS.

In a joint statement Anjan Kumar Sen and Nurul Amin, president and general secretary respectively of the CUJ condemned the "Eishan" for not paying the salaries of the working journalists and employees of the daily.

The CUJ demanded immediate payment of the arrears salaries and issuance of appointment letters to the journalists and other employees which was guaranteed in the agreement.

JRC talks

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The JRC meeting is very crucial as we must continue dialogue on sharing of waters of the 53 common rivers. We have an agreement on one river only. But according to international convention and as stipulated in the 30-year Indo-Bangladesh water accord, the two countries are to conclude agreement on all the common rivers," the official stressed.

He also pointed out the Agreement said in unambiguous terms that Bangladesh and India "are desirous of sharing by mutual agreement the waters of the international rivers flowing through the territories of the two countries and of making optimum utilisation of the water resources of their region in the fields of flood management, irrigation, river basin development and generation of hydro-electric power for the mutual benefit of the people of the two countries."

Meanwhile, water resources ministry officials and JRC experts in Dhaka termed as 'pure speculation' press reports that there would be shortage of the Ganges water in the next dry season due to scanty rainfall in the upper catchment of the river.

"It is simply absurd to expect more than occasional rainfall in winter", an official pointed out and expressed the hope that Bangladesh would receive its share of the Ganges water, at least the quantum provided for in the Agreement.

India and Bangladesh have already begun a joint scientific study to identify the causes of shortage of Ganges waters. The study by a 'Joint Scientific Team' is expected to suggest ways and means to remove the causes of shortfall in the dry season last year, immediately after the signing of the 30-year water accord. The 'Joint Scientific Team' met in Dhaka on November 15 and 16 this year. It was the second meeting of the Team, the first held in Siliguri, India, in August. The Team set a two-year time frame for finalising its report.

A water resources ministry official also said that as per Article X of the water accord, both the countries could seek a review of it after a period of two years. The treaty entered its third year on the twelfth of this month.

It would be open to either party to seek the first review after two years to assess the impact and working of the sharing arrangement as contained in this Treaty," the accord said.

Preparations are underway to monitor the Ganges water as the next dry season begins on January 1. The dry season, which includes a lean period, ends on May 31.

Death anniversary of Munajatuddin today

By Staff Correspondent

The third death anniversary of eminent journalist Munajatuddin will be observed today. On this day in 1995, Munajat, who was famous for rural journalism, met the tragic end of his life after he fell into river Jamuna from a running ferry near Tistamukh ghat. He was taking photographs of the Kalasana Char for his story.

During his long journalism career since 1976, Munajatuddin had established a new trend in rural journalism through his investigating and on-the-spot reporting. He has become a model for the newsmen who works in the rural Bangladesh.

Munajat was awarded Philips award in 1987 and Ekushey Padak in 1997 (posthumous) for his outstanding contribution to journalism.

Munajatuddin Smriti Sangsad will hold a discussion meeting at its office this afternoon to mark the day.

Yesterday, the Smriti Sangsad announced the Munajatuddin Smriti Award '98. The award went to former Barguna district correspondent of Bangladesh Patrika Rafiqul Islam Mantu. The awardee is currently the roving correspondent of the Daily Manabjama.

A three-member panel of judges selected Rafiqul Islam Mantu for the award. The panel members were: Hedayet Hossain Morshed (Chairman), Harun Habib (member) and Prof A M S Arefin Siddiqi (member). The award comprises Tk 25,000, a crest and a certificate.

Mustard cultivation scheme taken up

PABNA, Dec 28: A massive scheme has been taken up to bring 19,500 hectares of land under mustard cultivation in the district during the current season, reports UNB.

Local Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources said the target of production has been fixed at 17,500 metric tons.

The growers are expecting bumper crops of the mustard due to accumulation of alluvial soil brought by the devastating flood.

Foreign co donates 50,000 jackets for flood-hit children

A private sector foreign investment company has donated 50,000 jackets costing 2,50,000 US dollars (Tk 12 million) for the flood affected children of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The consignment of winter clothing for children of 4-12 years produced by the Youngone Corporation of South Korea in the Export Processing Zone was delivered to the officials of the Prime Minister's Relief Fund yesterday.

A press release said another consignment of garments had been donated soon after the recent flood in pursuance of the commitment made by Kihak Sung, chairman of the Youngone Corporation to the Prime Minister in October this year.

With 20,000 employees in 15 factories at Export Processing Zones of Dhaka and Chittagong, Youngone is largest private sector foreign investment company of Korea in Bangladesh. Beginning as pioneer in RMG sector at CPZ with a modest start of one factory of 250 workers, only it maintained steady growth in employment generation and investment.



Fire broke out at inside a workshop at Nardabazar of Pragati Sarani in which property worth about Tk 6 lakh were gutted yesterday noon. According to the Fire Brigade and Civil Defence sources, fire originated from the Jahangir Engineering Works at noon and it engulfed two other adjacent shops. One Toyota car and a motor cycle were damaged in the fire.

— Star photo

3 to stand trial

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9 last year rejected the lower court's suggestion. The three accused companies then went to the Supreme Court where a single bench appeal judge granted a stay on the High Court verdict.

On March 15 this year, the matter went before the full bench of the Appellate Division for hearing. On May 13 this year, the Chief Justice and three other judges rejected the leave petitions by the accused companies.

The Supreme Court found that the Sessions Judge was wrong in making the quashment reference to the High Court and was highly critical of the Sessions Judge for "failing to maintain a balance."

"The Sessions Judge, in our opinion, would have been well-advised to reject the revision petitions upon the view that the objection as to the alleged lack of authority should be raised before the court taking cognisance," the Chief Justice said.

"In the facts of the present case, we are satisfied that there was sufficient compliance of the requirement of the law as regards authorisation of the officer who filed the report on behalf of the SEC," the Supreme Court judgement said.

"The objections raised by the petitioners as to lack of authority of the officer was premature in that they did not surrender before the CMM before whom the objection should have been raised first," the Chief Justice observed.

"We are also satisfied that there is prima facie allegation of contravention of section 17 of the ordinance. When the SEC was making a complaint of fraudulent acts against certain companies and their directors on the basis of an enquiry undertaken by an expert committee, a court would be well-advised not to try to be more expert at the complaint stage because otherwise it will be an example of nipping the prosecution in the bud. We do not at all approve of the manner in which the revision petitions were disposed of by the learned Sessions Judge."

The Chief Justice was also highly critical of the arguments that the "CMM acted wrongly in directing the issuance of warrant of arrest at once instead of issuing summons at the first instance."

It was also argued on behalf of the three companies that in the absence of list of witnesses and copies of complaint the order of issuance of warrant of arrest was violation of a section of CrPC.

The Supreme Court agreed with the High Court Bench, which rejected the three companies' plea, in "rejecting these contentions."

"The Sessions Judge should not have given any importance to the submissions because

law permitted issuance of warrants of arrest and copies of complaint and the list of witnesses were filed before him and no warrant of arrest was issued at all before the accused petitioners hurried to the court of Sessions Judge with revision petitions. They did not wait for any warrant of arrest to be issued but promptly appeared before the High Court Division on the next day and obtained anticipatory bail," the Chief Justice in his judgement said, criticising the Sessions Judge.

It is true that in criminal matters the accused should get all protection under the law but it is also important that the law should not be stretched too far so that big companies against whom serious allegations of foul play concerning national economy is being made before the court by a statutory authority can themselves overtake the law by resourceful enterprise in raising ingenious contentions in order to frustrate the prosecution on the threshold. The court must strike a balance. We are of the view that learned Session Judge failed to maintain that balance which has been restored by the High Court Division," the Chief Justice said.

The Chief Justice concluded by saying that the reference made by the Sessions Judge was "misconceived because he himself could set aside the order in the CMM which was actually prayed for."

Seven other companies will face the court later in the month, on January 25 and 26. They are: Intiyaz Hossain & Co, SES Companies, First Capital Securities, Securities Consultants Ltd, HMMS Financial Consultancy & Services, Chittagong Cement Clinker and Rupon Oil.

The rest five have secured a High Court order staying the proceedings after they had moved for quashment. The companies are Premium Securities, Apex Foods, Amam Sea Food, Olympic Industries and Chit. Textiles.

PHED repairs 827 tubewells in Kishoreganj

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 28: Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED) has repaired 827 tubewells in some areas 13 thanas of the district affected by recent flooding, reports BSS.

According to PHED official sources, the repaired tubewells are: 66 in Hossainpur, 86 in Pakundia, 54 in Kuliarchar, 48 in Bhairab, 122 in Itna, 62 in Mithaman, 70 in Astogram, 25 in Bajitpur, 36 in Nikli, 102 in Karimganj, 74 in Tara, 30 in Katadi, 122 in Itna and 52 in Kishoreganj Sadar.



Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) organised a special medical service at Raj Fulbaria, Savar affected by recent flood. About 300 rural people were examined and given medicines. Photo shows Dr Lee Ju-Yong a member of KOICA medical team examining a patient.