



A delegation of the newly elected members of Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday called on President Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban. — PID photo

Khaleda offers Fateha at Madina

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, now in Saudi Arabia as the royal guest of Saudi King, left Madina for Makkah yesterday, reports UNB.

Begum Zia along with her entourage offered Fateha at the *Rooja Sharif* of Rasool-e-Karim (SM) a Madina under royal management before leaving for Makkah, said a party press release in the city.

Earlier on Saturday, she said prayers at Masjid-e-Kuba and Masjid-e-Keblatiae, the original mosques of Madina, after *Zohr* prayers, and prayed for continued peace and prosperity of Bangladeshi people and the Muslim *Ummah*.

The Saudi royal protocol, leaders and workers of BNP and its front organisations and expatriates Bangladeshi living there saw off Begum Zia at the airport at Madina.

Begum Zia and her entourage will perform *Umrah* during her stay in the Saudi city of Makkah, the press release added.

More donations to PM's Relief Fund

Assistance to the Prime Minister's Relief and Welfare Fund for the country's flood-affected people continued to flow in as various organisations and individuals donated Tk 2.14 lakh yesterday, reports UNB.

University of Science and Technology, Chittagong donated Tk one lakh, Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), Barisal Tk 50,000, Dakop Thana Disaster Management Committee Tk 25,000, Dr Muhammad Kamrul Hassan Tk 20,000, Chittagong Social Welfare and Relief Committee Tk 10,000, Hathazari Natyia Sampradai, Chittagong Tk 6,900 and IMA, Khulna Tk 3,000, said an official handout.

Prokrichi-BCS elects new president, gen-secy

By Staff Correspondent

Engineer Ruhul Matin and Agriculturist Abdul Mannan have been elected President and Secretary General of the Central Co-ordination Council of Prokrichi-BCS respectively.

The election was held on Saturday at a meeting of the organisation. Dr Mostofa Jalal Mohiuddin, Dr Rashide-e-Mahbub, M Ibrahim, Chowdhury Kalequzaman, M Nazrul Islam, M Monirul Islam, Mongol Chandra Chanda, Dr Kamrul Hassan Khan, Khan Monzur Morshed, M Nuruzzaman, Dr Mustaq Hossain and Dr M Yunus Ali Sarkar attended the meeting.

The meeting decided to hold a council meeting of the organisation within 15 days and a meeting of representatives of the organisation in one month. They also urged the government to fulfil their demands immediately.



Salim new Marketing Director of BTI

Sadat Hossain Salim, a renowned business professional, has joined Building Technology & Ideas Ltd as Director sales & marketing, says a press release.

Building Technology & Ideas Ltd, popularly known as BTI is the only real estate company in Bangladesh, which has been awarded the ISO-9001 certification for quality.

Salim carries with him vast experience and professional expertise. His chequered career started with multinational conglomerate Duncun Brothers and subsequently held senior management positions with Partex Group, Apex Tannery Group, HRC Group and Philips Consumer Communications etc.



Obituary

Morshed Ali Khan Majlis, father of M Z Khan Majlis, in-charge, PRD, BCIC died of old age complications on Saturday. He was 82, says a press release.

He is survived by four sons, two daughters, one brother, two sisters and a host of relatives, friends and admirers.

He was born in the renowned "Khan Majlis" family of Boraid under Manikganj district. Eminent media personality late Daud Khan Majlis was his cousin. His *qukhwan* will be held at his residence at 38/C, Enayetganj Lane, Peckhana tomorrow after Asr prayers. Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the *qukhwan*.

Eid-ul-Fitr programmes

Government has taken up elaborate programmes to celebrate the *Eid-ul-Fitr* with due solemnity and religious fervour, reports UNB.

A high-level inter-ministerial meeting at the Religious Ministry finalised Eid celebration programmes.

The meeting, presided over by State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana Mohammad Nurul Islam, was attended by Secretary Mohammad Morshed Hossain and high officials of different ministries and departments.

The main Eid congregation will be held at the National *Eidgah* in front of the High Court at 8 am. The venue may be shifted to Baitul Mukarram Mosque at 8 am in case of adverse weather, said an official handout.

National flag will be hoisted atop government and private buildings on the Eid Day while the main streets and islands from the Air Port to Bangabhaban will be decorated with National flags and banners inscribed with "Eid Mubarak".

Improved diet will be given to the inmates in various hospi-

JP joint meet tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

An emergency joint meeting of the Jatiya Party will be held tomorrow at its central office at Kalabagan at 7 pm, said a press release.

Party secretary general Nazim Rahman Manju in a statement has asked presidents and general secretaries of all front organisation's central committees, president and general secretary of JP Dhaka city unit and all concerned to attend the meeting on time.

CU vacation

CHITTAGONG, Jan 10: The offices of Chittagong University will remain closed from January 16 to 26 on the occasion of *Shabe-Quadre*, *Eid-ul-Fitr* and *Saraswati Pujan*, a university press release said here today, reports BSS.

The office of the university registrar will however, remain open from 9 am to 2-30 pm during the *Eid* holidays for receiving forms of the second convocation, the press release added.



State Minister for Religious Affairs Mohammad Nurul Islam presiding over an inter-ministerial meeting on Eid-ul-Fitr programmes at the conference room of the ministry yesterday. — PID photo

Death anniversary of Justice AR Chowdhury today

The fifth death anniversary of Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury will be observed today, says a press release.

Son of late Alhaj Khan Bahadur Abdul Latif Chowdhury, Justice Chowdhury was born in 1926 in an illustrious family of undivided Bengal. A meritorious student and a brilliant orator, Justice Chowdhury was the VP of Salmullah Muslim Hall in 1948 and was one of the pioneers of the Language Movement. The historic memorandum containing the demands of the people of the then East Pakistan given to the then Prime Minister of Pakistan was drafted by late Justice Chowdhury.

Justice Chowdhury played a very active and leading role in the struggle for restoration of democracy specially during the autocratic military rule, upholding the rule of law and the promotion and protection of Bangladeshi nationalism and Islamic values.

A *mitad mahfil* and feeding of orphans has been arranged on the occasion. Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury Foundation has also arranged a discussion meeting entitled "Bangladesh in the New Century: Expectation and Reality" on January 30 at the CIRDAP Auditorium.

HRC executives

By Staff Correspondent

MR Mahub has been elected president of Human Rights Coalition (HRC), a forum for promotion and protection of human rights.

The other office-bearers are: Nurun Nahar Bhuiyan, Ali Akbar Mufti, Omar Farooq, Mufti Salahuddin, Nizamul Islam, Quamrun Nahar Khan, Miah Akbar Hossain (Barek), Md Lutfor Rahman, Md Shahidul Islam, Shaiful Islam Babu and Naznin Nahar Jesmin.

Youth arrested with revolver

Police arrested a youth along with a revolver and fifteen syringe from the city's Badda area yesterday, reports UNB.

Police said Ripon is a listed criminal who is allegedly involved in terrorist activities and trading of phensidyl and other drugs in city's Lalbagh area.

Obituary

Begum Baduzzaman, mother of retired secretary Kafiluddin Mahmood, died at a city clinic at 5 pm yesterday due to old age complications. She was 80, reports UNB.

Her body will be taken Monday to village home at South Dharmapur, Parshuram, for burial at the family graveyard. The *qukhwan* will be held at the village home on Wednesday.



Designer's Den, a leading fashion boutique, organised a fashion show in the city recently to present its Eid collection and to celebrate its first anniversary.



A group of young children, some with no warm clothes, gather around a small fire to protect themselves from the chilly weather. Life for most destitute children, specially for those living in slum areas, is very hard in winter with little protection against the bitter cold. — Star photo by Anisur Rahman.

'Palestinians won't be allowed to determine Israel's borders'

JERUSALEM, Jan 10: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took a hard line today on Palestinian statehood, telling his Cabinet that the Palestinians will not be allowed to determine Israel's borders, reports AP.

A senior Palestinian official, meanwhile, insisted Palestinians would achieve an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital — something Israel has vowed never to allow.

In recent months, Palestinian plans to declare statehood have been a major point of contention. The Palestinians have said they have the right to declare a state in May whether or not terms have been negotiated with Israel.

Israel has called that stance irresponsible and dangerous and demanded that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat stop talking about any unilateral declaration of statehood.

Palestinians have recently toned down statehood talk, fearing that resulting Israeli security jitters would give a boost to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in May 17 elections.

Netanyahu reiterated his hard-line views at today's Cabinet meeting.

Two in an interview aired today that Arafat told him that if peace talks were renewed between the sides, "There would be no need for unilateral declarations" of statehood.

One right-wing candidate for prime minister, lawmaker Uzi Landau, said Palestinians would defer declaring statehood in order to help leftist candidates in the election.

"It's a fact that if they delayed it, it would be in the interest of helping the (opposition) Labour Party," Landau told army radio.

On Sunday, Netanyahu told his Cabinet that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was also pressing Arafat to hold off on declaring statehood.

The increasingly bitter statehood debate comes as the US-brokered Wye River peace accords, signed in October, continue to founder. Israel called off a promised troop withdrawal last month, citing what

it said were Palestinian violations of the accord. The Palestinians deny violating the agreement, and say they will not meet new terms set by Israel.

US mediator Dennis Ross was due in the region tomorrow to try to help get the accord back on track.

Although Israel's troop withdrawals from the West Bank have been put on hold, the director of Israel's Finance Ministry, Ben-Tsion Zilberfarb, travelled today to Washington to request \$1.2 billion in aid that the US pledged to Israel to cover costs of implementing the peace accord, his office said.

Also Sunday, Palestinians marched in the West Bank town of Hebron to protest a curfew in the city's downtown. The curfew has been in effect since Monday, when gunmen opened fire on a van, wounding two Jewish settlers.

'Complete repair work of health complexes in time'

TANGAIL, Jan 10: Health Minister Salahuddin Yusuf has given directives for completion of repair and reconstruction of all flood-damaged health complexes within the stipulated time, reports APB.

He gave the directive while addressing a meeting of the Tangail District Health Development Committee at the conference room of Tangail Sadar Hospital yesterday.

He also asked the relevant authorities to strengthen their supervision to ensure timely completion of the work.

The meeting was presided over by Chairman of the committee former health minister Abdul Mannan MP. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hassan Chowdhury, Abdul Latif Siddique, the Director (Admin) of the Directorate of Health Services and the Civil Surgeon also addressed the meeting.

The health minister informed the meeting that the 100-bed Tangail Sadar Hospital would be upgraded to a 200-bed one in phases and a Trauma Centre would be set up there.



Lever Brothers MD honoured

John Noel, the chairman and managing director of Lever Brothers (Bangladesh) Ltd, has been made an officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's New Year's Honours List for 1999, says a British High Commission press release.

John Noel has been working with the Lever Brothers (Bangladesh) since 1995. His career with Unilever worldwide spans more than 40 years.

During his time in Bangladesh, Noel has played a leading role in the British business community and in the enhancement of Britain's commercial interest generally in Bangladesh, beyond those of his own company.

Noel has volunteered himself as the British High Commission's Consular Warden in Chittagong, where the British community has grown considerably over the last two years, with the development of an offshore gas field in the Bay of Bengal.

Nepal to ban tobacco ads on radio, TV

By Deepak Gajurel

KATHMANDU, Jan 10: Tobacco and liquor advertisements will be taken off television and radio networks in Nepal as part of the government's effort to discourage smoking and drinking.

Nepali Information and Communications Minister Jaya Prakash Gupta has announced that the government would enforce the ban soon.

Commercial products make up nearly 50 per cent of revenue of television and radio stations in Nepal. Most sports, music and popular programmes are sponsored by either cigarette or whisky-makers.

Nepal Television's (NTV) annual revenue of Rs. 70 million (\$1.04 million) includes Rs. 25 million (\$373,000) from tobacco and alcohol advertising.

Government-owned Radio Nepal earns about 40 per cent of its total revenue from such advertising. Newly established private FM radio stations too are heavily dependent on cigarette and liquor commercials.

The government-owned Nepal Television is the only station in the country while there are four FM radio stations — three privately-owned — in Kathmandu. Another half a dozen FM radio stations are in the pipeline.

According to experts, sale of whisky, beer and cigarettes has experienced a huge surge over recent years in Nepal.

"The World Health Organisation (WHO) has been calling

for stopping such advertising since a long time back," the minister said. "The government has also expressed its commitment in this regard at many international forums and the Health Ministry is working to foster awareness against alcohol and tobacco."

Those working with television and radio stations are worried about their networks' sustainability. "The decision is a most welcome step. But the government has to arrange for an alternative source of income for these media," NTV board chairman Tirtha Koirala said.

"The government is not in a position to compensate for the loss caused by a halt to such advertising, but it will take the initiative to minimise the loss through inter-ministerial level coordination," Gupta assured the electronic media.

A few however claim the move doesn't spell doom for the electronic media. "Revenue from the advertising of other consumer goods can be enough for us," said the station manager of Radio Sagarmatha, a community network in Kathmandu run by a consortium of four non-governmental organisations.

Though most media officials are worried about the possible revenue loss, experts have welcomed the government's ban. "Such a ban should be imposed on the print media as well," senior journalist Bhatrab Rimal said. — *India Abroad News Service*

JCD submits memo to Home Minister

By DU Correspondent

Jatityabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) submitted a memorandum to Home Minister Rafiqul Islam yesterday demanding immediate release of its leaders and workers.

JCD, the student wing of opposition BNP, brought out a procession on the Dhaka University campus in the morning to press home their demand.

Several JCD leaders and workers, including, president Habib-un-Nabi Sohel and general secretary Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, have been arrested on various charges.

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Police intercepted a procession of JCD activists near the High Court yesterday as they were marching towards the Home Ministry to submit a memorandum demanding the release of its leaders and workers. — Star photo