

Speakers at seminar

Uproot all strings of communalism from society

Speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday strongly pleaded for uprooting all strings of communalism from the society to help establish party between men and women in the greater interest of social progress and prosperity, reports BSS.

They said religion-based politics and *fatwabaz mullas* were standing out as main obstacles in the way of social progress and called for enacting laws to stop communal forces to ensuring equal rights for men and women in the country. They also pleaded for a strong resistance against forces who oppose rights of women.

The seminar on "Spirit of the War of Liberation and Equal Rights of Women" was held at the WVA auditorium in Dhanmondi under the auspices of Bangladesh Nari Progati

Sangha with eminent politician and woman leader Begum Nurjahan Murshid in the chair, a press release of the organisation said.

In her speech, Begum Nurjahan Murshid said the spirit of the War of Liberation was waning due to religion-based politics in the country.

Justice KM Sobhan, Principal Ahad Choudhury, Syed Hasan Imam, journalist Abed Khan, Dr Maleka Khatun, Bela Nahi and Dr Sonar Vishat Amin, among others, took part in the discussion on the topic.

Justice KM Sobhan said atrocities on women were on rise due to religion-based politics in the country and in this regard he suggested enactment of a law against the *fatwabaz mullas* and repealing of the 7th and 8th amendments to the constitution.

Deben Ghose dead

BARISAL, Jan 11: Deben-dranath Ghose, one of the eldest revolutionary politicians of the sub-continent, died here this morning at the age of 108, reports BSS.

Ghose, who had fought against British colonial and Pakistani rulers, had been suffering from breathing problems and old age complications for quite some time. He died at his Club Road residence at Kaunia at 8.30 am.

Chief whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, MP and local industrialist capt (ret'd) A Sabur Khan along with other political leaders went to the house of the late political leader to pay their respects.

Later a mourning procession was brought out in the town from the Aswini Kumar Town Hall. The procession ended at the cremation site of Ghose.

Death conolod

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman has expressed deep shock at the death of Debendra Nath, member of Barisal Awami League and leader of anti-British movement, reports UNB.

In a condolence message, the minister prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

In another condolence message, AL Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu conolod the death of Debendra Nath.

Another UNB report adds: Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzaq yesterday conolod the death of Deben Ghose, a revolutionary and veteran freedom fighter.

"I'm deeply shocked. We lost a great politician who taught us how to achieve great things like liberty through self-less dedication and commitment," he told UNB by telephone.

Razzaq prayed for the salvation of the departed soul of the centenarian politician.

Razzaq recalled the glorious contribution of late Deben Ghose during the anti-British movement and the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.

"Deben Ghose fought selflessly against British imperialism to free the then India and later revolted again to liberate Bangladesh," said the minister, an admirer of the late leader.

PRIP Trust-IFB sign agreement

An agreement has been signed between the PRIP Trust and IMPACT Foundation (IFB), Bangladesh yesterday under which IFB will conduct a survey on "Need Assessment on Delivery Services from Jiban Tori Mobile Hospital" in 12 thanas of Munshiganj, Brahmanbaria, Kishoreganj, Sylhet, Comilla and Narayanganj dists, says a press release.

Jiban Tori Mobile Hospital is expected to deliver its services in these places from next April. The survey will be funded by the PRIP Trust and findings will be considered at a workshop by the middle of March next to develop the action plan and operational manual of Jiban Tori.

Aroma Goon, Executive Director of the PRIP Trust and Monsur Ahmed Choudhuri, Director of IMPACT Foundation Bangladesh signed the agreement on behalf of the respective organisations.

Death Anniversary

The 6th death anniversary of Ustad Hasan Ali Khan, a renowned singer, composer, music director and former teacher of Bulbul Lalitkala Academy (BAFA), Shurvi San-geet Niketan and Jahangirnagar University Music School will be observed today, says a press release.

Different socio-cultural organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes, to mark the day. The programmes include *Quran Khwani* and *milad mahfil* after Asr prayers at his village home of Kulashin in Brahmanbaria.

Extension Award

Leo Md Nazir Hossain Khan Mithu, District President (1997-98), District 315AI, Bangladesh has achieved the Extension Award from International Association of Lions Clubs for the year 1997-98, says a press release.

New Leo clubs were formed and some clubs were revived under Khan's leadership during his tenure.

In another letter, Judge Howard L "Pat" Patterson, Jr, International president (1997-98) of the International Association of Lions Clubs, sent him greetings for his successful Presidentship year.

Premier show of Hathat Brishti on BTB

Bangladesh Television (BTB) will screen premier show of feature film "Hathat Brishti" as part of its special programmes designed to celebrate the Eid-ul-Fitr, reports BSS.

"The move will be first ever in BTB's history to telecast a film premier show," an official handout said yesterday adding "perhaps this move will be the first in the subcontinent also."

It is expected that the premier show will be one of the main attractions of BTB's Eid special programmes.

JS body on edn finalises bills on universities

A meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Education was held at the Sangsad Bhavan yesterday, reports BSS.

Chairman of the committee Nurul Islam Nahid was in the chair.

The meeting discussed on different aspects of the bills placed earlier at the Jatiya Sangsad and sent to the committee for scrutiny.

The bills are: The Dhaka University (amendment) Bill '98, the Jahangirnagar University (amendment) Bill '98, the Chittagong University (amendment) bill '98, the Rajshahi University (amendment) Bill '98, the Agricultural University (Amendment) Bill '98, Islamic University (amendment) Bill '98, Shaheed Suhrawardy Science and Technology (amendment) Bill and Khulna University (amendment) Bill '98.

After an elaborate discussion, reports on the bills were finalised to place it (bills) to the Jatiya Sangsad.

Besides, the meeting discussed the overall situation of the universities including improvement of its education quality, autonomy and activities of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Committee members Education Minister ASHK Saadique, whip, vice-principal Mohammad Abdus Shaheed, Prof Mohammad Abdul Kuddus, Kazi Sirajul Islam, Begum Roushan Ershad, Alamgir Kabir and Mashur Rahman attended the meeting.

Sena Kalyan Sangstha stipends

Sena Kalyan Sangstha has invited applications from school and madrasa level students for 1999 from children of released or retired armed forces personnel, reports BSS.

Children studying in various classes of school and madrasas, who obtained 40 per cent and above marks are eligible for applications, said an ISPR press yesterday adding that not more than two members of a family at a time will be eligible for the stipend at all levels and children born after retirement are not eligible to apply for the stipend.

Prescribed application forms will be available from all district armed services boards and Sena Kalyan Sangstha's head office at Sena Kalyan Bhaban at 195, Motijheel C/A, on production of pension or discharge certificates.

The last date for submission of duly filled-in applications at district armed services board is March 20.

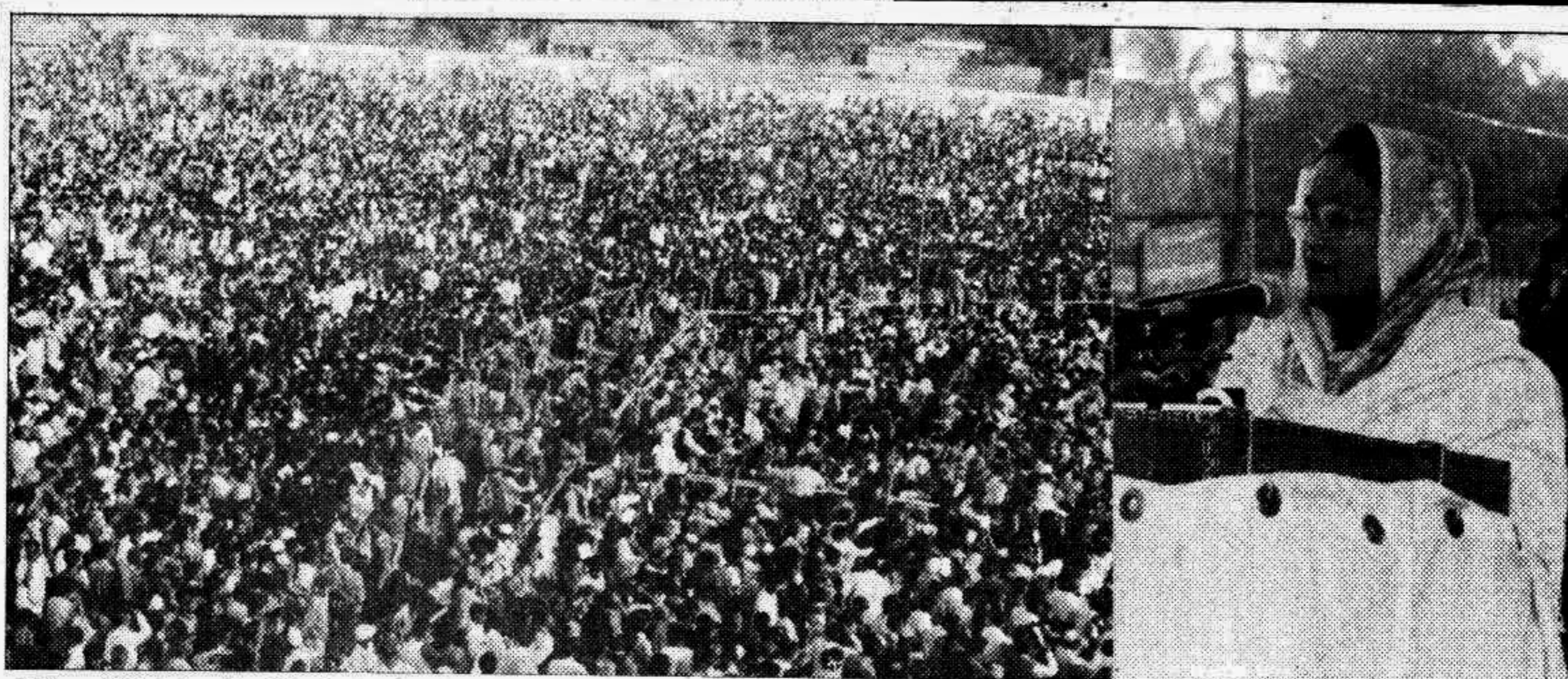
District armed services board will submit all the duly completed application forms to head office of Sena Kalyan Sangstha by March 31, the release said.

For renewal of the stipends, the stipendiaries from class VI to IX will submit their promotion report or marksheet duly countersigned by the head of the institutions to Sena Kalyan Sangstha's head office by March 31. Promotion reports or marksheets should bear the name of stipendiary and his/her stipend holding number, father's name and his service particulars such as number, rank etc.

15 held in Rangamati

RANGAMATI, Jan 11: Police in a special drive in the district arrested 15 people on various charges in the last 24 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Police said they arrested nine people from Kotwali thana, one each from Rajshahi, Longodu, Chandraghona and Kawkhali thana and two from Naniachar.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at Narsingdi stadium yesterday. — PID photo

Hasina warns of stern action against misuse of relief funds

NARSINGDI, Jan 11: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today warned stern action against any misuse of funds or corruption in implementation of the post-flood rehabilitation schemes conceived with hard-earned money, reports UNB.

"We are to work hard to mobilise money and material... I don't like to see waste of even a handful of wheat," she told a post-flood review meeting with officials at the local circuit house this afternoon.

Hasina said immediate action will be taken against any wastage or corruption and asked the concerned authorities to implement the post-flood schemes as soon as possible to overcome the losses caused by the devastating floods.

The Prime Minister said she had ordered the Secretaries to visit the flood-hit areas and review the progress of post-flood projects under different ministries.

About the various rehabilitation programmes, she said the government was feeding two crore people under 42 lakh VGF

cards in the flood-hit areas. She expressed urgency for creating jobs and increasing agricultural production so that people do not have to depend on drip-fed by relief funds.

Hasina said immediate and appropriate actions of her government had helped save two crore lives in the aftermath of floods belying apprehensions of international agencies, media and opposition parties.

The Prime Minister suggested infrastructure development, including easy road communications, for spurring economic activity. She also asked the concerned officials to ensure health services to all.

The government, she said, has undertaken various projects to provide housing facilities to the poor and homeless. "We have a plan, though ambitious, to provide each homeless person with a home," she told the meeting.

Referring to government plans for disbursing Tk 3270 crore in farm credits, the Prime Minister asked bank manage-

ment to see the money used by farmers in agriculture sector and ensure the recovery of the loans.

She said the government has also small credit programmes to help the weavers community affected by the floods.

Hasina asked the concerned officials to evolve devices to use surface water and rainwater as safe drinking water to avert arsenic contamination.

The Prime Minister also sanctioned Tk 2 lakh for development of Narsingdi Press Club.

Earlier, Narsingdi Deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Islam gave a resume of the progress of various post-flood schemes in the district, one of the worst hit in the deluge.

LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman, Telecommunications and Works Minister Mohammad Nasim, Science and Technology Minister Noor Uddin Khan, local MPs, senior officials and representatives of different professional groups attended the meeting.

959 killed on Dhaka-Sylhet highway in '98

NARSINGDI, Jan 11: A total of 959 people were killed and over 12,000 injured in road accidents on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway last year, police said, reports APB.

Road accidents on the highway have increased because of reckless driving, overloading and plying of unfit vehicles, they said.

Most of the drivers plying the highway do not follow traffic rules and always overload their vehicles with passengers and goods. Carrying of passengers on roofs is another cause.

To stop overloading, a weighing machine was set up at the Saidabad bus terminal in Dhaka in 1982. It was removed after three years.

An official of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) told APB that overloaded buses and trucks are also damaging the Bhairab-Ashuganj ferry ghat.

Sources said more than 60 per cent of the buses and trucks plying the highway do not have fitness certificates. About 35 per cent of the drivers do not have any valid driving license.

Henry's Heritage fashion show begins

A week-long Eid collection of renowned house of design 'Henry's Heritage' began at the gallery of Alliance Francaise yesterday, reports APB.

Different types of saree, salwar and kameez, especially designed for Eid occasion, are on display at the exhibition.

State Minister for Textile A K M Jahangir Hossain inaugurated the show where, among others, Director of Alliance Francaise France Lasnier, director of Henry's Heritage Hasinur Rahman Henry and designer Shahrukh Shaheed were present.

The exhibition will remain open from 3 pm to 8 pm everyday.

Japanese team visits BUET

A delegation from Centre of the International Cooperation for Computerisation (CICC) of Japan visited Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

The delegation, led by CICC Chairman Minoru Ikeda, met the Vice-Chancellor of BUET Prof Nooruddin Ahmed and discussed matters of mutual interest, said a press release.

They also visited the VLSI Laboratory of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Department of Computer Science and Engineering and the Computer Centre of BUET.

The delegation assessed the computing facilities and discussed future cooperation between BUET and CICC.

Ctg AL leader's death anniversary observed

CHITTAGONG, Jan 11: Speakers at a discussion paid tributes to late MAZ Aziz a prominent Awami League leader while observing his 26th death anniversary here today, reports BSS.

Chittagong south, north and city Awami League jointly held the discussion near the mazar of the late leader at Hallishahar. Dr Afsarul Amin, a local leader, presided over the discussion participated by acting mayor Shahidul Alam, party leaders Moslem Uddin Ahmad, M A Salam, Sadek Chowdhury, Muhammad Zakaria and advocate Fakhruddin.

They recalled contribution of MA Aziz in organising and consolidating the party in Chittagong region.

They placed wreath at the mazar of the late leader and offered feteha. Leaders of different front organisations of the party also placed wreaths at the mazar.

Chittagong north district Awami League also held a separate discussion on the occasion at its office with the party general secretary MA Salam in the chair.

Obituary

Chief scientific officer of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) Anwar Uddin Ahmed died of a cardiac arrest in the city on Sunday night. He was 54, reports BSS.

He was survived by his wife, one son and a daughter, sisters, brothers and a host of relatives. The *qukhwani* of Anwar Uddin will be held at 277 South Paikpara, Kalyanpur Natun Bazar on January 15, family sources said.

What's on today....

Procession: Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) will lead a procession to demand stabilisation of all market prices and to create awareness among the buyers. Venue: From CAB office at 48/A, Segun Bagicha to Osmani Udyan. Time: 11 am.

Seminar: Centre for Development Research, Bangladesh (CDRB) will hold a seminar on "Compact Townships". Speaker: Prof Dr. Salim Rashid, senior Fellow of AIBS. Venue: WVA auditorium, Dhanmondi R/A.

Reception: Rohne-Poulenc Rorer Bangladesh Ltd. will hold a reception in honour of Prof AK Azad Khan, Secretary General of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh. Chief Guest: Minister For Health and Family Welfare Salim Uddin Yusuf. Venue: Winter Garden, Hotel Sheraton. Time: 4 pm.

Meeting: The regular weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 4.15 pm.

Birth anniversary of Vivekananda: Vivekananda Shikkha O Sanskriti Parishad will hold day-long programmes to mark the 136th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. A procession will be brought out from the Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University at 10 am. Discussion meeting at TSC auditorium at 4 pm and a cultural programme at 6:30 pm.

Netrokona district Work under FWP, test relief yet to begin

NETROKONA, Jan 11: Work under Food for Work Programme (FWP) and Test Relief are yet to begin in most areas of the district although allocations under the programmes have reached those areas, local people alleged, reports APB.

The government has allocated 2120 tonnes of wheat for FWP and 896 tonnes for TR in the district.

Under the FWP, Barhatha thana got 183 tonnes, Purbadhala 304, Sadar 287, Kendua 331, Durgapur 197, Kalmakanda 269, Mohanganj 144, Madan 152, Khalajuri 98 and Apara thana got 155 tonnes for various programmes. But till now no work has been undertaken, people in those areas alleged.

Under TR, 896 tonnes of wheat has been allocated for 501 projects in 10 thanas and four municipalities. Barhatha thana got 81 tonnes of wheat, Sadar 106, Durgapur 85, Kalmakanda 107, Kendua 114, Apara 71, Madan 70, Mohanganj 69, Khalajuri 57, Purbadhala 110 and the four municipalities got 26 tonnes.

People in those areas allege that work under the programmes are yet to begin although the wheat has been made available to the local authorities.

A source in the district Relief and Rehabilitation office denied these allegations and claimed that work under TR was proceeding satisfactorily in some areas.

Meanwhile unemployment has increased in the rural areas because *aman* harvest is almost over.

Govt being deprived of huge revenue in Sherpur

SHERPUR, Jan 11: The government is being deprived of huge revenue due to non-enforcement of the Guest Control Regulation in the district, reports APB.

As per the Food Department's Guest Control Regulation, introduced in August 1984, any one willing to entertain more than 100 guests will have to take permission from the Deputy Commissioner or the local TNO.

A fine of Tk 25 may be charged for each guest in excess of the mandatory 100, up to a limit of 400. If the number of guests is between 431 and 500, then a fine of Tk 250 can be charged for each guest.

Under no circumstances, the number can cross the limit of 500. Any host failing to pay this amount may be punished under the Public Demand Recovery Act, 1913. Certificate cases may be filed against the offenders.

Officers of the rank of Inspector in food ministry, all gazetted officers of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption, Deputy Commissioners and TNOs are empowered to take action against the offenders.

In Sherpur district, not a single farthing has been realised as fine on that account in the last five years.

List of freedom fighters prepared in Chandpur

CHANDPUR, Jan 11: A total of 1,800 freedom fighters including two women have been enlisted in seven thanas of the district after scrutiny, reports APB.

The two women freedom fighters are Dr Badrunnahar Chowdhury and Begum Mohsina Akhter.

A two-member team of the Central Command Council of Bangladesh MuktiJoddha Sangsad, led by its Vice-Chairman and former MP Iqbal Hossain, prepared the list of genuine freedom fighters.

Iqbal told a press conference at Chandpur Press Club that the names of freedom fighters were enlisted after scrutinising documents of about 3,500 people. About 150 freedom fighters in the district have so far died, he said.

He said many *Razakars* (collaborators of Pakistani force) also claimed to be freedom fighters. Their names have been deleted from the list.

A good number of freedom fighters were present at the press conference.

One to die for killing mother, daughter

RAJBARI, Jan 11: A court here today sentenced a man to death for killing his septuagenarian mother and teenage daughter at a village in Sadar thana last June, reports UNB.

The convict, Mohammad Siddiq Sheikh, 38, is an inhabitant of Pangachhia village under Sadar thana.

According to prosecution, Siddiq stabbed to death his mother Nurjahan-Bibi, 70, on June 14 after she refused to sell some property to pay him the money he had demanded from her.

He also killed his daughter, Aklima, 15, who had witnessed this barbaric killing.

3 killed, 27 hurt in road mishap in Moulvibazar

MOULVIBAZAR, Jan 11: Three unidentified people were killed and 27 others injured in a traffic mishap on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Gumra in Sadar thana today, reports UNB.

Police said the accident occurred when the Dhaka-bound coach tumbled into a roadside ditch after hitting a private car.

Ten of the injured were admitted to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital while 17 to Sadar Hospital.

Fertiliser dealer caught

NAOGAON, Jan 11: The Thana Nirbahi Officer and the Chairman of Akbarpur Union Parishad caught a fertiliser dealer for selling sand-mixed TSP and handed him over to police recently, reports APB.

Twenty bags of sand-mixed fertiliser were recovered from his shop.

A case has been filed in this regard.

Call to resist activities of war criminals

The national executive committee of the Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday at a meeting urged all to resist the activities of war criminals of 1971 in the country, reports BSS.

The meeting also decided to exchange views with the peace loving and pro-liberation student youth, political, social and professional organisations for strengthening the ongoing movement against the war criminals including Golam Azam and his allies.

The meeting urged all concerned to build up a fresh and united movement for speedy trial of the collaborators of 1971 under a special tribunal.

Advocate Khurshid Alam Swapan presided over the meeting while committee members Kamal Hossain Badal, architect Basa, R N Basu, Abdur Rahim, Mostafa Galib Samir, Pulak Chowdhury were present.

One killed in road accident

MAGURA, Jan 11: A helper of a bus was killed in a road accident at Parnadual on Kamarkhal road on Sunday morning here, reports UNB.

Police said the helper Anisur Rahman (25) fell down when a Magura bound truck hit the Dhaka bound bus he was on at 9:00 am. The victim died on the spot.

The truck driver managed to flee with his vehicle. A case was lodged with the police.



Chhatra Oikya Forum, Jatiya Chhatra Oikya and Biplobi Chhatra Oikya demanded action against the DU teacher accused of sexual abuse. — Star photo



Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, Chhatra Oikya Forum, Jatiya Chhatra Oikya and Biplobi Chhatra Oikya brought out a procession on the DU campus yesterday demanding formulation of a code of conduct for educational institutions. — Star photo