

Shishu Biswakosh published

"Shishu-Biswakosh" an encyclopedia in Bangla for the children, the first ever such publication in Bangladesh, has come to light, reports BSS.

"Shishu-Biswakosh," a work of Bangladesh Shishu Academy, has been published in five volumes containing over 2000 pages in lucid language at a cost of about Taka 67 lakh.

This was stated at a function on the occasion of its publication in the Shishu Academy auditorium in the city yesterday morning, presided over by chairman of the Bangladesh Shishu Academy Begum Taherunnessa Abdullah.

Former Chief of adviser of the caretaker government Justice Habibur Rahman was present as the chief guest.

National Professor Kabir

Chowdhury, Dr Ahmed Rafiq, Hayat Mahmud, Selina Hossain and Hashem Khan discussed the contents of the encyclopedia while director of Shishu Academy Gholam Kibria introduced the new publication to the audience.

Justice Habibur Rahman said that it was the dictate of history under which Bangladesh has the natural responsibility to nurture and nourish Bangla language and literature.

He said the encyclopedia would foster closer relations with the countries of the world.

Begum Taherunnessa Abdullah said it would not only satisfy the inquisitive queries of the kids but the grown ups would also find it quite pleasant to go through it.

BCS (econ) Officers' Assoc concerned

By Special Correspondent
Bangladesh Civil Service (Economic) Officers' Association in an emergency meeting yesterday expressed deep concern over what it said non-filament of certain posts through promotions despite recommendation by the Superior Selection Board (SSB).

It said that some officials, who had been recommended for promotions by SSB in its meeting on December 12, have gone into leave preparatory to retirement (LPR), and some others are waiting for LPR.

In a statement, Dr M A Mabud, President and Mohammad Rafiqul Islam, General Secretary of the association described it as 'inhuman'.

They said it was learnt that when SSB recommendations were placed before the Prime Minister for approval, she had ordered that the should be placed within one month after the standing committee of the Public Service Commission finalises seniority list.

But the finalisation of graduation list is a complex and time-consuming process which is not possible to prepare within a month, they said. Considering that situation, a high level meeting in 1993 decided that the promotions in economic cadre would continue on the basis of a seniority list prepared in 1992, they added.

They said the association fully supported the initiatives taken by the Planning Ministry, establishment division and the SSB to fill up the vacant posts in the economic cadre through promotion.

Association sources said that 22 promotion cases are awaiting approval. It includes five divisional chiefs and 17 joint chiefs.

4 held, revolver recovered

By Staff Correspondent
Police arrested four persons and recovered one revolver and ornaments worth about Tk 5 lakh during different raids in the city yesterday morning.

The arrested were identified as Tarek alias Lipu, Al-Amin, Mintu Miah and Yunus Miah. Detective police acting on a tip-off, raided Kamalapur Purnan Market area and arrested Lipu, Amin and Mantu and recovered a revolver from their possession at about 10:35 am yesterday.

In another incident, Lalbagh police raided Hazi Mojib market of Makim Katara and recovered the imitation ornaments from second and third floor at about 6:30 am yesterday. Police also arrested Haji Mohammad Abed Ali for his alleged involvement with the incident.

Separate cases were lodged in this connection.

Obituary

By Staff Correspondent
Former State Minister and BNP MP Dr Mohammad Faridul Huda died at the age of 70 yesterday morning. He was undergoing treatment at East Asia Hospital in Dhaka.

Huda was a freedom fighter and worked with injured freedom fighters in Sector No 2.

He was a close associate of Moulana Bhashani and actively joined in progressive democratic politics under his leadership. Huda was elected MP from Sarail in Brahmanbaria in 1979 with the BNP ticket and was appointed as State Minister for Health during the BNP regime. He was also a sportsman.

BNP leaders Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Abdullah Al Noman, ex-BMA president Dr MA Majed rushed to East Asia Hospital on hearing about his death and paid their last respects to him.

Begum Rahima Wazed, mother of Establishment Secretary Dr Shah Mohammad Farid, died of old-age complications in the city yesterday morning, family sources said. She was 78, reports BSS.

She left behind three sons, one daughter and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her death.

Late advocate Shah Mohammad Wazed of Mymensingh is the husband of Rahima Wazed and former vice-chancellor of Agricultural University Dr Shah Mohammad Faruq is one of her sons.

Post office holiday

All post offices of the country will remain closed between January 19 and 21, reports BSS.

But the post offices having CEP or EMS services will work during holidays except the Eid day. Unregistered letters will be distributed on the last working day before Eid and post cards and envelopes will be sold from RMS counters during the holiday.

'Bangladesh Book' corner opens at Jadavpur University

The third 'Bangladesh Book' corner opened yesterday at Jadavpur University, a message received in the city from Calcutta said, reports BSS.

Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner to India Sheikh Ahmed Jalal on Wednesday handed over three hundred books on literature, culture, history, social science and Liberation War of Bangladesh to Vice-Chancellor Professor Ashoke Nath Basu through a simple ceremony at the university's central library.

Senior members of the faculty, students and officers of Bangladesh mission were present on the occasion.

Expressing gratitude to the university authorities, the deputy commissioner hoped that regular exchange of books and other publications would boost existing friendly ties between the two peoples.

Reciprocating the sentiment Prof. Basu said Indian scholars and researchers will find many important texts from these books.

Sec 144 imposed in Fatulla Pry School area

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 14: Local administration has imposed Section 144 in Fatulla Primary School area from Thursday afternoon to avert a possible clash between two rival student organisations, reports UNB.

Police said tension was prevailing in the area after BNP's student front JCD and Chhatra League both arranged iftar party at the school today.

Ruling party's youth front Jubo League and BNP-backed Jubo Dal have too arranged iftar party at the venue for Saturday.

The restriction in the area will remain in force till Saturday night, police said.

JS body discusses food situation

The parliamentary standing committee on Food Ministry has advised the authorities concerned to set up at least two Open Market Sale Unit centres in each union, reports UNB.

The committee, at a meeting held at Sangsad Bhavan yesterday with its chairman Sayedul Haque, discussed the food situation and expressed satisfaction over food stocks.

It decided to implement foodgrain distribution programme through cards at all the divisional, district and thana headquarters, including Dhaka city at fair price.

Members of the committee Joyal Abedin Bhuiyan, Sriamati Bharati Nandi and Joyal Abedin Sarkar attended the meeting. Food Secretary Mahub Kabir and other concerned officials were present.

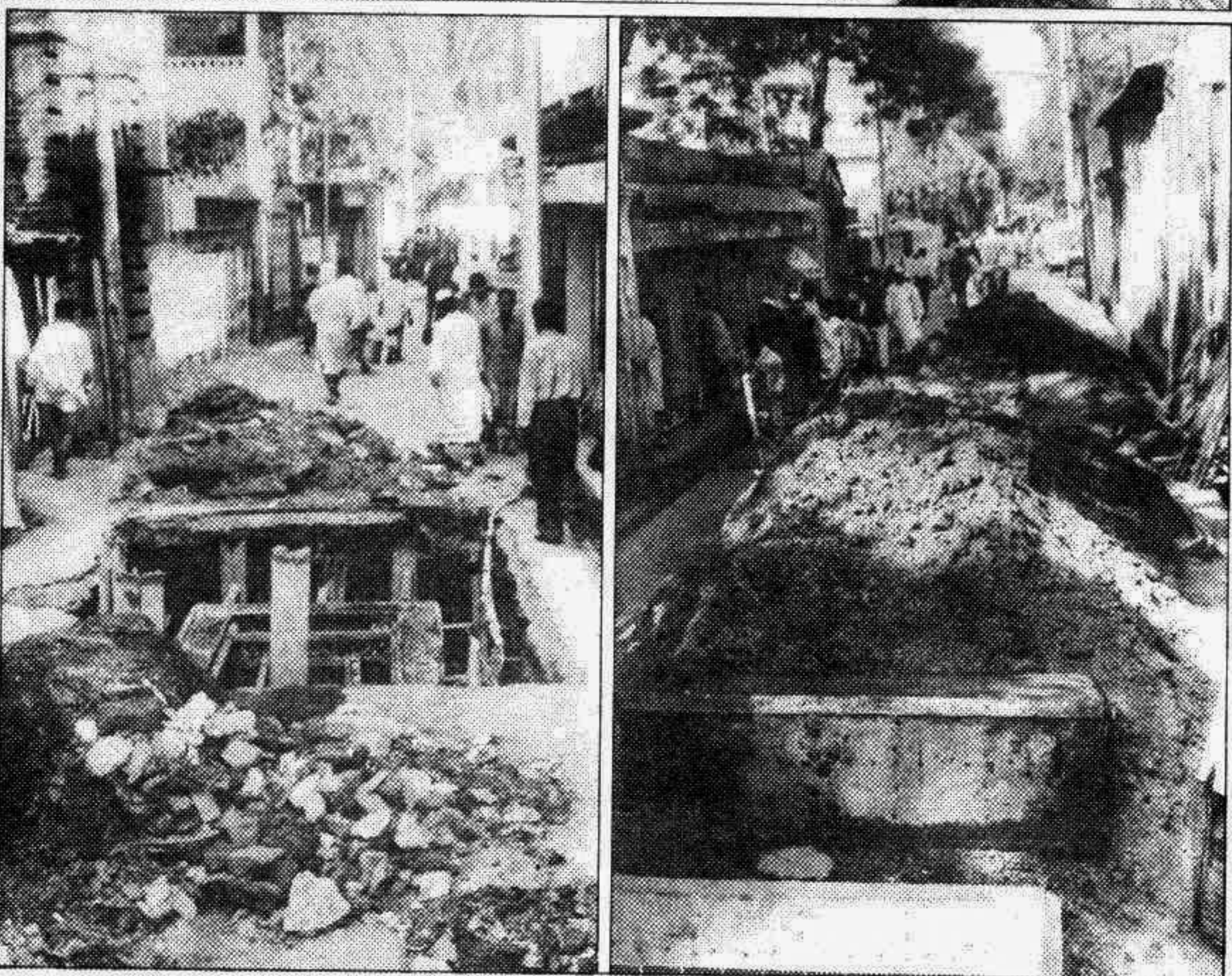


Sumaiya seeks help

Sumaiya Khatun, a 12-year-old student of Monipur High School, is fighting against ovarian cancer. She wants to lead a normal life like any other girl of her age, says a press release.

During an operation at the Islami Bank Hospital, doctors detected a tumor in her ovary and advised her parents to take her to Thakurpur Cancer Hospital, India, for treatment. There Sumaiya's condition improved after six cycles of chemotherapy. However, her condition has deteriorated again and she is now at the Delta Medical Center in Mirpur. Local specialists say seven more cycles of chemotherapy are needed for a remission. The cost involving Tk 3.85,000 for seven taxol injections — is beyond the capacity of Sumaiya's father Abdul Qudus, a stenographer at the Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board.

Abdul Qudus has appealed for financial assistance from the affluent in the society to help save his daughter. Sumaiya, an account (No SB 776/4) has been opened with the Mirpur Branch of Islami Bank for this purpose. Willing donors are requested to deposit any contribution to this account.



Does anybody care?

The Telephone and Telegraph Board is currently busy installing digital lines in old parts of Dhaka. But, as photos taken by AKM Mohsin above show, the Board's contractors have turned the narrow lanes and roads of the old city into a virtual siege area. Work in (clockwise) Walder Street at Sutrapur market, Dinnath Sen Road at Gendaria and Satish Sarkar Road started last November, but construction is moving at a snail's pace, with contractors showing little regard for the suffering of the local people who have no alternative roads to use. It appears that neither the T&T nor anybody else could care less.

Bangladesh set to conquer 24th Calcutta Book Fair

"Bangladeshi writers and publishers are expected to get an unprecedented exposure to India especially in West Bengal through the 24th Calcutta Book Fair which opens later this month, reports BSS.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the Calcutta Book Fair on January 27. Bangladesh is the focal theme country for this year's prestigious book fair in the capital of West Bengal.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and fair authorities have invited the Bangladesh prime minister to inaugurate the fair.

Calcutta Book Fair has a long tradition and history. It is already marked as an important international destination for book publishers and traders around the globe.

Britain was the focal theme country in 1998 and France the year before in the fair which will last till February 9.

Nearly one hundred thousand books of about five thousand titles have already been sent to Calcutta for the fair, one of the participant publishers, told BSS. He said nearly two dozen publishers are taking part in the book fair and there will be about twenty stalls in the fair alongside the main theme pavilion to be erected on behalf of the government. This

will be the greatest show of Bangladesh intellectual property outside the country, experts opined.

The importance of Bangla, the mother tongue of over twenty crore people living in Bangladesh, India and elsewhere in the world was one of the main factors in the selection of Bangladesh as this year's theme country, sources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. The contribution of Bangladesh to the flourishing of the Bengali language also played a key role in the matter. The historic Language Movement and its impact on the advancement of Bengali literature and culture had its due role on the overall selection, the sources added.

The fair authorities have earmarked about five thousand square feet for the Bangladesh theme pavilion. Work is going on to decorate the pavilion so that it reflects country's history, culture and glorious chapter of the Liberation War.

Bangladesh Day will be observed in the fair on January 30 for which a detailed programme has been chalked out. The programme included holding of seminar, discussion meeting and an assembly of litterateurs and artists from Bangladesh. There will also be a film festival.

A group of writers, litterateurs and artists are expected to be in Calcutta during the fair and will take part in different programmes to be arranged during that time.

Book traders and publishers of Bangladesh and India are scheduled to hold discussions during the fair to upgrade and smoothen the transactions between them.

Experts are of the opinion that the fair will open a new horizon for cultural exchange between the two countries and facilitate the availability of Bangladesh books in India. The fair is expected to have a two-way flow of movement of books and bring a positive impact on the balance of trade even if in a symbolic manner.

The External Publicity Wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is organising a trip for a group of journalists to Calcutta during the opening of the book fair. Sources said the journalists on board a bus would go all the way to Calcutta and return home by the same bus.

Bangladesh's participation in the Calcutta Book Fair had become uncertain following last year's devastating flood. At one time it looked like it was to be abandoned because of lack of funds and other constraints. But finally everything is set and now all awaits the big day.

JS body on Planning Ministry meets

A meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on Planning Ministry yesterday stressed the importance of taking effective steps to alleviate poverty and improve the economic condition of the people, reports UNB.

Held at its Jatiya Sangsad office, the meeting was presided over by Committee Chairman HN Ahiqur Rahman in the chair.

The meeting also discussed the terms of reference of the Task Force on poverty alleviation and its activities.

It observed that education, efficiency in works, availability of food and planned families are pre-requisites to eradication of poverty.

The meeting was told that the Fifth Five-year Plan (1997-2002) had laid special emphasis on poverty alleviation in addition to adopting various strategies and plans in this regard.

Committee members Science and Technology Minister Noor Uddin Khan, Muhammad Rezaul Karim Hira, Prof Muhammad Ali Ashraf, Prof Jannatul Ferdous, GM Fazlul Huq, Abu Leis Muhammad Mubin Chowdhury attended the meeting.

State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir attended the meeting on special invitation.

Planning Secretary, Planning Commission members, acting secretary and other senior officials were also present.

'Forthcoming local bodies polls acid test for govt, EC'

Workers Party Secretary General Rashed Khan Menon has said the forthcoming local bodies elections will be an acid test for the government as well as for the Election Commission, reports APB.

Addressing party workers meeting at Motiheel yesterday he said major political parties have so far played foul with the franchise of the masses which had been earned at the immense cost of blood and sweat. He alleged that the present government had been pursuing the same policy and using the civil and police administration to this end.

"The district administrations in the country have been turned into local branches of the ruling party," he said, adding that no fair polls could be held under the present administration.

The meeting chaired by Mostafa Alamgir Ratan, was also addressed by party leaders Kamrul Ahsan, Paresch Chandra Shaha, Akhter Sobhan Mashrur, PKR Tushar, Jahangir Alam Fazlu and Mohammad Ismail."

Qulkhwani

The Qulkhwani of the wife of Jalal-ur Rahman, a local Awami League leader will be held today at the RAOWA Club after Asr prayers, says a press release.

She died on Wednesday night at a city clinic and was buried at Banani Graveyard after namaz-e-janaza at the DOHS Mosque.

DU JCD factions hold separate iftar parties

By DU Correspondent
Two rival factions of the BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) arranged separate iftar parties on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

One iftar party was held at the DUCSU building while the other was held at the Hakim Chhatra on the campus.

The iftar party that held at the DUCSU cafeteria was attended by different BNP and JCD leaders. On the other hand, no BNP or JCD's top leaders were present at the party held at Hakim Chhatra.

The DU unit of the JCD arranged the iftar party at the DUCSU cafeteria while the workers who were not included in the new JCD committee organised the party at Hakim Chhatra.

A great majority of the JCD leaders and activists are unhappy as non-student and outsiders have been inducted into the newly formed committees.

While talking to The Daily Star yesterday, many of the deprived leaders expressed strong resentment as outsiders and alleged terrorists were included in the new committees.

Bank holiday

Bangladesh Bank and all the scheduled banks will remain closed on January 19-21 on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, reports UNB.

The central bank and all other scheduled banks will also remain closed on January 15-16 on account of Jammatal Wida and Shah-e-Qadar.

Dhaka Int'l Trade Fair begins Feb 2

By Staff Correspondent

The stage is set for the Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF) '99 beginning in the city on February 2. The fifth international trade fair will be held with participants from as many as 30 countries.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the fair as chief guest.

The aim of the international exposition is to introduce foreign machinery and local exportables to the prospective buyers," an EPB (Export Promotion Bureau) official told The Daily Star.

A wide array of products like jute goods, jute yarn and twine jute carpets, garments, textiles, towels and garment accessories, leather and leather goods including footwear and jackets will be on display.

Besides, the buyers can pick tea and coffee, cane and basket products, electronic items, stuffed toys and handloom products from the exposition.

The fair will help foreign buyers or their agents to make their choices and establish contact with the exporters.

Overseas participants from different countries are also expected to exhibit various kinds of consumer goods along with machinery.

Expected foreign partici-

pants include companies from the USA, UK, Germany, France, Denmark, Italy, Australia, Egypt, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Korea, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Kenya, Malaysia, China, Oman, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Japan, and Russia.

A private sector web design company, Digital Web Corporation, has been assigned to maintain a Web site to the DITF. Web explorers would be able to see what is happening instantly through a digital display in the Internet.

There will be 33 pavilions, 53 mini pavilions, 271 stalls and 10 restaurants in the fair. The fair will be held at its traditional venue at the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

Bangladesh has a very bright prospect in garments sector from which it earned \$5161.20 million during the fiscal 1997-98 and expected to get more orders from the fair.

The exposition last year did business amounting Tk 300 crore.

The business community and the general public wait round the year for this fair as they can buy many local and foreign products from the fair which is not available at normal time.

Experts tell seminar

Use of urea super granule will increase rice production

Rice production in the country could be increased considerably if farmers are encouraged to use urea super granule instead of the common brand, a workshop was told yesterday, reports APB.

Production of the Boro crop alone could be raised by 15 lakh metric tonnes annually by accelerated use of urea super granule.

Agriculture experts said this at a national seminar on "Marketing of urea super granule" at a local hotel in the city yesterday.

A total of 150 elite farmers and agri-input traders participated at the day-long seminar organised by USAID financed Agro-based Industries and Technology Development Project (ATDP).

Among others, ATDP Chief Dr Ronald P Black, BADC Chairman MA Wadud, Agriculture Extension Department DG M Enamul Haq and USAID representative Richard Rousseau addressed the seminar. Agriculture Ministry's Additional Secretary MA Halim presided.

The speakers said that in the

traditional method almost 70 per cent of ureas is usually evaporated or washed away from the land and the remaining 30 per cent is practically utilised.

Urea super granule, only 40 per cent is found to be more efficient.

It can also be easily placed in between the sapling lines.

According to one estimate, urea granule is being used in 1.5 lakh hectares in the current season after farmers harvested increased yields using the fertiliser in 10,000 hectares last year.

Experts viewed that the country could produce some 15 lakh metric tonnes of additional Boro crops using the fertiliser in some 30 lakh hectares.

The seminar was informed that some 160 companies had been producing urea granule in the country since January 1997. This technology, which is now widely applied by the farmers in many countries, was not prevalent anywhere in the world before 1990.

New Grameenphone rules

Subscribers announce 3-day protest programme

By Staff Correspondent

Grameenphone Subscribers' Forum yesterday announced a 3-day programme to protest what it said were steps taken against the interests of subscribers.

The programmes were announced at a press conference held at the National Press Club. Architect Mobashwer Hossain, convenor of the Forum read out a written statement at the conference.

The programmes begin January 25 through collection of signatures of the subscribers, sending of condemnations to the Grameenphone office through phone calls, fax and e-mail on January 26 and assembly in front of Grameenphone office at 11 am on January 27.

Besides, meetings with the Post and Telecommunications Minister, managing director of Grameen Bank, T&T Chairman, MPs and concerned authorities to seek their interference to refrain the Grameenphone authority from its anti-subscribers policies are also being arranged.

Speaking at the news conference, convenor of the forum said that Grameenphone has

breached its pledge through the announcement of imposition of incoming charges effective from January 1, he added.

Criticising the announcement, Hossain urged the Grameenphone authority to immediately withdraw the decision and refrain from taking steps against the interests of the subscribers.

He said that alongside filing of cases against the Grameenphone, the forum will launch a social movement in support of the GSA concept and agreement signed with the subscribers. The movement will continue until the realisation of their demands.

The convenor also urged the Prime Minister to constitute a Consumer Act immediately to protect the interests of consumers. He also drew the attention of the Jatiya Sangsad regarding the exploitive steps of Grameenphone.

Forum leaders Munirul Haq, Manjurul Azim Palash, Shamsul Arefin Chowdhury, Kamal Pasha Chowdhury, Salim Samad, Dildar Hossain and Mozilul Anwar Dilon were present at the press conference.

Housewife shot dead trying to protect husband from kidnappers

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 14: A housewife was shot dead when she tried to resist a gang of armed people who stormed into their residence to kidnap her husband on Wednesday night.

The victim was identified as Soma Begum, 35, wife of Idris Ali. Their residence is located in Chandmari rail line area under Fatulla thana.

Hearing the sounds of firing, patrol police rushed to the spot and arrested five members of the gang. Two revolvers and one pipegun were also recovered from their possession.

The arrested were identified as Monir Hossain, Ziaur Rahman, Shabbuddin, Delaware and Swapon.

The incident was a sequel to an incident in which the couple were robbed in the area when they were returning home after Eid shopping on Tuesday, hospital sources said quoting Soma's relatives who brought her to the Narayanganj Sadar Hospital.

But in the next morning, Idris identified two youths of the gang who were involved in the snatching and managed to recover Tk. 700 from them. And this led to the killing of Soma at night.

Soma was shot in the chest. She was rushed to the hospital where the doctors declared her

dead. Two separate cases have been lodged with Fatullah thana in this connection.

ICMAB students lock institution

By DU Correspondent

Students of the Institute of Cost and Management Accounts of Bangladesh (ICMAB) locked the doors of the institution yesterday to press home their demands.

Earlier, they threatened to do this if the authorities does not meet their 20-point demand by yesterday noon.

The students under the banner of Andolan Bastiyabayan Parishad (ABP) also threatened to prevent the council members from entering the institute until the demands are met.

The students have been agitating for about a month to press home their demands that include immediate reopening of the institute, and withdrawal of tuition fee hike.

Meanwhile, four more student organisations expressed their solidarity with the movement of the ICMAB students yesterday.

Poll schedule

From page 1

he said every election is a political one and sought cooperation from all political parties in holding it in a free, fair and peaceful manner.

Asked about opposition's demand of his resignation, the CEC said he and his Commission are very clear to their conscience that they are discharging their constitutional duties in a neutral and transparent manner.

"But I have no grudge against those who raised question about my neutrality. We know we are neutral," he said adding that the Election Commission is not counterpart of any quarter or party.

About the ensuing municipal election, Abu Hena ruled out possibility of deployment of armed force to maintain law and order, but said strict measures will be taken to compel the candidates code of conduct.

"One or more than one vigilance teams will work in every pourasavas. If they find any irregularity by any candidate, instantly they would inform concerned authorities and a case will start," he warned.

In another gazette notification, the EC also appointed additional district magistrates as returning officers for the local government elections in the urban or semi-urban areas.

District election officers will be assistant returning officers for the pourasavas in the district headquarters while Thana Nirbahi Officers outside the district towns.

The returning officers will make public notification in all wards of the municipalities as soon as possible seeking nomination papers from the probable candidates and also mentioning where the nomination papers will be submitted.

The Election Commission in the gazette advised the returning officers, if possible, to hold voting in all the municipalities of their respective district in a day of the scheduled three days.

Pour election at a glance

Following are the pertinent information at a glance about the February 23-25 Pourasava (municipal) elections for which the schedule was announced the city yesterday, reports UNB.

city yesterday, reports UNB.	
Total no of Pourasavas (municipalities):	182
Election to be held in:	143
Election postponed due to cases	2
Tenure yet to expire:	27
Boundary not decided:	0
Districts involved in election;	10
Thanas involved in election;	140
Total no. of general wards:	1359
Female wards:	453
Total no. of returning officers (ADMs):	453
Total no. of coordinators (DCs)	140
Total no assistant returning officers:	140
51 district election officers and 89 TNOs)	
(Source: Election Commis-	
sion Secretariat).	