

**Bangabandhu Bridge
Nasim opens two
police stations
at both ends today**

TANGAIL, May 4: Two police stations at both ends of the Bangabandhu Bridge will be inaugurated tomorrow, reports UNB.

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim will first open the "Bangabandhu Bridge (East) thana" at the eastern end of the bridge and later the "Bangabandhu Bridge (West) thana" at the western end.

With the setting up of the new police stations, the number of thanas in the Tangail district will stand at 12 and while 10 in Sirajganj district.

Sources said both the police stations would look after the Bangabandhu Bridge and ensure security of its resources and control traffic movement.

Like other police stations of the country, the thanas will also maintain law and order situation, file and investigate cases and arrest the accused persons.

One Inspector (Officer-in-Charge), four sub-inspectors, three assistant sub-inspectors, 25 constables, one cook and one sweeper have been appointed for each of the thanas.

The thana at the east end of the bridge was constituted comprising its adjacent areas and portions of 21 Moujas under Kalihati and Bhanupur thanas in the district while the thana at the west end constituted comprising portions of 37 Moujas under Sadar, Kamarkhand and Royganj thanas in Sirajganj district.

**'Bomb attacks in
east London
unfortunate'**

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury yesterday called the last week's bomb attacks at the biggest Bangladeshi community in East London "unfortunate and regrettable".

Giving his reaction to UNB over the incident in which seven people, including four Bangladeshis, were injured, Chowdhury said: "We are aware of the very unfortunate and regrettable bomb attacks in Brick Lane" and hoped the British government would deal very effectively against any such recurrence.

The State Minister mentioned British Home Secretary Jack Straw's visit to the affected areas and reassuring words by local MP Ms Una King. Bangladesh High Commission in London Mahmud Ali along with other officials also visited the areas.

"All I would like to say at this stage, we believe that by far the vast majority of Britons deplore such activities by fringe groups and also that the government of Britain would deal effectively against any such recurrence," Chowdhury said. Recalling the British support to Bangladesh's Liberation War and the excellent bilateral relations, the State Minister said: "I sincerely hope the anxieties are also shared by the people in the government and public representatives in the United Kingdom."

**E Timor accord
Indonesia,
Portugal to
sign today**

UNITED NATIONS, May 4: Indonesian and Portuguese foreign ministers are due to sign here Wednesday an autonomy agreement for East Timor paving the way for independence for the former Portuguese colony, reports AFP.

Security arrangements contained in an annex to the accord provide for the immediate dispatch of civilian police officers to the territory, annexed by Indonesia in 1976, where factional fighting has increased in recent weeks.

However, UN spokesman Fred Eckhard refused on Monday to give details on the UN police contingent, described as "police advisers" by Jakarta, expected to number several hundred to ensure a smooth ballot on August 8.

In the ballot -- which is a referendum in all but name -- the 800,000 East Timorese in the territory and those in exile are to choose whether to accept the Indonesian offer of wide-ranging autonomy or independence.

**ME peace
Arafat seeks
continued
Irish support**

DUBLIN, May 4: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Monday thanked Ireland for supporting an independent Palestinian state and urged its continued support in the Middle East peace process, reports Reuters.

"We need international support, we need the support of our friends all over the world to push forward the peace process and try to safeguard it. We need your support in this particular aspect," Arafat, looking frail but cheerful, told reporters after a meeting with Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern.

"We'd like to see peace prevail both in Ireland and in Palestine," Arafat in Ireland as part of a tour of European capitals, told reporters through an interpreter.

Ahern, pledging greater involvement by Ireland in a Palestinian state, said the hour-long talks had reviewed the problems faced by the Palestinian people, including economic, political and social issues.



The committee to observe the birth centenary of the National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam at national-level held a cultural evening at the auditorium of the National Museum in the city yesterday. — Star photo

**Purbachal Model Town project
Massive corruption detected**

There were hardly any houses or trees on some pockets of the vast land acquired for proposed Purbachal Model Town. But crores of taka was allegedly embezzled in the name of paying off compensation for "immovable property," reports UNB.

A government investigation into the alleged irregularities in disbursing compensation revealed that a group of unscrupulous surveyors in connivance with some corrupt officials misappropriated a huge amount of money by showing houses and trees on the barren lands.

The surveyors fraudulently showed trees and houses on barren lands and even in ponds, and awarded about Tk 90 crore as compensation for immovable property, according to an enquiry committee report.

The Land Ministry formed the committee at the directive of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to detect corruption following a report by an official of Narayanganj district administration.

The five-member committee, headed by a joint-secretary, detected massive corruption in awarding compensation to some "affected people."

The disbursement of compensation was stopped on January 27, 1998. Surprisingly, the Land Ministry recently issued a directive for resuming the disbursement, excluding four small portions of the land, where the committee detected irregularities.

The committee carried out the investigation on only these four small portions (14.55 acres) of the total acquired land of 6,153.77 acres.

A source in the ministry said the government would suffer a huge loss if it pays off the compensatory money on the plea of implementing the project "without any delay."

The committee in its report

remarked that investigation on the total acquired land needs more time and more manpower. The land (6,153.77 acres) covering parts of Narayanganj and Gazipur districts (about 4,433.30 acres in N'ganj) was acquired in 1993 to build a model town.

The government allocated about Tk 240.66 crore to pay off compensation for land, houses and trees to the affected people, and also to meet administrative cost for Narayanganj portion of the project.

It handed over the land along with immovable property to RAJUK in January 1997 to develop the project and directed the concerned authorities to pay off the compensation. Some 22.21 per cent of the compensation of about Tk 53.64 crore have already been paid off.

But, the disbursement was stopped after Land Acquisition Officer (LAO) of Narayanganj Shamsul Islam, detected huge irregularities in fixing compensation for houses and trees on the acquired land.

Following a note from the district land office, the ministry constituted the enquiry committee headed by Joint Secretary Mirza Md Al Farooq.

In a random sampling, the committee found that compensation money was paid off for trees on a piece of land where there was a pond.

The concerned surveyors also awarded compensation to the affected people for houses on lands, where there was no house or any such establishment.

Earlier, detecting such corruption, 12 surveyors were transferred. Transfer was the only punishment for such massive corruption, the sources said.

There was something very fishy about the enquiry committee itself. Firstly, it submitted its report much before stipulated time (April 30, 1990).

During its month-long inquiry, it carried out the investigation on small pieces of land on four dates in June-July 1998. The report said the enquiry was hampered due to rainy season and that it would have been better to go for investigation during dry season.

However, the committee investigating 10.91 acres of land under Kamta Mouja, found that there were five owners of the land. But 11 different people own trees on the same land. They on the basis of deed on a 50-taka stamp claimed compensation for trees at more than Tk four crore.

The report said the land was acquired in 1993-94, but compensation for trees was awarded to different persons in 1996. Awarding ownership of trees of an acquired land was in gross violation of the existing laws, it said.

Moreover, the committee in its report mentioned that in no way the existing trees on the acquired land could be worth more than Tk 75 lakh.

On another piece of land (0.34 acres) under Porshi Mouja, the enquiry team found that the whole land was under water and there was no sign of any tree or house. But as per the report of the surveyors over Tk two lakh was paid for trees and houses to an "affected person."

The committee also found that the land was sold to Begum Rubina, wife of a surveyor, who was involved in the land survey, by its original owner and she received the compensatory money.

In another enquiry on 2.67 acres of land under Kamta Mouja, local people told the committee they did not see any house on this land at any time. But, over Tk 40 lakh was withdrawn from trees and over Tk 33 lakh taken away as compensation for houses.



A child juvenile rally at the Central Shaheed Minar marking the birth anniversary of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam. — Star photo

**People urged to build
resistance against
evil forces**

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak yesterday urged the people to build resistance imbued with the spirit of Liberation War against the evil forces, reports BSS.

"We are committed to implementing the spirit of the Liberation War in our national life despite many hurdles as we had participated in the war in 1971 at the call of father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," he said.

Razzak was speaking as the chief guest at a Children-juvenile rally at the Central Shaheed Minar to mark the 70th birth anniversary of "Shaheed Janani" Jahanara Imam.

The rally, organised by "Muktijuddher" Chetana Bastabayan O Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Jatiya Samonnyo Committee," was also addressed, among others, by Col. (Retd) Shawkat Ali, MP, Professor Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Principal Abdul Ahaad Chowdhury, Gholam Quddus, Sadequr Rahman and Advocate Abdul Mannan.

Convener of the organisation Syed Hassan Imam presided. Paying tribute to Jahanara Imam for her contribution for the anti-liberation and communal forces, Razzak said she did not compromise to the cause till her death despite facing harassment by the past government.

It will be the proper way to show respect to the memories of Jahanara Imam through trial of "Gonodatar" held at the Suhrawardy Udyan in 1992 who was a criminal of 1971 in the soil of Bangladesh, he said.

Earlier Razzak, who is also a member of the Steering Committee of the organisation, placed wreath by the portrait of Jahanara Imam there.

The speakers urged the government to execute the verdict of "Gonodatar" held at the Suhrawardy Udyan in 1992 which had declared the offences of Gholam Azam and his accomplices during the war of liberation punishable by death. The rally paraded the different city streets that ended in front of Jatiya Press Club.

**DMC library faces shortage
of textbooks, journals**

Acute shortages of books, journals, and other educational resources have gripped the library of Dhaka Medical College (DMC), once famous for professional excellence, reports UNB.

The students and faculty members are more or less dependent on the nearby British Council library and other special libraries like ICDDR,B for meeting academic requirement.

"The necessary textbooks and journals for meeting the academic needs are rarely visible on the shelves while visual

**Kibria returns
home**

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria returned home yesterday after attending the 55th session of the UN-ESCAP in Bangkok and the 32nd meeting of Governors' Council of Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila, reports UNB.

Kibria led a four-member Bangladesh delegation to the ESCAP session, held in the Thai capital on April 27-28 last.

**New committee
of Gram Theatre
formed**

By Staff Correspondent

The new executive committee of Bangladesh Gram Theatre (BGT) was formed at its fourth national council with Nasir Uddin Yusuf and Humayun Kabir as president and secretary general respectively.

The three-day council, held at the Puthia in Rajshahi concluded on May 1. The programme was followed by Sixth Folk-Drama Festival which was participated by a number of theatre activists and some 13 groups.

Prof. Hasan Azizul Haq inaugurated the council while former BGT president Selim Al Din presided.

An advisory committee was also formed at the programme, which includes Dr. Selim Al Din, Prof. Hasan Azizul Haq, Rafique Azad, Mohammad Rafique and Afsar Ahmed.

The other members of the BGT executive committee are: Pijush Bandopadhyaya (executive president), Kazi Sayed Hossain Dulal and Kamal Bayezid (joint secretary), Asadullah Farazi (organising and research secretary), Shaifur Rahman Tota (training secretary), Mosaddek Millat (publicity and publication secretary), Yusuf Khasru (office secretary), Badrul Islam (finance secretary), Shimul Yusuf, Lutfar Rahman Lebu, Ratan Das, Alamgir Kabir Badal and Ahmed Sunny (executive members).

Another co-ordinating committee for five divisions was also announced with Salam Saqlain (Dhaka), Narayan Nag (Chittagong), Toufique Hasan Moina (Rajshahi), Shuvankar Chakraborty (Barisal) and Amirul Islam (Khulna).

**Bangabandhu
Parishad JU
body formed**

By DU Correspondent

A 51-member committee of Jahangirnagar University (JU) unit of Bangabandhu Parishad was formed with JU Treasurer Prof Sharif Enamul Kabir and Dr ATM Abdul Hannan as its president and general secretary respectively.

The new committee was formed at a general meeting and conference of the Parishad at the JU Chemistry Gallery on May 1, said a press release.

**Rotaract Club of
Dhaka to mark its
Silver Jubilee
tomorrow**

Rotaract Club of Dhaka celebrates its Silver Jubilee celebrations on Thursday, reports BSS.

As part of the programme, the club will hold the 26th Charter Day celebration in Manohib Protibondhi (SWDB) auditorium at Eskaton Garden at 5:30 pm on the day.

Old Rotaractors Rotarians, among others, have been invited to join the festivity.

**Hilly people urged
to live in peace**

TABALCHHARI, May 4: Home Minister Mohammad Nasim today urged the hilly people to live in peace and harmony for the sake of speedy development of the region, reports UNB.

"You give us peace, we will give you development," he told public meetings at Tabalchhari and Guimara in Khagrachhari after inaugurating a new thana Bhaban and a police investigation centre today.

The minister said there was a confusion and suspicion among the tribal and non-tribal about the peace accord because of propaganda by a vested group aimed at misleading the people.

"But now the people have realised that the propaganda was wrong and the peace has been restored among Bangali and hilly people," Nasim said with a note of satisfaction.

He said Ziaur Rahman, Gen Ershad and Begum Khaleda Zia had failed restore peace in the

region. It has been achieved under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Referring to opposition propaganda against the CHT peace accord, Nasim said their apprehension that the region would go to India has proved utterly false and baseless.

He informed the hilly people that the government has taken up adequate steps for speedy development of the region. "You will soon get cellular phone facilities,"

CHT Affairs Minister Kalparangan Chakma and Khagrachhari Zila Parishad chairman Jitendra Lal Tripura were present at the public meetings.

Guimara thana Awami League president Chai-Thoai and Tabalchhari UP chairman Mohammad Abul Kashem presided over the respective meetings.

IGP AYBI Siddiqui was present during the inauguration of the thana Bhaban.

**Weather
No change in temperature**

Rain or thundershowers with temporary *Kalbatshakhi*, gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Tangail and Mymensingh till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

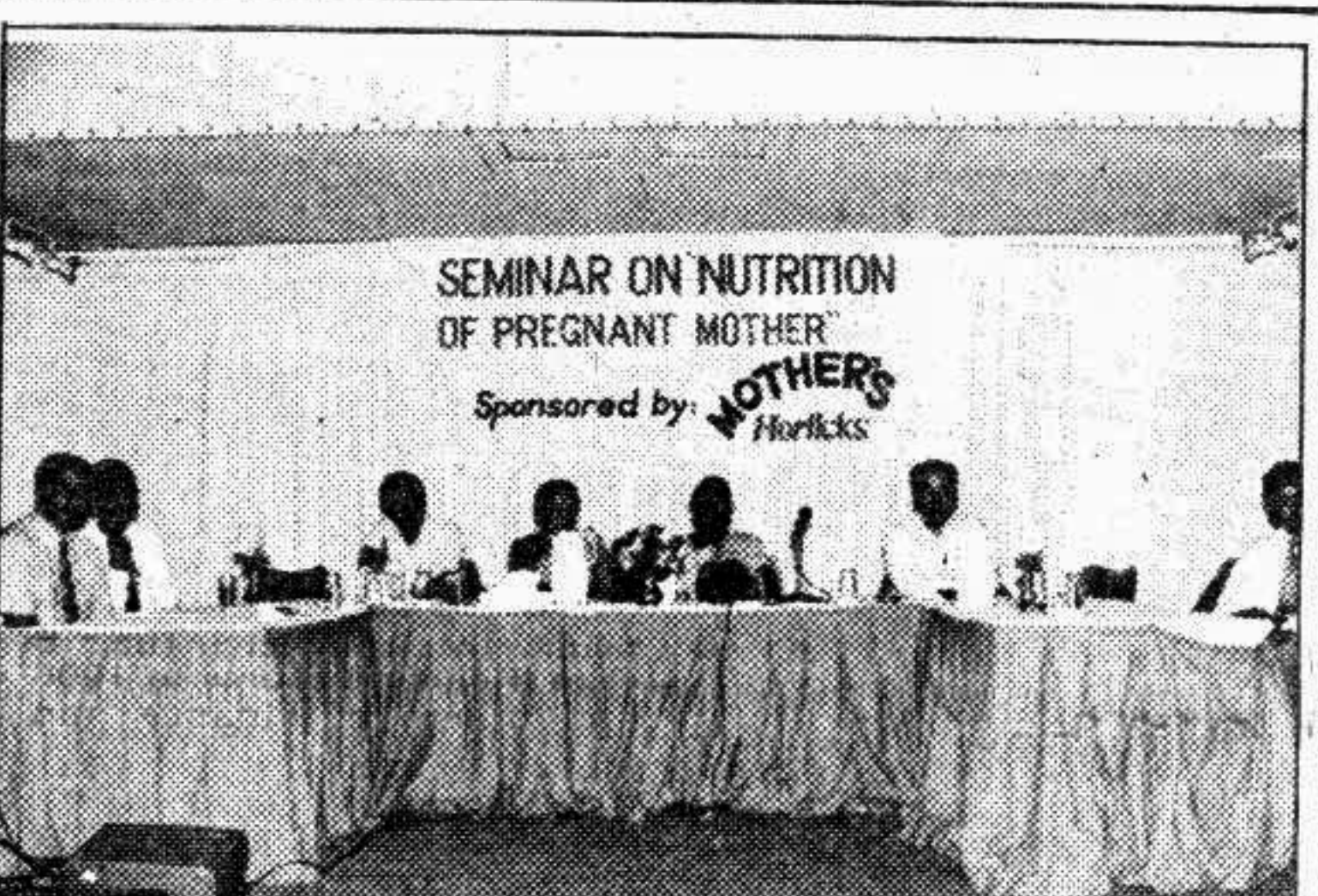
Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere during the period, the Met Office said adding that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

It also warned that north or north-westerly *Kalbatshakhi* squalls with a speed at 60-75 kph or more at places is likely during the next 18 hours from 6 pm Tuesday.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 39.3 degree Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi and the lowest 22.1 degrees Celsius at Rangpur.

The sun sets today at 6:29 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:21 am. Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

| City/Town | Temperature in Celsius | | Humidity in Percentage | |
|-------------|------------------------|------|------------------------|---------|
| | Max | Min | Morning | Evening |
| Dhaka | 37.5 | 28.5 | 69 | 51 |
| Chittagong | 34.6 | 27.4 | 69 | 75 |
| Rajshahi | 39.3 | 27.7 | 74 | 45 |
| Khulna | 36.0 | 27.5 | 74 | 70 |
| Barisal | 35.6 | 27.6 | 74 | 67 |
| Sylhet | 29.3 | 23.7 | 69 | 83 |
| Cox's Bazar | 36.3 | 27.0 | 67 | 72 |



The Society of Gynaecologist and Obstetricians of Bangladesh held a seminar on Nutrition of Pregnant Mothers recently.

**CJ, Law Minister discuss
judicial reforms with WB VP**

Chief Justice ATM Afzal and Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru had a meeting with World Bank Vice President Meiko Nishimizu in Washington Tuesday morning, reports BSS.

They discussed legal and judicial reforms in Bangladesh with Nishimizu.

The Chief Justice said the Supreme Court of Bangladesh is interested in measures to improve court management. Computerisation of courts and infrastructure development are the key areas of priorities to go hand in hand with legal and judicial reforms.

Law Minister Khasru said good governance is a major commitment of the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The first bill passed in the present parliament was for setting up of a permanent Law Commission. This was followed by a series of steps to improve court management and to make the legal system more accessible to the people and more sensitive to the growing needs of the private sector in a globalised economy. In this regard, Khasru mentioned the Judicial Administration Training Institute, the setting up of Grameen Courts, which is under process, and legal aid for the vulnerable people.

Law Minister Khasru said the government has approved a bill for setting up of an independent Human Rights Commission, which further highlights the commitment to make the legal system people-friendly. Organogram for the Ombudsmen's office has also been approved, he informed.

He said the judicial and legal capacity building project that

the Ministry of Law has drawn up with full participation of the judiciary and other concerned sections of society will help Bangladesh make rapid strides in the area of good governance. The participatory approach followed in drawing up the strategic reform is unique and has given the project a firm foundation. The reforms will, among other things, supplement and strengthen the government's ongoing efforts like enactment of Banking Company Law and establishment of Bankruptcy Courts to bring about discipline in the financial sector.

The Bangladesh Law Minister said the judiciary enjoys high credibility and respect of all citizens. With the help of the judiciary, the project will turn out to be a model, the minister said. He said he was happy that the World Bank has agreed to be a partner in the project.

Nishimizu said she holds the commitment of the government to good governance and the steps already taken in this regard in high appreciation. In spite of the great odds, Bangladesh is a country of great potential, said Nishimizu.

The monthly *zkr mahfil* will be held tomorrow after Magrib prayers at *Khanqaya Toazia*, 27 Siddheshwari Road, in the city, says a press release.

The *Gaddin Peer* of Darlapur Sharif, Hazrat Moulana Shah Sufi Alhaj Abul Hasan Muhammad Abdul Quaiyum will conduct the *zkr mahfil* according to the rules of *Kadria Tarika*.

All *murid-mutakids* and devotees have been invited to attend the *mahfil* on time.

**AL-backed BCL
sweeps college
union polls in
Khulna**

KHULNA, May 4: The ruling party-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) swept in the Khulna Sundarban Government Ideal College Students Union election today bagging all the 24 posts, reports UNB.

Sheikh Rafiqul Islam Lavlu and Rezaul Hossain Ripan were elected president and general secretary respectively in the election.

Jatytatabadi Chhatra Dal, the student wing of main opposition BNP, brought allegations of terrorism and rigging in the polls.

JCD leaders at a press conference alleged that their polling agents were ousted from the polling centres and ID cards of their supporters were snatched by BCL activists.

Following the incidents, JCD decided to boycott the election and informed their decision to the election commission at noon.

They also handed over a memorandum to the election commission in this regard.

Police said the election was held peacefully and there was no report of untoward incident during the election.

**Six alleged
criminals
held in Ctg**

CHITTAGONG, May 4: Chittagong metropolitan police arrested six alleged criminals from different parts of the city and seized one sawed-off rifle and two cartridges from Madarbari area today, reports BSS.

Police said four criminals were arrested by Doublenmorning thana police from west Madarbari sweeper colony and arms and ammunition were seized from their possession.

They arrested another person from Rangipara of Agrabad for his alleged involvement in criminal activities.

**Medicine club
conference ends**

The two-day fourth central conference of Medicine Club concluded at Comilla Medical College auditorium recently, reports BSS.

Vice-Chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Professor Dr. M A Kadri inaugurated the conference.

Principal of Comilla Medical College Dr. Farida Abid Khanam presided over the function. Besides transacting organisational matters the programme of the two-day conference also included club members rally, discussion meeting and cultural function.

About 200 members of the Medicine Club attended the two-day conference.

**Lt Anwarul Azim's
death anniversary
today**



The 28th death anniversary of Shaheed Lt Md Anwarul Azim will be observed today at North Bengal Sugar Mills, Azimnagar, Rajshahi in a befitting manner, says a press release.

On May 5, 1971 the Pakistani Occupation Forces entered the Mill compound and killed more than 200 officers and workers of the mill including the then General Manager Lt Azim on the staircase of the pond now known as "Shaheed Sagar".

Shaheed Azim actively took part in the Liberation War and under his guidance the aerodrome of Ishwardi Airport was destroyed with Mill's bulldozer. He also guided the freedom fighters into a fight in front of the railgate of North Bengal Sugar Mills where several Pakistani soldiers along with Major Aslam were killed.

The employees of the r have chalked out programmes to observe the day. Qurankhwan, milad mahfil, discussion meeting will be held at the Mill premises.

**Death anniversary
of Dr Iftekhar
Hossain Friday**

The first death anniversary of Dr Sheikh Iftekhar Hossain (Gora), an economist at the World Bank is Washington DC, USA will be observed on Friday, says a press release.

A milad mahfil marking the death anniversary will be held on Friday, after Asr prayers at Khehlagar premises of the Officers' Club, Bally Road in the city. He died on May 3, 1998.



Bangladesh Computer Samity members speaking on its role to face computer virus at a function in the city yesterday. — Star photo