

The Ambassador of Denmark in Bangladesh Finn Thilsted presented his credentials to President Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday. — PID photo

Thanas on east & west side of BJMB open

Upazila polls to be held on time : Nasim

SIRAJGANJ, May 5: Minister for Home, Post and Telecommunications Mohammad Nasim today categorically said the Upazila elections would be held on time with the all-out participation of the people, reports BSS. He said the nation had widely participated in the Poursava polls without caring about the hartal called by the oppositions and they would also demonstrate the same spirit during the coming Upazila polls. The nation wants peace and tranquillity, not hartal or similar programme which are detrimental to development now being carried out by the present government to achieve the national goals, the minister said while addressing four separate public meetings in Tangal and Sirajganj districts today. The meetings were organised in connection with opening two new thanas both East and West sides of the Bangabandhu Bridge and inaugurating the new building of Ullapara thana under Sirajganj district. Besides, the minister addressed a large public meeting at Ullapara College Ground organised by the local unit of Awami League. The meetings were also addressed by Abdul Mannan MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Ministry Advocate Rahmat Ali MP, Abdul Latif Siddiqi MP, Abdul Latif Mirza MP, Inspector General of Police A Y B Siddiqi and Local Awami League leaders.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the eighth national conference of the Bangladesh Teachers' Association at Mirpur Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium yesterday. — PID photo

55 die in one month in city Govt takes steps to check outbreak of diarrhoea

The government has undertaken all measures to check the outbreak of diarrhoea in different areas of the country. Due to prolonged drought and sultry weather incidents of diarrhoea have increased in Dhaka city and six coastal districts for the last one month, official and hospital sources said. Sources at the Directorate of Health Services told BSS that 668 medical teams have been formed and four temporary treatment centres have been set up to provide medicare to the patients in the 33 affected thanas under six coastal districts. There is adequate stock of ORS, intravenous fluid and antibiotics in government hospitals in the affected districts for treatment of diarrhoeal patients and more drugs are being sent to boost the stock, the sources said. The affected coastal districts are Bhola, Patuakhali, Noakhali, Cox's Bazar, Bagerhat and Chittagong. The ICDDR,B, popularly known as Cholera Hospital, at Mahakhali in the city has set up two temporary tents to accommodate the increased number of patients. It has also increased the number of medical and nursing staff to cope with the situation. Office of the Dhaka District Civil Surgeon has decided to open ORS corners in 17 government dispensaries for the capital for treatment of diarrhoeal patients. According to statistics available at the Health Directorate, 872 persons were affected in the coastal districts during the last 24 hours ending May 3 and six of them died, two in Bhola and four in Noakhali. The number of patients who were treated at the hospital in these districts during the last seven days was 4,608 and 29 of them died. In the last one month, 13,243 persons were treated at the hospitals of whom 91 died. The ICDDR,B treated 14,382 patients last month and 55 of them mostly children, died due to other major complications, hospital sources said. In the last eight days, the hospital treated 4,612 patients and 18 of them died while in the last three days, 1,892 patients were treated and six of them died. The number of patients who came to the hospital till noon yesterday was 309. To cope with the situation, the ICDDR,B authorities have increased the number of doctors and nurses. At present, 87 nurses are working in place of the normal 67 along with four additional doctors, 15 health workers and 14 cleaners. About 35 per cent of the patients at the ICDDR,B are released within four hours, 55 per cent within four days and the rest within a week. Diarrhoea breaks out twice a year — from April to early June, and from September to November.

New Danish envoy presents his credentials to President

Newly appointed Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh Finn Thilsted presented his credentials to President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday, reports UNB. Welcoming the new ambassador, the President said that Denmark has been a major development partner of Bangladesh. Bangladesh appreciated continued participation of Denmark in the country's development efforts, the President noted with satisfaction that from this year Denmark has increased its financial assistance to Bangladesh substantially. President Shahabuddin Ahmed also mentioned that both the countries share similar views on many important global issues. They believe in democracy, free market economy and respect for the dignity of human being, said the President, adding that these shared values have provided the essential basis for a long-term partnership between the two countries. He hoped that the relations between Denmark and Bangladesh would be further strengthened in future. Ambassador Thilsted said that the Danish government has noted with satisfaction the fact that the general elections in June 1996 were conducted in a free and fair manner. Democracy is the foundation for good governance, said the Danish envoy adding that Denmark recognises the steps that the government of Bangladesh has been taking towards economic and administrative reforms. In this connection he mentioned that the Danish-Bangladesh Development Cooperation Agreement was signed in 1995 which defined the areas of cooperation in the fields of agriculture, drinking water and sanitation and infrastructure. Wife of the Ambassador Shakuntala Thilsted, Secretary to the President M Ismail Hossain, Acting Foreign Secretary Mohiuddin Ahmed, Maj Gen AM Siraj and Press Secretary RN Trivedi were present.

Weather Temperature may fall

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary Kalboishakhi gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna, Dhaka, Barisal and Chittagong divisions till 6 pm today, reports UNB. Slight fall in day temperature is expected over the country during the period. It also warned that north or north-westerly Kalboishakhi squalls speed 60-75 KPH or more at places is likely over the regions of Farna, Rangpur, Bogra, Faridpur, Dhaka, Tangail, Mymensingh and Sylhet during next 12 hours from 6 pm yesterday. The country's highest temperature 37.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishurdi and the lowest 20.4 degrees Celsius at Srimongal. The sun sets today at 6.29 pm and rises on Friday at 5.21 am. Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (max, min), Humidity in percentage (morning, evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.



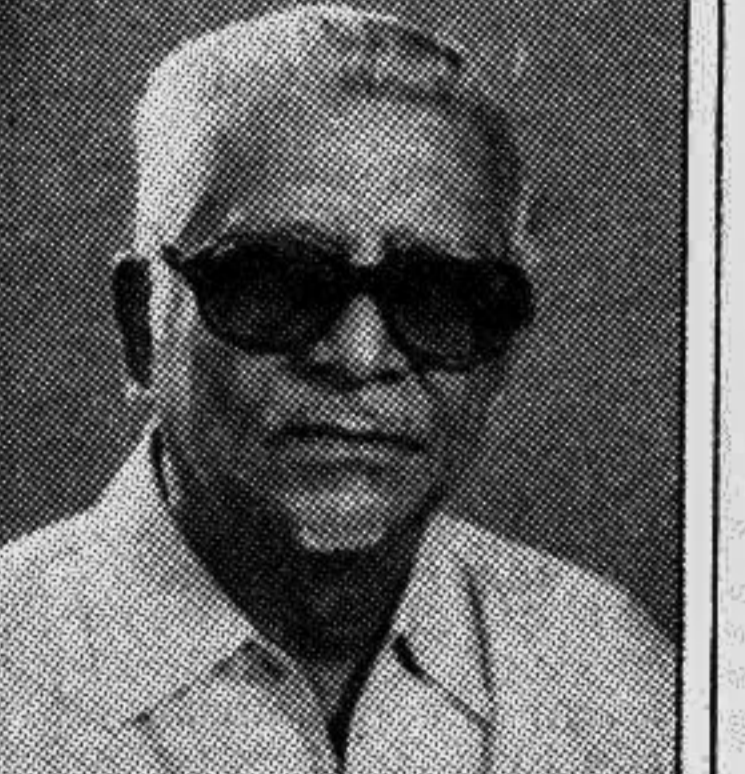
Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs speaking at a roundtable on 'Kosovo Crisis: Aspects of Concern', organised by the Centre for Strategic and Peace Studies at the CIRDP auditorium in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Global actions urged for resolving Kosovo crisis

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury called for global actions for bringing peace and normalcy in Kosovo under the banner of United Nations, reports UNB. The minister reaffirmed Bangladesh's support for the aspirations of the Kosovars. He made the call while addressing a roundtable discussion on 'Kosovo Crisis: Aspects of Concern' organised by the Centre for Strategic and Peace Studies at CIRDP auditorium in the city yesterday. Chowdhury said Bangladesh government would also look into the possibilities of increasing the scope of support to the distressed Kosovo refugees. He recalled Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's donation of 50,000 US dollars for the refugees. Journalist Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, former secretary and Ambassador Ahmed Farid and Major General (ret'd) Ghulam Quader presented keynote papers in the meeting. Tobarak Hossain, former Foreign Secretary, German Ambassador to Bangladesh Schramm, UNHCR Representative in Dhaka, teachers of Dhaka and Jahangirnagar universities, editors of national dailies, Abul Kalam Azad MP and other noted personalities spoke on the occasion. Commodore M A Ataur Rahman, Chairman of the Centre for Strategic and Peace Studies (CSPS), presided over the discussion while Major General (ret'd) Sayed Mohammad Ibrahim, Executive Director of CSPS, moderated.

Ferry services introduced in Koira, Shibsra rivers

Direct road communication between the divisional city Khulna and remote Koira thana has been established following introduction of ferry service on the rivers Koira and Shibsra, reducing the travel time at least by five hours, reports BSS. The ferry service was introduced yesterday a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked the communication officials to press two ferries into service, a Communications Ministry press release said here. The Communications Ministry recently constructed a road linking the divisional city and Koira thana, an isolated area near the world's largest mangrove forest, the Sundarbans.



Obituary G M M E Karim, youngest son of late Khan Bahadur Fazlul Karim, died at the CMH yesterday evening. He was 76, says a press release. A leading conservationist, G M Karim was an Honorary Consultant of the World Wildlife Fund for Nature in 1970. As an government official, he contributed a lot to the development of tourism in the country. He also served as Director of Bangladesh Mukti-joddha Welfare Trust. G M Karim left behind his wife, three sons, two daughters, and a host of relatives and friends. His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Baitul Mukarram, Mosque today after Asr prayers.

Brick falls on girl, dies

By Staff Correspondent A ten-year-old girl succumbed to her injuries when a brick fell on her head from an under-construction building at Tilpapa under Khilgaon thana in the city Tuesday night. The dead was identified as Shilpi Rani Das, daughter of Nepal Das of Tarabagh at Tilpapa. Shilpi was injured seriously when a brick fell on her head from an under-construction building, police said. She was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical condition where she succumbed to her injuries at about 9:30 pm on Tuesday. The body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Meeting to select site for university in CHT region held RANGAMATI, May 5: The first meeting on selection of site for the proposed Chittagong Hill Tracts University of Science and Technology was held here today in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner's office, reports BSS. Senior government officials, educationists, local heads of political parties, and elite attended the meeting with Cabinet Secretary Quazi Shamul Alam in the chair. The meeting discussed different aspects about the selection of a convenient site to set up the proposed University of Science and Technology in the Chittagong Hill Tracts considering the convenience of the people living in the region. Vice-Chancellor of National University Prof Aminul Islam, Secretary of the University Grand Commission Shahidullah, Secretary of Ministry of Education Quazi Rakiuddin Ahmed, Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong A S M Mobaidul Islam, Chief Engineer of Public Works Department A K M Mukhtar Rahman, Chief Engineer of Facilities Department Abdul Mannan, Deputy Commissioners of the Hill Districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban, Chief of Chakma Circle Raza Devashish Roy, Convener of Rangamati Nagarik Committee Gautam Dewan, former adviser on Tribal Affairs to the President B K Dewan and Subimol Dewan, former parliament member Sudipta Dewan, Rangamati Municipality Chairman Habibur Rahman and local leaders of different political parties were, among others, attended the meeting. Later, the participants of the meeting visited five spots at the outskirts of the town, Khepupara, Kutukchhari, Ghagra, Sukkurchari, and Shapchari to finalise the site for the proposed university.

Teachers urge govt to meet demands by May 30

By Staff Correspondent Bangladesh Shikhhak Samity (Amanullah-Selim) has threatened to launch an agitation in June if the government does not meet its demands by May 30. The ultimatum was announced at an emergency meeting of the samity in the city yesterday. They demanded of the government to pay full salary, festival bonus, and house rent to the non-government school teachers, and implement new pay-scale for headmasters and assistant headmasters. The present prime minister and the then leader of the opposition in parliament announced in 1994 that the teachers would not have to take to street for realisation of their demands if her government comes to power. But the teacher community is still neglected today, said a press release yesterday. Among others, secretary general of the samity Mohammad Selim Bhuiyan, Mohammad Shahabuddin, Paritosh Sarkar, Khondakar Abdus Samad, Makbul Hossain and Mosharrar Hossain addressed the meeting.

Meherpur by-polls fails to generate interest among voters: FEMA

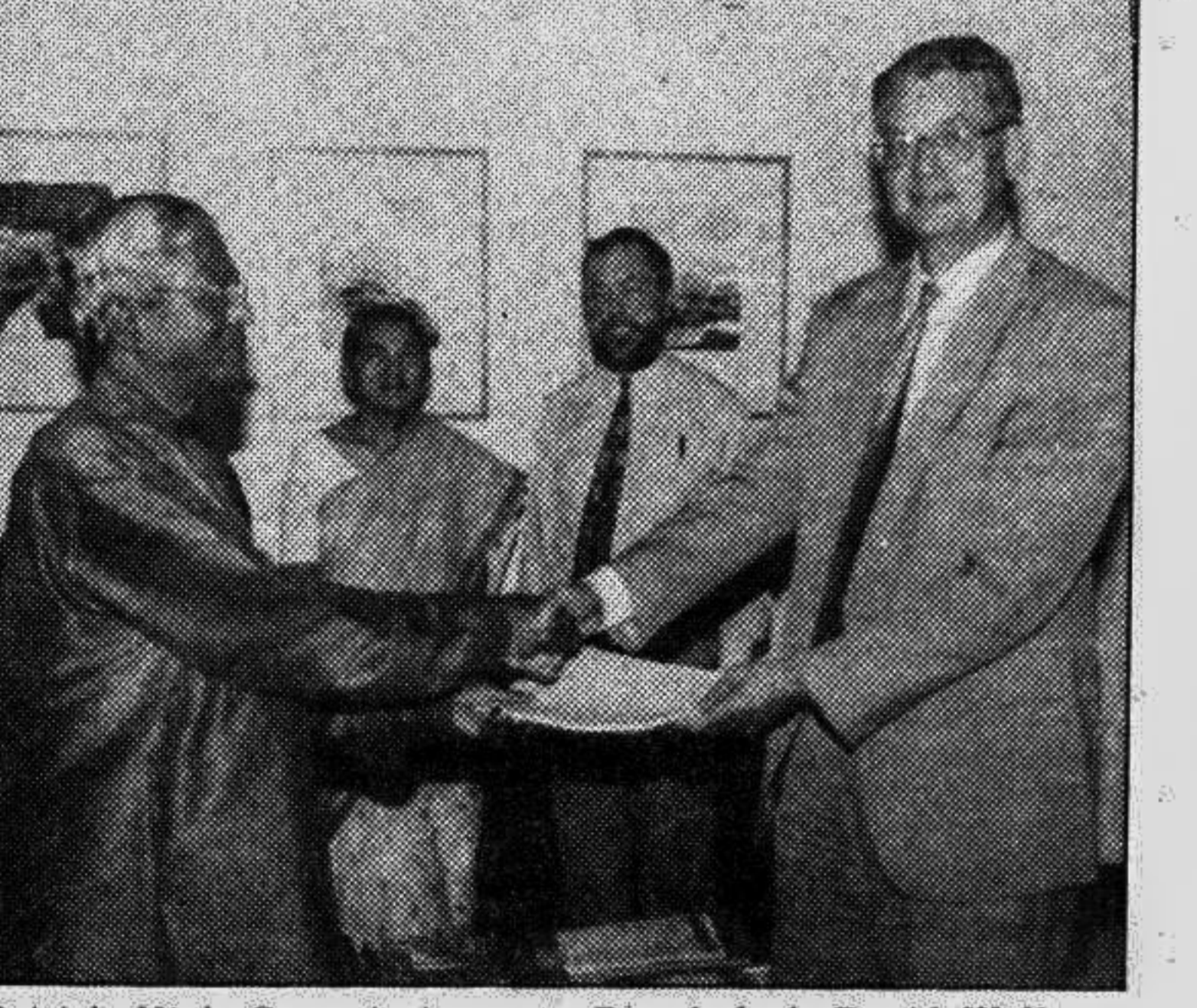
By Staff Correspondent Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) in a statement yesterday said that the Meherpur-1 by-election failed to generate sufficient interest among voters. "The one party election to Meherpur-1 constituency failed to generate sufficient interest among the voters either during the campaign period or on the election day," said FEMA, an NGO. It said: "In the absence of competition the campaign period was colourless." It alleged that despite a non-competitive environment the ruling party candidates, both official and dissident violated the code of conduct by using more than three loudspeakers at a time in the constituency, beyond the stipulated time. The refusal of the Returning Officer to issue credentials to local journalists raised question about the transparency of the polls, the statement added.

Grassroots women to be involved in food processing industries

In the wake of growing demand of fast-food and processed diet in urban areas, a UN organization is striving to involve women at grassroots level in food processing industries in the country. The aim of the UN-supported Asian and Pacific Center for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) in involving women in food processing industries is to make another avenue for sustenance, Prof. M Moshuazzaman, Chairman of Bangladesh Council for Industrial Research (BCSIR), told BSS yesterday. Explaining other objectives of APCTT endeavour, Dr. Moshuazzaman said these women would be acquainted with modern food technology through training and workshop to share their experiences among themselves and make them self-reliant. To share the ideas and experiences among eight countries, APCTT in collaboration with BCSIR organised a three-day regional workshop on 'Technology Sharing' for grassroots women in the food processing sector which ended in the BCSIR auditorium yesterday. Twenty-three participants from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand and host Bangladesh shared their experiences in technology transfer on food processing and preparation technique in the workshop, said Dr. Moshuazzaman. The BCSIR Chairman said participants in the workshop would also formulate future strategy of action to implement the experiences gained through various workshops held in the last one and a half years in their respective countries. The workshop will be followed by formulation of country programme involving NGO and government research institutions. Dr. Moshuazzaman said adding that BCSIR would act as collaborator of APCTT here. He said Science and Technology Minister Mohammad Noor Uddin Khan and Science and Technology Secretary M. Fazlur Rahman took keen interest in APCTT idea and the workshop, and they participated in some sessions of the workshop.

Britain to give Tk 109 cr to BRAC's NFPE programme

Britain will provide 13.7 million pounds sterling equivalent to Taka 109 crore for assisting the third phase of Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee's (BRAC) Non-formal Primary Education Programme (NFPE), reports BSS. The fund provided by Britain's Department for International Development (DFID) will aid the NFPE-III programme which will operate 34,000 schools and aims to produce approximately 1.2 million primary education graduates from March 2000 to March 2004. The NFPE Phase-III will provide an improved and complete primary curriculum for poor children and adolescents covering all five grades in the current formal cycle, instead of the three grades previously provided. The time of the 6th solo exhibition by Ferdowsy Priyabhashini, sponsored by British-American Tobacco, Bangladesh, has been extended till May 12. The exhibition will remain open from 10:30 am to 8:00 pm, says a press release.



British High Commissioner to Bangladesh David Walker (1st from right), handing over documents to Fazole Hasan Abed, Executive Director of Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), at the British High Commission in the city on Wednesday. Kevin Sparkhall, Counsellor, Department of International Development, Bangladesh (2nd from right), also seen.

Advertisement for 'Daka Goyasa' (ঢাকা গয়াসা) featuring a water drop logo and text in Bengali. It mentions a competition for water conservation and lists prizes and dates.

Bhutanese health minister calls on Yusuf

Bhutan has urged Bangladesh for awarding post graduation degrees to Bhutanese doctors in medical science, reports UNB. The request came when Health and Education Minister of Bhutan Sangay Ngedup met Health and Family Welfare Minister Salah Uddin Yusuf at his office in the city yesterday. The Bhutanese Minister told Yusuf that a good number of Bhutanese students are studying medical science in Bangladesh. During the meeting, they also discussed matters of bilateral issues. Yusuf apprised the Bhutanese Minister about different steps taken by the government for development of the health sector. Ngedup said his country was also facing similar problems like Bangladesh and the experiences of Bangladesh in the field would help solve their problems. Yusuf stressed the need for concerted efforts of the two countries to eradicate polio and sought all-out cooperation of Bhutan in combating the deadly diseases. Director General of Health Services, Director General of Family Planning and senior officials of the ministry were present on the occasion.

Sayed urges BNP to pursue healthy politics

Minister of State for Information Prof Abu Sayeed yesterday urged BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia to pursue sound and healthy democratic political activities instead of indulging in indecent, distasteful and anti-state politics, reports BSS. In a statement, the state minister pointed out that as the people's organisation the Awami League had struggled for protecting the rights of the people, liberated the country and finally established democracy on a sound footing through bringing an end to autocracy. Prof. Sayeed said yesterday the Awami League under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been putting in relentless efforts to find solutions to the accumulated problems left by the post-75 governments by institutionalizing democracy, introducing rule of law, ensuring the right to vote and food. But at the same time Begum Zia is dreaming to recapture power through killings, coups and conspiracies, which the people will never let it happen. The state minister condemned the BNP chief Begum Zia for her recent 'undemocratic, false, concocted and motivated statements and said these have reflected the mental imbalance of Begum Zia.



Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) brought out a procession in the city as part of its DESA office gherao programme yesterday. They demanded an end to the power and water crises. — Star photo