

## WFP delegation in city

A seven-member delegation of the Executive Board of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) arrived in the city yesterday on a week-long visit to Bangladesh to see how the food assistance is helping the poor families build their skills and assets, reports BSS.

This is for the first time that a WFP Executive Board delegation is visiting Bangladesh, the largest recipient of WFP's development food assistance. The food assistance is targeted to the ultra-poor who consume less than 1800 calorie a day — 30 million people belong to this group. Food assistance enables the beneficiaries to receive a package of training and credit to be able to "graduate" to other development programmes, on the path to self-reliance.

The delegation members include representatives from the governments of Lesotho, Sudan, Haiti, Slovak Republic, Jordan, UK and Pakistan.

The Deputy Regional Director of WFP for Asia and the Pacific Region, Ms Angela Van Rynbach, is accompanying the delegation.

They will meet the Finance Minister, Agriculture Minister, and Women and Children's Affairs Minister as well as senior officials of the government, donors, NGOs and UN agencies.

They will also visit the WFP-assisted Vulnerable Groups Development (VGD) and Rural Development (RD) projects in the villages of Mymensingh and Tangail.

The visit of the Executive Board delegation has particular significance in the context of a strategic change in the orientation of WFP food assistance for the poor in Bangladesh. At the end of the visit, the delegation will address a press conference on May 29.

## Indian national dies in city hotel

By Staff Correspondent

An Indian citizen died in a residential hotel in the city's Shantinagar area yesterday. The dead was identified as Nirmalendu Roy, 36, son of Satish Chandra Roy, of Bara Dahi in Chhabish Pargana district.

Police and doctors suspected that he died of cardiac arrest. Nirmalendu along with his wife, two sons and four other relatives came here on May 20 to visit Bangladesh, hospital sources said quoting Tapan Roy, a relative of the dead.

Nirmalendu complaint of feeling sick yesterday morning. Kamla Roy, wife of the deceased sought help of the hotel authorities when his condition deteriorated, police and hospital sources said. Nirmalendu was a doctor who declared him dead at about 11:45 am. The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.



## Obituary

Shamsunnahar Ghani, wife of late Dr M O Ghani, former Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, died at the CMH on Saturday. She was 78, says a press release.

She left behind four sons, five daughters, and a host of grandchildren, relatives, friends and admirers to mourn her death.

Her *namaj-e-janaza* was held at her residence, 80, Indira Road, on Sunday. She was buried at the Banani graveyard. Her *gulkhwan* will be held at her Indira Road residence at 5 pm on May 25.



A K M Mahmudul Hasan, son of Md Nazrul Islam, Madhupur, Tangail, died in a road accident in Sylhet on May 22, says a press release.

Hasan, 30, was working as the Medical Services Officer in Eskayef Bangladesh Limited.

He left behind his parents, wife, one son, one daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Akhlaqur Rahman, son of the late Khan Bahadur Bazlur Rahman, of Bagerhat and elder brother of former Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, died of old age complications at his Dhanmondi residence on Saturday. He was 83, reports UNB.

His *gulkhwan* will be held on Tuesday after Asr prayers at his Dhanmondi residence, said a press release.

SM Shah Alam, acting food inspector of Nayapara (Habitat) district, died of a heart attack yesterday, says a press release.

Alam, 49, was a freedom fighter.

Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad has expressed profound shock at his untimely death.

## Tofail seeks Indian investment in software sector

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed sought Indian investment in the Information Technology sector of Bangladesh, hoping that the neighbour's expertise may play an important role in the sprouting industry, reports UNB.

He informed the Indian IT entrepreneurs that Bangladesh had announced software as a thrust sector and withdrawal all duties and taxes on computers and accessories for its expansion.

The minister was exchanging views with IT experts and organisers while visiting Software Technology Park and software industries in India's most planned city Bangalore on Saturday, according to a message received in the city yesterday.

The Indian experts mentioned high prospects of Bangladesh in software industry.

try for its geographical position and showed keen interest in investing in this sector over here. For its expansion, massive infrastructure development, including telecommunications and technical education, is an imperative, they said.

Referring to India's success in IT sector, the experts said only a few companies had ventured on the high-tech business in the 80s, and the number is now 1100 who are fetching a lot of export earnings.

Exports from this sector earned a paltry amount of 168 million US dollars in 1991 that shot up to 2,700 million in 1998.

They attributed the success to government's policy support, expansion of technical education, proficiency in spoken English, adaptability to new technologies, law protecting intellectual property and infrastruc-

ture development.

Tofail said the Bangladesh government had implemented almost all the 44-point recommendation submitted by the committee led by famous IT expert and former adviser of the caretaker government Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury.

He said the government had taken overall measures for the progress of computer education in the country. Besides, training is being provided by world famous companies like IBM, NIIT and Aptech.

"The government even is giving loans to the trained youths to help them be self-employed," he told them.

Earlier Tofail met with Governor of Karnataka Khorshed Alam Khan and exchanged views on bilateral issues.

The minister also visited small and cottage industries exhibition centre.

## Govt to open Safari Park in Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, May 23: The government has plans to set up a Safari Park as deforestation in Cox's Bazar region is driving wildlives including elephants to Myanmar, officials said here today, reports BSS.

The current number of elephants is only 70 or 80 in 1 lakh 16,000 hectares of reserve forest in the region as against some 2,000 elephants 10 years ago, a forest officer here said.

He added that other wild animals including deer and monkey were also migrating to Myanmar forests for want of food caused by depletion of forests.

Officials of Cox's Bazar forest division said they were expecting approval of the proposed Tk 35 crore project to set up a Safari Park on 900 hectares of land in the reserve forest to protect the wildlife.

"The works on the proposed Safari is expected to start soon and this is the first such project in the country," one official said. He added that another project to expand the country's lone deer reproduction centre at Chokoria began recently at a cost of Tk one crore.

Forest officials said the current number of deer in the centre is 70, including three Shambars.

## Killing of lawyer condemned

By Staff Correspondent

One hundred and one lawyers in a statement yesterday condemned the killing of Mahmud Khalid, 54, a lawyer of Supreme Court.

Khalid, son of former ambassador Kamaruddin Ahmed, was critically injured when a gang of miscreants stabbed him on May 13 near the Jagannath University College. Later, Mahiuddin succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Tuesday.

The lawyers demanded immediate arrest of the killers and a judicial inquiry into the incident.

## Mugger caught red-handed

By Staff Correspondent

An alleged mugger was caught red-handed by local police in Bania Mandir area under Sutrapur thana in the city yesterday morning.

Police said the mugger Siraj, along with two other accomplices snatched Tk 2200 from one Nurul Huq at gunpoint at about 6 am. As the three tried to run away with the money, the victim raised an alarm.

Hearing the screaming, local people and police chased them and caught Siraj with a pistol.

Two cases were lodged with Sutrapur thana in this connection.

## BBIOA team calls on Kibria

A delegation of Bangladesh Bidi Industry Owners Association (BBIOA), led by its president Karim Uddin Barsha, MP, called on Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria at his office in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

The delegation discussed different aspects relating to revenue income of the bidi industry with the minister and requested him to reduce the rate of tax at the source and exercise duty in the next annual budget.

The delegation informed the minister that over one crore disabled and aged men and women are employed in this industry. They said the bidi industry has already started exporting its products as a non-traditional item and the volume is expected to increase in near future.

## Evaluation meet of 6th Nat'l Scouts Jamboree held

An evaluation meeting of the sixth Bangladesh National Scouts Jamboree was held on Saturday with Chief National Commissioner and Jamboree Chief M Manzoor ul Karim in the chair, reports BSS.

Those who spoke on the occasion included Abdul Quayum Thakur, Badiur Rahman, Habibul Alam Bir Pratik, A B M Masudur Rahman, Afzal Hossain and Shah Alam.

About 11,500 scouts and scouters from different countries of the world including India, Pakistan, Bhutan and Australia participated in the Jamboree. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the Jamboree held between February 5 to 11.



Sammilita Nari Samaj staged a protest march against police repression on women in the city yesterday.

## Nasim urges opposition to take part in upazila polls

SATKHIRA, May 23: Home Minister Mohammad Nasim today called upon the opposition parties to come to discussion table and to take part in upazila election, reports UNB.

"I am confident that all problems could be solved through discussion," he said while addressing a big public meeting at Khordar High School ground in Kolaroa thana.

At the same time, the Home Minister warned the opposition against destructive activities in the name of movement. "Don't try to protect the killers of Bangabandhu by taking to the streets and damaging public property,"

Pointing to the joint movement of opposition parties, Nasim said they have resorted to destruction activities as the government's success during its three years of rule made them envious.

Earlier, inaugurating a permanent police camp at Khordar, Nasim reiterated his commitment that if the terrorists surrender, they would be rehabilitated. He also warned that stern action would be taken against those who would not surrender.

Referring to the coming operation against the criminals, Nasim termed it a great success. He, however, did not give details of arrest and recovery of illegal arms.

The Home Minister said the coming operation would continue as it had yielded good results in the southern region, which was under the grip of the armed terrorists.

He said he had ordered to return the fire if terrorists attacked the police with guns during the coming operation.

Presided over by Nazrul Islam, president of Kolaroa thana unit of Awami League, the meeting was addressed, by Dr Mokhesur Rahman MP, Fazlul Huq MP, Syed Kamal Bakht MP.

Later, the minister addressed another public meeting at Talal.

## Police fail to check violence 1 more killed in 2nd day of clashes in Magura

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, May 23: One more was killed and six others critically injured following a series of violent clashes between two groups of villagers in the early hours today.

The victim was identified as Zabeeda Khatun, 30, of Chandpur village who was killed on the spot when miscreants attacked her with sharp weapons at about 1 am today. Another youth, Rakib of the same village was killed on Friday.

Police and local sources said supporters of UP members Khaleque and Awal locked into clashes over establishing supremacy in the villages of Dhalhara and Chandpur under sadar thana on Friday.

On the first day of the violent clash, some 10 people were injured while Rakib succumbed to his injuries on way to Dhaka. Others were admitted to different hospitals.

After the first day's murder, a temporary police camp was set up at Dhalhara Bazar on Friday to avert further clashes. But police failed to check today's murder and looting of properties.

Local sources said rivals started massive looting and damaging of houses at Chandpur village in the early hours today. Zabeeda Khatun, who had been living with his son, came under attack of the miscreants when she tried to protect valuables. The miscreants looted and damaged at least 15 houses and also left six others wounded.

Sources said most of the male in the village have already left their homes fearing further attacks and to escape police arrest.

Meanwhile, police in a special drive during the last two days arrested a total of 61 people and recovered an India-made revolver. Most of the arrested are already accused in different cases while some 11 are allegedly real criminals.

Police arrested Shivajit, son of one Nirmal Biswas from a house at Magura Natunbazar this morning and recovered an India-made revolver from his possession as well.



Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal demonstrating in the city yesterday demanding smooth supply of water and power.

## Proceedings of case against Chetia adjourned till June 13

By Staff Correspondent

The Fifth Assistant Metropolitan Sessions Judge Court yesterday adjourned the proceedings of the case filed against ULFA leader Anup Chetia and two others on charge of possessing illegal foreign currency, till June 13.

The ULFA leader along with his two accomplices — Babul Sarma and Laxmi Prasad Goswami — were arrested from the city's Mohammadpur area on December 21, 1997. Police also recovered a satellite telephone set and foreign currency from them.

Chanchal was allegedly beaten to death at Kulai Mahal in the city yesterday afternoon. Hospital sources quoting the relatives said that one Babul called Chanchal from his home at about 10:30 am yesterday. Later at about 3 pm he came back and informed Chanchal's mother that he was seriously injured at Kulai Mahal.

Relatives who went there and found Chanchal in a fatal condition. He had received injuries on his head, abdomen and legs. He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the attending doctors declared him dead.

In another incident Khorsheed, 22, was stabbed to death by a gang of miscreants at the Mitford Hospital premises under Kotwali thana in the city Saturday night.

Hospital sources quoting the relatives said that a gang of youths, called Khorsheed in a snacks joint and took him to the Mitford College basketball ground and stabbed him.

Khorsheed was rushed to the Mitford Hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead.

## Meherpur-1 AL MP takes oath

Prof Abdul Mannan, declared elected MP in parliamentary byelection to Meherpur-1 seat on Awami League ticket, took oath yesterday, reports UNB.

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury administered the oath at a simple ceremony at Sangsad Bhaban.

Present among others were State Minister for Textiles A K M Jahangir Hossain, Whips Mizanur Rahman Manu and Prof Khaleda Khanam, Sultan Mohammad Monsur Ahmed MP and leaders of Meherpur Awami League.

The seat left vacant at the death of opposition BNP member Ahmad Ali and the byelection took place on May 4.

All major opposition parties, including BNP, had stayed off the bypolls to press their demands for replacement of the Chief Election Commissioner.

## Rural electrification programme in Chuadanga

CHUADANGA, May 23: The Chuadanga Zone of Bangladesh Rural Electrification Samity has taken up a programme to electrify 110 kilometre areas under the Rural Electrification Programme in all the four thanas of the district in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

The thanas are: Chuadanga Sadar, Alamdanga, Damurhuda and Jibannagar.

According to an official source, of the total 32 kilometres will be in Chuadanga sadar, 15 kilometres in Alamdanga, 38 kilometres in Damurhuda and 25 kilometres in Jibannagar.

About 80 per cent of the total scheme have been implemented and the remaining work is expected to be completed by June next.

## Lightning kills one in Gazipur

GAZIPUR, May 23: A farmer was killed and three others injured in a lightning at Bekarsara village in Sreepur thana today, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Tajuddin, 35. The injured Nehajul, 35, Khaleque, 45, and Aminur, 28, were hospitalised.

They fell victim to the lightning while working in a field in the afternoon, villagers said.

## BNP programme on Zia's death anniversary

BNP has chalked out a 10-day programme to observe the 18th death anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman, reports UNB.

A 201-member national committee has been formed for observing the death anniversary with BNP vice-president Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury as convener and city BNP convener Sadek Hossain Khoka as member secretary, said a press release.

The programme will begin with a discussion at Engineers Institution at 4 pm on May 29. BNP Chief Begum Khaleda Zia will attend the programme.

On May 30, black flags will be hoisted at all party offices while party flag will fly at half-mast. The other programmes on the day are Quran khwani after Asr prayers, placing of wreaths, lighting lateha and milled mahfil at Zia's mazar at 9 am.

Begum Zia and other BNP leaders will distribute food among the destitute in the capital from 11 am.

A discussion meeting will be held at the National Press Club auditorium at 4 pm on the day under the auspices of Jatiyatabadi Muktiyoddha Dal.

On May 31, Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal will hold a discussion meeting at Engineers Institution.

Mahila Dal will arrange a discussion on June 1 while JCD on June 2, Zia Parishad on June 3, Sramik Dal on June 4 and Shechhashebak Dal on June 5.

## JS committee meets Body formed to probe SRTI irregularities

Parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock yesterday reviewed the activities of the Sugarcane Research and Training Institute (SRTI) and laid emphasis on necessary training for the sugarcane growers as well as application of modern technology for increasing sugarcane production, reports BSS.

The meeting formed a three-member sub-committee headed by Whip Mohammad Mizanur Rahman Manu as its convener to probe the alleged mismanagement in the SRTI. Two other members are Mohammad Imdadul Huq and Mohammad Abdul Wahab.

Presided over by committee chairman Dr T I M Fazle Rabbi, the meeting expressed its satisfaction over the bumper production of paddy this year.

The activities of different development projects under the ministry of agriculture were also discussed at the meeting.

The matter relating to provide subsidy in order to increase production of paddy and formulating a policy to that end keeping consistency with the recommendations of the WTO and the World Bank also came up for discussion.

Committee members Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Whip Mizanur Rahman Manu, Dewan Farid Gazi, Mohammad Anisul Huq Chowdhury, Mohammad Imdadul Huq, Abul Kalam Azad Siddiqui, Mohammad Majbar Rahman Sarwar and Mohammad Abdul Wahab attended the meeting.

Agriculture Secretary Dr A M M Shawkat Ali and other senior concerned officials were present.

## Tangail AL unit unveils Kader Siddiqi's 'property'

By Staff Correspondent

A day after ruling party lawmaker Kader Siddiqi cast a challenge to party chief Sheikh Hasina of taking account of his assets, the Tangail district unit of Awami League is prompt enough to come up with a list of properties that Siddiqi has accumulated.

Addressing a freedom fighters' rally in the city on Saturday, Siddiqi had asked the prime minister to take account of his properties within one month, otherwise, he warned of taking account of assets owned by Sheikh Hasina, her kith and her colleagues in the cabinet.

Issuing a joint statement yesterday, the Tangail district unit president and general secretary of Awami League raised question about properties owned by Siddiqi and demanded a probe into his assets.

In their statement, Mirza Tofazal Hossain, the president, and Fazlur Rahman Faruq, the general secretary, provided a long list of assets, which they said, has been accumulated by Kader Siddiqi. These properties include, one house in city's Mohammadpur area, a piece of land in Mirpur, two houses in Tangail, and a piece of land near Kumudini College in Tangail. Besides, they also charged him of grabbing huge property of one Hindu businessman in his constituency.

They also demanded an investigation to ascertain that how much money the two younger brothers of Kader Siddiqi had accumulated by the means of terrorism.

Siddiqi, who hails from Tangail having a special clout in Awami politics for his role during the War of Liberation, is now surfaced on centre of a fresh fuss since after his meeting with the opposition supreme Begum Khaleda Zia. He was vehemently criticized by some party colleagues for visiting the BNP chief on last Eid-day.