

# WB to give \$167m more for five projects

The World Bank has approved a fund of 167.7 million US dollar to supplement five ongoing Bank-assisted projects for repairing flood-damaged infrastructure and equipment in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The funds are part of a broader assistance programme to respond to the urgent needs of Bangladesh in the aftermath of the worst floods in the nation's living memory in August-September 1998, said a World Bank press release.

The projects to be supported by the supplementary funds are: Third Inland Water Transport Project, River Bank Protection Project, the Second Rural Roads and Markets Project, Coastal Embankment Project and the Second Road Rehabilitation and Maintenance Project.

These projects are for repairing the damaged highways, rural roads, pontoons, jetties,

river terminals, embankments and market places.

The latest allocation is in addition to approximately 38 million US dollar that has been made available by restructuring the previously approved Fifth Health and Population Project, Primary Education Development Project, and Fourth Dhaka Water and Sanitation Project to finance the repair work of damaged healthcare facilities, schools, water supply, and sewerage.

"By providing supplemented funds for rehabilitation, the Bank's assistance will reduce the government's need to cut-back its development programme," said World Bank Country Director Frederick Temple.

The cost of such rehabilitation is high and was not anticipated in the budget. The objective of the Bank's assistance is

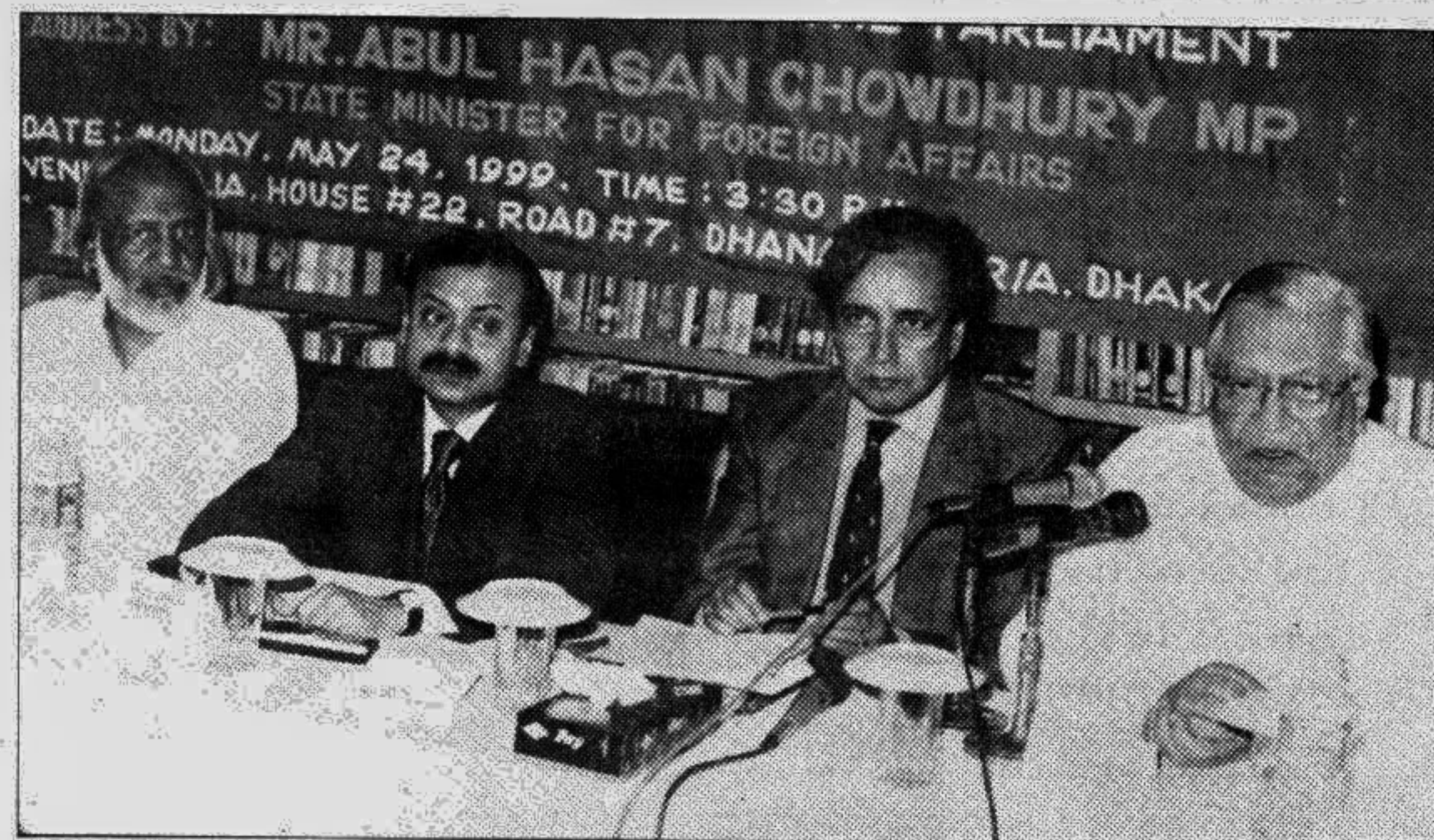
to assist the government in restoring key infrastructure and thereby enable restoration of normal levels of economic and social activities," he added.

The Bank has been following a three-part strategy to help Bangladesh with its flood recovery effort.

Last November, the Bank provided 200 million US dollar in quick disbursing assistance to help maintain macroeconomic stability in the short-term through the emergency flood rehabilitation project.

The World Bank has made use of supplemental credits and funds were freed up through restructuring of existing credits to repair damaged infrastructure.

The third part of the Bank's response focuses on long-term strengthening of the country's capacity for disaster preparedness and management.



Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury, Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad, speaking at a session on 'Interaction Between Probationer Diplomats of Indian Foreign Service and Bangladesh' at Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) yesterday. Also seen in the picture from left are Dr Moyeen Khan, MP, Abul Hasan Chowdhury, State Minister for Foreign Affairs and Waliur Rahman, Director of BILIA. —Star photo

## Railway earning up

Following partial reforms, Bangladesh Railway has posted an increased earning of Tk 227 crore in revenue during the last 10 months of the current financial year, crossing targets for the period, reports UNB.

Its passenger revenue earnings during the July 1998-April 1999 period stood at Tk 114 crore, up from last year's income of Tk 112 crore.

The trend indicates a 21 per cent growth, exceeding the target growth of 12 per cent, according to a Railway news release issued yesterday.

This attainment was possible despite 24 per cent loss of passenger traffic in the West Zone of the Railway due to opening of the Bangabandhu Bridge, it said.

Rail freight revenue also grew 18 per cent to Tk 113 crore

as against TK 96 crore of the corresponding period of last year.

During the first 10 months the freight volume exceeded 3 million tons which is equal to last year's total.

Improving the quality of service, giving more emphasis on long-hauled inter-city trains, associating private sector for providing on-board services and leasing out the commercial functions of nearly 12 per cent of non-core passenger trains to private sector are the reasons for which the passenger revenue saw an upward trend.

Rise in the freight volume and freight revenue is attributed to efficient handling of cargo, particularly food imports.

## Commodore Abu Taher new Navy Chief

Commodore Abu Taher has been appointed Chief of the Naval Staff with effect from June 4, according to a notification issued by the Ministry of Defence in the city on Sunday, reports BSS.

According to another notification issued by the Ministry of Defence, Rear Admiral Mohammad Nurul Islam, Chief of Naval Staff, will go on normal retirement on completion of his tenure on June 3.

The Chief of Naval Staff designate, Commodore Abu Taher has been promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral.

According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Defence in Dhaka on May 23, 1999, the promotion will be effective from June 4.

Commodore Abu Taher was born in 1949 in a respectable Muslim family in Poyalgacha of Comilla district. While studying in Comilla Victoria College, he joined the erstwhile Pakistan Navy as a Cadet in 1968.

He was commissioned in the Executive Branch on December 1, 1970 and also got his Graduation degree. He completed his initial training from PNS Himalaya and PNS Karsaz.

During the War of Liberation, he was interned in Layalpur Jail. He escaped from the jail along with a group of Bengali officers by digging an underground tunnel and after returning home he took up his appointment in the newly formed Bangladesh Navy.

He attended various courses both at home and abroad.

## 8 arrested in Ctg, arms recovered

From Our Correspondent CHITTAGONG, May 24: Pahartoli police today arrested eight people and recovered firearms and ammunition from their possession.

Police raid the spot at Master Lane at about 3 pm today. During the raid, the miscreants opened fire on police and fled to a nearby slum at Railing Filter colony. Police however arrested them and recovered one sawed off gun, one rifle, 11 bullets of pistol and 7 rounds of rifle bullets from their possession.

Of the arrested, Ali Akbar and Jahangir are accused in Pahartoli Feroz murder case while Iqbal is an accused in Helal murder case. Other arrested persons are Naser, Jonny, Rajib, Shajol and Hannan.

## A view from the Gully

From page 1  
In 1899, exactly a hundred years ago, Yorkshire County Cricket Club is extremely conservative. Lord Hawke first broke the unwritten law of 'no outsiders.' In 1880's when I became captain of Yorkshire they were a fine lot. Hawke once said, "There were ten drunks and a chapel person — and he wasn't ordained!" (I hope Boycott does not mind).

Now back to the game. Steve Waugh's decision to send the opponents in was normal because he had the strength in his batting, reinforced by Damien Martin and Paul Reiffel. To chase a moderate score and at the rate the Pakistanis lost their first three wickets the job appeared easy. But one can hardly think that one had seen all in cricket. Razzaq and Inzamam, out of nick so far, kept the Aussie bowling at bay.

In the process they slowly stabilised the innings but not before Inzamam, not the best of runner in the world, gave creeps to the Pakistani supporters. Inzamam, who was going great guns, felt the need to go and Inzamam finally ran the yard in shortest possible time in vain. The last ten overs were extremely fruitful for Pakistan as they raced to 275 for 8 from 167 for 4 an addition of solid 108 runs that made all the difference at end of the day. Barring Fleming all others came for a bit of slick from the desperate Pakistanis.

Australians were determined to make it a match having lost the previous one to New Zealand. An early wicket was no hindrance, as Mark and Ponting made their intentions clear. But three quick wickets by Razzaq and Saglain slowed

down the Aussie chariot. Steve and Bevan started consolidating their position and the drama between Steve Waugh and Shoaib Akhtar began. Umpire Rudy Koertzen of South Africa pointed fingers at Shoaib and Akram hastened to cool down the speed merchant. The contest that ensued between Shoaib and Steve Waugh could be the plot for a real thriller. The net result was that Shoaib was deprived by Koertzen of a plumb Lbw decision against Steve and Azhar suffered at the hands of the other Umpire from England Peter Willey, as Bevan gave an inside edge to Moir that was turned down. Both these decisions were clear indications of the Umpires' annoyance with the bowlers which is highly regrettable. Even the partisan Australian commentators disagreed with the Umpires' decisions.

In spite of such provocations the Pakistani got the right breakthrough at the right time and secured their position in the 'Super Six'.

It was only fair that Sachin Tendulkar should return with a bang. Whatever may be the opposition it is always difficult to hammer out a century, particularly in a limited over match. Tendulkar did that in great style and force and in the process kept India's hopes for a 'Super Six' berth alive. He dedicated his first ever World Cup to his late father Ramchandra Tendulkar — an able son indeed. Rahul Dravid also scored a century, his first in World Cup also and India had a facile win but not before the Kenyans crossed the 200 mark for the third time in the tournament. Why Asif Karim invited such a strong opposition to bat will remain a misty.

## Recoverable gas reserve

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assessment was not made properly as Petrobangla invested as little as possible to develop various gas fields, experts said at the symposium.

The size of the actual gas reserve of the country has remained a subject of debate for the last couple of years. This debate first flared up when there was news reports on the foreign oil companies and government's intention of exporting gas.

The two-day symposium sponsored by Cairn, Occidental, Unocal, Shell and Baker Hughes, brought together for the first time all the leading experts from Petrobangla and its sister concerns, foreign oil companies, international energy experts and academicians from BUET.

Inaugurated by Energy Secretary Dr Towfiq-E-Elahi Chowdhury as chief guest, the opening session was also addressed by Chairman of Petrobangla Mosharraf Hossain, BUET Vice-Chancellor of Prof Nooruddin Ahmed, Dr Edmond Gomes of PMRE Department of BUET and others.

Former Chairman of Petrobangla SKM Abdullah and Abdus Samad of Dhaka University co-chaired the first technical session on Geology and Geophysics, while Kazi Shahidur Rahman of Petrobangla and NM Anisur Rahman of BUET co-chaired the second technical session on Reservoir Engineering.

Experts from BAPEX, Occidental, US Geological Survey, Unocal, Petrobangla, Cairn, Western Geophysical, Schlumberger Overseas and Grant Geophysical presented some 14 papers on various aspects of gas exploration, assessment and technology.

Robert C Millici and Emil D Attanasio of US Geological Survey, a prestigious organisation

that works internationally to assess global oil and gas reserves data, in its paper on the 'field growth phenomenon' said that in USA, by using modern technology, the reserves of old recoverable oil and gas fields were increasing nine to 10 times.

"Most of the fields in Bangladesh are less than 30 years old and there currently are only about 44 producing wells," said Millici. "It is very likely that once hydrocarbon exploration and development efforts are expanded, field growth phenomena similar to that found elsewhere in the world will be observed through the life of the Bangladesh fields."

"For example, fields discovered in 1962-63 like Habiganj, Rashidpur and Titus are still immature and are undergoing primary development. The data available to make reserve estimates for these fields are limited," he added.

"It is clear that valid growth projections for the fields in Bangladesh require accurate annual production statistics as well as accurate annual estimates of proven reserves, by field," he pointed out.

Sharing the exploration experience of Bibiyana gas field, unofficially said to be the country's biggest reserve, an expert of Occidental said that the initial data analysis of Bibiyana exploration did not show much promise. But by using several modern technology, Occidental realised that the gas reserve potential was much brighter than it conventionally seemed.

He further said that with such a promising initial result, Occidental went for 3D seismic survey — a completely new technology introduced in Bangladesh. While this technology would ensure a better

idea about the true reserve of Bibiyana field, it was also helping Bangladesh experts to learn and understand its use and applications.

## Engineers Instt urges withdrawal of suspension order

By Staff Correspondent Engineers Institution, Bangladesh expressed its deep concern and resentment over the government decision to suspend former Managing Director and nine high officials of Titus Gas on charge of 'so-called' irregularities in providing gas lines to different industries under a 'cost-sharing scheme'.

The Engineers Institution urged the government to withdraw the suspension order. Nine Titus gas deputy general managers, general managers and the former managing director who is currently the MD of BAPEX, were suspended Sunday as per a decision prompted by the State Minister for Energy on the basis of a probe committee report.

In a press release, the institution said that the Probe Committee report, which was the basis of the suspension order against these officials, only expressed its doubts that the officials could be involved in the irregularities.

"It is fully irrational and against all rules and regulations to suspend an official on the basis of a primary level report, without giving the officials a chance to defend themselves," said honorary General Secretary of Engineers Institution ANH Akhtar Hossain in the press release.

## 'Mutual exchanges between SAARC states imperative'

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury has said historic experience and geographical proximity of this region make it imperative that there will be a great deal of economic exchange, trade and commerce among the SAARC countries, reports UNB.

The Speaker was inaugurating a session on 'Interaction between probationer diplomats of Indian Foreign Service and Bangladesh' at Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs yesterday.

He said the political relationship always plays an important role in creating a permissive atmosphere, and the diplomats of today should try to take advantage in maximising the flow of goods and services to improve the economies of their respective countries.

Presided over by Justice KM Sobhan, the session was also addressed by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan

Chowdhury, Dr Moyeen Khan MP, Ambassador Waliur Rahman, Director BILIA and Deputy High Commissioner of India Pinak Ranjan Chakrabarty.

## Reception to Larma today

RANGAMATI, May 24: Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council Chairman Jyotirindro Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma will be accorded a civic reception here tomorrow, reports UNB.

Rangamati Civic Reception Committee will accord the reception at poura auditorium in the afternoon ahead of Larma's taking over the charge on May 27.

Meanwhile, Larma reached here from Khagrachhari on Monday afternoon. Soon after his arrival, Larma exchanged views with cross section of people at the Circuit House.

## Call to withdraw decision by June 15 Package Forum leaders to submit memo to PM

By Staff Correspondent

Producers of package programmes for Bangladesh Television (BTV) will submit a memorandum to the Prime Minister demanding withdrawal of the decision not to air package programme during peak hours.

This was decided at a meeting of the 'Package Forum' held yesterday at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium with Mamunur Rashid, joint convener of the Forum in the chair.

The Forum leaders said they will also submit a memorandum to the State Minister for Information today. They will give an ultimatum to the authorities to consider our demand within June 15," a forum leader said.

The nine-point demand of the Forum includes withdrawal of decision not to air package programmes, formation of a preview committee for package programmes and inclusion of forum representatives in the committee to preview committee report within one month, implementation of package rule 4(1) for buying of package programmes directly or through sponsors, allocation of more air time for package programmes, stopping transmission of dubbed imported serials (except documentaries and educational programmes), production of local educational documentaries by BTV and allocation of advertisement time for 5 and 3 minutes respectively for 60 and 30 minute programmes.

The Forum leaders demanded resumption of package programme, not to telecast these programmes between 7:00 pm and 10:00 pm, they added.

The Forum leaders alleged that a section of incompetent officials and non-gazetted BTV employees had been conspiring against a growing industry that already invested about Tk 100 crore since its introduction on November 25, 1994.

The meeting was also addressed by Badar Rahman, Abul Hayat, Humayun Ahmed, Asaduzzaman Noor, Afzal Hossain, Imdadul Huq Milon, Tariq Anam, Nima Anam, Amjad Hossain and Nader Chowdhury.

## BFTA puts forth 15-pt demand

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Association (BFTA) yesterday set forth 15-point 'recommendations' and urged the government to immediately implement those for the sake of ensuring a modern education system.

Presenting the 'recommendations' at a press conference at the National Press Club, the BFTA leaders said implementation of the recommendations is a must for further improvement of standard of education.

The demands include giving full government salary, festival bonus and housing allowance to the non-government teachers, promotion of college teachers into the positions of associate professor and professor, higher pay-scale for headmasters and assistant headmasters and recruitment of teachers through the Public Service Commission.

General secretary of College Teachers' Association Kazi Faruk Ahmed read out the written statement at the press conference. Its president Principal Zahurul Islam, president of Government College Teachers' Council Principal Ali Akbar Khan, secretary general of Bangladesh Teachers' Association Selim Bhuiyan and secretary general of Secondary Government School Teachers' Association Mohammad Toaha were present.

## IUB press confce now May 28

The press conference and reception to the Uday Shankar Culture Troupe will now be held on May 28 instead of May 26, says a press release.

Organised by the Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), the event will take place at 6:30 pm at House-6, Road-14, Baridhara.

## Nazrul

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She will also lay the foundation stone of a mausoleum at the graves of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, Potua Quamrul Hassan, former Vice-Chancellor Abdul Matin Chowdhury and other intellectuals this morning.

She will also place wreath at the mazar of the poet.

The other highlights of the day's programmes include holding of rallies, seminars and recital of Nazrul's poems and songs.

The students and teachers of Dhaka University will bring out a procession from Aparajaya Bangla. The University authorities will also hold a six-day birth centenary function at the TSC auditorium from May 26 to May 31.

Meanwhile, the people of Darinrampur under Trishal Thana where the poet passed his boyhood, have chalked out a three-day long programme on the occasion.

The programmes include procession, rallies, discussions and sessions of Nazrul's songs and recitation and Nazrul Mela at the local Nazrul academy.

## Shazneen

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lodged a case under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 1995 with Gulshan Thana.

Earlier, a murder case was filed with the same thana by Latifur Rahman. Trial of the murder has started at the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court.

In charge sheets of both the cases, police accused seven persons — domestic help Shahid, contractor Hasan, supervisor Badal, carpenter Shani Ram, guard Humayun Kabir, maids — Parveen and Minu. Of the accused, Humayun Kabir died of a cardiac arrest on January 11.

The six accused were produced before the court yesterday. Special Public Prosecutor Abdul Bari submitted a time prayer before the judge, Tapan Kumar Rudra, as the witnesses did not appear before the court.

Advocate Saika Ferdous, junior to Mosarraf Hossain Kajal, lawyer for maids Parveen and Minu, also submitted a time prayer before saying the 'admission hearing' of the criminal appeal in the High Court was likely to be held on May 31.

Earlier, Kajal had filed the appeal with the HC praying for setting aside the order of the Special Court that framed charges against his clients in the Shazneen rape case.

The court adjourned the proceedings of the case till June 28 after hearing both the sides.

## First class first

Samia Rahman obtained first class first position in MA final examination of 1998 (held in 1998) in Mass Communication & Journalism from the University of Dhaka. She had also secured first class first position in the honours examination of 1995, says a press release.

Samia Rahman is the third daughter of eminent playwright and Director (Jalisco Programme) of Bangladesh Betar, Quazi Mahmudur Rahman and Dilruba Rahman.

Samia is now working with the Forum of Environment Journalists of Bangladesh.

## Obituary

Matiara Haider Khan, wife of Ali Haider Khan, former divisional Commissioner, Chittagong, succumbed to her injuries at BIRDEM Hospital on Saturday.

Matiara Khan was critically injured following a collision between a Pajero Jeep in which she was travelling and a speeding truck on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway on May 5.

She left behind her mother, husband, one daughter, two sons, five grandchildren and a host of relatives, friends and admirers to mourn her death.

Her qulhwani will be held today at her residence at House No 1, Road No 2, Sector-7, Uttara, Dhaka after Sar prayers.

## Ershad blames BNP but won't cause 'disunity'

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party chief H M Ershad has blamed BNP for acting against the interests of the four-party opposition alliance. He, however, assured that his party would never cause disunity in the alliance.

The former president was speaking at a rally in front of the party's Kalabagan office yesterday afternoon before leading a march of the JP MPs loyal to him. The march was organised simultaneously with three other alliance partners including BNP in demand for resignation of the 'failed' Awami League government.

Prior to the march, JP secretary general Nazimul Rahman Manju announced a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the Chittagong division on May 27, the day Shantu Larma is due to take over as chairman of the CHT Regional Council. The day would be observed as 'black day', he said.

Ershad claimed that 19 of the 33 MPs took part in yesterday's march which was also joined by some central leaders and hundreds of workers of the party. A JP press release last night named the 19 MPs. Besides two other MPs — G M Quader and Shahadat Hossain — sent fax messages regretting their absence due to their stay outside Dhaka, the release added.

The 19 JP lawmakers are: H M Ershad, Roushan Ershad, T I M Fakir, Rabi Chowdhury, N K Alam, Chowdhury, Rabeya Bhuiyan, Sabita Mahmud, Rustam Ali Faraji, Asadur Rahman, M A Mukit Khan, Nasiruddin Chowdhury, Joyal Abedin Sarkar, Karimuddin Bharrasha, Lutfur Rahman, Mojiur Rahman, Mozammel Haq Lal, Abdul Rashid Sarkar, Shah Mofazzal Hossain, Kaikobad, Abu Lais Mubin Chowdhury and Wahiduzzaman Basha.

Ershad walked all the way with the JP procession from Kalabagan to the Jatiya Press Club, parading Mirpur Road, Panthapath, Mymensingh Road and Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. However, some other MPs including Roushan Ershad, Rabeya Bhuiyan and Sabita Mahmud took motor ride from Panthapath to the High Court area.

## HC verdict

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Beimco Pharmaceuticals, Doha Securities and Shinepukur Holdings.

The Court of Metropolitan Sessions Judge had earlier rejected plea from the three companies that the cases be transferred from the court of Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge to the court of Mirza Mohammad Sharif, the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge, who had earlier heard the cases as First Additional Sessions Judge of Dhaka District.

The lawyers of the three companies also argued that there was no scope for distribution of the cases as they were transferred automatically by application of law.

All the cases, excepting these three, were transferred to the judge when he was transferred to the metro court, said Sirajul Huq who appeared for the three companies.

Appearing as the Securities and Exchange lawyer, Dr M Zahir then pointed out that the Metro Court did not consist of several judges but one single judge to whom the cases were transferred.

He said that the other judges are additional judges whose jurisdictions are derived from two sources — one by special government order and the second from the Sessions Judge. "So when a notification says that the cases will be transferred to the Metro Court it means to the Sessions Judge who sits in that court."

Appearing for the state, Additional Attorney General Mahbub-e-Alam said that prayers by the accused companies were contradictory.

He said that at one point they are asking for transfer of the cases to the court of Mirza Mohammad Sharif on the other hand they are saying that the transfer itself to metro court was illegal.

The High Court Bench comprising of Justice Golam Rabbani and Md Latifur Rahman after hearing both sides fixed June 8 for judgement.

## Ershad blames BNP but won't cause 'disunity'

By Staff Correspondent

Disappointed by what he said BNP's recent negotiation with the government on lifting a ban on a road march through the Bangabandhu Bridge recently, Ershad told the press that he agreed to a BNP proposal for a one-day march following the government move.

"But later BNP alone settled the issue with the government without consulting the JP. Dissatisfied by BNP's behaviour, we then asked the party to a liaison committee meeting to say why should we go for a united movement if BNP does not honour us and if it ignores us?"

Ershad said, he allowed the JP nominees to discuss the matter in the liaison committee and agreed to participate in yesterday's march of the opposition MPs. "We did so for the sake of continued unity, not bowing to any pressure, or accepting any condition. We also did not want to be the cause of disunity."

"We believe in unity but not at the cost of JP's existence. Launching movement from a common platform needs approval of the JP council," he said denying press reports that he did not press for a summit of the four top opposition leaders.

The former military dictator also came down heavily on a section of newspapers for publishing 'untrue' reports about his party. In this regard, he named the daily 'Bangladesh Patrika' and made oblique reference to the daily 'Ittefaq' owned by communications minister Anwar Hossain Manju who pioneered the JP split.

He called the JP MPs who had deserted him as 'betrayers' and said their departure would not stop JP's forward march. Rather, he hoped that his party would bag more votes in the areas of those MPs in the next elections.

The deposed president found the Jatiya Sangsad 'ineffective' as the opposition members were 'not allowed to speak there'. He expressed his firm determination to continue street agitation until fall of the government.

Concluding the march in front of the Press Club, Ershad hoped the opposition lawmakers' street protests would expedite the fall of the government.

## CEC to attend workshop in Mexico

By Staff Correspondent

Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena leaves Dhaka for Mexico today to attend an international workshop on elections. He is scheduled to return by June 17.

The workshop titled 'Electoral Management Bodies as Institution of Governance' will be held in Mexico City from May 26 to 29.

Some 40 participants from 23 countries will attend the four-day workshop, which will be spreading over five sessions. Abu Hena is scheduled to chair a session on 'The Role of the Election Management Bodies in Supporting Voters Registration: Lessons Learnt and Challenges'.

Other Asian countries to attend the workshop are India, Pakistan, the Philippines and South Korea.

From Mexico, Hena will go to the United States to see his children. "I will spend a few days with my children there and return home by June 17," the CEC told The Daily Star yesterday.

## Injured BCL activist dies at CMCH

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 24: A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activist who received bullet injury on May 20 at the Shah Amanat hall succumbed to his injuries at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) this morning.

The nama-e-janaja of Mohammad Saiful Islam, a master's student of Statistics Department was held at the Andarkilla Mosque this afternoon. Later his body was sent to his village home at Chakaria in Cox's Bazar.

Meanwhile, Shibir observed third day of its siege programme at CU today.

## Military Instt of Science & Tech to be set up in Savar