

Bus service will bring people closer : Jyoti Basu

Indian West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu yesterday said that the direct bus service between Dhaka and Calcutta would bring the people of the two countries closer and create a scope for better interaction, reports BSS.

"Although we have one language, one Rabindranath and one Nazrul, our younger generations know little about each other," the visiting Chief Minister told a reception hosted in his honour by the Workers' Party. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad attended the reception ceremony.

The West Bengal chief minister said the problem of the border enclaves remain an unsettled issue causing immense suffering to the people there. Basu said he would take fresh initiative to solve the problem.

West Bengal ministers Manab Mukherjee and Susanta Das, former member of Lok Sabha and CPI leader Geeta Mukherjee accompanied Basu at the reception.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, economist Rehman Sobhan, chief whip of the opposition Khondokar Delwar Hossain, Awami League leader Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, CPB president Manjurul Ahsan Khan, Gano Forum leader Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Left Front leaders Nirmal Sen, Khalequzzaman, Mujahidul Islam Selim, AFM Mahbubul Haq, Abdus Salam and Dilip Barua, Gano Azadi League leader Hajj Abdus Samad, Bangladesh Bank governor Dr Farahuddin, The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam, Weekly 2000 editor Shahadat Chowdhury, poet Abu Zafar Obaidullah were also present.

President of Workers' Party Rashed Khan Menon and its leaders Abul Bashar, Haidar Akbar Khan Rano, Bimal Biswas, Nurul Hassan, Saiful Haq, Fazle Hossain Badsha, Mahmudul Hassan Manik, Parsh Chandra Saha, Hazera Nazrul and Quamrul Ahsan welcomed the guests.



Death anniversary of poet Rudra today

By DU Correspondent

The 8th death anniversary of Poet Rudra Muhammad Shahidullah will be observed today.

To mark the day, the Rudra Sangsad has drawn up elaborate programmes. In the morning, wreaths will be placed on his grave.

The programmes include open discussion, photo exhibition, cultural function, *mitad mahfil* and feeding of the destitute.



Obituary

Rubina Afroz, a second year student of the Department of Computer Science and Technology, the University of Asia Pacific (UAP), died on Saturday at 3:30 am, says a press release.

Her *namaz-e-janaza* followed by a condolence meeting was held on the university premises yesterday.

The condolence meeting was presided over by Vice-Chancellor of UAP, Hedayat Ahmed. Students and faculty members spoke on the occasion. *Munajat* was offered for the salvation of the departed soul.

Retired Chief Engineer of Roads and Highways Division and the Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge Project Abdul Matin, 62, died of heart failure at a local clinic early yesterday, reports BSS.

He left behind three sons and four daughters.

Abdul Matin was buried at the family graveyard at his village home of Pirakashimpur under Muradnagar thana of Comilla district.

His *qukhwan* will be held at his residence of Elephant Road on June 25 after Asr prayers.

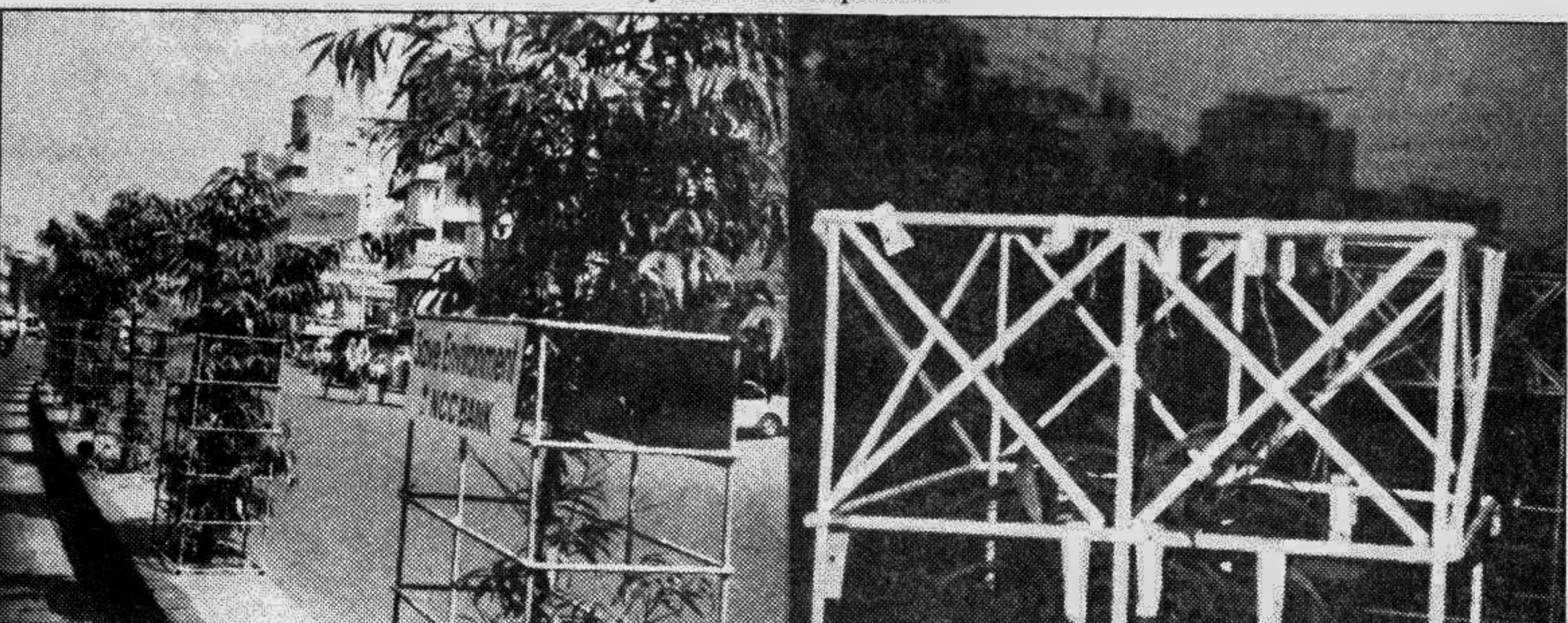
Abu Ahmed Majumder, son of late Sujat Ali Majumder of Chhagalnaiya thana in Feni district, died at Suhrawardy Hospital Saturday night, reports BSS.

He left behind his wife, four sons and two daughters.

He was buried at his family graveyard after *namaz-e-janaza* at Debpur Eidgah maidan at his Poshimdevour village yesterday.

Signboards disappear from city roads

By Staff Correspondent



The signboards put up in different streets of Dhaka and Chittagong as part of a campaign to protect the environment have started disappearing recently.

In a statement, Journeymen, the official agency for event management of World Environment Day '99, said that unidentified elements, seem to

have removed the boards with public awareness slogans at night.

The boards with slogans like "Grow more trees", "Care for trees", "Save trees to save yourself" were attached to the iron fences around the trees on important road dividers, important road islands and surrounding of parks.

The boards put up at Kakrail, Panthapath, Jatiya Press Club, Education Bhaban and some other areas of the city have been removed in the last few days.

The statement further said that removal of signboards during the tree plantation campaign appears mysterious and is against the interests of the people.

It urged the authorities concerned and city dwellers to remain alert against such activities.

The picture (above left) shows signboards on the fences around the trees while the fence (above right) is seen with the signboard missing.

World Music Day at Alliance Francaise June 24

By Staff Correspondent

A musical festival will be held at the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka on June 24 and 25 to mark World Music Day observed by people of France every year.

France Lasnier, the Director of Alliance Francaise, explained at a press conference held yesterday to explain the significance of the occasion, that this function will be held on the evening of June 24, and the afternoon of 25th, with professionals and amateurs taking part. All types of music varying from folk to classical to band music will be sung on these days. She said that in Paris people sing on the pavements and cafes on the occasion.

The celebration of World Music Day was first started on June 21 in 1982 by the then Minister of Culture, Jack Lang. Since that day, she added, the popular day on the calendar has been receiving increasing enthusiasm.

She said furthermore that a charter between partners of the European Music Festival now enables fruitful exchanges between the musicians of France and their European neighbours. In Bangladesh itself, Lasnier said, one will hear a variety of music including Rabindra Sangeet and Nazrul Geetis.

Alain Delaune, the Deputy Director of Alliance Francaise, present on the occasion, added that singers and musicians like Farida Parveen and Bari Siddiqui will perform. The last two occasions had been undoubtedly successes with people singing and playing even on the stairs.

Christophe Steyre, the other Deputy Director of Alliance Francaise, added that celebrations will go on in every room of the cultural centre. Only the entrance to the rock band's show will be on invitation, he added.

Two arrested, pistol recovered

GAZIPUR, June 20: Tongi thana police arrested two alleged terrorists and recovered a pistol from their possessions from Dattapara village under Tongi Pourashava last night, reports BSS.

Police said, the arrested persons are Rumanee, 20, and Mustak, 21.

A case has been registered with Tongi thana in this connection.

Journalist Sadekin dead

Noted journalist M Sadekin died of heart attack at his Zafarabad residence yesterday morning. He was 60, reports BSS.

Sadekin left behind his wife, three daughters and host of relatives to mourn his death.

He had been crippled the last few years of his life following a fatal road accident.

During his long career in journalism, Sadekin worked in a number of newspapers including *Dainik Bangla*, *Sangbad*, *weekly Robbar*, and the *Janakantha*.

Author of a number of novels and dramas, he was also associated with the *Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra* as a commentator during the War of Liberation.

His first *namaz-e-janaza* was held at Jafarabad Mosque after Asr prayers. His body was taken to the Jatiya Press Club where the journalists assembled to pay their last respects to him.

Press Club general secretary Swapna Kumar Saha placed a wreath beside the mortal remains of Sadekin on behalf of the Press Club.

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) secretary general Akhtar Ahmed Khan, Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) president Altaf Mahmud and general secretary Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan also placed wreaths on behalf of their organisations.

Later, Sadekin was buried at the Mirpur Freedom Fighters' graveyard.



Visiting Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee placing a wreath at National Memorial at Savar yesterday. — PID photo

Weather

Thundershowers likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers with temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Khulna and Rajshahi divisions during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Moderately heavy falls is also likely at places over Chittagong division during the period, according to Met office.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Country's highest temperature 35.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and the lowest 24.0 degree Celsius at Sathkhira.

The sun sets today at 6:49 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:12 am.

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.5	27.5	79	86
Chittagong	30.8	25.0	97	90
Rajshahi	35.3	27.0	81	90
Khulna	33.2	26.0	87	93
Barisal	32.6	25.3	99	97
Sylhet	32.4	25.4	82	100
Cox's Bazar	28.0	25.0	98	95

What's on today

Meeting: The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar-Dhaka will be held. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 5.30

Meeting: A meeting of the Golden Jubilee Celebration Committee of Bangladesh Awami League will be held. Venue: Party's central office at 23, Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 7.00 pm

MBBS course begins at Armed Forces Medical College

The classes of the first batch of MBBS course at the Armed Forces Medical College in Dhaka got underway at the Dhaka Cantonment yesterday, reports BSS.

Chief of the Army Staff Lieutenant General Muhammad Mustafizur Rahman, Bir Bikram, formally inaugurated the classes yesterday morning.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone of the college on March 19 last year.

The academic session 1998-99 of the college started under the Dhaka University. The six-year MBBS course of the college includes one-year in-service training.

The Chief of Army Staff said that the college was established with the aim of providing qualified and efficient physicians. Besides, armed forces personnel and their wards, a number of students from outside would also get opportunity to take part in the courses run by the college, he said.

The Acting Commandant of the college also spoke on the occasion and gave a brief resume on the courses.

Among others, the Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Abu Taher, the Chief of Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed and senior officials of the armed forces were present.

Parents of the students including Minister for Science and Technology Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan and Begum Noor Uddin were also present.

Projanmo '71 greets GOP

By DU Correspondent

Projanmo '71, an organisation of the children of martyrs of Liberation War, has congratulated Ganatantrik Oikya Parishad (GOP) for its landslide victory in the elections of the registered graduate representatives to the Dhaka University Senate.

In a statement yesterday, Anwarul Kabir Mithu and Hedayet Hossain, the president and general secretary of the organisation, described the victory as a triumph for the pro-liberation forces.

The newly-elected representatives would work to revive the glorious image of the DU by uprooting terrorism from the campus, the statement said.

In the elections, the GOP bagged all the 25 posts of the registered graduate representatives to the DU Senate.

The government has taken up five Arayan Prakaipa to rehabilitate the destitutes in three thanas of the district, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the implementation of the project is in full swing at Dhaturhat under Chuadanga Sadar thana, Gargari under Alamdanga thana, and Karpashdanga, Subalpur and Chitla and Damurhuda thana.

Ershad calls on Vajpayee

Former President and Jatiya Party Chairman H M Ershad made a courtesy call on Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee at the State Guest House Jamuna in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

During the meeting, the two leaders stressed the need for further strengthening the existing bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh.

They also exchanged opinion on regional and international politics, and issues relating to trade and commerce.

Jatiya Party secretary general Nazim Rahman Manjur accompanied Ershad during the meeting.

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dev Mukherjee was present on the occasion.

Bashar second in Business Studies group

By DU Correspondent

Md Enamul Bashar obtained second position on the combined merit list of Business Studies group securing 895 marks with letters in eight subjects.

A student of Ideal School and College, the second boy used to study at least ten hours daily before the examinations.

Son of Md Abul Bashar, AGM of Sonali Bank main branch and Anjuman Ara Begum, a housewife, Bashar wants to study Business Administration. Talking to The Daily Star, he said that he was very happy with his result.

He is fond of reading and music. The Feeling is his favourite musical band.

He blamed the political leaders for terrorism in educational institutions and said that student politics should be banned.

Fouzia third in Humanities group

By Staff Correspondent

Fouzia Afroz Khan Tara obtained third position on the combined merit list of the Humanities group under the Dhaka Board securing 880 marks with letters in seven subjects.

She appeared at the SSC examination from the Vigarunisa Noon School and expressed her gratitude to the teachers of the school as they played a key role in her success.

Daughter of Arifuzzaman Khan, a businessman, and Nazmunnahar Khan, a housewife, Fouzia aspires to be a barrister. She is interested in studying abroad.

Fouzia is rather unhappy with her result as she expected to be on top of the merit list.

Talking to The Daily Star, she said that she did not like student politics and blamed political leaders for patronising terrorism in the educational institutions.

She had a private tutor for mathematics and she used to study around eight hours regularly.

Poet Sufia Kamal turns 89

Representatives and members of different socio-cultural organisations yesterday greeted distinguished poet Sufia Kamal, a pioneer of the movements for freedom and enlightenment of women, as she stepped into the 89th year of her eventful life, reports BSS.

A large number of people visited the poet's house 'Sanjher Maya' at Dhanmondi and presented her with bouquets to show their deep love and respect for her.

The poet, who has been fighting old-age complications for quite a some time, told the visitors that she was having problems in continuing her reading habit.

"Now-a-days, it is very difficult for me to ponder over serious issues or texts. I enjoy novels meant for children, and my son has brought 'Feluda series' of Satyajit Roy for me," a beaming poet said.

Projanmo '71, an organisation of the children of the martyrs of the Liberation War, led by Farzana Chowdhury Nipa, greeted the poet, wishing her a long, healthy life.

Poet Sufia Kamal expressed her concern as the communal forces resurfacing in the country. The members of the Projanmo '71 expressed their firm commitment to build a communalism-free Bangladesh imbued with the spirit of the Liberation War.

On behalf of the Bangla Academy, Professor Dr Syed Anwar Hossain, the Director General, visited the poet's house.

Captain Moin elected IMO Committee chief

Captain Moin Uddin Ahmed, Regional Representative of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation for Europe, has been elected Chairman of the Technical Cooperation Committee of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), reports BSS.

Moin was elected a top position in one of the main committees of IMO at the 40th session of the committee at IMO headquarters in London on June 17, according to a press release.

The United States proposed Captain Moin's name for the post while representatives from Panama, Malta, Vanuatu, Algeria and Liberia endorsed the proposal.

This is for the first time that Bangladesh has occupied such a high position on one of the five main committees of the IMO, a specialised technical body of the United Nations.

The IMO functions through five main committees and 14 sub-committees. The Technical Committee is responsible for coordinating the work of the IMO in the provision of maritime technical assistance to member-countries of the organisation, particularly developing countries.

Lawyers call for withdrawal of VAT

Lawyers yesterday requested Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria to withdraw the proposed Value Added Tax (VAT) on law advisory institutions, reports UNB.

Kibria in the new budget proposed to impose the tax on the income of the lawyers.

The leaders of different Bar associations made the request when they called on the Finance Minister at his office yesterday. Vice Chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council Barrister Amirul Islam led the delegation.

"If the government withdraws the VAT, lawyers will be encouraged in their profession," the leaders said.

Kibria assured them that he would look into their demand. He also said that the process of paying income tax has been made easier in the proposed budget so that the taxpayers don't have to face any trouble.

President of Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, its member Advocate Sudhagu Sekhar Halder, Convenor of Bangladesh Awami Lawyers' Association Advocate Shahara Khan and the members of Dhaka Bar, Dhaka Taxes Bar Association and senior advocates of the Supreme Court were present.

DU senate polls

14 former student leaders demand re-polling

By DU Correspondent

Fourteen former student leaders yesterday demanded that the results of the elections of registered graduate representatives to the Dhaka University Senate be cancelled steps be taken for re-polling.

In a statement, they described the election as 'farical' and alleged that the university authorities has illegally supported the pro-government party Gonatantrik Oikya Parishad.

In the election, the panel bagged all the 25 posts to the Senate.

The signatories to the statement include Aman Ullah Aman, MA Jalil, Habibur Rahman Habib, Khairul Kabir Khokan, Najimuddin Alam, Fazul Haq Milon, Jahir Uddin Swapna, Saifuddin Ahmed Moni, Mhandaker Lutur Rahman, Miral Islam Abassi, Rizvi Ahmed, Ilias Ali, Asadur Rahman Asad and Abul Kashem.

Govt pledge-bound to protect rights of women

Minister for Labour and Employment M A Mannan yesterday said the present government is pledge-bound to protect the rights and interest of working women through implementing different development projects for them, reports BSS.

The Minister was speaking at the launching ceremony of a National Seminar titled 'Enforcement of Labour Laws relating to Women Workers in the Garment Industries' as chief guest at Bangladesh Institute of Management (BIM) here. The seminar was organised by the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Muhammad Ahsan Ali Sarkar presided over the seminar while Secretary, Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, Prof Tahmina Hossain was special guest.

The minister said the government has set up a Women Technical Training Centre (WTTTC) at Mirpur in Dhaka to make them skilled workers. It also has a plan to establish five more such centres in other divisional headquarters.

The minister said the government has also taken measures to implement the report of the Labour Law Commission to tailor and reframe the existing laws according to the need of the time.

He said the government has been relentlessly working to fix the wages for labourers working in different sectors and hoped that the wages commission report would be completed as early as possible.

Mannan pointed out that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had already announced that the Wages Commission Report would be implemented from July 1, 1997.

WB Minister for Environment calls on Sajada

West Bengal Minister for Youth Service, Environment and Tourism, Manabendra Mukherjee called on Minister for Environment and Forest Syeda Sajada Chowdhury at her secretariat office yesterday, reports BSS.

They discussed matters of mutual interest including preservation of environment and development of forest resources, official sources said.

Syeda Sajada Chowdhury apprised Mukherjee about the programmes undertaken by the Bangladesh government for preservation of environment.

Manabendra Mukherjee appreciated the efforts of Bangladesh government and said environmental preservation activities of the region could be strengthened through mutual cooperation and exchange of experiences and information.

Malaria breaks out in Netrakona

NETRAKONA, June 20: Malaria has been spreading in different areas of Durgapur and Kalmakanda, the two border thanas of Netrakona district, in the current rainy season, reports BSS.

An official source said Malaria claimed two lives and attacked 42 people in Durgapur thana during the last one month. But no death cases were reported from Kalmakanda thana where 139 persons were attacked by this mosquito-borne disease during the period.

Civil Surgeon of Netrakona Dr Abul Baset told BSS today that fifteen medical teams have been rendering service to the malaria patients in Durgapur and Kalmakanda.

Besides, Netrakona district Health Department distributed over 4,000 quinine tablets among the local people of the two thanas, he added.

Indonesia to court martial colonel over corruption

JAKARTA, June 20 : Indonesian military authorities will court martial an army colonel who promised a foundation linked to former president Suharto money if he was re-appointed to a senior position, a report said Sunday, reports AFP.

A military tribunal in Semarang in central Java will open the trial of Colonel Sri Roso Sudarmo, formerly head of the central Java district of Bantul, on Tuesday, a military spokesman told the *Republika* daily.

"We have gathered evidence and data and it is true that the former head of the Bantul district has made some wrongdoing," Artillery Colonel Sri Roso Sudarmo has violated his oath," said Major General Bibit Waluyo.

While Suharto was still in power, Sudarmo in 1996 promised a Suharto-linked foundation one billion rupiah (about 400,000 dollars at the time) if he was reappointed to head the Bantul district for another five years.

Waluyo said Sudarmo was for the time only being accused of offering a bribe and that the court martial will not deal with

the case of the murder of a journalist in 1996 which is believed to be related to the bribe case.

"What we will settle first now is what the society has been waiting for, that is the bribery case," Waluyo said.

Fuad Syarifuddin, a local journalist, died in August 1996 after three days in intensive care in hospital. He failed to regain consciousness after he was attacked and beaten by two strangers who visited his home.

The 33-year-old journalist had been writing about controversial land cases and corruption issues involving local senior officials, including Sudarmo. His colleagues said he had received death threats over the phone about his articles.

In November, an Indonesian court freed a man police accused of having murdered Syarifuddin, citing lack of evidence.

Human rights groups have accused the authorities of falsely accusing the man in their efforts to conceal the involvement of officials in the murder.

The case of Syarifuddin's murder remains unsolved.

'People to foil foreign plots to divide Iraq'

BAGHDAD, June 20 : President Saddam Hussein has voiced confidence that the Iraqi people will thwart foreign plots to divide the country without the army having to step in, newspapers reported Sunday, reports AFP.

"I'm convinced the people of southern Iraq, under the Baath Party's leadership, is capable of repelling the forces of evil, without our armed forces having to intervene," he told officials of the ruling party.

"Iraq is a single unit which cannot be divided," the president said. "The Iraqi people cannot be divided into different groups under plans drawn up by foreign forces."

He said that "several plots, elaborately drawn up by the enemies, have already been foiled by the people under the leadership of the party."

The newspapers did not say when or where he made the comments.

US and British warplanes

patrol "no-fly" zones with the declared aim of protecting the Shiites of southern Iraq and the Kurds of the north from attack by Saddam's forces.

In defiance of Baghdad, Kurdish factions have controlled three northern provinces under a US-British security umbrella since 1991.

Foreign Minister