

## BCL greets PM

By DU Correspondent

Pro-government student organisation Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday brought out a colourful procession on the Dhaka University campus to greet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as she has been conferred academic doctorate degree by the Catholic University of Belgium.

Following the procession, BCL held a rally at the Aparajito Bangla on the campus at noon.

Addressing the rally, the BCL leaders said that the recognition proves Hasina's contribution to democracy and world politics. "We feel proud of our leader," they said.

Presided over by Bahadur Bepary, the rally was addressed, among others, by Anisur Rahman, Sahabuddin Farazi, Likat Ali Sikder, Ashrafur Azim Rubon, Prasanta Bhushar Hossain, Sajad Hossain, Miraj Hossain and A K M Azim.

## Mohila AL criticises opposition hartal call

An extended meeting of Bangladesh Mohila Awami League yesterday strongly criticised hartals called frequently by some opposition parties including BNP, terming their activities destructive, reports BSS.

The meeting, held at the party central office, was presided over by its president Begum Ivy Rahman.

Among others, general secretary and whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Prof Khaleda Khanam, organising secretary Farida Rouf Asha, MP, central leaders Nasima Malek, Nasibun Ahmed, Tahmina Khatun, Taslima Chowdhury, Begum Nasima Montu and Anjali Sarker addressed the meeting.

Ivy Rahman said: "Fearing the rising popularity of Awami League, the opposition is employing propaganda, one after another."

They are hatching conspiracy to capture power through coup, killing and conspiracy, she said, adding the people have already rejected this politics.

She called upon the people to rally round Awami League led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to build a hunger and poverty-free "Sonar Bangla" as envisioned by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The meeting thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her contribution to the signing of the landmark Ganges Water Sharing Treaty and the historic Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord.

The meeting demanded immediate execution of the verdict against the killers of the Bangabandhu.

## 3 held in city

By Staff Correspondent

An accused in at least twenty cases, including a murder case, was arrested with his two accomplices from city's Uttara area yesterday.

Police identified the arrested as Mia alias Majnu, Habib and Masum.

According to police, Mia, a resident of Khilgaon area, had been involved in robbery, snatching, extorting and killing for a long time. Habib and Masum are also accused in a number of cases.

A team of Khilgaon police during an operation at Kamarpada and Kachkura area in Uttara arrested the three in the early morning yesterday.

## 'All dev projects aimed at welfare of people'

CHITTAGONG, July 31: Civil Aviation, Tourism, Housing and Public Works Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain today said that all development programmes of the government aimed at ensuring welfare of the masses, reports BSS.

Speaking as chief guest at the tri-ennial conference of Sitakunda Thana Awami League at a local high school ground the minister said, BNP and its allies have been conspiring to frustrate the development programmes of the government to capture power. These political parties have been misleading people by propaganda against madrasah education and they are resorting to issue-less hartal and road march to hinder normal development activities in the country, he said.

He called upon the party leaders and workers to face the opposition propaganda politically. He also called for strengthening the Awami League from grassroots level.

The meeting, presided over by Sitakunda Thana AL president Habib Noor was also addressed by A M B Abul Kashem Master, MP, Rafiqul Anwar, MP, North District AL vice-president Dr Ekhlashur Rahman, general secretary M A Salam and others.

## Obituary

Former Fisheries and Livestock Secretary Dr M Yusuf Ali died of old-age ailment at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) yesterday. He was 74, reports UNB.

He left behind his only daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren along with a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

The namaj-e-janaza of late Yusuf will be held at Baitul Mukarram Mosque after Jogh prayers today and later will be buried at the Banani graveyard.

Law Minister speaks at a seminar  
Consensus a must for good governance

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Khasru yesterday called for putting in concerted endeavours to ensure good governance in society, reports BSS.

Speaking as the chief guest at a seminar on 'Good Governance', organised by MBA Association, the minister urged all concerned, particularly the opposition political parties, to work together to extend best services to the taxpayers. He laid emphasis on reaching a consensus for reforming the administration suiting the need of a service-oriented independent judiciary like Bangladesh.

Presided over by the president of the association and Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled, the seminar was also addressed by the chairman of Public Administration Reform Commission Prof Shamsul Haq as the special guest.

Khalequzzaman, MP (BNP), editor of Bengali daily Prothom Alo, Matur Rahman and general secretary of the association Azizul Islam also spoke on the occasion. Earlier, Prof Mozaffar Ahmed of the Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University presented the key-note speech highlighting the problems and prospects of good governance in the country.

Highlighting the government's efforts, the Law Minister referred to the constitutional provisions for extending best services to the people of the republic and said, all particularly the opposition should come forward to supplement the government's efforts to establish good governance in the country.

He sought a consensus among the leading political parties for the appointment of an Ombudsman and formation of an independent Human Rights Commission.

Khasru said the present government has been working with seriousness to ensure a result-oriented administration having transparency and accountability. He said that the government was trying to introduce a Citizen Charter involving utility services like telephone

and electricity departments. Oppositions' cooperation and support are needed in materialising such efforts, he added.

The Law Minister said that there was no dearth of talents and potentials in the country for establishing good governance in the society. What we need is developing an efficient managerial capacity to overcome the present state of managerial crisis.

The Law Minister referred to widespread criticism about the red-tapism and other practices causing suffering to the people and said such tendency in the bureaucracy has developed due to the past colonial and military dictatorial rule in the country. Uninterrupted practice of democracy having transparency and accountability could help overcome such problems in the bureaucracy.

Referring to criticism against the behaviour and bad taste of some Members of Parliament in their acrimonious attack and mud-slinging against each other in the House during the last session, he felt such problems could be overcome through continued practice of democracy and election of good people as public representatives.

In this connection he referred to the introduction of caretaker government for conducting national elections and said the days of winning elections through musclemen with the help of twenty motor cycles and hoodlums in over today.

Dwelling on role of newspaper industry, the minister said in the past journalism was regarded as a mission. Nowadays people are publishing newspapers for business, he said. The chairman of the Public Administration Reform Commission Prof Shamsul Haq said that the commission was bringing about appropriate reforms based on consensus. In his key-note speech, Prof Mozaffar Ahmed said the concept of good governance is correlated with the socio-economic and political conditions.

## 'BNP, allies conspiring to frustrate dev programmes'

CHITTAGONG, July 31: Civil Aviation, Tourism, Housing and Public Works Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain said today that all development programmes of the government aimed at ensuring welfare of the mass people, reports BSS.

He said, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had dreamt of a happy and prosperous 'Sonar Bangla', but the conspirators had thwarted the dream. Governments came to power one after another but they had no development programmes to change the lot of the people, he said, adding it is Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government which has ensured the people of their rights to vote and food.

Speaking as chief guest at the three yearly conference of Sitakunda Thana Awami League at a local high school ground the minister said, BNP

and its allies have been conspiring to frustrate the development programmes of the government to capture power. These political parties have been misleading people through their propaganda on madrasah education and they are resorting to issue-less hartal and road march to hinder development activities in the country, he said.

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Atlanta shooting on Thursday  
No Bangladeshi killed or hurt

From Govinda Shill

ATLANTA, July 31: No Bangladeshi has been killed or hurt in slaying on Thursday that left nine Americans dead including two Asian-Americans in the Georgian city of Atlanta, according to the Bangladeshi community here.

A securities trader killed nine people on Thursday afternoon in Atlanta's two office buildings in the shiny, glitzy Buckhead district. He evaded an extensive police manhunt for five hours, and then killed himself in his van after the police made him pull over. The incident left another 12 people injured.

Police in Atlanta said they believed Mark Orrin Barton, a losing day trader about to be left homeless in a divorce, started a bloodbath by killing his wife and his two children, then shooting nine people to death. It was in a gas station that the police finally tracked him down but he took his life before they could get to him, according to reports.

Some 5,000 expatriate Bangladeshis live in Atlanta.

## CJF ad hoc body formed

A seven-member ad hoc committee of Chittagong Journalists' Forum (CJF) in Dhaka was formed yesterday with BSS Senior Reporter Enamul Hque Chowdhury as its Convener, reports BSS.

The committee was formed at a meeting of the Forum held at the Jatiya Press Club (JPC).

Other members of the committee are: Shyamal Dutt (Bhorer Kago), Masumur Rahman Khalil (Dinkal), Anis Alamgir (Ajker Kago), Shaheenul Islam Chowdhury (Matribhumi), M Baker Hossain (Arthanit) and Saif Hossain Delal (Brotam Alo).

The committee decided to hold the general meeting of the Forum at 11 am on September 2 at the JPC.

Journalists of Chittagong working in news agencies, national dailies and weeklies in Dhaka have been requested to contact the ad hoc committee members.

## Ramgati Samity EC formed

A 31-member executive committee of Ramgati Samity, Dhaka, was formed at the annual general meeting held at the Bangladesh National Museum yesterday, reports UNB.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister ASM Abdur Rab, who hails from Ramgati Thana in the district, attended the meeting as chief guest.

The meeting chaired by AHM Noman urged the government to construct the much needed Ramgati-Bhola bridge on the river Meghna and Sonapur-Ramgati rail line, and establish fish processing plant at Ramgati for the welfare of the people of the Thana.

Welcoming the newly formed committee the Minister said the present government has been working tirelessly to change the lot of common people.

He also assured of all-possible help in implementing the genuine demands of the samity.

## Dhaka-Jamalpur commuter train service begins today

The second commuter train from Dhaka to Jamalpur will be inaugurated today, reports UNB.

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain will open the train at Jamalpur Railway Station at 6:45 pm.

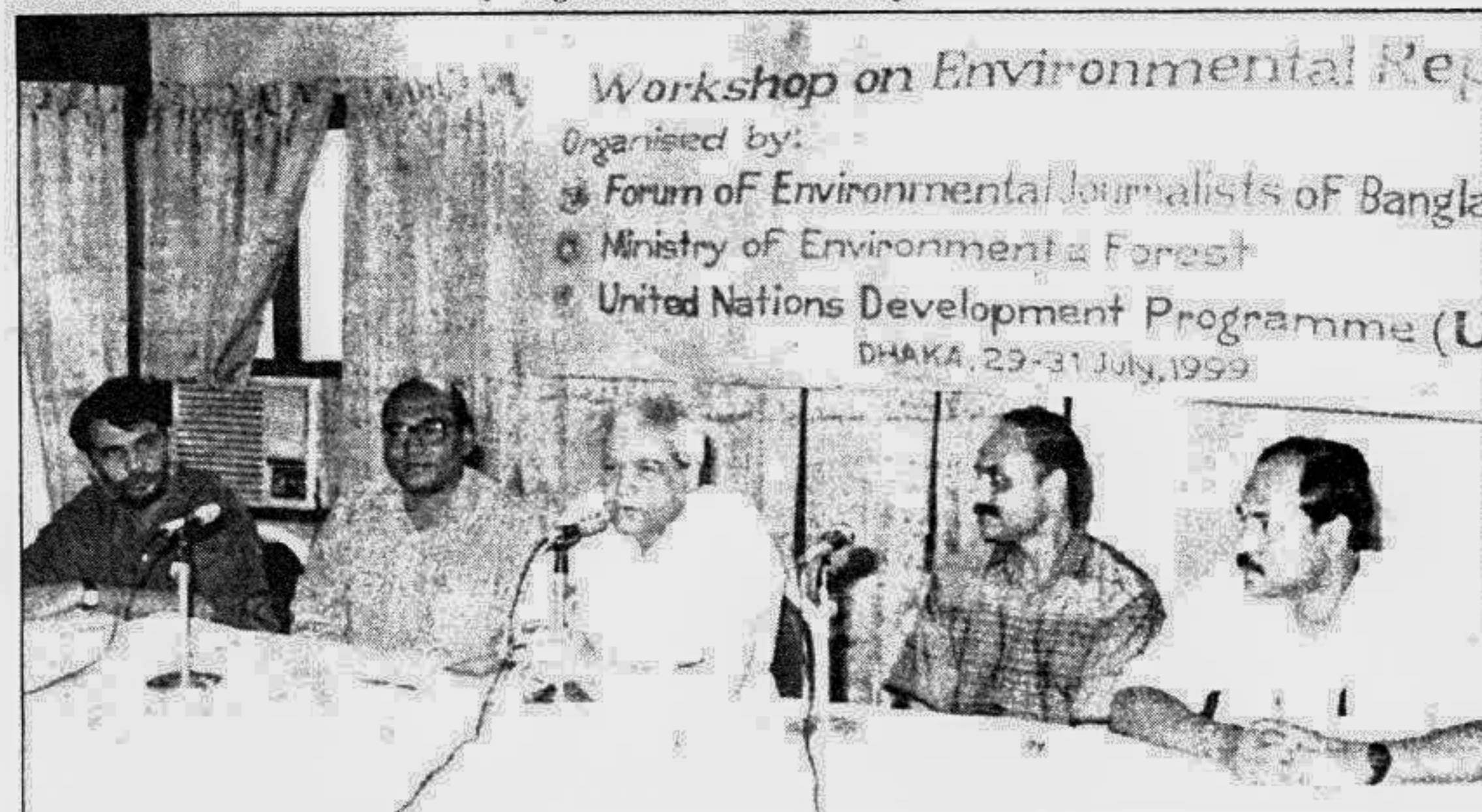
Earlier, Dhaka-Brahmanbaria commuter train was inaugurated.

## Construction work of cultural centre begins

The construction work of the National Music and Dance Centre, a part of the National Cultural Complex, starts today, reports BSS.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader will inaugurate the construction work of the centre at the premises of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy today morning, an Academy press release said.

The Academy authorities have arranged a *mulad mahfil* on the occasion.



Daily Janakantha Advisory Editor Toab Khan addressing as the chief guest the concluding session of a three-day workshop on Environmental Reporting organised by the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. FEJB chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury and Environment Ministry's Dr Mahfuzul Haque are also seen in the picture.

## 'Economic disparity — root cause of environmental degradation'

Advisory Editor of Daily Janakantha Toab Khan yesterday said political determination and direction are urgently required to reduce income disparity, and arrest socio-environmental degradations, reports BSS.

He was addressing as the chief guest the concluding session of the three-day workshop on 'Environmental Reporting' organised by the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) with support from the Ministry of Environment and Forest and UNDP in the city.

FEJB Chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury presided over workshop while Programme Coordinator of Sustainable Environment Management Programme of the Ministry of Environment and Forest Dr Mahfuzul Haque and FEJB general secretary Bakhtiar Rana addressed the workshop.

Toab Khan said economic disparity is the root cause of environmental degradation and there is a growing need for reducing economic disparity to help arrest environmental degradation in the country.

He cited the encroachment of the Buriganga River and said political opportunists are the principal encroachers.

The Janakantha Advisory Editor said environmental degradation is correlated with the social degradation and underdevelopment.

He said industrialised nations are not suffering from environmental problems but the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) like Bangladesh are caught up in this trap of underdevelopment and degradation.

Dr Mahfuz underscored the need for raising awareness among the people about environmental problems.

Quamrul Islam Chowdhury underlined the need for improving the quality of environmental reports, articles and features to exert pressure on the decision-makers to help avert environmental degradation and maintain the ecological balance.

Toab Khan also handed over certificates among the 21 participants of the workshop from different newspapers and news agencies.

## 'Our heritage projected thru' our culture'

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed yesterday said we will prove our supremacy in the field of culture by establishing our cultural heritage and tradition overcoming all obstacles and conspiracies, reports BSS.

Joy Bangla Sangskritik Oikya Jote will hold a workers meeting and mourning rally at Faltan Mahan at 4 pm tomorrow. Ministers, party leaders and cultural activists will speak at the meeting. The Jote will also organise another programme at 5 pm on August 3 at the National Sports Council auditorium, said a press release.

President and general secretary of Supreme Court branch of Bangabandhu Parishad Barister Shawkat Ali And Advocate Subrata Chowdhury have urged the people to observe the death anniversary with due respect.

The minister was addressing the inaugural function of the solo Khatak Dance evening by Mautushi Khandaker as the chief guest at the auditorium of the National Museum.

President of 'Sangbarta', a cultural organisation, arranged the dance programme.

## Programmes to observe Aug 15

Various organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the month of mourning in commemoration of 24th death anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, reports BSS.

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## Krishibid Parishad hails transit facility to India

Bangladesh Krishibid Parishad (KP) yesterday hailed the government for its decision to approve in-principle the transshipment of Indian commodities through Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The Parishad leaders, in a statement, said India got the permission of using Bangladesh waterways two decades back and every government in the past had been awaiting to implement the decision of transshipment of Indian goods through land routes.

Krishibid Parishad Dhaka chapter president Shankar Goshwami, general secretary Moazzem Hossain and office secretary Babar Ali in the statement urged all to keep the country's interest above all.



Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) brought out a procession in the city yesterday in protest of the transshipment facility to India. — Star photo

## ICAB members urged to have updated knowledge of accounting

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak yesterday called upon the chartered accountants to equip themselves with the latest developments in accounting techniques, information system, tax procedures etc, for rendering the best possible services to the nation and meet professional challenges, reports BSS.

He was addressing as the chief guest a seminar on 'Salient Features and Implications of Changes Made in Income Tax Ordinance 1984 by Finance Act 1999' organised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh (ICAB). Institute President Anisur Rahman presided while Member of National Board of Revenue Quazi Ali Asgar, Institute Past Presidents A K M Mosharraf Hossain, MP, and Janul Abedin also spoke.

The Minister commended the profession of accountancy and said the members of ICAB must have updated knowledge, know-how and expertise in various professional and technical subjects to render quality services and meet the professional challenges.

Razzak appreciated the ICAB's professional education (CPE) programme and advised the members to organise regular programmes round-the-year to acquire professional skills especially accounting and financial management, in both public and private sectors of the national economy.

## VOA is popular for its objective news'

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury yesterday expressed the hope that the Voice of America (VOA) would continue to provide objective news to its listeners, reports BSS.

Speaking as chief guest at the 19th anniversary and yearly council of Narayanganj District VOA Fan Club at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium in the city, Chowdhury eulogised VOA's endeavours in broadcasting world news with objectivity and fairness.

He referred to the tradition of the VOA in upholding democratic values and freedom of expression and expressed the confidence that as in the past this tradition of objective presentation would continue, specially while broadcasting news and views on Bangladesh.

Chairman of the Board of Editors of the Daily Ittefaq and the New Nation Barister Moinul Hossain inaugurated the function.

Presided over by President of Narayanganj VOA Fan Club Tariqul Islam Tarun, the inaugural function was addressed by VOA Bangla Service chief Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury. President of National Federation of VOA Fan Clubs Gias Kamal Chowdhury, VOA's Dhaka Correspondent Matur Rahman Chowdhury and Zahurul Alam, coordinator of VOA Fan Clubs Asaduzzaman Bachchu, Abdul Hai Khan, Prof Selina Bahar Zaman, Moniruzzaman Monir, Alhaj Abdul Matin Prodhan, Shaifur Rahman and M Miza-

nur Rahman Mizan.

Referring to the VOA's positive role during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in enhancing the spirit of the freedom loving people of this part of the world, the minister said the VOA continued to be a popular broadcasting to the people of Bangladesh all now for its objectivity. He said the government has been working on the modalities to provide autonomy to the country's electronic media.

He advised the VOA Fan Clubs to continue their social welfare activities and contribute to the overall national development activities.

Barister Moinul Hossain emphasised the need for objectivity and neutrality of print and electronic media for upholding democratic values and creating political awareness among the people. He also stressed the need for providing autonomy to the country's government-controlled radio and television networks to create an atmosphere of confidence and credibility to electronic media.

Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury praised the voluntary services being rendered by the country's 800 VOA Fan Clubs in various fields in social welfare and other sectors. He described the establishment of VOA Fan Clubs in Bangladesh by listeners themselves as unique example in the context of 54 language services of VOA and advised the club members to dedicate their youthful vigour to the services of the common people.

Confce on SWMC  
Central database must for efficient running of all projects'

Eminent hydrologists yesterday opined that setting up of a central data base is a must for avoiding duplication of data provided by different agencies, reports BSS.

To improve the accuracy of the hydrological models aimed at enhancing proficiency of water resources and environment projects there is no alternative of comprehensive management of hydrological data, they said.

The water experts were speaking at the inaugural session of the users' conference of Surface Water Modelling Centre (SWMC) in the LGED auditorium at Agargaon.

"Establishment of a central database containing spatial, non-spatial and time series data involving uniform methodologies for data collection, processing and sharing would minimise tiresome duplication of efforts and improve the accuracy and productivity," the experts suggested.

Dr A T M Shamsul Huda, Secretary of the Ministry of Water Resources presided over the session which was also addressed by Dr M B Abbott, Professor emeritus, International Institute for Hydrological and Environmental Engineering, Delft, the Netherlands.

Director, Surface Water Modelling Centre (SWMC) Emaduddin Ahmed presented a keynote on "SWMC Models in decision-making". In his speech he said that the SWMC, a centre for environmental modelling, has been developing mathematical models in association with Danish Hydraulic Institute for the engineers and scientists.

Dr A T M Shamsul Huda emphasised the need for using the SWMC models in all water resources and environmental projects.

Representatives from different government, non-government organisations including Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and WASA participated in the conference.

## Juba League programmes for August 15

Bangladesh Awami Juba League has chalked out a detailed programme to observe with due honour the 24th martyrdom anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the National Mourning Day, August 15, reports BSS.

The day's programme will start with hoisting of the party flag at half mast and black flag atop the Juba League office, wearing black badge, rally at the premises of Bangabandhu Bhawan, placing wreath by the portrait of Father of the Nation and offering *fateha* and placing wreaths at the *mazzars* of all martyrs, including Founder-Chairman of Juba League Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni, who were brutally killed on August 15, 1975. The Juba League leaders and workers will visit Tungipara on the day to place wreath and offer *fateha* at the *mazzar* of Bangabandhu.

Chairman of Awami Juba League Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim MP and General Secretary Advocate Kazi Iqbal Hussain, in a joint statement yesterday asked all Juba League committees at different levels to observe the day in a befitting manner.

## Contaminated water 67 hospitalised in Turkey

ANKARA, July 31: Sixty-seven people were undergoing treatment in Diyarbakir in southeastern Turkey after being poisoned by contaminated drinking water, local officials said Saturday, reports AFP.

In a written statement carried by the Anatolia news agency, the local governor's office said that tests on water samples had shown high levels of ammonia and nitrate caused by the seepage of sewage into the local water network.

The statement said that local waterworks authorities had been told to locate and repair the leaks while hospital workers had their leave cancelled.

Diyarbakir is the main city in Turkey's underdeveloped southeastern Anatolia where separatist Kurdish rebels have been waging an armed campaign for self-rule since 1984.

The conflict has claimed more than 31,000 lives, led to massive migration to urban areas in western Turkey and stalled the regional economy.

## Death toll rises to 20 in Swiss canyoning accident

INTERLAKEN, Switzerland, July 31: The death toll in an accident during a canyoning expedition in a central Swiss valley rose to 20 Saturday after rescue workers found another victim, Swiss police said, reports AFP.

The body was found 63 metres under water in Brienz lake, at the foot of the Saxe-Bach valley where the accident happened on Tuesday.

Rescue workers located the body using an underwater camera, police said.

Efforts were continuing Saturday to find the body of the 21st and last victim of the accident, which is believed to have happened when a storm caused a river's water level to rise swiftly.

According to survivors, a two-meter high wall of water swept through gorges which are about 300 meters long and only two meters wide at some points.

Prior to the accident, they were not considered particularly dangerous.

The victims were tourists from Australia, Britain, New Zealand, South Africa and other countries, and three of their guides. Only nine of the bodies have been formally identified.

The regional prosecutor, Michel-Andre Fels, on Friday opened an investigation to determine if the guides were aware of an imminent storm before the group set out.

## Tortoises reported for noise nuisance

ROME, July 31: A pair of amorous tortoises have been reported to the Italian authorities by a disgruntled neighbour kept awake by their night-time love-making in the garden next door, police said Saturday, reports AGF.

But the magistrates ruled that the randy reptiles could not be prosecuted for committing an obscene act in a public place.

Nor could they be held responsible for the racket, though the public prosecutor's office sent round an expert just to check the decibel level reached when they achieved their shell-clattering climax.

Police reported that both animals were in "excellent physical condition."

## India to evolve consensus on CTBT after polls: FM

NEW DELHI, July 31: India will try to evolve a national consensus on a global test ban treaty it is committed to signing after the September-October parliamentary polls, Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh said Saturday, reports AFP.

Singh told a private television channel that the Hindu nationalist caretaker government would take up the issue on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) after the elections.

"We will take up the process of achieving a national consensus as announced (by the government) earlier," Singh said in an interview to Star News.

While most analysts expect the elections to yield a hung parliament, some opinion polls indicate the Hindu nationalist BJP party is regaining some of its support that had been sliding away until this Summer.

"National consensus has to be created. India's national interests have to be explained. I have no doubt that people across the political spectrum will begin to see what the right course for India to adopt is."

India, which staged nuclear tests last year prompting a tit-for-tat response from arch-foe Pakistan, is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but is committed to signing the CTBT.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's government, which forced its way into the nuclear club last May, had been in talks with Washington on the issue. But the dialogue has been suspended until after the polls.

The CTBT, concluded in 1996, has been signed by 152 countries, of which 33 have ratified it. For the treaty to come into force, it has to be ratified by 44 countries, including rival nuclear powers India and Pakistan.

The treaty's preamble requires that if it has not been implemented within three years -- that is by this September -- UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan should convene a conference to discuss how to proceed.

## Newt Gingrich files for divorce

WASHINGTON, July 31: Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich has filed for divorce from his second wife of 18 years, Marianne, the Washington Post reported Saturday, reports AFP.

The couple's marriage is "irretrievably broken," and the couple are trying to resolve "all matters and controversies between them," according to papers filed in Cobb County, Georgia's Superior Court.

The Gingrichs have been separated since May 10, the Post said citing the papers.

The former Republican politician, 56, has reserved the right to "set forth additional grounds for divorce," if he and Marianne, 47, cannot reach a deal, the daily said.

## 12 killed, 15 hurt in fighting in southeastern Turkey

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey, July 31: Twelve people were killed and 15 others injured in clashes between separatist Kurdish rebels and Turkish security forces in eastern and southeastern Turkey, local security sources in this southeastern Anatolian city said on Saturday, reports AFP.