

BCL greets Sheikh Hasina

By DU Correspondent.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of ruling Awami League yesterday brought out a colourful procession on the Dhaka University campus hailing Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who has been nominated for the FAO Food Award CERES medal.

Following the procession, BCL held a rally at the Aparaajeo Bangla on the campus at noon. Presiding over the rally, BCL president Bahadur Bepari said, "the nation is proud of Sheikh Hasina as she has gained international recognition for her fight against hunger and for her initiatives to help the victims in the recent flood."

Termining it a 'renaissance', the BCL leaders urged the government to continue such steps.

Among others, Anisur Rahman, Aminul Islam, Liakat Ali Sikder, Ashraf Azim Rubon, Saifuddin Nasir, Saifuzzaman Shikhor, Sajjad Hossain, Miraj Hossain, AKM Azim and Giasuddin Palash addressed the rally.



Awami League backed Bangladesh Chhatra League brought out a procession on the Dhaka University campus yesterday hailing Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her nomination for the FAO award.

Commonwealth Photography Competition

A photography competition will be held for presenting the Commonwealth Photographic Awards to mark the 50th anniversary of Modern Commonwealth, says a press release.

The Commonwealth Foundation and Guardian Foundation have sponsored the competition with additional contributions by Commonwealth Press Union (CPU) and Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA).

This is an open competition for colour and black and white photographs on the theme of 'Freedom'. Only Commonwealth residents must send their entries (one print per entry) by September 30, 1999 while judging will take place in October this year.

Name, address, telephone, fax numbers and e-mail address must be printed on the back of photograph with a caption. There is no entry form or fees for the competition.

Interested persons are requested to send entry to: Photo Awards, CBA, 17 Fleet Street, London, EC 4Y 1AA, UK. Telephone: 44 171-583-5550 Fax: 44 171-583-5549/ e-mail: cba@cba.org.uk

Tk 4.8 lakh British donation for Dhaka Community Hospital

Britain yesterday presented medical equipment worth about Taka 480,000 to Dhaka Community Hospital, reports BSS.

Acting British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Stephen Turner handed over the gadget equipment to the Trust of the hospital. The equipment includes a foetal heart detector, a cardiac monitor, an obstetric bed, an infant resuscitation trolley, air-conditioning unit for the delivery room and a computer unit.

Dhaka Community Hospital Trust (DCHT) aims to create a sustainable and affordable, non-profit health care system in the country, a release of the British High Commission in Dhaka said.

Agrani Bank

The sources also said the transfers have been ordered to streamline bank operations.

Mohammad Enamul Haq Chowdhury took over from Nazmul Huq on Sunday as the managing director. Prior to joining his new post, Chowdhury served as the managing director of Shilpa Bank. Earlier, he had served as the deputy managing director of Agrani Bank.

The new transfer order read: "In the greater interest of the bank and in order to infuse dynamism in bank operation the office order dated July 8, 1999 is being amended partially and the following officials are transferred..."

Bangladeshi student honoured

Subarna Hamid graduated from Pace University, New York, with a bachelor's degree in Biochemistry/Molecular Biology on May 24.

1999. She attained the highest Latin Honours, Summa Cum Laude, with a perfect Grade Point Average of 4.0, and was honoured with numerous national awards for her dedication and commitment to the sciences, says a press release.

She received the Who's Who National Honors Award, the Silver Gavel National Honors Award, the American Chemical Society Analytical Chemistry Award, the Pace University Biochemistry Award and the Dyson Alumni Association Award, among many others.

Her scores ranged from 98.5 per cent to 108.5 per cent all through her undergraduate career. In addition to completing her 4 years graduation course in 3 years, she also worked for the Pepsi-Cola Global Research Headquarters all through her undergraduate career as a student scientist.

She is the eldest daughter of Engr. Abdul Hamid and Sayeeda Hamid and grand daughter of late Abdur Rashid Biswas, a prominent personality of Kansat, Chapainawabganj.

'Admn must be freed from bureaucratic red-tape'

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed yesterday called for developing a pro-people administration and economic system discarding the "bureaucratic hegemony" and "unholy influence" of financial tycoons coming out of the legacy of the past 'autocratic' regimes, reports BSS.

"The present government is committed to set economy on a sound footing, freeing it from the snatchers of people's money especially the bank defaulters and a section of corrupt bureaucrats," he said while speaking at a function of the betar's regular artists at the Agargaon Betar Bhaban in the city.

"The independence came for the entire population, not for 22 or 2,000 families, which amassed wealth looting more than Taka 75,000 crore during the post 1975 regimes," he added.

Director General of Bangladesh Betar M I Chowdhury, secretary general of artists' council Kazi Zakir Hassan Chandan addressed the function, while its president Shaikh Sadi Khan chaired it. "Those days are over. The bank defaulters and the cor-

rupted bureaucrats who made huge amounts of money and constructed castle-like houses in the city will now be brought to book," he said adding "discipline must be restored at any cost," the state minister said.

Prof Sayeed questioned how could a bureaucrat own more than one palatial house in posh areas of the capital when a politician, an intellectual even an honest businessman could not afford a good home to live in.

Prof Sayeed said although the autocratic regimes were no more there in the country, the thinking of their beneficiaries had yet to be changed.

"Now they are hatching conspiracies so that democracy cannot take place at the grassroots," he observed, and said, the country was now passing through a transition.

Referring to the aggression from 'open sky culture' Prof Sayeed said alien culture was introduced in the country by Ziaur Rahman from the ship Hizbul Bahar and also from Bogra. "Later, it was reintroduced in the country during BNP's last tenure in office when it allowed

Bangladesh Television to broadcast foreign television channels though they are very much contrary to Bangladesh's values and culture," he observed.

The State Minister, however, said that the aggression of alien culture could be resisted by creating quality programmes matching with our own culture and heritage.

"Bangladesh Betar is playing a tremendous role in reflecting the country's heritage and culture defying aggression of the alien culture now being spread by satellite channels."

Recalling the historic role of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra in the Liberation War in 1971 Prof Sayeed, a valiant freedom fighter, said the declaration of independence by Bangladesh was aired from the Kendra on March 26, 1971, motivated the nation to fight for independence.

"Following its glorious history, Bangladesh Betar is playing a key role in motivating people in human resource development," he said. The State Minister asked Betar to preserve all its historic documents for the benefit of the new generation.



Rtn AK Rafiquddin Ahmed (R) of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West handing over a set of five computer monitor cords for the ICU of Ibrahim Memorial Hospital to Brig (Rtd) M Mazhar Hossain (L), Director, BIRDEM at the Dhaka Club yesterday. — Star photo

Milad at Nuri Mosque today

The Liberation Museum will hold a milad mahfil after Asr prayers today at Nuri Mosque at Muslim Bazar in the city's Mirpur area to pray for the peace of the departed souls of those killed during the Liberation War in 1971, reports BSS.

A large number of human skulls and bones were unearthed during the excavation of a well on the premises of the mosque recently.

The premises was used by the killers as one of the mass graves during the country's Liberation War.

10 ABC sponsored students pass SSC exams

Ten visually impaired students, residing in hostels sponsored by Assistance for Blind Children (ABC), passed SSC examinations this year, reports UNB.

Of the students, eight got first division while two second division, said an ABC press release yesterday.

The hostels where the blind students reside are located in Brahmanbaria, Mymensingh, Sirajganj and Magura districts.

BFUJ, DUJ condemn sacking of 19 Ajker Kagaj journalists

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalist (DUJ) yesterday condemned the sacking of 19 Ajker Kagaj journalists, reports BSS.

In a joint statement, BFUJ President and Secretary General Abul Kalam Azad and Akhtar Ahmed Khan and DUJ President and General Secretary Altaf Mahmud and Abdul Jalil Bhuian expressed their strong protest and indignation over the action of the management of the daily.

The leaders pointed out the Ajker Kagaj authorities had been enjoying all government facilities including advertisement although they did not issue appointment letters to journalists and implement the Wage Board Award. The union leaders called upon the government to withdraw all those facilities provided to the daily.

The union leaders said the owner-editor of Ajker Kagaj has created an anarchic situation in the paper by firing journalists on trivial issues which is contrary to a healthy situation in the newspaper industries.

Sounding a note of caution the leaders said the owners of Ajker Kagaj will have to face the consequences if the sacked journalists are not reinstated and given appointment letter immediately.

Meeting of Cadet College Council held

A meeting of the Bangladesh Cadet College Council was held at the Dhaka Cantonment yesterday, reports BSS.

Important matters related to various problems faced by the Cadet Colleges and their possible solutions as well as development and other related matters came up for discussion, an ISPR press release said.

Kibria says BNP had signed transit agreement with India

HOBIGANJ, Aug 4: Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria observed that the then BNP government had signed transit agreement with India foreseeing financial benefit of the country from the deal, reports UNB.

"But it's again they who are now opposing this by calling a hartal as the Awami League government, on principle has decided to give transshipment facility to India. It's unfortunate for a nation," he said.

He made the comment a day after a 30-hour shutdown enforced by the BNP-led opposition alliance against a cabinet decision in this regard ended Tuesday.

Inaugurating the new building of Sachindra College at Nagura in Baniachang thana today he called upon the opposition parties to shun negative and trivial politics in the interest of national development.

The Finance Minister described various development

schemes being implemented by the government.

Earlier, the minister laid the foundation-stone of district jail. The prison with a capacity of accommodating 1000 inmates is being constructed at a cost of Tk 22.56 crore, officials said.

Later, Kibria attended a review meeting of Agriculture and Irrigation Department, Facilities Department, Water Development Board, Local Government and Engineering Department and Rural Electrification Board.

The meeting was informed that Tk 36.46 crore had been disbursed in farm credits in the last fiscal year, exceeding the target of Tk 35.88 crore.

Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Suranjit Sengupta, Dewan Farid Gazi MP, Enamul Huq Mustafa Shahid and DG Habibur Rahman attended the meeting, among others.



Sayed Sajeda Chowdhury, Minister for Forests and Environment speaking at the inaugural function of afforestation programme of British American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB) in the city yesterday.

BATB launches annual tree plantation programme

By Staff Correspondent

The British American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB), as a part of its afforestation programme, yesterday launched its yearly campaign to distribute free-of-cost saplings for five days from Bonsai, its Dhaka based nursery.

The launching ceremony was formally inaugurated by, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Minister for Environment and Forests.

BATB's officials said since the beginning of its afforestation programme in 1980, some 32 million saplings, mostly of Ipil Ipil, have been distributed and planted in areas of Kushtia, Rangpur, Manikganj, Chittagong and Rangamati. These areas grow bulk of the country's tobacco leaves. In the current year the tobacco company has distributed 3.2 million saplings among the tobacco leaf farmers.

The company has also imparted training among the farmers on how to look after these trees.

Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury stressed the need for afforestation in the country and sighted that some 17.5 per cent of the country's land might be submerged due to the green house effect. "This natural disaster must be deterred by mass afforestation," she said.

The minister called upon the people to participate in the tree

plantation programme that began on June 15 and will continue upto September 15 this year.

Yesterday's campaign was launched in a bid to motivate the urban dwellers towards planting trees, BATB officials said at a press briefing later.

When asked why they were insisting on distributing Ipil Ipil instead of local varieties, BATB's Regional Manager of Manikganj, Amanul Karim replied that the Ipil Ipil is a bio-friendly species, it is fast growing and is commercially viable. It gains wood fuel value from the third year of its growth and timber value from the eighth year. BATB officials said although about 75 per cent of the trees were Ipil Ipil, the remaining 25 per cent were mixture of guava, neem, jackfruit, shishu and others.

Rebecca I Moudouf of the BATB's Media Relations said the company was using neem extracts as pesticide in the tobacco fields.

She said that said under the company's programme the trees have been planted along roadsides, canal banks and some also on farmers' premises. It includes 300 of the 900-mile canal banks in Kushtia, Rangpur and along the railway tracks near Hardinge Bridge.

Seett calm, 2 more held

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The families of the detained employees had accused police, specially the Officer-in-Charge of the Jhama Thana, of behaving roughly when they went to visit them in custody. A brother of Mizanur Rahman, an employee leader complained that he was slapped and his niece was shouted at by the OC who used abusive language, a newspaper reported yesterday quoting them said. But the OC was not available for comment. A duty officer at 8-45 p.m. told the Star that the OC was not available nor had he heard about such incidents.

Mizanur Rahman, general secretary of the class four employees' association along with Shah Alam, co-chairman of a 'Oikyo Jote' of the employees were sent to prison along with two others yesterday. Police had sought further remand for them. But police would not say if the remand was granted or not.

Authorities meanwhile continued their punitive action to restore discipline after the arrest of Shah Alam and others on Sunday led to ransacking of several rooms of officials and including that of the minister for labour. So far 37 employees have been put under suspension.

A statement by the 'Oikyo Jote' issued by Abdul Halim urged authorities to release their leaders, withdraw punitive suspensions and set a ministerial committee to accept their demands instead of continuing with the crackdown.

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Plainclothes police meanwhile questioned some officials yesterday trying to find out about their suspected involvement in the employees' agitation, a move that sent jitters among officers in the Secretariat. However, even on this matter, police would not comment.

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New RU VC takes over

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Aug 4: The newly appointed Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the university Prof Sayeedur Rahman Khan has taken over charges today.

He takes the charges from the outgoing VC Prof Abdul Khaleque at a simple ceremony at the VC office at 10.00 am. The RU Treasurer, Registrar, Accounts Director, Proctor, Deans of the faculties, chairmen of all departments and other high officials were present there. He is the 17th VC of the university.

Prof Khan was nominated the VC by the President yesterday. He had secured the 54 votes in the RU Senate election held on June 19.

A group of miscreants intercepted the motorbike of Abdur Razzak and snatched the bag containing the said money from him at gun point, police said.

They also beat up Razzak. A case has been filed accusing five people with Poba thana in this connection.

5 defaulters

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ited, Kohinor Jute Mills Limited, M Noor Hossain, Coastal Sea Foods Limited and Premier Products Limited.

Before taking the decision at the meeting on Tuesday the committee had detail discussions on several audit objections against loan defaulters of different branches of Sonali Bank involving Tk 111 crore 25 lakh.

Comptroller General of Audit and Accounts raised audit objections of the fiscal 1996-97 against the defaulters.

Committee members Prof M Ali Ashraf, M K Anwar, M Mujibur Rahman, Whip Abdus Shahid, Abul Kalam Azad, Mostafizur Rahman, Nurul Islam Nahid, Hafizuddin Ahmed, A H M Mostafa Kamal attended the meeting.

Comptroller and Auditor General Hafizuddin Khan and other officials concerned were present.

Hospital

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germ here (through culture and sensitivity test) but the latest method requires only one week. We need modern technology to overcome such problems."

There are nine binocular microscopes but only three are functioning and six are out of order for more than two years. Four more are required. There are two electrical balances but those are not functioning well.

The chemical analyser also does not give accurate results, they said.

The laboratories also give a filthy look. During the visit, walls floors, and tables of hemato pathology and chemical pathology laboratories were found smudged with chemicals and specimen of blood. Two basketfuls of used syringes were found left in the open. The insects gave an impression that those were not cleaned in several days.

Asked about the lack of reagents for use of the gas electrolyte analyser, Superintendent of the hospital A K M Shamsul Alam said, "We floated tender to procure reagents but only two parties responded. As per rule, bidding by at least three parties is necessary. So, the tender was cancelled. Because the process for buying reagents is complicated, we could not go for re-tender." He however said reagents will be procured soon.

About tests done (blood gas and electrolyte analysis) outside, the superintendent's version contradicted with that of the biochemist.

Alam said only one or two tests were done in absence of reagents. Alam admitted that tests are done outside. In case of poor patients, social welfare organisations are requested to pay for the tests, he said.

Asked about the dirty condition in laboratories and waste disposal, Alam said there are sweepers in all the departments. "It is their responsibility to keep the laboratories clean. We collect syringes and destroy those by burning. All waste materials are dumped in open space on the hospital premises," Alam said.

The yearly budget for Medical Surgical Requisites (MSR) for the hospital is Tk 1.5 crore.

Ship sinking

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Mongla Port Authority (MPA), the vessel could not leave the port after unloading the cement due to a litigation between the importer and the owner of the vessel. The importer stopped the departure of the vessel through a court order. But by this time, the owner of the vessel became bankrupt and at last decided to sell it as scrap.

After winning the legal battle, the vessel left Mongla Port at 2:50 pm on Monday and crossed Hiron Point at about 6:50 pm.

The cracks developed at the bottom of the vessel after it reached 25 nautical miles north-east of the Bay of Bengal. MV Shibsha of MPA has also left the port for rescue of the crew who are reportedly crying also for food and water.

Efforts are on to rescue the crew at any cost declaring the vessel abandoned. The sea is rough and Navy's rescue ship MV Khadem has been obstructed by foul weather, said a MPA source.

Sex workers

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convened the meeting to learn about the ideas of those opposing the government programme, seek their suggestions and cooperation for an effective rehabilitation programme.

Mahbuba Mahmud, who represented a women body in the meeting, said they would continue agitation against the illegal eviction of the sex workers unless a practical solution to the problem was worked out.

Meanwhile, the UNDP country representative David Lockwood met State Minister for Social Welfare Dr Mozammel Hossain at the later's office yesterday to know about the rehab programme.

Asked about their meeting, secretary of the ministry Dr. K M Das replied that the meeting had no link with any UNDP programme.

A few days before, an alliance of 59 women and human rights organisations handed over Lockwood a memorandum condemning "violation of human rights" to forward to the UN Human Rights Commissioner.

Human bones

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tee during its building construction work found a human skull and some bones on July 27 and the following day. The committee then covered the site with two truck load of earth and sealed off the area.

But on hearing the news, the Museum authorities on July 31 started excavating the area in cooperation with the mosque committee for human remains.

The site is at Muslim Bazar in Mirpur Section-12.

BNP emergency meet tomorrow

An emergency meeting of the National Executive Committee members of BNP residing in Dhaka will be held at Leader of the Opposition's Minto Road office at 5 pm tomorrow, reports UNB.

Party chairperson Khaleda Zia will preside over the meeting.

Members of the National Standing Committee and Advisory Council of the Chairperson, including vice-presidents, officials and members, residing in Dhaka have been requested to attend the meeting.

BNP march

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member Abdul Matin Chowdhury has been made the road march coordinator for Narayanganj and Narsingdhi districts and Bhairab thana.

Chowdhury will finalise the routes and spots for public meetings during the Dhaka-Bhairab march. Sources said the party chief is expected to address at least 13 public rallies on her way to Bhairab.

The BNP has also finalised programmes for public meetings in eight parliamentary constituencies in the capital city beginning August 9.