

## 'T&T mobile phones now only a matter of time'

Introduction of the much-awaited mobile and cellular phones under the Telephone and Telegraph Board (T&T) is only a matter of time, reports BSS.

Home, Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim disclosed this at the fourth national conference of Bangladesh Telecommunications Society (BTS) at the Telephone Bhaban yesterday.

"We are looking for the fund. Inshallah, the mobile facilities in T&T will be introduced in Bangladesh," he said without elaborating while speaking at the conference.

Nasim said that T&T is still a profitable concern of the government. So there is no reason for its privatisation.

The function was also addressed by Chairman of T&T Khondoker Abdul Matin, President of Jatiya Sramik League Abdus Salam Khan, Secretary General of Central Trade Union Dr Wajed Ali and General Secretary of BTKSP Rafiqul Islam.

Mohammad Nasim said that the government wants to solve

problems through discussion with representatives of workers and employees of each sector. "But none can be a leader of a collective bargaining agent (CBA) unless elected by his fellows," he said and added the concept of trade unionism should be changed. He also directed the T&T chairman to take necessary steps to hold elections in T&T CBA.

He said that the government has done a lot in the telephone sector. Besides, the government has opened up competitive field for the private entrepreneurs breaking the monopoly of a foreign company which was chosen by the past government.

He also said that the government will do its best to stand by the T&T men, but warned none would be spared if found busy with personal gain instead of providing services to subscribers.

He sought cooperation from the workers and employees of the board to root out elements against the interest of the sector and provide better services to the subscribers.

## Rickshawpuller shot by police dies

By Staff Correspondent

The rickshawpuller who came in a cross fire between police and phensidyl traders at Agargaon slum on Tuesday died of pellet injury on the back of his head the same day, hospital sources said quoting his post mortem report.

"The victim might have died of police firing," said the police officer responsible for Tuesday's raid on the Agargaon slum.

A team of Mohammadpur police carried out a raid against drug traders at the slum in the afternoon, sources said adding that the victim was an innocent rickshawpuller and not among the gang members whom the police was chasing following the raid.

A constable named Ali fired the shots at the gang members, sources said.

The new DMP Commissioner Matur Rahman soon after taking over his offices last month asked the police to "shoot on sight" muggers and robbers to arrest the capital's deteriorating crime situation.

Police has been advised to take sufficient precautionary measures before implementing such a decision so that innocent people were not victimised, the Commissioner earlier stated without mentioning who would bear responsibility for deaths of innocent people in such cases.

The commissioner, however, could not be contacted for his comments in this regard last night.

## 'Public Safety Act creating panic among public'

By Court Correspondent

The recently enacted Public Safety Act came under tremendous criticism during a discussion held under the auspices of the Court Reporters Association held in the city yesterday.

The discussion on 'Human Rights and Court Reporting' held at the auditorium of the Dhaka Bar Association was chaired by Justice Habibur Rahman Khan, Chairman of Press Council.

Barrister Moinul Hossain, Abdus Sattar Khan, DC of Dhaka and A Rezzak Khan, president of the Bar were special guests on the occasion.

Condemning the Public Safety Act the speakers said that provision of trials brought under the Act could be done very easily under the existing laws.

The act has created panic among the public, they added, comparing it with previous such acts promulgated under different regimes.

## Queen Sophia calls on President

Visiting Queen Sophia of Spain made a courtesy call on President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday evening, reports BSS.

Welcoming the queen, President Shahabuddin appreciated her concern for and abiding interest in poverty alleviation in developing countries. He also mentioned her role as a patron of micro-credit programmes.

One major initiative of the government is Ashrayan project that provides shelter to the homeless and slum-dwellers, the President said. He appreciated Spain for giving assistance to many rural development projects including the Grameen Bank Project.

President Justice Shahabuddin expressed satisfaction over the cordial and friendly relations between Bangladesh and Spain.

Queen Sophia thanked the President for receiving her and her delegation. She said that she would continue to assist various development programmes in Bangladesh.

Secretary to President Muhammad Ismail Hossain, Foreign Secretary CM Shafi Sami, Ambassador of Spain to Bangladesh Mr Don Alberto Escudero and members of the delegation were present on the occasion.

## Chuadanga AL leaders call on Hasina

A delegation of Chuadanga district Awami League (AL) led by its president Advocate Yunus Ali and general secretary Solyman Haque Joardar called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday, reports BSS.

They congratulated the prime minister for curbing terrorism in the country in general and in Chuadanga in particular. They urged the prime minister to take up more development programmes in the district and accelerate the existing projects.

The prime minister said the present government believe in strength of the people and all its activities are aimed at their development.

She also asked the leaders to strengthen party activities in their area.

## Police camp looting 9 arrested in Rajbari so far

RAJBARI, Feb 9: Some 11 people have been arrested in connection with the looting of arms and ammunition Monday from Jowkura police camp by armed terrorists, reports UNB.

No arms or ammunition could be recovered till Wednesday evening.

Police did not disclose the identity of the arrested persons for the sake of investigation. A boatman was held from Dhanchi area.

The arrested persons were being interrogated.

Eight police squads, including one from the Special Branch, spread out in a bid to recover the arms and ammunition and arrest the terrorists involved in the looting.

A group of terrorists looted six rifles, one SMG, one SLR and 260 rounds of ammunition.

## Compilation of President's speeches out

A book titled 'Ganatantra Uttarar Ganatantra Birirman' was presented to President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed by its Editor at Bangabhaban yesterday, reports BSS.

The book is a compilation of speeches delivered by President Shahabuddin Ahmed on various occasions. The book was edited by the former Registrar of Dhaka University, columnist and educationist Syed Badrudin Hossain. Publisher of the book, Ahmed Mahmudul Huq, was also present on the occasion.

## Teachers should give emphasis on qualitative education'

The Vice-Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Abdul Bayes said yesterday that the teachers should give emphasis on qualitative instead of quantitative education, reports BSS.

Prof Bayes asked all the teachers of the university to be united to reduce session jam and root out terrorism from the campus while he was addressing the university teachers at the seminar room of the university central auditorium.

Many of the teachers are not serious enough to take tests in time which created frustration among the students, he said and asked the teachers to contribute their best for the welfare of the students.

Prof Bayes also mentioned of the poor financial condition, transport problem, inadequate cultural activities in the university and asked all to help him for a smooth running of the university.

Prof Sayed Shafiqullah and Dr Abdul Latif Masum spoke on the occasion. Registrar of Jahangirnagar University Mohammad Ali and Treasurer Prof Sharif Enamul Kabir were also present.

## Call for ban on Jainal Hajari's book

SDUASH holds solidarity rally on DU campus

By DU Correspondent

The students of the Dhaka University yesterday held a solidarity rally on the Dhaka University campus against sexual harassment on women.

The students under the banner of 'Students of Dhaka University Against Sexual Harassment' (SDUASH) held the rally at the Sheparjita Sadhiana at the Teacher and Students Centre (TSC) intersection.

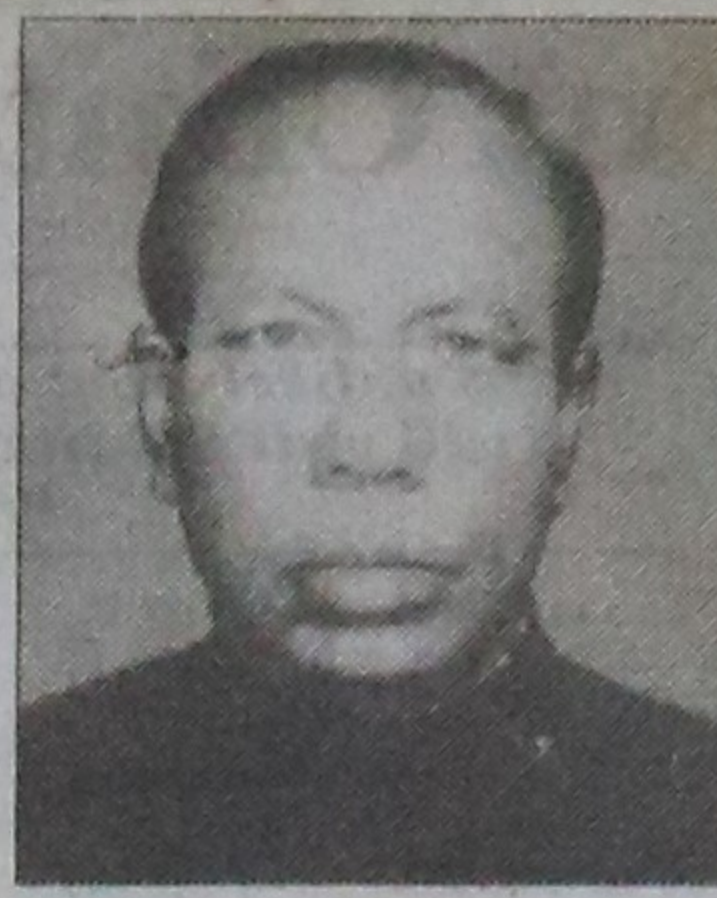
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) and Hill Women's Federation (HWF), Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, general students and some other cultural organisations and activists expressed solidarity with the students.

Addressing the rally, the speakers demanded a code of conduct against sexual harassment and a complaint cell at the university.

The speakers condemned Jainal Hajari, an MP for his a book titled 'Badhoner Bichar Chai' and also demanded ban on the book.

They also demanded exemplary punishment of Ferdous Hossain, a teacher of Political Science and General Secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) who was arrested recently in connection with assaulting his wife. He is now in jail.

Among others, Ayesha Khanom of BMP, Kabita Chakma of HWM, Mahmuduzzaman Babu, Zonayed Saki, Uzai Azim, Ehsani Moni, Kamrul and Bidisha addressed the rally.



## Abdur Rashid dead

Mohammad Abdur Rashid, a former member of parliament from Laxmipur constituency, died of heart failure at a hospital in New Delhi, India on Tuesday night. He was 78, reports BSS.

Rashid had been suffering from kidney ailments for a long time.

He was a close associate of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and was elected four times as a member of parliament.

He is survived by his wife, three sons and a number of grand children.

The *namaz-e-janaza* of the deceased will be held at Banani Chairman Bari Mosque tomorrow after *Juma* prayers and the body will be buried at Banani Graveyard.

Rashid's *qulhwani* will be held at his residence at House-36, Road-1, Block-1, Banani after *Rasr* prayers on Saturday.

## Hasina condoles

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of elderly politician Abdur Rashid.

In a condolence message, the prime minister said that with his death the nation has lost a patriotic leader.

She conveyed her sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for peace of the departed soul.

## Green agenda needed to reverse environmental degradation

Participants at workshop say

Editors and speakers at a workshop yesterday emphasised the need for formulation of green agenda of the political parties to reverse the environmental degradation and downturn reports BSS.

They were addressing a Workshop on Environmental Reporting, organised by Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) with support from the Ministry of Environment and Forest and UNDP at National Press Club.

Environment Secretary Sayed Marghub Murshed, the Daily Independent Editor Mahbabul Alam, Executive Editor of Daily Banglar Bani Shafiqul Aziz Mukul and BSS Managing Director and Chief Editor Haroon Habib spoke at the opening session chaired by FEJB Chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury.

Marghub Murshed said the issues of both governance and environment should be addressed at one-go because without improvement in the governance one can't expect a magical solution to any environmental problem.

"If the decay of Calcutta can

be reverted, the down-turn of Dhaka City is also possible," he said and called the environmental journalists to play the watch dog's role.

Mahbabul Alam said there are laws, rules, regulations and programmes to arrest environmental degradation but the physical environment in reality is getting worse.

He said that political will is required to solve the severe environmental problem of Dhaka city as the situation in Calcutta improved riding on the strong political will.

Shafiqul Aziz said a healthy political environment supported by the strong culture and solid economic growth can only ensure a healthy physical environment in Bangladesh.

"Dialogue with political leaders is essential to improve the environment. The river Buriganga is being encroached at the patronisation of the political high-ups. The river is dying. The level of air pollution is deteriorating alarmingly. Deforestation is on the rise. But nobody cares, he said."

Haroon Habib requested FEJB to initiate a campaign so

that all political parties place their environmental agenda in their election manifestoes before the next general election.

He said FEJB as a professional body of environmental journalists of proven track record should take a lead in unfolding the green agenda in Bangladesh.

Quamrul Chowdhury said professional excellence, integrity and superior skill of environmental journalists supported by their editors can help mount awareness about environmental degradation and sensitize political leaders for taking urgent steps in improving the environment and conserving the nature.

Director of the Department of Environment Mohammad Rezauddin, Environment Ministry's Sustainable Environment Management Programme Coordinator Dr Mahfuzul Haque, Health Ministry's Dr AZM Iftikar Husein, Director of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association Syeda Rizwana Hasan and IUCN Country Director Dr Ainun Nishat were resource persons at different sessions of the two-day workshop.



Syed Marghub Murshed, Environment Secretary speaking at a workshop on "Environmental Reporting" organised by Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) in association with Ministry of Environment and Forest and UNDP at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

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