

## Metropolitan

## 'Dhaka needs more access to US market'

Bangladesh needs expanded and continued access to US market for developing the country's industrial base and raising the GNP, reports UNB.

"We must push for more market access and it is more vital than anything for Bangladesh's future," said Abdul Awal Minto, President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry expressing his views as to how Bangladesh can benefit from Clinton's ensuing visit.

Bangladesh will be benefited much if any agreement for free trade is signed with USA during the visit of the President, he added.

"We should offer bilateral free trade arrangements with USA," he said, echoing the idea floated by leading economist Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud.

He referred to some Asian giants like Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan and said their market access to USA brought them today's prosperity.

To develop its industrial base, Bangladesh must have an uninterrupted access to US market beyond the year 2004. Minto said. Bangladesh needs enough time to prepare for the quota-free regime.

Minto said FBCCI has already approached to the US State Department in Washington and US Embassy in Dhaka for an appointment with Bill Clinton during his stay in Dhaka. Business community is now setting its agenda with special focus on increased cooperation between the two private sectors to place to the US President.

"If we can convince the US president, he may put the mechanism in order before he leaves the office next year," Minto said.

Bangladesh is required to develop its gas resource and develop market for it. USA has

the technology. "We must take an opportunity to convince him (Clinton) for more US technology and capital."

But first of all, US companies must develop their interest about Bangladesh. Clinton's visit, the FBCCI chief said, would infuse interest among US companies and encourage them to invest here.

He said massive US investment is needed in heavy energy consuming industries like cement, fertiliser, paper and chemical and the visit may create more scopes for US investment.

About the government move to sign a long-term agreement with the USA for developing a nuclear power plant, he said it would be a "big gain" for Bangladesh if the US agrees to the proposal.

The visit may also pave the way for complete waiving of the debt under PL-480 and conversion of it into free development assistance, he added.

Above all, the trip of the US president will definitely elevate Bangladesh's prestige in the SAARC as well as in the whole world.

"It will make us more important in world politics," he said.

## US HR report on Bangladesh

The Embassy of the United States of America will formally release the Bangladesh section of the US State Department Human Rights Report for 1999 today at 4:30 pm at USIS Mohamenshah House, House 110, Road 27, Banani, says a press release.

The US State Department prepares and releases this annual report mandated by the Congress on the state of human rights in 194 countries around the world.



Justice Habibur Rahman Khan, chairman of Bangladesh Press Council, addressing a seminar on "Mass media in the 21st century: Problems and Prospects" at TSC auditorium yesterday. Dhaka University Journalists' Association (DUJA) organised the event on the occasion of its 15th founding anniversary.

— Star photo

## BCL founding anniversary today

By DU Correspondent

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the ruling party, will hold a reunion at Paltan Maidan today to mark its 52nd founding anniversary.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will attend the programme as chief guest while Bahadur Bepari will preside. The programme begins at 11 am.

## Training on disaster preparedness from Feb 27

Disaster Preparedness Information Service (DPIIS), a project of PRIP Trust, is going to conduct a three-day training programme on Disaster Preparedness and Response for mid-level NGO Officials from February 27 to 29, says a press release.

The programme will be held at Gano Unnayan Procheta Training Centre, Rajoir, Madaripur.

This is a programme of Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) as part of Environmental Awareness & Monitoring at Grassroots Level Project (EAMGLP), Sustainable Environment Management Programme (SEMP), Ministry of Environment and Forests.

## DUJA founding anniversary

By DU Correspondent

The annual seminar and grand reunion of Dhaka University Journalist Association (DUJA) was held yesterday at the Teachers' and Students' Centre of the Dhaka University to mark the 15th founding anniversary of the association.

Professor A A M S Arefin Siddique delivered the keynote speech at the seminar on "Mass Media of 21st Century: Problems and Prospects" while it was also addressed by Professor A K Azad Chowdhury, the Vice Chancellor of the university as the chief guest.

The discussants at the seminar were Justice Habibur Rahman Khan, chairman of Bangladesh Press Council, Obaidul Haq, former editor of the Bangladesh Observer and Iraj Ahmed, Staff Reporter of the Daily Prothom Alo.

Addressing the seminar as chief guest, Vice Chancellor of the Dhaka University Azad Chowdhury stressed the necessity of press freedom and responsibilities of the journalists and said journalists have to be alert about it.

In his key note speech Dr Arefin Siddique, chairman of Board of Directors of BSS and

Professor of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University said, "The rapid improvement in computer technology has opened up the windows of revolution in mass media."

"Journalists have to play their role so that people get justice and they should keep in mind that their reports do not create anarchy in the society," Habibur Rahman Khan said.

Obaidul Haq underscored the need of reporters' social responsibilities and duties together.

Presiding over the ceremony, Abdul Kalam Azad, president of DUJA, urged the university authorities to introduce an award for campus reporting and said, "It would be a great inspiration for the reporters to produce quality reporters."

The seminar was conducted by Mamunur Rashid, the general secretary of DUJA.

In the reminiscence session, a number of former Dhaka University correspondents recollect memories of their campus life. The programme was followed by a cultural programme in the evening where two dramas, directed by Ashish Khandakar were staged.

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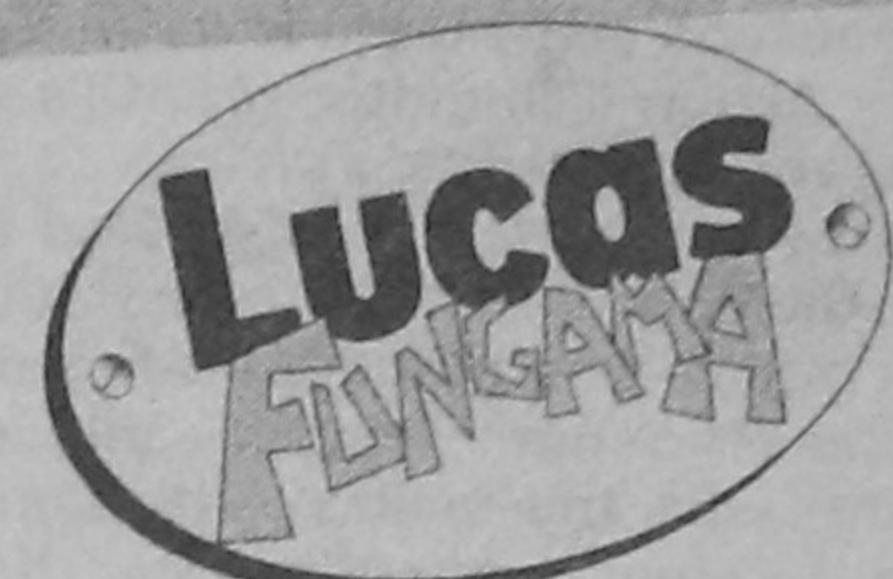
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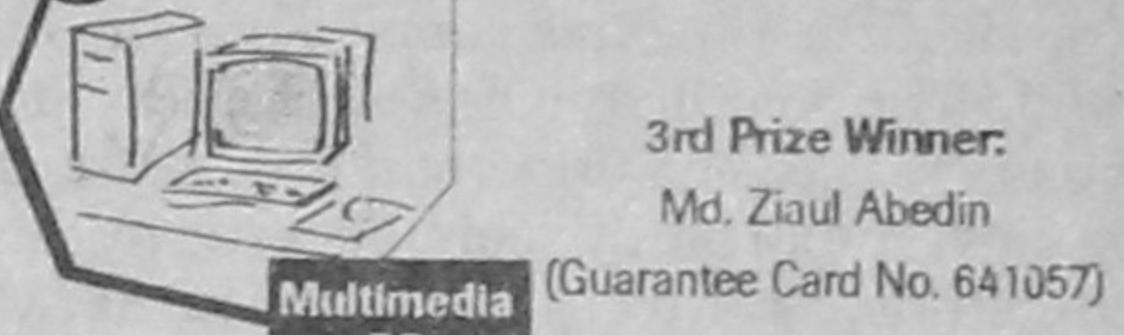
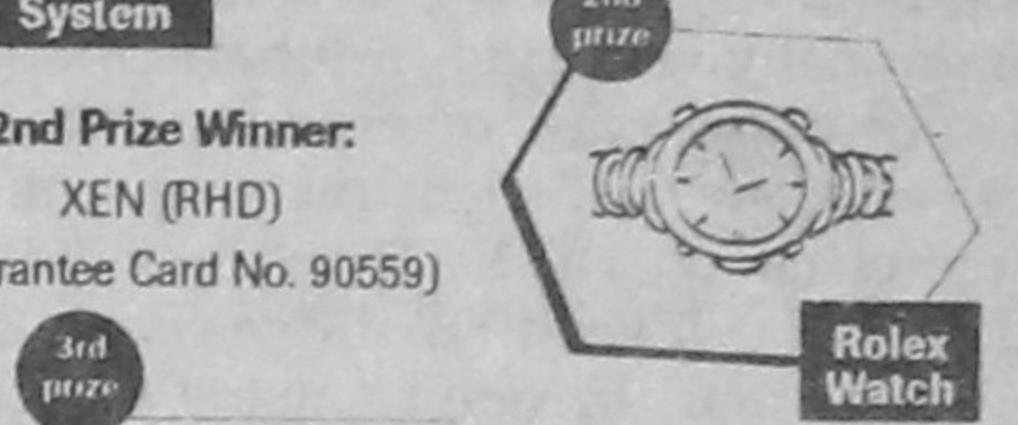
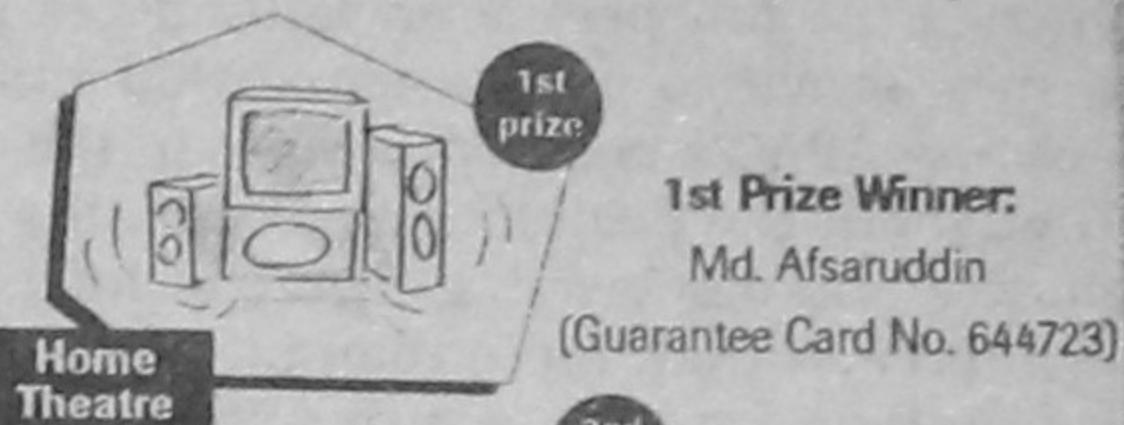
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## BILS trainees confce begins in city

The second BILS/LO-FTF Trainees Conference has begun yesterday morning at BIM campus in the city, says a press release.

State Minister for Textile A K M Jahangir Hossain was chief guest in the opening session while Ambassador of Royal Danish Embassy in Bangladesh Finn Thisted and ILO representative Annemarie Reerink were the special guests.

BILS Chairman Ahsan Ullah MP presided over the function. The inaugural session was also addressed by BILS Vice Chairperson Prof Zahan Ara Begum, BILS Advisor Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar and Project Manager Hans Kastrup Anderson, Executive Director of BILS/LO-FTF Project Nazrul Islam Khan presented the address of welcome.

In his inaugural speech the state minister emphasised on workers' participation in the reforms and privatisation process. He mentioned that hand over of nine textile mills to the workers was a good decision of the government.

A total of 400 trade union activists of different national trade union federations who participated in the training courses of the project are attending the conference. The closing session of this two day-long conference will be held today.

## Muktir Kotha to be screened for DRU today

A special screening of 'Muktir Kotha' will be held for Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) today at 3 pm at Shawkat Osman Auditorium of Central Public Library. Complimentary tickets will be available for members of the Dhaka Reporters' Unity from DRU office or at the beginning of the show or at the auditorium on first come, first served basis, says a press release.

Tareque and Catherine Masud, Directors of 'Muktir Kotha' will be present during the screening of the 85-minute documentary along with some participants of the documentary which portrays the struggle and suffering of the people in 1971.



Students of Bangladesh Bank Adarsha High School performing a dance number at its annual prize distribution ceremony and cultural programme on the school premises yesterday.

— Star photo

## Int'l conference on manufacturing

Some 100 experts from developed and developing countries began a three-day international conference in the city Thursday to discuss manufacturing for the new millennium, reports UNB.

Vice Chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) Prof Nooruddin Ahmed inaugurated the International Conference on Manufacturing (ICM)-2000 organised by Department of Industrial and Production Engineering of the University.

Experts and practitioners from the USA, UK, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, India, Finland, Nigeria, Ireland, Papua New Guinea and Bangladesh are attending the conference. Ninety research papers on 14 topics related to manufacturing will be presented in 16 sessions, which

will conclude on Saturday. Inaugurating the conference, Prof Nooruddin Ahmed said the forum will create opportunities in this field and enable the researchers from both developing and developed world to discuss manufacturing for the new millennium.

Prof M Golam Mohiuddin, head of IPE department, said the people in the 21st century are heading towards a 'Cyber Society' where the evolution of global manufacturing will be a great challenge for the Manufacturing Engineers.

Developments in computer and communication technology, new materials, new manufacturing methods and evolution of global manufacturing for the global market have transformed rapidly during the last couple of decades at a double rate, he added.



Prof Dr Nooruddin Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor of BUET addressing as chief guest the inaugural ceremony of the Reunion 2000 of Sher-e-Bangla Hall of the university, organised by the Hall Alumni Association at BUET Central Auditorium yesterday.

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