



Zeaul Huq's qulkhwani on Tuesday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Zeaul Huq Tulu, Chairman and Managing Director of Ori-Oxi and Director in the IPDC and KAFCO was buried at Banani graveyard yesterday.

Earlier, his namaj-e-janaza was held at Gulshan Mosque after Zohr prayers.

Huq, a former president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, died at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore on Friday. He was suffering from kidney and liver ailments for long.

Qulkhwani of Zeaul Huq Tulu will be held on Tuesday (February 20) at Banani Jame Mosque, Road No 10, Banani, after Asr prayers.

RU closed till March 10

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Rajshahi University has been declared closed till March 10 following a series of clashes between the students and people of Meherhandi village adjacent to the campus on Friday.

The Syndicate took the decision at an emergency meeting yesterday.

Resident students were asked to vacate their respective dormitories by 4 pm yesterday.

However, the administrative building and office will remain open during the vacation.

At least 60 people including 35 students of the university were injured in a series of clashes between the students and the villagers.

Meanwhile, the university authorities have formed a six-member committee headed by Prof Mokhlesur Rahman Chowdhury to

Repression on girls 3 post-graduates barred from attending JU convocation

UNB, Savar

Three post-graduates of Jahangirnagar University were debarred from attending the convocation ceremony yesterday for their involvement in repression on girl students on the campus.

The action was taken on Miradul Islam, Nabiul Haq Rony and Ruhul Quddus.

It came following warning of President Shahabuddin Ahmed, also Chancellor of the University, that he would not attend the convocation ceremony if he is to confer the certificates on anyone involved in

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Help develop IT sector to reduce unemployment

PM urges engrsr at IEB convention

UNB, Khulna

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the engineers to adopt appropriate technologies in all productive sectors for accelerating the pace of development and meeting all basic needs of the people.

The Awami League government, she said, is working as per its pledge for ensuring people's basic needs food, clothing, housing, education and health.

"Proper application of information technology will reduce the number of unemployed as well as help earn huge foreign exchange," she said while inaugurating the 45th convention of the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB) at Khalishpur in Khulna.

The Prime Minister called upon the engineers to play leading role in expanding computer training and education for the success of government plan to create 1,000 programmers every year.

She told the function that the government had sanctioned Tk 15 crore for the development of IT sector, and if necessary, the allocation would be increased.

Sheikh Hasina mentioned that the government has a

plan to establish 12 science and technology universities and make three of those multimedia and IT-based. Besides, 10,000 computers have already been supplied for secondary schools.

She also listed government steps for setting up a high-powered task force on IT, increasing use of computers and opening websites in government offices and introducing Prime Minister's Award in IT.

The Prime Minister apprised the engineers that the government is going to establish connection to Information Superhighway through optic-fibre cables. This connection between Bangladesh and Singapore through submarine cables will cost 40 million dollars.

Sheikh Hasina urged the engineers to show professional excellence and high efficiency while utilising science and technology as tools of development.

She assured that the government would consider the

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Confce of World Assoc of Press Councils begins tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

The eighth International Conference of World Association of Press Councils (WAPC), sponsored by Bangladesh Press Council begins in the city tomorrow.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the conference at 3 pm on the day at Osmani Memorial auditorium, a release of the Press Council said yesterday.

Justice P B Sawant, president of WAPC will preside.

About 60 foreign delegates representing various press and media councils are expected to attend the function. Besides, distinguished media personalities like M J Akbar, Chief Editor and Managing Director of Asian Age and C R Irani, Chief Editor of the Statesman, India will participate as special invitees.

There will be four business sessions at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on February 20. The topics of the conference are: The promotion of Media Freedom and code of ethics, right to information with reference to official secrets and other related laws, media and development and the role of media in promoting international peace and cooperation.

Justice Latifur Rahman, Chief Justice of Bangladesh, Abdul Matin Khasru, Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Prof Abu Sayeed, State Minister for Information and Abul Hasan Chowdhury, State Minister for Foreign Affairs will be chief guests at these sessions.

Editors, journalists, lawyers, professors of different universities, members of the Armed Forces Division and law enforcing agencies will present keynote papers and participate as discussants.

On February 21, leaders of W A P C

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A dialogue on Rethinking Self-reliance, organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) in collaboration with The Daily Star and the Centre for Alternatives, was held at the BIDS conference room at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city yesterday.

'Change in mindset a must for being self-reliant'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed the need for a change in the mindset for being self-reliant as a nation and also to have a kind of culture that would open up space for people's creativity.

The Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised the seminar on 'Rethinking Self-reliance' in collaboration with The Daily Star and the Centre for Alternatives.

Held at the BIDS conference room in the city, the seminar also put accent on serious thinking on the country's education policy that has so far been running on an ad-hoc basis and not helping broaden people's mind.

Referring to the various definitions of self-reliance, the speakers emphasised on achieving autonomy in policy-making and policy implementation, leading to

expansion of choices and reduction of vulnerability.

Taking the broader perspective of self-reliance as the premise, the speakers pointed to the need for rethinking the concept itself. They said the need for rethinking emerges from the changed global circumstances with increasing globalisation of trade, promotion, services and communication as well as from the failure of state modernisation.

Dr Abu Abdullah, Director General of BIDS, chaired the first session that was moderated by Omar Haider Chowdhury of BIDS. Dr Akbar Ali Khan, Secretary, Ministry of Finance, moderated the second session that focused on rethinking intellectual and cultural self-reliance.

The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam, Dr Imtiaz Ahmed of the Centre for Alternatives, Binayak Sen of BIDS, among others, spoke on the occasion.

DETAILS ON BUSINESS PAGE

EC fears violence in coming polls

Tk 36cr sought for security measures

NAZRUL ISLAM

Fearing widespread violence in the next general elections, the Election Commission (EC) has proposed allocation of Tk 36 crore exclusively for security measures in its draft budget. The Tk 100-crore proposal is likely to be placed before the Ministry of Finance for approval this week.

According to sources at the EC Secretariat, rest of the budget has been earmarked for election management and training programmes.

This time the EC has plans to spend Tk 12 lakh for each constituency to continue countrywide drive to recover illegal arms, arrest listed felons and implement its other suggestions in this regard before the elections. Huge contingencies of troops would also be deployed at each constituency this year as was in 1996.

The EC's budget for the 1996 general elections was Tk 47 crore, less than half of what has been proposed for the 2001 polls.

Issues such as enrolment of more voters, global increase of oil price, employment of more polling and presiding officers, enhanced security arrangement and inflation have been considered while preparing the new budget proposal, informed an EC official.

Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed expressed strong determination to keep the troublemakers at bay during the polls.

"Strong preventive measures would be taken against any sort of disturbances during election time," he told The Daily Star while responding to a query on the commission's preparations to ensure peaceful polls.

Syed, however, made no direct comment on the possibility of chaos in the

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Ochendo freed, to be flown back home today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nigerian citizen Ochendo Goddya is finally free. He walked out from Dhaka Central Jail at 2:45 pm yesterday.

He languished in jail for five years seven months without any charge after serving a two-month sentence in 1995.

Two officials of the Nigerian High Commission took him to the High

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Members of the Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (Women's Council) stage a sit-in at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday for building resistance against the fatwabaz.

Grameen Bank to invest savings of rural poor in stock market

M SHAMSUR RAHMAN

Grameen Bank is planning to introduce 'mutual funds' by mobilising savings of the rural poor and investing those in the stock market to "alleviate their status to those of middle-income groups".

The savings with different Grameen projects now stand at over Tk 1000 crore. Part of these funds will be mobilised into the stock market and the returns will be distributed to them on the basis of their investments.

An application was sent to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on February 12 for registration of 'Grameen Mutual Fund One'.

Under the mutual fund, a series of schemes with funds of different sizes will be launched in the stock market. The fund will be invested in a number "selected group of companies with strong fundamentals".

By purchasing shares, the rural poor will ultimately be owners of the companies in the stock market, Grameen Bank Managing Director Dr Mohammad Yunus told The Daily Star.

"It will basically act as an old age pension scheme for the poor women who are members of the Grameen family," he said.

The investment will be risk-free. The mutual fund will guarantee a minimum dividend and ensure security of the investment, he said.

Besides members of Grameen families, other investors will be allowed to subscribe the Grameen fund.

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