



President pays last respects to Obaidullah

BSS, Dhaka

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday visited the Gulshan residence of late Abu Zafar Mohammad Obaidullah Khan to pay his last respects to the poet.

President Shahabuddin stayed there for some time, stood beside the mortal remains of the poet and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul. The President consoled the bereaved family members.

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon and Weekly Holiday Editor Enayetullah Khan, brothers of the deceased, were, among others, present.

Poet Obaidullah, who was in a coma following a brain haemorrhage, died of cardiorespiratory

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Qulkhwani tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

Renowned poet and former civil servant Abu Zafar Mohammad Obaidullah Khan was laid to rest at the Banani graveyard yesterday afternoon.

Earlier, the namaz-e-jezaza of the deceased, held at Gulshan Jame Masjid, was largely attended by political leaders, litterateurs, relatives, friends and admirers.

Former President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Chief Election Commissioner M A Syed, Minister for Fisheries and Livestock A S M Abdur Rob, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Jatiya Party (Mizan) Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, BNP leaders Saifur

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Delimitation of constituencies EC asks officials for reports by Mar 30

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has asked the officials concerned to send the latest reports on delimitation of the 300 parliamentary constituencies by March 30, as part of its preparations for an early general election.

This time the EC has decided to incorporate the names of new administrative areas in the gazette, following administrative changes in the last one for delimitation published on May 30, 1995. But demarcation of the constituencies would not be changed, said EC sources.

Names of the new thanas in metropolitan areas would also be incorporated in the gazette. The sources said thanas across the country will be renamed as upazilas.

The commission has served the notice to all deputy election commissioners, district election officials, deputy commissioners and others concerned, asking them to send the delimitation report by "special messengers" to the Election Commission Secretariat.

Meanwhile, the Ganotantr Party has urged the

Election Commission to make the voter list transparent and safeguard the upcoming election from the influence of black money and terrorism.

At a meeting with the Election Commission on electoral reforms yesterday, the party, which nominated only three candidates in the-1996 general election and lost their security deposits, proposed lowering the deposit money for candidature.

It said, "We feel it should be as low as the earlier one's, and the election commission can charge part of their expenses, if a candidate withdraws on the last date of withdrawal."

Chaired by Chief Election Commissioner M A Syed, the meeting was attended among others by Election Commissioners Abdur Rahman and Safiur Rahman, and EC Secretary Mohammad Anwarul Islam and other officials concerned on the part of EC. Ganotantr Party General Secretary Azizul Islam Khan, Saiful Islam,

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You can now cross Padma in 15 minutes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One can now cross the Padma in fifteen minutes, thanks to a recently introduced speedboat service between Maa and Keorakandi ferry ghats in Faridpur.

A group of entrepreneurs have introduced the service which has drastically cut down the usual 90 to 120 minutes required for crossing the mighty Padma on launches and ferries.

Hundreds of passengers are now using the speedboat services for TK 60 each. Up to ten people travel on each of the speedboats, which constantly shuttle between the two ghats.

Kalam Sheikh, a worker at Maa ghat said that within months of the introduction of two speedboats few months ago, at least 30 more have joined the fleet.

"It is only good for people travelling with small luggage and I am

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A speedboat, moored at a makeshift jetty, waits for passengers.

Bagerhat-2 constituency Industrialist Selim has many rivals despite all promises

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Money is no problem for him. He has already started giving donations to various organisations in Bagerhat-2 constituency (Sadar thana-Kachua), sources in political and other circles say.

Even a prominent local leader of Awami League has said he considers AH Selim as his main rival in the next parliamentary election.

Industrialist Selim joined BNP in 1999, assuring party chief Khaleda Zia of "destroying" the "Awami fort" in Bagerhat-2 and Bagerhat-3 constituencies.

Selim has an intention to contest also from Bagerhat-3 constituency (Rampal-Mongla) if the party chief desires.

Selim has created a sensation, telling local people that he would change their lot and make Bagerhat district a "paradise of SouthWestern zone" if BNP wins all the seats.

But Selim's main problem lies in

his own party where he has many rivals in getting nomination from any of the two constituencies. Component parties of the 4-party alliance in the district also have reservations about him, said some top leaders of Bagerhat BNP. "A newcomer can not go ahead of dedicated leaders", said one of them who had opposed his joining BNP.

He is spending huge amounts of money to draw voters' support in his favour. He has already started donating money to schools, colleges, mosques and temples in the two constituencies.

The recipients are often seen beating his drum, said Abu Siddique, a businessmen hailing from Munshiganj in Sadar upazila.

"Selim Shaheb is our saviour and we can not forget his generosity", said Dilip Das of Kachua upazila who wants to cast his vote for Selim for the first time.

Insiders in Bagerhat district BNP

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Fourth day of SSC exams Over 2000 examinees, 20 teachers expelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 2,023 SSC examinees and 20 teachers were expelled from different centres across the country for adopting unfair means during the Bengali second paper examination yesterday.

On the fourth day of the SSC examinations, 229 examinees were expelled under the Dhaka Education Board, according to board officials.

Of them, 38 were in Netrokona, 35 in Mymensingh, 24 in Kishoreganj, nine in Gopalganj, 14 in Shariatpur, four in Munshiganj, three in Narayanganj, two in Faridpur, three in Manikganj, 74 in Jamalpur, two in Tangail, 12 in Madaripur, one in Rajbari, four in Gazipur.

Six hundred and fifty five examinees and 16 teachers were

expelled under Rajshahi Education Board.

Some 95 examinees and 12 teachers were expelled in Chapainawabganj, 51 examinees in Rajshahi, 42 in Naogaon, 31 in Natore, 88 in Pabna, 90 in Rangpur, 69 in Kurigram, two teachers and 24 examinees in Nilphamari, 46 in Lalmonirhat, 98 in Thakurgaon, 129 examinees and two teachers in Dinajpur, 244 in Gaibandha and 21 in Panchagar.

Two hundred and eighty four examinees were expelled under the Chittagong Education Board.

According to board officials, 232 were expelled in Chittagong, 28 in Cox's Bazaar and 12 in Khagrachari, 11 in Rangamati and four in Bandarban.

One hundred and eight examinees were expelled under the

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Fabrics missing from container at Ctg port

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Over 40,000 yards of imported fabrics worth about Tk 25 lakh were found missing from a container at Chittagong port, port sources and police said yesterday.

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) suspended three dealing clerks and two security guards and formed a three-member probe body immediately after it was detected. The probe body headed

by a Traffic Officer will submit its report shortly, port sources said.

The CPA and the C&F agent concerned filed separate cases with the port thana yesterday, but none could be arrested, police said.

The consignment was found missing from Yard No. 1 before taking delivery. It was imported by a Dhaka-based garments factory, Nippon Garments Ltd, the sources said.

Bangabandhu Murder Case Submission against acquittal of Lt Col Muhiuddin ends

BSS, Dhaka

The prosecution in Bangabandhu Murder Trial yesterday ended its submission against acquittal of former lieutenant colonel Muhiuddin Ahmed (artillery) in the split judgment saying the grounds cited for the acquittal were illogical as well as "contradictory to the case records."

"The reasons which were cited to disbelieve some of the witnesses in acquitting Muhiuddin were not only illogical but also were contradictory to records," Chief Prosecution Counsel Serajul Haq told the court of Justice Mohammad Fazul Karim, hearing the split judgment of the previous High Court bench.

He added that the prosecution was "able to prove beyond doubt" the charges against the accused artillery officer with the testimonies of the witnesses, who happened to be the artillery men under Muhiuddin during the August 15, 1975 killing of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The prosecution ended its submission on Muhiuddin, one of the five accused acquitted by one of the two judges in the previous bench, as the hearing before the third judge continued for the 13th day yesterday.

The major charges against Muhiuddin are that he joined the pre-murder briefing on the plot leaders in the name of night parade, ordered artillery fire at Dhanmondi during the incident and later was seen at Ganobhaban along with other plot leaders.

Justice Mohammad Ruhul Amin, the judge who acquitted the five of the 15 accused, in his judgement cleared Muhiuddin saying, his joining the night parade was not an offence since it was a routine practice.

He also rejected Muhiuddin's own confessional statement calling it "not voluntary and true" and refused to consider testimonies of several witnesses who belonged to artillery unit (papa battery) saying those were contradictory and not credible.

The prosecution argued that although night parades were usual events in army, the use of ammunition was not allowed for such practices. But Muhiuddin ordered his troops to collect the ammunition in line with instructions from the absconding convict lieutenant colonel Khondoker Abdur Rashid.

Haq said the court might have ignored one of the artillery witnesses' testimony if it found it to be exaggerated since he presented some new evidence in court which he did not mention to the investigation officer

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DC's order indeed!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Deputy Commissioner of Rajshahi has ordered owners of the city's residential hotels and industries to pay Tk 1000 each for observing the Independence and National Day.

The DC sent a letter to them in this regard.

The owners of hotels and industries of Rajshahi resented the order.

In the letter he said an elaborate programme has been taken up to observe the Independence and National Day and it has been decided to collect money from the

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