

Independence Day Award 2001 announced

BSS, Dhaka

The Government yesterday announced the Independence Day Award 2001 for 10 personalities, including eight posthumously, and one organisation in recognition of their outstanding contributions to their respective fields.

According to an official announcement, of the eight posthumous awardees, seven were conferred with the honour for their role in independence and the War of Liberation, and one for literature.

They are: Shaheed Moshir Rahman, Late Alhaj Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury, Late MA Aziz, Shaheed Mohammad Moizuddin, Late Ruhul Kuddus, Shaheed Amin Uddin Ahmed, and Shaheed Dr Zikrul Haq for their role in independence and

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Taraj Murder Case Dipu's bail extended

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Third Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka yesterday extended the bail to Dipu Chowdhury, son of State Minister for Shipping Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, an accused in the Taraj Uddin Murder Case.

The ACMM, Abdur Razzak passed the order after hearing on the petition for extension of bail to Dipu

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina among the recipients of Independence Day Award 2000 at Osmani Memorial Hall in the city yesterday.

Govt might continue in power till July 28, says Tofail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The present government might continue in power till July 28, Presidium Member of the ruling Awami League (AL) and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed said yesterday.

The AL government's tenure ends on July 13 but the Constitution allows another 15 days' time for takeover by a caretaker government and the President can ask the present one to continue for this period, he said.

Tofail was speaking at a discussion meeting on the occasion of Independence Day at Paltan Maidan in the

city, organised by the city unit of AL.

AL General Secretary and LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman, taking part in the discussion, however urged Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia to have talks with the Prime Minister 'directly if she really wants' an early election.

"There is still time and she (PM) may consider holding of early polls if you (Opposition Leader) discuss with her, shunning the path of hartals and ultimatum," Zillur said.

Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina, who

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2 friends share Pepsi car at Chittagong

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two young men, friends for the last 16 years, have won a 1000 cc Hyundai car for drinking Pepsi-Cola in the port city.

The car was handed over to Md. Rahat Farid and Shahid Jahan Sarwar, both 26, at a colourful function organised by Pepsi company at Chittagong Club premises yesterday.

The two beaming youngsters, friends since their early school days, said they are delighted to have won the Pepsi magic crown prize.

"It is due to my mother's blessings as she often prays for me," said Hossain who owns a

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Create atmosphere for fair polls first: Badruddoza

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury has said BNP definitely wants election and stressed the need for recovery of illegal arms and removal of 'party men' appointed by the Awami League (AL) government in different important administrative positions to ensure free and fair polls.

The ruling party is for holding of the next election within five to six weeks after the caretaker government takes over but it is not possible within such a short period because recovery of illegal arms, restructuring of the Election Commission, administrative changes and release of all opposition leaders and activists detained in 'false cases' are needed before the election, he said.

Prof Chowdhury was addressing a discussion meet-

ing organised by the Jatiyatabadi Muktiyoddaha Dal on the occasion of Independence Day at Engineers Institution in the city yesterday. President of Muktiyoddaha Dal MA Majid was in the chair.

The BNP leader said AL wants holding of the election under the present administrative set up. But the caretaker government must be given reasonable time for recovering illegal arms and bringing changes in the administration to create a conducive atmosphere for election, he added.

Quoting press reports, he said there are now over 1.50 lakh illegal arms and 25,000 licensed arms in the hands of AL cadres. No fair election is possible unless these illegal arms are recovered, he stressed.

Chowdhury said the caretaker government must be

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Showcase on govt for detention of Mostafa

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A Division Bench of the High Court yesterday issued a rule on the government asking to show cause within two weeks why the order for detention of Mafizur Rahman Mostafa, younger brother of JP leader Naziur Rahman Manzur shall not be declared illegal.

The bench comprising Justice Abu Naim Mominur Rahman and Justice Khademul Islam Choudhury

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Bangabandhu Murder Case Muslehuddin's acquittal inconsistent with evidence, court told

BSS, Dhaka

The prosecution in Bangabandhu Murder Trial yesterday called the acquittal of fugitive Risaldar Muslehuddin by one of the two judges of the previous High Court bench as "inconsistent with evidence" as they ended submission on the split judgement.

"The evidences and testimonies of the witnesses clearly prove his (Muslehuddin's) involvement in the killing. His (death) sentence should be upheld," special prosecutor Anisul Haq told the third judge as the hearing continued for the 16th day.

He added that the confessional statement of Lieutenant Colonel Syed Farook Rahman also described this fugitive's (Muslehuddin's) specific role during and after the August 15, 1975 carnage, which called for his conviction in the case.

Defence lawyers yesterday started submissions for the five of the 15 accused with argument for another fugitive captain MAMajed.

Meanwhile, Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim, hearing arguments on the split verdict as the third judge of the High Court, criticised the 1998 verdict of the trial court for not explaining the "points of determination" in acquitting the five of the originally 19 accused in the case.

"They (accused) came in a body (to take part in the killing) but some of them were acquitted while others were convicted, Justice Karim said during the defence arguments in reference to a point on the acquittal of the five people by the Dhaka District and Sessions Judge in 1998.

The High Court judge, Justice Mohammad Ruhul Amin, who ordered the acquittal of Muslehuddin alias Muslemuddin, in

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Dry spell may be over in a couple of days

REAZ AHMAD

Rainfall is expected today or tomorrow in different parts of the country, putting an end to the prolonged dry spell.

Weathermen said yesterday nor'westers accompanied by rain are likely to hit the northern and central regions of the country in a couple of days.

The rain would bring relief to farmers having great difficulty in irrigating their fields with standing crops due to absence of rain for more than four months.

Cultivation of aus and boro paddy and some seasonal crops was badly affected due to lack of moisture content in soil, experts said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Director of Meteorological Department Anwarul Kabir said, "Indications are there that the northern and central regions may experience some rains as we can foresee nor'westers today or tomorrow at the latest."

There has been virtually no rainfall in the country since November last year. As against an expected 43 mm rainfall in January this year, there was almost no rain.

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