# AL firm to hold Nat'l Convention Jan 27-28

UNB, Dhaka

There is no uncertainty about the holding of national convention on "Crimes against Humanity", an Awami League leader said yesterday.

"A steering committee will be formed within two days, which will finalise the programme of the proposed convention scheduled for January 27-28," Saber Hossain Chowdhury told the news agency yesterday.

Saber Chowdhury, political secretary to Sheikh Hasina, said final programme of the convention would be announced shortly.

Awami League has decided to hold the national convention on pre-and-post-election "atrocities, torture and repression on the party workers and minority population."

the steering committee would be scenario surrounding the polls in formed with cross-sections of Bangladesh.

people and also with the representation of the tortured people.

The committee headed by Justice K M Shobhan will take all the decisions, he said, adding that all preparatory works are going on smoothly.

The dates for the convention were earlier set for January 19-20, but it was deferred because of

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina who mooted the idea of convention is alleging that her party was forced to concede defeat on October 1 under a blueprint and rigged election.

Representatives of different political parties, human rights activists and tortured people are expected to join the convention, which has been designed to put a pressure on the present government and draw the attention of In reply to a question he said the world community about the



The members of Nrityanchal perform a 'Kathhak' dance at Shishu Academy auditorium in the city on the last day of 'Nrityanchal Festival, 2002' yesterday.

# DESA to disconnect illegal lines from today

BSS, Dhaka

Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) will launch a massive drive to disconnect power supply lines of all its illegal users and bill defaulters from today.

The DESA authorities at a coordination meeting at its office here yesterday called upon all concerned to work with utmost sincerity to make the drive a success to ensure uninterrupted power supply in the capital city, a DESA press release said yesterday.

Presided over by DESA Chairman S M Shamsul Alam, all DESA members, general managers, superintendents, executive engineers and DESA magistrates, were present at the meeting.

Earlier, the DESA authorities disconnected 8,474 power supply lines of illegal users and bill de- higher than that of the 61 days of added.

faulters by conducting a drive the year 2000. from August 1, 2001 to September 14, 2001. It also disconnected 424 November 6, 2001, the press re-

lease added. During the drives the DESA realised fines of over Tk 15.45 lakh and outstanding bills of over Tk income of the organisation increased to Tk 740.40 crore during the first six months (July-December) of 2001-2002 fiscal which is 35.40 per cent higher than that of the first six months of the press release said.

The DESA, which is implementing a 100-day programme from November 1 last year, also 224.70 crore during the last 61 against the "corrupt" officials of

The organisation is hopeful to increase its revenue income siglines from November 4, 2001 to nificantly after completion of its 100-day programme, the release

The DESA authorities have been carrying out different development programmes keeping in 87.84 lakh. Besides, the revenue mind to ensure uninterrupted power supply. keeping loadshedding in a lower limit and increas-

ing revenue income. Under the programme, it will replace the old equipment with new ones and take necessary steps previous (2000-2001) fiscal, the to increase revenue income by realising outstanding dues and

disconnecting illegal lines. It has also decided to introduce consumer service desks in all of its raised its revenue income to Tk divisions and take stern actions

days, which is 42.07 per cent the organisation, the press release

# **对放发展等点**至

## Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Utpal Das, a promising young physician, has been suffering from colorectal carcinoma, a type of cancer, says a press release.

He needs a lot of money for the treatment, which he or his family cannot afford.

A former student of Dhaka Medical College, Utpal appeals to the well-off section of the society to extend financial support for his treatment

Contributions can be sent to Utpal Das, Savings Account No. 15994, Janata Bank, DMCH Branch, Dhaka.

Persons willing to help can also contact him over telephone --9256483 (residence) or 017-680118

## Akhteruzzaman Chy Babu gets bail in Humayun Zahir Murder case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Additional District Magistrate's Court, Dhaka yesterday granted bail to Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, an acquittal accused in the sensational Huma yun Zahir Murder case.

Magistrate Mohammad Abdul Haq passed the order upon a bond of Tk 1.50 lakh with two guaran-

Babu along with his lawyers Advocate Syed Haider Ali, A K M Zahirul Haq and Shahina Akhter appeared before the court at 3:00 pm yesterday and prayed for bail while Advocate Dulal Mridha opposed the petition for bail.

After hearing both the sides, the court granted him bail.

On January 9 last year, an Additional District Judge, Dhaka convicted three out of six accused. Two of them were sentenced to death and one to life-term imprisonment. The trial court acquitted | help the kids suffering from can-Akhteruzzaman Babu and two others of charges.

Meanwhile, the High Court on December 1 last year directed Babu, the prime accused of the case, to surrender before the Dhaka District Magistrate within 30 days from the date of issue of

## Separate custody for juvenile prisoners soon

BSS, Dhaka

The government will soon introduce safe custody programme for under-aged prisoners segregating them from the influence of 'coarse' elements in normal jails to ensure better prison management and human rights condition, according to the prison officials.

The prison officials were speaking at a four-day training workshop on "Good prison management for prison personnel of Bangladesh" that began here yesterday. Local and international

## Int'l Childhood Cancer Day today

UNB, Dhaka

International Childhood Cancer Day is going to be observed for the first time in the country today as elsewhere across the globe with a call to the parents to be united to

International Confederation of Childhood Cancer Parent Organisations (ICCCPO) which represents parents and families of children with cancer in 43 countries declared January 15 as International Childhood Cancer Day in its conference in September 2001.

prison officials and management experts and NGO activists are participating in the workshop jointly sponsored by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trus (BLAST) and Penal Reform International (PRI).

Inaugurating the workshop, State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfuzzaman Babar said the presence of government prison officials in such a training programme is a fair indication of the government's attitude to correctional services towards prisoners.

Prison officials told BSS that at least 200 juvenile prisoners categorised as children were in custody of 65 jails, including Dhaka Central Jail.

Under a plan envisaged by the government, the children would be kept in a building under the control of women affairs ministry According to the present jail code one aged between six and 16 is treated as a child.

The function was addressed by IG prison M A Zahir.

Advocate Sigma Huda, a noted Human Rights activist, said backlog of cases in the courts was the major cause that hindered the release of prisoners from the jail in due time.

## Hindu-Bouddha Oikya Parishad leaders meet President

BSS, Dhaka

five-member delegation of the Hindu-Buddha-Bangladesh Christian Oikya Parishad, led by its Chairman major general (Retd) CR Dutta, called on President A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury at Bangabhaban here yesterday.

The members of the delegation apprised the President of some unrestrained activities by certain anti-social elements to foil the existing social peace and harmony for which Bangladesh can boast of,

They said that people of the country, irrespective of their religious identity, live in peace through the ages and it must be maintained at all costs. They suggested that the anti-social elements should be nabbed for maintaining the social peace and harmony among the people of the

The President advised them to maintain contact with different social and political forums for widening their initiative for ensuring social harmony. He, however, said that he will do the needful for any specific incident of violence disrupting social peace and communal harmony.

## Int'l workshop on arsenic mitigation begins 'Protect safe aquifers at any cost'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day international workshop on 'Arsenic Mitigation in Bangladesh' began in the city yesterday with the participation of more than 150 experts from home and abroad.

Three papers were presented at the plenary session held at the LGED Bhaban in the afternoon.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare presented a paper on 'Arsenic-related health problems', that briefly discussed the patient management protocols and the impact on health from drinking arsenic-contaminated

'Hydrogeology of Bangladesh' was the title of the second paper presented by the Geological Survey of Bangladesh. It focussed on the layers or the sediments affected by arsenic.

The paper also dealt with the groundwater management. stressed the need for protecting the safe aquifers at any cost.

According to the paper, ninetynine per cent of groundwater is being used for irrigation. It suggested using certain aquifers for irrigation purpose only. Dr M Feroze Ahmed of BUET presented the third paper on 'Alternative Water Supply Options' In his paper, Dr Feroze pointed

groundwater. Elsewhere, water from surface streams is the main source of recharge for groundwater. In general, groundwater flows into the

out that many streams receive a

major portion of their flow from

surface water sources in dry season and surface water enters into ground during monsoon." But in recent years, Dr Feroze said, large-scale use of groundwater for irrigation has caused

lowering of groundwater level and drying up of surface water sources. Earlier, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia inaugurated the workshop at Osmani Memorial hall.

She called for a consensus among all who are working to mitigate the arsenic problem in

the country. The prime minister urged bigger role of non-governmental organisations in addressing the problem and appealed for more assistance from the international

agencies in this regard. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development has organised the workshop.

## |5 girls rescued in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Kludna

Mongla police on Saturday night rescued five minor girls from the clutches of two women pimps of Banishanta brothel.

The pimps were arrested and minor girls taken into safe custody. The pimps were identified as Nilu, 40, and Sultana, 30, while rescued girls are Selina, 15, Asha, 13, Lipi, 16, Murshida, 14, and Rehana, 15.

They were allegedly abducted from different places of Khulna and Bagerhat districts.

Police launched the operation on the basis of a written complain by Advocate Syeda Sabiha of Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Ainjibi

## 1321 more held

BSS, Dhaka

Police seized eight firearms, one other weapon and 19 bullets and arrested 1,321 people during their countrywide drive in the last 24 hours ending at 6:00 am yesterday, a police headquarters press re-

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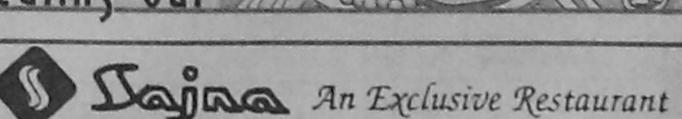
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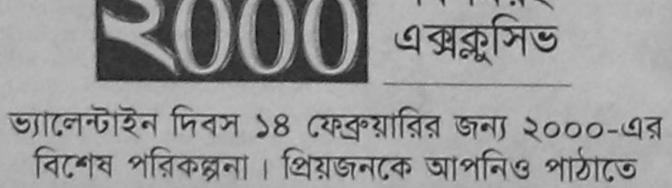
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