

CNG stations to be set up on R&D land

UNB, Dhaka

The government has decided to set up CNG filling stations on the unutilised lands of Roads and Highways Department in the capital to cater to emerging fleets of vehicles run by natural gas.

"The decision has been taken to increase revenue income as well as to protect the city's environment," Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda said yesterday.

He was addressing a meeting on "Setting up CNG filling stations on the unutilised lands of Roads and Highways Department" held at his office.

For quick implementation of the government decision, the minister asked the RHD to submit a concrete report on the total unutilised lands in the city within two weeks.

Barrister Huda hoped that this programme would bring more revenue to the exchequer. RHD

contributed Tk 110 crore to revenue last fiscal year, he said.

The meeting was attended, among others, by State Minister for Communications Salahuddin Ahmad, Communications Secretary Sved Rezaul Hayat and high officials from RHD and Bangladesh Railways.

As a ban on two-stroke three-wheelers comes into effect from September 1, the government decided to allow import of 15,000 CNG-run auto-rickshaws to fill the vacuum.

The government is imposing the ban with a view to ensuring environmental development in the city as well as facilitating easy movement of the city-dwellers.

The state-run BRIC has taken an initiative to introduce taxicab service in the city roads while the government allowed the import of 4,000 taxicabs under private sector to meet the transport needs of the residents.



Artists of Pratiti rendering songs of monsoon at a function at the Shawkat Osman auditorium in the city yesterday.

Body to probe audit objection of Biman

UNB, Dhaka

Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry has formed a two-member inquiry committee to examine the audit objections of Bangladesh Biman head office of 1998-99 fiscal.

Joint Secretary of the Ministry MA Mostafizur Rahman has been made convener of the committee.

The committee will investigate the allegations of financial irregularities mentioned in the audit reports and submit its report within three weeks, said an official handout.

The allegations include payment of Tk 56 lakh to the transport contractor before receiving buses, purchase of tires for grounded ATP aircraft and renting an office at Kamal Ataturk Avenue, the handout added.

Directive to bring system loss of power to below 20 per cent

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for Power Iqbal Hasan Mahmud yesterday directed the DESA officials to bring the system loss of power to below 20 per cent.

The minister was presiding over a meeting to review the overall activities of Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (DESA) at the Bidyut Bhawan.

He also asked the officials concerned to implement the current development projects on time.

Mahmud expressed dissatisfaction at the procrastination of tender process and stressed the need for adding pace to it.

The meeting decided that all DESA subscribers would be given computerised billing facility in the current fiscal.

It also resolved to introduce Ready Cash system for the payment of bills.

The meeting was told that a training institute would be established at Gazipur to raise the skills of DESA engineers.

The meeting stressed the need for motivating businessmen for the use of own generators at supermarkets in the capital at night for promoting proper and frugal use of finite power resources of the country.

Power Secretary S M Shamsul Alam, DESA Chairman Brig Gen A A M A Rob and senior DESA officials were present at the meeting.

BJRF seminar on Sept 27

Bangladesh Journalists Rights Forum (BJRF) has decided to hold a national seminar on professional rights and safety of journalists on September 27 at National Press Club, says a press release.

A meeting of the BJRF executive committee was held at National Press Club on August 5 with its president Habibur Rahman Milon in the chair.

The BJRF called for the unity of all democratic forces to ensure the security and rights of the journalists as well as freedom of press. The BJRF also protested and condemned the attack and repression on journalists and newspapers in different parts of the country.

BJRF executive committee member Faizus Salehen, MA Rahman, Nurul Islam Soman, Ashraf Hossain, Nezamul Haque and Noor-E-Jannat were present at the meeting.

5 arms recovered

BSS, Dhaka

Police recovered five firearms, three other weapons, 16 explosives and 36 bullets from across the country during the last 24 hours ending at 6 am yesterday.

They also arrested 1,298 people during the period. Of them, four are identified criminals, 653 police wanted and 634 accused in under-investigation cases.

Seven persons were arrested in connection with the arms seizure and five cases filed against them under the Arms Act, a police headquarters press release said.

Of the firearms, DMP recovered two while other districts police seized three.

The arrested criminals are Janna alias Abul Basar of Bagerhat, Azmal of Khulna, Mizanur Rahman alias Mizan Jowarder of Jhalakathi and Akter of Dhaka city.



The Janala Bangladesh organised a press conference on a new TV programme on IT and computers titled 'Janala' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Plan to supply safe water through pipeline in scarcity prone areas

UNB, Dhaka

Termining safe water the most vital of people's basic rights, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said the government plans to provide safe drinking water using pipelines in the scarcity prone areas.

"Whatever the cost, we must supply safe drinking water to the people... we're thinking of collecting surface water for supply to the areas beset with crisis of water," he said.

But the government needs few more years to ensure supply of safe drinking water to the people, he added.

Bhuiyan was addressing the publication ceremony of two

books titled 'Bangladesh: State of Arsenic 2001' and 'Bangladesh Arsenic Chitra 2001' at the National Press Club in the morning.

The Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) published the two books with support from the Ministry of Environment and Forest and the UNDP.

State Minister for Environment and Forest Jafarul Islam Chowdhury and Environment and Forest Secretary Sabihuddin Ahmed also spoke at the function, chaired by FEJB president Qamrul Islam Chowdhury.

The LGRD Minister said that the government has already taken two projects to supply safe drinking water to the Barind area where scarcity of water is acute. "We've another plan to collect water from the river Padma as the people now want relief from arsenic," he said.

Criticising misuse of drinking water from underground sources, he underscored the need for proper water management in the rainy season for boosting agricultural production two to three times more than at present.

Bhuiyan said a lot of experiments have taken place on arsenic, but there was no initiative to solve the real problem.

In this regard, he criticised the government project titled 'Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project'. He expressed doubts about the sustainability of the project, saying that the Public Health department was not involved with the project.

"The people are already aware of the problem. There is no need to make them further aware, the need now is to provide them with the alternative," the minister said.

The donors had provided money for the awareness pro-

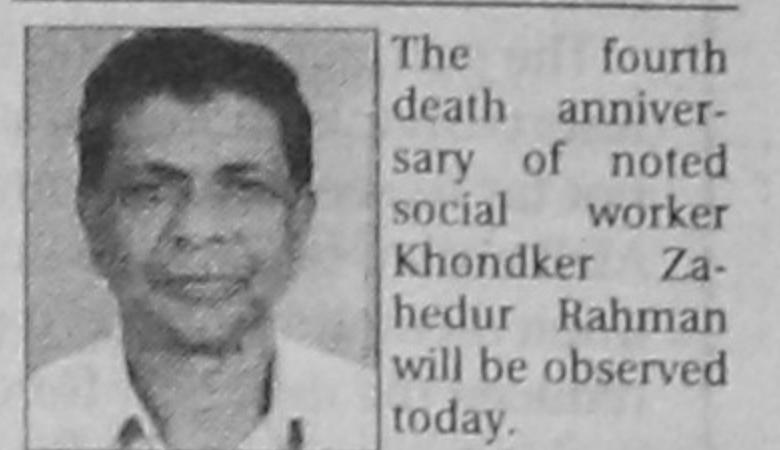
gramme, but the government needs money to mitigate the real problem, he added.

It is now found that 50 per cent of tube-wells are arsenic contaminated, the minister said.

"When we look for ponds as a source of surface water, we hardly find any. Many people have occupied 'khas' ponds and others using the ponds for pisciculture," he said.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



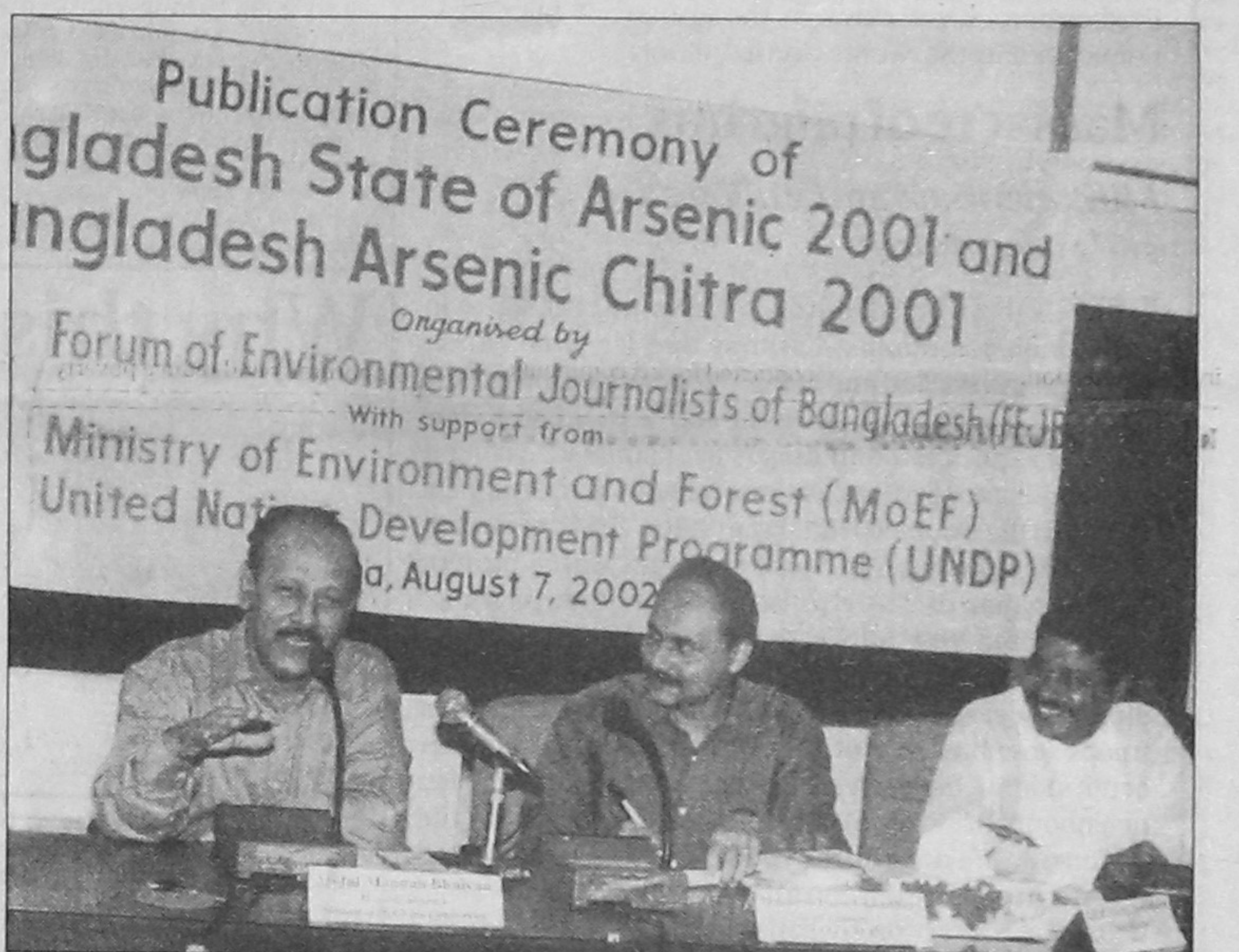
The fourth death anniversary of noted social worker Khondker Zahedur Rahman will be observed today.

A former member of the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU), Zahed was the second son of late Khondker Fazlur Rahman (Mawlad) of Gowaldi, Faridpur.

A *doa mahfil* will be held at the Masjid-ut-Taqwa, Road 12/A, Dhanmondi, after *Asr* prayers today.

Mallik died in a road accident near Zia International Airport in the city last year.

He also served as sports reporter, international cricket umpire, FIFA referee and sports commentator.



LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan addressing the publication ceremony of Bangladesh State of Arsenic 2001 and Bangladesh Arsenic Chitra 2001 at the National Press Club, Dhaka organised by Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) yesterday.

Lack of breast-feeding 1.5m children die in world a year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CGR

Some 1.5 million children die across the world every year due to lack of effective breast-feeding.

This was revealed at a seminar organised by the Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) yesterday in observance of the World Breast-Feeding Week.

Prof Abdul Mannan Shikdar, principal of Chittagong Medical College (CMC) attended the seminar as chief guest while Head of the Gynaecology Department Prof Shamsunnahar was the special guest.

Presided over by Director of CMCH Brigadier General Shah-E-Alam, the seminar was addressed by the Director of Ma O Shisu Hospital Abul Hossain, Head of Child Department of CMCH Prof Chowdhury B. Mahmud, Chittagong Bureau Chief of The Daily Star Nurul Alam, Dr. Farid Uddin Ahmed, Resident Surgeon of Gy-

naecology Dr. Kamrunnesa Runa, Dr. Majedul Islam and staff nurse Smriti Rani Ghosh.

Speakers at the seminar stressed the importance for breast-feeding to ensure healthy growth of children after their birth.

They said only the breast-feeding can protect the children from various infantile diseases.

Prof Abdul Mannan Shikdar in his speech urged the doctors to motivate the mothers for breast-feeding.

Prof. Shamsunnahar said holding of seminars and symposiums during the breast-feeding week could create a good impact on mothers to develop the trend of breast-feeding.

The CMCH director called for social motivation and community participation to create awareness about breast-feeding.

Earlier, doctors and nurses of CMCH took out a procession to mark the occasion.

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