



PHOTO: STAR

Author of 'An Abiding City: Ruminations from Rome' Neeman A Sobhan presents a copy of her book to Education Minister Dr. Osman Farruk at the launching ceremony of the book at Ectetera in the city yesterday. The University Press Limited and The Daily Star jointly organised the event.

Foil all conspiracies against country: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the ruling BNP yesterday called upon the countrymen to take fresh vow to foil all conspiracies hatched at home and abroad against national sovereignty and integrity. They said a particular quarter, which was defeated in the last general election, is engaged in campaign to portray Bangladesh as a country of "fundamentalist and criminals" with the support of their foreign "masters". Addressing a huge gathering at Paltan Maidan in the city prior to bringing out a procession marking the Victory Day, the ruling party leaders categorically blamed the Awami League for hatching conspiracy against the country as well as launching anti-Bangladesh campaign. Speaking as chief guest, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan

Bhuiyan said conspirators at home and abroad have been trying to portray Bangladesh as a country of "criminals and extremists" to halt the advancement of the country. He said a deep rooted conspiracy is being hatched against the country when Bangladesh under the leadership of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is marching towards rapid development and the government is implementing the ideals and dreams of the War of Independence. Bhuiyan said it is the BNP which has ensured freedom of speech, press and judiciary and welfare of the people. Now the party is trying hard to make Bangladesh a self-reliant country, he added. The BNP leader said the conspirators who do not want development and democracy in the country is now desperate to foil the pro-people moves and the achievements of the present

government. He called upon the people to be united and foil all evil moves of the conspirators to materialise the dreams of independence. Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain said the AL had betrayed the dreams of independence by forming the BAKSAL after the liberation and making Bangladesh dependent on India. On the other hand, the BNP is the only party that upheld the independence and sovereignty of the country, he said. The minister said late President Ziaur Rahman had not only proclaimed independence and fought for liberation, but also safeguarded the sovereignty of the country and took Bangladesh to a dignified position in the community of nations.

Selim Osman granted ad-interim bail

BSS, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to Selim Osman, a former president of Narayanjan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in an arms case. The court also issued rule asking the government to show cause in four weeks why Selim Osman should not be granted permanent bail. A division bench comprising Justice Syed Amirul Islam and Justice Mirza Hossain Haider passed the order. Selim Osman, elder brother of former Awami League lawmaker AKM Shamim Osman, was arrested on December 14 after recovering a foreign-made pistol from his factory. Barrister M Amirul Islam along with Barrister Sowkat Ali Khan and Advocate Manzil Murshid moved the petition on behalf of Selim Osman.

Six more die

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(butcher) from Jasim's rented house at Colonel Hat in Pahartali Sunday. Bashar was released later on. A contractor, who was picked up by the joint forces early Friday morning in Comilla, died at the DMCH on Monday. Twenty-three-year-old Mohammad Ibrahim Khalil Euv, 23, was handed to Kotwali police. Police had him admitted to the Kuchiyatali Sadar hospital and shifted to the DMCH at about 5:00pm Monday, where he died later at night. Khalil's elder brother Swapan and cousin Harun Miah told journalists that he was neither involved with neither any political party nor any criminal activities. His rivals may have had Khalil arrested to take revenge, they added. In Narayanjan, Omar Faruq alias Tiger Faruq, arrested by the joint forces on Sunday, died Monday morning. Faruq, brother of the joint convener of the Narayanjan town BNP, was picked up by an army team from the truck stand Sunday afternoon. He was taken to an army camp at Fatullah and later handed to police at night. In critical condition, he was first admitted to the Narayanjan General Hospital and then to the DMCH, where he died Monday night. According to family sources, his arms and legs were broken, and there were cigarette burns all over his body. However, the DMCH doctors put his death to micro-cardiac infraction. In Tongi, the joint forces picked up Shafi Uddin Ahmed Swapan from his Uttara residence on Friday night. After interrogation, he was sent to the Tongi police station. Police sent him to the DMCH where on-duty doctors declared him dead Sunday night. Swapan, according to his family, completed his masters on Islamic studies last year and was not involved in any criminal activities. He was not even accused in any case with any police station, they said. According to our Sirajganj correspondent, former Awami League lawmaker Abdul Latif Mirza

DHAKA TODAY

- Film session**
As part of Contemporary Mexican Film Session, Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen two films titled 'Danzon' directed by Maria NOVARD and 'Amores Perros' directed by Alejandro Gonzales INARRITU. Venue: Goethe Institut, Dhannondi. Time: 5.00pm and 7.00pm respectively.
- Film show**
The High Commission of India will screen a Hindi film titled 'Gharwali Baharwal' directed by Tiltu Sharma. Venue: High Commission of India Cultural Centre, Satmasjid Road, Dhannondi. Time: 6.00pm.
- Documentary show**
A documentary video on Royal Bengal Tiger titled 'Sundarbaner Bagher Sandhane' directed by Razia Quadri, will be screened. Venue: Poet Begum Sufia Kamal auditorium of National Museum. Time: 6.00pm.
- Seminar**
A seminar on 'Environment Issues in Bangladesh PRSP', organised by Bangladesh Environment, Economic and Poverty Programme and Manabik Sahajya Sagstha, will be held. Venue: IDB Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 9.30am.
- Discussion**
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organises a
- discussion demanding direct election to reserved women seats in parliament. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3.00pm.
- Naripakkha**
A cultural programme, organised by Naripakkha, will be held. Venue: Central Shaheed Minar. Time: 5.00pm.
- BKL discussion**
Bangladesh Krishak League (BKL) organises a discussion on the occasion of the Victory Day. Venue: 23, Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 3.00pm.
- Meeting**
A meeting of the executive committee of Uttaranga Janakalyan Samity will be held. Venue: 54, Dilkusha. Time: 4.30pm.
- Drawing competition**
An inter-school drawing competition, organised by Dhaka General Schools Division-2 of UCEP Bangladesh, will be held. Venue: Shishu Academy auditorium. Time: 1.00pm.
- Migrant Day**
In observance of World Migrant Day, the Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees (WARBE) and Bangladeshi Women Migrant Organisation (BWMA) jointly organise a rally. Venue: In front of the National Museum. Time: 10.00am.

Unicef report links child rights to nat'l dev

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (Unicef) has linked implementation of child rights to overall development of a nation. "It is increasingly evident that if children's rights and wellbeing are not addressed by governments, national agencies and their various international partners, development goals will never be met," Unicef's State of the World Children 2003 release here said. It was published as part of its campaign to increase participation of children in all spheres of life and to create a world suitable for children. The document also focused on some responsibilities of adults to seek views of children and to take those seriously. It underscored the need for a "new partnership" among adults, children and young people, seeking their (children's) opinion and taking them into account in the family,

community and society. "Authentic and meaningful child participation requires a radical shift in adult thinking and behaviour," it said. The shift should be "from an exclusionary to an inclusionary approach to children and their capabilities - from a world defined solely by adults to one in which children contribute to building the kind of world they want to live in." The launching ceremony held at the IDB Bhaban auditorium at Agargaon was addressed by Herluf Madsen, regional representative here of Sweden's Save the Children, Unicef representative Morten Giersing, Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Deputy Executive Director BRAC and Mizanur Rahman, Executive Director of Resource Bangladesh. The speakers said adults often do not bother to give much attention to the feelings of children. A group of working children organised by BRAC also presented some issues through staging a

drama at the launching ceremony. They also spoke of various difficulties they face in their day to day life. They voiced against early marriage, dowry and all sorts of repression on under aged people in the country. Herluf Madsen underscored the need for a 'national plan of action' to improve the role of children in society. A major problem in this regard is that parents do not know how to do this. A greater role of children will bring happiness in the family, tighten the bondage in communities and ensure their growth and development, he said. Dr. Salehuddin said although many countries signed the UN Convention on Child Rights, thousands of children are subjected to torture and various types of repression. UN member states pledged to fulfill eight goals by 2015, six of which are directly related to children, the document said.

Hosts turn around

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The left-handed Gayle was beaten all ends up by a beauty of a delivery from the right-arm paceman that held its line after pitching on the off-stump and nipped the bats. Bowling with venom Talha also dismissed Marlon Samuels for 31 after Monjurul had found the edge of Sarwan's gloves behind the wicket to Khaled Mashud. Mashud also took a brilliant catch down the leg side to remove Shivnarine Chanderpaul reducing the West Indies to 127-5. Expectations of a remarkable turnaround then rose, but the left-right combination of Jacobs and Ganga spared the visitors the embarrassment of scoring less than the hosts. Ganga top-scored with 63. The Trinidad right-hander was looking confident until he tried to loft off-spinner Sanwar Hossain out of the ground but ended up offering a simple catch at long on to Taposh. Jacobs scored a captain's knock off 59 before his opposite number Mashud, diving full length to his left,

Dhaka, Yangon for road link

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The issue of repatriating Rohingya refugees to Myanmar. Some 22,000 refugees are staying in Bangladesh's coastal district of Cox's Bazar. Asked about this, the foreign secretary said the refugees would be sent back through maintaining proper procedure. Before attending the official talks, the two prime ministers had a 15-minute tete-a-tete when the Bangladesh premier stressed strengthening of the country's relations with the countries in the East following recent developments. In the meeting, Dhaka reaffirmed its commitment to SAARC and BIMSTEC and sought cooperation of Myanmar in becoming a dialogue partner of ASEAN-plus 4 by getting the membership of Asian Regional Forum (ARF). On international plane, Bangladesh renewed its commitment to international peace and global fight against terrorism. The foreign secretary quoted General Shwe as telling Khaleda Zia that the military regime has no intention of denying democracy to the people of Myanmar as "state power belongs to the people". Emerging from the meeting, Khaleda described her discussion with Shwe as "very fruitful". "It was a very fruitful discussion. We have agreed to further strengthen the existing good relations between the two countries," she told waiting reporters. Khaleda further said they had also discussed ways of working together to expand economic and trade relations as well as communications network between the two neighbouring countries. "Very soon work will start on the basis of consultations," Khaleda told

the newsmen about implementation of the outcome of the talks with Myanmar. Myanmar Prime Minister General Shwe termed his first visit to Bangladesh "a great pleasure" for him. He wished the Myanmar-Bangladesh friendship would live long. Khaleda Zia led the host side while her Myanmar counterpart Than Shwe headed his delegation at the meeting held at International Conference Centre at PMO complex. Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda, Foreign Minister Morshed Khan, Disaster Management and Relief Minister Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, Principal Secretary to PM Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui, Foreign Secretary Shamsur Mubin Chowdhury, Home Secretary Omar Faruq, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Myanmar Manjur Rahim and DG Saiful Amin Khan were present in the talks. Earlier in the morning, a red carpet reception was accorded to the Myanmar premier at the Zia International Airport as he arrived in Dhaka on a two-day official visit. A 21-gun salute heralded the arrival of the distinguished visitor when he disembarked from a Myanmar International Airways (MIA) aircraft at the VIP terminal of Zia International Airport in the morning. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia received her Myanmar counterpart at the VIP tarmac. General Than Shwe is leading a 55-member delegation that included his spouse, two daughters and ministers of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Industries and Commerce. A guard of honour was given to the Myanmar

Prime Minister at the VVIP tarmac by a smartly turned out contingent drawn from the three services of the armed forces. On his first day in Dhaka, General Shwe also visited the National Mausoleum at Savar to pay homage to the martyrs of the country's War of Independence. He attended a banquet at Bangabhaban hosted by the prime minister. Before leaving Dhaka this afternoon, the Myanmar leader is scheduled to call on President Iajuddin Ahmed.

2 judges

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Jamiruddin Sircar laid wreaths later. Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina placed wreaths at 8.15 am. Hasina, who is also the president of Awami League, placed wreaths again on behalf of her party. She was accompanied by her party central leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Zillur Rahman, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, S A M S Kibria, Abdur Razzak, Abul Jalil, Mohammad Hanif and Motia Chowdhury. A good number of party workers were also present at the time. The government, political parties and different socio-cultural organisations celebrated the day with renewed pledge to consolidate the country's independence and sovereignty. The day was a public holiday. In the capital, the day's programme began with a 31 gun-salute. The national flag was hoisted atop all public and private buildings across the country at dawn. Main thoroughfares and road islands in the capital and other big cities were decorated with colorful festoons and bunting while important government buildings illuminated.

Share scam cases

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Sessions Judge's Court had not followed the Code of Criminal Procedure in framing charges against the accused and that its decision of indicting the accused did not reflect "judicial thinking." The three directors of Chittagong Cement had moved to the High Court for quashing the cases, but the High Court rejected their prayers and directed the Session Judge's Court to follow the Code of Criminal procedure in framing charges against the accused directors. The SEC then went to the Appellate Division filing three appeal petitions against the verdict of the High Court. These are five of the 15 complaint cases filed by the SEC following the 1996 share market crash. The SEC sued 35 directors of different publicly traded companies and stock market brokers based on an inquiry committee report. Seven cases were filed against brokerage firms and their officials while eight others were against listed companies and their directors. Five of the cases were initially stayed by the High Court after the defence moved for quashing the cases. The companies and their accused directors are: A Rouf Chowdhury, Mashur Rahman, S Chowdhury and Anu Jagdir of Premium Securities, Zafar Ahmed and Zahir Ahmed of Apex Foods, Zafar Ahmed and Zahir Ahmed of Amam Sea Food, Mohammad Bhai and Aziz Mohammad Bhai of Olympic Industries and Iftakhar Mohammad and Mohammad Maqsoodur Rahman of Chick Textiles. These cases are still pending with the High Court for almost six years. In three other cases, charges have been framed against five directors. The companies against which charges have been framed are: Doha Securities, Securities Consultant Limited, and SES company. Three other cases are pending with the Appellate Division of which two companies, Beximco Pharmaceuticals and Shinepukur Holdings have filed appeal petitions against an order of the High Court. In the case of Runa Alam, the High Court had acquitted Alam which was challenged by the SEC and the case is currently pending with the Appellate Division.

Rly defies PMO Order

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or fire incident as these will also block movement of ambulance, fire brigade and rescue teams. In many areas, people use the sidewalks along the tracks as passage as there is lack of adequate road network. This is mainly due to unplanned urbanisation. BR sources however alleged that, many of the residences have built their houses on BR land by 'manipulating land documents and totally ignoring construction rules'. Sources in BR said a strong syndicate of contractors backed by an influential minister is playing the key role in implementation of the wall project in a hurry. The contractors are trying to complete the work as early as possible to draw their bills, said a BR official preferring anonymity. But the BR has no adequate budget now, he said. KM Asaduzzaman, convener of the committee opposing the wall construction, said they sought intervention of local MP Abdul Mannan and Communication Minister Nazmul Huda to stop the project. Commissioners of Wards No 54 and 55 have also joined the movement, he said. Meanwhile, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda on December 10 verbally instructed the BR to erect the perimeter walls along the tracks leaving at least seven feet for roads on both sides to level people move. The instruction came during his

visit to Arjotpara in the face of protests by local people. But there are also allegations of land grabbing by many of the residents in the said area. The BR will launch a drive today to evict the encroachers from its land, sources said. **Unite to fight**
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and Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka Syed Nakib Muslim. The programme began with the Prime Minister releasing colourful balloons and pigeons in the sky. She also hoisted the National Flag while the band played the National Anthem. The Prime Minister inspected the march-part in an open jeep and took salute from a decorated podium. At 11:00 am, the prime minister witnessed a joint exercise of the armed forces at the National Parade Square. The fly past and air show by the Bangladesh Air Force enthralled the spectators. Fighter jets and helicopters were took part in the exercise. She also inaugurated an exhibition of military hardware at the parade ground. The Army, Navy and Air Force set up separate stalls to display the military hardware and equipment. The prime minister first visited the "Muktijuddha Stall" where arms and ammunition used during the war of liberation by the freedom fighters were displayed. The heroic role of seven "Bir Shresthas" in the war was also highlighted. She went round different stalls.

Ershad Shikdar

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Shikdar's three other accomplices -- Liakat Lashkar, Haroon alias Toondoo Haroon and Joyanal Khan. Of the accused, Joyanal is still absconding. The four others appealed to the higher court against the verdict. The High Court bench in its verdict also ordered immediate execution of Shikdar and Jamai Faruk. However, the lawyer of the convicts, advocate Khondkar Mahub Hossain, said they will appeal to the Appellate Division. Ershad Shikdar has also been sentenced to death in seven other cases and life imprisonment in three cases. Jamai Faruk was given death sentence in five other cases and life imprisonment in five cases. So far, 12 murder cases and 28 other cases have been filed against Shikdar. The court in its verdict said if criminals like Shikdar goes unpunished, it would mean deterioration of law and order and this type of criminals do not have any rights to live.

Court: Army

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with a tree. "They tied up his hands and legs, blindfolded him and beat him up mercilessly. The army tortured my husband to death as he failed to hand over arms." After Litu died, the army men covered his body with a bed sheet and handed it over to Savar police. "They also forced Savar police to prepare an inquest report," she complained to the court. "As a cover-up, the army circulated the story that Litu had hurt himself seriously as he jumped off the first floor of the farm and later succumbed to his injuries at the Combined Military Hospital in Savar," she said. There is not two-storied structure in the farm compound, she added.

Reuters stringer

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home ministry. When he asked questions about the bomb attacks, he received answers accordingly, and the quotes regarding "al-Qaeda" were taken from that conversation. After this call, Enamul phoned Saber Chowdhury telling him what he came to know about the bomb explosions and the home ministry's opinion. At this point, Saber told him that he should go ahead with the news story. Later, Enamul found out that the phone call he made to the home ministry was misplaced. He had not talked to anybody at the ministry, and had actually talked to someone else. Now he feels ashamed and regrets his mistake. Soon after his statement was recorded, the police abruptly sent him to jail at 3.00 pm. He was not given the chance to meet his wife, elder brother and lawyers. Later, Enamul's lawyers moved a petition for bail. The hearing of the petition should take place in presence of Enamul, according to his lawyers. The CMM's Court, however, rejected the plea for hearing in his presence, and approved a hearing for bail petition tomorrow. A Reuters report on the Mymensingh bomb blasts on December 7 created controversy over a quotation of Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury. The minister on the next day claimed that he did not talk to Reuters, while the international news agency stood by its story. The minister issued a rejoinder. Events took a sharp turn when Reuters withdrew its story and began an internal investigation to find out how the story was filed. Enamul Haque Chowdhury, a senior reporter of BSS working as a Reuters stringer, filed the news story and was arrested by the police on December 12. The Reuters story quoted Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury as saying, "The bomb attacks could be the act of al-Qaeda or any other terrorist group." He also quoted Altaf as saying that the political opponents of the government might also have been behind the explosions. Enamul's quote in the story lost its credibility when Zakaria Milon, a crime reporter of the Ittefaq, told the press that on December 7 Enamul dialled Milon's mobile phone number, mistaking it for the home minister's, and they talked about the Mymensingh blasts. Enamul did not realise his mistake until the next day when he called Milon again. **TIB report**
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they had to pay bribe to get service. In education, the TI report mentioned that 87 per cent respondents encountered corruption by the teachers while 40 per cent students were subjected to different kinds of irregularities in the education department. The TI report said bribe is a heavy financial burden on South Asian households.