



Awami League and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal exchanged views on prevailing political situation at the JSD office in the city yesterday.

6 more Ansars battalions to be raised: PM

UNB, SHAFIPUR (Gazipur).

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said that her government had taken steps to strengthen the Ansar-VDP and build up the force according to the need of the time.

Process has started to raise six more Ansars battalions, of which one will be formed this year as part of the development of the force, she said.

"All efforts for modernisation of the force and welfare of its members will continue," the prime minister said, addressing a function marking the Ansar-VDP (Village Defence Party) Day and the 25th National Assembly of Force at the Ansar-VDP Headquarters here in the morning.

A colourful parade was organised to mark the occasion. Khaleda reviewed the parade and took salute.

Members of the Ansar-VDP also presented a ceremonial display on the occasion.

On arrival at the Ansar-VDP Headquarters, she was received by Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfulzaman Babar and

Director General of the Ansar-VDP Major General Monzurul Alam.

Terming the Ansar-VDP as the second line of national defence, she expressed satisfaction that their integration in maintaining law and order, and in socio-economic programmes have injected new momentum in rural development.

"This three-dimensional role has enhanced the prestige and importance of the Force. As a result, your responsibilities have increased," she told the members of the Force.

She also appreciated the role of Ansar-VDP in the countrywide joint operations against crime.

Khaleda mentioned various development programmes for the Force, including building up the Ansar Academy into a full-fledged modern education and training centre, and setting up of Ansar-VDP Bank in every upazila in phases for welfare of its members.

As part of the Force's successes, Khaleda lauded their role in empowering rural women. "Bangladesh has become a world model in micro-credit and we also want to make Ansar-VDP

as a role model for socio-economic development and maintaining peace and discipline in the rural areas.

Later, she witnessed a colourful dance drama presented by the members of the force, portraying the activities of the Ansar-VDP and the social messages carried by them for socio-economic uplift.

Khaleda also inaugurated a new 100-bed hospital at Ansar-VDP headquarters.

Body identified as vegetable wholesaler

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The man whose body dumped on the street in front of the state guest-house Padma was a vegetable wholesaler of Jatrabari.

The dead was identified as Nurunnabi Khan Shuvo, 35, owner of Munshiganj Food Traders. Shuvo lived with his parents at 56, Kutubkhali in Jatrabari.

Victim's family claimed Shuvo to be a member of Gulshan Shooting Club, who won gold in national shooting competition in Chittagong in 1982. But his membership at the club could not be confirmed.

Some people threw the body out of a rickshaw-van in front of the guesthouse gate Monday evening. The body bore a big bullet hole in the chest.

After hearing of the news on TV on Monday night, victim's father Nurul Amin went to Dhaka Medical College yesterday afternoon and identified the body of his son.

Victim's brother Nurul Momen said, "Shuvo went out hurriedly of our home without saying anything Monday afternoon after someone called at his cell phone thrice."

None was arrested till filing of this report at 7:00 pm yesterday evening.

Mountain Dew Competition 3 DU students to go on Everest expedition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muyeed, Ashraf and Ainal -- three students of Dhaka University -- are now one step closer to making their dream come true as they won the Mountain Dew Team Extreme Competition on Monday.

Their team will be the first group from Bangladesh to go on the Everest expedition in an attempt to reach the highest summit in the world.

Dalchhut, an adventure magazine arranged the countrywide competition with the support of Mountain Dew, a soft drink.

The beverage company will sponsor the team that will go to the Base camp-1 of the Everest in May after a mountaineering course at Uttar Kashi in India.

"We hope this team will be able to reach the peak of the Everest carrying the Bangladeshi flag for the first time within next five years," said Moshurul Amin Milon, who conducted the competition, at a press conference in the city yesterday.

Abdullah-ul Muyeed, Ashraf Haque and Ainal Haque are doing graduation in economics and international relationship at Dhaka University.

"I like adventure from my boyhood. We have been to many places, including Keokradong, the highest peak in

the country. But we never dared to head for the Everest due to financial crisis. Now we are going to make our dream come true," said an excited Muyeed.

Out of the 15 teams selected for the final competition that took place in Srimongal, Muyeed's team emerged as champions. They took part in different events such as trekking, riding push-bike and swimming.

In the preliminary stage, more than 100 teams from across the country joined the race. And the organisers selected only 15 teams comprising 44 boys and only one girl.

"We prioritised the team spirit along with their performance while selecting the team as mountaineering is a total team work," said Milon. Anish Roy, country manager of Pepsi, was also present at the press conference.

The names of the teams that secured the second and third positions were also announced at the press conference. If the first team somehow fails to join the training course, the second one will get the chance.

Zahid-ul Mamun, Firoz Ahmed and Md Shihabuddin from Khulna secured the second position and Obaidullah-ul Masud, Dipak Chandra Halder and Hisham Khan Setu from Barisal got the third position.

Early detection of symptoms can prevent cervical cancer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About two per cent of married women in Bangladesh show early symptoms of cervical cancer, a recent study revealed.

Awareness along with application of a simple method to detect the visual symptoms can effectively prevent the disease, experts said at a dissemination workshop yesterday.

Co-sponsored by Proshika and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK, the one-year study was conducted on about 3,000 married women from two unions of Narayanganj district and one ward of Dhaka district.

Cervical cancer, caused by Papilloma virus, is the most common form of cancer in women and it is the highest incidence among all forms of cancer in women.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer has forecast that around 7,000 women will die prematurely in Bangladesh by 2005 due to such preventable diseases, with cervical cancer being on the top of the list.

Many developing countries, the study said, have successfully reduced cervical cancer incidence.

The developed nations have low incidence of cervical cancer as women in those countries have access to a screening test that allows precancerous lesions to be detected and treated early.

Visual inspection aided by acetic acid (VIA), a cost-effective and easy procedure, proves one of the promising screening methods for detecting cervical cancer in the developing countries.

The VIA instant finding shows white lesions, often white plaques, ulcer or even cauliflower shape growth and fungal mass in the cervix. These

symptoms can easily trigger an effective treatment to prevent the cancer, researchers said.

VIA, already tried successfully in three countries, involves swabbing of the cervix with four to five percent acetic acid known as vinegar solution prior to visual examination.

"The method is very easy and does not require any special expertise for the physical examination. Five to ten days of training is sufficient to enable any level of health provider to identify any pre-condition for cervical cancer," said Dr Ataur Rahman, the principal investigator of the study.

Presenting his population-based findings at the Birdem Hospital auditorium yesterday, Dr Ataur said that more advanced method -- pap smear with colposcopy done at laboratory -- is not always available in all health centres.

But if public healthcare providers are trained to conduct VIA test, women at grassroots level can easily learn about their status of illness.

About 2.2 percent of 3290 women who voluntarily took part in the VIA study showed squamous intraepithelial lesions or an indication of development of (primary stage) cervical cancer, the study said.

Quazi Faruque Ahmed, president of Proshika, Dr Halida Hanum Akhter, managing director of Health Promotion, and senior gynaecologists of Birdem and other leading hospitals were also present at the workshop.

Reunion

The annual general meeting and the reunion of the ex-students of Matlobganj JB High School will be held on the school premises at Matlob Upazila in Chandpur district at 9.00 am on February 27, says a press release.

Matlobganj Ex-students Association president Ahaj Mohammed Zahirul Haque will preside. Ex-students and teachers of the school and their family members have been requested to attend the function.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi



Rajshahi Medical College Hospital yesterday morning at the age of 65.

He left two daughters, one son and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

He was buried at Tikapara graveyard following his namaj-e-janaza at Dainik Barta premises after Asr prayers.

He started his journalistic career in 1960 and worked for Pakistan Observer, Dainik Azad, Dainik Paigam, Dainik Pakistan and Dainik Bangla.

Death anniversary



President of the Pabna district Awami League, will be observed today, says a press release.

He was the first to hoist the flag of independent Bangladesh in Pabna district.

Rob died in a car accident on February 25 in 1973.



PHOTO: STAR

US Ambassador Harry K Thomas speaks at the inaugural ceremony of the 'Nishorgo' programme as special guest at the Champa VIP Rest House, Bhawal National Park yesterday. Environment and Forest Minister Shajahan Siraj, sitting left, inaugurated the ceremony as chief guest.

Dhaka Jail guard commits suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A guard of Dhaka Central Jail allegedly committed suicide at his residence in Lalbagh yesterday.

Police found the body of Mokbul Hossain, 52, hanging from the ceiling of tin-roofed quarters of the jail at about 9:00am.

The reason behind the suicide could not be known. Police suspected that poverty has forced him to commit suicide as he could not maintain his family of five daughters and one son with his meagre income.

At around 2:00am, he told his wife that he had a stomachache, said police quoting his wife.

She even treated him with some food to ease the pain but did not have the slightest idea of such tragic incident, she said.

The body was sent to Mitford hospital for autopsy.



Old Faujians Association executives

Obaidur Rahman Khan and M Najmul Hasan have been elected chairman and secretary general of the central governing body of Old Faujians Association for 2004-06, says a press release.

The election and convention of the association, an organisation of ex-cadets of Faujdardhat Cadet College, was held at the Trust Auditorium in the city recently.

Other elected office-bearers are Shariff Atiqur Rahman and Md Anwar Shahid - vice chairmen; Mahmudul Alam and Momin Ud Dowlah - joint secretaries general; Quazi Giasuddin - treasurer; Syed Abdur Rashed - office secretary; and Md Enamul Hafiz Khan, Farmanur Rahman Chowdhury, Matilul Islam Nowshad, M Musleh UZ Zaman and M Arifur Rahman - members.

DHAKA TODAY

Best films of 2002-03

Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen some of the best films in world cinema of 2002-03. The films are: 'Finding Nemo' (2003) by Stanton and Unkrich (USA), 'Respiro' (2002) by Emanuele Crialesse (Italy), 'Whale Rider' (2002) by Niki Caro (New Zealand) and 'Dogville' (2002) by Lars Von Trier (Denmark). Venue: German Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 2:00pm, 3:45pm, 5:30pm and 7:15pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'Born Romantic'. Venue: Society auditorium, 21/ C Jigatola. Time: 6:30pm.

Library programme

As part of its fortnight-long programme to observe International Mother Language Day, Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco, in association with Directorate of Public Libraries, organises a Library Appreciation Programme. Venue: Central Public Library, Shahbagh. Time: 9:30am.

BBS workshop

A workshop on 'Mapping poverty, food insecurity and nutrition', organised by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), will be held with Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan as chief guest. Venue: Parisankhan Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 10:30am.

Conference

The 31st conference of Ophthalmological Society of Bangladesh will be held with Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: BCPS auditorium, Mohakhali. Time: 8:30am.

BU seminar

Bangladesh University (BU)

organises a seminar on 'Modern Practices in Software Development'. Venue: University campus, Mohammadpur. Time: 10:00am.

Workshop

A workshop on 'Effective Participation of Elected Women Members: Problem, Expectation and Solution', organised by Khan Foundation, will be held. Venue: Democracy auditorium, Momenbagh. Time: 11:00am.

CAB discussion

Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) will hold a discussion on the enactment of a law to protect the rights of the consumers. Venue: CAB Conference Hall, Segun Bagicha. Time: 11:00am.

Jote discussion

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote will hold a discussion titled 'Recognising Dhaka as International City of Tomorrow'. Sheikh Hasina. Venue: Bishwasahitya Kendra auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Rotary meeting

Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhanmondi Dhaka will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5:30pm.

Best films of 2002-03

Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen some of the best films in world cinema of 2002-03. The films are: 'Nowhere in Africa' (2001) by Caroline Link (Germany), 'Nothing More' (2001) by Juan Carlos Cremata Malberti (Cuba), and 'Bowling for Columbia' (2002) by Michael Moore (USA). Venue: German Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 3:00pm, 5:45pm and 7:30pm