

Ruling party lawmaker Fazlul Haq Milon launches the website of the Society for the Welfare of Autistic Children (SWAC) at its Lamatia Centre in the city yesterday.

SWAC launches website

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Society for the Welfare of Autistic Children (SWAC), a non-governmental organisation, launched its website yesterday.

The website, www.swacbd.org, will provide detailed information about the activities of the organisation and autism, said Anwar Hossain, chairman of the SWAC, at the launching ceremony at its Lamatia centre in the city.

BNP lawmaker Fazlul Haq Milon attended the ceremony as chief guest.

The website was developed by Farhana Rahman, mother of an autistic child, and Dr Sirazi Munira, principal secretary of the centre.

Addressing the ceremony, the speakers said the centre needs a large open space for the autistic children and a workshop to train them on self-help skills.

They also sought financial support from the government, non-government organisations and affluent members of the society to carry out their activities for the welfare of autistic children.

The SWAC was formed on February 3, 2000 by a group of parents of autistic children with only six children. Now it has 54 students of different ages.

The centre puts emphasis on developing communication and social skills, functional education, acceptable behavioural patterns and self-help skills.

Novartis Instt for Tropical Diseases opens in Singapore

Novartis Institute for Tropical Diseases (NITD) was opened in Singapore on July 5, says a press release.

The institute is focused on advanced biomedical research for diseases like dengue fever and drug-resistant tuberculosis (TB).

Both the diseases are spreading rapidly particularly in the developing world.

In every second, someone is infected with TB which has grown to be the third leading cause of death globally for people aged 15-59, while dengue fever infects as many as 50 million people a year, and is endemic in over 100 countries, said Dr Daniel Vasella, chairman of Novartis.

The World Health Organisation has declared drug-resistant TB an urgent health matter with more than 300,000 new cases per year occurring mainly in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

In the case of dengue fever, there has been no major discovery effort directed to new treatments despite significant unmet medical need.

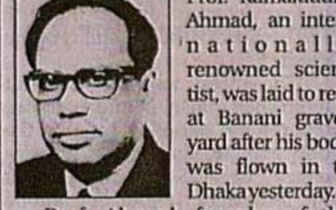
The NITD is a public-private partnership between Novartis and the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB).

Its goal is to have at least two compounds for patients by 2013.

Novartis intends to make these treatments available without profit for countries where these diseases are endemic.

Prof Kamaluddin laid to rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Prof. Kamaluddin Ahmad, an internationally renowned scientist, was laid to rest at Banani graveyard after his body was flown in to Dhaka yesterday.

Prof. Ahmad, founder of the department of biochemistry at Dhaka University, died of a cardiac arrest in Manila on July 4.

A namaz-e-janaza was held on the Curzon Hall premises before his burial. His qulkhwani will be held at Sunbeam School (senior section), House #8, Road #6, Dhanmondi, after Asr prayers on July 8.

4 killed, 2 injured in Comilla road accidents

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Four people died and two others were injured in two road accidents on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Comilla yesterday.

The first accident took place in Matara area under Sadar Upazila in the morning when a Dhaka bound covered van from Chittagong collided with a sand-laden truck, killing a covered van passenger on the spot.

The identity of the victim could not be known.

The second accident occurred at

Kala Kutcha under Burichang Upazila at about 12:45pm when a Dhaka bound taxicab from Comilla collided with a Noakhali bound passenger bus from Dhaka. Three passengers of the taxicab died on the spot and two others were injured.

Identity of the victims could not be known. The injured were admitted to the Combined Military Hospital at Comilla.

After the accidents, traffic on the highway remained suspended for three hours.

Advertisement for 'DHAKA TODAY' and 'DHAKA TOMORROW' featuring various events like Thai fruits festival, painting exhibition, human chain, roundtable, seminar, workshop, and reception.

Children of stranded Pakistanis demand equal rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The children of stranded Pakistanis yesterday demanded equal rights as Bangladeshi citizens.

"We are neither stranded nor Pakistanis. We are Bangladeshi as we were born and brought up in this country," said Md Sadaqat Khan, president of the Stranded Pakistani Youth Rehabilitation Movement, at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city.

He alleged that a vested quarter is politicising the issue by terming Urdu-speaking people as stranded Pakistanis.

Criticising the move by the Stranded Pakistani General Repatriation Committee, Sadaqat Khan said, "The committee leaders were now seeking rehabilitation of Urdu-speaking people in Bangladesh when we are demanding Bangladeshi citizenship."

"They have thrown our life into uncertainty in the name of repatriation to Pakistan," he added.

Sadaqat also claimed that most Urdu-speaking people in Bangladesh support the movement initiated by his organisation.

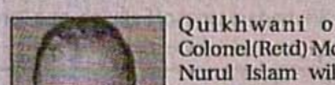
He called on the government to provide civic amenities, including proper housing and sanitation, for the Urdu-speaking people in Bangladesh.

"We are living in an inhuman condition as we are denied rights as citizens of Bangladesh," Sadaqat said.

The organisation will submit a memorandum to the prime minister and the Pakistani high commissioner, and form a human chain in front of the United Nations office in Dhaka to press home its demand.

Shahed Ali Bablu and Mustaq Ahmed also spoke at the press conference.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Colonel (Retd) Md Nurul Islam will be held at his residence at Road No-7, House No-60/A at Dhaka Cantonment after Asr prayers tomorrow (Thursday), says a press release.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani.

Nurul Islam died at the Dhaka Combined Military Hospital on July 4. He left behind his wife, two sons and one daughter.



Winners of the 27th National Science and Information and Communication Technology Week pose for photograph with the guests at the Osmani Memorial auditorium in the city yesterday. Science and Information and Communication Technology Ministry organised the event.

Include HIV/Aids issue in educational curriculum

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The HIV/Aids issue should be included extensively in school and college curriculum in order to create awareness among the students about the deadly disease, said the speakers at a workshop in the city yesterday.

They said the teachers, parents and religious leaders should be included in the awareness campaign and they have to be trained up on HIV/Aids issues.

The three-day workshop on 'Strengthening the education sector's response to HIV/Aids in Bangladesh' was organised by

Bangladesh Aids Prevention Society at a city hotel.

Education Secretary Faruk Ahmed Siddiqui attended the workshop as chief guest while UNESCO Representative in Bangladesh Wolfgang Vollmann chaired the inaugural session.

The education secretary said a draft curriculum on HIV/Aids has already been prepared and his ministry is now scrutinising it.

He said there should be an inter-ministerial programme on HIV/Aids as the dissemination of knowledge about HIV/Aids is very important.

Dr M. Mustafa Kamal, a former consultant on HIV/Aids programme

of World Health Organisation and A N M Bazlur Rahman, secretary of Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco, presented two papers on HIV/Aids situation in Bangladesh.

Later, four technical sessions were held on the papers.

According to government statistics, the total number of HIV positives in Bangladesh is now 363, but unofficially it is much more. According to UNAIDS, about 13,000 people are living with HIV positives in the country.

Drug users, migrant workers, male and female sex workers, professional blood donors and hermaphrodites are most vulnerable to Aids.

BCL threatens tough movement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday demanded withdrawal of the graft case against Opposition Leader and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and former state minister and AL leader Obaidul Kader.

If the government does not withdraw the case, the BCL along with people would wage a tough movement against the ruling coalition, the BCL leaders warned at a protest rally on the Dhaka University campus.

They announced that the BCL would stage a demonstration at Mukhtang in the city on July 8 to protest the harassment of the opposition leaders.

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption recently filed the case against Hasina, Kader, former joint secretary of cultural ministry Asaduzzaman Bhuiyan and architect Iqbal Habib of Vitti Sthopoti Breenda Limited on charge of financial irregularities in the construction of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman's grave complex at Tungipara, Gopalganj.

Addressing the protest rally, BCL President Liakat Shikder alleged that the government filed the case only to divert public attention from the irregularities in Thursday's Dhaka-10 by-polls.

BCL General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu, Delwar Hossain, Hemayet Hossain Himu, Shahadat Hossain Sujon, Aparna Pal and Nasim-al Momin Rupak also spoke.

Withdraw case to get back son

Hoodlum asks Mary's parents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The hoodlum reportedly responsible for Mary Yusuf Sharmin's suicide threatened her parents yesterday to withdraw the murder case against him to get back their son who had been abducted by his men.

Mary, 18, committed suicide on June 28 at her house in Sukhalpur area in Demra, half an hour after her return from local hoodlum Mohammad Ali alias Raju's residence. She went there to negotiate the release of her brother Shahin who had been abducted by Raju's gang the previous day.

Mary's father Yusuf Ali has filed a murder case with Demra Police Station accusing Raju of being the cause for her death.

Sharmin's mother Nazma Begum told newsmen that one of the associates of Raju phoned to inform that they would free Shahin only if the case against Raju is withdrawn.

"They also threatened to kill my other children if we don't pull back from the case," she said adding, "Three of his men came to my house the previous day to mount the pressure."

Investigation Officer (IO) of the case Abdul Kashem of Demra Police Station, meanwhile, doubted the kidnap.

"The kidnap incident may be a

set-up by the family," he said adding the family members did not inform the police about it earlier and no case has yet been filed in this connection.

Police so far could not nab Raju or any of his accomplices and rescue Shahin after nine days since the kidnap.

Raju's family members alleged the IO is not active enough to arrest the culprits or to make any rescue attempt.

Kashem brushed aside the allegation and said, "Raju, a mugger and an associate of local influential people, hasn't been in the area for the last couple of days." He said, "We raided the area more than once but could not find him."

Ershad concerned

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday expressed concern at overall situation, especially price hike of essential after the budget was passed.

"Due to inflation, people's purchasing capacity has decreased. Besides, recession has been created in business following imposition of excessive tax and VAT, prompting the business community to become vocal against the budget," Ershad said while he was presiding over his party's presidium meeting at Banani office.

LIFE REPORT ON BY-POLLS 50pc of votes cast were false

UNB, Dhaka

Life, a non-government development organisation, in its report on the Dhaka-10 by-election held on July 1 said 50 per cent of the votes cast were false.

Two mobile teams of Life observed the casting of votes from beginning to end in 35 centres.

The report said that though the environment outside the polling centres appeared normal the situation inside was full of irregularities.

It said the turnout of female voters was meagre by Bangladesh standard. They also found that the agents of 'Kula' (winnowing fan) were forced out of the centres and the election officials were compelled to work in favour of the ruling party candidate.

The Life report alleged that massive rigging took place and many genuine voters failed to exercise their right to franchise. The observers also detected cases of bribing of voters in and around the polling centres and saw open campaign for the ruling party candidate breaching election code of conduct.

They affirmed that the High Court order for deployment of army at all the centres was violated.

Life also put forward some suggestions to hold the future elections in a free and fair manner.

Madaripur BNP leader hurt in road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The convener of Madaripur district BNP was critically injured in a road accident in the city yesterday.

Borhan Uddin, the 70-year-old BNP leader and a former vice-president of Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU), suffered serious head injury when a bus hit him at around 1:30pm, said Badal, a fellow partyman who rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Borhan, who came to Dhaka for party activities, was crossing the road with Badal to go to Nagar Bhaban.

1,328 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,328 people on various charges during their country-wide drive in last 24 hours till 6:00am yesterday.

During the period, the law enforcers also recovered six firearms, seven other weapons and 18 bullets and filed three cases against 12 people under the Arms Act.

Weather Today advertisement with a sun and cloud icon, providing a forecast of light to moderate rain and a table of temperature and humidity data for various cities.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Local Government Engineering Directorate Office of the Executive Engineer, Barisal. Notice regarding contractor renewal fees and a table with columns for Serial No, Class of contractor, Amount of renewal fee, Last date of renewing fee, Last date of depositing renewal fee with 50% fine, and Last date of depositing renewal fee with 100% fine.

Advertisement for 'The QUEST' featuring 'Ad science offers for those talented enough to join us in our journey into the Advertising world.' and 'Visualizer: Should be good at bringing forth ideas and have the ability to visualize the total sense of promotion through your own creative thoughts.'