



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Muhammad Yunus, founder and managing director of Grameen Bank and a founding trustee of the UN Foundation, hosted a lunch for Dr Tim Wirth, president of the Foundation, at Sheraton Hotel on February 9 during his visit to Dhaka. Civil society members, NGO representatives and media and business personalities attended the programme. The UN Foundation has been set up with the US\$ 1 billion donation from CNN founder Ted Turner to assist in the humanitarian work of the UN. Members of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation, including its founder Ted Turner, are scheduled to visit Dhaka at the end of this year.

FFs urged to unite to revive spirit of Liberation War

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a conference on Thursday called on the freedom fighters to be united to revive the spirit of the Liberation War and establish it in every sphere of life.

Caught in the whirl of political chaos, the freedom fighters have been deprived of their just rights and status in the society, they said.

The Freedom Fighters Council organised the Dhaka divisional conference of freedom fighters at the Gonosasthya Nagar Hospital in the city.

The speakers said the freedom fighters sacrificed their lives for political and economic freedom, social justice, rule of law and democracy, but none of these exists now in the country.

"The war did not come to an end yet. We fought against the Pakistani forces in 1971 to free our motherland from the occupation of Pakistan, but now we have to fight against the evil

forces who want to destroy our freedom," said Dr Jafarullah Chowdhury, chief adviser to the council.

The political parties have failed to bring any qualitative changes to the lives of the common people, he said, adding that the rich have become richer and the poor have become poorer and the politics has turned into a game of money and muscle.

Jafarullah said the politicisation of administration began to creep in during the liberation war and it grew stronger, depriving the freedom fighters of their rights.

"The freedom fighters joined the liberation war not for their personal gain but to free the country from the grip of Pakistani occupation forces," said Lt. Col. (ret'd) Quazi Nuruzzaman, commander of Sector-7 comprised of greater Rajshahi, Pabna, Bogra and Dinajpur districts.

It is a shame for the nation that those brave sons of the soil now have to lobby at the government offices for a

job, he added.

Captain (ret'd.) M Nurul Huda, chairman of the council, said, "It is regrettable that we also could not take the political leadership of the country. But time has come to get rid of the current crises by bringing honest leadership to power."

The deity, Saraswati, is represented as a graceful woman with white skin, wearing a crescent moon on her brow. She rides a swan or a peacock or is seated on a lotus flower.

In the capital, the Saraswati puja is being held regularly in Dhakeswari temple, Siddheswari temple and at Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University.

Students from over 30-35 departments of Dhaka University have made arrangements for the puja on the Jagannath Hall premises this year.

"If needed, we shall go for another war, but we must not let the evil forces remain in power," he added.

Freedom fighter Faruque-Azam recalled the immense contribution of the women to the liberation war and urged all to involve them in the mainstream of life.

Saraswati Puja tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

Saraswati Puja will be celebrated across the country tomorrow, mostly in educational institutions, with the Hindu students seeking blessing from their goddess of learning and eloquence.

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Repression on Ittefaq leader condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of different unions of Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Kamachari Federation in a joint statement condemned repression on the Daily Ittefaq Kamachari Union President Kazi Bazul Rahman by police on February 5, says a press release.

Daily Sangbad Union President Mohammad Abdul Kadir and General Secretary Debendranath Majumder, Daily Sangram Union President Khairul Islam and General Secretary Mohammad Habibullah, The Daily Star Union President Mohammad Nazrul Islam and General Secretary Tapan Chandra Das, The Bangladesh Observer Kamachari Union President Mohammad Salimuddin Selim and General Secretary Zahurul Haque issued the statement.

Obituary

Abdul Hai, internal auditor of Madina Group of Industries, died at a hospital Thursday at the age of 60, says a press release.

He left behind his wife and three daughters.

He was buried on the premises of his home in Jamalpur.

Aminur Rahman

Aminur Rahman, retired divisional engineer of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB), died of old age complications at his Banani residence in the city on Wednesday at the age of 83, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, three sons and three daughters.

His qulqhwani will be held at his Banani residence at House No. 50, Road No. 2 after Maghrib prayers today.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the qulqhwani.

Dewan Rashedul Shahin

Dewan Rashedul Shahin, deputy director of Proshika, a non-government organisation, died of a cardiac arrest at the city's National Heart Foundation on Wednesday at the age of 55, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife and two sons.

His namaz-e-janaza was held on the Proshika Bhaban premises at Mirpur.

He was buried at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectual Graveyard.

Death anniversary

Today is the fifth death anniversary of Tofael Ahmed, former chief photographer of the Press Information Department, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residence at 403 East Goran in the city.

Brac University launches Master of Public Health Programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Brac University launched a Master of Public Health Programme through its James P Grant School of Public Health yesterday.

Welcoming the first batch of students, Fazle Hasan Abed, founder and chairperson of Brac, said the school has been established to provide higher education of the highest quality in the field of public health utilising the unique resources of development in Bangladesh.

A total of 25 students, including ten foreign students from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Kenya, Uganda, Philippines, Afghanistan and the USA, have received full scholarship for one year.

The school will prepare health leaders utilising Bangladesh's vast field laboratory for experimental teaching and learning. The programme has been designed to educate and empower graduates to solve problems in the field of health using skills in epidemiology, biostatistics, modern management, nutrition, research and diseases control.

The International Centre for Health and Population Research, popularly known as ICDDR,B, also joins hands in the initiative, said a press release.

The school will have both national and international faculty with institutional affiliations with Columbia University, University of Amsterdam, Harvard University, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Johns Hopkins University.

Dr Mushtaque Chowdhury, dean of the school, introduced the students at the launching ceremony held at the Brac Centre in the city.

Prof Demissie Habte, the first international director of the school and former director of ICDDR,B, Richard cash, a professor of Harvard University School of Public Health, Dr Alayne Adams of Columbia University, Dr Anwar Islam, Carleton University, Canada, Dr Abbas Bhuiyan of ICDDR,B, Prof Yunus Harun of Dhaka University and Dr Shams Arefeen of ICDDR,B were present.

2 muggers beaten at book fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two muggers were caught red-handed while trying to flee after snatching money from a visitor at the Bangla Academy, the venue of Ekushe Book Fair, in the city yesterday evening.

A mob caught the two, Babul and Habib, at the Academy gate at around 7.30pm and beat them severely.

Later, they were handed over to the members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and taken to Ramna Police Station.

Ctg BNP union confce today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong north district BNP is all set to hold a conference of its representatives at the union level at MA Aziz Stadium, the second Test cricket venue of the country, today.

About 880 representatives from 104 unions of seven thanas -- Rangunia, Raozan, Fatikhahari, Sitakunda, Mirersarai, Sandwip and Hathazari -- will join the conference. They will highlight the problems, internal feuds, expectations and conflicts over local leadership.

Tarique Rahman, senior joint secretary general of the party, will attend the conference.

While the party leaders and activists are in an upbeat mood, party insiders believe that the conference will mainly focus on reorganising the party organs now in a bad shape in some areas of the district.

The party is in a disorganised state in Rangunia and Raozan, sources said. There is no thana committee in Rangunia.



Hemayetuddin, high commissioner of Bangladesh to India, and Shyam Saran, Indian foreign secretary, shake hands after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on flood relief assistance in New Delhi yesterday.

DHAKA TODAY

Roundtable

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (Bils) organises a roundtable on 'Protection of child domestic workers: Role of trade union and civil society'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10.00am.

Confce on Int'l Criminal Court

Odhikar, a human rights organisation, will hold a 'South Asian Conference on the International Criminal Court: Campaigns, prospects and challenges', with Law Minister Moudud Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: Brac Centre Inn, Mohakhali. Time: 9.00am.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of 'Itihasher Anghatak O Onnanya' by Gazilul Hasan Khan, managing director and chief editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, will be held, with Information Minister M Shamsul Islam as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3.00pm.

Workshop on waste

World Wide Recycling and Waste Concern have jointly organised a workshop on 'Landfill gas extraction and utilization from Matuail waste dump site' and 'Composting of organic waste in Dhaka'. Venue: Brac Centre seminar

room, Mohakhali. Time: 10.00am.

Asiatic Society talk

The Asiatic Society of Bangladesh arranges a special talk on 'Understanding problems of poverty alleviation, pro-poor growth and sustainable development options'. Shaikh Maqsood Ali, former secretary and member, Planning Commission, will deliver the talk. Venue: Seminar room of the Society, 5 Old Secretariat Road, Nimitai. Time: 4.00pm.

Krishak League meeting

Bangladesh Krishak League will hold an emergency meeting of its central committee, with its President Dr Mirza Jalil in the chair. Venue: 23 Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 4.30pm.

Rotary Dhaka North West

Regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held. Members are requested to attend the meeting on time. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5.30pm.

Rotary Dhaka Central

Regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Rotarian are invited for fellowship and make-up. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1.30pm.

MOU SIGNED

India to provide Rs 100 cr flood relief aid

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India will provide Rs 100 crore to Bangladesh as relief assistance for the people affected by recent floods.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in this regard was signed between the two countries in New Delhi yesterday.

Shyam Saran, Indian foreign secretary, and Hemayetuddin, high commissioner of Bangladesh to India, signed the MoU.

The amount will be used for procurement of foodgrains, medicines and building materials from India, according to an official release.

The MoU is a follow-up of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's offer of the assistance as a gesture of solidarity, goodwill and friendship for the people of Bangladesh, it said.

7 robbers held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a gang of robbers with lethal weapons and bombs while they were taking preparation to commit a robbery at Badda in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a Rab team raided Balurmath sium at north Badda at 1:35am and arrested seven with lethal weapons and bombs.

The arrestees are Amir Hossan, 21, Shariful Islam, 19, Ariful Islam, 22, Dilip Barman, 24, Amit Hassan, 19, Sanchay Biswas, 26, and Mohammad Hriday, 20.



PHOTO: STAR

Aman Ullah, general secretary of Bulbul Lalitakala Academy, speaks at a meeting in memory of Murad Ali, vice-principal of the Academy, on its premises in the city yesterday on the occasion of his first death anniversary.



GrameenPhone Managing Director Erik Aas hands over a computer to Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed of Bishwa Sahitya Kendro.



Novartis Bangladesh Managing Director Ashfaqur Rahman, left, hands over a cheque for Tk 623,139 to Unicef representative in Bangladesh Morten Giersing for tsunami victims at the Unicef office in the city on Thursday.

GP donates computers to Bishwa Sahitya Kendro

GrameenPhone Ltd donated 10 computers to Bishwa Sahitya Kendro (World-Literature Centre) for the organisation's administrative and coordination work, says a press release.

GrameenPhone Managing Director Erik Aas handed over the computers to Bishwa Sahitya Kendro President Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed at a simple ceremony at GrameenPhone's head office. Khalid Hasan, director corporate affairs, Emad Ul Ameen, Director Human Resources of GrameenPhone and other senior officials were present.

Professor Sayeed thanked GrameenPhone for the computers, which will help the centre to carry on its works efficiently.

Erik Aas said, "I think your effort to spread extra-curricular education and reading habit is admirable. We are proud to be associated with it in small way."

GrameenPhone is also going to sponsor the award ceremony of Bishwa Sahitya Kendro's Book Reading Competition for the school students of Dhaka city. The programme will be held on February 25 and 26 and 5,000 students will be awarded there. Some 24,000 students of 100 schools have taken part in this competition.

Over Tk 6 lakh Novartis donation for tsunami victims

Novartis Bangladesh donated yesterday Tk 623,139 (US\$10,000 approximately) to Unicef to help the tsunami-affected children, says a press release.

Half of the money was donated by Novartis Bangladesh staff as their one day's salary and the rest was matched by the company.

Ashfaqur Rahman, Managing Director of Novartis Bangladesh, handed over the cheque to Unicef Representative Morten Giersing at Unicef office at a simple ceremony.

Novartis group of companies have already provided over 2 million US dollar in immediate emergency aid for the victims following the December 26 tsunami that killed 300,000 people in 12 countries.

The support, which began immediately in the wake of the tragedy, includes direct financial aid to relief agencies and donations of essential medicines to Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry over the country till 6.00pm today.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 31.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sathkira, Patuakhali and Teknaf while lowest 12.4 degree Celsius at Srimangal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:52pm today and rises at 6:33am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	28.4	16.8	70	48
Chittagong	29.6	16.8	75	52
Rajshahi	29.5	13.0	78	59
Khulna	30.0	16.4	79	64
Barisal	29.8	15.4	72	61
Sylhet	29.5	16.0	70	57
Cox's Bazar	30.0	18.6	66	61