



PHOTO: STAR

A car makes its way along Dhanmondi Road No. 15 that went under water following torrential rain yesterday. Many roads of the city were also inundated.

# 'Medical colleges lack adequate number of teachers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite some impressive gains in health sector, the country still lacks adequate number of teachers in medical colleges, said the speakers at a conference yesterday.

They said the government should immediately create more posts of physicians to teach various sub-specialties as almost all the medical colleges now offer post-

graduate courses.

Organised by the Association of Physicians of Bangladesh (APB), the two-day conference was inaugurated at a city hotel.

"To improve the quality of medical education and reach more patients in the rural settings, the need for more posts of physicians at district and below levels has now become essential," said Prof Mobin Khan, president of the APB.

Experts on cardiology, orthopaedic, trauma management, cancer treatment, obesity, management of asthma attacks, hypertension and other fields of medicine gave separate lectures where each presenter showed the latest technologies in the treatment of illnesses.

Experts from the Philippines and Singapore also delivered lectures.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf

Hossain attended the inaugural session as chief guest.

State Minister for health Mizanur Rahman Sinha, Health Secretary A F M Sarwar Kamal, President of Bangladesh Medical Association Prof M A Hadi, and Secretary General Dr A Z M Zahid Hossain also spoke on the occasion.

More than six hundred physicians attended the inaugural session.

## Poverty blamed for rising fundamentalism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rising fundamentalism has become a potential threat to the country, said the speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They said fundamentalists are getting strong as major political parties have used them to gain the state power.

The discussion titled 'Question of fundamentalism and communalism: People's democratic struggle' was organised by five left-leaning parties in the city.

The existing poverty has turned the country into a breeding ground for fundamentalism, said Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, a noted academic.

He said, "The successive ruling parties were engaged in competition to increase the number of madrasas which yielded no positive result."

Prof Chowdhury said there is no basic differences among the major political parties from the point of their economic policy.

President of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Manjurul Ahsan Khan said all progressive political and social forces have to be united to fight fundamentalism.

He said fundamentalism has turned to be a problem not only in Bangladesh but also in neighbouring countries.

Language Movement veteran Abdul Matin, and CPB leader Ruhin Hossain Prince also spoke.

## CPA fines 43 cargo ships

BSS, Chittagong

The Magistrate Court of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) fined 43 inland cargo ships Tk 4 lakh on various charges while conducting mobile courts from upstream at Karnaphuli bridge point to the port estuary in last four days.

An inland cargo vessel was also seized during the drive led by CPA Magistrate Mohammad Munir Chowdhury, a CPA magistracy press release said yesterday.

The drive was carried out to ensure safe and secure movement of vessels, prevent pollution, restore discipline at the harbour and check tax evasion, the press release added.

# 30 pc of private teaching jobs reserved for women

AFP, Dhaka

The government has ordered all private schools, colleges and madrasas to reserve 30 per cent of teaching jobs for women compared to the current level of about 10 per cent, a minister said yesterday.

The decision has sparked protests from religious leaders who say the rules should be relaxed for madrasa, where boys and girls are taught separately.

"Every non-government educational institution has to fill up 30 percent of their teaching staffs with female teachers," State Minister for Education Ehsanul Haq Milon told AFP.

"The aim is to boost the number of women in the workforce. We want to keep teaching jobs as a privilege for women," he said. "We want them

to come out of their homes and take up jobs in increasing numbers."

States subsidies to private educational institutions failing to meet the new requirement will be cut, Milon said.

The government annually pays some 90 per cent of the salaries of teachers in non-government schools. Around 470,000 teachers are on the payroll of some 27,970 private educational institutions, officials say.

Bangladesh had earlier reserved 60 per cent of teaching jobs for women in government primary schools, boosting the percentage of female teachers in the 37,700 such schools in the country to 38 per cent so far from 22 per cent in 1991.

The chief inspector of the Madrasa Education Board, Abdul Wadud, said the religious schools, which cater mainly for boys, would

find it difficult to comply with the new order.

Of the 7,945 madrasas, only around 12 per cent are girls-only institutions and the rest are reserved solely for males, he said.

"We have already told the education minister to relax the rules for us," said Maulana Jainal Abedin, the head of the country's biggest private madrasa, Tamirul Millat.

"He had earlier given us an assurance," Abedin told AFP. "Our demand is specific and we want segregation in this regard. The male teachers will be allowed to teach only in boys-only madrasas while female teachers will be for the girls-only madrasas."

Bangladesh is the world's third largest Muslim majority country with a population of around 140 million.



PHOTO: STAR

Rokia A Rahman, president of Women Entrepreneurs' Association, Bangladesh, admires a painting at a group art exhibition titled 'Colours of Shako' at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts in the city yesterday. She inaugurated the fortnight-long exhibition.

## 2 get 31 yrs for possessing heroin

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two persons to 31 years' rigorous imprisonment for possessing 250 grams of heroin 11 years back.

Judge Shamsunnahar Begum of the Environment Appeal Court handed down the verdict.

The convicts are Habibur Rahman alias Selu and Dewan Shah Taifur Rahman alias Crown of Jamalpur district.

Both the convicts were tried in absentia and their punishment will be effective from the date of their arrest or surrender, the court said.

Earlier, the prosecution and the

defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of six prosecution witnesses.

In the case filed with Mohammadpur Police Station, it has been alleged that a team of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) led by assistant superintendent of police (ASP) Munshi Atiqur Rahman arrested the two from in front of Asad Gate at about 11:00am on March 11, 1994 and seized 250 grams of heroin from their possession.

Later, CID Inspector Mohammad Nasiruddin filed a case against them under the Narcotics Control Act the same day.

Special Public Prosecutor Khalilur Rahman appeared for the state while Advocate Ali Akbar Belayeti defended the accused.

## 1,546 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,546 people on various charges from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours as of 6.00am yesterday.

During the period, the law enforcers recovered five firearms and 19 bullets and filed two cases against five people under the Arms Act, says a police headquarters press release.