

# Get united to protect independence: PM

Mujibul Huq, ICDDR,B representative receive Independence Award 2005

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the people to remain vigilant and get united to protect independence of the country saying unprotected freedom is like dependence.

"National disarray, division, confusion and indiscipline are the real enemies of independence. So all have to remain conscious and aware of all these stuffs", she said.

Khaleda was speaking as the chief guest at the Independence Award 2005 giving ceremony at Osmani auditorium in the city. Cabinet Secretary Dr Saadat Hussain also spoke on the occasion.

The members of the cabinet, judges, diplomats and high government and non-government officials were present.

This year's Independence Award goes to the chairman of the National Pay Commission Mujibul Huq and International Centre for Diarrhoea Diseases Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B). ICDDR,B's executive director received the award on behalf of the institution.

Khaleda said freedom is needed for a successful and meaningful life. Independence is as difficult to protect as to achieve. It is also very difficult to make lives of people glorious and noteworthy properly utilising the opportunities created by independence.

She said since the liberation a vested quarter has been trying to put the country under their absolute grip. Some of them became very rich plundering wealth of the majority people.

"Demand for justice had fallen into deaf ear, independence turned into mockery but people changed



PHOTO: PID

Recipients of Independence Awards 2005 pose for photograph with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

the situation through a fresh struggle" she added.

Describing poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, malnutrition, over population, environment pollution and diseases as enemies of independence, she said backward position of various groups of people including women are the main reasons of the country's underdevelopment. These barriers must

be overcome to make independence fruitful.

Khaleda said that there is a move to resist the initiatives taken by the government to make freedom fruitful. All moves against the social and political stability will be foiled, she said calling upon the people to overcome all these problems through a coordinated effort.

## Help build a prosperous nation

Prof Abu Sayeed tells students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent educationist Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed yesterday called on the students to help build a prosperous nation "that we deserve and dreamt of".

"You must act like a crusader to develop the country as there are many challenges lying ahead," he said at a function at the conference hall of the Presidency University in the city.

The Presidency University Cultural Club organised the programme to celebrate the 35th Independence Day.

The university also presented a

crest to Prof Sayeed, a recipient of the Magsaysay Award 2004, as a mark of honour.

Prof Sayeed, founder-chairman of Biswa Sahitya Kendro, said, "By liberating the nation, we presented a huge wealth to our new generation, the nation builders."

"You are our future who can help bring back values, trust, discipline and unity," he told the students.

Prof Arifa Rahman, head of the English department of the university, also spoke.

Dr MA Baqui Khalily, acting vice-chancellor of the university, presented the crest to Prof Abu Sayeed.



PHOTO: STAR

Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed speaks at a discussion marking the Independence Day at the Presidency University yesterday.

## Pvt varsities urged to play vital role in higher edn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The private universities will have to play a complementary role alongside the public universities in expanding higher education, said Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain at a prize awarding function yesterday.

"The role of private universities in higher education is still supplementary, but they (private universities) will have to play a more vital role to promote higher education," he added.

Thirty-three competitors were awarded prize at the function at East West University (EWU) auditorium in the city who contested in a quiz competition organised by the EWU, the Prothom Alo and the Mutual Trust Bank.

The health minister said the

objective of formulating The Private University Act 1992 was to promote a healthy private sector in higher education.

"Although some private universities are doing well in maintaining quality of education, the rest of them will have to go a long way to improve their standard," he mentioned.

"In the past, the student politics was based on merit, but unfortunately it has now become polluted," he added.

The minister also thanked the EWU for organising the quiz competition.

Speaking on the occasion, Prothom Alo Editor Motiur Rahman said extra-curricular activities help bring out the meritorious students to the limelight who are scattered across the

country.

He said his organisation would continue to promote such extra-curricular activities in the days to come.

Syed Monjur Elahi, chairman of Mutual Trust Bank, told the function that leadership is created through extra-curricular activities.

He said education is not just memorising text books, rather students have to be involved in extra-curricular activities to develop their creativity.

President of the Board of Directors and Founder Vice-chancellor of EWU Dr Mohammad Farashuddin and Director of the American Centre Jonathan Cebra also addressed the function.

## Body to probe irregularities inside jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government formed an eight-member enquiry committee headed by deputy secretary (administration) of home ministry to probe the allegations of irregularities, disorder, violence and drug trading inside Dhaka Central Jail recently reported by different newspapers.

A press release issued by joint-secretary (administration) of the Ministry of Home Affairs said the committee will submit its report in seven working days upon which punitive action would be taken against responsible persons as per law.

The press release also said the government is pledge-bound to maintain proper administration and management in all jails including Dhaka Central Jail. "No laxity and negligence will be tolerated in this respect," it added.

The home ministry sought cooperation from all concerned in this regard in Dhaka Central Jail, the press release said.

Different newspapers published a series of reports on drug trading and irregularities following a clash between two groups over establishing supremacy in Dhaka Central Jail recently.

## 'Govt plots to make CHT peace treaty ineffective'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) Joint Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday alleged that cadres of the ruling BNP-Jamaat-led coalition had established a 'reign of terror' in the Chittagong-Hill Tracts (CHT).

The AL leader made the observation in a statement yesterday after returning from a three-day organisational trip to Khagrachhari.

He said the ruling coalition has intensified the gap between the hills people and the Bengalis of the CHT in the name of equal rights over the last three and a half years.

The alliance government has taken no effective step to implement the CHT peace accord rather it is conspiring to render the accord ineffective," Quader said.

He alleged that seven AL leaders of Khagrachhari had been killed and more than a hundred leaders and activists had been crippled through torture since the coalition government took over 2001.

He observed even the journalists are not safe in the CHT. He mentioned in the statement that the coalition government had persecuted many journalists and filed false cases against them.

During the visit, he joined the triennial AL councils of Dighinala, Mahalchhari, Manikchhari, panchhari and Matiranga.

## Easter Sunday on March 27

The members of the Christian community will celebrate the Easter Sunday on March 27, says a press release.

On the occasion, there will be a thanksgiving prayer gathering called 'Easter Sunrise Service' in front of the National Assembly Building (South Plaza) at 5:45am and will continue till 7:30am.

Thousands of Christians will gather together to worship Lord Jesus Christ. This is a great occasion for the Christian community in Bangladesh.

## WCC secretary general arrives tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

Rev Dr Samuel Rodger Kobiah, Secretary General of the Geneva-based World Council of Churches (WCC), arrives here tomorrow on a short visit to Bangladesh.

He will be accompanied by Mrs Ruth Kobiah, and Dr Mathews George, Asia Secretary of the WCC, a press release of the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) said yesterday.

During his visit, Dr Kobiah is expected to call on President Iajuddin Ahmed on March 28. Besides, he will inaugurate the newly built training centre of the (CCDB) at Baroipara near Savar.

## Belta ESL Programme begins today

A five-day English Teacher Training Programme of Bangladesh English Language Teachers' Association (Belta) begins at the Presidency University in Gulshan today at 9:00am, says a press release.

The theme of the programme is "Teaching strategies for the ESL classroom."

Dr Michelle Jones of the American Centre will attend the inaugural session as chief guest.

Six English Teacher Training Specialists from abroad will be the resource persons of the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of the Fourth The Daily Star-Viqarunnisa Noon School and College English Inter School, Inter Club and First Children's Debate Championship-2005 pose with the guests at the closing ceremony of the debate at the college auditorium in the city yesterday.

## Road renamed after Mir Shawkat Ali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another city road was renamed after a sector commander of the War of Liberation yesterday.

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) renamed the road from Tejaon Nabisco to Gulshan Circle 2 as Bir Uttam Mir Shawkat Ali Road.

Mir Shawkat Ali, who was the commander of Sector 5, unveiled the name plaque of the road at Gulshan Crossing-2 at 4:00pm. DCC Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka and State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Md Rezaul Karim were present on the occasion.

Earlier, DCC renamed the link road from Mohakhali Crossing at Jal Khabar to Gulshan Circle-1 as Bir Uttam AK Khandaker Road after sector commander AK Khandaker Bir Uttam, the Panthapath from Sonargaon Crossing to Russell Square as Bir Uttam Quazi Nuruzzaman Road after Col (ret'd) Quazi Nuruzzaman Bir Uttam, and the stretch of the road from Science Laboratory to Peelkhana BDR gate as Bir Uttam MA Rabb Road after late major general (ret'd) MA Rabb Bir Uttam.

The renaming of another road from Kantaban Crossing to Sonargaon Crossing via Hatirpool after CR Dutta Bir Uttam will be held after the arrival of the retired major general from abroad, sources said. The praise-worthy initiative of the DCC to rename roads after sector commanders started on Sunday last as part of the announcement given by the Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka at a reunion of the freedom fighters marking the country's glorious Victory Day on December 16 last year.

Initially, four roads are being renamed after four sector commanders so that the new generation can remember their contributions to the liberation war.

## Amena Serniabat passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Amena Serniabat, younger sister of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, passed away at her Dhanmudi house yesterday at the age of 81.

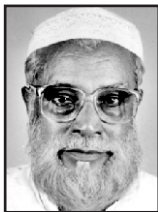
Amena, wife of slain former minister Abdur Rob Serniabat and mother of former chief whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, is survived by two sons and four daughters.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held at Baitul Mukarram mosque after Juma prayers today and she will be buried at the Banani graveyard.

Awami League President and Opposition Leader in Parliament Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of her aunt Amena Serniabat.

In a condolence message, she prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed her sympathy to the bereaved family.

Safiruddin Ahmed



Freedom fighter Safiruddin Ahmed, a former member of the National Assembly and Awami League (AL) leader of Gazipur district,

passed away due to old-age complications yesterday at the age of 79.

He left behind his wife and the only daughter, says a press release.

Leader of the Opposition and AL President Sheikh Hasina in a condolence message expressed deep shock at the death and conveyed her sympathy to the bereaved

## DAILY STAR-VIQARUNNISA SCHOOL ENGLISH DEBATE Viqarunnisa, NSU become champions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 67 winners were awarded in different categories at the closing ceremony of the Fourth The Daily Star-Viqarunnisa Noon School and College English Inter School, Inter Club and First Children's Debate Championship-2005 yesterday.

Viqarunnisa Noon School and College emerged as champion in the both school and children categories and North South University (NSU) became champion in the club category.

Irtiza Maisha Islam and Moshfeqa Karim of Viqarunnisa Noon Debating Club were adjudged as the best speaker in the children category and school category respectively while Asif Newaz of NSU was selected as the best speaker in the club category.

The Daily Star and the Viqarunnisa Noon Debating Club jointly organised the weeklong competition at the college auditorium. The Daily Star has been

sponsoring the event for the last four years.

Commissioner of Anti-Corruption Bureau and former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof M Maniruzzaman Mian gave away crests and certificates to the winners as the chief guest.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Mian called on all to act as conscious citizens for the development of the country.

Rowena Hossain, principal of Viqarunnisa college, Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, noted debater Dr Abdun Noor Tushar and Afrin Hossain Barsha and Shamim Jahan Ahsan, president and moderator of the Viqarunnisa debating club, also spoke.

Mahfuz Anam urged the students to bring a meaningful change to their everyday lives.

Principal Rowena Hossain thanked The Daily Star for its support to such competition, which will help students in their future life.

## Constitutional recognition of indigenous rights demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a conference yesterday called for constitutional recognition of the rights of indigenous people as they are being deprived of various facilities.

They also criticised the government for avoiding its responsibility towards the indigenous people.

"A conspiracy is on to root out the indigenous people. The 45 ethnic groups need a strong national political party to fight for their rights," said Chairman of CHT Regional Council Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Lama alias Santu Lama at the inaugural session of the two-day conference in the city.

The National Adivasi Coordination Committee (NACC), Bangladesh Adivasi Forum (BAF), Hill Tracts NGO Forum (HTNF)

organised the conference on 'Emerging issues of indigenous people in Bangladesh' in association with the Nijera Kori, an NGO. The Minority Rights Group International, London sponsored it.

The conference was aimed to reach a consensus on the relationship between indigenous groups and the government and bring the ethnic groups under a network.

Raja Devasish Roy, chairperson of the HTNF, said discrimination against the ethnic community are still prevailing in society.

Promod Mankin MP, General Secretary of BAF Sanjeeb Drong, Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kori, theatre personality Mamun-ur Rashid and Prof Mesbah Kamal also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Janaudyug and Green Froce form a human chain demanding constitutional recognition of rights of the indigenous people of the country at Shahbagh in the city yesterday.

## B Chy demands relief for tornado victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President Professor AQM Baduruddoja Chowdhury yesterday demanded that the government immediately provide the tornado affected people with relief and rehabilitation.

He also accused the government of failing to provide sufficient relief materials for the affected people according to their needs.

He urged all to come forward and help the affected in recovering the post-tornado situation.

## Niamat made Magura DC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday transferred two deputy commissioners (DC) and appointed a new one, an official notification said.

Niamat Ullah Bhuiyan, director of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC), has been appointed as the new DC of Magura.

Meanwhile, Khagrachari DC Golan Mostafa has been transferred in Jamalpur while DC of Jamalpur, Mohammad Humayun Kabir, to Khagrachari.

## 'Save Osmani Udyan'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environment activists at a rally yesterday demanded that the government take immediate steps to save city's Osmani Udyan from the grabbers.

They also stressed the need for proper maintenance, expansion and beautification of the park.

The activists were speaking at the rally organised by Osmani Udyanar Agaro Hazar Gach Rakhiya Andolon, an environmental organisation, at Osmani Udyan in the city.

By constructing illegal structures, a vested quarter in connivance of the government bodiesz continues the encroachment process unabated, the speakers alleged.

Presided over by Professor Serajul Islam Chowdhury, the rally was addressed by Engineer Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) leader Ruhin Hossain Prince and Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) General Secretary Mohidul Haque Khan.