

Seek apology for March 25 genocide

Duta urges Pak govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday called on the Pakistan government to seek unconditional apology for the genocide committed by its forces in Bangladesh on the night of March 25, 1971.

Speaking at a seminar, they also expressed concern at the rise of anti-liberation forces who assisted the occupation forces in the killing of millions of innocent Bangladeshes.

The speakers called upon the people from all walks of life to come forward to resist the fundamentalist forces for safeguarding the country's independence and sovereignty.

The seminar on 'The significance of liberation war' was organised by Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) at the DU Club.

Presided over by Duta President Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, the seminar was addressed by Duta General Secretary Prof Mohammad Akhtaruzzaman, Prof AMM Shahidullah, Dr AZM Nowsher Ali Khan, Prof M Mostafa Chowdhury, Prof Ashraf Uddin Chowdhury, Prof Giassuddin Mollah and Prof Aminul Huq Bhuiyan.

American Alumni Assoc AGM held

Staff Correspondent

The annual general meeting of American Alumni Association (AAA) was held at a city restaurant on March 26, says a press release.

AAA President Syed Almas Kabir presided over the meeting while Secretary Ayesha Dastagir and Treasurer Forrest E Cookson presented their respective reports.

AAA founding member and Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Sayeeful Islam, American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh former president Forrest E Cookson, The Daily Star Managing Editor Sayed Fahim Munaim, former ERD Secretary of the Finance Ministry Dr AKM Mashur Rahman, American Center former director John Kincannon, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) Professor Dr Iqbal Mahmud and Dhaka University Professor Dr Perween Hasan were recognised for their contributions towards the organisation.

Crests were awarded to the new life members at the event. A musical programme was also held to celebrate the Independence Day of Bangladesh.

The Association operates under the chairmanship of US Ambassador in Bangladesh Harry K Thomas and aims to strengthen fellowship among graduates of American universities in Bangladesh.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation took out a colourful procession at Bailey Road yesterday in observance of the World Theatre Day.

3 pirates killed in intra-group clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

An armed clash between two rival groups of the pirates at Kokilmani area of the Sundarbans on Friday midnight left three men killed and several others injured.

The dead could not be identified till yesterday noon.

According to Swarankhola thana police of Bagerhat, the clash took place between the BDR Selim Bahini and the Rezaul Bahini over the supremacy and the share of booty.

Neither Bagerhat Police Super nor Assistant Forest Conservator of Swarankhola Range could be contacted for further information as they went to the spot on Saturday.

Obituary

UNB, Dhaka

Companiganj upazila BNP President Alhaj Nurul Islam died of cardiac arrest in city's National Heart Foundation yesterday at the age of 65.

He left behind his two sons and two daughters and a host of friends and relatives to mourn his death.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed consoled the death of Nurul Islam.

Bangla-Danish cultural festival next month

BSS, Dhaka

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs, in cooperation with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and the Embassy of Denmark in Bangladesh, has initiated a cultural festival to be held in the city next month.

The festival focusing on the cooperation between the two countries, will coincide with the worldwide celebration of Hans Christian Andersen's bicentenary, said a press release.

During the festival, different programmes will take place highlighting the life and activities of Hans Christian Andersen, two new translations of his most popular fairy tales and other related issues.

One of the book containing 50 fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen with original illustration will be launched at a Bookshop at Gulshan on April 2, marking his birth anniversary. Bangladesh artists have adapted some of the most popular fairy tales into drama and puppet theatre. KM Harun of the 'Theatre, Natak Sarani' will show 'The Emperors New Clothes' adapted to a local setting by Professor Syed Manzuorul Islam at 7:00pm on April 7 and 8:00pm at the National Theatre at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Artist Mustafa Monwar will present the life of Hans Christian Andersen through a fairy tale 'The Ugly Duckling' and present a show based on 'The Nightingale' at the same venue on April 10.

A Danish movie 'Move Me' will also be shown at the British Council on April 12. A Danida supported project in Comilla that used drama for empowering young men and women will show one of their dramas at the Shilpakala Academy at 7:00pm on April 4.

Dr Mahbub joins KU as VC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Prof Dr Mahbubur Rahman yesterday joined the Khulna University (KU) as the new vice-chancellor.

Prior to his new assignment, he was a teacher of the soil science department of Dhaka University.

Hope Training Centre opens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Capacity building is an effective means of raising voice of the marginalised in society, said Dr Samuel R Kobia, general secretary of Geneva-based World Council of Churches (WCC), while inaugurating a training centre in Savar yesterday.

The Human and Organisational Potential Enhancement (Hope) Training Centre of the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB), an NGO, at Baropara will function primarily as a centre for capacity building of its staff members.

"The centre will be a catalyst for enhancing the human and organisational potentials, not only in Bangladesh but also in other countries in Asia and elsewhere," Kobia said.

The centre will also train the staffs of like-minded organisations that believe in people-oriented development on a participatory basis.

The Hope centre on a seven-acre campus, an hour's drive from the capital city, has been equipped with physical, technical and human resources.

It has residential accommodation for 90 participants, four classrooms, seminar room, and an audio-visual presentation theatre, among other facilities.

'Herbal medical system unregulated'

PORIMOL PALMA

The country's traditional herbal medical system is irregular and unregulated, said Dr Ferdousi Begum, a plant bio-technologist.

"The country could gain significantly by patronising the herbal medical system, but it is not being done just due to lack of government's political will and the anomalies of the corrupt officials," she added.

Dr Ferdousi, who is also the executive director of the Development of Biotechnology and Environmental Conservation Centre, said there is no regulatory body to check the quality of the herbal medicines produced by more than 800 companies in the country.

In her survey report on 'Traditional and industrial use and market scenario of medicinal plant in Bangladesh-2001,' she said more than 90 percent of the raw materials is exported in the form of spices, and a large portion of the herbal plants is smuggled out of the country.

Managing Director of Hamdard Laboratories Bangladesh Md Yousuf Haroon Bhuiyan has said there is an annual demand of herbal medicine worth Tk 100 crore in the country, but this can be raised to Tk 1000 crore if the government takes care of this sector.

Besides, there is huge export potential of herbal medicinal plants and medicines, he added.

When contacted, Director General of Health Abdur Rahman said all the companies engaged in the production of herbal medicines will be brought under the drug administration soon to maintain their quality.

Rahman said herbal medicine doctors will be appointed soon in the remaining district sadar hospitals and then in thana health complexes.

In 2002, the government

decided in principle to recruit at least one homeopathic or herbal medicine doctor at every thana health complex, and make one herbal medicinal plant garden there.

Though 464 gardeners were appointed for the gardens, no doctor has so far been appointed in any thana health complexes.

Only 15 homeopathic and 30 herbal medical doctors have been appointed in the district sadar hospitals, said an official of the Government Unani Ayurvedic Degree College and Hospital (GUADCH).

The appointment of 20 doctors was suspended even after written and oral test due to conflict between health ministry and directorate in 2004, sources said.

However, the directorate of health has sent a proposal to the health ministry to appoint three doctors at district sadar hospital and 1 doctor at thana health complex, the sources added.

During a recent visit to the lone GUADCH in the city, this corre-

spondent found the 100-bed hospital in a shabby condition with only five patients in the female ward. The male ward was totally vacant.

"But there is a regular budgetary allocation for medicines and meals of the patients," said a hospital source.

Of the total 44 teaching posts, there are only one assistant professor and 18 lecturers in the college. Principal-cum-Superintendent Dr Ataur Rahman is also a lecturer.

This shortage of teacher seriously hampers the education, said a source adding that lack of fund also deprives the students of internships.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) had been funding the college by giving fellowships and training to the doctors. But it has stopped its assistance since 1997 for misuse of funds, an official in the hospital added.

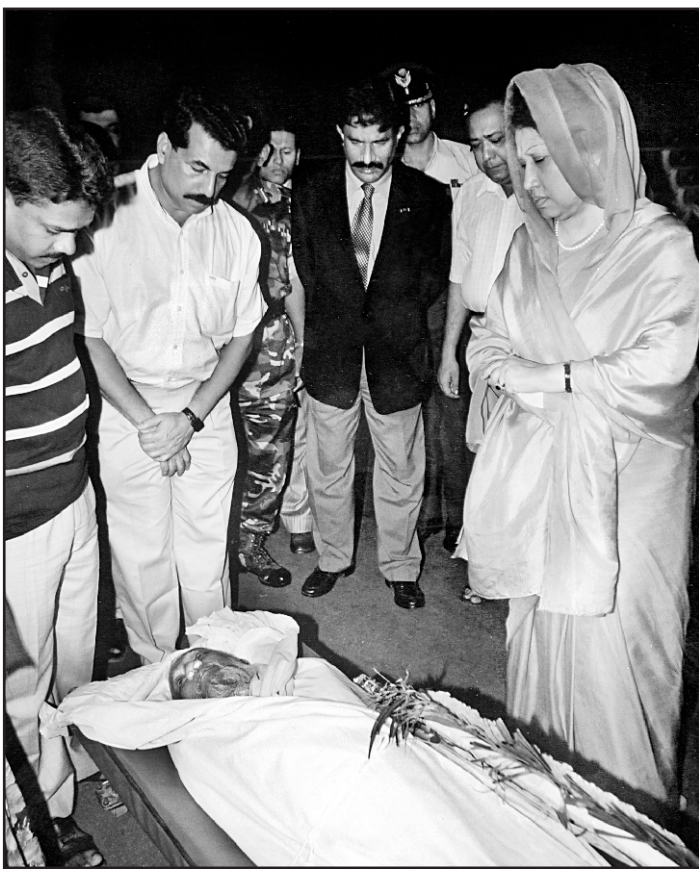


PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia places wreaths at the coffin of Shamsuddin Ahmed Ishaq MP at the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday to pay her last respect to the leader.

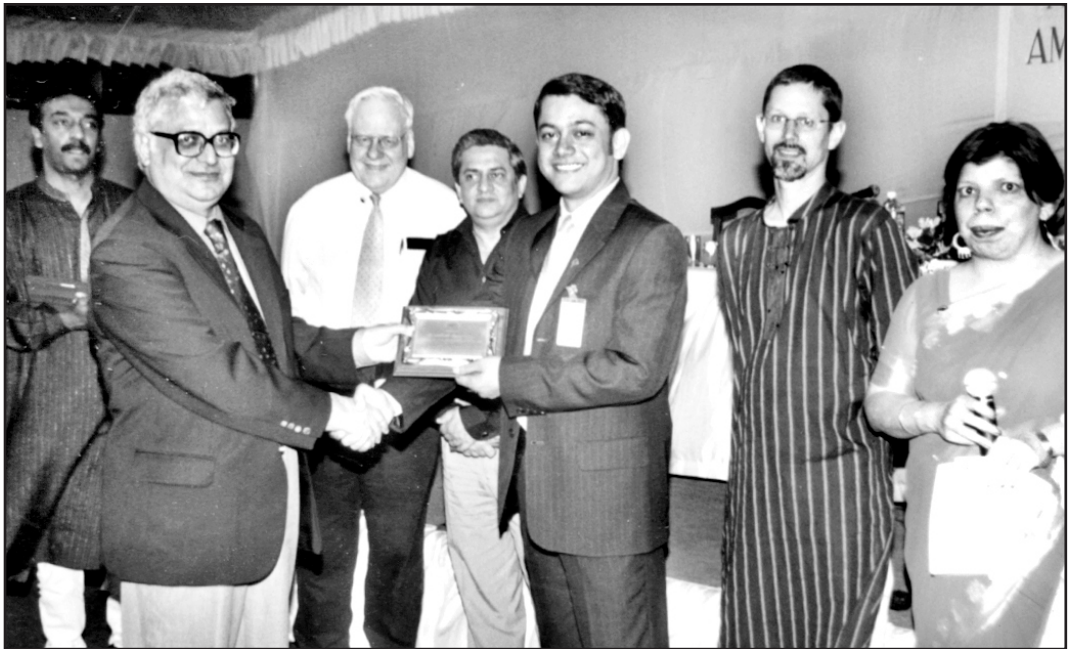


PHOTO: STAR

American Alumni Association (AAA) awards crests to new life members at its annual general meeting held at the Saffron restaurant in the city on March 26.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6.00pm today.

Day temperature may rise over the country during the period, Met Office said.

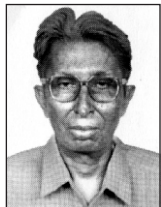
Highest temperature 34.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 18.0 degree Celsius at Rangamati.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:13pm today and rises at 5:53am 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	32.5	23.5	76	62
Chittagong	30.8	22.0	76	79
Rajshahi	32.2	19.0	70	62
Khulna	33.0	23.4	89	76
Barisal	33.0	23.4	87	69
Sylhet	26.5	19.6	87	70
Cox's Bazar	32.4	22.2	78	83

Death anniversary



Today is the 5th death anniversary of Dr Syed Ali Naqi, professor of sociology, University of Dhaka, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his daughter's residence at the Shaheed Glas Uddin Residential Area on the Dhaka University campus after Asr prayers.

Qulkhwani



West Panthopath, Kalabagan residence after Magrib prayers today, says a press release.

Harun-ur-Rashid passed away due to brain stroke on March 25 at the age of 62.

Sajida introduces eye care insurance scheme

Orbis International Bangladesh Country Office on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Sajida Foundation, a local NGO, to build capacity on eye care in Keraniganj and Kamrangirchar under Dhaka district, says a press release.

For the first time in Bangladesh, eye care is going to be integrated in existing health insurance scheme for the poor people under this agreement.

Both health insured and non-insured clients will benefit, about 2000 cataract surgeries will be performed, more than 10,000 eye patients will receive treatment and about 2,00,000 people will be screened under the three-year project.

Orbis Bangladesh Country Director Dr Khairul Islam and Executive Director of Sajida Foundation, Zahida Fizza Kabir signed the MoU at a simple ceremony in Dhaka.

The objective of the project is to address the problems of eye care in the area; especially cataract and refractive error – the major causes of blindness and poor productivity

among poor population.

The project will establish "Salim & Sayeeda Fahmi Eye Centre" to address the eye care problem of the poor people through this health insurance scheme.

To accomplish the objective, Orbis will support in capacity building, provide financial and technical support and organise fellowship training for ophthalmologist and other staff.

Orbis, better known for its flying eye hospital, is an international, non-profit, humanitarian organisation committed to preserving and restoring sight in the developing world through hands-on training of medical personnel and by strengthening the capacity of in-country eye care services and institution.

Sajida Foundation is a non-government voluntary organisation, grew from a home-based education charity into a micro-finance institution with health insurance for the urban poor population.

Sajida owns 51 percent share of Renata Ltd, a pharmaceutical company.



Orbis Bangladesh Country Director Dr Khairul Islam and Executive Director of Sajida Foundation, Zahida Fizza Kabir sign the MoU at a simple ceremony in the city on Wednesday.

AMIC Secretary General arrives today

UNB, Dhaka

Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) Secretary General Dr Indrajit Banerjee will arrive here today from Singapore on a four-day visit to Bangladesh.

During his stay in Dhaka, he will exchange views with media personalities and journalists and visit a number of leading media organisations, including BTV, Bangladesh Betar, National Press Club, Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB), BSS and UNB.

The AMIC secretary general will make a courtesy call on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban. He will also call on Information Minister M Shamsul Islam and Information Secretary Dr Mahbubur Rahman.

AMIC plans to organise a South Asia media conference in Bangladesh early next year.

It will also hold a number of workshops, seminar and training courses here this year with a view to improving the professional skill and expertise of Bangladesh journalists.

Dr Banerjee will return to Singapore on April 1.



BAPI executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SM Safiuzzaman and Nazmul Hasan were reelected as president and general secretary of Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries (BAPI) for the years of 2005-06, says a press release.

The election was held recently at its 34th general meeting at Pan Pacific Hotel Sonargaon in the city. MA Karim was also reelected as treasurer of the association.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, State Minister Mizanur Rahman Sinha and Advisor of the Commerce Ministry Barkat Ullah Bulu were present.

DHAKA TODAY

Kite exhibition

An exhibition of Japan-Bangladesh Kite and Traditional Handicrafts will be inaugurated by Japanese Ambassador Matsushiro Horiguchi as chief guest. Venue: Novera Hall of the National Museum, Shahbagh. Time: 3.00pm.

Eye seminar

Islamia Eye Hospital and MA Ispahani Institute of Ophthalmology organise a seminar on 'Corneal Blindness' with Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: Hospital auditorium. Time: 10.00am.

Bikalpa Dhara meeting

A meeting of the Bikalpa Jubo Dhara will be held in observance of the National and Independence Day. It will be followed by a cultural function. Venue: 13/1, Topkhana Road. Time: 4.30pm.

JP meeting

Dhaka city unit of the Jatiya Party organises a meeting to mark the Independence Day. Venue: Muktagong, Ramna. Time: 3.00pm.

Chamber meeting

The monthly meeting of the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be held with State Minister for Power Iqbal Hasan Mahmood as chief guest. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel Time: 12.30pm.

CNRS dialogue

The Centre for National and Regional Studies organises a dialogue on development and good governance. Venue: IDB Bhaban Auditorium, Agargaon. Time: 9.30am.

NPC seminar

The National Press Club organises a seminar on 'The advancement in the treatment of heart disease'. Venue: VIP Lounge of the club. Time: 10.00am.

DHAKA TOMORROW

BIISS seminar

The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies organises a seminar titled 'National security of Bangladesh in the new millennium' with Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar as chief guest. Venue: BIISS Auditorium, 1/46 Old Elephant Road.

Education seminar

Bangladesh Quran Learning Society organises a seminar on 'Islamic Education System'. Venue: Hamdard Auditorium, Sonargaon Road. Time: 5.00pm.

Mridubhashan

The weekly Mridubhashan organises a roundtable on 'How to overcome the present crisis in Bangladesh?' Venue: BETS Centre, House-55, Road-4/A, Dhannomdi. Time: 4.00pm.

Chironton

Chironton Bangladesh organises a