

## Tata team arrives tomorrow

PTI, Dhaka

Top officials of Tata group will arrive here tomorrow to discuss further course of action following submission of the pre-feasibility study on the proposed 2.5 billion US dollar investment in Bangladesh.

The Indian conglomerate has proposed to invest in fertiliser, power and steel sectors and conducted feasibility studies to examine its business suitability as also other pros and cons of the business.

Three top officials of Tata will visit Dhaka on Sunday at the invitation of the Board of Investment (BOI), sources said.

The managing directors of Tata steel, power and chemical will be visiting Dhaka for a day, sources said.

"The team will discuss the next steps and it is basically a preparatory meeting before negotiations expected to start in the third week of May," he said.



Rudra Udyan Parishad organises 'Rudra Mela' in celebration of the birth anniversary of late poet Rudra Mohammad Shahidullah at the Institute of Fine Arts in the city yesterday.

## 8 women, 10 children tortured to death daily during Jan-Mar

### Says MMC report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eight women were tortured to death everyday during January to March 2005 while 22 abused in different ways on an average, said a Mass Line Media Centre (MMC) report.

MMC at a seminar in Khulna also reported that the number of women repression and killing incidents during this period is less than that in October to December 2004.

A total of 11 women died everyday and 25 repressed during that time.

Since January to March 2005, different newspapers published 2323 news items on women rights. A total of 1962 women were tortured, 696 killed among them. The

number of injured women is 636. A total of 671 cases were filed against the repression whereas the number of arrest is only 445.

Besides, only 96 verdicts were announced in various women related cases.

Reports published in 12 national dailies and 175 local dailies revealed that the rape incidents were the highest during that period, with 291 of the victims killed.

Sexual violence and rape incidents on children are the highest in Rajshahi division totaling at 93.

A total of 35 women were acid burnt, 303 tortured for dowry, 49 abducted and 117 were trafficked. On an average, 10 children were killed everyday and 53 tor-

tured during the period. The number has increased comparing to that in October to December 2004.

193 children abduction report got published in different newspapers while 254 sexually harassed and 23 killed after being raped.

A total of 110 children became victims of trafficking.

A total of 194 women were raped, 35 among them forced to commit suicide.

A total of 442 children became victim to various torture incidents. Among them, 104 children were killed, 90 injured, 69 raped and 75 abducted during January 1 to March 31, Odhakar, a rights organisation's report adds.

PHOTO: STAR

## Unite to save nation from misrule of alliance govt

### Speakers urge pro-liberation forces

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League leaders yesterday called for solid rock unity of the progressive and pro-liberation forces to save the nation from the "misrule of this autocratic and anti-liberation government."

"A solid rock unity of the democratic and progressive forces is essential to get rid of this anti-liberation alliance regime," Abdur Razzak told a citizens' condolence meeting.

The condolence meeting was organised by Sammito Sangkritik Jote and Sammito Nagorik Samaj in memory of veteran Awami League leader Abdus Samad Azad.

Addressing the meeting, civil society leaders paid their glowing tributes to Abdus Samad Azad, a close associate of Bangabandhu and a prominent organiser of the War of Liberation.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil said Azad's political career spanned over 60 years and people of this country would always remember him for his courageous role in establishing a society of democratic practice, progress and secularism.

Jalil said Samad Azad had played a significant role in building the world opinion in favour of Bangladesh during the liberation war.

Former Justice KM Sobhan, Dr SA Malek, Samyabadi Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua, Krishak Samik Janata League General Secretary Advocate Fazlur Rahman, JSD leader Shari Nurul Ambia, Supreme Court Bar Association President Mahabub-e-Alam, Prof Abdul Ahad Chowdhury, Communist Party leader Morshed Ali, Dhaka University Teachers' Association President AAMF Arefin Siddique, Ramendu Majumder, Habibur Rahman Khan, Golam Kuddus, journalist Foyez Ahmed and Samad Azad's elder son Azizus Samad Don also spoke at the meeting.

## 'Politicisation of trade unions leads to labour exploitation'

PORIMOL PALMA

Politicisation of trade unions and government's apathy to implement labour laws have encouraged industrialists and businessmen in private sector to exploit 80 lakh workers in the country, said economists and labour leaders.

"The trade unions in almost all the state-owned enterprises are mainly divided into two groups - pro-BNP and pro-Awami League, and their leaders enjoy the supreme power in any negotiations when their respective party-led governments are in power, they added.

Consequently, the elected Collective Bargaining Agents (CBAs) become dysfunctional allowing the partisan leaders to enjoy personal interests, said Dr Wazedul Islam Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Trade Union Centre (BTUC).

For example, the BNP-backed trade union in Waza (Water and Sewerage Authority) is now more powerful than the CBA, as its majority members are pro-AL and were elected during the last AL regime, he noted.

"The trade union movement has been tumbled owing to this partisan trade unionism," Dr Wazedul said, adding that, due to this division, the

government meets the demand of only a particular quarters and not the interest of all workers.

According to Srarnik Karmochari Oikya Parishad (Skop), the government in 1984 fixed the minimum wage at Tk 560 for the workers of the denationalised industries, and this remains unchanged as of today.

"Meanwhile, the price of essentials in the last 20 years rocketed about 300 percent. So, can you imagine how vulnerable the workers are now with that meager wage?" Wazedul questioned.

About 80 percent of state-owned industries and commercial organisations have been denationalised since 1975, Skop leaders said, adding that since then private sector flourished rapidly pushing more than 90 percent of the workers to the private sector.

The minimum wage of the workers in the private sector has been fixed sector-wise ranging from Tk 900 to 1050, which is also not ensured in many factories, they noted.

The government signed three agreements with the Skop in 1992, '98 and '04, but not a single one has been implemented, alleged the leaders.

The workers in the factories also risk their lives.

According to Jatiya Garment Srarnik Federation, 291 workers died

and 1782 others were injured in 32 accidents in the garment and knit-wear factories since 1990.

A research by Karmojibi Nari says most of the garment factories do not have sufficient safety measures causing fire accidents.

According to Imarat Nirman Srarnik (Building Construction Labour) Union Bangladesh, 115 workers died and more than 1,000 were injured since 2004. But none of them was compensated.

Bangladesh Economic Association President Dr Qazi Kholiuzzaman Ahmad blamed the absence of an appropriate regulatory body for the exploitation of the workers.

"The workers, being the weakest part of our population, are the victims of free market economy," he added.

Karmojibi Nari President Shirin Akhter said, "Government's negligence to protect the rights of the workers has made them more vulnerable to exploitation, and its failure to arrest the owners of Spectrum Sweater Industries at Savar as of today has again provided it."

Besides, there are numerous examples that the garment workers who become vocal about their rights are immediately sacked, she added.



## Ahsanullah's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Awami League (AL) lawmaker Ahsanullah Master.

Ahsanullah Master was shot dead as about 20 gunmen fired on the rally of Sheekh Haseebul League at a school compound at Noagon near his residence in Dhaka on May 7 last year.

On the occasion, local Awami League and its front organisations chalked out month long programmes, including milad mahfil, Quran khwani and wearing of black badges.

A Dhaka court handed down death sentences to 22 people and life terms to six others for the murder of Ahsanullah on April 16, the highest number of capital punishments ever awarded in a single criminal case in Bangladesh.

## Makbul Hasan Moni

Today is the 24th death anniversary of Makbul Hasan Moni, former controller of accounts at Biman Bangladesh and a sports organiser, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residence at Bakshi Bazar at 5:00pm today. The family members, relatives, friends and admirers of late Moni will offer Fataha at his Azampur grave.

To mark the day, Makbul Hasan Trust will donate Tk4000 to Sir Salimullah Muslim orphanage.

## Give indigenous people back their land

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally on Thursday urged the authorities concerned to give back the land of indigenous people to them by abolishing all discriminatory laws.

They said though the constitution guarantees equal rights of all citizens, the indigenous people are deprived of their rights to land.

Jana Uddo, an environmentalist group, organised the rally at Shahbagh in the city.

Terming the indigenous people as encroachers, the vested quarter evicts them from the lands where they had been living since long, said the speakers.

They said the indigenous people are evicted in the name of establishing eco-park, cantonment, banana and pineapple gardens.

They are even tortured when they protest, said the speakers.

They urged all to raise their voice to protect the interest of indigenous people.

Presided over by Jono Uddo Coordinator Sharifuzzaman Sharif, the rally was also addressed by Prof Mesbah Kamal, Robaet Ferdous, Engineer Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, Uzal Azim, Dipayan Khusha and Alamgir Kabir.

## NEW RULES BY INDIAN CUSTOMS

### Trade thru Benapole suspended for 4 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Trade between Bangladesh and India remained suspended for the fourth consecutive day yesterday through the country's biggest land port at Benapole incurring a loss of over Tk 12 crore in revenue earning during dieperiod.

According to a reliable source, several thousand trucks laden with perishable and non-perishable goods have been lying stranded on both sides of Petrapole land port of India since the suspension of import-export trade.

Leaders of four organisations using the land port held a meeting at the auditorium of the Association of C&F Agents at Benapole on Thursday. The meeting was presided over by Alhaj Mofizur Rahman Sujon, senior vice-president of the association.

Leaders of the Indian side Himangshu Banik, Ramesh Sen and Dilip Biswas expressed their firm determination not to resume export to Bangladesh until their demands for withdrawal of new rules imposed by the Indian customs are withdrawn.

The Indian striking exporters also held a meeting with Benapole Customs Commissioner Dr Rafiqul Islam to discuss the situation.

But the meeting yielded no positive results to end the deadlock. Later, the customs commissioner, in a press release, claimed that the strike did not cause any loss to revenue earning in three days.

However, the strike will adversely affect different mills and industries due to shortage of raw materials imported through Benapole land port, said some Bangladeshi importers.

WEATHER TODAY		
City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min

## Slight rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6:00pm today.

Met Office predicted slight rise in day temperature over the country during the period.

Highest temperature 33.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 18.5 degree Celsius at Mongla.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:30pm today and rises at 5:20am 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
Dhaka	31.4	19.7
Chittagong	31.2	22.2
Rajshahi	30.5	19.5
Khulna	31.7	20.7
Barisal	31.4	21.4
Sylhet	31.0	20.4
Cox's Bazar	33.0	22.8

## 4 killed, 30 injured in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Four people, including a retired deputy secretary, were killed and 30 others injured in separate road accidents in the city and Jamalpur district yesterday.

Our Staff Correspondent adds, a retired government official was killed in a road accident at Shantinagar in the city yesterday.

Family sources said a passenger bus of Grameen Paribahan hit Kazi AHM Yehia, 63, a retired deputy secretary, near Shantinagar Bazar at about 6:00am when he was returning to his apartment at Shantinagar after morning walk.

Locals rushed Yehia to the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at about 7:35am.

Victim's wife Monwara Begum, lecturer of Motijheel Ideal School and College, said her husband went out of their Green Garden apartment for morning walk.

Police could neither trace the bus, nor arrest its driver until

6:30pm.

UNB adds, three labourers travelling on board a truck were killed and about 30 others injured as the coal-laden vehicle overturned on Jamalpur-Tangail Highway at Beltia near the district town yesterday.

Fire Service sources said some 30-35 labourers boarded the Tangail-bound truck from Dhanua Kamalpur in Bakshiganj upazila.

The truck overturned near the Youth Development office in Jamalpur as the driver braked hard to save a stray cow on the highway.

Labourers -- Mahmud, 35, Malek, 25, and Alam, 28, -- of Purbo Tangaripara of Sherpur, were killed on the spot.

Of the injured, 17 were admitted to Jamalpur General Hospital in critical condition. All the injured were from Sherpur.

On information, district Fire Services personnel rushed to the spot and brought the injured to the hospital.

Police seized the truck but the driver managed to escape.

## Recruit qualified faculty

### Speakers urge private universities

DU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a ceremony yesterday urged the private universities to recruit full time qualified faculty members to ensure quality education and uphold the image of the country.

Addressing the first graduation ceremony of Northern University of Bangladesh (NUB) at Osmani Memorial Hall in the city, they also said the private universities could play a vital role in creating better human resources for the development of the country.

Addressing the ceremony as chief guest, Speaker of the National Parliament Barrister Muhammad Jamiruddin Sirca said there is no alternative to skilled and educated human resources to build a prosperous nation.

Speaking as a special guest, University Grants Commission Chairman Prof Dr M Asaduzzaman said it is a matter of sorrow that the quality of education in country's private universities is far behind that in the foreign universities.

The private universities should spend more money in the filed of research works, he said assuring both public and private universities of increased allocations for research works in the upcoming budget from the government.

A total of 130 graduates were conferred degrees and they received certificates and crests from the Speaker.

Presided over by NUB Vice Chancellor Prof Mohammad Ali, the ceremony was also addressed by Executive Secretary of IBAT Trust M Abu Bakar Siddique, Director of the trust M Lutfar Rahman, Business Faculty Dean Prof Azhar Uddin and Arts Faculty Dean Prof Sadrudin Ahmed.

## GB orientation

The 14-day orientation of the newly-admitted students of Gono Bishwabidyalaya concluded at the Gono Shasthya PHA Bhavan recently, says a press release.

University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof M Asaduzzaman was the chief guest with Gono Bishwabidyalaya Vice Chancellor Prof Abul Quasem Chowdhury in the chair.

Prof Asaduzzaman in his speech lauded the role of Gono Bishwabidyalaya in the field of education.

Prof Quasem called upon the students to maintain the congenial academic atmosphere at the university.

Registrar Md Delwar Hossain also spoke.



One minute's silence was observed at the citizens' condolence meeting yesterday at the Central Shaheed Minar to mourn the sad demise of the Language Movement veteran and country's first foreign minister Abdus Samad Azad. Sammito Sangkritik Jote organised the meeting.

**DHAKA TODAY**

- Prize giving ceremony**  
The prize giving ceremony of Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Mela will be held with Awami League President Sheikh Hasina as chief guest. Venue: Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:00pm.
- Memorial meeting**  
A meeting will be held to commemorate the death of Swami Ranganathanadaji, the 13th president of Ramakrishna Mission. Venue: Mission premises. Time: 5:00pm.
- Prize giving ceremony**  
The prize giving ceremony of Lions Club of Dhaka South International District 315B-1 will be held. Venue: Lions Foundation Bhaban Auditorium, Agargaon. Time: 5:00pm.
- Rotary Dhaka**  
Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club, Shahbagh. Time: 1:30pm.
- Rotary North West**  
Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 1:30pm.
- Academy film show**  
Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'Ocean's 12'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6:30pm.
- Lecture**  
Under Meet the Reporters' Programme, Water Resources Minister Hafiz Uddin Ahmed will deliver a lecture on the 'Desertification and environmental disaster in Bangladesh'. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity Auditorium, Segun Bagicha. Time: 11:00am.
- Seminar**  
Community Development Library organises a seminar on 'Water: Rights or Trade'. Venue: CDL Auditorium, House-39, Road-14/A, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:30pm.
- Rehab seminar**  
Rehab organises a seminar on 'Building collapse at Savar: Probable causes and future remedies'. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 10:30am.
- Samata meeting**  
Samata, a non-government organisation, will hold an opinion sharing meeting on 'Expediting distribution of khas land among the land less people to alleviate poverty'. Venue: Biam Auditorium, New Eskaton. Time: 9:30am.
- Khelaghar**  
In collaboration with Save the Children UK, Kendrio Khelaghar Asar will hold a discussion on 'Legal rights of the children'. Venue: House-9, Road-16, Gulshan-1. Time: 4:00pm.

**DHAKA TOMORROW**

- University film show**  
Northern University Bangladesh will screen two films titled 'Hamlet' and 'Taming of the Shrew' by Shakespeare. Venue: University Auditorium, Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur. Time: 11:00am and 2:00pm.
- University film show**  
Northern University Bangladesh will screen two films titled 'Othello' and 'Mid Summer Night's Dream' by Shakespeare. Venue: University Auditorium, Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur. Time: 11:00am and 2:00pm.
- Indian film show**  
The High Commission of India will screen a film titled 'Teen Kanya'. Venue: Indian Cultural Centre Auditorium, House-25, Road-96, Gulshan-2. Time: 6:00pm.
- Academy film show**  
Academy Film Society will screen a German thriller titled 'Underground'. Venue: Academy Auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6:30pm.
- Chhayanaout**  
Chhayanaout, in collaboration with Nagorik Naya Sampraday, organises a programme to mark the birth anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore. Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall of the Shilpakala Academy, Segunbagicha. Time: 7:00pm.
- Discussion**  
In observance of International Thalasasaemia Day, Bangladesh Thalasasaemia Samity will hold a discussion with National Professor Dr M R Khan as chief guest. Venue: VIP Lounge of the National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

## Get your favourite books delivered to your door!

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Oitiya, a famous publishing house of the country, has taken up an initiative to reach the classical literature collections to the reader at a reasonable price with home delivery service.

For the first time in the country, the reader will be able to purchase the books by depositing money with a commercial bank under this package that offers collections of five noted writers of Bengali literature-Rabindranath Tagore, Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay, Manik Bandyopadhyay, Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay and Jibananda Das.

The price for the complete package would be Tk 6500. Readers can deposit the money with one of the 68 branches of Arab-Bangladesh (AB) Bank Ltd through out the country from today until May 15.

Arifur Rahman Nayeem, chief executive of Oitiya Publications apprised it while addressing a press conference in the city yesterday.

Oitiya Publications will deliver the books to any reader anywhere in Bangladesh.

Earlier, Oitiya published collections of Tagore literature that earned a tremendous popularity among the buyers, Arifur Rahman told the journalists.

## 'Western media portray Bangladesh negatively'

BSS, Dhaka

Speakers at a discussion on World Press Freedom Day recently said the western media negatively portray the developing countries like Bangladesh but frequently ignore the incidents of rights violation in their own countries.

PEN Centre Bangladesh and Bangladesh National Commission on UNESCO jointly organised the function.

PEN Bangladesh chapter president Abdur Rahim chaired it.

"The overall standard of life will definitely deteriorate in any country where freedom of speech and the press is snatched away," Rahim said quoting Nobel Laureate economist Amartya Sen. No severe famine has so far broken out in any country where there is press freedom, he added.