



Third death anniversary of Sony today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the third death anniversary of Sabegunnahar Sony, the first female student to fall victim to campus violence.

A student of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Sony died in a crossfire during a gunfight between two factions of the ruling BNP-backed Jatrayabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) on the BUET campus in 2002.

Sony Memorial Foundation, a voluntary organisation, has drawn up programmes to mark the day. Dr Kamal Hossain is the honorary chairman of the foundation, says a press release.

The programmes include offering fatiha at the grave of Sony at the city corporation's graveyard at Uttara Sector # 4 at 7:30am and placing wreaths at the memorial to Sony on the BUET campus at 9:30am.

Meanwhile, BUET unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League will form a human chain on the university campus at 10:00am, says a press release.

A doa mahfil will be held at the Sonali Bank officers' quarters Jame Mosque at Sector # 8 in Uttara at 5:30pm and foods will be distributed among the students of Sony Buddhi Probondhi School at her village home at Bijeswar in Brahmanbaria at 1:30pm.

Mainuddin Ahmed

Today is the 15th death anniversary of Mainuddin Ahmed, a social worker of Brahmanbaria district and the founder of Alamnagar Uttarpara Primary School, says a press release.

Mainuddin Ahmed is the father of Shah Jalal Uddin Ahmed, managing director of Techno Drugs Ltd.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Flower export fetches Tk 17cr in 10 months

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh exported flowers worth over Tk 17.17 crore in the last 10 months of the current fiscal, compared to about Tk 4.77 crore last year.

Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury revealed the figure in parliament yesterday while replying to a question of Manjur Kader (BNP-Pabna).

He said flowers are being exported to many countries, including Pakistan, Italy, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, the USA, Philippines, Singapore, Greece, Belgium, Turkey, Japan, Germany, the UK, Denmark and France.

The government has decided to allocate maximum five acres of khas land to each entrepreneur on commercial basis for flower cultivation for export, said the minister.

Altaf said the country is also exporting orchid after meeting local demands. Orchid is now cultivated in Kushtia, Jessore, Satkhira, Dhaka and in some districts in the northern region.

Obituary

Miah Musa, editor of the Dainik Patrika and vice chairman of Jatiya Party (JP-Ershad), passed away at his residence in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Jatiya Party Chairman H M Ershad in a message from Saudi Arabia yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of Musa and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family. The JP Secretary General ABM Ruhul Amin Hawlader also expressed condolence at his death.

Alhaj Md Ashrafuddin Mia

Alhaj Md Ashrafuddin Mia, a retired official of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, passed away due to heat stroke at his village home Kalma in Louhajang on June 1 at the age of 87, says a press release.

Ashrafuddin, father of AKM Mohsin, a senior photojournalist of The Daily Star, left behind his four sons and five daughters to mourn his death.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his village home Kalma after Juma prayers on Friday.

Rohingya crisis to be solved as early as possible

Minister tells parliament

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh yesterday hoped that the long standing Rohingya refugee problem would be resolved as early as possible through bilateral discussions with Myanmar.

"The crisis will be resolved as early as possible through bilateral talks," State Minister for Food and Disaster Management Asadul Habib Dulu told Parliament responding to a volley of queries during the question hour.

He said some 20,000 refugees were still stranded in two camps in Cox's Bazar after repatriating 230,000 Rohingya refugees to Myanmar since 1991. "Not a single penny was spent for the refugees during the last three years," he added.

Replying to Jatiya Party lawmaker Golam Habib Dulu, he said a process was underway to send back

the remaining refugees to their native country.

He said that the government received Tk 38,108,487 from United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2004 to support the Rohingya refugees in the camps.

To another question of GM Quader (Jatiya Party) on stranded Pakistanis in the Geneva Camp, he said that his ministry was trying to resolve the problems, including power supply to the Geneva Camp, where three people died from heat-stroke recently.

The camp dwellers were asked to use a single bulb and a fan, but they used various electric tools and also had illegal power connections prompting the Ministry of Power to snap the electricity, Dulu told the House.

"We have paid Tk 44 crore in electric bills for the Geneva Camp in

last two years," he said adding, "Power supply would be restored in the camps soon."

Replying to another question, Dulu said that about 100,000 families were currently living in 70 refugee camps across the country.

"The programme for distributing relief materials among the refugees continues. The programme will be expanded after submission of the report of a sub-committee, formed earlier to work out the actual figure of the stranded Pakistanis," he said.

He said the country has the capability and logistics to tackle any natural disaster, including after-shocks of any earthquake.

"The Ministry of Relief and Disaster Management is working sincerely to raise awareness among the people of the country to reduce the casualties of natural catastrophes," he said.

Minister level meet to resolve water issue stressed Kolkata Press Club team meets Hafiz

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Water Resources Minister Hafiz Uddin Ahmed Bir Bikram yesterday emphasised talks at prime minister or minister level to resolve outstanding problems in water sharing with India.

He said this when a seven-member delegation of Kolkata Press Club met him at his secretariat office.

The minister told the delegation that if Bangladesh cannot get its due share of water, agriculture, fisheries and water transportation will be badly affected causing environmental degradation.

The delegation of Kolkata Press Club told the minister that the Indian government has not carried out any feasibility study to divert water toward its southern zone from the northern.

President of Kolkata Press Club and reporter of the Hindustan Raj Mithilia, Vice President of the press club and correspondent of PTI Shyamol Baran Roy and general secretary of the club and correspondent of Durdanshan, Snehashish Sur were present at the meeting.

BSS adds, The delegation also made a courtesy call on Information Minister M Shamsul Islam at his office in the city yesterday.

They exchanged views on matters relating to different aspects of newspapers for the welfare of peoples of both the countries.

During the meeting, the minister said the news should be maintained the accuracy and objectivity in the current age free-flow of information. He called for refraining from publishing incorrect news that can mislead the people.

"It is very much essential to check and cross-check the news before its publication in the newspapers," he said.

BUDGET 2005-06

Allocation for farmers, labourers demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday demanded separate allocation in the upcoming national budget for the farmers and labourers.

They said rural people are the majority of the country and we have to pay more attention to them in order to change the overall socio-economic situation of the country.

The speakers comprising economists, engineers, agriculturists and researchers suggested introduction of voucher system to ensure agriculture subsidy to the actual farmers and demanded set up of more export-oriented industries in the rural areas to create more jobs for the rural people.

The roundtable on "Separate allocation in the budget for the farmers and labourers" was organised by Bangladesh Khetmajur Samity, a labourer's organisation.

Presenting the keynote paper, economist MM Akash said high rate of national growth does not guarantee eradication of poverty. It could be successful only once we can ensure the participation of the poor in it, he added.

He also stressed the need for providing rural labours with loan and land facilities in order for them to become self-reliant.

Communist party of Bangladesh (CPB) General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim observed that the government could create employment opportunities to one crore people if they allocate 10 per cent in the next three national budgets.

Economist Dr Khalikuzzaman Ahmed, Anu Muhammad, Engineer Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah, Agriculturist Prof Muazzem Hossen, among others, took part in the discussion.

RU VC seeks cooperation

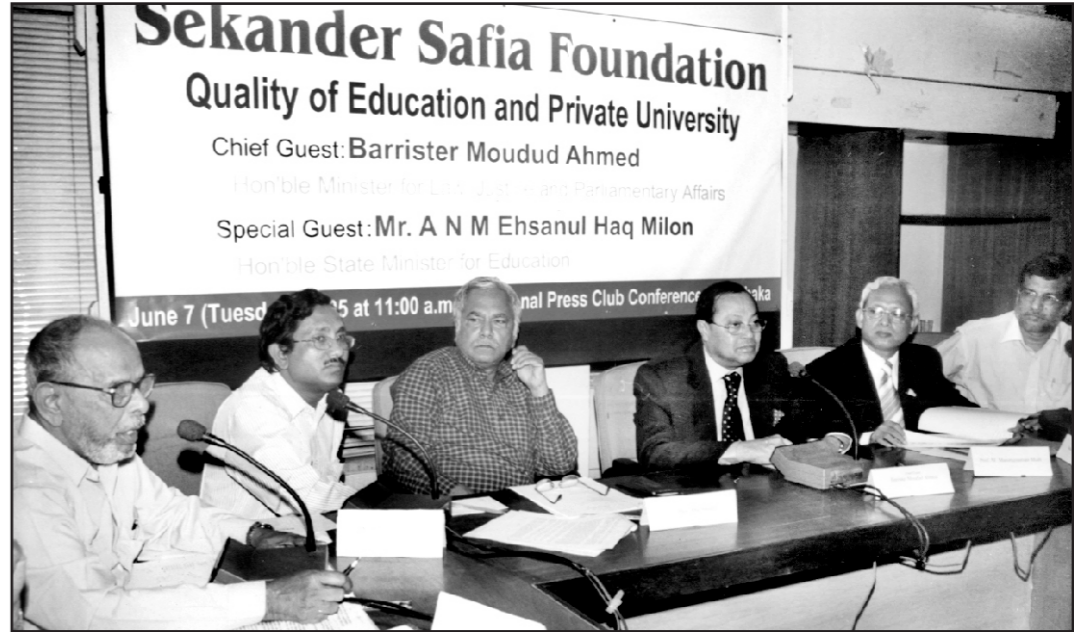
UNB, Rajshahi

Prof Dr M Altaf Hossain, newly appointed vice-chancellor of Rajshahi University yesterday sought cooperation of all, including teachers, students, officials and employees, in maintaining congenial atmosphere on the campus.

He said this when 150 teachers belonging to Zia Parishad called on him at his office.

New Pro-VC Prof Dr Mamnunul Keramat, Rata President Prof M Nuzrul Islam and Rata General Secretary Abdul Hye Talukder were also present.

The teachers greeted the new VC and pro-VC and assured them of their allout cooperation in maintaining congenial atmosphere on the campus.



Law Minister Moudud Ahmed speaks at a discussion on 'Quality of Education and Private Universities' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Pvt universities require regulation: Moudud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The private university sector requires regulation to some extent, but without interference in its institutional administration, said Law Minister Moudud Ahmed at a discussion yesterday.

There should not be such control that may restrict the growth of this sector, neither should the government be involved directly with the streamlining of the private sector universities, he said.

Sekander Safia Foundation organised the discussion on 'Quality of Education and Private Universities' at the National Press Club.

The minister said that although most private universities run in appropriate manner, "there are some that do not have any characteristics of a university."

Privatisation does not necessar-

ily mean unlimited freedom, he said, adding that private universities cannot be allowed to run as business concerns like private hospitals or clinics.

Referring to the proposed amendments to the Private University Act, the minister said that the education ministry should organise an open discussion with all the stakeholders before it is passed as a law.

Commodore (retd.) Ataur Rahman, chairman of the Forum of Private Universities, said the interference of the bureaucracy is creating obstacles to the growth of private university sector.

Dr Shamsheer Ali, vice-chancellor of South East University, said the private universities should be allowed to conduct distant education programme.

National Professor Nurul Islam called for accreditation to ensure

quality of education in the private universities but expressed his reservation about the precondition of 20-year teaching experience to become a vice-chancellor in the proposed amendments.

Presenting a keynote paper, Dr ABM Shahidul Islam, vice-chairman of Eastern University Foundation, said that about 60,000 students have been studying in the private universities who otherwise would have gone abroad. It saves the country's foreign currency worth about Tk 6,000 million.

Prof Durga Das Bhattacharya and founder-life member of North South University MA Kashem also spoke while Prof Abu Ahmed of Dhaka University chaired the discussion.

'Unite to form nat'l govt after general election'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday urged all democratic and patriotic forces to be united to form a national government after the next general election to free the people from the misrule of BNP-led alliance government.

They said under the shelter of the four-party alliance government, the anti-liberation forces have clutched all government and non-government sectors, and they are now working to turn the country into a fundamentalist one.

JSD President Hasanul Huq Inu said June 7 is a milestone, and the new generation should know its significance in the history of our national movements. JSD General Secretary Syed Jafar Sajjad, and other party lead-

ers Mainuddin Khan Badal, Nazmul Huq, Sharif Ambia, Mohamad Khaled and Ataur Rahman also spoke.

On this day, police and members of the then East Pakistan Rifles shot dead 11 people including Monu Mia, Shafia and Shamsul Huq in Dhaka and Narayanganj during a hartal.

The hartal was called for the release of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other leaders who were detained for launching the six-point demand that included autonomy for erstwhile East Pakistan.



Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka speaks at the meet the reporters on 'Development of the city: Aspiration and achievement' at the DRU office in the city yesterday. Dhaka Reporters' Unity organised the event.

Frequent power outage in Chittagong

ABDULLAH -AL MAHMUD, City

Amid unbearable heat of the scorching summer, frequent power outage has been wrecking havoc on normal life in the port city for the last few days.

Most city areas have been witnessing power outages for two to four hours in phases every day.

During this time there is an average load shedding of over

120MW every day though the sources concerned in Power Development Board (PDB) put the load shedding at around 100MW.

The city had been under the grip of acute power shortage since last few weeks.

The situation worsened further when 60MW Shikolbaha Thermal Power Plant (gas fired) tripped on May 24 evening and Razoan Power Plant unit no 2 with a

capacity of 210 MW went into forced shut down on June 4 night.

At present, around 200MW of power is being generated in Chittagong as against the demand of over 450 MW.

According to sources, the total generation of power in Chittagong region was only 201 MW on Monday.

Of them, Razoan Power Plant unit no 1 generated 100MW, while unit no 1, 2 & 3 of Kaptai Hydroelectric Power Plant produced 91MW and some 10MW was available from Shikolbaha Burge-mounted Power Plant.

With 201MW of power generated in Chittagong and some 176MW received from the national grid, PDB Chittagong supplied 377MW of power resulting in a load shedding of around 100MW on that day, sources said.

PDB sources feared that the suffering of the city dwellers due to power outage might linger as power generation remains in a pitiable state.

With most power plants remaining either shutdown due technical glitches or generating below the capacity, the total power generation in Chittagong came down to less than one-third of the total production capacity, they said.

A total of over 700MW of power could be generated in Chittagong when all the power plants, 420-MW Razoan Power Plant, 230-MW Kaptai Hydro-electric Power Plant, 60-MW Shikolbaha Thermal Power Plant (Gas-fired) and 30MW Shikolbaha Burge-mounted Power Plant, are in full operation.

Of them, two units (No 4 & 5) of Kaptai plant have been out of order for about a year while the rest three units (NO 1, 2 & 3) were generating power below capacity. These three units are producing some 100MW of power everyday on an average, sources said.

PDB officials could not say about the probable time when the units 4 & 5 might resume generation.

Having unit 3 also in a very bad shape and the "curve role" (water level) of Kaptai Lake falling fast, power generation in the functional three units is also declining, they said.

DHAKA TODAY advertisement with various event listings including Roundtable, Conference, Meeting, Human chain, Founding anniversary, Film show, Orientation, Seminar, Kingshuk meeting, Prize giving ceremony.

WEATHER TODAY advertisement with a weather forecast table for Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

HSBC sets up trash bins at Patenga beach

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) Limited in Bangladesh held a daylong environmental programme at Patenga sea beach in Chittagong on June 3 on the eve of the World Environment Day, says a press release.

Chittagong is a major tourist destination of the country and Patenga beach one of its prime attractions. The beach area lacks trash bins due to which wastes such as food packets, cigarettes and polythene left by the visitors make the area dirty.

Steve Banner, CEO of HSBC Bangladesh, along with 50 staffs volunteered to set up trash bins in the beach area to mitigate this problem. HSBC has also hired a local person for maintenance of the trash bins and cleaning up of litter in the beach on a regular basis.

They also cleaned up the beach area and distributed leaflets among the shopkeepers and visitors to raise awareness about keeping the beach area clean and the dumping of wastes in designated trash bins.