

‘Recognise languages of minority communities’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called for recognition and free use of mother languages of all minority communities in the country. The government should take initiative to promote all major and minor languages, which are on the verge of extinction, they said. The Northern University Bangladesh (NUB) and the United Nations Information Centre jointly organised the discussion on 'International Mother Language Day' at the university auditorium in the city. Speaking as the chief guest, Ataus Samad, advisory editor of the daily Amar Desh, called on the new generation to read the history of Bangla language movement more and more to learn about the signifi-

cance of the Mother Language Day. Apart from Bangla, there are many languages used by the minority communities in the country, he said, adding that the government should give recognition to these languages and allow the minority communities to use their languages freely. Unesco Representative Wolfgang Vollmann said 80 percent of rural people could not read and write Bangla, which is a great threat to Bangla language. "Literacy for all" would be a better slogan of the International Mother Language Day, he added. Prof Nurul Momen, former chairman, Department of International Relations, Dhaka University, said According to a survey report of a

European research council, there are about 7,000 languages in the world and 3000 of them are at high risk of extinction, said Prof Nurul Momen. "Apart from Bangla, there are more than 100 different languages in our country, and we have to show respect to all languages," he said. Presided over by NUB Vice-Chancellor Prof Mohammad Ali, the discussion was also addressed by NUB Treasurer Abu Bakar Siddik, Business Faculty Dean Prof Dr Azhar Uddin, Prof Dr Sadruddin Ahmed, Officer-in-Charge of UN Information Centre Kazi Ali Reza and Publisher of the Amar Desh Hasmat Ali.

Outlaw killed in 'shoot out'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

A regional leader of the outlawed Biplabi Communist Party (BCP) was killed in a 'shoot out' between his accomplices and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Shailakupa upazila of Jhenidah yesterday. A Rab team from Khulna, after a tip off, arrested Foyez Uddin Biswas, 38, at Sabujbagh in Dhaka Sunday morning. Rab said they went to Asannagar following Foyez's lead to recover arms. They claimed BCP operatives opened fire on them as they reached the spot around 2:30am triggering an hour-long gun battle. Foyez was caught between the two battling parties as he attempted to flee from the Rab van. He died on the spot. Rab recovered one pistol, one shutter gun and eight live ammunitions from the spot. Foyez was an accused of five criminal cases including two murder cases, Rab official said.

Cuet classes suspended for 10 days as students clash

CU CORRESPONDENT

All academic activities at Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) have been suspended for 10 days following a clash between the students that left four injured, one critically. The university authorities yesterday held an emergency meeting and decided to suspend the classes until March 2. All resident students were asked to leave their respective dormitories by 5:00pm yesterday. Campus sources said the trouble ensued when a student named Anindya of Civil Engineering Department had an altercation with Enayet, a senior student of Mechanical Department, at a hotel in front of the university at around 2:00pm on Sunday. As a sequel to the incident, Anindya, reportedly an activist of JCD, the student of the ruling BNP, along with his friends swooped on Enayet and his batch mates at New Hall at 12:30am yesterday, leading to a clash between the two sides. The critically injured, identified as Ripon of Mechanical Department, was admitted to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital, while the remaining three—Didar, Rabbi and Raihan—were given first aid. The Cuet authorities formed a four-member committee to probe the incident. The committee, headed by Mostafa Kamal of Social Science Department, has been asked to submit its report within seven days.

PM unveils cover of 'Jababdihta'

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia unveiled the cover of a book titled 'Jababdihta' at her office yesterday. The book, compiled by M Musfiqul Fazal Ansari, contains the Prime Minister's replies to the questions during the question-answer session in the Jatiya Sangsad. The PM thanked the writer for the book.

Pizza Hut launches website in Bangla

Pizza Hut, the leading Pizza Restaurants operating in Dhaka and Chittagang, has launched a Bangla version of its website on the eve of this year's the Ekushey February, says a press release. From now on, pizza lovers can learn about Pizza Hut's wide range of products and services in Bangla after logging into www.pizzahutbd.com and by choosing the Bangla version. Pizza Hut has made this move in commemoration of the Language Movement in 1952. "Pizza Hut always respects and honours the local culture and heritage no matter where we set up our chain of Restaurants. Without compromising our international Brand Standards of excellence in Service, Products, Quality, Maintenance and Cleanliness, we believe a Brand becomes stronger if it cohabitates with the local culture and heritage. This Bangla version is a mark respect to those valiant language martyrs." Transcom Foods Ltd., a subsidiary of Transcom Group, operates Pizza Hut in Bangladesh.

Arshad files case against Tasmima

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Arshad Hosein, chief executive-cum-consultant of Ittefaq Group of Publications, yesterday filed a criminal case with a Dhaka court against Tasmima Hossain, wife of the daily Ittefaq Editor Anwar Hossain Manju. The court then issued a show cause notice to Tasmima, also a director of the Ittefaq, to explain within March 21 why a legal action would not be taken against her. In his complaint filed with the chief metropolitan magistrate's court, Arshad, son of Barrister Mainul Hosein, said that Tasmima along with hired musclemen played an active role on July 19 last year in printing the name of her husband Manju as the editor of the daily Ittefaq. The complainant also said Tasmima issued threats to Arshad on February 14 through her party's musclemen that he will face dire consequences if he continues to visit the premises of the publication company. On February 13, Tasmima had also filed a defamation case against Arshad and the court issued summons upon him to appear before it on April 18.

# WEATHER TODAY

## Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places among Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the region of Comilla in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

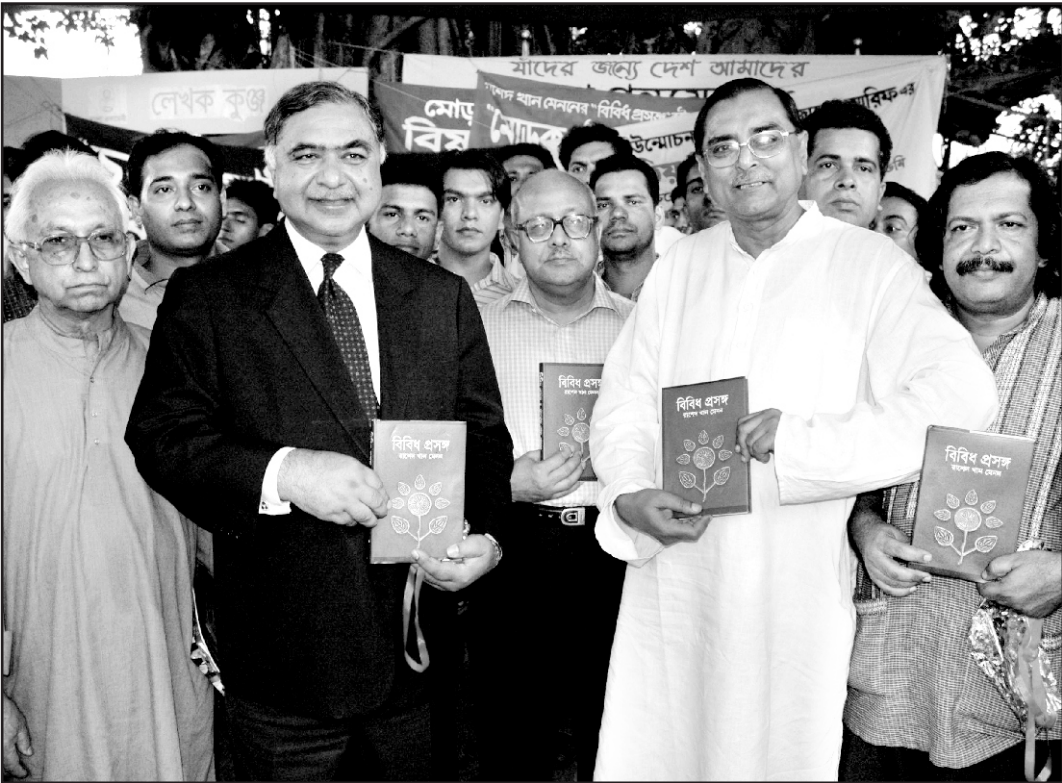
Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged night temperature.

Highest temperature 32.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rangamati and lowest 18.4 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

**The sun sets in the capital at 5:57pm today and rises at 6:27am 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	30.2	23.8	79	62
Chittagong	31.0	20.5	84	78
Rajshahi	28.2	20.4	96	96
Khulna	31.6	22.4	91	59
Barisal	31.2	21.5	91	61
Sylhet	29.0	20.3	85	73
Cox's Bazar	30.8	19.8	76	--



Jatiya Oikya Mancha President Dr Kamal Hossain and Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon hold copies of a book titled 'Bibidho Prosango' by Menon at the publication ceremony of the book at the Ekushey Book Fair at the Bangla Academy yesterday.

7 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least seven people were killed and eleven others injured in separate road accidents in Bogra, Comilla and Tangail yesterday. Our Correspondent from Bogra reports: Four people were killed and seven others injured in a road accident on Bogra-Dhaka highway near Mirzapur under Sherpur upazila yesterday. Police sources said the accident occurred at around 12.00 noon when a Dhaka-bound passenger coach coming from Bogra collide with a tempo from the opposite direction near Jamuna Para at Mirzapur. Shamim, 25, the tempo driver, son of Rohim Box of Jamail village under Sherpur, Moinuddin, 32, of Mandail, and Aminur, 35, son of Amed Ali of Shankar Hata and an unidentified person were killed on the spot.

JCD cadre held with looted money in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A cadre of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the ruling BNP, was caught while he was fleeing after snatching an amount of Tk 2 lakh from a trader in the city yesterday. His two accomplices, however, managed to escape. Belal Ahmed, a trader from Jagannathpur upazila of Sunamganj district, fell victim to snatching when he was on his way back to bus terminal in a rickshaw from a bank at the city's Dargah gate area at about 2:15pm. Three snatchers on a motorbike stood on the way of Belal at Dhopadighirpara area and took away the bag containing the money at dagger-point. As the victim raised hue and cry for help, Abul Hossain, a reporter of a local daily who was passing the area in a motorbike, chased the snatchers and caught one of them. Sayeed Ahmed claimed himself a cadre of the Upashahar faction of the JCD. The money was recovered from him. His two accomplices were identified as Zaved, a JCD cadre, and Zakaria, a Chhatra League cadre. Kotwali police started a case under the speedy trial law.

PROF TAHER MURDER

'Cop action to nab Shibir leader an eyewash'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police yesterday showed up in a huge number on Rajshahi University (RU) campus trumpeting for the arrest of Mahbubul Alam Shalehi, the lone absconding killer-suspect in Prof S Taher Ahmed murder case and RU Shibir president. "Tipped off, we took all-out preparations to arrest Shalehi, but he did not dare to appear at the scheduled meeting of the Shibir," Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP) Commissioner Nayeem Ahmed told The Daily Star. He said police had no reasonable ground to arrest Shalehi on February 10 when he appeared in a public meeting with top Jamaat and Shibir leaders, but "We have no hesitance now as Salam confessed his (Shalehi) name clearly on February 12." Tension mounted on the campus from morning as some 500 policemen from armed division, detective branch and four police stations took up their positions around a Shibir gathering near the administrative building. They also set up check posts at every entry points on the campus to resist outsiders and kept prison van, ambulance and fire brigade ready near the RU Stadium to meet any eventuality after the arrest of Shalehi. The police action, however, drew flak from many RU teachers, officials and students who termed it 'eyewash and drama'. "It is simply a drama. Police are not so fool to call a criminal for arrest," said a university teacher. Sources said Jamaat was pressuring police to arrest a pro-Awami League teacher implicating him in the murder as the involvement of Jamaat-aligned teacher Mohiuddin and Shalehi in the murder had already tarnished their image. Despite police action, Islami Chhatra Shibir staged a big show-down with outsiders and madrasa students of Budhpara and Meherchandi areas heightening the tension. Addressing a rally, the shibir leaders termed the involvement of Shalehi in Taher murder a conspiracy of Awami League and media. Meanwhile, several hundred teachers and students formed a long human chain from Binodhpur to Kajla gate of RU demanding the arrest and speedy trial of the killers of Prof Yunus and Prof Dr Taher. They also announced to hold human chain on every Saturday till their demands are met.



Children look at a microbus of HSBC bank decorated with the theme of 'Ekushey February' near the Bangla Academy in the city yesterday. The HSBC arranged a spot quiz contest for the visitors to the Ekushey Book Fair.

Menon's book launched at Ekushey fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

'Bibidho Prosango', a book by Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, was launched at the Ekushey Book Fair at Bangla Academy in the city yesterday. Launching the book, Jatiya Oikya Mancha President Dr Kamal Hossain said the Burdwan House, which is now the Bangla Academy, was once the residence of the then chief minister, a puppet of the Pakistani rulers, but the people unseated him and turned it into a 'people's house'. There is now a similar house in the country where different policies are adopted only for the sake of some vested quarters ignoring the people's interest, he said, but the people will oust the patrons of the vested quarters and establish their rights again. By toppling the ruling alliance, which is using religion to score political gains, the people will achieve another victory very soon like in 1971, Dr Kamal said. Gono Forum General Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, economist Dr Atiur Rahman, Prof Mesbah Kamal, banker Khandaker Ibrahim Khaled, and Rashed Khan Menon were also present at the publication ceremony of the book. Bud Comprint and Publications has published the 240-page book priced at Tk 200.

BOMB ATTACK Condition of Khulna AL leader critical

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Condition of Shaikh Yunus Ali, President of Ward N0-2 unit of Awami League, is not out of danger, said the doctors at the Khulna Medical College Hospital yesterday. The right hand of Yunus, also a ward commissioner, was blown off in a bomb attack by the criminals in front of his party office at Phulbari Gate under Khanjahan Ali Police Station on Sunday night. He survived another bomb attack at the same place on January 4. Yunus was made target of a pre-planned attack by the cadres of the ruling party, said Khulna city AL President Talukder Abdul Khaleque MP at a protest rally in city yesterday. Meanwhile, members of the injured AL leader's family did not file any case in this connection fearing further attack on him in future. Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) could not arrest anyone despite combing operation in the city in this connection.

Debate exhibition held at British Council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A half-day debate exhibition was held at the British Council in the city yesterday. Bangladesh Debate Federation (BDF) in association with Democracywatch organised the exhibition to mark the Beyond Borders International Youth Summit 2006. Beyond Borders is a regional project of British Council's global initiative of 'Connecting Futures' aiming to build mutual understanding, learning and respect among young people between 18 to 22 years in Britain and South Asian countries-Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Under the theme 'Love, Live, Express, Access', the Summit 2006 (February 19-23) was designed with innovative and inspiring events for young people such as quiz competition, sex health education, public speaking and debate exhibition. Starting with the public speaking on 'Beyond borders by the year 2025', the half-day debate exhibition followed a series of debate competitions. Editor of the daily Jugantor Abed Khan, former director general of Bangla Academy Dr Syed Anwar Hossain, BDF President Bulbul Hasan and BDF General Secretary Asif Newaj participated in the traditional debate while presidential debate and planchat debate were also held. The BDF outgoing president Bulbul Hasan said with a view to forming future leadership for the country we have brought the eminent personalities as a source of inspiration for the young generation. BDF members from over 20 districts including school, college and university students and Beyond Borders members participated in the event.