

# Contribute to enhance dignity of army

## PM urges Army Engineering Corps

BSS, *Natore*

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the engineering corps members of Bangladesh Army to groom themselves as ideal soldiers and make meaningful contribution to enhance dignity and honour of the army.

"I firmly believe that all the members of this corps will enhance dignity of the army in national and international arenas by working hard with discipline, sincerity and devotion," she told a darbar at Engineer Centre and School of Military Engineering (ECSME) at Qadiriabad Cantonment here.

The darbar was held on the occasion of the 4th engineer corps reunion and Annual Commanding Officers Conference 2006.

Khaleda Zia, who holds the portfolio of Defense Ministry, stressed the need for regular training, vigorous exercise and the highest degree of discipline to attain the goal.

She said the role of the corps of engineers is very important in the army. Members of this corps also extend significant assistance to the civil administration in time of need, she added.

She particularly mentioned the

role of the engineering corps during natural calamities and in the construction of roads in hilly areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts, building dams on various rivers and constructing Dhaka city protection embankment.

"You have made brilliant examples of your professional efficiency," she said and added the members of the corps of engineers have also earned appreciation through their rescue and salvation activities after different accidents.

Addressing the darbar, the Prime Minister referred to the contribution of sappers to maintain peace in international arena saying they earned honour and dignity for the country by discharging their duties side by side with modern armies from other countries during the Gulf War.

Noting the role of the sappers in the reconstruction of war-ravaged Kuwait, she said about 9,000 members of the corps successfully completed their duties in different peace missions.

"The foreign currency earned by you is not only useful for the welfare of your families, but also for the country," she said.

Terming the reunion a function of tradition, Khaleda Zia said it helps the retired and in-service members

of the corps to assemble together and strengthen the bond of brotherhood and enrich professional efficiency.

The Prime Minister recalled with respect all the freedom fighter soldiers, including the proclaimer of independence and architect of self-reliant Bangladesh Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman.

She particularly paid tributes to the members of the corps of engineers including Birshrestha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir, Lt. Col Qadir and Captain Shamsul Huda who sacrificed their lives in the War of Independence.

The Prime Minister planted a 'bakul' sapling beside the podium of the parade ground.

Ministers, MPs, Army Chief and senior civil and military officers were present at the function along with former and in-service members of the corps of engineers.

Earlier, the day's programme began with Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen. Moeen U Ahmed placing wreath at the memorial of the ECSME in honour of the martyred soldiers of the corps of engineers.

She also reviewed the reunion parade of former and present soldiers and took salute.

# Contempt hearing against bureaucrats adjourned

UNB, *Dhaka*

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday once again adjourned the hearing of a revised petition for drawing contempt proceedings against ten top order secretaries for impeding the implementation of its judgment on separation of judiciary.

As the quorum crisis of the court of the Appellate Division continued owing to sickness of a judge, the five-member bench headed by Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassir Husain expressed its unwillingness to hear the long-pending contempt petition when the court resumed.

After brief submission made by Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam, counsel for the contempt petitioner, and Attorney General AJ Mohammad Ali, who stood for the government, the court adjourned the hearing until April 2.

Earlier on February 22, the hearing was deferred until March 1 due to illness of another judge of the full court.

When the court resumed at 9:33am, the attorney general submitted a copy of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill-2006 placed in the parliament, seeking separation of judiciary from the executive with a provision for introducing separate executive and judicial magistracies.

After receiving the copy of the bill, the court interrupted the attorney general and asked him to place the latest initiatives taken by the government with regard to framing of rules on separation of judiciary.

As the attorney general kept mum on the matter, the court asked Barrister Amir-Ul Islam to make his submission.

Barrister Amir submitted that the contempt petition against the top order secretaries might be taken up for hearing sans the full court, if it is considered as a partly heard case. But the court ruled out his submission and adjourned the hearing till April 2.

# Barisal BNP men sue Prothom Alo, Jugantor editors, publishers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Baranipara upazila BNP leaders have lodged two cases against the editors, publishers and reporters of the Prothom Alo and the Jugantor for publishing reports on Whip Shahidul Huq Jamal filing a pond for the construction of a house.

Baranipara BNP Secretary Mir Shahidul Islam and Vice-President Aftab Hossain Mofakkar filed the cases on Tuesday night against Prothom Alo Editor Maitur Rahman, Publisher Mahfuz Anam and Barisal bureau chief Towfik Maruf and Jugantor Editor Abed Khan, Publisher Salma Islam and Barisal bureau chief Akter Faruk Shahin.

In their complaints, the BNP leaders said the reports published in the two newspapers are false, fictitious and exaggerated. As the Whip had no property in his own name in Baranipara municipal area, he can never be accused of filling any pond, they said.

The cases were filed with Baranipara Police Station under Sections 182, 420, 501, 502 and 505 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

# PSC report submitted to president

UNB, *Dhaka*

President Iajuddin Ahmed asked for making the competitive civil service more dynamic and public service-oriented so qualified people can be recruited for government jobs.

He said the PSC members will have to perform their duties "with sincerity and honesty to select qualified BCS cadre and non-cadre candidates".

"Responsibilities of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (PSC) have increased" in the changed context, he said when Public Service Commission chairman Prof Dr Zinnatun Nesa Tahmidia Begum handed over PSC report-2005 to him at Bangabhaban yesterday.

The PSC report revealed the statistics on direct appointments, conducted by the commission in last few years, showing steadily increased number of the applicants for different posts.

It is stated in the report that the government has already approved examination reforms, proposed by the commission for updating the recruitment test to scientifically select "most qualified candidates" in Bangladesh Civil Service (Cadre-Noncadre).

The new method was introduced from the 27th BCS examination, the report says.

M Mozammel Haque, Prof M Mahfuzur Rahman, M Abdur Rouf, Latifur Rahman, Col (Honourary) Prof Mahmudur Rahman, Prof Dr M Ashrafur Islam Chowdhury, Prof Dr M Nurul Islam, Mohammad Ashraf and Prof Dr KAM Shahadat Hossain Mondol, Secretary M Abdul Majid and Director AEM Nesaruddin were among the delegation members.



PHOTO: STAR

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad (inset) waves at the supporters at a public meeting at Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday.

# TANNERY INDUSTRY 'Expedite relocation process, set up treatment plant'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Civil society and the media should put pressure on the government to expedite the process of relocating the tanneries from the city's Hazaribagh area to Savar to save the environment, speakers at a seminar said yesterday.

Although that tannery industrial park in Savar was scheduled to complete by 2005, only 50 percent of the project work has been completed so far, they said.

They also called for setting up a central effluent treatment plant for the tannery industry to check pollution of water and the environment.

Save the Environment Movement and the Department of International Relationship (IR) of Dhaka University organised the seminar on 'Pollution and waste management: Tannery relocation to

Savar'.

Four students of IR department -- Shamima Nasreen, Farhana Alam, Sumaya Imam and Abu Bakar Siddiqui -- presented a research paper on the tannery relocation.

The speakers called for formulating a master plan to improve the situation. Coordination between the government and private sector is a must for the relocation of the tannery industry, they added.

An effective monitoring system should also be evolved to monitor the whole process, they said.

Prof Asheka Irshad said the policymakers have to make sure that the existing rules are implemented to save the environment. Besides, raising awareness among the people about environmental pollution is a must, she said.

President of Save the Environment Movement Dr Naser

Khan said Dhaka city would become unliveable after a few years if the tanneries are not relocated soon. The waste from tanneries might even pollute groundwater, he cautioned.

"The government took the decision to relocate the tanneries in order to protect the environment and to modernise the factories. But the process of relocation is being delayed as different ministries are involved in it," said Sohrab Hossain of the Department of Environment.

Presided over by Chairperson of IR department Prof Amena Mohsin, the seminar was also addressed by Prof Ramjul Haque, Prof Imtiaz Ahmed, Abdul Halim and Ruksana Kibria.

# 4 killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least four people, including a JCD leader, were killed and five injured in separate road accidents in Comilla and Chittagong on Tuesday night and yesterday.

UNB from Comilla reports: Two people were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents in the district yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Momtaz Uddin, 50, and Babul, 35, of Akabpur village in Burichang upazila.

Police said businessman Momtaz was run over by a bus at Shuaganj on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Comilla Dakshin Upazila at about 3:00pm.

Meanwhile, a bus rammed a three-wheeler auto-rickshaw coming from opposite direction at Parura in Burichang upazila on Comilla-Sylhet highway in the afternoon, killing three-wheeler passenger Babul on the spot and injuring five others.

BDNEWS from Chittagong adds: A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader was killed in a road accident at port connecting road in the city on Tuesday night.

The deceased Mohammad Helauddin, 25, was a senior vice president of JCD Karnaphuli unit, police said.

The accident occurred when a speeding truck knocked him down near Port Connecting Road at around 11:00pm on Tuesday while he was crossing the road, witnesses said.

Port police seized the truck but its driver managed to flee the scene minutes after the accident.

Our Correspondent from Chandpur reports: One person was killed in a road accident on Chandpur-Comilla regional highway at Meher area under Shaharasi upazila yesterday.

Witnesses and police said the

# SSKOP ultimatum to information ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) has given an ultimatum to the information ministry to publish the gazette notification regarding the 40 percent dearness allowance for the newspapermen by March 6.

Otherwise, they will boycott all programmes and news of the information minister from March 7 and observe a token strike in all newspaper and news agency offices from 11:00am to 5:00pm on March 8, the SSKOP leaders said at a rally in the city yesterday.

They also decided to stage a sit-in in front of the Secretariat on March 8 to press for their demand.

Condemning the dilly-dallying attitude over the publication of the gazette notification, the SSKOP leaders said the Sixth Wage Board announced the dearness allowance in October last year, but the Prime Minister's office and the information ministry still did not take any step to publish it.

Presided over by SSKOP Co-Convenor Iqbal Sobahan Chowdhury, the rally was addressed by Gias Kamal Chowdhury, Fazle Imam, Ruhul Amin Gazi, Manjirul Ahsan Bulbul, Abul Hasem, Khairul Islam, Altaf Mahmud, Elahi Newaj Khan, Omar Faruk and Sardar Farid.



PHOTO: STAR

Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad holds rally in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding publication of gazette of 40 percent dearness allowance declared by the 6th Wage Board.

# Traffic jam worsens for JP rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of the capital suffered from tremendous traffic jams from noon to late evening yesterday due to a Jatiya Party rally at Paltan Maidan.

A number of buses rented by the party to carry its rally participants from different parts of the city and elsewhere in the country were parked in front of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, Secretariat, Bangabazar and on the adjacent streets making it difficult for vehicles to move smoothly.

Traffic were congested for several hours at most parts of central Dhaka including Shahbagh, Press Club, Paltan, Motijheel, Kakrail and Nayapaltan causing difficulties for office workers returning home in the hot afternoon.

The situation worsened when the rally participants marched towards Paltan from different parts of the city and the traffic police re-routed Motijheel, Sayedabad and Sadarghat-bound buses towards Kakrail from Matsya Bhaban and towards Gulistan from Paltan.

Many were seen walking on footpaths while many motorbike riders were also compelled to get on the footpaths to avoid delays on the streets.

"I got on a Syedabad-bound bus at Shahbagh at 4:00pm to go to Dainik Bangla, but the traffic police diverted the vehicle in front of the Directorate of Public Health and Engineering forcing it to go back towards Hotel Sheraton," said Suravi, a student.

She said she was compelled to get down near Minto Road and walked to Kakrail where she took a rickshaw to arrive at her destination. "A journey that usually takes no more than half an hour took about an hour and a half."

For Chaitannya Chandra, who is a lawyer at Metropolitan Magistrate Court, it was too long a journey to come to Farmgate from Gulistan. "It took more than an hour," he said.

# Barapukuria power plant halts trial production

KONGKON KARMAKER, *Dinajpur*

Barapukuria coal-fired power plant stopped operation on Tuesday night only 12 days after it went into trial production.

Sources at the plant however claimed its operation was suspended due to snapping of the national grid with it. One of the two units of plant was supplying 110-125 MW of power since February 16.

The 250 MW Chinese built plant's two units have equal production capacity. The fate of one unit is uncertain due to numerous technical faults.

Power Development Board officials yesterday said the plant would resume production 'tonight' (Wednesday night).

# Death anniversary



The first death anniversary of Begum Shama K Moinuddin will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at the house of her daughter Farhana Ibrahim at Banani in the city after Asr prayers.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to attend the milad.

# Qulkhwani of Prof Shamsul Huq tomorrow

BSS, *Dhaka*

Qulkhwani of eminent educationist and National Professor Muhammad Shamsul Huq

will be held after Asr prayers tomorrow at his residence "Rima," 10, Eskaton Garden in the city.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani.

# Jahanara Begum



Qulkhwani of Jahanara Begum, wife of Dr T Hossain, will be held at 6:00pm today at 56/C, Road-11, Banani in the city, says a press release.

She passed away due to old age ailments on February 27 at the age of 78.

She is survived by one son and four daughters.



PHOTO: STAR

In the wake of recent fire incident at KTS Textile Mill in Chittagong, a garments factory in Dhaka has taken a programme to raise awareness for its employees. The picture shows a man using a megaphone to instruct the female workers of Consumer Products Ltd. how to get out of the factory building in case of any such incident.

# DISCUSSION ON SECULARISM

# 'Bangladesh a liberal democratic, not moderate Islamic country'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said restoration of 1972 Constitution is necessary to stop fundamentalism in the country and establish a secular democratic country.

They also emphasised the need to teach people about the lessons of secularism.

Secular Unity Bangladesh organised the discussion on the premises of Liberation War Museum at Shegunbagicha in the city.

Addressing the rally, Sammlita Ainjibi Samannaya Parishad President Barrister Amirul Islam said the rise of militancy is the result of the religion-based politics in the country.

The 1972 constitution had no discrimination between Islam and other religions of the country, he added.

Colonel (ret'd) Faruk Khan MP said, "We always believe that our country is a liberal democratic country, not a 'moderate Islamic democratic country' as called by Christina Rocca, former US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian affairs."

He said one should practise religion at individual level but state should not force anybody to practise any particular religion.

Dhaka University Teachers' Association President Prof AASM Arefin Siddique said 3 million freedom fighters sacrificed their lives

with a view to establishing a secular state.

The Ershad government betrayed the freedom fighters' blood by incorporating religion in the constitution, he added.

Prof Arefin said democracy and religion-based politics are contradictory, as in the democracy there is no distinction between a Muslim and people of other faiths.

But those who made Islam a state religion have done so for using the religion for political gain, he added.

By changing the constitution, the then government destroyed both religion and politics, said Prof Arefin adding, "We have to establish a secular government in the country to free the country from the hands of totalitarian rule."

Promod Mankin MP, Dhaka University Prof Dr Anisuzzaman, Colonel (ret'd) Shawkat Ali MP, Dr Denish Dilip Datta, Cultural per-

sonality Golam Kuddush and Kobori Sarwar, eminent writer Shahriar Kabir, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Prof Dr Moazzem Hossain, Mymensingh Agricultural University Prof Abdus Sattar Mondol, Prof Abul Barakat, former DUCSU VP Mahfuza Khanam, Pradip Chakrabarti, Dr Shirin Sharmin, Prem Ranjan Dev and freedom fighter Abul Kashem Chowdhury spoke on the occasion.

Dr Md Abdul Hai read out the declaration paper on 'Secular Unity Bangladesh', while language veteran Mahbubul Alam Chowdhury presided over the discussion and journalist Shamsul Arefin Khan moderated.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Rain or thundershowers likely

UNB, *Dhaka*

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, and Sylhet Divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country. Met office said predicting dry day temperature.

Highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Majidhe Court and lowest 17.5 degree Celsius at Rangpur.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:02pm today and rises at 6:19am 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	32.4	22.8	75	51
Chittagong	30.8	22.0	88	83
Rajshahi	32.0	18.8	44	40
Khulna	31.5	20.6	75	61
Barisal	32.3	22.0	95	80
Sylhet	31.4	21.8	--	60
Cox's Bazar	31.0	22.0	78	79