



Participants observe one minute's silence in memory of Colonel Taher at a discussion organised by Colonel Taher Sangsad at TSC auditorium in the city yesterday to mark his 30th death anniversary. From left are Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers' Party of Bangladesh, Dr Kamal Hossain, president of Gono Forum, eminent US journalist Lawrence Lifschultz and Kamal Lohani, president of Colonel Taher Sangsad.

PHOTO: STAR

Khaleda to meet field-level party leaders twice a week

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has decided to exchange views with her party's district, thana and pourashava leaders and MPs twice a week on Saturdays and Sundays at the PM's office at 30 Hare Road.

As per the schedule, leaders of BNP's Rajshahi and Meherpur districts will meet Khaleda Zia, also the chairperson of ruling BNP, today while leaders of Kushtia and Chuadanga tomorrow, according to party sources.

Earlier, Khaleda exchanged views with her party's field-level leaders once a week on Saturday.

Djuice lifestyle fair begins in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu yesterday inaugurated a three-day 'lifestyle fair', organised by Djuice, a package designed for youths by mobile phone operator Grameen Phone, at Rajshahi tennis complex.

The fair includes a number of entertainment programmes including sports, music, fashion show, concert and mobile fair. A number of 50 djuice partners set up their stalls for djuice connection, mobile sets, mobile accessories like ring tones and wall papers, cloths, sports accessories and food.

Daylong games, gifts, a performance by Bappa Majumder and 10 rock stars and fashion shows will be held during the fair.

Grameen Phone HR Director Emad UL Ameen and senior officials of RCC and Grameen Phone were also present in the inaugural ceremony.

Call to strengthen social afforestation movement

BSS, Chittagong

A 10-day three fair began in the city yesterday with a call to strengthen the social afforestation movement by bringing more fallow lands under the programme for maintaining ecological balance.

Chittagong District Administration and Chittagong North Forest Division are organising the fair titled "Tree Plantation Movement and Tree Fair-2006" at Laldighi Maidan as part of the

national tree plantation programme.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman inaugurated the fair as the chief guest, while State Minister for Environment and Forest Jafrul Islam Chowdhury was present as special guest.

With Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Dr Syed Nesar Ahmed Rumi in the chair, the function was addressed, among others, by Divisional Commissioner Mohammad Ashraful Makbul, Conservator of Forest, Chittagong

region, Salahuddin Ahmed and Divisional Forest Officer of Chittagong North Shamsul Azam.

Speaking at the function, Abdullah Al Noman said, "We have to plant trees not only for maintaining ecological balance but also for a conducive atmosphere for the human being as trees give us oxygen and absorb carbon-dioxide."

He said optimum utilisation of country's existing natural resources and land assets could contribute to a great extent in attaining economic progress side by side with exporting industrial products.

The minister underscored the need for further strengthening the social participatory afforestation instead of creating government regulatory forest areas to turn the tree plantation into a social movement.

State Minister for Environment and Forest Jafrul Islam Chowdhury said about Tk 86 crore were distributed among 56,000 families across the country during the last four and a half years under the social afforestation programme which has contributed a lot to change the economic status of the beneficiaries.

He said as per the directives of the prime minister the Environment and Forest Ministry has planted 93 crore coconut saplings in the coastal areas last year, and this year the ministry has taken a plan to plant one crore Neem saplings throughout the country.

Earlier, Abdullah Al Noman along with Jafrul Islam Chowdhury inaugurated the tree fair by planting saplings on the Chittagong Circuit House premises.

A procession with the participation of government and NGO officials, students and girl guides, was brought out from the Circuit House premises to create mass awareness about tree plantation.

'Withdraw suspension order on BGEF chief'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Government Employees Federation (BGEF), a national organisation for third and fourth class employees of the republic, yesterday demanded immediate withdrawal of the suspension order on the federation president.

At a press conference at the National Press Club in the city, the federation leaders also urged the government to meet their 11-point demand announced at a representatives' conference on June 3.

Terming the suspension order 'illegal', they alleged that the federation president was suspended without any specific allegation.

They said two presidents and one secretary general of its front organisations were also suspended and around 20 leaders transferred to other departments after the present government came to power.

Addressing the press conference the federation President Suraiya Akhter said prior to the suspension, a departmental case was lodged against her

and without proving the allegations another case for disobeying the order to join her office was lodged.

As per government rule an employee should be transferred to nearest offices, but she was first transferred to Sunamganj and then to Manikganj, said Suraiya, an employee of the family planning department, adding, "We are the employees of the republic, not the government."

At the press conference, a series of agitation programmes were also announced.

These included human chain in the capital on August 5, rally on the premises of Azimpur family planning directorate in the city and at all deputy commissioners' (DC) and upazila nirbahi officers' (UNO) offices on August 10, 21 and 28 and a grand rally at Paltan Maidan in the city on September 23.

Lutfur Rahman, acting president of the central working committee of the federation, and Abdur Rahman, secretary general, also spoke on the occasion.

Accommodation crisis grips JU dormitories

Teachers' politics, class boycott, intra-party feud lead to session jams

EMRAN HOSSAIN

Most of the students, who got admission to Jahangirnagar University (JU) this year under 2005-2006 academic sessions, will not avail themselves of accommodation facilities at the university dormitories in the next two years, as accommodation crisis due to session jam has gripped the lone residential university of the country.

Most of the freshers, including females, are staying outside the campus now, as many students enrolled under 2004-2005 academic sessions have not got accommodation yet and still staying on the floors of the TV rooms, guest rooms, common rooms, reading rooms and prayer halls or sharing beds with senior students in the hall rooms of different dormitories.

The overstay of 29th (1999-2000 academic sessions) and 30th (2000-2001 academic sessions) batches due to session jams ranging from two to three years created this crisis.

Teachers' politics, political instabil-

ity, intra-party conflict among student wings of different political parties, class boycott by students and work abstention by teachers caused the session jams.

Failure of the hall authorities to distribute seats among the students due to interference by ruling party's student organisation Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) added to the sufferings of the freshers.

The freshers have to attend political programmes to get a seat at the dormitory. About 10-15 rooms in each dormitory remain occupied by JCD leaders, with no effective measures from university authorities to check the occupation to ease the crisis.

"Lack of planning to resolve the crisis, unplanned enrolment of students, and failure of university authorities to fairly distribute the seats worsened the accommodation crisis," said a provost on condition of anonymity.

The crisis at female dormitories might have been lessened, had the construction work of Khaleda Zia hall had been completed in time. A portion

of the dormitory was constructed last year to reduce the accommodation crisis.

Due to lack of regular monitoring, construction work of the hall is yet to be completed though it was scheduled to be completed one year and six months ago.

About 820 freshers have been allotted in the six male dormitories without considering the accommodation situation properly. A few students could manage seats in common rooms, chhatra sangshad, reading rooms and guest rooms of the dormitories while others were asked to attend classes from outside.

About eight to 12 students stay in four-seated rooms of the halls by sharing beds and floors. Students are suffering much as study in such a mass room is almost impossible.

Some of the female students, who are allotted seats in Prilota, Fazilatun Nesa (FN), Jahanara Imam (JI), Faizunnesa and Khaleda Zia halls, are staying in common rooms, prayer rooms, TV rooms and reading rooms

while others live in newly constructed teachers quarter in front of JI hall.

"More than 20 students are living in a room here in absence of any kind of academic facilities," said Mohua, a resident student of Khaleda Zia hall.

"We feel insecure here as no fence is made around it and it is open to all sides. The authorities must take immediate steps to ensure our security," said Laboni, who live at the ground floor of the teachers' quarter in front of JI hall.

"We have to frequent the neighbouring dormitory for having meals and watching television while about 30 students are living inhumanly on the floor," she added.

The university authorities have made bus services for the newcomers living outside the campus. The arrangement, however, is not sufficient.

Despite several attempts to contact Vice Chancellor Prof Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman for his comment, he was not available.

EMBEZZLEMENT OF Tk 32 LAKH

Bank officer taken into police custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

An officer of Jamuna Bank Limited was taken into police custody on Thursday night for his alleged involvement in an embezzlement of Tk 32 lakh from three accounts.

The officer Zahidul Alam is being interrogated by police.

Manager of Jamuna Bank Sylhet branch filed a general diary (GD) with the Kotwali Police Station alleging the shortage of the said amount from three separate accounts on the same day.

The manager in his GD suspected involvement of two officers Chowdhury Abul Kalam Parvez and Zahidul Alam in the matter.

Accordingly, police took them to custody for interrogation.

But at midnight, the manager got the release of Chowdhury Abul Kalam Parvez by giving a written bond to the police.

The close-circuit camera of the bank was brought back from the capital after repairing it for the second time last week, but it went out of order again on Wednesday.

It was done intentionally, bank authorities apprehended.

GP launches Rajshahi City Beautification Project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The country's largest mobile phone operator Grameen Phone yesterday launched Rajshahi City Beautification Project, aiming at luring visitors and presenting the city dwellers a nice view.

With the theme 'Green Rajshahi, Healthy Rajshahi', GP will beautify 12 kilometres of road islands, seven major crossroads including Talaimari, Gourhanga, Jahangir Sarani, Laxmipur, Kazi Nazrul Sarani, decoration at Shishu Park square and Rajshahi bypass.

Under the project fashionable trees in islands between the city roads will be planted while fountains and sculptures will be installed at major city points.

Rajshahi Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu formally inaugurated the programme at a function at Rajshahi Jafar Imam Tennis Complex while Grameen Phone HR Director Emad UL Ameen, Brand Development and Management Head Emon Kalyan Dutta, RCC Chief Engineer Sarit Dutta Gupta and other high officials were also present.

GP will maintain the beauty spots till 2010.

USA unit of Jubo Dal formed

BSS, New York

A 151-member new committee of the USA unit of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal was formed on Thursday after dissolving the convening committee of the unit.

Former student leader Zakir H Chowdhury and Abu Sayeed Mohammad were elected president and general secretary respectively of the unit.

The new committee was formed with a view to bringing dynamism to the unit and strengthening its activities in the USA, as per the decision of the central executive committee of the Jubo Dal.



Bangladesh Shikshak Karmachari Samannaya Parishad stages a token hunger strike at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding implementation of Unesco and ILO recommendations with regard to education.

PHOTO: STAR



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina speaks at a view exchange meeting with Jubo League leaders at the party's Dhanmondi office in the city yesterday.