

### Three killed in road accidents

UNB, Dhaka

At least three people, including two children, were killed in separate road accidents in Sirajganj and Sylhet yesterday.

A Sirajganj report adds: Two children were killed and their mother was injured in a road accident at Moshipur in Sahajadpur upazila yesterday evening.

Police said Noor Mohammad, 10, and his brother Noor Hossain, 8, died on the spot when a Pabna-bound bus from Bogra hit them on Bogra-Nagorbari highway at about 6:00pm.

Their mother was also injured during the accident and was admitted to Sadar Hospital in critical condition.

Another report from Sylhet adds: A woman was killed and her son was injured in a road accident on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway in Dayamir area in Osmaninagar upazila yesterday.

Witnesses said Rushna Begum, 45, died on spot and her son Abdul Hamid, 22, was injured as a truck hit them while they were crossing the road at 4:00pm.

Police seized the bus but its driver managed to flee. A case was filed with the police.

### DFID, Unicef to help improve sanitation, hygiene for 3cr people

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Unicef signed an agreement in the city yesterday to support Bangladesh government in implementing improved sanitation and hygiene programmes to reach 30 million people in 34 districts across the country, says a press release.

For the five-year project from 2007 to 2011, DFID will contribute up to £35 million (Tk 483 crore), Unicef's own contribution will be approximately £4.8 million while the government investment will be around £8.9 million.

Up to 5.1 million people, particularly the poorest, will benefit from year round access to adequate supplies of safe drinking water.

Acting Country Representative of DFID Elizabeth Carriere and Unicef Representative Louis-Georges Arsenault signed the agreement.

This agreement was signed to support the joint implementation of the Sanitation, Hygiene Education and Water Supply in Bangladesh (SHEWA-B) project by Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and Unicef.

Through SHEWA-B, around 1.5 million schoolchildren will benefit from safe water delivery and improved sanitation services to 7,500 primary schools, whilst 4.5 million additional children are to gain from hygiene education in their schools.

### Rob calls on Indian HC

Indian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty and Juktafront leader ASM Abdur Rob held a meeting at Indian High Commission in the city yesterday, according to a press release.

During the meeting they talked about the need for increased cooperation between India and Bangladesh to promote their mutual development.

### Mass Upsurge Day today

BSS, Dhaka

The nation observes the 38th historic Mass Upsurge Day today to commemorate the valiant sons of the soil who sacrificed their lives during the mass upsurge that culminated in independence.

On this day in 1969, students and general people waged a strong movement against the then Pakistani autocratic regime of Ayub Khan. The movement turned into a mass upsurge following the martyrdom of Motiur Rahman, a student of class IX of Nabakumar Institute in the city.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina have given separate messages highlighting the significance of the day.

In her message, Khaleda urged the people to forge a strong national unity to safeguard democracy.

She said January 24 is a memorable day in the national life, as the students and the people of this country forged a strong national unity on this day in 1969 against the Pakistani autocracy, turning the mass movement into a mass upsurge.

That historic mass upsurge led to the fall of the then autocratic government and opened up the path of realising democratic rights of the people of this country, she said, adding that the independent Bangladesh emerged in 1971 as a sequel to that incident.

In another message, Hasina said, "Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman led the mass upsurge of January 24, 1969, which culminated in the war of independence in 1971. This is a rare example of national solidarity of the Bangalee nation."

The AL chief said she was shot at on the same day of 1988 in Chittagong, where 18 leaders and workers of Awami League were killed.

She urged all to be imbued with the spirit of the Mass Upsurge Day and play a positive role in freeing democracy-loving people from torture, repression and oppression.

The Samajtantrik Chhatra Front and the Bangladesh Gorib Mukti Andolon will hold discussions to mark the day.

### PHULBARI COAL MINE Bapa condemns Asia Energy's renewed bid

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) has condemned the renewed initiative of Asia Energy to take lease of Phulbari Coal Mine by renaming itself as Global Coal Management (GCM).

In a press release issued yesterday, Bapa leaders said by changing the name, Asia Energy is hatching a conspiracy to fulfil its ill design and signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Peoples Telecom and Information Services Limited which is now under consideration of the Board of Investment.

They demanded immediate ouster of Asia Energy from the country and implementation of the contract signed between the government and the agitating villagers on August 30 of last year.

### Cop attack on JN varsity students slated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Convener of Bangladesh Students Federation (BSF) Samiul Alam and Joint Conveners Sohail Rana and Raju Ahmed in a joint statement blasted the police attack on students of Jagannath University terming it an act of fascism.

The statement said such atrocities on general students who were agitating to press home their seven-point demand, is nothing but a continuation of political repression on students to curb their rights.

The BSF leaders demanded immediate release of the arrested students and exemplary punishment to those responsible for the attack.

### 2 indigenous groups trade gunfire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Two indigenous groups yesterday traded gunfire at the border area between Matiranga and Ramgour upazilas of the district leaving one injured critically.

The injured was identified as Bipul Barua, a former member of Shanti Bahini, and at present a member of Jana Sanghati Samity, police said.

He was sent to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital in a critical condition.

Police could not give any other details.



Dhaka City Corporation bulldozes illegal structures on roads at Mohammadpur in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

### Tale of a dowry-free village

WASIM BIN HABIB, Back From Comilla

Beside the river Gomoti in Comilla, Kahetara is a small village of around 100 families. Like other villages of the country, Kahetara has the same socio-economic scenarios with one great exception. The village is totally dowry-free and this has made the village totally different from others.

Dowry is such a social menace that pauperises hundreds of families in rural Bangladesh. Many families became destitute to meet the demand for dowry.

But the people of Kahetara under Burichang upazila are lucky enough to get rid of the curse of dowry. Now no parents here are worried about the marriage of their daughters as no matchmaker comes with the proposal of dowry on behalf of the groom's family.

The success story of the

Kahetara village was learnt while visiting the village, which is the part of a project titled 'Communication activities for children and women development'.

Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) is executing the project with the financial assistance of UNICEF.

Khadiza Akhter Munni, who was married to Shakhawat Hossain recently, told this correspondent that the groom's family did not make any demand for dowry.

Her father Abu Taher said, "Three of my daughters as well as two sons were married off without taking or giving any dowry."

Kahetara village was declared as the dowry-free village on March 26, 2004 under the initiatives of Sammilon Ekushe, a socio-cultural organisation.

Kazi Abdul Maleque, a former PWD engineer and chief adviser of Sammilon Ekushe, said the organisation was formed on December

16, 2003 to help improve education and health of women and children.

Whenever any proposal for marriage is initiated in the village, Ekushe performs all other related works, he added.

Joshed Ahmed, organising secretary of Sammilon Ekushe, said, "We organise different cultural programmes on national days to create awareness about harmful effects of dowry and early marriage including importance of education for children and women."

Kazi Abul Hossain, a marriage registrar, said he did not find any case of dowry in last year.

The organisers of Ekushe said it operates with no financial support from the government or any non-government bodies, rather the villagers themselves donate money to run the organisation.

Thus, Kahetara has become a model to be followed by many other villages of the country.

### Confce of Nobel laureates in July

For the first time, young scientists of the country will have an opportunity to take part in a conference of Nobel Prize winners to be held in Germany in July, says a press release.

Each year some 30 or more Nobel laureates come to Lindau, Germany, to give lectures and interact with about 700 young scientists and researchers from around the world. Such conferences are being held since 1951.

Interested scientists and researchers are requested to submit their applications through the website – www.lindau-bangladesh.org.bd.

### AL leaders visit Puja mandaps

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Awami League (AL) yesterday visited different Puja mandaps in the city and exchanged greetings with people of all walks of life who came to visit the mandaps on the occasion of Saraswati Puja.

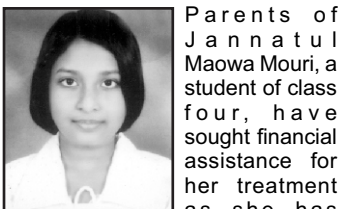
An AL team led by its Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu visited different mandaps at Dhaka University's Jagannath Hall and exchanged greetings with the students there.

The other members of the team include AL Presidium Members Abdur Razzak and Suranjit Sengupta, acting General Secretary Obaidul Quader, Joint Secretary Mukul Bose and Organising Secretary Abdul Mannan.

AL President Sheikh Hasina's Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury visited three mandaps at Kamlapur School, Buddha Mandir area and Razarbag Hindu Para and exchanged greetings with the people of all walks of life.

### Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Parents of Jannatul Maowa Mouri, a student of class four, have sought financial assistance for her treatment as she has been suffering from complicated heart diseases.

Mouri, a student of Oasis Children's Home at Sabujbagh, is now fighting for life.

Doctors have advised that she should undergo open heart surgery immediately, which involves around Tk three lakh. But her father MA Motalib Hossain, a senior journalist, could not afford such expensive treatment.

Her family has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand so that Mouri can lead a normal life again.

Contributions can be sent to Khadiza Yasmin, Savings Account No. 150580182340, Brac Bank, Motijheel branch, Dhaka. Phone: 0193-956012.

### Listed criminal arrested from court premises

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested a listed criminal from the court premises of the district town.

The arrestee was identified as Abdul Hamid, a top listed criminal of Comilla district, police sources said.

Acting on a tip off, a Rab team arrested Hamid at 1:00pm from the court area.

Additional Police Super of Khagrachhari Mohammad Tareq Ahmed confirmed the arrest.



PHOTO: STAR

Muktiyoddha Sangsad distributes warm clothes among the distressed freedom fighters at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday.

### 'Make alternative shelters for slum dwellers,hawkers before eviction'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday urged the government to arrange alternative shelters for the slum dwellers and hawkers before evicting them.

CPB President Manzurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Muzahidul Islam Selim, in a statement, said the right to shelter is a fundamental right of people and there is a verdict of the High Court that without arranging alternative housing for the slum dwellers they would not be evicted.

Despite this verdict, slums are demolished in a large scale causing immense sufferings to them, they said, adding that evicting hawkers without rehabilitation also halted their livelihood.

### Concern over demolition of city slums

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) yesterday expressed deep concern over demolition of slums in the city in the name of evicting illegal structures.

In a statement, it said evicting the slums without rehabilitation is a clear violation of human rights.

It also said it is necessary to evict the illegal grabbers but eviction of the slums without arranging alternative housing is inhuman.

BSD demanded rehabilitation of the slum dwellers and hawkers.

### RAPE OF SYLHET SCHOOLGIRL Arbitration condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) has condemned the arbitration for resolving the rape case of a schoolgirl at Zakiganj upazila in Sylhet and demanded an immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to the culprits.

In a statement, the BNWLA regretted the fact that heinous crimes like rape are still solved through arbitration despite proper laws in the country.

Terming arbitration illegal and equal to Fatwa, the statement called for punitive measures against the criminals to stop further occurrence of such incidents.

### Acute crisis of transport in Rajshahi Govt College

RU CORRESPONDENT

Acute crisis of buses is hampering study of around 23,775 students of Rajshahi Government College, established 128 years ago.

The students attend classes boarding on only three buses, of which two are rented while some come to college using public buses from neighbouring districts of 50 kilometres distance Natore and Chapainawabganj.

Students and teachers have been demanding that the authorities should purchase more buses as thousands of students are facing hassle to attend classes.

Borhan Uddin, a 3rd year honours student of physiology department of the college, alleged that every day we come to the college boarding on the jam-packed buses like hanging bats.

Female students suffer most, as there is no arrangement of separate transports for female students, said Farhana, a 2nd year student of Economic department.

The college authorities failed to purchase even a transport bus for students at its own cost although they collect over Tk 26 lakh every year from the students as transport fees, college sources said.

The sources added that during the admission, authorities collect Tk 110 per student as transport fees for a year.

But majority of students cannot avail transport facility for scanty number of buses, students alleged.

A source in the college said college authorities could easily purchase a bus every year from the fund the students pay every year, but they pay Tk 5,600 a day for the rented buses.

Admitting the sufferings of the students, the college transport committee convener Assistant Professor Ali Ahsan said, after opening 23 disciplines of the college, the number of students has increased but their facilities have not increased in a parallel way.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Fall in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may also occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog elsewhere over the country during late night until morning, Met Office said.

Mild to moderate cold wave sweeping over Rajshahi division and the regions of Srimongal, Mymensingh, Tangail and Jessore may spread over adjacent areas.

It said that night temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius at places over the country.

Highest temperature 28.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and lowest 06.0 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

**The sun sets in the capital at 5:39pm today and rises at 6:42am tomorrow.**

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature	Humidity in celsius		
percentage	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	25.6	11.6	67	63
Chittagong	28.6	13.4	51	44
Rajshahi	24.5	9.5	65	62
Khulna	25.5	11.9	71	66
Barisal	26.2	11.0	78	62
Sylhet	26.3	11.5	69	38
Cox's Bazar	27.2	14.8	58	49