

## Grameen Trust signs MoU with Bahrain govt

UNB, Bahrain

Grameen Trust and Bahrain government yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for setting up and implementing a micro credit programme for the poor families in Bahrain.

Prof Muhammad Yunus, Executive Trustee of Grameen Trust, and Bahrain's Social Development Minister Dr Fatima Al Balooshi signed the MoU for their respective sides.

Nobel Laureate Prof Yunus is on a three-day visit to Bahrain at the invitation of Crown Prince Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

Being interested in the work of Grameen Bank, the Crown Prince had invited Grameen Trust to extend technical cooperation to develop a micro credit programme in his country.

Grameen Trust will depute management and field staff to Bahrain to implement a Build Operate and Transfer (BOT) micro credit programme in Bahrain for an initial period of three years.

Grameen Trust has already implemented such BOT programmes in Myanmar, Turkey, Kosovo and Zambia, while negotiations are going on to introduce such programmes in China, India and East Timor.

## CASE OF SEPTUPLETS Former DIG sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A former deputy inspector general (DIG) of police, who is accused in a criminal case, was sent to jail rejecting his bail prayer while his wife was granted an ad-interim bail yesterday.

Judge Shamim Afzal of the Fourth Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka passed the order when former DIG Anisur Rahman and his wife Anwara Rahman, who were the centre of controversy for claiming to have given birth to a set of septuplets, appeared before the tribunal.

The court also took the charges against them into cognisance following a naraji (no-confidence) petition of Advocate Alena Khan, executive director of the Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) against the final report (FRT) in December last year.

The detective branch (DB) of police submitted the FRT before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court on December 10 last year saying that the charges brought against them were not proved. DB also prayed for discharging them.

On January 8, Alena Khan filed the naraji petition with the tribunal against the FRT submitted by the investigation officer (IO).

Earlier on June 16 of last year, she filed a case against them with Badda Police Station accusing them of confining the children with an intention of trafficking.

The complaint says Anisur Rahman, former DIG, defied a court order by not taking his wife Anwara Rahman to a medical lab for a DNA test.

A Dhaka magistrate's court on June 8 issued an order for a DNA test to determine whether the septuplets are indeed the couple's biological children following a controversy triggered by newspaper reports that the couple were maintaining a household with 14 children, seven of whom are seemingly of the same age.

Since the emergence of the controversy, the couple has been claiming that the seven children were born to them as septuplets.

On June 15, Badda police took the former police official and the so-called septuplets to Dhaka Medical College for a DNA test, but Anisur Rahman declined to have the test done saying that they are the parents of the children as nobody else claimed their parenthood.

## CELLPHONE SET THEFT 2 DMC sweepers beaten

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two sweepers of Fazle Rabbi Hall of Dhaka Medical College (DMC) were beaten up by four students allegedly for stealing mobile phone set yesterday.

Sources said the students beat up Abdul Wadud, 52, and Abdul Aziz, 48, severely while they were working at the ground floor of the dormitory at Bakhshibazar at around 1:00pm.

Other staffs of the dormitory recovered them and sent them to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

They also filed a general diary (GD) with the Lalbagh Police Station.

DMCH sources said tension was prevailing among the staffs over the incident.

When contacted, some students of the dormitory told The Daily Star that they suspect the sweepers because they were present there when the mobile set went missing.

# Work to build corruption-free Bangladesh

## Hasina urges cultural activists

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the cultural activists to work together to build Bangladesh as a terrorism and corruption-free country.

Hasina said this when a delegation of Bangladesh Awami Sangskritik Forum led by its President Sheikh Uzzal, called on her at Sudha Sadan ahead of International Mother Language Day

to be observed on February 21.

She said the cultural activists could play a significant role in building Bangladesh as a terrorism and corruption-free country.

The delegation presented Hasina some books on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The delegation members included Forum General Secretary Arjo Khan singer Nusrat Sharmin Sonia and Ariful Islam Arif.

## GOLD SMUGGLING

# Verdict in case against Ershad deferred

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday re-fixed February 15 as the date of verdict of the gold smuggling case filed 16 years back against former president and Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad.

Judge SM Mujibur Rahman of the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order as he could not complete preparing the judgement.

Ershad along with Kazi Zafar Ahmed, ABM Ruhul Amin Howlader and a large number of party leaders and activists appeared before the court at 10:15am. The judge took his seat at 10:45am and delivered the order.

Additional police forces were deployed in and around the court premises to avoid any untoward incident.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence had completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of eight prosecution witnesses including the complainant and investigation officer (IO) of the case.

A team of customs officials held four people including two foreign nationals from Zia International Airport on July 17, 1990 when they were attempting to smuggle around 3.6 kg of gold worth around Tk 2.5 crore into Bangladesh, the prosecution said.

A smuggling case was filed with the Cantonment Police Station the same day against the four -- Bernhard Rudiger of Germany, David Anthony Chalmar Chaker of England, then manager of the Zia International Airport Major (ret'd) Ashraf Uddin Sekender and Abu Taher, an airport security guard.

During the investigation, the IO found evidence of Ershad's involvement.



Phil Guinand, regional director, Asia Pacific, Venofer Switzerland, speaks at a training programme on a new drug Venofer at LGED Bhaban in the city yesterday.

## BCSIR science fair begins Feb 28

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In search of new and young scientists, Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) will organise a science fair on its premises from February 28 to March 3.

At a press conference in the city yesterday, the organisers said the fair will be open to all.

Speaking as chief guest Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, chairman of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), said the science fair would encourage the next generation.

"If the students across the country could get the chance to display their invention in the largest science and research institute, they would be encouraged," he said, adding, the science fair is an endeavour to widen the research activities to meet the needs of life.

BCSIR Chairman Prof Dr Choudhury Mahmood Hasan said a budget of Tk 10 lakh has been prepared for the science fair which will remain open for the visitors from 10:00am to 8:00pm daily.

He said the BCSIR will contact the renowned district schools and colleges directly for their participation in the fair.

"At first 100 to 200 projects will be selected for exhibition and then the judges from BCSIR, Dhaka University and Buet will select the first, second and third prize winners," he added.

A total of ten prizes will be distributed among the three groups including the best prize.

The winners of first, second and third prizes will get Tk 30000, Tk 20000 and Tk 10000 respectively.

The best inventive project will get Tk 50000.

Besides, all the participants will get certificate.

The competition will be held in three groups- junior, secondary and higher secondary.

In the junior group students from class six to class eight would submit their projects. In the secondary group students of class nine and ten while in higher secondary group students of college level will participate.

In order to take part in the science fair, the students should contact through their educational institutions by February 20.

The contact address is Member (Science and Technology), BCSIR, Dr Kudrat-e-Khuda Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka- 1205.

## 4,012 bottles of phensidyl seized in Sathkhira

UNB, Sathkhira

BDR men seized 4,012 bottles of phensidyl from a truck at Labsa crossing on Sathkhira-Jessore road in Sadar upazila yesterday.

Major Kamrul Hasan of Battalion-41 said they challenged a truck loaded with the phensidyl at Alipur area at about 6:30am.

At one stage of the chase, the driver jumped from the running truck at Labsa crossing and fled the scene. The speeding truck stopped on the way after hitting a roadside tree.

Later, BDR men recovered the liquor from the truck, damaged partially during the accident.

They also intercepted a private car, which was following the truck, and held Abul Hossain and Raju Ahmed from the vehicle along with Tk87,000.

## DHAKA TODAY

### Roundtable

Bangladesh New Society Movement will hold a roundtable on 'The necessity of ID card in order to eliminate corruption and crime and to prepare accurate voter list'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

### Launching

The launching of 'Export quality management-An answer book for small and medium-sized exporters' will be held. Venue: DCCI auditorium. Time: 11:00am.

### Workshop

Rotaract Club organises a workshop on 'Phonetics'. Venue: Khamarbari DAE auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

### Roundtable

Consumers Association of Bangladesh will hold a roundtable on 'Mismanagement in passenger service and our duties'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 11:00am.

### Discussion

Workers Party of Bangladesh will hold a discussion on 'Ekushey February and non-communist democratic spirit'. Venue: Shahid Asad auditorium. Time: 3:30pm.

### Discussion

Gonomukti Andolon will hold a discussion on 'Spirit of Language Movement and the Future of Democracy in Bangladesh'. Venue: BSD office, Topkhana road. Time: 4:00pm.



PHOTO: STAR

Professor Muzaffer Ahmad, chairman of the TIB board of trustees, speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

## Int'l Congress on Bengal Art begins today

The 5-day 7th International Congress on Bengal Art organised by the International Centre for Study of Bengal Art (ICSBA) begins today in Bogra and Dhaka, says a press release.

It is co-sponsored by the Unilever Bangladesh Ltd.

This is a biannual congress attended by scholars from Bangladesh, as well as 65 eminent scholars from USA, UK, Germany, The Netherlands, Austria, Australia, Korea, Singapore, Thailand, India, Pakistan, UAE and Sri Lanka.

It is expected to be a good gathering of specialists on ancient and medieval sculpture, painting, epigraph, architecture, and decorative and folk arts of Bangladesh and Eastern India.

The attending delegates will visit the archaeological monuments and sites at Mahasthangarh, Paharpur and Kantanagar. About 60 scholarly research papers will be presented in 12 sessions in Bogra.

On February 8, Professor Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, former vice chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, will inaugurate the Congress.

Eminent folklorist Prof Ashraf Siddiqui will be the special guest on this occasion. Dr Pratapaditya Pal, former senior curator of Los Angeles County Museum of Art and a famous art historian, will deliver the keynote address.

On the occasion, four globally selected art historians will receive the Honorary Fellowship of ICSBA.

There will be a Valedictory Session in Dhaka on February 12 where Professor Anisuzzaman will be the chief guest and High Commissioner of India Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty will be the special guest.

## Road crashes kill 2

STAR REPORT

At least two people were killed in separate road accidents in Brahmanbaria and Chittagong yesterday.

Our Correspondent from Brahmanbaria reports: One unidentified person was killed in a road accident on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Sunarampur village under Ashuganj upazila yesterday. A Sylhet-bound bus was knocked him down on the road while he was crossing the highway at Sunarampur, leaving him dead on the spot, police said quoting witnesses.

The driver and the helper along with their bus managed to escape.

BSS from Chittagong adds: Wahidun Nabi, 30, a medical representative of Novartis Pharmaceuticals Limited, was crushed under the wheels of a running covered van at Uttar Bazar at Mirsarai at about 10:00am yesterday.

Police and hospital sources said, Nabi on his motorcycle was run over by the Dhaka-bound covered van and became seriously injured.

Nabi was immediately rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

## OCC, DNA lab open in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

One-stop Crisis Centre (OCC) and Divisional DNA Screening Laboratory of Khulna Medical College Hospital was inaugurated yesterday under the auspices of Multi-sectoral Programme on Violence against Women (first phase) of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

Adviser Geeteara Safiya Chowdhury attended the function as chief guest.

The inaugural function was presided over by Dr Mohammad Hame Zamal, superintendent of Khulna Medical College Hospital.

Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh Einar Jensen, Secretary of Women Affairs Ministry Md Abdul Haque, Divisional Commissioner Kabir M Ashraf Alam and Director of Health of Khulna division Md Fazul Karim were present as special guests.

## Build knowledge network with Australia Bangladesh HC urges expats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Australia can be lifted qualitatively through sharing knowledge and skills, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Australia M Humayun Kabir said on Sunday.

He urged the Bangladeshi professionals living in Australia to contribute in building a knowledge network between the two countries.

Such a process would also help protect the image of Bangladesh as a modern, globally connected and a responsible member of the international community, he added.

The high commissioner was speaking at a reception at Perth organised in his honour by the Bangladesh Association in Western Australia, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Meanwhile, the high commissioner visited Curtin University of Technology and exchanged views with Pro-Vice Chancellor (international) Prof Kevin McKenna over a lunch on Monday.

He requested Prof McKenna to broaden the areas of academic

cooperation between his university and Bangladeshi universities.

In this context, Kabir suggested enrolling more Bangladeshi students, intensifying exchange of students and faculty members and conducting research in the areas of mutual interest.

Prof McKenna welcomed the ideas and promised to work with the High Commission and interested universities in Bangladesh to this end.

High Commissioner Kabir also sought the support of Bangladeshi academicians in the Curtin University of Technology to materialise such a process to which they promised to extend their full support.

He also encouraged the Bangladeshi academicians to explore the possibility of building a forum to discuss issues relevant to Bangladesh and Australia.

Prof Mohammad Qudus, Prof Meher Manzur, Prof Ruhul Salim and Prof Nazrul Islam were also present at the lunch hosted by Prof Syed Islam.

## Bus passengers robbed of Tk 10.6 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of robbers took away Tk 10.57 lakh from the passengers of a bus in broad daylight in the city's Jatrabari area yesterday.

Seven to eight robbers posing as passengers got on the bus when it stopped at Shanir Akhra bus stand at around 9:00am, the police said. The bus was coming from Chandpur.

As the bus heading towards Jatrabari, the gang robbed the passengers at knife-point and got off the bus when it reached Dania University College.

The robbers stabbed Suman Saha, owner of Matlab Department

Store in Chandpur, and took away Tk 5.15 lakh from him. He was coming to Dhaka to buy goods for his shop.

Police said most of the passengers were businessmen and they came to Dhaka for buying goods.

The gang also beat up some passengers.

After the robbers fled the scene, agitated passengers caught hold of the driver and two helpers and handed them over to Jatrabari police.

The passengers suspect that the driver and helpers are involved in the robbery.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT JU authorities try to save teacher

Students allege DU CORRESPONDENT

Jahangirnagar University (JU) students under the banner of 'Jahangirnagar Against Harassment' alleged that JU authorities are trying to save the teacher with allegation of sexual harassment on a female student of the university.

At a press conference at Dhaka University Modhus Canteen, they further said the authorities have been spending time in the name of investigation.

Since November, students have been demonstrating demanding dismissal of the teacher and formulation of policy against sexual harassment through rallies, processions, human chains and sit-ins.

As the authorities remain indifferent to their demand, students have begun to fast unto death from Sunday on the campus to meet their demand.

A female student of Bangla department brought the allegation of sexual harassment against the teacher of the same department in November last year while nine more allegations were also filed against the teacher during the investigation.

The teacher was suspended on a report by fact-finding committee, however, a high-powered probe body formed by JU syndicate seems to be passing time.

Kallol Banik, Shomitro Kumar Das, Aninda Arif, Imran Kamal, Aminul Islam, Shawn Islam and others were present at the press conference.

## AL calls for reconstituting Public Service Commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Acting General Secretary of Awami League (AL) Obaidul Quader yesterday urged the caretaker government (CG) to reconstitute the Public Service Commission (PSC) with honest, competent and neutral personalities.

"The previous BNP-Jamaat coalition government turned the PSC into a corrupt organisation like the Election Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission by selecting party men for government services and making it a business hub," said Quader in a press statement.

The AL leader also called on the CG to take steps against those who have been appointed politically and in exchange of money through an impartial investigation.

He said the PSC resorted to corruption by leaking out question papers before the BCS (Bangladesh Civil Service) examinations during the five-year regime of the previous government in a bid to appoint party cadres in the administration, he added.

Quader said the PSC was compelled to cancel the result of the 24th BCS examination because of the leakage of question papers.

Expressing deep concern, the AL leader said the present commission has made the administration meritless by giving appointment on political consideration.

## Khairul Kabir's death anniversary



Today is the tenth death anniversary of Journalist and Banker Khairul Kabir, says a press release.

On this day in 1997, he died in Singapore

due to old age ailment.

Khairul Kabir was the founder editor of the daily Sangbad and founder member of the National Press Club.

Khairul hailed from Ghorashal and was buried in the family graveyard there.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his village home in Ghorashal to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

## Ruby Rahman



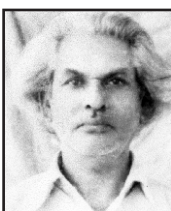
Today is the 42nd death anniversary of artist Ruby Rahman, says a press release.

Litterateur and classical Chinese paintings expert Ruby Rahman was killed in a road accident on this day in 1965 at the border of Lebanon and Syria when she had been living there with her late diplomat husband M Rahman in Damascus.

Out of her 25 paintings, ten are preserved in the National Museum of Dhaka.

On the occasion, qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at city's High Court Mazar today.

## Obituary

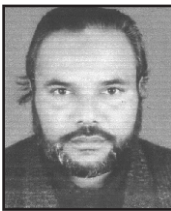


Academician and poet Mufakhkharul Islam passed away at Birdem hospital in the city on Saturday night at the age of 86, says a press release.

As an academician, he taught at Pabna Edward College, Rangpur Carmichael College, Khulna BL College, Dhaka College, Titumir College and Khulna Government Girls College from 1950 to 1994.

A doa mahfil will be held at his village home at Ghatil thana of Tangail on February 12 after Zohr prayers.

## Md Abdul Mannan



Md Abdul Mannan, son of Maolvi Ahmedullah and member of Dhaka Sangbadpatra Hawkers' Bahumukhi

Samabaya Samity, passed away due to a cardiac arrest on February 5 at the age of 58, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one daughter and three sons to mourn his death.

Dhaka Sangbadpatra Hawkers' Bahumukhi Samabaya Samity president and general secretary in a statement condoled his death and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family. They also prayed for salvation of the departed soul.