

CG to solve  
current problems

Hopes Japan

UNB, Dhaka

Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso has hoped that the caretaker government would be able to solve the current issues Bangladesh is now encountering.

"The caretaker government would successfully solve the current issues that Bangladesh is encountering so that the development and democracy of Bangladesh advance further," he said in a letter to his Bangladesh counterpart Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

The letter was sent to Foreign Affairs Adviser Dr Iftekhar marking the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and Japan.

## 55 houses gutted in Cox's Bazar

Estimated loss Tk 5cr

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

they said.

Fire Brigade vehicles reached the spot after two hours from Cox's Bazar town and doused the blaze.

Muzaffer Ahmed Sowdagar, a local businessman, distributed bamboo and clothes to fire victims instantly.

Teknaf UNO Altaf Hossain Chowdhury also distributed cash to the affected people.

DGFI, Coast Guard and BDR officials visited the spot.

Fire brigade sources have estimated the loss at about Tk five

Mobile court realises Tk 2.2 lakh in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court here yesterday fined a state owned filling station for cheating customers on weight and a lubricant wholesaler for not having the approval of power and energy ministry and fire department and realised Tk 2.2 lakh.

The mobile court led by metropolitan magistrate Rokon Ud-Doula fined Tara Mia, the owner of Gold Star Lubricant at Dhalpur in Jatrabari area, Tk two lakh and seized 117 drums of lubricants for doing business without the approval of fire department and power and energy ministry.

The mobile court also fined Harun-Ur Rashid, manager of Meghna Model Filling Station at Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Tk 20,000 for cheating customers on weight.



Nitam Shilpi Goshthi performs at the opening ceremony of Gender and Development Communication Fair at Chhayanaut Sangskriti Bhaban in the city yesterday.



Fire fighters try to extinguish a fire at a sweater factory at Mannan Tower at Khilkhet in the city yesterday.

Sweater factory gutted in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A sweater factory was gutted in a fire at Khilkhet in the city yesterday.

Fire brigade sources said a fire broke out at the storeroom of Lepusta Alex Ltd located at topmost floors of nine story-building Mannan Plaza in Khilkhet Bazar at around 7:30am.

They also said all clothes and yarns stored in the 7000 square feet 7th floor of the Plaza were reduced to ashes.

Huge smoke emanating from the fire created panic among the people.

Khilkhet police said no injury was reported because the working hour has not begun by that time. Besides, as fire originated in the topmost floor, people could come out of the building safely.

Eleven units of fire fighting teams from different areas extinguished it at 11:15am. Causes of the fire could not be ascertained.

### MURDER CASE

5 get life in Rajbari

UNB, Rajbari

A court here yesterday sentenced five young men to life term imprisonment in a murder case.

The lifers are Abu Taleb, Bablu, Raja Sheikh, Omar Ali and Sakhawat Hossain. Of them, Sakhawat was tried in absentia.

The court also fined them Tk 10,000 each, in default, to suffer two years rigorous imprisonment more.

According to the prosecution, the convicts shot and slaughtered Shukur Ali as he refused to give them Tk 5 lakh as toll at Harinbaria village in Pangsha upazila on November 13, 2003.

### GENDER FAIR BEGINS

## 'Gender equality a must for sustainable dev'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Gender and Development Communication Fair, first of its kind, began in the city yesterday with the theme 'social communication for social change'.

Steps Towards Development (Steps), an NGO that promotes gender equality, human rights and good governance, has taken the initiative to raise awareness about the gender issue among people.

Ambassador of Sweden Britt F Hagstrom inaugurated the three-day fair at Chhayanaut Sangskriti Bhaban in Dhanmondi.

Addressing as chief guest, Swedish Ambassador said gender equality is one of the central components of the Swedish policy for global development since it is strongly linked to sustainable development and pro-poor growth in any society.

She stressed the need for highlighting success story of women empowerment, messages about justice and good governance through media.

The daily Shamakal Editor Abed Khan said a mental gap between men and women still exists in the society that needs to be removed.

The daily Sangbad Editor Bazlur Rahman said although awareness about gender has been created for raising voice by the women organisations but women issues do not get due

importance at policy making level.

Terming the fair as a 'nobel initiative', Sculptor Ferdousi Priyabhashini asked for observing a 'human being day' rather than a 'women day'.

Steps Executive Director Ranjan Karmakar and Author and Trustee of the Liberation War Museum Mofidul Haque also spoke on the occasion.

A cultural programme followed highlighting women and child rights, violence against women and women education.

A total of 42 organisations, including Acid Survivors Foundation, Action Aid Bangladesh, Asia Foundation, Hunger Project Bangladesh, Brac, D-Net, Unicef, Women for Women, Nari Pakkha and DemocracyWatch participated in the fair.

The fair exhibits photography, video, poster, cartoon, pot painting and rickshaw painting on different issues related to gender equality and good governance.

The fair will remain open from 10:00am to 7:00pm till March 8.



Brig Gen SM Golam Robbani, deputy director general of Bangladesh Rifles, distributes prizes among the winners of the Annual Merit Awards at Bishreshtha Munshi Abdur Rouf Rifles College in the city on Monday.