

# Fight regional, global challenges together

## Speakers urge Saarc countries

UNB, Delhi

Policymakers, academics and human rights activists urged the Saarc countries to fight the regional and global challenges together.

The call was made at a two-day South Asian Policy Forum on Socio-economic Rights titled "Imagine a New South Asia" at the India International Centre in New Delhi yesterday.

The forum was jointly organised by Centre for Development and Human Rights and Institute for Human Development in partnership with ActionAid International. Regional organisations Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, Sustainable Development of Pakistan, Indian Social Institute and NGO Federation of Nepal were associative partners at the forum.

Chaired by the former adviser of the caretaker government Shafi Sami, the inaugural address was presented by former Indian prime minister IK Gujral.

Reminding the delegates of the importance of repositioning South Asia as a community in the chang-

ing Asian and global context, Gujral said the formidable challenge is to take along the entire region, listen to voices from all facets of South Asian geography, fulfill the aspirations of all classes, inclusion of most marginalised citizens and accommodate entire spectrum of political ideologies.

The "Imagine a New South Asia" is conceived as a broad-based citizens' initiative to advance a shared sense of South Asian vision in promoting increasing policy convergence on key regional issues and increasing regional cooperation both at the government levels as well as the citizens' levels.

Prof Arjun Sengupta, a member of the parliament and chairman of Indian National Commission for Unorganised Sector, said most of the South Asian countries are experiencing positive changes in their GDPs, but what is important is that the changes in institutions, governance and technology are as important as the changes in GDP.

John Samuel, international director of ActionAid International in Asia region, said the new genera-

tion in South Asia refuses to be the victims of the past. Rather, it wants to build the future based on trust, solidarity, peace and stability.

"To them, politics of South Asia would have to be of the peoples, who look forward to become citizens of a South Asian union. And the first step toward that direction is to create a functional South Asian Parliament," he said.

Urging all for an improvement in democracies in the region, Nepali social and political activist Sarita Giri suggested establishing democracies in the region for better conflict resolution in South Asia.

Shafi Sami, the chair of the inaugural session, reminded the delegates about the past failures of the Saarc and urged them to work for a better association that represents the aspirations of the peoples across the Saarc countries.

In the working sessions delegates pressed for a strong national level integration which, they thought, is the pre-condition for greater cooperation at the regional level.

## Bail petition of Koyes Sami rejected again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again rejected the bail petition of Chowdhury Koyes Sami, former managing director of Oriental Bank Limited, in connection with a graft case filed against him on charges of embezzling Tk 15.24 crore.

Metropolitan Magistrate Jagannath Das Khokon passed the order rejecting the bail petition submitted by the lawyers for Koyes Sami.

Earlier on Sunday, Koyes was sent to Dhaka Central Jail as his bail petitions were rejected after he surrendered to a court and sought bail.

On January 18 and 25, the Oriental Bank filed two criminal cases with Tejgaon and Kotwali police stations against Orion Group chief Obaidul Karim, Koyes Sami and some other present and former officials of the bank on charges of embezzling Tk 504 crore.

In the case filed with Kotwali Police Station, SMM Akhter Hamid Bhuiyan, assistant director of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), alleged that Koyes Sami and nine others embezzled Tk 15.24 crore from a client's account by forging the client's signature.

Another case filed against him alleged that he along with others misappropriated Tk 488.50 crore through unauthorised issuance of 369 inter-branch debit advices with the assistance of several officials at the Oriental Bank head office and Bangshal, Nawabpur, Mirpur Road, Karwan Bazar and principal branches between 2003 and June 2006.

"Obaidul Karim, who is a close relative of some members of then board of directors of the bank, is the chief beneficiary of the misappropriated money," said the FIR.

## GRAFT CASE AGAINST SYLHET MAYOR, 18 OTHERS Trial deferred until Apr 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Sylhet court yesterday deferred the trial of a graft case against Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran and 18 others until April 5 due to the absence of the judge.

The trial of the much-talked-about kitchen market leasing case was scheduled to begin yesterday, but Additional District Judge Rafiqul Alam refused the date due to the absence of District and Sessions Judge Abdul Gafur.

Sources said the cognisance court of Sylhet Sadar sent the case records to the district special court on March 13 after the Anti-Corruption Commission filed charge sheet against the 19 accused on February 7.

All the accused except Ward Commissioner Azadur Rahman Azad were present in the court yesterday. Azad is now detained in the jail on other charges.

In the charge sheet, Deputy Director of the ACC, Comilla circle, and Investigation Officer Shafiqur Rahman Chowdhury said the accused leased the kitchen market of the city corporation at Shibganj Bazar to Azad on May 11, 2000 without floating any tender or taking permission from the ministry concerned. They had misappropriated Tk 23 lakh through the corrupt practice, the charge sheet added.

## Filmmakers meet Mainul

UNB, Dhaka

A delegation of filmmakers yesterday met Information Adviser Barister Mainul Hossain and placed some specific proposals regarding removing barriers in making creative films and flourishing the country's film culture.

During the meeting at Information Ministry, they said the trend of making creative films is gradually intensifying in recent times and a number of films have brought honour for the country.

The adviser assured them of considering their proposals.

Tanveer Mokammel and Morshedul Islam led the filmmakers' delegation, said an official handout.

## Cambrian College launches tourism courses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cambrian College formally launched bachelor and master's courses on tourism and hospitality management in collaboration with the Organisation of Tourism and Hospitality Management of London South Bank University.

"Tourism industry has huge potential to flourish in Bangladesh. These courses will help produce professionals needed for this sector in the near future," Chairman of the college MK Bashir said at the course launching ceremony in the city.

The country can earn a huge foreign exchange through exploring the tourism industry, he said.

Principal Dr Korunamoy Goshwami said the college's collaboration with an internationally recognised institute would help ensure quality education on tourism in Bangladesh.

Principal of London College of Law and Management Dr Mike Sonny, Key Account Manager of OTHM Simon Patiniott also spoke at the ceremony held at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium.



PHOTO: PID

Members of Executive Board of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Bangladesh pose for photograph with Chief Adviser to the Caretaker Government Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

## ROBBERY AT CITY HOUSE Valuables worth Tk 30.6 lakh looted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of armed robbers looted cash and valuables worth Tk 30.6 lakh at a building at Arjatarpara in the city's Tejgaon area early morning yesterday.

Some seven robbers entered the first floor of the building cutting window grills of the kitchen at about 2:10am, police sources said.

The criminals tied all the inhabitants on the first floor and took some members to the second floor to make them open the door and started looting, added the sources.

Robbers took away gold ornaments, video player, valuables and Tk 2.95 lakh in cash holding the inmates at gunpoint, said the victims.

Robbers stayed at the building for about 45 minutes before fleeing the spot with the looted valuables, they added.

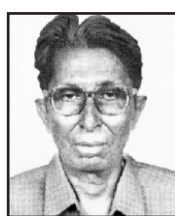
Police are yet to either arrest any of the robbers or recover the looted goods.

## MoU to beautify Park Road

Anwar Group will sponsor beautification of Park Road at Baridhara in the city, says a press release.

In this regard Baridhara Society and Anwar Group recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under which Anwar Group would bear the expenses of beautification for the next five years.

## Death anniversary



Today is the 7th death anniversary of Dr Syed Ali Naqi, professor of Sociology at Dhaka University, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at his daughter's residence at Shaheed Gias Uddin Residential Area on Dhaka University campus.

Relatives, students and admirers are requested to pray for the eternal peace of his soul.

## Korshed Alam Khan



Today is the 42nd death anniversary of former Range Inspector of School Korshed Alam Khan, says a press release.

On the occasion, milad mahfil will be held at his village home at Alipur in Begumganj of Noakhali district and also at his house at Kalabagan in the city after Maghrib prayers today.

He is the father of veteran politician Sirajul Alam Khan and former joint secretary KM Akhtar Alam Khan.

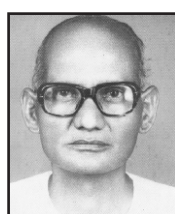
## Quazi Fazlul Haq



Today is the second death anniversary of industrialist Quazi Fazlul Haq, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and a doa mahfil will be held at Sonargaon Quazi Fazlul Haq Women's University College in Narayanganj.

## Abdul Jabbar Master



Today is the ninth death anniversary of Abdul Jabbar Master, a social worker, says a press release.

He established renowned Charkawna High School at Pakundia in Kishoreganj.

His family requested all to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## Dolphin corner, butterfly garden at Dhaka Zoo soon

BSS, Dhaka

A new dolphin corner and a butterfly garden will be set up at Dhaka Zoo to attract more visitors.

This was decided at the 14th meeting of the advisory committee of the Dhaka Zoo held yesterday in the ministry's conference room in the city.

Presiding over the meeting, Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Dr CS Karim expressed his deep concern over the poor supervision of the Dhaka Zoo saying that stern actions would be taken against the responsible persons, if anomalies and corruption are found.

"Due to mismanagement and lack of adequate supervision, the 50-year historic zoo is now on the verge of extinction," the adviser added.

The adviser underscored the need for appointing skilled livestock trainers for increasing rejuvenation

activities and capacity-building of the zoo.

The meeting decided to prepare a probe report within two days elaborating reasons behind the irregularities in the zoo and reopen the closed shops inside the zoo for the convenience of the visitors coming from home and abroad.

The adviser termed the zoo as a best place for recreation as well as for education and research and said special security measures should be taken as a large number of children visit the zoo.

Fisheries and Livestock Secretary Syed Ataur Rahman, Education Secretary Momtajul Islam, Environment and Forest Secretary SM Jahurul Islam and high official concerned, among others, attended the meeting.

## Memorial to DU martyrs demanded

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) demanded that the university authorities set up a memorial to the martyrs of the university who were killed by Pakistan Army on March 25 in 1971.

It also demanded preservation of the places on the campus that bear memories of the Liberation War.

They placed their demands at a meeting to mark the National and Independence Day at the university club in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Presided over by Duta President Prof Sadrul Amin, the meeting was

also addressed by Acting General Secretary Dr Mamun Ahmed, Prof AKM Shamsul Haque, Prof Sukamol Barua, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Prof Aminul Haque Bhuiyan, Prof Ashraf Uddin Chowdhury, Prof M Akhtaruzzaman and Prof Hossain Monsur.

Teachers said the war criminals and collaborators of '71 should be brought to justice.

They urged the government to include the true history of the Liberation War in textbooks so that the new generation learns about the heroism and sacrifice of the freedom fighters.

## Another reshuffle in admin 10 additional secretaries transferred

UNB, Dhaka

The caretaker government transferred and gave new postings to 10 additional secretaries in the latest reshuffle in the administration yesterday.

An official handout said Primary and Mass Education Ministry Additional Secretary Abul Hasan Mohammad Rezaul Kabir was made acting secretary of Women and Children Affairs Ministry while National Museum Director General Kazi Akhter Hossain made additional secretary of Primary and Mass Education Ministry.

Establishment Ministry Additional Secretary (OSD) M Abdur Razzaque has been appointed chairman of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation and Establishment Ministry Additional Secretary M Abdul Hakim Mondal made chairman of Bangladesh Handloom Board.

Economic Relations Division Additional Secretary Iqbal Mahmud has been made Additional Secretary of Establishment Ministry and Establishment Ministry Additional Secretary (OSD) M Ziaul Alam appointed chairman of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh.

BCS Administration Academy Director Muhammad Sadique has been made DG of Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) Foundation while Bangladesh Tariff Commission member Begum Masuda Binto-e Quader made DG of Women Affairs Department.

Labour Directorate DG M Shamsul Alam has been appointed registrar of the Joint Capital Company and Farms Directorate while Establishment Ministry Additional Secretary (OSD) M Abdus Samad as Director of Bangladesh Small and Cottages Industry Corporation (BSCIC).

## \$3.5m Dutch aid for birth registration

UNB, Dhaka

The Netherlands will provide 3.5 million US dollar to Bangladesh to support its Birth Registration project, to be implemented by the government and UNICEF.

Netherlands Minister for Development Co-operation Kees Beemsterboer and UNICEF Representative Louis-Georges Arsenault signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides.

Under the agreement, the Dutch government will donate the money for two years from January 2007 to December 31, 2009.

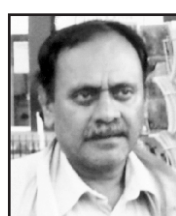
LGRD and Cooperatives Ministry of Bangladesh, in partnership with the UNICEF, is going to strengthen the system and capacity for the implementation of effective birth registration across the country.

The project will contribute to the implementation of the inter-sectoral strategy along with supporting the establishment of a sustainable and functional birth registration system.

During the first priority phase, 90% of primary and secondary level students and 95% of 0-1 year old children will be covered, which is 25% of the total population.

The government has adopted a Universal Birth Registration strategy in 2006, which provides free registration for the following two years, aiming at registering all by 2008.

## Obituary



Omar Khaled passed away at his residence in Amsterdam on March 24 at the age of 57, says a press release.

He left behind his wife,

one son and one daughter to mourn his death.

Friends and admirers are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## CLASH OVER CHARITY FOOTBALL

## Duet closed sine die

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology (Duet) authorities yesterday declared the university closed sine die and directed residential students to leave the dormitories following a clash between two groups of students.

Witnesses said the clash erupted after a number of student leaders misbehaved with the teachers during a charity football match between students and teachers on Monday to mark the 37th National and Independence Day.

Protesting the incident, general students boycotted the classes and demanded punishment to the student leaders.

A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader was injured in the clash yesterday afternoon.

As the situation deteriorated, the authorities declared the university closed.

Additional police forces were deployed on the campus.

## Concern over firing on Ctg RMG workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Odhikar, a human rights organisation, has expressed concern over indiscriminate firing on agitating workers of a sweater factory by Ansars at Baizid Bostami area in Chittagong yesterday, says a press release.

Workers of Sunknit and Sunman sweater factory have been agitating for bonus and increased wages for a long time.

The incident occurred when the workers went to meet the factory owners for failing to meet their demands by March 24.

Three workers were injured as the on-duty Ansars opened fire on them. Odhikar said such incidents are taking place as these were never investigated and persons responsible never brought to justice in the past.

Odhikar demanded investigation into the incident and punishment of those responsible.

Garments Samik Sangram Parishad has also condemned the incident.

In a joint statement, the Parishad leaders asked the factory owners to meet the demands of the workers.

They also demanded punishment of those responsible for firing.

# WEATHER TODAY

## Dry weather likely

**UNB, Dhaka**

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

Slight rise in day temperature is expected over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 36.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 15.4 degree Celsius at Ishwardi.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:13pm today and rises at 5:54am 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	35.0	20.2	32	19
Chittagong	33.8	22.4	74	73
Rajshahi	34.6	16.4	58	25
Khulna	34.2	23.0	77	54
Barisal	34.6	22.8	82	51
Sylhet	34.2	19.5	43	24
Cox's Bazar	33.7	23.2	64	56