



Prof Mannan passes away

Former vice chancellor (VC) of Dhaka University (DU) Prof Abdul Mannan passed away at his Gulshan residence in the city yesterday morning at the age of 76, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, four sons and two daughters to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza was held on DU central mosque premises after Asr prayers yesterday.

The deceased will be buried at his family graveyard at Monohardi in Narsingdi tomorrow once his sons and daughters come home from abroad.

His kulkhwani will be held at House no. 8, Road no. 68/A, Gulshan-2 after Maghrib prayers on May 4.

His friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the programme to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Prof Mannan was born on January 1, 1932 at Syedpur village under Monohardi upazila in Narsingdi district. He obtained masters degree in Biochemistry from DU in 1955 and joined the same department as a lecturer in 1961. Later, he joined Pharmacy department in 1983.

He was elected DU VC in July, 1986 for four years.

DU VC Prof SMA Faiz in a message condoled the death of Prof Mannan and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Pro-VC Prof AFM Yusuf Haider and Treasurer Prof Syed Abul Kalam Azad also expressed deep shock at his death.

Fund in budget for Khulna dev demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna City Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman has demanded that the caretaker government allocate necessary fund in the next national budget for implementation of different development projects of greater Khulna.

The city mayor who presided over a pre-budget discussion meeting held yesterday at the KCC auditorium hoped that the present government would come forward to fulfill legitimate demands of people of greater Khulna.

Organised by Khulna City Corporation, the pre-budget discussion meeting was addressed, among others, by Secretary General of greater Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee Shaikh Ashrafuzzaman, President of Khulna Press Club Makbul Hossain Mintu, and General Secretary of Khulna Press Club Md Shaheb Ali.

Speakers urged the mayor to get ready for any legal battle against any further discrimination in the allocation of fund in the next national budget so far as implementation of different development projects is concerned.

Death anniversary



The seventh death anniversary of Maj Gen (ret'd) Abdul Mannan Siddique, founding chairman of Phoenix Insurance Company Ltd, will be observed tomorrow, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at his residence in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow.

His friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the programme to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Serajuddin Ahmed

Today is the 22nd death anniversary of Serajuddin Ahmed, founder chairman of Elite Paint Group of Company Ltd, says a press release.

He was also founder director of Arab Bangladesh Bank Ltd, former president of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries and former chairman of Tea Traders Association of Bangladesh (TTAB).

On the occasion, a milad mahfil followed by Ziafat will be held at his house in Gulshan in the city.

Women still bystanders in decision making

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Adviser Dr AB Mirza Azizul Islam yesterday said the government is fully committed to ensure accountability and transparency in public expenditures.

"I hope that the women will play important role in this process and become role models for their male counterparts," he said while speaking as chief guest at a seminar titled 'Women in decision making.'

The international seminar was organised by Bangladesh Audit and Accounts Cadre Women Forum in association with the office of Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh, Financial Management Reform Programme, Ministry of Finance and United Nations Population Fund at Sheraton Hotel in the city.

Dr Islam said there is legal recognition of equal rights of men and women, but it is not enough, rather only a pre-condition.

An environment should be created so that the women can enjoy the instruments for equal rights, he added.

The adviser said participation of women in administration and private sector has significantly increased making remarkable progress in mainstreaming them.

"We, however, are not at the stage when we can have complacency. We still have large number of illiterate women and many are subjected to harassment and dowry," he said.

National Health Care Network Chairman Prof Hajera Mahtab in her presentation in the business session said the women of Bangladesh are practically outside all the three components of power and are bystanders to national decision-making, policy formulation and execution.

She called for such an electoral system that will encourage political parties to integrate women into elective and non-elective public positions in same proportion and at same level as men.

In the keynote presentation, Finance Controller Army Fahmida Islam stressed the need for necessary exposure and training for making women's participation in politics effective.

"Specific legislation and guidelines specifying the roles and responsibilities of women members should be issued as soon as possible," she said, adding that changes in attitude towards girl children and orientation of mindset of boy children should be given importance.

"Sons must be trained to share

caring responsibilities. Daughters must be exposed to decision making factors so that they can think and develop themselves independently," Fahmida noted.

Speaking as special guest at the inaugural session, Acting Country Representative of Department for International Development (DFID) Elizabeth Carriere said development will not have its actual impact unless men and women equally share it.

"If a woman is educated, she will give birth to a healthy child who will in turn become an educated human being," she said, adding that equal access to men and women in every sphere of life therefore is very important.

Nurun Nahar, director general of Defence Audit Directorate, said, "Human development is not possible without improving the status of women. And this can be achieved through ensuring their full, equal and effective participation in decision making at all levels."

Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh Asif Ali, UNFPA Representative Pomchai Suchitta, Auditor General of Brunei Darussalam Datin Paduka Hajah Salmah Binti Haji Hanifah, and Director of public reporting audit of Scotland Barbara Hurst also spoke on the occasion.

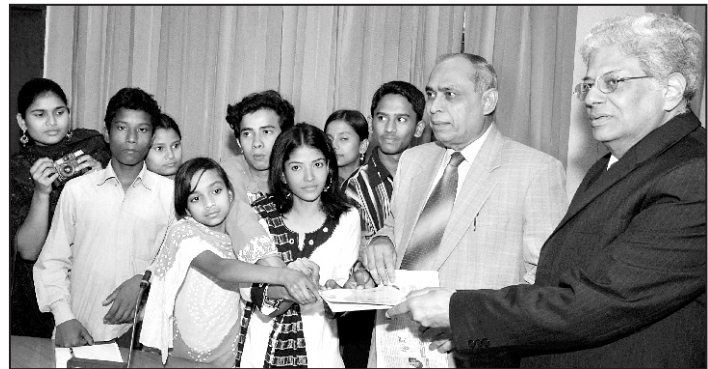


PHOTO: STAR

Members of the National Children's Task Force submit a memorandum to Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda, right, at his office in the city yesterday demanding steps to put an end to the use of children in political programmes. On his right is Election Commissioner Sohul Hossain.

NCTF SUBMITS MEMO TO CEC

'Ban use of children in political activities'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday assured the National Children's Task Force (NCTF) of taking steps to prevent the use of children in political activities.

The assurance came when a ten-member NCTF team met the CEC at his office in the city and submitted a memorandum demanding enactment of laws banning the use of children in political programmes.

The NCTF is a countrywide children's organisation that monitor the child rights situation and advocate children's concerns at the local and international levels.

At the meeting with the CEC, The children urged him to include provisions in the new election code of conduct to bar political parties from involving children in their activities.

They said the political parties lure children with money and food, taking the advantage of their poverty and age, and force them into risky activities.

The government should provide security for children as they are often unaware of the danger of political activities, the NCTF members said.

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (Ret'd.) M Sakawat Hossain and Sohul Hossain were also present at the hour-long meeting.

CEC Shamsul Huda advised the NCTF members to meet the chief adviser to the caretaker govern-

ment and the leaders of political parties and discuss the issue.

The Election Commission is seriously considering this issue and will take every possible step in this regard, he said.

The NCTF also placed at the meeting the findings of a survey it conducted on 668 children across the country.

The survey shows that the children who took part in political activities have suffered in some way.

Some 73 percent of the respondents said children join the processions of political parties mainly for money or food.

The survey reveals that 71 percent of respondents are utterly opposed to the children's involvement in political activities while only 3 percent support it.

"Joining political activities involves a lot of risk for children," said Ahsan Habib, a student of Sherpur Degree College and member of NCTF.

Later, the NCTF organised a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity where its central committee member Sohrab Alam Shanto presented a written statement.

Shanto said they are worried about the abuse of children as the political parties involved them in political activities several months ago.

He also stressed the need for a massive media campaign to raise awareness among the people about the negative impact of such practice.

Housewife succumbs to burn injuries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife died at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) yesterday, a day after her husband and his first wife poured kerosene over her and set her on fire at their house at Badda in the city at around 8:00am on Sunday.

The deceased Ranu Begum, 25, died at around 3:00am.

Sources said Ranu's husband Abdul Malik, a fish trader, and his first wife Rashida Begum poured kerosene over her and set her on fire at their house at Badda in the city at around 8:00am on Sunday.

Neighbours came to rescue Ranu after they heard her screams and rushed her to DMCH where she was admitted.

Doctors said she received 100 percent burns.

Victim's younger sister Sathi told The Daily Star that Malik lives with his first wife at Badda and Ranu lived separately in Narayanganj where she worked at a garment factory.

She alleged that Malik never took care of Ranu and did not provide any financial support.

Sathi said Malik did not disclose to Ranu about his first marriage when they first met and Malik took Tk 80,000 from Ranu at the time of their wedding two years back saying that he would invest the amount in his trade.

When Ranu came to know about his first marriage, she asked Malik to give her back the money that he took from her.

This was the main cause of their rift, she added.

Ranu came to Malik's house at Badda on Saturday afternoon for the money which led to an altercation between her and Malik.

A case was filed with Badda Police Station against Malik, Rashida, niece Nasima Akhter and nephew Swapon in this connection.

8th World Hindi Conference July 13-15 in New York

The 8th World Hindi Conference will be held in New York on July 13-15, says a press release of the High Commission of India in Dhaka.

The conference will be organised by the Government of India in cooperation with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhaban and other Hindi organisations based in the US.

The theme of the conference is 'Vishwa Manch Par Hindi'. The inaugural ceremony of the conference will take place at the UN headquarters in New York, which will be followed by an academic session on 'Hindi in the UN'.

The three-day programme of the conference includes academic sessions, cultural programmes and exhibitions that would be held at Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

Details of the conference programme are available on the website www.vishwahindi.com which also includes information for online registration for attending the conference.

Local universities/educational institutions may like to depute their representatives to attend the conference. Those interested may contact Anil K Matta, second secretary (I&C), by dialing 8820243-07/Ext.156 or sending e-mail at informa@hcidhaka.org.

Kidnapper confesses to murder of boy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khaled Hossain Zakir gave the confessional statement in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court yesterday that he and his cousin Shamim killed Saidul, 7, after kidnaping him for ransom of Tk 50,000 at 8:00pm on Saturday.

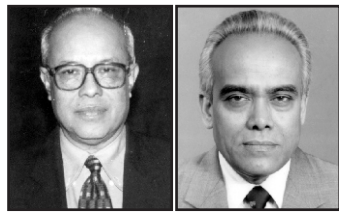
He told the court that they had stabbed the boy to death and dumped his body in a garden as they could not find any place to hide him when Saidul's family announced the news of his missing through loudspeakers in the area.

Later, members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Sunday recovered the body of Saidul from a mango garden near Civil Aviation Staff Quarter at Kaola in the city according to Zakir's statement.

Saidul, son of Babul Mia of Dewail inder Dakkhin Khan Police Station in the city, was a student of a local kindergarten school. Babul Mia is now living in Kuwait.

Rab arrested Khaled Hossain Zakir and his accomplice Babul from Tongi at 4:00pm on Sunday when they went to receive ransom promising release of Saidul from Tongi Station Road. Zakir's cousin Shamim was arrested from Turag.

The court granted three days' remand to Shamim and Babul for interrogation, Dakkhin Khan police said.



Prof Tahir, Prof Majid new VC, pro-VC of BSMMU

Prof Mohammad Tahir and Prof MA Majid joined Gangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) as the new vice-chancellor and pro-vice-chancellor on Sunday, say BSMMU press releases.

Earlier, Prof Tahir served as the pro-vice-chancellor and acting vice-chancellor of BSMMU simultaneously.

He is Bangladesh's regional adviser to Edinburgh Royal College of Physicians in the UK.

Prof Majid has been successfully working as a surgical tutor at UK's Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh since 1997 till date.

Prof Sharif made



EWU VC
Prof Mohammed Sharif has been appointed vice chancellor of East West University, says a press release.

He was a faculty member at the University of Chittagong before going for higher studies in the USA. After completing his PhD, he joined the University of Rhode Island and taught for 22 years.

Prof Sharif has published two books and a number of articles in international journals, including Cambridge Journal of Economics.

B Ed, M Ed exams on May 10

UNB, Dhaka

The B Ed and M Ed examinations, scheduled for May 2 under the National University, have been shifted to May 10 due to Buddha Purnima holiday.

A PID handout yesterday said the B Ed exam (irregular)-2007 and M Ed exam 2007 will be held at 9:00am on May 10 instead May 2.

The schedules of other exams, however, will remain unchanged, the handout said.

Discussion
Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) will hold a discussion on the occasion of the May Day. Venue: DUJ office. Time: 11:00am.

Furniture Festival
Bangladesh Furniture Shipila Malik Samity organises Furniture Festival 2007 beginning from today. Venue: Probab Community Centre. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion
Partnership of Women in Action (PaWA) will hold a discussion and cultural programme on the occasion of the May Day. Venue: Nagorik Uddog, House No. 8/14, Block B, Lalmatia. Time: 4:00pm.

Photography exhibition
Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) organises a photography exhibition, lecture and cultural programme. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Concert
Karmojibi Nari organises a concert on the occasion of the May Day. Venue: Rabindra Sarobar. Time: 4:00pm.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of The Daily Star 4th Inter Hall English Debate Championship, 7th Inter Hall Bangla Debate Competition and 2nd Inter University Public Speaking Competition pose for photograph with the guests at the prize giving ceremony at the Teacher-Student Centre auditorium yesterday. Sitting from right are Prof Atikur Rahman, Pro-VC Prof AFM Yusuf Haider and Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam.

Old parts of Dhaka, Ctg at high risk of tremor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The old parts of both Dhaka and Chittagong are the most vulnerable to earthquake due to narrow road, high density of population and buildings, experts at a seminar said yesterday.

They also said risk of earthquake depends primarily on the geological condition and geo-morphological setting of the city.

ActionAid Bangladesh organised the seminar at Spectra Convention Centre in city's Gulshan where experts suggested taking short term and long term measures so that casualties by earthquake can be reduced.

Experts said many structures of the both cities in particular schools, garment factories, mosques, shopping centres, and movie theatres are at high risk.

Dr M Shahidul Islam, professor of Geography and Environmental Studies of Chittagong University (CU), said vulnerability of any city depends on geological set-up, infrastructure and socio-cultural condition.

"Huge population will die or be critically injured and most of the buildings will be damaged if a medium earthquake hits the old parts of Dhaka or Chittagong," he said while presenting his keynote paper on Earthquake Vulnerability Atlas of Chittagong City.

He suggested taking short-term awareness programme so that people can save themselves from the earthquake.

"The government should take strong long term programme especially imposing restriction to construct high rise building with low-quality materials," he said.

"One person dies when a doctor makes a mistake, but hundreds of people will die when an engineer makes a mistake," he mentioned urging the engineers to be careful while constructing a high-rise building.

KS Masud Siddiqui, director general of Disaster Management Bureau, said people would understand their duties before, during and after an earthquake if a map based awareness programme is launched.



PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka inaugurates Dilkusha Car Parking space at Motijheel in the city yesterday.

Injured jute mill worker dies in KMCH prison cell

Police refute allegation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A pump operator of Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills succumbed to his injuries in the prison cell of Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) at 4:00am on Sunday.

The victim identified as Abdur Rahman Munshi, hailed from Jhalakathi district, was severely injured by police during raids of labour colonies on the night of April 21. Munshi reportedly came under attack by police and arrested while he was trying to flee his house during the raid.

Munshi had worked in the jute mill for about 27 years.

He was buried at Goal Khali graveyard at Khalishpur after Zohr prayers today at his residence at 2 Paribag in the city, says a press release.

Munshi is the first victim of police action of labour movement launched recently by

ActionAid Bangladesh Country Director Shoaib Siddiqui presided over the seminar while Dr Maksud Kamal, Catelijene Mittendorf, AFM Shahidur Rahman and Shamina Akhter also spoke on the occasion.

SALE OF PUBLIC VACCINES Chief health officer among 4 RCC staffs held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested four officials and employees of Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC), including the chief health officer, for selling out anti-rabbit vaccines of the government, which were not for sale.

Rab members last night arrested Chief Health Officer Rizvi Sultan and Store Keeper Afsar Ali when they went to Rab office with papers related to sale of anti-rabbit vaccines of the government, as Rab found evidence of irregularities in the papers.

Earlier in the day, Rab held Zillur Rahman, 55, of Wasenkola of Rajpara and Mohammad Khaibar, 54, of Ranibazar of Boalia thana, both are employees of RCC.

Rab members seized four vaccines from them and labels on those read, 'For free distribution by Peoples Republic of Bangladesh Government, Not for Sale'.

A Rab press release said a citizen informed Rab officials at Rajshahi Railway Colony camp that RCC staff refused him anti-rabbit vaccines saying there was no vaccine when he went to RCC Bhaban as dog bit his son.

With the complaint, a team of Rab members went to RCC for buying the vaccine and they were also refused.

Later, the Rab members challenged two RCC staffs outside RCC Bhaban and found the four vaccines with them.

DAILY STAR INTER HALL ENGLISH DEBATE Mohsin Hall becomes champion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University emerged as the champion in The Daily Star 4th Inter Hall English Debate Championship 2007 while Suryasen Hall won the championship of the 7th Inter Hall Bangla Debate Competition 2007 yesterday.

Also, Mehedi Ahsan of Dhaka University became the best speaker in the 2nd Inter University Public Speaking Competition 2007.

Dhaka University Debating Society (DUDS) in association with The Daily Star organised the competitions that ended yesterday.

The prize giving ceremony was held at the Teacher-Student Centre auditorium, with DUDS President Rashedul Anam Russell in the chair.

Fazul Haque Hal became the runner-up in the English debate while Fazlulunnessa Mujib Hall became the runner-up in the Bangla debate.

Walid bin Kashem of Ahsanullah University and Mohammad Hossain of Dhaka University became the first and second runners-up of public speaking competition respectively.

A total of 20 debating clubs took part in the debate competitions this year.

Speaking at the prize giving ceremony, DUDS Chief Moderator Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam said debate stimulates the latent talent of an individual. "The more the debate will gain popularity in the country, the more superstitions and extremism will be eliminated from our society," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, called on the students to manage time properly and foster creativity within themselves.

If there is any wealth in life, it is time, he said, adding that there is nothing more foolish than wasting time.

DU Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof AFM Yusuf Haider was also present as the special guest.

FIRE AT FAN FACTORY

4 more die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four more people succumbed to their burn injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the last two days who were injured in the fire that broke out at an electric fan factory at Jatrabari on Wednesday night, raising the death toll to six.

Najma Akter, 16 and Nasrin Akter, 16 died yesterday while Mohammad Rubel, 14, and Siraj Mia, 22 died on Sunday.

Earlier, on April 27, Panna Akter, 20 and Shahnur Begum, 22, succumbed to their injuries at DMCH.

At least 12 workers, six of them women, were admitted to DMCH following the devastating fire at the factory named Three Star.

DMCH doctors said the condition of the remaining six is also critical.

Aftab chairman of English Speaking Union of Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent business leader Aftab ul Islam has been appointed chairman of the newly-formed The English Speaking Union of Bangladesh.

The first meeting of the Union was held on April 28, 2007 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

Headquartered in London, The English Speaking Union came into being in 1920. Its present president is Prince Phillip while Queen Elizabeth II is the patron.

Prof Alan Lee Williams, OBE, also former director general of The English Speaking Union and former labour member of British Parliament, outlined ESU's aims and objectives in promoting English in international public speaking and debate for support of worldwide communication and dialogue at the meeting.