



Birth anniversary of poet Sufia Kamal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 96th birth anniversary of poet Begum Sufia Kamal, a champion of women's rights.

Sufia Kamal, a major literary figure, dedicated her life to achieving empowerment of women. She took part in democratic cultural movement throughout her life.

Born in Barisal in 1911, Sufia Kamal won many awards and accolades for her contribution to literature.

She passed away on November 20, 1999.

On the occasion of the poet's birth anniversary, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina paid tribute to the memory of the poet.

Begum Sufia Kamal played an important role in the language movement, Liberation War and cultural and democratic movement as a poet and freethinker, Hasina said in a statement yesterday.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will hold a memorial lecture and cultural programme at BIAM auditorium in the city today to mark the day.

Noted litterateur Hasan Azizul Haque will deliver the lecture on 'Sufia Kamal and democratic movement'.

State of emergency due to failure of political leaders

Says Khulna mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khulna City Mayor and BNP leader Shaikh Tayebur Rahman yesterday said state of emergency was declared to avert imminent civil war in the country.

Such a situation was created due to failure of top leadership of major political parties, he added.

He said had he known the corruption of top-BNP leadership earlier, he would have disassociated himself from BNP politics.

The BNP leader made the comments while talking to the journalists yesterday in the city after a meeting with the officials of the ministry of local government.

When asked why he did not protest the wrong-doings of his fellow party-men, the mayor said when one gets involved in politics, he cannot express everything due to some obligations.

Replies to a question whether there are opportunists among the leaders who are vocal about reforms in political parties, he said definitely there would be some opportunists that can be identified by examining their track records.

Incident of hill cutting unearthed

CU CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court unearthed an incident of hill cutting in Baghona area at Lalkhan Bazar in the port city yesterday.

The court, led by Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Magistrate Munir Chowdhury, found that boundary walls and 30 to 40 plots were developed cutting a 15-acre hill of the area.

The cutting resulted in several cracks and landslides of the hill, posing a great threat to the lives of 10 families, living in shanties and semi-pucca houses at the foothill, sources said.

The court in primary investigation found that 10 people and organisations are involved in the hill cutting.

The court told the Department of Environment (DoE) and Police to file separate cases against the accused and stop construction work.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) and DoE officials assisted the mobile court during the two-hour drive.

Make concerted moves to push thru' RTI Bill

Speakers tell workshop on media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A workshop on media concluded yesterday with a call to make concerted moves to adopt the Right to Information (RTI) Bill and to make politicians, bureaucrats and the people aware of the need for greater access to information.

Researchers and NGO leaders said the push to pass the proposed draft of the RTI Bill has not turned into a 'movement' as yet, but it is slowly gathering pace.

Organised by the World Bank Institute, the two-day workshop on 'Media and Information Environment in Bangladesh' focused on international RTI laws and their implementation, lessons learned in this regard in Bangladesh and how they can be moved forward.

The Daily Star, Channel i and Mass-line Media Centre were the partners of the workshop held at a city hotel.

Naomi Hossain of the Centre for Governance Studies, Brac University, said young civil servants should be the target of awareness campaign as they are willing to

change themselves and change the 'culture of secrecy' in the bureaucracy.

Enacting the right to information law is needed to ensure accountability in social welfare and development, she added.

Shaeen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, said the people need to know why they should have access to information.

She suggested arranging public hearings at the grassroots level on various issues such as transparency in ration card distribution and cost of road constructions.

She also urged the leading NGOs like Brac, Proshika and ASA to take the message down to villages of what it means to have the law and how it would positively affect their lives.

The culture of secrecy may go if a 'win-win' situation is created whereby the people would benefit from transparent public information system and the government can showcase the positive effects of their programmes, she said.

Outlining the Mexican laws relating to the access to information,

Juan Pablo Guerrero Amparan, commissioner of the Federal Institute for Access to Public Information (IFAI) in Mexico, said the laws require the government to publish certain materials online, especially the results of government audits and civic participation mechanisms.

He also presented the operations of the IFAI, an independent agency that supervises the access to information laws and helps enforce them.

The participants, including media leaders, development practitioners and academics, also offered strategies to move the RTI Bill forward, saying mass awareness programmes should be launched on the media and through various other means such as play, song and poster.

Stressing the need to adopt the RTI Bill at the earliest, they also suggested holding a series of dialogues with politicians, government agencies, the media, donors and training institutes to formulate a more effective and comprehensive strategy to push the RTI Bill forward.

The Day celebrations started in 1983 to mark the last day of university studies in a bid to introduce another culture rather than rag day. The day was celebrated five times in the following years in the month of February each time.

DU Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) will organise the celebration programme with the cooperation of DU Debating Society and DU Alumni Association, sources said.

The daylong celebration will begin with a rally at 9:00am, where university's former VCs, distinguished persons, teachers, students and their guardians will participate.

Special foods will be served at the university offices and residential dormitories, sources added.

An essay highlighting university's history and heritage will be presented on the Day, while Curzon Hall will present a special feature. However, who will present the essay is yet to be determined.

Prof Faiz expressed his satisfaction as the Day celebration is going to revive. He said, "Due to lack of preparation and time, the celebration might not be a mega one but we will try to make it lively."

Dhaka University Day July 1

DU CORRESPONDENT

Forgotten 'Dhaka University Day', an annual celebration for all of the university family, is going to be revived after 18 years, as the authorities yesterday decided to celebrate the Day on July 1.

Dhaka University (DU) Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz said DU authorities at a meeting yesterday decided to revive the Day celebration and formed a committee headed by Treasurer Prof Syed Abul Kalam Azad to organise the event successfully.

The Day has not been celebrated since 1989 due to lack of initiatives from the authorities and reluctance and absence of awareness among students.

The University Day that was regarded as a day of celebrations and open to all, was last observed on March 31, 1989. The present generation of the DU students hardly know about the event.

Popularly known as 'the Open Day', various fun-fair programmes including reminiscence meeting of university alumni, sports, debates and cultural functions were the main features of the occasion. People used to flock the DU campus to join in the celebrations.

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PHOTO: STAR
North South University Vice-chancellor Hafiz GA Siddiqui speaks at a press conference to launch the 'Citigroup Financial Quiz Competition' at National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left are Dr Mohammad Farashuddin and Mamun Rashid and on his right are Masih Ul Karim and Barrister Nihad Kabir. Citibank NA Bangladesh and North South University are jointly organising the competition.

Citigroup quiz contest launched to promote financial edn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to promote financial education among the young generation in the country, Citigroup Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Citigroup, yesterday announced the launching of a financial quiz competition for business school students.

Beginning formally from today, the competition styled 'Citigroup Financial Quiz Competition' will be managed jointly by Citibank N.A. Bangladesh and North South University.

A total of 36 business students from 12 universities across the country will take part in the competition scheduled to end on August 31, said the organisers at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

"As most of the universities of the country are located in Dhaka, 60 percent of the participants will be from Dhaka-based institutions and the rest will be from outside the capital, while 50 percent of the students will be from public university and the rest will be from private one," said North South University Vice-chancellor Hafiz GA Siddiqui, who chaired the session.

"For achieving 8-9 percent GDP growth, we need sound financial management and through the programme people will become aware of this issue," said Mamun Rashid, Citigroup country officer at the press conference.

He said a few students will directly participate in the programme but the whole nation will be able to watch the programme through television, making them educated on financial issues.

Channel i, a partner organisation of the programme, will telecast the whole 11 episodes of the contest including two semi-finals and one final.

Only under-graduate level university students will be able to participate in the contest.

Each of the three members of the champion team will get \$ 1000 as prize money while each member of the runner-up team will get \$ 500.

Masih Ul Karim, president of Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Walir Rahman Bhuiyan, managing director of BOC Bangladesh Ltd, Barrister Nihad Kabir, senior partner of Syed Iftihaq And Associates were present on the occasion.

Major reshuffle in Railway

Officials asked to join new workplaces by June 26

UNB, Dhaka

Pakshi and additional CO (Track) of the West Md Kazi Rafiqul Alam transferred as DRM of Paksey.

Additional CE (Bridge) of the East Md Ibrahim Khalil has been transferred as DRM of Chittagong while CME of the West Md Khalil Rahman as CME of the East and CME of the East Md Shamsuzzaman as CME of the west.

General manager of the BR western zone (Rajshahi) Md Iqbal Mollah has been transferred to the eastern zone (Chittagong) while GM of the east Md Sirajuddin to the west.

Dhaka Kalyan Trust Managing Director Md Shahjahan has been transferred as COPS of the western zone while COPS of the west Md Mizanur Rahman was transferred as additional CSTE of the Dhaka Kalyan Trust.

DRM of Paksey Md Amzad Hossain has been transferred as additional CO (bridge) of the East while DRM of Lalmonirhat Md Solaiman Chowdhury as CPO of the West, DRM of Dhaka Md Yusuf Ali Mirida as CPO of the East and DRM of Chittagong Md Mozammel Haque transferred as additional CO (track) of the west.

CPO of the East Md Tafazzal Hossain has been transferred to Dhaka as DRM, CPO of the West Md Anwarul Kabir as DRM of

Obituary



Quazi Golam Ajmiri, son of late Kazi Fazlul Karim of Burdhaman, passed away in a hospital at Rhode Island in the US on Monday at the age of 84, says a press release.

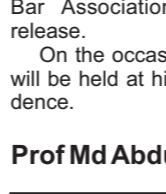
He is survived by his wife, youngest brother Maj Gen (Retd) Quazi Golam Dastagir, two sisters, four children and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Relatives and admirers are requested to pray for his departed soul.

Today is the 23rd death anniversary of Ahmad Sobhan, a prominent lawyer and former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association, says a press release.

On the occasion, a mild mahfil will be held at his Dhamondi residence.

Prof Md Abdul Jabbar



Today is the seventh death anniversary of Prof Md Abdul Jabbar, former vice-principal of Mymensingh Ananda Mohan Govt. College and head of chemistry of Dhaka College, Titumir College and Jagannath College, says a press release.

On the occasion, a mild mahfil and Quarakhwan will be held at his village home at Musuli in Nandail, Mymensingh, at 5:00pm.

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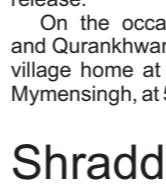
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Shraddha



Shraddha (post-funeral rites) of Kiranmoyee Sen, wife of late Monindra Lal Sen, will be held today at her village home at Dhemsha in Sankaria, Chittagong, says a press release.

Kiranmoyee passed away on June 8 at the age of 88.

She left behind three sons and as many daughters. Her eldest son Prof Amal Kanti Sen is the controller of examinations at the Gono Biswabidyayalaya.

The purpose of the seminar was to share and disseminate information about the activities of JOCVs in Sylhet region.

JICA officials at the seminar said a total of 968 Japanese volunteers have been serving in different fields like health, agriculture, education, engineering and sports in Bangladesh since 1973.

Presently, 51 volunteers and 3 senior volunteers are working with different institutions and organisations in Bangladesh, they added.

The speakers said JICA recruits young men and women who want to contribute to the development of other countries and train them with required skills before dispatching them as JOCVs.

These skilled persons provide on the spot help in developing countries for their socio-economic as well as human resource development, they added.

The speakers said the activities



PHOTO: STAR
Sylhet Divisional Commissioner Aziz Hasan speaks at a seminar titled 'Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) in Bangladesh' at the conference room of the deputy commissioner in Sylhet yesterday. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance jointly organised the seminar.

Japanese volunteers' role lauded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet