



President Iajuddin Ahmed speaks at the Army Headquarters Selection Board-2007 meet at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday.

Execute verdict in Bangabandhu murder case, release Hasina

36 eminent citizens urge CG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 36 renowned citizens yesterday issued a joint statement demanding the execution of the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case and immediate release of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

They also urged the caretaker government to withdraw all false and controversial cases filed against Sheikh Hasina who is also president of Awami League (AL).

"We have observed that several conspiracy cases were filed against Bangabandhu's daughter Sheikh Hasina. We demand her release immediately and withdrawal of all controversial cases against her," the statement added.

It said a group of misguided officers of the armed forces killed Bangabandhu and his family members on August 15, 1975 and later a court sentenced the killers to death penalty but the verdict is yet to be executed.

"We urge the caretaker government in this month of mourning to execute the verdict of 'Bangabandhu Murder Case' and establish the dignity of Bangabandhu to stop the distortion of history," the statement added.

The signatories to the statement are Prof Kabir Chowdhury, Justice KM Sobahan, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Prof Saidul Haque Chowdhury, Iqbal

Warid awards schoolboy for his bravery

Warid Telecom yesterday awarded schoolboy Rakibul Hasan whose bravery helped avert a train accident in Comilla on August 2, says a press release.

Muneer Farooqui, chief executive officer of the company, gave away the Warid Recognition Award at the company's head office in the city.

On August 2, Rakibul noticed a track displacement while cutting grass beside the railway line. Immediately he ran to the nearest level crossing to inform the signalman and returned to the spot to stand on vigil.

As Noakhali-bound Upakul Express approached to the displaced track, he took off his red T-shirt and waved it, signaling the train to stop. The driver stopped the train on Rakibul's red signal, much to the relief of the passengers.

Rakibul, son of Ali Newaz Moishaje of Khanpur village, is a student of class ten at Chanpur Janata High School in Comilla Sadar South Upazila.

CEO Muneer Farooqui presented him with scholarship worth Tk 50,000 for his education up to higher secondary and all books necessary for his secondary education. Rakibul also received a gift hamper, including a Sony Ericsson W200i handset with Warid connection.

Grameenphone relief programme for flood victims

Grameenphone Ltd. yesterday launched emergency relief programmes in flood-affected areas in Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions, says a press release.

Volunteers from Grameenphone in collaboration with the members of the Joins Forces, local government authorities and different CSR partners of Grameenphone are distributing relief materials.

As part of this drive, relief materials were handed over to the Bangladesh Army and Dhaka District Administration authorities at the Army camp in Badda yesterday.

Arif Al Islam, chief financial officer, and Kahlid Hasan, director, Regulatory and Corporate Affairs of Grameenphone, handed over relief materials to District Commissioner Kamal Uddin and the army battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel Sarwar.

The relief materials included 302 sacks of rice, 200 sacks of chira, 800 bottles of soybean oil, 50 sacks of lintel, 50 sacks of salt, 44,000 packets of oral saline, 12,000 water purifying tablets and 18,000 packets of biscuits.

Relief materials were also distributed at Buriganga 2nd bridge and Aambagicha Government Primary School in Keraniganj. Family packs containing essential items were distributed to the flood victims.

Each family pack included 3 kg of rice, 1 kg of dal, 1 litre of soybean oil, 1 kg of chira, 500 gm of salt and gur, 3 packets of biscuits, 3 packets of oral saline, 6 candlesticks and a lighter.

Sobahan Chowdhury, Prof Dr AFM Ruhul Haq, Prof Dr Iqbal Arslan, Nasiruddin Yusuf, M Golam Kuddus, Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, Engineer AKM Ishaq Birpratik, Dr Kamrul Hasan Khan, Poet Mahadeb Saha, Ferdousi Majumdar, Prof Anower Hossain, Prof Harun-ur-Rashid, Prof Nazma Shaheen, Prof RIM Aminur Rashid, Manzurul Ahsan Bulbul, Ramendu Majumdar, Syed Shamsul Haq, Poet

Rabiul Hossain, Poet Muhammad Samad, Kalim Sharafee, Prof Mamtazuddin Patwari, Shamsuzzaman Khan, Agriculturist Abdur Razzak Mian, Prof Syed Mudassir Ali, Agriculturist Dr Abdul Mannan Akanda, Anwara Syed Bari, Agriculturist Dr Abdul Bari, Agriculturist GM Nurul Huda, Prof Sadeka Halim, Agriculturist Dr Ismail Hossain and Prof Saiful Islam Khan.

3 boys missing in Bay

CU CORRESPONDENT

Three schoolboys went missing while playing football at the Patenga sea beach yesterday morning.

They were identified as Ibrahim Mian Ripon, a student of class X, Abhishek Barua and Arefin of class IX of Agrabad Boys' High School.

Sources said, a group of 11 students of the school went to the beach and started playing football at around 11:00am.

At one stage when the ball went into the seawater Ibrahim ran to fetch it and was carried away by the sea.

It prompted Abhishek and Arefin to rush for saving Ibrahim, only to be caught up in the huge waves and meet the same fate, said the witnesses.

All the three boys remained missing since then.

Rescuers from fire service rushed to the spot but failed to conduct any search as the sea was very rough.

Divers of Bangladesh Navy were preparing to launch a search operation at 5:30pm.

AL protest in US today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expatriate Bangladeshis will stage a demonstration in front of the United Nations headquarters in New York and submit a memorandum to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon today urging him to put pressure on the caretaker government to release Awami League President Sheikh Hasina.

Similar demonstrations, organised by the US chapter of Awami League, will also be held in front of the UN headquarters and the US State Department on August 10, says the America News Agency.

The AL will also stage demonstrations demanding Hasina's release on August 15, the 32nd death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

BSF guns down 2 cattle traders

UNB, Dhaka

Two Bangladeshi cattle traders were gunned down by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) in separate incidents on Benapole and Sathkira borders yesterday.

At Benapole, BSF troops shot dead a Bangladeshi cattle trader on Agrabulot frontier early in the morning. The dead was identified as Aijuddin, 30, of Agrabulot village.

In Sathkira, another Bangladeshi cattle trader was shot dead by BSF on Kakkdanga border in Kolaroa upazila early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Ziarul Haq, 25, of Raipur village.

BDR sources said the Indian border guards of Hakimpur camp fired on him, when he was returning home from India with cattle, leaving him dead on the spot.

Low over Bay, adjoining area intensifies

UNB, Dhaka

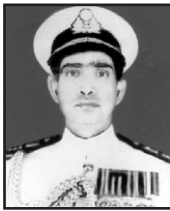
The low over Northwest Bay and adjoining area intensified into a well-marked low over the same area at 12:00 noon yesterday.

It is likely to intensify further and move in a northwesterly direction. Under its influence, deep convection is taking place over the North Bay and adjoining area. Squally weather may continue over the ports, said a Met Office bulletin.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoist local cautionary signal number three @ three.

All fishing boats and trawlers over the North Bay have been advised to take shelter immediately and remain in shelter until further notice.

Death anniversary



Today is the 23rd death anniversary of Rear Admiral Mahbub Ali Khan, former navy chief and communication and agriculture minister, says a press release.

On the occasion, wreaths will be placed at his grave at the Banani defence graveyard and milad mahfil will be held at Mahbub Bhaban at House No - 40, Road No - 5 at Dhanmondi in the city after Maghrib prayers today.

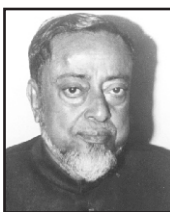
Rear Admiral Mahbub Ali Khan popularly known as M A Khan breathed his last on this day in 1984 while on his duty.

Relatives, colleagues, friends and admirers are requested to attend the milad mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

MA Khan Memorial Committee, Sylhet and UK also have taken programmes marking the day.

Bangladesh Navy will also observe the day with due solemnity.

Mahmudun Nabi Chowdhury



Today is the 12th death anniversary of former minister and former president of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Alhaj Mahmudun Nabi Chowdhury, says a press release.

On the occasion, prayers will be offered at his grave, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at Meher Group Agrabad office.

Various social organisations have also taken different programmes at Kattali marking the day.

Santosh Gupta



Today is the third death anniversary of noted journalist, columnist and litterateur Santosh Gupta, says a press release.

He was senior assistant editor of the daily Sangbad.

Santosh Gupta Smriti Parishad will place wreaths at his memorial at the Postagola crematorium in the city in the morning today.

On the occasion, a discussion will be held and a documentary on his life will be screened at 5:00pm at the Poet Sofia Kamal auditorium at the National Museum on August 11.

Mahmudur Rahman Nur

Today is the first death anniversary of Mahmudur Rahman Nur, a second year student of the Khulna University, says a press release.

Nur drowned in the river last year. Relatives and admirers are requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Taokirun Nesa, a social worker and wife of former labour commissioner Golam Mobarak, will be held at her residence at 23 New Eskaton in the city after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the chehlum.

Call to build a secular society

Begum editor honoured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nurjahan Begum, editor of the weekly magazine Begum, was honoured yesterday for her outstanding contribution to women journalism and her pioneering role in advancing the cause of women in various sectors.

She was presented a citation by the Department of Women and Gender

SEDITION CASE Charge sheet against Bahauddin Nasim accepted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday accepted the charge sheet of the sedition case against Awami Sworchhasebok League President AFM Bahauddin Nasim.

After scrutinising the case docket and other relevant documents, Metropolitan Magistrate Selina Akhter accepted the charge sheet and sent to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) for next steps.

On July 25, Assistant Superintendent (ASP) of CID Munshi Atiqur Rahman, also the investigation officer of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the CMM's Court, Dhaka showing 17 people as prosecution witnesses.

Police filed the sedition case with a Dhaka court on March 11 in 2002 accusing Nasim of acting against the country's sovereignty and tarnishing its image abroad.

Mohammad Dulal Uddin Akond, ASP of CID's Faridpur zone, arrested Bahauddin Nasim on February 27, 2002 from Zia International Airport and seized \$6,300, three passports, two tickets, eight books and some CDs.

The complainant alleged that the CDs contained 'false and fabricated scenes of torture' on the minority community, videos of ransacking of rooms at Dhaka University dormitories and houses at different parts of the country by the activists of the four-party alliance.

He said the CDs contained videos of attacks on the minority Hindu community and ransacking of puja mandaps after 2001 general election.

"Such activities might destroy the communal harmony and worsen the country's law and order," he observed.

Studies at Dhaka University (DU) at a function at the Senate Bhaban.

In her welcome speech Chairperson of women and gender studies department Prof Ayesha Banu said Nurjahan Begum, who herself is an institution, led the advancement of women of this subcontinent.

She said the function was organised to recognise her incomparable contribution in documenting the social picture of the twentieth century in 'Begum'.

Prof Ayesha read out the citation on behalf of the founding chairperson of the department Prof Dr Nazma Chowdhury.

Speaking on the occasion Prof Muntasir Mamun highlighted the role of 'Begum' in building a secular society in last 60 years.

Quoting from 'Begum', Prof Muntasir said, "Women and men should advance hand in hand to achieve the progress of the society."

He asked for more research on 'Begum' as it contains the overall picture of the society from the early twenties to till date.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Anisuzzaman mentioned the name of Nasir Uddin, editor of the monthly 'Saogat', who also paved the way for women's advancement in this subcontinent.

The weekly 'Begum', introduced by Nasir Uddin, gradually became a

document of socio-political picture of the then society and a medium of expressing thinking of womenfolk at the grassroots level, he added.

In her response, Nurjahan Begum urged all to keep continuing her efforts towards building a secular society.

She also recalled the early days of 'Begum' saying, "Women were not even allowed to go outside let alone working there."

She urged all to take fresh vow to work together to stop violence against women and children and bring an end to child marriage.

DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz also addressed the function as chief guest while Dean of Social Science Faculty Prof Dr Harun-or-Rashid spoke as special guest.

Prof Nazma handed over the citation to Nurjahan Begum.

Time for depositing Hajj money extended

BSS, Dhaka

The government has decided to extend time for depositing Hajj money in the banks up to August 30 next considering the country's overall flood situation, an official handout said here yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Dr Nazma Chowdhury hands over a citation to Nurjahan Begum, editor of the weekly magazine Begum, at a function at the Dhaka University Senate Bhaban yesterday. DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz, left, is also seen.

Heavy rainfall brings boon to lone croc farm

FROM PAGE 16

In Mymensingh, the farm's 13.4 acre compound houses 68 crocodiles in 12 artificial ponds and two lagoons.

The large reptiles, ranging from 7 feet to 12 feet in lengths, were brought in from Malaysia on December 22, 2004, at a total cost of around Tk 1.25 crore. Of the 75 crocodiles imported initially, one died in its cage during the airplane journey, and six others also perished since.

Fourteen of the remaining crocodiles are males, while 54 are females. Each female can lay 30 to 40 eggs a year. The eggs will be hatched artificially, and the offspring will be sold on the international market when they become four years old.

"Over the past year, we have built special incubation facilities and other infrastructure for hatching the eggs and raising the baby crocodiles," said Mushataq Ahmed.

RFL employed Geoff McClure, an Australian crocodile expert, to design the state of the art infrastructure for the company. He also helped the company to establish and follow Australian reptile farming protocols, which are among the most widely used and successful in the world.

After a slow start, it seems the company's activities are finally gathering momentum.

"We are expecting 30 to 40 percent yield of hatchlings from the 500 plus

eggs we have gotten this year. Next year, we anticipate a substantially larger number of eggs, and a higher yield rate of about 60 to 70 percent," said Mesbahul Haque, chairman of the farm.

While the project is Ahmed's brainchild, it was Haque's investment that helped turn the dream into a reality. The two entrepreneurs were aided in their maiden venture with technical assistance from South Asian Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF) and with financial support from the equity and entrepreneur fund (EEF) unit of Bangladesh Bank.

RFL also received assistance from Southeast Bank Ltd.

"Bangladesh Bank holds 49 percent equity in the company, and their support has been invaluable, but we wish they were more active as partners," said Haque. "We also hope the government will formulate an exotic wildlife farming policy to facilitate exploration of this field, as the sector can make valuable contributions to our export basket," he added.

Currently the farm employs 12 full time staff, who have been trained locally and internationally. As part of its human resource development programme, RFL encourages all its employees to pursue higher studies in local universities.

The employees are bound to

follow strict safety protocols, and have been instructed not to allow any visitor on the farm premises, for safety and commercial reasons.

The calm and isolation has proven to be beneficial not only for the crocodiles, but also for local birds, since they can nest there without any disturbance. Flocks of birds have adopted the area as their home.

RFL also planted over 5,000 trees of 40 different species of fruits, wood and medicinal plants, whose yields they plan to sell locally.

Meat, skin and bones from the crocodiles will be exported to countries around the world. Charcoal made from crocodile bones is indispensable to the global perfume industry, while crocodile meat is widely consumed in Australia, Japan, Singapore, China and the Americas.

Mesbahul Haque also informed The Daily Star that a kilogram of crocodile meat sells for eight dollars on international markets, while a single purse made of crocodile skin can sell for up to Tk 20,000.

"Cost of rearing a crocodile for four years is projected at 20,000 taka, and export of each one is expected to bring in 40,000 taka to 50,000 taka," he said.

The company expects to start commercial export in 2009.

German experience can solve Bangladesh crisis

FROM PAGE 16

Under the underground-water reservoir through simple, cheap and effective infiltration wells. This ensures that the ground water table is not depleted in a way that nature cannot adequately replenish with water. The farmlands are happy and the nature in the mining area is bustling with trees.

The RWE also supplies 40mcm of water annually to the communities in the 282sqkm North Rhine Westfalia (NRW) coal mining zone of Germany, sends another 60mcm water to the highly-sensitive local wetlands, 170mcm to the power plants that generate 11,000 megawatt (MW) power and the remaining to the lakes and the local rivers.

The Daily Star correspondent visited the mines and coal power plant installations near Cologne at the invitation of Asia Energy Bangladesh between July 25 and July 28. The Daily Star funded the trip and stay of its correspondent, while Asia Energy--that has stakes in the Phulbari Coal Mine--facilitated the visit in collaboration with Germany's biggest mining and power company RWE.

The RWE is a consultant company for Asia Energy for handling Phulbari project's most sensitive area--water tables. The Asia Energy had proposed pumping out 180mcm of water annu-

ally in Phulbari to produce 15 million tonnes of coal (Barapukuria producing only half a million tonnes of coal); one third of it will be pumped back into the ground, one third to 1,000MW power plant and the rest for serving the community.

The RWE operates three large lignite coalmines in the NRW area and annually produces 100 million tonnes. This home-grown company takes responsibility for addressing environmental, agricultural and human settlement issues and has developed many technologies over the years.

"The RWE now has 20 to 30 years of experience of de-watering. The idea of de-watering came after the 50's with the advent of technology and mining needs," says RWE's senior hydrogeologist Dr Thomas Von Schwarzenberg. "We have invested 60 million Euros for installing 1,400 wells and we have spent 120 million Euros for their operation. The cost of this water comes at 0.18 cents per cubic meter," he said.

Schwarzenberg notes that the company is legally bound to protect the local wetland, which is located at least 20km off any of the mines. The RWE not only pumps water to this wetland directly, but it must also pump in water underground to keep the water tables healthy enough. A moni-

toring group measures the water level of the wetland. If it detects a drop in the water level by even a few millimetres, the RWE must act instantly.

The RWE has built 130km of water pipeline, 14km of water infiltration ditches, 150 supporting barriers, 50 direct water rechargers and 175 infiltration wells.

Pumping out of huge water also causes land subsidence. In the NRW area, there had been maximum land subsidence of 4 metres due to de-watering.

HOW WATER IS PUMPED BACK UNDERGROUND

Schwarzenberg showed this correspondent how water is pumped back into the underground reservoir using simple yet intelligent technology--infiltration wells and ditches.

The topsoil of the land that grows trees retains water. As a result rainwater cannot recharge a depleting sub-soil water level. Similarly, the topsoil retains river water or ponds.

Beneath this level of soil is the sand and silt zone, which easily absorbs water and sends it to the water reservoir beneath.

The RWE's infiltration wells are dug like a traditional well through this topsoil, which may be typically 20-30 feet deep. Once the well hits the sand zone, it fills up the well with sand.

BB OFFICIAL MURDER

Two suspected killers arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two suspected killers of Hedayetullah, deputy general manager of Bangladesh Bank (BB), from the capital on Saturday midnight.

A team of Rab-11 arrested Mosharraf Hossain, the prime suspect, from Mirpur-1 area and his accomplice Jahangir Alam from Shaymoli area. The team also recovered the mobile phone of Hedayetullah from the possession of the arrestees.

Commander of the Savar Camp of Rab-11 Ariful Islam told The Daily Star that the two have already confessed that they raided the residence of Hedayetullah for robbery but shot him dead as he caught hold of one member of the gang.

Hedayet's two daughters, Nusrat and Dilruba, and son Hasan identified the arrestees as the killers of their father at the local Rab camp.

Rab is now trying to track down four other members of the gang.

Hedayetullah, 52, was gunned down at his home in Dhamrai municipal area on July 21.

DHAKA TODAY

Convocation

The First Convocation of State University of Bangladesh will be held. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Time: 10:00am.

EPB Workshop

Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) organises a workshop under its 'One district one product' project. Venue: TCB Bhaban, 1 Karwan Bazar. Time: 10:00am.

Seminar

The Saarc Agriculture Centre organises a seminar on 'Contribution of rural development for sustainable agriculture'. Venue: Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) conference room. Time: 3:00pm.

Rotary Dhaka North

The regular weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka North will be held. Venue: Radisson Water Garden Hotel. Time: 6:00pm.

Workshop

Environment and Population Research Centre organises a workshop on 'Capacity building of young school teachers and local government members for environmental health issues in coastal areas'. Venue: LGED conference room, level 4, LGED Bhaban. Time: 9:00am.

Seminar

Bangladesh Investment Climate Fund of International Finance Corporation and Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) will jointly organise a seminar on competition policy. Venue: BEI. Time: 3:00pm.

Discussion

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), Bangladesh will jointly organise a discussion on the Hiroshima Day 2007. Venue: National press Club. Time: 11:00am.

Conference

Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum organises National Child Conference. Venue: LGED Bhaban seminar room, level 12. Time: 9:30am.

Orientation

The orientation programme of the students of Summer Semester 2007 of Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology will be held. Venue: Uttara campus. Time: 10:00am.

Dialogue

Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) organises a dialogue titled 'The position of female workers in RMG sector of Bangladesh: CPD's recent survey'. Venue: Cidrap auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

Orientation programme

Nari Mooltree organises an orientation programme on birth registration for the local organisations and school teachers. Venue: Biam Foundation. Time: 9:30am.

When water is poured, this sand absorbs it instantly and sends it to the sub-soil water reservoir. Schwarzenberg showed that such a well could pump in millions of cubic metres of water every year.

Schwarzenberg who had visited the Barapukuria coalmine area in the recent past notes, "The Barapukuria water tables can be recharged easily by making such infiltration trenches."

This method can also greatly help fast recharging Dhaka's water tables during the rainy seasons, geologists say.

Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) says Dhaka's underground water table is depleting by five feet every year, while the city of 10 million people is consuming 75,000 litres of water per second using a total of 2,500 deep tube-wells (Wasa owns 800 to 1,000 deep tube-wells). The present sub-soil water level of Dhaka is at a depth of 210 feet at its highest level, which used to be less than 50 feet two decades ago.

The Bangladesh topsoil (called Modhupur Clay Layer) is 10 feet to 45 feet deep. Beneath it lies sand and