



Former secretary Momin passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Former foreign secretary and ambassador Abdul Momin, a freedom fighter, passed away at his Gulshan residence in the city yesterday morning at the age of 86.

Born in 1921 at village Udrapur in Dagonbhuyar under Feni, Momin joined the Bengal Civil Service in 1946 and was absorbed in the Pakistan Foreign Service in 1950.

He served in various capacities in a number of missions abroad, with postings in Rangoon, Akyab, Washington, DC, Baghdad, Shilong, Brussels, Lisbon and Buenos Aires. He had been Ambassador to Argentina since 1970.

He severed connections with the Pakistan government and transferred allegiance to Bangladesh in October 1971.

Thereafter, he remained on assignments given by the Government of Bangladesh in Mujibnagar until he took over as "permanent secretary" at the Foreign Office of the newborn state.

He also served as High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Canada, and Ambassador to China and France.

He left behind his wife, a daughter and a host of friends and relations, and admirers to mourn his death.

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed expressed deep shock at the death of Abdul Momin.

In a condolence message, he said Abdul Momin had made an invaluable contribution in putting Bangladesh's diplomacy and foreign policy on a firm foundation.

"This courageous freedom fighter (late Momin) had played a lead role in creating world opinion in favour of an independent Bangladesh during the time of great Liberation War," Fakhruddin observed and hoped that the nation would remember his contribution with respect forever.

He prayed for divine peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury also expressed deep shock at his death.

In a condolence message, he said late Momin was one of the leading figures who founded the foreign policy of Bangladesh on firm footing.

He prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Syed Matur Rahman



the city at the age of 65, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one son and two daughters to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at Gopibagh Jame Mosque after Zohr prayers.

He was laid to rest with state honour at Gopibagh Panchayet Committee graveyard beside his father's grave.

Communist Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Mahila Samity, Udichi Shilpi Gosthi payed their last respect to the late freedom fighter.

Syed Matur Rahman was a student leader of the mass movement in 1969, founding president of Khulna district trade union, editor of weekly Mahanagor and founding editor of Tarakalok.

Anath Bandhu

Bss, Dhaka

Nonagenarian Anath Bandhu Saha, father of noted industrialist Paritosh Chandra Saha of Narayanganj, passed away due to old age complications at BirDEM Hospital in the city in the early hours of yesterday at the age of 96, family sources said.

He is survived by wife, three sons and five daughters to mourn his death.

Anath Bandhu was cremated at Narayanganj crematorium.

Teak timber worth Tk 16 lakh seized

CU CORRESPONDENT

Members of Bangladesh Coast Guard seized a boat with 840 cubic feet of smuggled teak timber worth Tk 16 lakh from the river Karnaphuli under Chandgaon Police Station early yesterday.

On information, members of the Coast Guard challenged the boat on the river near Boalkhali upazila at around 3.00am and seized the timber worth Tk 16 lakh.

Indigenous people deprived of fundamental rights

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indigenous people of Bangladesh are deprived of their fundamental and constitutional rights, said the speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

Criticising the government for not observing the 'World Indigenous Day' officially, they said it's the failure of the government as well as shame for the country.

The roundtable titled 'Mother language of indigenous people and their culture' was jointly organised by Imagine a New South Asia (INSA) and Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) at the National Press Club in the city.

The speakers said the indige-

nous people will have to be given their rights on land and language.

They should have the right to get lessons through their mother languages, at least up to primary level, they added.

Chaired by Prof Anisuzzaman of Dhaka University, the meeting was also addressed by Justice Ghulam Rabbani, Raja Devasish Roy, Nawazish Ali Khan of ATN Bangla, Humaira Kabir of Shakti Foundation, Khandaker Ibrahim Khaled, former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, Asgar Ali of Action Aid and Shamsul Huda of the Association for Land Reform and Development.

Justice Ghulam Rabbani said as

indigenous people are the citizens of the country, it is the duty of the government to protect their rights.

Prof Anisuzzaman said World Indigenous Day is the only day that the government does not observe officially and it is very unfortunate.

He said they will have to be given the rights to get lessons through their mother tongue, at least up to primary level.

Khandaker Ibrahim Khaled said a garden without different kinds of flower does not look beautiful.

"If we consider ourselves as 'rose', they (indigenous people) are also flowers and together we are all Bangladeshis," he added.



Justice Ghulam Rabbani speaks at a roundtable at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left are Prof Anisuzzaman and Raja Devasish Roy and on his right is Humaira Kabir.

DHAKA TODAY

Workshop

The inaugural ceremony of an international workshop titled 'Democracy, governance and security reforms', organised jointly by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies and Asia-Pacific Centre for Security Studies, will be held. Venue: Radisson Water Garden Hotel. Time: 9.30am.

ICC workshop

International Chamber of Commerce organises a workshop titled 'Understanding the UCP 600'. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Time: 9.30am.

Roundtable

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute will hold a roundtable titled 'Promoting good governance: Key reform challenges facing Bangladesh'. Venue: Institute premises. Time: 3.00pm.

Seminar

A seminar on the 'Rules of engagement and combating terrorism' will be held. Venue: Station Officers Mess C, Dhaka Cantonment. Time: 8.00am.

Techno-seminar

Technomedia Limited organises a seminar titled 'Check processing system and MICR technology'. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 5.00pm.

Lecture

Bangla Academy will hold Gazi Shamsur Rahman Memorial Lecture on Environment and Nature. Venue: Seminar room of the academy. Time: 4.00pm.

Youth roundtable

National Youth Forum of Bangladesh in cooperation with Bhorer Kagoj organises a roundtable on election-related thinking of the youths and tomorrow's Bangladesh. Venue: VIP Lounge of the National Press Club. Time: 11.00am.

Exhibition

The opening ceremony of ICE Today-Aqua Paints Interior Design Award Exhibition will be held. Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts. Time: 6.00pm. The three-day exhibition will remain open from 12.00noon to 8.00pm daily.

Chinese military team leaves

UNB, Dhaka

The 12-member Chinese military delegation led by General Chen Bingde left Dhaka yesterday after a four-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh.

Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam saw off the delegation at Zia International Airport.

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Zheng Qing Dian was also present at the airport, said a press release of ISPR.

During their stay in Bangladesh, the delegation paid courtesy call on President and Supreme Commander of Bangladesh Armed Forces Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban.

They also called on Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed, Navy Chief Vice-Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam and Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal S M Ziaur Rahman at their respective services' headquarters and Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Lieutenant General Masud Uddin Chowdhury at the AFD.

Family members demand trial of killers of Sumon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of slain IT specialist Luffar Rahman Mustafa alias Sumon yesterday demanded arrest and trial of the killers.

They also alleged that a major was also involved in the killing.

Sumon, an IT specialist of Mirpur Primary Education Department, went missing on June 11 and the police recovered his slaughtered body beside Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Chandina in Comilla the next day. Sumon was cremated in comilla after an autopsy as police mentioned him as a Hindu in the inquest report.

At a press conference in the city, Sumon's sister Nazma Sultana Usha said she and Sumon's wife Nawrin Zahan Nitu received calls on their cellphones on June 12 and 13 from an anonymous caller who told them to give up hope of getting back Sumon.

The caller also told Nitu that he has punished Sumon, a resident of Mirpur, as he (Sumon) has ruined the life of one of his dear ones, Usha added.

She also alleged that a major of Bangladesh Rifles might be behind the killing as he suspected that Sumon had a relationship with his wife, who is a friend of Usha.

The family members also said Sumon was cremated just to destroy the evidence of the murder.

Sumon's father Hamidur Rahman filed a case with Mirpur Police station on June 13. They also informed the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) of their suspicion.

The family members came to know that Sumon was killed when Rab members called them to their office and showed pictures of slain Sumon on August 9.

Rab arrested two persons - Shamsul Islam Matin and Ahsan Habib - on August 8 from a village in Bogra. The arrestees also confessed that they and the major were involved in the killing, the family members said.

Low over Bay likely to intensify

UNB, Dhaka

The low persisting over northwest Bay off West Bengal-Bangladesh coast is likely to intensify further and move in a northwesterly direction.

Under its influence deep convection is taking place over north Bay. Squally weather may continue over the maritime ports, said a special bulletin of Met Office.

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

All fishing boats and trawlers over north Bay have been advised to remain close to the coast and proceed with caution until further notice.

Chief executive of Sightsavers arrives

Dr Caroline Harper, chief executive of Sightsavers International, UK, arrived in Dhaka on Friday to visit various programmes and activities supported by Sightsavers in Bangladesh, says a press release.

During her visit, Dr Harper will meet President Iajuddin Ahmed, senior government and non-government officials, donors, corporate, media and leaders in the disability area.

Sightsavers is an international agency based in the UK preventing blindness in 33 countries across the world. Where blindness is not preventable, the organisation provides support for the rehabilitation of people who are visually impaired and education for children who are blind and visually impaired.

In Bangladesh, Sightsavers has been operating since 1973 and currently supports the prevention of blindness programmes through partnership with 12 eye care NGOs/hospitals and five government district hospitals in 24 districts, including Dhaka urban areas.

IBA debate contest ends

DU CORRESPONDENT

A national debate championship, organised by the Communication Club of the Institute of Business Administration (IBACC) at Dhaka University (DU), ended yesterday with the holding of the final round of the competition between the IBA (Team 1) and the North South University (NSU 1).

Result of the final round will be announced formally at a ceremony at the IBA today, said the organisers.

With a view to provide a platform to young generation to speak on contemporary issues, the IBA National Debate Championship 2007 began on August 10 with the participation of 24 teams from different public and private universities.

In the quarterfinals, Brac University took on IBA (Team 3), Dhaka University Debating Society (Duds) fought AIUB, NSU (Team 1) competed against Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), while NSU (Team 2) took on IBA (Team 1).

Of them, IBA (Team 1) and NSU (Team 1) took on Duds and IBA (Team 3) respectively in the semifinals.

IBA (Team 1) faced NSU (Team 1) in the final on the topic 'China is better off with communism'.

RMG worker commits suicide in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A worker reportedly committed suicide by jumping from the rooftop of a six-storey garments factory in the port city yesterday.

The victim identified as Shafiqul Islam, 22, son of Mohammad Ali of Durgapur under Netrakona was a worker of Clifton Garments in Bayezid area.

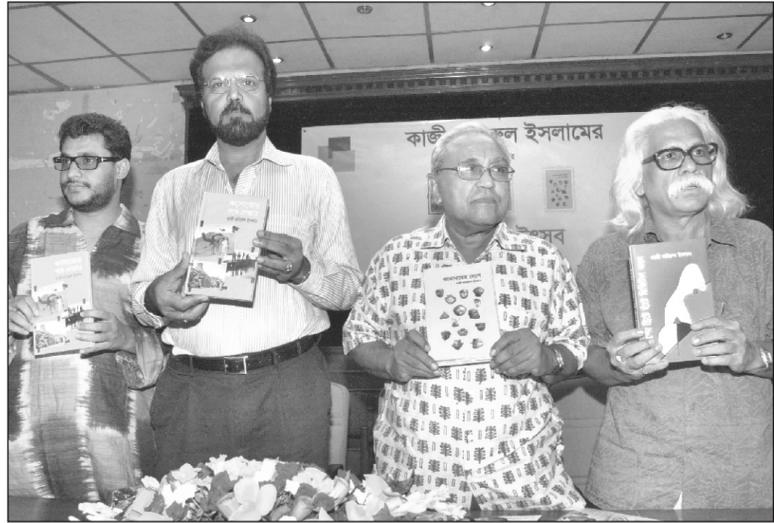
Sources said Saiful went his workplace as usual and wore his official dress to join the work on the top floor of the building.

He jumped from the rooftop at around 8:30am and met tragic end, police said.

Police suspected that Shafiqul committed suicide following a family feud.

Quoting victim's father Sub-Inspector (SI) Abdul Matin of Bayezid Police Station said Shafiqul engaged in a family quarrel in the morning before leaving his residence at Rekha Colony in Enayet Bazar.

Matin said the recorded footage by the close circuit television (CCTV) in the factory showed that Shafiqul jumped from the rooftop and none was with him at the moment.



Poet Samudra Gupta, right, Dr Hyat Mamud, second from right, actor Tarique Anam, third from right, launch three books of Kazi Zahirul Islam, left, at a publication ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

More organisations come to aid of flood victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To mitigate the suffering of flood victims, various organisations yesterday continued to distribute relief materials in different parts of the country reeling under floods.

BNP leader Lt Gen (ret.) Mahbubur Rahman conducted relief operations in several upazilas in Brahmanbaria. Communist Party of Bangladesh distributed foods among 500 displaced people on the embankment at Mohammadpur and also distributed 1000 packets of oral saline in Faridpur.

The Bangladesh Student Union distributed relief among 263 families in Mothertek area in the city while Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) conducted a relief operation in Gaibandha.

A team of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) led by its President Mir Nasir distributed relief in Faridpur, Rajbari and Magura and the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association handed over 2000 packets of relief materials to flood victims in several districts.

With the aid from DFID and UNDP, Resource Integration Centre distributed relief to 800 families in Munshiganj.

A team of Square Pharmaceuticals led by Disaster and Relief Management Adviser Tapan Chowdhury distributed relief materials to 600 people in Pabna.

Justice Debesh Foundation distributed relief among 350 families at Kailhati in Tangail on Friday and among 125 families on August 3.

Bangladesh Chitra Moitree and Charan Cultural Centre have been preparing and distributing thou-

sands of packets of oral saline every day.

Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, Mutual Trust Bank, Jatya Nari Sramik Trade Union Kendro and People's Relief Committee also came to the aid of the flood victims.

Grameenphone Ltd. has distributed relief materials, including food and other essential items worth over Tk one crore, in Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions in its first phase of emergency relief efforts over the last week.

A number of Grameenphone employees have also volunteered to participate in the relief distribution efforts in collaboration with members of the joint forces, local government authorities and the CSR partners of Grameenphone.

Grameenphone will continue its relief efforts over the next 10 days.

Beximco Pharmaceuticals distributed relief materials among the flood-affected people in Manikganj. Earlier, the company distributed relief in Sirajganj.

The officials and staff of the company distributed 2000 packets of relief materials in the two districts through creating a relief fund.

Each packet includes 1.5 kg of flattened rice, 0.5 kg of molasses, one pack of biscuit, and 10 pieces of water purifying tablets.

Our Manikganj correspondent adds: Engineer Zakir Hossain, an official of Delta Brac Housing, distributed relief among 200 flood-affected families at Muljan and Shushunda villages at the personal initiative. He distributed 500 kg of rice, 200 kg of chira, 50kg of molasses and 500 packets of oral saline.

Red Crescent Manikganj Unit distributed relief among 1000

flood-affected families at Bewtha, Baniajuri and Sagardighi villages.

Each family received 3 kg of chira, 700 gm of molasses, 6 water purifying tablets and 3 packets of oral saline.

Meanwhile, ASA disbursed Tk 1.60 crore interest-free loan to its 16,000 flood-affected members in Manikganj district.

CA's Relief Fund

UNB adds: Twenty more government and private organisations and individuals yesterday donated Tk 4.99 crore to the Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund for the flood victims.

Meanwhile, Tk 50 lakh was allocated for Munshiganj and Tk 20 lakh for Nature for the CA's Relief Fund for the flood-affected people.

On August 7, Tk 11 crore was allocated from the CA's fund for 15 flood-hit districts.

The 20 organisations that donated money include ministries of industries, home and labour and employment, Bangladesh Bar Council, Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha, BEPZA, Standard Chartered Bank, Uttara Bank, Jewel League Pharma Ltd, Angel Ditech and Tex Abo International Pvt Ltd.

Individuals and representatives of the organisations handed over cheques and cash to Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office.



Abdun Noor Tushar moderates a session of the IBA National Debate at the IBA auditorium yesterday.

Voter listing with photo kicks off in Rajshahi

FROM PAGE 1 photographs and fingerprint taken for the voter list, however complained of troubles and sufferings due to inadequate facilities at the registration centres.

Tired of waiting in long queues, many left for home.

The officials concerned however said they were trying to gear up the task at the registration centres so that those visiting the centres do not have to wait for long to have their photographs and fingerprint taken.

The voter listing work was going on at 37 centres out of a total of 101 in all 30 wards in RCC on the first day. The task is scheduled to be completed early in September, listing about three lakh voters.

Earlier on July 29, field level tasks like collection of particulars of prospective voters started with enumerators' door-to-door visit.

Now, from yesterday, the prospective voters started to visit the voter registration centres to have their photographs and fingerprints taken.

Meanwhile, election commissioners Muhammed Sohul Hussain and Brig Gen (ret.) M Sakhatul Hossain yesterday visited Comilla municipality area to monitor the preparation for beginning voter listing in this month.

The EC, which was reconstituted on February 4, announced on April 5 an 18-month timeframe for preparing a voter list with photographs.

WORK IN RCC AREA

Al Markajul Islami As-Salafi Dakhil Madrasa founded by jailed militant kingpin and chief of Ahle Hadith Andolon, Bangladesh Asadullah Al Galib has been made a registration centre, our staff correspondent from Rajshahi adds.

Rajshahi election officials said the madrasa was a vote centre during RCC elections in 2003, but it was not selected during general elections of 2001. Galib's militant link was uncovered in 2003.

Rajshahi district election officer Sayed Mohammad Musa, however, told The Daily Star, "The election office has no relation with any activities of the places selected as registration centres...We selected the madrasa as it was a vote centre during the RCC elections."

At the madrasa centre, women were seen standing for hours in a long queue. "I came here at 8:30am as voter listing was scheduled to begin at 9:00am. But for faults in the system, it started hours later," said Shabana Khatun, a 65-year-old woman from Boro Bongram.

"I am facing troubles standing for hours under the sun in this long queue," she said at 11:00am.

Hasina Banu, 27, Samsad Begum, 22, Chameil, 22, and Hira, 23, of Bharalipara also complained of the delayed process. They however expressed their enthusiasm about the digitised system.

"I came here without having breakfast, but still standing in the

queue as I think the voter listing is important," said Chameil.

Afroza Akhtar, a data entry operator at the centre, said her laptop was running at a slower speed and she had to take some time for perfection in the work. "In two hours, I completed listing of 12 voters."

"Several voters expressed their doubt as their fingers were not inked for fingerprints in the digitised system," she said.

Nasim, another data entry operator, was seen sitting idle before his laptop as the machine went out of order just after completing four voters.

"My photo looked dark as it was taken in scanty light," said Ashraf Hossain who was coming out of Upashahar Degree College centre at around 12:00noon.

Power cuts also cause wastage of time, said Ashraf's wife Rubina Begum.

Ashraf said an hour later that the data entry operator called him three times for corrections as the operator made mistakes, including one regarding Ashraf's name.

Laila Haque, a housewife who went to the centre with her 3-year-old daughter, however, expressed happiness saying that she would be able to cast her own vote.

WEATHER TODAY

Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at few places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, Sylhet, Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said in a forecast. It also said that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 36.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Bogra and lowest 25.2 degree Celsius at Cox's Bazar and Khepupara.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:34pm today and rises at 5:33am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening)