

Rebury Bir Shreshthas in one compound

Army chief urges govt

BSS, Dhaka

Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday urged the government to rebury all the seven Bir Shreshthas in a single compound so that people could pay their homage to all the valiant freedom fighters at a time.

"I have made a request to the

chief adviser in this regard and he accordingly agreed," the Army Chief said while receiving donations from various organisations and individuals for the cyclone survivors at Dhaka Cantonment.

Gen Moeen suggested the National Memorial at Savar as a probable site for reburial of the Bir Shreshthas, who made supreme

sacrifice for the independence of the country.

He said the army has succeeded in ensuring food and water for every cyclone-victim in the affected areas immediately after the disaster hit the country's southern part and now time has come to rehabilitate the victims.

TRIAL OF WAR CRIMINALS

AL wants CG to initiate process, BNP leaves it to political govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) yesterday hoped that the caretaker government (CG) would initiate the trial process of the war criminals, while BNP observed that the next political government should start the process, as the main agenda of this government is to hold a free and fair election.

Participating in the BBC Bangladesh-Singapore at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital, AL presidium member Abdur Razzak demanded immediate trial of the war criminals and pledged that his party would never form any alliance or seek any support from the Jamaat-e-Islami to go to power.

BNP's standing committee member Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman said the war criminals should be put on trial after proving the allegations against them, and termed the question whether they would form any alliance with Jamaat "irrational." "If any person brings specific allegation against a war criminal, the person will get justice if the BNP voted to power," he added.

Prof MM Akash of Dhaka University and Executive Director of Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha Rokeya Kabir took part in the Sanglap

as panelists.

BBC Bangla Service in conjunction with the BBC World Service Trust organised the event moderated by Shakeel Anwar.

Razzak, a former minister, asked where is the problem of trying the war criminals when the entire nation including chief adviser, chief of army staff and all political parties except the Jamaat are in favour of holding the trial of the war criminals. "If we fail to try the war criminals, then one day they will term us war criminals," he added.

Mahbub, a former chief of army staff, said the previous governments could take the initiative for trying the war criminals.

Asked whether AL and BNP would bring the war criminals to book if voted to power again, AL leader pledged that they would bring war criminals to justice with top priority while BNP leader said people would take the initiative to bring the war criminals to book, but BNP does not oppose their trial.

Prof Akash observed that if the present government starts the process of trying the war criminals, the next political government would be bound to try them. He said according to the law of the country there is a legal

framework to try the war criminals.

Rokeya said it is the duty of the state to bring the war criminals to book to establish rule of law and protect human rights. She hoped that the present government would start the process of trying the war criminals.

Replying to a query, Razzak said if the government would have taken early measures it could be possible to recover the bodies of labourers from the Rangs Bhawan. "This kind of negligence is unforgivable," he added.

Mahbub said the government could take help from the army or the expert from abroad to rescue the bodies. It's the government's failure, as they did not take any initiative, he added.

Responding to another query, Prof Akash said the government should release the detained teachers and students immediately as no governments in the past could remain in power undermining the dignity of Dhaka University. He said they will be forced to announce further programmes to press home their demand.

All the panelists demanded that the government lift the state of emergency for the interest of holding a free and fair election to hand over power to an elected government.

The next edition of the Sanglap will be held on January 5.

56 Army, Navy men get commission, promotion

UNB, Dhaka

A total of 56 Army and Navy personnel have been granted honorary commission and promotion on the occasion of the Victory Day.

Forty-eight from Bangladesh Army and eight from Bangladesh Navy have been granted honorary commission and promotion.

"These honorary promotion and honorary commission will be effective from today," said an ISPR release.

Twenty-two Honorary Lieutenants were promoted to Honorary Captain and 26 Junior Commissioned Officers to the rank of Honorary Lieutenant.

On the other hand, eight Master Chief Petty Officers of Bangladesh Navy received Honorary Commission.

Those promoted to Honorary Captain include Honorary Lieutenant Salim Khan, EME, Honorary Lt Md Asaduzzaman Bhuiyan, EME, Honorary Lt Md Farukul Islam, EME, Honorary Lt Md Khorsed Alam Sharif, ASC, Honorary Lt Md Chand Mia, ABC, Honorary Lt Md Abdul Halim, Honorary Lt Md Sattar, East Bengal, Honorary Lt Md Anwar Hossain, East Bengal, Honorary Lt Noor Hossain Khan, ASC, Honorary Lt Md Abdul Jalil, BIR, and Honorary Lt Md Touhid Hossain, East Bengal.

They also include Honorary Lt Abdul Awal, ABC, Honorary Lt Bodiar Rahman Khan, East Bengal, Honorary Lt Md Shaifiquil Islam, Signals, Honorary Lt Md Mozammel Hogue, East Bengal, Honorary Lt Md Fazlul Hogue, East Bengal, Honorary Lt Md Abdul Khaleque Sheikh, East Bengal, Honorary Lt Md Fakhruul Islam, Ordnance, Honorary Lt Md Shahjahan Ali, East Bengal, Honorary Lt Md Anisur Rahman Mondal, Ordnance, Honorary Lt Md Delwar Hossain, East Bengal and Honorary Lt Haider Ali Khan, East Bengal.

The Junior Commissioned Officers who got commission in the rank of Honorary Lieutenant in the Army are Master Warrant Officers Md Jahangir Alam, EME, Md Alauddin Sarker, BIR, Sheikh Abul Kalam, BIR, Md Delwar Hossain Khan, Eng, Nur Muhammad Bhuiyan, Md Habibur Rahman, East Bengal, Md Shahjahan Mia, BIR, Md Lokman Hossain, Eng, Md Abdul Goni, ACC, Abu Saleed Mondal, Syed Motahar Ali, ASC, Md Gias Uddin, Md Mohiuddin Sarker, Artillery, Md Serajul Islam Molla ACC, Md Mahbub Alam, ASC, Md Abdul Mannan Mia, Artillery, Md Salim Molla, ACC, Md Abdus Samad, Md Delwar Sharif, Armored, Md Idris Ahmed, East Bengal, Md Sabur Ali Khan, BIR, Md Najrul Islam Miazee, ACC, Md Nurul Alam, East Bengal, Md Ziaul Haque, ASC and in AMC Md Abul Fazal and Abdul Karim.

The Junior Commissioned Officers of the Bangladesh Navy who were granted Commission in the rank of Honorary Sub-Lieutenant are Hamid Khan Siddique, MCPO (Ex)/(G), Sheikh Akkas Ali, MCPO (Ex) QRP-1, Md Nazrul Islam Munshi, MCPO (E), Aktar Kamal, MCPO (S), Sheikh Md Mofizur Rahman, MCPO (L), Md Mahbub-ul-Alam Talukder, MCPO (L), Nur Mohammad Sheikh, MCPO (R) and Md Shah Alam MCPO (Kat).

Relief work going on in full swing: CA

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said relief and rehabilitation activities in the cyclone-affected southwestern region are going on in full swing.

He said the government and private organisations are conducting relief operations in Sidi-hit areas in a coordinated manner although there were some difficulties at the initial stage.

The CA said these while receiving donations for the Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund from a number of individuals, organisations and institutions.

He told the contributors that a major part of the donated money is being spent for rebuilding the damaged houses. "Nearly Tk 120 crore has been disbursed from the fund," he added.

He thanked the donors and expressed happiness as many of them donated to the relief fund by cancelling their annual dinners or picnic programme.



Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelley, left, and Sadat Selim, right, launch a book titled 'Nirer Pakhi' by Sadat Selim at its publication ceremony at Hotel Sheraton in the city yesterday. Society for Nature Photography organised the event.



UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky having chances of light rain or drizzle at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Dhaka divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 28.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 12.7 degrees Celsius at Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:14pm today and rises at 6:35am 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	25.3	19.0	72	65
Chittagong	25.5	19.3	78	68
Rajshahi	27.0	14.0	87	59
Khulna	24.2	18.6	88	83
Barisal	23.5	18.0	77	90
Sylhet	25.5	16.7	88	79
Cox's Bazar	28.0	20.0	60	64

Extortion charge pressed against Khulna mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police yesterday pressed charges against Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman and KCC Public Relations Officer (PRO) Sardar Abu Taher in an extortion case filed with Khulna Sadar Police Station on November 2.

Sub-Inspector Keshab Chandra Chakraborty, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted a charge-sheet against the mayor and the PRO to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court. The IO recorded statements of 19 prosecution witnesses during interrogation in the case.

Mayor Tayebur, who was arrested at his Dhaka residence on November 2, is now in Jessore Central Jail while PRO Abu Taher has been absconding since the filing of the case.

Procurement officer of the Municipal Services project (MSP) of the KCC SM Hafizur Rahman, who was suspended by the mayor on charges of corruption in October last, filed the case.

Special flour for diabetic patients

BSS, Dhaka

Considering the nutritional requirements of diabetic patients, Foundation for Economic Development (FED) has developed DIA-ATA through intensive research with all microelements.

The packet of special flour DIA-ATA was displayed at the 13th Diabetes and Endocrine Conference organised jointly by Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (Dab) and Bangladesh Endocrine Society that concluded at the Institute of Diploma Engineers Bangladesh in the city yesterday.

On the inaugural day of the three-day conference, FED organised a symposium where Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, scientific officer of Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute, explained the chemical composition of special flour (DIA-ATA) with its health benefits for diabetic patients.

Chaired by Prof Liaquat Ali and co-chaired by Akhtarun Nahar Alo of Birdem, Dr Anoop Misra of Biomedical Research Group of Birdem, presented his paper titled 'Importance of post-prandial blood glucose control' at the symposium.

The DIA-ATA will be available at Shreechandra Store of Birdem from the current week.

Steel furniture trader killed in Ctg road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Promothesh Barua, a steel furniture trader, was killed in a road accident on Friday night after a bus had run over him near Garibullah Shah Mazar in Nasirabad area.

Promothesh, father of Dwaipayan Barua, a journalist of The Daily Star in Chittagong.

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

Witnesses and police said the accident occurred at around 9.30pm on Friday while Promothesh was going to attend a marriage ceremony by a bus at a community centre at MM Ali Road near Garibullah Shah Mazar. As the bus slowed down at MM Ali Road, Promothesh tried to get off but fell to the ground. Immediately, the same bus ran over him.

Locals rushed critically injured Promothesh to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Promothesh was cremated at his village at Mukut Knight in Karalkhain Union under Patiya Upazila of the district in the afternoon.

Obituary

Dr Faiza Bari Malik Lipi, youngest daughter of late Engineer Malik Abdul Bari, passed away at a hospital in London in the United Kingdom due to cerebral haemorrhage on December 11 at the age of 68, says a press release.

She left behind her husband Hasinur Reza Chowdhury and son Dr Hasib Reza Chowdhury.

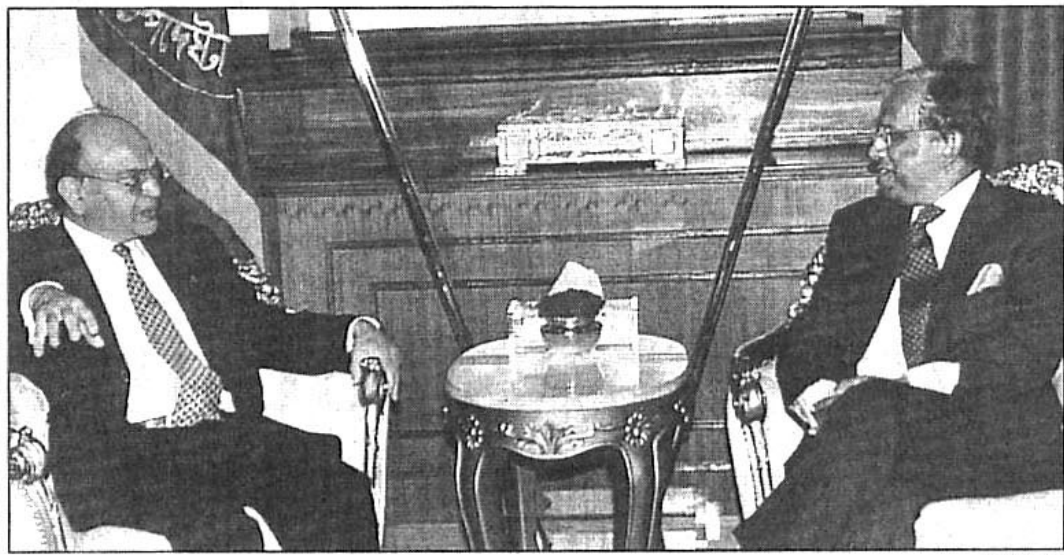
She was buried at Gardens of Peace Muslim Cemetery on December 15 after her namaz-e-janaza at East London Mosque.

Dr Faiza had been practising medicine in the UK since late 1960. She was also active in various cultural and social activities.

V-Day concert at Fantasy Kingdom

A Victory Day live concert will be held at Fantasy Kingdom on 4:00pm today. Popular band LRB Yaatri and Nagar Baul will perform on the concert, says a press release.

Ticket price will be for per person regular Tk 180 and VIP Tk 250.



World Bank Vice-president Praful C Patel calls on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at the latter's office in the city yesterday.

Loss of livestock during cyclone high for lack of preparedness

Say govt officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The loss of livestock during cyclone Sidr was high due to lack of preparedness, a government official said yesterday.

Secretary of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management Dr Mohammad Ayub Mia said that though the government was better able to ensure the safety of human lives, it had not addressed the issue of livestock in its preparedness management mechanism.

He was speaking at a workshop in the city held to identify gender specific needs during periods of risk and disaster, and analysis of rights of the socially deprived.

Some 871 people still remain missing in the southern region while the official death toll from the cyclone stands at 3200.

The loss of livestock during the cyclone is estimated to be over two lakh.

Dr Ayub told the workshop that loss of lives has decreased comparatively from the previous cyclones of 1970 and 1991. In the 1970 cyclone

the death toll was 70 lakh while in 1991 one lakh people lost their lives.

This was despite the fact that the government had been able to move only one third of the people at risk to cyclone shelters, he said.

"However the loss of livestock was high this year," he admitted.

Disaster Management Bureau organised the workshop to share the gender and social exclusion analysis framework of Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) guidebook with different organisations before finalising it.

The secretary also said that although a government's expert committee in 1993 recommended that 3500 cyclone shelters be built in coastal belt areas, only 1800 shelters have been established by the government and non-government organisations till date.

He added that the government this year has been able to ensure food security in the Sidr affected areas and till now no one has died due to hunger.

Director General of Disaster Management Bureau KH Masud

Siddiqui pointed out the importance of the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD). At the same time enacting the Disaster Management Law is also required to ensure institutional accountability, he added.

Director of Disaster Management Bureau Abu Sadeque and Director of the Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation Jahangir Hossain attended the workshop, along with 40 officials from different government and donor agencies and non-government organisations.

VISION OF MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRY BY 2021

'Political will a must to achieve target'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political will is a must to turn Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021, speakers at a view exchange meeting said yesterday.

They also suggested taking up development projects under different ministries in a planned way with a view to achieving the target.

Prattasha 2021 Forum and Hunger Free World jointly organised the meeting at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Presenting the keynote paper, Forum Secretary Ataur Rahman Miton said the country has achieved some progress in the socio-economic sector since independence, but quality education, healthcare, housing facilities and social security for all are yet to be achieved.

"No nation can survive for long depending on the foreign aid," he said, adding that the population must be turned into human resources to help realise the vision of a middle-income country.

He also called for steps to make the union parishad more active in order to alleviate poverty from the country.

Prof Dr Atiur Rahman, chairperson of Unnayan Samannay, Nitai Das, a development organiser, and Dr Lenin Chowdhury also spoke at the meeting.

NAT'L CHILDREN'S ART CONTEST

Winners receive prizes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prizes were distributed among the winners of National Children's Art Competition at a function at Sufia Kamal auditorium of the National Museum in the city yesterday.

The competition was organised by Patua Kamrul Hasan Art School to mark the 85th birth anniversary of the artist.

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury was present as chief guest at the function where noted academics Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, artist Prof Murtaza Bashir and Managing Director of Prime Bank M Shahjahan Bhuiyan were present as special guests.

Presided over by economist Atiur Rahman, chairman of the board of directors of Patua Kamrul Hasan Art School, the programme was also attended by former director of the National Museum Prof Shamsuzzaman Khan, Chairman of University Grants Commission Prof Nazrul Islam, poet Nirmolendu Gun, artist Biren Shom, Anwar Hossain Babu and Prof Motlub Ali.

A total of 40 children were selected for the prizes for their art works in the competition held on the premises of the Arts Institute of Dhaka University on December 7.

Around 3000 competitors from across the country took part in the competition.

Convener of the jury committee and former director of Bangladesh Television Abdullah Mannan announced the names of the winners.

Tamim Ahsan Zaman of Oxford Laboratory School, Kakoli Sutradhar of Viharunnessa Noon School, Kazi Samiul Islam of Dhanmendi Tutorial and ANM Ferdous Al Rabbi of ABC International School won gold medals, prize bonds and certificates.

The remaining 36 winners received prize bonds and certificates.

December 2 was the birthday of noted artist Patua Kamrul Hasan.

NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY

Govt decides to form body for reviewing 6th wage board

UNB, Dhaka

The government has decided to form a committee to review the recommendations in the just-declared sixth Wage Board Award for the newspaper industry.

"The review committee will be formed comprising newspaper owners, journalists and other staff members," said an official handout yesterday.

The government announced the Sixth Wage Board Award through a gazette notification on December 6, fixing salaries, allowances and other benefits for the journalists, press workers and employees.

But Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) rejected the Wage Board Award and observed a four-hour work abstention on Wednesday, demanding its immediate revision.

Announce revised 6th Wage Board Award

Editors, SSKOP leaders urge govt

BSS, Dhaka

A joint meeting of editors of newspapers and news agencies and the leaders of Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) yesterday called for formation of a committee to review the 6th Wage Board Award for journalists and employees in the newspaper industry.

They also called for the announcement of the wage board award anew after incorporating just and legitimate facilities and privileges into it.

The meeting urged the government to ensure upholding of the dignity of the editorial institution, which has long been enjoyed by the editors of newspapers and news agencies.

It also called on the authorities to take necessary steps to remove constraints and obstacles facing the newspaper industry and to increase the rate of advertisements for the survival of the newspapers.

Presided over by SSKOP co-convenor Mozammel Haq, the meeting was attended by Mahbubul Alam, editor of The Independent, Matiar Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, editor of The Bangladesh Observer, Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, Golam Sarwar, editor of Jugantar, Alamgir Mohiuddin, editor of Naya Diganta, Rahat Khan, acting editor of Ittefaq, Bazlur Rahman, editor of Sangbad, Abul Asad, editor of Sangram, Rezauddin Ahmed, editor of The News Today, Glas Kamal Chowdhury, editor of Khaborpatra, Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, chief editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), Motiur Rahman Chowdhury, chief editor of Manabzamin, Naimul Islam Khan, editor of Amader Samoy, Mostafa Kamal Majumder, editor of The New Nation, and Shaymal Dutta, editor of Bhorer Kagoj.

Senior journalists ABM Musa, Ataus Samad and National Press Club President Shawkat Mahmud and General Secretary Kamal Uddin Sabuj were also present.

SSKOP leaders Kartik Chattarjee, Fazle Imam, Ruhul Amin Gazi, Motiur Rahman Talukder, Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Abul Hashem, Mohammad Khairul Islam, Altaf Mahmud, Azizul Haq Banna, Omar Faruque and Sarder Farid Ahmed attended the meeting held at the National Press Club.

Convention on environment begins Dec 17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-day convention on 'Indigenous people and the environment of Bangladesh' begins at the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) auditorium on December 17.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Bangladesh Environment Network (Ben) have jointly organised the convention.

The objective of the convention is to assess the extent of environmental degradation in forests and other areas where ethnic minorities live, to understand their economy, culture and relationship with the environment, said Ben Coordinator Prof Nazrul Islam at a press conference yesterday.

Researchers, development activists, social workers, political leaders and representatives from ethnic minority groups will attend the programme.

Bapa Vice-President Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed said the forestland in Madhupur and Chittagong Hill Tracts areas have been degrading fast over the last few decades. If steps are not taken right now, not a single plot can be protected from the greed of encroachers, he added.

Bapa General Secretary Dr MA Matin, Prof Mokaddem Hossain and Mohidul Huq Khan also spoke.