

Media should reflect issues related to poverty cut

Experts tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Issues relating to poverty reduction should be prominently reflected in the media to create platforms for debates leading to formulation of pro-poor policies...

while there is lack of time for story researches, Jon Barnes said, adding that there is also journalists' lacking in understanding the complex issues.

Demanding more strategic support for media, he said public policies and an enabling environment should be created for media through supportive media legislation and independent media regulation bodies.

"Besides mainstream media, alternative media, such as community radio and the needs of local journalists should also be seriously considered," he said.

Moderating the discussion, Panos South Asia Representative SM Mayeen Ahmed said information for the poor and of the poor is not truly highlighted in the media.

"We want the voices of the voiceless to be reflected," he added. He said the participation of media was not actively considered in preparing the document of PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper).

"We need budget for media to disseminating information to the poor," he added.

"I have not seen enough investigative reports on poverty issues,"

said Planning Commission Joint Chief Dr M Golam Sarwar.

"As a society our tolerance to poverty probably is too high," he added.

Dr Sarwar said the second PRSP for 2008-2011 will be prepared by June-July this year, but it will not be possible to go out of Dhaka for consulting grassroots people because of the present nature of the government.

The New Nation Editor Mostafa Kamal Majumder said journalists face difficulties in getting information from the government officials for their secretive nature, while the NGOs want the media to carry only their messages.

When the state-owned media cover only event-based news, the private news organisations are sponsored by politicians, businessmen and even NGOs, he said, adding that an environment should be created in media for balanced reports.

"NGOs and civil society organisations should understand the working conditions of the journalists and prepare materials accordingly in time with due contexts," he said.



Houston mayor declares Jan 14 'Yunus Day'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Houston, one of the America's largest cities, has declared January 14 'Muhammad Yunus Day' to honour Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus who is currently on a tour of the US.

Mayor Bill White made the declaration on Monday at a reception accorded to Prof Yunus, who was visiting Houston, Texas, as part of his whistle-stop tour to promote his new book 'Creating a world without poverty: Social business and the future of capitalism'.

The mayor also handed over a copy of the proclamation to Prof Yunus at the function attended by over 500 personalities, reports NewsWorld.

Prof Yunus described how micro-credit and social business can help alleviate poverty and move a country like Bangladesh forward.

He also addressed two other reception ceremonies hosted by the World Affairs Council and the Bangladesh-American Society. Over 2,000 people attended the functions.

'Withdraw emergency in phases'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Kalyan Party (BKP) Chairman Maj Gen (ret'd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim yesterday demanded withdrawal of emergency in phases and lifting ban on indoor politics in all districts by the end of this month.

He also demanded holding of the general elections immediately after the completion of the voter ID card project.

The BKP chief was addressing his first press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium since the launching of BKP on December 4.

He also urged the government to identify the war criminals and try them immediately.

When asked about the demand of early election raised from different political parties, the BKP chief said a free and fair election cannot be held without preparing voter ID cards.

KILLING OF MANIK SAHA Citizens' probe demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday demanded forming a citizens' probe committee to identify the real culprits behind the killing of journalist Manik Saha.

They also said it is a shame that the verdict of the case has yet not been declared although it has been four years since his assassination.

Colleagues of Manik Saha and some Dhaka-based journalists organised the discussion at Moni Singh-Farhad auditorium in the city to mark his 4th death anniversary.

Manik, Khulna correspondent of the New Age and a stringer of BBC Bangla Service, was killed in a bomb attack near Khulna Press Club on January 15 in 2004.

Speaking as the chief guest, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said Manik is more than his ideology remains alive.

"Manik presented facts in his reporting which are very essential in objective reporting," he added.

Nijera Kari Coordinator Khushi Kabir said Manik always wrote against irregularities, corruption, communalism and fundamentalism and that's why a vested quarter killed him.

Journalist Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul said Manik Smrity Sangsad and a citizens' probe committee could be formed for dealing the case properly and raising voice against repression on journalists across the country.

Today is the 93rd death anniversary of Nawab Sir Salimullah Bahadur, says a press release.

On the occasion, quarkhwani, doa mahfil, distribution of food among orphans, and discussion meeting will be held.

Orphaned Bangladeshi conjoined twins set for separation

AFP, Sydney

Orphaned Bangladeshi conjoined twins have survived an initial operation, but it will be another six months before they can be separated, the Australian charity looking after them said Tuesday.

One-year-old girls Trishna and Krishna are joined at the head but have separate brains. If the twins are not separated, they are expected to die.

Surgeons, who carried out the first surgical procedure last week, have assessed that they can be separated but it will be a difficult task.

They have had one stage of an operation. They have got to have six months of preparation before they can be separated," Margaret Smith, chief executive of the Children First Foundation, told AFP.

"They are very beautiful little girls. They are quite normal. They just happen to be joined at the head."

The children were brought to Australia late last year from Bangladesh, where they were living in an orphanage at an undisclosed location. According to the charity, they were orphaned at birth in December 2006.

They are staying at Melbourne's Royal Children's Hospital, one of Australia's leading medical institutions for children, and will live at a rehabilitation centre in the country.



Swiss Ambassador Dora Rapold talks to common people at Bakshimolli School during her visit to some projects at Tanore and Mohonpur upazilas in Rajshahi yesterday.

WEATHER TODAY logo with sun and cloud icons.

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather will remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during early morning, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged night temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 27.3 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 8.2 degrees Celsius at Jessore.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:33pm and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

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

Table with 3 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

Death anniversary

QUESTION LEAKAGE Resignation of NU VC demanded

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students of Dhaka College and Shaheed Titumir College yesterday staged demonstrations protesting the postponement of English compulsory examinations of the National University (NU) for the second time upon allegation of question paper leakage.

They demanded immediate resignation of the NU vice-chancellor for his failure to check question leakage.

The examinations of English compulsory course of BA Honours part-2 were earlier scheduled for November 11, but that were also postponed due to same reason.

Aggrieved students of the two colleges took to the streets and blocked the New Market-Mirpur road and Mohakhli-Gulshan road for over half an hour at noon, causing disruption of traffic movements.

Switzerland to spend 20m francs a year for dev projects

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Ambassador of Switzerland to Bangladesh Dora Rapold yesterday said her country would spend up to 20 million Swiss francs annually for different development projects for next five years.

"We have defined our priorities which include strengthening of the local government and spreading of education among the rural poor," she said.

"Our second priority will be rural employment and income generating activities apart from funding on micro-credit and small entrepreneur promotion," she added.

Dora was talking to The Daily Star after her visit to some projects involving indigenous groups on fisheries, sanitation and water distribution system at Tanore and Mohonpur upazilas.

"We took Rajshahi and Sunamganj as our priority region considering poverty and great potentials of the areas," she said.

Switzerland is spending about 4 million Swiss francs for 16 development projects in Rajshahi and Sunamganj under Sharique programme in cooperation with Care Bangladesh.

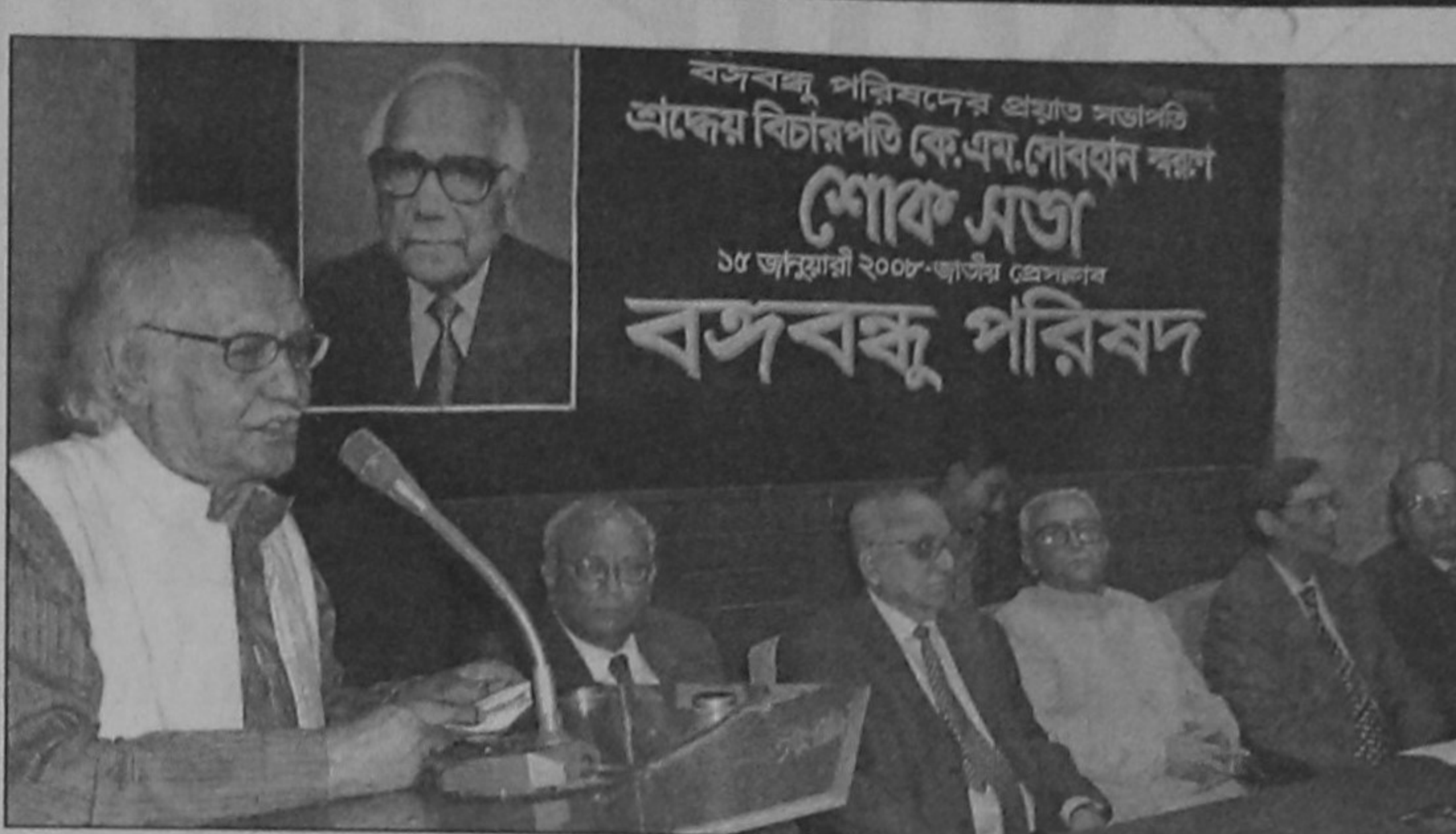
DEFAMATION CASE RU teacher gets bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) Court yesterday granted bail to Rajshahi University (RU) teacher M Faruk-uz-Zaman after he surrendered before the court.

The court on Monday issued an arrest warrant against Faruk following a defamation suit against him by RU VC Prof M Altaf Hossain in August last year.

Earlier in July Faruk, a professor of history department, sent memoranda to the chief adviser, education adviser and UGC chairman alleging irregularities against the VC and demanding his removal.



Prof Kabir Chowdhury speaks at a meeting in memory of Justice KM Sobhan, president of Bangabandhu Parishad, at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Selim Al Deen to be laid to rest today

Condolences pour in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation will pay homage to Selim Al Deen, the legendary drama icon of the country, at Central Shaheed Minar in the city today before his burial on Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus.

Teachers, students, theatre men, litterateur and his admirers will take out a procession from the National Museum at 9:00am that will accompany the car carrying the mortal remains of one of the foremost of the theatre figures in the subcontinent to Shaheed Minar.

The body will be kept on a special altar there till 12:45pm for the people to pay their last respects to the writer.

Later, the body will be taken to Dhaka University (DU) Central Mosque where his first namaz-e-janaza will be held after Zohr prayers.

The body will then be taken to JU and the second namaz-e-janaza will be held there after Asr prayers.

He will be buried in the graveyard adjacent to JU Central Mosque afterwards.

All classes, scheduled to be held at JU after noon, will remain suspended for performing the burial to this end.

An emergency syndicate meeting yesterday took the decision while also approving the decision to bury him on the university campus.

JU will also hold a condolence meeting at the central auditorium on January 19 while different cultural organisations have announced of launching programmes in memory of the eminent playwright.

Meanwhile, different cultural, political and social organisations yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of Dr Selim Al Deen, also a professor at the department of Drama and Dramatics, JU.

The organisations prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Jahangirnagar Sanskritik Jote (JSJ) in a statement said Selim Al Deen had been the harbinger of the country's cultural movement and his death caused an irreparable loss to the cultural arena.

Gono Forum, Sammita Sanskritik Jote, Bangladesh Lekhak Shibir, Bangladesh Centre of the International Theatre Institute, Theatre, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Jahangirnagar Theatre, Jahangirnagar Students' Film Society and Ronesh Dasgupta Chalachitra Sangsad also condoled the death of the eminent playwright.

DU student found dead at husband's residence

DU CORRESPONDENT

A female student of Dhaka University (DU) was found dead at the residence of her husband on Monday.

The body of FatematuZZohra Esi, a MA student of Bangla Department, was hanging from a ceiling fan at her bedroom.

She was married to one Atiqur Rahman Victor, an employee of HSCB Bank, for one and a half years.

Esi, who hailed from Rangpur, lived with her husband's family at Rupayan Palace at Mirpur-10.

Esi's uncle Mahfuzur Rahman, an employee of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), said Esi's mother-in-law Manwara Parvin informed him over phone at 4:00pm that Esi was not opening the door of her room.

Mahfuzur rushed to the spot and found Esi hanging from a ceiling fan after breaking the door at 10:00pm.

Later, he brought the body to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

However, Mahfuzur said Esi's feet were touching the bed and her husband's family could not give him a clear description of the incident.

He also alleged the family of Esi's husband took Tk 50000 from her father, who retired recently, on different occasions.

Joint forces raid Nanak's residence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the joint forces conducted a raid on the residence of Jubo League Chairman Jahangir Kabir Nanak at Green Road in the city last night.

His family members said members of the joint forces entered the house at about 8:30pm and searched four rooms and two almirahs. They also took away the photocopy of the licence of a revolver of Nanak and some other documents.

When asked, Dhanmondi police confirmed the raid but said they were not aware of any arrest.

8 criminals arrested in Pallabi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested eight members of a gang led by listed criminal Shahadat from the city's Pallabi area and recovered four firearms along with 19 bullets in the early hours of yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Md Imran, 20, Al-Mamun, 21, Md Momin, 23, Al-Amin alias Johnny, 22, Al-Islam, 20, Nazmul Islam alias Jewel, 18, Rafiqul Islam alias Robin, 18, and Zisanul Rahman Pial, 18.

Rab-4 sources said they arrested Md Imran, Al-Mamun and Md Momin from the Eastern Housing area at 2:00am and recovered two revolvers, a shutter gun and nine bullets.

Acting on their confession, Rab members arrested five others from Mirpur Section-11 and recovered another revolver with 11 bullets.

Rab said the arrestees admitted their involvement in killing, gunfight, extortion and other crimes.

Crime rate falls, probes make little headway

FROM PAGE 16

Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) also resulted in the law and order improvement. Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad recently said an excellent situation has been prevailing in the country since the six-top JMB leaders were executed.

Obituary

Lutfunnessa Hamid, wife of Dr Abdul Hamid, passed away at United Hospital on January 14 due to old-age complications, says a press release.

She is survived by her sons AYM Kamal, former director of FBCCI, AYM Naim, managing director of Travel Trade, AYM Selim, former country director of UNDP in Sri Lanka, and her only daughter Yasmin Hassan.

She was buried at Uttara graveyard.

A doa mahfil for the salvation of the departed soul will be held at her Uttara House # 43, Road # 1, Sector # 13 on Friday, January 18, after Asr prayers.

Syeda Nuresh Muksud

Advocate Syeda Nuresh Muksud, a former law-maker and vice president of Bangladesh Mahila Samity, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at the Apollo Hospitals in the city on Monday at the age of 68.

President and general secretary of Bangladesh Mahila Samity expressed deep shock at the death of Nuresh Muksud and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

They also prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

Her kulkhwani will be held at her residence at House no18, Road no 6/A, Uttara in the city on January 18.

Rahela Khatun

BSS, Dhaka

Rahela Khatun, mother of Shamsuddin Haaron, senior vice-president of BFUJ and Chittagong bureau chief of the daily Manabzamin, passed away at her Pallabi residence yesterday at the age of 80.

She is survived by two sons and three daughters.

She was buried at her family graveyard at Pallabi extension.

BFUJ President Mozammel Haq, General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi, EC member Zahidul Karim and President of Chittagong Metropolitan Union of Journalists Shamsul Haq Haidari in a joint statement expressed condolence at the death of Rahela Khatun.

Md Mayeen Uddin Mainu

Md Mayeen Uddin Mainu, assistant general secretary of Bangladesh Truck-Coveredvan Malik Samity, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at his residence yesterday at the age of 45, says a press release.

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

President, senior vice-president and general secretary of Bangladesh Truck-Coveredvan Malik Samity expressed deep shock at his death and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Hazera Begum

Hazera Begum, mother of former DCC ward commissioner Mahamudul Alam Montu, passed away due to old age complications at her Maizpara residence under Ramganj upazila on Monday at the age of 75, says a press release.

She left behind her two sons, two daughters, and a host of relatives to mourn her death.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Hazrat Abdul Karim Al Chisti will be held today at Shajadpur village in Sirajganj, says a press release.



Obituary

Lutfunnessa Hamid, wife of Dr Abdul Hamid, passed away at United Hospital on January 14 due to old-age complications, says a press release.

She is survived by her sons AYM Kamal, former director of FBCCI, AYM Naim, managing director of Travel Trade, AYM Selim, former country director of UNDP in Sri Lanka, and her only daughter Yasmin Hassan.

She was buried at Uttara graveyard.

A doa mahfil for the salvation of the departed soul will be held at her Uttara House # 43, Road # 1, Sector # 13 on Friday, January 18, after Asr prayers.

Syeda Nuresh Muksud

Advocate Syeda Nuresh Muksud, a former law-maker and vice president of Bangladesh Mahila Samity, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at the Apollo Hospitals in the city on Monday at the age of 68.

President and general secretary of Bangladesh Mahila Samity expressed deep shock at the death of Nuresh Muksud and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

They also prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

Her kulkhwani will be held at her residence at House no18, Road no 6/A, Uttara in the city on January 18.

Rahela Khatun

BSS, Dhaka

Rahela Khatun, mother of Shamsuddin Haaron, senior vice-president of BFUJ and Chittagong bureau chief of the daily Manabzamin, passed away at her Pallabi residence yesterday at the age of 80.

She is survived by two sons and three daughters.

She was buried at her family graveyard at Pallabi extension.

BFUJ President Mozammel Haq, General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi, EC member Zahidul Karim and President of Chittagong Metropolitan Union of Journalists Shamsul Haq Haidari in a joint statement expressed condolence at the death of Rahela Khatun.

Md Mayeen Uddin Mainu

Md Mayeen Uddin Mainu, assistant general secretary of Bangladesh Truck-Coveredvan Malik Samity, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at his residence yesterday at the age of 45, says a press release.

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

President, senior vice-president and general secretary of Bangladesh Truck-Coveredvan Malik Samity expressed deep shock at his death and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Hazera Begum

Hazera Begum, mother of former DCC ward commissioner Mahamudul Alam Montu, passed away due to old age complications at her Maizpara residence under Ramganj upazila on Monday at the age of 75, says a press release.

She left behind her two sons, two daughters, and a host of relatives to mourn her death.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Hazrat Abdul Karim Al Chisti will be held today at Shajadpur village in Sirajganj, says a press release.

He passed away on December 10 at the age of 95.

Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the chehlum and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Qulkhwani

BSS, Dhaka

Qulkhwani of Begum Masuma Aziz, mother of the Jatiya Press Club (JPC) President Shaikat Mahmud, will be held after Asr prayers at JPC auditorium today.

Begum Masuma passed away at a city hospital on Saturday.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for the departed soul.