

Form body to check use of illegal arms

Speakers urge govt

BSS, Dhaka

Speakers at a rally here yesterday urged the government to form an independent national peace and security commission for checking use of illegal arms and counter terrorism in the country.

They also demanded formulating rules and regulations under the arms act to strictly implement it for controlling smuggling and trafficking of illegal arms.

The anti-arms trafficking rally was jointly organised by Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BPDC), Bangladesh Network on Small Arms (BNSA) with the support of South Asian Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPI) and

International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA).

The rally was organised to mark the Global Week of Action against Gun Violence 2008 to raise awareness, campaign for better gun laws and push for stronger regulation of the global arms trade.

The week is being observed across the globe from June 2 ahead of the United Nations biennial review meeting scheduled on July 14 to 18 in New York to review progress on the UN Programme of 'Action on Small Arms'.

The rally with the participants carrying colourful banners and festoons with various anti-terrorism slogans started in front of the National Museum and ended at the same venue parading TSC

intersection of Dhaka University.

After the rally, director of BPDC Sharif A Kafi placed an 11-point recommendation to the government for controlling illegal arms.

The recommendations include forming a national peace and security commission, updating the arms law, reforming arms licensing rules, bringing madrasa education under general education system, allocating adequate budget to create employment opportunity, taking measures in the light of UN action and establishing a network with the neighbouring countries.

They would also submit memorandum to the chief adviser, advisers, and to the heads of the Saarc states, he said.

BDR man killed in attack by mentally disordered man

UNB, Jhalakati

A BDR member was killed and two other people were injured in an attack by a mentally disordered man at Timirkati bus stand in Nolechhi upazila on Friday night.

The dead was identified as Mortuja Ali, 35, of Nanguli village of the upazila.

Police said when Mortuja was going to Barisal town from his village by a tempo, a mentally disordered man attacked the tempo passengers at Timirkati bus stand in the evening.

He beat up the tempo passengers indiscriminately, leaving three passengers—Julus, 20, Najmul, 18 and Mortuja, 30, injured critically.

Mortuja succumbed to his injuries on way to Dhaka. Julus and Najmul were admitted to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Arrest of killers of Ashru demanded

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Christian Association yesterday demanded arrest of and exemplary punishment to the killers of Bitni Ashru D'Silva, a student of Tumilia Saint Mary's School in Gazipur, says a press release.

The association also demanded security of her family members and the school and college girls in the area.

The demand was placed at a protest rally organised by the association's Tumilia-Kaliganj and Daripara-Kaliganj units and Tumilia Mission Peace and Fairness Coordination Committee at Tumilia Boys High School ground in Kaliganj.

Presided over by Alfred Rozario, the rally was addressed by James D'Silva, father of Ashru, Christian Association senior vice-president Hubart Gomez, secretary general Nirmal Rozario, international affairs secretary of Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan Kazi Azizul Haque and Advocate John Gomez.

Later, a team of the leaders submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur to press home their demands.

On the night of April 30, a gang of local hoodlums raped Ashru, a student of class eight, leaving her critically injured. She died in the morning the next day.

Chevron hands over houses to two flood-hit families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chevron Bangladesh has handed over the newly built houses to the two families at Karimpur village near Bibiyana gas field in Habiganj, which were destroyed in the devastating flood last year.

Earlier, Chevron rehabilitated 23 severely affected families through its post-flood rehabilitation campaign.

With the support of its partner-NGO FIVDB, Chevron identified families whose houses were damaged and initiated a house-building programme in the wake of the flood that affected some 2,000 households in the area.

Chevron initiated a number of rehabilitation programmes aiming at assisting the flood-affected community who live in the area.

In addition to building new houses, Chevron launched programmes to clean ponds and wells in order to ensure safe and hygienic water supply, to protect the borders of the ponds to withstand future flooding and also to provide assistance in fish farming.

Buffie Wilson, wife of Chevron Bangladesh President Steve Wilson, recently visited the families of Champa Begum and Jotsna Dev at Karimpur and handed over the houses to them.

BRDB awards for 56 best village organisers

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) has awarded 56 best village organisers under its ongoing Palli Paragati project.

LGRD and Cooperative Secretary ATM Fazlul Karim distributed the prizes among the awardees at a function held at its head office yesterday.

Each of the award recipient received Tk 5,000 for successfully implementing project activities in the filed level, said a press release.

Tagore's Kacharibari at Patisar losing its shine

ANWAR ALI, back from Patisar, Naogaon

Non-coordinated development work for poet Rabindranath Tagore's Kacharibari at Patisar in Naogaon has done some damage to this protected site, a part of national heritage.

The local administration has carried out the development work hastily in and around the Kacharibari in the last five months without informing the Department of Archaeology, the custodian of the protected site.

The local administration also claimed that the land around the Kacharibari (zamindari estate building) is a vested property, which belongs to the district administration.

On the other hand, the archaeology department claimed that some development work violated the antiquity rules and no archaeological expertise was involved in the work.

Meanwhile, academicians and researchers also blamed the archaeology department for its indifferent attitude to this site of historical importance.

As part of the development work, a boundary wall was erected on the east of Kacharibari after demolishing a row of houses bearing the memories of the poet, witnesses said.

Badrul Alam, a supervising officer of the archaeology department, said any construction that may hamper taking photo of a protected site is not allowed as per antiquity rules.

But the new boundary wall is creating obstacles to taking snaps of the Kacharibari.

"A great damage was done to this site of historical importance through demolition of old houses," said Atful Haque Siddiki, a retired school teacher.

Moniary Union Chairman SM Faruk Bakht said a garden is being prepared inside the boundary wall while a permanent stage was built



Constructions around poet Rabindranath Tagore's Kacharibari at Patisar in Naogaon.

PHOTO: STAR

for cultural functions within the boundary wall.

A sculpture of the poet, created by a Rajshahi University student, was also placed inside the Kacharibari.

The district council has constructed the boundary wall of Rabi Sarobor (pond), reconstructed roads and planted saplings while the Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) dug a dihi (big pond) across a road on the east of the Kacharibari.

"A replica of Rabindranath's Padma boat will be erected in the dihi... the Kacharibari will be turned into a museum and many items have already been collected from different districts to this end... all these are for beautification of the Kacharibari," said Atrai

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Zahangir Alam.

Replying to queries, Zahangir, also a researcher on Tagore, said, "We didn't touch the protected building, we have carried out the development work on the land belonging to the district administration."

"Besides, we didn't find any records showing that the archaeology department has the authority over the land. The land is recorded as a vested property," he added.

Dr M Saifuddin Chowdhury, a folklore teacher of Rajshahi University, said, "The Kacharibari is a protected monument, nobody can develop it personally without the permission from the archaeology department."

Dr M Saifuddin, who wrote a

book on Rabindranath, also blamed the archaeology department for not conserving the building property. "The present look of the Kacharibari has no similarity with the original one," he said.

Local people, however, hailed the local administration for recovering the vast land in front of the Kacharibari from illegal occupation.

When asked about the development work, Dr Shafikul Alam, director of the archaeology department, said, "Even sticking a pin in a protected site is prohibited. However, we are looking into the matter."

Two years ago, the department implemented a project to conserve the Kacharibari.

Dr Alam also refuted the allegations that the Kacharibari was not conserved properly.



Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad speaks at an inaugural ceremony of a website of Chittagong Range Police at Khulsi DIG Range Bhaban in Chittagong yesterday. (Story on page 1)

GOVT ATTORNEY SERVICE ORDINANCE

SC law officers demand amendment

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Though the legal experts have hailed the Government Attorney Service Ordinance 2008, the state law officers of the Supreme Court (SC) have strongly protested the promulgation of the Ordinance under which the Government Attorney Department has been set up for dealing with cases in courts and performing other duties on behalf of the state.

Sources said the SC attorneys (law officers) at a meeting recently decided to urge the government to amend some "discriminatory" provisions of the Ordinance including a system of two bosses for the law officers— one attorney general (AG) and another director general (DG).

The meeting was held at the office of the attorney general on June 5 with AG Barrister Fida M Kamal in the chair.

The meeting formed a committee to recommend that the government should amend the Ordinance incorporating the provisions for upholding the dignity of the existing law officers, their honourable farewell from the service or ensuring five years' tenure of their service and stopping appointment on deputa-

tion in the offices of the attorneys.

A law officer present at the meeting told The Daily Star that complexities would arise between the AG office and the attorney department due to some discriminatory provisions of the Ordinance.

"If those discriminatory provisions are not amended or repealed, the law officers may resign from their offices," he headed.

He said the provision of the Attorney Service Ordinance for replacing the existing attorneys within two years is a blow to their honour and dignity, since they (attorneys) have come to serve the state for five years leaving their independent practice and seniors' chambers.

"The attorneys are all practicing lawyers. A joint secretary of the government has been appointed as a boss of the law officers. A bureaucrat cannot be our boss," he said.

The attorney said in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance, the services of the attorneys might remain valid for next two years if the government desires.

"But if the government doesn't want, our services will end at any time. We will propose to the government to amend the Ordinance with a provision for ensuring our jobs for five years," he added.

There are 77 attorneys including the attorney general for dealing with cases for the state and most of them were appointed in June last for five

years as per President's Order No 6 of 1972.

However, the newly appointed DG of the attorney department Md Israil Hossain said there was no possibility of misunderstanding or conflict between the attorney general's office and the attorney department as the department will function in accordance with the law.

"The existing attorneys who are now serving under the attorney general (AG) can continue their service as per the existing rules. The attorney department will not interfere in performing their duties," he said.

While talking to The Daily Star on Thursday last, Israil informed that as per the Government Attorney Service Ordinance, the attorney department would appoint new law officers for the Supreme Court within two years and for the district within three years through the Public Service Commission (PSC).

"As per the provisions of the Ordinance, the present attorneys can continue their jobs during this period. They will be replaced after the appointment of the new law officers," he added.

Israil said the attorney department would recruit the law officers with transparency, neutrality and responsibility, as the Judicial Service Commission has recently appointed 390 judges for subordinate judiciary and all sections have appreciated those appointments.

DHAKA TODAY

Roundtable

International Dialogue Aid Foundation organises a roundtable on 'Old style politics: Contemporary issues and our expectations'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Discussion

Bangladesh Student Forum and Sonny Memorial Foundation jointly organise a discussion on the occasion of the 6th death anniversary of Sabekun Nahar Sonny. Venue: Engineers Institute auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Roundtable

Workers Party of Bangladesh organises a roundtable on local government law and election. Venue: Shaheed Asad auditorium. Time: 10:30am.

Lecture

The fifth foundation day lecture of Department of Peace and Conflict Studies of Dhaka University will be delivered. Finn Ruda of ICRC Dhaka office will deliver the lecture. Venue: RC Majumdar auditorium. Time: 11:30am.

Seminar

Citibank NA Bangladesh organises a seminar on global currencies and commodities market. Venue: Citi Learning Centre, Citibank. Time: 9:30am.

WEATHER TODAY graphic with sun and cloud icons.

No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over all the six divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 34.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 23.0 degrees Celsius at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:45pm today and rises at 5:10am tomorrow.

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

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

Encourage farmers to use organic fertilisers

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday urged the government to encourage farmers to use bio-fertilisers and bio-pesticides for producing poison-free crops.

In observance of the Diploma Agriculturist Day, the Diploma Krishibid Institution organised the seminar on the role of the diploma agriculturists in achieving self-sufficiency in food at the National Press Club in the capital.

The speakers said the use of chemical pesticides is damaging the soil and environment which can be prevented by using organic fertiliser and pesticides.

They called for popularising Mehegan oil to use it as organic pesticide.

They said every year the country loses Tk 6000 crore due to 20 per cent crop damage caused by drought and pests.

Speaking as chief guest at the seminar, Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said farmland, which is reducing day by day, should be unified to increase production.

In this connection he suggested for turning the mono cropland into multi-cropland.

Prof Muzaffer said the shrimp farming lands in southern region of the country should be brought back to agriculture for increased production of agricultural crops.

There exists always a big time gap between a new invention at the research institutes and its use by the farmers at field level, he said, adding that this time gap should be shortened.

Prof Mohammad Sadrul Amin

in his keynote paper said, while 22 per cent of the national income comes from agriculture and 60 to 70 per cent people of the country are employed in agriculture, 94 per cent banks do not provide any loan to agriculture sector whereas the Krishi bank provides loan to industry sector.

He also placed a seven-point demand for the welfare of the diploma agriculturists that included up-gradation of their posts to class two officers and foreign training.

The diploma agriculturists urged the government to allocate the highest budget for agriculture sector.

They also called for easing the import of bio-pesticides and posting of at least five diploma agriculturists at each union.

Presided over by Chairman of the Diploma Krishibid Institution Md Jahir Uddin Mobu, the seminar was also addressed by former adviser to caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan and Ward Commissioner of Ward No 40 Anwaruzzaman.

ROAD ACCIDENT RMG worker's death sparks violence in Savar

UNB, Savar

The death of a female garment worker in a road accident at Ashulia yesterday triggered violent protests by her colleagues who barricaded the EPZ-Abdullahpur road and damaged a number of vehicles.

Police and witnesses said Rupali Begum, 24, a worker of Magpie Knitwear Factory Limited in Ghoshbagh area, was run over by a microbus while she was returning home for lunch.

She was taken to a nearby health centre where the doctors declared her dead.

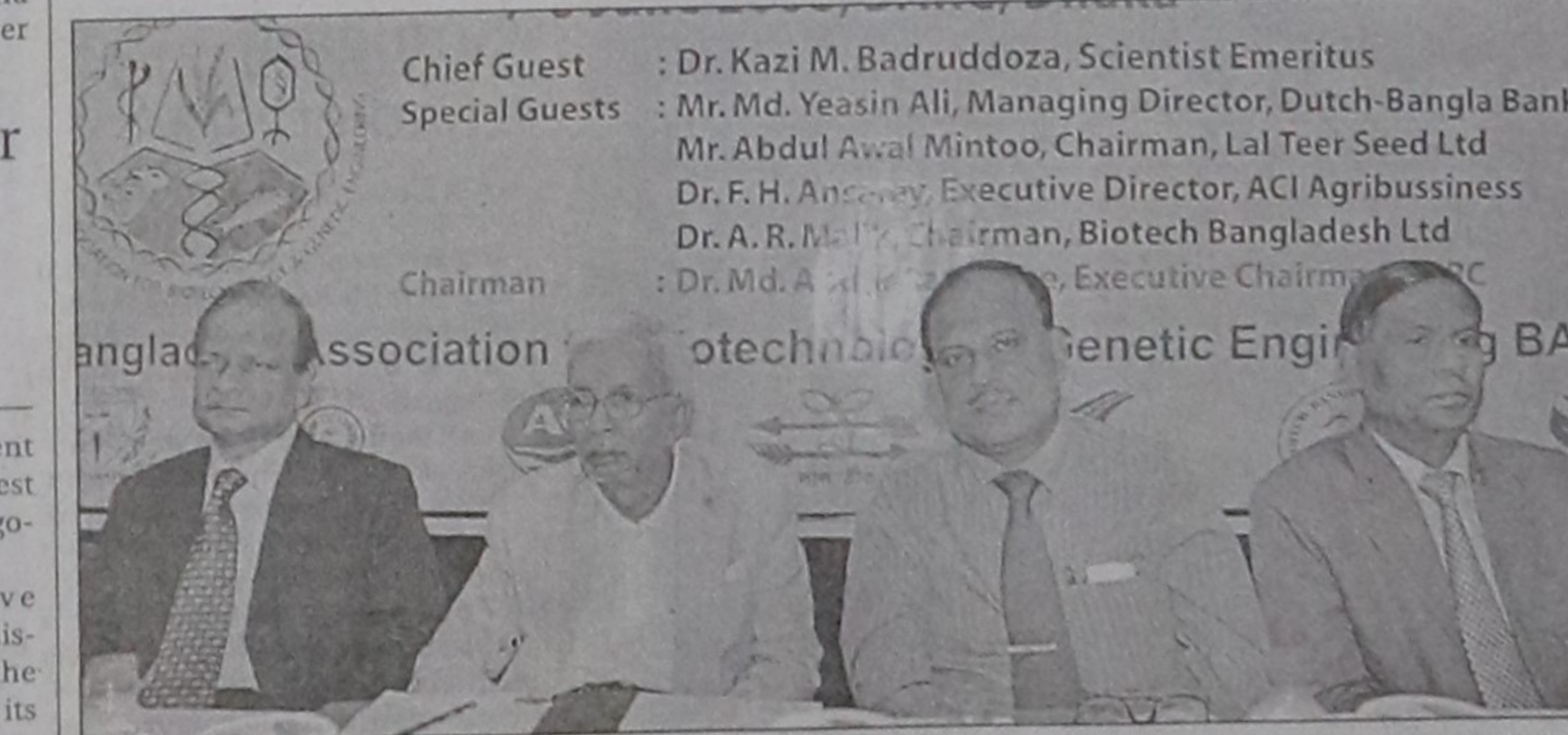
As the death news spread, the factory workers demonstrated and at one stage put up barricades on the road demanding arrest of the microbus driver. They also damaged at least 10 vehicles on the road.

A severe traffic jam was created in the area due to the road blockade that lasted for half an hour.

Police and Rab personnel rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Earlier on Tuesday, another female worker, also named Rupali, of a garment factory of Sharmin Group was injured in a road accident at Narsinghpur in Savar area that also sparked a street agitation.

The angry workers damaged vehicles and several garment factories, banks and markets and blocked the same road for four hours.



Bangladesh Association for Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering (BAGBE) organised a conference on 'International Biotechnology Conference' at BARC auditorium in the city yesterday. From left are Bangladesh Agriculture University Vice Chancellor Akter Hossain, Scientist Kazi M Badrudooza, BARC Executive Chairman Abdur Razaque and DBBL Managing Director Md Yeasin Ali. (Story on Star Business, Page B3)

Dr Ibrahim reelected FNB chair

Dr Muhammad Ibrahim, executive director of CMES, was reelected chair of the executive board of the Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB) yesterday, says a press release.

Other office-bearers are Treasurer: Bureau Bangladesh Executive Director Zakir Hossain and Vice Chair: DORP Executive Director AHM Noman and BELA Director (programmes) Syeda Rezwana Hasan.

Members are Jagaroni Chakra Foundation Director Azadul Kabir Arzu, ERFD President Borhan Ahmed, FDA Director Muhammad Azharul Islam, RIC Director Abul Hasib Khan, SDS Executive Director Majibur Rahman, NGO Forum for DWSS Executive Director SMA Rashid and Almeraj Foundation Executive Director Harun-ur-Rashid.

Divisional members are Fakhru Ferdous for Dhaka Division, Mohammad Raihan Ali for Rajshahi Division, Khurshid Alam for Chittagong Division, Mohammad Zahurul Haque Bali for Khulna Division, Anwarullah for Barisal Division and Belal Ahmed for Sylhet Division.

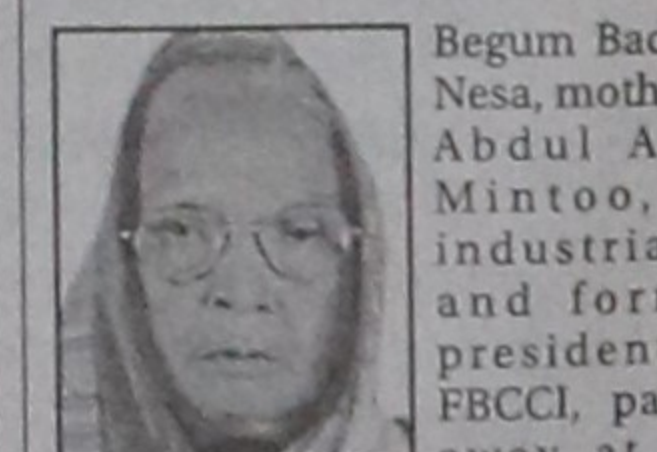
Zesmin Prema, Daisy Ahmed and Lutfunnahar Runu were elected to the seats reserved for the women.

Shahidul Haque was elected to the seat reserved for the physically challenged.

Khushi Kabir, Md Abdul Kader Mia, Abdul Khalek Bhuiyan and Mustafizur Rahman conducted the election at Institute of Engineers Bangladesh.

The annual general meeting was held with Dr Muhammad Ibrahim in the chair.

Obituary



Begum Badar Nesa, mother of Abdul Awal Mintoo, an industrialist and former president of FBCCI, passed away at the residence of Mintoo in the city early yesterday at the age of 79, says a press release.

She left behind her six sons, grandchildren, relatives and a host of admirers to mourn her death.

She was buried after namaz-e-janaza at her family graveyard at Alayearpur under Daganbuih upazila in Feni.

Her qukhani will be held on Tuesday after Maghrib prayers at Mintoo's residence (71 Gulshan Avenue) in the city.