

## Create fund to scale up training, research, project activities

### LGRD adviser tells Cirdap meet

LGRD and Cooperatives Adviser Anwarul Iqbal has called on the member countries of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (Cirdap) to create a common fund to scale up training, research and project activities within the organisation, says a press release.

The call was made yesterday while presenting the country statement of Bangladesh at the ministerial retreat of rural development ministers of 14 countries of the Asia-Pacific region which is going on in New Delhi, the Indian capital.

The meeting is focusing on the issue of information and communication technology (ICT) and

gender equality and empowerment in rural development programmes.

The adviser said the LGRD and cooperatives ministry is taking the lead in establishing institutional network along with other government and non-government institutions for implementing rural development policies.

Various projects are now underway for overall rural development and especially to create employment opportunities for vulnerable rural women and for their skill development programmes to empower them. Moreover, the government has taken necessary steps to strengthen the local gov-

ernment systems in order to make quick response to the needs and priorities of the local people.

Bangladesh has made significant progress in ICT sector and is planned to improve social welfare through integration into rural development activities, including agricultural, rural planning and the fisheries industry, he added.

The adviser further said the government of Bangladesh is looking forward to hold the 17th Governing Council meeting and the 2nd ministerial meeting of Cirdap in Dhaka in 2009.

The ministerial retreat will conclude today by adopting 'New Delhi Declaration'.

### UGC full commission meeting held

The 112th meeting of the Full Commission of University Grants Commission (UGC) was held at the Commission Bhaban in the city yesterday with its Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam in the chair, says a press release.

The meeting approved the minutes of the 111th meeting of the commission. It also reviewed the progress of the implementation of the decision taken in its previous meeting.

The UGC full commission meeting approved the revised budget for the public universities for the fiscal 2007-08 and the original budget for 2008-09. It also okayed the revised budget for the UGC for the fiscal 2007-08 and the original budget for 2008-09.

Members for the UGC finance committee were nominated and the guidelines of the UGC professorship were reviewed in the meeting. The meeting also discussed about the report of a three-member probe committee formed to investigate the irregularities of

UGC members Prof Ehsanul Haque, Prof Md Abdul Hakim, Prof AH Zehadul Karim, Prof Md Tajul Islam and Prof Amena Begum were present at the meeting.

Education Secretary Momtajul Islam, Islamic University Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Faiz Md Sirajul Haque, SUST VC Prof M Aminul Islam, Khulna University VC Prof Md Saifuddin Shah, Prof Abdul Hamid of BSMRAU Agronomy department and Chairman of BSMRU Urology department Prof SAM Golam Kibria and UGC Secretary Dr Md Lutfu Alam were also present on the occasion.

Education Secretary Momtajul Islam, Islamic University Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Faiz Md Sirajul Haque, SUST VC Prof M Aminul Islam, Khulna University VC Prof Md Saifuddin Shah, Prof Abdul Hamid of BSMRAU Agronomy department and Chairman of BSMRU Urology department Prof SAM Golam Kibria and UGC Secretary Dr Md Lutfu Alam were also present on the occasion.

The budget also shows Tk 50 crore as government grants for ADP projects, Tk 10 crore for special projects, Tk 10 crore for flood control projects, Tk 15 crore for water and sanitation projects, Tk 10 crore for environment and beautification projects, Tk 10 crore for construction of walk way along the Surma river bank, Tk 10 crore for waste management project, Tk 10 crore for city corporation building project, Tk 20 crore for improvement of roads and drainage system, Tk 10 crore for Saiful Rahman Shishu Park project, Tk 5 crore for truck terminal construction project, Tk 15 crore for restoring canals and natural streams.

Besides, Tk 30.94 crore will be spent for development schemes like maintenance of roads, bridges, culverts and drainages.

The budget envisages a revenue income of Tk 54.65 crore which includes Tk 32 crore as holding tax, Tk 4.5 crore as property transfer tax, Tk 2.5 crore as fees for building construction permission, Tk 4 crore as fees for businesses permission, Tk 3.2 crore as water supply tax and Tk 7 crore as Salami for allotment of SCC market shops.

The SCC will spend Tk 18.91 crore as revenue expenditure.

19 midshipmen commissioned in navy

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nineteen midshipmen were commissioned in the Bangladesh Navy yesterday at a ceremony on completion of their training at the Bangladesh Naval Academy Parade Ground at Patenga in Chittagong.

Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam attended the Summer Graduation President Parade, which was organised to mark the commissioning of Midshipmen 2006 'Bravo' batch.

The naval chief reviewed the smartly turned-out parade as the chief guest and took salute at the impressive march past.

The naval chief said Bangladesh Navy emerged as an important force over the years by protecting the geographical location of the country, checking piracy and safeguarding resources in the vast sea region.

"I, on this august moment, urge you all to be honest, discharge duties with sincerity and remain vigilant to protect the country's sovereignty," he told the newly commissioned officers.

He also called on them to build a corruption-free society, giving priority to national interest than that of individual one.

Midshipman Kazi Sakur Mahmud was adjudged the best all-round midshipman of the course and awarded the coveted "Sword of Honour" and also the CNS Gold Medal and Osmani Gold Medal for his outstanding performance in professional and academic subjects respectively.

Currently 16 foreign cadets -- 12 from Palestine and two each from Qatar and the Maldives -- are now being trained at the academy, which came into being in 1976. Some of them also took part in yesterday's parade.

The academy also earned fame outside the country by training cadets from Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and Nigeria.

Principal Staff Officer (PSO) of Naval Headquarters Commodore Commanding Chittagong M Nasir, Commandant BNA Captain M Mozammel Haque, diplomats, high civil and military officials, parents and guardians of the midshipmen and cadets were present on the occasion.

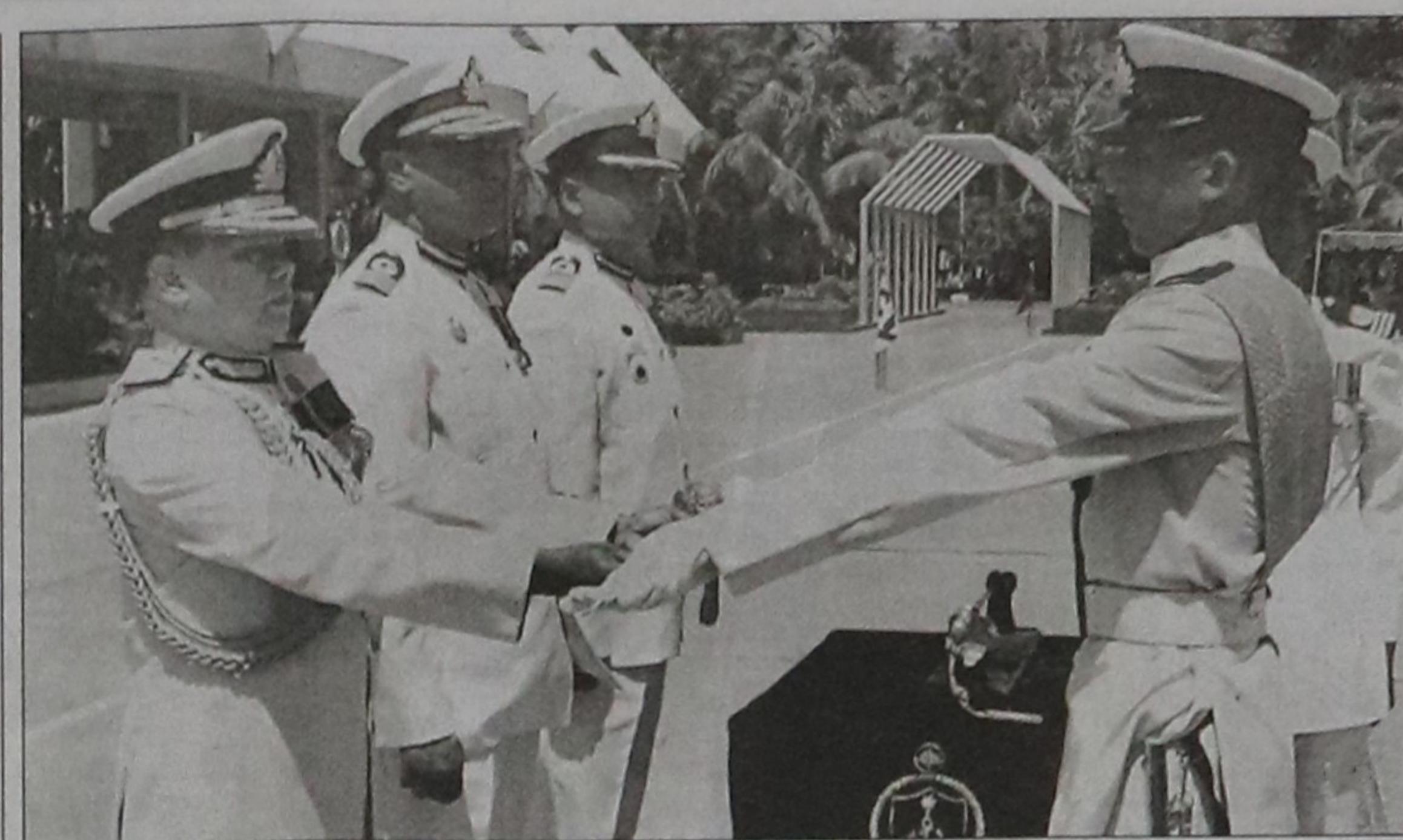


PHOTO: ISRPR

Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam hands over 'Sword of Honour' to the best all round Midshipman 2006 'Bravo' batch of Bangladesh Navy at the Bangladesh Naval Academy Parade ground yesterday.



Cultural Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury presents a crest to convocation speaker Prof Sirajul Islam Choudhury at the first convocation ceremony of Eastern University at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

### Sanjukta Sramik Fed demands new labour law

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Sanjukta Sramik Federation (BSSF) yesterday called on the government to formulate a new democratic labour law.

They made the demand at a press conference at its office in the city.

In the conference, they placed a three-point demand including fixing the minimum wage of Tk 6700 and implementing it in all private and public industries.

They also demanded ration card for the workers and subsidized fertiliser, seeds, pesticides, electricity and fuel for the farmers.

They said that a memorandum would be submitted to the adviser for Ministry of Labour and Employment on June 30 and to the chief adviser on July 7 to press home their demand.

General Secretary of the federation Mokadem Hossain read out a written paper. President of the federation Mokhlesur Rahman, Vice President Harun Or Rashid Bhuiyan, Amjad Hossain Bhuiyan, Mohammad Zulfiqar Azad and Joint General Secretary Anwar Hossain Shikder were present at the press conference.

## Over 200 graft cases against bigwigs challenged

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wealth statement. After long hearing, the HC on November 21 last year declared the ACC notice illegal.

A number of other accused including another former premier Khaleda Zia had later filed similar writs.

The HC verdict made uncertain the fate of over 200 cases filed by ACC on the basis of its notices to graft suspects.

The ACC filed an appeal with the Supreme Court, which on March 13 cancelled the HC verdict after hearing arguments and submissions from counsels of both sides.

As per rules 10 of ACC 2004, the investigation report will have to be submitted to the court within 60 days after filing a case.

Sources say in most of the cases, which were filed after 9/11 scenario, the HC has stayed proceedings and also issued rules upon ACC to explain the filing of the cases against accused.

But the HC rejected her petition saying 60 days' period for completing the trial proceedings is not mandatory.

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The same day, Attorney General Fida M Kamal, who moved for ACC in the apex court, said future of the graft cases was now out of reach.

Hearings of the rules issued by the HC in similar writs are not being held as the certified copy of the Appellate Division judgement has yet to be published.

According to lawyers, a few accused filed petitions with the HC on grounds that the trial courts have not completed the proceedings within the stipulated 60 days since taking the cases into cognizance. That is why the proceedings of the cases should be quashed, they claimed.

The NBR filed a case accusing the former state minister of evading over Tk 3.8 crore in income tax.

from 1999 to 2007.

Upon a writ filed by former state minister for power Iqbal Hassan Mahmood Tuku on December 5 last year, the HC declared null and void the tax evasion case against him.

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