

## BNP special meet held amid chaos in Chittagong

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A special meeting of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Chittagong North District unit was held here yesterday amid chaos and scuffle between rival groups.

The BNP Chittagong North District unit organised the meeting at a local community centre in presence of the BNP Organizational Team for Chittagong Division.

The 42-member team joined the meeting to know about the condition and activities of the party and its different front organisations at the grassroots level.

Team leader and BNP central committee Vice-chairman Rabeya Chowdhury was the chief guest at the meeting with district unit President Golam Akbar Khandaker in the chair.

At around 4.30pm a chaotic situation developed when General Secretary of BNP Hathazari upazila unit Nur Mohammad, loyal to former whip Syed Wahidul Alam, was addressing the meeting.

Some supporters of former BGMEA president and an aspirant for Hathazari constituency SM Fazlul Hoque started chanting slogans against Wahidul Alam, who left the country immediately after the imposition of the state of emergency in 2007 and returned recently, was sitting on the dais while Fazlul Hoque was sitting amidst his loyalists and supporters in front of the dais.

Supporters of both the group were locked into altercation and got involved in the scuffle.

After half-an-hour-long pandemonium, Golam Akbar and other senior leaders with the assistance of

police intervened into the matter and asked the supporters of Fazlul Hoque to leave the scene.

Their leader Fazul then left the spot along with his supporters. Afterwards, the meeting continued without any further problem.

Speakers at the meeting urged all the leaders and activists of the party to work unitedly under the leadership of its Chairperson Khaleida Zia to win the upcoming election.

Leaders of the visiting team hoped that BNP in Chittagong would continue to play role in strengthening democracy under the direction of Khaleida Zia.

Earlier, district unit president and representatives of seven upazila and six pourasava committees placed organisational reports.

While presenting his report, Golam Akbar hoped that BNP would be able to win most of the seven seats under the north district if the party activists would work unitedly forgetting their differences.

Narrating the reason for such meeting, team leader Rabeya Chowdhury said after the imposition of emergency on January 11 of 2007, BNP suffered much comparing to other political parties.

Directed by BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain seven such organisational teams were formed to visit six divisions to exchange views with the grassroots level leaders and activists, she added.

Joint Secretary of BNP Central Executive Committee Abdullah Al Noman, former whip Syed Wahidul Alam, team member Joinal Abedin Faruk, team Coordinator Md Shahjahan, member Rosy Kabir, Nuri Ara Saha and Rehana Akhter Ranu were present at the meeting.



Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury speaks at a sit-in programme of the teachers and students on Dhaka University campus yesterday protesting the removal of Baul sculptures from the roundabout in front of Zia International Airport. (Story on Page 16)

## 'E-governance can improve govt activities, curb graft'

UNB, Dhaka

ICT experts at the launching ceremony of a book yesterday suggested introducing electronic governance in Bangladesh as they said it would not only improve the process of the government activities but also ensure transparency and check corruption.

Addressing the programme,

Special Assistant to Chief Adviser Dr Tamim emphasised computer-based skill development of the government officials, saying that e-governance can ease and accelerate the country's development process.

"Government officials must have the knowledge about information and communication technology (ICT) to improve their efficiency," he said while launching the book titled "e-Government for Bangladesh: Strategy pathway to success".

Information systems researcher Ahmed Imran, Australian IT expert Tim Turner and Prof of Australian National University Shirley Gregor are the joint authors of the book.

National Centre for Information System Research (NCISR), ANU

College of Business and Economics and Australian National University of Canberra jointly published the book under a project in the country supported by AusAid.

Dr Tamim, an ex-Buet teacher, said the country's young generation needs to get connected with the internet services to improve their level of efficiency.

The programme held at a city hotel was also addressed by Australian High Commissioner Douglas Foskett, BCC Executive Director Zayed Ali Sarker and Science and ICT Secretary Wahiduzzaman.

The ICT secretary said, "People will get better services at the earliest if the whole systems are brought into ICT."

## Develop eco-friendly rice varieties

CS Karim urges agronomists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agriculture and Water Resources Adviser CS Karim yesterday said the country needs to develop different eco-friendly rice varieties locally to meet the challenges of global climate change.

He said this at the inaugural session of the daylong workshop on 'Brac in food autarky: Distributors, dealers and farmers' workshop-2008' organised by Brac at Brac Centre Inn in the city.

He called on the agronomists to conduct more positive researches for developing such varieties that will address the country's environmental problems and reduce dependency on imported rice seeds.

Monga (famine-like situation) in north Bengal, saline concentration in soil in coastal areas and early and flash floods in haor areas are great problems for rice cultivation in the country, he said, adding that foreign varieties, regardless of hybrid or other varieties, cannot properly address these problems as foreign rich researchers are not accurately aware of the gravity of the local problems.

He lauded the efforts of Bangladesh Rich Research Institute (BRRRI), which developed BRRI-33 variety to address the monga-afflicted problems.

Speakers at the workshop said farmers in the monga-prone northern districts can start harvesting of BRRI-33 from first week of October to November, creating job opportunities for farm labourers when monga hits the area with its full gravity.

Researchers should concentrate all their efforts on developing such more varieties, they said, adding that some varieties have been introduced locally to address saline concentration in coastal districts and flash and early floods in haor areas but these are not enough.

The adviser said, "During the acute food shortage period after the Sidr attacked the country, we went to different countries but failed to buy foods," adding, "We have to produce our food ourselves if we want to survive as food shortage appears as an international phenomenon."

He also called on the farmers to increase the use of organic fertiliser

instead of chemical one to keep the soil condition sound.

Director General (seed wing) of the agriculture ministry Anwar Faruq said at present, 40 companies of the country import hybrid seeds of 60 varieties.

He urged the private seed importers and seed dealers not to sell sub-standard seeds to farmers, as it will hamper food production greatly.

Brac Executive Director Dr Mahbub Hossen said it has developed a hybrid rice variety so far and another two varieties to be released.

Apart from Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC), Brac only produces hybrid seeds in the country for farmers, he added.

The country needs to spend a lot of foreign currencies on seed import, the speakers said, adding that it must reduce dependency on foreign seeds and must develop a hybrid technology in the country.

With Brac executive director in the chair, Channel-I Director Shykh Siraj and Md Aminul Alam of Brac also addressed the workshop.



Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda speaks at a roundtable on 'Election 2008: Our expectations' at the Prothom Alo office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)



Police prevent activists of Samajtantrik Mahila Forum and Shishu Kishore Mela from staging a demonstration at Mukhtangan yesterday as they were demanding punishment to those responsible for importing toxic milk powder.

## Husband kills wife in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A private security guard surrendered to the police after killing his wife in the city yesterday.

Sohrab Hossain, 25, claimed that he stabbed his wife Lipi Akter, 19, to death for her extramarital affairs.

He also said three other people helped him in the murder.

Police said Sohrab went to Badda Police Station where he confessed to killing his wife and said he wanted to surrender.

As the incident took place at a house in Shahjadpur of Gulshan, Badda police informed their Gulshan counterpart of the matter.

Gulshan police rushed to Badda Police Station, arrested Sohrab and later recovered the body of his wife.

Sources said Sohrab and Lipi got married one year ago.

Sub-inspector Mahmudul Hasan of Gulshan Police Station said, "Sohrab confessed that he had killed his wife after he was confirmed about his wife's extramarital affair."

"Sohrab and his three associates together killed Lipi at about 2.30am and later Sohrab went to the police while his associates went into hiding," he added.

SI Hasan, however, declined to

disclose the details about three absconders.

Mansura Begum, Lipi's mother, filed a murder case accusing four people including Sohrab.

### Body of Ctg mayor's daughter arrives today

CU CORRESPONDENT

The body of Fauzia Sultana Tumpa, daughter of Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, will arrive in the port city today from Bangkok.

Tumpa died of cancer at a hospital in Bangkok on Friday.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held at Lalighi Maidan after Asr prayers and she will be buried at Chasma Hill Graveyard.

Tumpa, who had been suffering from non-Hodgkin Lymphoma, had been undergoing treatment at Piyathai Hospital since the first week of June this year.

The mayor, his wife Hasina Mohiuddin and son Barrister Mohibul Hasan flew to Bangkok on Friday.

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A vendor puts his signature on a poster as the People's Forum on MDGs organises a 'signature campaign' on the occasion of the World Poverty Eradication Day on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

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