

Advisers okay signing of Bimstec convention on fighting terrorism

UNB, Dhaka

A meeting of the council of advisers yesterday approved the signing of Bimstec Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organised Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking.

Chief Adviser Fakhrudin Ahmed presided over the meeting. In another major step, the meeting also approved the Citizenship (Amendment) Ordinance 2008 to interpolate the word 'mother' next to the existing word 'father' in section 5 of the number-2 law of the Citizenship Act 1951.

As a result of amending the citizenship law, if father or mother of a child is Bangladeshi during the baby's birth, the child will get the citizenship of Bangladesh.

Under the existing law, if husband of a Bangladeshi woman is a foreigner, their child cannot be a citizen of Bangladesh. Then, the child will have to follow the legal procedure for getting citizenship.

"The amendment has been made to the Citizenship Act 1951 to remove procedural difficulty and gender disparity," says the statement on the background of necessity of bringing amendment to the existing Act.

To achieve the goal of the Bimstec convention, the member states of the sub-regional grouping, subject to the domestic rules and regulations and under the framework of convention, should provide "widest possible measures and mutual assistance in prevention, investigation, prosecution and suppression" of such crimes.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim said the meeting also approved in principle Dhaka Shishu Hospital Ordinance 2008 subject to further examination by the law and health ministries.

After vetting, it will again be placed before the council of advisers at its meeting "as soon as possible".

The cabinet division at the meeting placed the annual report of activities of different ministries and divisions for the fiscal 2007-08. The meeting directed the ministries to publish their respective annual reports.

CA's Special Assistant for Civil Aviation Ministry apprised the meeting of the latest position of Hajj flights, saying, "Hajj flight operations are going on smoothly".



Death anniversary of Maulana Bhasani today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The 32nd death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, a veteran political leader, will be observed today.

Born in 1880 at village Dhanpara in Sirajganj, Bhasani dedicated his life to establishing the rights of the oppressed and downtrodden.

Bhasani passed away in 1976. He was buried at Santosh in Tangail.

Different socio-political organisations will mark the day with elaborate programmes across the country. They will place wreaths at his grave at Santosh.

Maulana Bhasani University of Science and Technology (MBUST) and the Bhasani Foundation have jointly organised three-day programmes at Santosh.

The programme includes milad mahfil, discussion, fair, Baul song, voluntary blood donation and photo exhibition.

Delwar hopes govt will meet 7-pt demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday hoped that the government and the Election Commission (EC) would fulfil four-party alliance's seven-point demand to facilitate its participation in the elections.

Talking to reporters at the BNP head office, Delwar said it is the responsibility of the government and the EC to bring the four-party polls.

"We want to participate in the elections. But does the government want us?" the BNP leader said.

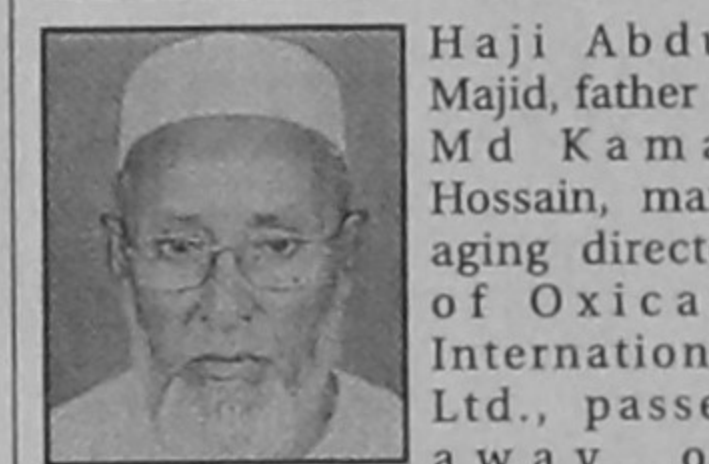
Meanwhile, talking to reporters at his Dilkusha office in the city, BNP standing committee member Chowdhury Tanbir Ahmed Siddiky said an elected government will not last more than a month if it assumes power through a one-sided election.

"The government will have to say yes or no about our demands. There is no choice of wasting time," said Tanbir.

The BNP leader said election without the participation of any of the two major political parties will not be acceptable at home and abroad.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Haji Abdul Majid, father of Md Kamal Hossain, managing director of Oxica International Ltd., passed away on November 14 at the age of 69, says a press release.

A milad mahfil will be held at his residence at House # 1, Road # 18, Block # C, Mirpur # 10 after Asr prayers today.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

DHAKA TODAY

Workshop

IPGNSP project of Planning Commission organises a workshop on 'Orientation of civil society and others on gender issues and sex disaggregated data on ICPD/MGD/PRS'. Venue: Academy for Planning Commission and Development. Time: 9:00am.

Brac roundtable

Brac organises a roundtable on role of the media in programmes for malaria control. Venue: Brac Centre (3rd floor). Time: 10:00am.

View exchange meeting

People's Empowerment Trust organises a view exchange meeting on 'Right to Information: Commitment of political parties in electoral manifestos and its implementation'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Roundtable

Bangladesh Manobadhikar Samonny Parishad organises a roundtable on Representation of Peoples Ordinance and candidature of individuals and NGO chief executives in elections. Venue: IDB building auditorium. Time: 10:00am.



Six newly appointed additional judges of the High Court pose for photograph with Chief Justice MM Ruhul Amin after taking oath at the judges' lounge of the Supreme Court in the city yesterday.

BOOK ON CYCLONE SIDR LAUNCHED

'Rehabilitation of Sidr-hit people frustrating'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rehabilitation of Sidr-affected people in the last one year is frustrating, said speakers at a book launching ceremony yesterday.

The book titled 'Cyclone Sidr: Devastated Coast' was published jointly by the Prothom Alo and Maula Brothers, a publishing house, at the Cirdap auditorium in the afternoon.

The book containing news, photographs and analysis on Sidr devastation was published in observance of one year of Sidr that hit the coastal belt of the country on November 15.

"It is unfortunate that hundreds of thousands of people have not been rehabilitated properly," said Brac University Vice-chancellor Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury.

He wondered what has happened to the announcement and pledges regarding immediate rehabilitation of Sidr-hit people and installation of more cyclone shelter in coastal areas.

"I hoped there would be better coordination among different agencies, but no effort was made in this regard with a master plan," he added.

Referring to \$115 million donation announced by an unnamed Saudi donor, Prof Jamilur said he was asked to be chief of a committee to spend the money but he does not know what happened to that

committee.

"We have been working for the whole year since Sidr hit the coastal area. We are working uninterruptedly for the rehabilitation of Sidr-hit people. Our responsibility does not end only in making news, our responsibility lies in distributing relief among the affected people when it is necessary," said Prothom Alo Editor Matuor Rahman.

"Our policy to deal with a natural calamity should be how affected people can be brought back to normal life rather than distributing relief," said IUCN Country Representative Dr Ainun Nishat.

Prothom Alo thanked people at home and abroad for donating Tk 3,08,42,522 in the fund maintained by the daily in aid of Sidr-victims.

The daily informed that rehabilitation work is still going on with that money.



Guests hold copies of a book titled 'Cyclone Sidr: Devastated Coast' at its launching ceremony at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. From left are Dr Ainun Nishat, Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury and Matuor Rahman. The daily Prothom Alo and Maula Brothers jointly published the book.

Bahauddin Nasim sent to jail after his surrender

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected the bail petition of Awami Svecchha-sebak League President AFM Bahauddin Nasim and sent him to jail after his surrender in an extortion case.

Judge Mohammad Shafiqul Azam of the Sixth Joint Sessions Judge's Court passed the order after Nasim along with his lawyers appeared before the court and sought bail in the case filed for extorting Tk 25 lakh from an AL leader.

Moving the bail petition, lawyers told the court that their client had surrendered before the High Court (HC) on November 9 and sought an anticipatory bail.

After hearing, the HC did not grant him bail and asked the petitioner to surrender before the trial court within 10 weeks. The law enforcement agencies were also directed not to harass or arrest him during the period.

According to the trial, AL leader Rawshan Ali Master, managing director of Famous Steel Mills Ltd,

filed the case with Shyampur Police Station against Nasim and his brother Khalid Hossain Yead on August 1 last year.

In the first information report, the complainant alleged that he had paid a total amount of Tk 25 lakh as extortion money from July 4 to October 28, 2006 after being threatened by Nasim and his brother.

Talking to the reporters on the court premises, Rawshan, who got AL ticket to contest 2001 parliamentary election from Comilla-4, said he had a business transaction with Nasim and his brother and they had settled the matter amicably.

After a long investigation, Sub-Inspector Enamul Haque pressed charges against Nasim and his brother on April 1. Nasim's brother has been absconding.

Complainant Rawshan and two others appeared before the court yesterday to give their statements but the court did not record their statements. The court fixed November 19 for the next hearing of the case.

'Ensure security of women during elections'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday called on the government to ensure security of the women before and after the elections slated for December 18, says a press release.

They also demanded deployment of army even after 15 days of holding the polls for the sake of security.

They made the call at the press conference on 'Ensure security of the women irrespective of cast, creed and religion' at the National Press Club in the city.

Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BDPC), South Asian Alliance For Poverty eradication (SAAPI) to Bangladesh, Bangladesh Human Rights Defenders Group (BHRDG) and Nari and Manabadhikar Foundation (NMF) jointly organised the conference to mark the Rural Women's Day 2008.

Make election pledges to ensure equal rights of women

Mahila Parishad urges political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday called on the political parties to make specific commitments in their election manifestos with a view to ensuring equal rights of women and establishing social equity.

Political parties should also make promises to keep their commitments if they are voted to power, they added.

The women leaders said this at a press conference at the parishad office in the city.

The chief election commissioner on November 2 announced the poll schedules that removed the people's doubts about the election, they said, adding that it is time to work together for the country's advancement towards

democracy and political stability through conducting a free and fair election.

They also urged the parties not to make any alliance with the anti-liberation forces under any circumstances, to restore the National Women's Development Policy-1997 and direct election in 100 women reserve seats in the parliament.

The demands also include placing the party policies before the women community, reformation of the citizens' act, formulation of land commission and food security act and withdrawal of the reservations from CEDAW document immediately and its complete implementation.

Their recommendations

include that allocation of budget and work distribution should be increased three times, state should take necessary steps for women's political empowerment, war criminals should be brought to book and constitution of 1972 should be restored to build the country non-communal.

Addressing the programme, President of the parishad Ayesha Khanam also urged the women community to cast their votes considering quality, efficiency, economic base and responsibility of the candidates.

General Secretary of the parishad Maleka Banu, Rekha Saha, Masuma Khanam and Lokkhi Chakrabarti also took part in the press conference.

'Parking guideline needed to ease traffic congestion'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday stressed the need for preparing parking guideline and its proper implementation to ease traffic congestion in the city.

They also underscored the need for creating more facilities for pedestrians so that people are encouraged to walking which is good for health.

The discussion was organised jointly by Save the Environment Movement and WBB Trust at Imax Centre in the city.

"A guideline is very important for private car parking which is intensifying day by day in the city," said Maruf Rahman, project officer of WBB Trust who presented the keynote paper at the discussion.

He said to solve car parking problem import of private cars should be restricted, free parking facilities should be curtailed and number of public transport should be increased.

Journalist Kamal Lohani, who presided over the discussion, said to improve the traffic congestion, the government should build more footpaths to facilitate walking.

Bidhan Chandra Pal, programme officer of the Hunger Project, said political parties should pledge in their election manifestos that they will implement a parking policy if voted to power.

"We shall have to devise a mechanism so that people are

discouraged to use private car and encouraged to use public transport," said Sharif Mohammad Tariquzzaman, representative of Urban Development Directorate.

Shafiqul Islam, assistant professor of Jahangirnagar University, said

the air of Dhaka city is more polluted than other cities where more motorised vehicles ply.

Chairman of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon Abu Naser Khan said parking facility is part of an urban planning and it is very much related to public health.

If people are encouraged to walk instead of using cars, it will be better for their health, he added.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours as of 6:00pm today.

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

Yesterday's highest temperature of 31.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Cox's Bazar and the lowest of 14.4 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:12pm and rises at 6:16am tomorrow.

The 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	28.6	18.4	58	64
Chittagong	30.2	20.4	77	72
Rajshahi	28.5	14.7	76	82
Khulna	28.5	20.0	75	77
Barisal	28.8	21.0	85	87
Sylhet	29.2	16.7	62	79
Cox's Bazar	31.0	21.0	73	62

SC upholds HC orders granting bail to Moudud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday upheld two High Court orders granting bail to former law minister Moudud Ahmed in two separate cases filed by the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

After hearing two appeals filed by Moudud, the full bench of the Appellate Division passed the orders. Earlier, a lawyer of the Supreme Court had submitted to the High Court a copy of a letter which says that an influential man in the government has been helping former minister Moudud Ahmed in obtaining bail for him from the court in the cases against him.

In the letter, the high official said they would consider releasing Moudud on parole for his treatment if he was not granted bail by the court.

The HC earlier granted ad-interim bail to Moudud Ahmed in the cases regarding his payment of taxes and submitting FDRs.

The government filed two petitions with the SC for vacating the HC orders. Following the government petitions, the Chamber judge of the Appellate Division stayed the HC orders.

Moudud then filed appeals against the Chamber Judge's orders.

GRAFT CASE Suspended envoy gets five years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday sentenced suspended Bangladesh Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates ATM Nazimullah Chowdhury to five years' rigorous imprisonment for embezzlement of state funds through misuse of power and deception.

Judge Khandaker Kamaluzzaman of the Special Court-9 at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex also fined him Tk 21 lakh. If he fails to pay, he will have to serve one more year in jail.

Since Nazimullah is on the run, the sentence will come into effect the day he surrenders or is arrested.

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Deputy Director Abdullah Al Zahid filed the case with Shabbagh Police Station on May 14 this year accusing Nazimullah of causing a loss of Tk 21 lakh to the state exchequer when he was serving as the Bangladesh ambassador in Abu Dhabi.

According to the prosecution, Nazimullah on different occasions purchased different items for personal use in Abu Dhabi drawing money from government funds through illegal means.

The career diplomat shifted his residence in Abu Dhabi through misuse of power for his own benefit, causing loss to the state exchequer and also appointed two gardeners at his residence resorting to corruption and irregularities.

Death anniversary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

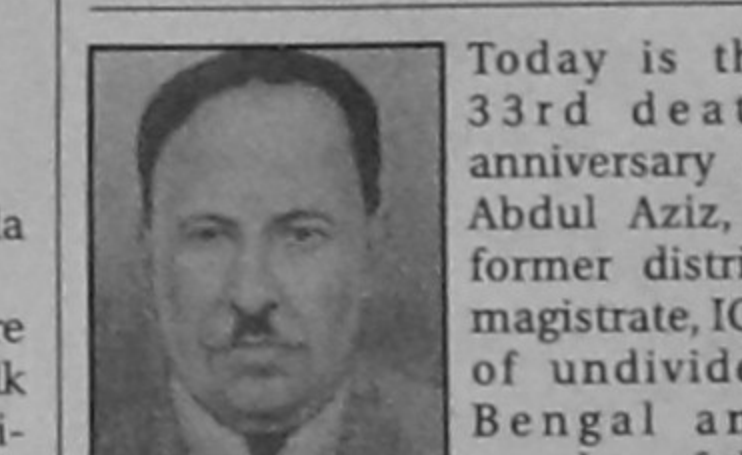
Today is the third death anniversary of Gautam Das, former bureau chief of the daily Shamokal who was strangled at his office on this day in 2005.

Journalists and different social organisations in Faridpur have chalked out various programmes to mark the day.

The programmes include hoisting black flag, wearing black badge, placing wreath at his portrait and holding a memorial meeting at Faridpur Press Club.

Abdul Aziz

METRO DESK



Bengal Civil Service, says a press release.

He hailed from village Narayanpur in Nabinagar, Brahmanbaria.

A doa mahfil will be held at the residence of his third son, Moinuddin Chisti, after Maghrib prayers on the occasion. Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend.

Dr Maleka-Al-Razi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the eighth death anniversary of Dr Maleka-Al-Razi, founder of Dr Maleka College, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at the college at 12:00 noon.

Relatives, admirers and students are requested to attend the programme and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

2 sued for milk adulteration

FROM PAGE 16 Shahzadpur upazila, reported our correspondent in Sirajganj.

The health department officials said they filed the cases against the two officials as Public Health Institution in Dhaka in its tests found adulterated milk from the two centres at Shahzadpur last week.

The actions of the health department was taken following media reports in late October which say some dishonest businessmen extracted fat from cow milk and mixed chemicals and added extra water to milk in Sirajganj and Pabna.

Meanwhile, though adulteration has been found in milk and actions also taken against the dishonest traders, melamine tests of the five suspected liquid milk samples became uncertain either for fund crisis or for ignorance of the officials concerned.

The district health department sent five samples of milk and 'chhana' (curdled milk) to Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) for chemical and melamine tests on November 2.

But BSTI refused to test those samples, as the health department could not pay fees for the tests, district Civil Surgeon Towhiquil Islam told The Daily Star.

Earlier on November 12, The

Daily Star ran a report titled: "Chemicals in milk not tested for lack of fund: BSTI returns samples to Sirajganj health department after it failed to pay fees."

In a clarification of the report, BSTI said the actual reason why it did not accept the samples was that they needed at least one litre of milk in each sample for melamine and other chemical tests, but each of the five samples, sent by Sirajganj health department, contained only 100 ml of milk.

BSTI Director General Azmal Hossain said they also informed the district health department officials that the tests of each sample would require Tk 6,332.

He said BSTI conducts tests of any samples sent by the government or semi-government agencies in a shortest possible time and that they have to pay fees after completion of the tests.

Whatever the claims by the health department or the BSTI are, what happened by this time is that melamine and chemical tests of the samples of suspected milk, collected from milk collection centers in Shahzadpur, could not be conducted.

"We cannot find similar milk or curdled milk from the centers from where we earlier collected milk

samples," said Shahzadpur Upazila Sanitary Inspector Dr Ansar Ali.

"Now traders are aware of. We are not going to get samples of milk which we suspected to be contaminated with chemicals," he told The Daily Star over phone.

Asked if they are aware of that each sample requires one litre of milk for its melamine and chemical tests, Ansar Ali said they did not send samples to BSTI for tests earlier.

"We usually send samples of 200 ml containers to Public Health Institution," he said.

Meanwhile, many dishonest traders who were involved with milk adulteration went absconding following the drives launched against them by local law enforcement agencies, sources said.

Civil Surgeon Towhiquil Islam of Sirajganj said a monitoring team has been working in the area to find out the unscrupulous traders and added that if they got any evidence of adulteration, they would take necessary action with the help of local administration.

The district health department also sent nine new samples of milk from different milk production and collection centers in Shahzadpur upazila and sent those to the Public Health Institution in the capital for test, an official said.