

TRIAL OF WAR CRIMINALS

Process to form tribunal in six months: Muhith

BNP will help, says Hannan Shah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new government will start the process of forming a special tribunal and appoint a special prosecutor within six months to try war criminals with the help of United Nations, newly elected Awami League lawmaker AMA Muhith said yesterday.

He said this at BBC Bangladesh Sanglap where another panelist Brig Gen (ret) ASM Hannan Shah, adviser to the BNP chairperson, said BNP will help the government in the process of forming the tribunal.

"BNP also want trial of the war criminals. This is one of the issues we need to settle," he said replying to a question from the audience.

He, However, said the nation is yet to set the definition of war criminals.

Hannan Shah also said BNP, as a responsible opposition party, will support the government in and outside parliament so that Awami League can implement its six-point election pledge.

Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah of JANIPOP, an election observation group, and Salma Khan of Women for Women also attended the programme as panellists.

Muhith said the first task of the government would be to lower the prices of essentials.

"The situation in international market is now normal. So I think, it will be easy to reduce the prices," he said, but did not give any timeframe.

But Hannan Shah said it would be difficult for the government to reduce the prices of essentials.

If the Awami League government can provide free fertiliser to farmers, it would be possible to lower the prices of rice, he said, adding that but it will cost Tk 30,000.

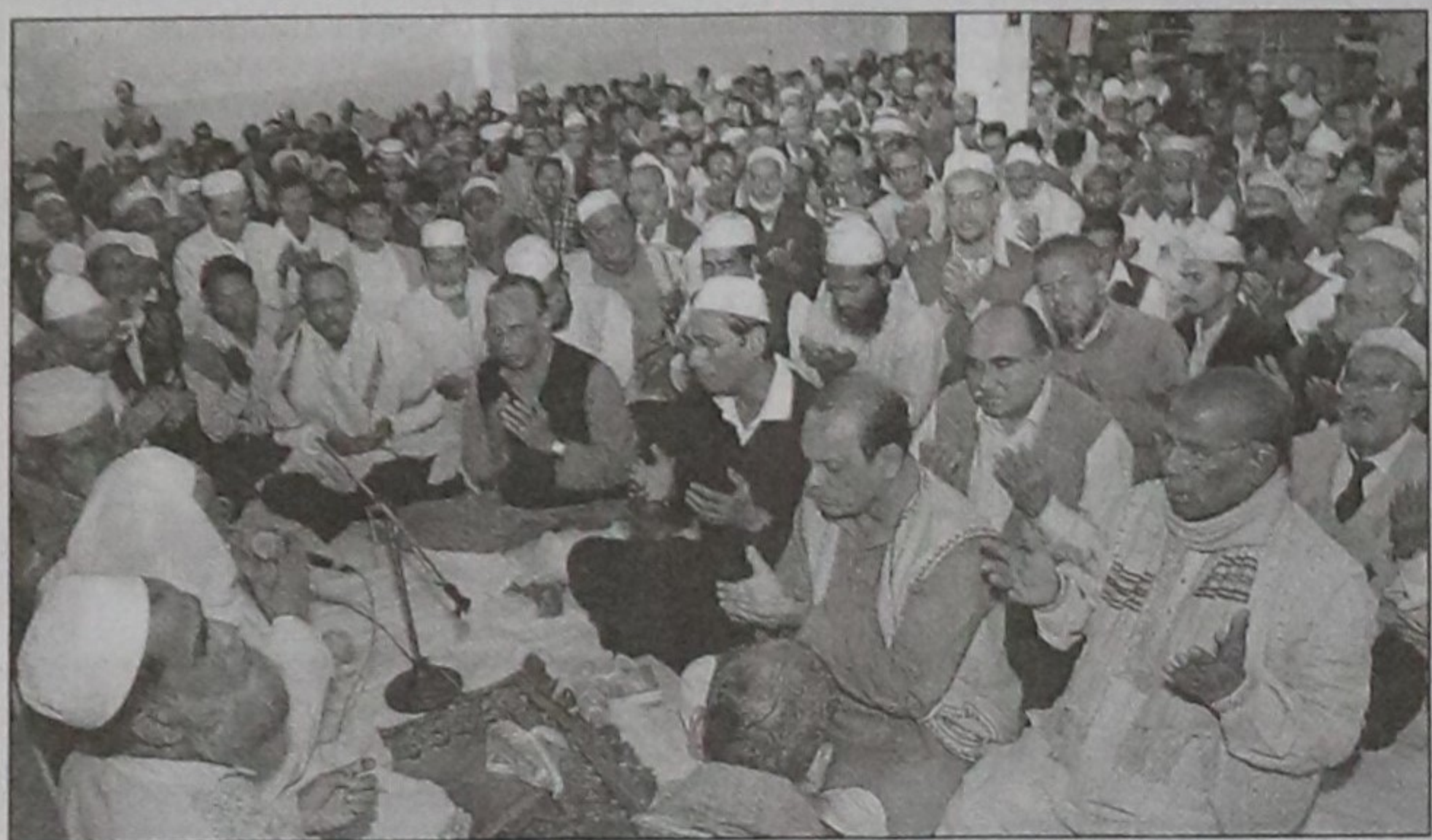
Salma Khan said the people should see the price hike issue from a practical point of view. The price would not fall drastically.

The government has to monitor the market and the syndicate very carefully, she said. She hoped that the rice price may be fixed at Tk 20 to 25 per kilogram.

About December 29 parliamentary election, all the panellists said the election was free and fair.

However, Hannan Shah said at least 15 to 20 percent of votes cast in his centre were fake. "The vote rigging was held at the room of the presiding officer," he said.

But a polling officer of the same constituency, who was present at the Sanglap, protested the remarks and said he never saw such a free and fair election in his life.



Chehlum of Mohammad Nurul Islam, president of Gonotantri Party and Bangladesh Trade Union Centre, and his son Islam Tomhor Puchi was held at Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) cafeteria of Dhaka University yesterday.

BCL drives out JCD men from Ruet dorms, 10 hurt

RU CORRESPONDENT

Tension has been running high on the Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) campus as Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists drove away Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists from their hall rooms yesterday, leaving 10 JCD activists injured.

BCL activists also occupied the rooms of the JCD men in all the dormitories.

Sources said a group of BCL activists, led by Al-Amin, Nazmul and Roni, first raided Shaheed Salim Hall and forced the JCD occupants to vacate their rooms.

They also threw out books, bedding and clothes of the JCD men and took control of the rooms. They also allegedly beat up Zunayed and Kabir with iron rods and hockey sticks during the raid.

Later, BCL men raided Shahidullah and Shaheed Ziaur Rahman halls and clashed with JCD activists in front of Zia Hall. As the news of violence spread over the campus, supporters of both the groups organised themselves separately and locked into a hour-long clash.

BCL activists took position behind Salim Hall, while JCD men were in front of Zia Hall. Both the groups used bricks, wood sticks and iron rods during the incident.

As the situation deteriorated, a huge number of police rushed to the campus and took control of the halls as well as the campus.

Identified as Shihab, Russell, Zunayed, Kabir of 4th year students of Mechanical department, Utpal, a 2nd year student of Civil Engineering department, Shaheen, a 2nd year student of Computer Science and Engineering department and JCD outsiders Rafiq and Rashid, the

injured JCD activists were undergoing treatment at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

BCL activists also staged a show-down and went to different dormitories for hunting JCD activists, sources said, adding that the incidents triggered panic among general students and many leave their halls with apprehension that fresh clashes might erupt anytime.

BCL leader Roni told newsmen that their activists resisted JCD cadres on the campus as they staged an armed show-down with many outsiders.

9 BCL activists sued

DU CORRESPONDENT

Elder brother of a Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activist yesterday filed a case against six other BCL activists of Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall of Dhaka University on charge of assaulting his younger brother.

Khairul Kabir Khokan, elder brother of BCL activist Shamsul Kabir Rahat, filed the case with Shabbagh Police Station against BCL activists -- Riaz Uddin Sumon, Shahrar, Mizanur Rahman Ruble, Monirul Rahman Shovon, Saqlaine Alam, Ashraf Ali Begh

JCD Leader Sabuj blamed the attack, saying that BCL cadres made the attack in a pre-planned way.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Mother zone Zahangir Hossain said additional police were deployed on the Ruet campus to avoid further clashes.

Prof Sayed Abdul Mafiz, student welfare adviser, told this correspondent that the authorities have ensured treatment of the injured students at RMCH. They took all security measures to bring back smooth atmosphere on the campus.

Unidentified cadres assaulted Rahat with machetes leaving him critically injured near Teacher-Student Centre intersection on December 27.

With serious injuries in his legs, hands and back, he was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and later was shifted to orthopedic hospital.

Rezaul Karim, officer-in-charge of Shabbagh Police Station, said they would go for action against the accused BCL activists as per rule.

Chehlum of Nurul Islam held

DU CORRESPONDENT

Chehlum of veteran labour leader and politician Mohammad Nurul Islam and his son Islam Tomhor Puchi was held at Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) cafeteria of Dhaka University yesterday.

Political figures, labour leaders and distinguished personalities attended the programme.

Nurul Islam, president of Gonotantri Party and Bangladesh Trade Union Centre, and his son died in a mysterious fire at his residence in the city last month.

Talking to reporters, politicians and labour leaders demanded proper investigation into the fire incident.

CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan, Prof Syed Manzoorn Islam, Prof MM Akash, Prof Abul Barakat, Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam, Bangladesh Trade Union President Shahidullah Chowdhury, General Secretary Dr Wazedul Islam Khan, Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal President Nazrul Islam Khan, Sramik League General Secretary Roy Romesh Chandra and labour leaders Shaifur Rahman Mazumder, Abdul Kader Hawlader, Abul Kalam Azad, Abdul Malek and AKM Mohibullah attended the programme.

Spurious liquor factory unearthed in city

UNB, Dhaka

Police unearthed a spurious liquor factory and seized 408 cans of bears at Pallabi in the city yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, Pallabi police raided a house at about 4:pm and seized 408 cans of spurious bear produced in the clandestine factory. Materials of spurious wine making were also seized.

All men of the factory managed to flee before the raid.

The owner of the house said, a man identified as Sanny rented the house.

Obituary

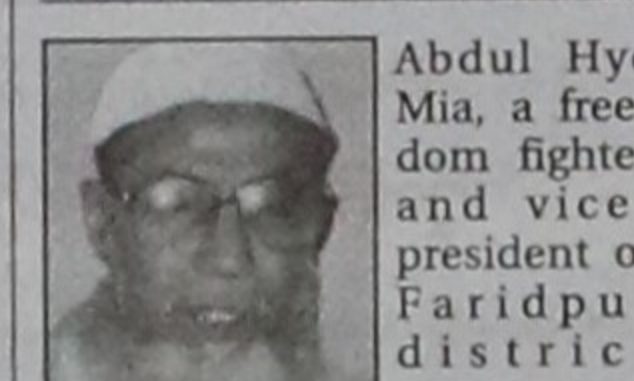
BSS, Dhaka

Advocate Abdul Wadud Khandker, a former additional attorney general, passed away at his residence yesterday at the age of 80, family sources said.

He is survived by two sons, two daughters and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Abdul Hye Mia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur



Abdul Hye Mia, a freedom fighter and vice-president of Faridpur district

A w a m i League, passed away at Faridpur Diabetic Hospital on Friday night at the age of 65.

He left behind his wife, a daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death. Different organisations, including Sramik League, Krishak League, Muktijodha Sangsad, Faridpur Sahitya O Sangskriti Unnayan Sangstha, Sammillito Sangskritik Jote, Faridpur Chamber of Commerce, Rabindra Sangeet Sammlon Parishad, CPB and Mahila Parishad have expressed deep shock at his death.

He was buried at Alipur Graveyard yesterday with state honour.



Sector Commanders' Forum (SCF) leader Air Vice Marshal (ret) AK Khandker addresses a press conference at Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. On his right is Maj Gen (ret) CR Dutta and on his left are Maj Gen (ret) KM Shafuliah and Lt Col (ret) Abu Osman Chowdhury. (Story on Page 1)

'Form special tribunal to try war criminals'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Forum for Secular Bangladesh and Trial of War Criminals of 1971 (Ekatturer Ghatok Dal Nirnul Committee) yesterday congratulated the voters for rejecting the war criminals in Jatiya Sangsad election.

The congratulatory came from a joint meeting of the central executive council and advisory council of the Forum with its Vice-president Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury in the chair.

Justice Mohammad Golam Rabbani presided over the meeting held at the residence of Shyamoli.

The Forum said in the election the people gave a clear verdict in favour of the trial of 1971 war criminals and the implementation of the spirit of the liberation war.

The meeting urged the government to form special tribunal for the trial of the war criminals

and the restoration of 1972 constitution.

It also called for bringing down the price of essentials within the reach of people and checking corruption and terrorism.

The forum said the historic victory has created scope for the restoration of the main spirit of the 1972 constitution which banned politics in the name of religion.

It demanded immediate removal of partisan persons loyal to four-party alliance including Jamaat from the administration and all religious institutions.

Journalist Kamal Lohani, litterateur Syed Shamsul Haq, Sector Commander Lt Col (ret) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Shahrar Kabir, artist Hashem Khan, Prof Muntassir Mamun, sculptor Ferdousi Priyobhashini, poet and architect Rabiul Husain, novelist Anwara Syed Haq, Salma Haq, Kazi Mukul, film maker Shamim Akhter, Prof Zerina Rahman Khan and social worker Aroma Dutta attended the meeting.

Mro leader kept in chains in hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ranglai Mro, an indigenous community leader who fell seriously ill in Chittagong Central Jail, was brought to a Dhaka hospital in chains on Thursday.

Mro, a cardiac patient, is now undergoing treatment at the Coronary Care Unit (CCU) at National Institute Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD), still in chains. He was shifted from Chittagong Medical College and Hospital in a critical condition.

Doctors said Ranglai also suffered injuries in his chest and back and that the chains are creating obstacles to proper treatment.

Shirin Sultana Lira, coordinator of Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, said Mro remains in chains round-the-clock -- during his sleep and even when he goes to toilet. "It is not only inhuman but also illegal," she added.

Lira said, "Ranglai had been taken to hospital three times earlier. The last time he



Ranglai Mro, an indigenous leader, in hospital bed.

was hospitalised for his cardiac ailments was in November last year. I and two other senior lawyers then requested the prison authorities not to put him in chains during his stay in hospital and they accepted our request. But this time he was brought to hospital in fetters."

According to a high court verdict, only the notorious criminals can be kept in chains round-the-clock, said Nizamul Haque Nasim, a lawyer for Mro.

71 injured as post-poll clashes on

FROM PAGE 16

over control of all dormitories of Ruet yesterday and two dorms at Jagannath University in Dhaka on Friday night.

Our Netrakona correspondent reported that at least 50 people, including five BCL leaders, were injured in a clash between Juba Dal and BCL over gambling at Rail Colony in Mohongonj poura area yesterday.

Our Ranganmati Correspondent has added that at least eight leaders and activists of Juba Dal and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were injured when Juba League and BCL cadres attacked them.

In Naniarchar, some BCL cadres under the leadership of Bablu, stabbed Naniarchar Union's Juba Dal leader Abdul Jalil on Friday night. They also broke his right leg and arm.

Earlier on Thursday evening, BCL and Juba League cadres carried out an attack on JCD activists injuring five people. They also vandalised shops owned by JCD activists at Chandraghona Bazar under Kaptaipapula.

Our RU correspondent has reported that at least 10 JCD activists were injured in separate clashes over control

of dormitories in Ruet. BCL activists at the university took control over the rooms previously occupied by JCD activists in all dormitories of Ruet campus. Sources said a group of BCL activists led by Al-Amin, Nazmul and Roni forced JCD activists out of Shaheed Salim Hall.

The BCL activists then raided Shahidullah and Shaheed Ziaur Rahman halls and clashes ensued between BCL and JCD activists in front of Ziaur Rahman hall.

Police later brought the situation under control. AL activists looted Tk 2.7 lakh in cash from a petrol pump in Sarishabari in Jamalpur district. They injured the pump owner's son and manager of the petrol pump, reports UNB.

In another incident, BNP supporter and freedom fighter Chan Mia was hacked at Panchashahi allegedly by AL activists on Friday night.

Earlier on Thursday evening, BCL and Juba League cadres carried out an attack on JCD activists injuring five people. They also vandalised shops owned by JCD activists at Chandraghona Bazar under Kaptaipapula.

dent of Muladi upazila BNP, told The Daily Star that a group of BCL activists attacked the office at about 11:00 am yesterday, ransacking the office and also damaging furniture.

BCL activists in Dhaka has taken control over two dorms in Jagannath University on Friday night, UNB has reported.

UNB adds: A local Juba Dal leader was kidnapped and beaten up allegedly by his rivals in Earpur area of Savar upazila on Friday night.

Family sources said Madhu Dewan, also a cousin of defeated BNP candidate Dewan M Salauddin, was later found in an unconscious state near his house.

In Laxmipur, AL men in Purbo Jamirtali village under Sadar upazila stabbed a BNP activist on Friday night.

Sources said AL activists swooped on Rabiul while he was returning home from a local market. He is now undergoing treatment at Sadar Hospital.

Bird flu re-surfaces in crowded Indian state

AFP, Kolkata

Health authorities in India yesterday confirmed a fresh outbreak of deadly bird flu after thousands of chickens died, officials said.

The latest infection is the fourth outbreak of the H5N1 virus in the eastern West Bengal state in the past year, they said, adding that thousands of poultry perished in the hilly Darjeeling district.

"Several thousands of poultry dropped dead over the week in Darjeeling's Mathigarah village," West Bengal Animal Resources Development Minister Anisur Rahman told AFP in state capital Kolkata.

"Samples of the dead poultry have tested positive," he said and added that 20,000 infected birds would be culled on Sunday.

The state authorities have already slaughtered five million poultry to control the virus during 2008 as India battled its worst bird flu outbreak.

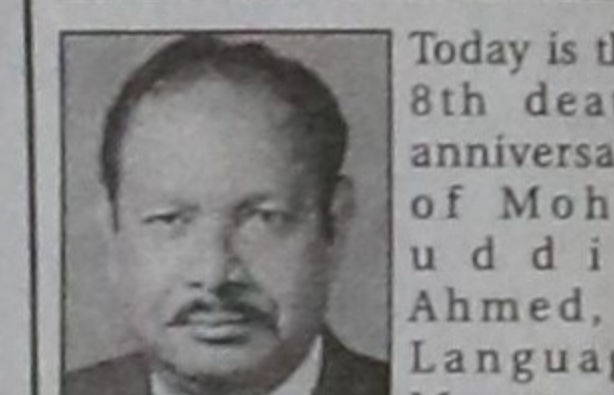
The virus spread to 14 of the 19 districts in West Bengal, which has a population of more than 80 million. But India has still not reported any human case of the deadly H5N1 strain of the virus.

Officials in the northeast state of Assam last month killed 250,000 chickens to control the spread of the deadly infection, which had sparked fears of a human case after many people were reported sick.

The World Health Organization says the H5N1 strain has killed nearly 250 people, mostly in Southeast Asia, since 2003.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 8th death anniversary of Mohiuddin Ahmed, a Language Movement veteran, and student leader of '60s, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at Siddeshwari Circular Road mosque in the city.

An initiative was also taken to publish a memorial book on Mohiuddin Ahmed.

Friends, relatives, colleagues and admirers are requested to send writings, pictures or documents for the memorial book to the following address: Soma Ahmed, Talukdar Estate, 69-71 Siddeshwari Circular Road, Dhaka, Phone: 01552-364296.

Begum Shahida Diwan

METRO DESK



Today is the ninth death anniversary of Begum Shahida Diwan, wife of Prof Md Rustam Ali

Diwan of Dhaka University, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Nurjahan Begum Tuku

METRO DESK

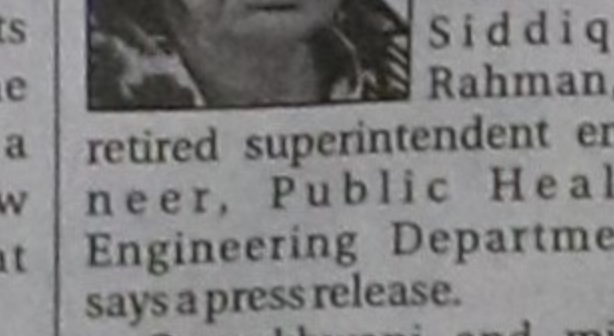
The 11th anniversary of death of Nurjahan Begum Tuku, wife of poet and architect Rabiul Husain, will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at Dormitory Mainul Quran Hafizia Kaunia Madrasah and Orphanage at Green Road after Asr prayers.

Tuku breathed her last in 1998 after being in a coma for one month following a brain haemorrhage.

Relatives and friends are requested to pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Mehta Begum



Today is the 4th death anniversary of Mehta Begum, wife of AKM Siddiqur Rahman, a retired superintendent engineer, Public Health Engineering Department, says a press release.

Quarankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at the residence of her son Shaifur Rahman at Adabar, Shyamoli.

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

DHAKA TODAY Discussion Award giving ceremony

WEATHER TODAY Moderate to thick fog likely UNB, Dhaka