# METROPOLITAN/NEWS

# Dhaka should be Obama's 1st destination in Muslim world

Says US researcher

BSS, Dhaka

Dhaka should be Barack Obama's first destination among Muslim countries, says Lisa Curtis, senior research fellow of the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington.

Curtis was speaking as a panelist at a briefing on "Implications of the recent Bangladesh election for business" at the US Chamber of Commerce in Washington DC yesterday.

She put forward two main arguments in favour of her proposal. First, Bangladesh is least susceptible to extremism as proved in the recently held election. Secondly, progress in women empowerment in Bangladesh has provided a solid check on the growing radi-

open rehab

for Sidr-hit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Indian Foreign Minister

Pranab Mukharjee is expected

to inaugurate the final rehabil-

itation model project of 11

Bangladesh on February 9.

and Morelganj.

Muslim countries.

According to Curtis, economic option tries in the region. in Bangladesh now seems brighter than

She hoped there will be more tolerance among the political parties to work together for the people of Bangladesh.

She also urged the US government to consider lifting of all tariffs and allowing duty free access of products from least developed countries like Bangladesh to

Bangladesh Ambassador to USA Humayun Kabir, who also spoke as a panelist, gave a detailed sketch on how part. Bangladesh economy has maintained its strong resilience.

He said that with a new conciliatory political culture emerged from a free, fair calisation prevalent in some other and credible election, Bangladesh is the message added.

much investor friendly than other coun-

Kabir also urged the US companies to take advantage of the investment opportunities in Bangladesh.

Another panelist Donal Camp, principal deputy assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asia, narrated on how warmly the US government welcomed the recent election in Bangladesh.

The session was followed by a lively question and answer session, where high officials of leading US companies like chevron, Boeing, Conocophillips took

The briefing was attended by US government officials, business executives, congressional staffs, academics, journalists and Bangladesh Embassy officials,



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presides over a special meeting of cabinet at the Cabinet Division conference room of the Secretariat is the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

# Tight security for smooth observance of Amar Ekushey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Battalion (Rab) would be deployed in and around the Central Shaheed Minar in the city for smooth observance of Amar Ekushey February.

State Minister for Home Tanjim Ahmed Shohel Taj yesterday said the Shaheed Minar area has been divided into red zone and green zone.

After a meeting at the home ministry on law and order ahead of the International Mother Language DayonFebruary21, Tanjim said the government considers ensuring

publicsecurity as a big challenge. "Safeguarding law and order is

and digital Bangladesh as per the Around 7000 police and 800 government's election pledge. It is members of Rapid Action also abig challenge," he said. "It is the responsibility of the the programmes of

government to ensure security of

the people. The law-enforcers

are working 24 hours to this end," he added. Tanjim hoped that people would cooperate with the law

enforcers to keep security normalin two zones. While elaborating the secu-

rity measures on Ekushey February, he said the red zone centring the Shaheed Minar will be manned by Rab and other security forces equipped with metal detector and CCTV.

Besides, special arrange- Khandaker and Dhaka

acrucialissueinformingamodem ments will be made to keep Metropolitan Police traffic normal in the zone. Commissioner Nayeem Ahmed.

Meanwhile, Dhaka University (DU) authorities have formed a coordination committee for smooth observance of the International Mother Language Day.

Dhaka University Teachers' Association President Prof "We are working keeping in Khandaker Bazlul Huq was made coordinator while its Vicelaw-enforcers have been put on president Dr Mohammad Akhteruzzaman and General Chaired by Home Minister Secretary Dr ABM Obaydul Sahara Khatun, the meeting was

> The committee was formed at a meeting presided over by DU

VC Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique.

Islam joint coordinators.

Ten sub-committees were also formed in the meeting.

Dutch envoy

meets PM

UNB, Dhaka

### RENEWAL OF TRADE TREATY WITH INDIA

# Come to parliament and give suggestions

Commerce minister asks BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan yesterday called on BNP to come to parliament and give suggestions on how to use the bilateral trade agreement with India without undermining the national interests.

"It is a matter of regret that BNP is now opposing the renewal of Bangladesh-India trade agreement although they first signed it and renewed it in 2006," he told reporters after a view exchange meeting with government had renewed the planning to provide financial the representatives of agreement in 2006 secretly assistance. Bangladesh Grey and without the approval of the Finished Fabrics Mills and Exporters Association (BGFFMEA) at the conference room of his ministry.

discussions at the party's

views on what led to the polls

debacle, they briefed the

central leaders about organi-

Ashraf Ali, president of

Mirzaganj upazila BNP in

Patuakhali, as saying, "Team-

ing up with Jamaat was the

main reason why we fared

badly in the election. People

did not take our ties to war

panel for Rajshahi division

and Pabna district leaders,

Mahbub Morshed Jyoti, presi-

dent of Sathia BNP, said the

party suffered the humiliating

demanded that the high-

command dissolve immedi-

ately the district committee led

by former home minister Altaf

Hossain Chowdhury. They said

they lost four seats due to

failure of this committee.

FROM PAGE 1

Some leaders of Patuakhali

defeat because of Jamaat.

At the talks between the

criminals positively."

A meeting source quoted

sational state of their units.

Apart from airing their

headquarters in Nava Paltan.

FROM PAGE 1

Unlike the previous BNP- ing, BGFFMEA President Md Jamaat government who used Harun-or-Rashid placed trade and commerce as a several demands, including political weapon, the present lowering the interest rate of government would use them bank loans and providing as a tool for development, the financial assistance for the ministersaid.

renewal of the agreement, the them in building a prosperous commerce minister said the BNP wants the country to lag behind in the competitive taking necessary measurers to world market.

cabinet. "But this time it will be discussed in parliament to make the people aware of it."

At the view exchange meet-

polls because of the bitter Habib is to blame for the

wrangle between Altaf internal conflict in local BNP

through vote at all levels of the said requesting anonymity.

Abdus Samad Montu, with the central team,

Star.

Corrupt, Jamaat downed BNP

Chowdhury and his general

secretary," Kazi Mahbub,

president of sadar upazila

BNP, was quoted as saying by a

central body to form a new

Kalapara BNP President ABM

Mosharraf Hossain told The

Daily Star that they have sug-

gested that the high-

command arrange for fresh

committees to be set up

president of Pabna sadar

upazila BNP, told this corre-

spondent that weak organisa-

tional base was the key reason

for dismal election perfor-

mance. He said the leadership

should also hear the ward- and

union-level leaders for proper

assessment of the grassroots

Secretary Raisuddin said

"We got drubbing in the former lawmaker Selim Reza lead-up to the election.

Bera upazila BNP General

committee by ballot.

Mahbub also asked the

After the meetings,

participant.

organisation.

conditions.

businessmen. Referring to BNP's threat to ... The commerce minister

When asked whether they

have any security fears during

International Mother Language

Day, the state minister said such

incidents may take place at any

moment, not only on the day of

mind such apprehension. The

attended by Home Secretary

Abdul Karim, Inspector General of

Police Noor Mohammad, Rab

Director General Hasan Mahmud

February 21.

alert," headded.

launch agitation against the also sought cooperation from country. He also assured them of

resolve their problems and He said the BNP-Jamaat said that the government is

The commerce minister also hoped that the prices of essentials would come down if the businessmen cooperate with the government.

party should purge itself of all

controversial leaders through

councils," he told The Daily

district said activities of for-

mer finance minister Saifur

Rahman and his son Naser

Rahman brought on the elec-

tion defeat. "Some close aides

to Saifur including his son

diminished the party's polls

prospects by amassing wealth

through abuse of power," he

Advocate Abdur Rahman,

president of Sarail upazila

BNP [Brahmanbaria district],

told The Daily Star, "We've

asked the central leaders to

reorganise the party so we can

get over the internal problems

Besides, he said, as the

caretaker government did not

play a neutral role, their party

could not work freely in the

Asked about discussions

A leader from Moulvibazar

free the nation from all crises.

prime minister. The PM and the Ambassador had a discussion on Bangladesh Water Development Board. They recalled the technical assistant agreement on water

Death anniversary



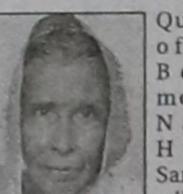
fifth death anniversary of Dr ABM Mafizul Islam Patwari,

Today is the

professor of Dhaka University law department and founder of Dhaka International University, says a press

Qulkhwani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



of Nazia Begum, mother of Nazmul Haque

Bangla Bazar Patrika, will be held at her village home Boragari in Domar, Nilphamari today, says a press release.

mahfil and Qurankhwani will beheld.

old age complicacations at her village home on November 27

She left behind her four

Maleka Samad

Qulkhwani of Maleka Samad, sister of Probe News Magazine Chief Editor Irtiza Nasim Ali and wife of former PWD engineer Rezaul Karim Chowdhury (Khasru), will be held at her Dhanmondi residence in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press

# about AIDS' model project

tect people from AIDS.

Sidr-hit villages of Bagerhat The central council of during his brief official visit to Deputy Commissioner of Bagerhat Aparup Choudhury yesterday said he did not get to mark its 32nd anniversary.

any official instruction yet lawmaker Murad Hossain about the Indian foreign said, "As a developing country, minister's visit to Sharankhola Bangladesh is in a risky stage and Sandhani will have to take While visiting the Sidr-hit the lead of making people villages of Bagerhat in aware of Aids." December 2007, Pranab Mukherjee announced his

government's decision to undertake the rehabilitation cil Dr Mani Lal Aich Litu said project for the villages ravaged by the cyclonic storm. Sources said a plan was

developed to rebuild the villages as per a model by a consultant engineering firm appointed by the Indian High Commission in Dhaka. The model plan includes

construction of 1600 new

houses, a multi-purpose cyclone shelter, distribution of solar energy units and arrangement for safe water supply. India has allocated 34 crore

30 lakh rupees for full implementation of the project which may further increase, if necessary.

# DHAKA

on cancer followed by a musical soiree. Venue: Biam auditorium. Time: 4:30pm. Reunion

The first reunion of the

Department of Computer Science

and Engineering, Dhaka

### University will be held. Venue: Curzon Hall. Time: 9:00am.

Book launch

The launching ceremony of the book titled 'Moromi literature in Bangladesh and Syed Ahmadul Hag's works on Rumi' authored by Mohammad Bahauddin, a lecturer of Persian language and literature department of Dhaka University, will be held. Venue: Nabab Nowab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

### **Experience sharing** programme

North Alpine Club Bangladesh (NACB) organises an experience sharing programme on its stride of Mount Everest and Mount Langsisa Ri expedition. Venue: National Press Club. Time:

### 10:30am. Flute recital

Rotary Club of Dhaka Premier organises a flute recital by Ustad Azizul Islam. Venue: National Museum auditorium. Time:

### 6:30pm. Prize giving ceremony

The prize giving ceremony of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra's book reading programme will begin. Venue: Ramna Batamul. Time: 9:30am.

### **Drawing contest**

Ain O Salish Kendra organises a drawing contest for the underprivileged children to mark the International Mother Language Day, Venue: Fine Art Institute. Time: 10:00am.

# Indian FM to Raise awareness 2 Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called on Sandhani to increase its awareness building programmes for blood and eye donation in order to pro-

Sandhani organised the seminar on 'Prevention of AIDS, role of youth and Sandhani' at the National Press Club in the city Speaking as the chief guest,

Quoting UNAIDS and WHO statistics of 2005, advisor of Sandhani central coun-

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bihari community

yesterday called on the govern-

proper rehabilitation of their

They also urged the govern-

stranded Pakistanis, integrate

more than 37 years made the

Biharis a marginalised com-

munity in Bangladesh, as we

did not have access to the basic

as we did not have citizenship

rights. We had very little access

to resources and employment.

Proper schooling and

healthcare facilities are still

absent in our camps. Starting

all over again without any skills

or resources is very hard for

us," explained Khan.

"We could not own property

rights," he said.

"Having been stateless for

into the mainstream society.

granted citizenship last year.

around 11,000 to 13,000 people in the country are living with HIV and AIDS.

Overall prevalence was 0.6 percent in 2004-05, HIV prevalence among injectable drug users is already 4 percent and Bangladesh is at a very high risk zone due to the neighbouring country, he added.

Prof Abul Kalam Azad said expatriate workers are spreading AIDS in the country.

ATN Bangla Chief Adviser Saiful Bari stressed the need to form 'community groups' which would work on raising awareness among the grassroots-level people.

Additional Secretary General of the department of Health Dr Hosne Ara Tahmid, founder member of Sandhani CH Kabir and journalist Kashem Humayun also spoke.

Biharis demand rehabilitation

United Nations, donor coun-

tries and international organi-

sations to assist Bangladesh

government in rehabilitate the ment to take initiatives for Urdu-speaking community. They said the Biharis should community as they were be rehabilitated in the area they are now living in so that they can continue in their tradiment not to evict the Biharis tional profession. Moving somewhere else would disconnect them from the only work they know, they added. Majority of the Biharis are engaged in producing 'Benarasi' sari and in

> 'Karchupi' work. There are around three lakh Biharis in Bangladesh. Of them, around 1.6 lakh are living in 166 camps across the country, according to a survey of

## Chehlum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Chehlum of Md Harunur Rashid Punu Mia, a retired accountant of Agriculture Research

Institute, will be held at his village home at Delua under Kaliganj upazila in Gazipur after Asr prayers today,

Rashid passed away due to

says a press release. cardiac arrest on December 3 at his residence at Agriculture Research Institute quarters in The leaders also urged the Gazipur.

# Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Dry weather is likely to continue over the country in next 12

hours until 6:00pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur over the country during late night till morning, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged night temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 30.3 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 09.8 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:48pm today and rises at

6:37am tomorrow. Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/10wn	Celsius		percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	28.5	14.9	67	57
Chittagong	27.5	15.0	70	59
Rajshahi	28.5	10.8	88	55
Khulna	28.0	13.4	92	56
Barisal	29.0	12.5	84	73
Sylhet	30.3	14.4	65	60
Cox's Bazar	28.8	15.0	53	60

## shot dead in Michigan

ENA/NEWS World from Michigan

At least two Bangladeshis were shot dead at Michigan in the United States on Tuesday and

Wednesday night. ENA says, a Bangladeshi identified as Abdur Rahman, 46, was shot dead by the miscreants at Hamtronics city in Michigan on February 3 night.

A Hamtronics police detective said miscreants fired two shots on Rahman.

Police detective Mike said rescue workers rushed Rahman to nearby Detroit Receiving Hospital in critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries. Rahman will be buried in Michigan. Former president of

Jalalabad Association in Michigan Syed Shahedul Haq told news agency ENA that Abdur Rahman was living in the Hamtronics city along with his wife and three sons. Rahman went to the USA in 1991 and had been working at a downtown restaurant. News World from Michigan

adds: A Bangladeshi identified as Rafigul Islam was shot dead by a gang of miscreants at Michigan on Wednesday night. Rafiqul Islam, only earning member of the family, was the resident of Hamtronics city in Michigan.

## Dhaka urged to be member of Arbitration Court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Secretary General of International Permanent Court of Arbitration Christian MJ Kroner yesterday urged Bangladesh to become a

member of the court. Kroner made the proposal when he paid a courtesy call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Hasan Mahmud at the foreign ministry in the morning.

Dhaka to request Bangladesh to become a member of the court. Kroner said least developed countries do not have to

He said he has come to

donate to the fund of the court. The secretary general said the court maintains a fund with the assistance of the developed and rich countries for settling disputes and

Bangladesh may get assistance from the fund. He said the 110-year-old organisation has settled many disputes between countries

developing countries like

using modern technique. **NOISE POLLUTION** 

## Cases against 17 vehicles

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) filed cases against 17 vehicles, including buses and private cars, in the city during a drive against noise pollution yesterday.

the drives in Dhanmondi and Sat Masjid Road area. A team led by DoE Deputy Director Dr Mostafa Kamal Faruk conducted the drives where Executive Magistrate Md

The cases were filed during

The drives were aimed at creating awareness among the drivers and its passengers of the bad effect of noise pollu-The anti-noise pollution

team also realised Tk 9,900

and seized hydraulic horns

from eight vehicles.

Abdul Samad, DMP police and

BRTC officials were present.

ACC for working ties with govt hope such process will continue has carried out its activities after

corruption drive. He declined to comment on the prime minister's statement about ACC in parliament but said the commission's activities were not politically motivated.

"I hope the government will take initiative considering our problems and ongoing fight against corruption will continue as it carried out in the last two years," he said during a routine press briefing at ACC headquarters yesterday afternoon. The ACC chief said they are

still committed to the policy, which are dealing with the corruption cases based on evidences and facts and hoped that it will continue such efforts in future in cooperation with the government as pledged by the prime minister. "The commission design its in future," he said. Pointing out Prime Minister

Sheikh Hassina's recent assurance of cooperation in fighting against corruption, he said ACC will continue discussions with the government highlighting its

ments on publishing information about corruption by the press, Hasan Mashhud said the information about the corruption can be discussed if it does not work against the commission's security. If the information dissemination process is stopped, transparency of the commission cannot be maintained, he added.

wish of prime minister to reconstitute the ACC, he said, it will not be decent for him to make graft cases based on the eviany comment on the prime dences and facts and court also minister's statement. has pronounced verdict in the cases based on the same way. I

statement that the commission work of the committee.

being politically motivated. There is no reason to think that there was any political motivation in pursuing the fight against corruption," he said while

replying to another query. About his resignation, the ACC boss said this is not the advantages and disadvantages. moment to take such decision About the lawmaker's comkeeping the commission's role questioned adding "I don't think there is any reason to take any decision suddenly at the moment getting excited." Regarding the two-member

committee formed to scrutinize the allegation against him involving money laundering, Hasan Mashhud said, "I think, work of the committee is not being hampered anyway. They are Replying to a query on the working independently as per directives of the government." He added that he is one of

members of the committee and the other commissioners are not subordinate to him, so there is "I will never agree to the no chance of influencing the

### Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said all problems of the country would be solved if people could be inspired to stand confident and united. She told the Dutch envoy in Bangladesh that her govern-

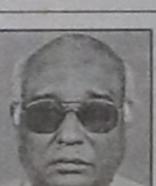
the people of all walks of life to She was talking to the Dutch Ambassador, Berendina Maria (Bea) ten Tusscher, when she called on her at the PM office and discussed matters of bilateral

ment would work together with

interest of Bangladesh and the Netherlands. The ambassador formally handed over the letter of felicitation from the Dutch prime minister to Hasina on assumption of her office as

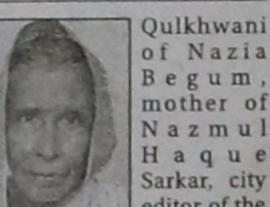
resources signed between Bangladesh and the Netherlands in 1973. and the polls disaster. "The

# STAFF CORRESPONDENT



former

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residences at Devi Chowdhurani and Maniram in Rangpur.



Sarkar, city editor of the

On the occasion, a milad Nazia passed away due to

at the age of 70.

sons and two daughters.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

release.

### from the camps unless they are properly rehabilitated. At a press conference in the city, the Urdu-Speaking People's Youth Rehabilitation Movement (USPYRM) also placed a six-point demand, including establishment of schools for Bihari children, special employment quota for Film show them and renovation of dilapi-Mosabbir Cancer Care Centre, dated buildings in Wapda Dhaka will screen a documentary Bihari colony at Mirpur. USPYRM President Sadakat Khan said the government must take necessary initiatives to help Biharis, also known as