

# Pranab for united efforts to protect culture, heritage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee yesterday said peoples in both Bangladesh and India will have to work together not only to face the global economic meltdown, but also to safeguard the culture and heritage, history and the environment.

"Along with whole world, both Bangladesh and India are facing the economic crisis. Our culture, heritage, values, belief and the environment have also received a blow. We will have to work together to deal with these issues successfully," he said at a programme

at Dhaka University.

The minister said this while speaking as the chief guest at the foundation stone laying ceremony for a training centre and classrooms of the Drama and Music Department of the university. The centre is being built with the financial assistance from the Indian government.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Harun-ur-Rashid, Arts Faculty Dean Prof Dr Sadrul Amin, Drama and Music Department Chairman Prof Dr Israfil Shaheen and Indian High Commissioner Pinak

Ranjan Chakravarty were also present at the ceremony.

Recalling the contribution of Dhaka University, Pranab Mukherjee said the university played a vital role in all movements -- not only during the liberation war of Bangladesh but also during the independence struggle against the British.

"Personally, I believe Dhaka University can save us from the blow to heritage, culture, values, belief and the environment," he said, adding that the university played a vital role in creating the same culture in both Bangladesh and India.

"I came to Bangladesh

several times. But this is the first time that I have come to Dhaka University and I feel proud because this university has produced many scholars, researchers and intellectuals," said the Indian minister.

He also recalled the names of many teachers of the university, including Dr Muhammad Shahidullah and Prof Satyen Bose, for their outstanding contribution to the history of Bangladesh and India.

Speaking on the occasion, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid recalled the contribution of India to the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

## CSB NEWS LICENCES HC rule on govt to explain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain why cancellation of the transmission and frequency licenses of CSB News should not be declared illegal.

A HC bench comprising Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui passed the rule following a writ petition that challenged legality of the government action canceling the broadcasting and frequency licenses of the channel.

Secretary to the Information ministry and chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) were asked to reply within four weeks.

Petitioner's counsel barrister Omar Sadat told the court the military-backed caretaker government shutdown the broadcasting of CSB News and cancelled its frequency license.

The government cancelled the license as the channel had aired live incidents of clashes on Dhaka University campus and arrest of then Awami League president and now Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he added.

At least 400 staff including journalists of the TV channel were rendered jobless after its shutdown, he said.

The immediate past caretaker government on September 6, 2007 cancelled the transmission and frequency licenses of CSB News on charge of committing forgery in obtaining frequency license.

The CSB News, a satellite TV channel of Focus Multimedia Company and the first 24-hour Bangla news channel in the country began transmission on February 21, 2007.

Fazul Quader Chowdhury, managing director of Focus Multimedia Company, filed a writ petition with the HC in September last year.

Barrister Srwat Siraj assisted Omar Sadat in moving the petition while Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Razik Al Jalil appeared for the government.



A visitor looks at decorative ceramics at an exhibition at Zainul Gallery at the Fine Art Institute in the city yesterday. Poramon organised the six-day exhibition.

## ALCWC meets today to discuss party activities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) sits today to discuss ways to bring dynamism to party activities across the country.

The meeting of ALCWC, the highest decision-making body, will be the first one since the AL formed the government following a landslide victory in the December 29 general elections.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 10:00am at party chief and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's political office at Dhanmondi in the city. She will preside over the meeting.

Party sources said the meeting's agenda include the party's next council, reorganisation of the party's wings and review of the performance of the government in its first month.

The meeting will also discuss other issues such as observance of International Mother Language Day on February 21, historic March 7, Bangladesh's birth anniversary on March 17, Independence Day on March 26 and Mujibnagar Day on April 17.

AL spokesperson Syed Ashrafur Islam has called upon all ALCWC members to attend the meeting on time.

## EXTORTION CASE

### HC stays proceedings against Milon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed for three months the proceedings of Tk 5 lakh extortion case filed against former BNP lawmaker Fazlul Huq Milon under the Emergency Power Rules (EPR) 2007.

Upon a petition filed by Milon, an HC bench of Justice Syed AB Mahmudul Huq and Justice Moeenul Islam Chowdhury also issued a rule upon the government asking it to reply within six weeks why the proceedings against the petitioner should not be quashed.

Petitioner's counsel Barrister Mahbubuddin Khokon told newsmen that the managing director of CIAM Industries Limited on January 8 last year filed a case with Shabagh police station against Fazlul Huq Milon on charge of collecting over Tk 5 lakh from the plaintiff by threatening him from 2003 to 2005.

He said Milon earlier got bail from the High Court in this case.

## 2 construction labourers shot by extortionists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Extortionists shot two construction labourers in the city's Senpara under Mirpur police station yesterday.

Injured labourers Mejbahuddin, 37, and Abdus Sattar, 60, were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with bullet injuries. Mejbah was shot in his hand and leg while Sattar in his left chest.

Mirpur police said four armed criminals went to the under-construction building at about 3:00pm and asked the labourers about the owner of the building for extortion. The miscreants fired at the workers when they refused to say anything about the owner and left the spot immediately.



Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee unveils the foundation plaque of a training centre and classrooms of the Drama and Music Department of Dhaka University yesterday.

## Kabir Chy's 87th birth anniversary celebrated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Kabir Chowdhury demanded trial of the war criminals and elimination of the rich-poor discrimination at his 87th birth anniversary programme yesterday, says a press release.

Intellectuals, poets, litterateur and eminent personalities from Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee and other organisations yesterday wished Kabir Chowdhury with wreaths at his 87th birth anniversary. Later, a meeting was held at his residence.

MA Karim, Sadia Sharmin Tuku, Parul Akhter, Mohammed Ali Munna, Joydev Roy, Anowar Hossain Moznou and activists of Sangskritik Jote from Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj and Moulvibazar and leaders of Jatiny Hindu Moitree Parishad were present at the programme.

## Remain vigilant to safeguard independence

### Gen Moeen asks army

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday asked members of the armed forces to remain vigilant at all times to safeguard independence and sovereignty of the country.

"The country has earned independence at the cost of enormous sacrifices. You have to safeguard independence and work towards building a prosperous country," he said as the chief guest at a parade at Bangladesh Infantry Regiment Centre (BIRC) in Rajshahi.

All the 252 staffs of BIRC were awarded honorary regiment colour badges on completion of the regiment's

eight years in service.

Gen Moeen said the Bangladesh Army won accolades from home and abroad for their contribution to preparing the voter list with photographs and national identity cards and holding peaceful general elections.

The forces also earned praise for their cooperation in handling natural disasters, including the Cyclone Sidr, he said.

Gen Moeen asked the BIRC members to be sincere in protecting the regiment colour, which is a rare honour for the army members.

Maj Gen Ferdous Mia, Brig Gen Nazmul Hussain and other senior officials were present on the occasion.



Leaders of the Forum for Secular Bangladesh greet Prof Kabir Chowdhury with a bouquet at a ceremony marking his 87th birthday at Gazi Bhaban in the city yesterday.

## US to help build multi-purpose shelters in Sidr-affected areas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United States government will build four multi-purpose cyclone shelters in the Sidr affected areas of Khulna and Barisal under a humanitarian assistance project.

These are the first four of 24 cyclone shelters funded by the US Pacific Command. The shelters will be used as schools

when not required for emergencies.

Groundbreaking for the four shelters started on Sunday in Deuli Palli Mongal High School in Mirzaganj Upazila, Pahkimara PV High School in Kalapara Upazila, and AC Lala High Schools and Khoalia Abdul Rashid Khan College in Morrelganj Upazila.

The project is part of an

agreement between the United States and Bangladesh that provides US\$ 4.3 million for the construction of the multi-purpose cyclone shelters and bridges.

The US government is also providing US\$ 100 million in funds for emergency relief, rehabilitation, and sustainable development in Sidr affected areas.

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