

## Guidebook trade

FROM PAGE 1

The education ministry on February 5 formed a taskforce comprised of personnel from Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), police, and NCTB with Rab Additional Director General Col Reza-nur-Rahman Khan as its head to solve the persisting crisis.

Due to a crackdown by the taskforce, some publishers were not able to hoard 24 types of textbooks of the third phase of NCTB's distribution. However, the taskforce has yet to make any headway in making 14 other textbooks of the first phase, and 38 textbooks of the second phase available on the market.

NCTB divided its distribution of the textbooks into 3 phases according to importance of the books -- the 14 most important ones are in the first phase, 38 are in the second phase, and in the third phase there are 24 textbooks.

Although the deadlines for releasing the books of the first and second phases were in January, the books are still scarce on the market.

Taking advantage of the artificial crisis, some unscrupulous book retailers are also making quick bucks forcing the guide books on buyers. If a buyer does not buy a guidebook, the retailers charge higher prices for the textbook.

Those book retailers charge around Tk 20 to Tk 40 for a textbook, while they sell a guidebook for the textbook for Tk 150 to Tk 250. The Daily Star found, investigating the business practice of several book stores in the capital's Nilkhet and Bangla Bazar areas, prominent for book markets.

"The unavailability of textbooks is now a national crisis. We will not tolerate any irregularity and will take tough legal actions against publishers, if we find them hoarding textbooks," said taskforce chief Col Reza-nur-Rahman Khan.

He also said the publishers were not able to hoard the third phase books as the taskforce on February 7 gave them a 24-hour ultimatum for releasing the books, and again reminded them about the directive on Tuesday.

"The taskforce is working round the clock on the matter," he said.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said steps will be taken according to the task force's report, which is due on February 20.

NCTB Chairman Masir Uddin Ahmed blamed the crisis on the unscrupulous publishers.

The publishers however claimed that the shortage of books was bound to occur, even if all books had been released on time, since NCTB invited tender for printing only 2.62 crore books while the countrywide demand is for at least five crore.

This year, secondary level students will need fresh copies of all 76 of their textbooks, because of the introduction of a new method to the curriculum, called the 'creative question method'.

Usually 30 percent of old textbooks are re-used each year by the students, but due to the new curriculum that will not be possible this year.

The taskforce during its crackdown identified 14 publishers who illegally sold on open market the paper provided by NCTB at a subsidised rate for printing the textbooks.

Four publishers were also identified as hoarders of textbooks, the NCTB sources said.

### LAW PROHIBITING NOTEBOOKS

If anyone is found guilty of violating Notebook Prohibition Act-1980, the person might face rigorous imprisonment up to

### Trapped

FROM PAGE 1

Things were much easier during the caretaker government as the number of advisers at that time was only 10. Besides, rundown vehicles too were held in check, headed.

BRTA Director (enforcement) Abdur Rouf said they conduct drive against unfit vehicles continuously.

Lately, though, operation of BRTA mobile courts has slowed down as three magistrates of the DC office are now busy with SSC examinations, he noted.

They will step up the crackdown on illegal vehicles after the end in the middle of the exams.

Joint Commissioner (traffic) Jasim Uddin of DMP said agitations blocking the thoroughfares, which have become quite frequent of late, lead to near-constant gridlock.

Besides, the situation has deteriorated as the number of commuters has shot up with most of the schools and colleges returning from vacations.

He points out, "We struggle maintaining smooth flow of traffic also because we don't have the manpower needed to man around 400 intersections across the city. Only a few crossings have fully automatic traffic signal systems."

He said they cannot go on a drive against illegal rickshaws at will as they need permission for that, and also have to consider the livelihood of poor and displaced people.

Absence of a large dump to hold the seized rickshaws acts as another deterrent.

seven years or can be fined up to Tk 25,000 or both.

But due to lack of enforcement of the law, publishers continue to print and market notebooks changing the name to guidebook.

As per the law, 'note-book' means any printed book that contains notes, annotations, explanations, answers or solutions to any question on any subject or matter, or translations or paraphrases of any part of the text-book but does not include any such book published by or under the authority of the Board.

According to the given criteria for notebooks, almost all guidebooks available in the market can be considered notebooks.

The Mobile Court Ordinance-2007 empowers mobile courts to take legal actions against those involved in printing and selling notebooks in the market without permission from the NCTB.

But usually no action is taken against the publishers and sellers of such books.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Home Affairs Tanjim Ahmed Sohail Taj said they will take necessary steps in consultation with the education ministry to resolve the textbook crisis.

"We shall take actions immediately against the unscrupulous publishers who have created artificial crisis in the market," the state minister told The Daily Star.

## Suu Kyi's party launches signature campaign

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's pro-democracy party launched a name-signing campaign calling for the release of political prisoners, including leader Aung San Suu Kyi, on the 62nd anniversary of Union Day yesterday.

Senior members of the National League for Democracy party signed a whiteboard at the party's headquarters in Yangon calling for the release of Nobel Peace laureate Suu Kyi and party vice-chairman Tin Oo.

The ceremony was completed under the watchful gaze of plain clothes police and militia groups loyal to Myanmar's ruling military junta.

"We will continue signing as it is in accordance with the law. We will show that we have the people's support, not only to them (the authorities) but also to the international community," NLD spokesman Nyan Wint told reporters.

Some 250 people, including party members, politicians and diplomats attended an earlier ceremony at the headquarters to mark Myanmar's 62nd Union Day.

## 9 killed

FROM PAGE 1  
The help of locals rescued over 35 people, our correspondent in Bandarban reports.

Nineteen of the critically injured were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) while 20 others to Bandarban Sadar Hospital.

Dilwara Begum and Kapil Barua died on their way to CMCH, our staff correspondent in Chittagong reports. Seven bodies were in Bandarban Sadar Hospital.

The accident happened around 6:30pm when the bus, with 50 students, teachers and guardians on board, fell into the 300-foot-deep ditch as the driver lost control of the wheel ascending a hill.

The spot was two km away from Bandarban town near Monartek area, said Masud, an injured teacher of economics department of the college. The bus was one of the five carrying over 200 students and teachers of the department back to Chittagong after a picnic in Bandarban.

Army commander Brig Mahfuzur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner of Bandarban Moudud AK Qaiyum, Additional Superintendent of Police Tutul Talukder, Bandarban District Council Chairman Prof Thanjama Lusa and high officials of the armed forces, district administration, police and fire service rushed to the spot.

The CMCH authorities had kept its physicians on standby to treat the injured. Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) also took measures to keep roads free from traffic jams and help the injured reach the hospital faster, CMCH Deputy Commissioner (north) Banaj Kumar Majumdar said.

The scene at CMCH was heartbreaking as microbuses carrying students with critical injuries started arriving at the hospital from Bandarban after 9:30pm.

Guardians, teachers and relatives of students thronged the hospital praying for the injured and the dead. Every time a microbus or an ambulance entered CMCH they proceeded with shaky feet to have a glimpse and see if they knew the injured.

## US, Russian

FROM PAGE 16

"While this is an extremely unusual, very low-probability event, the Iridium constellation is uniquely designed to withstand such an event, and the company is taking the necessary steps to replace the lost satellite with one of its in-orbit spare satellites," the Iridium Satellite company said in a statement.

Iridium Satellite, which says its network comprises 66 communication satellites plus in-orbit spares, rejected any fault for the accident.

"This satellite loss may result in very limited service disruption in the form of brief, occasional outages," it said, adding that the company expects to implement a solution by Friday, and move one a spare satellite already in orbit to replace the destroyed satellite within 30 days.

According to Space News, Nasa issued an alert Tuesday saying the 900 kilogram (1,980 pound) Russian Cosmos 2251 satellite collided with Iridium's 560-kilogram (1,232-pound) craft at 16:55 GMT, some 790 kilometres (490 miles) above Siberia.

It said Nasa was tracking two large clouds of debris.

The Washington Post quoted a Nasa memo saying officials "have determined that the risk to the space station is elevated, and they estimate the risk to be very small and within acceptable limits."

There is small risk the space station will enter the debris cloud, however, as the ISS is orbiting about 354 kilometres (220 miles) above Earth, some 436 kilometres (270 miles) below the collision orbit.

## Unruly students

FROM PAGE 16  
Teachers and employees fell sick, as they remained confined for a long time.

When asked the VC said he could not change the decision of the university syndicate.

Replying to a question, the VC said they would not file any case against the students who confined them and set fire to the furniture.

Earlier, over 250 police and RAB personnel sealed off the area and waited till 9 pm for a mutual solution. As the situation was getting worse they swung in to action and freed the confined teachers and students.

Mahbubur Rahman, deputy commissioner for Tejgaon zone of the DMP, said they resorted to baton charge only to free teachers and students confined for hours without food.

The DC confirmed that the law enforcers picked up five students in this connection.

## AL-BNP clash

FROM PAGE 16  
Witnesses said the clash ensued on the day between the two groups of people -- one led by BNP supporter Jalal and another by Awami League supporter Sharif and Monir following an altercation over playing a carom board, leaving 15 people injured from both sides.

About 50 houses, including the house of district unit Chhatra League vice-president Saiful Haque Swapan, were ransacked and looted during the clash.

Ten of the injured were admitted to district sadar hospital. A case was filed with the police in this connection.

Jalal also beat Monir and Sharif on Tuesday night following the altercation, according to the source.

## 6 upazilas

FROM PAGE 16  
upazila polls for the three posts -- one chairman and two vice-chairmen -- in each upazila will be held on April 6.

"The six upazila parishads will have just polling fresh on the day," Abdul Baten told The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, re-election at eleven polling centres in eight upazilas was suspended in the 22 January upazila polls due to some disturbances in the centres.

However, re-polling at eleven centres will not be held for all the three posts of the upazila elections of Chowhali of Sirajganj, Islampur of Jamalpur, Nandail of Mymensingh, Gazaria of Munshiganj, Ruppaganj of Narayanganj, Faridganj of Chandpur, Lakshimpur Sadar and Swandip of Chittagong.

Re-election will be held only for chairman post in some upazilas while for vice-chairman posts in some other upazilas and for the both posts in the rest of the upazilas.

Election results of 446 upazila parishads have been published through the official gazette while results of 35 upazilas were suspended for holding re-elections or carrying out the investigation.

## Zillur sworn in

FROM PAGE 1

Deputy Leader of the House Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, ministers, members of parliament, judges of the Supreme Court, and senior civil service and military officials.

After the oath-taking ceremony, Hasina said she was very happy to see a life-long politician become the president. "A new journey of democracy has begun in the country with Zillur Rahman as president," she told reporters.

BNP leaders MK Anwar and Barkatullah Bulu, Jatya Party Chairman HM Ershad, Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon, members of the diplomatic corps, senior journalists and Hasina's sister Sheikh Rehana were also present.

As Zillur, flanked by senior military officers entered Bangabandhu, at 7:00pm on the dot, outgoing president Iajuddin Ahmed welcomed him. The national anthem was played after he sat to Iajuddin's right.

Known as a close companion of independence architect and Hasina's father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the 79-year-old president shook hands with his predecessor and the chief justice immediately after taking oath. Zillur and Iajuddin swapped chairs amid a standing ovation.

After the swearing in, BNP Chief Whip Jainul Abdin Faruk said, "We congratulated Zillur Rahman earlier on his election as president and we congratulate him again today. He is an experienced politician. If he puts his experience to use, he will do a good job of upholding democracy."

Faruk said BNP will extend its cooperation to the new president if he performs his duty neutrally.

On January 3, AL Parliamentary Party unanimously nominated Zillur for the country's top post.

Son of late Meher Ali Mian, Zillur was born in a respectable Muslim family at Bhairab in Kishoreganj on March 09, 1929.

He started his academic life in Mymensingh town and passed his Matriculation examination from Bhairab KB High School in 1945. He obtained Intermediate of Arts (IA) certificate from Dhaka Intermediate College. In 1954, he got his MA with honours in History and LLB degree from Dhaka University.

He played an active role in the 1952 Language Movement. He presided over a student gathering held in the historic Amtala on Dhaka University campus on February 19, 1952, demanding Bangla be made the state language. Zillur was one of the prominent leaders of the 11 student-leaders who met beside the pond between Fazlul Huq Hall and Dhaka Hall on February 20, 1952, and decided to violate Section-144.

In 1953, he was elected vice-president of Student Union of Fazlul Huq Hall of Dhaka University without contest. The university authorities had expelled him and snatched his

masters' degree for his active participation in the Language Movement.

However, facing intense students' agitation the university was forced to return his degree. At the time of Jukto Front Election in 1954, he was made the vice-chairman of Election Steering Committee of the greater Mymensingh district. He was elected general secretary of Dhaka District Bar Association in the 60s.

Zillur Rahman became close to Bangabandhu in 1946 when he was in Dhaka Intermediate College. He was engaged in campaign for a referendum in Sylhet during the British era. He took part in all mass movements including the movement against military rule in 1962, the Six-point Movement in 1966 and Mass Upsurge in 1969. In 1970, he was elected member of the National Assembly of Pakistan.

He was one of the veteran organisers of the country's Liberation War in 1971. He was associated with the operations of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra (the radio station of independent Bangladesh) and publication of the newspaper Joy Bangla, the mouthpiece of the then Mujibnagar government.

In 1972, just after victory in the Liberation War, he became a member of Bangladesh Constituent Assembly and actively took part in forming the Constitution of Bangladesh.

He was elected lawmaker in 1973, 1986 and 2001. In 1996, after his election as lawmaker, he was made minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives. He was also deputy leader in parliament then.

Hasina had made Zillur the acting party chief after she was arrested in 2007.

His beloved wife Ivey Rahman, a veteran leader of AL, succumbed to her injuries two days after the August 21, 2004, grenade attack on an AL rally on Bangabandhu Avenue. Zillur is blessed with two daughters and a son.

## Ekushey Padak

FROM PAGE 16  
said an official release.

The distinguished persons are Dr Borhan Uddin Khan Jahangir (education), Prof Dr Syed Anwar Hossain (research), Mahbub-Ul Alam Chowdhury (language movement-posthumous), Ashrafuz Zaman Khan (journalism-posthumous), Begum Bilkis Nasir Uddin (music), Manik Chandra Saha (journalism-posthumous), Humayun Kabir Balu (journalism-posthumous), Begum Selina Hossain (literature), Shamsuzzaman Khan (research), Dr Quazi Khaliquzzaman Ahmad (poverty alleviation), Mohammad Rafi Khan (social service), Mansur-ul-Karim (fine arts) and Ramendu Majumdar (theatre).

The award carries Tk 40,000, a gold medal and a citation.

## Dhaka says no

FROM PAGE 1  
support Bangladesh's economic reform efforts.

The team met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Planning Minister AK Khandker, Adviser for Finance and Planning M Ashiur Rahman, Bangladesh Bank Governor Salehuddin Ahmed and other government high-ups.

"Bangladesh's economy has been able to resist thus far some of the effects of the global financial crisis. The domestic economy has retained momentum from a favourable agricultural performance and Bangladesh has benefited from the fall in food, fuel and other commodity prices," Singh said.

"Moreover, limited capital account dependence has largely protected the country's banks and stock market from the first round impact of the global crisis," he added.

"However, pressures from the global slowdown are building and growth could begin to moderate. In particular, demand has weakened sharply in Bangladesh's major export markets in the European Union and North America, and although remittances remain robust there has recently been a decline in the number of workers leaving Bangladesh for employment abroad," the IMF official observed.

He went on to say, "In this context, the new government is looking to improve the investment and growth

orientation of the economy through public sector and financial reforms.

"An important objective is to increase the support of government spending for infrastructure and social investment, thereby also boosting the economy's medium-term growth potential and accelerating poverty reduction. Another important dimension is financial sector reforms to strengthen the resilience of the sector and broaden and deepen domestic financial market."

Before the press briefing, the IMF team held about a one-hour-long meeting with the Bangladesh Bank governor and high officials.

Later the governor told the reporters, "Bangladesh does not need any overall bail-out package like the US. However, assistance may be needed in some sectors."

In the morning after the meeting with the IMF team the prime minister's Economic Affairs Adviser Mashiur Rahman at the finance minister's office told the reporters the recession has not yet affected the country's economy, but it will. He added nobody can say till now what extent the impact will be.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith said the economic condition of the country remains good so far and there was nothing to be worried about the impact during the current fiscal year.

"We'll have to think about the next fiscal year," he added.

## Gaziul

FROM PAGE 16

Gaziul regained consciousness yesterday and he no longer requires artificial life-support equipment.

His overall condition is improving, the doctor said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid a visit to Gaziul yesterday. She enquired about his condition and prayed for his early recovery.

Gaziul Haque was admitted to Square Hospital Wednesday. He has diabetes, a heart disease and has been suffering from old-age-related complications. He was put on the support of a ventilator at the ICU.

Gaziul Haque was born on Feb 13, 1929. He is widely respected for his active role in many historic movements in the country.

Gaziul, a member of the Awami League advisory committee, played a leading role in the language movement. He took part in the mass upsurge of 1969.

He was also a valiant freedom fighter and fought bravely in the Bogra frontline.

He also played an active role in the anti-ocratic movement of 1990.

His daughter Sujata Haque requested admirers, friends and relatives to pray for his early recovery.

## New books

FROM PAGE 16  
Parishad, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Samraggee, Chayon and Ujjiban.

The number of new books on women and gender issues is low though.

Female writers think that most publishers are not interested in bringing out books on these issues as such books do not sell very well.

A few publishers' representatives, requesting anonymity, said they hardly find good scripts from new female writers and so are not eager to take risks by publishing those.

Meanwhile Bangla Academy authorities are expecting huge crowds at the Ekushey Boi Mela today, on Pahela Falgun, the first day of spring.

Hundreds of young boys and girls, dressed in traditional clothes -- usually in yellows and oranges -- throng the Institute of Arts premises on the Dhaka university campus in the morning on this day. They take part in the "Boshonto Boron" festivities welcoming the spring.

These crowds then move on to the book fair, resulting in a surge of crowds.

Publishers also expect good sales on the occasion, as many people will be buying books as presents for their near and dear ones.

A total of 89 new books arrived at the fair yesterday which include -- "Chharar Ghuri Urouri" by Shabuddin Nagri, "Nisanggo Karagare Sheikh Hasina-331 Din" by Baby Moudud, "Ho Chi Miner Deshe" by Shakur Majid, "Bete Vooth" by Anisul Haq, "Bibash Bhanggo" by Mohammad Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal and "Ebong Parisey" by Nirmalendu Goon.

The fair will open at 11:00am today -- four hours earlier than usual for the weekend.

## Sajeda

FROM PAGE 16

The parliamentary party gave farewell to Zillur Rahman at the meeting.

Zillur Rahman will be able to bring back the dignity of the post of president, Hasina told reporters after the meeting.

"I shall do everything in my capability to prevent any wrongdoings," Zillur said.

Sajeda Chowdhury vowed to work sincerely for making the parliament effective and urged the oppositions to return to the parliament.

## Help cut poverty

FROM PAGE 16  
play a key role in eradicating poverty.

She said the new government "puts enormous emphasis on agriculture to build up a prosperous and developed Bangladesh".

The PM also called for establishing peace in the region for overall sustainable development.

Hasina urged the IMF to help underdeveloped and developing countries to face the challenges of the recession in the world economy.

In this context, she underscored the need for proper utilisation of funds and aid provided by the development agencies to the developing nations, including Bangladesh.

Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Kazi M Aminul Islam and Press Secretary to the PM Abul Kalam Azad were present.

## Part of Mumbai plot

FROM PAGE 1

"This is a positive development," a foreign ministry statement said in response to Islamabad's admission and announcement that it had filed a case against eight suspects, six of them in custody.

"It remains India's goal to bring the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks on Mumbai to book, and to follow this process through to the end," the foreign ministry statement said.

"We would also expect that the government of Pakistan take credible steps to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism in Pakistan," it added.

Malik said investigators had traced a boat engine used by the attackers to sail from Pakistan to India and busted two hideouts of the suspects near the southern city of Karachi.

Other leads pointed to Europe and the United States, and Malik said Pakistan would ask the FBI for help.

"I want to assure the international community, I want to assure all those who have been victims of terrorism that we mean business," Malik said, waving a copy of Pakistan's initial findings at reporters gathered inside his ministry.

"We will continue our investigation, but we want tenable evidence from India. We want full cooperation from India so that this kind of ring be smashed."

India says all 10 gunmen only one of whom was captured alive were Pakistanis and that their handlers in Pakistan had kept in close touch with them by phone during the three-day assault.

New Delhi provided a dossier of evidence to Islamabad, testing Pakistan's insistence that it would do all in its power to punish those responsible and that it has truly abandoned its past sponsorship of Islamist militants including the Taliban.

In Pakistan's first detailed response, Malik said criminal cases had been opened against eight suspects on charges of "abetting, conspiring and facilitation" of a terrorist act.

He said six of them were in custody, including Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi and Zarrar Shah, both Lashkar-e-Taiba leaders named by India as the masterminds of the attack, and a person who sent an e-mail claiming responsibility for the attacks.

Indian media said at the time that they received an e-mail in the name of the previously unknown Deccan Mujahideen a name which suggested an Indian rather than Pakistani group was behind the attacks and which now appears to have been a decoy.

Malik said the culprits were "non-state actors," a phrase used by Pakistani authorities to counter allegations that its intelligence agencies had a hand in the attacks.

Malik said the assailants used three boats to travel from Pakistan to Mumbai.

He said detectives had traced an engine recovered from one of the vessels to a shop in the southern Pakistani port city of Karachi. He said the shopkeeper had provided the phone number of the buyer, which led to a bank account in the name of Hammad Amin Sadiq.

Malik said authorities had arrested Sadiq and obtained from him information that led them to bust two "hide-outs of the terrorists," one in Karachi and one about two hours drive away.

He described Sadiq, a 37-year-old who had been living in Karachi, as "the main operator" but didn't elaborate.

He said the detainees had told of how the group used a spot on the Pakistani coast to practice their sea-borne attack.

To stiffen its case, Pakistan was sending 30 questions to India about the attacks, Malik said. Among the additional details sought are the DNA of the 10 gunmen and information on intercepted phone conversations between the militants and their handlers.

He also asked New Delhi to investigate what contacts and help the attackers had inside India. The terrorists also used phones with Indian SIM cards, he noted. Their two suspected handlers are still at large.

India's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the government will consider Islamabad's request. "After that examination, we will share whatever we can with Pakistan," the statement said.

On Thursday, Malik also suggested a wider international dimension to the crime.

One suspect, Javed Iqbal, had been "lured" back from Barcelona, Spain, where he had been living, and was now in Pakistani custody. While in Spain, Iqbal had arranged Internet telephone accounts used in the attacks and bills had been paid in Italy, Malik said.

Suspects also used a digital teleconferencing system whose service provider is based in Houston, Texas, while a Thuraya phone was issued in a Middle Eastern country, he said.

Other bills were paid by a company in Islamabad and two people have been arrested as a result, Malik said.

"It is not only Pakistan, but the system of the other countries has also been used," Malik said.

actor" but didn't elaborate.

He said the detainees had told of how the group used a spot on the Pakistani coast to practice their sea-borne attack.

To stiffen its case, Pakistan was sending 30 questions to India about the attacks, Malik said.