

Little magazine

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on issue after being motivated by some organizations like Sector Commanders' Forum and the political move to banish the anti-liberation forces, said Major Quamrul Hassan Bhuiyan (Rtd), chairman & chief researcher, Centre for Bangladesh Liberation War Studies.

The stall named 'Shudhui Muktiuddher Boi' is selling comic series on the heroes of the liberation war to disseminate its message among young readers.

The demand of little magazines has also increased significantly this year. Visitors were seen flocking to the circular stalls under the two banyan trees on the book fair premises.

"This year the sale of little magazines is comparatively high. In the previous years, the number of stalls for little magazines was 11/12 but this year it is 40 in the fair," said Arif Ahmad, editor, Sahitya Bazar, a little magazine.

"This year the arrangement of the fair is more professional and systematic than previous. Every stall has its indication number. Previously, I could not say the number of my stall when people asked me," said Ahsan Habib, popular writer and editor of satire magazine Unmad.

"We feel different kinds of inspiration in the fair this year, he said.

Besides selling books in the fair, the stalls set up for voluntary blood donation were carrying out their activities in full swing. Among the stalls, Quantum Foundation has collected 1,172 bags of blood till yesterday.

Seventeen new books were launched in the book fair yesterday include Kobi O Kobita by Md Moniruzzaman, One Zero One Cyborg Team by Azman Andalib, Nishattay by Syed Ahmad, Megher Kole Roudra Hase by Syed Ahmad,

Zillur

FROM PAGE 1
Rehana, her close relatives and the president's family members were present.

BSS adds: Earlier, the newly elected president paid rich tribute to the memories of his late wife Ivy Rahman, a senior Awami League leader killed in the August 21, 2004 grenade attack, placing wreath at her graveyard at Banani in the capital.

Son, daughters and other close relatives of the president were present.

After that, President Zillur Rahman placed wreaths at the graveyard of the family members of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who were assassinated brutally along with Bangabandhu on August 15, 1975 in the capital.

He also placed floral wreaths at the mazars of Awami League's senior leaders at the same graveyard.

The president offered feteha and stood in solemn silence for some time at the graveyard.

Drug addict

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handed over the youths to the police suspecting their involvement with the murder.

The youths confessed to the police that they killed the two sisters.

Tipaimukh

FROM PAGE 1
the face of protest within and outside India.

A long march from Sylhet to Jakiganj and environmentalists in India had strongly protested the construction of the barrage.

According to the WDB officials, Indian state-owned NIPCO Company recently started the groundwork on the barrage. An appraisal committee of river valley and hydro-electric experts of India issued the clearance certificate for the barrage few months ago.

Sajjadul Hasan, deputy commissioner of Sylhet, said he would inform the appropriate quarter about the latest development on Tipaimukh barrage.

The barrage at the catchment of Surma and Kushiara rivers at an estimated cost of Rs 4 crore is aimed at building up a 1500-megawatt hydel project.

When the barrage will be completed by 2012, the 350-km long Surma and 110-km long Kushiara rivers will dry up in the winter, seriously affecting agriculture and bringing about ecological changes in the region, experts said.

Maiden Saudi woman minister appointed

Hajar Bochor Pore by Syed Ahmad and Samudra (poetry) by Sohani Hossain.

"But at least today (Saturday) I can move to a stall and buy something. It was quite impossible for me yesterday (Friday). Today I have bought 22 books," said Rifat, a DU student.

The taskforces members also admitted the fact and said there is no way of doing it as 42 days of the current academic year have already been passed and students are still facing textbook crisis.

"Something is better than nothing. We have issued two deadlines to publishers observing the tremendous crisis. Yes, students have to face troubles. But now they can continue their study after getting books," said Mirza Abdullah Baki, chief of the taskforce and additional director general of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB).

He said they will give an attention to check the problems in printing and binding as soon as the present situation improves. However, publishers said textbooks crisis will not be ended even after publishing all NCTB-tendered 2.65 crore textbooks because the actual demand is estimated to be over five crore.

Students will have to read the textbooks with low quality printing and binding this year for this reason, they said.

Most of the publishers failed to market the required number of 2.65 crore textbooks last month under all the three phases, alleged NCTB Chairman Masir Uddin.

"When there will be no crisis of textbooks, we will take steps to ensure quality of binding and printing of books so that students will be encouraged," he told The Daily Star.

On February 5, the present government formed a taskforce for textbooks following recommendation by the education ministry in an effort to solve the textbooks crisis. The taskforce will also prepare a set of recommendations so that the textbooks crisis will not happen again in the next year.

Under Ghaiith, the Muttawa, who enforce Saudi Arabia's strict-but-eroding Islamic social mores, such as complete separation of unrelated members of the opposite sexes and Saudi women shrouding themselves completely in black while in public, have been widely feared.

Ghaiith was replaced by Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Humain, who quickly gave notice of changes to come.

"We will try to be close to the heart of every citizen. Their concerns are ours," Humain told Al-Arabiya news channel.

"This is a turning point. It is the biggest change that happened in this country in 20 years," Mohammad al-Zulfa, a member of the Shura council, told AFP.

"It is a new start for King Abdullah. People are expecting changes," Zulfa said.

Abdullah, who ascended the throne after the death of his half-brother King Fahd in August 2005, had made mainly minor changes in the government since then, and expectations had grown for him to put his mark more deeply on the administration.

But the most powerful cabinet positions of defence, interior, and foreign affairs remained unchanged, remaining in the hands of the key princes of the royal family who have held the jobs for many years if not decades.

The changes announced Saturday included naming Ambassador to Lebanon Abdulaziz al-Khoja as information and culture minister, legal expert Sheikh Mohammed al-Issa as justice minister, and senior national guard official Prince Faisal bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Saud as education minister.

Bengali culture

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culture so that they can become ambassadors of our culture and heritage all over the world," he added.

"We have a plan to arrange the programme every year and students from outside the city could also participate in the events," he further said.

Students from nine renowned schools including Maple Leaf School, BIT School, BIS School, Sea Breeze School, Oxford International School, Green Gems International School, Sunnydale School, Playpen School, and St Jude's School participated in the programme. They performed group songs and dances.

Textbook

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said a publisher wishing anonymity.

Despite knowing about these types of problems in the newly printed textbooks, the publishers are not getting time to check the books before marketing, he added.

Besides, officials of National Curriculum & Textbooks Board (NCTB) do not get time to check the printed textbooks before marketing, as they have to allow the publishers self-permission without checking due to tremendous pressure from the taskforce.

The taskforces members also admitted the fact and said there is no way of doing it as 42 days of the current academic year have already been passed and students are still facing textbook crisis.

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Blight blow

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The government targeted production of 80 lakh tonnes of potato from five lakh hectares of land this season but it was cultivated in 4.64 lakh hectares. Last season, 92 lakh tonnes were produced from 5.20 lakh hectares, a senior DAE official mentioned.

"Late blight caused by bad weather may affect total production of potato," he said seeking anonymity.

Contacted, DAE Deputy Director in Munshiganj Hira Lal said the fungal disease attacked potato crop in 81 hectares out of the 35,587 hectares brought under potato cultivation this time.

But farmers said the affected area is several times that claimed by the DAE.

Ramzan, a farmer at Charkewar in the district, said the disease attacked potato crop in more than 100 hectares only in that area.

Afzal Hossain, "I borrowed money to cultivate potato, but all my potato field is now affected. I am now helpless."

In Rangpur, farmer Sohail Khandoker of Mahiganj, said late blight damaged almost 30 percent of the plants on 30 acres of his land.

Another farmer, Sajedul Islam Liton of Pirganj, said around 40 percent of his eight acres of potato field was affected in January and about 30 percent this month.

In Kurigram, the disease damaged potato crop in some areas of Rajarhat and Sadar upazilas.

A team of agriculturists looked into the matter and found low quality seeds were a major reason behind it.

Reports from Nilphamari said the disease led to untimely harvest of potato and consequent huge supply of it in local markets. And potato price has fallen sharply. It now sells at only Tk7-8 a kg compared to Tk 18-20 just two weeks back.

Hari Padi Mazumder, DAE director (field services), said agriculture extension officials had promptly advised farmers to spray fungicides when the attack was at primary stage.

"Those who followed their advice saved their crop," he claimed.

The field reports on late blight attack affecting potato crop were received from our correspondents Rafique Sarker in Rangpur, Abdul Wahed in Kurigram, EAM Asaduzzaman in Nilphamari, Farhana Mirza in Munshiganj and others sources.

16 killed in Indian train crash

AFP, Bhubaneswar

Rescuers searched through the wreckage of smashed carriages yesterday after a train derailed in eastern India, leaving 16 people dead and almost 200 injured, rail officials said.

The high-speed Coromandel Express, connecting the eastern metropolis of Kolkata and the southern city of Chennai, derailed Friday night while changing tracks at Jajpur, 100km from Orissa's state capital Bhubaneswar.

"Its tragic. 16 passengers have died, while close to 200 got injured," Ajay Kumar Goel, general manager of Eastern Railways, told AFP.

Witnesses said 12 carriages had jumped the tracks while travelling at high speed.

"The train had acquired speed and minutes later it crossed the station and just toppled," said Hemant Bhalotia, whose 70-year-old father died.

The accident came on a day when federal railways minister Lalu Yadav took credit for turning round the giant state-run transport network, which was once headed for bankruptcy.

The Press Trust of India news agency reported that Yadav has ordered an inquiry into the

100 fall sick in food poisoning

UNB, Gazipur

Over 100 students and teachers of Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology fell sick owing to food poisoning at a feast yesterday.

Sources said the students and teachers fell sick after taking food at the monthly feast at Shaheed Muktiyoddha dormitory on Friday night.

"Many of them have been suffering from diarrhoea, fever and stomach upset since they dined at the feast," said many a student.

Over 50 students were taken to sadar hospital as their condition deteriorated.

Death toll

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skidded off the road and fell into a 500 feet deep ditch.

Sources said the rescuers salvaged the bus Friday night but they could not find the body of the female student as the ditch got covered with mud and water after the accident.

Meanwhile, teachers and students of the college brought out a mourning procession on their campus in the morning. College authorities also announced a three-day mourning programme.

"She sought my permission before going to the picnic and I was unwilling to let her go. Finally, I allowed her because she missed our family visit to St. Martin's Island just two weeks ago due to her year final exam," her father Tejiyo Kumar Mutsuddy said in an emotion-choked voice.

Priyashi was a familiar face in cultural arena and obtained many prizes, including 3rd place in Jatiya Shishu Kishor Sangskritik Protijogita 2008 organised by Bangabandhu Shishu Kishor Mela. She also got prize in All India Children and Adolescent Cultural Competition held in Kolkata in 2000.

Investigation officer of the case Sub-inspector (SI) Tariqul Islam of Ramna Police Station said police are looking for clues and trying to arrest the killers.

Several electronic and print media and ntv demanded arrest of the killers.

Love lost

FROM PAGE 1
Agargaon. On Valentine's Day yesterday, a nurse was checking her health.

"I feel great when my sons come to see me," whispered Selina in a feeble voice.

"Please do not make up stories madam," a nurse reminds her gently. "Your sons have never come to see you."

Selina falls silent and the look in her eyes is vacant. She looks lost in a loveless world. Probably dawn on her stroke-ridden brain that her wealthy past, her children established in life -- nothing matters now that she is living on others' pity.

Bedridden for the last four years after a series of strokes, she also suffers from diabetes and blood pressure. Recently she had a heart attack, her doctors said.

Lying on a plastic sheet reeking of urine, Selina was taking few orange pods from a kind woman who had come to visit the elderly in the home.

"None of her children looks after her. Her daughters visited her only four times in the last four years," said her attendant.

accident as well as compensation for families of the dead and those injured.

On Friday he boasted that the number of train accidents had decreased significantly during his tenure as minister, from 325 in 2003-4 to 194 in 2007-8.

The railway system -- still the main form of long-distance travel in India despite fierce competition from new private airlines -- runs 14,000 passenger and freight trains and carries 18.5 million people daily.

Smoking free

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enhance the anti-smoking campaign as it is undoubtedly harmful to health," said Prof Nazrul adding that they would soon put up billboards prohibiting smoking on every building at the university premises.

Concurrently the shops selling cigarettes around the campus would soon be closed, he said.

Prof Dr Arup Ratan Choudhury, founder president of MANAS said tobacco is responsible for death of one in every ten adults worldwide.

He also said every year almost one lakh people die in our country due to smoking related diseases, which is 16 percent of the total deaths.

"Smoking can cause some 25 deadly diseases including lung cancer, cardio-vascular diseases, brain strokes, child death etc," he said adding that according to the World Bank 350 children dying of malnutrition every day across the globe can be saved if 69 percent of the total expense on tobacco is contributed for them.

Speaking as the chief guest at the conference at DMCH Modasser Ali said the government would put its effort to make all government institutions smoke free.

"Massive persuasion as well as implementation of the Act against smoking in public is important," he added.

Director of DMCH Abdus Shaheed Khan, Principal of the hospital Deen Mohammad and film star Ilias Kanchan also spoke, among others.

ntv staff killers

FROM PAGE 16
Talking to reporters after a function in Uttara, Home Minister Sahara Khatun expressed condolences at Atiqul's death and said she had asked the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad to take measures to arrest the killers as soon as possible.

"I am accountable to the prime minister for deterioration of law and order and so are the police for any crime committed under their jurisdiction," she added.

Atiqul's body was taken to ntv office at Karwan Bazar yesterday morning and later he was buried at his home village in Bogra after two namaz-e-janazas -- one at ntv and the other in Bogra.

Morgue sources said Atiqul was shot twice from behind.

Investigation officer of the case Sub-inspector (SI) Tariqul Islam of Ramna Police Station said police are looking for clues and trying to arrest the killers.

Former Additional Attorney General M Enayetullah said the bar council act does not permit any law graduate to practice law without having a bar council's enrolment certificate.

Asked when the Government Attorney Department will start functioning, Israil said the implementation of the Attorney Service Ordinance is up to the government now.

In May last year, during setting up of the department, it was empowered to recruit government attorneys for all courts including the Supreme Court.

The president promulgated the Attorney Service Ordinance, 2008 on December 2 last year repealing the Government Attorney Service Ordinance, 2008 through which the department had been established.

The law ministry in August last year had sent a proposal to the establishment ministry for creating about 3,700 posts for the attorney department and the courts. But the establishment ministry on November 25 approved 2,098 posts including 976 posts of government attorneys.

Director General of Government Attorney Department Israil Hossain said the ordinance made the bar council's enrolment certificates unnecessary for lawyers wanting to be government attorneys.

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Direct election

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for reserved seats for women in parliament.

A total of 188 party nomination aspirants collected forms on the first day from the AL chief's political office in the capital's Dhanmondi. Some of them also submitted the forms.

Ashrafal said the issue of staging direct election to reserved seats for women in parliament is there in the party's election manifesto.

The manifesto also said the number of reserved seats for women in parliament will be increased to 33 percent from 15.

Now parliament has 45 reserved seats for women who are elected by the lawmakers. The AL will get 35 seats and the others the rest in proportion to party strengths in parliament.

The minister said honest candidates having good educational qualification and background of making sacrifices for the party will be given priority.

He said the forms would be sent to the AL parliamentary board that will finalise the list of party nominees.

Party nomination aspirants can collect forms paying a non-refundable amount of Tk 10,000 each from the AL office and submit those from 11:00am to 4:00pm till February 18.

As per the constitution, the election to reserved seats for women must be held within 90 days since the publication of general election results.

The party nomination aspirants who collected forms yesterday include Jubo Mohila League president Nazma Akhtar, party's relief and welfare secretary Prof Nazma Rahman, Prof Jinnatunnesa Talukder, Hasina Doula, Mohila League president Ashrafunnesa Mosharrar, Faridunnaah Lily, Apu Ukil, Marufa Akhtar Popy and Lutfunnahar Munni.

BNP to recast

FROM PAGE 16
Six central teams led by the party's joint secretaries-general and organisational secretaries which are assigned to talk to grassroots level leaders, were already asked to submit their recommendations for party revitalisation to the party high-ups soon after completing their discussions.

Joint Secretary General Abdullah Al Noman told The Daily Star last night that they will submit their reports soon after completing their interviews with field level leaders.

He also said he is planning to submit an action plan for boosting the party's activities as well with his report. "An action plan should be adopted for better coordination between the central and field levels through central leaders' frequent visits to the grassroots level."

The party is now interviewing its grassroots level leaders to find out the reasons behind its humiliating defeat in the December 29, 2008 parliamentary election, and to better understand the overall organisational situation. The interviews which started on February 3 will continue till the end of this month.

Attorney office

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ministry based on recommendations of judges concerned.

Haque, who has been suffering from diabetes, heart disease and old age complications, was hospitalised on Wednesday morning as his condition deteriorated.

Born on February 13, 1929, Haque had played a leading role in the 1952 Language Movement. He was also a valiant freedom fighter and fought bravely in the Bogra frontline.

Haque, a member of the advisory committee of Awami League, also took part in the mass upsurge of 1969 and anti-autocratic movement in 1990.

16 sewerage

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fish of the lagoons, the metals would enter our bodies and remain there for years."

He said heavy metals can damage the kidneys and cause liver cirrhosis and cancer, so the authorities concerned should kill the fish every three months.

Faroque said it is very important to keep the place secured so that no one can enter otherwise it would be difficult to check the illegal fishing.

Fish cultivation in the lagoons was reportedly started by one Harunur Rashid Pintu, son of a WASA staffer in 1985. The practice went on unabated by a number of influential people in the area, till the end of the four-party alliance government's tenure, said sources of WASA. The fish breed in the lagoons naturally now. They are mostly Telapia which grow very fast, he said.

Executive engineer Kamrul, however, maintained that it is not possible to kill all the fishes in the lagoons, some always survive and start breeding again.

Lanka bus carrying

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residents of a home for the elderly inside a demarcated safe area within Sri Lanka's war zone, a doctor said Saturday.

Many elderly people were also injured in the shelling in the northeast coastal area of Puttumattalan, said T. Satyamurthy, a doctor working out of the makeshift community centre hospital.

He said hundreds of civilians were being treated in the hospital, which was running out of drugs and lacked clean toilets and clean water.

Security forces and police were also deployed Saturday at a local election for two provincial councils in the central and north-western parts of the country, officials said.

The government of President Mahinda Rajapakse turned the election into a referendum on its handling of the battle against Tamil Tiger rebels. Police said the vote went through peacefully and results are expected Sunday.

This week, the Red Cross evacuated more than 600 patients and family members from Puttumattalan by sea to the northeastern coastal town of Trincomalee.

Satyamurthy said another 600 badly wounded people needed to be evacuated for further treatment.

More than 200 patients suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease and kidney problems

Language hero

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ordinances to be laid before the legislature as bills.

On its instructions, the law ministry has already directed the ministries concerned to convert the ordinances into bills.

Committee Chairman Rahmat Ali yesterday told The Daily Star that they might seek Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's opinions before settling on the ordinances to be placed for ratification.

Contacted over phone yesterday, committee member and former law minister Abdul Matin Khāsurī said, "Hopefully we'll be able to resolve the issue at tomorrow's meeting."

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, another member of the committee, said they might need some more time as they will hear from experts as well.

The cabinet on Wednesday approved only three bills to be placed in parliament.

Legal experts say the government can, however, introduce fresh bills to be made laws along the lines of the ordinances that might not be ratified by February 24.

Taliban