

Process of trial of war criminals in a month

Says state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Liberation War Affairs ABM Tajul Islam yesterday said the government is likely to announce the final process and time of starting the trial of war criminals in a month.

The minister said this at a reception ceremony organised by Bangladesh Sangbadik Oikya Parishad at the PIB auditorium in the city on the occasion of the 25th death anniversary of General Ataul Gani Osmani.

Tajul said the government is determined to try the criminals as early as possible after collecting proper documents from the concerned sources, including states, during the liberation war.

Home, law and foreign ministries will work for the execution of the trial, he added.

“As the trial process has been started later, we will have to face various troubles related to this issue,” he said while handing Osmani awards over to eminent personalities for their contribution to different sectors.

A total of 14 important persons from business, media, education, medical service and administration received the awards.

Presiding over the programme, President of the Parishad ABM Abdul Halim Sarkar said the initiative was taken to help people remember the contribution of General Osmani, which is waning from the history of the liberation war.

The speakers said people have expressed their full support for the demand of justice of the war criminals by their clear mandate to the Awami League-led grand alliance government, adding that there is no way of escaping from the trial.

BIRDEM Prof Abdus Salam, Pathan Group Managing Director Nasiruddin Pathan, Stamford University President Prof MA Hannan Firoze, Joint Secretary of Fisheries and Livestock Ministry Shah Alam Siddiki, Moni Group Chairman Gausuddin Khan, Principal of Habibullah Bahar College Abu Bakar Chowdhury, media personality Aly Zaker and PIB Director General Md Nazrul Islam also spoke.

Initiative taken to build small ships at Naval Shipyard

Navy chief tells president

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Navy has taken an initiative to build small ships on commercial basis at the country's Naval Shipyard in Khulna.

Newly appointed Navy Chief Rear Admiral Zahir Uddin Ahmed apprised President Zillur Rahman of this when he met him at Bangabhaban.

During the meeting, the navy chief, who met Zillur for the first time after he assumed his office as president, informed the president about various ongoing development activities of Bangladesh Navy.

Zillur gave him a patient hearing and greeted Rear Admiral Zahir for being the navy chief.

He also praised the role of navy members in different nation-building activities, especially in relief works, during natural calamities.

The president expressed satisfaction over the recent re-commissioning of BNS Khaled Bin Walid, a war vassal of Bangladesh Navy, and assured the naval chief of an all out cooperation in performing his duties.

Secretary of the president's Office Md Sirajul Islam, Military Secretary to the President Major General Mohammad Ruhul Amin and the President's Press Secretary Abdul Awal Howlader were present.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presides over a cabinet meeting at the conference room of the cabinet division in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Invest more in Bangladesh

PM urges Canadian govt

UNB, Dhaka Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the Canadian government to invest more in various development sectors of Bangladesh.

She made the request when Canadian High Commissioner in Dhaka Robert McDougall called on her at her office in the Parliament house in the evening, Press Secretary to

the PM Abul Kalam Azad told reporters.

The prime minister thanked the Canadian government for its continuous cooperation in Bangladesh's various sectors since the country's independence in 1971.

They also exchanged views on how the country's democracy could be strengthened further and the Parliament be made more effective.

The Canadian envoy greeted Hasina on her assuming office as prime minister and hoped that the existing friendly relations between Bangladesh and Canada would be "strengthened further in the days to come" under her leadership.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Hasan Mahmud and Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Secretary Mollah Wahiduzzaman were present.

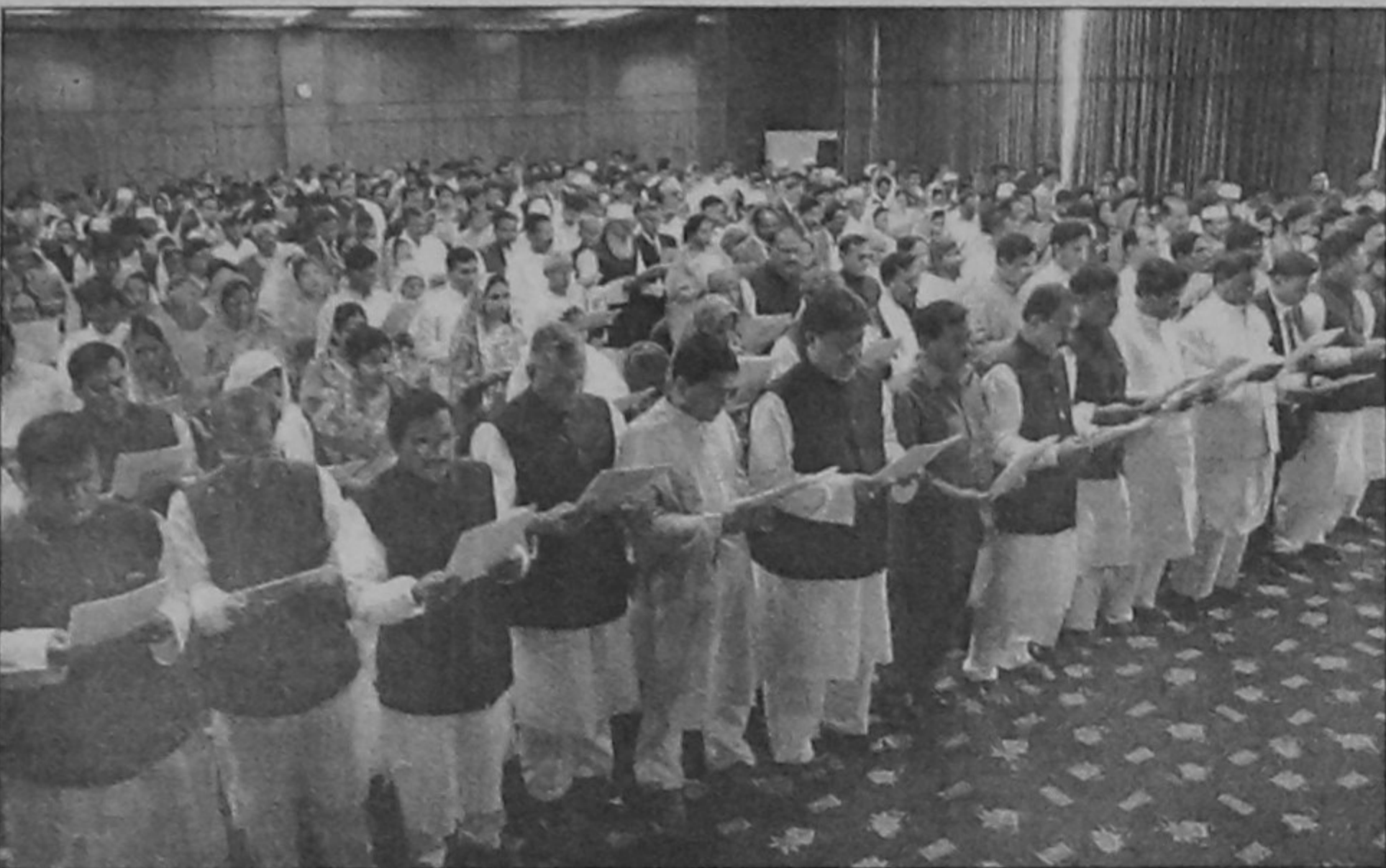


PHOTO: STAR

The newly elected upazila chairmen and vice-chairmen from Dhaka division take oath at the LGED auditorium in the city yesterday. Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Dr Khondakar Shawkat Hossain administered the oath to them. (Story on Page 1)

Listed criminal gunned down at Uttara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rivals gunned down a listed criminal at a fast food shop in the city's Uttara yesterday evening.

Identified as Makkub Hossain alias Mona, the victim was the gang leader of Mona group at Golapbagh in the city. He was accused in around 27 cases, including four murder cases, with several police stations.

Police said a number of three criminals fired at least 10 to 12 shots indiscriminately while Mona along with his two accomplices were having food at Mashalla Fast Food at Sector 7 at around 6:15pm.

Witnesses said the victim along with his accessories and the killers were taking fast food in the same shop.

At one stage, the criminals opened fire at Mona, leaving him seriously injured and left the place immediately.

Locals rushed the criminal down to Adhunik Hospital in the area where the doctors declared him dead.

Deputy Commissioner of Police at Uttara Zone Khandaker Rafiqul Islam said rivals of the listed criminal might have killed him over an internal feud.

Police said he used to control drug peddlers in the area, adding that internal feud in the gang might be the reason behind the killing.

Shop employee stabbed to death in Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Miscreeants stabbed an employee of a shop to death and injured three others at Chelopara village in Bogra Sadar yesterday.

The dead was identified as Sumon, 22, while the injured are Sabuj, Swapan and Pintu.

Local people said the miscreeants called Sumon out of his residence at about 11:00am and chopped him to death.

Sources said Sumon had an altercation with some local terrorists few days ago.

Meanwhile, President of District Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Shubhashish claimed that Sumon was one of their activists and alleged that cadres of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal killed him.

TIFA, TRANSIT, S ASIAN TASKFORCE BNP threatens tough programmes

UNB, Dhaka

The opposition BNP yesterday threatened to launch tough programmes if any anti-state agreement is signed by the government with any country.

“No one has the right to strike any deal with any country that goes against the spirit of our independence and sovereignty,” said BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

He was addressing a roundtable titled 'Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA)- Transit - South Asian Regional Taskforce vs Independence and Sovereignty' organised by 'Student Leaders of the 80s', a platform of former students leaders, at the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon.

Delwar said people have been protecting the country's independence and sovereignty with great patriotism, not to make it subservient to any country.

He said BNP is always vocal when it comes to protection of the independence and sovereignty. “We did that in the past and we'll do that in the future too, as BNP is the party of this soil and the

people of this country.”

He said BNP wants to cooperate with the government in doing things that ensure welfare of the people and protect the interests of the country.

Presided over by SM Kamaluddin Chowdhury, one of the 80s student leaders, the roundtable was also addressed by former minister and BNP leader Shah Mohammad Moazzem Hossain, JAGPA leader Shaful Alam Prodhan and Jatiya Press Club President Shawkat Mahmud.

KN hails govt for low price rice for workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Karmojibi Nari (KN) hailed the government for its decision of selling rice at Tk 18 to the garments and tea workers, says a press release.

General Secretary of the organisation Sharmin Kabir and Managing Director Rokeya Rafiq said this in a joint statement yesterday.

They also urged the government to include workers of other sectors in the programme.

Police start probe into Gazipur grenade blast

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The probe committee yesterday started investigation into the grenade blast detonated by JMB operative 'Mamun' at the police superintendent's office in Gazipur on February 20.

Sources said probe committee members Mozammel Hossain, additional deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Dhaka Range, and Saiful Islam, DIG (Criminal) Investigation Department (CID), visited the spot and collected some evidence yesterday morning.

They also collected statements of 15 witnesses, including policemen and journalists.

Sources said the DB personnel are carrying out drives to arrest other JMB members following the confessional statements of the detained operatives.

Meanwhile, of the 11 Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) operatives arrested here, seven have been sent to Dhaka for interrogation by the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) while four others are being interrogated by the detective branch officials in Gazipur.

Besides, the grenades recovered from the possession of the JMB operatives were defused yesterday in the jungle of Gazipur.

Major reshuffle in education sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government as a part of its major reshuffle in the education sector yesterday appointed Prof Khan Habibur Rahman as chairman of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) and Dr Liaquat Ali Khan as director general of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), popularly known as 'Shikha Bhaban'.

Habibur Rahman, acting director general of DSHE, was made chairman of NCTB in the place of Masir Uddin who was strongly criticised for the recent textbook crisis in secondary level, sources of education ministry.

However, Liaquat Ali Khan was the head of economics department at Chittagong College.

Besides, Dr Sirajul Haque, member of the NCTB, was made a director of the DSHE following the allegation of his failure to stop the textbook crisis.

Confer gallantry award on Father Rigon

Speakers urge govt at reception

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a reception ceremony yesterday called on the government to confer gallantry award, Bir Uttam or Bir Bikram, on Father Rigon, an Italian priest, freedom fighter and litterateur, in recognition of his contribution to the War of Liberation.

The government has recently awarded honorary citizenship to Father Rigon, who migrated to Bangladesh in the fifties and has dedicated his life to caring for others through constructive and creative activities.

During the Liberation War, he arranged treatment and food for the valiant freedom fighters. The Citizens' Committee for Reception to Father Rigon accorded the reception to him at the Liberation War Museum on his achieving the honorary citizenship.

Terming him a true friend of the nation, the speakers said Father Rigon has also contributed to literature and culture.

Recalling the services of Father Rigon during the liberation war, freedom fighter Hemayet Uddin said, "I am alive today because Father Rigon provided treatment to me in time after I received a bullet during the war. Like me, hundreds of freedom fighters received food, shelter and treatment from him."

At the ceremony, poet Asad Chowdhury handed over a crest to Father Rigon and Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) founder Valerie Taylor presented an Uttariyo, a traditional shawl of honour, to him.

Italian Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr Itala Occhi attended the programme as special guest.

Kaboo Kamrul, coordinator of the committee, artiste Shamim Ara Neepa, and Hasna Moudud also spoke at the function.

Father Rigon has translated a number of publications of Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Jasimuddin and Lalou into Italian.

Joint survey of Indo-Bangla rivers begins

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sakhira

A joint team of Bangladesh and India yesterday started a two-day survey of the border rivers of Ichchhamati and Kalindi to demarcate water territory of the two countries.

The survey started from Pillar No 1 at village Padmashakhra in Sadar upazila.

In Sakhira district, there are at least 100-kilometre river border between the two countries, sources said. Lands of Bangladesh drifted away towards India due to continuous erosion by the border rivers and change in their course over the years. The map of Sakhira was changed following disappearance of a vast tract of land in Sadar, Debhata, Shyamnagar and Kaliganj upazilas, sources said.

The Charge Officer of Bangladesh Land Records and Survey Department, Ferdous Hossain, is leading the Bangladesh side while the Indian side is being led by the Charge Officer of Indian Land Record and Survey Department, S Chandra.

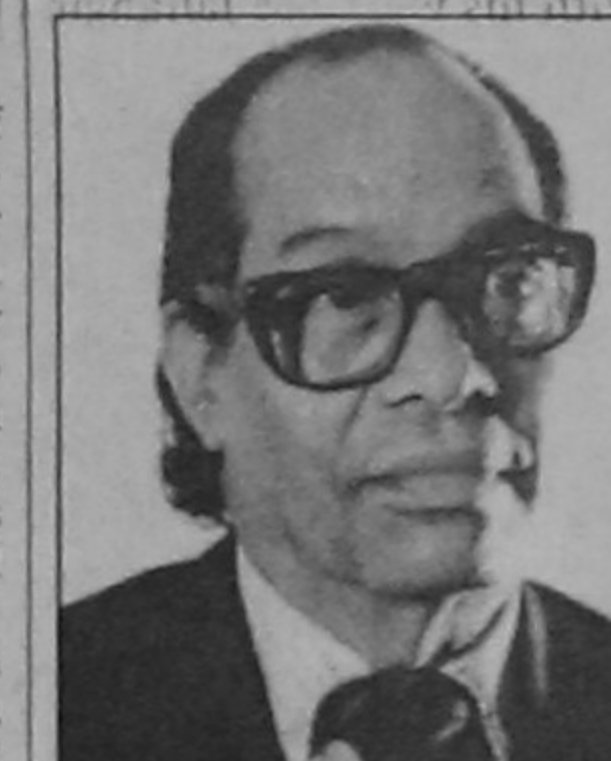
Kabir Chy made Bangla Academy chairman

UNB, Dhaka

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury has been appointed chairman of Bangla Academy for two years.

The terms and condition of his service will be guided by the Bangla Academy Ordinance, said an official handout.

The appointment of Prof Chowdhury, now in his late 80s, is effective from February 22, 2009.



Ahmed Sharif's anniversary of death today

METRO DESK

Today is the 10th death anniversary of Dr Ahmed Sharif, a renowned scholar, researcher of Bangla literature and a forerunner of free thought movements, says a press release.

On the occasion, Swadesh Chinta Shanga will arrange Dr Ahmed Sharif commemoration lecture and award giving function at the Business Studies Faculty auditorium at Dhaka University at 4:00pm today.

Indian intellectual and former vice-chancellor of Viswa Bharati University Prof Amlan Dutta and Naxalbari Movement peasant's leader Comrade Azizul Haq will deliver the commemoration lectures.

Sector Commander Col (Retd) Quazi Nur-uz-Zaman Bir Uttam and eminent journalist and cultural activist Kamal Lohani will receive this year's commemoration awards.

One killed in Ctg road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A driver was killed and his helper injured when their loaded truck fell from Kalurghat bridge breaking through the railing yesterday.

The victim driver was identified as Abdul Kuddus, 36.

The accident occurred as the driver lost control over steering wheel of the truck before reaching the Boalkhalied of the bridge.

Helper Mohiuddin, 30, was treated at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.



A mob vandalises Padma General Hospital, a private clinic, in the city yesterday after a day labourer died in the clinic due to alleged negligence of doctors.

Parliament to be effective

Hope German MPs

UNB, Dhaka

A four-member German parliamentary delegation called on leader of the opposition in parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office yesterday.

Sebastian Ebathy, MP of Social Democratic Party, led the delegation.

Emerging from the meeting he told newsmen that his government hoped Bangladesh parliament would be effective.

“Any dispute may arise

good relationship economically and politically for long.

Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury, foreign affairs adviser to BNP chairperson, who was present at the meeting, said they discussed about further improvement of relations and cooperation between the two countries in different fields.

The other members of the delegation are Steffen Reiche of SPD, Holger Ortel of SPD and Hans Peter Thul of Christian Democratic Party (CDU).

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light fog may also occur over the river basins of the country during late night to morning. Met Office said in a forecast.

It said that night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 33.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Patuakhali and lowest 11.8 degrees Celsius at Srirongol.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:59pm today and rises at 6:24am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	31.8	19.5	75	36
Chittagong	28.5	15.5	79	75
Rajshahi	32.5	13.0	68	43
Khulna	32.6	20.5	87	45
Barisal	32.4	19.5	77	67
Sylhet	30.9	15.8	48	38
Cox's Bazar	29.8	16.5	80	82

DHAKA TODAY

Workshop
IUCN Bangladesh organises a workshop to share findings of different studies on community based sustainable management of Tanguar Haor. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 9:00am.

Symposium
United Nations Association of Bangladesh organises a symposium in observance of the International Mother Language Day. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 5:00pm.

Roundtable
SME Foundation organises a roundtable on 'Export dynamism in SMEs: Challenges and opportunities'. Venue: Export Promotion Bureau conference room. Time: 11:00am.

Seminar
North South University organises a seminar on 'Global financial crisis: Challenges for Bangladesh'. Venue: STR 300, NSU. Time: 6:00pm.

Discussion
Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco and Mother Language Lovers of the World, Bangladesh Chapter jointly organise a discussion on the occasion of International Mother Language Day 2009. Venue: NAEM. Time: 3:00pm.