



Farukul Islam's 50th anniversary of death today

METRO DESK

Today is the 50th death anniversary of Farukul Islam, a pioneer of the insurance business in the early fifties in the then East Pakistan and the country representative of the Norwich Union Life Insurance Company, a UK-based insurance company, says a press release.

He passed away on March 16 in 1959 at the age of 52, leaving behind his wife and four young children.

Farukul Islam was the deputy managing editor of the Ittehad, the first Muslim-run newspaper in Kolkata in 1946, founded by Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy, and worked under noted journalist, politician and political satirist Abul Mansur Ahmad. He was one of the first non-white members of Dhaka Club in 1949.

He is survived by his wife Musleha Islam, daughter Shaheen Anam and three sons -- Wasif Islam, Sheraz Faruk and Rizwan Faruk.

Advocate Aminul Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the first death anniversary of Advocate Aminul Islam, a former member of

of the then East Pakistan Civil Service, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his village home and Aftabia Madrasa in Sherpur.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the programme and pray for eternal peace of the departed soul.

Rangpur varsity academic activities begin Mar 28

METRO DESK

The academic activities of the first year students (sessions 2008-2009) of Rangpur University will begin on March 28.

The orientation programme of the students will be held the next day, says a press release.

Detailed information will be available on the university notice board, added the release.

DUEDAA reunion Apr 3

METRO DESK

The annual general meeting and reunion of Dhaka University Economics Department Alumni Association (DUEDAA) will be held on April 3 at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, says a press release.

DUEDAA members are requested to communicate with Parveen (01716-161805), Farid (01711-537100), Asari (01916-858250), Fatema Yusuf (01713-244340), Zia, Nurul Amin (01819-220259), Si Khan (01817-045648), Monwar (01711-342896), Hafiz (01814-652655), Fatema Zohra, Mالدar (01711-534763), Kamrul (01711-433807), Rezan (01819-214351), and Iftekhar (01711-475335) for registration.

BADC activities curtailed under donors' pressure

Matia tells parliament

UNB, Sangsad Bhaban

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury yesterday told lawmakers that the activities of Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) have been significantly curtailed due to pressures from the donors.

Such disclosure from none other than the minister and veteran politician only would give credence to wild criticisms that donors—the funding agencies now euphemistically called development partners—sometimes give wrong prescriptions for the client countries' socio-economic health.

"BADC has not been strengthened in the past due to mentality to bow down to the donors," the former fiery student leader, Matia, told the House in reply to a supplementary question from Awami League member Abdul Mannan.

Admitting that the BADC might have errors, the outspoken minister said it is not right to cut the head to heal the

headache.

Matia said more money is needed to strengthen the BADC, especially for its seed-related activities, and urged the finance minister to consider allocating adequate money for this purpose.

Attaching importance to private initiatives relating to seeds, she, however, said the government would not allow the private initiators to profiteer and supply contaminated seeds. "The government will have the intervening power."

Responding to another supplementary question from AL member Moslem Uddin, the agriculture minister admitted that there is existence of contaminated fertilisers in the country and the government is trying to address the problem.

Replying to a supplementary question from AL member Atiur Rahman Atiq, she said the harvest outlook of Boro is good and assured that the government would ensure price support for the farmers.

To a supplementary question from treasury bench member ABM

Anwarul Haque, Matia said the previous BNP-Jamaat government did not believe in taking care of agriculture. "Import and take commission" was their motto in this regard, she quipped.

About the immediate-past caretaker government, she said, "The caretaker government did not have any accountability whatsoever."

Matia told the questioner that subject to availability of a list the government would certainly consider helping farmers affected by river erosion.

Replying to a question from AL member AKM Rahmatullah, she told the House that the food demand in the country for 2008-2009 fiscal year stands at about 2.64 crore tonnes.

She said the neat production of food crops in 2007-2008 was 2.62 crore tonnes.

Matia said the government has undertaken various steps to make the country self-sufficient in food.

'Try war criminals to free nation of stigma'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Sector Commanders' Forum on Saturday said there is no alternative to the trial of war criminals to free the nation from its long-lasting stigma and incidents like BDR mutiny will break out one after another without the justice.

They said this at a view exchange meeting with teachers and officials at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

Planning Minister Air Vice Marshal (ret) AK Khandaker said the liberation war was the national war where millions of people took part. Of them, 80 percent were general people.

There is no justification for

punishment to anybody in the country if the war criminals are not brought to trial, he said, adding that if any criminals go unpunished, the number of crimes increases in society.

Sector Commander Maj Gen (ret) CR Dutta said the trial of war criminals will have to be done through combined strength of both past and present generations.

"We will have to face more strong sabotage than Pikhana mutiny if the war criminals remain out of trial," said Lt Gen (ret) Harun-ur-Rashid.

Vice Chancellor Prof AMM Shafiqullah presided the meeting where Sector Commander Maj Gen (ret) KM Shafiqullah also spoke.

Entries invited for essay competition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Disaster Management Bureau of Bangladesh is going to organise an essay competition for school and college-level students with a view to creating awareness of disaster management among the people, says a press release.

The subject of the essay for school group is on 'Disaster and Women' with maximum 2000 words, while 'Disaster and Mass Media' is for college group with not more than 2500 words.

The interested students have been requested to send their essays in English or Bangla before March 25, by the e-mail address 'idmb@btcl.net.bd'/'abusad@eque@gmail.com'.

The students also can send their scripts by post or courier to the Director (admin), Disaster Management Bureau (Fifth Floor), Disaster Management and Relief Bhaban, 92-93 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.

A total of six students will be rewarded, the release added.

Restoration of Zia's mural demanded

CU CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday intercepted the Chittagong city BNP and its front organisations while they were proceeding towards the Shah Amanat International Airport to lay siege to it protesting removal of a wooden mural of late president Ziaur Rahman from the lounge of the airport.

Following the rally, the BNP leaders and activists held a rally at Bijoy Nagar, around two kilometres off the airport.

Former ministers Abdullah Al Noman and Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Ziaur Rahman Foundation Chittagong District unit Convener Dr Shahadat Hossain and worker leaders AM Nazimuddin and MA Sabur spoke at the rally.

Later, they took out a procession towards the airport at around 5:15pm. But, police intercepted them near Jetty No 15, around one-and-a-half kilometres off the airport.

Officer-in-Charge of the concerned Patenga Police Station Mohammad Abdullah told The Daily Star that no agitation is allowed within the periphery of the airport since it's a Key Point Installation (KPI) of the country.

Fertiliser seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkhira

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized 280 bags of smuggled potash and sulphur fertilisers from a truck near the BDR 41 battalion headquarters in Sathkhira yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, BDR intercepted a Khulna-bound truck and seized the fertilisers.

BDR also arrested two people for allegedly smuggling Indian fertilisers and seized the truck.

The arrestees are Mokhlesur Rahman, 28, son of Nur Islam and Khoka Mia, 25, son of Shukhand of Benapole.



(From right) Prof Mohammad Shahidullah, National Prof MR Khan, Mahe Alam and Sheikh Moazzem Hossain hold tickets at a lottery launching ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday for fundraising of Child Health Foundation Bangladesh.

Tk 6.25 lakh looted at CNG filling station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed muggers looted Tk 6.25 lakh at a CNG filling station at Paribagh in the city early yesterday after firing shots indiscriminately that left one employee of the station injured.

Identified as Md Zafar Ahmed, 35, the victim was the cashier of the filling station.

Police said a gang of five armed muggers in a microbus reached Sajahan Petrol Pump and CNG Filling Station in the guise of CNG customers at around 4:15pm.

All of a sudden, the criminals entered the cash room and took away the money from the cash box at gunpoint. They confined the employees to a room in the station.

However, the employees caught mugger Ahsan from behind while they were getting into the microbus to flee the spot.

When the other muggers shot fires to free their accomplice, Zafar sustained bullet wound on his head.

Officer-in-Charge Rezaul Karim of Shabbagh Police Station said according to confessional statement of Ahsan, police arrested another mugger Mahub and recovered Tk 6500 of the looted amount from his possession.

The arrestees said they visited the filling station to commit the robbery two days ago, the OC said.

A case was filed in this connection with the police station, Shabbagh police said.

Meanwhile, two people sustained bullet injuries inside the office of a recruiting agency at Malibagh intersection as unidentified criminals opened fires at the office in the afternoon.

The injured were identified as office assistant Shamsur Rahman and visitor Samir Halder.

Ranna police said a gang of four to five armed muggers stormed into Mahub International Agency at Malibagh intersection. At one stage, they shot fires that left the two bullet injured.

Mother killed while trying to save son from road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Like every other day, four-year-old Hridoy was playing in front of his house at Modhupur village in Thakurgaon Sadar yesterday morning.

At one stage, he moved a few yards out and he was on Thakurgaon-Atwari highway, unable to sense what was to come.

But she did sense it. Finding Hridoy nowhere on the yard, his mother Jahanara Begum, 30, rushed to the highway, only to see a speeding bus running towards her bundle of joy.

Without the least hesitation, she dived on the highway and pushed her son to safety, out of the reach of the bus. But, the bus didn't spare her and crushed the brave mother under its wheels.

Following the accident, her husband Nazrul Islam, has almost lost his sanity. He said that they had another son and Jahanara was carrying.

Four killed
Our staff correspondent in Bogra adds: Three people, including an army person, were killed in separate road accidents in Bogra yesterday.

CIVIL SERVICE

Regular appointment every year

Assures Muhith

UNB, Savar

In the backdrop of irregular appointment in the public services in the past, Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday said the government would henceforth appoint manpower in the public service every year.

"It's very unfortunate that the recruitment in the government services was not regular," he said, inaugurating a foundation-training course for the 43rd BCS officers at Bangladesh

Public Administration Training Centre here.

He advised the participants - 184 officers from 19 cadres - to improve their sense of timeliness and improving discipline while being updated with the current

issues of terrorism and climate change besides their day-to-day duties.

"You are experiencing the different dimensions of terrorism almost every day. You must know and understand the issue," he said, adding that the issues like environmental degradation and climate change are becoming more important for Bangladesh as the country emerged as the worst victim of the natural disaster.

"You must know how the 20 percent land of the country, vulnerable to plunge under water, can be saved," Muhith added.

Cabinet Secretary Abdul Aziz and Public Works Secretary Iqbal Mahmud were also present at the function.

Bijoy TV case stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday upheld its chamber judge's order staying the proceedings against Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury and others in the Bijoy TV graft case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

The three-member full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice Md Fazlul Karim passed the verdict with disposing of the government's leave to appeal against a High Court (HC) order that had also stayed the proceedings of the case.

Upon a petition, the HC on January 17 last year stayed for three months the proceedings of the case and also issued a rule upon the deputy commissioner of Chittagong to explain why the proceedings of the case should not be quashed.

On February 10 last year, following a stay petition filed by the government, the Appellate Division stayed the High Court order for a week and asked the government to file a regular leave to appeal with the court by this time.

As per the Appellate Division order, the government has filed

CONTEMPT OF COURT

Petition to exempt Rafique-Ul-Huq from personal appearance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Barrister Rafique-Ul-Huq, a senior-most lawyer of the Supreme Court, yesterday filed a petition with the High Court (HC) to exempt him from personal appearance before the court in connection with a contempt of court petition against him.

Without exempting him from personal appearance, the HC bench comprising Justice Syed AB Mahmudul Huq and Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury fixed March 22 for passing order on his (Rafique) petition.

Earlier on February 25, responding to a contempt petition jointly filed by two SC lawyers, the HC had directed the barrister, who was a counsel for both Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and former premier Khaleda Zia, to appear in person before it at 10:30am on March 22 in connection with this petition.

The court had also issued a rule upon him to show cause why contempt proceedings should not be drawn against him on charge of using 'abusive' and 'objectionable' language about a judge of the court.

The petition filed by advocate Idrisur Rahman and advocate Zahurul Islam Mukul stated that Rafique-Ul-Huq had abruptly stood up and shouted abusive and objectionable language at Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury during the delivery of a dissenting judgement on February 23.

During the hearing of Rafique's petition, advocate TH Khan argued for the barrister, while advocate Salah Uddin Ahmad appeared for the lawyers.

Flag Vessels Bill passed in JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday passed the Bangladesh Flag Vessels (protection) (amendment) Bill 2009 to protect the interest of national flag carrier ships.

Shipping Minister Afsarul Amin proposed the speaker for passing the bill in the parliament.

Earlier, the bill was sent to the parliamentary standing committee on shipping for scrutiny.

Several opposition lawmakers opposed the passage of the bill and demanded the speaker sends the bill to elicit further opinion, but it was rejected by voice vote.

JOSNA MURDER

Two arrested, victim's cellphone recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The detective police yesterday recovered the cellphone of Josna Kabir, who was found dead in a luggage at Zia International Airport (ZIA) on March 6, and arrested two people in this connection.

Quoting the arrestees, detective branch (DB) of police said they killed Josna over previous enmity and left the body on the first floor at terminal building-1 of ZIA in a luggage.

DB police said they arrested Mohammad Ahsan Habib alias Sabuj, 27, former husband of victim's daughter Dalia, from the city's Green Road area and recovered the cellphone from Badda area according to his confessional statement.

Later, DB police arrested his accomplice Mohammad Ashraf Ali, 22, from Mathabanga village of Uttar Matlab in Chandpur.

DB police conducted several drives in the capital and Chandpur from March 11-14 to arrest Sabuj and Ashraf and to recover the cellphone.

DB sources said Sabuj and his accomplice Ashraf killed Josna.

Police said the enmity began after the divorce of Dalia.

Josna, wife of Bangladeshi expatriate Kabir Hossain living in Malaysia, was a resident of Khilkhet area in the city.

After receiving a cellphone call, Josna went out of her house at around 3:30pm on March 5 and since then she was missing, her family sources said.

Family members of Josna said they rushed to the Dhaka Medical College morgue to identify the body following the report of different television channels and dailies.



Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and the regions of Dhaka and Sylhet in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may fall slightly over southern part of the country and it may remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:08pm today and rises at 6:06am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 34.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 13.8 degrees Celsius at Rajshahi and Srimongal.

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 | 33.8 | 18.2 | 61 | 32 |
| Chittagong | 32.0 | 20.5 | 72 | 67 |
| Rajshahi | 34.0 | 13.8 | 67 | -- |
| Khulna | 31.8 | 16.7 | 80 | 89 |
| Barisal | 31.8 | 16.5 | 77 | 60 |
| Sylhet | 33.0 | 18.1 | 45 | 52 |
| Cox's Bazar | -- | 19.0 | 77 | 73 |

DHAKA TODAY

BIDS seminar

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organises a seminar on global financial crisis and its impact on Bangladesh. Venue: BIDS conference room. Time: 2:30pm.

BIZ BEE seminar

BIZ BEE (Brach University business club) organises a seminar on the current meltdown and its impact on the economy of Bangladesh. Venue: Brac University indoor games room. Time: 3:00pm.

Seminar

Centre for Advanced Research in Humanities of Dhaka University organises a seminar on reflection on the OIC. Venue: 434 Lecture Theater, DU. Time: 4:00pm.