



Asaduzzaman Noor announces the launching of Desh TV in front of the Shikha Chirantan at the Suhrawardy Udyan in the city yesterday.



President Zillur Rahman, right, exchanges greetings with foreign diplomats while Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, left, talks with injured freedom fighters at a reception at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday. The reception was arranged on the occasion of the Independence Day. PHOTO: STAR

## Desh TV goes on air

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a commitment to presenting healthy entertainment, thoughts and ensuring objectivity and professionalism, Desh TV, a new private satellite channel, went on air yesterday coinciding with the celebration of the 38th Independence Day.

Through a different and exceptional programme in front of the Shikha Chirantan (Eternal Flames) at the historic Suhrawardy Udyan in the city, the new TV channel kicked off its formal inauguration.

In the brief launching programme of the channel, there was not any special or chief guest.

Under the sky of the Udyan, Desh TV Managing Director (MD) lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor announced aims and objective of the television channel.

"More commercial broadcasting is not our aim, we are committed to presenting healthy entertainment, thoughts and society as role of TV media is inevitable in building a healthy and progressive-minded society," Noor said.

The channel will focus on enriching the country's culture, values and communal harmony which, they believe, will strengthen democracy, he added.

After his speech, artists sang the national anthem at the foot of Shikha Chirantan. The whole programme that lasted for around 10 minutes was telecast live on the channel.

With the air of Desh TV, the number of private television channels in the country now stands at 10.

## Rab to be upgraded, well equipped

Says director general

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members yesterday celebrated the fifth anniversary of the crime busting elite force by offering condolence to the family members of those killed during the February 25-26 BDR mutiny.

Rab, which was formed on March 26, 2004 through attending the national parade of Independence Day, has by now arrested around 45,000 people, including 475 militant suspects, under its belt.

The agency, comprising efficient members from army, police, Ansar, BDR, armed battalion and coastguard forces, came into operation to crack down on serious crimes across the country.

President, prime minister, home minister and state minister for home gave separate messages on the occasion, while national dailies bring out special supplements highlighting various achievements of the force.

The anti-crime force, with its hard-line tactics, is widely held to have considerably surpassed other law enforcement agencies in its various drives against militancy and terrorism, illegal arms, narcot-

ics and illegal VoIP equipment.

But the agency has also faced strong criticism over extrajudicial killings, usually described as deaths due to 'crossfire' or 'armed encounters'.

Rab Director General Hasan Mahmud Khandaker hoped that the force would be upgraded and well-equipped in combating crimes in land, air and water.

According to Rab headquarters, the 8,000-strong force has arrested 44,828 crime suspects to date, recovered more than 5,000 firearms and over 51,000 rounds of ammunition.

The Rab personnel have arrested 449 members of the banned Islamist outfit Jama'at ul Mujahideen Bangladesh, including its top leaders, and another 26 militants of other outlawed groups.

Rab also showed much success in anti-narcotics operations, recovering 150 kilograms or 42,561 purias of heroin and 164,000 Yaba tablets among other drug seizures.

Around 250 Rab members have been brought under punitive measures so far due to negligence of their duty, misconduct or indiscipline.

A special Darbar (assembly) was held at the Rab headquarters on the occasion.

## President hosts reception

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman hosted a reception on the occasion of the Independence and National Day at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina attended the function. Valiant freedom fighters, family members of Birshreshtha gallantry awardees and family members of the army officers brutally killed at the BDR headquarters also attended the reception.

After the national anthem, one-minute's silence was observed in honour of the slain army officers.

President and PM exchanged greetings with the guests. Leading artists presented patriotic songs and Armed Forces and Ansar-VDP bands played instrumental music.

Former presidents Prof Iajuddin Ahmed and H M Ershad, Speaker Abdul Hamid, Chief Justice MM Ruhul Amin, ministers, diplomats, CEC, SC judges, MPs, political leaders, chiefs of the three services, secretaries, editors, academics, business leaders, senior journalists and artists also attended the reception.

The president and the PM separately sympathised with the members of the bereaved families of the army officers killed in the Pikhana carnage and enquired about their well-being.

Later, President hosted a separate reception for the family members of the Birshreshthas.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY OBSERVED

# Call for trial of war criminals under int'l crimes act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political and socio-cultural organisations celebrated the 38th Independence Day by paying rich tribute to the martyrs of the liberation war with a call for quick implementation of the government decision to try war criminals under the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973.

To mark the day, they laid wreaths at the National Mausoleum at Savar and Shikha Chirantan at Suhrawardy Udyan in the city and holding a number of programmes at different venues.

The speakers at the programmes demanded trial of the war criminals immediately.

Bangladesh Jatiya Party, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Liberal Democratic Party, Bangla-desher Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Singsad, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, Bangladesh Shanti Parishad, Bangladesh Gonotantrik Ainjibi Samity, different education institutions and many other organisations placed wreaths at the mausoleum.

After placing a wreath, CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan said the nation is united for the trial of war criminals, adding: "The government will have to implement the mass demand for trial of the war criminals without wasting any time."

Muktijoddha Oikya Parishad, a platform of freedom fighters, Proshika Manabik Unnayan Kendra and United Citizen's Movement also placed wreaths at Shikha Chirantan.

Liberation War Museum organised a cultural programme for children on the 4th day of its week-long programmes marking its 13th

anniversary as well as the Independence Day.

Students of Sargam Lalitakala Academy rendered songs on the liberation war, while the students of Spandan perform dances and those of YWDC staged a drama. Students of UCEP School recited poems at the programme.

State Minister for Science and ICT Yafez Osman inaugurated a daylong collage photography exhibition titled 'Flash

Back: Dahokal (1971-2009)' organised by Ghatik Dhikkar Stambha Sthapon Sangha at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi in the city.

The photos showed different times of political changes and a period of turbulence since 1971.

Sammilita Sangskritik Jote, a platform of cultural activists, organised a programme at the Central Shaheed Minar as part of its three-day cultural programmes to mark the

Independence Day. Sandhani, a voluntary organisation, set up a blood donation camp on the Dhaka University campus, while Bangla Academy held a discussion at Nazrul Mancha on the academy premises to celebrate the day.

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury presided over the programme where Planning Minister Air Vice Marshal (retd) AK Khandker was present as the chief guest.

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☑ Last Date of Application: March 31, 2009  
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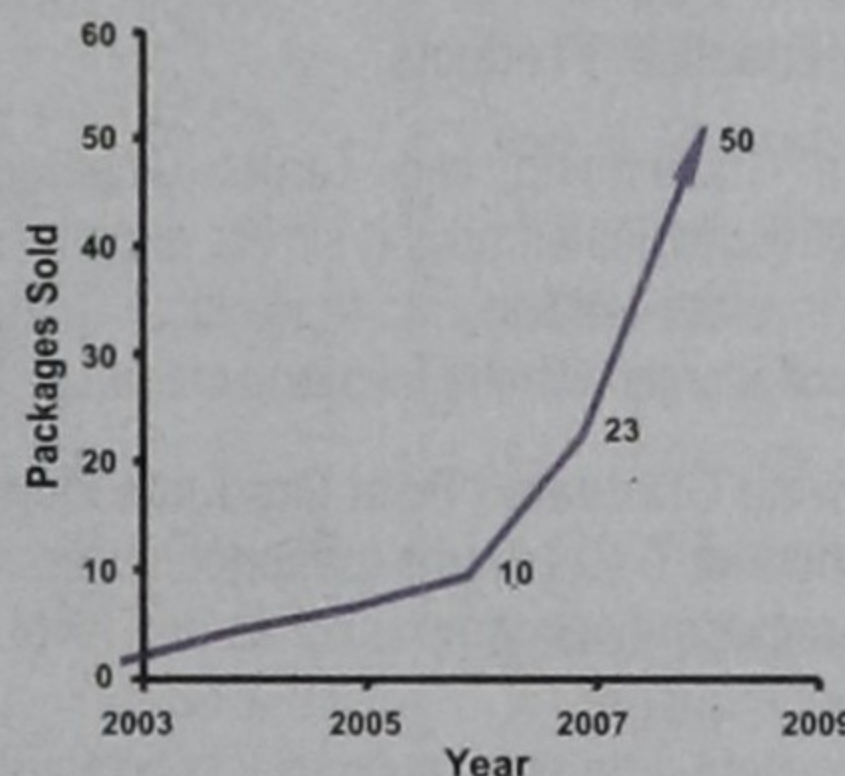
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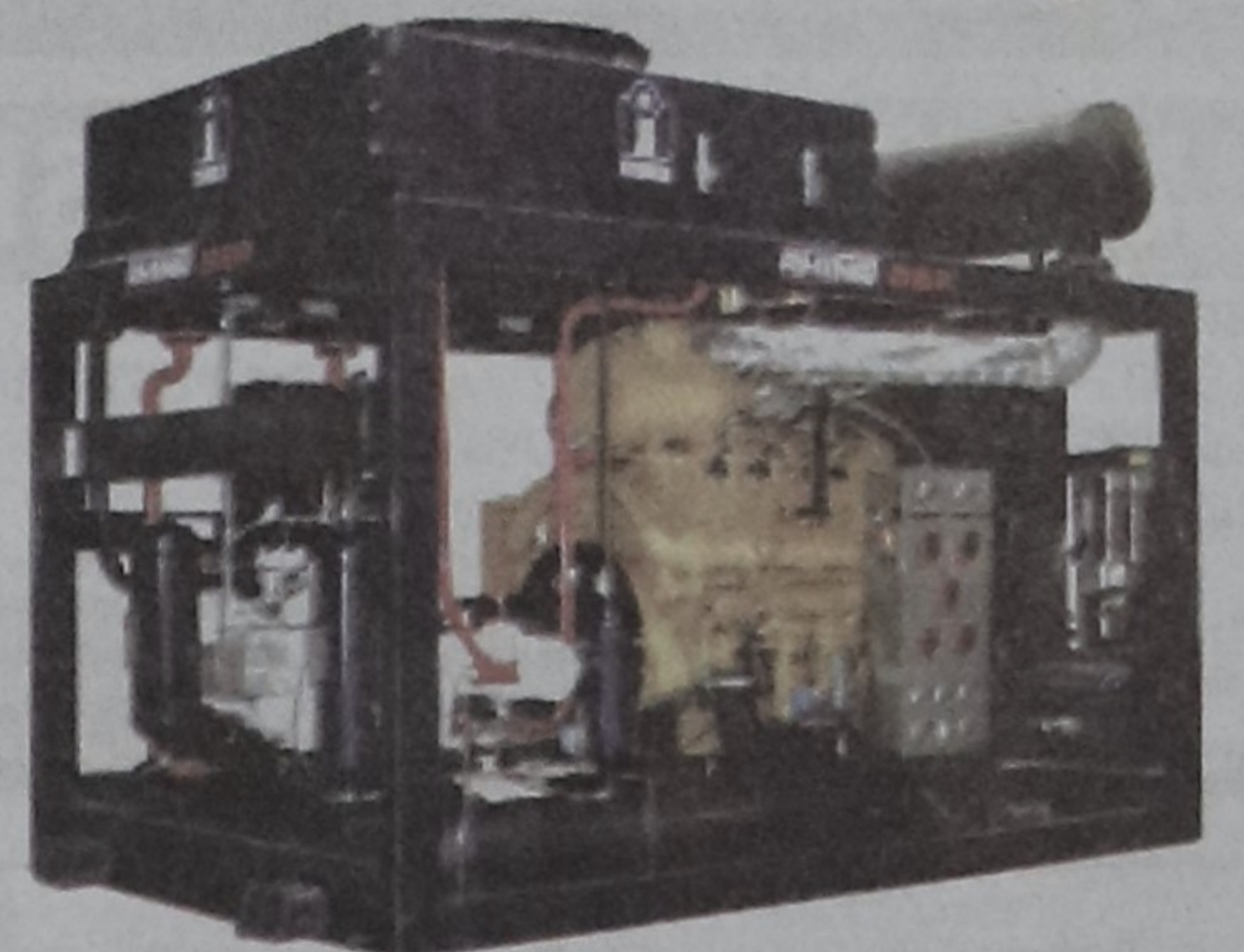
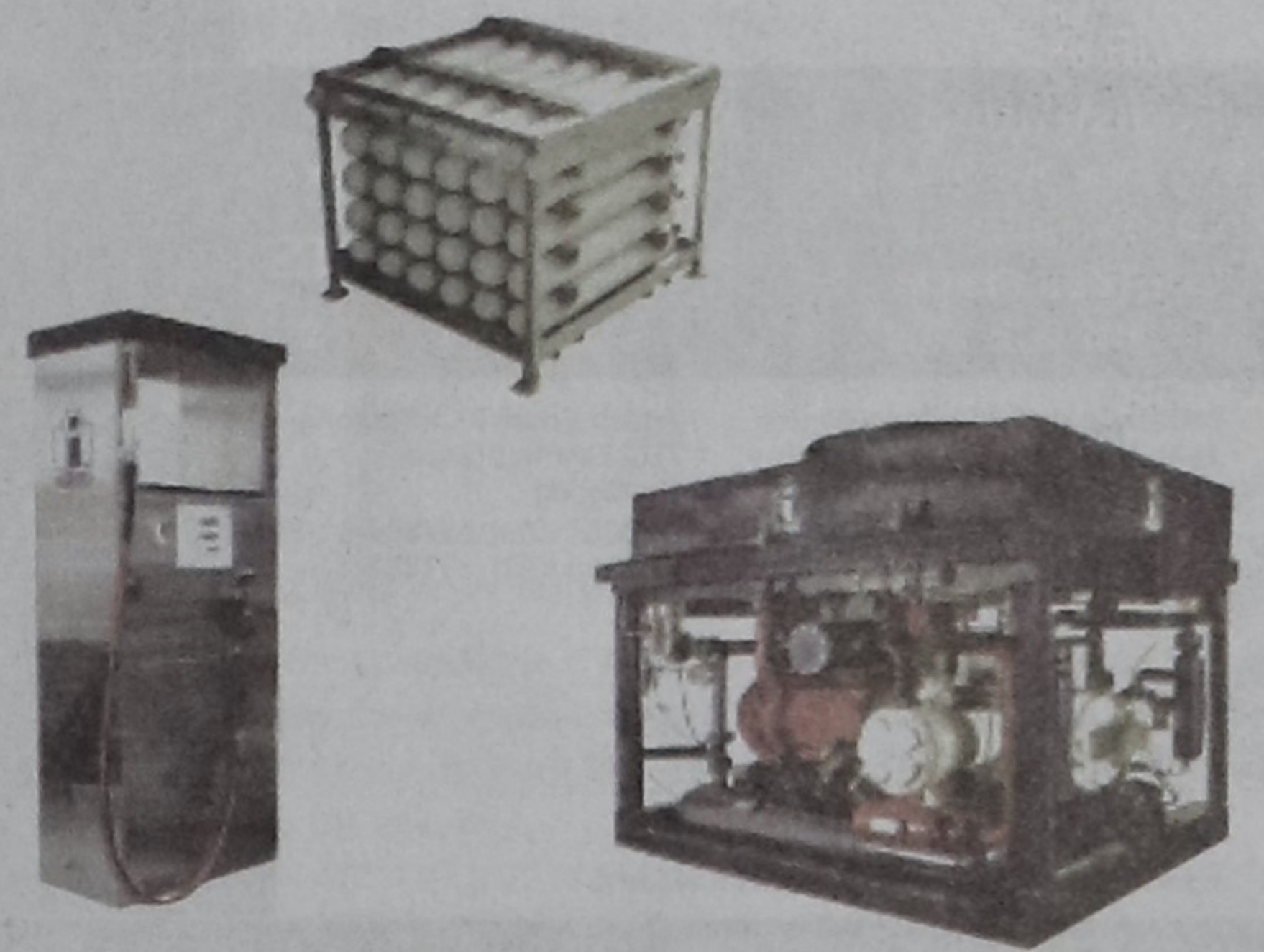


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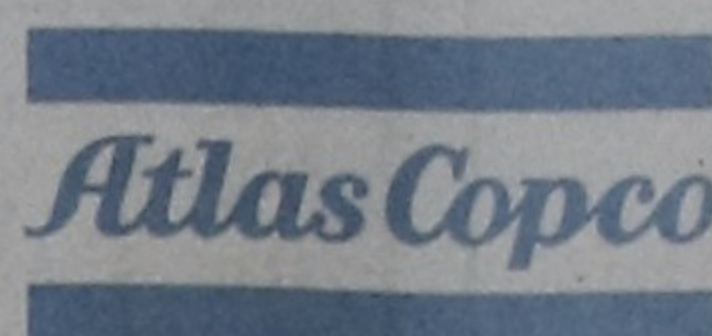
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