

War crime trial under Int'l Crimes Act '73: Shafique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said the trial of war criminals will be held under International Crimes (Tribunal) Act 1973.

The government will appoint 12 to 20 prosecutors and the same number of investigators for holding the trial, the minister said this while talking to reporters at his office in the afternoon.

Replying to a question, Shafique said there is no pressure on the government over holding the trial of the war criminals.

He said a total 16,172 cases relating to VAT, tax and income tax

involving Tk 6,551 crore have been pending with the High Court.

The government has decided to move the cases through the attorney general's office, not through the panel lawyers, for their speedy disposal as well as realising the money.

The attorney general's office has already been asked to do the jobs for speedy disposal of the cases, Shafique said.

The decision came at a meeting at the law ministry about speedy disposal of cases as many writ petitions and appeals on VAT, tax and income tax remain pending.

The minister chaired the meeting, while representatives from the finance ministry, NBR, customs and attorney general's office were present.

Road accidents kill five

METRO DESK

Five people were killed and 15 others injured in separate road accidents in Sirajganj, Comilla and Kurigram yesterday.

UNB from Sirajganj adds: Two people were killed and 15 others injured in a road accident on Jhal over-bridge in western Golchattar near Jamuna Bridge early yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Abdul Haque Khan, 55, superintendent of National Board of Revenue, and Laxmi Mia, 70, of Kachua upazila in Chandpur district.

Police said the accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound bus dashed a standing truck from behind on the over-bridge at about 2:00am, leaving 17 passengers injured.

Of the injured, Haque and Laxmi died on the way to

hospital and the rests were admitted to Sadar hospital.

Police arrested the bus driver Masudur Rahman.

UNB from Comilla adds: Two people were killed as a bus hit a rickshaw at Chouddagram upazila headquarters in Comilla yesterday.

The deceased could not be identified immediately.

Police said the Feni-bound bus from Comilla hit the rickshaw from behind at noon, killing the rickshaw puller and a passenger on the spot.

Police seized the bus but the driver managed to flee the scene.

Our correspondent in Kurigram reports: One person was killed in a road accident at the west side of Dharla Bridge on Bhurungamari-Kurigram road yesterday.

The victim was identified as Shahidul Islam, 28, son of

late Golap Uddin of River View Mor area in Kurigram town and a toll collector of the Dharla Bridge.

Police and local sources said a Kurigram-bound cattle loaded truck was crossing the bridge at 7:00am. Shahidul tried to stop the truck for collecting toll, but the truck driver did not stop the truck and ran over him.

Following the incident local people set fire in another truck and block the road communication for two and half hours.

Later, Deputy Commissioner of Kurigram Md Asaduzzaman rushed to spot at 9:15am and brought the situation under control.

Officer-in-Charge of Sadar Police Station Humayun Kabir said they could not identify the truck, but a case was filed in this connection.

College student murdered in Benapole

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Miscreants killed a college student at Sharsha Nizampur village of Benapole yesterday.

The victim was identified as Mehedi Hasan Shimul, 22. He was a third year honours students at Habibullah Bahar College, Dhaka.

Police said when Shimul was going to a local market on Saturday afternoon the miscreants abducted him and took to local Sanyasitola gher (fish enclosure). They tortured him throughout the night, hanged him to death and left the body there.

The fishermen found the body of Shimul and informed police.

Police recovered the body and sent it for autopsy.

A case was filed with Sharsha Police Station in this connection.

More subsidies in agricultural sector demanded

METRO DESK

Farmers at a conference in Sirajganj on Saturday demanded more subsidies in the agricultural sector and proper steps for saving the poultry and dairy industries.

They also demanded agro-information centres be set up in every village and non-political organisations be formed for the wellbeing of the farmers.

Around 1500 farmers attended the conference titled 'Krishi Budget Krishaker Budge', which is a programme of Channel i's Hridoye Mati O Manush, directed by agri expert and noted media personality Shykh Siraj.

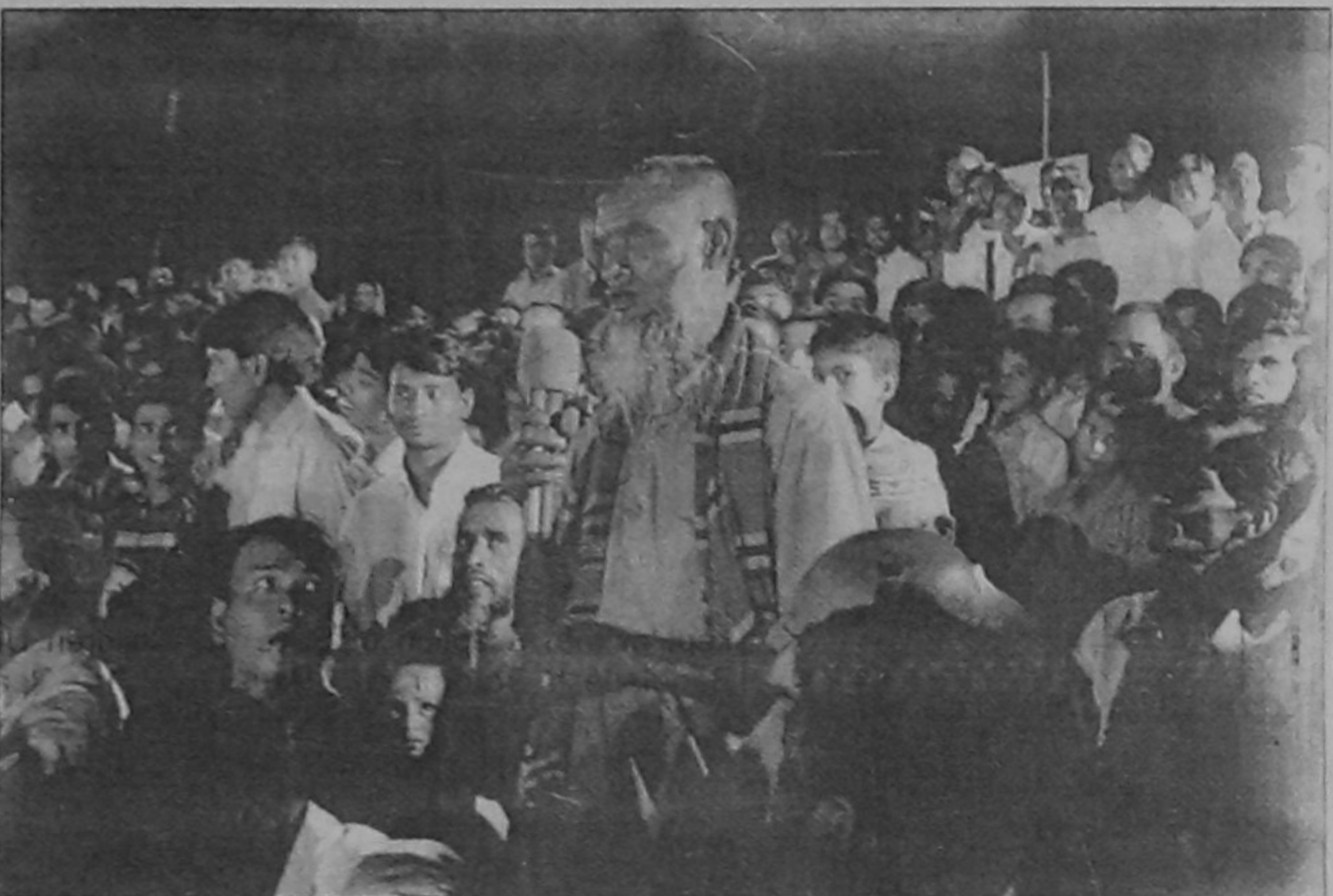
Food Minister Dr Abdur Razzak was present at the programme held in a field near Shialkol Bazar at Sirajganj.

He said the government is keen to ensure agricultural development. Hoping that the upcoming budget will be farmer-friendly, he said he will inform the ministry concerned of the demands of the farmers.

Shykh Siraj pointed out different problems of the farmers at the two-hour programme, which was also attended by Industries Minister Dilip Barua.

Shykh Siraj suggested starting Shashya Gudam Rin Prokolpo in every region of the country, ensuring proper price of the crops, putting an end to buying adulterated fertilisers from India, more concentration on bio-agriculture, allocating subsidy for poultry and dairy sectors, increasing the manpower of Agriculture Extension Department, etc.

Krishi Budget Krishaker Budge began in 2005. This is the fifth year of this programme. This year, the first event was held at a madrasa at Hat Hazari in Chittagong.



A farmer speaks at a conference titled 'Krishi Budget Krishaker Budge' at Shialkol Bazar in Sirajganj on Saturday. The conference is a programme of Channel i's Hridoye Mati O Manush, directed by agri expert and noted media personality Shykh Siraj.

Deal with UNDP to launch project in coastal areas

METRO DESK

The government of Bangladesh and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed an agreement for the implementation of the first-ever field-level project in coastal areas on Saturday, says a press release.

Titled 'Community-based adaptation to climate change through coastal afforestation in Bangladesh', the new project signed in the city directly targets vulnerable people living in communities in the coastal belts.

The project aims to enhance the resilience of both coastal communities and protective ecosystems through community-led adaptation interventions that focuses on coastal afforestation and livelihood diversification, which is a top priority intervention area as identified by the government's National Adaptation Programme of Action for Climate Change.

The project also intends to further enhance the national, sub-national and local capacities of the government authorities and sectoral planners to understand climate risk dynamics in coastal areas and to implement appropriate risk reduction measures.

The five coastal districts in which the project will be operated are Barguna, Patuakhali, Bhola, Noakhali and Chittagong.

The project will also enhance the adaptive capacity of local communities to anticipate dynamic climate-related threats and protect their livelihoods.

It will also improve the individual, institutional and systemic capacity at all levels of public administration to plan for and respond to climate change risks in coastal areas.

The total value of the project amounts to \$5.4 million (approximately Tk 37 crore). Of them, \$3.3 million (Tk 22.7

crore) is contributed by the Global Environment Facility/Least Developed Countries Climate Change Fund (GEF/LDCF), \$1.1 million (approximately Tk 7.5 crore) from UNDP and \$1 million in kind contribution (approximately Tk 6.8 crore) from the government.

"Adaptation to climate change has become the new development challenge for Bangladesh. As such, this is the right project to take significant measures towards demonstrating adaptation strategies for vulnerable coastal communities," said UNDP Country Director Stefan Priesner.

It is hoped that the project will be a showcase for other least developed countries (LDCs) also working on climate change adaptation projects.

The results of the project are intended to be present to the upcoming climate conference in Copenhagen in December this year.

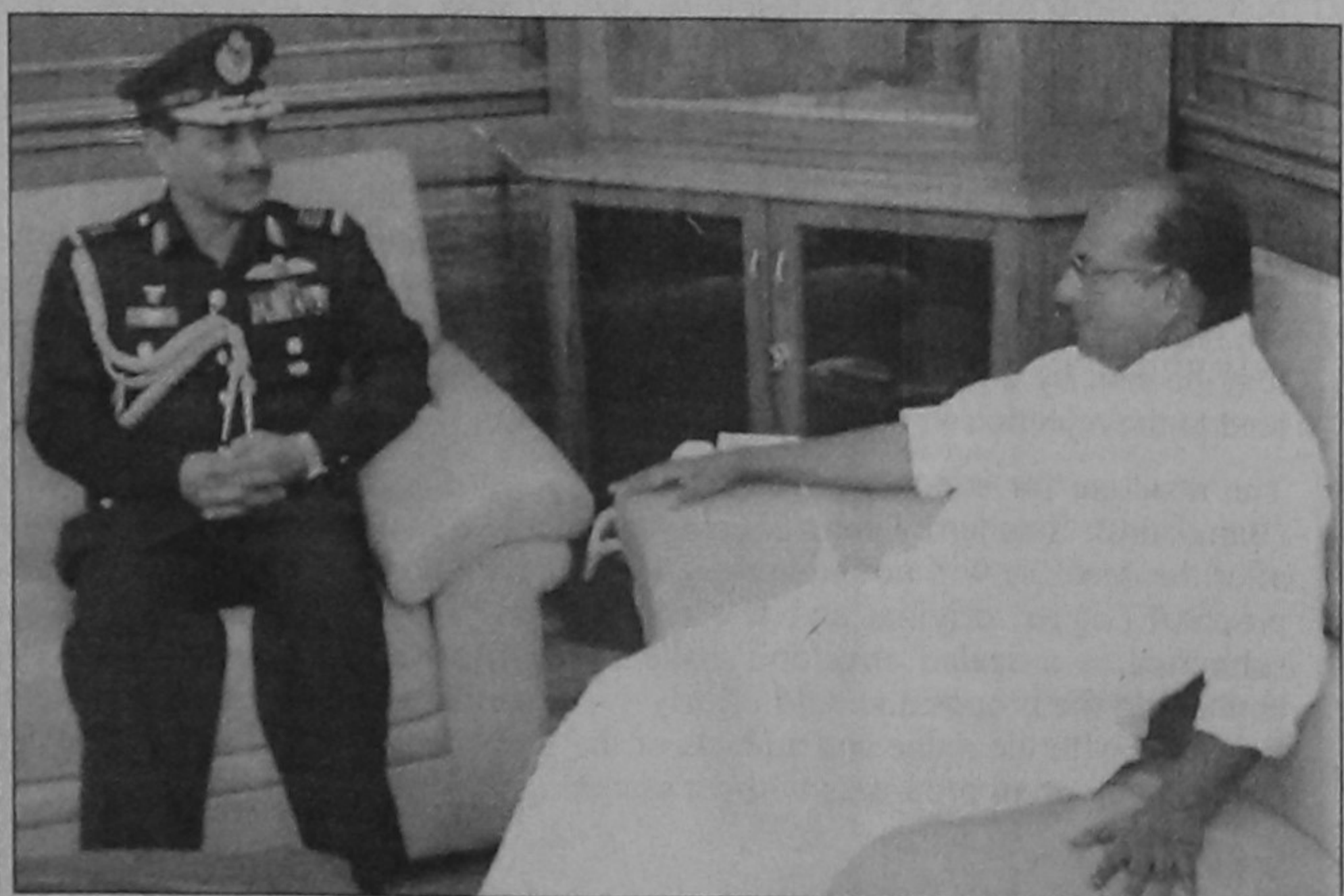
Two more health check packages

METRO DESK

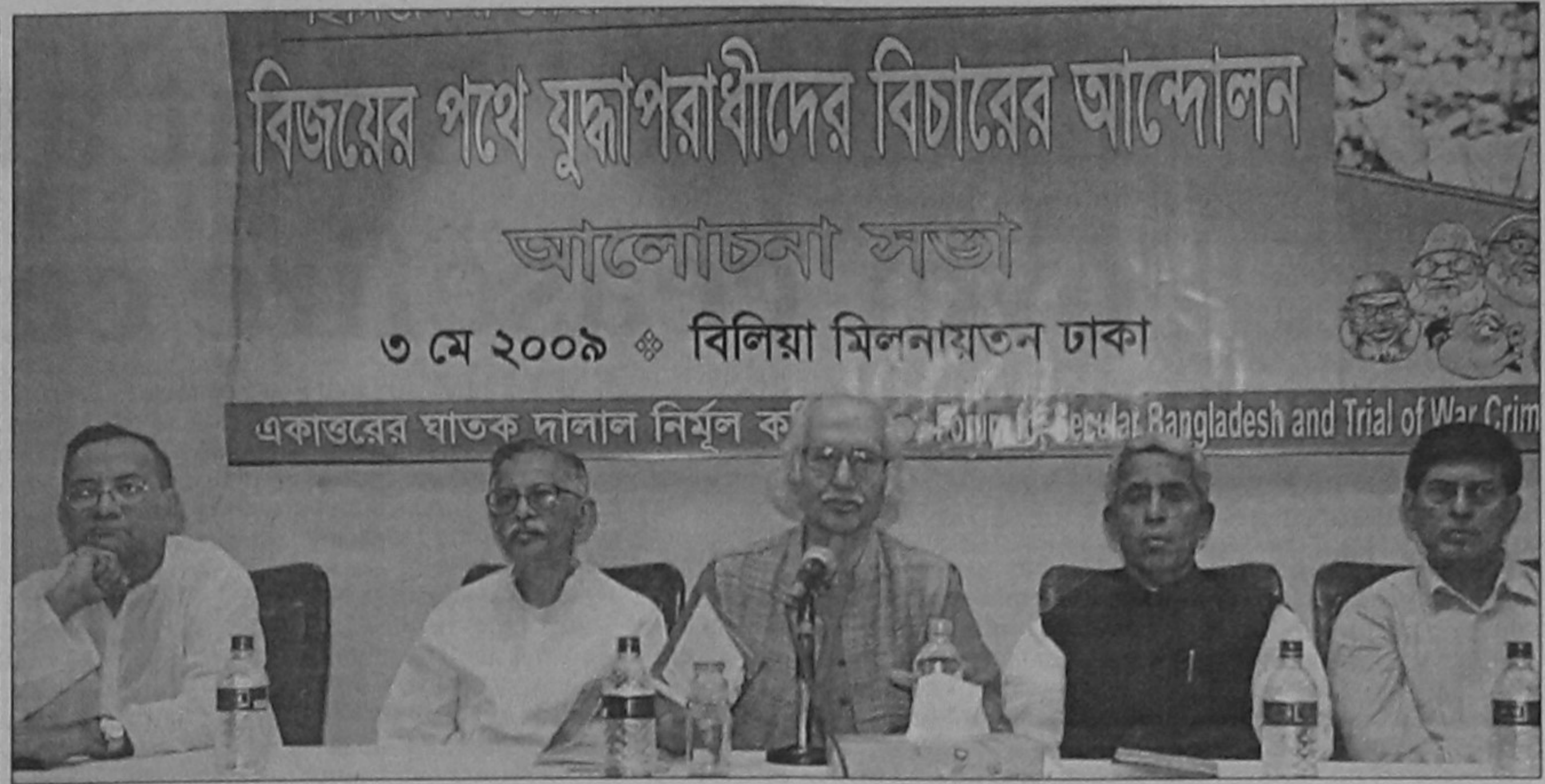
Apollo Hospitals Dhaka has launched two new packages recently, says a press release.

One is Apollo Joint Pain & Arthritis Check and another is Apollo Obesity Check. People who are 40 years old and over, experiencing at least some symptoms of Arthritis can do Apollo Joint Pain & Arthritis Check and those people who is having too much body fat which can be harmful to the body in many ways, they can do Apollo Obesity Check.

These two health screenings are first of its kinds in Bangladesh.



Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman pays a courtesy call on Indian Defence Minister AK Antony during his recent visit to India.



Prof Kabir Chowdhury speaks at a discussion at Bilia auditorium in the city yesterday on the occasion of the 80th birth anniversary of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam. On his left are Awami League presidium member Abdur Razzak and Principal Ahad Chowdhury and on his right are Justice Gholam Rabbani and Mujahidul Islam Selim.

Exercise Shamudro Torongo ends

BSS, Dhaka

The joint exercise titled 'Exercise Shamudro Torongo' between the Bangladesh Navy and the United Kingdom ended in the Bay of Bengal yesterday.

Bangladesh Navy, Commando of Bangladesh Army, Fighter Air Crafts and Helicopters of Bangladesh Air Force, Coast Guard ship, Rab and Police personnel took part in the five-day exercise.

The main objective of the exercise was to have better coordination between different forces and institutions of Bangladesh to protect the maritime security and to learn different techniques of joint exercise, said an ISPR press release.

Two war ships of British Royal Navy LPG Boolwork and RFA Webruler, Royal Marine and Commando took part in the exercise.

On the concluding day British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Defence Attach, Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Operations) of Bangladesh Navy and other senior naval officers witnessed the exercise from British Royal Navy ship LPG Boolwork.

Both ships of the Royal Navy left Bangladesh territorial water on completion of the exercise.

The exercise Shamudro Torongo, the name was given to the Bangladesh element of the deployment, aims at maintaining the Royal Navy's fighting capability as well as developing the UK's capacity to operate with key partners and other nations to enhance interoperability.

Parkway Health offers 34 new packages

HELEMUL ALAM, back from Singapore

ParkwayHealth, one of Asia's leading private healthcare providers, has launched a series of fixed price all-in-one packages that cover various surgeries including general surgery, neurosurgery, cardiology, obstetrics and gynaecology, ophthalmology, orthopaedic, urology, ENT and gastroenterology.

The launching ceremony was held at a press conference at Gleneagles Hospital in Singapore on April 29.

The 34 new healthcare packages are arguably the most inclusive and comprehensive offered to date by a private healthcare provider.

These fixed price packages include all costs related to inpatient care including hospitalisation, doctors' fees, nursing care and facility charges, said Dr Lim Cheok Peng, executive vice-chairman, managing director, group president, and chief executive officer, of Parkway Holdings Limited.

He said the move has been taken so that the patients can afford the costs easily.

"These are tough times, we hope that with these all-in-one packages, both local and foreign patients will be encouraged not to delay or put off much needed surgery," he said.

"For ParkwayHealth, we want to make a difference in people's lives through excellent patient care and we will continue to review pricing and services to see how we can further help our patients," he added.

Dr Lim Cheok Peng said these packages are available for patients who, apart from their intended surgeries, are

generally fit and healthy (without any complications) and they will be told of the cost of his or her surgery beforehand.

Kamaljeet Singh Gill, chief marketing officer of Global Corporate Marketing at ParkwayHealth, said due to this package programme, the treatment cost would be reduced by 23 percent than before.

He said their fixed pricing structures will allow ParkwayHealth to deliver their service to patients who are in need of medical treatment at lower costs.

Uncertainty over treatment costs can be a cause of anxiety for patients especially during these difficult times, Kamaljeet said, adding that with fixed pricing, patients have the advantage of having their surgeries at a price that suits them.

The packages will be continued for one year and they will extend the time if required, he said.

The packages will be available for patients of all the three hospitals of ParkwayHealth in Singapore. These are East Shore Hospital, Mount Elizabeth Hospital and Gleneagles Hospital.

2 cadres of top criminal held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested two accomplices of listed criminal Shahadat on charges of demanding extortion at Kafrul in the city on Saturday evening.

The arrestees were identified as Abdullah-al-Mamun, 27, and Abu Saleh Yasin Arafat alias Samir.

Kafrul police told The Daily Star that Mamun over cellphone threatened Mohammad Sirajul Islam Patwari, who is an owner of a recruiting agency at Motijheel, several times between January 7 and April 30 to pay him Tk 15 lakh.

They told Patwari that he would have to pay the amount to Juba League central leader Sachchu if he wants to run his business uninterrupted or else he will be kidnapped.

On Saturday they told Patwari to come in front of Bhagyakul Mistanna Bhandar at Kachukhet in Kafrul with Tk 5 lakh.

Police took position there and on the arrival of the extortionists arrested the two.

SI Mokammel said the criminals provided a cellphone number, which they claimed to be of Juba League leader Sachchu, but police found that the cellphone belonged to Samir.

He said in primary interrogation it was found that they have been realising extortions from different traders and people of other professions in the city's Kafrul, Pallabi and Mirpur area for long.

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