

# BPO awaits govt nod for setting up ATMs at post offices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Post Office (BPO) is awaiting the government's nod for setting up automated teller machines (ATM) at the post offices across the country.

BPO had applied for such services few months ago with a view to facilitating faster and easier money transactions at grassroots level.

If it gets the green signal, it would set up ATM booths in all the district headquarters in the first phase, said Mobasherur Rahman, director general of BPO, adding that it would take two months to install ATMs at all the district offices of BPO after it gets the approval.

"We would expand such services to the upazila level in the second phase, which would take over two years of time and a huge investment," he also said.

He was speaking at a seminar styled 'Remittance by NRB Workers Inward: Opportunities and Risks'.

The seminar, presided over by Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Atiur Rahman, was organised as part of the three-day 'First NRB Manpower Development and Opportunities Conference - 2009' at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel jointly organised by Scholars Bangladesh and Human Capital Development Limited.

A private IT solutions provider, which has already came

into agreement with 22 banks in this regard, would install the ATMs and establish the network in cooperation with the government. Mobasherur told The Daily Star following the seminar.

The service would be set up with investment from the private sector, he added.

"Once the service is made available at the rural level, people will be able to receive money with a simple card, especially remittance sent from abroad, very fast and without any hassle," he said.

Dr Atiur welcomed the initiative of BPO saying besides families of expatriate Bangladeshis, NGOs that operate in the rural areas will also take advantage of the services as they have to carry big amounts of money from one place to another in the rural areas with risk.

"Such facilities will greatly reduce the risks of such NGOs," said the BB governor.

"Nowadays we are hearing about many problems regarding the activities of courier services, which will be reduced largely if the ATM booths are installed," he added.

Mobasherur also said that they would launch a pilot project on mobile money transfer very soon, which is also expected to facilitate quick money transfer in rural areas.

Dr Atiur also said the central bank has decided to set up

Automated Clearing House from next November and has already directed all the banks in this regard.

"Once it is done, people will be able to withdraw money from any bank of the country using the cheque of any particular bank," he added.

He also said the BB would welcome local financial institutions to set up exchange houses abroad to facilitate inflow of remittance in the country.

Presenting the keynote styled 'Remittance by NRB Workers Inward: Opportunities and Risks', Dr Tasneem Siddiqui, chairperson of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), said though overseas employment opportunities for the people of the country has reduced in the first six months of the calendar year, it would not affect flow of remittance in the country.

She lamented that the non-resident Bangladeshis has not been given the due credit in spite of playing a pivotal role in the country's development.

Syed Mohammad Kamal, country manager (Bangladesh) of Western Union, Shafiqul Azam of Moneygram, Dr Mustafa Kamal Mujeri, director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), among others, also spoke at the seminar.

## PARTY REGISTRATION AL may seek more time from EC for council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ruling Awami League (AL) may seek an extension of time from the Election Commission (EC) to hold its central council to ratify the provisional changes made to its constitutions for registration.

AL leaders have already hinted that they would not be able to hold the council within July 25, the stipulated timeframe of the EC.

The AL presidium, the highest policy-making body of the party, sits today at the party president Sheikh Hasina's political office in Dhanmondi to decide on the matter, sources said.

Hasina would chair the meeting.

Before the ninth parliamentary election, political parties were allowed to be registered with the EC by making interim changes to their charters to meet the registration criteria laid out in the Representation of the People Order (RPO).

They had to give an undertaking that they would have their amendments approved by the national council within six months after the first sitting of the ninth parliament.

Earlier on March 28, AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC), the highest decision-making body of the party, decided to hold the council within the time limit.

It also formed a high-powered committee to amend the party constitution and declaration paper in line with the RPO.

## AL leader killed in Bogra clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bogra

A local Awami League leader was killed and five people were injured during a clash over control of a pond at Nanglu in Dhanu yesterday.

The dead was identified as Abu Saim, 48, president of Nanglu union of Awami League.

The clash erupted after Abu Saim along with his men tried to release fish in a public pond, which was under control of one Nidul Hossain, said Rafiqul Islam, Officer in Charge (OC) of Dhanu police station.

Saim was seriously injured when the supporters of Nidul attacked him with sharp weapons. He was rushed to Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Nidul Hossain took a lease on the pond in the name of Kantonagar Purbopara Jubo Unnayan Samity three years ago.

## DHAKA TODAY

### View exchange meeting

National Forum of Organisations Working with Disabled organises a view exchange meeting on 'Rights act for people with disabilities'. Venue: LGRD conference room. Time: 10:00am.

### Poster contest

UNFPA Bangladesh organises a poster contest on the theme 'Responding to the economic crisis: Investing in women is a smart choice'. Venue: Shipkoka Academy. Time: 4:00pm.

### Seminar

PPRC and Bangladesh Compute Samity jointly organise an interactive seminar on web-based entrepreneurship. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:30am.

### Math Olympiad

The opening ceremony of Mathematics Olympiad 2009 will be held. Venue: East West University. Time: 9:00am.

### Roundtable

Transparency International Bangladesh organises a roundtable on duties to making effective the Jatiya Sangsad. Venue: Brac Centre Inn. Time: 11:00am.

### Discussion

National Agribusiness Foundation of Bangladesh organises a discussion on importance of forming agricultural price commission. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 9:00am.



Commerce Minister Lt Col (ret) Faruk Khan speaks at the launching ceremony of call centre and telecom solution of Inspire Communications Limited at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

## BICOM-INSPIRE JOINT VENTURE

# Call centre, telecom solution business launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bicom Systems Limited, a London-based company providing best-fit telephony solutions, and Inspire Communications Limited, a Dhaka-based company providing call centre and telecom solutions, jointly launched call centre and telecom solution business in the country yesterday.

At a launching ceremony at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city, the organisers said this sector has immense potential and Bangladesh can earn a lot of foreign currencies and engage its skilled manpower in this sector.

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan was present as the chief guest at the function organised by Inspire Communications Limited.

Introducing their joint endeavour, Hedayet Hossain, chief executive officer (CEO) of Inspire Communications, said despite having a huge prospect, the country is lagging behind in the lucrative call centre business at a time when its neighbouring countries are earning billions of

dollars from such business.

The country can attract multinational companies who are keen to lower costs by outsourcing customer call centres in countries with low labour costs, he said, adding: "We have skilled manpower and enthusiastic generation who are proficient in language."

The CEO alleged that Bangladesh Telecommunication Commission (BTRC) has some bureaucratic tangles in giving the Internet Private Leased Line Circuit (IPLC) connection.

BTRC asked for contracts of call centres before giving connections, while foreign companies said they would not give the contracts as the call centres do not have the connectivity, he added.

Hedayet further said, "When different foreign currency earners sectors are suffering the impacts of global meltdown, we can develop call centre business," adding: "To do so, we want cooperation from the government."

Assuring the organisers, the commerce minister said there will be no department in the country which will create obstacles to develop

ing the country and its people.

Faruk Khan further said this sort of projects will help create employment opportunities for the countrymen.

Mentioning the government's plan in giving IT training to the school students, he said the students would get employment opportunities in these types of projects.

"In this extreme competitive world and in the time of global recession, we want to do new businesses which will help the country face the challenges of the twenty first century," he said.

The minister also said the government's commitment to building a digital Bangladesh and giving jobs to the people can be fulfilled in these types of telecom businesses.

Stephen Wingfield and Senad Jordanovic of Bicom Systems Limited gave a brief introduction of their project, while Tannun E Morsalin, associate professor of University of Liberal Arts, gave an overview of the call centre business in the country.

British High Commissioner Stephen Evans also spoke.

## Jhoot trader shot in Bhaluka

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A jhoot (garment rejects) trader sustained bullet injury as the managing director of Bashar Spinning Mills fired a shot following tussle between local jhoot traders and the factory authorities at Nishinda in Bhaluka upazila Thursday.

The injured was Mujibur Rahman, 40, son of late Abdus Sobhan of Bhaluka. Mujibur, a local Juba League activist, was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital and later transferred to Dhaka for better treatment.

Police said a dispute broke out between the local jhoot traders and Bashar Spinning Mills authorities centring business in the area. The factory authorities claimed that local traders demanded toll from them, police added.

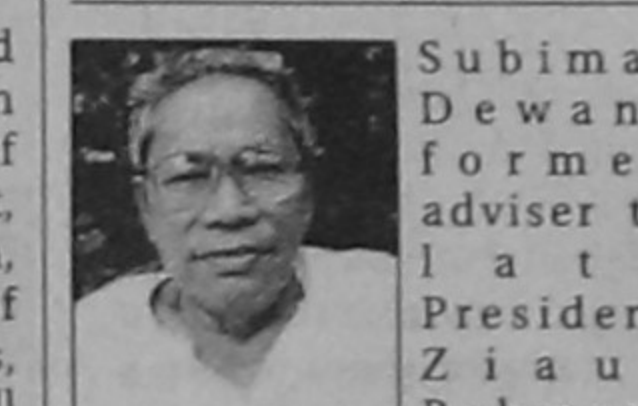
Fazlur Rahman Sarker, officer-in-charge (OC) of Bhaluka Police Station, said the local businessmen attacked Nurul Huda, MD of the factory, and his staff around 10:30pm Thursday. At one stage Nurul Huda fired a shot from his licensed pistol which accidentally hit Mujibur's leg, said the OC.

However, police are yet to seize Nurul Huda's pistol.

Pabitra Basak, the general manager of the spinning mill, filed a case with Bhaluka Police Station accusing 10-12 people including Mujibur. None was arrested till yesterday evening.

## Subimal Dewan passes away

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati



Subimal Dewan, former adviser to the President Ziaur Rahman, passed away at his residence at College Gate in the town yesterday at the age of 93.

He was also the president of Rangamati Pratibandhi School and Bangladesh Special Olympic, Rangamati branch.

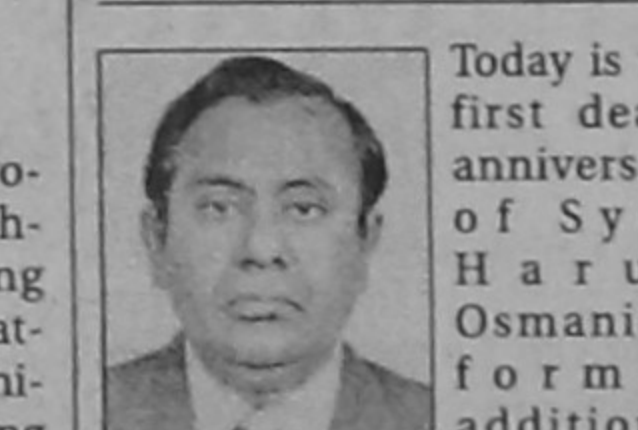
He received a number of awards, including National Social Welfare Award, Family Planning Association of Bangladesh Award and received an award from Rangamati Hill District Council for his outstanding contribution to society.

Subimal left behind four sons and four daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia, State Minister for CHT Affairs Dipankar Talukder and Chairman of Rangamati Hill District Council Nikhil Kumar Chakma, in separate messages, expressed deep shock at the death of Subimal Dewan and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

## Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the first death anniversary of Syed Harun Osmani, a former additional secretary to the law ministry, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at 'Shimul Bhaban', Azimpur Judges' Quarters, after Asr prayers.

## Abdul Hakim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 22nd death anniversary of Abdul Hakim Birkampur, former member of Bengal Legislative Council and a social worker, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held at KK Government Institution in Munshiganj.

## Parul Begum

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Today is the 13th death anniversary of Parul Begum, mother of Mir Nasir Uddin Ujjal, a reporter of Janakantha.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil and Qurankhwani will be held at her home at Baherpara in Tongbari and at a local mosque.



Foreign Minister Dipu Moni speaks at a seminar on 'Improving the role of the foreign ministry and embassies of Bangladesh for better services and protection of our workers' at a city hotel yesterday. Scholars Bangladesh and Human Capital Development Limited jointly organised the seminar.

## Nazim Kamran, two others released on bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former lawmaker Nazim Kamran Choudhury, husband of former adviser to a caretaker government Geetara Shafiya Choudhury, his brother and son-in-law were released on bail yesterday 16 hours after their arrest on Thursday night.

Gulshan police arrested them at around 11:00pm on Thursday night on charges of occupying a property in Gulshan forcibly.

Magistrate Kanika Biswas of Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court granted bail to Kamran, his younger brother Mukim Choudhury and son-in-law Adit Bhagat on a bond of Tk 50,000 each.

According to Gulshan police, Dr Mahbubul Islam, owner of the house, filed a case accusing 11 tenants, including former adviser Geetara, on Thursday.

The other accused are Nazim's daughter Nazim Farhana Choudhury, Abu Rushd Tareq, Shamsunnahar Tareq, Sakawat Hossain alias Shahadat, Ripon Chandra Saha, Bipul Hossain and Yar Ali.

Investigation Officer of the case Sub-Inspector Masud Karim said that in the case statement, Dr Mahbubul Islam stated that he came under an attack by the accused on July 17, 2008 when he tried to prevent them from installing two generators at his house in Gulshan-2.

His wife Farhana Islam had filed a similar case with Dhaka District and Sessions Judge's Court in November 2007 against three companies of the Choudhury family on charges of illegal occupancy.

But the court quashed the case on January 25, 2008, as the report submitted by the investigation officer said that the allegation was 'not proved'.

## Eviction of freedom fighters protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muktijoddha Nou-Commando Bahumukhi Samobai Samity leaders yesterday condemned the mindless eviction of freedom fighters from their government-allotted land at Kafirul and demolition of the commando shed.

At a press conference yesterday at the Liberation War Museum in the city, they called on the government to find out a solution to the problem.

The speakers said around 30 families lost their homes and belongings when bulldozers rolled onto their neighbourhood in Mirpur Sector 15 on July 1 and razed the houses without any prior announcement.

Few days before the drive, the housing department informed the local residents

through loudspeakers that the authorities will construct a road on the land.

"They instructed us to remove all our belongings and properties from the place designated for the new road," said Commando Abul Hossain.

"And we did remove everything as instructed. But during the eviction, they brought bulldozers and started to raze our properties that were outside the designated boundary of the road," he added.

He also alleged that the local residents who tried to protest the eviction were abused and beaten up by the police.

Other speakers said the government-owned 3.17-acre land in Mirpur sector 15 was allotted to the freedom fighters around 10 years ago.



## Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at most places over all six divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 7:50pm today and rises at 6:16am tomorrow.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 32.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Cox's Bazar and the lowest of 24 degrees at Sylhet and Chittagong.

The 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	28.3	25.5	93	87
Chittagong	31.0	24.0	78	87
Rajshahi	27.3	26.2	100	94
Khulna	27.8	24.8	98	92
Barisal	26.4	25.3	100	97
Sylhet	27.8	24.0	98	96
Cox's Bazar	32.5	24.4	76	90



Dr ASM Atiqur Rahman speaks on 'National election and expectation of the youths' at a meeting at Rabindra Sarobar at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

## Call to implement pledges made for youths

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a meeting yesterday urged the government to announce specific programmes for implementing the pledges made for youths in its election manifesto.

They said the government must implement the pledges as the youths cast their votes in the general election considering its election manifesto.

The meeting titled 'National election and expectation of the youth' was organised by Citizen's Alliance for Promoting Transparency and

Accountability (CAPTA) at Rabindra Sarobar in the city.

Prof Dr Mahbuba Nasrin said only the youths can bring a positive change in the society.

"Youths can be used to cope with different crisis situation including natural disasters. A bold political intervention can help utilise the youths for building a digital Bangladesh," said Advocate Sanjida Khanam MP.

Lawmakers Fazle Hasan Badsha and Moyeen Uddin Khan Badal also spoke.

In a statement, CAPTA demanded updating of

National Youth Policy, introducing vocational and technological education along with general education, creating employment opportunities for youths, and ensuring access to information for transparency and accountability.

Quoting a survey on youths before the general election the statement mentioned that four problems facing the youths are lack of employment, poverty, addiction and absence of government organisations for youths.

The meeting was followed by a cultural function.



Participants of a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on teaching with emerging technologies pose for photograph at computer lab of Presidency University in the city yesterday. Bangladesh English Language Teachers' Association (BELTA) and English Department of Presidency University jointly organised the workshop.

## 159 illegal electricity lines snapped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) disconnected 159 electricity lines on the first day of its drive against illegal electricity connections, says a press release.

A taskforce formed by the BPDB snapped the connections in the six distribution areas of Chittagong, Rajshahi, Comilla, Sylhet, Rangpur and Mymensingh.

The drive began on July 1 and will continue till July 15.