

# PM for removing trade imbalance with Pakistan

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for removing Bangladesh's widening trade imbalance with Pakistan.

She said there is huge potential lying untapped for enhancing the bilateral trade.

She said this when Pakistan High Commissioner in Dhaka Alamgir Bashir Khan Babar paid a courtesy call on Hasina at her office yesterday.

The PM and the Pakistan envoy discussed various bilateral issues, including trade and investment and terrorism.

As the issue of terrorism came up for discussion, Hasina stressed the need for joint efforts to root out terrorism to establish peace in the South Asian region.

"Terrorism and the terrorists have no boundary and religion," she told the diplomat.

Pakistan is now at war with

the Taliban on the domestic front.

Hasina said there is huge potential for enhancing bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Pakistan. "Due importance should be given to rectifying the widening trade imbalance between the two countries," she said.

The two-way trade in the recent years has been in the range of \$300-\$350 million, and Bangladesh's exports have hovered around \$70 million only.

Hasina emphasised general understanding on granting zero tariff access to each other under the Early Harvest Programme to reduce the expanding trade gap.

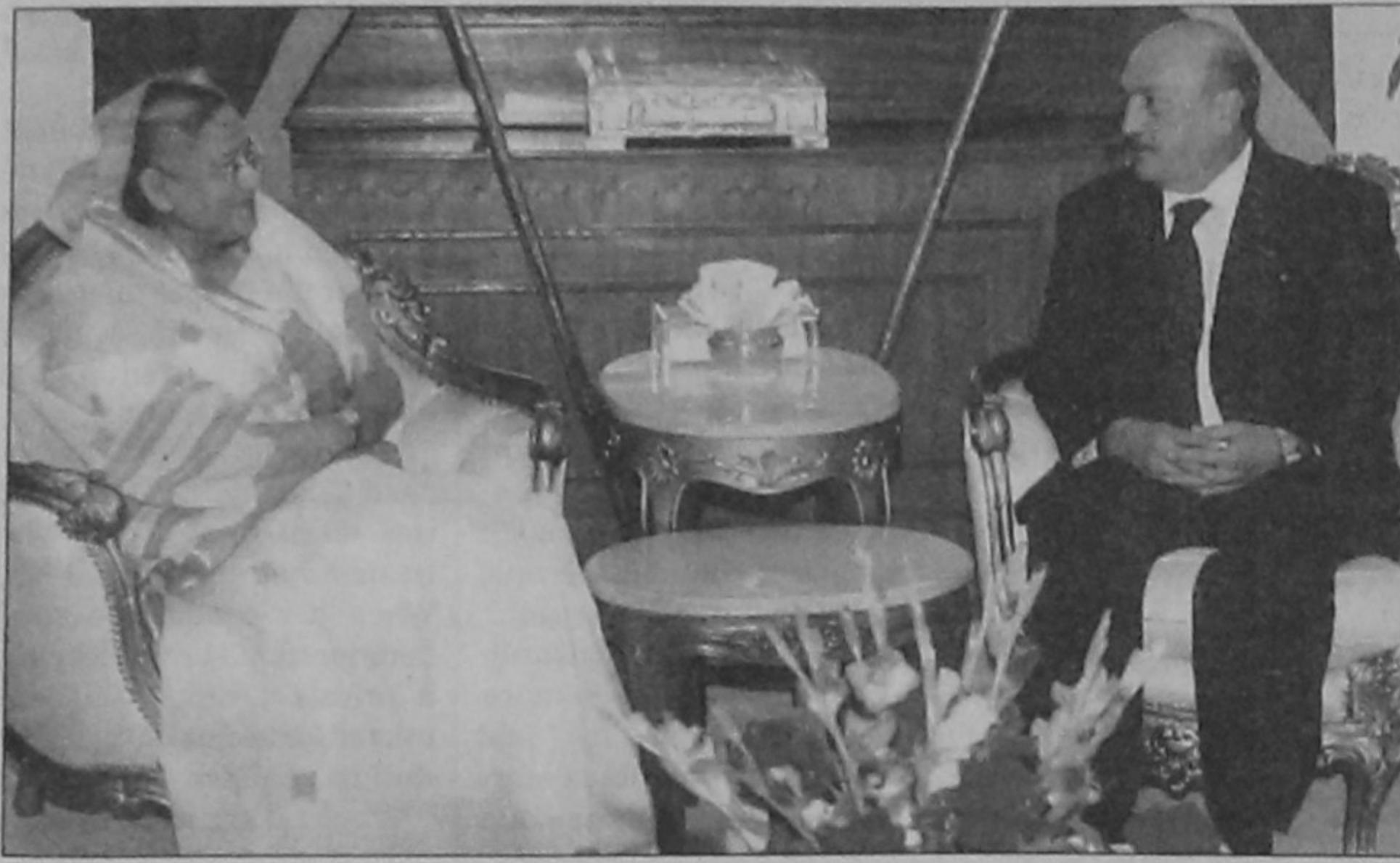
She also expressed the hope that Pakistani investors would take interest in investing in Bangladesh in the sectors of pharmaceuticals, textiles, information technology, telecommunications and agro-based industries.

Hasina recalled her recent meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani and Sharif el Sheikh on the sideline of the 15th Nam Summit and stated that they had fruitful discussions on how to work together to improve the quality of people's life through eradicating poverty from the region.

She said regional cooperation would have to be institutionalised and collective strength of the South Asian countries be harnessed to face the challenges in the region.

The Pakistani High Commissioner expressed interest in bilateral exchange of information with Bangladesh on different sectors.

Prime Minister's Office Secretary Molla Waheduzzaman, Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad and Ambassador M Ziauddin were present during the meeting.



Pakistan High Commissioner in Dhaka Alamgir Bashir Khan Babar pays a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

## DRAFT NAT'L HEALTH POLICY

# Call for more consultation with stakeholders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Doctors for Health and Environment (DHE) at a press conference yesterday urged the government for more consultation with the stakeholders before finalising the national health policy.

They said as the government sought public opinion about the draft policy through website without thinking how many people have online facilities, very few people could share their views to update the policy.

DHE organised the press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) auditorium to draw the attention of the government about the public participation in the review of the proposed health policy through online.

DHE President Prof Dr Rashid-e-Mahbub, who was

also the former president of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), said it is not clear whether the proposed health policy would be able to ensure people's health rights or it will make healthcare a commodity.

He stressed the need for developing a system to produce adequate doctors and nurses to overcome their shortage.

To improve the draft policy, Dr Shakeel also made some recommendations that include availability of lifesaving drugs free of cost, health insurance for all, and quality management of other treatment systems like Homeopathy, Ayurvedic and Unani system.

Dr Kazi Rakibul Islam, a paediatric of Health and Hope Ltd, also spoke at the press conference.

Presenting the keynote

# Technical edn a must to turn people into resources: Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday underscored the importance of expanding technical as well as timely education to turn the country's huge population into skilled human resources.

"In the past, we overlooked the technical knowledge-based education system. That's why, we are still lagging behind," he said.

The minister said, "We will have to put stress on technical and vocational education system for the betterment of the country."

Speaking as the chief guest, Nahid said this while addressing a certificate awarding ceremony organised by Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha (BNPS) at Chhayanaut Sangskriti Bhaban auditorium in the city.

At the programme, the students, who participated in the Peace Camp in Italy organised by Universal Forum of Cultures Foundation, Barcelona, shared their experiences during the camp.

The government spends only two percent of entire education budget for technical and vocational education, he said, adding: "But we should ensure additional budgetary allocation for technical and vocational education system."

Praising the campers, he said, "Participation in such an international camp will strengthen the confidence and skills of Bangladeshi students."

State Minister for Women and Child Affairs Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury stressed the need for women empowerment through cultural exchange between Bangladesh and other countries.

BNPS Executive Director Rokeya Kabir presided over the programme where world-renowned fashion

designer Bibi Russell, participants and their teachers also spoke.

Universal Forum of Cultures Foundation organises the camp after every three years to promote cultural exchange among the students aged between 13 and 14 from different cities of the world.

Following the incident, the van owner filed a case with Chandina Police Station in this connection the same day.

The gang used to commit such crimes on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway for long. Rabsources added.

**Convention on disaster risk reduction concludes**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The national convention on 'Disaster risk reduction through schools' concluded yesterday with a 10-point declaration.

The declaration includes demand of adequate fund for disaster risk reduction and inclusion of guidelines for expansion of climate and disaster reduction education.

ActionAid Bangladesh reports: A minor boy was killed and his mother injured in a road accident in front of Atinay Bazar Degree College here yesterday.

Earlier, a policy dialogue on 'Duties to build the climate aware future generation, capable of facing disaster risk' was held at the National Museum.

Chairman of the parliamentary committee on food and disaster management ministry Md Sayedul Haque chaired the dialogue. Bangladesh Economic Association President Dr Quazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad Dr Quazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, writer Selina Hossain, Mahabub Ara Gini, MP among others, spoke at the dialogue.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over Chittagong and Barisal divisions and at a few places over Dhaka.

Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls also to occur at places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions during the period, Met Office said.

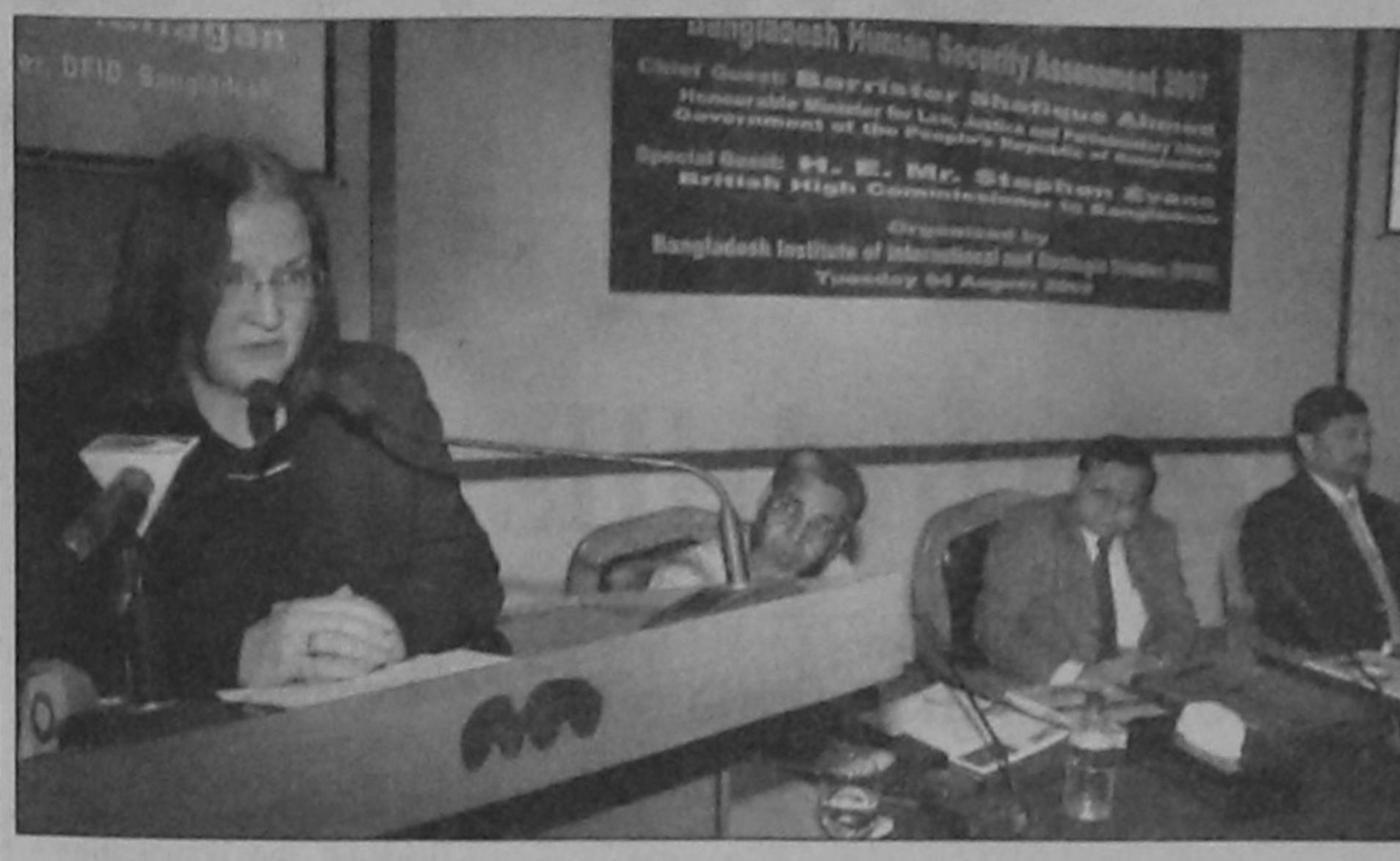
Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 7:39pm today and rises at 6:30am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Barisal and lowest 25.0 degrees Celsius at Satkhira.

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	34.2	77.6	81	77		
Chittagong	31.8	76.7	79	81		
Rajshahi	35.0	26.0	92	78		
Khulna	33.6	26.4	80	--		
Barisal	35.5	27.0	80	97		
Sylhet	32.4	26.7	92	93		
Cox's Bazar	34.0	26.6	73	88		



Honor Flanagan speaks at a seminar at BISS office in the city yesterday. On her left are Dr Abdur Rob Khan, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed and Maj Gen Sheikh Monirul Islam.

Critically injured youth flees DMCH OT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A critically injured youth yesterday escaped from the operation theatre of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday sensing the presence of policemen.

Hospital sources said the youth was taken to the Operation Theatre with serious injuries on both of his hands, but he fled the hospital sensing presence of police there.

The youth identified as Sohel, 25, sustained injuries the same day when crackers went off at a shanty at Shahidbagh under Pallabi in the city where the crackers were being made on the eve of the holy Shab-e-Barat.

The victim was then rushed to the hospital with injuries on both of his hands.

Quoting the slum dwellers, Sub-Inspector Monirul Islam of Pallabi Police Station said hearing a loud bang, they rushed to the shanty and found him groaning in a pool of blood with injuries around 4:00pm.

Locals told Islam that ahead of the Shab-e-Barat, Sohel was preparing crackers which have a great demand to children.

## DCC to clean surface drain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has taken a crash programme to clean the surface drain and storm sewerage lines in the city.

DCC also has taken initiative to repair the roads, footpaths and drains damaged during recent heavy downpour.

It also asked the city dwellers to refrain from them dropping solid waste, mud and concrete materials into the storm sewerage lines and surface drains.

The corporation also requested the city dwellers to lodge complaints about roads, which are needed immediate repairing, over phone 9556012, 9565981 and 9556580 or dropping complaints into the box at DCC office.

## Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Antim Chandra Roy, a freedom fighter, passed away due to old-age complications at his village home under Thakurgaon sadar upazila on Monday at the age of 60.

He left behind his wife, sons, daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

His funeral was held with state honour yesterday.



MA Khan's death anniversary tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 25th death anniversary of Rear Admiral Mahbub Ali Khan, former Navy Chief and minister for communications and agriculture, will be observed tomorrow.

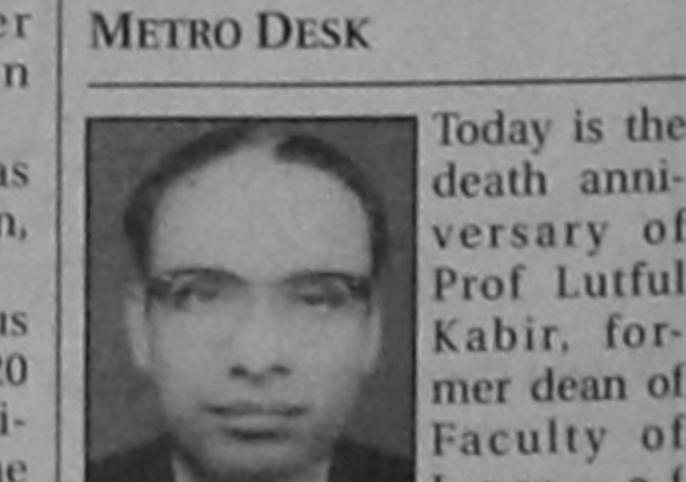
Elaborate programmes including placing wreaths at his grave, milad mahfil, Qurankhwani and distribution of foods at different orphanages have been taken up to observe the death anniversary.

A milad mahfil will be held after Maghrab prayers today at Mahbub Bhaban (House-40, Road-5, Dhanmondi) in the city.

Rear Admiral Mahbub Ali Khan Memorial Committee will organise a discussion on his life and works in Sylhet and milad mahfil and destitute feeding programme at the shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) tomorrow.

Bangladesh Navy will also arrange milad mahfils at its all bases.

Prof Lutful Kabir METRO DESK



Today is the death anniversary of Prof Lutful Kabir, former dean of Faculty of Law of Dhaka University, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held at the residence of his son at Banani in the city.

# Road crashes kill 6, injure 25

METRO DESK

Dimla road in Nilphamari yesterday.

The victim was identified as Mohsin Ali.

Police said the accident occurred when a truck hit a bus from behind, leaving Al-Amin dead on the spot and 25 others injured.

The injured were given first aid at Brahmanbaria sadar hospital and private clinics.

Our correspondent in Mymensingh adds: Two more passengers were killed as a CNG-run bus rammed a shop and its gas cylinder exploded at Sreerampur on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road under Gouripur upazila in Mymensingh last night.

They were identified as Rustom Ali, 65, and Shamim, 20.

Three passengers of the bus were killed on the spot and 20 others injured due to the accident on Sunday night. All the injured were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

The accident took place when the bus skidded off the road and smashed a roadside tea stall.

Our correspondent in Brahmanbaria adds: One person was killed in a road accident at Birpara under Brahmanbaria sadar upazila yesterday.