

5.50 lakh children suffer from rickets

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Rickets is becoming a 'public health problem' in the country as 0.99 percent of children have been suffering from the disease.

According to health experts, when one percent of population suffers from a specific disease, it is called a public health problem, and if the current trend of rickets cannot be stopped, it would take an alarming turn within a very short time.

National Rickets Survey 2008 revealed that around 5.50 lakh children aged between 1 and 15 years have been suffering from rickets.

Though Vitamin D deficiency was assumed as the main reason for rickets, the scientists found that lack of calcium also responsible for rickets.

"It is found that the rate of rickets due to Vitamin D deficiency is 80 percent while it is

50 percent due to calcium deficiency," said SK Roy, scientific officer of ICDDR, B. He said there are patients with rickets at almost every house at Maheshkhali in Cox's Bazar.

ICDDR, B Rickets Interest Group (RIG), CARE Bangladesh, Unicef and National Nutrition Programme (NPP) jointly organised the survey on 20,000 children.

The highest prevalence of the disease was found in Chittagong which was 76.6 percent.

The study also revealed that some 2.19 percent children aged between 1 and 15 years in Chittagong are suffering from rickets while more than one person suffering from the disease in the same family in Cox's Bazar.

Sylhet is the second highest division with 0.28 percent rickets patients.

Rickets is a softening of the bones of children that can lead to fractures and permanent

deformities. Being physically disabled these children finally become the burden of their family and the society.

Dr Roy said preparing an action plan for prevention of rickets and early diagnosis is important along with treating these children.

He also suggested that medical officers working at upazila health complexes and the 'Pushti apa' who are working under the National Nutrition Programme (NPP) should continue counselling the mothers to provide their children with calcium-rich foods like sea fish, arum, liver, egg and milk.

Breastfeeding is very important to prevent rickets, he added.

In Bangladesh rickets-related information was first published by the Social Assistance and Rehabilitation of the Physically Vulnerable (SARPV) after the cyclone hit Chokoria in Cox's Bazar in

1991.

The rickets situation is worst in Cox's Bazar as the children's daily intake of calcium there is 160 milligrams per day against World Health Organisation (WHO)-recommended level of 500-800 milligrams per day.

Experts have also termed rickets as a cross-cutting health problem that involves nutrition, food habit, environmental degradation, chemical fertiliser, change of crop pattern, micronutrients, poverty and multi-dimensional social problems.

They suggested consuming leafy vegetable, sesame seed, small fish and dairy products to check rickets.

One gram (2 fingertips) of chun (lime) per kilogram of rice will also be helpful in preventing rickets as 1000mg of lime contains about 300 mg of calcium.

Besides, food diversification and prolonged breastfeeding are also important.

US envoy greets Dr Yunus

METRO DESK

US Ambassador James F. Moriarty met Dr Muhammad Yunus at his Grameen Bank offices in the city yesterday and congratulated him for his selection as a recipient of the highest US civilian award, says a press release.

The Nobel laureate would receive the US Presidential Medal of Freedom award at the White House in Washington DC on August 12.

On July 30, President Barack Obama announced that Dr Yunus was one of 16 recipients for this award.

Medal of Freedom is awarded to individuals who make an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the US, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavours.

Dr Yunus studied Economics at Vanderbilt University in 1965 as a Fulbright scholar.

Convict ex-Rajuk officer sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent former Rajdhani Unnayan Katripakha (Rajuk) authorised officer ATM Kamruzzaman Khan to jail in two cases in which he was earlier sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment in absentia.

Judge AK Roy of the Special Judge Court-2 passed the order after the convict along with his lawyers surrendered before it and sought bail in the cases.

On May 14 last year, the same court sentenced Kamruzzaman to seven years' jail in a case filed against him on charge of assisting The Daily Janakantha Editor Atiqullah Khan Masud in getting a fake Rajuk approval for the building.

Mahmud Hasan, deputy assistant director of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), filed the case with Motiheel Police Station on June 12 in 2007 against Atiqullah and Kamruzzaman for faking a Rajuk approval for a building design.

According to the case statement, Atiqullah Khan applied to Rajuk on April 19 in 1999 for construction of a 15-storey building on DIT road at Malibagh. Following the application, Kamruzzaman prepared a building design and a fake approval from Rajuk and handed over the design to Atiqullah.

Later, Atiqullah collected Tk 1,22,44,000 from 17 people to construct the building showing the fake Rajuk approval.

Kamruzzaman was also sentenced to seven years' imprisonment on March 20 last year on charge of faking design of another building.

ACC Deputy Assistant Director Mahmud Hasan filed the case against three persons on September 30 in 2007.

According to case statement, Atiqullah submitted a building design to Rajuk for constructing a 15-storey building in the capital's Segunbagicha.

Security beefed up at Tungipara

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

Blanket security measures have been taken in and around the graveyard of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara here centring the arrival of president, prime minister, ministers, state ministers, lawmakers and other important persons on the National Mourning Day on August 15.

Both state and party-level programmes would be observed at Tungipara on the day when the father of the nation and most of his family members were assassinated by a disgruntled splinter of army officers in 1975.

President Zillur Rahman

and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is also the eldest daughter of the architect of the country's independence, would pay tributes to Bangabandhu.

Additional police forces have already been deployed at different points encircling the graveyard. Besides, different intelligence agencies are already stationed here to ensure highest state-level security for the VIPs.

Police have already set up security check posts on the roads leading to Tungipara from Gopalganj.

Besides, beautification of the graveyard is going in full swing ahead of the day. Public works department is doing the renovation work to this end.

SALARY OF JUDICIAL OFFICERS Govt considering recommendations AG tells SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General Mahbub Alam yesterday told the Supreme Court that the government is considering the judicial service pay commission's recommendations.

11 arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Special Weapon and Tactics (Swat) arrested four alleged arms and drugs peddlers with arms, ammunition and Phensidyl from Agargaon while Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested seven frauds from Paltan area in the city in last two days.

The drug peddlers were identified as Zahir alias Kosai Zahir, Razu, Falan and Mainuddin and seven alleged frauds are Mizanur Rahman, Selim Parvez, Humayun Kabir, Mohammad Liton, Shamsul Huq and Julhas Uddin.

An inspector of the Swat said the drug peddlers are listed criminals of Agargaon and Shyamoli areas. He also said they recovered a revolver with eight bullets and 35 bottles of Phensidyl from their possession.

dations to enhance salaries and other facilities of the judicial officials.

The government has already constituted a committee to workout a plan for implementing the judicial service pay commission's recommendations keeping pace with the national pay commission's recommendations, he said.

The attorney general said this while he was placing submissions during the hearing on the Masdar Hossain Case, popularly known as judiciary separation case before the seven-member full bench of the Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice MM Ruhul Amin.

The apex court fixed October 22 for order on the matter.

Sources said the judicial service pay commission last year recommended the government to give judicial allowances to the judicial officials equal to their monthly basic salaries and to enhance other facilities.



Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over all the six divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely to occur at places over the country, Met Office said.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 7:36pm today and rises at 6:32am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 34.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 23.9 degree at Sathkira.

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	33.5	26.7	83	67
Chittagong	30.8	25.7	83	83
Rajshahi	33.4	28.3	81	84
Khulna	33.3	26.0	88	87
Barisal	33.0	26.6	83	77
Sylhet	34.8	25.3	92	69
Cox's Bazar	31.0	25.8	88	85



No police effort to find out missing Mamun

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three years have elapsed since Enamul Haque Md Al Mamun, 52, a government official, went missing from the city, but his family members are yet to know his whereabouts.

Mamun, head assistant of BTB (now BTCL) at Mohakhali wireless transmission region, went out of his Indira Road residence at Farmgate on this day in 2006 for a morning walk and never returned.

Following Mamun's mysterious disappearance, his family members had filed general diaries with Tejgaon Police Station more than once, but they did not get the desired cooperation from the police, they alleged.

In a press release yesterday, the family members said they could not find any trace of Mamun as police did not take any effective measures in this regard.

Rather, the remarks and attitudes of police gave birth to many mysterious questions about his missing, they added.

They also alleged that many people had tried to cheat them during their search for Mamun, and they called for police action against the frauds in vain.

The authorities of T&T where Mamun was serving did not help to find out Mamun, they added.

Mamun is the eldest son of late Lt AM Ataul Haque, a freedom fighter and acting chief of Bangladesh Navy after independence.

His elderly mother Begum Fazilatunnessa and other family members have been passing their days amidst terrible agony as they could not know the fate of Mamun in the last three years.

The family members, who are still eagerly waiting for his return, have earnestly requested people to contact at cellphone no 01711177609 if they know the whereabouts of Mamun.

Miscreants slash tongue of youth

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

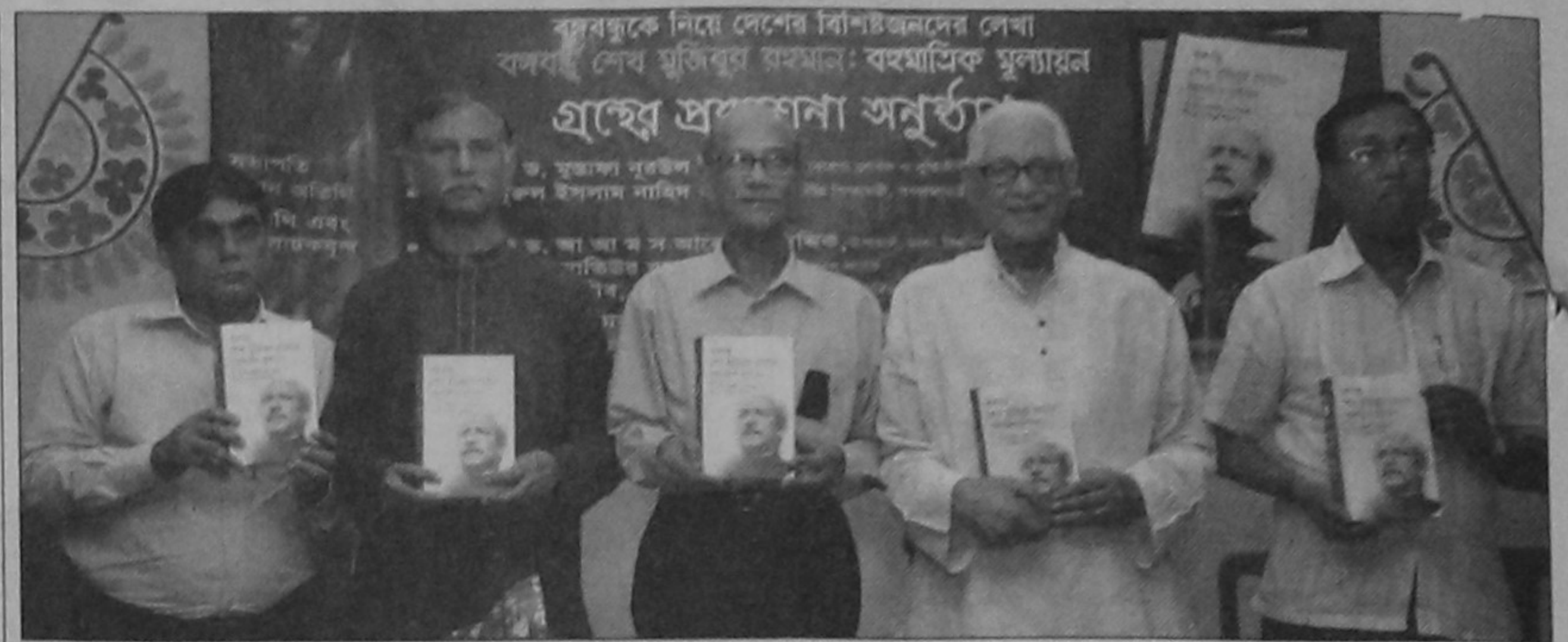
Miscreants cut down the tongue of a youth at Paikpara in Narayanganj on Saturday night, as he did not agree to open a policy at a specific insurance company.

Police arrested Rinku, 25, and his mother Rokeya Begum in this connection on that night.

Sources said Rinku's mother Rokeya Begum has been working at Pragati Insurance Company and she requested her neighbour Mofiz to open a policy to her company.

Mofiz expressed his unwillingness to open a policy, which angered Rinku and he along with his friends attacked Mofiz at 10:30pm and cut down his tongue.

Mofiz was taken to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.



Guests hold copies of a book 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Bahumatik Mullayan' at its launching ceremony at Public Library seminar room in the city yesterday. From left are Prof Mamtajuddin Patwari, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Mustafa Nurul Islam and Harun Habib.

BOOK ON BANGABANDHU LAUNCHED

'He is not only history but also inspiration for future'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was murdered by the vested quarters who were defeated in the liberation war to take the revenge of their defeat, said the speakers yesterday.

They said these quarters have now been conspiring to take the country backwards and not letting it to be a hunger-free modern state.

The speakers were addressing the launching ceremony of a book titled 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Bahumatik Mullayan' at the seminar room of the Public Library in the city.

Speaking as chief guest Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said Bangabandhu was killed as part of a big conspiracy by those who were defeated in

the liberation war and the conspiracy is still on to push Bangladesh backwards and deviate it from its cherished goal.

He said Bangabandhu is not only the history of Bangladesh but also an inspiration for the future.

The minister said the historic March 7 address of Bangabandhu would be included in the curriculum of Class 8 from next year.

Speaking as special guest Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said a special commission should be formed to let the people know who were behind the brutal murder of Bangabandhu.

"People should know who have sent the self-proclaimed killers of Bangabandhu to different foreign missions and who barred the trial of the

killers through indemnity ordinance," he added.

Bangladesh Bank Governor Prof Atiur Rahman said Bangabandhu was the greatest hero of the country as he was never afraid of death.

"Bangabandhu should not be limited to a small institution or to a street as he is in the hearts of all people," he added.

The ceremony was presided over by eminent writer and intellectual Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam.

The book, consisting of 164 essays on Bangabandhu written by eminent writers, was edited by Prof Mamtajuddin Patwari of history department at Bangladesh Open University and GM Tarikul Islam, lecturer of the same department of the same university.

The book has been published by Anindya Prakash.

MARITIME BOUNDARY WITH MYANMAR

FS hopes disputes to be resolved through talks

UNB, Dhaka

New Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes yesterday hoped that Bangladesh would resolve the maritime boundary disputes with Myanmar across the table, ruling out any military move by the neighbouring country trying to enforce their claim on the disputed portion of the Bay of Bengal waters.

"We may have differences on the issue but our attitude is positive. And we believe we are reducing the gap, establishing our rights and moving forward," he told diplomatic correspondents at the foreign ministry.

Quayes wouldn't endorse the notion of a correspondent that Myanmar might use military force during the coming winter to establish

their claim on the disputed seawaters.

"We've not got any such indication that we are moving towards a difficult time," he said, referring to the last meeting between the delegations of the countries in Myanmar recently. "I don't see any basis of apprehension. Engagement between us moves forward."

Myanmar and India had sent survey ships to the disputed waters last November-December, triggering tension in the Bay of Bengal, when Dhaka had to initiate diplomatic offensive to defuse the tensions.

On the follow-up to the parliamentary delegation's visit to Tipaimukh-dam site, DG (South Asia) Mohammad Imran, who was a member of the delegation, said the delegation has submitted a report to the prime minister.

Asked how he plans to achieve 'economic diplomacy', the foreign secretary said diplomacy is a political tour, which is never divorced from core issue of pursuing economic objective.

Experts from 65 nations gather in Indonesia yesterday to assess progress in the battle against HIV/AIDS amid concern only a quarter of those in need in Asia and the Pacific are getting treatment.

The International Congress on AIDS in the region, which will be opened by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on the resort island of Bali, will look at how to ensure 'universal access' to antiretroviral treatment, congress chairman Zubairi Djoerban said.

He said that only 25 percent of the 1.7 million of people with HIV/AIDS in the Asia-Pacific region who need the treatment are receiving it.

"We're still far away from our target," he said.

"We're not talking 100 percent, which is the ideal. If Latin America can treat 62 percent of sufferers there, we should strive towards that."

An estimated five million Asians are living with HIV, especially in southeastern countries such as Thailand, Cambodia, the Philippines and Indonesia, according to a UN report released last year.

The congress, which runs until Thursday, will also serve to demand commitment from governments to tackle the disease that killed 380,000 people across Asia in 2007, Djoerban said.

"We ask for commitment from the countries to achieve the targets they have set and if they say they can't, we'll discuss new efforts to help them reach their goals," he added.

"We can discuss prevention and treatment but with no leadership and commitment

from countries and the community, we won't achieve much."

While there are some bright spots in the region, such as Cambodia, where HIV prevalence has declined through condom use, new infections are growing steadily in populous countries such as Bangladesh and China, the UN report said.

In Indonesia and South Asia, Djoerban said the biggest threat was the lethal combination of dirty needles and unprotected sex.

"We're concerned about India, Indonesia and Pakistan, where there is overlapping of drug injecting and unprotected sex... this includes sex workers taking drugs and drug users not using condoms," he said.

"New infections are offsetting positive results from preventive actions."

In Indonesia, where HIV/AIDS cases have tripled since 2005 to 26,632, according to official figures, prisoners and prostitutes have joined injecting drug users to become among the groups most at risk.

A third of 254 prison deaths in the country in May this year were due to HIV/AIDS.

Meanwhile, one of the worst HIV epidemics outside of Africa is under way in Indonesia's remote eastern province of Papua, where 2.4 out of every 100 people are infected due to an influx of migrants workers and a booming sex industry.

However, HIV prevalence in the region is still low compared with Africa.

"In South and Southeast Asia, the HIV prevalence is 0.3 percent. In sub-Saharan Africa, it's five percent," Djoerban said.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Chandra Shekhor Chakma, former general secretary of Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Madhupur village under Khagrachhari sadar upazila yesterday.

Party sources said he came to Khagrachhari to attend a discussion marking the International Day of World's Indigenous Day.

After the discussion he felt sick and went to his relative's house to take rest, where he died.

His was sent to his residence in Rangamati yesterday.

Tejendra Narayan Chanda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



old-age complications at his residence in the city on Saturday at the age of 92, says a press release.

He left behind his four sons, two daughters and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Dhaka Metropolitan Bar Association expressed deep shock at his death and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

Aktor Hossain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

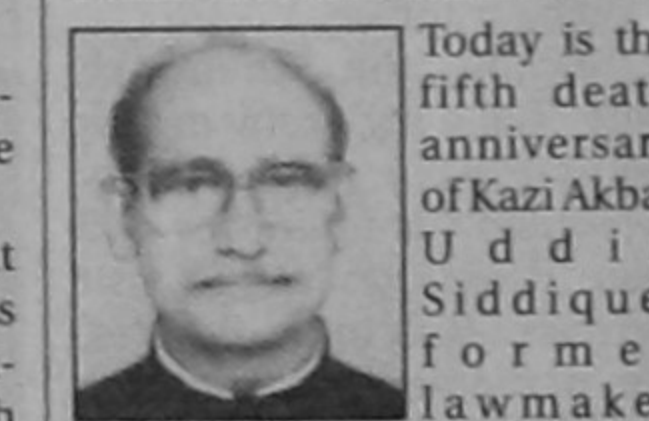
Aktor Hossain, former president of Haji Mohammad Mohsin Hall unit of Chhatra League and member of National Progressive Multipurpose Co-Operative Society Limited, passed away due to cancer at his residence at Uttara in the city on Saturday at the age of 48.

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

President, general secretary of the cooperative society expressed shock at his death and prayed for salvation of his departed soul.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

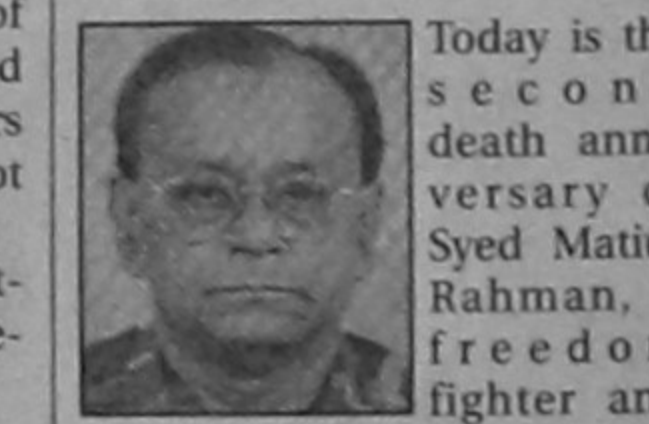


Today is the fifth death anniversary of Kazi Akbar Uddin Siddique, former law maker and founding member of Awami League, says a press release.

On the occasion, Siddique MP Foundation organises a memorial meeting at Nabinagar Pilot High School in Brahmanbaria at 4:00pm.

Syed Matiur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the second death anniversary of Syed Matiur Rahman, a freedom fighter and journalist.

He was the vice-president of East Pakistan Students Union and played an important role in the mass upsurge during 1969.

On the occasion, fatehah will be offered at his grave and food will be distributed among the orphans. His family members requested all to pray for his departed soul.

Ambia Khatun

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the sixth death anniversary of Ambia Khatun, mother of Altf Hossain, chairman of Jatiya Sangbadik Sangstha, says a press release.

On the occasion, milad mahfils and destitute feeding programmes will be held at the residences of her two sons in the city.