



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon forms a human chain on the Mirpur Road in the city yesterday protesting the move to build a stadium and shops at Dhanmondi playground.

Probal Chy  
critically ill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Probal Chowdhury, a popular singer and an artiste of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, is critically ill.

He has been undergoing treatment at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of a private hospital in the port city and put on life-support ventilator since Wednesday evening.

A medical board yesterday decided to observe his condition for another 48 hours, said hospital and family sources.

Probal was admitted to Chattogram Metropolitan Hospital after he fell unconscious following a massive brain haemorrhage at around 4:15pm when he was directing a cultural programme at BTV Chittagong centre.

"He has been in coma since then and his condition deteriorated further with continuous haemorrhage on Thursday evening," said Dr Ranjan Chowdhury, eldest son of Probal.

## BB steps up monitoring of farm loans: Dr Atiur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,  
Rajshahi

The central bank has put in place a three-tier monitoring system to ensure proper distribution of Tk 12,000 crore in agricultural loans across the country this fiscal.

Bangladesh Bank (BB) Governor Dr Atiur Rahman said this at a view exchange meeting with reporters at the bank's Rajshahi branch office yesterday.

Besides, the respective banks will also monitor their own distribution activities," he said.

"We are also providing

training to some 80 new officials who will visit banks across the country and monitor the distribution of loans for 15 days," the governor said.

The Bangladesh Bank asked all banks to keep a record of mobile numbers of farmers receiving loans so that the monitoring staffs can contact them easily to know about the loans, he added.

Dr Atiur said the agricultural loans this year has been increased 25 percent to Tk 12,000 crore.

"It's a big jump and the amount includes Tk 500 crore for distribution among the sharecroppers. So, we are keen

to ensure proper distribution of the loans."

The central bank governor observed that it is not possible to boost economy by ignoring agriculture.

"If agro-based industries and SMEs (Small and medium enterprises) flourish, Rajshahi region will be a big driving force for the economy," he hoped.

"Gas and power crisis is hindering the growth of industries in Rajshahi, but the region has fertile lands where lies the potential for agro-based industries," he added.

If the banks agree to provide loans to silk-based SMEs,

the central bank will provide funds at a five percent interest rate."

"Based on the agriculture and remittance, we are now proud of a reserve of over US\$ 9 billion, and the reserve is likely to reach US\$ 10 billion at any time now," Dr Atiur said.

Describing the role of banks in the country's economy, he said the country has survived the recession because of the stability of the banks.

General Manager Sardar M Shahjahan of Bangladesh Bank, Rajshahi branch, and DGM AFM Asaduzzaman were present at the view exchange meeting.

## Donors' suggestions hit agri sector badly

Matia tells seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury yesterday criticised the role of donor agencies, including the World Bank, saying that their recommendation to the previous government to stop the irrigation projects of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has hit the agriculture sector badly.

"But the Awami League government has now allotted Tk 400 crore to strengthen BADC," she said at a seminar marking the World Food Day at Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) in the city.

With this fund, BADC will be able to launch some projects, including canal restructuring to reserve water and increase water supply, to boost Boro production and reduce salinity in the southern coastal zone, said the minister.

"During the previous

Awami League government, I, as a minister, also faced pressure from donor agencies. At that time, they made a recommendation not to store more than seven lakh metric tons of foods in the godowns. But if we had ignored their suggestion, we could have avoided the food crisis," Matia said.

She also pointed out several major obstacles to ensuring food security in the country such as overpopulation and a decrease in food production for growing salinity in arable lands.

Matia also sought cooperation from donor agencies to check population growth by providing contraceptive devices. She stressed the need to raise awareness about the population growth.

The agriculture ministry in association with TeleFood, FAO and Channel i organised the seminar. This year's theme for the World Food Day is 'Achieving Food Security in



Students of Shamsunnahar Hall of Dhaka University form a human chain on the campus yesterday demanding fair probe into the death of Mafrauda Haq Sutapa, a student of journalism department, and trial of her killers.



Visitors admire orchids at an Orchid Show at Road - 95, CEN(C) - 2, Gulshan in the city. The Orchid Society of Bangladesh organised the two-day show that began yesterday.

## PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES Raise social awareness to address their problems Experts call at int'l conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Establishment of residential institutions and arrangement of special training programmes are essential to deal with mentally challenged people, said the experts at the concluding session of a three-day international conference in the city yesterday.

They also underscored the need for reliable instruments for proper assessment of the needs of mentally challenged people to undertake proper interventions programme for them.

The SIVUS International, Bangladesh SIVUS Institute and Dhaka University (DU) psychology department organised the three-day International SIVUS Conference on Mental Retardation at Nawab Nabab

Ali Senate Hall on DU campus.

A total of 16 participants from eight countries India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the UK, USA, Poland, Japan and Bangladesh took part in the conference with a view to finding challenges and probable remedies for mentally challenged people in the country.

While addressing the concluding session, DU Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Harun-or-Rashid stressed the need for building social awareness to address the problems of people with mental disabilities.

## Store employee shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of local armed criminals shot dead a teenage employee of a departmental store in the city's Banarsi area under Rampura Police Station yesterday.

Identified as Zahirul Islam, 17, of Sanjida Departmental Store in the area, the victim died on the spot as the criminals pumped two bullets into his body while he was unlocking the shop around 8:00am.

Sub-Inspector Asgar Hossain of Rampura Police Station said an identified man came to the shop and sprayed bullets on Zahirul, who had been serving the shop for the last four years.

The victim's cousin Alamgir Hossain said they could not ascertain the cause behind the killing.

Shop owner Momazzed Hossain filed a murder case, accusing some unknown criminals in this connection.

Meanwhile, police yesterday recovered the body of a 20-year-old youth from a canal at Bamoli under Demra Police Station.

Identified as Mohammad Faisal, 20, son of late Abdul Mannan of the area, the victim was found floating on the water and his hand and legs were tied with rope.

## শেল্টেক আবাসন মেলা ২০০৯

অক্টোবর ১৫-১৯, ২০০৯ (সকাল ১০:০০-সন্ধে ৭:০০)

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