

Bomb attack on Amar Desh journo

UNB, Dhaka

A journalist of the daily Amar Desh came under cocktail and brick-bat attacks near the Banani Staff Road and Kakoli traffic signal while going to office by his car yesterday afternoon.

The injured was identified as M Abdullah, special correspondent of the newspaper.

Abdullah suffered spinal injury while the glasses of his car were damaged as the attackers first hurled cocktail (handmade bombs) from behind at about 3:45pm as he was coming to Amar Desh office at Karwan Bazar from his Tongi residence.

Four attackers, riding on two motorbikes, chased his speedy car and launched the second attack by hurling brickbats at his car at Kakoli traffic signal. Abdullah told UNB overphone.

"I was scared, left my car and got into a passing passenger bus," he said, adding that his driver was beaten by the attackers before police appeared at the scene and took away his car and driver to the Gulshan Police Station.

Abdullah said he received injury in his spinal cord during the second attack as the brickbats were targeted at his head.

Asked about the motive behind the attacks, Abdullah said perhaps his report about the five million dollar commission received by the PM's son, Sajib Wazed Joy, and Advisor Dr Toufique-Elahi Chowdhury in awarding an unsolicited contract to US company Chevron for setting up a gas compressor.

Daily Amar Desh published the front-page report on December 17 this year.

"I don't see any other reason for the attack," he added.

Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in a statement condemned the attack on Abdullah.

Celebrating victory through volunteerism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 42 organisations, corporations, educational institutions, hospitals and other institutions celebrated the Victory Day at home and abroad on December 16 with the slogan 'Celebrating victory through volunteerism'.

The concept originated from the idea of celebrating the spirit of the freedom fighters by doing at least one act of 'voluntary service for the country, the organisers said in a press release yesterday.

Their programmes on the Victory Day included distribution of free medicines, setting up of a library at an orphanage, taking the poor school students to Wonderland, Liberation War Museum and the National Memorial at Savar, distribution of warm clothes and blood pressure measurement for poor people.

The organisations include Akij Group, Adcomm, Labaid Group, Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University, United International University, Ibn Sina Pharmaceuticals, Bangladesh Medical College and Bangladesh Cultural Organisation (of Norway), the press release said.



Aziz Gulshan Club president

METRO DESK

Rubel Aziz has been elected president of Gulshan Club Limited for the year 2009-10, says a press release.

He was elected at the annual general meeting of the club on Friday.

Executive committee members are: Obeid R Nizam, Khwaja Shafiqur Rahman, Riaz ur Rahman, Sabera Ahmed (Koli), Sultan Moyeen Ahmed Robin, AKM Iftekhar Hossain, Anwarul Kabir Khan (Tushan), AFM Obaidur Rahman, Alam Mahbubul and Engr Shafiqul H. Syed.

Police high-ups concerned over activities of land grabbers

KAILASH SARKAR

Police high-ups have expressed their concern to the home minister about the activities of two land developers' companies and also criticised the moves of some government bodies regarding the police department.

At a recent meeting with Home Minister Sahara Khatun and Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder at the Police Headquarters in the city, a senior police official observed that the police might feel disappointed as the government is not paying enough attention to the misdeeds of the land grabbers, sources said.

The police official said the

land developers are creating obstacles to implementing a housing project for the police officers.

The law enforcers would suffer from low morale if they have to give in to the pressure from the land grabbers, he added.

According to the sources, both the previous BNP-led four-party alliance government and the caretaker government approved the project titled 'Police Officers' Housing Society' on 200 acres of land and the present government also wants to implement the project. But the project faces uncertainty because of interference from well-connected land grabbers.

Another senior police officer expressed his concern over developments related to the formation of the proposed 'Industrial Police'.

Sources said the Police Department proposed forming the Industrial Police with 2400 police members and the establishment ministry approved creation of 1580 posts for the new forces. But the finance ministry rejected both the proposals and suggested forming the Industrial Police with the members from the Ansar.

The senior police official told the home minister that the Ansar members could only guard places but they are not capable of doing the job of police such as policing and

legal dealings.

Talking to The Daily Star, an official said, "At present, over 7,000 Ansar members are deployed to guard the industries in Gazipur, Savar and Narayanganj. But they could not deal with the labour unrest without the help from the police."

Another senior police official expressed concern over objections by the home and finance ministries to the police department's spending for entertainment purpose.

Sources said the police department sent a proposal to the government, seeking allocation of Tk 10,000 for each police station for the purpose of 'community policing' and Tk 5,000 for entertain-

ment purpose. But the government did not approve any of the proposals.

At the meeting, Home Minister Sahara Khatun assured the police officials of looking into the issues raised by them.

IGP Noor Mohammad chaired the meeting while Deputy Inspector General (DIG-admin) Benazir Ahmed, Assistant Inspector General (AIG-establishment) Mahbubur Rahman, AIG (admin) Mohammad Ibrahim Fatemi, AIG (crime) Mohammad Shah Alam and AIG (finance) Sahabuddin Koreshi presented keynote papers on the present situation of policing and future planning.



Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran inaugurates the sixth national conference of Bangladesh Photojournalists Association and Maitri Nepal Photo Exhibition by hoisting the national flag at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

99pc of child labour hazardous

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed the need for a coordinated effort to eliminate child labour from the country.

Poverty is the main reason behind child labour and 99 percent of such labour in the country is hazardous, they added.

The speakers said this at the seminar on 'Experiences of poverty and working children project' organised by Save the Children-UK at a city hotel with Prof Abul Barakat in the chair.

Save the Children-UK ran the project funded by the

European Union from 2004-2009 and shared their experiences. It also placed some recommendations in this connection.

Under the project in Kurigram, Khulna and the city's Lalbagh areas, the code of conduct for the employers was prepared and maintained along with children's saving schemes and working children's education programme.

Speaking as the chief guest, Dr Alauddin Ahmed, adviser to prime minister, said a collective effort is required to eliminate child labour as some 7.4 million children are engaged in paid labour which is quite a big number.

"The area of social safety net should be broadened and the amount of the financial allocation be increased to address the people living below the poverty line," he said.

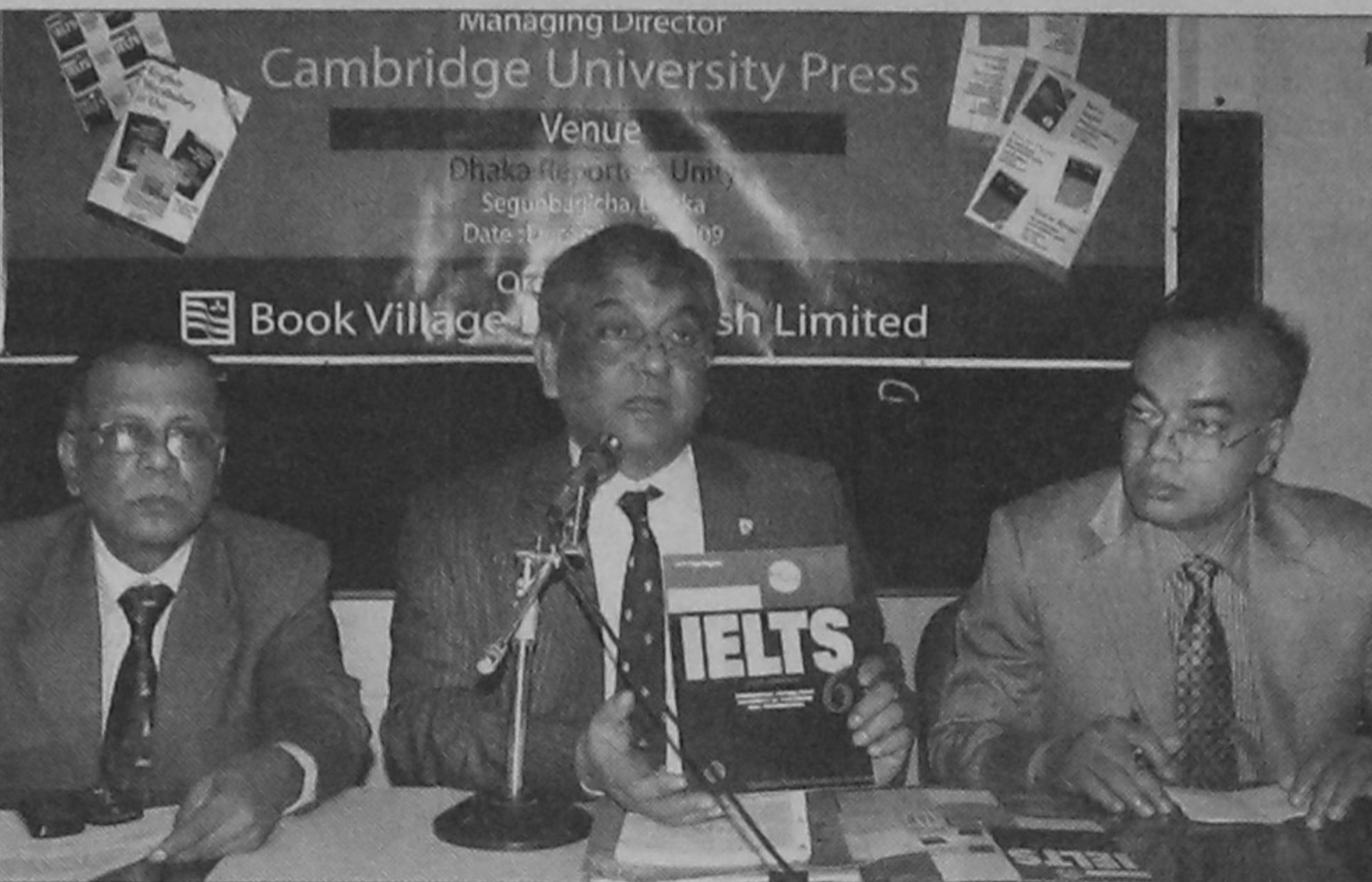
He stressed the need to strengthen the local government system so that the local elected representatives can work for eliminating child labour issue and can work for managing the health and education of these children.

State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury said that elimination of child labour is also stated in the country's Labour Law 2006. But it is not that much easy to eliminate

child labour.

"A monitoring mechanism can be established through the child labour unit as well as taking necessary steps for poverty reduction," she added.

Jean Jacques Lauret, head of operation of the delegation of European Union to Bangladesh, Shalahuddin Khan, senior programme officer of the delegation, Prof Syed M Hashemi, director of Brac Development Institute of Brac University, and Dr Pranab Kumar Pandey, chairman of the department of Public Administration of Rajshahi University, also spoke.



Managing Director of Cambridge University Press Manas Saikia speaks at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right is Osman Gani and on his left is Nurul Islam Azad. Book Village Bangladesh Limited organised the event marking the 425th anniversary of the press.

RANSACKING GOVT OFFICES 3 more held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Police arrested three more persons from Panbari Crossing in Jessore around 2:30am yesterday in connection with ransacking government offices in Rajshahi, Natore and Bogra in between December 11 and 14.

The three arrestees -- Habib alias Hridoy, 25, Kana Babu, 36, and Hannan, 32, -- were brought to Detective Branch office in Bogra for interrogation. On Thursday, police arrested Habibur Rahman Shimul, 25, of Jhapa village in Monirampur upazila of Jessore for the incident.

In interrogation, the three admitted their involvement with the robberies in different government offices including Divisional Commissioner's and LGED office in Rajshahi, Natore Technical School and College and Bogra Public Works Department.

They also said that they were a gang of seven and were only after money and computers.

Bogra police said the arrestees were the members of an inter-district robbery gang.

On December 13, a gang forcefully entered into the PWD office at Bogra and stabbed its night guard to death. They also ransacked 33 almirahs in 14 rooms of the office.

Chemistry Olympiad final round held

METRO DESK

The final round of Bangladesh Chemistry Olympiad 2009 held at Mukarram Hossain Khundkar Science Building at Dhaka University on Friday, says a press release.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique distributed prizes among the participants at the event.

Students securing top positions in the preliminary round of the Olympiad held at six divisional headquarters of Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Khulna and Barisal took part in the final round.

Top ten students in order of merit at the event are: Gulam Mustafa Mustashar Shahid Chowdhury (Sylhet International School and College), Akid Ornob (Scholastica), Moutushi Piya Tuni Banik (Mastermind International School and College), Joy Roy Chowdhury (Maple Leaf International School), Ahamed Al Nahian (Dhaka College), Sian Saket Ahmed (Scholastica), Abdullah Al Zobayer (Dhaka College), Shahadat Hossain Parvez (Sylhet Khajanchi Bari School and College), Jayeed Naseer (Aga Khan School) and Intishar Jashim (Aga Khan School).

Job fair for visually impaired people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shefali Rani Pal of Sirajganj lost her vision due to complications that developed after giving birth to a child. Later, her husband also deserted her, but she did not lose heart. To earn a living, she started to make and sell clay pots.

Shefali has now become an example to others that the visually impaired people are also capable of doing various work and can live a dignified life if they get minimum support and opportunity.

Like Shefali, many visually impaired people across the country have overcome their limitations through hard work and confidence.

Featuring these successful persons, a two-day photography exhibition began at the Nalinikanta Bhattashali Gallery at the National Museum in the city yesterday.

Bangladesh Visually Impaired People's Society organised the exhibition and also a job fair for the visually impaired people in association with the Sight Savers International.

At the job fair, the participating organisations received bio-data from the visually impaired people.

The Associated Press, Jamuna Bank, Prime Bank and some other organisations have come forward to offer jobs to educated and competent visually impaired youths.

A discussion was also held there and the success stories of some visually impaired persons were highlighted.

"Many visually impaired people can now operate computer and are also able to do administrative work. Using the Jaw software, they can also use Internet and they have proved their efficiency while working with different companies such as Teletalk, Reneta and Keya Cosmetics," said Jowaherul Islam Mamun, secretary general of National Forum of the Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD).

The speakers pointed out that physically and mentally challenged persons account for 10 percent of the total population and 33 percent of them are visually impaired, and they are deprived of their right to employment.

They demanded formulation of a law in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Lawmaker Shah Jikrul Ahmed was present as the chief guest. Mosharraf Hossain Majumder, general secretary of Visually Impaired People's Society, Salma Nasreen, deputy secretary of the CHT Affairs ministry, and Gazi Nurul Kabir, managing director of the Jatiya Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation, also spoke.

WEATHER TODAY

Temperature may fall

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog elsewhere over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

It said night temperature may fall 1-2 degrees Celsius over the country during the period.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:16pm today and rises at 7:37am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 30.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 12.8 degrees Celsius at Sayedpur.

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	27.5	18.4	62	69
Chittagong	29.1	17.7	75	62
Rajshahi	27.8	16.0	85	74
Khulna	28.0	19.8	75	79
Barisal	28.5	17.5	81	86
Sylhet	28.0	16.7	83	74
Cox's Bazar	30.4	18.0	78	71

Duta polls on Dec 30

DU CORRESPONDENT

Election to the executive committee of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) will be held on December 30.

Pro-Awami League and left leaning teachers under 'Blue-Panel' and pro-BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami teachers under 'White Panel' are contesting the election.

Candidates from both the panels submitted their nomination papers to the election commissioner yesterday.

Incumbent president of the association Prof Khondoker Bazul Haque of international business department and Prof Wahiduzzaman of Institute of Education and Research will contest the poll as president and general secretary candidates with blue-panel tickets, while Prof Tasmeri SA Islam of chemistry and incumbent general secretary Prof ABM Obaidul Islam of physics will compete for the president and the general secretary posts from the white-panel.

Other candidates from blue-panel are Dr Shahid Akhter Hossain of soil, water and environment (vice-president), Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed of economics (treasurer), Dr Muhammad Abdus Samad of mathematics (joint-secretary), and member candidates are -- Dr Ajoy Kumar Das of applied chemistry and chemical engineering, Prof Abul Barakat of economics, Prof Muhammad Akhtaruzzaman of Islamic history and culture, Prof Muhammad Anwar Hossain of bio-chemistry, Prof Fakhrul Alam of English, Prof Farida Begum of pharmacy, Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam of English, Prof Mobina Khandaker of tourism and hospitality management, Prof Mezbah Kamal of history and Dr KM Saiful Islam Khan of Persian language and literature.

Candidates of white-panel are Prof Syed Salehin Kadri of Bio-chemistry (vice-president), Prof Abbas Ali Khan of management (treasurer), Abul Hasnet of pharmacy (joint-secretary) and members -- Prof Sadrul Amin of English, Prof Abul Kalam Azad of marketing, Prof Sirajul Islam of management, Prof Abu Ahmed of economics, Shaheda Rafiq, dean of engineering faculty, Lutfar Rahman of statistics, Prof Haripad Bhattacharya of marketing, Muhammad Shafullah of geography and environment science and Chowdhury Mahmud Hasan of pharmacy.

The last date of withdrawing nomination paper is December 21. Casting of votes will continue from 10:00am to 2:00pm at DU teachers' club without any break.

Stop unnecessary medical tests

President urges physicians

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged physicians, including surgeons in lifesaving emergency service, to stop their consultation practice for unnecessary medical investigations for the patients and also asked for keeping medical-test fees at affordable levels.

"Consultation for unnecessary (medical) examinations and investigations should be stopped and fees for examination will have to be kept in tolerable level," the president categorically said, in the wake of reports carrying innumerable complaints in this regard.

He made the call while inaugurating the 11th International Surgical

Congress at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city.

Society of Surgeons of Bangladesh organised the event.

Describing medical profession as a noble mission for serving the humanity Zillur said, "You (surgeons) should pay special attention to providing people healthcare at easy and cheaper prices. I think you are very responsible to society and the country. The people also expect much more from you."

He mentioned that the government is firmly committed to providing the basic healthcare to the people of all strata besides fulfilling the basic human needs of the citizens.

Feasibility study on dredging of Padma

BSS, Rajshahi

Works of feasibility study to initiate dredging in the river Padma has been launched to bring back navigability in the river.

An experts' team of Water Resource Directorate carried out an extensive feasibility study at Godagari point of the Padma on Thursday.

Navigability in the river has been declined due to emergence of numerous shoals in the dry season and the river turns into various confluents affecting the river ways and irrigation system, sources said.

To get rid of the adverse

situation, various social organisations including Rajshahi Raksha Sangram Parishad and Godagari Nagorik Committee staged demonstrations.

They also sent memorandums to the prime minister's office and water resource ministry demanding immediate step to bring back navigability in the river through necessary dredging.

In response to the memorandums, the water resource ministry issued a directive to the Water Resource Directorate to prepare a ground level feasibility study on how to bring back navigability in the river.

Ex-BCL leaders demand trial of Tarique

DU CORRESPONDENT

Former leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) demanded that BNP Senior Vice-Chairman Tarique Rahman be brought back to the country to stand trial for his 'illegal' activities.

The former BCL leaders placed the demands at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium yesterday a day after some former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders alleged that the government has been hatching conspiracies against Tarique to tarnish his image.

Reading out a written statement, former BCL president AKM Enamul Haque Shameem alleged that Tarique had turned the country into a haven for terrorism during the

tenure of previous BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

He also alleged that Tarique had laundered thousands of crores of taka abroad.

The former BCL leaders urged the government to take action against Tarique immediately.

Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, Saifuzzaman Shikhar, Dr Aoulad Hossain, ABU Sayeed Al Mahmud Swapan, Bahadur Bepari, Ajoy Kar Khokan, Liakat Shikder and Engineer M Sabur were present at the press conference.

Meanwhile, present BCL leaders and activists staged a demonstration on the Dhaka University campus yesterday protesting propaganda by a section of the media against Sajeeb Wazed Joy, son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Primary terminal exam result on Dec 22

UNB, Dhaka

The results of primary education terminal examinations of Class V schedule for today will now be published on December 22.

The examinations were held on November 21-24.

5th National Debate Festival in January

METRO DESK

The two-day 5th NDF-BD National Debate Festival-2010 will begin in the city on January 30, says a press release.

The National Debate Federation Bangladesh (NDF-BD) has organised the festival.

About 2000 debaters from different Bengali and English medium schools, colleges, madrasa, medical college and universities will take part in the debate festival.

The festival will feature grand rally, model debates under different formats, public speaking competition, debate workshop, campfire, multimedia presentation and cultural show.

For details, interested persons can visit www.ndfbd.org.

For registration, debaters can call at 01611541566.

JU student falls victim to snatching

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers took away belongings of a girl from Santinar intersection in the city yesterday.

When Falguni Shampa, a student of Jahangirnagar University, reached near the intersection in a rickshaw in the morning, the snatchers took away her belongings coming from behind in an autorickshaw. Shampa was on her way to get into the university bus from National Press Club area.

Her university ID card and some other important documents were in the bag.

On information, police conducted raid in Kakrail and Santinar intersections area, but could not nab anybody. A general diary was filed in this connection.