#### Judge dies after falling over at secretariat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

District Sessions Judge Mohammad Golam Mowla, a member of the Customs, Excise and VAT Appellate Tribunal, died as he fell over while entering a washroom at the home ministry office at the secretariat in the city yesterday.

Golam Mowla, 54, hurt his head badly when he fell over at about 1:00pm. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead, his family members said.

Mowla came to the home ministry from the appellate tribunal in Dilkusha at noon, his driver Maznu Miah said.

Family members said Mowla had been transferred to the Customs, Excise and VAT Appellate Tribunal in deputation from Bandarban a year ago.

### Ghoraghat OC kills himself

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Ghoraghat police station in Dinajpur committed suicide, firing a shot into his forehead at his in-law's house of Namaz Ghar area in Bogra town yester-

The dead was identified as OCZakir Hossain, 45.

Zakir shot himself in the forehead at one stage of quarrel with his wife Nur Akhter Jahan Lipi around 9:15pm after his wife had complained to the additional superintendent of police of Dinajpur about his illicit relation with a woman.

Lipi told reporters that she complained to additional superintendent of police of Dinajpur yesterday morning stating that her husband has an extramarital affair with a woman that disrupted her family life. Additional SP called Zakir

following the complaint and rebuked him at noon, she said, adding that her husband came to her father's house in the evening and locked into a quarrel with her.

She said at one stage of quarrel Zakir pulled out his revolver from his waist and shot himself in the forehead.

Lipi said she lives in her father's house with her four

### Iqbal Wahhab awarded OBE

METRO DESK

daughters.



Wahhab has b e e n awarded an OBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours List for his public service duties as well as for

industry, says a press release. Iqbal's parents are from Khulna and now retired living

services to the hospitality

in London. After working as a journal-

ist in the national press for three years, Iqbal, a graduate of the London School of Economics, set up in 1991 his own PR firm that specialised in food, drink and restaurants. In 1994, he launched Tandoor Magazine.

Iqbal was recently made chair of the Mayor's Fund for London Business Club.

He sold out of the magazine to launch the multi-award winning Cinnamon Club in

2001 -- a restaurant and bar. He co-authored The Cinnamon Club Cookbook. In 2005, he opened Roast, a restaurant and bar in Borough Market celebrating the best of British cooking with the best of seasonal British produce.

### 13th NSU convocation today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 13th convocation of North South University (NSU) will be held on its own campus at

Bashundhara in the city today.

President Zillur Rahman, also the chancellor of NSU, will attend the convocation as the chief guest and confer degrees on 726 graduates.

Canadian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Robert McDougall will address the ceremony as the

convocation speaker. At a press conference yesterday, NSU Vice Chancellor Dr Hafiz GA Siddiqi said almost all preparations required for the celebration

have been completed.

# Multi-mode communication system on the cards

BSS, DHAKA

The government has taken up a master plan to develop a people-oriented, safe, cost-effective, environment-friendly, sustainable and multi-dimensional communication system within its fiveyear regime to ensure faster economic growth, Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain told BSS yesterday.

The minister said the government is making all-out efforts to launch the construction work of the Padma Bridge by September this year and complete it by December, 2013.

Hossain said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone of the 6.15-kilometer Padma Bridge on July 4, 2001, but the project made no headway during the last seven years.

The present government in its first cabinet meeting on purchase approved the appointment of international consultant for the Padma Bridge, he said.

He also said that the consultant has already prepared the final design of the project worth \$ 2.6 billion and donor agencies are keen to finance the project.

Hossain said the government has also taken preliminary steps for constructing the second bridge on the Padma at Paturia-Goalanda point, sensing the importance of smooth communication between the country's south and western region.

To carry goods from Mongla Port to Barisal, a 1550-meter long bridge would be constructed at Bikutia, he said.

The communication minister said that the cabinet committee has approved three expressway projects and metro-rail in the city to resolve the traffic problems.

The minister said the Dhaka-Chittagong highway, the main economic lifeline of the country, would be made a four-lane expanded road at a cost of Tk 2,300 crore. The two-way national highway now

carries goods of around Tk 4,000 crore annually, but about 400 to 600 people die every year in accidents. The cabinet has already approved Tk 1,655 crore for 192.3 kilometers of road and work orders have been issued, he said. He expressed the hope that the con-

struction work of the highway would start this month and they expect to complete it by 2013, which would make an immense contribution to the economic development of the country. In addition to taking new road projects, the government in the last one year

nication system. Construction works of the Shaheed Buddhijibi Setu (third Buriganga Bridge) is now complete with financial supports from Kuwait, making communication of the western part of the capital with the

made its best efforts to complete the

ongoing projects to develop the commu-

centre easier.

He said the construction work of the third Karnaphuli Bridge in Chittagong was also completed and it would be opened to traffic in April this year after completion of the approach road.

The government is trying to complete the construction of the 2nd Shitalakkha Bridge on the Kanchpur road by May this year while the construction of the Dapdapiya Setu on the Barisal-Patuakhali road, which is project worth Tk 298 crore, is going on in full swing.

The minister said the government allocated Tk 280 crore to complete the construction of 51 culverts in the country, which remained incomplete for years due to negligence of the past governments.

Besides, he added, the government has undertaken eight projects at a cost of Tk 2,229 crore under the Roads and Highways Division. This year, Tk 210 crore has been allocated for those projects. With the financial supports of the JICA,

the government has taken the "Eastern Bangladesh Bridge Improvement Project" at a cost of Tk 690 crore under which 136 medium size bridges would be repaired and reconstructed. A bridge would also be constructed

across the Arial Khan river at Kazirtek point of Madaripur at a cost of Tk 300 crore with financial supports of China, the minister also said.

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

shortage of judges.

### Electronic pass for sect staffs by June

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Electronic passes for officials and employees at the Secretariat will be introduced by the government to prevent the fraud and misuse that has reportedly occurred with manual passes.

The e-pass will be issued to approximately 12,000 civil servants employed by the Secretariat and it will be used in addition to their existing identity cards.

Home ministry officials said Tk 77 lakh has already been allocated from the finance ministry to introduce the e-pass by June.

Additional Secretary for the Ministry of Home Affairs Md Ghulam Hussain said, "Initially we will introduce the new passes for officials and employees and later the epasses will be issued to visitors, including journalists." Although a large number of

police and Armed Police Battalion (APBn) personnel guard the entrance, there have been reports of irregularities in both the issuing and use of the manual pass. Home affairs officials said

the introduction of the e-pass will prevent fraud as all those entering the Secretariat will first have to scan their pass at the entrance.

209 judges appointed

## Tender snatchers give death threat to bidder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminals who snatched bid documents from Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC) office at Paribagh on Wednesday had also issued death threats to a bidder the previous day.

The bidder, Md Abul Kashem, owner of Newaz Electrics Ltd., told The Daily Star yesterday that the criminals gave him threats over phone on Tuesday, warning him not to drop the tender schedule.

"Six companies, including my company, purchased the tender schedules and the cadres of a company snatched my documents," he said. "I had assured the caller that

me," said Abul Kashem, who is a retired PDB engineer. "I also heard that the criminals also took away bidding documents of another company before snatching my

police," he added. Wednesday was the last day for submitting tender schedules for the work order worth Tk 65

document in presence of

lakh. The job was to repair and maintain transformers for one

Meanwhile, the DPDC authorities and Abul Kashem filed separate general diaries (GD) with Shahbagh police in connection with the tender snatching.

But the statement of the DPDC in its GD differs from the statement of Kashem in his GD. In the GD, Kashem men-

tioned that criminals snatched his documents when he was dropping it into the tender box.

On the other hand, DPDS Deputy General Manager (Technical) Jahangir Hossain mentioned in the GD that they would be given some unidentified criminals got away money if they do not disturb with the bid documents kept on the top of the tender box.

> Sub-Inspector Abdul Kaiyum of Shahbagh Police Station, who is investigating the snatching incident, said none of the bidders and officials raised an alarm or informed the police.

He also said the police are yet to identify the criminals.

Death anniversary



Duncan Richard Weir, director of Golf Development Committee, Royal & Ancient, St. Andrews, Scotland, pays a courtesy call on Army Chief Gen Md Abdul Mubeen at the Army Headquarters at

#### January 17, according to law ministry offi-As many as 416 posts of the lower court

judges have been vacant for a long time, hampering the judicial work, sources said, adding

the lower courts across the country.

The government has recently appointed 209

junior judges for the lower courts to address the

The new judges will join their offices on

The capacity of the lower courts to deal with huge backlog of pending cases has increased with the appointment of the junior judges, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed told The Daily Star.

that around 15 lakh cases are now pending in

justice will depend on the integrity, efficiency

and sincerity of the judges.

The rate of disposal of cases at the lower courts will now increase, he added.

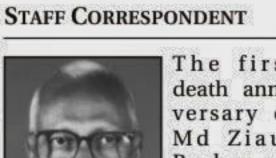
The Bangladesh Supreme Judicial Commission selected the new judges (assistant judges and judicial magistrates) through tests and examinations last year.

President Zillur Rahman approved the selection in December. After receiving approval from the Supreme

Court, the law ministry issued the appointment letters to the judicial officers with postings on December 30, according to the sources.

In 2008, some 394 assistant judges and judicial magistrates were appointed through the Bangladesh Judicial Service Commission during the tenure of the previous caretaker government.

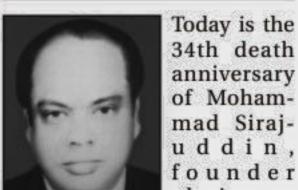
Md Ziaur Rahman



versary of Md Ziaur Rahman (Rubu), a renowned

his house at 9/24 Humayun Road, Block-C, Mohammadpur in the city after Asr prayers. Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the doa

### Mohammad Sirajuddin



This is the first visit of Modhumita Group, says a press release.

departed soul. titled 'Prime Minister's India Engr Md Anwar Hossain

### METRO DESK



engineer of Power Development Board, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held at his residence at 76 Barobagh, Mirpur-2 in the city.

also spoke at the meeting with Prof Mahbubullah in the chair. Relatives and admirers are

> Mohammadpur High School

### reunion today STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A reunion of the students of

Mohammadpur Government High School will be held today,

Jahangir Kabir Nanak will attend the programme as the chief guest.

The programme includes

### Dhaka Cantonment yesterday. Energy policy has to be devised on consensus'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A comprehensive national energy policy has to be devised on the basis of consensus to deal with the country's mineral resources, barrister Abdur Razzaq told the High

Court vesterday. The executive might abuse power in dealing with natural resources in absence of an appropriate policy, Razzaq said while placing arguments before the HC during the third day's hearing on a long-

pending writ petition. The writ petition was filed challenging the government move to sign productionsharing contracts (PSC) with foreign companies for gas and oil

exploration in onshore blocks. The HC on January 5 started the hearing following a government move in December last year to lift an HC injunction on onshore oil and gas exploration that resulted in suspension of all new PSC-based explora-

tions since 2001. The HC bench of justices Mohammad Anwarul Haque and AHM Shamsuddin

Chowdhury asked Abdur

Razzaq, the counsel for the writ petitioners, to give opinion on whether this court can interfere in the state policy involv-

ing mineral resources. Razzaq argued that the country's constitution has empowered the HC to examine whether the executive is properly dealing with the natural resources including oil and gas, since the people are the trustees and beneficiary of these

resources. The executive can sign PSC after ensuring protection of the

people's interests, he said. There was no proper guideline in the existing energy policy, formulated in 1995,

added Razzaq. Former secretary Shah Abdul Hannan, columnist Sadek Khan, journalist Amanullah Kabir, and Prof Abdur Rob jointly filed the writ petition as public interest

litigation in 1998. The HC in 2001 issued an injunction on oil and gas exploration in the country's onshore

blocks. The court fixed January 10 for further hearing on the

petition.



### Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

at Jessore and Feni.

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today. Moderate to thick fog may occur over the country during midnight till morning, met office said.

Prevailing mild cold wave over Rajshahi division and the regions of Mymensingh, Comilla, Feni, Barisal, Jessore and Kushtia may continue, it said. Night temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:27pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow. Country's highest temperature 28.0 degrees Celsius was

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were: **Humidity** in Temperature in City/Town

recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 8.4 degrees Celsius

Celsius percentage Evening Morning Max Min 25.6 11.7 Dhaka 88 23.6 12.8 Chittagong 81 Rajshahi 24.5 76 09.0 85 Khulna 24.5 11.7 95 Barisal 25.7 10.0 83 100 Sylhet 100 28.0 10.0 Cox's Bazar 27.0 15.0 75 86

# CBA leader Bakir dies in

custody STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Detained forme president of Sonali Bank Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA)

BM Bakir

to 13 years in a corruption case, died at Apollo Hospitals in the city yesterday. Senior Superintendent of Dhaka Central Jail Towhidul

Hossain, who was sentenced

Islam told The Daily Star that the CBA leader, who was arrested on July 9 in 2007, died at around 2:00pm of cardiovascular disease. Jail sources said the jail

Dhaka Medical College Hospital soon after he fell sick on December 22 last year. He was then shifted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and later transferred to Millennium

authorities rushed Bakir to

December 25. Afterwards, he was taken to

Hospital at Lalmatia on

Apollo Hospitals. Sources said Bakir was arrested in connection with two corruption cases filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) during the immediate past caretaker government regime. The court convicted him in a case while

another case was under trial. BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia expressed her deep shock at his death.

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, however, termed the death

questionable and a conspiracy. He demanded fair investigation into the death since Bakir was in custody.

Obituary STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shibly Sadiq, a renowned film director and former president of Bangladesh Film Directors' Association, passed away at a city hospital yesterday at the age of 68, says a press release. He left behind his son,

daughter and a host of admirers to mourn his death. Bangladesh Film Directors'

Association president and general secretary expressed deep shock at his death and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul. They also conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

### He, however, said fair dispensation of

REHABILITATION OF AILA-HIT PEOPLE

# Minister admits failure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur that his ministry failed to oftechnology. rehabilitate the cyclone Ailaaffected people in the coastal

"Many people who were affected by Aila are still living on the embankments, as it was not possible to repair breaches. This was our ministry's failure," he said at a press briefing on one year of the government at his minis-

The minister, however, could not say exactly how many people are still home-

According to the Power and Participation Research Centre, about 45,000 people are still living on the embankments under the open sky. Following a recent visit to the areas, the officials of the Centre said a new disaster might hit the people in Khulna and Satkhira districts if breaches at six major points of the embankments are not repaired imme-

The minister said some breaches could not be repaired in the first phase while some other breaches Razzaque yesterday admitted could not be fixed due to lack

However, Razzaque said his ministry was successful in management of food production and in operating social safety net programmes to help the poor people. He also thanked the media

for helping the government in

its various efforts through

highlighting the issues of

public interests, especially in food management. The minister also said total of 2,36,500 pieces of blankets have been distributed among the poor people to protect them from the cold wave. Priority has been given to distributing blankets among the people in Aila-hit areas and northern districts

he added. With the assistance from the United Nations Development Programme, the government will distribute one lakh more blankets to the cold-hit poor, the minister said.

Meantime, Sheuli Rahman,

director of Rid Pharmaceutical

Ltd and wife of its managing

director Mizanur Rahman, on

Sunday got bail from the Drug

Court till February 18. The same

At least 28 children died of

renal failure following intake of

Rid's paracetamol syrup and

suspension, across the country

Court issued arrest warrants

against the five after Directorate

of Drug Administration

On August 11, the Dhaka Drug

from June to August last year.

filed the case with the court.

secured it for six months.

#### ARREST WARRANTS AGAINST RID BOSS

### Court asks OC again to submit report

COURT CORRESPONDENT A Dhaka court yesterday again

asked the officer-in-charge of Brahmanbaria Sadar Police Station to submit reports on execution of arrest warrants against the three Rid Pharmaceutical Ltd director and pharmacists who are accused of manufacturing toxic paracetamol syrup. Judge Golam Mortuza

report on the property attachment of director Abdul Gani, and pharmacists Mahbubul Islam and Enamul Haque as he failed to submit the reports on Sunday. The OC was earlier asked to

submit reports twice but failed.

Later, on October 14 and

November 15 last year, he was

Majumder of Dhaka Drug Court

also asked the OC to submit

asked to explain why he failed to in Brahmanbaria as well, while arrest the accused and attach three other cases were filed their properties. against the Rid management in But the OC did not pay heed to Comilla, Narayanganj and the court order.

'Be firm on

#### national interest' STAFF CORRESPONDENT Speakers at a discussion yes-

PM's India Visit

terday urged the prime minister to be strict regarding issues of national interest during her upcoming India visit, which begins on January 10. They said there are a lot of unresolved issues with the

neighbouring country that should be solved through mutual respect and the premier should not bow down before India. The speakers also urged Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

share of water in the common rivers and maritime boundary. Liberty Bangladesh, a pro-BNP organisation, organised the discussion at the National Press Club in the city ahead of the scheduled visit of the premier to India.

to raise the issues of justified

Sheikh Hasina to India since she had taken office. Former vice chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin Ahmed was the chief guest at the discussion

Visit: Concerns and Prospects'. Emajuddin said there are some common problems in the South Asian countries, which could not be solved through bilateral framework. So, such problems, like water sharing and combating militancy, should be solved through multilateral framework.

He also urged the prime

minister to be strict like her

Indian counterpart on the Tipaimukh dam issue. Former director general of Bangladesh Rifles Maj Gen (retd) ALM Fazlur Rahman and journalist Sadek Khan

New UAPF court fixed January 17 for hearing a bail petition filed by Mizan's executives On August 18 last year, Sheuli Rahman appeared before the HC, METRO DESK seeking anticipatory bail and

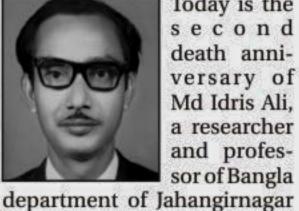
> Abu Taher has been elected chairman of h University of Asia Pacific

Engineer M

Foundation (UPAF), says a press release. Other office-bearers are Monzoor Ahmed Chowdhury

Superintendent Shafiqul Islam A case was filed against them senior vice-chairman; architect Mahabuba Haque and Tashmeen Shayera Moyeen -vice-chairmen; and KM Akhtaruzzaman -- treasurer.

#### METRO DESK Today is the

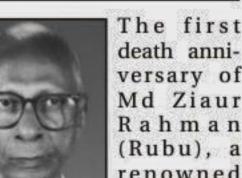


University, says a press

release. A milad mahfil will be held at his village home at Kalamnagar in Aatghoria, Pabna. A Rural Information and Technology Practice

Centre will also be launched in

his memory.

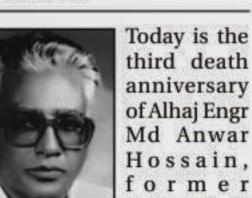


cricketer of Bogra, will be observed today, says a press release. A doa mahfil will be held at

#### METRO DESK Today is the 34th death

of Mohammad Sirajuddin, founder and managing director of

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to pray for eternal peace of the



requested to attend the programme.

says a press release. State Minister for LGRD

discussion, blood donation and a cultural show.