

GOVT OFFICES

# Reserved posts to remain vacant until FF quota filled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday decided that posts in different offices reserved for dependents of freedom fighters will remain vacant if eligible candidates could not be found to fill the 30 percent quota in each of such offices.

Chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the cabinet directed the authorities concerned to ensure direct appointments of freedom fighters' dependents in offices of the government, autonomous and semi-autonomous organisations, and different corporate entities marked for such appointments.

The cabinet however sent the relevant proposal back to the establishment ministry asking it to include similar separate preferential quotas for women and disabled freedom fighters as well before re-submitting the proposal.

The previous Awami League government in 1998 decided to keep vacant those reserved posts for which eligible candidates could not be found.

The BNP-Jamaat coalition regime in 2002 changed the system and decided to fill up the remaining posts with BCS examinations.

The cabinet yesterday also approved the draft Acid Control (Amendment) Act 2009. The law was

enacted in 2002 and a 22-member Acid Control Council was formed thereafter. It was amended twice in 2007 through ordinances. Sheikh Hasina directed her cabinet colleagues and top bureaucrats not to pile up files on their desks, and to work sincerely to speed up the wheels of the administration.

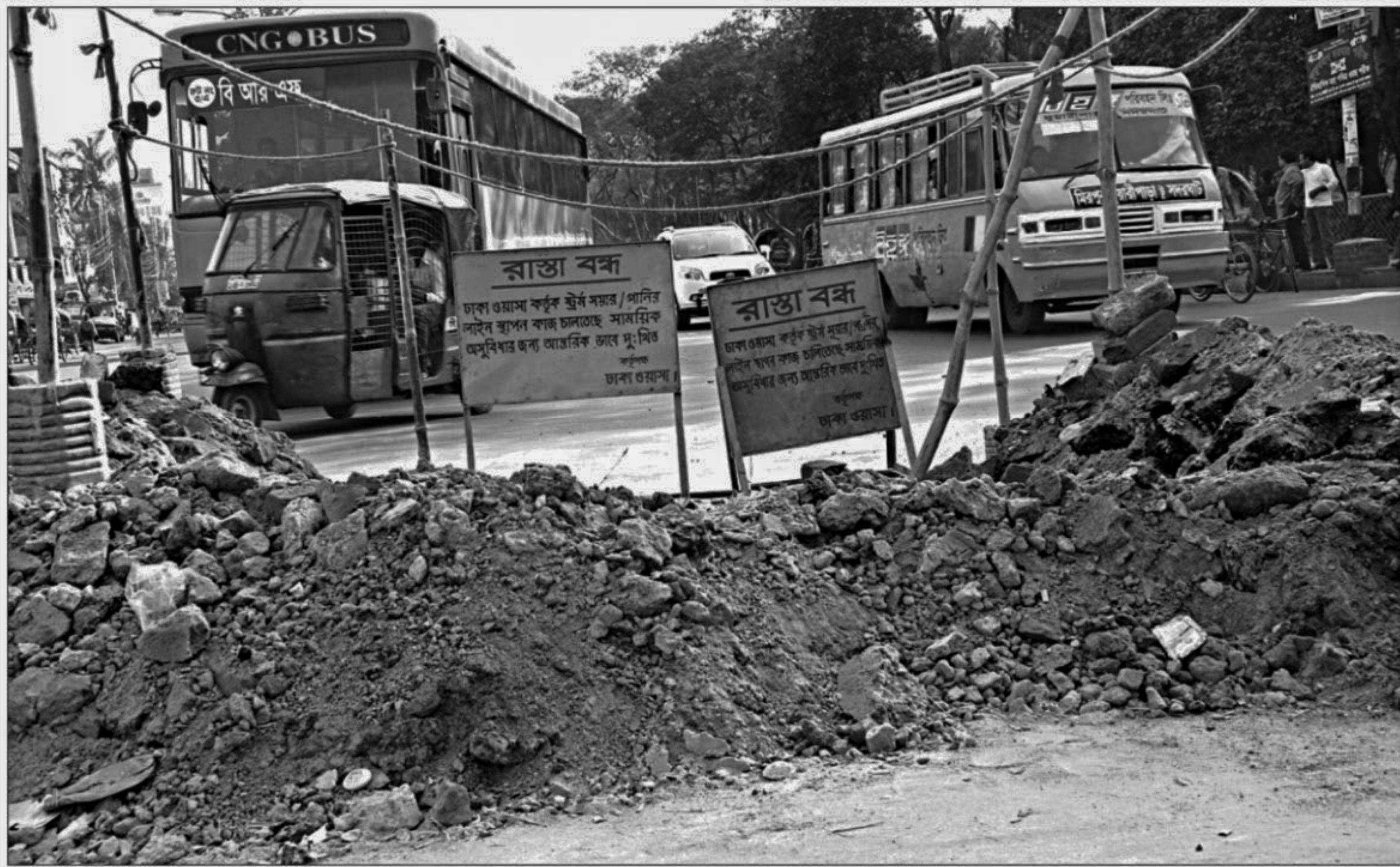
"I am trying to utilise every moment of my life. So, I ask you to do the same," Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad quoted the head of the government to reporters as saying, after the meeting held in Bangladesh Secretariat.

The cabinet also reviewed progress reports of implementation of its different decisions taken in the last three months of the past year.

In the last three months the cabinet had 50 meetings where 317 decisions were taken; 238 of which have been implemented so far, and 79 are currently being implemented.

The council of ministers also discussed reports placed by Bangladesh representatives to the 3rd joint economic commission meetings with Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

Although a discussion on Bangladesh Public-Private Partnership Policy and Guideline 2009 had also been in the agenda of yesterday's meeting, it was later dropped.



Dhaka Wasa digs in the middle of the Bijoy Sarani intersection in the city to repair the storm sewerage pipeline, hampering smooth movement of vehicles. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

# US seeks support for new UN convention

BSS, Dhaka

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said a new convention ensuring religious rights of the people would be introduced in the United Nations (UN) by the USA.

"The representatives of the US government have been travelling to the UN member countries and trying to build up worldwide opinion about the convention," he told journalists after an hour-long meeting with Ambassador Michael Kozak, senior adviser to the US State Department for Democracy, Rights and Labour, at this office here.

The minister said Kozak discussed with him religious freedom of the Bangladeshi people, especially the religious minorities, and proposed a new convention for ensuring religious rights of the people of the world.

He also wanted to know the opinion and position of Bangladesh about the subject.

"I have told the adviser that religious rights in Bangladesh are guaranteed by the constitu-

tion of the country" Shafique said, "We believe that the religion is totally separated from politics and no one would be discriminated, tortured or persecuted on religious grounds."

The US government is trying to ensure that the state does not create any discrimination among the citizens on religious grounds, Kozak told the minister.

Replying to a query regarding the constitution of Jamaat, the minister said according to the Representation of People's Order (RPO), Election Commission could ask any political party to change the party constitution if there is anything contrary to the constitution of the country.

"Constitution is above all laws or rules, so anything contrary to the constitution must be removed," he added.

Two senior officials of the US embassy accompanied the visiting adviser to the state department.

Earlier, the envoy called on the religious affairs secretary at this office at secretariat.

## Tuku granted anticipatory bail from HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted six months' anticipatory bail to Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal President Sultan Salauddin Tuku in a robbery case against him.

The HC bench of Justice MA Wahhab Miah and Justice Md Abdur Razzaque issued a rule upon the government to explain why Tuku should not be granted regular bail in this case.

On January 18, Shamima Akter Laizu of Dhanmondi filed the robbery case with Dhanmondi Police Station against some JCD leaders and workers including Tuku.

The bench also directed eight JCD leaders including General Secretary Amirul Islam to surrender before the trial courts within eight weeks in connection with two separate cases including the robbery case.

The other one was filed with Shabbagh Police Station on the same day following the violence at Dhaka University on January 18.

After hearing separate bail petitions filed by the accused student leaders, the court also asked the government not to harass or arrest them in this period.

The leaders yesterday appeared before the HC for bail in the cases.

## Korea-Bangla MPs' assoc chair in city

BSS, Dhaka

Kim Choong-Whan, chairman of the Korea-Bangladesh Parliamentarians' Friendship Association of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, is now in city on a four-day visit to Bangladesh.

He arrived here on Sunday, said a South Korean Embassy press release yesterday.

He will meet Speaker Abdul Hamid Advocate.

## PRIMARY TERMINAL EXAMS 50,535 get scholarships

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 50,535 students will get the scholarships of Primary Terminal Examinations 2009 this year.

Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) handed over the list of scholarships to the Primary and Mass Education Ministry yesterday. State Minister for the Primary and Mass Education Motaah Hossain, Secretary-in-charge Abu Alam Mohammad Shahid Khan, Director General of Directorate of Primary Education Shyamal Kanti Ghosh and senior officials were present on the occasion.

The scholarships have been given in two categories -- talent pool and general -- on the basis of highest numbers in the examinations. Of the scholarships, 19,995 students got scholarships in talent pool while 30,540 in general category.

The government introduced the public exam for the class V students this year in place of the existing scholarship exam. In the previous system, only 40 percent of primary school students across the country used to sit for the scholarship

exam.

A total of 18,23,465 class-V students -- 8,30,879 boys and 9,92,585 girls -- took part in the newly introduced examination. The exam of 2009 saw a pass percentage of 88.84.

However, the number of scholarship has increased by 251 this year. Some 50,284 scholarships -- 19,976 in talent pool and 30,308 in general -- were given in the scholarship exams last year.

Students of Dhaka division got the highest number of scholarships as the highest number of students took part in the exams from this division.

The number of scholarship recipients in Dhaka division is 14,621; Rajshahi 12,912; Chittagong 10,285; Khulna 5,919; Barisal 3,412 and Sylhet 3,386.

Briefing the newsmen at his secretariat office, Primary and Mass Education Minister Afsarul Ameen said the list of scholarships is available on the website of DPE (www.dpe.gov.bd/).

He said they expect that the number of scholarships would be increased in the next fiscal year.

## 4 arrested for forging PM's signature

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Bagrama police yesterday arrested four including two teachers for forging signatures of the prime minister, a state minister and a lawmaker.

The arrestees are Abdul Hannan, 35, teacher at Boro Bihani Technical School and College, Shariful Islam, 30, teacher at Bhawaniganj Technical School and College and two farmers Yakub Ali, 65, of Kazipara and Shahar Ali, 60, of Boikuri villages.

They were preparing forged documents to draw Palli Biddyt Samity's (PBS) special attention regarding power connection to their irrigation facilities for boro season.

Deputy general manager of Natore Palli Biddyt Samity-1 lodged a case with the Bagrama Police Station in this connection. The arrestees were placed on a three-day remand.

Charges against Shariful Islam were dropped although he and some others abetted the crime, said Officer-in-charge Harun-ur Rashid of the police station.

## WRIT FOR DEMARCATION OF DCC HC asks authorities to explain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule upon the authorities to explain within four weeks why they should not be directed to demarcate the areas and determine the number of the wards of Dhaka City Corporation on the basis of equal number of population before holding the upcoming DCC election.

The HC bench of Justice Md Montajuddin Ahmed and Justice Naima Haider issued the rule upon a public interest writ petition filed by one Shamim Mollah, a voter of ward No 17 of the DCC.

The LGRD and cooperatives secretary, the chief election commissioner, the DCC mayor and deputy commissioner of Dhaka were made respondent.

The petitioner prayed to the court to direct the respondents to implement the provision of the gazette

notification issued on October 15, 2009, saying that the areas and the number of wards of every city corporation will be determined according to the latest population census.

He said the DCC was divided into 90 wards in 1993, and the latest population census was held in 2001.

The differences between the population and the voters of the wards of DCC are very high, he said citing an example that the number of population of ward No 6 of DCC is 1,05,096, while the population of its ward No 73 is 10,695.

The petition said budget allocation for development works of the wards are obstructed due to the differences.

The petitioner said the areas of the wards of DCC should be demarcated on the basis of population to allocate the development budget equally for all the wards.

## HC asks SQ Chy to surrender before trial court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury to surrender before the trial court within eight weeks in connection with a defamation case filed in Khulna.

The HC bench of Justice MA Wahhab Miah and Justice Md Abdur Razzaque also directed the government not to harass or arrest Salauddin during the period.

The HC also asked the trial court to consider his bail prayer after his surrender.

The court came up with the order upon a bail petition filed by Salauddin. He appeared before the HC for bail in the case.

Advocate Shirin Sultana, of Khulna, filed the defamation case in December last year against him on charges of making derogatory comments about the killings of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members and the National Mourning Day.

Chief Judicial Magistrate of Khulna took the case into cognisance on December 23 last year and issued a summons against him.

Advocate Shah Manjurul Hoque appeared for the petitioner.

## Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AKM Jamaluddin, former food department official, passed away due to old age complications in the city on Sunday at the age of 81, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and three daughters to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at 11.00am today at his village in Borchapa under Monohardi in Narsingdi after arrival of his children from abroad. He will be laid to rest at his family graveyard.

## Death anniversary

METRO DESK



Today is the second death anniversary of Md Golam Kibria, deputy superintendent of police and the founder of Bangladesh Reserve Force (RRF), Khulna, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa maflil will be held at his residence at Jessore.

Golam Kibria started his career in the Bengal Police Service during the British period in 1938 and retired in 1972. His eldest son Dr M Golam Shahi Alam is a senior professor of Bangladesh Agricultural University in Mymensingh.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## 5th Amendment cannot be scrapped at gunpoint

Says Nizami

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Fifth Amendment cannot be cancelled only by holding a 'gun to the head of the court', Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Matiur Rahman Nizami said yesterday.

"The Fifth Amendment was brought under certain circumstances when democracy was not there. It introduced democracy and, at the same time, it holds the sentiment of Muslims of the country. So, it cannot be changed only by holding a gun to the head of the court."

Nizami said this as the chief guest at a discussion organised by Dhaka City unit of Jamaat to mark January 25 the day of establishing Bakshal.

The amendment was ratified in the parliament where the ruling Awami League (AL) was also present, he added.

Meanwhile, Dhaka City unit Jamaat Ameer Rafiqul Islam Khan raised a question about the jurisdiction of the court to declare Fifth Amendment illegal.

"Which one is supreme -- parliament or court? Now people are putting a question, 'Does the court have any right to declare Fifth Amendment illegal passed by the parliament?'"

The Jamaat chief said the ruling party was conspiring to impose Bakshal-like one-party rule once again by banning the religion-based political parties.

He further said that establishment of Bakshal brought the disaster of August 15. "A section of AL leaders were involved in the August 15 massacre and were also the beneficiaries of the August 15 change-over," he said.

Assistant Secretary General of Jamaat Abdul Kader Molla, ATM Azaharul Islam and Publicity Secretary Tasnim Alam also spoke at the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

Guardians of students of Vigarunnisa Noon School and College form a human chain in front of the institution in the city yesterday protesting hike in the tuition and readmission fees.

**WEATHER**

**Temperature may rise**

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country with partly cloudy sky over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Night temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:40pm today and rises at 6:42am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 31.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rangamati and lowest 8.4 degrees Celsius in Srimongal.

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	29.0	14.4	66	--
Chittagong	27.0	13.6	71	71
Rajshahi	27.0	11.3	84	68
Khulna	28.0	12.0	89	62
Barisal	28.9	10.9	85	71
Sylhet	30.8	15.1	42	40
Cox's Bazar	29.7	13.5	70	75

**T O D A Y**

**Workshop**

The Department of Mass Communication and UNICEF Bangladesh will jointly organise a planning workshop for the district information officers. Venue: Press Institute of Bangladesh auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

**Seminar**

North South University and MANAS (Association for the Prevention of Drug Abuse) will jointly organise a seminar on 'Drug abuse and prevention in Bangladesh'. Venue: NSU campus. Time: 3:00pm.

**Prize giving ceremony**

The annual sports and prize giving ceremony of Vigarunnisa Noon School and College will be held. Venue: School premises. Time: 9:00am.

**Lecture**

The daily Bhorer Kagoj organises the Zahur Hossain Chowdhury Memorial Lecture 2010. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 11:00am.

**Dialogue**

Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific organises the Fourth Regional Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Rural Livelihoods. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 9:30am.