



Abed to receive knighthood today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fazole Hasan Abed, founder and chairperson of Brac, will be knighted by Queen Elizabeth at a special ceremony at the Buckingham Palace in London today.

The knighthood, announced in the New Year Honours List, will be awarded in recognition of Abed's outstanding service for poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor in Bangladesh and abroad, says a press release.

Abed's new title will be Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George (KMG), the United Kingdom's sixth highest honour.

He is the first person of Bangladesh origin, since 1947, to be honoured with a knighthood by the British Crown, the release added.

Abed was born in 1936 in Baniachong of Habiganj district. He attended Pabna Zilla School and Dhaka College before studying Naval Architecture at Glasgow University. He joined the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants in London.

When he returned to Bangladesh, he joined the Shell Oil Company, but when the cyclone of 1970 killed 300,000 people, the course of his life changed.

He established the relief and rehabilitation organisation HELP, but was forced to flee Bangladesh when the Liberation War broke out in 1971.

Whilst in England, he set up Action Bangladesh to lobby for independence and when he returned home after the war, he used the funds he had generated from selling his flat in London to set up Brac.

Within 30 years Brac has become the largest development organisation in the world.

It currently operates in more than 69,000 villages and provides assistance to around 110 million people.

Brac provides free primary education, essential healthcare, agricultural support, legal services to promote human rights, as well as microfinance and enterprise development.

MONEY LAUNDERING Court asks 2 OCs to submit reports on arrest warrant against Saimon

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday directed officers-in-charge (OCs) of Comilla Sadar and Gulshan police stations to submit reports by March 11 on execution of arrest warrant against Ismail Hossain Saimon, son of former shipping minister late Akbar Hossain, in a money laundering case.

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after prosecution informed the court saying that police had failed to submit reports on execution of arrest warrants.

Another accused Arafat Rahman Koko, the youngest son of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, could not appear before it as he was earlier released on parole and had gone abroad for his treatment.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case against Koko on March 17 last year under the money laundering law for siphoning off Tk 19,70,25,000 to Singapore.

As per the deposition, a portion of the money deposited to Koko's bank account came from an account of China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd opened in the USA.

China Bangladesh was operating in Bangladesh at the time of the transfer when it was constructing the New Mooring Container Terminal.

DHAKA ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY

Move to implement billion dollar project without feasibility study

UNB, Dhaka

The communications ministry, without conducting any feasibility study, has been moving to implement the much-talked-about Dhaka Elevated Expressway (DEE) project.

And what is more, even before doing any preliminary works, the ministry has sought approval of the Cabinet Economic Affairs Committee to appoint a consultant for the project without any tender process.

According to official sources, the ministry initially moved a proposal in this regard to the Cabinet Economic Affairs Committee last month. The committee is likely to sit on February 18 to consider the proposal.

As per the plan of the ministry, the four-lane Dhaka Elevated Expressway will be of 32.10 kilometer length from Gazipur to Narayanganj and it will be implemented at a cost of Tk 8617 crore (equivalent to 1.24 billion US dollar) in three phases -- 10.80 km in the first phase, 10.10 km in second phase and 11.30 km in the final phase.

The monorail and underground subway

network was suggested to be integrated into the project. Despite huge involvement of different modes of systems, so far no feasibility study was conducted on such a mega project.

Experts in the infrastructure sector wondered how the communication ministry could move with a mega infrastructure project like the elevated expressway without any feasibility study on which the entire Dhaka city's communication system, including rail and roads, will depend.

They said such eager haste with any project may lead to big trouble in future and invite more complications instead of yielding a solution to the problem.

After assuming office in January 2009, the Awami League government announced that it would implement the proposed elevated expressway project with a view to easing the traffic congestion in the capital city.

Subsequently, the communication ministry moved a proposal in June last year and the Economic Affairs Committee gave its nod to the proposal asking to imple-

ment the elevated expressway project by the private sector, either on build-own-operate (BOO) or build-own-transfer (BOT) basis.

The ministry was also asked by the committee to implement the project in compliance with the Bangladesh Private Sector Infrastructure Guideline (BPSIG).

After this directive, the ministry in November 2009 invited pre-qualification tender prior to selecting international bidders for the mega project. The bidders were asked to submit their prequalification documents by January 2010.

But when the ministry invited the bidders to a pre-bid investors' promotion meeting on January 12, some of the bidders requested it to extend the submission time until January 22, 2010.

But in the meantime, the ministry felt that it had no technical expertise to handle such a mega infrastructure project.

Particularly, it has no expert to deal with matters like engineering concepts, including route selection, determining criteria, traffic

and revenue conditions, economic and financial feasibility, preparation of tender document and project agreement.

The communication ministry subsequently prepared a proposal to appoint the present consultant of the proposed Padma Bridge Maunsel-AECOM at a cost of 450,400 US dollar (equivalent to about Tk 3.10 crore).

It was said in the proposal that the Maunsel-AECOM should be appointed as consultant mainly to expedite the implementation of the DEE project.

The government can appoint the Maunsel-AECOM as a consultant of the project as the price for the job was justified in the opinion of the communication ministry, said the proposal.

But some senior officials at the other ministries disagreed with this view saying that it would be a bad example to appoint any consultant for any public project.

They said this was an unsolicited matter, which the public procurement law (PPA) does not allow.

Restriction on entrance of vehicles to secretariat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday imposed restriction on the entrance of vehicles to the Bangladesh Secretariat as part of strengthening security measures at the country's civil administration hub.

From today no vehicles without the special stickers can enter the Secretariat, according to the decision.

The home ministry has introduced three types of stickers --- orange, yellow and white --- which have been distributed.

Yellow sticker is for government, semi-government, directorates, embassies, donor agencies and their officials' vehicles, orange for ministries and their officials, while white for those who would visit Secretariat for a single visit.

The decision, which was supposed to come into effect on January 1, was imposed without any notification yesterday. As a result, most of the vehicles could not enter the administrative hub that caused huge chaos at the entrance.

Even any government did not allow any government vehicles without the stickers.

Home ministry officials said that a floor of the transport pool, just opposite to the secretariat, has been made vacant for the vehicles, which cannot enter the secretariat.

'Democratic State and Army' launched

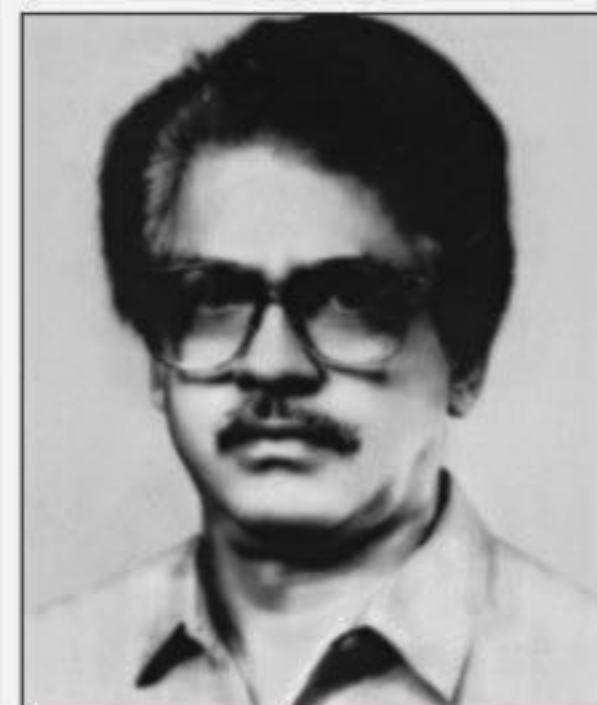
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A book titled 'Democratic State and Army' written by Prof Anwar Hossain of Dhaka University was launched at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair on Bangla Academy premises yesterday.

The book is a compilation of 25 articles of Prof Anwar published in different dailies from July 21 in 1996 to December 16, 2009.

Prof Anwar, former general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association, who was detained during the immediate past caretaker government centring the violence on Dhaka University campus, said the democratic state we dreamt of has not come into being yet, which led to military interventions again and again.

He said the articles deal with the nature of an ideal democratic state and the dreams of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Col (ret'd) Taher who sacrificed their lives for the country.



Kazi Aref's 11th anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 11th death anniversary of Kazi Aref Ahmed, a freedom fighter and founder of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), says a press release.

Kazi Aref Parishad has chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day.

The programmes include doa and milad mahfil at his grave at Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in Mirpur in the morning, placing wreaths at his home and discussion at the National Press Club at 4:00pm.

Political leaders, journalists and cultural personalities are expected to join the discussion.

Amir Shakil

METRO DESK

Today is the 8th death anniversary of Amir Shakil, son of late Hazi Abdul Quadir and grandson of late Khan Shahib Hazi Emdad Ali of Zinzira at Keraniganj, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at his Gulzarbagh residence at Zinzira after Asr prayers today.

Friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the milad and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

President asks CJ for quick disposal of cases

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday called for taking proper steps to dispose of all cases pending with both lower and higher courts "as soon as possible".

"Ensure justice for common people by settling the cases in a speedy manner," he told newly appointed Chief Justice M Fazlul Karim, who called on the president at Bangabhaban and apprised him of various matters of the judiciary.

During the meeting, the president suggested digitalising the judicial system to expedite the trial process of the pending cases, as reports say a total of around six lakh cases remained unresolved in the two tiers of

the judiciary.

Chief Justice M Fazlul Karim sought the president's support and cooperation in establishing the judicial secretariat proposed during the separation of the judiciary from the executive.

"A separate secretariat would help increase the speed of the work of courts as well as judicial process," he told the president.

The chief justice also urged the president to take steps to increase the facilities of judges.

The president gave him a patient hearing and assured him of his all-out cooperation for the overall development of the judicial system.

BCL LEADER MURDER

Three suspects placed on 5-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed three alleged killers of BCL leader AKM Faruk Hossain on a five-day remand for interrogation, the directive branch of police said.

The detective police arrested Abu Taleb, 31, Enayet Hossain, 25, and Shukur, 30, in connection with the killing of Faruk on Sunday.

Cantonment Thana BCL president Faruk was killed on February 12 on the premises of Adarsha Biddaniketan at Manikdi.

Mollah Nazrul Islam, additional deputy commissioner of DB, told The Daily Star that during the primary interrogation, the arrestees confessed to their involvement in the killing. They also said that they did not shoot Faruk but accompanied the killers.

Establishing supremacy in

the area, extortion and drug peddling are main reasons behind the killing, the DB high official said.

Local people said at least nine people were killed in the last 14 months in the area, which also saw a rise in drug peddling.

To stop these activities, local people urged Faruk to form an anti-crime committee, for which the vested group killed him, they said, adding that but the real culprit is yet to be arrested.

Monirul Haque of Manikdi area, a Rokan (permanent member) of Jamaat-e-Islami was shown arrested in connection with the murder of Faruk on Friday night.

Home Minister Sahara Khatun visited Faruk's house and the area yesterday afternoon. Local people demanded a fair investigation into the murder and immediate arrest of the criminals.

Obituary

METRO DESK



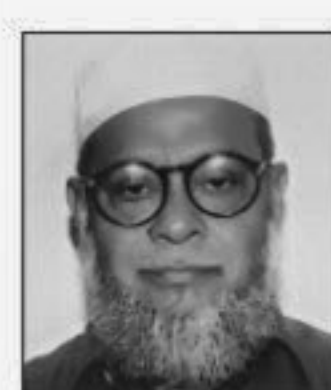
OH Shamim Sher, a hydrogeologist consultant and freedom fighter of Sector No. 2, passed away on February 14, says a press release.

His qulkhani will be held at 12/6 Pallabi, Mirpur in the city after Asr prayers on February 18 and at House #52, Road # 6A at Dhanmondi in the city on February 19.

All are requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

Nazir Ahmed

METRO DESK



Nazir Ahmed, chairman of Academic Council of Islamic Bank Training and Research Academy, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at United Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 72, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, four sons, one daughter and a host of admirers.

His body was taken to his village home at Murail of Kahaalu upazila in Bogra after namaz-e-janaza at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque.

Prof Abu Nasser Muhammad Abdus Zaher, chairman of Board of Directors, and M Fariduddin Ahmad, managing director of Islamic Bank Bangladesh Limited, condoled his death, prayed for salvation of his departed soul and conveyed the sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Doa mahfils for salvation of the departed soul was held the same day at head office and all the branches of the bank.

Shraddha

METRO DESK



Shrutidhar Suijt Kishor Dhar will be held at Dhakeshwari Temple in the city this morning, said a press release.

Suijt, an advocate and a former assistant settlement officer in Dhaka, passed away at a city hospital on February 6 due to old-age complications.

Kidnapped elderly man, guard rescued, 6 arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police rescued an elderly man and his security guard after they were kidnapped last Saturday in the capital's Uttara.

Six people have been arrested in connection with the kidnapping of Hossain Altaf and his security guard.

Sub-Inspector Parvez Islam of Uttara police station said the two men were taken to Hotel Northern Residence at Sector-11 in Uttara and then to a hide-out in the capital.

They were rescued on Saturday evening.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Nisharul Arif of DMP Uttara zone said Al-Mamun Jewel and 250 of his cadres ransacked the victim's house and stole gold and diamond ornaments worth approximately Tk 50 lakh.

Police said there is an ongoing land dispute between the attackers and the victim.

The vandals also looted furniture, damaged the windows and doors, pulled out bathroom fittings and damaged a portion of the roof.

The attackers dumped the electronic goods and furniture in a field in Sector 6 of Uttara.

The DC said Hossain's friend Habibur Rahman alerted police around 10:00am that people were vandalising Hossain's house on the five katha plot on Road 11 in Sector 4.

A police team rushed to the spot and arrested five attackers, whilst the others managed to flee.

The six arrested men faced a Dhaka court on Monday and were placed on a one-day remand.

Hossain told police that he had been living in the house for the last 27 years.

He said he originally bought the plot of land and the house from Shamsuddin, who was heir to the house and the land, which was at

the time owned by expatriate Yeaj Uddin.

When Yeaj Uddin died few years ago, his nephew Shamsuddin inherited the plot with the house because Yeaj did not have a spouse.

However both Yeaj Uddin and Shamsuddin died before formally handing over the house and land.

Jewel, however, alleges that he bought the plot with the house from the heirs of Shamsuddin and that Hossain was an illegal occupant.

Police said both Jewel and Hossain could not produce any documents supporting their claims.

Both their families live abroad and were therefore unable to substantiate the claims.

Hossain has filed a case with the police station accusing the six arrestees and around 250 unidentified others.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Slight rise in night temperature is expected over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:54pm today and rises at 6:30am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 31.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 12.4 degrees Celsius at 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	29.1	17.6	54	30
Chittagong	30.0	17.6	67	53
Rajshahi	27.5	12.9	79	61
Khulna	28.0	18.5	68	58
Barisal	28.5	17.4	71	65
Sylhet	31.2	14.4	60	33
Cox's Bazar	31.4	19.9	72	64

DHAKA TODAY

Memorial meeting
A memorial meeting will be held to pay tribute to the memories of peasant leader Barun Roy. Venue: Liberation War Museum. Time: 3:30pm.

Publication ceremony
The Swadhinata Juddher Sipahsalar: Swadhinata Juddher Sipahsalar: Swadhinata Juddher Sipahsalar will be held. Venue: Osmani Memorial Auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Seminar
Manash and Willes Little Flower School and College will jointly organise a seminar to raise awareness against smoking and drugs. Venue: Instoking auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion
Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) will hold a discussion to pay tribute to the memories of Sergeant Zahurul Haque and other JSD activists who were killed. Venue: JSD office. Time: 4:00pm.

View exchange meeting
International Business Forum of Bangladesh (IBFB) organises a view exchange meeting on 'Participation of Bangladesh businessmen with Bhutan on business related issues'. Venue: IBFB conference room. Time: 3:00pm.

Roundtable
Jatiya Adivasi Parishad, Kapaeng Foundation and Gram Bikash Kendra will jointly organise a roundtable on the land problems of indigenous peoples of plain land. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

Award giving ceremony
Omar Siraj GQ Foundation will give away International Mother Language Award. Venue: National Museum auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.