



A billboard collapses in the middle of Bijoy Sarani during a hailstorm in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

PHOTO: STAR

Private varsity law to improve standards

Says education minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the government has formulated a private university law in a bid to ensure discipline, progress, standards and good management in the country's private universities.
"We have made the law more time-befitting after consultations and discussions with the people concerned. We did not make haste in doing so, rather we took time for discussions."
"The law will soon be placed in the parliament," the minister added.
Nahid said this as the chief

guest at a function on the occasion of the ninth founding anniversary of Daffodil International University (DIU) at Kalabagan playground in the city.
He said many of 51 private universities did not succeed, though some of them do significantly well over the years.
"Who will take the responsibility of these unsuccessful universities?" he put a question, with a reluctance that why would students get admitted to the universities which failed to keep their promises of switching to own campuses within five years.
The minister said the government updated the private

university law for the sake of ensuring good management and standards of education in those universities.
University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam, DIU Vice Chancellor Prof Aminul Islam, Adviser Prof M Shahjahan Mia and deans of different faculties also spoke.
Sabur Khan, chairman of the board of governors of the university, presided over the function.
The cabinet on January 25 approved the draft of amended Private University Bill 2009. The bill is waiting for vetting of the law ministry, said the education ministry.

STUDENT VIOLENCE Amnesty critical of mass arrest

UNB, Dhaka

Amnesty International has said the government of Bangladesh must refrain from arbitrary mass arrests, which appear to have been directed only at the opposition student activists.
"Criminal investigations must be impartial, regardless of the suspect's political affiliation or party membership."
"Moreover, the authorities must ensure that the detainees are brought promptly before a court and allowed to challenge the legality of their detention," said a statement by the London based Amnesty International on Tuesday.
It said more than 300 supporters of Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, were arrested in Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong and other cities last week. "It is not known if any of them have been charged with a recognisable criminal offence."

Legal notice served on commerce minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A human rights and environmental organisation yesterday served a legal notice on Commerce Minister Faruk Khan for seeking not to demolish some jetties on the bank of river Shitalakhyia at Ruppangj and a High Court order for demolition of all structures.
On January 24, the HC directed the government to start within a month demolition of all structures within the boundaries of four rivers around the capital -- Buriganga, Balu, Shitalakhyia and Turag.
In line with the HC order, the deputy commissioner of Narayanganj on February 9 served a notice to the City Group of Industries to remove its structures and jetties on the bank of Shitalakhyia by February 20.
But on February 22, the commerce minister sent a letter to Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan and requested him to take necessary steps so that the jetties set up by the City Group are not demolished. He also said that the industries concerned will be damaged if the jetties are demolished.
Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) served the legal notice on the commerce minister, stating that his request to the shipping minister is tantamount to interference in the implementation of the HC directive.
On behalf of the organisation, Advocate Manzill Murshid served the notice asking the commerce minister to explain within 24 hours why contempt of court charge should not be brought against him.

Recruit more workers from Bangladesh

President urges South Korea

BSS, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged South Korea to recruit more manpower from Bangladesh as they could contribute to the economies of both the countries.
The president made the call when outgoing Korean Ambassador to Bangladesh Suk Bum Park paid a farewell call on him at Bangabhaban.
During the meeting, Zillur also sought duty and quota free access of Bangladesh products to South Korea for reducing trade imbalance between the two countries.
Mentioning Bangladesh greatly values its close and friendly relations with South Korea, he expressed his satisfaction at the excellent bilateral relation existing between the two countries.
The Korean envoy apprised the president that his country has recruited 3000 Bangladesh manpower and would recruit 5000 more next year.
"We will increase the number gradually as the Bangladeshi workers had attained high reputation in Korea for their honesty, hard working nature as well as disciplined lifestyle," he said.

These industries claim generation of employment, their owners restrict its workers from forming any trade union, it added.
As there is no pro-environment measure in the ship breaking yards, the Department of Environment cannot issue any environmental clearance certificate, it said.
There is no regular and effective monitoring system, within the Department of Labour, in those illegally run ship breaking yards, it observed.
On March 19, 2009, the Supreme Court directed the government to ensure that no ship would enter Bangladesh for breaking without being pre-cleaned outside the territory of Bangladesh.

Tuku's case against Moeen to continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday summarily rejected a petition for dismissal of a Tk 100-crore defamation case filed against former army chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed by former BNP state minister for energy Iqbal Hassan Mahmood Tuku.
The HC bench of Justice Abdul Awal and Justice M Moazzam Husain passed the order after a brief hearing on the petition.
Now there is no obstacle to proceeding with the case against Moeen at the trial court.
Tuku filed the defamation suit on July 12 last year against the former army chief in connection with making derogatory remarks that damaged Tuku's reputation.
According to the case statement, Moeen on March 27, 2007, at a tea party at the National Parade Square said that corrupt politicians had siphoned off at least Tk 20,000 crore of the energy sector during the tenure of the four-party government.

Enact laws for ship breaking industries

Bela urges PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (BELA) yesterday urged the prime minister to take necessary measures to enact laws to monitor the ship breaking industries and import of hazardous ships in the country.
The organisation made the appeal in a letter describing the life endangering conditions of the unregulated ship breaking yards in the country.
The letter stated that the ship breaking industries of the country even do not maintain records of their employees.
In the last two years, the negligent operation of the industry allegedly killed at least 38 workers and left 49 disabled, it said. Although

these industries claim generation of employment, their owners restrict its workers from forming any trade union, it added.
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Prof Abu Rushd passes away

BSS, Dhaka

Prof Abu Rushd Matinuddin, an eminent educationist and litterateur, passed away on Tuesday at the age of 91.
Prof Rushd was born in a respected Muslim family in Kolkata on December 25 in 1919. He started his career as an English lecturer in Hugli Mohsin College.
He moved to England in 1951 for studying English literature at Oxford University.
After resigning from the post of education counsellor in Washington in the United States in 1971, he played an important role in creating mass opinion in favour of the War of Liberation.
His notable books are Elomelo, Biyog Baytha, Same Natun Din, Nongar, Anishchita Kahinee and Shagita Dwip.
He got a number of awards for his contribution to literature. The awards included Ekushey Padak, Bangla Academy Award, Adamjee Award and Sher-e-Bangla Gold Medal.
Finance Minister Abul Mal Abdul Muhith and Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad yesterday expressed deep shock at his death.

Pintu's bail stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for four weeks a High Court order that granted bail to former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu in the Pikhana carnage case.
Chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC, Justice BK Das passed the order upon a government petition moved by Attorney General Mahubey Alam.
The judge also asked the attorney general to file a regular leave to appeal with the apex court against the HC order within this four-week period.

Muggers on rampage

FROM PAGE 16

In the back door of a two-storey building in the area around 3:30am and took away 36 tolas of gold, four sets of mobile phone, Tk 1.39 lakh and clothes. The house belongs to engineer Mir Monwar Ali.
Selina Akhter, wife of Monwar, told reporters that robbers wielding sharp weapons held hostage the members living on the ground and first floors.
OC Mohammad Enamul Haque of Hazaribagh Police Station told The Daily Star that they had arrested three construction workers -- Sabuz, Masud and Liton -- who worked at the house a

few days ago.
The OC quoted Selina as saying the three had been wearing masks made of window curtain cloth of the house.
When police brought the detained workers to Selina, she could identify them by their physical features.
In interrogation, the robbers admitted their involvement in the robbery and gave the names of their associates, the OC said.
OC Enamul hopes they will be able to arrest the rest of the gang members and recover the goods soon.
Selina filed a case with the police station in this connection yesterday.

15 business establishments fined Tk 2 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court of Bangladesh Standards Testing Institute (BSTI) fined 15 business establishments Tk 2.27 lakh during an anti-adulteration drive in the city yesterday.
The mobile court also filed 16 cases against them for selling various items without BSTI licence, producing and preserving food in unhygienic conditions and for weight manipulation.
The business houses include The Westin Hotel at Gulshan, Decent Pastry Shop at Motijheel, Olympia Bakery, New Khandakar Restaurant, Salma Restaurant and Cafe Siraj at Motijheel, Salimar Hotel, South Chinese Restaurant, Adi Banaful and Haq Filling Station at Jatrabari, and Cafe D Taj and Al Madina Restaurant at Malibagh.

Call to raise taxes to control tobacco use

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for steps to increase taxes on tobacco and tobacco products to control their use, thereby contributing to poverty reduction.
The use of tobacco not only increases poverty but also increases disparity between the rich and the poor, which ultimately hinders the development of the country, economist Dr Nigar Nargis said.
She also called for a massive awareness campaign to control the use of tobacco.
Presently, the number of Bidi smokers in the country

is about one crore and Tk 7.9 crore is spent on tobacco per day. This amount can be used to provide an egg and one glass of milk for 53 lakh severely malnourished children, according to a survey.
WBB Trust, a non-governmental organisation, organised the seminar on 'The role of tobacco control in poverty reduction' was held at IDB Bhaban in the city.
Dr Badiul Alam, country director, The Hunger Project, said tobacco use among the poor can be controlled only by increasing its prices, which would affect their purchasing

power.
According to a research entitled 'Hungry for Tobacco' conducted by WBB Trust in 2000, the rate of smoking among the poor is twice the rate among the rich, and Bidi industries exploit women and child workers by paying low wages.
Another survey conducted among 2,590 Bidi smokers in six districts in 2009 revealed that they spend about 4.5 percent of their daily income on tobacco or 7.9 Tk per day per person.
Economist Dr Julfikar Ali also spoke at the seminar.

Trial of war criminals to start by April

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has organised nearly all the necessary logistics for war crime tribunal including the venue and offices for holding trial of the war criminals, said three ministers yesterday.
Law Minister Shafique Ahmed, Home Minister Shahara Khatun and Planning Minister AK Khandker said this during a press briefing after visiting the old High Court building yesterday.
They said the trial would begin by March or April at a special tribunal in a fair and transparent manner with conforming to international standards.
Shafique, however, did not

mention any specific date for the appointments of the chairman, investigators and prosecutors.
The home minister, however, said her ministry would appoint the investigators within a very short time.
The planning minister said they are working on how the trials of war criminals could be held in a fair and acceptable manner maintaining international standard.
State minister for Law Quamrul Islam, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Capt (ret) Tajul Islam and State Minister for Housing and Public Works Abdul Mannan Khan accompanied the ministers during the visit.

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27 arrested for cheating

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) picked up 27 people from the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) office area at Mirpur in the city yesterday on charges of cheating people.
During the drive, Rab-4 men also seized a huge number of BRTA forms, seals, pads and stamps from their possession.
Rab officials said the arrestees had been cheating people who go there for collecting fitness certificates, driving licenses and registration-related documents of their vehicles.



Bazlur Rahman's death anniversary tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 2nd death anniversary of Bazlur Rahman, a freedom fighter and former editor of the daily Sangbad, will be observed tomorrow.
Journalists and employees of the daily Sangbad, Bazlur Rahman Foundation and children's organisation Khelaghar will place wreaths at his grave at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard at 9:30am tomorrow.
Special doa and milad mahfil will be held at his Magbazar residence (Flat-1/2, Ramna Apartment Complex) after Asr prayers.
Bazlur Rahman, husband of Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, passed away due to a cardiac arrest on this day in 2008.

Hailstorm hits book fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first hailstorm of the season yesterday hit the Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2010 hard, causing a huge loss to publishers as a large number of books were damaged by the rain.
The loss could not be initially estimated but the publishers said it would be huge.
When book lovers and visitors started thronging the fair venue, the storm accompanied by gusty wind and moderate rain swept the Bangla Academy premises leaving them helpless to hide their heads.
Books put on display in different stalls were damaged

by the rainwater. Many book-stalls were seen submerged by the rain. The yard in front of the Nazrul Mancha got water-logged.
Momin, a salesperson at the stall of Oitijhya Publications, told The Daily Star that books worth about Tk 50,000 were damaged by the rain. "We will not be able to sell the damaged books. So, it was a total loss."
He said water trickled down from the roof and damaged the books.
Shamima Akter, a publisher whose stall was submerged by water, said the rainwater should be pumped out now. Otherwise, it would take a long

time to remove the water.
Most of the stalls were closed down just after the storm around 6:00pm. Most visitors started to come out of the fair venue. By 6:30pm, the venue was almost empty.
Meanwhile, a book on the biographies of three martyrs of political killings -- SAMS Kibria, Ivy Rahman and Ahsan Ullah Master -- titled 'Shaheedtroi Smarak Grontha' edited by Belayet Hossain Belal was launched the same day at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.
Commerce Minister Faruk Khan unveiled the cover of the book at the launching ceremony.

A vacation never came true

FROM PAGE 1

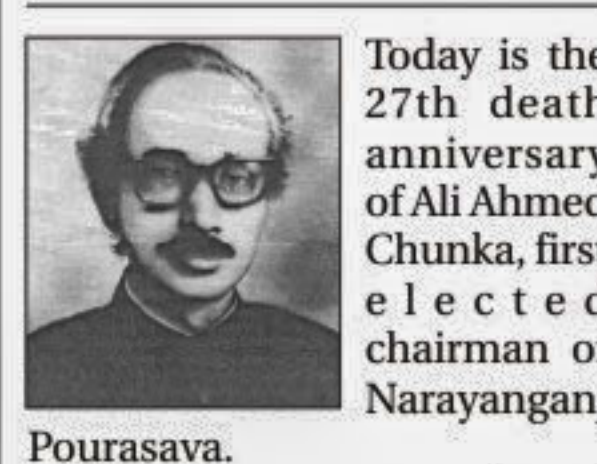
She was still first in the first term examinations of class IX, but then she slipped to the second place in the second and third term exams. "She was heavily disturbed," Fatema says.
"My daughters miss their father in every aspect of their life...And about myself? I now have no one to share anything with," Fatema says in a choked voice.
Recalling the day Gulzar was killed, Fatema says they were supposed to attend a lunch at Pikhana that day. Before leaving, Gulzar just asked her to take the girls.
Then someone informed her over phone about the chaos at Pikhana, but Fatema never thought for once that her husband might be killed.
On February 27 morning, when army officers' family members gathered in front of the main gate of the BDR headquarters to learn the whereabouts of their near and dear ones, Fatema was also there.
"Even at that time I never thought he was not alive. I always thought he was hiding somewhere. I hoped he would return," Fatema says.
"The hope was with me for a long time. But on the 40th day after the incident, when I was offering prayers I suddenly realised that he is no more with us," says Fatema.
Fatema cannot still understand why the soldiers brutally killed 57 brilliant army officers. "I always saw how the officers love their soldiers and the soldiers respect the officers in the military."
It was Gulzar's first posting in the BDR. He joined the paramilitary force in the second week of February 2009 as the commander of Sylhet sector. "He could not have enmity with any BDR soldier, so why would they kill him? Why would the BDR soldiers have wrath on him?" Fatema

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Ali Ahmed Chunka

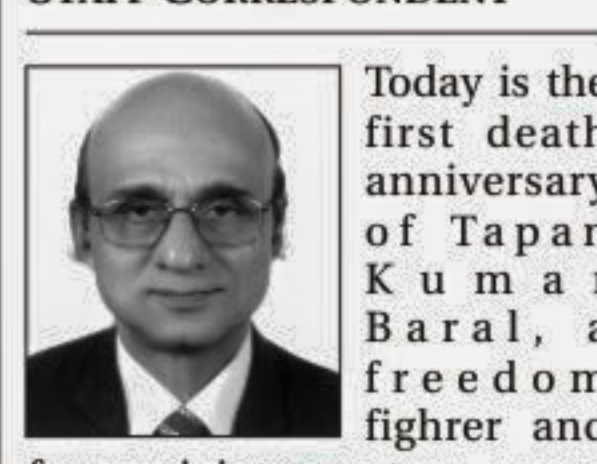
OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj



Today is the 27th death anniversary of Ali Ahmed Chunka, first elected chairman of Narayanganj Pourasava.
Chunka was an organiser of the War of Liberation, former president of Narayanganj district and town Awami League and life member of Narayanganj Press Club.
A milad mahfil and doa mahfil will be held at Play Pen School after Fajr prayers.
Abdur Rob
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Today is the 37th death anniversary of Abdur Rob alias Boga Mia, a freedom fighter and former member of the constituent assembly, says a press release.
A former president of Pabna district Awami League, he was the first to hoist the flag of independent Bangladesh in the district.

Tapan Kumar Baral

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the first death anniversary of Tapan Kumar Baral, a freedom fighter and former joint secretary, says a press release.
On the occasion, his family has chalked out different programmes.