

## PROFILES OF BUSINESS ICONS

The Daily Star and DHL Express have awarded three outstanding business leaders, one financial institution and one enterprise. Here is a short guide to give you an idea of who they are:



NASIR A CHOUDHURY

Nasir A Choudhury

RECIPIENT OF LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**B**ORN in the Assam province of undivided India in December 1934, Nasir A Choudhury is the managing director and chief executive of Green Delta Insurance Company Ltd (GDIC). After obtaining a master's degree from Dhaka University, he began his career as a management trainee at Pakistan Insurance Corporation on September 24, 1958. Later, he was posted at the insurer's regional office in Chittagong in 1964, after completing training at Eagle Star Insurance Company in London and Munich Reinsurance Company in Germany. In 1985, when insurance was allowed in the private sector, he, along with some friends, who were mostly working abroad, floated Green Delta Insurance Company Ltd. It started operations on January 1, 1986. It was the only company in Bangladesh that was floated and run by professionals. In May 1973, Choudhury was appointed in-charge of underwriting and re-insurance of Sadharan Birna



SAIFUL ISLAM

Saiful Islam

BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

**A** mariner by education, Md Saiful Islam retired from his job at Bangladesh Shipping Corporation in 1986 to bet his fortunes on business. The same year, he set up a small office at Motijheel in Dhaka to render technical services to ocean-going ships and supply spare parts for vessels. But the venture did not augur well initially. It was the Gulf War of 1990 that presented a window of opportunity, as the turbulence shifted overhauling and technical works of ocean-going vessels to his company. He never looked back since then. In 1990, Islam established Al-Islam Apparel Group under a joint venture. Seeking more value-added businesses, he established a German-Bangladesh joint venture, Picard (Bangladesh) Ltd, in 1997 to produce leather goods under the brand name of Picard. It was in 1994 when Islam launched his most successful venture so far: shipbuilding. Western Marine Shipyard Ltd is one of the largest shipyards in Bangladesh. It began its own journey in 2000. The company is in action in the global



KANIZ ALMAS KHAN

Kaniz Almas Khan

OUTSTANDING WOMAN IN BUSINESS

**P**ERSONA Managing Director Kaniz Almas Khan is regarded as a leading beauty expert in Bangladesh. Her journey as an entrepreneur began in 1990 with a salon named Glamour, run by nine workers. MIDAS Financing helped her jump start the salon with a Tk 2 lakh loan. In 1998, a new brand name was established, Persona, which since then has evolved into the country's largest beauty care company. The brand ambassador for Sunsilk since 1991 and currently the same for Meril, Kaniz set up Persona Hair and Beauty Ltd at Dhanmondi in Dhaka in 1998. The companies presently operating under the Persona brand name as private limited companies are Persona Hair and Beauty Ltd and Persona Beauty Care Ltd. Now it has four beauty salons, four spas, two men's grooming salons, two gyms, a photo studio, a beauty institute and a fashion and lifestyle magazine under the two companies with an estimated 1,300 employees, 99 percent



SAMSON H CHOWDHURY AT THE HELM OF SQUARE PHARMACEUTICALS

Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd

BEST ENTERPRISE

**W**ITH an annual turnover of \$164 million, Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd is the largest pharmaceutical company in Bangladesh. Under the leadership of Samson H Chowdhury, Square Pharma started its journey in 1958 under a partnership. Now, Tapan Chowdhury is the managing director of the concern that was registered as a private limited company in 1964 and converted to a public limited company in 1991. It mainly produces active pharmaceutical ingredients, agro vets, pesticides, herbal and nutraceuticals. Tablets, capsules, liquids, ENT preparations, dry syrup, suppositories, inhalers, basic chemicals and aerosols are some of its products. The company exports products to different countries, including those in Europe, Africa, South America and Asia, that accounted for \$5.5 million in export earnings in 2008-09. Square Pharmaceuticals won the National Export Trophy two times -- the



HELAL AHMED CHOWDHURY, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PUBALI BANK

Pubali Bank

BEST FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

**P**UBALI Bank is the largest private sector commercial bank with 386 branches countrywide. It is also the first banking venture by local entrepreneurs. The bank emerged in the then East Pakistan as Eastern Mercantile Bank Ltd in 1959. Then, 60 percent of the bank was owned by Bangladeshi entrepreneurs and the rest 40 percent by the State Bank of Pakistan. After independence, the bank was nationalised as per government policy and renamed Pubali Bank. It was denationalised in 1983 to form Pubali Bank Ltd. During inception, the bank had Tk 5 million in authorised capital. As on September 30, 2009, the bank has Tk 3,822 million in paid-up capital. The bank declared 30 percent dividend in 2008 and witnessed more than 25 percent profit on average in the last five years. The financial institution recently got permission from Bangladesh Bank to open two exchange houses in the UK



Students of Chittagong University take out a procession with the body of fellow student Md Asaduzzaman who was stabbed to death by local villagers yesterday. (Inset) Friends of Asaduzzaman break down in tears after he died at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital. (Story on Page 1)

## Project country's real history to students

Nahid urges historians

DU CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday called on the historians and history teachers to prepare a proposal with recommendations to update the syllabuses of history at school and college level to project real history of the country to students. "You [historians and history teachers] prepare a proposal on various factors in teaching history, including syllabuses and problems faced by teachers, so that we can constitute a committee to resolve the problems." The minister said this as the chief guest at a seminar on 'Studying history in college level: Problems and possibilities' organised by Government College History Teachers' Council at BMA auditorium in the city. "With the real history of the country, we have to make our students proud and brave," he added. Nahid called for involvement of historians in preparing an effective proposal in this connection and said the ministry will provide all-out support to update history syllabus.

Historian Muntasir Mamun said study of the country's history should be made compulsory in all disciplines, including science and commerce. "Why should the country and the government help a student who does not know the history of his or her own country even after completing their education," questioned Muntasir, also a professor of history at Dhaka University. The country has faced a number of problems, as history was not studied in all disciplines in the last 30 years, he opined. Speakers at the seminar said no nation can reach its target until it places its real history before young people. The eventful history of the country's socio-cultural and political movements should be included in the history syllabuses at all levels of education. Prof Syed Anwar Hossain and Vice Chancellor of National University Dr Kazi Shahidullah also spoke.

## LEGAL NOTICE SERVED Govt asked to enforce House Rent Control Act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A human rights organisation served a legal notice asking the government to enforce the House Rent Control Act 1991 in order to prevent the house owners in the capital from arbitrarily collecting excess rent and advances from their tenants. In the legal notice served on Thursday, the Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) also asked the government to execute the standard rent for premises fixed by Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and to frame rules as per the act. Secretaries to the cabinet division, secretariat of the prime minister's office, ministry of law, justice and parliamentary affairs, and the secretary of the Jatiya Sangsad, and DCC mayor have been asked to reply to the legal notice within seven days.

## WEALTH STATEMENT ACC to send notice to Mahmudur by post

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) on Thursday decided to send a notice to Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of the Amar Desh and former energy adviser, by post asking him to submit his wealth statement. On April 13, the ACC had sent the notice to Mahmudur by hand, but he refused to receive it. ACC sources said the notice would be sent in a day or two. The ACC decided to ask for the wealth statement of Mahmudur Rahman, as preliminary enquiry reveals that he possesses wealth beyond known sources of income. In February, the ACC launched an enquiry into allegations of ill-gotten wealth against Mahmudur.

## Develop infrastructure to attract foreign investment Says British envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

It is imperative for Bangladesh to develop overall physical infrastructure including port, rail, road and shipping communications to attract foreign investment and achieve durable economic growth, British High Commissioner Stephen Evans observed. He also said it would not be possible to accelerate industrialisation without desired development of the energy sector, including power and gas. The British envoy said this during a meeting with Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) President MA Latif MP at the latter's office in the port city on Thursday evening. Stephan Evans suggested introducing and implementing a congenial energy policy to attract foreign oil-gas exploration companies to ensure energy security. The overall development of the country would be seriously hampered unless new gas fields are found here soon, he observed. CCCI President MA Latif, also the local lawmaker of ruling Awami League, sought financial and technical assistance from the European Union, particularly the United Kingdom, for developing required infrastructure, including dedicated express highway, port and power plant.

## US deputy secy of state arrives Apr 22

UNB, Dhaka

US Deputy Secretary of State James B Steinberg will arrive in Dhaka on April 22 from India on a brief visit. This will be his first visit to Bangladesh and India as deputy secretary, a press release from the US State Department said. Foreign ministry officials said Steinberg will call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and meet Foreign Minister Dipu Moni and other political figures. He will discuss a range of bilateral and multilateral issues that advance the bilateral relationships between the US and Bangladesh. Steinberg serves as the principal deputy; serves as acting secretary of state in the secretary's absence; and assists the secretary in the formulation and conduct of US foreign policy and in giving general supervision and direction to all elements of the department.



Members of Dhaka University Rover Scout Group form a human chain at the university playground yesterday with a call to put an end to 'stalking of girls' during an awareness campaign.