

Remove razakars from schools, colleges

JS body asks edn ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday asked the education ministry to remove war criminals and razakars from the top posts in all educational institutions...

try and the respective education board will launch an investigation against the persons concerned," Dabirul Islam, a member of the committee and ruling party lawmaker, told The Daily Star after the meeting.

If the allegations are found to be true, the ministry will remove the persons concerned from his post, he added.

The meeting was told that the previous BNP-Jamaat-led government appointed many razakars and war criminals as heads of managing committees of different educational institutes.

"The Awami League government is now in power. Why we will tolerate the razakars and war criminals in those posts. Earlier, a number of our party lawmakers told the education boards to remove war criminals from different schools and colleges. As the boards had failed to do so, the committee formally asked them today (Wednesday) to carry out our decision," Dabirul said.

Petrol pump owners' strike from May 9

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

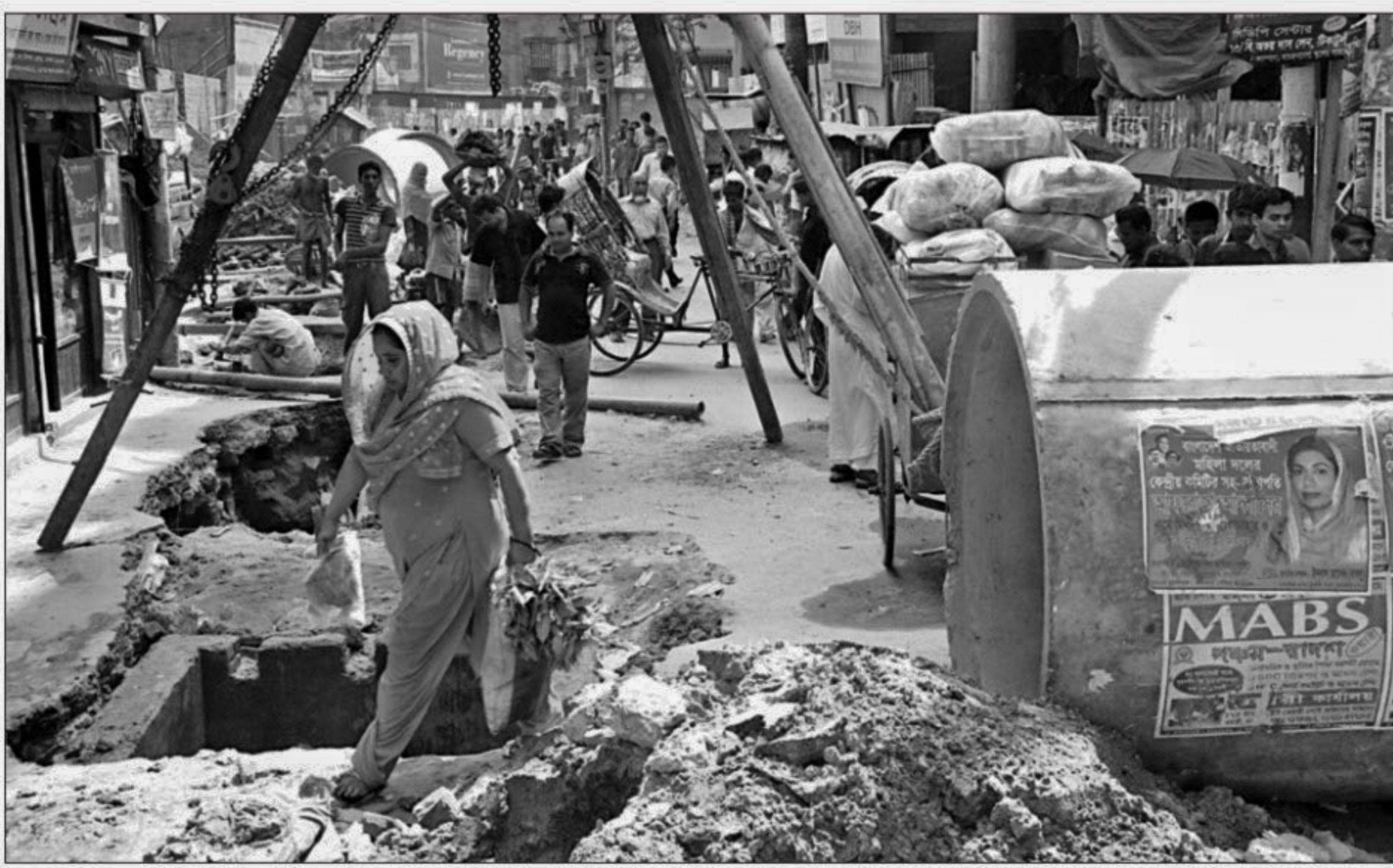
Bangladesh Petrol Pump and Tank Lorry Malik-Sramik Oikya Parishad is going to begin a countrywide indefinite strike on May 9 to realise its 13-point demand including fixing seven percent commission on sale of oil.

It was decided yesterday at an emergency meeting of the parishad at Hotel Rajmoni Ishakha in the city.

The strike will begin at 6:00am on May 9 and continue till the fulfillment of the demands, the parishad leaders said.

It held a half-day countrywide strike on March 14 to realise the same demands.

The other demands include taking proper steps to stop robberies in patrol pumps and stopping harassment of tank lorry drivers by police on the roads.



Work for installation of sewage pipes at Ramakrishna Mission Road in the city continues for the last three months, causing suffering to the road users.

No bar on telecasting Khaleda's address

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday categorically said there was no bar on telecasting BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's address live from the party's divisional grand rally in Rajshahi.

The government's response came after several newspapers reported on Wednesday that the private TV channels would not telecast Khaleda's address from Rajshahi rally due to restrictions imposed by the government.

"The report is 'misleading' and 'ill-motivated'," said the government in a handout issued hours before Khaleda's rally yesterday.

However, ntv, a private TV channel owned by former BNP lawmaker Mosaddek Ali Falu, telecast the speech of Khaleda, also the leader of the opposition in parliament, from Rajshahi Madrasa Maidan.

Mostafa Feroj, head of the Bangladesh Television, another TV channel owned by pro-BNP entrepreneurs, told BBC that there was no bar from the government on telecasting political programme.

He said the TV channels take decisions on their own regarding telecasting opposition's programmes and that the government sometimes only requests them to telecast 'the address of the prime minister to the nation'.

Earlier, different TV channels telecast Khaleda's address from Chittagong on March 29 and from Khulna on April 18.

BDR CARNAGE Family of Subedar Major Nurul Islam gets Tk 10 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) yesterday gave Tk 10 lakh to the family of Subedar Major Nurul Islam, who was killed during the BDR carnage last year.

BDR Director General (DG) Maj Gen Mainul Islam handed over the cheque for the amount to Nurul's wife Ayesha Begum at the former's office, says a press release.

Nurul Islam, who hailed from Laxmipur, joined BDR in 1972 and served the border guards in different capacities. He left behind his wife, one son and four daughters.

PROTECTION OF 2 CITY LAKES HC asks Rajuk to submit report by June 2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) to submit its report by June 2 on what steps it has taken to protect Gulshan-Baridhara and Gulshan-Banani lakes in the city following its verdict delivered in July last year.

The court on July 14 last year directed Rajuk to conduct surveys to demarcate the lakes and identify and evict all illegal occupants and remove temporary and permanent

structures on the lakes.

It had ruled that the surveys and evictions must be done by January 31, 2010.

It also directed Rajuk to submit a report to the court on the implementation of the directives by February 25, 2010, and also ruled that the government and Rajuk would have the liberty to take legal actions against encroachers and illegal occupants by filing compensation suits against the perpetrators.

The HC directives came after Kazi M Mosharraf

Hussain, executive secretary of Gulshan Society, a registered development organisation, filed a writ petition in this regard in May last year.

The HC bench of Justice Md Mamtaz Uddin Ahmed and Justice Naima Haider yesterday passed the order following an application filed by the writ petitioner.

Barrister ABM Siddiqur Rahman Khan moved for the petitioner while Deputy Attorney General Mostafa Zaman Islam stood for the government.

'Set up int'l climate change adaptation centre in Dhaka'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Environment and Forest Hasan Mahmud called on the world community to set up an International Climate Change Adaptation Centre in Dhaka to offset the impacts of global climate change.

He made the call while speaking at an international conference on 'Petersburg Climate dialogue-building Momentum to Mexico' in Germany on Tuesday.

Highlighting the success of Bangladesh in disaster management, Hasan Mahmud said only a few hundred people were killed in the cyclone Sidr and cyclone Aila, which hit the

country in 2008 and 2009 respectively, while the cyclone in 1970 killed over five lakh people and another cyclone in 1991 claimed the lives of over one lakh people.

The statistics show that the people of Bangladesh have gained expertise in disaster management, he added.

He also said that the scientists of the country have also developed saline-tolerant rice to cope with the increased salinity of land in coastal areas.

The people are now facing tough challenges due to climate change and it is vital to set up an international adaptation centre to tackle the climate change, the state minister said.



Chief Operating Officer of Apollo Hospitals Dhaka Shahjahan Majumder, third from left, and principal of DPS STS School Dhaka Harsh Wal, second from right, exchange documents after signing a corporate agreement on behalf of their respective organisations in the city recently. The agreement was signed to provide priority corporate benefits and medical services for their employees and dependents.

WEATHER section with sun and cloud icons.

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at Chittagong division, Met Office said in a forecast. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:30pm today and rises at 5:20am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 37.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and Ishwardi and lowest 23.4 degrees Celsius at Sayedpur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Town, Max Celsius, Min Celsius, Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

Youth killed in city road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A youth was killed in a road accident in front of Dhaka College yesterday, which triggered a violent protest by agitating students of the college who vandalized at least ten vehicles.

Road communication also remained suspended for half an hour on the Mirpur Road.

Witnesses said an Asad Gate bound bus of Anik Paribahan from Azimpur knocked Mohammad Selim, 24, down while he was crossing the road at around 8:00pm.

They said the injured Selim, resident of city's Sokrabad, died on the spot within few minutes as none took him to hospital while the bus escaped the scene.

As the news spread some Dhaka College students and locals put up barricade on the road and damaged the vehicles.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Blackout in central part of Dhaka city

Major glitch at grid substation

UNB, Dhaka

A vast area of the central part of the capital, including the Bangladesh Secretariat, plunged into a blackout yesterday following a major technical fault at the Dhanmondi Grid substation.

The whole power supply to the Cabinet Division and other ministries at the Secretariat came to a halt at about 2:20pm, with the situation persisting for about 20 minutes.

Official sources at the Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DDPC), which controls the area, said they restored power supply to the Secretariat through an emergency alternative line. But despite that, power disruptions took place in the Secretariat several times and continued for 5-6 minutes on each occasion.

Apart from the Secretariat, huge areas in the central and old parts of the city, including Motijheel, Segunbagicha, Kakrail, Dilkusha, Bijoyagar, Paltan, Dhaka University, National Press Club, Dhaka Club, Dhanmondi, Hazaribagh, Lalbagh experienced massive load shedding due to the fault at the substation.

Sources said a technical fault occurred at the Dhanmondi Grid substation that led to a breakdown of a circuit-breaker there. This immediately affected the Ramna Substation, which mainly controls the power supply to the central part of the city including the Secretariat.

Power supply went off at the Secretariat and many officials became stranded in the elevators. The lift-technicians then rescued them through manual operation of the lifts.

Even, the Biddyt Bhaban, which is located adjacent to the Secretariat and houses the country's main power control system and also the Headquarters of the DDPC, faced blackouts brought on by the interruption in the power supply.

Saying that a skilled birth attendant is a must to ensure safe delivery, they added that creating more midwives is imperative if Bangladesh wants to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 4.

The MDG 4 tells of reducing maternal mortality rate to 143 per one lakh live birth and increasing delivery by the skilled birth attendants to 50 percent.

But unfortunately, less than 20 percent delivery is conducted by skilled birth attendants, they said.

They also demanded a 'midwife' cadre and a coordinated effort of the government, non-government organisations in this regard and basic, post basic BSC and master's degree in midwifery.

At the same time, awareness should be raised in the society so that every mother goes to a skilled birth attendant.

Director General of Health Services Shah Monir Hossain, World Health Organisation (WHO) Representative to Bangladesh Dr Duangvadee Sungkhobol and UNFPA Representative Arthur Erken also spoke at the seminar.

President of Bangladesh Nursing Council Ira Dibra presided over the session while Registrar of the council Suraiya Begum read out the keynote paper.

SUSPICIOUS BURQA-CLAD WOMAN Dhaka-bound flight makes emergency landing in Kolkata

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

A Dhaka-bound flight of Indian carrier Spicejet yesterday made an emergency landing at Kolkata airport following suspicion of a burqa-clad woman passenger on board.

The Delhi-Kolkata-Dhaka flight 208 carrying 123 passengers landed at the airport at 11:23am, sources said.

The aircraft was immediately taken to an isolation bay as per the protocol of priority landing, airport sources said.

The burqa-clad woman passenger Irbaniya Eieonora, 42 and her husband Aslan Bekov Arthur, 50, were bound for Dhaka.

They were taken to the office of the airport manager for questioning. Both of them were Russian passport holders and their papers were found okay, the sources said.

The confusion arose because of the large physique of the woman passenger and her language problem as she failed to reply in English, sources said.

The airhostesses became suspicious, as she was eating without taking her veil off and passing food to her husband, they said.

The airhostesses then informed a senior colleague of the matter who alerted the pilot.

There was no hijack attempt to the flight, said an Indian Civil Aviation ministry spokesperson, in New Delhi.

Police took the two passengers, including the woman, for questioning, she added.

Sources said the couple would be put on board the flight, which would leave for Dhaka in the evening.

More midwives can cut maternal mortality Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of midwives should be increased in the country to reduce maternal and newborn mortality, speakers said at a seminar yesterday.

Bangladesh Nursing Council organised the seminar to mark International Day of the Midwife. It also held a rally on the Central Shaheed Minar premises.

The theme of this year's Midwife Day is 'The world needs midwife now more than ever.'

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PM's adviser meets Indian security adviser

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Economic Affairs Adviser Dr Mashiur Rahman yesterday had a meeting with Indian National Security Adviser Shiv Shankar Menon and discussed bilateral security cooperation.

The hour-long meeting between Mashiur and Menon, who has the rank of a minister of state, held at the latter's office kicked off a series of meetings Hasina's adviser is going to have with Indian ministers aiming to expeditiously implement various decisions taken during her visit to India in January.

There was no official word from either side on what transpired at the meeting between Mashiur and Menon, but the two deliberated at length security cooperation between the two countries.

Mashiur, who is leading a high-level team of officials as a follow-up of the talks between Hasina and Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the 16th Saarc Summit in Thimphu, is expected to call Indian Power Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde today to discuss the proposal for export of 200MW of electricity to Bangladesh.

He is also expected to call on Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Water Resources Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal but the date and timing for them are yet to be finalised, sources said.

Man robbed of Tk 2 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Snatchers took away Tk 2 lakh from a stock market investor at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

Six armed criminals on two motorbikes intercepted Mohammad Sadikur Rahman, a resident of Arambagh in Mirpur-7 section, while he was returning home in a rickshaw after withdrawing about Tk 2 lakh from the Mirpur-10 intersection branch of Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd.

Holding him at gunpoint, they made away with the money, Sadikur told The Daily Star.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A l h a j Muhammad Hanif, a renowned lawyer and social worker, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at a city hospital on Tuesday at the age of 75, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one son, two daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

He was buried at Azimpur graveyard after namaz-e-janaza yesterday.

His quikhwani will be held at the Fakirerpool Jame Mosque after Asr prayers on Friday.

Rowshan Ara Begum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rowshan Ara Begum, wife of AFM Nurul Islam, former information chief of USIS, passed away at a local hospital early yesterday at the age of 65.

She left behind two sons and two daughters.

Her quikhwani will be held at her Banani Residence (H-56, Road-7A, Block-H) after Asr prayers tomorrow.

Call for stern laws for tobacco control

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop in Barisal yesterday underscored the need for stern laws to control tobacco.

Apart from engaging teachers and second-class government officials in implementing tobacco control act, they suggested tough punishment to law violators and ban on tobacco cultivation in any fresh land.

Educationalists, civil society members, cultural activists and journalists attended the workshop organised to create awareness against smoking.

Jointly organised by WBB Trust and Save the Coastal People (SCOP), the workshop urged the government to amend the tobacco control act and make it sterner.

It also suggested engaging local representatives and dignitaries in anti-tobacco campaign.

Prof Mohammad Hanif, former principal of Barisal BM College said trees at different forests are being destroyed as people use it to heat tobacco leaves. The government, therefore, needs to make the tobacco control act sterner.

He also urged the government to take strong measures to stop publicity of cigarette.

Kazi Enayet Hossain, member, central executive committee of Bangladesh Anti-tobacco Alliance, said the government should increase the amount of fines and level of punishment to discourage smokers in public places.