

Take effective steps for convenience of Hajj pilgrims: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the authorities concerned to take effective measures for the convenience of the Hajj pilgrims this year.

She gave the directive when the executive members of the Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB) paid a courtesy call on her at the PM's office.

Hasina said the government would do whatever is needed to complete the process so that the pilgrims could perform the holy Hajj smoothly.

She said the pilgrims go to perform the Hajj with great desire and expectations. "We've to look after their convenience and take effective steps in this regard."

Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Abul Kalam Azad briefed reporters after the meeting.

The prime minister also thanked the Saudi government for their infrastructural development to allow the pilgrims perform Hajj with more convenience and comfort.

She said the HAAB members would have to

properly brief the pilgrims from Bangladesh so they could perform their Hajj without any hindrance.

In this connection, Hasina mentioned that the HAAB members should show videos to the pilgrims and provide them with written materials. "Such assistance should continue till the end of performing Hajj," she said.

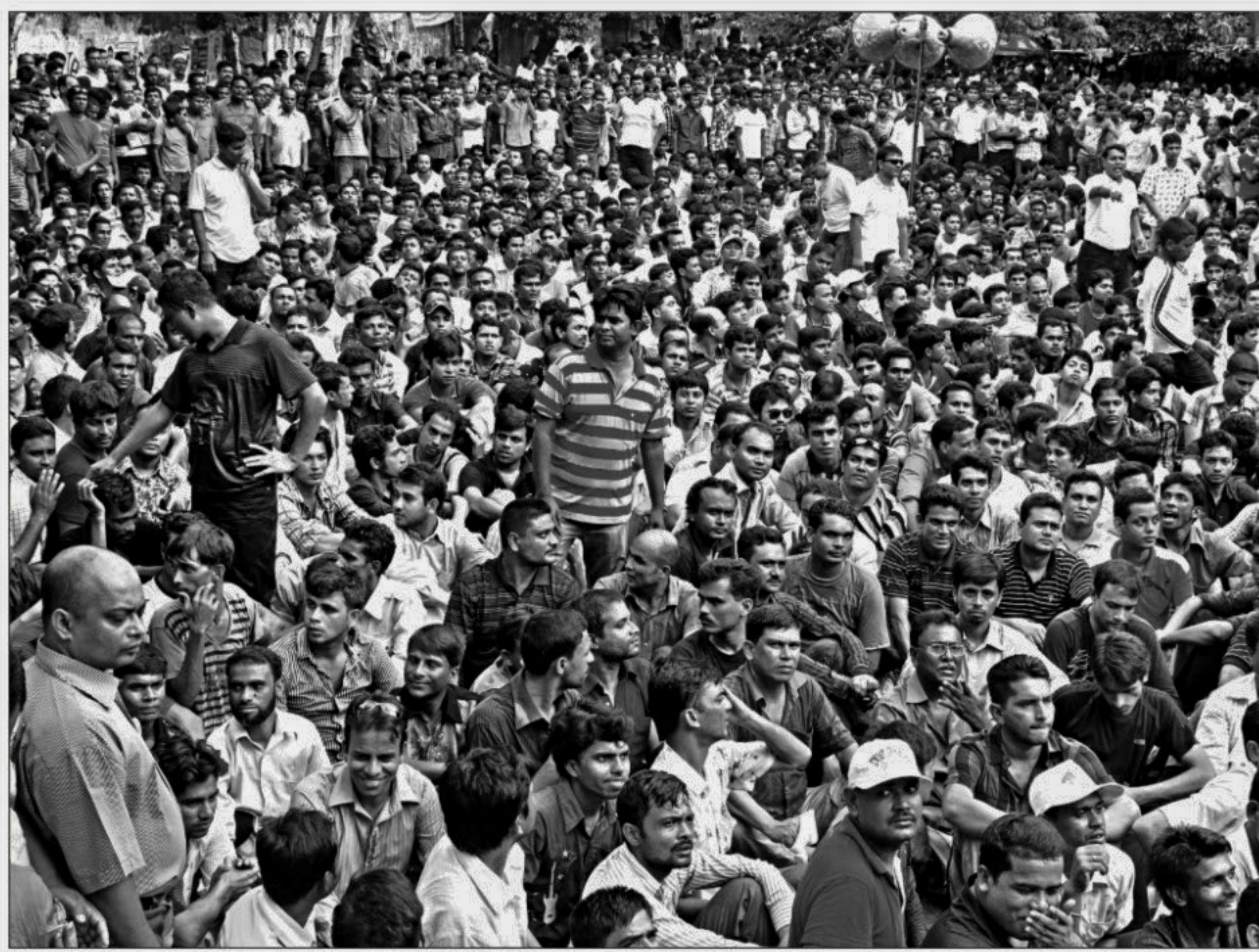
She thanked all concerned for their hectic efforts last year to make the Hajj convenient and smooth for Bangladeshi pilgrims. She expected that similar efforts would continue this year.

"Let it be ensured that the pilgrims will enjoy the same facilities this year as well," she said.

HAAB President M Ibrahim Bahar and General Secretary MA Rashid Shah Samrat apprised the prime minister of the various problems that they are facing.

Hasina assured them to resolve their problems.

Ambassador at-large M Ziauddin, Principal Secretary MA Karim and Prime Minister's Office Secretary Molla Waheeduzaman were present during the meeting.



BNP stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday protesting a remark against its Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

CANTONMENT HOUSE Hearing adjourned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

High Court (HC) yesterday adjourned for two weeks the ongoing hearing on the writ petition filed by Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Chairperson Khaleda Zia challenging legality of a government notice to vacate her cantonment house.

The HC bench of Justice Nazrul Islam and Justice Sheikh Hasan Ali passed the adjournment order following a prayer moved by Deputy Attorney General Akram Hossain Manju.

Manju prayed to the court to adjourn hearing the petition saying that Attorney General Mahbubey Alam, who will place submissions before this court on behalf of the government, is now ill.

The HC bench was set to continue hearing on the matter yesterday.

The HC stayed the government notice asking Khaleda to vacate the cantonment house on May 27 last year and issued a rule upon the government to explain why its notice should not be declared illegal.

Media policies on cards

BSS, Dhaka

The government is working to prepare separate policies for both electronic and print media to bring a complete discipline in media sector.

The ministry of information has already started working to prepare a draft broadcasting policy for the electronic media.

This was disclosed at a seminar titled "Perfect Broadcasting Policy is Needed for Electronic Media," organised by the Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) at CIRDAP auditorium here yesterday.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad said flourishing of media is necessary for democracy in the age of free flow of information, as it has a great impact on all sections of the society.

The media—both print and electronic—are contrib-

uting immensely to the socio-economic development of the country, Azad said adding that they (media) should also make constructive criticism of the government.

"We have given licenses for 12 new private TV channels as the present government believes in free flow of information and freedom of the press," Azad told the seminar.

The minister said none would be able to say that the Awami League government or he as a minister tried to censor any news.

Information Secretary Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury said the ministry is working to prepare a draft broadcasting policy, which would be finalised in consultation with all concerned.

"Our neighbour India, a vast country with a huge

number of channels, still has no broadcasting policy," he said adding Pakistan and Nepal went ahead in this regard.

Asaduzzaman Noor said formulation of a fair broadcasting policy for the electronic media is possible with the sincere and honest efforts of all concerned.

Other speakers opined to constitute a commission to formulate a broadcasting policy for the electronic media.

BTRC Chairman Major Gen (ret'd) Zia Ahmed, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) president Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury and Shahjahan Mia also spoke at the seminar.

Former president of BFUJ Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul presented the keynote paper at the seminar while DUJ president Shah Alamgir in the chair.

HC rejects petition on 'Qurbani' in textbooks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday summarily rejected a writ petition on "Qurbani" written in the textbooks of Islamic education, and also fined Tk 5,000 to the petitioner as it may hurt religious sentiment of the Muslims.

The court asked petitioner Dev Narayan Moheswar, who claimed himself as the president of the Universe Peace Council, not to move such petition, as it can hurt religious sentiment of the people in future.

An HC bench of Justice MA Wahhab Miah and Justice Kazi Reza-ul-Huq yesterday passed the order after hearing the petition.

Narayan Moheswar, who also claimed that he converted himself to Muslim, on July 26 filed the petition stating that Hazrat Ibrahim (As) laid down his son Hazrat Ishaque (As) to sacrifice for Almighty Allah's satisfaction is written in the Holy Quran, Holy Enjil and Holy Taurat.

But the authorities concerned have written in all the textbooks of Islamic education that Hazrat Ibrahim (As) laid down his son Ismail (As) to sacrifice for Almighty Allah's satisfaction, which is "incorrect and contradictory" to the Holy books, he stated.

He prayed to the HC for directing the government to take steps to insert the name Hazrat Ishaque (As) in place of Hazrat Ismail (As) in all textbooks of Islamic education.

During the hearing, Additional Attorney General Murad Reza opposed the petition, saying that the petitioner has filed the petition to hurt the religious sentiment of the Muslims in Bangladesh as well as other countries in the world.

He also said such petition is not maintainable and the petitioners should be asked to pay exemplary cost for filing such "vexatious and malafide" petition with this court.

The petitioner himself moved the petition.

Deputy Attorney General Razik-Al Jalil and Assistant Attorney General Khander Diliruzzaman assisted Murad Reza.

BNP threatens tougher agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of main opposition BNP yesterday warned the government of taking tougher agitation course if it obstructs its mass procession scheduled for August 9.

The warning came from a protest rally organised at city's Muktangan condemning a speech of Prime Minister about the party chairperson and demanding release of its detained leaders.

Addressing the rally Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said government cannot tolerate any criticism and that is why it is repressing the opposition by making arrests and filing false cases.

Party leaders came down hard on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her recent comment against BNP chief.

Hasina recently asked Khaleda to admit to her past crimes and promise not to make money through corruption by making self-debasing pledge.

BNP Vice-president and city Mayor Sadque Hossain Khoka presided over the rally while Selima Rahman, Aman Ullah Aman, Moazzem Hossain Alal, Mahbubuddin Khokan, among others, addressed it.

Two factions of Jatiyatobadi Chatra Dal's Jagannath University unit engaged into mild clash during the rally creating tension in the area. Both the factions' workers chased and beat each other using plastic chairs.

Later the party leaders controlled the situation.

A joint meeting of the party leaders was held yesterday at

the chairperson's Gulshan office to discuss about the preparations of the mass procession programme.

BNP standing committee members Shamsul Islam, Nazrul Islam Khan and Sarwari Rahman, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, Aman Ullah Aman, Zainul Abidin Farrooque, among others, attended the meeting.

"BNP will conduct the mass procession programme peacefully and it will bring dire consequences for the government if it tried to obstruct the programme," Nazrul told newsmen after the meeting.

He also said Chairperson Khaleda Zia will lead the mass procession which people from city and its adjacent districts will join to mount pressure on the government to meet their demands.

Fake-note making factory unearthed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) unearthed a counterfeit note producing factory at Niketan in the city's Gulshan area and arrested three people, including two foreigners, for their involvement in producing and marketing them in and out of the country.

The Rab-1 team also recovered counterfeit notes worth Tk 53 lakhs and note producing equipment from the factory Wednesday, the Rab press release said.

Acting on a tip-off, the team arrested Isomo Hasan, 34, of Cameroon, Liza Harnandez, 51, of Philippines and Kamruzzaman, 50, a Bangladeshi citizen.

The elite force also recovered a number of laptops, printers and different foreign currencies, including Euro, US dollar and half-printed Bangladeshi notes from their possession.

The arrestees were handed over to Gulshan Police Station, said Kamruzzaman, assistant superintendent of police.

Youths' contribution to dev stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Youths can contribute to the development of the society by sharing their experiences, speakers said at a workshop on experience sharing between youths of Bangladesh and Singapore yesterday.

At the workshop youths of the two countries shared their experiences and problems of youths in the respective countries through discussions and presentations.

The speakers also said youths can make a difference in the society as they are taking responsibility through voluntary work. Their voluntary activities should be encouraged, they added.

The workshop organised by Hope'87 Bangladesh, an NGO, was held at the conference room of the Department of Youth Development (DYD) in the city.

Youth participants from Bangladesh recommended holding youth exchange programmes with different countries to share experiences about their problems and opportunities in the fields of sports and culture beside their regular studies.

A seven-member youth representatives' team from Singapore and 30 students from different universities, colleges and youth organisations participated in the workshop.

The seven-member team from People's Association for Youth Movement and Universities of Singapore led by Chang Jit Huee Cindy is on a five-day visit to Bangladesh.

Director General of DYD Md Azizur Rahman was the chief guest at the inaugural session of the workshop titled 'Youth Issues and Volunteerism in Bangladesh and Singapore'.

DHAKA TODAY

- Human chain**
Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote will organise a human chain. Venue: Press club, Time: 11:00am
- Convention**
Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Managers of Bangladesh will hold a convention. Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, Time: 4:00pm.
- Rally**
Japan Bangla Peace Foundation will hold a rally on Hiroshima Day. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 10:30.
- Seminar**
Bangladesh Shanti Parishad will organise a seminar. Venue: Engineering Institute, Time: 4:00pm.
- Human chain**
Shwasthya Odhikar Jote will organise a human chain. Venue: Charukola Institute, Dhaka University, Time: 10:45am
- Mezban**
Dhaka club will organise an anniversary mezban and musical programme. Venue: Dhaka Club, Time: 1:00pm
- Reception**
Shishu Shwasthya Foundation will organise a reception for National Prof. Dr. M R Khan. Venue: Syndicate Bhaban, Dhaka University, Time: 5:15pm.
- Flute recital**
High Commission of India will organise a flute recital programme. Venue: High Commission of India, Gulshan, Time: 7:00pm.
- Cultural function**
Bangla academy will organise a cultural function on the occasion of 69th death anniversary of the poet Rabindranath Tagore. Venue: Seminar hall, Bangla Academy, Time: 4:00pm
- Meeting**
Gono forum presidium will hold a meeting. Venue: 2/1, Arambagh,
- Award giving ceremony**
Computer Science and Engineering department of Buet will organise an award giving ceremony. Venue: Information Access Centre, Buet, Time: 7:30pm
- Cultural event**
Hans, a students' organisation, will organise a cultural event to introduce the term AUTISM. Venue: LGED auditorium, Time: 3:30pm.
- Fashion Show**
Bexi fabrics will organise a fashion show. Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. Time: 5:30
- Human chain**
War crimes trial movement will organise a human chain. Venue: Mirpur-10, Goal Chakkar area, Time: 4:30pm.
- Award giving ceremony**
Bangladesh National Museum will organise an award giving ceremony. Venue: auditorium of the museum, Time: 5:00pm
- Seminar**
BEDSS and Amra Mukti Joddhar Santan will organise a seminar on Bangabandhu Sangram O Swapno. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity, Time: 10:30am.
- Protest meeting**
Bangabandhu Sangskritik Parishad will organise a protest and demonstration. Venue: Muktangan, Time: 3:00pm.
- Discussion**
Families United Against Road Accident will organise doa mahfil and discussion. Venue: BIAM auditorium, Time: 5:00pm
- Cultural event**
Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha will organise a cultural event on the occasion of 69th death anniversary of the poet Rabindranath Tagore. Venue: Public Library auditorium, Time: 4:30pm.

Meat prices during Ramadan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) yesterday fixed price per kg meat of local cow at Tk 250, foreign cow at Tk 220 and mutton at Tk 350 during Ramadan.

DCC also fixed price of buffalo meat at Tk 220 a kg.

The price was fixed at a view-exchange meeting with the meat traders of Dhaka city held at Nagar Bhaban.

The traders have to hang price charts in front of their shops from the first of Ramadan to the 27th.

The meat traders assured the authorities concerned of following the price chart properly and demanded improving drainage system of Gabtali cattle market.

DCC Mayor Sadque Hossain Khoka asked the traders to follow the chart and give fair measurement while selling meat.

He assured the traders of improving the drainage system of Gabtali cattle market.

The mayor also said they have a plan to set up four abattoirs at four sides of Dhaka city to solve problems of meat traders for slaughtering of animals.

Chief Executive Officer of DCC Md Abul Kalam Azad, Chief Engineer Abdur Kader and Chief Health Officer Md Nasiruddin were present at the meeting.

Santosh Gupta

METRO DESK

Today is the sixth death anniversary of eminent journalist and writer Santosh Gupta, says a press release.

On the occasion, Santosh Gupta Smriti Parishad will place wreaths on his memorial at Postagala crematorium 9:30am today.

Santosh Gupta, born in 1925 at Runshi village in Jhalakathi, was involved with left politics before starting journalism as a profession.

He joined journalism in 1957 with The Daily Azad and later switched to Daily Sangbad as senior assistant editor. He served the Sangbad for 35 years.

Santosh Gupta made significant contribution to all democratic movements including the War of Liberation in 1971.

He was also jailed several times for about 12 years for his political activities.

His post editorial under the penname Aniruddha made him one of the most popular journalists at home and abroad.

Objectivity, independence and honesty were reflected by his writings on politics, economics and on country.

His articles, analysis and critiques on politics and economics added a different trend on journalism.

Santosh Gupta wrote 14 books on arts, poem, politics, literature and journalism and edited some 30 books but a lot of his write-ups are unpublished.

For his outstanding contribution to journalism and literature he was awarded Ekushey Padak, Sher-e-Bangla Padak, Maulana Tarkabagish Padak, Jahur Hossain Memorial Padak, Kazi Mahabubullah-Zebunnisa Welfare Trust Award.

Chehlum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A milad mahfil will be held on the occasion of the chehlum of Advocate Moniruzzaman Laskar Badal at his village Aral of Kapasia upazila of Gazipur district today, says a press release.

A veteran of the uprising of 1969 and the liberation war, Badal passed away on June 30 at the age of 58. He left behind a wife, a son, and a daughter to mourn his death.

He was the husband of Shaheen Laskar, president of Dhaka City Mohila Awami League.

WEATHER

Moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at most places over Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions and at many places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places over Southern part of the country, Met Office said.

Day temperature may fall by 1-2 degrees Celsius over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:39pm today and rises at 5:30am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.9 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 24.7 degrees Celsius at Faridpur and 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	33.7	25.4	69	64
Chittagong	31.8	25.0	82	83
Rajshahi	34.3	26.3	78	65
Khulna	31.3	26.8	83	95
Barisal	31.4	26.6	83	81
Sylhet	35.9	25.5	81	76
Cox's Bazar	31.5	25.2	76	81



Daily Star employees union executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Nazrul Islam and Khokon Chandra Das (Arup) were elected uncontested the president and general secretary of The Daily Star Employees' Union, says a press release.

The election, presided over by former president of the union Abdus Sattar Pramanik, was held at The Daily Star seminar room.

Other office-bearers are Vice-President Md Delwar Hossain, Joint Secretary Md Sekandar Ali, Treasurer Abdul Gafur, Publicity Secretary Md Abul Kalam Azad, Cultural Secretary Rafea Mufli and Executive Member Md Jashim Uddin.