



A guard of honour is presented in honour of Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Abu Yusuf Alam, inset, at Jamiatul Falah National Mosque in Chittagong yesterday.

Indigenous people protector of forests

Speakers tell view exchange meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Karuna Rani Sarkar, a Union Parishad (UP) member of Shyamnagar upazila in Satkhira, at a view exchange meeting yesterday said the male chairman does not let them to carry out any development works.

"The chairman gives me only five VGF cards, out of 30, for distribution," she said, adding that the male chairman and members take advantage of her being minority.

Institute for Environment and Development (IED), an NGO, organised the meeting titled "Participation of indigenous people living in low land in local government system, forest act and the rights of the indigenous" at the National Press Club in the city.

Karuna, a Kshatriya of Hindu religion, said though the people of her community are frequently attacked by

the land grabbers and the pirates from the Sundarbans while the local administration shows indifference to them.

"My two brothers were abducted by the pirates of the Sundarbans for Tk 50,000 on November 3. They tortured them, brutally. I informed the matter to police, local administration and chairman but they did not do anything for me. The pirates freed my brothers on November 9 after I gave them the money," she said in an emotion-choked voice.

Rabindranath Saren, a leader of the indigenous people, said the land grabbers cut down the trees of the forests but the indigenous people are blamed for deforestation.

"Indigenous people can't live without forest. They plant trees and maintain forests but police caught them on charge of deforestation. It's really pathetic," he said.

Project Coordinator of IED Jyoti

Chatterjee and researcher Pavel Partha presented two separate papers at the meeting.

Presenting PowerPoint slide on the way of life of the indigenous people and the usefulness of forests for their livelihood, Pavel Partha said there is a technical error in the existing forest act. "The act considered the management and preservation of forest as administrative work but the rights of people to forests is not ensured by the law," he said.

He urged the government to make it public before finalising the amendments to the forest act, 2010.

The government should take initiative to prevent forest grabbing and impose ban on setting up Eco-park, Eco-tourism, rest house and commercial tourism centres in the indigenous people's area, he said.

There are 1.5 million indigenous people of over 30 different communities living in the plain land throughout the

country.

Journalist Ataus Samad said the government should leave the responsibility of reforestation to the aboriginal people of the country.

Land and forest grabbing are not the problems for only the indigenous people rather the people from all walks of life suffer due to land grabbing and deforestation, said eminent columnist ABM Musa.

"You should unite and raise voice against land and forest grabbing," Musa said.

Former Pro-Vice Chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Rashid-e-Mahub presided over the meeting. Prof Dalem Chandra Barman, acting editor of the Daily Sangbad Muniruzzaman and Associate Editor of Prothom Alo Mizanur Rahman Khan also spoke at the meeting.

Adamjee Cant School golden jubilee on Dec 23, 24

METRO DESK

The golden jubilee of Adamjee Cantonment School and College in Dhaka will be held on December 23 and 24 on its premises, says a press release.

An agreement on this regard was signed between Desh TV, as co-partner of the event, Radio Today, as media partner, and the institution on the college campus on Sunday.

Convener of the event and the institution's Principal Golam Hossain Sarakar, Desh TV Managing Director Asaduzzaman Noor and Saify of Radio Today signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organisations.

The institution's governing body Chairman Muhammad Imrul Quayes was present on the occasion.

As per agreement, Desh TV will telecast the programme live on December 24.

Around 6,000 existing students and 5,000 former students with their families are likely to be registered in this programme.

On-going registration on the campus will continue till December 4.

Interested participants are requested to contact for registration at cellphone # 01973722227 or 01912107172.

JAPANESE FM CALLS ON HASINA Dev issue discussed

UNB, Tokyo

Japanese Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her hotel suite yesterday.

During the meeting, the prime minister and the Japanese foreign minister discussed a wide range of bilateral issues of development, said Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad.

The two leaders stated that both the countries are committed to principal policies of peace, development and disarmament, and maintain a history of supporting each other in the different international bodies including in the United Nations.

Seiji highly praised Hasina's leadership in the international forums on various issues including on climate change.

In reply Hasina expressed her strong commitment to poverty alleviation and protecting country people from the wraths of climate change.

She also sought Japanese cooperation for infrastructure development in Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, a delegation of Japan International Training Cooperation Organisation led by its President Shotaro Tochigi met the prime minister at her hotel suite.

During the meeting, the JITCO delegation expressed their keenness to establishing a training centre aiming at a smooth transfer of industrial skills for further development of SMEs in Bangladesh and Japan.

Hasina appreciated the role of JITCO in promoting the small and medium enterprises sectors.

Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni, Finance Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr Mashiur Rahman were present at the meeting.

MoU to set up info desk at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to set up an 'Information and Suggestion Desk' at DMCH.

People will get important information about different health related issues as well as services of DMCH from the desk, says a press release.

DMCH Director Brig Gen Md Shahidul Haque Mollik and TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman signed the MoU on behalf of DMCH and TIB respectively.

TIB has been directing 34 'Mobile Information and Suggestion Desks' at the DMCH outdoor section since 2008. A total of 35,500 people have so far been provided with information and tips on healthcare from these desks.

Prof Yusuf laid to rest

CU CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong University (CU) Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Abu Yusuf Alam was laid to eternal rest with state honour at university central graveyard yesterday evening.

Earlier his first janaza was held on the university central playground at 2:00pm.

His last namaz-e-janaza was held at Jamiatul Falah National Mosque where hundreds of people from all walks of life including Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid participated.

President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at Yusuf's death. They expressed sympathy to the bereaved family members and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

Obituary

METRO DESK

Momtaz Chowdhury, mother of Mehboob Chowdhury, CEO of Citycell, passed away yesterday, says a press release.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held at Gulshan Azad Mosque in the city after Zohr prayers tomorrow (Wednesday).

Sunbeams students win Lucknow's choral singing competition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of students from Sunbeams School in Dhaka won the 'Most Outstanding Team' award in a choral singing competition at Celesta International 2010 held in the Indian city of Lucknow from November 17 to 21.

The team of students performed a patriotic song to win the award at the event, which provides a golden opportunity for Asian teenagers to showcase their talents in the fields of choral singing, traditional group dance, choreography, dramatics and orchestra.

Sunbeams School competed alongside students from Nepal, Sri Lanka, and various states of India at this year's venue in Lucknow City Montessori School.



A group of students from Sunbeams School of Dhaka perform in a choral singing competition at Celesta International 2010 held in the Indian city of Lucknow from November 17 to 21.

COLONEL COMMANDANT 6th investiture held

UNB, Gazipur

Investiture Ceremony of Chief of General Staff (CGS) of Bangladesh Army Lieutenant General Md Mainul Islam as the 6th 'Colonel Commandant' of Ordnance Corps of Bangladesh Army was held at Ordnance Centre and School (OC and S) in Rajendrapur Cantonment here yesterday.

Senior most Commanding Officer of the Corps Brigadier General Didarul Alam Chowdhury and senior most Junior Commissioned Officer Lieutenant Md Hanif Mina adorned Lt Gen Mainul with the badges of the 'Colonel Commandant' on the occasion.

Addressing the high military officials and military and civil members of the Ordnance Corps at a Darbar, Gen Mainul said members of the corps would have to work hard to further strengthen their position and uphold their importance, making their effort visible, to meet the future challenges with preparedness, professional development and practical efficiency during both wartime and peacetime, and here would underlie the key to success in war.

DHAKA TODAY

Meeting
The trustee board on climate change will hold a meeting. Time: 3:00pm. Venue: Conference room, Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Discussion
LGRD Ministry will organise a discussion. Time: 11:30am. Venue: Conference room, LGRD Ministry.

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Last Date of Application: December 12, 2010
Admission Test: December 17, 2010

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