

BANGLADESH-TRIPURA BORDER

# India mulls over opening haats

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

With the increase in trade between Tripura and Bangladesh, the Indian government is considering a Tripura state's proposal for opening border markets and introducing flights on Agartala-Dhaka-Chittagong routes.

The Indian home ministry has informed Tripura government that it was considering to open two 'haats' or border markets in West and South Tripura districts, Tripura Commerce and Industries Minister Jiten Chowdhury told the media in Agartala.

"Border haats will facilitate trade in a 5km radius of the border of the two countries so that local growers can get market connectivity," he said.

"Generally no vehicles are used for marketing of local products and border guards take care of security. However, modalities are yet to be finalised," Chowdhury said.

Tripura government has sent proposals to the federal home ministry for opening border haats at six points on the 856km Indo-Bangladesh international border.

He said trade between Tripura and Bangladesh rose to Rs 300 crore in the current fiscal against Rs 163 crore last year.

India's civil aviation ministry, Chowdhury said, is also considering introduction of flights on Agartala-Dhaka-Chittagong route as the prospect of export and import business with Bangladesh was good.

He added that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina in talks in January last year had agreed on giving India access to Chittagong port.

He said alignment of the 16km rail link from Agartala to Akhaura has been completed by engineers of both countries recently and the Rs 251 crore to be spent for laying railway tracks would be borne by India.

The Bangladesh government, he said, was considering finalisation of the modalities to allow India, Nepal, and Bhutan to use the seaport.

# VOA Bangla senior editor Ziaur retires

METRO DESK

Syed Ziaur Rahman, a veteran journalist and renowned broadcaster, retired from Voice of America (VOA) after serving its Bangla Service for 35 years as senior editor.

The VOA Bangla hosted a farewell party in Washington to mark the occasion, said a press release received here yesterday.

VOA's Director Danforth Austin honoured Syed Ziaur with the prestigious "Career Achievement Award" for his valuable contributions to VOA and playing a critical role in bringing VOA broadcasts of the highest quality to worldwide audiences.

VOA's Bangla Service Chief Brian Armstead paying rich tribute to Rahman on the occasion, said the legacy he left will inspire journalists and broadcasters of all media beyond VOA.

Syed Ziaur Rahman began his career as a print journalist in 1955 in Dhaka and worked with various daily and weekly newspapers and journals. He joined the Information and Publications Department of the USIS in Dhaka in 1963 where he was one of the editors of USIS's Bangla fortnightly newspaper Markin Parikrama.

While working with VOA Bangla in Washington, Syed Ziaur interviewed at least three presidents, five prime ministers, members of the parliament, ambassadors, leaders of political parties and distinguished personalities in the field of arts and culture and social works in Bangladesh, as well as members of Congress and high officials within the United States government.

His interviews with Nobel laureates Dr Mohammad Yunus and Dr Amartya Sen, Saogat editor Mohammad Nasiruddin, Poet Sufia Kamal, Poet Shamsur Rahman among others were "first" in Voice of America.

During Rahman's long services with the VOA in Washington he was awarded "Superior Honour Award" and other awards for excellence in journalism.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina handing over the documents of the house and the land she presented to Ramiza Khatun, wife of late rickshaw-puller Hasmat Ali, at her village of Kharua Barail in Gafargaon yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

# PM returns favour

UNB, Gafargaon, Mymensingh

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday handed over a house and the land to the poor wife of Hasmat Ali, a late rickshaw-puller, who showed a rare respect to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with his little hard-earned capital before his death in 2004.

The 630 square feet concrete house was given to Ramiza Khatun at her village of Kharua Barail under Gafargaon, Mymensingh yesterday. Ramiza, in her 80s now, started begging to earn her keep following her husband Hasmat's death.

Hasmat bought 6.45-decimal land in 2003 at his village for Sheikh Hasina as he thought of Hasina as an "orphan" after the tragic killings of her father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and mother Fazilatunnesa Mujib on August 15, 1975.

Hasina, to give back the favour of Hasmat, built the house named Hashmat Villa at a cost of Tk 9.46 lakh from prime minister's relief fund and gifted it to Ramiza. "I have no more expectation in my life," said Ramiza while being hugged by Hasina yesterday.



From left, VOA Director Danforth Austin, Syed Ziaur Rahman with Career Achievement Award, and Bangla Service Chief Brian Armstead.

PHOTO: COURTESY

# Distribution of book on liberation war documents begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday started free distribution of a 15-volume book on Bangladesh Liberation War documents to nearly 17,000 schools, colleges and madrasas as part of its move to help students learn the true history.

Inaugurating the distribution event at Sultana Kamal Women's Sports Complex in Dhanmondi, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid handed over the book "Bangladesher Swadhinata Juddho Dalilpatra," edited by Hasan Hafizur Rahman, to 5,000 educational institutions.

This year 16,666 institutions, both private and public, will receive the book. The minister said they plan to distribute the book to 17,000 more schools and colleges next year.

Hakkani Publisher printed the 15,000-page document.



# Three martyrs' death anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 39th death anniversary of liberation war martyrs engineer Fazlur Rahman, his younger brother Rafiqul Islam and his nephew Anwar Hossain, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at their village at Kazir Kandi in Narsingdi after Juma prayers.

The Pakistani occupation forces led by an army captain shot the two brothers and their nephew dead in Syedpur Cantonment on this day in 1971.

# DU celebrates award achievement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University authorities yesterday celebrated its achievement of Independence Award 2011 through colourful programmes on the campus.

The university won the award for its contribution to education.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique received the award on behalf of the institution from the prime minister at a function on March 24.

To celebrate the achievement, teachers, students and officials of the university brought out a colourful procession from Aparajeyo Bangla yesterday morning.

DU's top administrators, including the VC, led the procession through the campus streets to the Central Shaheed Minar, placing a wreath there.

The administrators released pigeons and balloons into the sky while different department students participated in the cultural performances at the Shaheed Minar.

## বৈশাখি মেলায় হোক আপনার হৌকতা...

**বুটিক**

৬৯০ টাকা

**নকশা**

৩৯০-৪৫০ টাকা

**রং**

৫৫০-৫৯০ টাকা

**মেলা**

৭৫০-৮৯০ টাকা

বৈশাখি মেলায় আগের নববর্ষের আনন্দে আকর্ষণীয় রঙের নতুন সেভেলে গ্যালারি অপেক্স এখন ভরপুর। আপনাকে স্বাগতম।