

## Promised climate funds sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has sought urgent bilateral climate change fund disbursement from the developed countries and development partners as the United Nations Global Green Fund, pledged for the vulnerable countries, shows no sign of disbursement shortly.

Bangladesh is treated as one of the major claimants of the green fund, which was created in Cancun Climate Change Conference last year. "It is yet to decide how they would disburse the money from the UN climate change fund. But being the most affected country in the world we need to act now to face the change. So, we have sought assistant from the development partners on bilateral basis," said Dr Hasan Mahmud, state minister for the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

The meeting was held at the state guesthouse Padma in the city. Some 16 envoys or their representatives including from US, Germany, Denmark, Japan, South Korea, European Union and officials of development partners including from World Bank, UNDP, USAID, DFID, SIDA, attended the meeting.

## Punishment to baul attackers demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Speakers at a rally yesterday demanded the government's immediate and stern action against the fundamentalists who forcibly shaved off hair and moustaches of the 28 bauls (mystic singers) at Char Ramnagar village in Pangsha, Rajbari on April 5.

They said the culprits want to spread militancy, fundamentalism, and religious bigotry in the country in the name of Islam and called upon cross-section of people to resist the ill motive.

The rally was organised by different cultural organisations of Chittagong city on Shahid Minar premises.

Begum Mustari Safi, poets Abul Momen and Kamrul Hasan Badal, Dr AQM Sirajul Islam, Dr Chandan Das, Prof Hossain Kabir, and cultural activists Rashed Hasan, and Shima Dutta addressed the rally among others.

## 'Food storage better than ever before'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, CTG

Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzaque yesterday said the country's food storage remains better than any time in the past, but he did not elaborate how it is better.

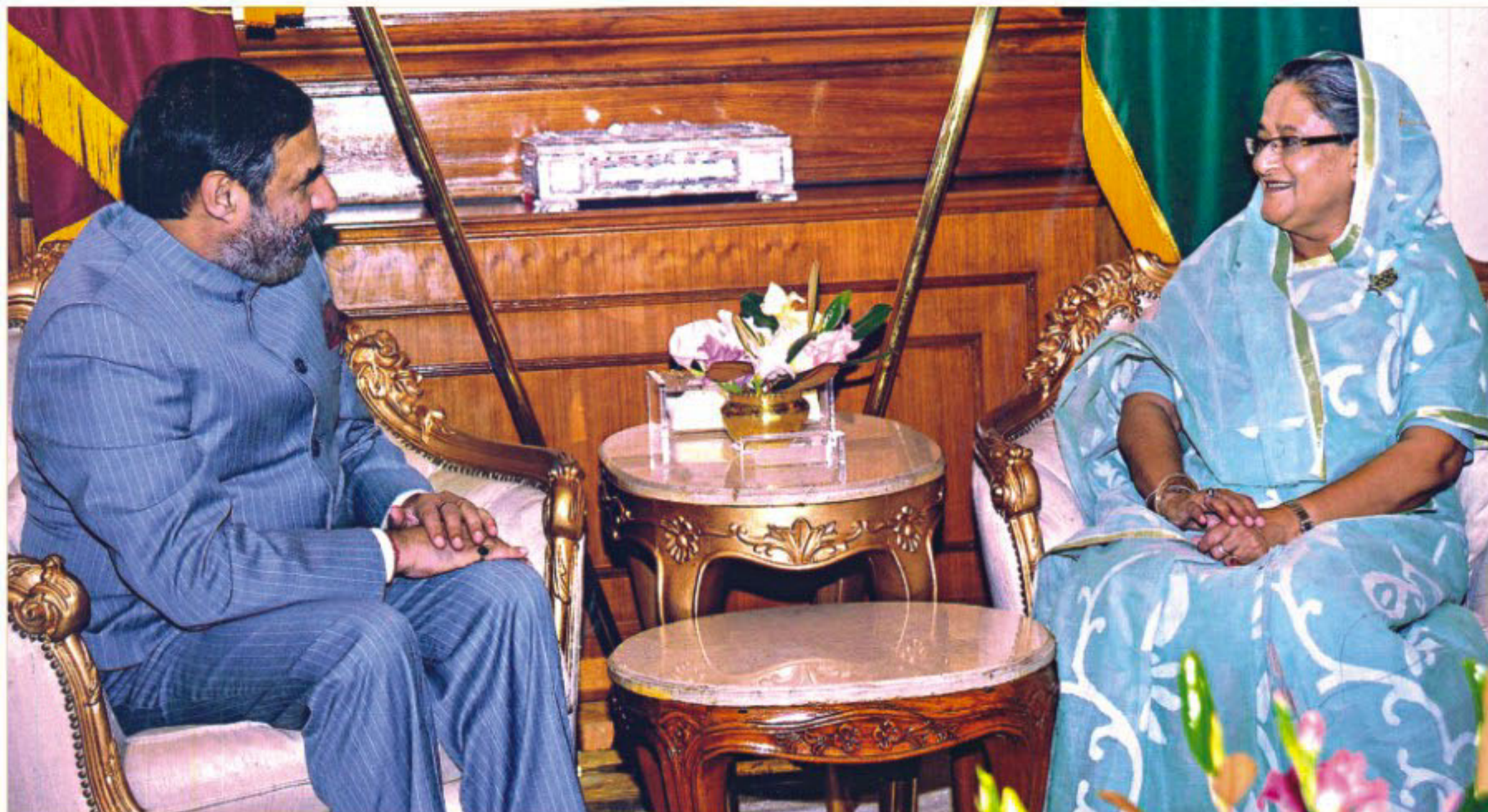
The minister made the comment while addressing as the chief guest a view-exchange meeting with the officials of the department of food at Chittagong Circuit House.

Razzaque also said open market sale (OMS) of rice has brought stability in rice market, referring to the current price of the food grain.

The minister came to Chittagong to visit the under-construction godowns and the OMS service here. He said the government will construct 91 godowns with Tk218 crore in Chittagong within this year.

Of them 77 godowns, each with 1,000 tonnes storage capacity, would be set up at Haliashahar and the rest 14, each with 500-tonnes capacity, at Dewanhat, he added.

Ahmad Hossain Chowdhury, director general of the department, and Deputy Commissioner (DC) Fayed Ahmed also spoke at the meeting.



Indian Commerce Minister Anand Sharma pays a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## GAS, ELECTRICITY AND WATER CRISES

# Fresh BNP agitation programmes May 9

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday said it will announce fresh agitation programmes on May 9 in protest at the existing gas, electricity and water crises and the price hike of essentials.

As per its previous decision, the party will stage demonstrations on that day across the country demanding a midterm election.

At a press conference at the party's central office in the city's Nayapaltan, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, party acting secretary general, said "We will declare fresh agitation programmes demanding the resignation of the government if it fails to resolve the crises in public life."

The conference was organised to announce the decisions taken on Saturday during a daylong meeting of the National Executive Committee of the main opposition.

Replying to a query, the BNP leader said Chairperson Khaleda Zia will declare in time the party's stance regarding the invitation by

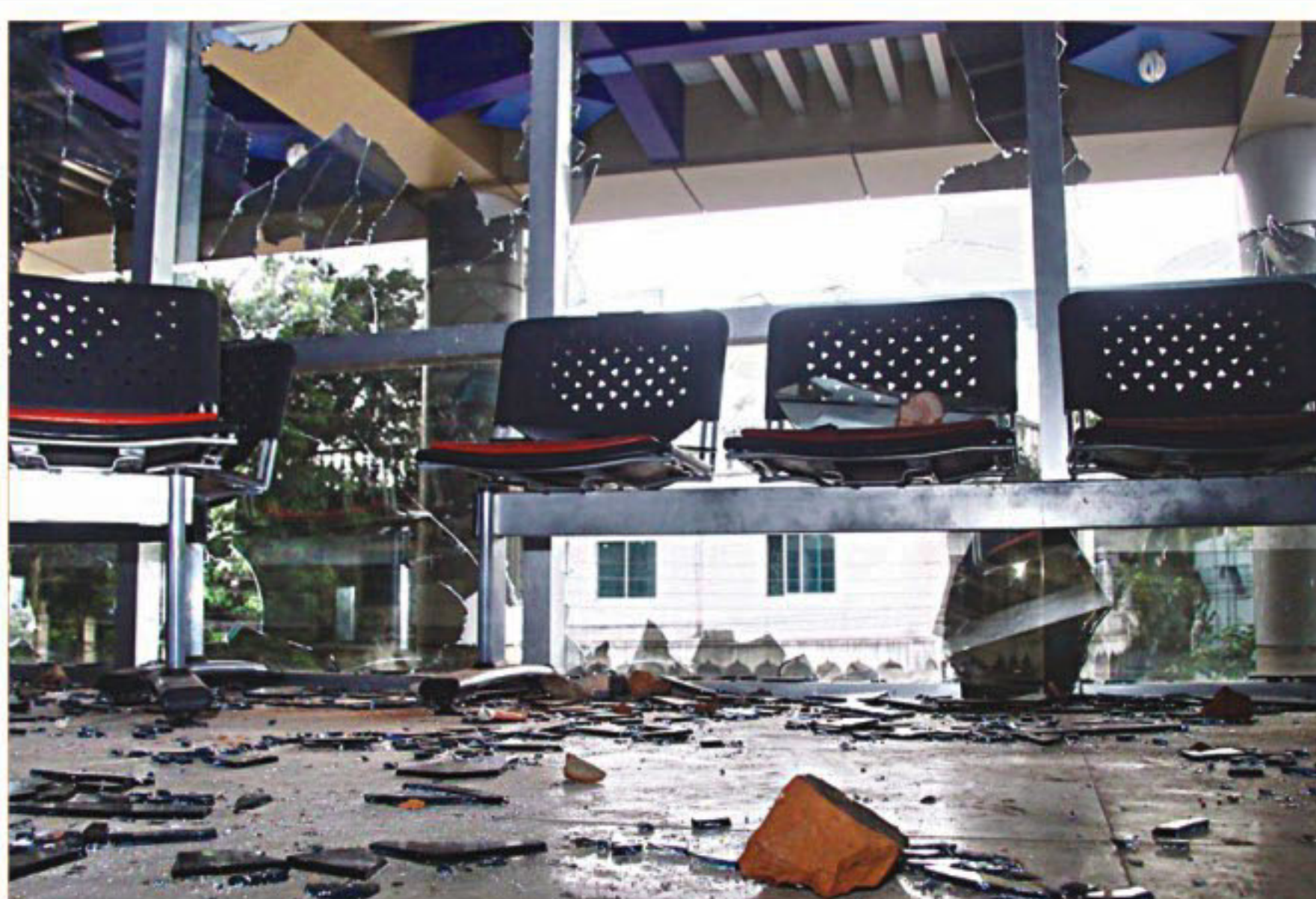
the parliamentary special committee on constitutional amendments.

Mirza Alamgir unveiled a 26-point demand including reduction of prices of essentials and release of arrested party leaders at the conference. He said the opposition is worried about the government's failure and negligence in discharging its duties.

The executive committee on Saturday discussed the organisational affairs, he mentioned. Full-fledged committees of 43 district units have been formed and another 10 committees will be formed soon. Rest of the committees will be formed before the next executive committee meeting.

The meeting congratulated Khaleda Zia on her nominating Mirza Alamgir as acting secretary general and criticised the government for harassing Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus.

Saturday's meeting was arranged in line with the party constitution according to which the executive committee must hold a meeting once in every six months.



Shards of glass lie strewn on a floor of Chevron Diagnostic Centre in Panchlaish of Chittagong city yesterday after students of Chittagong Medical College vandalised it following a squabble with the centre staff.

PHOTO: STAR

## Transport workers beat 5 CU students

CU CORRESPONDENT

Five students of Chittagong University (CU) were beaten up by transport workers at Nandirhat in Hathazari upazila of Chittagong Saturday night.

SM Helal Uddin, Mohammad Ali, Swadesh Vodra, and AJM Mamun Hasan are master's students of sociology department, and Nazmul Sakib, second year student of Bangla department.

Helal and Ali were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) in critical condition. Others took primary treatment at the university medical centre.

Police said Helal was beaten up by the helper and driver of Tari, an engine-run passenger carrier, following an altercation over fare at Nandirhat around 10:30pm.

As fellows of Helal reached there, the transport workers beat them up too along with locals. Police of university outpost rescued the students and picked up the helper Md Rafique and the driver Abul Kalam.

## Diagnostic centre ransacked in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Students of Chittagong Medical College (CMC) vandalised a private diagnostic centre over a squabble in Panchlaish area of Chittagong city Saturday night.

Transport movement from in front of the medical college to Chalkbazar remained suspended for over 12 hours, as the students blocked the road around 12:00am Saturday.

Police and diagnostic centre sources said two CMC students, who went to Chevron Diagnostic Centre for some tests around 9:30pm, tried to violate queue.

An altercation ensued as the attendants of other patients protested the violation. At one stage, Chevron staff tied and beat up the two students who were released after being identified as students of CMC.

An attending doctor of the diagnostic centre, seeking anonymity, said several agitating youths arrived at the centre after the two students contacted their fellows.

As Panchlaish police reached the spot, the agitators asked Officer-in-charge (OC) Nobojyoti Khisha to hand over the Chevron staff responsible for their "harassment".

Denied, the students along with some "outsiders" vandalised three floors of the diagnostic centre and damaged computers and other equipment. After the vandalism, the youths put blockade on the road at midnight demanding punishment to the Chevron staff.

The blockade was lifted around 12:00pm yesterday after a two-hour long meeting between CMC students and Chevron authorities.

The anonymous doctor alleged police remained silent during the vandalism. Asked, OC Nobojyoti said a few policemen accompanied him during the violence, and they just tried to save the staff. "We took control of the situation after more policemen joined us."

Panchlaish police picked up three staff -- Abul Hossain, Suman (1) and Suman (2) -- after the medical college students filed a case with the police station early Sunday.

## COURSE ON JOURNALISM

# Manila University invites application

METRO DESK

The Diploma in Multimedia Journalism, a one-year Internet-based distance-learning programme, will open on May 25 to a class of 15 students.

Applications for admission and for scholarship grants are being accepted up to May 13.

This newest offering of Konrad Adenauer Asian Center for Journalism at Ateneo de Manila University (ACFJ) was developed to bring Asian journalists in step with latest platforms for news and commentary, says Dr Violet B Valdez, ACFJ executive director.

With six theory and practice-oriented courses and a capstone project, the multimedia diploma programme will provide journalists with a broad perspective and the skills to undertake multimedia projects, she explained.

Dr DJ Clark, head of ACFJ's visual journalism programme, said the programme is "designed for any professional journalist - writers, photographers, radio and TV reporters -- wishing to diversify their story telling."

ACFJ created 10 scholarship grants for the programme, five of which are full grants covering travel and tuition fees. Applicants must be Asian journalists with at least two years of experience as fulltime journalists.

Application guidelines are available at ACFJ@ateneo.edu, or write to The Program Director (Multimedia) at news-room@admu.edu.ph.

## PSWA observes professionals' day

METRO DESK

Professional Secretaries Welfare Association (PSWA), a forum of administrative professionals, observed International Secretaries and Administrative Professionals Day on Friday.

On the occasion, a discussion session was organised at EmmaNuella's Banquet Hall in the city, says a press release.

Chaired by Obaida Kabir, President of PSWA, the session was addressed by Mohammed Tareq, Head of Human Resources, Green Energy Management Services; KM Ali, Chief Executive Officer, Partex Star Group and Syed Badrul Ahsan, Editor, Current Affairs, The Daily Star.

Tareq stressed the need for mentoring as an important component of promoting professionalism in various sectors of activity.

Syed Badrul Ahsan emphasised various aspects involved in communication, in particular a need to uphold values in individual interaction.

The discussion was followed by a cultural programme and lunch.

The forum was set up in 1995 bringing together personnel from well-known national, multinational and international organisations in Dhaka.

# Dhaka working for poverty alleviation

## PM tells Indian commerce minister

UNB, Dhaka

Underscoring the need for combined efforts among the South Asian nations to alleviate poverty from the region, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said her government is working to alleviate poverty and attain economic emancipation of the mass people.

"Poverty is the common enemy of the South Asian region," she said when visiting Indian Commerce Minister Anand Sharma paid a courtesy call on her at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) yesterday.

The Indian commerce minister apprised the PM of his visit to Bangladesh to boost bilateral trade and business.

In reply, the PM thanked Anand Sharma for visiting Bangladesh.

Sharma was accompanied by Indian Commerce Secretary Rahul Khullar and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Rajeet Mitter.

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan, Ambassador at-Large M Ziauddin, Principal Secretary to the PM M A Karim and press secretary to the PM Abul Kalam Azad were present.

# Freedom fighter among 6 killed in road crashes

METRO DESK

Six people including a freedom fighter were killed and 50 others injured in road accidents in Nilphamari and Panchagarh yesterday and Saturday.

UNB from Panchagarh reports: A freedom fighter was killed after a tractor hit his motorcycle at Karatoa bridge in Debiganj upazila Saturday evening.

Naba Kumar Roy, 65 of Debiduba union of the upazila, died on the spot. He was Debiduba union unit commander of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Shangshad.

Another man was killed after being hit by a bus at Magurmari intersection in Tentulia upazila, Panchagarh on Saturday afternoon.

Tariqul Islam, 35, a rock trader and son of Abdul Kader of Debnagar village of the upazila, died on the spot.

Our Nilphamari correspondent says: Four people were killed and 50 others wounded as a BRTC bus fell into a ditch at Golahat in Syedpur of the district yesterday.

Dead are Amena Begum, 38, her daughter Rupali Begum Rupa, 22, and an unidentified man aged about 60 of Thakurgaon and Noman, 25, of Birganj, Dinajpur.

Thirty-five of the injured were admitted to Syedpur hospital, and 16 of them were shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in critical condition. Others received first aid at different private clinics.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Abdul Aziz speaks at a discussion titled "Pest outbreak: Reasons and requirements" organised by Poribesh Bachao Andolan (Poba) at the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Abu Naser Khan and on his left is Prof Dwijen Sharma.

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