

NEWS IN *brief*

Rampura OCs, 2 SIs sued

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A bribery case was filed on Tuesday against officers-in-charge (OCs) of Rampura Police Station and two sub-inspectors (SIs) with a Dhaka court. The accused are OC (admin) Mohammad Sayedur Rahman, OC (investigation) Abdul Bari, SIs Azgar Hossain and Nure Alam Fakir. Murshida Khatun, resident of Savar, yesterday filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka against the accused on charges of taking Tk 1.70 lakh from her to register a murder case. After the hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Abdul Kader ordered a judicial inquiry into the matter. In her complaint, Murshida alleged that her elder daughter Musliha Jahan Papiya was killed by her husband Ruhul Amin on March 13 this year. Later she went to Rampura Police Station to file a case where police refused to register it. Later, Murshida filed a case with Dhaka court on March 30 and the court directed Rampura police to register it as a regular case. But police registered it after taking Tk 1.7 lakh in bribe from her, the complainant added.

DSHE to inspect educational institutions every month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) decided to expedite its monitoring mechanism on public and private high schools, colleges and madrasas to check educational activities. The decision came at a meeting of DSHE Monitoring and Evaluation Wing on Thursday to ensure standard of education from grassroots. Now, district and upazila education officers and DSHE regional deputy directors must send an evaluation report to DSHE after inspecting at least 10 institutions each in their area every month, said DSHE Director General Prof Noman-ur-Rashid. A circular in this regard would soon be issued to officials concerned, he said, adding that departmental action would be taken against those who would fail to comply. Sources said allegations were rife that educational activities especially in rural areas were not monitored properly. The officials inspect the administrative matters of the institutions on the basis of allegation, they added. DSHE would take proper steps on the basis of these reports, said an official preferring anonymity.

Prof Nasreen laid to rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Nasreen Khundakar, professor of economics of Dhaka University (DU), was laid to rest at Banani Graveyard in the city yesterday. Her Namaz-e-Janaza was held in front of DU Central Mosque after Zohr prayers. Prof Nasreen died on Monday at United Hospital of city at the age of 55. She was suffering from complications arising out of acute renal failure. DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Bangladesh Economic Association, and the economics department condoled her death yesterday. Prof Arefin in a statement said Dr Nasreen was a devoted teacher and researcher, and her death is a permanent loss. She will always be remembered by the economics department and the university as well for her contribution to the country's education, he added. In a written statement signed by general secretary Prof Tawfiq Ahmed Chowdhury, Bangladesh Economic Association expressed shock over the death of Prof Nasreen. DU's economics department in a condolence message expressed sympathy for the bereaved family of Prof Nasreen. Nasreen Khundakar joined the economics department of DU in 1980. She was promoted to assistant professor in 1993, to associate professor in 1995, and to professor in 2001.

Actress Nishi, husband on 2-day remand over suicide by housemaid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday placed film actress Nargis Akhter Nishi and her husband on a two-day remand in the case filed in connection with the suicide of their housemaid Monday. Abul Miah, sub-inspector of Uttara Police Station and investigation officer (IO) of the case, produced the couple before a Dhaka court, requesting for seven days' remand. The court, however, granted two days' remand to interrogate Nishi and her husband Jahid Manna over the suicide of the housemaid, Nasima Akhter Priya, 25. Uttara police recovered the hanging body of Priya from Nishi and Jahid's apartment at Uttara sector no. 11 and detained the couple. Police, later, filed the case against the two.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sharafat Hossain Chowdhury, a senior lawyer of the Supreme Court, passed away at Apollo Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 75, says a press release. He left behind his wife, three sons and three daughters. He was buried at Azimpur graveyard. His kulkhwani will be held at Road No-15, House No-399 in Bashundhara residential area after Asr prayers on Friday.

Saifuddin Ahmed

METRO DESK

Saifuddin Ahmed, a banker and son of late Prof Sirajul Haque, passed away on Friday morning at Detroit, Michigan, USA, at the age of 86, according to family source. Saifuddin, a former resident of Dhanmondi, left behind his three sons and one daughter to mourn his death.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Mozaffar Ali Talukder, father of Rafiqul Islam Ratan, chief reporter of Bengali daily the Dainik Jugantor, says a press release. On the occasion, qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held today and a destitute feeding programme will be held tomorrow at his village home at Nagar Bari of Kalihati upazila.

Azimpur old friends assoc reunion held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first reunion of the former residents of Azimpur colony was held on the premises of Azimpur Girls' School and College on Sunday. Around 400 people participated in the reunion organised by Azimpur Old Friends Association, says a press release. The association awarded former residents of Azimpur colony Prof Dr Ashraf Siddiqui, Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury and Prof Dr T A Chowdhury for their special contribution to the society. Former minister Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelly was present as the chief guest while local lawmaker Dr Mostofa Jalal Mohiuddin and Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank Ziaul Hasan Siddiqui were present as special guests.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY OBSERVED
Call to ensure journo's security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Press Freedom Day was observed in the country as elsewhere across the globe yesterday with this year's theme "21st Century Media: New Frontiers, New Barriers". Different organisations arranged seminars and other programmes to mark the day. Supro or Sushasoner Jonno Procharavizan (Campaign for Good Governance) formed a human chain in front of the National Museum. At the event, the organisation demanded of the government to take necessary steps to ensure journalist's security so that they can work independently, says a press release. Supro leaders said free and independent media is the prerequisite to national development; so press freedom has to be ensured.

Their other demands include full implementation of the Right to Information (RTI) Act and giving recognition to the journalists contributing to build a society free of corruption. Mass-line Media Centre (MMC) organised a seminar at IDB Bhaban in the city's Agargaon. Speakers there stressed the need for ensuring freedom of the press and journalists and satisfying journalists' professional demands, says a press release. They urged all to help build media as an industry by resisting usage of the evil forces. Meanwhile, four organisations -- Campaign in Citizen Rights to Information, Nagorik Uddyog, Green Voice, and Jubo Nagorik Adhikar Jote -- jointly organised a human chain programme and street play in front of the National Museum.

Speakers at the programme said although a democratic government is in power now, many journalists were being killed and harassed, making the country as one of the top countries in terms of repressing journalists. The culture of repression on media and journalists is not good for democracy, they said, demanding the government ensure freedom of press and security of journalists. The United Nations General Assembly declared May 3 as World Press Freedom Day to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press. The day is also to remind governments of their duty to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression enshrined under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, according to the wikipedia.



Sushasoner Jonno Procharavizan (Campaign for Good Governance) forms a human chain in front of the National Museum in the city yesterday marking the World Press Freedom Day.

US envoy on war crimes happy over trial process

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Stephen J Rapp, US Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues, yesterday said he is impressed with the work the investigators and prosecutors of the International Crimes Tribunal is doing to find evidence for the war crimes trial. "What we want to see here [in Bangladesh] is a process that could be a model for other countries," he said. "I met the investigators and prosecution staff, and am pleased with the hard work they are doing to develop evidence that proves these crimes. I am impressed with the work they are doing," he added. The envoy made the remark at a press conference on the concluding day of his three-day visit to the country. Rapp arrived in Dhaka on Sunday at the invitation of the government to share his experience and discuss how the US government may assist

Bangladesh to hold trial successfully. This was his second visit to the country within three months. During his last visit in this January, Rapp suggested amendments to the rules regarding pre-charge detention, victims' protection, investigation into the allegations, prosecution strategy and public information. "There has not yet been following up to the suggestions," he said at the briefing yesterday, "I understand these things need to be carefully considered." He said the amendment to the rules could be made by the tribunal judges with the stroke of a pen and would not require going to the parliament. Once these issues are taken cared of, Rapp hoped that it would be possible for the US government to provide training to the investigators, judges and prosecution staff if requested by Bangladesh. "Before that happens I'll have to go

back and consult with the Congress," he said. Asked about pre-charge detention, Rapp said there are instances where accused are detained during the pre-charge and pre-trial period. The accused could be detained on informal charges before bring formal charges, he said. During his visit, he held meetings with the law minister, foreign minister, the judges, the chief prosecutor and his staff, representatives of the defence and political oppositions. He lauded Bangladesh for undertaking a process of achieving justice after 40 years since the atrocities of 1971 [War of Liberation]. "And while the tribunal faces many challenges, it has the opportunity to accomplish great ends as long as the process is independent and fair," he said.

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 20

Plan to procure 70,000mt sugar

UNB, Dhaka

The government will procure 70,000 metric tonnes of sugar from local and international sources keeping in mind the additional demand during the holy month of Ramadan, which will begin in August. The government has endorsed two separate proposals, one for 12,500 metric tonnes and another for 25,000 metric tonnes of sugar in line with the demand forecast made by the industry ministry. Officials told the news agency yesterday that the bulk procurement of 70,000 metric tonnes will be in addition to the earlier procurement of sugar. Last year, the government had similar move for import of sugar to keep the market stable. But that move went in vain because of a trick by an unscrupulous group of businessmen. It was alleged that some firms obtained the order for supply of sugar to the government. But finally they backed out of supplying the sugar as part of a plot hatched by a section of sugar merchants in connivance with certain officials. As a result, the government could not release any sugar to the market on demand and the price went up during the Ramadan. Taking advantage of the situation the unscrupulous business circle increased the sugar price and the people had to buy sugar at an excessively higher price.

MiG-29 PURCHASE
Court records statement of 26 PWs' in a day

COURT CORRESPONDENT

In an unprecedented move, a Dhaka court yesterday recorded statement of 26 prosecution witnesses (PWs) in MiG-29 purchase graft case. Judge Abdul Majid of Special Court for Dhaka Division recorded statement of the witnesses and fixed May 10 for the next hearing after the defendants' lawyers cross-examined them. Advocate Shahjahan Miah Sachhu of Dhaka Judge's Court told The Daily Star that during his last 18 years' practice, he never saw such number witnesses giving statement in a day. Taking statements of 26 witnesses of a case in a single day is unprecedented, said the lawyer. Earlier on April 18, the same court recorded statement of complainant Abdullah Al Zahid, deputy director of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). The accused are Air Marshal (retd) Jamal Uddin Ahmed, former Defence Secretary Syed Yusuf Hossain, Air Commodore (retd) Mirza Akhter Maruf, former joint secretary Hossain Serniabat and Unique Group Managing Director Nur Ali. The case was filed with Tejgaon Police Station against Hasina and six others on December 11, 2001.



Prof AK Azad made UGC chairman

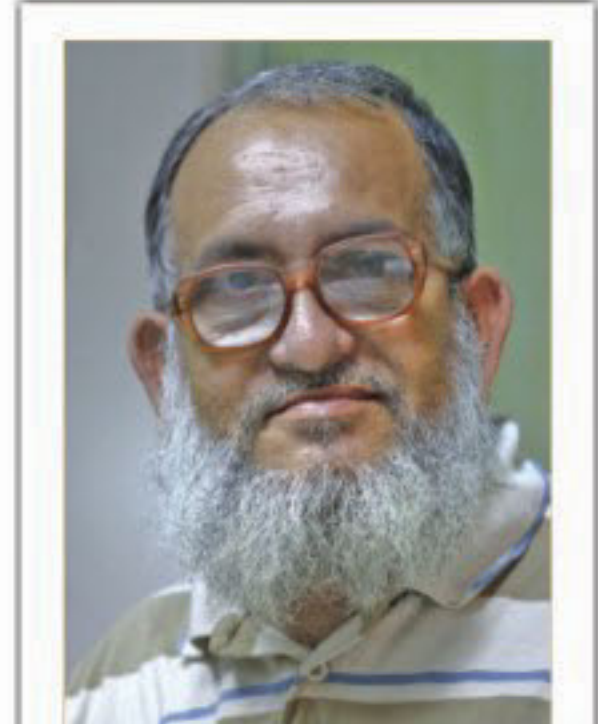
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Dr AK Azad Chowdhury former vice chancellor of Dhaka University, has been appointed the Chairman of University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh for a period of four years. The education ministry has issued a circular yesterday and sent it to the persons concerned. This is for the first time, a proposal for giving the UGC chairman of the status of a state minister has been sent to the cabinet division. The status of the incumbent chairman is equivalent to a secretary of the government, major general in Army, Navy and Air Force, as per the warrant of precedence. The education ministry has sent the proposal to the cabinet secretary to take necessary steps to give him the status, said sources. A professor of Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacology department of Dhaka University, Dr Chowdhury will replace Prof Nazrul Islam, incumbent chairman of UGC, whose tenure will end on May 6. Dr Chowdhury's appointment order would be effective from his joining date to the post, reads the circular.

Students ransack vehicles in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of Mirpur University College barricaded Mirpur section-2 road and ransacked vehicles after a student of the college was injured in a road accident near Mirpur Police Station in the city yesterday. The injured student Mohammad Russell was a first year honours student of the college. Police said the accident took place when a Mirpur section-1 bound bus of Bengal Paribahan hit Russell while he was crossing the road.



Help save freedom fighter Jahanir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Jahangir Hossain Talukder, a freedom fighter suffering from diabetes and heart diseases, needs financial help for treatment. Hossain used to sell tea at Rabindra Sharobar in Dhanmondi to earn his livelihood. He has been unable to carry this petty business since his illness. Hossain hails from K a s h e m a b a d o f Gouranadi upazila, Barisal. He now stays at Sadek Khan road in Rayer Bazaar in the city. The freedom fighter appealed to the financially solvent people of the country for helping him to continue treatment. Any assistance can be sent to this address: Agrani Bank, Gouranadi branch, savings account no. 5873. His family can be contacted at 01731 318097.

Glaxose WEATHER TODAY
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No change in temperature likely
UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions in 12 hours till 6:00pm today. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:28pm today and rises at 5:22am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 36.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 19.6 degrees Celsius at Rangpur.

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	34.1	23.0	73	58
Chittagong	31.0	24.4	77	78
Rajshahi	35.7	22.8	75	68
Rangpur	29.6	19.6	84	82
Khulna	34.6	23.6	69	63
Barisal	34.0	25.0	83	73

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