

NEWS IN *brief*

Two electrocuted in Gazipur

UNB, Gazipur

Two construction workers were electrocuted at Masjidia village at Khoiyachhara union in Mirsarai upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Najim Uddin, 25, and Saddam Hossain, 22.

Locals said they were working at an under-construction building owned by Gura Mia at the village in the afternoon.

Suddenly they came in contact with live electric

Support for Mirsarai victim families

UNB, Chittagong

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker provided Tk 30,000 to each family of the deceased students killed in Mirsarai road accident.

The minister on behalf of the ministry handed over the cheque at a ceremony on Abu Torab Government Primary School premises in Mirsharai yesterday.

Addressing the occasion, the minister also announced to construct necessary galleries at Mirsarai upazila stadium after renovating the stadium.

Ahad Ali visited the accident spot and he on behalf of the national sports council declared to give financial assistance for construction of a monument at the spot, which was planned by Ministry

2 Mirsarai survivors admitted to BSMMU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The two survivors of Mirsarai tragedy were admitted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) on Saturday.

Kajal, a class eight student of Abu Torab Bahumukhi High School, was taken to Dhaka with "critical condition."

His classmate Nayan was also shifted to BSMMU for better treatment.

Forty people died when a truck carrying the people, mostly students, fell into a ditch beside the link road between Abu Torab Bazar and Borotakia



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

The driver of this bus lost control over the steering and knocked over the rickshaw and the traffic police booth in front of Notre Dame College in the city yesterday.

Orthopaedic hospital limps on with shortage of staff

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

The poor patients are not getting artificial limbs at the cheapest rate from Pongu Hospital, the country's lone specialised public orthopaedic hospital, as its artificial limb centre is almost closed down due to severe manpower crisis.

Though the centre produced 734 artificial limbs in 12 months [June 2003 to June 2004] for the patients, it produced only 245 in last year [January to December, 2010], shows the hospital record.

As the eight limb makers of the centre have gone to retirement in last five years and these posts have been laying vacant at the centre since then, said Matilal Biswas, only limb maker and manager of the artificial limb centre at National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedic Rehabilitation (NITOR), mostly known as Pongu Hospital.

Despite having "enough fund and machines," the limb centre remains virtually inoperative due to the shortage of limb makers, said Motilal who is also going to retirement soon.

Total post of limb makers of the hospital is nine.

According to Matilal, Tk 65,000 is needed for the Above Knee Prosthesis (artificial organ set above the knee) at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) and Tk 25,000 at Brac Artificial Limb Centre, which is only Tk 550 at NITOR.

"Only Tk 330 is needed for the Below Knee Prosthesis at NITOR which cost at least Tk 8,000 if you want to procure it from outside the hospital," he said admitting that the poor patients are suffering most as they have to procure artificial limbs from outside paying even 24 times more now.

While visiting the hospital, this corre-

spondent found one Darbesh Ali, 40, who admitted to the hospital in the mid of June following a road accident and his leg had to be amputated.

Darbesh, a fish trader, was about to cry while narrating his state as he is managing treatment costs from his relatives.

Purchasing an artificial limb is beyond his capacity if he is not provided it free of cost or nominal cost.

"Can you manage an artificial limb from here for me, apa [sister]? If I would go back to work, I could save my family, my four little children would at least get their education," said Darbesh lying at G-1 bed at IJ ward of the hospital to the reporter.

According to the hospital sources, a total of 246 items like surgical/club foot shoe, Taylor brace, long leg brace, short leg brace etc was prepared last year, which was quite insignificant comparing

to the existing demand. The production is almost nil this year, sources said.

Admitting the situation, Director of NITOR Abdul Awal Rizvi said that they could not go for recruitment, as they did not get qualified limb makers.

"Even we could not take non qualified ones to make them qualified after providing them training. Because the government recruitment policy does not allow it. So, we have applied to the health ministry to bring slight changes in the recruitment policy," said Dr Rizvi.

They are also trying to take people through outsourcing and already have contacted to the Protibandhi Unnayan Foundation in this regard, he added.

The hospital has been producing and supplying artificial limbs to the patients at the cheapest rate since its inception in 1972.

EVM in next local elections: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commission (EC) will introduce electronic voting machine (EVM) in the next local government elections to secure people's faith in the system before using it in the parliamentary polls.

"If the new system can gain the trust of the people and political parties, we will go for introducing it in the 2014 general election," said Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday.

He was speaking at a view exchange meeting on introducing EVM with representatives of different print and electronic media. EC organised the meeting at the conference room of National Economic Council in the city.

Editors, news-editors and veteran journalists of several print and electronic media attended the meeting where two election commissioners M Sohul Hussain and M Sakawat Hussain were present.

Addressing the function, media representatives emphasised on enhancing security measures in the EVM to prevent vote rigging and launching massive awareness programmes for general people on EVM.

The CEC said EC decided to introduce EVM in Narayanganj City Corporation polls, expected to be held in November, and in Comilla City Corporation polls in January next year.

EC plans to launch a five-year long project to popularise EVM and to use it in phases in different polls, he said.

Talking about different features of the EVM, Huda said this new system will make EC's administrative activities easier during and after elections and save time in counting votes.

EC is also mulling over reducing the time allotted for casting votes, which is currently from 8:00am to 4:00pm, he said.

The CEC also reiterated that EC wants the cabinet division and three ministries of home, local government and rural development & co-operatives and public administration to do the administrative jobs relevant to parliamentary polls in consultation with it, ahead of the polls.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AKM Fazlul Haque, a former official of Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (DESA), passed away at a hospital in the city on Saturday due to kidney related complexities at the age of 70.

He left behind his wife and four daughters.

His youngest daughter Foyez-un-nesa Liza is working as a sub-editor at the Dainik Ittefaq.

He was buried at the Azimpur graveyard after namaz-e-janaza.

Relatives and well-wishers are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 16th death anniversary of Anisul Islam, former

general secretary of Bangladesh Association of Consulting Engineers and former president of Rotary Club of Dhaka.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his Rayer Bazar residence in the city after Asr prayers while Qurankhwani will be held and fateha will be offered at his grave in Mirpur Graveyard, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the events and pray for salvation of the departed soul.



PHOTO: STAR

Former Chief Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman speaks at a national convention on 'Social inclusion of Urdu speaking camp-based Bangladeshis' in RC Majumdar Auditorium of Dhaka University yesterday.

'Introduce quota for Urdu-speaking people'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a national convention yesterday urged the government to introduce quota system for the Urdu-speaking people like other minorities of the country.

They made the call at the convention on Social Inclusion of Urdu-speaking camp-based Bangladeshis organised by Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) and representatives from Urdu-speaking community, at RC Majumdar Auditorium of Dhaka University.

They also demanded ensuring fundamental rights, including education, health and habitat, for the Urdu-speaking minorities.

The Urdu-speaking people who come from different camps of the country said though the government has given voting rights and national ID cards but they are still out from the

fundamental rights for which they have been passing their days under sub-human condition in 116 shelter camps in the country.

The camps, known as "Bihari camp" or "refugee camp" were constructed after the liberation war for stranded Pakistanis. Now there are around 1.60 lakh Urdu-speaking people in the country.

Stressing the movement to get anything, Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman said if anybody does not want anything he will not get it.

Dr Shahdeen Malik said it the time to place demand for quota system for the Urdu-speaking people of the country.

"Though we wear Benarashi shari made by Urdu-speaking people but we do not think about their contribution," said Rasheda K Chowdhury, former adviser to a caretaker government.

Poet Asad Chowdhury, said there were around five Urdu-speaking

poets who supported the language movement of 1952 but it was not written anywhere in the country.

Mohammad Hasan, a representative of the Urdu-speaking community, said though there are 116 camps for the Urdu-speaking people in the country but the government is giving attention only to the Geneva camp.

Md Sazid Hossain, a youth of the community, said they do not have any privacy as they have to share a room with grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, son and daughter.

Hannah Sholder, who carried out a research on two camps of the community, said there is only one toilet for every 200 residents in Geneva Camp in the city's Mohammadpur.

CR Abrar of RMMRU said though Urdu-speaking people have got their citizenship but they fear about eviction from their places.



UN MISSION Gen Hafiz made force commander

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Major General Abdul Hafiz, NDC, PSC, of Bangladesh Army has been appointed as force commander in United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Mission in Western Sahara.

He is scheduled to join UN Headquarters in New York today, says a press release sent by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday.

Earlier, Hafiz was appointed as force commander, deputy force commander and chief military liaison officer in the UN peacekeeping force in Ivory Coast and as an observer in the UN mission in Kuwait.

Hafiz was selected for the post following Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's demand in the 64th UN General Assembly on September 26, 2009 to ensure Bangladesh's representation in policy-making in UN peacekeeping missions.



No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi and Rangpur 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 6:45pm today and rises at 5:25am tomorrow. Country's highest temperature 34.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Patuakhali and lowest 22.8 degrees Celsius at Rangamati.

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 | 33.5 | 26.8 | 73 | 71 |
| Chittagong | 31.0 | 24.2 | 85 | 88 |
| Rajshahi | 32.2 | 25.7 | 87 | 83 |
| Rangpur | 32.6 | 26.7 | 85 | 66 |
| Khulna | 33.5 | 26.0 | 80 | 82 |
| Barisal | 32.8 | 26.0 | 76 | 65 |
| Sylhet | 34.5 | 25.8 | 76 | 62 |