Prof Dwijen Sharma awarded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Dwijen Sharma, an eminent botanist, was awarded "Nature Conservation Award-2011" for his outstanding contribution to the conservation of nature and natural resources in Bangladesh.

State Minister for Environment and Forests Dr Hasan Mahmud handed over a crest during an award ceremony jointly organised by Prokriti O Jibon Foundation and Channel i at a city hotel yesterday.

Meanwhile, Managing Director of Incepta Pharmaceuticals Abdul Muktadir handed over Tk 1 lakh cheque to Prof Sharma while Japan-Bangladesh Friendship Hospital announced lifetime free treatment facilities to the botanist.

Dwijen Sharma has written about 16 books on nature.

4 hurt in fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people were injured as an office of a firm caught in fire at Uttar Badda in the city yesterday.

Fire brigade officials said the fire broke out at Project Consultant and Construction firm on the fifth floor of the 10-storey building around 1:10pm. The blaze gutted eight computers, three air conditioners, and other valuables in four rooms of the floor.

PHOTO: PID

Indian Home Minister P Chidambaram meets Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban in the city yesterday.

DHAKA-KOLKATA TRAIN

India to weigh onboard immigration check

BSS, DHAKA

India would actively consider introducing onboard immigration check in Dhaka-Kolkata train service to minimise sufferings of visitors.

Visiting Indian Home Minister P Chidambaram said this as he paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence of Gono Bhaban yesterday.

As the prime minister gave a proposal for onboard immigration check in train service, the Indian home minister said, "It is technically feasible, and Delhi will consider the matter actively".

The prime minister stressed further cooperation of India to root out terrorism and militancy from the region. She also sought more Indian investment in Bangladesh.

Chidambaram assured her of extending India's all out support to nab the killers of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman if anyone is hiding in the Indian territory.

Hasina requested the Indian government to remove various trade barriers including complexity over customs formalities in larger interest of the national economy.

End BSF firing along border

Dipu Moni urges India

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday urged India to take effective steps to put a complete stop of frequent incidents of firing by BSF on innocent and unarmed Bangladeshi nationals.

She made the request when visiting Indian Home Minister P. Chidambaram paid a call on her at her office yesterday afternoon, said a press release.

Dipu Moni reiterated the unequivocal position of the government against terrorism and assured that Bangladesh would continue its cooperation with India in this regard.

She noted that the two countries must strengthen efforts to stop criminal activities along the border, particularly drugs smuggling and human trafficking.

Dipu Moni also expressed satisfaction at the level of cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the areas of security, border management and the work to resolve the long pending issue of demarcation of the land boundary and its related issues.

3 new public universities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Academic activities of the newly built three public universities will start from this year to ensure admission for the students, who have passed HSC examinations.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said this at a function in Teachers' Training College auditorium in the city yesterday. The universities are--Textile University in Dhaka, Barisal University and Gopalganj University, he said.

Devolution stressed for local govt bodies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputy Speaker Col (retd) Shawkat Ali said yesterday the government should be decentralised further as the local government bodies remain ineffective due to lack of empowerment.

He was addressing the national consultation on "the Village Court Act, 2006: Challenges and Way Forward" organised by the Local Government Division (LGD) at Dhaka Officers' Club.

Shawkat Ali said village courts have been functioning in many upazilas, but many people are not aware about them.

He also said the law should be written in an easy manner to make it more understandable to rural people.

Village court is a five-member panel, headed by union parishad chairman, which include two representatives from the complainant and two others from the defendant for local arbitration.

Girl hurt in 'chemical' attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

Two youths identified as outsiders threw "unknown chemical" to a girl student inside her school compound in Rajshahi city yesterday, inflicting injuries on both of her eyes.

Sanjida Islam Tanni, a class VIII student, was admitted to the eye department of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, but doctors could not immediately detect the damages.

"She said her eyes were burning, and we washed them properly. We can tell the detail upon necessary examinations within 24 hours", said Dr Tanjila Alam, chairman of the eye department, RMCH.

According to the victim and police, two youths entered Rajshahi Education Board Model School and College and caught Tanni at the staircase of the school around 10:50am as she was going to the examination hall to the fourth floor to attend mathematics exam at 11:00am. The attackers threw the chemical from two bottles on her face and fled as she screamed.

Makbul Hossain, principal of the college, said the attackers were outsiders.

The victim's father Tarikul Islam said he does not know the reason behind the attack.

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Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad inaugurates Maasranga Television, a private satellite channel, at Radisson Hotel in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shalahuddin Ahmed, a former defence secretary, passed away at Square Hospital in the city yesterday due to brain haemorrhage. He was 87.

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