

NEWS IN *brief*

Envoy to Myanmar called back

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The government has called back Bangladesh Ambassador in Myanmar Maj Gen Anup Kumar Chakma, an official notification issued by the Ministry of Public Administration said yesterday.

Subsequently, the ambassador was put back into his former position in Bangladesh Army. No reason was mentioned in the notification behind his withdrawal.

Maj Gen Anup Kumar Chakma was appointed Bangladesh Ambassador to Myanmar in 2009, according to foreign ministry sources.

Worker dies in rooftop fall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A construction worker died after falling from the rooftop of a building in the city's Moghbazar area yesterday.

Abul Kalam, 20, of Barguna, had slipped and fell on the ground from the rooftop of a four-storey building at Moghbazar Daktagoli around 10:30am while working there, Mohammad Rubel, a co-worker of Abul, told The Daily Star.

Critically injured Abul was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at about 12:30pm.

2 new trains on Dhaka-N'ganj route

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Railway will launch two additional train services on Dhaka-Narayanganj-Dhaka route today to ease traffic jam in the city and fulfil demand of the commuters.

The trains will leave Dhaka for Narayanganj at 2:00pm and reach at 2:45pm. On the other hand, the trains will leave Narayanganj for Dhaka at 4:00pm and arrive at 4:45 pm, according to an official release.

Railway Minister Surenjit Sengupta will inaugurate the train service at Kamalapur rail station.

DUEDAA reunion on Jan 20

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Economics Department Alumni Association (DUEDAA) will organise its reunion on January 20 at Aangana Estate under Kapasia upazila in Gazipur, says a press release.

The members have been requested to contact Prof Farid at 01711537100, Mrs Perveen (Economics department) at 9661920-59 and SI Khan at 01760972112 for registration and required information regarding the programme.

CONTEMPT OF COURT PETITION HC summons health secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday summoned the health secretary for allegedly ignoring and misinterpreting its verdict regarding including 216 upazila family planning officers in the cadre service.

In response to a petition, the court directed Md Humayun Kabir to appear before it on January 25 to explain his conduct in this regard.

The HC on December 4, 1995 following a writ petition directed the government to include the upazila family planning officers, who have relevant qualifications, in the cadre service with seniority from September 11, 1995.

The Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP) on February 22, 2010 recommended to include only 34 officers in the cadre service, as they were found qualified as per the HC directives.

The four writ petitioners, who were directly recruited as cadre officers, in May last year filed a contempt of court petition against the health secretary for not executing the recommendation of the DGFP in line with the HC directives.

Following this petition, the court on May 24 last year issued a rule upon the health secretary to explain why contempt of court proceedings should not be brought against him for not complying with its verdict.

The petitioners on January 8 submitted a petition to the HC to summon the health secretary before it to explain his conduct in this regard.

The HC bench of Justice Md Ashfaul Islam and Justice Mostafa Zaman Islam issued summons against the health secretary after hearing the petition yesterday.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light rain may occur at one or two places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and weather may remain nearly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country in 12 hours till 6:00pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Day temperature may rise slightly and night temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:29pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 29.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 11.6 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

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	23.0	16.0	83	73
Chittagong	27.0	18.0	73	64
Rajshahi	23.4	15.3	98	88
Rangpur	23.5	13.0	83	69
Khulna	20.4	16.0	100	90
Barisal	20.7	15.5	95	93
Sylhet	25.2	13.5	73	75

JMB trying to reorganise

KAILASH SARKAR

Leaders and activists of banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) were trying to reorganise giving priority to collecting funds from their wellwishers and building communication with grassroots activists.

Quoting detained Abu Talha Mohammad Fahim alias Bashar, a son of detained JMB chief Saidur Rahman, officials of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) said the reorganisation attempt was taken at the directives of JMB acting ameer Soheli Mahfuz, who is reportedly hiding in a neighbouring country.

Rab personnel arrested JMB Majlish-e-Sura committee member Bashar, reportedly finance



wing chief of the outlawed outfit, in Rajshahi early Sunday along with one of his accomplices Mohammad Abdul Alim with some leaflets and Indian currencies.

Hours after their arrest in a village of

Rajpara in Rajshahi, they were taken to Dhaka and were sent back to Rajshahi Sunday night and handed over to Rajpara police.

During preliminary interrogation, Bashar admitted that he had met acting chief Mahfuz in India several times and the last meeting was around four months ago, Rab officials said.

Besides, they had regular contact among them over phone, the Rab sources said quoting Bashar.

Contacted, Commander M Sohail, director of Legal and Media wing of Rab, told The Daily Star they also had information that JMB was trying to reorganise and as part of the bid they were trying to communicate with their field-level activists and supporters and also

collect financial support.

Asked, Commander Sohail also admitted that Bashar had regular communication with Mahfuz, who took over the charge as the JMB chief soon after the arrest of Bashar's father Saidur Rahman in May last year.

Meanwhile, Bashar and his associate Alim were sent to jail by a Rajshahi court after police produced them before the court. Police did not seek their remand.

Sohail said Rab officials filed two cases against them on Monday. One case was filed under the Anti-terrorism Act, 2009 and another under the Special Power Act for possessing Indian currency.

Main opposition patronises militants

PM tells US congresswoman

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reaffirmed her commitment to contain terrorism, militancy and women and child trafficking alongside continuing efforts to strengthen democracy.

She said this when visiting US Congresswoman and Ambassador at-Large for Global Women's Issues Betty McCollum called on her at her office.

After the meeting, Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Abul Kalam Azad briefed reporters.

He said Hasina told the US congresswoman that after assuming power her government controlled extremism, terrorism and militancy in the country with an iron hand. "But, the militants are still getting patronage from the main opposition," she alleged.

Her government approved a draft of anti-trafficking law last month stipulating capital punishment for human trafficking and prosecution of the accused by tribunals, said Hasina.

"Bangladesh is upgrading its national capacity to combat the menace of trafficking in persons," the prime minister said adding that her government is relentlessly working for people's empowerment, especially that of women.

In this context, she mentioned that the direct election to the seats reserved for women in all local gov-



US Congresswoman and Ambassador at-Large for Global Women's Issues Betty McCollum pays a call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

ernment bodies, election of parliament members, appointment of a good number of women ministers, secretaries, justice of higher courts and police officers.

She also mentioned about her government's steps to give the country's democracy a strong footing and said the Election Commission is being strengthened to this end.

She referred to the use of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) in local government election in Comilla City Corporation (CCC) for

making the voting fair and transparent.

About continuation of the democratic process, she said, "Democracy must continue in the country. Without democracy there'll be no development in any country."

Hasina said her government during its previous term had taken initiatives to reach healthcare services to the doorsteps of people through community clinics and the country was fully freed from polio.

On war crimes trial, the prime

minister said the trial is a popular demand of the nation as it was in the case of the trial of the killers of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The US congresswoman lauded the role of Bangladeshi peacekeepers to the UN, especially the women.

Ambassador at-Large M Ziauddin, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Sheikh Md Wahid Uz Zaman, and PMO Secretary Molla Waheeduzzaman were present.

Journalist Nikhil Bhadra flies to Bangkok today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nikhil Bhadra, a journalist who lost a leg in a city road crash two weeks ago, flies for Bangkok today for better treatment, family sources said last night.

"With the kind cooperation of the government and Bashundhara Group, Nikhil will be flown tomorrow [today] at 3:00pm on a Biman airliner", Nikhil's brother Shourav Bhadra said.

Nikhil will be accompanied by his wife Shakila Parvin and his two-month-old baby.

On Monday, Information Minister Abul Kamal Azad assured Nikhil's wife of continuing government's assistance for his better treatment.

On December 28, Nikhil, a senior reporter of bangla daily Kaler Kantha, lost his leg as a BRTC bus ran him over in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

His right leg had been amputated from the knee. He also suffered severe injuries in the left leg.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Shamsun Nahar Chowdhury, mother of Md Shafiqul Haque Chowdhury, president of ASA, passed away at her Habiganj residence on Monday due to old age complications at the age of 80, said a press release.

She left behind her three sons and three daughters. She was buried at her family graveyard at Narapati village in Chunarughat upazila of the district.



PHOTO: STAR

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia presides over a meeting of the party's standing committee at her Gulshan office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Unicef boss for attention to urban slum children

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Executive Director of Unicef Dr Anthony Lake stressed the need paying urgent attention to children in urban slums.

"Living conditions of children in urban slums are much worse than those in most rural areas," said he.

He said urbanisation is rapidly growing here and about three million children are living in urban slums, who need urgent attention.

Dr Lake, also UN under-secretary general for children, briefed reporters at a city hotel yesterday, on the concluding day of his three-day visit to Bangladesh.

Quoting a Unicef report, he said it has found that rural people are pushed out of their land mostly due to economic factors.

"They don't come to major cities as they are



Dr Anthony Lake

attracted to it but due to lack of job or poverty and other factors, they migrate," said the Unicef chief.

He said the flow of people to urban area would be reduced if the factors of migration are addressed. The implication is one can't prevent urbanisation and one can't deny providing service to slum areas where they are mostly located, he added.

Lauding Bangladesh's

achievement in substantially reducing the mortality rate of both mother and children, Dr Lake said Unicef assistance to materialise the goal will continue.

He also emphasised continuing further progress and bringing the benefits to the doorsteps of all people.

Dr Lake stressed the need for eliminating malnutrition problem in Bangladesh to ensure good health of children in a bid to building a prosperous nation.

He said length and weight of a baby depends on nutrition and it also directly affects the brain of a baby.

He said the nutrition has a tremendous impact on development and informed that about 40 percent of the children in Bangladesh are stunted and they can be cured by providing micro nutrient like Vitamin A. "An

under-weight child can gain weight but stunting is irrecoverable," he added.

Referring to his past visit to Bangladesh, he said that he witnessed tremendous changes in the country but what has not changed is people.

He said that he first came to Bangladesh in mid 70 when he worked for private peace corp and traveled to Dinajpur, Comilla, Dhaka and other areas usually by bus that time.

"They (people) are as vibrant and innovative as they were before," he said while sharing his experience of his first visit and the present visit.

Unicef Representative in Bangladesh Dr Pascal Villeneuve, Deputy Representative Michel Saint-Lot and other senior officials were present.

Viqarunnisa's ex-principal gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Husne Ara Begum, former principal of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College, in a case filed in connection with violation of a female student last year.

The order came after Husne Ara along with her lawyer appeared before the court and sought bail in the case.

Judge Mohammad Arifur Rahman of the Fourth Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression passed the order.

The same court on Monday issued arrest warrants against Husne Ara and Lutfur Rahman, Bashundhara branch-in-charge of the institution, after accepting charges against them.

On July 5, 2011, the victim's father filed a case against the two and Porimol Joydhor, a sacked teacher of the school's Bashundhara campus.

Porimol was accused of violating the student twice at his coaching centre in Badda on May 28 and June 17 while Husne Ara and Lutfur were accused of trying to cover up the incident and delaying to take action against Porimol.



Save Hafiz

METRO DESK

Md Hafizur Rahman, a schoolteacher, has been suffering from kidney disease and Hepatitis C for the last few years.

He is currently under the treatment of Dr Shoib in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Dhaka. He needs Tk 13,00,000 for kidney transplantation and treatment of Hepatitis C.

It is impossible for his family to afford the huge amount. No way out, he now looks forward to people to save his life.

Contributions can be sent to Md Johirul Islam, savings account no. 0261340032061, SIBL, Dhaka. His family can be contacted at 01914898292, 01920292930.

AMINBAZAR KILLINGS Hearing on remand prayer Jan 15

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Investigation into the brutal killing of six students by a mob in Aminbazar has taken a new turn as investigation officer (IO) of the case got important information from interrogation.

Senior ASP of CID Sirajul Haque, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case,

The IO produced Farid Khan who is among the six arrested, before a Dhaka court yesterday on completion of his two-day remand and prayed for a seven-day fresh remand. The court fixed January 15 for hearing on the prayer with the progress report of investigation of the case.

In his yesterday's forwarding report, the IO said he gathered important information from Farid about the killings. But Farid often kept mum while quizzing and avoided the questions tactfully.

IO Sirajul said he had earlier taken Wasim, Saiful, Rahim and Rajib on remand in the killing case. So, he needs to be remanded to interrogate in presence of the four.

Six students were lynched labelling them robbers on July 18. Their friend Al Amin, however, survived with severe injuries.