

NEWS IN *brief*

Qureshi for discipline in army

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Worried over the plot in the army to topple the government, Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Dr Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi yesterday said maintaining discipline in the army under the current "unstable" situation in the country has become more necessary than at any other time.

"Military force is a national resource...there is no alternative to a powerful and disciplined military force for the protection of a modern nation state," he told a press conference at PDP office at Segunbagicha in the city.

Referring to the torture on the Bangladeshi youth Habibur Rahman by Indian BSF men, Qureshi urged the Indian government to seek pardon from Bangladesh for the incident.

He also called upon the main opposition BNP not to spend a huge amount of money for organising political programmes like long marches.

Two held with firearms in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

Two alleged robbers with firearms were arrested in the port city of Chittagong early yesterday.

The arrested are Md Shah Alam, 34, of Muradnagar in Comilla, and Md Yusuf alias Elias, 30, of Boalkhali in Chittagong.

Acting on a tip-off, Kotwali police arrested Shah Alam from Station road area at around 2:00am, said police.

Following his confessional statement, police arrested Yusuf from his house in Barisal Colony at around 4:10am.

Police also seized three rifles, five cartridges and three machetes from his possession.

Installation event of Ctg Samity, Dhaka held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chattagram Samity, Dhaka, as a platform, can play a strong role for the port city's development, said Primary and Mass Education Minister Dr Md Afsarul Amin.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the installation ceremony of the Samity's newly elected executive council at Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh in the capital on Thursday, says a press release.

The Samity's outgoing president Md Jahangir Alam and its newly elected Chairman Rejaul Haque Chowdhury Mushtaque presided over the first and second session of the function respectively.

Former principal secretary to the prime minister's office and Chairman of the Samity's advisory council Md Abdul Karim gave oath of office to the newly elected office bearers.

The Samity's outgoing general secretary and Malaysian Chamber of Commerce President Syed Nurul Islam and former information secretary Md Didarul Alam also spoke on the occasion.

Former foreign minister M Morshed Khan, former army chief Lt Gen (ret'd) Harun-or-Rashid, former cabinet secretary Abu Solaiman Chowdhury, former secretary Nazrul Islam, former election commissioner MM Munsef Ali and law commission member Md Abdul Mobarak were present among others.

Executive committee of Officers' Club elected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The election of the executive committee of Officers' Club Dhaka was held on Friday.

Shahjahan Majumdar, MA Rajek and Dr Khondokar Shawkat Hossain were elected vice-chairmen after 1,216, 1,184 and 1,067 votes were respectively cast in their favour.

Secretary for local government department Abu Alem Md Shahid Khan was re-elected as general secretary with 1,724 votes.

Other office-bearers are MA Kader Sarkar (treasurer) and Ansar Ali Khan, KM Mozammel Haque and Nahar Ferdousi Begum Jhorna (joint secretary). Besides, fourteen others were elected in member posts.

Out of 2,769 voters, 2,308 members cast their votes, says a press release.



Vehicles are the only way people can cross Khurshid Ali Sardar Road in the city's Jurain without being soaked in sewage overflowing from pipes below and submerging the road for a long time. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Youth shot dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A youth was shot dead by miscreants in the city's Azampur Dakkhinkhan area early yesterday.

The deceased Arifur Rahman, 24, a private car driver, lived at Jamtola in Azampur.

The victim's maternal uncle Aslam Ali said at around 10:30pm on Friday one of his friends called him out of his house and since then he remained missing.

Around 6:00am yesterday local people found the body of Arifur in front of a shop near his house.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue.

Police said Arifur used to meet with drug addicts.

Police suspect he might have been killed over a drug related feud.

Ignorance of act leads to child rights violation

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ignorance of different sides of the child act is responsible for the violation of child rights, speakers said at a seminar yesterday and suggested that law enforcement agencies should scrutinise the young people's age before proceeding with any legal action.

Saying that a child could get bail even in non-bailable offences, Justice Iman Ali advised law enforcers to check different sources of information, including birth registration, ration card or parents' marriage documents to find out the juvenile's age even if it takes some time.

"Though any child under nine years of age will not be accused in any crime, children of six and eight years of age are confined in jail", he said, quoting data of Bangladesh Human Rights Foundation (BHRF).

A total of 274 under-six children are

staying with their mothers in different jails while 41 others below 18 years of age are detained in different cases, according to a letter sent by the home ministry to BHRF.

Against this backdrop, Justice Iman Ali suggested setting up of safe homes in every district to provide children suitable place to stay in.

BHRF organised the seminar on experience sharing on the lack of proper implementation of the child act in the city's Biam auditorium.

BHRF chairperson Alena Khan said BHRF in its investigation had found scratches at the place of age on different documents, including charge sheet and first information report of a case.

Mentioning that law enforcers often send to jail juvenile delinquents in want of accommodation, she said a separate cell should be opened at every police station to keep them away from adult criminals.

She also recommended that information about the child act be kept hung at different government and private offices and institutions to make people familiar with it.

Executive Director of Manusher Jonno Foundation Shaheen Anam said children were being deprived of their rights at every stage. "Street children are tortured mostly by police", she said, calling upon the participants to make a pledge for protecting children in the country.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Mili Biswas said police often do not get birth certificates or necessary documents, which creates difficulties in fixing the juveniles' age. Police should be given extensive education on child issues during training, she observed.

Mili Biswas also stressed the need for coordinated efforts of stakeholders to ensure proper implementation of the child act.



Two arrested robbers with guns, bullets and cleavers at Kotwali Police Station in Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Financial gain first, then transit

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Transit or transshipment should not be allowed to India without considering the financial interests of the country, speakers said at a roundtable here yesterday.

The government should take such a decision keeping in mind Bangladesh's political, geographical, environmental interests, among others, for people's benefit, they said.

The speakers noted that India is a big neighbour with big financial power, but some of its steps on significant issues like border killing, water sharing of common rivers are leading to a deterioration of relations between the two countries.

The roundtable titled "Transit, transshipment, port, and infrastructures" was organised by the Forum for Peoples' Voice (FPV) at Brac Centre in Chittagong city.

They said that due to absence of proper connectivity with Chittagong port, potential development of trade and commerce of the country is being hindered, resulting delays and increases in transport cost for industrial and agricultural commodities.

They put stress on rail routes as the mode of communication for removing the communication obstacles for potential development of the country.

Economist Prof Dr Moinul Islam, BIDS senior research fellow Dr Mohammad Yunus, and Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Chief Engineer Sultan Mahmud presented papers at the roundtable chaired by FPV President Dr Manjurul Amin Chowdhury.

Former commerce minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Dhaka University's Prof Dr MA Taslim, SCAP former director Dr M Rahamatullah, and UN and Socialist Party of Bangladesh general secretary Comrade Khalekuzaman also spoke.

Successes not portrayed in media: Barua

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The industries minister was speaking at the inaugural session of an economic seminar organised by Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA), Chittagong chapter, at Theatre Institute Chittagong.

At the session, BEA general secretary Dr Taufiq Ahmed Chowdhury said, "The condition of our economy is not so vulnerable as it is being projected nowadays".

Prof Dr Jyoti Prokash Dutta, president of BEA, Chittagong chapter, presided over the inaugural session addressed, among others, by Prof Sikander Khan, former president of BEA, and Prof Hanna Begum, director of Bangladesh Bank.

Eight research papers were presented in two separate sessions in the seminar.

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Guests at a five-day long exhibition, "Terra Terre", on sustainable and low cost housing at the auditorium of Alliance Française de Chittagong in the port city yesterday. The biodiversity club of Alliance Française de Chittagong, Caritas, Institut Français, CRAterre, The Daily Star and Zeppelin organised the exhibition.

PHOTO: STAR

Border killing protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India has been killing people along the border due to Bangladesh's submissive foreign policy, speakers said at the national convention of Jatiya Mukti Council on Friday.

They decided to hold a countrywide programme on February 8 to protest such killings by India.

They also called upon people to take their movement towards a mass upsurge of boycotting election under a caretaker government or interim government, said a press release.

The council, however, did not point out any system for holding elections in their statement.

IBAIS VC passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

IBAIS University Vice-Chancellor Prof Rahman passed away at a city hospital yesterday, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one son, and one daughter to mourn his death.

Prof Rahman served as a professor in the Department of English in Dhaka University, Chittagong University and Dhaka College.

Expo on low cost housing kicks off

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A five-day long exhibition on sustainable low cost housing kicked off at the auditorium of Alliance Française de Chittagong in the port city yesterday.

The biodiversity club of Alliance Française de Chittagong, Caritas, Institut Français and CRAterre arranged the exhibition titled "Terra Terre" in association with The Daily Star and Zeppelin.

Alliance Française de Chittagong Director Samuel Berthet inaugurated the programme as the chief guest.

On the occasion, a conference was held where architect Dr Oliver Moles of CRAterre, Prof Tahsin Reza Hossain and Dr Mohammad Shariful Islam of Buet, Caritas project leader Ratan Poddar spoke on contemporary low cost houses and those architectural designs in home and abroad.

Architect Taslim Uddin Chowdhury, engineer Bidhan Barua, among others, spoke on the occasion.

The speakers said in every country each community has their own techniques for building their houses.

"Some of them are effective and scientific," they said adding that coastal people of the country face cyclone and tidal surge while the indigenous people face attack of wild animals as well as insects, so their houses should be built keeping this matter in mind.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during mid night till morning, Met Office said.

Mild to moderate cold wave is sweeping over Rangpur division and the regions of Rajshahi, Pabna and Srimongal and it may continue.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:42 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:40am.

Country's highest temperature 28.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 06.7 degrees 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	26.0	12.7	59	34
Chittagong	27.8	13.8	65	28
Rajshahi	24.3	09.5	93	54
Rangpur	24.5	09.5	87	50
Khulna	26.5	13.0	89	54
Barisal	26.6	10.8	76	75
Sylhet	27.0	11.6	73	49
Cox's Bazar	28.5	16.7	37	52