

NEWS IN *brief*

32 held for video piracy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested 32 youths from Keraniganj and Sayedabad in the city on charges of video piracy and seized 44 computers and 3,500 pirated and porn CDs from their possession.

The arrested are employees of different shops where reportedly videos of different cinemas and TV plays are copied illegally.

Comander M Sohail, director of Legal and Media Wing of Rab, said this at a press briefing at the Film

DU forms committees to celebrate Language Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities have formed committees to celebrate the International Mother Language Day at Central Shahid Minar on February 21 this year.

A meeting at DU senate building, presided over by DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique, yesterday formed a three-member coordinating committee to celebrate the occasion.

Eleven sub-committees were also formed to

Koika team meets DU VC

UNB, Dhaka

A team of Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koika) called on Dhaka University (DU) Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique at the latter's office yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed the establishment of the Institute of Nursing Education at DU with financial support and cooperation from Koika, said a press release.

Members of the Koika team were Dr No-Yai Park, Dr. Euisook Kim, Kimhyejung and Lee Chang Woo and

Mahananda's martyrdom day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 45th martyrdom day of Mahananda Sarkar, who was killed by the then Pakistani police forces at a demonstration during the mass upsurge in 1969 on the bank of the river Madhumati, the border of Madaripur and Gopalganj.

Mahananda is one of the several heroes of the Mass Upsurge of '69, like Asad, Matiur, Sergeant Zahurul Huq and Shamsuzzoha.

Hailing from remote Polita village of Khalia union in Rajoir upazila in Madaripur, Class-IX student Mahananda was shot dead as he led a procession from his school, Ullabari United High School in Madaripur, protesting Pakistani misrule.

This year Mahananda Smrity Shangha at his village Polita has arranged day-long programmes, including discussions and cultural functions today.

Kumud Ranjan Sarkar, a member of Mahananda Smrity Shangha, said this year the function has a new dimension as Mahananda's elder brother Juran Sarkar has dedicated a piece of land in the memory of his

2 youths lynched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two youths were beaten to death at Jatrabari and Keraniganj in the capital yesterday.

In Keraniganj, Selim, 30, along with a gang of 10 to 12 robbers, entered the house of one Joj Miah by breaking open the door at Kulihati village at about 3:00am.

The gang looted ornaments and valuables worth around Tk 6 lakh after taking the inmates hostage at gunpoint, Keraniganj police said.

Following the victims' cries for help, the villagers caught Selim and beat him to death.

Police recovered a pistol and four bullets from Selim.

In Jatrabari, a mob beat up a youth at Kutubkhali Bou Bazar near his residence, injuring him severely.

The injured Mizan was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where on-duty doctors pronounced him dead.

Jatrabari police said he was a drug addict and kept company with bad youths. Whether the mob were his friends or others was yet to be ascertained.



Moderate fog 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 Tangail, Srirangal, Rajshahi, Pabna, Jessore and Khulna and it may continue.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. **The sun sets in the capital today at 5:45 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:39am.**

Country's highest temperature 29.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and lowest 07.0 degrees at Srirangal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.0	14.4	44	46
Chittagong	26.7	16.0	52	61
Rajshahi	26.5	09.6	66	52
Rangpur	26.2	09.6	79	61
Khulna	26.5	13.0	58	50
Barisal	26.5	11.4	57	70



PHOTO: STAR

From left, lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor, National Human Rights Commission Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman, Action on Disability and Development (ADD) International Country Director Mosharaff Hossain, Social Welfare Minister Enamul Hoque Mostofa Shaheed and its Secretary Ranjit Kumar Biswas, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu and BLAST Honorary Director Barrister Sara Hossain at a consultation meeting organised by the Bangladesh chapter of ADD International and Manusher Jonno Foundation at the city's Spectra Convention Centre yesterday.

Ex-PSC boss acquitted of charges

BSS, Dhaka

A Dhaka court has acquitted former chairman of Public Service Commission (PSC) Prof Dr Mohammad Mustafa Chowdhury along with a member and two officials of charges of recommending illegally four people for jobs in different cadres of the civil service.

Divisional Special Judge of Dhaka Mohammad Abdul Majid dismissed all the four cases against Mustafa, former PSC member Farhad Hossain Khan, controller Kabirul Alam Khan and director Sharifuddin Ahmed Khan in separate judgments, court officials said.

The then Anti-Corruption Bureau filed the four cases in 2002 accusing the four in each of the cases of nominating three "fake" freedom fighters and a tribesman with "fake academic certificate" for jobs in different cadres of the civil service.

Mustafa and the three others obtained a stay order against the cases from the High Court in the same year. The cases were later shifted to the divisional judge's court.

The court found the three freedom fighters' certificates valid but the academic certificate submitted by the tribesman fake.

However, the tribesman was imprisoned for 17 years for the forgery.

Mustafa, former faculty member of political science department of Dhaka University and an ex-president of Dhaka University Teachers Association (Duta), served as the chairman of the PSC from 1998 to 2002.

APPLICATION FOR GOVT JOBS

Age limit for challenged to increase: Minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will extend age limit of persons with disabilities by two years and visually impaired people by 10 years to facilitate them for applying for government jobs, Social Welfare Minister Enamul Hoque Mostofa Shaheed said yesterday.

"I have almost completed the procedure of increasing age limit for persons with disabilities, while the procedure for visually impaired people remains under plan", he said.

Currently, the maximum age limit for applying for government jobs is 30.

The social welfare minister was speaking on "Rights of Persons With

Disabilities (draft) Act 2011" at a consultation meeting at the city's Spectra Convention Centre.

The minister said he will request the parliamentary standing committee on his ministry to arrange public hearing on the draft after placing it in parliament.

Strongly criticising the draft, National Human Rights Commission Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman said it will keep the rights of the challenged hostage to the bureaucrats.

"Bureaucrats are acting as barriers at every stage on the way of the nation's progress. The same way, they will play the same role in ensuring welfare for persons with disabilities".

"I think, if the draft act is passed in its current format, it will not fully protect the rights of people with disability", Dr Mizan said.

The consultation meeting was organised by Bangladesh chapter of Action on Disability and Development (ADD) International in cooperation with Manusher Jonno Foundation.

Lawmakers Hasanul Haq Inu and Asaduzzaman Noor, Social Welfare Secretary Ranjit Kumar Biswas, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust (BLAST) honorary director Sara Hossain, and Bangladesh Supreme Court Advocate Khondaker Shahriar Shakir also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Special envoy of the Malaysian government Dato Seri S Samy Vellu calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Alhaj Barrister Md Abdul Jalil, a language movement veteran, breathed his

last at a city hospital on Sunday due to old-age complication.

He left behind his wife, four daughters, one son and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

He was buried at Jannatu Mawa Graveyard at Gabtoli in the capital on Monday.

Born in 1931 at 24 Pargana of West Bengal, Jalil obtained his MA in History from Dhaka University. He actively participated in the country's language movement in 1952.

Jalil was a member of Supreme Court Bar Council and was in law profession till 2009.

His Qulkhani will be held on Saturday at his Mazar Road residence in Gabtoli after Asar prayer.

Shreekanta Halder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shreekanta Halder, father of Shree Sagar Halder, former vice-president of the central committee of Bangladesh Chhatra League, passed away at his residence yesterday.

He left behind his wife, one son, two daughters and a host of relatives to mourn his death, said a press release.

Mohammad Abdullah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Maulana Mohammad Abdullah, former principal of Padipara Islamia Senior Fajil (Degree) Madrasa at Sonaimuri upazila in Noakhali, died following a cardiac arrest at his residence on Monday night at the age of 61.

He left behind his wife, two sons, five daughters and many other relatives to mourn his death, said a press release.

Malaysia offers fund to build Padma Bridge

UNB, Dhaka

The Malaysian government has expressed its intention to construct the much-awaited Padma Bridge.

The offer came when the special envoy of the Malaysian government on Infrastructure for India and South Asia, Dato Seri S Samy Vellu, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her yesterday.

PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed reporters after the meeting.

Malaysian High Commissioner in Dhaka Jamaluddin bin Sabeh, Ambassador at-large M Ziauddin, Principal Secretary Sheikh M Wahid Uz Zaman and Bridge Division secretary Khandaker Anwarul Islam were present during the meeting.

Rajuk to get more offices, staff soon

TAWFIQUE ALI

Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) is soon to be reorganised with enhanced manpower and four more regional offices outside the metropolitan city.

"We are going to have the new approved organogram by next month with double the existing manpower," Rajuk Chairman Md Nurul Huda told The Daily Star.

Having worked on the proposed organogram for the past one year, a 2,000-manpower is currently awaiting endorsement of the secretary-level committee on administrative development.

Currently, Rajuk has 1,087 members in its manpower.

Increased manpower would greatly help control development activities in the 1,528 square kilometers of Rajuk area that is not adequately monitored at current, said Huda.

Recruitment of new manpower would start as soon as the organogram is approved.

In addition to Rajuk's four zonal offices, there will be four more regional offices in Gazipur, Savar, Keraniganj and Narayanganj to help deliver public

service locally, he said.

The proposed organogram includes two urban planners with 13 deputy planner and 26 assistant planners and two urban architects with five deputies and 10 assistants.

Number of authorised officers, who approve building plans, will increase to 24 from the existing five. Each of the zonal and regional offices will have three authorised officers while the number of magistrates will rise to ten from the existing three.

LOTTERY FOR JHILMIL PROJECT

Rajuk is set to hold lottery for allotment of around 1,200 plots of Jhilmil housing project in Keraniganj this month with the help of Buet.

They have so far finished scrutinising 31,000 applications out of a total 35,000.

"We will hold the lottery anytime this month with completion of the scrutiny of the applications," said Huda.

Rajuk initiated the application procedure for allotment under different categories last June and accepted submissions till October.

Lawmakers, state ministers, ministers,

judges, speakers, and deputy speakers will qualify directly, said Rajuk sources.

Handover of the plots is expected in three years' time.

ILLEGAL PRIVATE HOUSING PROJECTS

Meanwhile, Ministry of Housing and Public Works issued an order to National Housing Authority to control housing schemes and building constructions in areas falling outside the jurisdiction of the four development authorities including those in Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi, said Huda.

Scores of private companies are developing housing schemes destroying agricultural land, homesteads and wetlands in rural areas, aloo of the four development authorities, with consent from the local union parishads and municipalities.

Such local government bodies lack required technical manpower to endorse such schemes, he added.

During the past two years, Rajuk conducted eviction drive at 800 buildings with deviations out of the 5,000 identified, realised Tk 20 crore in fine and pulled down a number of illegal housing project signboards.

ZUBAIR KILLING

JU teachers declare five-day protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The agitating Jahangirnagar University teachers opposing the vice-chancellor yesterday announced a five-day protest programme including class boycott, hunger strikes, rallies, and human chain, as the university administration refused to meet their demands.

The demands include disclosure of the probe report on the murder of Zubair, a student of JU, who died upon an attack by a group of Bangladesh Chhatra League activists on January 9, and the removal of the entire proctorial body and punishment to ex-proctor Prof Arzu Miah.

The agitation begins through a mass campaign on the campus today. The following programmes are class boycott, a human chain on Dhaka-Aricha Highway, and a rally on February 2, a hunger strike in front of the registrar building on February 4, a mass campaign in Dhaka on February 5, and a hunger strike and a rally on JU campus on February 6.

The agitating teachers will also meet the university chancellor (the president) and hand an open letter over to him on February 7 when the chancellor is scheduled to attend the university's fifth convocation.

Prof Nasim Akhter Hossain, a teacher of the Department of Government and Politics, announced the protest programme at a press conference at the office of Jahangirnagar University Journalists Association (JUJA) yesterday.

On Monday, the JU syndicate expelled 13 students from the university for their involvement in the killing of Zubair.