

BAU TEAM MEETS HASINA PM for intensive agri research

BSS, Dhaka
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday laid emphasis on more intensive research in the field of agriculture and other related areas to make the country self-reliant in food production to cope with the climate change.

"Research is very crucial for us for diversification of crops, invention of flood and saline tolerant variety of crops to achieve food autarky against the backdrop of soaring price and shortage in supply in the global market," she said.

The prime minister said this when a delegation of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) comprising teachers, syndicate members and teachers' association leaders paid a courtesy call on her at her office.

Vice-Chancellor of the university Prof Dr Md Rafiqul Hoque led the delegation while Matiur Rahman, MP, Abdul Mannan, MP, and Showkat Momen Shajahan, MP were present.

Hasina urged the country's agricultural universities to be independent in carrying out research and grow them up as centers of excellence.

"We made the country self-reliant in food production and we want to continue it as we don't want to beg foreign aid for our survival," she said.

But, BNP nurtured opposite policy pushing back the country towards food crisis during their past tenures, she added.

Hasina elaborated her government's plan to put in place a well-coordinated transport system and commuter train service between Dhaka and surrounding districts to facilitate growers in marketing their produce.

She assured the delegation of taking steps for resolving the accommodation problem of the students.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Sheikh M Wahid Uz Zamman, PMO secretary Mollah Wahiduzzaman and Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were also present.



Black smoke bellows from a tire set on fire by Islami Chhatra Shibir activists at Dampara More in Chittagong city yesterday during the hartal called by Shibir protesting the death of two Chittagong University students during Wednesday's clashes between Shibir and Bangladesh Chhatra League on the campus. (Inset) A driver of a CNG-run three-wheeler bleeds from the head after being hit by a brick thrown by hartal supporters at Askar Dighi area in the port city.

PHOTO: STAR

Hearing on charge framing against Porimol March 7

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed March 7 for the hearing on charge framing against three people sued over violation of a student of Vigarunnisa Noon School and College last year.

The three persons are Porimol Joydhar, the prime accused; Husne Ara Begum, former principal of the institution; and Lutfur Rahman, chief of the school's Bashundhara branch.

The victim's father filed the case with Badda Police Station against Porimol, Husne Ara, and Lutfur on July 5, 2011.

Porimol, a former Bangla teacher of the school's Bashundhara branch, was accused of violating the student at his coaching centre in the city's Badda twice--on May 28 and June 17, 2011.

Husne Ara and Lutfur were trying to cover up the incident and delaying in taking action against Porimol, according to the case statement.

Edible oil with vitamin A for 10cr people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 10 crore children, adolescents and pregnant women will be brought under the programme of fortified edible oil with vitamin A to reduce blindness and sicknesses caused by a lack of the vitamin, says a press release.

All edible palm oil and soybean oil refineries have been taken under the project to ensure vitamin A in oil. For this only Tk one will be spent per five-litre edible oil.

The industries ministry will implement the programme with the help of the health ministry and Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).

202 get Indian scholarship

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Indian government awarded student scholarships to 202 descendants of freedom fighters of Chittagong division yesterday at undergraduate (honours) and higher secondary level.

Each undergraduate student will receive Tk 24,000 annually for four years till the end of graduation. For each higher secondary student, it will be a yearly Tk 10,000 for two years.

The scholarship distribution ceremony was organised by the Assistant High Commission of India, Chittagong, at Theatre Institute yesterday.

Mayor M Manjur Alam attended the function as the chief guest with India's Assistant High Commissioner Somnath Ghosh in the chair.

Bangladesh ready to be an Asian tiger: Mozena

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The major challenges to establish a golden Bangladesh include corruption, difficult investment climate, poor communication system, and political instability, US Ambassador in Dhaka Dan Mozena said yesterday.

"But these challenges are surmountable and Bangladesh is ready to be an Asian Tiger", he said and added, "I envision a Bangladesh that is the world's largest exporter of readymade garments, household textiles and self-sufficient in food".

He stressed women's empowerment and participation at every level for the entire development of the country. "If you want meaningful development, and lasting, sustainable change, you must work with women".

The US ambassador was speaking at the unveiling ceremony of a directory styled "Who's Who: Bangladeshi Women at a Glance" organised by the Bangladesh Alliance for Women Leadership (BDAWL) at a city hotel yesterday.

The directory contains sketches of 397 Bangladeshi women who are in leadership position in different sectors including politics, business, academia, and media.

BDAWL Chairperson Barrister Rabia Bhuiyan, Executive Director Nasim Firdaus, and Managing Director Tahmina Rehman, among others, also spoke at the ceremony.

Zillur for expanding relations with Cuba

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman put emphasis on expansion of bilateral relations with Cuba, particularly in trade and commercial arenas, when newly appointed Cuban Ambassador to Bangladesh Abelardo Cueto Sosa presented his credentials at Bangabhaban yesterday.

The ambassador assured that he would take necessary steps to increase bilateral trade between the two friendly countries.

Welcoming the new envoy, the president recalled Cuban cooperation during the country's Liberation War in 1971. He conveyed his gratitude to the government and people of Cuba for their support in achieving the independence of Bangladesh.

The Cuban ambassador said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a close friend of Cuban leader Fidel Castro.

He appreciated the role of Bangladesh in sending troops to the UN peacekeeping missions.

He also lauded the economic growth of Bangladesh despite the global recession.

Boat capsizes in Surma 7 said to be missing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

An engine-run boat carrying around 15 passengers capsized in the river Surma in Jamalganj yesterday morning after being hit by a strong current.

Locals said seven passengers went missing but the divers found no bodies, said Khoibor Rahman, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Jamalganj.

A rescue team reached the scene in the morning but could not salvage the boat, the UNO said, adding that the rescue operation would resume tomorrow (Friday).

The boat was heading to Itna of Kishoreganj from Sachna Bazar in Jamalganj, Khoibor said.

Prof Omar made VC of IUB

METRO DESK



Prof M Omar Ejaz Rahman vice chancellor (VC) to Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), effective from January 26.

Prof Omar was the pro-VC of the university since April, 2006 and VC (in-charge) since January 2011, said a press release.

He is also professor of Demography and director of the Centre for Health, Population and Development at IUB.

EXPEDITION TO ANTARCTICA Dhaka's vulnerability to climate change made known

Says Hasan Mahmud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While taking part in a recent climate change expedition to Antarctica, Bangladesh's representative, Environment and Forests Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud, pointed out Bangladesh's vulnerability to climate change.

Sharing his experience on the expedition at a press conference in the ministry yesterday, Hasan also said many western policymakers and scientists witnessed the alarming rate at which Arctic ice is melting.

Al Gore, a Nobel Peace Prize winner and former US vice president, organised and led the 116-member expedition, "A Voyage to the Bottom of the Earth", from January 29 to February 6.

The aim was to see firsthand, explore and highlight the pace and alarming impacts of greenhouse pollution unfolding even in the

world's most remote frozen continent and let the world know how fast the climate bell is ticking.

Several documentaries are being made based on the expedition, said the minister, adding, "We are a part of it."

Mentioning that huge ice sheets are melting in the Atlantic Peninsula, he said, "If all the ice of the south pole melts, the sea level will rise by 65 meters. Can you imagine what will happen to Bangladesh then?"

Studies found that 15 to 19 percent of Bangladesh will go under water if the sea level rises by one metre, he added.

"While we were in Antarctica, our prime minister talked over phone with Al Gore and the others. I highlighted how Bangladesh, whose contribution to green house gas emission is negligible, is a victim of climate change," he said.

Promotion in admin given for dynamism

Says HT Imam

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister's Public Administration Affairs Advisor HT Imam said promotion in the civil service is an ongoing process and the government has given promotions in three tiers of the administration to make it efficient and dynamic.

"The promotion of 680 officers in the rank and status of additional secretary, joint secretary and deputy secretary has removed intricacies of promotion in the civil administration giving a shake-up in the bureaucracy to expedite implementation of development projects and digital Bangladesh as charted out in the vision 2021," he told the news agency.

Mentioning service re-structuring in the administration in the 1980s by setting up upazila administration, he said many officers had been appointed in the civil service at that time. But there was no similar steps taken to reduce the gap between the high and other levels, the advisor said.

HT Imam regretted that the previous BNP-Jamaat alliance government had not taken any initiative to remove such promotion intricacies from the civil administration.

Mohsena Chy passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



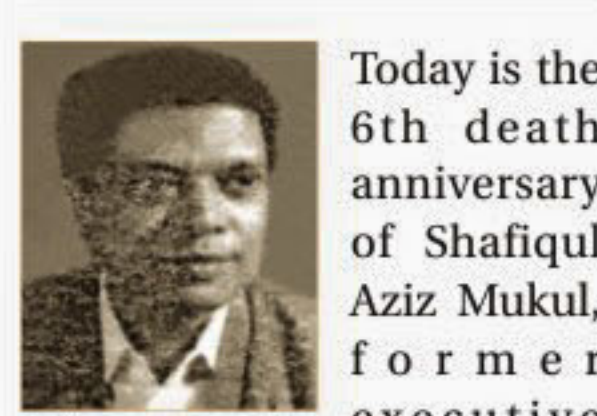
Begum Mohsena Chowdhury Tutu, former principal of Barisal Halima Khatun Girls School, passed away at her daughter's residence in the city at the age of 86 yesterday.

She left behind two sons and two daughters.

Mohsena Chowdhury was wife of Zamindar of Char Ahmedia late Khan Fazle Rab Chowdhury also known as Shahjahan Chowdhury of Barisal.

Death anniversary

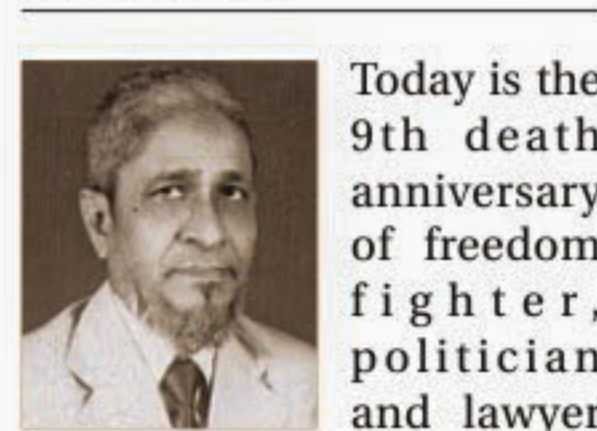
STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 6th death anniversary of Shafiqul Aziz Mukul, former executive editor of the now defunct Banglar Bani and a freedom fighter, says a press release.

Badiul Alam

METRO DESK



Today is the 9th death anniversary of freedom fighter, politician and lawyer Badiul Alam.

On the occasion, Advocate Md Saleh Uddin Haider Siddique will lay the foundation stone of the extension of Ibtedayi Madrasa building in Fatnagar.

Khaleda Akhter Banu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the fourth death anniversary of Prof Khaleda Akhter Banu, a Liberation War organiser and ex-chairperson of Bangla Department of Abujar Gifari University College.

On the occasion, recitation from the holy Quran and doa mahfil will be held at her house at 17/3, Shukrabad at 4:00pm.



Chittagong City Corporation Mayor M Manjur Alam, second from right, with the descendants of freedom fighters who were awarded student scholarships by the Indian government at Theatre Institute of Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

10 GRAFT CASES Ex-DMCH director Bazole Qader gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to former director of Dhaka Medical College Hospital Brig Gen (Retd) Bazole Qader in 10 graft cases filed against him for misappropriating over Tk 6.68 crore through drug purchase.

Judge Mohammad Zahurul Haque of the Senior Special Judge's Court granted the bail upon a bond of Tk 20,000 with two guarantors amid the protest by the prosecution.

The court gave the order after hearing on the petitions filed by Bazole Qader challenging the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) Court's order that sent him to jail rejecting his bail petitions on January 18.

Special Public Prosecutor Kabir Hussain told The Daily Star that if such an accused gets bail, corruption will increase and the corrupt persons will be encouraged in committing such offences.

Bazole Qader submitted 10 criminal appeals on January 25 against the CMM court order.

Asked about the bail order, senior lawyer Shahjahan Miah told The Daily Star that the court has a discretionary power to grant bail to any accused, but it should not grant bail such a corrupt person who had misappropriated a huge amount of money through drug purchase.

ACC Assistant Director Syed Tahsinul Haque filed the cases with Shahbagh Police Station against Bazole Qader and seven others on November 16 last year.

Other accused are former DMCH deputy director Foyzullah; senior lecturer of practical pharmacy Moshir Rahman; DMCH deputy director Kazi Enamul Kabir; Assistant Prof Atiar Rahman, social welfare officer Sayeeda Akhter, accountant Nazrul Islam and sub-divisional engineer of the Public Works Department Satinath Boshak.