

Shahnewaz sworn in as election commissioner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newly appointed Election Commissioner Mohammad Shahnewaz was sworn into office yesterday.

Chief Justice Md Mozammel Hossain administered his oath at the Supreme Court (SC) Judges' Lounge around 11:15am while SC Registrar AKM Shamsul Islam conducted the oath-taking ceremony.

Earlier on February 9, new Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad and three other election commissioners -- Mohammad Abu Hafiz, Mohammad Abdul Mobarak, and Brig Gen (ret) Md Zayed Ali -- were sworn in.

Shahnewaz did not take his oath on February 9 as the tenure of former election commissioner Brig Gen (ret) M Shakhawat Hossain did not expire till then.

He took his oath yesterday after Shakhawat's tenure expired on February 14.

President Zillur Rahman on February 8 reconstituted the Election Commission through appointing the new CEC and four election commissioners.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina takes salute at the 32nd National Conference of Ansar and VDP at Ansar Academy in Safipur, Gazipur yesterday.



PHOTO: PID

Work to protect people's lives, property

PM asks Ansars and VDP

UNB, Gazipur

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the members of Bangladesh Ansar and VDP to discharge their duties with utmost honesty, sincerity, and courage for ensuring people's security.

"It is your sacred duty to protect the lives and property of people", she said at the inauguration of the 32nd National Conference of Ansar and VDP at Ansar Academy in Safipur, Gazipur.

Hasina said no other government has done anything for the modernisation and development of Ansar and VDP like the Awami League government.

She said that for the first time in 1998, she gave Ansar and VDP the

national flag and took the initiative to regularise the jobs of the members of the force.

The jobs of some 12,215 battalion Ansars have so far been made permanent and it has been recognised as a law enforcement agency according to the Local Government (City Corporation, Pourashava, Union Parishad) Act, 2009, she said.

Terming Ansar and VDP as a traditional force of the country, Hasina said around 50 lakh of its members render voluntary services in villages and rural areas.

She said that for the welfare of the force, her government has established Ansar and VDP Bank, which is playing an important role in the socio-economic development of

Ansar and VDP members through micro-credits.

She said the minimum daily allowance of the enlisted Ansar members has been increased to Tk 180 from Tk 111 while the training allowance to Tk 90 from Tk 60.

In recognition to the force's contributions, Bangladesh Ansar has been given the responsibility to present guard of honour every year marking the Mujibnagar Day on April 17, Hasina said.

The premier said a modern training centre is going to be set up at the Ansar Academy to impart training on handicrafts.

She said her government has a plan to set up Bangabandhu Technical Complex at the Ansar Academy here.

On her arrival at the Ansar Academy, Home Minister Shahara Khatun and State Minister Shamsul Huq Tuku received the prime minister. Ansar and VDP director general Maj Gen M Zahidur Rahman was also present.

The premier inspected the Ansar & VDP parade and took the salute. She distributed 12 Ansar medals, 7 President's Ansar medals, and two President's VDP Medals.

She also inaugurated Ansar-VDP Technical Training Centre, Ansar-VDP Information System Centre, and Ansar-VDP Garment Training Centre.

Later she held a meeting with the Ansar-VDP officials at the Officers' Mess.

No progress if women excluded: Blake

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

It is impossible for a country to realise its full potential to advance or develop if women, half of the population, are excluded from meaningful participation in political or economic life, US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O Blake said here yesterday.

Bangladesh has made women's empowerment a national priority, resulting in steep drops in maternal and infant mortality, and more girls attending and graduating from schools, he said while delivering a speech at the Asian University for Women (AUW) in the port city.

About economic opportunity, Blake said it is important to everyone and one of the best ways to increase the opportunity and development for all is through greater cooperation and trade between neighbouring countries.

"Trade with neighbours makes a good economic sense. Just look at the United States, where two of our top three trading partners--Canada and Mexico--are on our borders and account for almost 30 percent of our total trade value.

"In contrast, trade among countries of

South and Central Asia is shockingly low". Only about five percent of the trade in the region is between South Asian countries, he said.

The senior US official also attended an award giving ceremony in Chittagong yesterday.

As the chief guest, he distributed certificates among 40 Madrasa students of Chittagong who have successfully completed a two-year English course under English Access Micro Scholarship Programme (EAMP), funded by American Centre.

English is the most key language for building bridge with nations as it is an international language, Blake told the students. "You will be the bridge of the US and Bangladesh relationship", he said.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena was also present at the award giving ceremony organised by Language Proficiency Centre, Chittagong.

Javed Karrem, director of EAMP, said the programme was launched in March 2011. It is a two-year English learning course for Madrasa students. Two more programmes including a course for the teachers of Madrasas are going on in Chittagong, he said.

Koica support for e-File Management

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica) handed over learning and teaching equipment to the public administration ministry yesterday as part of an ICT development project.

This is the first ever e-file management system in the Ministry of Public Administration (MoPA) with an aim to improve efficiency, dynamism and transparency of the administrative process.

Under this project, Koica provides e-File Management System software, 24 desktops and six laptops and necessary IT accessories for the information and communication technology (ICT) training room.

The South Korean government assisted Bangladesh in implementing the project with \$1.3 million in grants for the ministry in 2010-2012.

Abdus Sobhan Sikder, senior secretary of the MoPA and Korean Ambassador in Dhaka Taiyoung Cho were present at the programme.



US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O Blake speaks at the Asian University for Women (AUW) in the port city yesterday.

COMING OUT TOMORROW theSTAR

This week's cover story focuses on the government move to turn the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital into an autonomous university, which has triggered a surge of protests in the hospital. Besides a special feature that unearths the shady world of drug abuse, this week's Star has extensive write-ups on the left movement of the country and commercialisation of Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela.



Ask your Hawker for your Copy

Hasan leaves for US

UNB, Dhaka

Environment and Forests Minister Hasan Mahmud left for the USA on Tuesday night to attend a climate conference at the invitation of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Hilary has taken an initiative titled 'Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollution' involving six countries to cut air pollution across the world. Hasan Mahmud will join the inaugural session of this initiative.

Hilary will formally announce the initiative at a function of the US State Department in Washington today.

LUXURY APARTMENT @ Banani

Artisan Rupu's Castle
Size: 2175 Sft/Unit
Plot - 19, Road - 27
Block - J
Unit Left : 2

Artisan Hena Villa
Size: 1850 Sft/Unit
Plot - 84, Road - 13
Block - C
Unit Left : 1

Visit us @ Stall : 106
US Trade Show 2012
16-18th February
Ruposhi Bangla Hotel Tennis Court

ARTISAN Apartments Ltd.
Bridging Dream and Reality
ISO 9001 : 2008 CERTIFIED COMPANY
A concern of ARTISAN GROUP

24/7 HOTLINE
01972 - 784 726 01730 - 714 538
01971 - 627 466 01971 - 589 879
01730 - 714 539 01611 - 934 934

CORPORATE OFFICE
56/A, DOHS ROAD, OLD DOHS, BANANI, DHAKA - 1206 BANGLADESH
TEL: 02-9889360, 02-8813992. E-MAIL: info@artisanbd.com
WEB: www.artisanbd.com, www.fortmarino.com

Spellato
মানুষের মগজ তরিত তুলেট ওয়ার্ডস !!!

প্রতিটি Spellato বক্স-এ থাকছে ইজি টু হার্ড লেভেলের ৮০২টি বুলেট ওয়ার্ডস-এ ৪টা ৪ সেট কার্ড। তাই, এবার বন্ধুদের সাথে গেম খেলতে কিংবা তোমার ইংরেজি বানানের দক্ষতা বাড়াতে Spellato কেনো আর মগজে লোড করো বুলেট ওয়ার্ডস !!!
Spellato খেলে Spelling Bee তে Score বাড়াও এখনই

যে সব দোকানে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে: ঢাকা • বই বিচিত্রা, সবগুলো শাখায় • জ্ঞানকোশ, সোবহানবাগ ও ধানমন্ডি • বুকমাট, নিউমার্কেট • চম্পা ২১ • অজান্তা লাইব্রেরি, চক বাজার • কার্টেট বুক সেন্টার, জলসা রোড নিউ মার্কেট • বাতি ঘর, চেঙ্গাপি পাহাড় • বুকনেন, জিএসসি মোড় • নাথি বুকস, আন্দর কিল্লা • সিলেট • পপি লাইব্রেরি, জিন্দা বাজার • বইপত্র, রাজা ম্যানশ্যান জিন্দা বাজার • সেন্ট্রাল লাইব্রেরি, জিন্দা বাজার • জনতা লাইব্রেরি, আধার খানা • নিউ ন্যাশন, সিলেট • রাজশাহী • গ্রাইম বুকস, সাহেব বাজার • আলীগঞ্জ লাইব্রেরি, সাহেব বাজার • নিউজ হোম, সাহেব বাজার • বইপত্র, নিউমার্কেট • বগুড়া • মুসলিম বুক ডিপো, বগুড়া • রংপুর • টাউন স্টোর, স্টেশন রোড • ইস্ট ব্যান্ড লাইব্রেরি, স্টেশন রোড • খুলনা • একুশে নিউজ • প্রিয়া বুকস, নিউমার্কেট • আজমের্ট বুক স্টল, বিএন কলেজ গেট • কামাল বুক হাউজ, ফেরি ঘাট মোড় • যশোর • হাসান বুক ডিপো, দরা টানা মোড় • জনতা লাইব্রেরি, দরা টানা মোড় • যশোর বুক ডিপো, দরা টানা মোড় • এছাড়া একুশে বই মেলায় পাওয়া যাচ্ছে, স্টল নং-৫৫৮