

NEWS IN *brief*

Schoolboy 'killer' remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of Police yesterday placed the alleged killer of eight-year-old schoolboy, Sifat Ali Tanmoy, on a three-day remand for interrogation. Zahirul Islam, who said to have admitted the killing, was produced before a Dhaka court with a 10-day remand. He was arrested Wednesday. The victim's father, Hazrat Ali, demanded the cause behind the killing be exposed and the killer be given exemplary punishment. Tanmoy's body was found stuffed inside a bag in Zahirul's room on Wednesday, two days after he had gone missing. The boy used to spend time playing games on the computer of Zahirul, who was a tenant in Hazrat Ali's two-storey building in the city's Darussalam area.

Water bottling factory owner jailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday sentenced the owner of a drinking water factory in the city's Maniknagar to one year's imprisonment for running the business without BSTI licence. BAM Pure Drinking Water was also sealed off, and 70 water jars, each having 19-litre capacity, were destroyed, says a press release. Jahirul Islam Miji is owner of the factory.

Shaheed Aslam Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra Union, a student body, will observe Shaheed Aslam Day today, says a press release. The organisation will place wreaths at the graveyard of Mazharul Haq Aslam, a leader of the union, at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in the city this morning. In the afternoon, a discussion will be held at Mukti Bhaban recalling the sacrifices of the student leader, who was shot dead by criminals before the Arts Building at Dhaka University during a procession against the autocracy of HM Ershad on this day in 1986.

HSC exams begin on Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent examinations begin on Sunday with 9,26,814 examinees appearing in 2,916 centres across the country. Although the number of examinees rose by more than 1.47 lakh this year, around 1.70 lakh students of class XI will not sit for the exam owing to not registering for the exams. Some 4,96,395 male and 4,30,419 female students of 7,556 educational institutions will appear under 10 education boards, including madrasa and technical boards. The exams will also be held in four overseas centres in Doha, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah and Riyadh for 179 candidates. Physically challenged students will get an extra 20 minutes in the exam. Among the examinees, some 7.56 lakh are regular students while over 1.60 lakh are irregular. Besides, 4,685 are private examinees and some 4,419 are giving improvement exams. Announcing the figures at a press briefing at the Secretariat yesterday, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said necessary measures had been taken to ensure a peaceful environment at the examination centres. "Increase in the number of examinees is a positive trend for our education system," he said. Bangla First Paper, based on creative question method, the first time in the HSC exams, will be held on the first day. The written exams will end on May 20. The practical exams will be held from May 23 to June 6. Around 7.50 lakh students will take the exam under eight general education boards; 85,226 students will take Alim exam under Madrasa Board; and 86,415 students will take Business Management exam under Technical Board. Besides, 4,321 students of Diploma in Business Studies will sit under the Dhaka board. As in previous years, the highest number of examinees, 2.35 lakh, will appear under the Dhaka board while the lowest, 37,743, will appear under the Sylhet board. Yesterday, some students gathered before the Dhaka Board office, some claiming that they had not been provided with admit cards while others said theirs had errors in them. Dhaka Board Chairman Prof Fahima Khatun blamed the irresponsibility of the college principals and the students for the complications regarding the admit cards. No more than 50 students were facing such difficulties. They will get their admit cards as the office will remain open today and on Saturday, she said.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addresses the twelfth session of the ninth parliament which was prorogued yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: PMO

**ROOPPUR NUCLEAR POWER PLANT
Draft law on realising compensation okayed**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved a draft law with a provision for realising compensation from the operator of the country's first-ever nuclear power plant at Rooppur in Pabna for any damage due to accident. According to the draft Bangladesh Atomic Energy Control Act-2012, the claim of damage will have to be filed within ten years after the accident and disposed of within 50 years, Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan briefed reporters after the meeting. The council of ministers on January 2 approved the draft in principle. The 2000MW plant will be constructed with the assistance of Russia. The draft also has a provision on formation of a separate regulatory body since there is no such institution and legal framework at present, Musharraf said. The five-strong regulatory authority

headed by a chairman will supervise the activities at the plant. Moreover, an advisory panel consisting experts will also be formed. Besides these, the draft act also covers a wide range of issues including security and safety measures against radiation and management of nuclear plant, the cabinet secretary added. The meeting yesterday also revised the implementation date of National Wage Scale for the workers of state-owned mills and factories with effect from July 2009. The arrears will have to be paid in four equal instalments -- from September 2012 to December 2013. Under the new scale, the maximum basic salary of a worker would be Tk 5,600 while Tk 4,150 would be the minimum wage including 50 percent house rent and other allowances. The cabinet also endorsed a proposal declaring April 3 as the National Film Day from this year.

**Reform laws for fast graft case disposal
Says ACC chief**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Ghulam Rahman on Wednesday recommended reforming anti-corruption laws for the quick disposal of graft cases. He said, "The commission can investigate and it can even lodge cases against the accused but can not hold the trial. The accused in graft cases, in many cases, remain unpunished for years because of the complex and lengthy judicial process of the country." Ghulam Rahman was speaking at a human chain programme organised by ACC before Jatiya Press Club marking the "Corruption Prevention Week" which began on March 26. "We have to ensure the quick trial of the accused so that corrupt people get quickly punished." With the quick disposal of cases, people will have respect for punishment and refrain from corrupt practices, he added. Presence of corruption is more or less visible in every sector of society and ACC alone can not root it out, he said. ACC commissioners Mohammad Badiuzzaman and M Shahabuddin were present at the programme.

Pakistani journos welcome war crimes trial, urge Islamabad to seek apology

BSS, Dhaka

Pakistanis specially journalists welcomed Bangladesh's initiatives to try 1971 war criminals and urged their government to seek formal apology for their misdeeds. Three Pakistani journalists and an NGO activist hold the same opinion in exclusive interviews with the news agency on the sidelines of an international conference held in Sri Lanka recently. "We still feel sorry for the misdeeds of Pakistani forces in 1971," said Saleem Saikh, a senior journalist of widely circulated newspaper Dawn.

He said a formal apology by the Pakistan government for misdeeds in 1971 could smoothen the way for promoting friendly relations between the two countries. Echoing the same, journalist Amar Guroi of Pakistan Today said, "The Pakistan government should hold a symbolic trial of the members of Pakistani troops, who are still alive, as they did crimes against humanity in 1971." "There is still scope to try the Pakistani soldiers, who committed crimes during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971 as the war criminals of the Second World War are now facing trial for their

wrongdoings even after 62 years," he opined. Terming the inhuman activities of their troops in 1971 as a "black chapter" in Pakistan's history, Ramzan Chandio, a journalist of The Nation, urged their government to move a bill in the national assembly seeking formal apology for the misdeeds in Bangladesh in 1971. He was taken aback thinking how the Pakistani troops carried out a massacre in such a large scale on their brothers and the perpetrators go unpunished. Sumaira Gul, Programme Manager of a Rawalpindi based NGO and General Secretary of

Pakistan Peoples' Party, Rawalpindi City Unit, said "The Pakistani troops had launched propaganda that the war (in 1971) took place between Pakistan and India to misguide Pakistani common people for gaining support in their favour. But, the people of Pakistan later came to know the truth and stood by Bangladesh." "Most of the Pakistanis vehemently opposed the genocide carried out by their troops in the name of Islam," she said. She also urged her government to seek formal apology to Bangladesh without further delay for the massacre in 1971.

Khoda Baksh's anniversary of death today

METRO DESK



Mridha, an eminent sports commentator. Various organisations and individuals, including his family members, Khoda Baksh Mridha Fan Club, Sports Commentators' Forum, will place wreaths at his grave at Rajshahi Hatemkhan graveyard. A doa mahfil will also be held at his Hatemkhan residence after Asr prayers today, said a press release. Mridha was born in Hatemkhan of Rajshahi on January 22, 1945. He had served both in radio and television for 38 years as a sports commentator.

Decision on Ghulam Azam's indictment April 17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday fixed April 17 to decide whether it would indict former Jamaat-e-Islami chief Ghulam Azam on 62 charges of crimes against humanity that he allegedly committed during the 1971 Liberation War. If indicted, Ghulam Azam will face trial at the tribunal which was formed to deal with such crimes. The three-judge tribunal headed by Justice Md Nizamul Huq fixed the date after both prosecution and defence presented their arguments over the charges. The 89-year-old, arrested on January 11, was produced before the court yesterday. The formal charges accuse Ghulam Azam of planning to commit atrocities, incitement, complicity and murder. They also say that he had exclusive control over the auxiliary forces, including the peace committee, Al Badr and Al Shams, which were formed to oppose Bangladesh's liberation. The chief defence counsel, Abdur Razzaq, argued that Razakar, Al Badr

and Al Shams, among other fronts, were organised by Jamaat and Islami Chhatra Sangha, its student front. So these were not auxiliary forces as the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act of 1973 says that auxiliary forces are those which are directly under the control of the Pakistani army, he said. Prosecutor Zead Al Malum, in his counter arguments, said the Pakistan central government had issued a gazette in 1971 certifying Razakar, Al Badr and Al Shams as auxiliary forces of the Pakistani army. This gazette was read out by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as opposition leader in 1992 in Parliament, urging the government to try Ghulam Azam and the other collaborators, he said. Presenting the statement Sheikh Hasina read out that day and submitting a copy to the tribunal, Malum said defence had failed to substantiate their appeal for discharging Ghulam Azam. He said defence did not mention the whereabouts and activities of Ghulam Azam and the activities of Jamaat-e-Islami from March 25 to December 16, 1971.

Malum quoted Ghulam Azam, in an interview published in an online news portal, as saying, "We had tried to save the people of the country by forming the (auxiliary) forces." "Does this statement leave any room for suspicion about his involvement in forming the Razakar (and other auxiliary) forces?" he questioned. He appealed to the tribunal to frame the charges, saying that sufficient documents and evidence were submitted to the court for the indictment. **Hearing on charge framing against Kamaruzzaman deferred** Earlier in the day, the tribunal deferred till April 1 the hearing on charge framing against Muhammad Kamaruzzaman who is facing nine charges of crimes against humanity committed during the Liberation War. The tribunal fixed the date following an adjournment petition from the defence, who said that they were not prepared to give arguments against the charges. After hearing the defence's arguments, the tribunal will decide whether to indict Kamaruzzaman.

Parliament environment was better during my tenure: Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday claimed that the environment prevailing in the two parliaments during his tenure was better than that in the current House, referring to the use of indecent and abusive words by some MPS inside parliament. "Martial law or autocratic rule, whatever you call, the atmosphere in the parliaments during my tenure was better than the present one's", said Ershad, who was ousted in 1990 through a mass upsurge, paving the way for restoration of democracy. In the just-concluded session of parliament, some lawmakers used abusive words attacking their opponents in parliament. The former president also criticised the main opposition BNP for their present role, saying that during the 1991-1996 tenure, the BNP-led government imposed section 144 to foil at least 145 meetings of the Jatiya Party. Ershad, who is now a key leader of the AL-led ruling alliance, was speaking on the occasion of the conclusion of the parliament's 12th session yesterday. He said people did not want the present democracy. "The current parliament does not speak of people's joys and sorrows. I hope the country would soon get a democratic parliament." Ershad grabbed the state power through a bloodless military coup on March 24, 1982. Upon his fall, the country switched to parliamentary democracy from presidential system. Independent lawmaker Fazlul Azim also strongly criticised the use of indecent words in parliament.

Solution to land dispute in CHT demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers yesterday demanded the government's effective steps to resolve longstanding land dispute of indigenous people in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) immediately. Terming land dispute the root of other problems in indigenous communities, they said significant progress would be made in implementation of the CHT Peace Accord-1997 if the land dispute was solved. They placed the demand at a press conference, organised by Nagorik Sanghati at Dhaka Reporters' Unity. Nagorik Sanghati General Secretary Sharifuzzaman Sharif read out the statement at the press event. Social activist Aminur Rasul Babul and Bangladesh Paribesh Andolan (Bapa) Joint Secretary Mihir Biswas also spoke at the press conference.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Sylhet division in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today. Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said. Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. **The sun sets in the capital at 6:13pm today and rises at 05:52am tomorrow.**

Country's highest temperature 39.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 20.2 degrees Celsius at Sayerdpur. 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	37.3	24.7	67	43
Chittagong	30.0	23.5	87	81
Rajshahi	38.9	21.8	43	29
Rangpur	34.8	20.6	76	35
Khulna	35.7	24.0	67	53
Barisal	35.6	24.3	74	63

DHAKA TODAY

Rally
Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon will organise a citizens' rally; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Human chain
Bangabandhu Prajanma League will form a human chain; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:30am.

Meeting
Dumity Protirodh Committee Wari Zone will hold a meeting; Shapla Chatter; Time: 10:30am.

Human chain
Nimnobitto O Bastibashi Punarbashan Parishad will form a human chain; Venue: Bhashantek