

JOURNOS' NEW PAY-SCALE

## Dearness allowance announcement in a day or two

Says info minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dearness allowance for journalists, employees and workers of newspapers and news agencies will be announced in a day or two, said Information Minister Hasanul Haque Inu yesterday.

The allowance will be given for the interim period till the 8th Wage Board declares a new pay-scale. The board Chairman Justice Kazi Ebadul Haque will make a formal announcement in this regard, he said.

Inu was talking to journalists after a meeting with newspaper owners, editors and eminent journalists and columnists at his ministry following restrictions on the media from covering two programmes of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the last three days.

The government imposed the restrictions on grounds that a section of the media does not broadcast and publish the news of the head of the government with due importance.

Inu said the government would resolve problems of newspapers, as pointed out by the editors, within its capacity and form a committee with mass media representatives to formulate and implement a national broadcasting policy.

DEAFAMATION OF SHAON

## HC directs authorities to produce held physician

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government's authorities concerned to produce Ehsanuzzaman Khan before it by 10:30am today to examine whether he was arrested wrongfully or lawfully.

On October 15, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Ehsanuzzaman, a doctor of Sunamganj Sadar Hospital, for allegedly posting defamatory comments about actress Meher Afroz Shaon, widow of litterateur Humayun Ahmed, and her family members on Facebook.

The court passed the order after a petition filed by the physician's elder brother Akiluzzaman Khan. Inspector general of police, deputy commissioner of Dhaka, director general of Rab, and officer in charge of Ramna Police Station have been asked to comply with the order.

In the petition Akiluzzaman mentioned that Rab personnel arrested his brother (Eshanuzzaman) wrongfully, although he neither made any threat to Shaon and nor made any defamatory comments about her on the facebook.

The law enforcers also took Ehasuzzaman on remand without any case and did not produce him before a magistrate in 24 hours of arrest, he said.

# Spare money to build public libraries

Prime minister urges wealthy people

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the wealthy people to spend a part of their income for setting up public libraries in their respective areas.

She made the plea while addressing the inaugural function of the National Conference of Library Professionals-2012 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.

Hasina said a section of people in the country now earn quite a lot of money. "It won't be fair to spend all your money in travels abroad... spare some money to establish public libraries in your villages, upazilas and districts."

She also urged the parents and teachers to encourage their children in reading books so they do not take any wrong path.

Stressing the need for modernisation of information preservation and management system, she said the librarians could play an important role in building a digital Bangladesh.

Hasina asked the library professionals to

perform their duties with utmost sincerity and responsibility in collecting and preserving the invaluable folklores of the country.

The premier said initiative has been taken to build a strong public library management system in the country through modernisation and digitisation of their preservation system aimed at facilitating research and improving professional skills of librarians.

The prime minister said the previous Awami League government from 1996-2001 had set up more than 1,000 libraries in far away localities across the country.

But most of them were closed due to negligence of the subsequent BNP-Jamaat alliance government, she alleged.

The present government, she said, has taken initiatives to implement the library policy by making it time-befitting and established 2,000 mosque-based libraries across the country.

Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad also spoke at the function, chaired by Dilara Begum, president of Bangladesh Library Association.

# 55 shops gutted in overnight fire in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A fire burnt down 55 shops and left 25 others partially damaged at a market in the capital's West Agargaon early yesterday.

Fire service sources said the fire at BNP Bazar originated from a small tea stall around 2:15am. It was finally doused after two hours' frantic effort.

The market had shops of readymade garments, footwear, cosmetics, electronics and cloths, said Joint Secretary of the market shop owners' committee Abdullah Al Mamun.

"As the fire broke out at midnight, shop owners could not relocate their goods. The fire also spread too fast," he told The Daily Star.

The market authorities will form a probe body to find if the incident was subversive.

A shop owner, whose one shop was completely gutted and another one half damaged, said he had stored a good amount of goods ahead of Eid. All were burnt to ashes, he said.

Like him, many of the shop owners had had their goods stored in the shops, which were damaged in the fire.



The charred ruins of 55 shops and their stored goods, including clothes and footwear, at the capital's BNP Bazar yesterday. A fire originating around 2:30am ravaged through the market and burnt down the shops, most of which were made of wood and bamboos. PHOTO: STAR

## NEWS IN brief

### High power Chinese delegation to visit Dhaka to bolster ties

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

An eight-member high power Chinese delegation will pay an official visit to Dhaka on October 20-21 and hold talks with top government and opposition leaders to enhance Chinese cooperation in Bangladesh's development efforts.

An agreement on economic and technical cooperation and a memorandum of understanding on strengthening ties in power sector will be signed during the visit, said a press release of Chinese Embassy in Dhaka yesterday.

Li Changchun, member of the standing committee of the political bureau of the Communist Party of China central committee, will lead the CPC team, which will meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and

### Man commits 'suicide' in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man allegedly committed suicide at a hotel in the capital's Green Road area yesterday.

Wahiduzzaman Khan alias Lablu, 45, was found convulsing and foaming at the mouth in his hotel room at Mughal Residential Hotel.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

According to the victim's nephew, Mamun Chowdhury, Wahiduzzaman Khan has been missing since October 1.

A suicide note was found containing mobile phone

### Pakistan gifts computers to DU

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka yesterday presented several computers and printers to the departments of Urdu and international relations of Dhaka University (DU).

High Commissioner of Pakistan Mian Afrasiab Mehdi Hashmi Qureshi formally handed over the computers to DU Urdu department Chairman Dr Golam Rabbani and DU international relations department Chairman Dr Delwar Hossain, said a press release.

The two department chiefs expressed deep gratitude to the government of Pakistan for providing the

### Worker falls to death in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A worker died after falling from an under construction building in the capital's Mohakhali yesterday.

The dead is Antanur, 19, son of Afsar Ali of Taraganj in Rangpur district.

Afsar, a sanitary worker, along with two other workers was working on the fifth floor of the nine-storey building in TB Gate area and he fell from the floor while pulling a rod at about 12:30pm, said co-worker Faruque.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he died around 3:00pm.

ASI of Banani Police Station Abdur Rauf who visited the spot said he found no adequate safety for the

## GRAFT CASE AGAINST SAJEDA HC stays trial proceedings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed the proceedings of a corruption case against Deputy Leader of the Parliament Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury for six months.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case on July 10, 2008 on charge of amassing illegal wealth worth Tk 13.75 lakh and concealing information about this.

Yesterday, the HC also issued a rule upon the ACC and the government to explain in three weeks why the case against the Awami League leader should not be quashed.

The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Farid Ahmed came up with the rule and order following a petition filed by Sajeda on October 14.

The petition said the proceedings cannot be run at the trial court since the ACC could not complete its investigation in the stipulated time (three-month) after filing of the case.

## Chinese Communist Party expects more ties with BNP

UNB, Dhaka

Vice Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Chen Fengxiang yesterday told BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia that the relations between CPC and BNP will be strengthened further in the days to come.

He came up with the remark during a meeting between the visiting BNP delegation, led by Khaleda Zia, and the CPC International Department in Beijing yesterday morning.

Fengxiang agreed with the BNP chief's suggestion that there should be more exchanges of visits and engagements between the representatives of the two parties at various levels.

Khaleda said the people of Bangladesh always consider China as a special friend and recalled with gratitude the immense

contributions that China has made to the economic and infrastructure development in Bangladesh, and expressed confidence that this would widen in the future.

Khaleda reaffirmed BNP's support to "One China" policy when the vice minister mentioned the contributions of Khaleda in consolidation of these relations, initiated by late president Ziaur Rahman.

BNP standing committee members Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, and Lt Gen (ret) Mahbubur Rahman, vice-chairmen Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, and Selima Rahman, chairperson's adviser Sabihuddin Ahmed, press secretary Maruf Kalam Khan Sohel and other delegation members accompanied the BNP chief during the meeting.

The BNP chairperson went to China on Monday at the invitation of the CPC.

## DHAKA TODAY

### Seminar

The Coastal Association for Social Association Trust will organise a seminar on gathering views on FAO's recommendations on sustainable fishing. Venue: Cirdap Auditorium; Time: 10:30am.

### Protest rally

Seven like-minded left leaning political parties and organisations will organise a rally protesting torture on minority communities. Venue: before Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:30pm.

### Human chain

Khadde Bish Protirodh Andolon will form a human chain protesting the use

of formalin in food; Venue: by Dhanmondi 8 bridge; Time: 8:30am.

### Discussion

Farrukh Gobeshona Foundation will organise a discussion marking the 38th death anniversary of poet Farrukh Ahmed; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 8:30am.

### Poster exhibition

Vigaranisa Noon School and College will organise a poster exhibition as per its activities against extremism; Venue: its Baily Road campus; Time: 10:00am.

### Memorial meeting

International Nazrul Research Centre will hold a meeting marking the recent

## WEATHER TODAY

### Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light fog is likely to occur over the river basins of the country during midnight till early morning, Met Office said.

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:30pm and rises tomorrow at 5:58am.

Country's highest temperature 34.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sandwip and lowest 20.5 degrees at Dinajpur and Sayedpur.

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      | 33.3                   | 24.8 | 71                     | 65      |
| Chittagong | 32.5                   | 25.3 | 90                     | 86      |
| Rajshahi   | 32.4                   | 21.0 | 82                     | 75      |
| Rangpur    | 31.0                   | 22.2 | 70                     | 72      |
| Khulna     | 33.2                   | 25.0 | 76                     | 78      |
| Barisal    | 33.0                   | 24.2 | 79                     | 83      |

## ATTACK ON BUDDHISTS Independent probe demanded

Condemnation motion in JS sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Asian Human Rights Commission and Odhikar, two rights organisations, yesterday demanded an independent and impartial investigation committee on the recent attack on Buddhist communities.

The duo, in their websites, said the committee needs to unearth the real reasons behind the attack and identify the culprits to bring them under trial.

Meanwhile, eminent citizens at a views exchange meeting urged parliamentarians to uphold national unity by passing a motion condemning the attack.

A mob destroyed 12 Buddhist temples and monasteries and over 50 houses in Ramu, Ukhia and Teknaf of Cox's Bazar and Patiya of Chittagong on September 29 and 30. The violence was apparently triggered by a Facebook posting of a photo defaming the holy Quran.

The rights organisations said political parties once again failed to face the truth by playing the traditional blame-game.

ans must immediately reach consensus by condemning the violence and ensure that such premeditated attacks on ethnic minorities do not recur.

The meeting, "We are united in stopping conspiracies against communal harmony", was organised by Bangladesh Shanti Parishad in the capital's Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh.

A team of the parishad, which visited the spots of violence, shared its findings in the meeting and proposed parliamentarians to take a five-point initiative.

The initiatives include ending political blame-game between Awami League and BNP, protecting communal harmony by reaching out to people, ensuring exemplary punishment to government officials found negligent in their duties, providing aid to the victims and reconstructing the monasteries.

Dr Anisuzzaman, Benjamin De Costa, Abed Khan, Sanghanayak Suddhananda Mohathero and Pankaj Bhattacharya spoke at the meeting, presided over by the parishad President Mozaffar Hossain Poltu.

## Housewife held for torturing domestic help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested a housewife on charge of torturing her domestic help in the capital's Banani area yesterday.

The arrestee is Nushrat Ahmed Mishu, 45.

The victim Sharmin Akthar, 20, worked for Nushrat's daughter and herself for the last ten months.

Police said they arrested Nushrat following a case filed by Sufiya Begum, who works as a domestic help supplier, with Banani Police Station.

Sufiya said Nushrat called her on Monday night and placed an apparently ill Sharmin in her care. Later, Sharmin was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Doctors at the DMCH said Sharmin was in a poor health, malnourished, showed signs of having been beaten and wounded by scalding heat.

## Slum people part of city life

Experts tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The urban poor otherwise known as slum dwellers are integral to city life and economy, and the government must not evict them on a wholesale scale without rehabilitation, urban experts said at a seminar yesterday.

Forced and wholesale eviction of slum dwellers is not acceptable anywhere in the world, said M Shahidul Ameen, an architecture professor at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

The government should finalise the draft national housing policy without delay, he told the seminar on "housing of the urban poor" in the capital's Public Works Department auditorium.

Coalition for Urban Poor organised it to mark World Habitat Day.

A resident of the capital's Bhola slum said eviction without rehabilitation meant displacement, financial loss, insecurity and uncertainty.

Nearly 40 lakh urban poor live in the capital and constitute half of its total population, while the country's total urban poor are 1.5 crore, said Centre for Urban Study Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam.

A senior urban planner feared that city life would fall apart if the slum dwellers were driven out.