

NEWS IN *brief*

Dutch envoy meets Dipu Moni

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The newly appointed Netherlands Ambassador to Bangladesh, Gerben Sjoerd de Jong, paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at her office yesterday.

They discussed various bilateral issues and expressed happiness over the growing business between Bangladesh and the Netherlands. The envoy informed Dipu Moni that Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development

487 primary schools to get class-VI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday decided to introduce class-VI in one primary school in 487 upazilas in this academic session to extend primary level up to class-VIII as per the national education policy.

The decision came at a meeting at the primary and mass education ministry with the Minister Afsarul Ameen in the chair.

The ministry selected those government schools which have adequate number of teachers with efficiency of teaching class-VI students and necessary infrastructure, said the meeting sources. Class-VI will gradually open in one school of all 503 upazilas.

RU staff call 3-day strike from Jan 5 to raise retirement age

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Some officials and staff of Rajshahi University yesterday announced a three-day strike on the campus from January 5 demanding an increase in their retirement age from 60 years to 62.

The Rajshahi University Karmakarta Karmachari Oikya Parishad told a rally on the campus following work abstention from 8:00am to

Court orders confiscation of ex-BOU VC's properties

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered police to confiscate movable properties of former vice chancellor Ershadul Bari of Bangladesh Open University (BOU) in a case.

Ershadul and nine others were accused of distorting the history by removing the name of Bangabandhu and some other information on the Liberation War from the Civics second paper book published in 2000 for HSC under Bou. Former DU pro-vice chancellor Harun-or-Rashid filed the case on March 4, last year. The court passed the order as Ershadul is on the

Don't vote for corrupt politicians: ACC boss

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Ghulam Rahman yesterday urged people, from his/her respective position in society, not to vote for any corrupt politicians in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

"Resist politicians involved in corruption and take all out measures so that such corrupt politicians cannot come to power," he said at a rally before the ACC headquarters in the capital.

ACC organised the rally after a procession and human chain in the area to create mass awareness in fighting graft.

Ghulam also urged the judiciary to take steps to speed up the graft case

trials so that those could be completed within one year in lower courts and in two years in the higher court.

He also urged judges to stop the trend of passing stay orders to stop trial processes. "Any form of leniency towards people accused of corruption, however powerful that person may be, encourages corruption."

Graft will be eliminated from society if people prevent corrupt persons from coming to power. "I hope people someday will resist corrupt persons, hate them and take steps so that they can no longer hold any kind of power," he said.

Rights activists, ACC officials, journalists and civil society members attended the programmes.

MJF worried about rape incidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of the recent gang rape and murder of a young medical student in Delhi, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), a rights body, expressed concern over violence against women, particularly those belonging to ethnic minority communities.

The rights body demanded justice, exemplary punishment of the guilty and a secure environment for all women, said a MJF press release.

According to MJF, some 23 indigenous women and girls were raped, gang raped and murdered in the last six months in Chittagong Hill Tracts and Dinajpur, the release added.

According to partner organisations of MJF, some of the victims were as young as eleven and four years old.

In many cases, the perpetrators were exempt from punishment as some of them are connected to influential people and groups, alleged MJF.

DUTA POLLS Pro-AL panel gets president, opposition general secy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-ruling Awami League "Blue Panel" bagged eight posts, including that of the president, treasurer and joint secretary, in the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) election yesterday.

Pro-BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami "White Panel" secured seven posts, including that of the general secretary and vice-president. Both panels shared five members in the 15-member Duta executive committee.

Prof Fariduddin Chowdhury was elected president with 704 votes, Prof Hasibur Rashid was elected treasurer with 690 votes and Prof Ziaur Rahman became joint secretary with 702 votes.

Prof Mamun Ahmed was elected general secretary with 652 votes and Prof Akhtar Hossain Khan became vice-president with 638 votes.

The elected "Blue Panel" members are Prof M Akhtaruzzaman (782 votes), Abul Barkat (730), Sabita Rizwana Rahman (654), ABM Faruk (652) and Tazin Aziz Chowdhury (613).

"White Panel" members are Lutfur Rahman (714 votes), Sadrul Amin (703), Abul Hasnat (674), ABM Obaidul Islam (673) and Laila Nur Islam (619).

A total of 1,321 teachers out of 1,591 cast their votes from 10:00am to 2:00pm in the teacher's club.



This footbridge in the capital's Tikatuli was closed to the public by Dhaka South City Corporation after The Daily Star ran a photo of its sorry state, inset, yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Abdur Razzak worked for war crimes trial

Meeting told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Late Abdur Razzak, one of the key organisers of the Liberation War, had worked for the trial of the war criminals and the trial's completion would be the best way to pay him due respect, Razzak's colleagues and friends said yesterday.

They were speaking at a commemorating meeting marking the first death anniversary of the veteran Awami League leader Abdur Razzak.

Abdur Razzak Smriti Sangsad organised the programme in the auditorium of Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh, with eminent educationist Prof Anisuzzaman in the chair.

Razzak died on December 23 last year. Hasanul Haque Inu, president of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, said when Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, founded by Jahanara Imam, started movement for the trial of the war criminals during the 1990s, Razzak actively took part in the movement.

Awami League leader Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Communist Party of Bangladesh President Mujahidul Islam Selim, Bangladesh Shanti Parishad President Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon, and veteran AL leader Suranjit Sengupta echoed their remarks.

AL leader Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Tofail Ahmed, AL General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam, and Razzak's son Nahin Razzak, also spoke among others.

45pc children underweight
Says survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prevalence of underweight children at national level is about 45 percent in both boys and girls, shows a demographic survey.

It finds that the prevalence of stunting is 40 percent in both boys and girls, and that it is five percent higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

Three professors of the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science, Dhaka University --M Akhtaruzzaman, Md Nazrul Islam Khan, and Dr Sheikh Nazrul Islam-- conducted the survey.

The professors disclosed the preliminary report at a press conference at their office yesterday and said a more comprehensive and detailed report is due this year.

The researchers surveyed 6,274 households, among a population of 31,066, in both urban and rural areas, between March 2010 and March 2011.

They have found that food shortage is ever-prevalent among 11.2 percent of the households, while 14.4 percent of them face it occasionally.

The study, "The Nutrition, Health, Demographic Survey of Bangladesh-2011", was funded by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

It says about 59.2 percent of all households in Bangladesh have access to electricity, and the second most lighting arrangement is kerosene lamp (43.7 percent in rural areas and 36.4 percent nationally).

Almost all households in rural areas use solid fuels, it adds.

The research also finds that only 49 percent of the women surveyed know that condom use can reduce the chance of getting infected by HIV, and 89.4 percent of them have never heard of syphilis.

2 denied bail in Bishwajit murder case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected a bail petition of two arrestees in connection with a case filed for Bishwajit Das murder during the opposition's December 9 blockade. The two, HM Kibria and Mohammad Kayyum Miah Tipu, were produced before the court yesterday on completion of their 14-day remand in three phases.

Metropolitan Magistrate Tanbir Ahmed passed the order after their lawyer submitted a bail petition on grounds that their clients were not involved in the killing.

Bishwajit, a 24-year-old tailor, was beaten and hacked to death by pro-Awami League student organisation Bangladesh Chhatra League activists, who took him for a pro-blockade picket involved in a cocktail blast near Bahdurshah Park in Old Dhaka.

Prof Murshid was teacher of society
Say eminent citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Khan Sarwar Murshid was an ideal teacher who was not only a teacher for his students but also a teacher for society, eminent citizens said yesterday.

"To become an ideal teacher it is very necessary to refrain from some things which he maintained," said Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman, former chief adviser to a caretaker government, addressing a commemorating meeting at the capital's Bangla Academy.

"Another character of an ideal teacher is to be a teacher for society. And Sarwar turned into a teacher for society," he added.

Bangla Academy, Brati, Nagarik Udyog, Alokito Ngori, and Transparency International Bangladesh jointly organised the meeting.

Eminent educationalist, diplomat, and intellectual Prof Khan Sarwar Murshid breathed his last at a city hospital on December 8.

Eminent educationist Prof Zillur Rahman Siddique who had been close to Sarwar over 60 years said Murshid successfully established himself as a symbol of civilisation. "The person like Sarwar is needed for civilisation to survive," he said.

Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain said Murshid's his values were his most valued possession, and he tried to change the society as well as people with those values.

Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury said he had simplicity like a child but internally he was very firm. "Though he was an intellectual but he tried to understand the world by his heart not by his talents."

Economist Prof Rehman Sobhan, TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Murshid's daughter Sharmeen Murshid, and writer Selina Hossain, among others, also spoke.

DHAKA TODAY

Siege
Journalists' organisations will lay siege to the home ministry demanding, among others, trial into the killing of journalist couple Sagar-Runi; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Procession
Bangladesh Manobadhikar Council will hold a procession to raise awareness on human rights; Venue: from Central Shaheed Minar; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion
Nagorik Samaj will organise a discussion "Preventing corruption and protecting human rights"; Venue: BMA Auditorium; Time: 3:00pm.

Procession
Ethics Club Bangladesh will hold a procession to observe "Ethics Day"; Venue: from Shoparjito Swadhinata, Dhaka University; Time: 3:30pm.

Procession
Bangladesh Students' Union will organise a procession to observe "Anti-Imperialism Solidarity Day"; Venue:

WEATHER TODAY

Cold wave may continue
UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today. Thick fog may occur over the river basins and moderate to thick fog elsewhere over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said. Mild to moderate cold wave is sweeping over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna, Dhaka, Barisal and northern part of Chittagong divisions and the regions of Srimangal may continue. Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged and day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:23pm and rises tomorrow at 6:42am.

Country's highest temperature 26.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 06.6 degrees at Srimangal.

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

	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	23.7	10.8	95	54
Chittagong	23.4	11.5	72	60
Rajshahi	24.8	07.7	93	65
Rangpur	24.2	09.0	87	65
Khulna	24.8	09.5	94	81
Barisal	24.4	08.5	94	81

Music-rapt teenager run over by train

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With music playing on his headphones, a teenage boy failed to hear the sound of an oncoming train and died after subsequently being run over at Kuril rail crossing in the capital yesterday morning.

The deceased 17-year-old Sabbir Hossain Tufan, a resident of the capital's Uttara Badda, was scheduled to appear in the SSC examinations from Badda Model School and College in 2013.

Sabbir was going for tuitions in a coaching centre in Kuril Biswa Road, the victim's father, Wahab Ali Shah, told The Daily Star.

Kamalapur Government Railway

Police (GRP) Station Sub-inspector (SI) Anwar Hossain said the teenager was listening to music on his cellphone while walking over railway sleepers when the accident occurred around 9:30am.

GRP found the headphones tightly pressed against the teenager's ears when they came to recover the body, he said.

Locals at the scene had shouted warnings at the teenager when they saw the approaching train but to no avail, he said.

The victim's family arrived to identify the body when GRP called them from the victim's cellphone. They were also handed over the belongings found with the body, said SI Anwar.

Two 'shot dead' in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A youth was shot dead in an alleged encounter with police at Pallabi while a local Awami League leader was gunned down by some unknown miscreants at Jurain in the capital last night.

Pallabi police rushed to Section-7, Mirpur when the youth, Shah Alam, 25, and two other criminals tried to commit extortion in front of a garment factory around 8:30pm, claimed Officer-in-Charge Abdul Latif Sheikh.

At one stage, the criminals shot at the police forcing them to fire back, injuring the youth, said the OC.

Alam was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

At East Jurain, the unidentified miscreants shot president of Jurain Bou Bazar unit AL Ismail Hossain, 50, in front of his residence around 9:30pm.

Quoting the victim's family members, Kadamtali police OC Mazharul Islam said they could not find out the motive behind the killing.