

NEWS IN *brief*

Girl dies in Ctg house fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A three-year-old girl was burned to death and two others were injured in a fire in Boalkhali upazila of Chittagong on Monday night.

The deceased is Naima Akter, daughter of Mohammad Javed of Purbo Gomdandi village in the upazila.

Fire service sources said the fire originated from the oven of a tin-shed house around 8:30pm soon

Pro-AL teachers bag most posts in Sustta polls

SUST CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League (AL) teachers have won 9 posts out of 11 in the polls to Shahjalal University of Science and Technology Teachers Association (Sustta) held on Monday.

The panel also won all the top positions including president, treasurer and general secretary.

Prof Syed Samshul Alam was elected president, Dr Mastabur Rahman as general secretary, Prof Narayan Saha as treasurer, Prof Abdul Ghani as vice president and Chowdhury Abdullah Al

Expats hugely contributing to economy: Mozena

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

US Ambassador Dan W Mozena yesterday said the Bangladeshi expatriates were contributing greatly to its economy, especially the ones living in the UK.

He said they wanted Bangladeshi-Americans too to help build a better Bangladesh and invest more in Bangladesh. Mozena was addressing a reception organised by the Sylhet city Corporation at a city hotel on Monday night.

The envoy described the US as number one investor in Bangladesh and third largest source of

German, France lay foundation stone for common embassy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

German and France yesterday laid the foundation stone of a new building for a common embassy of the two countries in the capital marking the 50th anniversary of signing of the Elysée Treaty.

First ever of its kind in the world, the building will symbolise the reconciliation and cooperation between the two countries, which left behind centuries of their rivalry with the signing of the treaty on January 22, 1963.

German Ambassador to Bangladesh Albrecht Conze and French Ambassador to Bangladesh Michel Trinquier jointly laid the foundation stone



The body of Shaheen Khan, one of the 13 Bahrain fire victims, was received by his grieving widow, *left*, and brother, *centre*, at Shahjalal International Airport yesterday. The photo was taken when an ambulance carrying his coffin was about to start for Shaheen's village home in Matlab, Chandpur.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

An agonising visit to airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was the first time in her life that she saw Shahjalal International Airport. She had always wanted to see it with her own eyes--the planes, the runways, the big intimidating building. She had hoped to come here one day to receive her husband as he would home from his trip.

But she never knew that when the day finally came, it would be only to collect the charred body of her dead husband.

Farida Khatun had spoken to her husband, Jaru Miya, only half an hour before the disastrous fire that killed him, along with 12 other Bangladeshis, in Bahrain on January 11.

As she waited for his body to arrive in the airport yesterday, she kept replaying the last conversation she had with her husband.

"I spoke to him only for a few minutes, to tell him that I was sick, that he needed to send me money," said a grieving Farida, with tears in her eyes. "Now he is gone, and I am left with four children, and no one to support us anymore."

Next to her, Shahadat and Teetu's father,

Shah Alam, stared blankly at the passport size photos of his two sons. It took each of them Tk 3.5 lakh to migrate to Bahrain, and they still had not sent back much money home.

"Now I have lost both of them, and all hope of repaying the loans we owe to people," he said, his voice breaking with emotion.

Halima Akhtar Tonni, a young bride, held her 10-year-old son, Shaon, tightly in her arms, still in shock about her husband's death, unable to process the clamour of journalists and cameramen crowding around her.

"He had only moved to a new apartment six days ago..." she muttered meekly. Now her son would grow up without even a single memory of his father, who left the country two months after his birth.

Sumon Islam, elder brother of Sapan and Sayful Islam, said his mother was inconsolable, unable to bear the news of the death of both her sons. "She has become physically weak, and I don't know how she will be able to react at the sight of their corpses," he said, as he placed their coffins in the ambulance.

BAHRAIN FIRE 13 Bangladeshis' bodies arrive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bodies of 13 Bangladeshi workers who were killed in a fire in Bahrain on January 11 arrived home yesterday.

A flight of Emirates Airlines EK 838, carrying the bodies from Bahrain, landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 6:35pm.

The body of another Bangladeshi worker, Oli Ahmed, 28, who died in a building collapse on December 31 last year in Bahrain, also arrived in the same flight.

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain handed the bodies over to the families at the airport.

The minister also provided each of the families with Tk 35,500 for burial and said Tk 2 lakh will be given to each family as donation from the government.

The families have to place their certificate to receive the donation, added Khandaker Mosharraf.

Besides, the government is trying to realise the highest possible compensation from the workers' employers in Bahrain, the minister said, adding that they have already communicated to the six employers there.

On January 11, the fire swept through the labour camp they were living in.

Obituary

METRO DESK



Mukitir Rahman Bhuiyan, an industrialist and social worker, died yesterday in the capital.

He was 72.

He was the founder of Biopharma and managing director of Maxwell International.

He left behind his wife and two daughters.

Md Hossain Ali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Md Hossain Ali, former vice-president of Chittagong Newspaper Hawkers' Multipurpose Cooperative Society and Newspaper Hawkers' Union, died at his Dewanbazar residence in Chittagong yesterday. He was 60.

He left behind his wife, two sons and two daughters.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Tomorrow is the tenth death anniversary of Saleha Huq, wife of late Syed Nurul Huq, retired director of Power Development Board.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani will be held at the Dhaka residence of her son Engineer Syed Ziaul Huque and Barisal residence of her son Dr Syed Maksumul Huq.

Relatives and well-wishers are requested to pray for the departed soul.



An elderly man practises fortune telling through a parrot picking an enveloped card, which secrets the future of the client, in Shaheed Minar area in Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

TIB for completion of all war crimes cases

UNB, Dhaka

Expressing deep satisfaction over the International Crimes Tribunal's verdict, which sentenced Abul Kalam Azad alias Bachchu Razakar to death, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday called for immediate all-out actions to execute it.

The graft watchdog body also demanded completion of all other similar pending cases in an appropriate way ignoring pressure, influence and fear.

Referring to Monday's historic verdict, Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, said, "This is a milestone ... a befitting tribute to the millions of freedom fighters, particularly those who sacrificed their lives and experienced inhuman sufferings in the hands of barbaric perpetrators of war crimes."

"January 21 will remain a red letter day in the history of Bangladesh, marking the beginning of a glorious phase of truly proud and meaningful victory after relieving the national agony of unmet justice for too long," he added.

Govt to amend CHT land commission act Says Dipankar Talukdar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken initiative to revise some provisions of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act, 2001 to make the land commission more efficient, said State Minister for CHT Affairs Dipankar Talukdar yesterday.

"The land ministry and the law ministry are working together for this. We hope the commission will be effective after completion of the amendment and it will act properly to resolve land dispute in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)," he also said, while addressing as chief guest the inaugural session of a seminar.

He, however, did not mention which provisions will be amended.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) jointly organised the seminar titled "The ILO Conventions Relating to Ethnic Minorities" at Senate Bhaban in Dhaka University.

NHRC Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman said, "In the last year of this incumbent government, we do not want to hear assurance only. We want to see some implementation of the CHT peace accord in this last year."

The CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission has remained virtually inactive since its chairman Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury retired on July last year.

Discussion
Nagorik Udyog, and Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum will organise a discussion on the local government law; Venue: Cirdap Auditorium; Time: 10:00am.

Human chain
Griho Sramik Odhikar Protishtha Network will form a human chain protesting repression on domestic help; Venue: In front of Jatiya Press

Dialogue
Population Services and Training Centre, Awaj Foundation, and Action Aid Bangladesh will hold a dialogue on garment industry; Venue: Cirdap Auditorium; Time: 2:00pm.

Roundtable
Free Thinkers Forum will arrange a roundtable on Indian brutality in

Club; Time: 11:00am.

Dry weather likely
UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderate fog may occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog elsewhere over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Moderate cold wave is sweeping over the region of Srimangal and mild cold wave is sweeping over Rangpur divisions and regions of Rajshahi, Pabna, Jessore, Kustia and it may continue and spread over north western part of the country.

Night temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:39pm and rises tomorrow at 6:42am.

Country's highest temperature 29.9 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 06.9 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	25.4	14.5	66	43
Chittagong	25.0	14.9	59	61
Rajshahi	23.6	10.2	80	68
Rangpur	24.6	10.2	82	68
Khulna	25.3	13.5	78	68
Barisal	25.4	12.0	78	79