



NEWS IN brief

Bangladeshi made dean of West Bengal diplomatic corps

SUBRATA ACHARYA, Kolkata

Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner in Kolkata Zokey Ahad has been elected dean of the diplomatic corps, comprising envoys of around 200 countries including the US, the UK and United Arab Emirates, in West Bengal on December 13.

He will concurrently serve both positions. Zokey attributed his election to Bangladesh's successful foreign policy and dedicated the honour to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Russian Consul General Irina K Bashkirova served as dean last. The deputy high commission is Bangladesh's first foreign mission.

Indian scholarships announced

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The High Commission of India yesterday announced scholarships for meritorious Bangladeshi nationals to pursue various courses in India at undergraduate, post-graduate and PhD level for 2017-18 academic session, said a press release yesterday.

The last date of submitting the applications is December 31. For details, one can visit the Indian High Commission, its website or call at 55067301-55067308 and 55067645 to 55067649 Extn: 1096 or 1112.

New body to increase navigability of four rivers, cut water pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has formed a committee to prepare a master plan to reduce water pollution and increase navigability of four rivers surrounding the capital and the Karnaphuli river in Chittagong.

The committee will submit a draft master plan to the government by next three months and form a technical committee to prepare the master plan if necessary.

BYLC events on Victory Day today

CITY DESK

A campaign titled "Desh Amar Dayitto o Amar" (my country, my responsibility) to celebrate Victory Day and demonstrate the power of youth in the changing society has been arranged by the alumni association of Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC) today.

The BYLC Graduate Network (BGN) arranged the campaign where around 200 graduates will participate at multiple zones in Dhaka, Chittagong and Rajshahi, said a press release yesterday. The programme will start at 7:00am with the graduates singing the national anthem and then providing community service by cleaning roads and pavements and getting commitments from youths to take responsibility for certain issues to solve problems in the society. The campaign will end around 9:30am, with the graduates taking an oath to selflessly serve the nation for a better future.

Bodies of Tamim, 2 others handed over to Anjuman Mofidul for burial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bodies of three militant suspects, including that of alleged Gulshan attack mastermind Tamim Chowdhury, were handed over to Anjuman Mofidul Islam for burial at Jurain graveyard yesterday afternoon.

The bodies were kept at Dhaka Medical College mortuary for four months. As nobody claimed the bodies, they were handed over to the charity organisation.

"We handed over three bodies...for burial at 3:00pm," Dr Sohel Mahmud, head of forensic medicine of the college, told The Daily Star. Nurul Amin, a duty officer of Anjuman, received the body.

Joya's cremation tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of Joya Pati, former managing director of Kumudini Welfare Trust, will arrive in Dhaka tomorrow.

Joya Pati, the youngest daughter of the founder of Kumudini Welfare Trust and philanthropist RP Saha, died in London at the age of 84. Her body will be kept at House No-76/2 on Road No- 127 of the capital's Gulshan-1 between 1:00pm and 2:00pm. Pati's body will then be taken to Mirzapur of Tangail and kept at Kumudini Complex from 3:00pm onwards, says a press release, adding that her cremation would be held at her village home in Mirzapur at 5:00pm.

The reciprocal visits by freedom fighters and Indian war veterans marking Victory Day started in 2005, and so far 280 freedom fighters and 125 Indian veterans have joined the interactions in

was a meeting there. Instructions were given to keep an eye on the Dhaka stadium, InterContinental Hotel, and the governor's house.

"Four of us carried out the attacks -- four times firing eight rockets each time. And that possibly ended the war," said Hemant, one of a 28-member delegation of Indian war veterans and four serving officers, who arrived in Dhaka on a five-day visit on December 14 to join the Victory Day celebrations today.

The High Commission of India in Dhaka and Ekattor TV jointly organised the media interaction in honour of the Indian war veterans and Bangladesh's freedom fighters.

Simultaneously a delegation of 30 freedom fighters, six officers, three lawmakers, and a Supreme Court judge, led by Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, left for India to interact with Indian war veterans.

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Jessore man shown held in war crimes case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday showed a Jessore man arrested in a case filed for allegedly committing crimes during the 1971 Liberation War.

The tribunal passed the order following a petition moved by Prosecutor Rezia Sultan Chaman.

Accused Siddiquar Rahman Gazi, 68, of Harergati village in the district's Monirampur upazila, has been in a Jessore jail since December 10 in two other cases.

Rezia told the tribunal that the probe against Siddiquar started on August 22 and the case's investigation officer (IO) already "found his involvement" in at least one incident of killing during the war. The tribunal also asked the jail authorities to produce him before it on March 8.

Rezia told The Daily Star that Siddiquar was a "sub-commander" of Razakar Bahini under Monirampur Police Station and IO Abdur Razzak Khan claimed that Siddiquar's name was on a Razakar list prepared by the district administration.

GHULAM RABBANI MURDER CASE

Two convicts surrender to Ctg court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg



Ghulam Rabbani

Chittagong Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal yesterday sent to jail two convicts of the Commodore Ghulam Rabbani murder case after they had surrendered to it.

They are: former general manager of Korean Export Processing Zone (KEPZ) Abu Naser Chowdhury and one Md Selim, said the tribunal's Public Prosecutor Ayub Khan.

A former managing director of KEPZ, Commodore Rabbani was an aide-de-camp to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and a vital prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu murder and jail killing cases.

On April 11, 2004, a gang of armed criminals shot Rabbani in the throat by intercepting his microbus in the port city's Muradpur area when he was going to the KEPZ.

The same day an attempt to murder case was filed with Panchlaish Police Station. With Rabbani succumbing to his injuries at a Bangkok hospital on April 24 the same year, the case was turned into a murder one.

He was killed following a conflict between him and some of his colleagues over his appointment as MD and termination of two KEPZ staff before and after his appointment. Naser and Selim apart, the accused included former KEPZ chief security officer Humayun Kabir Chowdhury, Saiful Islam alias Bilal Saiful, Md Hashim and Abdul Malik Sohel. In April 2005, the tribunal handed down five years' imprisonment to Naser and Humayun, life term imprisonment to Selim, Md Hashim and Abdul Malik Sohel, and acquitted Saiful.

On February 12 in 2014, the High Court sentenced Naser, Selim and Humayun to life term imprisonment, acquitted Hashim and Sohel, and cancelled Saiful's acquittal order passed by the tribunal.

Naser and Selim surrendered to the lower court after the HC on October 5 this year in its full verdict had ordered the four to do so within eight weeks after they received the order.

The HC also asked the court to deliver a fresh judgment in the case against Saiful who is now in jail. Humayun's lawyers yesterday lodged a petition with the tribunal, claiming that their client died earlier, said the PP.

Weather will remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today. Moderate to thick fog may occur at places over the river basins and light to moderate fog elsewhere over the country during late night till morning. Night and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said, reports UNB. The sun sets in the capital today at 05:14pm and rises tomorrow at 06:35am.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Justice JN Deb Choudhury, a sitting judge of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court, died of cancer at Square Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He was 51.

Justice Choudhury left behind his wife, a son and a daughter. He will be cremated in his village in Sylhet today. Attorney General Mahbub Alam told The Daily Star.

Justice Abdul Wahab Miah, who is now functioning as chief justice as Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha is abroad, and other SC judges mourned his death and expressed sympathy to his bereaved family members, the attorney general said.

Law Minister Anisul Huq and Law Reporters Forum also expressed sorrow at his death. According to the SC website statement, he was appointed as an additional judge of the High Court Division on February 12 last year. He is the author of "Labour and Industrial Law" students' edition (in Bangla).

DIST COUNCIL POLLS SCHEDULE

HC questions legality

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of the district council election schedule, issuing a rule upon the Election Commission and government authorities concerned why it should not be declared so.

It also asked to show cause why the district council law provisions allowing an electoral body to cast vote should not be declared illegal. The bench of Justice Quamrul Islam Siddique and Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif came up with the rule following Supreme Court lawyer Rumeen Farhana's December 14 writ petition.

She challenged the legality of Sections 4 (2) and 17 of the Zila Parishad Act, Section 5 of Zila Parishad Amendment Act, and the election schedule.

Citing from the petition, her lawyer Barrister Syed Ejaz Kabir told The Daily Star that the sections were contrary to constitutional provisions which did not allow indirect voting. Following two other writ petitions, another HC bench of Justice Obaidul Hassan and Justice Krishan Debnath stayed effectiveness of two Satkhira union parishad voter lists for its district council election.

The petitioners claimed that the lists were faulty as newly-elected representatives were not included. Petitioners' lawyers AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon and Siddique Ullah Miah told The Daily Star that there was no scope for holding the election to Satkhira district council on December 28 following the HC stay.



Court says Khaleda's bail will be cancelled if she fails to face it Thursday

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A special court in Dhaka yesterday said bail will be cancelled if BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia fails to appear before it on Thursday, the next hearing date on the Zia Charitable Trust graft case.

Meantime, Khaleda's lawyer submitted before the court a list of 271 defence witnesses including BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir. They will give their statements.

Judge Abu Ahmed Jamadar of the Special Judge Court-3 gave the order after Khaleda's lawyer submitted a petition seeking an adjournment of the hearing.

Yesterday was the scheduled date for placing her self-defence statements. But she could not appear before it due to physical illness, said one of her lawyers Zainal Abedin Meshab.

Earlier, a total of 32 prosecution witnesses including complainant of the case gave their statements before the court on different dates.

Mentionable, two separate Dhaka courts yesterday adjourned till February 2 and 15, 2017 respectively the hearings of Niko and Boropukuria coalmine graft cases.

Dream comes to abrupt end

Expat, father die in road crash while returning home with iron rods on a truck to build house in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

ing some iron rods.

They rented a truck and headed home cheerily as they had managed to get a good price on the rods. Around 10:30am there was a traffic jam on Sakhipur-Gorai Road in Syedpur area, and their truck got stuck behind another one laden with electric pillars. The jam was about to clear and the truck in front moved backwards abruptly and some of the pillars went through the window of Sharif's truck, hitting the father and son, sitting beside the driver, and leaving them grievously injured. They were rushed to Kumudini Hospital where they died at noon, said locals. Police seized the pillar-laden truck.

Sharif finally managed to get some days off and recently returned home since he wanted to start the construction of the house. Yesterday morning, the father and son duo of Panchgaon village under Bashtoil union of Tangail went to Hatubanga area for purchas-

ing equipment from Ciena, USA, considered to be one of the world's top three industries in the sector, they said.

Ciena equipment had been used for carrying the Dhaka-Cox's Bazar submarine bandwidth, said the sources. The equipment, of 40 Gbps capacity, was first installed in 2008 and later upgraded to 240 Gbps

capacity using latest 100 Gbps capable equipment. The current capacity of the submarine cable at Cox's Bazar is 200 Gbps and domestic consumption is about 130 Gbps. Of the excess bandwidth, 10 Gbps is being exported to India through Akhaura Agartala border while domestic demand is expected to reach 210 Gbps by 2021, they added.

SC upholds HC scrapping BTCL

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Robayet Ferdous of Dhaka University and Farhana Helal Mehtab of Daffodil International University were present.

63 youths get TIB awards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday awarded 63 youths, who participated in an anti-corruption public speaking and essay competition, with a view to encouraging them to stand against corruption.

The awards, including a certificate, crest and prize money, were given under four categories where around 300 students from educational institutions, aged between 13 and 26, participated.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, handed over the prizes at a ceremony held at its office in the capital. TIB organised the competition marking the International Anti-Corruption Day, Dec 9.

Robayet Ferdous of Dhaka University and Farhana Helal Mehtab of Daffodil International University were present.

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The joint command of the Mukti Bahini and the Indian Army started operation on the evening of December 3, when the Pakistan Air Force bombed Amritsar, Sreenagar and the Kashmir valley in India.

The joint force continued advancing inside Bangladesh and reached Tongi on December 14 and Savar on the morning of December 16 to ensure surrender of the Pakistani forces.

"It's a great feeling," said 1971 war veteran Lt Col JS Sarai, who fought for

On December 9, he and his team had

to cross the Meghna River. When they

were following the rail line nearby, they saw machine gun bullets flying towards them.

"At one stage a bullet went through our helicopter. We were lucky that it did not hit any vital portion of the helicopter. We landed safe on the helipad in Sylhet," he said, recalling one of the many dangers they encountered.

Senior officers who were with him ordered him to evacuate a wounded officer who got shot in another helicopter by the machine gun on the rail line. The officers destroyed the enemy machine gun and took control of the areas, he said.