



(Left) Cardinal of Bangladesh Patrick D'Rozario presents a bouquet to President Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban in Dhaka yesterday on the occasion of Christmas, the biggest religious festival of the Christian community. (Right) Christians offer prayers in a Patharghata church in Chittagong.



PHOTO:
PID, ANURUP KANTI DAS

Contributions of freedom fighter, Artisan victim cop recognised
JU CORRESPONDENT

Jahangirnagar University Debate Organisation (JUDO) has recognised the contributions of freedom fighter Md Sifatullah during the 1971 Liberation War, and slain police officer Mohammad Rabiu Karim during the July 1 Gulshan café terror attack. The ceremony was held at Selim Al Deen Muktamancha on the JU campus on Saturday, the second day of a three-day programme, marking the 12th anniversary of JUDO.

The programmes -- including debate, parliamentary debate, concert and reunion -- ended yesterday. Rabiul, assistant commissioner of the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police,

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Child missing in speedboat crash found dead

Two vessels collided in Barisal's Arial Kha on Friday night killing mother

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The body of a 13-year-old girl, daughter of an associate professor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), was recovered from the Arial Kha river yesterday morning following a speedboat accident on Friday night when he along with his wife and daughter was returning to Barisal from Bhola, raising the death toll to two.

Dr Sarwar Jahan's wife's body was recovered on Friday while daughter Saheri Akhter, went missing after their speedboat collided head-on with another one.

The teenager's body was sent to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH), said Mahabub Alom, officer-in-charge of Bandar Police Station. Dr Jahan is under treatment at the hospital's intensive care unit, he added.

The other speedboat had four passengers. Around eight passengers of the two speedboats sustained minor injuries, said the OC, adding, the drivers are on the run.

"Sarwar was returning from his in-laws' house. Eight of us were on the boat," said Dr Prodip Kumar Banik, a friend of the family.

"It was a foggy night but the boat was at full speed. Around 8:00pm, we heard a noise and out of nowhere, saw another speedboat right in front of us," he said, adding.

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'JMB' man arrested in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police claimed to have arrested a suspected member of JMB at Hamirkutia Bazar in Bagmara upazila of Rajshahi on Saturday afternoon.

Mostafizur Rahman Montu, 52, a close aide of executed JMB leader Siddikul Islam Bangla Bhai, was wanted in a case filed under the Anti-terrorism Act with Bagmara Police Station early this year, said Officer-in-Charge Asaduzzaman.

He was involved in reorganising the militants, said the OC.

In 2007, a Rajshahi court jailed him for five years in a kidnap and extortion case of 2004. Later, he got bail from the High Court as he appealed challenging the verdict, said Asaduzzaman.

Montu is also on bail in two other cases including a murder, he added.

Bangladeshis top Oman migrant population

Reports Times of Oman

STAR REPORT

Around seven lakh Bangladeshis working in Oman make up the largest migrant population in the gulf nation, outnumbering Indians, reported the Times of Oman yesterday.

The number of Bangladeshis stood at 6,94,449, Indians at 6,91,775 (now the second largest), and Pakistanis at 2,31,685 after the end of November this year, said the newspaper, quoting the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) of Oman.

Last November, there were 5,90,170 Bangladeshis and 6,69,882 Indians in Oman, while the numbers were respectively 4,96,761 and 6,00,349 in November 2013.

For decades, Indians have made up the bulk of migrant workers in

the Sultanate, but despite police restrictions on the numbers of Bangladeshis allowed to enter Oman, as of November, their number has overtaken the number of Indian migrants.

A spokesman for Bangladesh Embassy in Muscat said Bangladeshis were preferred for major projects in the Sultanate while a spokesman for the Indian community said more Indians were choosing to stay at home as pay and working conditions in India were improving.

Of the seven lakh Bangladeshis, 1.85 lakh found jobs between January and December 20 this year, according to the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET).

Last year, 1,29,859 Bangladeshis

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EC's actions reliant on polls-time govt Says BNP Secy Gen Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission will not be able to work neutrally and independently if the election-time government does not act impartially, BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday.

He said BNP hoped the government would assist and play its due role in the president's ongoing initiative to form a strong and independent election commission.

"The present political crisis will not be solved without a free, fair and inclusive national election. We hope the government would consider the matter and take measures to hold an acceptable national election," Fakhrul said.

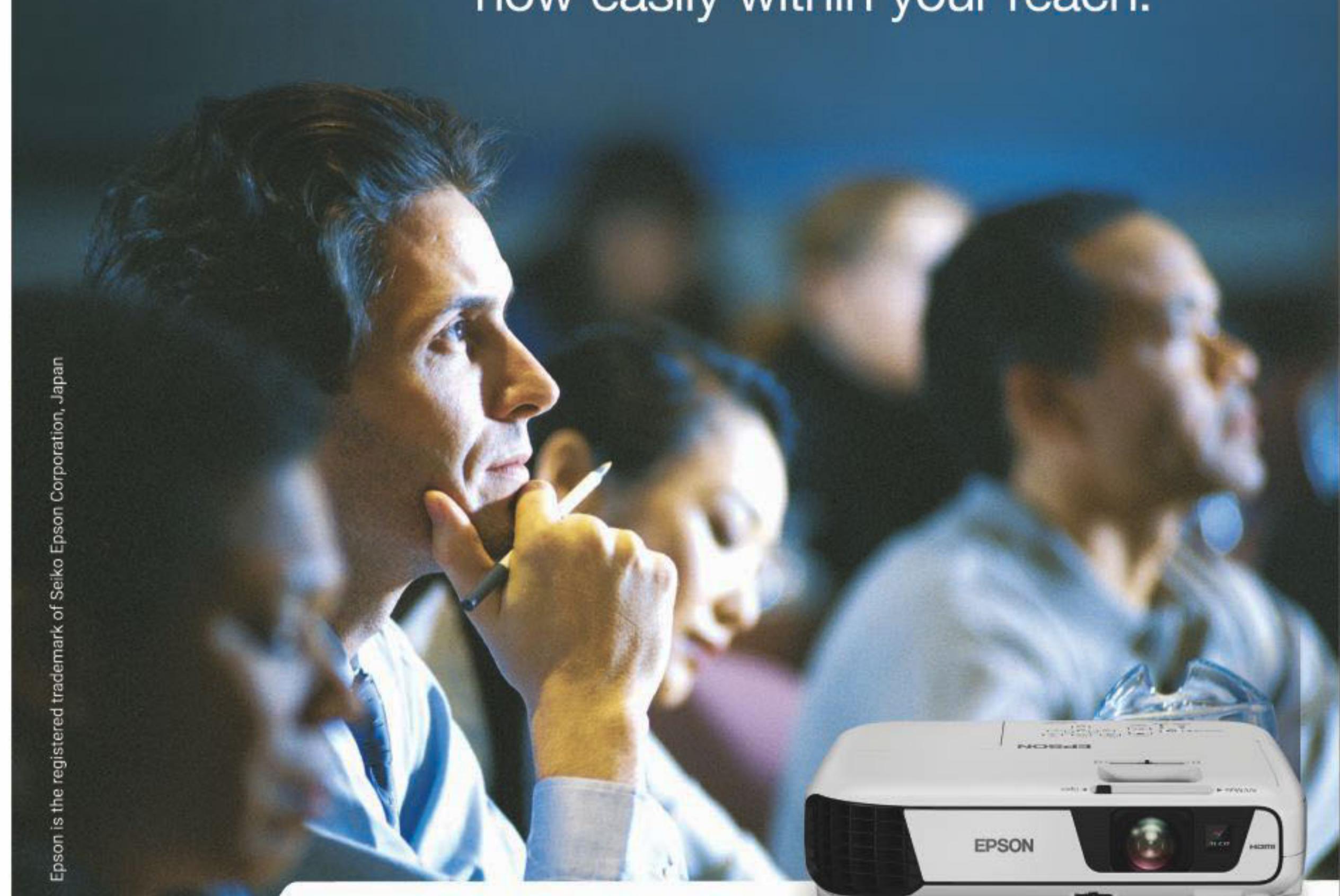
He was speaking at the central general council of Khelafat Majlis, a component in the BNP-led 20-party alliance, at the capital's Mahanagar Natyamancha.

Fakhrul said a strong and independent election commission was a must for ensuring fair polls. "We therefore hope the

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