

Formulate code of conduct to stop confrontational politics

Experts tell regional confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political scientists at a regional conference yesterday suggested formulating a code of conduct to stop confrontational politics in the country.

They stressed the need for evaluation and reforms of political parties to institutionalise democracy.

They also identified religious extremism, poverty and divisive political culture as the major constraints for democratisation.

The conference on 'Rethinking Political Development: South Asian Security and Democracy' was organised jointly by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Bangladesh Political Science Association (BPSA), and Stamford University Bangladesh at BISS Auditorium in the city.

Foreign Minister M. M. Shreshth Khan spoke as chief guest at the inaugural session chaired by BISS Chairman Muleh R Osmany.

Dr Zillur R Khan, Rosebush University Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin, USA delivered the keynote speech while BISS Director General Maj Gen Muhammad Abdul Matin and

Stamford University Professor ATM Zahurul Huq also spoke.

BPSA President Prof Ataur Rahman said the tendency of the political leaders to prefer politics outside parliament has seriously weakened the role of national legislature, while the 'politics of boycott' by the opposition in the face of ruling party's unaccommodating stances has made the very existence of parliament ineffective.

"The performance of Bangladesh Parliament over the past fourteen years has been so poor that people often take it as a 'house of irrelevant speeches'. Even in its own domain of legislation, the power of the parliament is highly circumscribed," he said.

The political parties afflicted by the influence of money and muscle are facing an array of challenges to their ability to perform key functions, Prof Rahman said, adding that it is particularly evident in the electoral process where buying of nominations and patronage of ruthless people are regular features.

The main political parties, particularly Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Awami League (AL) differ on the funda-

mentals of governance and ideology. There is little communication between them and both look upon each other as adversaries one trying to prosper at the expense of the other, he observed.

Prof Rahman said, "Intra-party environment and inter-party relations are very important in understanding their dynamics of reforms. The institutionalisation of democratic process within parties may lead to some positive changes, otherwise, the task of reforming the parties remains a mirage."

Each party should have a 'code of conduct' for its members and violators should be taken to tasks in terms of disciplinary measures. In this context, formal evaluation of party leaders and activists may be made, he suggested.

Morshed Khan said, "Our political culture and behaviour still have to adjust and adapt to democratic norms and values. Unfortunately this task is made even more difficult as vested interests seek to tarnish the liberal democratic endeavour and image of Bangladesh."

Bangladesh is ironically often misunderstood in the international arena despite her achievements in economic, health and

social sectors, he lamented.

On political reforms, Dr Zillur R Khan suggested 14th amendment of the constitution incorporating the provision of a second house that could be a viable option for Bangladesh considering the periodic boycotts of the opposition in a unicameral parliament and increasing difficulty in achieving consensus on national goals.

Citing that 90 percent of legislatures in the world are bicameral, he said such a structural change with greater representation of women and other interest groups in the upper house might help create a basis for constructive dialogues among stakeholders in governing and opposition for solving myriad of other problems.

On regional security, Dr Zillur suggested that South Asian nations might consider setting up a Joint Intelligence Commission within Saarc framework to monitor the intelligence reports that are often exaggerated beyond reality.

In any crises both RAW and ISI were eager to provide incendiary intelligence without being sure of their reliability, but unfortunately their prejudiced assessments could easily turn into self-fulfilling prophecies, he noted.

VOTER LIST

Tarique's comment is part of an ill intention

Says Obaidul Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said BNP leader Tarique Rahman has admitted that the alliance government came to power through vote rigging in general election in 2001 by claiming that there are 64 lakh false voters in the existing voter list.

Tarique's comment is part of an ill intention to exclude the real voters from the list and confuse the public opinion against the Chief Election Commissioner's non-compliance with the High Court order and appointment of two new commissioners, said Obaidul Quader in a statement.

"They are making conspiracy to turn Bangladesh into Pakistan and Dhaka into Islamabad by excluding AL supporters from the voter list," he said.

Obaidul Quader said the alliance government, especially the Prime Minister who came to power illegally and misappropriated thousands of crores of taka, have to step down from the power.

"The people want to know how Zia family has become the richest family with the ownership of a few television channels," he said, adding that the government has to seek pardon from the people for killing opposition leaders.

Man jumps from footbridge, run over by truck

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An unidentified youth was killed when he jumped onto a running truck from a footbridge in the port city yesterday.

Police said the accident occurred at around 2:00pm on Dewanhat Over-Bridge when the man aged around 20 was trying to jump onto the rear portion of a speeding truck which was carrying scrap iron and CI sheets.

But the man fell down only to be ran over by another speeding truck coming from the behind and died on the spot.

Kotwali police recovered the body and sent it to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) morgue for autopsy.

The on duty police officer said the victim might have been attempting to steal some scrap from the truck.

Police filed a case in this connection.

OIS offers Cambridge Primary Programme

Oxford International School (OIS) has become the first school in Dhaka to offer Cambridge International Primary Programme (CIPP) for students aged between five and 11, says a press release.

The CIPP was launched at a ceremony held at the school's Qudrat-I-Khuda Auditorium yesterday, with school's President Shakhat Hussain in the chair.

Dr M Asaduzzaman, chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC), attended the ceremony as the chief guest. Dr Mark Bartholomew, South Asian Regional Manager for Cambridge International Examination (CIE), and Mark Parkinson, Principal Head of School, OIS, also spoke.

The CIPP places emphasis on development of children's skills and competence through activity-based learning approach.

JMB member arrested at Bagmara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday arrested a JMB member from Taherpur Bazar at Bagmara in Rajshahi.

Emdadul Haque, of Anulia village in Durgapur upazila was held from his relative's house, said a Rab press release.

Majored in Chemistry from Jahangirnagar University, Emdadul joined JMB after JMB Ehsar Saikat and suicide squad member Wasim invited him.

He also took part in anti-outlaw operations of JMB in Bagmara, said sources.



Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil launches a book titled 'Muktijuddher Ranangan Thekey Major Ziar Palayan' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. Freedom fighter Siru Bangalee has written the book.

JUDGE KILLING CASE

Date for charge framing shifted for fourth time

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Barisal Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal yesterday shifted the date for framing charges in the case of murder of two judges at Jhalakati for the fourth time.

The tribunal was scheduled to frame charges yesterday but it again fixed the date for framing charges on January 23.

As Judge of the tribunal M A Matin went on leave for a week from January 15, AKM Nasiruddin Mahmud, the second additional district and sessions judge, was in charge of the tribunal.

Out of the six charge-sheeted

accused, four persons, including JMB suicide squad member Iftekhar Hasan Al Mamun alias Mamun Ali and his accomplice Sultan, are in police custody in Barisal Central Jail.

The two other arrested accused are Ataur Rahman Sunny and Abdul Awal Arif.

According to the law, all the four arrested accused are to be produced before the tribunal for framing of charges.

But Sunny and Awal could not be produced before the court as they are on police remand in another place in connection with other cases.

Zia's birth anniversary observed

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The 70th birth anniversary of late president Ziaur Rahman, founder of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), was observed yesterday.

The ruling BNP and its front organisations have taken up a two-day programme across the country to mark the day.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, also the BNP chairperson, and her senior party colleagues placed wreaths at the Mazar of Ziaur Rahman at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar at 11:30am yesterday. Later, a special munajat was offered for the peace of the departed soul.

The front organisations of BNP also placed wreaths at his mazar. A

programme was also organised at the Shilpakala Academy to mark the day.

The Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB) organised a blood donation programme at Tejgaon in the capital.

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal observed the birth anniversary of Zia by cutting cakes at the Madhu's Canteen on Dhaka University campus. The former Chhatra Dal leaders also observed the day by cutting cakes at the Ramna Restaurant.

Former President Ziaur Rahman was born on January 19 in 1936 in Gabtoli upazila of Bogra.

Shaheed Asad day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 37th death anniversary of Shaheed Asad who sacrificed his life during the mass upsurge in 1969.

Shaheed Asad Parishad chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the day including mourning procession from the foot of the Aparajeyo Bangla of Dhaka University.

They will lay wreaths on the graveyard of Shaheed Asad at Dhana of Shibpur in Narsingdi. A discussion on 'Mass upsurge of 1969 and the Liberation War' will be held at Mukhtangan in the city at 3:00pm.

President Dr Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina in separate messages paid tribute to Asad, the martyr of '69 whose sacrifice led to the fall of the autocratic force and sparked momentum to the Liberation War movement.

Gono-Sangskriti Front will hold a cultural programme at TSC Road Island at Dhaka University while Workers Party chalked out programmes including placing of wreaths, discussion and rally.

32 injured in Munshiganj road accident

BDNEWS, Munshiganj

At least 32 people were injured in collision between a bus and a truck on Dhaka-Mawa highway near Samapur under Srinagar upazila yesterday.

The accident involved a Mawa-bound bus and a Dhaka-bound iron rod-laden truck, witnesses said.

The injured were rushed to different Hospitals in Munshiganj and Dhaka. Drivers of both the vehicles fled the scene immediately after the accident.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura



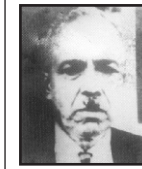
Advocate Rafiq Akbar Nanna, president of Magura District Bar Association, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Magura Sadar Hospital on Wednesday night at the age of 67.

He left behind his two sons, two daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

Rafiq Akbar, elder brother of local Awami League lawmaker Prof MS Akbar, was elected the president of Magura Bar Association eight times.

He was buried at Magura municipality graveyard after namaz-e-janaza on Magura Judge Court premises and Nomani Eidgah Maidan.

Death anniversary



The 39th death anniversary of Advocate Madar Baksh, a member of Bengal Legislative Assembly, founder of Rajshahi University and language movement veteran, will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a discussion will be held at Loknath High School in Rajshahi at 4:00pm.

Madar Baksh Ideal School will also arrange a milad mahfil at 10:00am to mark the day.

Latifur Rahman

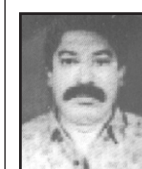


Former Deputy General Manager (DGM) of Rupali Bank Limited Latifur Rahman died of a cardiac arrest early yesterday at the age of 68, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and two daughters. Latifur Rahman started his professional life in 1961 as an officer of Muslim Commercial Bank Limited and retired from his job in 1995 as the DGM of Rupali Bank.

His kulkhwani will be held at his own house at 1/7 B, Shahjahan road, Mohammadpur in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow. Friends and relatives have been requested to attend and pray for the salvation of his departed soul.

Chehlum



The chehlum of Jahangir Alam Bachchu, a social worker, will be held today at his house at Faridabad in the city, says a press release.

Bachchu passed away due to cardiac arrest on December 5.

JATIYATABADI AINJIBI FORUM CONVENTION

Huda group forms central committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP lawyers led by Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda announced a 301-member central committee of the Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum (JAF) at its national convention yesterday.

Barrister Nazmul Huda was named as its president and Barrister Aminul Haque as general secretary at the convention held on the Supreme Court premises in the city.

Speaking as the chief guest, Barrister Mainul Hosen called on the lawyers to be united for the sake of democracy and nationalism. Otherwise, the judiciary system will weaken, he added.

He also urged all the members of the forum to work together.

Nazmul Huda said, "We formed the forum in 1991 but failed to strengthen our position due to lack of dynamic leadership."

"We have to strengthen our position before the next election to the Supreme Court Bar Association, which will be held in March," he added.

The minister also cut a 70-pound cake at the convention to mark the 70th birth anniversary of late president Ziaur Rahman.

Leaders of different district units of the forum attended the convention.

At the yesterday's convention, the forum also named State Minister for Law Barrister Shahjahan Omar as senior vice-president, Zainul Abedin as joint general secretary, Advocate Toimur Alam Khondoker as organising secretary, Assistant Attorney General Md Atiqul Karim as literary secretary and Md Shahjada as office secretary.

TH Khan was named the chief advisor of the committee while Barrister Moudud Ahmed, Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, Sheikh Razzak Ali, Barrister Mainul Hosen, Ziaur Rahman Khan, Moazzem Hossain Alal MP, Ruhul Kuddus Talukder, Mahub Uddin Ahmed were made advisory committee members.

In October last year, Huda, who was the vice-president of the forum, unilaterally dissolved the central committee before forming a 501-member convening committee headed by him.

Soon after the announcement of the new body, JAF President TH Khan, and its Secretary General and Telecommunications Minister Aminul Haq gathered in an emergency meeting to oust Huda and BNP Law Secretary Advocate Joinul Abedin from the JAF for their anti-organisational activities.

Tribal youth killed at Kalapara

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A tribal youth died at Kalapara hospital here yesterday morning 11 hours after he was critically injured in an attack by a gang of hoodlums.

Mon Chin Than, 38, a Rakhain youth, was injured when the gang led by one Gomes hit him with sharp weapons at Pakia Rakhain village on Wednesday night, police said. He was admitted to Kalapara Upazila Health Complex where he died at 9:00am yesterday.

The police arrested Gomes in the afternoon after a case was filed with the Kalapara Police Station.



Communications Minister Nazmul Huda inaugurates the national convention of Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum on the Supreme Court premises in the city yesterday by releasing pigeons.

14 injured as BNP factions clash at Sitakunda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

At least 13 activists of two rival BNP groups were injured yesterday in a clash at MM Jute Mills in Sitakunda upazila of the district.

The injured were identified as Mominul Haq, Khaled, Shah Alam, Anisul Haq, Abul Kahsem, Rafique, Anwar Hossain, Sirajul Islam, Nuruzzaman, Saiful Islam, Tajul Islam, Moslem Uddin, Shafiqul Azam and Shafi Ullah and the first eight men were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), police said.

Officer-in-Charge of Sitakunda

Police Station Md Mohiuddin said the clash began at around 10:00am yesterday between feuding groups of CBA President Abul Bashar Chowdhury and Nurul Islam.

"The groups were locked in clash over leadership dispute on the mill area," he further said.

Abul Bashar group won the last CBA election, defeating Islam group, on December 14, sources said.

Both groups were equipped with iron rods and bamboo and wooden sticks during the half-an-hour clash before a team of Sitakunda PS arrived the spot to bring the situation under control.

LOOTING AT JEWELLERY SHOP

5 Sylhet JCD men jailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A court in Sylhet has sentenced five cadres of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, student wing of ruling BNP, to rigorous imprisonment of 2 and a half years each in a case of vandalism and looting a business firm in the city.

All the convicts have been absconding since the incident, police claimed.

Magistrate Tofayel Islam of the Speedy Trial Tribunal in a judgement on Wednesday acquitted Imrul Kayes Imon, another JCD cadre who is also at large.

According to prosecution, the JCD cadres Jami and Taher along with five others parked a private car in front of the Ghoroni Jewellers at Zindabazar at about 9:00pm on August 21st last year.

As the shopkeepers asked them to free the space, an altercation followed between them.

Atone stage, the JCD cadres armed with deadly weapons went on a rampage and looted gold ornaments and caused critical injuries to Afzal Ahmed and Azmal Ahmed.

Iqbal Ahmed, another brother of the injured, filed a case with Sylhet Kotwali Police Station in this connection accusing Zami, Taher, Imrul Kayes Imran, Tipu, Jahangir and Kamal.

The business community also observed strikes demanding stern action against them.

Two get life for killing one in Sylhet

UNB, Sylhet

A Speedy Trial Tribunal here on Wednesday sentenced two people to life imprisonment in a murder case.

The convicts were identified as Shalik Miah, 35, and Koyes Miah, 40.

According to the prosecution, the convicts killed Jamiruddin as a sequel to a previous enmity at Ramdhana Kararpar village in Bishwanath Upazila on November 10, 2000.

After examining records and witnesses, Judge Biplob Goswami handed down the verdict.

The court acquitted three other accused as allegations brought against them could not be proved.



Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may also occur over the country during late night till morning. Met Office said, predicting slight rise in night temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 30.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 11.2 degrees at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:36pm today and rises at 6:43am. 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	28.1	16.0	90	53
Chittagong	28.0	18.0	76	94
Rajshahi	27.4	12.4	98	55
Khulna	29.8	16.8	100	65
Barisal	29.5	18.6	100	77
Sylhet	26.3	15.9	89.7	2
Cox's Bazar	28.3	18.5	85	86

Discussion

Swadhinota Forum Sangsad organises a discussion to mark the 70th birth anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman with Law Minister Moudud Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Cover unveiling

Sonarong, a literary magazine, organises a function to unveil the cover of a book titled 'Chalachitracharja Alamgir Kabir' to mark the 17th death anniversary of noted filmmaker Alamgir Kabir. Venue: Lecture Theatre, DU.

Art contest

Zia Shishu Kishore Sangadnan organises an art contest for children to mark the 70th birth anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman. Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy. Time: 3:00pm.

Photography exhibition

Neer organises the 50th solo photography exhibition of eminent photographer Nasir Ali Mamun and publication ceremony of an album titled 'GURU'- some rare moments of renowned Artist SM Sultan taken by Nasir Ali Mamun. Venue: Drik Gallery, Dhanmondi. Time: 3:30.



Bangladesh Hindu Boudhha Christian Oikya Parishad stages a demonstration at Mukhtangan in the city yesterday protesting the 'conspiracy' over voter listing.