

No election until demands are met

AL reiterates
The main opposition Awami League (AL) and its front organisations yesterday reiterated their stance for no election until their demands are met.

The demands included reforms in electoral systems and cancellation of the appointments of chief election commissioner (CEC) and two new election commissioners.

Joint operation in Sundarbans to recover looted arms

Authorities have started a joint operation in Sundarbans to recover arms and ammunition looted by robbers from a local forest camp.

Forest Department, Coast Guard, police and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) are jointly taking part in the operation.

'Community health care system can ensure quality service'

Participants at a meeting laid stress on the community managed health care system to ensure a sustainable health care system in the country, says a press release.

The system helps creating capacity of community people, raises awareness and provides quality services at community level, they added.

Yearly 80,000 patients are receiving health services through 37 Health Care Centres of the partners including referral hospital, static clinics and community clinics.

History of violence leads to awkward silence

DU VC tells workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The world is full of violence, domination, internal conflict and human rights violation in this century and it is important to process and negotiate the memories of violence among the countries, said Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University (DU) Prof SMA Faiz yesterday.

Prof Faiz was speaking at the inaugural session of a three-day workshop on 'Memory and Amnesia in the South: How Societies Process traumatic Memories of Violence and Conflict' at Brac Centre in the city.

and how representations of the past influence current behaviour and policies.

'Big US firms seek for liberal arts graduates'

The education curriculum of the ULAB will help build individuals with free mind of world standard, said Ms Judith Chammas, the Charge d'Affaires of the USA.

Ahmed chaired the seminar. Besides, Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Rafiqul Islam and Director of Academic Affairs Dr Kazi Anis Ahmed spoke on the occasion.

She was speaking at a seminar on the Liberal Arts organised by University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday, says a press release.

The seminar was attended by a number of principals of renowned English & Bengali medium schools, colleges, UGC members, Managing Directors & HR heads of multinational companies, eminent educationists, VCs of different universities, journalists, representatives of NGOs & international organisations.

Ms Chammas said, "In some renowned universities of the USA, Liberal Arts education system is prevalent. Big industrial firms of the USA seek for the graduates educated under Liberal Arts."

Member of the Board of Governors Mr Kazi Inam Ahmed and Deans of different schools of ULAB, faculty members and officials were also present in the seminar.

Professor Omar Rahman of Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB) was the special guest in the occasion.



Ms Judith Chammas, US Charge d'Affaires, speaks at a seminar on the Liberal Arts organised by University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday.

Chairperson of Department of International Relations Dr Amena Mohsin and Prof Akmal Hossain also addressed the workshop.

Dr Hamida Hossain, Dr Niaz Zaman, Dr Harun-or-Rashid and Prof BK Jahangir were present on the occasion.

In the second session, Dr Imtiaz Ahmed of Dhaka University presented a paper focusing on historicising of the 1971 genocide in the country while Farooq Sobhan Dar of Quaid-I-Azam University of Pakistan presented a paper titled 'Impact of Communal Riots in the Punjab on the Memories of the People of the Province'.

In the last session of the day, Sean Field of Cape Town University in his paper discussed the memories of Rwandan refugees in post-apartheid Cape Town while Mahbubur Rahman of Rajshahi University narrated in his paper the difficulties and challenges of reconstructing memories of the liberation war at the local level by taking the case of Gaibandha district as an example.

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Family members of Asad place wreaths on the memorial to of Shaheed Asad in front of Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the city yesterday.

Shaheed Asad Day observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shaheed Asad Day was observed yesterday in the country commemorating the supreme sacrifice of the student leader and the days of mass uprising of 1969 that led the nation towards independence.

On this day, Asaduzzaman, a student of Dhaka University, was killed as police opened fire on a procession brought out by the Students Action Committee.

Different organisations took elaborate programmes to observe the day.

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Bangladesh Chhatra Moitri, Workers' Party and Bangladesh Chhatra Union placed wreaths on the memorial plaque of Shaheed Asad in front of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Chhatra Union also held a meeting there.

Speakers at the meeting lamented that though we won independence in 1971, the dream of non-exploitative, non-communal and democratic Bangladesh for which Asad laid down his life is still unfulfilled.

Bangladesher Samyabadi Dal yesterday held a meeting at its Tophkana office where speakers called upon all to beef up movement against the ruling BNP-Jamaat alliance to free the country from the evil grasp of the alliance.

WEAVERS RECEIVE GRANTS

'Govt keen to develop handloom industries'

BSS, Sylhet

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said yesterday that the government is very keen to develop the handloom industries and ensure the welfare of the people of this sector.

"Looms are closely linked to our heritage and culture. These are part of our history and tradition," he said while distributing grants among the flood-affected marginal Manipuri loom owners, provided by the Bangladesh Tant Board (BTB).

Deputy Commissioner SM Faisal Alam presided over the ceremony while chairman of the Board M Akram Hossain was present as special guest.

Divisional Commissioner of Sylhet Abdul Hakim Mondol, members of the Board Dr MR Sharif, Dr M A Azim Jahangir and president of BNP Sylhet City unit Ariful Haq Chowdhury spoke on the occasion.

Referring to the low price and high quality of Benarasi and Jamdani saris, the finance minister said "the quality of our Benarasi is better than the Indian ones." However, he said, the weavers have to keep its design up-to-date.

He urged the BTB to provide technical and other supports to the weavers to help them improve the design and expand the market of the saris.

Saifur Rahman said the main objective of our economic development is to alleviate poverty.

"Our resources are very limited. However, we would be able to make good progress if the resources are utilised properly," he added.

Appreciating the lifestyle and high literacy rate in the Manipuri community, the finance minister urged the BTB to set up 'Tant Palli' (loom village) and design training centres in Sylhet for the Manipuri weavers.

The minister handed over cheques for Tk 6.30 lakh to 281 weavers.

Voter listing work going on: EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) in a press release yesterday said that the voter listing work is going on.

There is no confusion about the ongoing work of preparing the voter list, it added.

At a meeting on Thursday, the chief election commissioner decided to file an appeal against the High Court's January 4 directives on the voter list.

Former minister Rashid passes away

BSS, Dhaka

Veteran freedom fighter and former minister Engineer Abdur Rashid passed away at the BSMMUH in Dhaka yesterday at the age of 68.

He left behind his wife, two sons and three daughters, and a large number of admirers to mourn his death.

He was elected lawmaker four times from Daudkandi constituency.

Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain expressed deep shock at the death of Engineer Rashid.

The country has lost a veteran politician and social worker at his death, the minister said in a condolence message.

Fakhrul Islam Taran

Fakhrul Islam Taran, former general secretary of Ward 76 Awami League in Dhaka, passed away on Thursday at the age of 60, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and a host of admirers to mourn his death.

Dhaka City AL President Mohammad Hanif and General Secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and leaders of Joybanga Sangskritik Oikya Jote, Awami Shilpi Goshthi and Narinda Lions Club expressed deep shock at his death.

Rahela Siddiquee

Rahela Siddiquee, mother of Fazlur Rahman Siddiquee, Mymensingh correspondent of the News Today, passed away due to old age complications on January 17 at the age of 75.

She left behind two sons and four daughters.

She was buried at the Pulpur Madrasa graveyard.

Her qulkhwan will be held today at Balia Borabari.

Fatematuz Zohra

Fatematuz Zohra, mother of Chittagong Hill Tracts correspondent of The New Age AKM Zaboorul Huq, died at her village home at Jamalpur on Thursday at the age of 80.

She left behind four sons, three daughters and a host of relatives to mourn her death. She was buried at her family graveyard.

Janaza

Namaz-e-janaza of Alhaj Mir AKM Golam Quader, a freedom fighter and chairman of Nishu Advertising Limited, will be held at Noorpur GM Hat at Phulgazi, Feni, after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

He passed away at a Bangkok hospital on Tuesday. He will be buried at his family graveyard at Noorpur.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the janaza.

End anarchy in edn sector

Teachers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of teachers of both government and non-government high schools yesterday demanded immediate government measures to end the anarchy prevailing in the country's education sector.

They made the demand at a meeting with the Awami League's Education and Human Resource Development Secretary at the party office at Dhanmondi in the city.

The teachers said the BNP-Jamaat alliance government has established a reign of terror in the education sector through sacking and transferring them on narrow political interests.

They also demanded immediate rehabilitation of those teachers who were sacked and stopping

harassment of other teachers. They also protested politicisation of the education sector by the alliance government.

The meeting demanded implementation of the policy taken during the AL regime to upgrade the job of the teacher as first class and set up a separate directorate for secondary education.

The teachers also demanded cancellation of 50 percent direct appointment by the government in the post of head master at government high schools.

Expressing solidarity with the teachers' demand, Nurul Islam Nahid said the AL is working to establish a modern science-based education in the country.

Shikhak-Karmochari Parishad Convenor MA Awal Siddiqui presided over the meeting.

No raised cancer risk from mobile phones: Study

REUTERS, London

Using a mobile phone does not increase the risk of developing the most common type of brain tumor, according to a study.

After a four-year survey, scientists at the Institute of Cancer Research in London and three British universities found no link between regular, long-term use of cell phones and glioma.

"Overall, we found no raised risk of glioma associated with regular mobile phone use and no association with time since first use, lifetime years of use, cumulative hours of use, or number of calls," said Professor Patricia McKinney, of the University of Leeds, in a report in the British Medical Journal.

She added that the results were consistent with the findings of most studies done in the United States and Europe.

Anthony Swerdlow, a co-author of the report, from the Institute of Cancer Research, said the survey is larger than any of the other published studies and part of a collaboration involving 13 countries.

During the past two decades, the use of mobile phones has risen rapidly worldwide but there has been no hard evidence to substantiate fears that the technology causes health problems ranging from headaches to brain tumors.

But Swerdlow said it could be due to over-reporting of patients.

War fears, tension wreck lives in Sri Lanka

REUTERS, Trincomalee

Unnerved by fears that civil war may resume, perhaps within weeks, tension between communities is spiralling in Sri Lanka's northeast and growing numbers are fleeing their homes, aid workers and residents say.

The area, the only truly multi-ethnic part of the island republic, saw horrendous blood-letting in a two-decade civil war which was halted by a 2002 ceasefire.

Now, all-too familiar intercommunal tensions have started to resurface.

In a village by a military base near the northeastern port of Trincomalee, Pannathurai Malika said families from the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil and Muslim minorities had been able to live alongside each other until late December.

"Then, one soldier was killed in the village," said Malika, a 47-year-old Tamil woman who used to own a general store.

"The Sinhalese people in the village said the Tamil families had conspired to kill him. One night, there were six shots fired at my house."

Days later, after the almost exclusively Sinhalese military professed ignorance over the attacks on Tamil villagers, all 30 Tamil and Muslim families fled to a nearby church, leaving their village -- set up 16 years ago as an ethnic co-operation pilot project -- to the Sinhalese.

Malika's shop, damaged in the shooting, was left shuttered.

Sri Lanka's north is almost exclusively Hindu Tamil, while the south is predominantly Sinhalese, who are mainly Buddhist. The Muslims, who live mostly in the east, also speak Tamil but many consider themselves a separate community.

DHAKA TODAY logo

Seminar: Jica Alumni Association of Bangladesh organises a seminar on 'Disaster management in Bangladesh' with Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, minister for food and disaster management, as chief guest. Venue: Blam auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Human chain: Bangladesh Parishad Andolon will hold a rally and form a human chain demanding eviction of illegal structures near all rivers and water bodies of the city. Venue: Rayer Bazar Martyred Intellectual Mausoleum. Time: 4:00pm.

Rotary Dhaka Central: The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30pm.

Rotary Dhaka North West: The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 7:00pm.

WEATHER TODAY logo

Dry weather likely
UNB, Dhaka
Weather is likely to remain dry over the country during the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today and light to moderate fog may occur during late night until morning.

Night temperature may fall slightly over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions and it may remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 29.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 12.2 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:37pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

Table with 3 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening)



Leaders of Communist Party of Bangladesh lay wreaths at Paltan maidan in the city yesterday to commemorate the people killed in a bomb blast in 2001.