



BNP Chairperson and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presides over a meeting of the BNP Parliamentary Board at her office in the city yesterday.

BNP nominates Moinul Islam for Manikganj by-poll

UNB, Dhaka

The ruling BNP has nominated Moinul Islam Khan as its candidate for by-election to the parliamentary seat for Manikganj-4 constituency.

The by-election is scheduled for April 19.

A party announcement said the BNP Parliamentary Board took the decision at its meeting held yesterday with BNP Chairperson and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair.

"The board interviewed seven candidates and unanimously nominated Moinul Islam Khan as the party candidate for the by-election," it said.

The parliamentary seat fell vacant after the death of Muhammad Shamsul Islam Khan MP, also a former minister, on January 22 this year.

"Vote for the BNP candidate to continue the flow of development, peace and progress," the BNP board urged the voters.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Oli Ahmed Bir Bikram MP, Chief Whip Khandokar Delwar Hossain, Dr RA Gani, Health Minister Dr Mosharraf Hossain, and Law Minister Moudud Ahmed attended the meeting.

Jubo League leaders get anticipatory bail

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday granted ad interim anticipatory bail to Jubo League President Jahangir Kabir Nanak and three others when they surrendered in connection with a case of vandalism.

Paltan police filed the case against them for alleged vandalism in the capital during the half-day countrywide hartal on March 13.

The three others are Jubo League General Secretary Mirza Azam MP, Jubo Mahila League President Nazma Akhter and Fazilatunnisa Bappy.

Granting anticipatory bail, the division bench of Justice MA Rashid and Justice Mizanur Rahman Bhuiyan also issued a rule upon the government to explain why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail.

Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru and Sheikh Akhtarul Islam appeared for the petitioners.

Formulate nat'l policy for service sectors

Seminar speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called upon the government to formulate a national policy guideline for service sectors.

They said service sectors should not be privatised on wholesale basis following the prescription of international lending agencies.

The seminar titled 'Public services and public rights' was organised by Sushasoner Jonno Procharavijan (Supro), an NGO, at the National Press Club in the city.

The seminar was organised to mark the Asia region's conference of World Social Forum-2006 which is scheduled to be held at Karachi in Pakistan from March 24 to 29.

The speakers observed that the gap between the rich and the poor is widening day by day due to privatisation of service sectors like health, education and telecommunication.

It is often assumed that the private sector is more efficient than the public sector, but both empirical studies and theory suggest that this

assumption is wrong, they added.

The speakers said major causes of malfunctioning of public service sectors in poor countries are corruption and bureaucracy which are in turn absolutely political problems.

Privatisation, therefore, induces corruption by transferring economic and political power to an interest group that rarely represents the poor, they added.

Terming education a very significant sector, the speakers said privatisation of education would cut the access of common people to it.

They also expressed concern over foreign direct investment and said it will replace labour intensive industry by technology-based one and will make many people jobless.

Presenting the keynote paper, Md Shamsuddoha of Supro said privatisation of service sectors will reduce the growth of underprivileged class while the state will lose its welfare image.

Awami League lawmaker Dr Abdur Razzak, BNP lawmaker Tasnim Rana, Gonotantrik Party lawmaker Monoranjan Sheel Gopal,

JSD General Secretary Abdul Malek Ratan, and Rokeya Kabir from BNPS spoke at the seminar moderated by Supro President Abdul Awal.

13 counterfeit notes recovered, couple arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police arrested a couple and recovered 13 counterfeit notes of Tk 500 at Rajshahi Bus Terminal in Rajshahi city yesterday.

According to police, the couple, Mithu and Sonia, confessed to trading fake notes and said they got the notes from a seller in Kushtia.

A fruit vendor informed the police on suspicion when the couple went to him to buy fruits with a fake note.

Later, the police produced the two before a magistrate court that sent them to jail hajat.

Japan to provide Tk 29.4cr food aid

UNB, Dhaka

Japan will provide food aid of 500 million yen, equivalent to Tk 29.4 crore, in support of UN World Food Programme's Integrated Food Security Activities in Bangladesh.

The contribution will help improve the nutritional status of some 1.1 million vulnerable people in Bangladesh, said WFP Country Director Douglas Broderick.

The government of Japan has been a food aid donor to Bangladesh since independence, and this latest contribution restates Japan's commitment to the partnership with the people of Bangladesh and with WFP.

"We hope our contribution will help the marginalised people in Bangladesh to be more resilient against difficulties in their lives," Japanese Ambassador Matsushiro Horiguchi observed.

The contribution to WFP in Bangladesh forms more than one third of a donation of 1.385 billion yen (approximately 12.0 million US dollars) approved by the government of Japan on Friday at the conclusion of WFP's 3rd annual consultation with the government officials in Tokyo, said a Japan Embassy release.