

Evil forces have started surrendering like in '71

Dr Kamal tells discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Termining 2006 as the year of victory over militancy and misrule of the government, Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said the evil forces have started surrendering to the unity of people as the Pakistan Army did before the joint forces in 1971.

Speaking at Independence Day discussion organised by Bangladesh-Bharat Friendship Society at Cirdap auditorium in the city, Dr Kamal said people are now ready to fight against looting of public properties and human killings.

"Bangladesh is not the property of any landlord. Those who think themselves as lords and depriving the people of their rights by creating insecurity and terrorism will have to surrender on the soil of Bangla," said the eminent jurist as chief guest.

"Don't think we are weak. Come to the battlefield. You are just 1 percent and the 14-crore people are

on our side. The youths, as they did in '71, will not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for the second victory from injustice and domination," he said emphatically.

Dr Kamal alleged that some vested quarters carryout anti-India propaganda to create divisions, but India should not listen to them, rather the friendship established through the liberation war should be strengthened for mutual benefits.

"We have to think how we can jointly reap the result of victory," he added.

Awami League Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader said some political parties flatter India for clinging to power, but make anti-India propaganda ahead of elections.

"Our relationship with India is not of that kind, rather it is based on brotherhood and gratefulness," he said recalling India's contribution to the liberation war and its post-war assistance.

Obaid said the patrons of mili-

tancy and terrorism in the country are the common enemies of both Bangladesh and India and stressed the need for united fight against them.

Congratulating the Bangladesh people, acting Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Sarbjit Chakrabarti said his country feels proud of assisting Bangladesh in achieving its independence.

Friendship with Bangladesh will be strengthened further in future, he said, adding that India wants to share its progress with Bangladesh through mutual cooperation and partnership.

Chaired by former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, the discussion was also addressed by Bangladesh-Bharat Friendship Society General Secretary Aminul Haque Faruk, its presidium members Ismat Kadir Gama and Aminul Islam Bedu and AL leader Barrister Moksedul Islam.

Lanka to hold single country fair in Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

Sri Lanka, which is going to import a bulk amount of medicines from Bangladesh, will hold a single country fair here.

Outgoing Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Dhaka Gamani S Munasinghe said this when he made a farewell call on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday.

During the meeting, it was discussed that Sri Lanka has given a big order of Bangladeshi medicines during the recently held single country Bangladesh Trade Fair in Sri Lanka.

As the prime minister wanted to know the post-Tsunami rehabilitation works in Sri Lanka, the envoy apprised her that post-Tsunami reconstruction and rehabilitation works were still going on and recalled the Bangladesh assistance at the time.

Appreciating Bangladesh people's hospitable quality and cordiality what he saw during his tenure, the envoy thanked Khaleda for her government's support and cooperation in discharging his duties during his tenure here.

Khaleda invited Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse and Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayake through the High Commissioner to visit Bangladesh.



Bangladesh Non-government Primary School Teachers' Association observes hunger strike at Mukhtangan in the city yesterday demanding nationalisation of their jobs.

100 injured as villagers clash

UNB, Kishoreganj

Over 100 people were injured in a fierce clash between two rival groups of villagers at Bhanipur in Bhairab upazila yesterday.

Police said the clash between the two groups -- one led by Motin Master and another by Sattar Member -- ensued at 10:00am following an altercation over a bank cheque.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Seven of the injured, Humayan, Shamim, Faisal, Sumon, Farid Miah, Rafique, and Kafil Uddin, were admitted to Zahurul Islam Medical College Hospital.

100 PERCENT SANITATION Awareness a must to achieve target

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday called for creating awareness among the stakeholders to achieve cent percent sanitation in the country.

They said vigorous campaign about the necessity of sanitation in preserving public health is a must to realise the target.

The roundtable titled 'Media role to achieve 100 percent sanitation' was organised by Dushi Swasthya Kendra (DSK) in collaboration with Water Aid Bangladesh at the National Press Club in the city.

MAHakim, coordinator (Advocacy) of DSK, presented the keynote paper while Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalist (BFUJ) Secretary General Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul moderated the session.

Speaking on the occasion Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) President Altaf Mahmud said the government has to take long-term policy to achieve 100 percent sanitation in the country.

The government, NGOs and the community along with media have to work unitedly to achieve the goal, he added.

Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) President Shafiqul Islam Sabu said, "We have to use all types of media to create awareness among people at grassroots level about the advantage of sanitation."

He also stressed the need for more popular campaign to motivate people to use sanitary latrines.

Presided over by DSK Executive Director Dr Dibalok Sing, the roundtable was also addressed by Country Representative of Water Aid Bangladesh Dr Abdus Sabur, Chief Reporter of Prothom Alo Arun Karmakar, News Editor of Aker Kagoj Khaled Faruki and City Editor of daily Deshbangla Kazi Rafiq.

Mustafa Anwar hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mustafa Anwar, one of the organisers of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra and a poet, is now undergoing treatment at the CCU of Labaid Cardiac Hospital in the city after suffering from serious illness.

Critically ill Anwar's breathing system has been kept active artificially. Doctors said water has accumulated in his lungs while the heart is not functioning properly.

Anwar is one of the ten organisers of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra who shifted Chittagong radio station to Kalurghat from where the then Awami League leader Mohammad Hannan for the first time announced the declaration of independence on behalf of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The organisers then left for Tripura in India when the Pakistani occupation army attacked Kalurghat station on March 30, 1971.

In his response to the attack Anwar said, "They have killed human being, let us kill the animals."

The organisers resumed broadcasting from Tripura on the seventh day of their escape by setting up a transmitter there.

SC Bar election begins today

UNB, Dhaka

Election of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) begins today.

The two-day polls will start at 10:00am and continue until 5:00pm everyday

with one hour recess from 1:00pm. A total of 1,609 voters are expected to cast their votes to elect a 14-member executive committee of the SCBA for one year, court sources said.

Habibul Islam Bhuiyan and Barrister Abdullah Al Mamun are vying for president and secretary from the 4-party alliance government-backed lawyers' forum Jatiyatadabi Ainjibi Oikya Panel while Barrister M Amir-ul Islam and AM Amin Uddin contesting from pro-opposition lawyers' forum Sammilita Ainjibi Samonnay Parishad.

Two other candidates-ABM Nurul Islam and Masud Reza Sobhan--are in the race for the president post as independent candidates. Nurul Islam, who was earlier nominated by the Jatiyatadabi Ainjibi Oikya Panel, refused to withdraw his candidature in favour of Habibul Islam Bhuiyan.

ABM Bayezid, another independent candidate, is contesting the election for secretary.

Programmes for welfare of street children discussed

Plan Bangladesh, a non-govt organisation, yesterday discussed its five-year Programme Unit Strategic Plan (PUSP) with the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) officials for smooth implementation of projects taken for development of children, specially the street children, says a press release.

The discussion was held at the Nagarbhawan auditorium in the city. Plan Bangladesh Country Director Edward Thomas Espey presided over it while DCC Chief Executive Officer Shaifuddin Ahmed was present as the chief guest.

While addressing, the chief guest expressed his satisfaction to Plan Bangladesh for taking comprehensive programmes for development of street children in slum areas in the city. He assured all possible support from DCC for proper functioning of the projects.

Dhaka WASA Commercial Manager Md Nurul Huda Mian and Project Director of GoB-Unicef project Abdul Kader Chowdhury were present as special guests.

Plan Bangladesh Programme Support Manager Haider Wasim Yaqub, Programme Unit Manager Mohammad Masud and FM Shamsul Alam addressed on the occasion.

Rabia Akter, a disadvantaged child made a presentation at the function.

The PUSP has been designed to further promote participation of children and strengthen local government while up-scaling piloted programmes at local and national level through partnership.

A group of street children took part in the discussion and shared their views.

Plan Bangladesh Social Development Adviser Zinnat Afroz conducted the discussion session.

It was followed by a cultural programme.



Bangladesh-Bharat Friendship Society organises a discussion on Independence Day at the Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. Sitting from right are acting Indian High Commissioner Sarbjit Chakrabarti, Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, former Dhaka University vice-chancellor Prof AK Azad Chowdhury and Awami League Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader.

SWEPPER MURDER JB guard on three-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Halim Sikdar, a security guard of Janata Bank's Chakbazar branch, was taken on a three-day remand yesterday on charge of killing Nasima Begum, a female sweeper of the bank.

Nasima was allegedly raped and killed by Halim in the early morning of Monday.

Afsaruddin, a relative of Nasima, filed a murder case accusing Halim with Labagh Police Station the same day.



Appeal for help

A father has appealed for financial assistance for the treatment of his little daughter who has been suffering from severe paralysis, says a press release.

Twenty-seven-month-old Rubiya Khatun has been undergoing treatment for several months but her condition did not improve.

According to doctors, she needs better treatment, which involves a lot of money. But her father, Md Ruhul Amin, a security guard of a private firm and a resident of East Delpara at Fatullah, Narayanganj, could not afford such expensive treatment.

Even he does not have enough money to buy medicines prescribed by the physicians.

He appeals to the generous people to extend a helping hand to save his daughter.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: SM Iftekhar Alam, Account No.-108120741 (STD), Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd, Santinagar Branch, Dhaka.

Interested persons can also contact her father Md Ruhul Amin over telephone. Phone: 7604327 and 0171-633805.

KILLING OF 3 BCL LEADERS IN KUSHTIA BNP MP mastermind Alleges AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kushtia district Awami League yesterday alleged that the local BNP lawmaker was the mastermind behind the killings of three leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the AL, that took place on March 24.

Mahbub Alam Hanif, vice-president of Kushtia district AL, made the allegation against the ruling party lawmaker, Prof Shahidul Islam, at a press conference in the capital.

He also said the lawmaker has been torturing the activists of the AL and its front organisations in his constituency.

When contacted, Prof Shahidul Islam dismissed the allegations as false, saying that AL leader Mahbub is trying to achieve political gains out of this incident. "An outlawed group had claimed the responsibility for the killings of the three youths who hardly had any relation with the BCL," Islam added.

Three BCL activists -- Khan Sanwar Hossain Jibon, vice-president of BCL Mirpur unit of Kushtia, Mizanur Rahman alias

Maznu and Liton Ali -- were stabbed and then strangled at Nouda Azampur village on March 24.

Mahbub, who was defeated in the last national election from Kushtia-2 constituency, told reporters yesterday that Prof Shahidul, also Kushtia district BNP president, has resorted to repression on AL and BCL leaders and activists after the election.

Before the three were killed, the lawmaker's men threatened to teach them a lesson, he said.

"While two outlawed groups had claimed the responsibility for the killings, the local police said BCL's internal feud led to the killings," he said. "How come two groups claim the responsibility for the same incident," he questioned.

The AL leader sought the intervention of State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar in finding out the real culprits and demanded security for his men in the area.

WEATHER TODAY Fall in temperature likely UNB, Dhaka Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country having chances of rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and regions Jessore and Kushtia in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today. Day temperature may fall slightly over the country, Met Office said. Highest temperature 36.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 17.0 degree Celsius at Rangpur. The sun sets in the capital at 6:13pm today and rises at 5:53am tomorrow. 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 34.7 25.5 66 18 Chittagong 34.0 24.0 74 81 Rajshahi 34.0 19.3 40 41 Khulna 35.0 24.2 55 35 Barisal 35.0 26.2 86 49 Sylhet 35.1 24.8 76 42 Cox's Bazar 33.0 24.0 74 74

Dhaka bypass likely to open by June

A portion has already become uneven

BSS, Dhaka

The much-awaited 48-km Dhaka Bypass Road is likely to open to traffic within next two months, but the experts feared that a large portion of the road will become uneven because of inadequate compaction of soil.

"We have reports that there were some irregularities in the construction work of the road from Gazipur to Narayanganj, but we are keen to open it to traffic by June," Additional Chief Engineer of the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) Khondakar Nurul Arefin told the news agency.

Three months ago, the RHD formed a technical committee comprising three BUET professors to probe the irregularities, but it could not submit its report as yet because of lack of necessary documents.

Prof Alamgir Muzibul Haque, head of the committee, said they have submitted a proposal to the RHD for investigation into the technical faults in the construction work but have not yet received any official letter to conduct the inspection.

According to sources, a four-km portion of the road has already become uneven where vehicles have been plying unofficially. The RHD officials estimated that it will cost Tk 25 crore to repair the damaged portion of the road before the formal opening.

The bypass road started at Joydevpur and stretches via Bhulta and Kanchan through Chittagong Highway at Madanpur, connecting the Sylhet National Highway, Executive Engineer of Dhaka Zone Safiul Azam Bhuiyan said.

The four-km road from Bhulta to Kanchan has already become bumpy as the road sinks on less compact soil. Former executive engineer of Narayanganj division Nazmul Haque said last year's flood washed away the soils from the shoulder of the road.

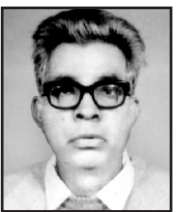
"This is neither a technical fault nor administrative irregularities, this is a regular phenomena for our RHD projects, and just a thick layer of pitch could solve the problems," he added.

But another engineer of the project, preferring anonymity, told the BSS that it is a technical fault because there was no option to do a scientific soil compaction, and without reconstruction, the road is not going to work.

According to BUET technical committee, there are problems in soil compaction as well as in construction work due to unnecessary involvement of too many contractors in the construction work.

Dismissing the allegations of irregularities, Superintendent Engineer of Dhaka circle Fakrul Alam Talukdar said there is no major problem in the road and it will be opened to traffic by June.

Obituary



Monday at the age of 83, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, two daughters, two sons and seven grandchildren.

He was buried at his hometown Daudkandi.

His quikhwani will be held today.

Death anniversary



Today is the sixth death anniversary of Farah Amena Rashid, only daughter of Engineer Mamun Rashid, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhani and doa mahfil will be held at the Wapda Orphanage at Motijheel in the city. Foods will also be distributed among the destitute.

1,550 more held

UNB, Dhaka Police arrested 1,550 people on various charges from different parts of the country in last 24 hours ending at 6:00am yesterday.

During the drive, the law-enforcers also recovered eight firearms and 92 bullets, said an official handout.

RIVER EROSION 3,575 sq km of land to disappear by 2025 Say water experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 3,575 square kilometres of land will disappear by 2025 due to river erosion as a huge amount of sediment from upstream is being dumped into river basins in the country every year, water experts said yesterday.

When huge quantities of sediment mixed with water accumulated in the river basin, the flow of water hits the river banks with greater force, intensifying the river erosion, said engineer Jalaluddin Md Abdul Hye, deputy executive director of Institute of Water Modelling (IWM), while delivering a lecture at a course on 'Water and Flood Management for Journalists'.

"Every year, some 10,000 hectares of land disappear due to river erosion, rendering about 60,000 people homeless," he said.

The Brahmaputra-Jamuna transports 600 metric tons of sediment each year while Padma carries 286 metric tons and Meghna carries one metric ton of sediment, the experts said.

The Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) and the Institute of Water and Flood Management (IWMF), Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET), jointly organised the three-day course at the PIB auditorium in collaboration with the IWM and the Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS).

Hundreds of small shoals have emerged due to accumulation of sediment, changing the course of the rivers, said Dr Mansur Rahman, assistant professor of IWMF.

Water Resources Planning Organisation (WARPO) Director General HS Mozaddad Faruque, IWMF Professors Abul Fazal M Saleh and Rezaur Rahman and Assistant Professor Dr Mashfiqul Salehin and Associate Professor Dr Tarekul Islam also delivered lectures.

'Wage tougher movement to root out dowry'

STAR REPORT

Noted woman leader and writer Maleka Begum called for waging a tougher movement to root out dowry culture from society, terming it a social menace both in Bangladesh and West Bengal.

An action plan is needed to intensify the movement against dowry, she said in her keynote paper on 'Dowry culture and Bengali women' presented at a seminar at Jadavpur University in Kolkata on Monday.

The Women's Studies Centre of the university and Bangiya Sahitya Parishad jointly organised the seminar.

Women of Bangladesh and West Bengal have established their rights through strong movement, but they still fall victim to disparity in the male-dominated society, said Maleka Begum.

"Women of both the countries have

to intensify their movement to eliminate discrimination, especially repression of women in the name of dowry," she added.

Prof Jashodhara Bagchi, chairperson of West Bengal Commission for Women, chaired the seminar while forensic expert Nimal Bagchi discussed the keynote paper.

Prof Jashodhara Bagchi also unveiled a book titled 'Nirbachita Begum: Ardho Shatabdir Samajchitra' edited by Maleka Begum. The social status of women and their role during the period from 1947 to 2000 have been depicted in this three-volume book.

Maleka Begum also attended another seminar organised by Bangiya Sahitya Parishad at its auditorium on March 25 where she presented a keynote paper.



Fourth class government employees stage a demonstration in the city yesterday to press for their demands.

DHAKA TODAY Congregation A national congregation of persons with disabilities, organised by National Alliance of Disabled People's Organisations, will be held. Venue: Paltan Maidan. Time: 9.00am. Discussion Jatiyatadabi Peshajibi Parishad will hold a discussion to mark its seventh founding anniversary. Venue: VIP Lounge of the National Press Club. Time: 3.30pm. Roundtable Bangladesh Enterprise Institute organise a roundtable titled WTO stalled: Is the multilateral system heading for crisis'. Venue: BEI conference room. Time: 3.00pm. Conference A national conference of National Doctors' Forum will be held. Venue: Engineers' Institution Auditorium, Ramna. Time: 9.00am. Discussion Jatiyatadabi Peshajibi Parishad will hold a discussion to mark its seventh founding anniversary. Venue: VIP Lounge of the National Press Club. Time: 3.30pm. Roundtable Bangladesh Enterprise Institute organise a roundtable titled WTO stalled: Is the multilateral system heading for crisis'. Venue: BEI conference room. Time: 3.00pm. Conference A national conference of National Doctors' Forum will be held. Venue: Engineers' Institution Auditorium, Ramna. Time: 9.00am.