

Accept reform proposals or face tougher movement

AL threatens govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) led 14-party opposition combine yesterday reiterated their firm demand for the reforms in electoral laws and caretaker system of government saying they would declare stricter programmes if the government does not accept those immediately.

"We will leave the streets only if the government accepts the reform proposals in 15 to 30 days," said AL Presidium Member Tofail Ahmed at a rally at Mukhtangan in the city protesting police attacks on the 14-party leaders and activists during a sit-in programme on April 19.

Otherwise, he said, the 14-party leaders and activists will not go back to the pavilion, rather declare tougher programmes including laying sieges across the country.

Calling upon the opposition leaders and activists for preparing for future agitation programme he said, "Campaigns for the reforms across the country will lead to elections."

The BNP-Jamaat government will never be allowed to hold the elections of blueprint, Tofail Ahmed

said criticising LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan's comment that the AL will not be able to go to power in the next polls.

"Mannan Bhuiyan could dare to make such comments, as the government has set their own people in the key posts like Chief Election Commissioner and the President," he noted.

He alleged that the alliance government has totally politicised the police administration appointing pro-BNP and Jamaat people in the administration. Police attack on the journalists in Chittagong and agitation of people in Kansat for power are its practical evidences, he noted.

Speaking as the chief guest, AL Presidium Member Abdul Razzak said the imposition of section 144 on the peaceful programme is against democracy.

He termed the killings of farmers in Kansat as unprecedented saying the government has denied the just demands of the people failing to meet their required electricity.

AL leader Suranjit Sen Gupta said Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is guided by the Jamaat, not the

progressive forces within her party.

Terming the police administration as pro-BNP and Jamaat, he said there are police in favour of Liberation War as well who will in time respond to the police attacks on the 14-party leaders and activists.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haque Inu reiterated the demand that there will be no dialogue with the government if it includes Jamaat-e-Islami.

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon alleged that the ruling alliance is trying to divert public attention from the reform issues through police attacks at different parts of the country.

AL Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader, Communist Party of Bangladesh Executive President Mainuddin Khan Badal and other 14-party leaders Dilip Barua, Nurul Islam, Zakir Hossain also addressed the rally presided by AL City Unit General Secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya.

DMP to train cops to check misbehaviour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) is training up its forces so that they do not misbehave with senior political leaders, journalists and women during hartal or other programme.

The training programme has been undertaken in the wake of unpleasant incidents between the police and journalists and political activists especially during political programmes like hartal which are expected to rise in the coming days.

"I have asked my forces not to misbehave with senior [political] leaders, journalists—particularly photojournalists, and women during hartal," DMP Commissioner SM Mizanur Rahman yesterday told journalists at a views-exchanging programme at the Rajarbagh Telecom Auditorium.

Senior police officials of DMP were present at the programme with crime reporters and photojournalists.

Mizanur Rahman said he even asked the police not to arrest any picket if it were to lead to an entanglement with journalists.

Referring to the assault on a veteran journalist in Chittagong, the DMP commissioner said he is personally ashamed of the incident and sorry for it.

The commissioner said the administration is trying to modernise the behaviour of police.

A number of journalists at the programme said many journalists including photographers have no orientation about their profession and sometimes act beyond their jurisdiction.

The DMP recently arranged a two-day training programme at the Rajarbagh Police Lines where video footages of different incidents were shown to policemen so that they could correct their behaviour.

Dashmina UNO removed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Dashmina has been removed in the face of agitation by the local people.

Over 200 people under the banner of Nagorik Committee confined AKM Masudur Rahman at his residence since Friday evening.

Being informed, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) of Patuakhali Rabiul Haq rushed to the spot at about 10:00am yesterday and told journalists that the UNO has been removed.

The agitation began after Rahman was the upazila parishad mosque under lock and key on Friday as a sequel to his feud with upazila Magistrate Anwar Hossain.

The agitating people broke the lock and laid a siege to the residence of the UNO demanding his immediate removal.

They brought out a victory procession in the town after hearing the news of removal.

Earlier, they observed a half-day hartal called by the Nagorik Committee.

Death anniversary

The 22nd death anniversary of justice Abdul Jabbar Khan, former speaker of Pakistan National Assembly, will be observed today, says a press release.

He was born in village Baherchar Khudrakathi under Babuganj thana in Barisal on January 1, 1901.

Fateha will be offered at his graveyard in Dhaka and a doa mahfil will be held at his village home.

Syed Mozammel Huq

Today is the 10th death anniversary of Syed Mozammel Huq, special correspondent of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), says a press release.

During his long journalistic career, he also worked for Time magazine and Oil and Gas Journal.

He hailed from Beshnal village in Tongibari, Munshiganj.

A Qurankhwani and distribution of food among the poor have been arranged to mark the day.

Hachen Uddin Fakir

The 17th death anniversary of social worker and former UP chairman Hachen Uddin Fakir, father of singer Fakir Alamgir, will be observed today, says a press release.

Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his village home at Kalmindha in Bhanga.

Another Qurankhwani will be held at Fakir Alamgir's residence at 259/B Khilgaon and a milad and doa mahfil at Khilgaon Matir Mosque in Dhaka after Asr prayers.



Winners of 6th Mutual Trust Bank-The Daily Star Inter-school English debate competition pose for photograph with the guests at the closing session of the debate at Theatre Institute Chattagram in the port city yesterday. Sitting from left are Dr Abdun Noor Tusher, Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury, Farid Ahmed Chowdhury, Mahfuz Anam, Abul Momen, Safia Gazi Rahman and Khorshed Alam.

MUTUAL TRUST BANK-DAILY STAR ENGLISH DEBATE

William Carey Academy becomes champion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

William Carey Academy won the champion's title in the weeklong 6th Mutual Trust Bank-The Daily Star Inter-school English debate competition that ended here yesterday.

In the final debate of the competition held at Theatre Institute Chattagram (TIC), the last year's champion Summer Fields became the runners-up.

Farah Iqbal of William Carey Academy was adjudged the best speaker of the final.

In the Best Speaker Round of the debate held in the format of United Nations model, Gopal Biswas of Summer Fields School achieved the 'Debater of the Tournament' award. Malha Ahmed of Bay View and Zuhair Mehtab Ali of Oxbridge International School were adjudged the best debaters in this round.

Drishy, a cultural organisation, arranged the competition under the auspices of The Daily Star and Mutual Trust Bank.

Ten renowned English medium schools of the port city took part in the competition held in parliament style.

Speakers at the closing ceremony called on the future leaders of the country to exercise tolerance and logics while making any decision in every steps of life and thus contribute to society.

The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam was the chief guest at the ceremony chaired by Chief Adviser to Drishy Farid Ahmed Chowdhury.

Abul Momen, the Chittagong-based resident editor of the Prothom Alo, Khorshed Alam, senior vice-president of Mutual Trust Bank, Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury, senior executive vice-president of Jamuna Bank, Safia Gazi Rahman, principal of Sunshine Grammar School and College, and Dr Abdun Noor Tusher, former national debater and popular TV artiste, were present as the special guests.

Addressing the ceremony, Mahfuz Anam lauded the participants of the debates, which he termed as a journey of mind made on the wings of logics, facts and argumentation. He also called on the students for making best use of

time.

Abul Momen emphasised the need for developing the practice of healthy debate and thus forming better understanding on any issue.

Khorshed Alam assured that Mutual Trust Bank will provide continued support for holding such competitions in future.

Dr Abdun Noor Tusher observed that intolerance was prevalent in society due to the absence of practice of logics.

"Our people appear to have developed a habit of accepting anything without asking any question," he said. "We will have to judge anything with logics and keep in mind that our fight would be against poverty and for the development of the nation."

Drishy Organising Secretary Adnan Mannan conducted the ceremony where Drishy President Masud Bakul and General Secretary Saif Chowdhury were also present.

In the final debate, William Carey Academy spoke for the motion 'The house believes that Bangladesh should export gas for the sake of

economic development'.

Radiant School became the second runners-up defeating Oxbridge International School.

Nafisa Iqbal of Radiant School was adjudged the 2nd runner-up best debater.

Six of the best debaters took part in the Best Speakers Round.

In the debate with the topic 'Is UNO Successful to keep peace in the world', Gopal Biswas of Summer Fields represented Russia.

Malha Ahmed of Bay View School and Zuhair Mehtab Ali of Oxbridge International School were the runners-up. They represented Iran and Canada respectively.

Segufta of William Child Heaven represented Bangladesh, Nafisa Iqbal of Radiant School spoke for India and Farah Iqbal of William Carey for Malaysia to win special awards.

Former Debater Dr Masud Rana of University of Science and Technology, Chittagong, Sadat Zaman Khan and Saif Hossain, both are the lecturers of Premier University, were the judges in all the three rounds.



AL Presidium Member Tofail Ahmed speaks at a 14-party opposition combine rally at Mukhtangan in the city yesterday protesting police attacks on the 14-party leaders and activists during a sit-in programme on April 19.

'Ensure security of journos'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists at a seminar in the city yesterday urged the government to ensure their security in both national and local levels to carry out professional duty smoothly and freely.

"We don't want to be a privileged group. We just want the freedom necessary to perform our professional duties," said Iqbal Sobhan

Chowdhury, president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ).

Iqbal, also editor of Bangladesh Observer, said 15 journalists were killed in the last few years while performing professional duty and killers have not been brought to book yet.

Criminalisation and politicisation entered every corner of the society, he said adding that it is high time that we established rule of law, eliminated communal politics and ensured transparency and accountability in the society.

Bangladesh Centre for Development of Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) organised the seminar on 'Security crisis of journalists at local level' at National Press Club in the city.

Repression on journalists has increased rapidly and Bangladesh is already considered as the most vulnerable place for the journalists in Asia, the speakers said urging all journalists to be united against repression.

Presiding over the seminar, National Press Club President Reazuddin Ahmed said police

atrocities on journalists in Chittagong tarnished the image of the country abroad.

"It is time that we established a democratic culture in the society and the journalist community, civil society as well as political parties should be united against the evil force," he said suggesting that a national committee to resist repression on journalists should be formed.

The speakers demanded immediate punishment of the policemen involved in atrocities in Chittagong and trial of the killers of the journalists in the last couple of years.

The speakers also condemned attack on journalists at Debidwar Press Club on April 13 backed by local MP Manjurul Ahsan Munshi and demanded exemplary punishment.

Khondoker Rashedul Haque, Senior Journalist Nirmol Sen, former president of BFUJ Gias Kamal Chowdhury, RTV News Editor Syed Ishtiaq Reza, Treasurer of National Press Club Abdur Rahman and Editor of New Nation Mostofa Kamal Majumder also spoke on the occasion.

Inter-university cultural contest begins tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

A three-day Inter-University Cultural Competition will begin at the National University (NU) academic building tomorrow.

NU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Wakil Ahmed will inaugurate the competition while Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Open University Prof Dr M Ershadul Bari will be present as the chief guest.

Education Minister M Osman Faruq will attend the concluding ceremony as the chief guest and distribute prizes among the winners, said a press release.

About 200 students from 24 public universities will take part in the competition jointly conducted by National University and Bangladesh Open University.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and regions of Comilla, Noakhali, Jessore and Kushtia in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said, predicting that day temperature will remain nearly unchanged.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 38.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Mongla and the lowest of 20 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:23pm today and rises at 5:30am tomorrow.

The 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	34.1	22.4	54	52
Chittagong	35.5	24.0	72	57
Rajshahi	35.0	21.6	64	52
Khulna	36.5	23.4	80	38
Barisal	35.0	21.5	73	55
Sylhet	33.0	23.5	67	55
Cox's Bazar	33.8	24.9	68	54

DHAKA TODAY

Inaugural ceremony

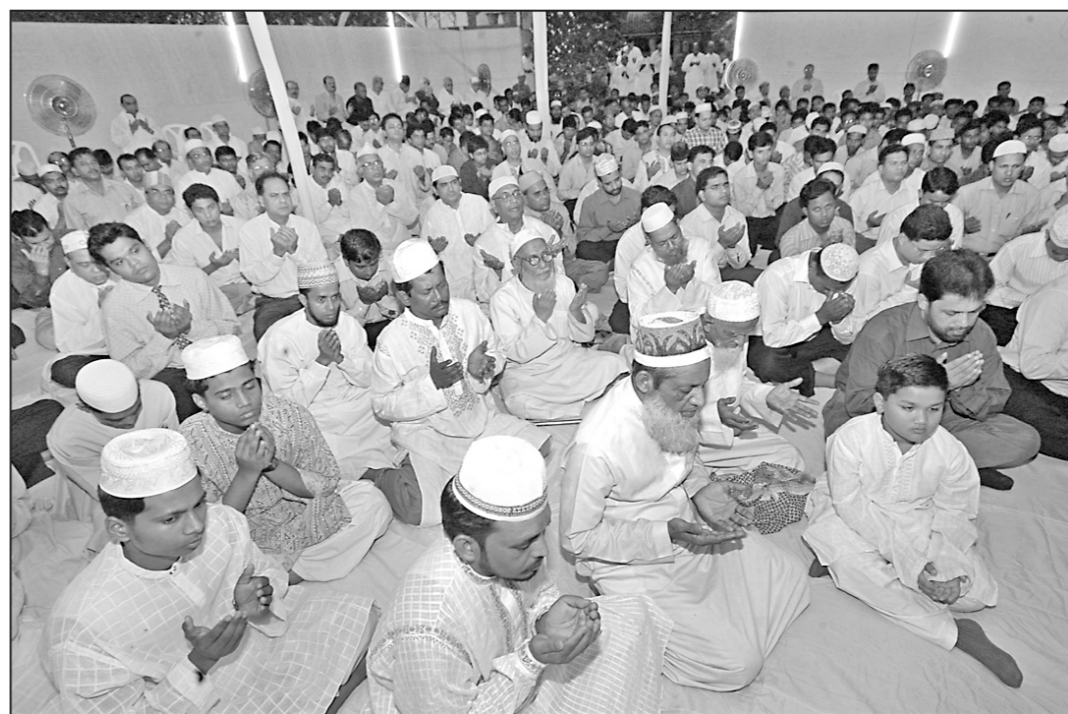
The inaugural ceremony of a weeklong 'National training session on Islamic education and girls and women literacy' organised by Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO will be held. Venue: BANBEIS Bhaban. Time: 9:00am.

Art exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of a six-day art exhibition by disabled children organised by Action on Disability and Development (ADD) will be held. Venue: National Museum. Time: 6:30pm.

Workshop

Padakkhep organises a workshop titled 'Training of trainers on mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS with GoB activities'. Venue: YWCA, Mohammadpur. Time: 9:00am.



A milad mahfil, seeking salvation of the departed soul of Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, was held at the Gulshan residence of her father Latifur Rahman yesterday on the occasion of her eighth death anniversary.

Project taken to reclaim derelict urban areas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A research project has been taken up for the reclamation and environmental improvement of derelict urban areas in the capital.

The three-year research project titled 'Application of innovative technologies for the reclamation and environmental improvement of derelict urban areas in Dhaka City' was launched in January this year.

Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet) in collaboration with Spain-based Cluster Association of Environment Industry of the Basque Country (ACLIMA) and Belgium-based Flemish Institute for Technological Research (VITO) is implementing the project.

The European Commission under its Asia Pro Eco-22 Programme is funding the project.

This was revealed at a dissemination meeting on the project organised by Kuet at a city hotel yesterday.

Presenting the project outline, Prof Dr Ludo Diels of the Department of Environment and Process Technology of VITO said as most of the industries of the country

are unplanned and lack of legislation and anti-pollution control laws, urban lands, waters and air are seriously contaminated by industrial effluents.

He said as most of the industries have no wastewater treatment and disposal facilities and the country has no effective legislation and regulation to control emission of industrial wastewater to the environment, a serious pollution of surface, groundwater and soil in the location and periphery of the industries is taking place.

According to Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) about 16,000 tonnes of waste are being accumulated in the Hazaribagh tannery zone alone and about 12,000 tonnes in Tejgaon industrial area, said Prof Ludo.

He said a total of 25 hectares of land under these two industrial belts has been categorised by the Department of Environment as 'red zone' where the morbidity rate is highest in the world.

Prof Ludo said with the shifting of tannery industries from Hazaribagh to Savar, the dismantling area will be a real brownfield which would need proper investigation of the

extent of pollution.

Besides, the study is needed to formulate guidelines for the remediation of the contaminated lands for sustainable development in the area.

Juan Antonio Gascon, project manager of ACLIMA, said the remediation technologies of soils in urban polluted sites will promote land use management, reduce human exposure to toxic pollutants, promote a sustainable urban planning and contribute to quality of life through sustainable development.

Prof Md Rezaul Karim and Prof Quazi Hamidul Bari of Kuet, Prof AM Shaiful Alam, Prof Abu Jafar Mahmood, Prof Syed Fazle Elahi and Assistant Prof Md Ahsan Habib of Dhaka University, Jalaluddin Mohammad Abdul Hye, deputy executive director of Planning and Development Institute of Water Modelling and Kyaw Sha Ching, executive engineer of Wasa also spoke on the occasion.

One robbed of pre-paid cards, cash worth Tk 5 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed a salesman of a private company and allegedly took away cell-phone recharge cards and cash worth Tk 5 lakh in Arambagh in the city yesterday.

Five to six muggers stopped the rickshaw of Arif Hossain, a salesman of People's Trading Company, in front of Arambagh Girls' High School and College at around 1:30pm and tried to take away his bag, when he was returning to his office at New Bailey Road after distributing cell phone card of a mobile phone operator.

As Arif tried to save the bag containing cash and recharge cards, the muggers stabbed him in the abdomen and back and snatched the bag.

He was later taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Shahidul Haider, managing director of the company, told reporters at the DMCH that there was cash and recharge cards worth about Tk 5 lakh in the bag.

Rab recovers 600 Phensidyl bottles: 2 held

UNB, Jhenidah

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members recovered 600 bottles of Phensidyl syrup in separate drives in Kaliganj upazila Friday morning.

Acting on a tip-off, the elite force raided the house of Baro Momin of Arpara village and arrested drug peddler Shariful Islam along with 500 bottles of Phensidyl.

The same team also arrested Monsur Ali along with 100 bottles of Phensidyl when he was coming to the upazila town with the drug the same day.

Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

Begum Farida Akter, a renowned social worker, died at Labaid Cardiac Hospital in Dhaka on Friday at the age of 65.

Daughter of former member of the then East Pakistan Provincial Assembly Kazim Uddin Ahmed, she left behind her husband, a son and a daughter.