

## Engrs urged not to compromise on standard in construction work

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday advised engineers not to compromise on standard in construction work and to be cautious so that there be no allegation of their involvement in corruption.

To underpin his emphasis on the need for quality construction, the President cited the recent collapse of Spectrum Garments building at Savar and another under-construction factory at Mohakhali in the city as classic instances of engineering failure.

He called upon the engineers to come forward to help government achieve the millennium development goals as well as build a rich Bangladesh.

"We are facing multifarious challenges in the changed world order. Skilled manpower is the proper means of facing these challenges—there is no alternative to rearing skilled manpower for facing the challenges of the present century," he said.

The President was speaking on 'Learning from the Best Practices', a national workshop, organised on the occasion of the 58th founding anniversary of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

Housing and Public Works



PHOTO: PID

President Iajuddin Ahmed addresses a workshop on 'Learning from the Best Practices' organised on the occasion of the 58th founding anniversary of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

Minister Mirza Abbas was special guest at the workshop.

The President said that engineers are meritorious and skilled manpower of the country. They have much contribution to planning based on far-reaching thoughts and designs, and in implementing projects and monitoring.

He noted with satisfaction that engineers of this country earned fame at home and abroad by applying their merit and skill.

The President, however, hoped that engineers would make sure that tragic incidents like Spectrum Garment and under-construction factory collapse could not repeat.

He said it is very important to monitor whether quality construction materials are being used in constructing large establishments.

Dr Iajuddin Ahmed asked the engineers to bring the standard of products to the level of 'Zero Defect' and follow 'Lean Production

System' successfully so standard products could be produced at minimum production cost.

He thanked the organisers for choosing 'Learning From the Best Practices' as main theme of the workshop and expressed the hope that the engineers would be able to exchange their useful experiences through this meet.

## Strengthen network to deal with price hike of essentials

Babar asks Rab

UNB, Dhaka

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutofuzzaman Babar yesterday asked the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to strengthen its intelligence network to deal with price hike of essentials, abuse of drugs, extortion and fake currencies.

He also asked the elite force to take necessary action if they found extortion as a reason behind the price hike of essentials.

His directives came during a regular meeting with Rab at the Home Ministry on law and order situation, meeting sources said.

They said the concerned Rab Battalion Commanders will have to answer in case of any robbery, extortion and acts of terrorism in their respective areas.

Rab should not be involved with any dispute over money and land as well as personal enmity, he said.

He called for inclusion of humanitarian aspects in the training programme for Rab personnel to increase its acceptability to the people.

The meeting was informed that so far, 189 cases against Rab for crossfire have been taken up. Of them, departmental investigations in 156 cases have been completed.

Home secretary Safar Raj Hossain and Rab Director General Abdul Aziz Sarkar were present at the meeting.

## Diesel-run vehicles responsible for 80pc air pollution in city

BSS, Dhaka

The diesel-run vehicles are responsible for more than 80 percent of the air pollution in the capital as most of them have failed to comply with the approved emission standard.

About 60 percent of city dwellers consider motor vehicles as the main source of air pollution, about 55 percent think that the diesel-run buses are the most polluting while 22 percent feel that diesel-run trucks cause the air pollution.

Nearly 60 percent of the dwellers stated that they suffer from disease due to air pollution and 88 percent believed smoke and dust are the main air pollutants.

This people's perceptions about air pollution were revealed in a recent survey titled 'Stakeholders Perception on Air Pollution by Diesel Vehicles in Dhaka City' jointly conducted by the Air Quality Management Project (AQMP) of Department of Environment (DoE) under the environment ministry and the World Bank.

AQMP Project Director Dr Mohammad Nasiruddin said they conducted a study titled 'Road-

side Vehicle Emission Testing Programme in Dhaka' in 2004 where they examined 2140 vehicles to identify the principal contributors to air pollution.

"At the end of the study we found that 90 percent of human-haulers followed by 60 percent diesel-run minibus have failed to follow the approved emission standard as their smoke capacity is higher than 80 Hartridge Smoke Units (HSU)", he said.

The study suggested a set of actions, including retirement of old technology vehicles following a time bound roadmap, introduction of low sulphur diesel, imposition of ban on import of all types of old vehicles and switch over to natural gas as the main source of transport fuel.

Nasir said, "after the study we launched the survey, which was designed to understand the current perceptions of the public in general, stakeholders and interest groups on the issue.

The survey found that 68 percent of the citizens are willing to pay higher fares for cleaner non-polluting buses where 37 percent gave their support to CNG conversion and 27 percent to

outright ban and aged based retirement of the diesel vehicles.

The level of knowledge and awareness about air pollution of bus and truck drivers are very low. On the other hand, nearly 74 percent truck and bus owners think that their vehicles' emissions are at acceptable level but 77 percent said their vehicles are fined sometimes for high smoke emissions.

About 84 percent of the owners are interested in buying CNG buses if diesel vehicles are banned, but 55 percent said the business is not sufficiently profitable, the survey said.

The survey recommended that the important governance issues, including yearly fitness certificates for commercial vehicles and the issue of driving licences for commercial vehicle drivers, have to be tackled.

The survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire among 842 people, including ordinary citizens, bus and truck drivers and owners, filling station attendants and automobile mechanics.

## Rab raids my house

Claims Ctg AL leader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) allegedly raided the Kattali house of City Awami League leader Khorshed Alam Sujan yesterday in search of anti-social activities but the Rab source did not confirm the incidence.

Sujan, health and environment secretary of City AL and also chairman of Consumers Rights Protection Committee (CRPC), termed the Rab raid uncalled for and harassment to him.

He alleged that the Rab team comprising eight to ten members entered the courtyard of his house in Pahartali at around 4:30pm yesterday.

As my wife and others inquired about the raid, one of the Rab officers replied that they came to check existence of anti-social activities such as gambling or liquor, Sujan alleged to this correspondent.

Sujan maintained that the unwanted raid was aimed at creating panic among his family members as well as preventing him from staging scheduled siege to the PDB Office in Chittagong on May 17.

The CRPC is scheduled to lock the PDB Office on May 17 demanding smooth supply of power.

When contacted, Senior ASP of Rab-7 Osman Gani told The Daily Star that as a law-enforcement agency the Rab has every right to search any body's house for collecting information about anti-social elements or activities.

But I am not sure whether any Rab team went to the house of Khorshed Alam Sujan today (Sunday), he added.

Protesting Rab raid, Sujan called a press conference at 11:00am today at Chittagong Press Club.



## Lions Clubs Int'l Dist 315 A1 executives

Ln Shahab Uddin Khan PMJF of Lions Club of Dhaka Rajanigandha Rajdhani and Ln Shah Zakir Hossain PMJF of Lions Club of Dhaka Rajdhani were elected District Governor and Vice District Governor of Lions Clubs International District 315 A1 for 2006-2007 on May 6, says a press release.

They were elected at the delegate session of the 11th annual convention of the Lions Clubs International District 315 A1 Bangladesh held on May 5-6 at the China-Bangladesh Friendship Conference Centre in the city.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the convention as chief guest while Information Minister M Shamsul Islam attended the banquet session as chief guest.

## 50 hurt as cops, BNP cadres attack AL rally in Keraniganj

BDNEWS, Keraniganj

At least 50 people were injured yesterday when police and ruling party cadres jointly attacked a procession of Awami League demanding supply of adequate water and uninterrupted electricity in Keraniganj.

Following the police attack, the agitated AL activists went on the rampage, damaged several motor vehicles and clashed with police that turned Keraniganj into a battlefield.

Witnesses said police attacked the AL rally at Kadamtoli when they were on their way to lay siege to the local electricity office at about 10:30am.

During the attacks, police charged baton on them indiscriminately. Besides, several ruling party cadres also joined hands with police.

A tense situation is prevailing in Keraniganj.

Our Staff Correspondent adds: The injured include Dhaka district Awami League Organising Secretary Haji Abu Siddique, Keraniganj Jubo League Joint Secretary Habibur Rahman Habib,

Keraniganj AL member Haji Bashir Ahmed, Keraniganj Swachchshavak League General Secretary Dr Selim Ahmed and Teguria Union AL Convener Haji Firoj Ahmed.

## PROF TAHER MURDER Punishment to killers demanded

RU CORRESPONDENT

Teachers and students of geology and mining department of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday took out a silent procession and held a rally on the campus demanding arrest and punishment to killers of Prof S Taher Ahmed.

Addressing the rally in front of the department, Chairman Prof Syed Shamsuddin Ahmed said they will continue to hold processions and rallies on the campus every Saturday and Tuesday to press home their demand for the arrest of the killers.

He said teachers feel insecure on the campus as they do not have any security.

## 14-party calls hartal in Bogra today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The 14-party opposition combine Bogra unit called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in Bogra today in protest against filing of cases against the opposition activists to harass them.

Leaders of the combine declared the hartal in a press conference at the house of District Awami League (AL) President Mamtajuiddin on Saturday evening.

Meanwhile, the four-party alliance and its front organisations brought out processions and held rallies in the town to protest the opposition activists' attack on the police and 'ransacking' the shops on Thursday and Saturday evening.

Jubo League President Manjurul Alam Mohon and Secretary Sagar Kumar Roy were arrested in a case filed under explosives act for their alleged involvement in damaging shops and cocktail attack on police on Saturday evening during the clash between the police and activists of the 14-party combine.

Two more cases were filed in the Sadar police station in this connection yesterday, police sources said.

## Work resumes at Akhaura land port

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

After 12 days of suspension, export and import of goods through Akhaura land port resumed yesterday.

Due to indefinite strike called by Eastern Custom Superintendents and Inspectors Association of India, activities at 10 land ports including Akhaura came to a standstill.

Sources said, the association called the strike for an indefinite period after Indian militants abducted two Indian custom officials from Gasua land port of India on April 26.

Owing to the strike, Akhaura land port incurred a loss of revenue worth about Tk 6 crore, source said.

The port will start functioning in full sewing from today.



PHOTO: STAR

Jatiya Oikya Mancha President Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday.



## Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Slight rise in day temperature is expected over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 35.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Mongla and lowest 20.4 degree Celsius at Jessore.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:34pm today and rises at 5:16am 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	31.0	22.3	80	75
Chittagong	32.6	26.0	68	70
Rajshahi	29.5	24.2	81	72
Khulna	34.0	26.0	79	93
Barisal	34.5	26.0	77	100
Sylhet	26.3	21.7	100	79
Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.8	74	82

## 2 outlaws held with explosives in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Jhenidah police recovered huge bomb-making materials and books of an outlawed party from a government rehabilitation project area and arrested two people including a woman on Saturday.

The materials included five kg explosives, seven and a half kg gunpowder, 500 books and 500 leaflets of Janajuddho, a faction of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP).

On an information, the DB (Detective Branch) police of Jhenidah arrested Madina Begum, a sweeper of Jhenidah zila panishad, on Saturday.

Being interrogated at DB office, Madina admitted her involvement in outlawed party activities and disclosed the name of her son Abdul Karim as a top cadre of the outfit.

She also admitted to have explosives hidden at the project area.

Later, police cordoned off the area in front of Jhenidah Cadet College and recovered the explosives from a locked house.

One Kalu, a suspected outlaw, was also arrested from the area.

Police produced him before a magistrate's court yesterday and demanded seven days remand.

The magistrate however granted five days remand for quizzing Kalu.

## Journo Aflatun passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Senior journalist and writer Aflatun passed away after prolonged illness at a city hospital yesterday at the age of 72.

He left behind his wife, two sons, three daughters and host of relatives and friends to mourn his death. Aflatun worked in the Daily Janakantha as an editorial assistance.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Amtola Mosque in Shajahanpur at 8:00am today. Later, his body will be taken to National Press Club where another janaza will be held at 10:00am. He will be buried at the Mirpur Intellectuals' Graveyard.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of Aflatun.

National Press Club President Reazuddin Ahmed and General Secretary Saikat Mahmud also expressed shock at the death of Aflatun.

BSS adds: Outgoing BFUU President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury and its newly elected President Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul and Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuyian, President of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) Altaf Mahmud and General Secretary Omar Faruk expressed their deep shock at the death of Aflatun.

## AFM Imam Hossain

BSS, Dhaka

Former additional secretary AFM Imam Hossain passed away due to cardiac arrest at his Pisciculture Housing Society residence at Shyamoli in the city on Saturday at the age of 65.

He was buried in Agargaon Jame Mosque graveyard.

His qulhwani will be held on May 16 after Maghrib prayers at House No 21, Road No-9, Pisciculture Housing Society of Shyamoli.

Relatives, colleagues, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qulhwani.

## Afroza Chowdhury

BSS, Dhaka

Maleka Hosna Afroza Chowdhury (Renu), wife of late Mohammad Islam Chowdhury, a senior former Government Officer, died at a New York Hospital yesterday morning at the age of 71.

Afroza, sister-in-law of journalist Aminul Islam Bedu, left behind her one daughter, one son and a host of relatives to mourn her death.

She will be buried in New York today.

## Mohammad Auhidullah

BSS, Dhaka

Mohammad Auhidullah, an employee of the Dhaka Metropolitan Football League Committee, died of cardiac arrest near his residence at Mizmizi under Siddhirganj of Narayanganj at the age of 50.

He is survived by his wife, three sons and three daughters.

President, general secretary and other executives of the Bangladesh Football Federation condoled the death.

They prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.



Participants of an IT training programme organised by Fair & Lovely Foundation pose for photograph with guests at a city hotel yesterday.

## Dr Kamal for judicial probe

FROM PAGE 16 which has claimed one student so far.

"Violence has now spread to the campuses due to politicisation and slide in law and order across the country." Dr Kamal Hossain, told at a joint press conference organised by the JOM, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) and Tarikat Federation at the Jatiya Press Club.

Referring to the resignation of SUST vice chancellor in the wake of student agitation, the eminent lawyer said this confirmed that there were irregularities and wrongdoings.

"We want a change in the present situation by forcing the government to quit and it will be done through democratic means." Dr Kamal Hossain, also the president of Gono Forum, said.

BDB General Secretary Major (ret) Abdul Mannan alleged that the present government is the cause of all public sufferings.

"We demand an end to the ongoing repression on people by the ruling coalition, otherwise it will have to suffer the same fate of the past tyrant rulers," he added.

Tarikat Federation President Nazibul Bashar Maizbhandari said

the ruling coalition recruited the leaders from the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir in the administration, mainly in the police, to manipulate the next election.

He also declared the alliance's programme of forming a human chain in the capital on May 22 to protest the price hike of essentials.

The speakers also said that the common people spontaneously responded to their long march to Sylhet on Saturday by joining it. It was led by Dr Kamal Hossain, former president and BDB chief AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and Nazibul Bashar Maizbhandari.

Zahirul Islam, leader of Gono Forum read out a statement about the SUST violence and demanded immediate investigation into the incident where a student has been killed and many others bullet-hit.

The statement also demanded punishment of the government officials responsible for the incident.

Gono Forum leader Mostafa Mohsin Montu and Abdur Rouf were present among others.

## Special tax facilities

FROM PAGE 16 ratio, Saifur urged the businessmen to pay taxes honestly. He said he has a list of the tax-evaders, quipping, "If I publish the list, you will be disgraced."

In response to the businessmen's demand not to adopt any donor-prescribed policy, the minister said, as it is not possible for the government to meet the country's entire development expenditure with its revenue alone, it needs outside assistance.

He hinted that the next national budget would be a usual one, as three governments will have to implement it. "In fact, I asked the prime minister whether we should prepare a budget at all. But she asked me to do it for the sake of continuity," Saifur disclosed.

The business leaders tabled a number of proposals about tax and tariff in the meeting.

FBCI President Mir Nasir Hossain, who chaired the meeting, said the country's industries are passing through a critical time. Under the circumstances, there should be short- and long-term plans to face the acute power, fuel and gas crises, and the next budget should give the highest priority and contain clear directions on how to address them.

Mir Nasir suggested trimming down the budget, as the revenue has gone down and pressure is mounting on the foreign exchange reserve. He also proposed a mid-term review to drop low-quality projects from the Annual Development Programme.

Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Saifuzzaman Chowdhury proposed that the import duties on essential goods be waived to bring down their prices to an affordable level. He also suggested enacting an anti-hoarding law.

Bangladesh Chamber of Industries President AK Azad said the ongoing gas, fuel and power crises are seriously affecting the local industrialists, inflating their production costs substantially. But, the foreign investors in the EPZs are not facing these troubles, and so are outdoing their local counterparts in competition.

Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industry President ASM Nazrul Islam mentioned that some people are importing luxurious cars costing Tk 1 crore or more.

But, he said, for a poor country like ours, the hard-earned foreign currency should not be wasted like that.

## Moyeen calls for promoting IT education for women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan has called upon private sector organisations to help promote IT (information technology) education for women empowerment.

He was speaking as chief guest at a certificate awarding ceremony of an IT training programme for women at a city hotel yesterday.

The minister said IT education will also help poverty alleviation.

Chairman and Managing Director of Unilever Bangladesh Ltd Sanjiv Meheta, Executive Director of Khan Foundation Rokhsana Khondker and UNDP Resident Representative Reneta Lok Dessalieu also spoke on the occasion.

Fair and Lovely Foundation of Unilever Bangladesh and Khan Foundation jointly sponsored the IT course for underprivileged women across the country.

Over 100 women received the certificates on completion of a three-month-long IT course.

## FARAKKA LONG MARCH 30th anniversary tomorrow

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The 30th anniversary of the historic Farakka Long March Day will be observed at Bhupur in Tangail tomorrow.

On this day in 1976, veteran public leader Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani initiated the long march against the death-trap Farakka Barrage from Rajshahi Madrasa ground with about one lakh people.

Bangladesh chapter and New York chapter of International Farakka Committee (IFC) have jointly taken up programmes to observe the day in a befitting manner.

Announcing the programme at a press conference at the Public Library Auditorium in Tangail, the organisers said a grand rally will be held at a 'char' in the river Jamuna after a token long march from Bhupur.

They said the programme has been taken up to reiterate our demand for stopping unilateral withdrawal of waters from all international rivers including Padma, Meghna, Jamuna, Surma and Teesta.

The day will also be observed in New York, Rome, London and Montreal.

A total of 40 small and big rivers of the country have already dried up as a result of Farakka Barrage.