

# No credible polls possible under present CEC: Jalil

UNB, Dhaka

Reiterating combine opposition's demand for resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil said no credible election is possible under the supervision of this "controversial" man.

"AL wants nothing other than election, but the alliance government is trying to retain power through massive vote rigging," he said warning that they would not allow the government to execute its evil design.

Jalil, also coordinator of the AL-led 14-party opposition combine, was addressing a rally demanding resignation of the CEC and two other commissioners and implementation of the proposed electoral reforms, and protesting "police attacks" on their peaceful processions during its Dhaka siege programme on Sunday.

Dhaka City unit of the 14-party opposition organised the rally at Bangabandhu Avenue with AL city unit General Secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya in the chair.

Jalil urged the opposition leaders and workers to make its 36-hour nonstop hartal, beginning at 6:00am today, a success.

AL presidium member Tofail Ahmed said the government has no legal right to stay in power, as the people showed their no confidence in it through Sunday's Dhaka siege programme.

"We'll force the government to step aside and implement our



14-party opposition combine stages a demonstration at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday in support of 36-hour hartal beginning today.

demand for electoral reforms through a mass movement," he told the rally.

JSD President Hasanul Haq Inu said the BNP-Jamaat coalition government wants to promote communalism and militancy in Bangladesh to destroy the country's communal harmony.

"So we're agitating against the

government to save democracy and communal harmony, and ensure a free and fair election," he said.

14-party leaders Motia Chowdhury, Obaidul Kader, Mukul Bose, Abdul Mannan, Hajera Sultana, Abdul Bari Joyadder, Subid Ali Bhuiyan, Habibur Rahman Seraj, Omar Ali,

ABM Rahamat Ullah, Meer Hossain Akhter, Kamal Majumder, Shah Alam Murad, Jahangir Kabir Nanak and Haji Selim also addressed the rally.

After the rally, the 14-party leaders and workers brought out a procession in support of their 36-hour hartal and paraded different city streets.

## HAIJ FLIGHT Biman to hire two aircraft to avert any crisis

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Biman Bangladesh Airlines is going to hire two aircraft to avert any crisis during the operation of Hajj flights.

Biman sources said that the national flag carrier will hire two sophisticated aircraft with a capacity of more than 305 seats each.

In response to an international tender floated by Biman, a Jordanian airline offered to lease two Boeing-747s and an AL-1011 while a French airline a Boeing-747.

The tender was floated on April 20 and the deadline for submitting the tender documents was June 5. Dr MA Momen, managing director of Biman, told BDNEWS that the aircraft are being hired in advance to avoid any unwanted controversy over the Hajj flight as happened last year.

"The hired aircraft will arrive in Bangladesh during the operation of Hajj flights," he said.

Last year, Biman hired an Airbus and a Boeing-747 in November for its Hajj flight operation that began on December 23.

But this time the Biman authorities are trying to complete the process about seven months ahead of the Hajj flight operation.

Biman sources said they are expecting to ferry a total of 32,500 Hajj pilgrims to Jeddah this year.

The Hajj flight will be operated from November 25 to February 6. Biman transported about 25,000 Hajj pilgrims last year. But a crisis over the Hajj flight occurred that time as the other airlines declined to ferry Hajj pilgrims at 1050 US dollars per person fixed by Biman.

The Middle East-bound airlines ferry Hajj pilgrims at US\$ 1350 to 1400. The Saudia also transports the same number of Hajj pilgrims as Biman.

The last year's controversy over the airfare of Hajj pilgrims led to the resignation of the then state minister for civil aviation Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin.

## 37 Dohar BNP men get bail in AL leader killing case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to 37 BNP leaders and activists of Dohar thana unit, accused of killing Khalil Kazi, a Awami League (AL) leader of the same area.

Judge Mohammad Rafiqul Islam of the District and Sessions Judge's Court, granted them bail upon a bond of Tk 25,000 each with two guarantors when the accused appeared before the court at about 10:30am and prayed for anticipatory bail.

In his order, the judge said the grounds stated in the bail petition are reasonable for granting bail to them and they are granted bail till June 27. The judge, however, did not mention whether the prosecution opposed the petition for bail.

A group of ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leaders and activists led by Mahbubur Rahman alias Pappu attacked AL leaders and activists, including Khalil Kazi, publicity secretary of AL of Kusumhati Union under Dohar thana with sharp weapons when he reached Kartikpur Bazar to attend a workers' rally at about 5:00pm on April 16 this year, according to the prosecution.

Communication Minister Nazmul Huda had directed the BNP leaders and activists that they would not allow the AL to run its activities at Dohar area the prosecution added.

Of the injured, condition of Khalil was serious and later he succumbed to his injuries after fighting with life for over 15 days at a city clinic.

Dohar police refused to register a case in this connection when victim's relatives went to file a case immediately after the incident.

A petition case was filed with the First Class Magistrate's Court, Dhaka against the accused on April 20 as the Dohar police refused to lodge a case in this connection.

Advocates Lutfey Alam, Khorshed Alam and Borhan Uddin appeared for the accused while District Public Prosecutor Mohammad Mohsin Miah for the state.

## DU exams postponed

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities postponed all the examinations scheduled for June 13 and 14 due to unavoidable reasons, a DU press release said yesterday.

Fresh schedule of the examinations will be announced soon.

Other scheduled examinations will be held in due time, the press release added.

# PM seeks Filipino support for nurses' training

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday sought Philippines support for nursing training by sending trainers to train nurses at Nursing Training Institutes.

The PM made the request when the newly appointed Filipino Ambassador to Bangladesh, Norberto Ramos Basilio, made a courtesy call on her at the Prime Minister's Office.

During the meeting, the Ambassador sought Bangladesh's support to the effort of the Philippines to get OIC observer status.

He said there are six million Muslims among 85 million people of his country.

The two sides emphasised on turning the present "excellent relations between the countries meaningful" to the two peoples through

expanding trade and commerce. They also underscored the need for exchanging business delegation visits for expanding the two-way trade and investment.

Khaleda said the Philippines can import quality Bangladeshi products, including jute goods, pharmaceuticals and ceramics, at

competitive prices. The Ambassador appreciated Bangladesh's progress in various sectors under the leadership of Khaleda.

He conveyed greetings of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to Khaleda. The PM reciprocated through the envoy.

## ASSAULT OF JU FEMALE STUDENT Punishment to culprits demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mohila Parishad yesterday demanded punishment to the culprits responsible for assaulting a female student inside a female dormitory at Jahangirnagar University.

Expressing concern over the security of the female students at the female dormitories, the parishad also urged the govern-

ment and the law enforcement agencies to take special measures to protect female students from such attacks, says a press release.

Referring newspaper reports on June 10, it says that two unknown men entering Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam Hall injured a female student of Physics department by stabbing her with a machete on June 7 at around 2:30am.

# Apply knowledge for betterment of the downtrodden

## Minister urges graduates at 10th IUB convocation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

China-Bangladesh Friendship Conference Centre wore a festive look yesterday as hundreds of graduates, teachers and guests wearing convocation gowns took part in the 10th convocation ceremony of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB).

A total of 355 students from various disciplines were awarded degrees at the convocation. Two students won gold medals for their outstanding academic performances.

Inaugurating the convocation, Education Minister Dr M Osman Farruk called on the graduating students to continue their search for knowledge and apply it not just for personal betterment but also for the defence of the downtrodden.

"Enrich yourselves with high moral principles of integrity, conscience and love for humanity to render the desired service to the people. The nation and the world expect a lot from you," he said.

The minister said the BNP-led four-party alliance government has given most priority to the education sector. "We have allocated the highest budget for education in 2006-07 fiscal year," he added.

He also hoped that the IUB would continue to play its due role in producing graduates with right education, training and skills to meet the challenges of higher education.

Renowned sociologist Dr Geof Wood, a professor of international development and dean of the faculty of humanities and Social Science, University of Bath, UK, gave the convocation speech on 'Expatriates'



Education Minister Dr M Osman Farruk confers IUB fellowship on Prof Dr Geof Wood of University of Bath, UK, at the 10th convocation ceremony of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) in the city yesterday.

role and contribution to the development of Bangladesh.

He said Bangladesh appeared to be the experimental locus of development ideas and practices during the first two decades of liberation.

But over the last decade, with the continuation of widespread poverty and the significant rise of new urban poverty through migration and demographic transformation, questions of culture and social organisation towards a more sovereign and nationalist version of development are increasingly raised, he said.

IUB Vice Chancellor Prof Bazul Mobin Chowdhury told the graduates that the convocation is not the end of learning, rather the beginning of a process of learning.

"You are now at the threshold of an entirely new life. Your families, countrymen and the nation as a whole have great expectations of you," he said.

IUB Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof M Omar Rahman, Chairman of Education, Science, Technology and Cultural Development Trust Towhid Samad and IUB Registrar Dr Tanvir Ahmed Khan also spoke.

# 'Political commitment a must to eliminate child labour'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political commitment and formulation of a national child labour policy is a must to eliminate hazardous child labour, said the speakers at a press conference yesterday.

The press conference was organised by Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) in association with Terre des hommes-Netherlands on the eve of the World Day Against Child Labour at Dhaka

## BCL attack on journos at DU condemned

BDNEWS, Dhaka University

Former founder members, presidents and general secretaries of Dhaka University Journalists' Association (DUJA) in a statement yesterday strongly condemned the attack on journalists by some unruly Bangladesh Chhatra League men during a press conference on June 7 at DUJA office.

Expressing their concern over the incident, they termed the incident unprecedented and unexpected. They demanded punishment to those involved in the incident.

Signatories to the statement are founder members Khairul Anwar Mukul, Mashiur Rahman, Eini Ilias, Rezwanul Haq Raza, Abdul Hye Siddiqui, Khairuzzaman Kamal, Harun-ur-Rashid, Syed Ishtiaq Reza, Iraj Ahmed, former presidents and general secretaries Rezanur Rahman, Rezaul Karim Lotus, Fariduzzaman Farid, Tareq Al Naser, Sagor Ahmed, Ilias Khan, Sharifuzzaman Pintu, Tarun Sarker, Nasiruddin Kachi, Shariful Islam, Kailash Sarker, Abul Kalam Azad, Abu Naser Razib, Ashraf Alam Khokan, Borhanul Haq Shamrat, Khadimul Islam Ripon, Sahabul Haq Sabu, Mohammad Zakaria, Nurul Karim Bhuiyan and Zahid Hasan Tusher.

## BOU viva voce rescheduled

The viva voce of the Bangladesh Open University (BOU) MBA Programme of 061 semesters under Dhaka Regional Resource Center (RRC) has been rescheduled due to unavoidable circumstances, says a press release.

The examination will now take place on June 27 and 28.

Besides, the place and the time of the examination will remain unchanged.

However, the date, time and venue of examinations of other RRC will also remain unchanged.

Reporters' Unity (DRU) auditorium.

The speakers said child labour is an existent reality in the country and poverty is the main reason that forces the children to accept risky jobs.

They demanded increased awareness in the society to resist worst form of child labour.

This can be done by providing to children alternative ways of living, vocational training and informal education along with micro credit facilities to their parents, they added.

The speakers also stressed the need for implementing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) as well as conducting advocacy at different levels to curb worst form

of child labour.

Quoting National Child Labour Survey 2002-03, they said a total of 4,23,67,000 children aged between 5 and 17 are child labour and over 40 percent of them are engaged in risky jobs.

"So it is time to implement the PRSP and women empowerment can also play an important role in eliminating child labour," said Abdus Shahid Mahmud of BSAF while reading a keynote paper.

BSAF Director AYM Morshed Hossain said child labour should not be considered as a stray incident in the society.

BSAF Vice-chairman Emranul Haque Chowdhury presided over the press conference.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh

Occupational Safety, Health and Environment (OSHE) Foundation formed a human chain at Agargaon in the city to mark the World Day Against Child Labour.

With the slogan 'Worst form of Child Labour Free Bangladesh', hundreds of children joined the human chain.

Speaking on the occasion, the speakers said the urban street and slum children are more vulnerable than rural children to worst form of child labour.

Foundation Joint Secretary Chaina Rahman and Organiser Monir Uddin were present on the occasion.



Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation forms a human chain in front of IDB Bhaban in the city yesterday to mark the World Day Against Child Labour.