

JP (Manju) hints at joining alliance of bigger parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Party faction of Anwar Hossain Manju will contest the next general elections under an alliance but it is not clear yet which alliance it will join.

The JP (Manju) leaders at their central executive committee's first general meeting yesterday put pressure on the policymakers to join the Awami League-led 14-party alliance, well-placed sources in the party said.

"We shall join an alliance...of bigger parties," Anwar Hossain Manju, chairman of the JP faction, said at the meeting held at a city hotel. He, however, did not elaborate.

Asked which these "bigger parties" are, a top JP (Manju) leader told The Daily Star, "Surely, we will join the parties that support the Liberation War of Bangladesh."

pro-Liberation in principle, includes in its alliance the anti-Liberation forces, it also becomes like-minded," the JP leader said, pointing at ruling BNP's alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami.

The JP (Manju) may also make "electoral arrangements" with small political parties like Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh and even JP (Ershad), the leader said. "We will not form an alliance with Ershad [chairman of the other JP faction], but we may make electoral arrangement with him," he said.

Indicating the JP (Ershad), Manju said parties that consider themselves "factors" will be washed away in the next elections.

"We shall do equally good, even better in some cases than these 'factors', in the next elections," he added.

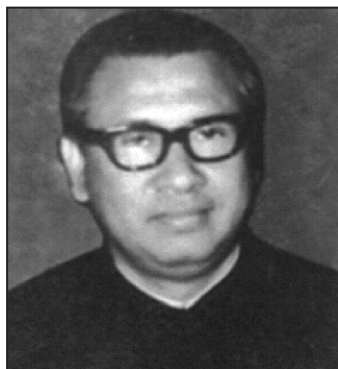
Manju said no government has been able to meet the needs of the people after the fall of Ershad's

regime. "And so, people are now looking for an alternative power," he said.

"What do the bigger parties have to present before the people?" Manju said, observing that the administration and judiciary have been politicised, corruption has been rampant, people are subject to repression and prices of essentials have gone beyond the capacity of lower and middle class people.

Manju asked his party leaders who came to attend the general meeting from across the country to go to people and work to gain public support for the next elections.

JP (Manju) Secretary General Sheikh Shahidul Islam, Additional Secretary General Sadeque Siddique, presidium members Shah Azizur Rahman, Amena Bari and Shah Mohammad Rafiqul Bari were present at the meeting.



Tajuddin's 81st anniversary of birth today

DU CORRESPONDENT

The 81st birth anniversary of Tajuddin Ahmad, the first prime minister of Bangladesh, will be observed today, says a press release.

On this day in 1925, Tajuddin was born at Dardaria village under Kapasia upazila in Gazipur district.

He was involved in politics from his student life and played a key role in all movements including historic language movement.

He was one of the main initiators in forming Awami League (AL) in 1947 and was the general secretary of Dhaka District AL between 1953 and 1957.

He was also involved in formulating 6-point demands in 1966.

Tajuddin was the symbol of intelligence, skill, honesty and ideology in the politics of Bangladesh.

The best achievement of his life was to play a pioneering role against Pakistan by forming the Bangladesh government in absence of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1971.

Tajuddin served the country as prime minister until Bangabandhu returned and afterwards he served as the finance and planning minister in Bangabandhu's cabinet.

He resigned from the post on October 26, 1974.

After Bangabandhu was killed along with his family members, Tajuddin was kept under house arrest and later shifted to the Central Jail.

On November 3, he was brutally killed inside the jail with three other national leaders.

Two women murdered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two bodies including one of a housewife were recovered in the city yesterday.

Police recovered the body of Shewli Rani Bhowmik, 18, from Lalkuthi area in Mirpur in the early hours.

Victim's brother Jeebon Krishna Bhowmik said Shewli who married a Muslim boy Md Masoom three months back was not accepted by her in-laws for being Hindu.

"My sister who was an Higher Secondary student at Open University went through severe mental trauma when her in-laws refused to accept her," he said claiming that her in-laws have deliberately killed her by giving poison.

According to morgue report the deceased died of poisoning.

Jeebon filed a murder case with Mirpur Police Station in this connection.

Shewli's husband and her in-laws have been absconding after the incident.

In another incident police recovered an unidentified body from a gunnysack at East Raja Bazar area in the afternoon.

The victim's hand and legs were tied with a rope and there were several marks of injuries on her body said the police.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Morgue for autopsy.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of AM Bahar will be held at House # 11/1, Tajmahal Road, Block # C, Mohammadpur after Asr prayers tomorrow, says a press release.

He passed away at a clinic in Dhaka on July 20.

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

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the qulkhwani.

Bibi Hanufa Karim

Qulkhwani of Bibi Hanufa Karim, mother of late freedom fighter Zahangir Hossain, will be held today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at her house in Dhanmondi in the city after Asr prayers today.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the programme.

She died of old age complication on Friday morning at her house in west Dhanmondi at the age of 75.

She left behind four sons and two daughters to mourn her death.



Supreme Court Bar Association President Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam speaks at a roundtable on electoral reforms in the city yesterday. On his left is Barrister Mainul Hosein and on his right are Prof Muzaffer Ahmad and Prof Rehman Sobhan.

5 more DNA labs to be set up

UNB, Dhaka

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharruf Hossain yesterday said five more divisional screening laboratories for DNA test will be set up at the divisional level medical colleges.

He mentioned that the first DNA Lab of the country has been set up at Dhaka Medical College in cooperation with the women and children affairs ministry.

The minister was speaking as the chief guest at 'Forensiccon-2006', a national conference on forensic medicine, at the Biam auditorium in the city.

Over 400 physicians attended the conference, organised by the Medicolegal Society of Bangladesh, an organisation of forensic medicine specialists.

Dr Mosharruf said steps would be taken to strengthen the research activities and to groom physicians skilled in forensic medicine for ensuring effective progress of medical science.

With this objective, a post-graduate course on forensic medicine has been introduced and a modern morgue established at the Chittagong Medical College, he said.

Besides, the minister said, there is also a plan to introduce post-graduate course on forensic medicine at the divisional level medical colleges.

State Minister for Health Mizanur Rahman Sinha, DG of Health Department Prof Dr Mohammad Shahadat Hossain, among others, also addressed the function, chaired by Society President Prof Dr Anwara Begum.

Prof Dr Nurul Islam (posthumous), Prof Dr Aktaruzzaman (posthumous) and Dr Mohammad Mazharul Islam, now working at the WHO office in Nepal, were honoured at the function in recognition of their special contributions to forensic medicine.

Discussion on nat'l broadband policy

Bss, Khulna

A daylong meeting on "National Broadband Policy" was held at Khulna Museum auditorium yesterday.

Organised by Prime Minister's office in collaboration with Khulna Divisional Commissioner's office, the meeting was presided over by Additional Divisional Commissioner Bahaj Uddin Mia.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Secretary of Prime Minister's office Khandaker Shahidul Islam as the chief guest and Khulna Divisional Commissioner Md Abdul Malek and Barisal Divisional Commissioner ATKM Ismail as special guests.

SUICIDE OF KALANDIAR Arrest of culprits demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a memorial meeting demanded arrest and exemplary punishment to the culprits, who forced valiant freedom fighter Kalandiar Kabir to commit suicide.

Addressing the meeting, Forum for Secular Bangladesh Acting President Shahriar Kabir said real freedom fighters live forever in the hearts of people, who cherish the spirit of liberation war in them.

He urged the youth to pioneer the movement for building a nation in the light of the spirit of liberation war.

He was speaking at a memorial meeting for freedom fighter Kalandiar Kabir at the Forum office in the city yesterday.

Prof Borhan Uddin Khan Jahangir said one of the preconditions for building the society in the light of the spirit of liberation war is to drive out the wicked people through united movement.

Vice President of Forum for Secular Bangladesh Shyamali Nasrin Chowdhury, General Secretary Qazi Mukul, Fersousi Hasan Priobhashini, Shirin Banu Mital, Khondakar Abdul Mannan, Prof Shamsur Rahman Khokon, Khairul Islam Bakul, Kazi Biplab and wife of Kalandiar Kabir Suraia Kabir Tithi were also present on the occasion.

Kalandiar Kabir committed suicide at midnight on July 13.

Mahima's family being harassed

Says TFT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The family of Mahima, who committed suicide following rape and humiliation by Chhatra Dal and Shibir cadres in 2002, is being harassed, said Task Force against Torture (TFT), an NGO under Bangladesh Institute of Human Rights (BIHR), in a press release yesterday.

According to TFT, harassment of the family began in retaliation for death sentences to rapists by a court.

A theft case was filed against Mahima's eldest brother Jahangir Alam, a Jubo League leader, but it was dismissed by the court for making false charges against him, said the report.

A false rape case was also filed against Mahima's cousin Parvez on July 20, said the family members.

Local BNP cadre Abbas forced the police to record the case, said TFT press release.

On February 19, 2002 Mahima Khatun, 14, committed suicide after she was raped four days ago and the subsequent distribution of photographs of the rape scene by the rapists among the local people.

The incident sparked off a country-wide outcry.

Four rapists were awarded death sentence and 10 others including fathers of the rapists were sentenced to different jail terms.

Three rapists are still absconding while some others convicted are now on bail.

TREE PLANTATION BATB role lauded

Bss, Chittagong

State Minister for Environment and Forests Jafrul Islam Chowdhury yesterday appreciated the contributions of the British-American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB) for supplementing the government's endeavour in turning the tree plantation programme into a social movement.

The appreciation came when he was speaking at a function on the city's Theatre Institute premises, marking the free distribution of tree saplings by the BATB authority. "We must plant more trees to attain economic self-reliance and maintain ecological balance in the country," he said.

The state minister urged people to come forward to make the government's plan a success in turning the whole country into a botanical garden through increasing the share of forest lands up to 20 percent by 2015.

According to the officials concerned, BATB authorities will distribute a total of 50 lakh tree saplings free of cost throughout the country this year under the national tree plantation programme. During the last 26 years, they distributed a total of 1.26 crore saplings among the people as well as private and public organisations.

With BATB Divisional Leaf Manager Giasuddin in the chair, Additional Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong M Golam Qudus, Conservator of Forests Chittagong Salahuddin Ahmed, Divisional Director of the Department of Environment Mosharruf Hossain, Director (Operation) of BATB Paul Thomson and Additional Director of the Agriculture Extension Department Anwarulla also spoke on the occasion.

Later, the state minister distributed saplings among the representatives of different organisations.



PHOTO: STAR

JOIN US TO SAVE A SMILE: Private University Students' Welfare Foundation forms a human chain in front of Teacher-Student Centre on the Dhaka University campus yesterday seeking financial assistance from the affluent to save the life of Labeeb, a child who has been suffering from blood cancer.

Street foods, beverages pose health hazards

BSS, Dhaka

Thousands of common people in the city are facing the threats of contamination by taking artificially flavoured beverages and foods sold on the roadsides.

These foods and beverages may cause deadly diseases from diarrhoea to cancer if one takes these foods and beverages regularly.

"The diseases caused by the adulterated foods and beverages include cancer, kidney and liver failures, stomach troubles and other complicated problems," Dr Mohammad Soyab Noman of Medicine Department of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University told BSS.

He cautioned that the people, who drink beverages, which contain various chemicals, are the worst victims of these trash foods.

"We have to attend victims of trash beverage and foods round the year in the hospital but the number of patients increases particularly in summer seasons," he added.

One of the deadly beverages is sugarcane juice that is sold all over the year in the Dhaka city and it is very popular among the commuters.

But most of the sugarcane juice sellers are selling unclean juice and some of them mix artificial sugar and water with juice.

Sugarcane juice seller Abdul Hai said most of the sellers are selling unclean juice and they are mixing water with it for more profit. Dr Noman said unclean and adulterated sugarcane juice may cause jaundice and other complicated diseases.

Under a WHO project BAN CWS-001, a team of the Public Health Laboratory performed a preliminary survey on street vendors in Dhaka City Corporation area in 1994.

A total of 52 samples of food collected from different street vendors of Dhaka city were examined microbiologically and chemically at Public Health Laboratory. It was found that all the samples were chemically unsatisfactory for human consumption.

Meanwhile, Consumers Association of Bangladesh (Cab) conducted a study on Street Food Vending Policies and Programmes in Bangladesh in 2004.

The Cab study said the source of 95 per cent drinking water for consumers are supplied from tap water of Wasa and 96 per cent of these unboiled waters are stored in plastic drums making the water easily contaminated.

Majority of the vendors (80%) displayed their foods in baskets or trays; only 12% used pushcarts. As much as nearly one-third (30%) did not cover their food while selling, according to the Cab study.

In the absence of laws, street vendors are doing brisk business by selling adulterated foods and beverages under extremely unhygienic conditions, posing serious threat to public health, the Cab study said.

Four killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least four people were killed in separate road accidents in Tangail and Rajbari yesterday and on Friday night.

Our Correspondent from Tangail reports: Two young motorcyclists were killed in a road accident in Kalihati upazila in the district on Friday night.

The victims were identified as motorcyclist Delwar Hossain, 35, son of Boksha Mollah of Bilbomy village and his friend motorcycle rider Sona Miah, 30, son of Mokaddas Ali of Chackhilda village under Kalihati upazila in the district.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place at around 9:30pm when a Tangail-bound goods-laden speedy truck crushed a Elenga-bound motorcycle from Palima under its wheels near Palima bridge under Kalihati upazila, leaving Delwar and Sona dead on the spot.

Police sent the body to Tangail General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Kalihati Police Station in this regard.

UNB from Rajbari adds: Two people, including a government official, were killed in separate road accidents in the district yesterday.

Shamsul Alam, 70, a local businessman, was killed on the spot when a bus hit him while he was crossing a road at Mohonpur Bazaar in Pansha upazila at about 7:00am.

Local people put up a barricade on Rajbari-Kushtia highway protesting the accident.

The blockade, however, was withdrawn after intervention by police and local administration.

Meanwhile, a pick-up van with some BADC officials of Faridpur fell into a roadside ditch when it tried to give side to a vehicle at Bagmara near the district town at about 1:00pm.

Sujit Kumar Saha, 42, an assistant engineer, died on the spot while three people managed to come out of the vehicle.

The pick-up van could not be retrieved from the ditch until 5:00pm yesterday due to lack of necessary salvage equipment.

2 held with 593 forged notes

BSS, Dhaka

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two fake note traders with 593 forged notes of Tk 50 denomination from city's West Malibagh area on Friday.

The arrestees were Alok Kurbi, 42, and Sobhan, 40, of Haluaghat thana in Mymensingh district.

Acting on a tip-off, a special team of Rab-2 raided the area at around 6:00pm and nabbed the criminals with the forged notes, says a Rab press release.



Moderately heavy falls likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places during the period, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 33.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Majidee Court and lowest 23.1 degree Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:46pm today and rises at 5:24am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.