

## Coalition politics main reason behind militancy

Says speaker at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

'Coalition politics' is one of the major multifaceted reasons responsible for rise and spread of Islamic militancy in Bangladesh, said a professor of International Studies at a seminar in the city yesterday.

Dr Imtiaz Hussain of Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico said in his keynote speech at the seminar on 'The Rise of Fundamentalism and Its Implications' organised by Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (Bilia) at its auditorium.

He pointed out that with the rise of fundamentalism, secularism—one of the four basic principles enshrined in the constitution—disappeared from the social and political aspects.

The coalition politics in the country is critical, and the direction of the nation depends on how the key party in the coalition government acts to

direct the nation, Dr Imtiaz said.

"It is probably crucial how they bend or do not bend according to the coalition partners, especially when the major body in the alliance has Islamic base," the professor added.

Defining the term 'fundamentalism' commonly as 'back to origin', Dr Imtiaz cited instances from the world history and said the practice of fundamentalism is not only limited in religious aspects, but also in political, economic and social aspects.

As probable solutions to the recent Islamic fundamentalism issues, Dr Imtiaz suggested that the government should let the militants talk for themselves, from the point of view of democracy, before branding them outlaws.

He also suggested holding talks and dialogues with the opposition parties to exchange both sides' views and ideologies, and let the voters decide what to do. "Moreover

it is very important to respect the people's decisions," he said.

He also asked the political leaders to demonstrate good behaviour before the people and refrain from corruption, otherwise the fundamentalists would capitalise on bad behaviour and corruption of the politicians and make issues out of them, he said.

Citing instances like Rohingya and Stranded Pakistani issues, Dr Imtiaz urged not to take any 'aggravating policies' to restrain the fundamentalists from picking militants out of them.

Chaired by Bilia Director and former ambassador Wali-ur Rahman, Consulting Editor of Amadershomoy Khandker Rashidul Huq Naba spoke as a respondent in the seminar while lawyers, intellectuals, government officials, students and former diplomats were also present.

## Mirpur OC seeks apology for violation of court order

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The officer-in-charge (OC) of Mirpur Police Station yesterday made an unconditional apology at a Dhaka court following a show cause as he violated the court order issued on July 16.

Meantime, two assistant sub-inspectors (ASIs) also sought unconditional apology from the same court for keeping a cellphone of a complainant in an abduction case filed with Mirpur Police Station in July last year.

Judge Shamsul Haq of the Fifth Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression passed the order after he came to know about the matter.

The show cause was issued as the OC MA Rob sent two prosecution witnesses to the court along with a constable, though the court had earlier directed him (OC) to produce them in the court along with a Sub-Inspector (SI).

On the other hand, the complainant of the case Mohammad Akbar while giving deposition yesterday told the court that ASI Ruslmi Hassan took his mobile set and asked him to take back after giving statement to the court.

After scrutinising the issues, the judge directed the OC and his two ASIs to appear before the court at 4:30pm with the cell phone of the complainant. The court directed the court Inspector Saiful Islam to inform the matter of the OC and two ASIs.

Following the order, the OC and two ASIs appeared before the court at 4:00pm and sought apology. The judge then pardoned and asked them to submit written apology.

## Mora not freed as 2 more rape cases pending with court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Obaidur Rahman Mora, who was acquitted of the charge in Tania rape case, is yet to come out of jail yesterday as two more rape cases against him are pending with the same court since 1998.

Judge Nurunnahar of the Third Special Tribunal for Prevention of women and Children Repression, Dhaka on Tuesday acquitted Mora, as the charge brought against him was not proved.

After his arrest (Mora) in connection with Tania rape case on March 22 in 1998, he was shown arrested in two more rape cases filed against him with Kotwali Police Station on April 2 the same year.

Five-year-old Tania was raped inside the police control room adjacent to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka around 3:00pm on March 10, 1998.

Hailing from Nagarkanda of Faridpur, Mora, 25, used to spend his days on the court premises selling fruits and other things.

According to the prosecution of the cases, it was alleged that Mora raped two other girls of Chandpur district at a room on the CMM court premises at about 7:00pm in January 1996.

But the two cases were filed two years after the incident and no witnesses have appeared before the court on 59 consecutive dates after the cases were transferred to the tribunal for trial in 1998. Mora had earlier granted bail in one of the cases.

## 200 telephones out of order in Ctg

BSS, Chittagong

At least 200 telephone lines in city's Nandankanon, Momin Road, Jamal Khan Road, Laldighi Crossing and KC Dey Road areas have been out of order since Sunday morning creating serious inconvenience to the subscribers.

Business firms, private healthcare centres, media offices, including the Chittagong Bureau of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), and private houses have been in an almost incommunicado state following the disruption of the telephone connections.

Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) officials said the phone lines went out of order because workers had cut the underground cables of the existing telephone infrastructures in the areas while digging earth for setting up subterranean internal network of submarine cables.

Some of the sufferers informed BSS that local BTTB officials are paying no attention to their repeated complaints.



Turkish parliamentary delegation calls on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday. PHOTO: PID

## Child commission to be set up to ensure child rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A child commission will be established to monitor violations of child rights and take action in this regard, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed said yesterday.

There is a consensus to eliminate violence against children, he said, adding that poverty and illiteracy are major reasons for violations of child rights.

He also said that the correction centres for children should be upgraded and that a ban on physical punishment of children should be imposed.

The minister was speaking as the chief guest at a dialogue on 'Rights of children: The role of parliamentarians and political leaders' at the National Press Club in the city.

All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on PRSP, MDGs and WTO and Bangladesh Development Forum in cooperation with People's Empowerment Trust (PET) and Save the Children, Sweden-Denmark (SCS-D), organised the dialogue.

Speaking at the dialogue, Awami League leader Suranjit Sengupta said confrontational politics and absence of public debate before enactment of laws for children are major obstacles to ensuring child rights.

"The situation would remain the same unless we take steps to stop confrontational politics, reduce poverty and curb corruption," he said. "If we remain divided over political issues, how can we protect child rights?"

He, however, said that Bangladesh is much ahead of many other countries with regard to child rights.

Former education minister ASHK Sadique said that it is important to consult with children before making any law for them.

He said parents and teachers should also be made aware of child rights so that they themselves do not exploit children.

AL leader Faruk Khan MP said the programmes meant for the children are not being implemented properly and the money allocated for children under different ministries is not being used properly. As a result, children are being deprived of their rights, including education, he added.

He also said that AL has specific plans with regard to child rights in its 23-point programme and that his party will implement those if voted to power.

AL lawmaker Shahjahan Khan called for political commitment and raising awareness to ensure child rights.

He also suggested establishing a special fund for the children.

Action should be taken against the syndicates using children for begging, he said and suggested enacting a law against such practices.

Moin Uddin Ashraf of PET gave a presentation on child rights and election manifesto.

The election manifesto should have specific issues regarding child rights such as ban on physical punishment of children in educational institutions and facilities for children with disability, he said.

In her presentation, Kristine Zeuthen Jeppensen of SCS-D said that physical and humiliating punishment is yet to be recognised as a violent act by policymakers, law enforcers, parents, teachers, employers and even the NGOs.

Physical and psychological punishment affects the children severely, she said.

Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Mahbubur Rahman MP, Dr Abdur Razaque MP, Motahar Hossain MP, Akhter Banu MP, Khaleda Rabbani MP, SCS-D Country Manager Olof Risberg also spoke at the dialogue chaired by Dr Muhammad Serajul Akbar MP, PET Executive Director Shshir Shil moderated the dialogue.

## Ahmadiyya Youth Confce tomorrow

The second district Ahmadiyya Youth Conference will be held from July 28 to August 1 at Masjeed Baitul Baset situated in Chawkbazar, Chittagong, says a press release.

Youths from Chittagong, Greater Chittagong, Noakhali, Comilla & Chandpur are expected to attend this annual conference.

Mahboobur Rahman, president of National Ahmadiyya Youth Organization is supposed to attend the conference as the chief guest.

## One killed in Bagerhat road accident

UNB, Bagerhat

A woman was killed and six others were injured when a bus ploughed through a rickshaw van on Bagerhat-Chitalmari road yesterday.

Police and local people said the accident occurred at Shyampara at 12:00 noon, killing van passenger Chhuti Mandal, 55, wife of Dhananjay Mandal, on the spot.

The injured were rushed to local hospitals.

Enraged by the accident, a mob put up barricade on the road disrupting traffic for three hours.

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

## Statue made of black stone found in Pabna

A CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Law enforcers recovered a statue made of valuable black stone worth Tk 10 crore at Shanthia upazilla under Pabna district on Tuesday.

Shanthia police said on information members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)-12 raided Ahasan's house in village Piyadaha of Nandanpur union on Tuesday in guise of customer.

Rab team recovered the statue from the spot and held Nawab Ali, 35, on charge of keeping the statue.

Rab handed over Nawab as well as the statue to Shanthia police.

Police said the recovered Gopal statue worth Tk 10 crore was made of valuable black stone.

## Prof Talukdar made Eastern University VC

President and Chancellor of Private University has appointed Professor Dr Rahim B Talukdar as vice-chancellor of Eastern University, says a press release.

Before joining his new position, Prof Talukdar was the vice-chancellor of Bangladesh University of Business & Technology (BUBT). He was also the director of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), University of Dhaka.

Prof Talukdar has a wide range of research, consulting and advising experience for over three decades in national and international organizations and agencies.

## Obituary



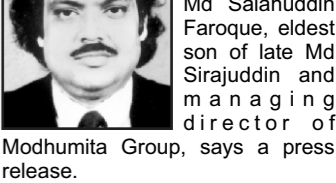
Prof Dr Tahmina Khatun, an eminent orthodontist and wife of Prof Dr Afzal Hossain Bachchu, passed away due to cancer at her residence yesterday at the age of 44, says a press release.

Dr Tahmina left behind her one son, one daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn her death.

Her quikhwani will be held at her residence at House No-69/E, Road No-6/A, Dhankandi in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow.

All have been requested to attend the quikhwani to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## Death anniversary



Today is the 14th death anniversary of Md Salahuddin Faroque, eldest son of late Md Sirajuddin and managing director of Modhumita Group, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## 'Concerted action a must to curb violence against women'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday called on the government, civil society members, local government institutions and NGOs to work together to curb violence against women.

They also stressed the need for coordination among the NGOs working to this end.

Many NGOs in rural areas have been trying to stamp out violence, but the lack of coordination among them is hampering their activities, they said.

South Asia Partnership Bangladesh (SAP) in collaboration with the Manusher Jonno Foundation organised the workshop on 'Resisting violence against women' at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

The participants called for strengthening the local government, saying that it can play an important role in establishing the rights of women.

They also said women UP members should be provided with proper training in order to ensure their participation in the judicial activities of Union Parishad (UP).

Achieving empowerment of women is a must to establish their rights in society, said Taleyia Rahman, executive director of Democracy Watch.

Women should also have more education to achieve self-reliance and development in various fields, she said.

Speaking as the chief guest, CQK Mushtak Ahmed, director general of NGO Affairs Bureau, said ensuring democracy at the grassroots level is a must to establish the rights of women and resolve the socio-economic problems in the country.

Syed Nurul Alam, executive director of SAP Bangladesh, said violence against women cannot be curbed overnight. "We all have to work together to stamp out the menace," he added.

SAP has initiated a three-year-long project titled 'Women's rights',

which is being implemented in 257 unions in six districts with the assistance of 14 other organisations, he said.

UP chairmen and members took part in the workshop and placed their recommendations.

Dr Faustina Pereira, director, research and advocacy, Ain-O-Salish Kendra, Prof Dr Sadeka Halim of Dhaka University, and Nadira Mallik, programme coordinator of SAP, also spoke at the workshop moderated by television personality and columnist Muhammad Jahangir.



Dr Faustina Pereira speaks at a workshop on 'Resisting violence against women' at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On her left is Prof Dr Sadeka Halim and on her right are CQK Mushtak Ahmed, Syed Nurul Alam and Taleyia Rahman. PHOTO: STAR

## 8 militants, road worker killed in Afghan unrest

AFP, Kandahar

Gunmen shot dead a road worker subcontracted to a US project in southern Afghanistan on Wednesday, police said, while coalition troops killed eight attackers in separate incidents.

Three other road builders were wounded when their vehicle came under fire in southern Zabul province as they were driving to work, the provincial police chief told AFP.

The officer, Nur Mohammad Paktine, blamed the attack on "enemies of Afghanistan" — a term used by the government to refer to remnants of the Taliban regime toppled from power in 2001 and now waging a deadly insurgency.

The men had been helping to build a road between a highway and an airport under construction near the provincial capital Qalat.



## Moderately heavy falls likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Moderately heavy falls are also expected at places during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 22.9 degree Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:44pm today and rises at 5:26am 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	28.4	82	74
Chittagong	31.2	27.0	83	88
Rajshahi	33.5	27.5	94	78
Khulna	34.2	27.5	79	80
Barisal	31.1	27.4	86	85
Sylhet	30.3	25.8	97	83
Cox's Bazar	31.0	26.7	80	92



A photography exhibition by Sirajul Hossain begins at the National Museum auditorium in the city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR



Jono Udyog forms a human chain in front of Fine Arts Institute in the city yesterday with a slogan 'Social awareness to prevent dengue'. PHOTO: STAR