



People from all walks of life gather in front of the Bangabandhu Bhaban at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday to pay homage to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, top, leaders of 14-party opposition combine led by Awami League President Sheikh Hasina place wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu, bottom.

BANGABANDHU KILLING Identify int'l elements involved: CPB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) at a discussion yesterday called for identifying the international elements involved in the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and immediate execution of the verdict in Bangabandhu murder case.

They also demanded restoration of the constitution of 1972 and implementation of four principles of the liberation war – nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism.

The CPB organised the discussion at its central office to mark the 31st death anniversary of Bangabandhu.

CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said the ongoing plundering in the name of free market economy is contrary to the spirit of the liberation war.

The real followers of Bangabandhu can never support the free market economy, he added.

Paying tribute to Bangabandhu, he said non-execution of the verdict is another evil design of the alliance government.

The speakers said the process of moving the country backward that started with the killing of Bangabandhu in 1975 is still in place.

CPB leaders Morshed Ali, Ruhin Hossain Prince, Mahub Alam, Sazzad Zahir Chandan, Prof AN Rasheeda and Abdul Jabbar also spoke.

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Imtiaz new envoy to Nepal

Bss, Dhaka

The government has decided to appoint Imtiaz Ahmed, currently Director General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Nepal.

A career diplomat Imtiaz joined the BCS foreign service in 1986 and served in Bangladesh Missions in Washington DC, Rome, Cairo, Kathmandu and Kuala Lumpur on different capacities, said a foreign office press release yesterday.

Bangladesh wants closer ties with Venezuela: President

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday said Bangladesh is eager to strengthen ties with Venezuela through more people-to-people contact and closer economic cooperation.

The president said this when newly appointed Ambassador of Venezuela Milena Santana-Ramirez presented her credentials to him at Bangabhaban.

Iajuddin congratulated the new Venezuelan envoy based in New Delhi.

He said Bangladesh and Venezuela enjoy close bonds of friendship and understanding based on their shared values of democracy and commitment to world peace.

He recalled the official visit of Venezuelan President Hugo Rafael Chavez Fries in 2001, the first-ever official visit to Bangladesh by a head of state of Venezuela.

Iajuddin underscored the need for exchange of visit of experts, especially doctors, agriculturists and students between the two countries.

He said Bangladesh has achieved significant progress in poverty alleviation, empowerment



Newly appointed Ambassador of Venezuela Milena Santana-Ramirez presented her credentials to President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

new Venezuelan envoy during her tenure would make significant contribution to take the relations between the two countries to a new height.

Iajuddin conveyed through the Ambassador best wishes to the Venezuelan president and invited him to visit Bangladesh.

The new ambassador noted with interest that Venezuela has also used the micro-credit model of Bangladesh for the welfare of the economically challenged section of its population.

She said Venezuela has taken initiatives to develop many sectors, including micro-credit and oil sectors.

Earlier on his arrival at Bangabhaban, the ambassador was given a guard of honour by the President's guard regiment. She took salute and inspected the parade, said an official release.

Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin, Military Secretary to the President Major Gen Md Aminul Karim, Secretary to the President AFM Solaiman Chowdhury, Press Secretary M Mukhlesur Rahman Chowdhury and other senior official were present on the occasion.

He expressed the hope that the

role in forming the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) to promote economic cooperation peace and stability in this region.

The president mentioned that Bangladesh has always perused cooperation and friendship with its neighbours and played a pioneering

of women and in non-formal education.

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2.46 lakh dropout children enrolled in pry schools

Bss, Dhaka

A total of 2.46 lakh children who were beyond the primary school coverage came under the primary school enrollment during the last two years.

According to World Bank sources, apart from the re-enrollment, 8,000 learning centres have been established for these underprivileged children.

The project titled 'Reaching Out of School Children (ROSC)' took the initiatives under the government's 'Education of All' programme.

Started in June 2004, the project is being implemented at a cost of Tk 367 crore with joint financial assistance of the WB and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC).

The main objective of the project is to reduce the number of out of school children through improve access, quality and efficient services in primary school, sources said.

'Bangladesh has taken great strides in primary enrolment and there are still many primary age children out of school reaching out through learning centres,' the sources added.

After successful completion of the project, it will cover 5 lakh dropout school children in these learning centres. The centres will provide facilities to the children who belong to the poorest segment of the society and who do not have access to primary education.

The significant achievements of the project in two years include establishment of 44 Shishu Kalyan Trust Schools, setting up a Comprehensive Management of Information System (CMIS) to improve existing monitoring mechanisms and 11 education resource providers for imparting training to the teachers of leaning centres.

Recently, the World Bank and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation concluded a joint supervision mission and expressed satisfaction over the overall progress of the projects.

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Another low at northwest bay

Bss, Dhaka

Another monsoon low was formed at the northwest Bay of Bengal yesterday noon off the West Bengal and Bangladesh coast, which may concentrate into a low pressure and turn into a seasonal depression, Met Office sources said.

The formation of the low followed departure of a depression on Sunday towards Orissa on a westward course taking away all the rains, weakening the monsoon over Bangladesh.

There had been a couple of lows and depressions in the recent past. All of them had moved away westward instead of northward over Bangladesh, causing a lull in rainfall over the country at its peak rainy season.

Now hopes have been renewed among the meteorologists that the latest low forming off the West Bengal and Bangladesh coast may become friendly to provide rains over the country at the mid period of the monsoon before it winds up for this season in early October.

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5.5 MILLION INFECTED WITH HIV IN SOUTH ASIA

HIV/AIDS epidemic in SA likely

Levels of risk high in Bangladesh: WB report

UNB, Dhaka

HIV and AIDS epidemic in South Asia is likely to grow rapidly unless the eight countries in the region saturate high-risk groups with better HIV preventive measures.

This was stated in a new World Bank report launched at the 16th International AIDS Conference in Toronto, Canada.

According to the Report titled 'AIDS in South Asia: Understanding and Responding to a Heterogeneous Epidemic', more than 5.5 million people are infected with HIV in South Asia.

The Report focused on five countries in the region: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

It said in Bangladesh levels of risk are high, with potential for a

substantial epidemic if there is significant spread among injecting drug user networks and their sexual partners.

According to the report, HIV infection among sex workers in Bangladesh remains at a low level.

'Bangladesh has a window of opportunity to saturate prevention programme coverage, particularly among female sex workers and also among men having sex with men and injecting drug users, wherever the latter sub populations are identified,' it said.

The World Bank has supported efforts to fight AIDS in South Asia, and has committed US \$380 million to date to support national programmes.

In Bangladesh, the Bank committed \$20 million for the HIV/AIDS Prevention Project (HAPP), which

supports scaling up of interventions among groups at high risk while strengthening overall programme management.

The new World Bank report on HIV said that the epidemic is increasingly being driven by the region's flourishing sex industry and injecting drug use.

The high-risk groups in the region include sex workers and their clients, injecting drug users and men having sex with men.

Contributing regional risk factors include widespread stigma and discrimination; poverty and inequality; illiteracy; the low social status of women and trafficking of women into commercial sex.

The risk factors also include porous borders; widespread migration; high levels of mobility; cultural restrictions on discussing sex; high

rates of sexually transmitted infections; and limited condom use.

The report says halting the spread of the epidemic will depend on a two-pronged approach.

The first one is establishing effective prevention programmes for groups at increased risk of HIV infection such as sex workers and their clients, injecting drug users, and men who have sex with men.

And secondly, resolving the social and economic drivers of the epidemic such as poverty, stigma, and sex trafficking of women.

The report suggested that countries must tailor their HIV prevention programmes to suit their own local conditions rather than rely on generic global or regional approaches, which have failed to make a difference in individual countries.



Community primary school teachers stage a demonstration at Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday demanding nationalisation of their jobs.



A nurse attends to ailing poet Shamsur Rahman as her daughter looks on at the intensive care unit of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital in the city yesterday.

Ruet extends vacation to avoid further untoward incidents

RU CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) finally announced a 12-day vacation from yesterday to avert further untoward incidents on the campus.

The mid-semester vacation was scheduled to begin on August 19 but in the wake of attacks on students by Islami Chhatra Shibir, the authorities extended the vacation period as the students have kept boycotting classes and examinations for the last three days in protest.

At an emergency meeting on Monday night, the university authorities took the decision on vacation. Ruet Vice-chancellor Prof AFM Anwarul Haque presided over the meeting.

Meanwhile, Shibir cadres gave death threat to BCL leader Asif over mobile phone on Monday midnight thrice, warning him not to stage any demon-

strations against the Shibir. The calls were made from the cellphone of Shibir President Syed Ahmed Kabir, but he denied making any such calls.

The cadres also gave death threat to general students who were protesting against the Shibir attack on Shaheed Shahidul Haque hall on Saturday, campus sources said.

At least 25 students, including 10 Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal workers, were injured in the armed attack by Shibir.

The agitating students said they would continue to stage demonstrations even after the reopening of the university until the attackers are arrested and punished.

Many residential students have already left the campus in fear of further attacks.

Additional police forces were deployed on the campus and the members of Rapid Action Battalion are also patrolling the campus.

AUGUST 15 MASSACRE Rinto's death anniversary observed

Bss, Dhaka

The 31st death anniversary of Abdur Nayeem Khan Rinto, a victim of 1975 August 15 massacre, was observed yesterday with due solemnity.

Rinto, son of late Abdul Khaleque Khan, founder-chairman of Oposonin Group of Industries and a promising artiste, had come to the capital from his Barisal town residence to lead a cultural group for rendering a musical soiree.

Rinto, who was also a close friend of the second son of Shaheed Abdur Rob Serniat, the then cabinet minister, went to his friend's residence on that fateful night and a bullet of the assassins put an end to his life.

In observance of the death anniversary of Rinto, a milad mahfil and special prayer was organised at the Eskaton head office of the Oposonin Group.

Besides, the staff members of the company, relatives and admirers of the deceased, including political leaders, cultural activists and dignitaries attended the mahfil.