

Electoral reforms a must as some rules go against free, fair polls

Hasina tells AL Sylhet leaders

UNB, Dhaka
Awami League (AL) President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday said electoral reform is a must as this government, after the 2001 polls, made some rules that stand against holding free and fair elections.

neutral environment," she said.
Blasting the government for its "double standard" regarding her proposed electoral reforms, she said the prime minister in public meetings demonstrates her rigid stance not to accept the reform proposals while her secretary general calls for dialogue.

for that reason Shaikh Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai are now kept in a sub-jail although they are convicted murderers."
Hasina also said that if Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai got the chance to speak freely, then they could divulge many secrets.

About the price spiral Hasina alleged that the family members of the prime minister through syndicate are "looting public money and enlisted themselves among the 29 richest people of the world".
Turning to the political scenario, she termed August as a 'month of killings, losses, mourning and dreads'.



A visitor takes a look at a consumer product at a stall of a fair organised by Square Consumer Products Ltd on the sidelines of a cooking competition in Dhaka yesterday.

'RADHUNI, RANNAY SHRESTHATTER LORAI' ENDS
Jobaida Begum of Ctg gets first prize

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Braving the elements, hundreds of people from around the city thronged the plenary hall of the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre yesterday to have a glimpse at the grand finale of a yearlong cooking competition, happened for the first ever in the history of Bangladesh.

Square Consumer Products organised the "Radhuni, Rannay Shresthatter Lorai" competition in association with Channel I, a private television channel and Mediacom, an event management firm.

SK Das, director of Square Consumer Products, inaugurated the first session of the programme.
Of the 20 thousand contenders from all over the country, five were elected for the final from two categories: Traditional and Creative. They cooked two items- "Amish" and "Niramish" yesterday.

Following the judgment of over one hundred people, including Siddika Kabir, Keka Ferdousi, both renowned culinary specialists of the country and Dr Shahin Ahmed, a nutrition specialist, Jobaida Begum from Chittagong was awarded first prize with 20 tolas of gold while Nasreen Jahan from Rangpur and Selina Nasreen from Faridpur jointly stood second and received Tk 50 thousand each.

The opposition leader urged her party members to be united for fighting against what she called "an autocratic and a killer government".

'Make politics accountable, transparent'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An accountable and transparent politics can lead the nation towards attaining its cherished goal for which people of the land fought a bloody battle in 1971, said Air Vice Marshal (Retd) AK Khondkar at a discussion yesterday.

The discussion titled 'Operation Jackpot in Liberation War' was organised by Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Non-Commando Association (BMNCA) at the Liberation War Museum in the city.

Speaking as chief guest, AK Khondkar said people fought the war to live a life free from hunger and exploitation.

"But their dream is still unfulfilled with 56 percent of total population living below the poverty line," he added.

Expressing his optimism AK Khondkar said, "If our unarmed people can defeat a well-trained regular army, they must be able to build a happy and prosperous country uprooting all evil forces from the land."

He also appreciated the role of 800-900 marine commandos who took part in the Operation Jackpot in 1971.

Due to their operation, supply of arms and ammunition to Pakistan army was disrupted and shipping agencies, who brought the army's supplies, were disinterested in anchoring their ships at the port as the risk of being sunk was high, said AK Khondkar.

Taking part in the discussion Colonel (Retd) Shawkat Ali MP said to build a non-communal, secular and democratic society the progressive people should fight the evil forces with new strategy.

Chaired by Chairman of the association Shahjahan Kabir Bir Pratik, the programme was also addressed by its Secretary General Commando Md Khalilur Rahman and Member Secretary of the Museum Trustee Board Dr Sarwar Ali.

ATTEMPT ON RU TEACHER Punishment to culprits demanded

RU CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of teachers, students and staffs of marketing department of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday staged a demonstration on the campus demanding punishment to the terrorists who had an attempt on the life of department teacher Faridul Islam.

They have boycotted all of today's academic activities.

Earlier, on August 16, a group of armed terrorists chased Faridul and one of his students on their way home. They escaped jumping into a pond and took shelter in a nearby house.

The demonstration, led by department Chairman Selim Raza, paraded different streets on the campus. At a rally at Rabindra Arts building premises, teachers and students expressed grave concern over the situation since police is yet to identify and arrest the attackers.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF) also staged demonstrations on the same demand.

The organisations also expressed solidarity with the movement of the department teachers and students for the greater interest and security of 25000 students.

They also threatened the university authorities to enforce tougher movements if they fail to ensure security of teachers and students.



Participants observe a minute of silence before the beginning of a discussion titled 'Operation Jackpot in the War of Liberation' at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday condoling the death of poet Shamsur Rahman.

'Right-to-know law a must for strengthening democracy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at discussion yesterday called for enactment of 'Right to Information Law' to strengthen democracy in society.

But such law should be formulated on the basis of recommendations from different professional bodies, they said at a view exchange meeting in Chittagong.

Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) and IPSA, a non-government organisation, in cooperation with Manusher Jonno Foundation organised the meeting to exchange views on working paper on 'Right to Information Law-2002' proposed by the Law Commission.

Barrister Tanjib-ul-Alam explained different aspects of the draft of the law at the meeting attended by human rights activists,

journalists, lawyers, teachers and NGO activists.

The speakers said a proper mechanism should be put in place so that people can have easy access to information in public and private organisations.

To ensure the right to information, they said, the Official Secrets Act-1923 should be either repealed or properly reformed.

This law should act as a tool to help establish human rights and good governance, they added.

Fifty-six distinguished personalities from Rangamati, Bandarban, Khagrachhari, Cox's Bazar, Noakhali, Feni, Comilla and Chittagong were present at the meeting moderated by Sanjida Sobhan.

Fyaz Uddin Ahmed of Manusher Jonno Foundation delivered the welcome address.

Nat'l strategy on infant young child feeding soon

BSS, Dhaka

Food and Disaster Management Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yousuf yesterday said a national strategy on infant and young child feeding (IYCF) will soon be introduced to help improve nutrition status of infants and young children side by side with implementing other integrated programmes.

"The government is committed to uphold their nutrition status by keeping breast-feeding as major component for the new born and young children," he said while addressing the inaugural session of a two-day national conference in the city.

The conference titled "Breast-feeding and complementary feeding (infant and young child feeding) is being jointly organised by Bangladesh Breast-feeding Foundation (BBF) and the National Nutrition Programme (NNP) at the Institute of Child and Mother Health (ICMC) at Matuail in the city.

Emphasising the need for breast-feeding, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yousuf said it could reduce risks of infectious diseases for infants up to two years side by side with preventing other diseases.

"Breast-feeding equally protects the health of mothers by reducing breast, ovarian and uterine cancers and helps control diabetes and save mothers from getting osteoporosis," he said.

Referring to the global health recommendations, the minister said infants should be breastfed for the first six months after their birth to achieve optimal physical and mental growth.

Referring to the global health recommendations, the minister said infants should be breastfed for the first six months after their birth to achieve optimal physical and mental growth.

Referring to the global health recommendations, the minister said infants should be breastfed for the first six months after their birth to achieve optimal physical and mental growth.

Referring to the global health recommendations, the minister said infants should be breastfed for the first six months after their birth to achieve optimal physical and mental growth.

Referring to the global health recommendations, the minister said infants should be breastfed for the first six months after their birth to achieve optimal physical and mental growth.

Referring to the global health recommendations, the minister said infants should be breastfed for the first six months after their birth to achieve optimal physical and mental growth.

Referring to the global health recommendations, the minister said infants should be breastfed for the first six months after their birth to achieve optimal physical and mental growth.

Centenary of scouting to be celebrated next year

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Scouts will celebrate the centenary of scouting through various colourful programmes on August 1 next year.

To mark the grand occasion, Bangladesh Scouts would arrange jamboree on the train, cycle rally, CD programmes, construct Centenary Scout Bhaban and release commemorative postage stamps and first day cover.

A team of Bangladesh Scouts would join the World Scouts Jamboree, and a Scouts Museum will also be set up, said speakers at a press conference at Scouts Bhaban here yesterday.

Chief National Commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts M Fazlur Rahman delivered the main speech at the conference, organised by the Centenary Celebration Committee.

Professor Mahbul Alam, Habibul Alam, Mihir Kanti Majumder, M Abul Kalam Azad, Dr Mirza Ali Haider, M Kamaluddin and Dr Shah Mohammad Farid addressed the conference, among others.

The press conference was told that Bangladesh Scouts ranks fifth in the world statistically.

The speakers said the image of Bangladesh Scouts has gradually enhanced for its social welfare activities, which enabled Bangladesh Scouts to become Vice President of the World Scouts Committee.

Fazlur Rahman expressed his hope that the Scouts movement would be able to meet the demand of time in building worthy youths through its various programmes.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Ishaq Babul, son of late Israfil, will be held at his residence at Elephant Road in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the qulkhwani to pray for salvation of the departed soul. Babul passed away on August 18.

SE ASIAN REGIONAL HEALTH MINISTERS' MEET BEGINS IN CITY TODAY

Healthcare services to figure agenda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Declaration containing present health concerns of South East Asia Region (SEAR) will be adopted at the SEAR health ministers' meeting scheduled to begin today in the city, Health Minister Khondkar Mosharrar Hossain said yesterday.

Addressing at a press briefing in a city hotel, the minister said the declaration would strengthen health workforce to implement the decisions of the meeting.

Health ministers of eleven member states of WHO in South-East Asia Region would participate in the two-day meeting to enhance regional cooperation with a view to developing the health care services, preventing diseases with a concerted effort and improving overall health status in the region, he added.

The ministers will discuss several issues of common interest including revised strategy for malaria control in the South East Asia Region, global fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, pandemic influenza preparedness and response, recovery activities in countries affected by the earthquake and tsunamis and regional commitment on strengthening

public health work force in SEAR countries.

The health ministers' meeting will be followed by the 59th session of the Regional Committee for the South-East Asia Region from August 22-25.

Issues to be discussed in the Regional Committee include promoting patient safety at health care institutions, alcohol consumption control policy options in the South-East Asia Region, and regional initiatives for eradication of tropical diseases and international trade and health.

WHO Regional Director Dr Samlee Plianbangchang will present a report on the work of WHO in the South-East Asia Region in the last year. Besides the programme budget, the delegates will discuss the regional implications of the decisions and resolutions of the recent World Health Assembly and the sessions of the Executive Board.

WHO Deputy Regional Director Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO representative in Bangladesh Dr Duangvadee Sungkhobol and Secretary to the health ministry AKM Zafarullah Khan were present at the press briefing.

'South Asian University concept needs to be pursued'

concept needs to be pursued

BSS, Dhaka

The South Asian Centre for Excellence, as proposed by Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, needs to be followed with seriousness since the concept, if materialised, will help intellectual advancement in the region.

Speakers at a seminar titled "South Asian Centre for Excellence - a SAARC aspiration" were unanimous that such an institution, which is in effect a university, will go a long way in developing the educational and related areas of the region's 1.4 billion people.

Organised by International Studies Association, Bangladesh (ISAB), the seminar was chaired by Prof K M Mohsin, President of the Asiatic Society Prof Emajuddin Ahmed was the chief guest while Director General of the BISS Major General Muniruzzaman was present as special guest.

Columnist Zagulul Ahmed Chowdhury and Dr Atiq Rahman, executive director of Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, were the designated discussants.

The speakers said that the pros and cons of the concept need to be examined and the idea should be pursued with seriousness with a view to giving a sound shape to the proposal.

Prof Anisuzzaman, Tauhid Hossain and Mainuddin Monem took part in the open discussions.

Dr A Rob, acting president of the ISAB, and Masud Mannan also spoke.



Mily Rahman speaks at a discussion to mark the 35th death anniversary of Bireshtha Matiur Rahman at Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. On her left are: Ishtiaq Kabir Ulfat, Syed Margub Morshed and Mohammad Zafar Iqbal.

Two killed in city road accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people were killed in separate road accidents in the city yesterday.

One unidentified person aged about 22 was killed in front of the Dhakeshwari temple in the city yesterday.

The accident occurred when a Dhamrai-bound passenger minibus ran over him at 1:30pm while he was crossing the road at Lalbagh.

He died on the spot. A library card of a student named Masum of Kobi Nazrul Govt. College was found in his pocket.

Following the accident, the agitated people put up barricades

on Bakshibazar and Dhakeshwari roads and damaged several minibuses.

The people withdrew the barricades 2:45pm when local lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu assured them of making speed breakers on the road immediately.

Another unidentified person age about 30 was killed at Shanirakha near a filling station on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

He died on the spot when a bus hit him from behind at around 1:30am.

Police sent the two bodies to the Sir Saimullah Medical College for autopsy.

Int'l conference on road safety at Buet Tuesday

BSS, Dhaka

A three-day 'International Conference on Road Safety in Developing Countries' begins at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) on Tuesday.

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda will inaugurate the conference to be organised by the Accident Research Center (ARC) of Buet.

State Minister for Communication Salahuddin Ahmed will be the special guest in the inaugural function to be presided over by Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr M Aleem Murtaza.

A total of 72 papers, including 12 keynote papers, will be presented in the conference to be joined by around 200 professionals working with road affairs.

WEATHER TODAY logo with sun and cloud icons.

Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

Country's highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Khulna and lowest 24.2 degree Celsius at Teknaf.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:28pm today and rises at 5:36am tomorrow.

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

Table with 5 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.