

Guard against threats of evil forces

BJP urges CG

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP) urged the caretaker government to guard against threats from all evil forces to continue the democratic and constitutional process.

This was expressed when a seven-member delegation of BJP (Matin), led by its Chairman MA Matin, called on President/Chief Adviser (CA) to caretaker government Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Expressing satisfaction over the initiatives taken by the caretaker government, the delegation observed that free, fair and neutral election would be held under the present caretaker government and the Election Commission.

The delegation members said those who are demanding removal of the Chief Election Commission (CEC) do not want the election to be held on time.

They also called upon the Chief Advisor to transfer UNOs and OCs for holding free, fair and neutral election.

CA said the newly formed caretaker government is determined to hold free, fair and neutral election. "The caretaker government has taken various measures in this regard," he said.

Iajuddin sought cooperation from all concerned for holding the election neutrally.

BJP General Secretary ABM Golam Mostafa and senior leaders Kazi Alauddin, Aminuddin, Qa'ari Habibullah Belali, Amatun Noor Panna and Abu Naser Rahmatullah were in the delegation.

JU meetings postponed

BSS, Dhaka

Meetings of the academic council, the board of ordinance studies and a committee for elections affairs of Jahangirnagar University (JU) scheduled for November 13 have been postponed, a JU press release said here yesterday.

The date for the meetings will be announced later.

Guardians' Forum submits memorandum to president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh School and College Guardians' Forum organised a silent rally in the city yesterday in protest against the threat given by a political alliance to bring the whole country into standstill through blockade.

The forum also submitted a memorandum containing its five-point demand to the president/chief adviser to caretaker government.

The memorandum said the attempt to cripple the economy of the country through blockading highways, railways and waterways, and shutting down ports cannot be the right of any political alliance.

The 5-point demand included completing syllabus and admission process in all schools and colleges in a proper way, preventing any sort of militant procession and meeting and discouraging political activities in educational institutions.

The forum also urged the president to ask the advisers to refrain from making statement before the media and hold a free and fair election within the stipulated period.

'Remove CEC, reform EC'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sammilita Nagorik Andolon and Peshajibi Samannay Parishad yesterday demanded removal of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and reconstitution of the Election Commission in order to pave the way for a free and fair election acceptable to all.

They also called on the caretaker government to remove the officials appointed on political considerations at all levels of the administration and appoint those who have been made OSD out of political vengeance.

People of this country would never accept the 'blueprint' election planned by the BNP-Jamaat alliance, they said at a rally in front of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), in the city.

They also called on President/

Chief Adviser of the caretaker government Iajuddin Ahmed not to act as a puppet of the BNP-Jamaat alliance.

Barrister Amir-Ul Islam, Abdul Ahad Chowdhury, Dr Kazi Faruque Ahmed, Nasir Uddin Yusuf, ASM Shamsul Arefin, Dipu Moni, Dr Iqbal

Arselan and Awami League leaders Dr Mostofa Jalal Mohiuddin and Dr Abdur Razzak spoke at the rally.

Earlier, leaders and activists of the two organisations took out processions and held rallies at different points in the city to press for their demands.

'AL conspires to foil polls'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum yesterday in an urgent meeting said the Awami League (AL) is conspiring to foil the upcoming election through their ill efforts to make the president 'controversial'.

In a statement, they also said no political party could even present a specific allegation against the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and that is why formation of Supreme Judicial Council against the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) is totally 'illogical' and 'ridiculous'.

They also urged the lawyers of the Sammilita Ainjibi Samonoy Parishad to refrain from misinterpretation of the constitution so that a fair and neutral election can be held on due time.

Central Convener Committee of the Forum organised the meeting at the Supreme Court Bar Association with Justice Habibul Islam Bhuyian, joint secretary of the Forum, in the chair.

Shah Khasruzzaman, member secretary of the Forum, Nitai Roy Chowdhury, former minister and Lute Alam, former president of Dhaka Bar, also spoke.

One beaten to death in C'nawabganj

UNB, C'nawabganj

A man was beaten to death and a teenage boy was injured by a gang of unidentified assailants in Farimari beel area in Bholahat upazila on Saturday night.

Police said the miscreants

attacked and beat up Majibur Rahman, 55, and Jamal, 18, of Alampur village when they were going to their paddy field, leaving Majibur dead on the spot. Injured Jamal was rushed to Bholahat Upazila Health Complex. Reason behind the attack could not be known immediately.



A team of Bangladesh Jatiya Party led by its Chairman Prof MA Matin calls on President/Chief Adviser to caretaker government Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

38th Foundation Training Course begins at BPATC

The 38th Foundation Training Course began at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) at Savar yesterday. A total of 217 civil servants from 19 cadres are taking part in the four-month long training course.

Adviser to the caretaker government CM Shafi Sami was the chief guest in the inaugural function while Md Abdus Salam Khan, rector, BPATC, was in the chair.

In his speech the chief guest said that "As a civil servant of the Republic you must discharge your duty with utmost sincerity and devotion. You must be neutral in any affairs of the government."

Member Directing Staff (MDS) Mohammad Shafiqul Alam is the course advisor while Director Md Mahmud-Ul-Hoque is course director. Course Coordinators are Senior Research Officer Md Shafiqul Haque, Assistant Directors Md Bellal Hossain Khan, Mohammad Rafiqul Karim and Kazi Nurunnahar and Research Officer Md Nurul Amin.



PHOTO: STAR

Rickshaws rule the city streets as motor vehicles were off the roads yesterday due to the countrywide blockade enforced by the 14-party alliance. The picture was taken from Jatrabari intersection.

CPB to continue demonstrations until CEC resigns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday staged demonstrations and held rallies across the country demanding removal of the chief election commissioner (CEC), reconstitution of the Election Commission (EC) and de-politicisation of the administration.

The CPB leaders and activists took to the streets from morning to evening amid bringing out processions and holding rallies in different parts of the country.

In the capital, the CPB leaders took to the streets at Purana Paltan and held a rally where they said the resignation of the CEC has become the demand of mass

people and he himself should resign to break the political deadlock.

They also demanded implementation of their 53-point recommendation.

Ahsan Habib Lavlu, Sajjad Zahir Chandan, Abul Kader, Asad Ullah Tito and Suvasish Mondol addressed the rally.

The CPB also staged demonstrations and held rallies in Narayanganj, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Faridpur, Rangpur, Mymensingh, Manikganj and some other parts of the country.

CPB presidium members addressed the programmes. Meanwhile, CPB President

Manzurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Muzahidul Islam Selim have announced that their party will continue the non-stop demonstration until the CEC resigns.

In a joint statement they urged the party leaders and activists to extend the programmes to grass-roots level.

They said the CEC is leading the country towards a catastrophe by not resigning.

They also urged the caretaker government to implement their 53-point recommendation and take exemplary measures against those involved in the price hike of essentials.

Migrant workers seriously abused in UAE

Says Human Rights Watch

AFP, Dubai

Human Rights Watch (HRW) yesterday slammed the United Arab Emirates' record of abuse against migrant construction workers, urging the government to keep its promise to enforce labour laws.

"As the United Arab Emirates experiences one of the world's largest construction booms, its government has failed to stop employers from seriously abusing the rights of the country's half million migrant construction workers," the New York-based HRW said in a report.

The report, "Building Towers, Cheating Workers", highlighted what it called "serious abuses of construction workers" by employers in the UAE. Its information was

based on interviews with 60 workers.

"These abuses include unpaid or extremely low wages, several years of indebtedness to recruitment agencies for fees that UAE law says only employers should pay, the withholding of employees' passports, and hazardous working conditions that result in apparently high rates of death and injury," the report said.

"Unless the government starts to hold employers accountable for breaking the law, the UAE's colossal new skyscrapers will be known for monumental labour violations," said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at HRW.

"Hundreds of gleaming towers have risen on the backs of migrants working in highly exploitative condi-

tions," she said.

She welcomed an order by Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashed al-Maktoum last week to enforce the country's labour law and push ahead with certain reforms "based on Human Rights Watch's recommendations."

"The prime minister's decree to protect workers' rights is a welcome step in the right direction," Whitson said.

Hadi Ghaemi, a researcher for HRW, said that the UAE's drive to become a global player should mean becoming a "real" global player, in an apparent reference to the implementation of international treaties.

"You can't pick and choose. You can't be a 21st century city with 19th century labour," he told AFP on the

sidelines of a news conference to launch the report.

HRW teams have made several unsuccessful attempts to discuss the issue with UAE labour ministry officials, HRW spokesman Lance Lattig said.

"Why aren't they meeting us?" Lattig said, adding that HRW teams did not face such difficulties in countries such as Sudan and Libya.

The report said that most of the UAE's 500,000 migrant construction workers come from South Asian countries, while the total migrant worker population is 2,738,000, or 95 percent of the workforce.

The embassies of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh repatriated the bodies of 880 construction workers in 2004, HRW said, adding that the government can account for only a few of these deaths "primarily because it appears not to enforce its own laws requiring employers to report worksite deaths and injuries."

HRW also highlighted debt incurred by workers because of fees they pay recruitment agencies inside or outside the UAE when the law says employers must meet these costs.



PHOTO: STAR

Police intercept members of Bangladesh School and College Guardians' Forum in front of Bangabhaban in the city yesterday as they went to submit a memorandum to President/Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed.