



Guardians and admission seekers wait in queues in front of Janata Bank Teacher Student Centre branch for forms for first year honours admission test of Dhaka University yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

# Protect forestland, hills in Cox's Bazar

Plea lawyers, environmentalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawyers and environmentalists at a press conference yesterday vowed to launch legal fight and mass campaign to protect forestland and hills being cut by some vested quarters in Cox's Bazar. The press conference was jointly organised by Cox's Bazar District Bar Association (CBDDBA) and Paribesh Bachao Andolon at the National Press Club in the city. "We are going to file a writ petition with the High Court in this regard and the environmentalists have assured us to extend their help to launch awareness campaign," said CBDDBA General Secretary

Advocate Abdur Rauf. He alleged that trees at Cox's Bazar reserved forest are being cut indiscriminately and the belt of hills stretching along the seacoast are being destroyed over the last few years. Rauf said some officials of district administration with the help of local BNP-led 4-party alliance leaders have prepared a plan to grab the forestland and hills and cut those indiscriminately for building residential structures. But as per environmental law, no forestland can be leased out without prior permission of land and environment and forest ministries, he said, adding that the ministries

concerned did not give any permission for leasing out any portion of forestland or hills in Cox's Bazar. Rauf claimed that at least 52 acres of forestland had been grabbed and 15 to 20 hills flattened so far. Convener of Paribesh Bachao Andolon Abu Naser Khan said they will launch united movement with other environmentalist organisations to save the ecological environment of Cox's Bazar. CBDDBA President Mamtaz Ahmed and Joint General Secretary AJM Mayeen Uddin were present at the press conference.



BNP-led four party alliance stages a demonstration at Mukttangan in the city yesterday protesting countrywide anarchy and atrocities. PHOTO: STAR

# BJP leader Saifur Rahman passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Secretary General of Bangladesh Jatiya Party (Naziur-Manju faction) and former lawmaker Saifur Rahman passed away due to a cardiac arrest immediately after addressing a rally of the four-party alliance at Mukttangan in the city yesterday afternoon. Sources said Saifur, also the founder secretary of Jatiyatobadi Jubo Dal, suddenly became unconscious while leading a procession organised by BNP-led four party alliance near Paltan Police Box at around 5:00pm.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where on duty doctors declared him dead. Saifur has left behind his wife Sultana Rahman, three daughters, three sons and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death. He hailed from Chookathiya village of Keraniganj and was elected a lawmaker from Dhaka -3, Keraniganj.

UNB adds: BNP Chairperson and immediate past prime minister Khaleda Zia expressed great shock at the death of Saifur Rahman. "May Allah give his family the strength to bear the shock," she said. She also said that the country had lost a potential politician in his death.

CA assures owners of security of vehicles during blockade

UNB, Dhaka

President/Chief Adviser (CA) Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday called upon the transport owners to operate their transports with an assurance of security of the vehicles carrying commuters and commodities. "The government is determined to ensure security of life and property of the people," a Bangabhaban spokesman quoted the President to have told a delegation from the transport sector.

He called upon all to take care of the people so that they do not suffer. The 12-member delegation of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners-Workers Joint Council, led by Bangladesh Bus-Truck Owners Association chairman GM Siraj, called on the President at Bangabhaban in the afternoon. Secretaries of Communication, Home Affairs and Commerce ministries and Inspector General of Police were present at the meeting.

The delegation urged the President/Chief Adviser to take security measures to help operate transports. The members of the delegation sought deployment of paramilitary BDR at Gabtoli, Mohakhali and Sayedabad bus terminals and police-BDR at the sensitive points of the highways across the country. They apprised the President that some 2.5 million transport workers suffer from unemployment problem due to blockade while owners incur heavy losses, estimated at Tk one billion daily.

"The owners will not be able to repay bank loans and render bankrupt as a result," the delegation head told the President. They urged all the political parties to keep the transport sector free from their programmes, including blockade, for the greater interest of the people and the economy. GM Siraj later told UNB that they will ply buses, mini buses and autorickshaws in the cities to provide transport facilities to the commuters.

"The President/CA has given us assurance of providing adequate security against possible vandalism," He added, "some 25 percent of our transport vehicles will come out to the city streets early in the morning. The number will go up gradually." Asked about the inter-district bus services, Siraj said they will decide it on Monday night. The association leaders will meet in the evening to take stock of the security situation and go on distant routes.

He said after the meeting with the President they met with IGP. During the 90-minute meeting with him they discussed measures being taken to ensure security of their vehicles. "The IGP has given assurance of full security of our buses on the street," he added.

# 'CA to be responsible for pushing country towards civil war'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President/Chief adviser will be responsible for pushing the country into a civil war because he has yet to take an effective action to break the current political impasse, leaders and activists of Jubo Sangram Parishad, a platform of youth bodies of Awami League (AL), said yesterday.

At a press conference, they vowed to resist the BNP-Jamaat cadres in the streets during the non-stop blockade programme demanding removal of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and reconstitution of the Election Commission.

"It is not reasonable to push the nation into a civil war for a person like CEC MA Aziz. The blueprint of BNP-Jamaat centring the CEC is now forcing the country into a civil war and President Iajuddin will be responsible

for this war," said Jahangir Kabir Nanak, chairman of Jubo League, while addressing the press conference at AL central office in the city.

He also said the tenure of BNP-Jamaat government is over but people of the country find no difference between the caretaker government led by Iajuddin and the immediate past government of BNP-Jamaat alliance even after three weeks into his tenure. He alleged that over 26,000 people were killed in the last five years of BNP-Jamaat government.

"People are confused over the mysterious activities of Iajuddin Ahmed. The president has failed to prove himself as neutral and now he should resign from the post of chief adviser and appoint a new one," he also said while reading out a written statement. He urged the activists of Jubo

League, Jubo Maitree, Jubo Gono Forum, Jubo Samity, Jatiya Jubo Oikya, Jubo Mohila League and Jatiya Jubo Jote to come to the streets and resist the cadres of BNP-Jamaat.

Mirza Azam, general secretary of Jubo League, said it is clear to all that President Iajuddin is not a neutral person and he is trying to materialise the conspiracy of BNP-Jamaat alliance.

He alleged that many activists of Jubo League have harassed by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in different places across the country.

Among others, Central Jubo Sangram Parishad leaders Nur Ahmed Bakul, Nazmul Haq Proddhan and Advocate Sagir Anwar were also present.



AL-led 14-party combine stages a demonstration at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday demanding resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner. PHOTO: STAR

# Driver shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unknown miscreants shot a man in city's Adabar area yesterday morning.

Ayub Ali, 45, who worked as a driver of an executive engineer of roads and highways of Manikganj, was shot by a group of miscreants at around 9:30am.

The actual reason behind the attack could not be known immediately.

Ali is currently receiving treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.