

UPDF rejects polls schedule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), a regional political party of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), yesterday rejected the surreptitious declaration of election schedule on the last day of the party's three-day congress.

Termining announcement of the election schedule a conspiracy, UPDF leaders said, "With this announcement, the current political crisis would turn worse".

The leaders, meanwhile, condemned the repression and arrest of UPDF members and supporters and urged the government to take immediate steps against the land grabbers, army men and settlers accused of violence against women.

They also condemned armed attacks and killing of Jana Sanghati Samity on UPDF leaders and activists and supporters.

Later, a new central committee for UPDF was formed.

Former Sramik Fed leaders blamed for using its name

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Sanjukt Sramik Federation (BSSF) at a press conference yesterday blamed some of its former leaders and activists who have been creating confusion among people in the name of workers movement in the country.

The press conference was organised by BSSF at its office in the city.

BSSF President Mukhlesur Rahman said some former BSSF leaders and activists violated party discipline and floated another organisation using the same banner.

"The court issued an injunction against the former leaders not to use the name of BSSF for their purpose", he added.

He also called upon them to close ranks to unite and work for the greater interest of workers community.

BSSF Vice President Mosaddek Hossain Swapan, Organising Secretary Mashur Rahman and Treasurer Warish Ahmed were also present at the press conference.

Canadian HC calls on Dhiraj

BSS, Dhaka

Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Barbara Richardson called on Adviser for Fisheries and Livestock, Housing and Public Works and Liberation War Affairs Dhiraj Kumar Nath at his Public Works Ministry office here yesterday.

The adviser thanked the Canadian government for its all-out cooperation since the independence of Bangladesh.

They discussed matters related to expansion of areas of cooperation and taking effective measures in alleviating poverty.

Global tithing body for Muslims proposed

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia yesterday proposed launching an international tithing body which would fund social and economic programmes to address the plight of Muslims worldwide.

"My proposal is to use the institution of zakat (tithe) to serve as a pool of resources for the economic and social development of the Ummah (Muslim community), beginning with those who need them most," Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.



Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandaker, third from left, receives Liberation War-related mementos from Father Marino Rigon, second from left, at a ceremony at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. Dr Sarwar Ali, extreme left, Major (ret'd) Shamsul Haque, second from right, and Shantilata Mallik, extreme right, were also present.

Ctg mayor threatens to resist election activities

UNB, Chittagong

City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury yesterday threatened to resist all election activities in the port city at any cost unless a fresh election schedule is announced. 'No election activities, including electioneering, will be allowed in Chittagong without ensuring the electoral reforms and proper updating of the voter list,' he told a rally of the 14-Party alliance.

The rally was held before laying a siege to the Election Commission office as part of the alliance's countrywide EC office siege programme.

Mohiuddin, also the 14-Party coordinator of Chittagong region, strongly criticised the Election Commission for declaring the election schedule before updating the electoral roll and called upon the EC officials to refrain from performing election works in the port city.

The Mayor alleged that the EC has started an evil move to appoint pro-Jamaat presiding and polling officers to rig the coming polls in favour of the 4-Party Alliance.

Mohiuddin asked the Election Commission to immediately stop the process of appointing partisan people for election duties. 'People will reject any farcical election.'

The rally was addressed, among others, by AL leader and former minister Engineer Mosharrar Hossain.



Resident Coordinator of the United Nations Renata Lok Dessalieu calls on Adviser to the Caretaker Government Sultana Kamal at the Secretariat in the city yesterday.

412 bottles of Phensidyl seized in city

UNB, Dhaka

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized 412 bottles of Phensidyl, smuggled from India, at Segunbagicha in the city and arrested five people in this connection yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab raided Segunbagicha area and held Mostafa alias Suman, 30, and Anwar Shadat Riad, 24, along with 100 bottles of Phensidyl from a house.

Following their confessional statement, Rab raided another house in the area and arrested Russel Mia, 24, Sohag Mia, 22 and Sanjida Akter Runa, 28, along with 312 bottles of Phensidyl and a car from the spot.

They admitted that they were involved in drug trade under the leadership of Liakat Ali since long.

'Treat all children equally'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a view exchange meeting yesterday called on all to treat all children equally and not to divide underprivileged children into different categories such as 'street children', 'excluded children' and 'orphans'.

Using such terms for children causes negative impacts on them, makes them feel dejected and stunts their mental growth, said Muhammad Asgar Ali, executive director of Child Development Forum.

He also said many children face domestic violence, which are very difficult to identify and find out a remedy.

The orphan department of Islamic Relief (IR), an international NGO working to alleviate poverty, organised the 'Information sharing and networking meeting' at Brac Inn

Centre in the city.

The speakers suggested involving more child psychologists in the child welfare projects with a view to taking proper initiatives for their development.

They also called on the media to help raise awareness about child rights.

IR Bangladesh officials said they have taken up various projects for the welfare of orphans. At present, 1,559 orphans are receiving over Tk 2,200 a month from international donors. Head of Programme of IR Bangladesh MUM Maleq, Project Manager (orphan) Dr Saidul Alam, Project Manager (disaster and planning) Nurul Amin also spoke.

Representatives from Save the Children USA, Save the Children UK, Save the Children Sweden, Denmark, Unicef, ActionAid Bangladesh and Phulki took part in the meeting.

China's Great Wall? "Just a pile of earth"

REUTERS, Beijing

Three people have been detained for digging up part of the Great Wall just days before draconian new penalties are introduced to protect China's most famous tourist attraction, Xinhua news agency said.

The men used excavators to take earth from the remains of part of the Great Wall in Inner Mongolia, built at least 2,200 years ago, to use as landfill for a village factory.

"It's just a pile of earth," Erhaihao village head Hao Zengjun was quoted as telling officials from the Municipal Office on Cultural Relics Protection.

The Great Wall, which snakes its way across more than 6,400 km (4,000 miles), receives an estimated 10 million visitors a year, mostly to the mere 10km opened to tourists at Badaling, the nearest stretch to Beijing.

The wall, which the United Nations listed as a World Heritage Site in 1987, has been rebuilt many times through the centuries, and many sections of it have suffered serious damage from weather erosion and human destruction.

Visitors climb wilder, crumblier sections that are not officially open to the public and stretches have become popular sites for summer raves.

Under the law, those who damage key cultural relics deliberately can be sentenced to up to 10 years in prison.

And from December 1, people taking earth or bricks from the Great Wall will be fined up to 500,000 yuan (32,782 pounds).

Bangladeshi nominated to Congressional advocacy body

BSS, New York

Eminent attorney on immigration laws in New York and lone Bangladeshi lawyer at the US Supreme Court, Nazmul Alam, has been nominated to the US Congressional Advocacy Committee as a representative of the American Immigration Lawyers' Association (AILA).

Nazmul Alam is the first Bangladeshi attorney to get the nomination to the prestigious committee of the AILA, the biggest platform for immigration attorneys in the USA. The AILA, an organisation of more than 10,000 members, works for enacting laws on immigration and immigrant rights at the US Congress.

The organisation also sent a delegation comprising representatives from all states of the USA to lobby at the US Congress in Washington DC.

Nazmul Alam has been providing legal advice on immigration and civil rights in the USA over the last 20 years. He has also been working for the New York State Department for the last eight years.

Boy killed in road accident in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A boy was killed on the spot in a road accident at Banshipur under Shyamnagar upazila on Shyamnagar-Banshipur road yesterday.

The victim was identified as Musa Gazi, 12, son of Shahidul Islam of village Iswariput under Shyamnagar upazila.

Quoting local people, police said a truck knocked him down while the victim was crossing the road.

On contact, Shyamnagar Police Station Officer-in-charge (OC) Ishaque Dukhu Mia confirmed the incident.



Awami League leaders and activists place wreaths at the coffin of former mayor Mohammad Hanif at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday to pay their last respect.

JU admission tests hampered as pro-AL teachers observe strike

JU CORRESPONDENT

The admission tests at Jahangirnagar University (JU) under the academic session 2006-07 were hampered due to unrest on the campus yesterday.

The university authorities were forced to shift the time of the admission test of business administration department from 9:30am to 12:30pm as the university buses carrying teachers from Dhaka could not reach the campus in time due to blockade enforced by BCL activists at Shyamoli, Technical, Mirpur and Ashulia.

The admission tests of other departments scheduled for yesterday were held in absence of pro-Awami League teachers.

The crisis deepens as pro-AL teachers yesterday observed work abstention programme demanding arrest and punishment to Parvez Mallick, the alleged non-student president of JU unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD).

The teachers also demanded expulsion of other non-student JCD activists and outsiders from the campus to ensure security and vowed to go on with the programme until their demands are met.

The Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) also enforced an indefinite strike from yesterday as its 12-hour ultimatum expired on Monday night demanding punishment to JCD activists including its JU unit president for beating up its activists.

The university authorities requested the BCL leaders to withdraw the strike for holding the admission test in a congenial atmosphere.

In an emergency meeting on Monday night, the vice-chancellor requested the student leaders to help hold the admission tests smoothly.

The BCL leaders did not attend the meeting headed by pro-vc Prof Enamul Huq Khan.

The JCD brought out a procession on the campus against the strike and vowed to keep the atmosphere on the campus congenial.

JCD President Parvez Mallick claimed that he is still a M. Phil student under the supervision of Prof Enamul Huq Khan.

Meanwhile, accusing eight JCD activists, BCL President Sohel Parvez filed a case with Savar Police Station on Monday.

Mahbubul Alam leaves for Saudi Arabia

UNB, Dhaka

Mahbubul Alam, adviser for Information, Religious and Water Resources Ministries, left Dhaka for Saudi Arabia on a four-day official visit.

He will visit the Bangladeshi Hajis there and also discuss house rent of the non-ballotees with the Saudi authorities.

Adviser Prof Sufia Rahman, in-charge of Health and Family Welfare, Labour and Employment, Expatriate Welfare and Employment Ministry, will accompany him during his visit, said a handout.

NU Masters exams postponed

UNB, Dhaka

All examinations of Masters 1st part-2005 under National University, schedule to start from December 2, 2006, have been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances.

Fresh dates of the examinations will be announced later, says a NU press release.

4x2



Officials of Apollo Hospitals Dhaka and High Commission of Canada pose for photograph at the signing ceremony of a corporate agreement recently. Apollo Hospitals signed the agreement with the High Commission to provide medical services and special corporate benefits to their staff. Chief Executive Officer and Director of Medical Services of the hospital Dr Praful B Pawar and First Secretary of the High Commission Anne Corrigan signed the agreement.

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