



Fight once again to protect democracy

Speakers urge freedom fighters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called on the freedom fighters to fight once again to protect independence, sovereignty and democracy that are now at stake.

They also urged all to initiate more and more campaigns on the War of Liberation to inspire the new generation.

The discussion styled 'Duties of the freedom fighters in the current crisis' was organised by Muktiyoddha Gono Parishad at Moni Singh-Farhad Trust Bhaban in the city.

Speaking at the discussion, Maj Gen (ret'd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim Bir Pratik said lots of vested quarters are hatching conspiracy to destroy the country and its sovereignty.

The freedom fighters failed to make people understand that why and for whom they had fought the War of Liberation, he said adding that they have to be cautious until their death to protect the country

from any sort of conspiracies.

He said ahead of the election, freedom fighters should urge people not to vote the traitors who were against the War of Liberation and killed the golden sons of this soil.

Noim Jahangir, former secretary general of the Parishad, said the base of the country has become volatile as important institutions like executive, judiciary and Election Commission (EC) have been made dysfunctional.

He also said the War of Liberation, the greatest achievement of the Bangladesh, has also been humiliated for corrupt politicians.

"Give us the power, we will form a government that will be headed by the senior most and we will arrange everything necessary for the election within a year," he said adding that a congenial atmosphere will be created by this time.

Former lawmaker Kamal Siddique Bir Bikram said the country is now reeling under severe crisis as evil forces, who were against the liberation, are now speaking about

the country's independence and constitution.

A leadership of the freedom fighters is now essential to save the country, he added.

Ataus Samad, advisory editor of the daily Amar Desh, urged the freedom fighters to give proposals how to govern the country and what reforms are needed to hold a free and fair election.

Shamim Mahmud, daughter of venerable music director Altaf Mahmud, called on the freedom fighters to initiate more and more campaigns on the history of liberation war before the new generation, as it is very important now for them to know the history.

Parishad President Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat said it is high time we fought another war as the country's independence, sovereignty and democracy are at the verge of destruction.

Syed Didar Bakht of Liberal Democratic Party and different union commanders of the Parishad also spoke at the discussion.

Ataur Rahman's 15th anniversary of death today

Today is the 15th death anniversary of former prime minister Ataur Rahman Khan, says a press release.

Ataur Rahman Khan, also a national leader, passed away on this day in 1991.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held on his graveyard premises at 9:00am tomorrow (Friday).

He was born at Balia under Dhamrai upazila in Dhaka district on March 6 in 1905.

Dr Qudrat-i-Khuda

BSS, Dhaka

Today is the 29th death anniversary of eminent scientist Dr Qudrat-i-Khuda.

To mark the day, Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) has arranged a memorial meeting and doa mahfil at BCSIR auditorium at 10.30 am today, said a press release.

With BCSIR Chairman Prof Chowdhury Mahmud Hasan in the chair, Adviser for Industries, Textiles and Jute and Science and ICT Ministries Begum Sultana Kamal will attend the programme as the chief guest.

Secretary of the Science and ICT Ministry SM Wahiduzzaman and Dr Muhammad Manjur-i-Khuda will also address the function.

Pinak new Indian HC to Bangladesh

BSS, Dhaka

The Government of India has appointment Pinak R Chakravarty as High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh.

Pinak R Chakravarty was born on September 24, 1953 and joined the Indian Foreign Service in July 1977, said an Indian High Commission press release yesterday.

He has served in Cairo in 1979-1981, Jeddah in 1981-1984, London in 1984-1987 and New Delhi in 1987-1994.

He was posted as Consul General of India in Karachi (September 1994-January 1995). He also served as Counsellor/Minister in Tel Aviv in 1995-1999 and was Deputy High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh from February 1999 to July 2002.

He is presently holding the post of Chief of Protocol in New Delhi, the press release added.

REMAND OF 12YR BOY Save the Children UK concerned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Save the Children UK yesterday expressed concern over a media report that a 12-year-old boy was taken to police remand over an allegation of vandalising the Supreme Court.

Drawing attention of police authorities and the courts concerned, the organisation in a statement urged them to consider the matter from child-friendly standpoint.

"The arrest of a child and putting him under 'so-called remand' is strictly prohibited as per Children Act 1974, and go against the interests of the children," it added.

Save the Children UK also urged all political parties to make arrangement for the bail of all children who were arrested for their participation in different political activities.



Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Kalyan Foundation lays a foundation stone of a memorial at Suhrawardi Udyan in the city yesterday in memory of the Indian soldiers who were killed during the War of Liberation in 1971.

PHOTO: STAR

'80 pc indigenous people landless'

RU CORRESPONDENT

A study of Adivashi Unnayan Sangstha (ASU) revealed that presently 80 per cent indigenous people of the country are landless while the percentage was about 15 to 20 in 1947.

Adivashi communities are deprived of basic rights and subjected to exploitation by the mainstream influential people, the report added.

The report was launched at a daylong dialogue on the 'Land Related Problems of Adivashi Community in the North' held at Rajshahi Public Administration Training Centre yesterday.

In 100 Adivashi villages of Rajshahi, 921 families have been living in the government owned Khas land for ages but they are yet to get ownership of the land, the report said.

It is alleged that as they do not have valid land ownership docu-

ments, the influential tenants frequently evict them from the land.

Adivashi leaders urged the government to distribute Khas land among the Adivashi families.

Rajshahi Deputy Commissioner Aminul Islam attended the programme as chief guest.

The organisation distributed stipend among 20 Adivashi meritorious students, who are studying in the universities, colleges and schools of Rajshahi.

Betar exam postponed

BSS, Dhaka

Tomorrow's written test for the post of radio technicians in Bangladesh Betar has been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances.

Fresh date of the test will be announced later, said a press release.

RMG workers block highway for salary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Hundreds of agitating workers staged a demonstration and blocked Kaliyakaur-Nabinagar highway for an hour demanding arrears and salaries.

Workers of Oriental Wool Ware in Gazipur laid a siege to the factory at around 8:30am yesterday protesting non-payment of salary for November after sudden closure of the factory on December 1.

The workers agreed to stop their demonstration after the factory owners had assured them to pay the arrears and bonus of Eid-ul-Azha by December 17.

Time for probe

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caretaker government to probe the matters as per the TOR of the circular issued by the establishment ministry on November 27.

The council of advisers in a meeting with President and Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed decided to probe only the Uttara incident, but the establishment ministry issued a circular detailing the TOR, which involves investigation into other previous incidents since 1996.

The advisers later denied their knowledge about the change of the decision.

Some political parties have alleged that in order to divert the attention from the more serious Uttara incident, the establishment ministry in connivance with BNP has included other incidents.

About 40 former and in-service government high officials, 15 among whom have been learnt to be holding posts of assistant secretaries to joint secretaries in the current civil administration and who are known to be close to BNP, joined former energy adviser Mahmudur Rahman's secret 'party' in his business office at Sector 1 of Uttara in the capital on November 24.

The incident created strong commotion across the country as it ended up on the front page of many newspapers with photographs of the bureaucrats leaving the spot hiding their faces.

BDR man killed as train rams into truck: 10 wounded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A member of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) died and ten others were injured when a train ramed a truck carrying the paramilitary troops on a level crossing near Shaheed Mahabur Rahman Cantonment at Kholahati under Parbatipur upazila of the district yesterday.

The dead was identified as Lance Nayek Harun ur Rashid, driver of the truck. The injured BDR men are undergoing treatment at Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Witnesses said a Parbatipur bound local train from Lalmonirhat hit the truck on military police (MP) check post-1 level crossing at 8:15am. The truck was badly damaged, they added.

The BDR men of 27 Rifles Battalion, Kurigram, were going to the cantonment by the truck to take part in a routine winter exercise, BDR and police sources said.

Delwar declared unwanted by party men

UNB, Manikganj

A section of BNP leaders yesterday declared party's standing committee member and former chief whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain "unwanted" in Ghior-Daulatpur area.

The declaration came at a meeting held at local high school ground with Abdul Matin in the chair.

BNP leaders Tozammel Haque Toza, Aminul Islam, Jahangir Alam addressed the meeting.

They accused Delwar of not taking any step for development of Ghior-Daulatpur area. They said people of this constituency will launch a greater movement if he gets nomination.

Sectt employees try to chase Osman Farruk

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of class four employees tried to chase Dr M Osman Farruk, former education minister, and four former secretaries Khandaker Shahidul Islam, Mofazzal Karim, Syed Sujauddin and Abdul Halim at the secretariat yesterday when they were returning after a meeting with housing and public works Adviser Dhiraj Kumar Nath.

The incident was a sequel to termination of the job of Heron Mian, a leader of class four employees' association, in September this year by the minister for his alleged involvement in arranging a rally at Muktagong in the city.

Dr Farruk, however, fled the scene hurriedly.

BCL observes first day of strike at CU

CU CORRESPONDENT

Academic activities of Chittagong University (CU) came to a halt as Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) CU unit enforced the first day of their indefinite student strike on the campus here yesterday.

The BCL activists barred students from going to the university at Sholoshahar Railway Station in the morning.

Though shuttle trains plied between Chittagong city and the university, the number of students was thin.

During the strike CU BCL held rallies at Sholoshahar Station and on university campus and vowed to continue strike until demands are met.

The demands include allocation of seats in the dormitories on the basis of merit, removal of politically recruited provosts and house tutors, end to recruiting teachers on political consideration and ensuring co-existence of the student bodies in dormitories.

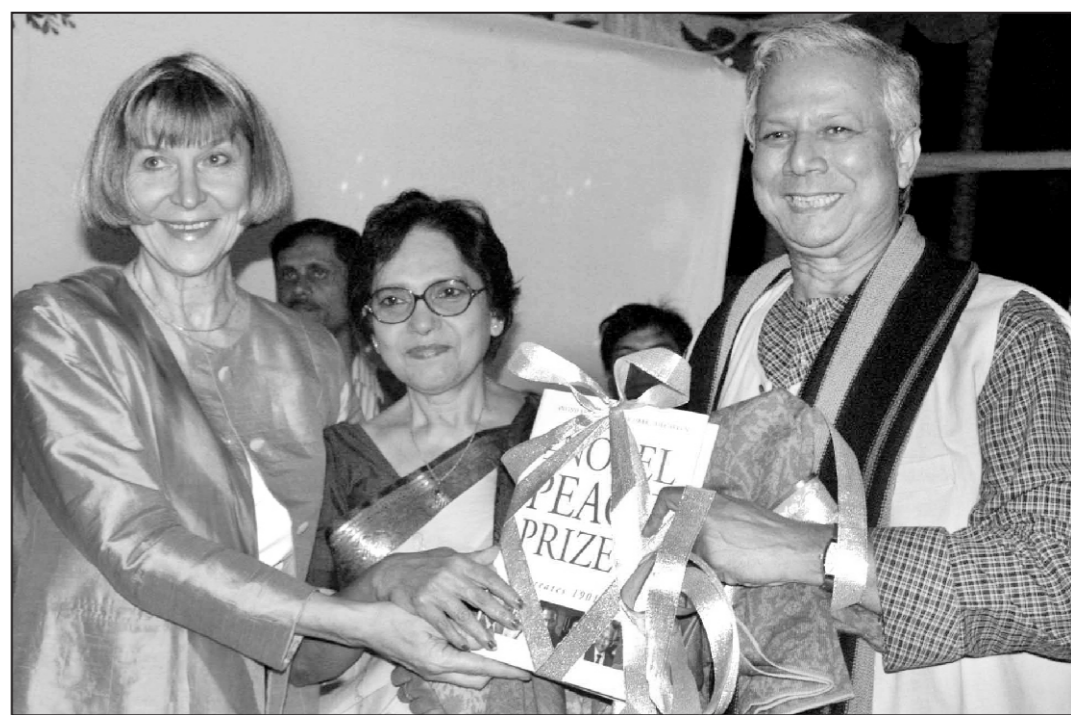


PHOTO: STAR

Norwegian Ambassador in Dhaka Ingebjorg Storfing presents a book titled 'Nobel Peace Prize' to Nobel Peace Prize winner Prof Muhammad Yunus at a reception hosted in his honour at the ambassador's residence in the city last night while Prof Afrozi Yunus, wife of the Nobel laureate, looks on.

Sedition case against eminent lawyers condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirnul Committee and South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism and Communalism yesterday condemned the filing of sedition case against country's eminent lawyers, a press release said.

Terming it utterly derogatory, leaders of the two platforms denounced the case against two hundred lawyers including Dr Kamal Hossain, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Barrister Amir Ul Islam and former SCBA president Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud and Barrister Tania Amir for vandalism at the Supreme Court on November 30.

One court keeper filed the case. "With a view to establishing the rule of law and uphold the esteem of the constitution, the way Dr Kamal Hossain and Barrister Amir Ul Islam came forward at the hour of crisis, the nation should remain grateful to them," read the statement.

It said the intervention of the honourable Chief Justice in the proceedings of the case, in fact, raises doubts about his impartiality and honesty.

The signatories to the statement include, Professor Kabir

Chowdhury, the liberation warrior Binod Bihari Chowdhury, Justice KM Sobhan, Advocate Gaziul Haque, singer Kolim Sharafi, women leader Hena Das, Maj Gen (Retd) CR Dutta and Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir.

'Foil conspiracy against polls'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Manjurul Ahsan Khan yesterday called upon all to foil all kinds of national and international conspiracies centring the upcoming general election through movement.

Khan was speaking at a rally organised by CPB at Paltan in the city to mark the Fall of Autocracy Day.

He also said the president is obstructing national advancement in every step.

Leaders called upon all to uphold the spirit of 1990 and to be united to make the democratic process stable.

Ruhin Hossain Prince, Ahsan Habib Lavlu and other leaders also spoke on the occasion.

Container falls on workers at CEPZ: 7 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Seven workers were injured in an accident at Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) area yesterday.

Sources said the workers were injured seriously when a loaded container suddenly fell on them from a container mover in front of Globe Textile Factory gate at around 10:30am.

The injured were identified as Ahsanul Hoque, Saurav, Shah Alam, Ismail, Matiuir Kabir and Alamgir.

The accident took place when they were loading goods in the container mover.

They sustained injuries in their hands and legs and were rushed to the CEPZ Hospital.

Later, three of them Ahsanul, Alamgir and Shah Alam were admitted to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital following the deterioration of their conditions.

Three container trailers fined

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mobile court in separate drives here yesterday fined three container trailers, two cargo vessels and three commercial centres and realised around Tk 2 lakh against different allegations.

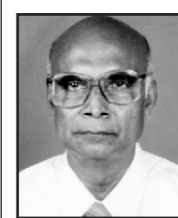
Sources said the court led by Chittagong Port Authority Magistrate Md Munir Chowdhury in a drive fined two cargo vessels Tk 1 lakh for loading goods beyond the capacity.

In two other drives, the court fined Woodland Diagnostic Centre and Rupali Canteen for digging deep tube-wells illegally and fined them Tk 60 thousand.

Three long container trailers were fined Tk 30 thousand for illegal parking at Saltgola Rail Crossing causing traffic jam.

The court also fined a chartered accountant (CA) firm BB Nath & Co Tk 3000 for wasting Wasa water.

Chehlum



Chehlum of Prof Azizul Haq, former principal of Sirajganj Govt College and Islamia Govt College, will be held at his residence at

Datta Bari in Sirajganj after Juma prayers tomorrow, says a press release.

Friends and admirers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

He passed away on October 20 at the age of 70.

RU staffs threaten fast-into-death from December 9

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) officials and staffs under the banner of 'Officer and Karmochari Oikya Parishad', an apex body of 3000 officials and employees of the university, yesterday announced that they would go for a fast-into-death from December 9 if their five-point charter of demands are not met within December 8.

The demands included a ban on cutting 20 percent pension money, implementation of syndicate decision on regularisation of jobs of 31 staffs, extension of service of the staffs to 65 years and recruitment of their dependants in the university.

Speaking at a news briefing at Rajshahi Press Club, Parishad President Mirza Wazed Hossain Beg said university authorities are not fulfilling their demands deliberately for long.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during early morning. Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged night temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 29.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakundu and lowest 09.5 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:11pm today and rises at 6:29am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in celsius	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	27.9	15.5	69	68
Chittagong	29.0	16.0	79	71
Rajshahi	28.0	12.7	83	80
Khulna	28.2	15.4	76	78
Barisal	28.0	14.5	86	90
Sylhet	28.0	14.9	70	59
Cox's Bazar	29.2	16.0	68	73

Traffic system chokes as sit-in rolls into day 2

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including laying siege to Bangabhaban, to realise their demands. These include reconstitution of the EC, correction of voter roll, de-politicisation of administration and cancellation of the election schedule.

They also demanded removal of President Iajuddin Ahmed from the post of the chief adviser (CA) saying that a fair poll is not possible under his leadership.

Hundreds of leaders and activists of the 14-party combine and the Zaker Party tried to march towards the EC Secretariat from two directions -- Mirpur and Dhanmondi, but as the police intercepted the processions, they held rallies at Russell Square, Dhanmondi Road-27 and Agargaon.

RUSSELL SQUARE

At the Russell Square rally, the 14-party leaders dubbed Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed as the 'culprit behind all the conspiracies' and said that advised by the Khaleda-Nizami alliance, he is now showing unwillingness to make changes in

the EC as per the package proposals of the advisory council.

"Cancelling all other programmes, we, millions of people shall lay siege to the Bangabhaban and stay there day and night until he (Iajuddin) is removed from the post of the CA," top AL leader Mohammad Nasim said while speaking as the chief guest.

Gono Forum leader Pankaj Bhattacharya suspected a 4-party alliance conspiracy behind the court boycotts by the justices.

"They (4-party alliance) are acting against the nation today, which is why they should be sued for sedition," he added.

Nurul Islam, the 11-party coordinator, alleged that BNP leader Khandaker Mosharruf Hossain had threatened the advisers for their steps to make changes in the EC and the administration.

Among others, Obaidul Quader, advocate Shahara Khatun, Dr Abdur Razzak, Hasanul Huq Inu spoke at the rally presided over by Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya.

The 14-party leaders and activists started to gather at the Russell Square from around 10:00am. The law enforcers closed off part of Mirpur Road near the Dhanmondi Road-27 by barbed wire barricades when the demonstrators tried to march towards the EC Secretariat at around 2:30pm.

Barred from approaching further, the 14-party leaders held the rally and concluded the day's programme by burning an effigy of the chief adviser.

Awami Swachhchasebak League and Awami Jubo League also arranged Bijoy Mancha (victory stage) and Jubo Mancha (youth stage) and held separate rallies on the Mirpur Road.

AGARGAON

The sit-in at Agargaon intersection witnessed some heat yesterday when supporters of rival AL leaders of Mirpur Kamal Ahmed Majumder and Elias Uddin Mollah locked in a scuffle during the demonstration.

They, however, calmed down after their leaders intervened following AL Presidium Member Motia Chowdhury's call to both

Kamal and Elias to bury their differences and organise demonstration from a single platform.

The leaders and activists of the 14-party combine and the Zaker Party massed at the Agargaon intersection later when the police halted their march towards the EC Secretariat. Processions coming from Rokeya Sarani had to stop at the same spot as the police put up barbed-wire fences there.

The 14-party combine, the Zaker Party and the supporters of Elias put up makeshift stages on trucks and staged separate rallies. AL Presidium Member Motia Chowdhury addressed the gatherings.

Cultural activists sang patriotic songs from the stages, keeping participants cheered up throughout the sit-in.

A huge contingent of police and paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel patrolled the area in armoured vehicles and water cannon to make sure no procession entered the perimetre of the EC Secretariat.