

Open discussion on 'role of teachers in holding fair polls'

# Formation of national govt emphasised

Speakers at an open discussion on "the role of teachers in holding free and fair elections and establishing democracy" underscored the need for forming a national or coalition government on the basis of consensus to carry out the Herculean task left before the nation as a legacy of the misuse of the autocratic government, reports BSS.

If there is a single victory for any political party in the forthcoming polls, a national or coalition government should be formed in the greater interest of the growth of democratic norms, values and institutions which remained absent from the national life for a long time," they observed.

Held at Dhaka University Teachers-Students Centre (TSC), on Sunday, the discussion was arranged by Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA).

Chaired by DUTA President, Prof. Anwarullah Chowdhury, the discussion was participated, among others, by DUTA General Secretary, Dr. Shahadat Ali, Joint Secretary, Prof. Shamsul Arefin and university teachers, Dr. A K Azad Chowdhury, Prof. Ajoy Roy, Dr. Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Dr. Muhammad Mustafa Chowdhury, Dr. Muhammad Abdul Mannan Khan, Dr. Nurur Rahman Khan, Dr. Khadija Khatoon, Dr. Ahmed Kamal and Dr. Shawkat Ara Hossain.

The speakers called upon all quarters to refrain from questioning the impartiality of the caretaker government as the nation under the interim government was passing through a crucial phase.

In his speech, Prof. Ajoy Roy said the nation should decide once for all that the re-

sponsibility to govern the country should be vested on politicians and on nobody else. The autocratic government completely de-institutionalised the social and democratic institutions deliberately so that one quarter, could easily cross his own boundary and interfere into other's affairs, he added.

Mr. Roy said, the university teachers should shun the attitude of escapism and tell the truth under any intimidation and duress.

Dr A K Azad said, within only one month, some political parties belonging to three alliances had deviated from the agreed principles giving a grave signal for the future of the nation. "Before raising any question of impartiality against the interim government, one should think what is the next before the nation," he said adding, the failure of the interim government would legally approve the arrival of the speaker of the parliament of the ousted regime.

He sounded a note of caution that the nation would plunge into bloodshed, chaos and confusion if the three alliances fail to formulate a code of conduct and act accordingly.

Stressing the need for objective presentation of the happenings for larger national interest, Dr. Azad said, the journalists would be accountable to the nation if they write what they wish just because "they have in their hands pen and paper."

Dr. Harun-ar-Rashid said, through the fall of autocracy, the nation was hopeful that the people would be able to exercise their right of franchise freely.

He said, it was the inherent right of a citizen to contest in all elections. But this right was not given to the university teachers, he said adding "the related provisions of University Ordinance should be amended so that the teachers could get the opportunities to contest in the national elections.

Dr. Ahmed Kamal was critical of the political circles for their failure to resist the ousted President Ershad when he (Ershad) started the process of overthrowing the Sattar Government by issuing statements as Chief of Army Staff in 1982.

He said, certain political circles helped Ershad from behind the screen to overthrow the elected government in 1982.

## Restoration of '72 Constitution demanded

Bangladesh Hindu Boudha Christian Oikya Parishad demanded restoration of 1972 Constitution prior to the Fourth Amendment for establishing a secular and non-communal state system, reports BSS.

The central committee of the parishad at the end of its two-day meeting Friday also demanded repeal of all discriminating law including the Enemy Property Law and a guarantee of lawful rights of all people including minority and the tribals of Chittagong hills, a press release said.

The meeting held at the Christian Community Church Centre in Tejgaon was chaired by Srimat Boudhipal Mahathero, one of the presidents of the parishad. The meeting was addressed, among other by Maj Gen (Retd) C. R. Datta, T. Rozario, Barrister Sudhir Das and Dr. Lalit Nath.

The meeting demanded immediate steps to compensate those affected by recent communal disturbances and repair of Mandirs and places of Worship. It criticised the anti-people campaign by a section of press creating fear psychosis among the minority community.



Two police motor-cycles and an outpost were set afire when students of City College in Dhaka and police clashed near Science Laboratory on Sunday. At least 45 persons were injured (story on page 1).

## Attack on Sonali Bank's employees

By Staff Correspondent

Several persons were injured when an armed group of Sonali Bank employees attacked their rivals at the bank's head office in Motijheel Commercial area Saturday.

Police quoted the president of the Bank Employees Association saying that the attackers from different city branches of the bank stormed the head office at 9.30 am.

They blasted hand-made bombs, damaged properties at the first, second and third floors and beat the employees working there.

Jalal Sikder and Aminul Huq Faruk, President and General Secretary of the Sonali Bank Employees' Union, led the attackers, police said.

## Ban on Amader Katha goes

The government has withdrawn ban on the publication of the weekly "Amader Katha", the fortnightly "Anik" and a book named "Khela along Khleor" an official handout said in Dhaka on Saturday, reports BSS.

The ban on publication of those was imposed earlier.

## Guideline sent to Bangladesh missions in Gulf

The government has already sent a "guideline" to all its missions in the Gulf region about the safety and security of Bangladeshis in the areas vulnerable to war.

Foreign Secretary Abul Ahsan Saturday told UNB "the guideline mainly concerns with the security of our people in the region and presence of Bangladesh troops in Saudi Arabia."

Ahsan, declined to disclose the details of the instructions circulated to embassies which he termed as "secret". The Foreign Secretary made it abundantly clear that Bangladesh troops were sent to Saudi Arabia at the specific request of the government of the Kingdom to use it for defence purposes only.

There is a clear understanding between the two governments that our troops will never be used for other purposes than defence, he added. About 40,000 Bangladeshis are living in different countries around the Gulf region.

## Freedom Party's plea for identity cards

The Freedom Party yesterday called for issuing identity cards to ensure 'proper, neutral and meaningful' elections and security to the voters and the polling centres, reports BSS.

The Freedom Party's plea was contained in an 8-point suggestion adopted at an extended meeting of the executive committee, presided over by the party Chairman, Col. (ret'd) Syed Faruk Rahman, according to a press release.

The Freedom Party suggested ten to twenty polling centres in each constituency, week-long polling in each centre, responsibility of security arrangement in each polling centre to be given to a combined team of police and para-military personnel headed by armed forces and others.

The meeting identified the reasons for the "meaningless elections in the past" and felt that the elections were "rigged and forged by not employing the administration as neutral".

## Holiday on Akheri Munajat Day demanded

Dhaka City Musalli Committee Saturday called for declaring the day of Akheri Munajat on the occasion of the Bishwa Ijtema as the permanent holiday facilitating lakhs of Bengali Muslims to join their brethren in seeking the blessings of the Almighty Allah, reports BSS.

In a joint statement Md. Amir Ali Hawlader and Sheikh Golam Asghar of the committee also called for special arrangements for transports and government facilities to the devotees to join the Akheri Munajat.

They called for concessional fares on various transports and said it would help poor devotees to come to the Ijtema venue to join the three-day congregation.

They also called upon all to volunteer themselves to the service of lakhs of devotees in the grand meet.

## Death condoled

M A Lutful Matin, Chairman of Petro Bangla has condoled the death of Dr. Habibur Rahman, founder of Petro Bangla and former Secretary of Mineral Resources Division under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, reports UNB.

Lauding the late founder for his contribution in directing the organisation effectively after it was merged with the Petroleum Division of the government Matin said, Dr Habibur Rahman's role will be remembered with respect.

Matin said in his death the country has lost a noted scientist and a freedom fighter. On behalf of the staff and the employees of Petro Bangla, he expressed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for peace of the departed soul.

A meeting of the Parliamentary Board of Ganotantri and a joint meeting of presidents and secretaries will be held on January 16 at the party's central office at Purana Paltan at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. respectively, according to a press release.

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3) Uvra-Arana	7:30 am (Ctg.)	1:05 pm (Dhaka)	Friday
4) Mahanagar Prerati	8:00 am	8:30 pm	Wednesday
5) Taruna-Nahita	2:40 pm (Ctg.)	8:30 pm	Monday
	1:30 pm (Ctg.)	6:00 am (Dhaka)	Monday

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1) Padma Express	8:30 am	8:40 pm	Sunday
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Dhaka-Sylhet			
1) Padma	8:40 am	3:40 pm	Thursday
2) Joyshankha	8:00 am (Dh.)	6:00 pm (Dh.)	Thursday
3) Ujjaneta	8:05 am (Dh.)	10:10 pm (Dh.)	Friday
	8:30 am (Dh.)	8:30 pm (Dh.)	Monday

Dhaka-Dinajpur			
1) Ujjaneta	7:00 am	9:35 pm	Monday
2) Shiba	6:15 am (Dh.)	9:35 pm (Dh.)	Monday
	5:00 pm (Dh.)	6:15 am (Dh.)	Monday

Dhaka-Nonkhali			
1) Ujjaneta	7:00 am	10:30 pm	Sunday
	2:00 pm (Dh.)	7:00 pm (Dh.)	Sunday

Dhaka-Rishoharganj			
1) Rigo Shanthi	9:00 am	1:00 pm	Sunday
	1:00 pm (Dh.)	6:10 pm (Dh.)	Sunday

Dhaka-Jagannathganj Ghat			
1) Jannat	4:00 pm	10:30 pm	Wednesday
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