

Metropolitan

Free, fair polls essence of democracy, seminar told

By DU Correspondent

Speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday observed that a free and fair election is the essence of democracy.

They said a political system is democratic to the extent that its powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest and periodic elections.

The Bangladesh Political Science Association (BPSA) organised the day-long seminar on "Election 1996, and Future of Democracy in Bangladesh".

It was chaired by Prof Rafiqul Islam Chowdhury, VC, Chittagong University.

Prof Ataur Rahman, general secretary of BPSA presented the key-note paper in the first session of the seminar on "Bangladesh in 1996: In Search of a Free and Fair Election".

Prof Saifullah Bhuiyan of DU, Dr. Abdur Rab Khan, BISS, Dr. Mostafa Chowdhury of DU, Prof AKM Shahidullah of DU, Prof Abdul Hakim of CU, Dr. Dilara Chowdhury of JU and Dr. Atab Ahmad of DU took part in the discussion.

Dr Ataur Rahman in his paper observed that Bangladesh started its journey with a democratic government — the first election in independent Bangladesh was held on March 7, 1973.

Prof Atab quoting from various newspaper reports, said the election was rigged in various ways despite the fact that Sheikh Mujib's charisma and AL's strong party network would have given the ruling party an absolute majority any way.

There was a presidential election in June 1978 and a parliamentary election in 1979. Allegations of massive rigging were also recorded in these elections.

He said there were allegations of questionable polling practices in all the elections except in 1991 held under a neutral caretaker government after the fall of Ershad.

He said the holding of parliamentary election on February 15 to fulfill a constitutional obligation in the face of opposition movement created disharmony in the political arena.

He said, the myth that the bureaucracy is neutral has been proved wrong in Bangladesh when civil servants refused to work on security grounds.

The political power of the military in Bangladesh is a reality, he said. Without the active cooperation of the military-bureaucratic establishment, the search for a free and fair election under a non-party caretaker government seems to be an elusive goal, he observed.

The inaugural session of the day-long session was chaired by DU VC Prof Emajuddin Ahmed. Justice Mostafa Kamal was present as the chief guest.

In his speech Justice Mostafa Kamal said the future of the democracy does not depend on a particular election.

Giving examples from different countries rich with democratic culture he said, the success of democracy depends on many factors. Free and fair election is one of them.

He said there must be democratic practices in the political parties.

In the second session of the seminar, Dr Mahfuzul Haq Chowdhury presented the key-note paper on "Political Parties and Democratic Order in Bangladesh" by Barrister Mainul Hossain in the chair.



Chief Justice of the Supreme Court ATM Afzal administering the oath of offices to newly appointed 8 additional judges of the High Court division of Supreme Court at his Chamber yesterday.

8 addl judges take oath

Eight additional judges of the High Court division of the Supreme Court were sworn in yesterday in the chamber of the Chief Justice, reports BSS.

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Justice A T M Afzal administered the oath of office and secrecy to the judges, appointed by the President on May 30.

Besides Justice Md Iftekhar Rasul and Justice Md Hasan Amin, the two former district judges of Chittagong and Khulna respectively, all other judges are practising advocates of the Supreme Court. They are Mohammad Abdul Aziz, Bar at Law, Amirul Kabir Chowdhury, Abdul Kalam Badrul Haq, Mohammad Jainul Abedin, Abdul Matin, Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman.

President Abdur Rahman Bhaswaz appointed them as judges for a period of two years in consultation with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, a press release of the Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs said.

With their oath taking, the number of judges in the High Court division of the Supreme Court has now risen to 34. Because of retirement, elevation to Appellate division and deaths, the number of judges in this division dwindled to 26 from 36.

The judges of the Appellate Division, High Court division and registrar were present during oath taking ceremony.

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What's on today....

Poster exhibition: German Cultural Centre in cooperation with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy have organised a week-long poster exhibition styled 'The Place, the Time and the Point' by Uwe Loesch. Prof Md Shamul Haque, Adviser for Education, Cultural Affairs, Youth and Sports will inaugurate the show. Venue: Shilpakala Academy gallery. Time: 4-45 pm.

BANSDOC awarding ceremony: The certificate distribution ceremony of the 'Computer Applications in Library and Information Activities' workshop organised by BANSDOC will be held. Venue: BANSDOC auditorium. Time: 4 pm.

Rotary Club of Dhaka Cosmopolitan: The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Kanichi Kancher Mela. 37/A Segunbagicha. Time: 5:30 pm.

BFUJ meet: A meeting of the executive committee of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) will be held. Venue: Jatiya Press Club. Time: 11 am.

Khelaghar confce: The concluding session of the two-day national conference of Khelaghar will be held. DCC Mayor Mohammad Hanif will be present as chief guest while Gazul Haq, Principal Ahad Chowdhury and Khushi Kabir will take part in discussion. A cultural programme will follow. Venue: Shishu Academy. Time: 5 pm.

Photo exhibition: Map Photo Agency with the assistance of the Royal Danish Embassy has organised a photo exhibition on Bangladeshi Women by Mahmud. Writer Selma Hossain will inaugurate the show. Venue: National Museum. Shabbagh. Time: 5:30 pm.

Seminar on role of Imam Khomeini: The Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran has organised a seminar on 'State and Leadership in Islam and the role of Imam Khomeini (R) in different stages of Islamic Revolution' on the occasion of the 7th death anniversary of Imam Khomeini. Venue: Jatiya Press Club auditorium. Time: 4 pm.



Leaders of the Left Democratic Front at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

— Star photo

Law & order situation not favourable for polls: LDF

Left Democratic Front yesterday observed that the prevailing law and order situation of the country was not favourable for holding a peaceful election as the authorities had failed to clean the ground, reports UNB.

At a press conference, LDF Coordinator Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan said violent incidents were increasing alarmingly due to lack of effective measures to recover illegal arms.

He referred to the killing of a ward commissioner in the city in broad daylight on Friday, and said the law-enforcing agencies had failed to arrest the armed hoodlums.

Bhuiyan alleged that the election rules and code of conduct had become a mockery as some candidates, particularly of four major parties, do not at all pay heed to those rules.

He said the Election Commission was doing nothing but warning the violators. As a result, Bhuiyan said, the extent of thumping the rules is increasing.

The LDF coordinator further said the EC had failed to bar loan defaulters from contesting the election. The defaulting candidates are now engaged in a game of black money in the name of election.

Documentary on Bangabandhu

A documentary film on August 15 incidents titled 'Ekbar Buk Bherge Kando' (Cry Our Hearts Out) will be formally released at seven this evening in front of Bangabandhu Bhaban in the city.

A number of mobile units would later organise shows of the film, produced by 'Father of the Nation' Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Trust and presented by Bangabandhu Smriti Jadughar (museum), at far flung areas throughout the country, says a press release.

AL candidates for June 12 elections and other individuals and organisations willing to show the film have been requested to contact Sayed Siddiqur Rahman, member secretary and curator of Bangabandhu Smriti Jadughar. Video cassettes of the film are available at the museum.

Hanif's election tour programme

Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Mohammad Hanif will address a number of election meetings in different parts of the country during his three-day tour beginning today, reports BSS.

According to the programme, Hanif will address three public meetings today at Rajbari, Lohagara (Narail) and Kalia at 2 pm, 5 pm and 6 pm respectively.

On June 3 Hanif will address a meeting at Dhilgalia (Khulna) at 9 am, Mongla at 12 noon, Bagherhat at 1 pm, Katakhal (Fakirhat) at 3 pm, Mollarhat at 4 pm, Tungipara at 5 pm, Kotalipara at 7 pm, Rupsha Ferryghat at 9 pm.

On June 4, Mohammad Hanif will address a public rally at Mollapattore (Khulna) at 10 am, Khalishpur industrial belt at 11 am, Fultaia at 12 noon, Noapara at 1 pm, Jessore at 3 pm, Kaliganj at 4 pm, Jhenidah at 5 pm, Magura at 6 pm and Madhukhal (Faridpur) at 7 pm.

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Opinion poll: Both AL, BNP to get 29pc votes

By Staff Correspondent

Both BNP and Awami League (AL) will attract equal support in the June 12, according to an opinion poll conducted by an independent research organisation, Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP).

The poll conducted on 1,449 respondents in 13 constituencies of Dhaka revealed that these two parties would get 29 per cent of the votes, while Jatiya Party will get five per cent votes. Jamaat-e-Islami will get two per cent and other parties will get one per cent of the votes.

However, 13 per cent of the respondents said they are not yet decided as to which party to vote for while 21 per cent did not respond.

This is a sufficiently large number that can play a crucial role in deciding which party will ultimately win," the survey findings said.

Given that some 34 per cent of voters are yet to make up their minds, there seems to be scope for each of the two major parties who appear to be neck and neck now to convince the undecided voters by explaining their policies and programmes to vote for its candidate and thereby tip the scale in its favour," the findings said.

About the performance of the caretaker government, 70 per cent of the respondents said they were satisfied with the performance of the caretaker government, with another 21 per cent more or less satisfied. Only two per cent expressed dissatisfaction.

In response to another question, it has been found that of those respondents who voted in the February 1991 elections, 48 per cent voted for BNP, while 19 per cent voted for AL, with 28 per cent did not answer the question.

It appears that there has been a significant increase in the support for the AL compared to 1991, while the opposite is the case with BNP, the findings said.

SPGRC rally today

School-going boys, girls and mothers will be among the stranded Pakistanis to hold a silent rally in the city today to demand their repatriation to the desired territory, reports UNB.

Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) will organise the rally to attract world attention to the sad plight of the stranded Pakistanis suffering in camps for the last 25 years.

Led by chief patron of SPGRC Alhaj M Nasim Khan, the procession will start at 10.00 am from Engineers' Institution and end at Jatiya Press Club after marching through the Zero point, said a press release.

Weather

Thundershower likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind may occur at many places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions and a few places over Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met office said an isolated moderately heavy falls is likely over Chittagong and Barisal divisions during the period.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

In its outlook for the subsequent two days Met office forecast that south-west monsoon may advance up to Chittagong while it may advance upto Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next five days.

Country's highest temperature was recorded yesterday 36 degree Celsius at Rajshahi and the lowest 22.5 degrees at Sylhet.

Meantime, Sylhet experienced the country's highest 46 mm rainfall followed by Rangpur with 12 mm rain.

The Sun sets today at 6:43 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:11 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.4	26.6	78	87
Chittagong	33.0	27.2	67	73
Rajshahi	36.0	26.1	-	76
Khulna	35.8	26.2	-	60
Barisal	34.0	26.4	-	77
Sylhet	28.6	22.5	57	82
Cox's Bazar	32.6	25.6	72	81



Khelaghar, a children's cultural organisation, brought out a colourful procession in the city yesterday marking its national conference.

Jamaat's TV programme recorded

By Staff Correspondent

The Jamaat-e-Islami's TV programme on election was recorded by Bangladesh Television (BTV) yesterday. The programme is part of the government's special programme called 'Sabinoye jantey chai' (we would like to know) on broadcasting party manifestos for the June 12 election.

Out of four parties selected for the programme, Awami League (AL) and Jatiya Party (JP) have already recorded their programme.

The BNP is yet to record their programme which was originally scheduled for May 30.

The panel of journalists asking questions to Jamaat were columnist Abed Khan, editor of Bhorer Kagoj Matur Rahman and editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam.

CAAB meet held

The second meeting of the Zia International Airport Co-ordination Committee of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) was held at the conference room of the Zia International Airport yesterday, says a press release.

Bakhrabad Gas Systems Limited
(A Company of Petrobangla)
Comilla, Bangladesh

গ্যাসের অপচয় রোধ করুন এবং নির্ধারিত সময়ে বিল পরিশোধ করুন

International Shopping Notice (Re-Tender) under Two Envelope System

IS Tender No	Description of item	Cost of tender document (Non-refundable)	Closing date & time	Opening date & time	Bid bond amount
BGSL/FP/IS-09/ADB (RE-TENDER)/96	Diaphragm Gas Meter	US\$ 25.00 or Tk 1000.00	23-7-96 at 11-00 hrs	23-7-96 at 11-15 hrs	US\$ 1750.00 or equivalent amount
BGSL/FP/IS-10/ADB (RE-TENDER)/96	Regulator Service	US\$ 25.00 or Tk 1000.00	23-7-96 at 11-00 hrs	23-7-96 at 11-30 hrs	US\$ 1750.00 or equivalent amount
BGSL/FP/IS-11/ADB (RE-TENDER)/96	Regulator Service	US\$ 50.00 or Tk 2000.00	23-7-96 at 11-00 hrs	23-7-96 at 12-00 hrs	US\$ 5000.00 or equivalent amount

- The procurement will be financed by Asian Development Bank (ADB) under Loan No 1293-BAN(SF), Part-B.
- Eligibility: Manufacturers/suppliers having proven experience of similar works from ADB member countries.
- Where tender documents will be available: BGSL Offices at:
 - Head Office Complex, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh.
 - Liaison Office, House No 3, Road No 2/A, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.
 - Accounts Section (Chittagong Region), 100, Momin Road, Chittagong, Bangladesh.
- Selling of tender documents: From 08-06-96 to 22-07-96 during office hours.
- Place of tender receiving: BGSL's Liaison Office, House No 3, Road No 2/A, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.
- For further information and clarification please contact: Dy General Manager (Purchase), BGSL, Comilla, Bangladesh. Telex No 642768 GAS BJ, Fax No: 880-2-886317.
- Those who purchased tender documents for the original International Shopping Tender No BGSL/FP/IS-01/ADB/95, BGSL/FP/IS-03/ADB/95 & BGSL/FP/IS-04/ADB/95 shall be provided with tender documents free of cost on production of evidence.
- BGSL reserves the right to accept any tender or to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

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