



Members of armed forces supplying drinking water at Khilgaon in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Maintain peace at educational institutions: Zillur

KISHOREGANJ, Apr 23: LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman today urged the students to build themselves up as worthy citizens of the country by acquiring real knowledge and proper utilisation of their student life, reports UNB.

He was addressing the freshers reception function at Zillur Rahman Women College at Bhairab. The Minister said the government has undertaken massive programmes to expand their rights and empowerment. He said to face the challenges of the 21st century, the government has laid emphasis on technical education. The government is going to set up twelve more Science and Technological Universities in the country. Work on these universities is expected to begin in the current fiscal.

He called for building of a strong resistance against unnecessary hartal and terrorism for maintaining congenial atmosphere in the educational institutions and overall development of education. The Awami League General Secretary said those who use the student as weapon to capture state power and instigate them to unseat the government cannot be believers of democracy and people's power.

He said BNP is playing with blood of the people by calling frequent hartals, but people would not tolerate the hartal, which destroys the country's economy, kills people and creates anarchy. Principal of the College Abdul Matin presided over the meeting.

Withdrawal of rules regarding admission of wards of employees 10-day strike at JU in two phases begins May 4, 10

By Shamim Ashraf

Employees of Jahangirnagar University (JU) have called a ten-day strike in two phases from May 4 demanding withdrawal of the authorities' new rules regarding admission of the wards of the university teachers, officers and employees, and introduction of a separate rule convenient to their wards.

Addressing a joint meeting of JU Employees' Union and Employees' Samity held in front of the Administrative Building Thursday, leaders called for a greater movement against the authority to press for their two-point demand.

Employees threatened the ten-day strike in two phases, 6 days from May 4 and another 4 days from May 10 if the authorities fail to withdraw its decision by May 3.

Whether we will observe second strike from May 10 depends on the authorities' initiatives to our demand, Firoz Mia, president of employees' Samity told journalists. "If they (authorities) fail to take any decision positive to our demand, we will try to organise the employees for greater movement which may create a stalemate in the university", another leader said while talking to The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, students at JU dormitories have been suffering due to the three-day shutdown by the employees. The cleaners have not been attending their duties and the toilets and bath-rooms are proof of this. During the last three days, a few officers were found in their offices passing their time idly and they could not do anything for want to employees.

Meanwhile, leaders of JU Employees' Union and Employees' Samity at a press conference at the Jahangirnagar University Journalists' Association (JUJA) office, alleged that teachers were involved in nepotism when their wards appeared in admission tests. When asked about teachers' and officers' absence in the movement of the wards of all teachers, officers and employees, they alleged that as the admission committee was formed by the teachers themselves, they didn't feel the necessity to join the movement as they could have done their work through backdoors.

Rules regarding admission of wards of the staff of JU have been introduced recently. The university earlier used to permit wards to get admission if found on the waiting list. Till 1987-88 those who secured 20 per cent marks were admitted. Later, the authorities declared that they must secure 6 marks

out of 20 (30pc) in the compulsory section and 24 out of 80(30pc) marks in the optional section. In 1997, JU authorities changed this rule to 7 out of 20 (35pc) in the compulsory section and 28 out of 80(35pc) in the optional section. There were no rules regarding allocation of seats for the wards till 1998. The authority passed a rule this year allotting three seats for the wards of teachers, officers and employees of the university which is to be decided on merit basis.

The employees went on a three-day strike after an unsuccessful discussion with the authority. Declaring solidarity with them JU Officers' Samity joined the movement which was chalked out by the employees. But they later withdrew their support before the strike began on April 20 following difference in opinion with the employees.

Minor boy killed in Kishoreganj

KISHOREGANJ, Apr 23: A minor boy was killed in a road accident at Ghlakandi in Katiakandi thana on Kishoreganj-Bhairab road Thursday, reports UNB.

Bangabandhu Bridge Video camera set up at toll collection plaza

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 23: A computerised video camera has been set up at the eastern toll collection plaza of Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge to ensure security, reports UNB.

The camera has a capacity to cover six kilometres area, including the main bridge and two police outposts on both ends of the bridge, said an official. The ultra-modern camera was set up at the office of toll realising authority — Zomak — last month as the authority faces serious problem in maintaining security of the bridge in traditional method.

Hundreds of visitors from across the country come and several thousands vehicles cross the bridge every day since its formal opening on June 23 last year. The camera will help the law enforcers to detect illegal arms in the running vehicles, catch vehicles escaping without paying toll and detect accident on the bridge site.

Seminar held at NSU

A seminar titled "Developing Business Communication Skills for the 21st Century" was held at North South University on Thursday, says a press release.

The seminar was jointly organised by the NSU chapter of the world's largest student organisation, AIESEC (International Association of Students in Economics and Management) International, AIESEC NSU, and the class of Business Communications.

Kaiser Rahman, Deputy Managing Director of Bangladesh General Insurance Company (BGIC) was the key note speaker at the seminar. The others speakers were Dr A N M Meshquat Uddin, Director, BBA programme, NSU and Mr Quazi Mahmud Ahmed, Assistant Director, Professional Development Programme, NSU.

The speakers stressed on different skills required in communication for the next century, the possible barriers that exist and how to overcome them.

World Book Day observed

World Book Day was observed in the country yesterday, reports UNB.

The day aimed at emphasising the importance of reading habit among the children. The British Council with the cooperation of English Department of Dhaka University organised a function at the Dhaka University Library premises to observe the day.

Mahmood Noman, Assistant Director of British Council, inaugurated function while Dr Niaz Zaman, chairperson, Department of English welcomed the students and guests. The Bookworm sponsored the programme.

The programmes included screening of Shakespeare's video and drama programme, programmes with the NGO children and Young Learners' Centre members, reading, storytelling and drawing competition. Some 75 children took part in the competition.



A colourful procession was brought out in the city Thursday marking the National Nutrition Day. —Star photo

Housewife killed in Madaripur

MADARIPUR, Apr 23: A housewife was reportedly beaten to death in her in-laws house in Shakuni area of the town early yesterday, reports UNB.

Police, however, arrested the victim's husband Monu, 25, in this connection. Family sources said her husband and other members of her in-laws tortured Shilpi Akhter, 18, for dowry money of Tk 30,000.

Shilpi was tortured mercilessly, confined in a room for hours and brought to the hospital at 2:30 am where doctors declared her dead. Monu and his family spread the rumour that Shilpi committed suicide. But the body of the deceased bore several injury marks.

A case was filed with the police, reports UNB.

Hearing on suo moto rule Hartal constitutional, democratic right: Moudud

"Hartal is a constitutional and democratic right," the counsel for the BNP Secretary General told the High Court in the suo moto rule on the pro and anti-hartal activities, reports APB.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed, in his submission, also argued that hartal is a historically recognised democratic right exercised by the political parties at different times in the subcontinent. The hearing of suo moto rule continued Thursday before the division bench comprising Justice Mohammad Gholam Rabbani and Justice Muhammad Latifur Rahman.

Barrister Moudud pointed out that freedom of thought and conscience is guaranteed in Article 39(1) of the Constitution and the Article 44 guarantees the right to enforce fundamental rights. "The people can exercise their rights through hartal."

Recalling the country's historical background, the counsel said without calling and enforcing hartals in erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) the movement for independence could not have reached the momentum. He further said hartal could not be spontaneous support of the people. "When hartal is called, certain social and political ingredients are already there," he observed.

"Hartal is a political action and used as the last resort," Moudud said substantiating that when democracy is not properly practised and not institutionalised, there remains no alternative but to take to the streets and resort to hartal to ventilate people's grievances.

Turning to the present political scenario, he said when the ruling party has taken a non-responsive stance, the people have no other way to register their protest than enforcing hartal remains as the only option.

Moratorium order withdrawn

The moratorium order on both the central and Dhaka city unit committees of BNP's front organisation Jatiyatabadi Shechasebak Dal has been withdrawn. The moratorium was imposed by the parent party following leadership conflict that ensured a violent clash within the organisation recently.

This withdrawal order will be made effective from yesterday, said a press release.

Steps suggested against Manzur Qader

Leaders of Pabna Sech Prokalpa Bastobayan Committee (Pabna Irrigation Project Implementation Committee) Thursday urged the government to take steps against former minister and BNP leader Manzur Qader for his alleged role in patronising terrorists and sheltering those who cut open a portion of the Pabna Irrigation Project Embankment last year.

The Bastobayan Committee leaders at a press conference in the city yesterday also alleged that Manzur Qader was involved in unleashing terrorism, forcefully occupying lands and forging documents of lands in Pabna.

The Sech Prokalpa Bastobayan Committee leaders presented a list of 40 cases and dairies filed against Major (rtd) Qader with different courts and police stations. Among others, president of the Sech Prokalpa Bastobayan Committee Al Mahmud Sarkar, Vice President Motiur Rahman, General Secretary Kafi Sarkar, joint general secretary Abdus Samad Khan, and organising secretary Fazlur Rahman were present at the press conference.

5 held in Ctg for looting Tk 30 lakh

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Apr 23: Police here in a pre-dawn raid today arrested five persons, including a woman, in connection with looting of Tk 30 lakh from fish godown at Reazuddin Bazar in the city recently.

Quit immediately, Mannan Bhuiyan urges AL govt

BNP secretary general Abul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday demanded of the government to step down immediately taking the responsibility of their failure to run the country and solve the problems of the people, reports UNB.

"Quit power seeking forgiveness to the people, otherwise people will retaliate by bringing you down," he told a reception at Mahboob Ali Auditorium at Motijheel yesterday evening.

Mirsarai Jatiyatabadi Forum in Dhaka accorded the reception to Maj. Gen. (Retd) ZA Khan, newly appointed advisory council member of BNP Chairperson, with Naimul Hassan Shimul in the chair.

BNP leaders Mirza Abbas, Haris Chowdhury, Sadek Hossain Khoka MP and Maj. Gen. (Retd) ZA Khan also addressed on the occasion.

Bhuiyan said the present government has brought the country to the doorstep of destruction. "Inefficient government has been causing much trouble for the people, he observed.

Tagore's birth anniversary to be observed at nat'l level

The government will observe the birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore at national level on Baishakh 25, 1406, reports BSS.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Coordination Committee on celebration of Rabindra birth anniversary with State Minister for Youth, Sports and Culture Obaidul Quader in the chair.

The meeting held in the conference room of the National Museum chalked out an elaborate programme to celebrate the anniversary. The main function will be held at Dighapatia Rajbari (Uttara Gonobhaban) under Natore district, one of the places carries the memory of Kabirgur.

Functions will also be held at other places including Dhaka, Shilaidaha of Kushtia, Shahjadpur of Sirajganj and Patisar of Naogaon on the occasion.

BAS calls for redirection of Cassini mission

General Secretary of Bangladesh Astronomical Society (BAS) F R Sarker has expressed concern at the impending earth flyby of Cassini space craft on August 18 next and has urged NASA authority to stop this flyby and redirect it towards the sun and save our planet from the possible nuclear catastrophe, reports BSS.

NASA launched its seven year Cassini space mission on October 15, 1997 to study the distant planet Saturn carrying 32.8 kg of plutonium as fuel.

Unlike other space craft moving against the thrust created from the combustion of propellants, Cassini will be moving primarily from the thrust of gravity it will gain through its flyby, twice with the Venus and each time with the Earth and the Jupiter.

Sarker quoting NASA environmental impact statement said that in the event of collision with our atmosphere it has the potential to expose five billion people to different degrees of radiation from plutonium releasing 400,000 curies fine particles.

Proshika educates over 6.62 lakh people

Proshika, a leading NGO of the country, so far educated over 6.62 lakh people under its functional literacy skill and non-formal primary education programmes, reports BSS.

Proshika sources said yesterday four lakh thirty-five thousand one hundred eighty people were imparted functional skill in its 21,096 Adult Literacy Centers while over 2.30 lakh students were enrolled in its 7,267 non-formal primary schools.

Besides, the organization provided another 36.6 lakh people across the country with human development and practical skill development training.

The sources said Proshika undertook Universal Education Programme (UEP) to provide functional adult literacy skills to its group members and to render educational facilities to their children through formal and non-formal primary schools.

It runs UEP under four components including adult literacy for non-literate group members, post-literacy centers for the neo-literates to reinforce, regenerate and sustain literacy skills, enrollment of children of the poor households to enhance further growth of literacy and non-formal primary education (NFPE) for the dropped-out and unrolled children of 8-11 age groups.

Proshika, which is concluding its first five year plan has sanctioned Taka 20 crore 67

Sharfuzzaman new chairman of DESA

The government has appointed Additional Chief Engineer of Public Works Directorate Mohammad Sharfuzzaman Bhuiyan as the Chairman of Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) on contract basis for two years, reports BSS.

Is Winnie Mandela on comeback trail?

BARCELONA, South Africa, Apr 23: Just 16 months after being snubbed by the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and eight years after being convicted of kidnapping, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was surrounded by throngs of admirers in a dusty squatter camp, reports AP.

If there was any doubt whether President Nelson Mandela's ex-wife has made a comeback, they were vanquished this week when Deputy President Thabo Mbeki — who is certain of winning the presidency in the June 2 election — defended her and warned others to leave her alone.

Stepping from her white Mercedes Benz in this squatter camp east of Johannesburg, the 64-year-old ex-wife Madikizela-Mandela showed she has not lost her touch with the common people.

"Winnie Mandela," sang the crowd, who left their corrugated tin shacks to meet her in the scorching midday sun.

"We like her very much. She is our mother," exuded one young man, a baseball cap perched atop his head and two earrings dangling from an ear, as the crowd jostled to get a close-up look at the woman they call "Mother of the Nation."

Madikizela-Mandela, wearing her trademark bejeweled eyeglasses, walked into a preschool where about 30 toddlers waved pennants with the ANC's green, yellow and black colours. She hoisted up most of the kids and planted kisses on their cheeks, then visited several shacks and spoke with residents about their concerns.

On the way, she stepped over a power cable lying across a muddy unpaved road, an illegal and dangerous source of power to residents who haven't been offered electricity yet.

Madikizela-Mandela said the cable was evidence that the government was not distributing services fast enough. Though instead of blaming others as she has in the past, Madikizela-Mandela who is president of the ANC's Women's League, said she shared responsibility for the government's



A sequence from dance drama 'Mahua' staged at the Public Library Auditorium yesterday organised by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. — Star photo

Hun Sen says Senior Khmer Rouge leaders to face trial

PHNOM PENH, Apr 23: Prime Minister Hun Sen believes that other senior Khmer Rouge leaders besides the one currently being held will eventually be brought before a court and pledged that he would not interfere in the judicial process, reports AP.

In a television interview first broadcast by the American network CBS and appearing on local television Friday, Hun Sen also said that he would not trust an international court to try surviving leaders of the genocidal regime.

The Khmer Rouge's guerrilla army began breaking up in 1996 and top leader Pol Pot died in 1998. Several leaders have made peace with Hun Sen and in exchange have not been arrested.

Only one, Ta Mok, 72, a hard-line guerrilla general known as 'The Butcher', is in custody awaiting trial. Hun Sen said that he hoped Ta Mok would be tried by a Cambodian court, with help from foreign legal experts, as soon as possible due to his age and possible ill health. Foreign prosecutors and judges can also take part in the appeals process.

Nuon Chea and Kieu Samphan, two Khmer Rouge leaders who surrendered in December but have been allowed to live in freedom, will "unavoidably" be summoned before a Cambodian court to face charges, Hun Sen said.

"The Khmer Rouge crimes were genocide, which is relevant to the roles of these people. They surrendered, but surrendering does not mean an end to any charges to be laid against them by the court," Hun Sen said.

Empowerment of people main agenda of JSD

The central council of 1999 of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) Thursday called for making empowerment of people the basic agenda of the JSD's politics in the next millennium, reports BSS.

The council, which was held jointly by the all former fractions of JSD, was presided over by Fisheries and Livestock Minister ASM Abdur Rab.

Convener of the council, preparatory committee Nur-e-Alam Jilku gave the welcome address. Central re-organisation committee general secretary Hasanul Haq Inu also spoke on the occasion.

To keep climate change in check Sun, wind should be used as new sources of energy

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 23: The world will have to use new sources of energy such as the sun and wind to keep climate change in check in the new millennium, organisers said in announcing the theme for Earth Day 2000, reports AP.

Energy and climate change are the focus of a worldwide campaign to draw attention to energy needs ahead of next year's Earth Day, the organisers said Thursday.

As we look at the vast array of energy problems that are facing the world, most of them have to do with environmental constraints," said Dennis Hayes, the chairman of Earth Day 2000.

"And as we look at environmental problems around the world virtually all of them have to do with energy considerations," US Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, Washington's last ambassador here, said. The United States supported Earth Day's theme "New Energy for a New Era."

"All of us play a role in making Earth Day's ideals a reality," he said. "The way that we heat and cool our homes and workplaces, power our industries, fuel our vehicles produces 85 per cent of the greenhouse gases the United States pumps into the environment. These gases in turn contribute to climate change."

After the campaign, Earth Day organisers gave out awards to the heads of British Petroleum and Interface Corp. and others, for their environmental good business.

Confce of women UP chairmen, members tomorrow

A conference of the elected women chairmen and members of Union Parishad will be held tomorrow at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar trade-fair ground in the city, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the conference as chief guest at 3:30 pm, said an official announcement yesterday.