



A Tazia procession in the city on Tuesday in observance of holy Ashura. — Star photo

# Govt wants to ensure development through peace: Hasina

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government wants to attain economic progress through peace and tranquillity, reports UNB. "Only peace can ensure overall development. People want peace and we want to ensure development through peace," she said addressing members of the Buddhist community at her office.

Representatives of the Buddhist community of the country met the Prime Minister on the eve of their religious festival Buddha Purnima.

The Prime Minister said Buddha preached the message of peace while Islam taught us tolerance and patience for establishing peace.

Hasina said the present government has created an environment where people of all faiths are enjoying their religious rights and this situation will continue.

She said the government is extending its all-out support for the preservation of culture, heritage and tradition of Buddhism.

Referring to the CHT peace agreement, the Prime Minister said the government has restored peace in the troubled region, where unrest and violence continued for over two decades.

She said after restoration peace in CHT, the citizens of the country who took refuge in other countries returned home. They have been rehabilitated. "We have given jobs to them, even the job of police, who have surrendered arms," she added.

The government has taken up massive development programmes for the region, she said.

## Sonali Bank takes up new scheme to boost export business

By Staff Correspondent

Sonali Bank has taken up some special programmes to develop garments factories and accelerate export business in the country.

Under the programme, the bank will also help the garments owners in executing export orders within the time schedule set by the international buyers.

The governing body of the bank at a meeting recently decided that any proposal regarding garments industry received at any branch should be forwarded to the head office with details within three working days.

The head office will return a decision within the next three working days unless it needs to make further queries regarding the case.

The governing body will meet, if necessary, to take a decision on revival of any garment factory which has been irregular for long.

As many as 462 garments factories are now operating with financial help from the Sonali Bank.

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) president Anisur Rahman Sinha along with seven other leaders made a courtesy call on the high officials of the bank yesterday and welcomed the programmes.

## Ershad says People will not accept polls without opposition

SUNAMGANJ, Apr 28: Reiterating his demand for holding elections to upazila parishes under a caretaker administration, Jatiya Party chairman H M Ershad today warned that no election will be acceptable to the people if it is held without the opposition, reports UNB.

Addressing a public meeting at Jagannathpur High School ground, the former President admitted his mistake and said the election held during his time without the opposition proved futile. He asked the government to learn lessons from its mistakes.

He said that the present government is expert in 'rigging elections' and hold polls without voters. They are now trying to hold elections to upazila parishes without the opposition in a bid to re-establish one-party BKSAL rule.

The JP chairman said the government ignored the opposition demand as it realised that they will be routed if the elections were held under the caretaker administration.

## Ex-employees of Bhorer Kagoj demand payment of arrears

Fifty-three former journalists and employees of the daily Bhorer Kagoj yesterday urged the newspaper authorities to pay their outstanding dues including gratuity, reports BSS.

In a statement the former journalists and employees said they resigned from the Bhorer Kagoj in September last year maintaining all regulations and giving notice to the newspaper management.

The former staff said although the Bhorer Kagoj authorities accepted their resignation, but they were yet to get their dues.

The signatories to the statement include Abdul Quyum Mukul, Mozammel Hossain, Mohammad Sanaulak, Anisul Haq, Arun Karmakar and Sumona Sharmin.

## Local MPs to be involved in implementation of WDB projects

Standing Committee on Water Resources Ministry at a meeting yesterday decided to involve the local member of parliament in the implementation of all projects of Water Development Board, reports BSS.

The meeting, presided over by committee chairman Abdul Momin, reviewed the progress of different decisions taken by the committee earlier and the progress of different projects of Water Development Board.

The meeting was informed that Tk 1416.23 crore had been sanctioned for 83 projects under the ministry for the year 1999-2000.

The committee members including Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak, Mohammad Anwarul Islam, Kazi Sikander Ali, Md. Bari, Sarfuddin Ahmed, Haroon al Rashid and Dr Habibur Rahman attended the meeting.



Police intercepted the activists of JASAS at Rampura when they were marching towards the TV Bhaban as part of their gherao programme yesterday. — Star photo

## Digital phone exchange opens in C'nawabganj

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Apr 28: A 1,000-line digital telephone exchange, installed at a cost of seven crore taka, was opened here today, reports UNB.

Home, Post and Telecommunication Minister Mohammad Nasim formally opened the exchange at the T&T Bhaban here by talking to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka at 1.10 pm.

The Prime Minister said Chapainawabganj was a neglected area in the past and no development activities were undertaken here.

She said her government would do its best for the wellbeing of the people, especially for the people of Nawabganj.

Hasina was happy to note that leaders of all political parties had gathered here on the occasion. She urged them to work unitedly for the welfare of the people sinking political differences.

She said rail service through Bangabandhu Bridge will facilitate transport of goods from this region to the capital. She also called for setting up agro-based industries there to contribute to the national economy.

Mohammad Nasim told the gathering that with the commissioning of the exchange, 15 districts came under digital telephone network. Nine more districts will be covered within this year, he added.

The minister said the government will resign after the expiry of its term in 2001 and general election will be held under a caretaker government. "We will honour the people's verdict."

He called upon all to be alert so that none can grab power through killing and coup.

Among others, State Minister for Water Resources Dr Alauddin, local BNP MP Haroon Or Rashid, district Awami League president Dr AAM Mezbaiul Haq, General Secretary Shamsul Haq and T&T Board Chairman MA Mannan Choudhury spoke on the occasion.

## Werner presents WFP publication to president

WFP Representative in Dhaka Dr Werner Kienhe called on President Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday and presented him a WFP publication on Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The publication, "People First," analyses how targeted food assistance makes a difference in the lives of poor people and help them rise to a situation where they can help themselves.

Dr Kienhe apprised the President of various projects undertaken by WFP in Bangladesh and said WFP delivers food to the people who need it most and can use it best.

## Golden Jubilee of AL Khulna unit celebration May 25

KHULNA, Apr 28: The golden jubilee of Bangladesh Awami League will be observed in the divisional city here on May 25 following the central programme on May 23 in capital Dhaka, reports BSS.

An observance committee has been formed with Khulna city Awami League president Advocate Manzoorul Islam as its convener and whip S M Mustafa Rashid Suja as the member secretary.

The committee, which was formed at a meeting held yesterday at the circuit house with Khulna district Awami League president Sheikh Harun-ur-Rashid presiding, will also include district president and general secretaries of the district units of the Awami League members of the national committee. Awami League MPs and ministers of the division.

## Gonotantik Oikya Parishad meet held at DU

A general meeting of the "Gonotantik Oikya Parishad", a national platform of the Registered Graduates of Dhaka University who belong to Bengali Nationalism and spirit of the Liberation War, was held yesterday at the TSC cafeteria of the university, reports BSS.

Convener of the organisation Advocate Syed Ahmed chaired the meeting, which elaborately discussed about the election of the 25 registered graduate representatives to the Dhaka University Senate scheduled to be held June next.

A large number of intellectuals, leaders of different professional organisations, nomination seekers from the panel and registered graduates addressed the meeting.

Emphasizing on unity of the pro-liberation forces in every sector, they said all concerned should have worked unitedly to ensure the victory of the candidates of the panel.

## Ctg BSD convening body formed

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Apr 28: A 101-member new convening committee of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) at Chittagong City unit was formed in a meeting at the party office on Tuesday.

Solaiman Khan and Taiabur Rahman have been made joint convenors of the committee. Presided over by Solaiman Khan, central leader Professor Nuruddin Jahed Munju, advocate Abu Mohammad Hashem, Dr Mahfuzur Rahman, Fahim Uddin Ahmed were present at the meeting.

## 5-day training session ends

A five-day training workshop on "In-depth Reporting on Gender Issues" concluded at News Network Office yesterday.

News Network, a news feature agency, organised training. 23 women journalists and freelance writers participated in the workshop conducted by News Network Editor Shahiduzzaman and AP Bureau Chief Farid Hossain.

Sultana Begum, Country Representative of Diakonia, a Swedish donor agency spoke on the gender issues at the concluding session. Farid Hossain praised the participants for their eager participation.

In five years time, the number of female journalists in the country would rise significantly, he said.

## Holy Ashura observed

Holy Ashura, the 10th of Muharram, commemorating the supreme sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussein (R), was observed in the country yesterday with due solemnity and religious fervour, reports UNB.

Imam Hussein, the grandson of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM), and 71 of his relatives and followers were killed in 680 AD at Karbala, some 110 kms south of Baghdad, as he led an uprising against Yazid who rejected the leadership of the Prophet's direct descendants.

Since then Muslims across the world observe the 10th of Muharram with due religious fervour.

Besides martyrdom of Imam Hussein, many important events in the calendar of Islam occurred on this day that symbolises the greatness of Almighty Allah.

The day was a public holiday.

President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia gave separate messages calling upon all to take lessons from the Ashura.

On the occasion, "Shia" Muslims brought out many "Tazia" processions in different areas of the capital, especially in the old parts of the city and

Mohammadpur.

The biggest mourning procession was brought out from Hosseini Dalan Imbarara. It paraded different streets of the old Dhaka.

A fair, marking the Ashura, was held at the Hosseini Dalan premises.

A huge mourning procession was brought out from Azimpur area that paraded different thoroughfares of the city.

Mourning processions were also brought out in other parts of the country. Stick games were also organised.

Discussions, *milad* and *doa mahfil* were organised in different mosques across the country.

Islamic Foundation and Azimpur Choto Daira Sharif also organised discussions and *milad mahfil* to mark the day.

Dewanbag Darbar Sharif held an Asheq-e-Rasul conference after Fajr prayers today (Tuesday).

After Zohr prayers, Sufi Samrat Hazrat Mahbub-e-Khoda Dewanbagi addressed the conference and led the Akheri munajat.

"Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar put up special programmes highlighting the significance of the day while newspapers published special articles.

## DU Ga unit admission test tomorrow

By DU Correspondent

The admission test of Ga unit (Business Studies Faculty) to admit into the first year Honours classes of Dhaka University will be held at 10 am tomorrow.

Admission seekers under this unit have been asked to take their respective seats by 9:30 am.

Seat plan and details of the test will be available in front of the head office of the faculty from the morning.



Bangladesh Union Parishad chairman Samity brought out a procession in the city yesterday in support of their 12-pt demand. — Star photo

## Consensus a must for nat'l interest: Samad Azad

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad on Tuesday said solidarity among the political parties and consensus on major issues relating to 'national interest' is a must to safeguard Bangladesh in the next millennium, reports BSS.

"Tough days are ahead. We are awaiting for the 'impending doom', narrow political differences won't help in the competitive international world," the minister said, adding "either you join the competition or get lost from the billboard of survivors."

Azad was speaking as the chief guest at a discussion organised by Sher-e-Bangla Jatiya Smriti Sangsad marking the 37th death anniversary of great leader of the Sub-continent Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazlul Haq at the Tin-Netar-Mazar premises here.

## Racist attacks in London SAARC diplomats express concern

Senior diplomats of SAARC countries in the UK yesterday expressed deep concern over the recent racist attacks on ethnic minority in Brixton and Brick Lane areas of London, reports BSS.

The SAARC envoys at a meeting in London decided to take coordinated efforts towards alleviating the worries of the ethnic minorities in Britain, according to a message received here tonight.

The meeting was presided over by A H Mahmood Ali, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Britain and Chairperson of the Group of SAARC High Commissioners in London.

The diplomats took a decision to meet British Home Secretary Jack Straw and Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Derek Fatchett, to apprise them of the concerns of SAARC nations on the issue of recent racial attacks including the latest attacks by the far-right racist groups in Brick Lane last Saturday.

## Release of Obaid, Manzur, Moazzem demanded

Obaid-Manzur Mukti Andolon has demanded immediate release of KM Obaidur Rahman, Nurul Islam Manzur and Shah Moazzem Hossain after proper investigation into the jail killing case by a judge of the High Court, reports UNB.

The Andolon at a press conference at the BNP central office yesterday also demanded of the government to allow KM Obaidur Rahman to attend the parliament session.

A greater movement will be launched if the three leaders are not released, it warned.

The Andolon alleged that KM Obaidur Rahman was arrested to "ensure the victory" of a minister who failed to get elected in the last general elections.

Its leaders further alleged that relatives of the three leaders are being harassed. Citing examples, they said wife of Obaid was transferred illegally while Shah Moazzem was not released on parole after his brother had died.

Advocate Shamsul Bari Mia Mohon read out a written statement at the press conference, which was attended by Khurshid Jahan Haq MP, Moazzem Hossain Alal and MA Hakim.

## JCD strike now on May 2

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has deferred their planned strike in educational institutions throughout the country to May 2, reports APB.

The strike was earlier scheduled for Thursday.

The announcement on the shifting of the strike programme came from a rally of the BNP's student wing at the Aparajso Bangla on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

The rally, organised to protest attacks on a JCD procession towards the Prime Minister's office on Sunday, was presided over by Manzur Elahi, senior vice president of the organisation and was addressed by other central leaders.

## Spl BRTC bus for working women

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) has introduced a bus service from Tongi station road to Mohakhali rail gate to facilitate safe journey of working women especially women garment workers, a BRTC release said last night, reports BSS.

The special bus service for the working women was introduced at the directives of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The service will operate from 7 am to 10 pm and the fare has been fixed at Tk 3.

This service will gradually be extended to other routes.

## No exam at DU today

Dhaka University will remain closed today on occasion of Buddha Purnima, reports UNB.

All examinations of the university scheduled for today will not be held due to the government declared general holiday, a DU press release said.

## 300 tons wheat allocated for JU lake project

By JU Correspondent

Relief Ministry has allocated 300 metric tonnes of wheat under 'Food for Work Programme' for digging five lakes and developing a sanctuary on the Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus.

Earlier, the JU authority sought the assistance to develop the forestry and to make the natural sites on the campus more attractive.

Two lakes will be dug on both sides of the Central Library, two on both sides of the Auditorium and one on the area adjacent to the Teachers' and Officers' Club.

JU Vice Chancellor Prof Alauddin Ahmed told The Daily Star: "We have taken a number of programmes for the development of forestry as well as natural sites to create awareness about the preservation of natural environment."

"Different NGOs have already conducted topographical survey on the campus to see the possibilities to turn the campus into a broad sanctuary for migratory birds," Prof Alauddin said.

Meanwhile, JU authority has formed three committees to monitor the lake project. The committees are likely to start their work by June.

## SCF leader beaten up on JU campus

By JU Correspondent

A leader of the Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF) was beaten allegedly by some activists of the ruling party-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) on the Jahangirnagar University campus Tuesday.

Zafar, a resident student of Moulana Bhasani Hall, was beaten up by the angry activists after a BCL poster had been removed from a board assigned for SCF only.

SCF activists alleged that BCL activists frequently used the board although there is a separate board for them.

At about 1:30 am, the BCL activists called Zafar to the common room of the hall and charged him with removing the poster. "Suddenly three BCL activists started beating me without hearing my explanation," Zafar told The Daily Star.

SCF brought out a procession on the campus and held a rally protesting the attack on their leader and demanded immediate action against to the persons involved in the attack.

## Obituary

Khandaker Abdul Mukhtar, Asstt Vice President of National Bank Limited and In-Charge, Brahmanbaria Branch, died of a massive heart attack on April 26 at his Dhaknondi residence, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and one daughter.

His quikhwani will be held at his Dhaknondi residence on Friday after Asr prayers. Relatives and friends have been requested to attend the qul.