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Chief Justice for efficient justice-delivery system

Chief Justice Mostafa Kamal yesterday called upon the lawyers and judges to try to devise an efficient justice-delivery system to fulfil people's expectations and honour their trust, reports UNB.

The profession of law and the institution of judiciary are at a crossroads of history. The new millennium begins with a universal trend of globalisation whose impact on the legal profession and the judiciary will be penetrating and pervasive," he said.

Delivering a farewell address at the Supreme Court auditorium, he said lawyers and judges have a role to play in the transition from the traditional administration of justice to a result-oriented, speedy and efficient justice-delivery system.

The adversarial system has to be injected with doses of consensual and conciliatory system of adjudication of disputes," he said. "Over an increasingly large and varied type of Court cases, a legal culture of mediation and arbitration has to be devised, nurtured and developed under the caring hands of both the lawyers and the judges."

Referring to the power of judges, the outgoing Chief Justice said the powers exercised by them are not powers given to them by a divine hand. It is the people of Bangladesh who have the judicial power.

"Under a constitutional arrangement it is the judicial power of the people which is being exercised by the judges who for the time being are performing functions of judges in various Courts and Tribunals," he told the function, adding: "The people therefore, are the repository of all power and are central to our Constitutional scheme."

The Chief Justice said like other organs of the Government, the judiciary cannot remain oblivious of and non-responsive to the legitimate expectation of the people.

"If the people expect a quick and speedy trial of their cases, if they expect the cost of their litigation to be within tolerable limits, if they expect impartiality, neutrality and independence in the exercise of their judicial functions, if they expect freedom from vexatious and harassing litigation and prosecution, then not only the lawyers and judges, but also the Parliament and the Executive have a joint responsibility to adequately respond to these legitimate expectations. And if they fail to do so their failure will recoil upon the efficacy, relevance, trust and confidence of

the people in the entire system," he said.

Chief Justice Mostafa Kamal urged lawyers and Judges all over the country to realise the compelling necessity of an adequate response to the legitimate expectations of the people. This is their constitutional commitment.

In a pungent comment on condition of convicts, undertrial prisoners and security detainees in jails, the Chief Justice said the jails are overcrowded. "Sanitary arrangements are barbaric. Food is intolerable." Quoting Hobbes, he said life there is solitary, nasty, brutish and short.

He said criminal justice system must take note of these objective conditions in the country's jails.

The Attorney General, members of the bench and the bar attended the meeting.

Convention

Siddique's supporters form 101-member preparatory body

By Staff Correspondent

Qader Siddique's supporters yesterday formed a 101-member convention preparatory committee with the objective to float a new political party soon.

Advocate Fazlur Rahman has been made convener of the committee, which finalised to hold the convention on December 24 at Engineers' Institution, said a press release.

A meeting of the supporters of Qader Siddique was held yesterday with Anwar Hossain Pahari, BP in the chair. The meeting formed eight sub-committees for making the convention a success.

4 killed in Savar bus plunge

SAVAR, Dec 12: Four people were killed and 50 injured in a road accident at Alamnagar near Hemayetpur on Dhaka-Aricha highway today, reports UNB.

Survivors and police said a Dhaka bound night coach from Benapole fell into a roadside ditch at 5 am as the driver lost control over the vehicle.

People from nearby villages rushed to the spot and rescued the victims.

A young woman Raburani, 30, died on the spot while three others succumbed to their injuries on the way to hospital, survivors said.

100 injured as rival transport workers clash at Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Dec 12: At least 100 people were injured in clashes between two groups rival of transport workers at different places of the town today.

Police and witnesses said, the trouble began as a sequel to Thursday's incident in which a truck was damaged by Bus Sramik Union in Shaheb Bazar area.

The members of Truck Sramik Union today damaged at least 15 buses in Talaimari Bus Terminal, Gourhanga and Kajla areas. At least 35 people were injured during the rampage by the members of Truck Sramik Union.

The Truck Sramik Union also put up a barricade on Rajshahi-Noagaon road and set ablaze a bus belonging to Noagaon Bus Sramik Union.

Both the groups — Bus Sramik Union and Truck Sramik Union — were locked in a violent clash at this place that resulted in injuries to 50 people.

Later, the clash spread to central bus terminal. At least ten buses and five trucks were damaged and 15 people injured during the melee.

The feuding groups used lethal weapons and exploded crackers during the clash.

Police rushed to the spot and resorted to lathi charge. They also lobbed tear gas shells to bring the situation under control.

Police arrested the president of Rajshahi Truck Sramik Union from the terminal area.

Protesting the attack by Truck Sramik Union, the Bus Sramik Union suspended plying of buses in all routes of the district for an indefinite period from today.

Of the injured, 12 were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital while the rest to different clinics and hospitals.

Tk 25 lakh gold seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

The customs surveillance team at the Zia International Airport seized 37 gold bars worth about Tk 25 lakh from a Biman passenger from Dubai yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, the team scanned the luggage of one Hassan Khan and recovered the gold weighing about 370 tolas by breaking a compressor, wrapped in carbon paper and hidden in it. Hassan Khan is the son of one Masuk Khan.

Sources in the customs said Hassan Khan was challenged when he attempted to pass through green channel.

He was handed over to Cantonment police and a case was filed.

2nd ODI

SL beat Zimbabwe

BULAWAYO, Dec 12: Sri Lanka beat Zimbabwe by 13 runs in the second one-day international today.

Scores: Sri Lanka 213 (Russel Arnold 103; Guy Whittall 4-35); Zimbabwe 200 (Alistair Campbell 56; Sanath Jayasuriya 4-41.)



A city BNP procession yesterday ahead of today's hartal.

Hartal

From page 1

when BNP was in power. Even there was no hartal in Ramadan during the 9-year rule by Ershad.

In the capital, the alliance partners — BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote — and some other smaller parties held separate rallies and brought out processions yesterday in support of today's hartal.

Main opposition BNP held rallies at eleven points in the city and brought out processions. Its main rally, held in front of the party's head office at Naya Paltan, was addressed by, among others, Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Abdus Salam, Amanullah Aman MP, Shamsuzzaman Dudu MP, Fazlul Haq Milon, Habibur Rahman Habib and Moazzem Hossain Alal.

Addressing the rally, they said the government forced them to call hartal in the holy month of Ramadan by announcing the CCC polls schedule "unilaterally."

They said Chittagong city will be paralysed if the government does not cancel the polls schedule immediately. There is no emergency that the polls have to be arranged even in the month of Ramadan, they said.

The rally over, a big procession was brought out which terminated in front of Jatiya Press Club at 4:15 pm after parading streets in Kakrail, Bijoygar, Paltan and Tophkana areas.

JP, Jamaat and IOJ also organised separate rallies and brought out processions from Kalabagan, the North gate of Baitul Mukarram and Furque Paltan respectively.

Meanwhile, the government has decided to deploy some 6,000 security forces in the capital to maintain law and order during the hartal, officials sources said.

SC procedures to be computerised

Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru yesterday announced that all the systems, procedures and functions of the Supreme Court would be computerised and modernised to cope with the challenges of the next century, reports BSS.

The coming century will be highly competitive one and the nation with modern information technology is likely to forge ahead in all respect, the minister added.

The law minister was speaking on the occasion of handing of computer sets and fax machines to Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association at a simple ceremony. The equipment were given under a comprehensive modernisation programme of the Supreme Court Procedures.

The law minister said a worldwide web site with internet and e-mail connection will be provided with all the computers of the Supreme Court. He said categorisation of cases and litigation management system will be provided with the provision of electronic filing system (EFS) in the Supreme Court Procedure.

V-Day: Festive mood

From page 1

Shadhinata", the Institute of Fine Arts, Sufia Kamal National Public Library and the Bangla Academy stand proudly.

At the library's Showkat Osman Auditorium, a huge turnout marked the third day of a six-day long cultural and film programme organised by the Information Ministry.

A discussion on "Sangrami Bangla" was held with Joint Secretary of Information Khondaker Fazlur Rahman in the chair. The director general of the Department of Film and Publication gave the welcome address while State Minister for Foreign Affairs M. Abdul Hasan Chowdhury was the chief guest.

The discussion was followed by a cultural function and film show. Two films "Stop Genocide" and "Ora Egarjan" were screened yesterday.

Another discussion on "Ranangan Bangladesh" will be held at 1:15 p.m. today with Golam Murtaza, managing director of the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation, in the chair. The discussion will be followed by a cultural function and film show.

Meanwhile, Sammilita Sangskritik Jute has drawn up a four-day "Victory Festival", which starts today at different stages in and around the Dhaka University Campus.

Sardar Fazlul Karim will inaugurate the programme at the Central Shaheed Minar. Prof Anisuzzaman will be present as a special guest. Folk songs, dance and cultural functions for children will be staged.

Poetry recitals, discussion meetings, street dramas, an exhibition of liberation war documents, a folk fair and film shows will be held at six other stages.

Bangla Academy will also organise a cultural function on Victory Day. A discussion meeting on the martyrs will be held at the academy's auditorium tomorrow.

Jahangirnagar University will also mark Victory Day with an inter-hall Chancellor's Cup Football tournament, a Vice-chancellor's Cup handball tournament for female students, and a display featuring books on the Liberation War.

Meanwhile, the Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial in Rayerbazar will be opened for public after its formal inauguration tomorrow.

The construction work of the memorial began in December 1996 with a plan to complete the work within one and half year. But due to unavoidable circumstances it took the Works Ministry three years to complete the work.

JS team to visit South Korea

From page 1

enquiry committee is found dissatisfied about manufacture of the frigate during the planned visit of Korea, he said.

Shafiuallah however told the meeting that as per documents available from the ministry, 80 per cent of the frigate's price had already been paid while only 58 per cent of the construction work was completed.

Yesterday's meeting also decided to discuss the defence policy of the country at its first meeting of the new year.

UNB adds: Opposition members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on defence staged a token walkout yesterday protesting presence of representative of the minister concerned in the JS body meeting that discussed a military purchase deal, reports UNB.

Science and Technology Minister Lt Gen (Retd) Nuruddin Khan attended the meeting as representative of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who holds the Defence portfolio.

The three opposition members who walked out of the room, however, came back after few minutes and had a heated exchange of words with members from the ruling party. Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah and BNP lawmaker Maj (Retd) M Akhtaruzzaman over the issue continued for about half an hour, meeting sources said.

Presence of a representative of any minister in the parliamentary standing committee meeting is violation of Section 247 of the Rules of Procedure," the opposition side argued.

The opposition lawmakers demanded formation of an inquiry committee over the purchase of a warship for the Bangladesh Navy.

They alleged that the order for building the frigate was given without determining the specification and violating the directives of the Prime Minister on the purchase procedure.

Although the Director General of Defence Purchase had informed that no provision for sub-contract had been kept, the opposition lawmakers named a business magnet of Dhaka and

Dhanmondi: DCC yet to remove illegal fences

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) hasn't removed the illegal fences blocking access to a Dhanmondi Lake walkway near Satmasjid Road.

The fences were built when a local resident, who claims to be a peer (religious preacher), used his influence to alter the original lake development project without approval. The money spent for work came from the project's fund.

The fence, constructed near the peer's house, blocks a new walkway built as part of the lake development project. The Public Works Department identified the peer, known as Sher-e-Khawja, as an encroacher of the public land by the lake.

An official with the DCC's Engineering Section and the lake development project told the Daily Star they would remove the fences and restore public access to the walkway, as cited in the original project design.

9 shops gutted in B'baria

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Dec 12: At least nine shops were gutted and five people injured in a fire at Radika Bazar, eight kilometres from Brahmanbaria district headquarters at around 6-30 pm today.

According to Fire Brigade sources, the fire originated from an unauthorised petrol shop at the bazar and soon engulfed the nearby shops.

Of the injured, two identified as Hasan and Faruk, employees of the petrol shop, were admitted to hospital. The identity of three others could not be known immediately.

The fire fighting units from the district headquarters rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze after an hour.

Truck with over 15,000 pieces of sarees seized

By Staff Correspondent

A special team of the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police yesterday seized a truck loaded with Indian sarees at Tipu Sultan Road in the city yesterday.

Sources in the DB last night said there were more than 15,000 pieces of sarees. There were also some Bangladeshi sarees, they said.

The police team, acting on a tip off, stopped the truck on Tipu Sultan Road and seized the sarees.

The truck was going to Chittagong with the sarees from the city's Islampur area, police said.

A section of unscrupulous traders are involved in smuggling sarees.

A case was filed with Sutar-pur police in this connection.

Paksey Bridge

From page 1

donor. Hyundai, reduce the price to Tk 930 crore. The government asked Shimizu to reduce its price and received an offer of Tk 890 crore.

This prompted Hyundai to lower its offer to Tk 850 crore. Having the target price at hand, the government wanted to award the contract to Hyundai.

However, the donor refused to sign Hyundai's second reduction. It said the contract should be awarded to Shimizu at Tk 890 crore.

This impasse was resolved when the Japanese Bank for International Co-operation agreed with a government plan to re-tender the project among the two bidders. The government and the bank also agreed that only offers below Tk 860 were acceptable.

Hyundai and Shimizu agreed in writing to participate in this bid, although Shimizu later withdrew. The Japanese Bank for International Co-operation declined to support the tender. They said they didn't participate enough and asked the government to tender the project again.

Jamaat activists storm SNS rally, snatch effigy of Gen Niazi

By Staff Correspondent

Some activists from a Jamaat-e-Islami procession stormed a gathering of Sammilita Nari Samaj (SNS), an apex body of women's organisations, near the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday, leaving several SNS activists injured.

The Jamaat activists also snatched an effigy of General Niazi from an SNS activist, Sultana Akhtar Rubi, leaving her injured. Niazi was commander of Pakistani occupation army during Bangladesh's War of Liberation.

The SNS activists gathered near the press club to burn the effigy of Niazi to protest his recent remarks that Pakistani soldiers were not involved in the rape of Bangalee women during the war.

The Jamaat procession, brought out in support of today's hartal, was passing through the area.

After the incident, the SNS activists burnt a portrait of Niazi there.

Addressing the gathering, SNS leaders condemned the Jamaat attack and asked Niazi to apologise to the people of Bangladesh for his comment. They also demanded that all war criminals and collaborators including Jamaat chief Golam Azam be arrested immediately and tried in a special tribunal.

Earlier, the SNS organised a rally at the Shahbag crossing in observance of Begum Rokeya Day.

Speakers at the rally demanded speedy trial of all criminal cases of repression on women, including those filed in connection with the sensational murders of Yasmin, Seema and Taniya.

Incidents of violence against women are increasing in the country due to slow trial of such cases. Many such cases are pending with higher courts for long, they said.

An SNS delegation later met Attorney General Mahmudul Hasan at his High Court chamber and submitted a memorandum containing eight demands. The demands include setting up of a special tribunal for trial of all war criminals, placing of the planned bill in Parliament on repression on women and children and raising the number of reserved seats for women in Parliament.

The women leaders urged the AG to take steps for quick disposal of cases relating to crimes against women. The AG reportedly assured them of looking into the matter.

Meanwhile, Shirin Akhtar and Sharmin Kabir, president and general secretary respectively of Karmajibi Nari, an organisation of working women, in a statement yesterday termed Niazi's remarks audacious and asked him to apologise.

They urged Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to take steps for trial of war criminals and also Opposition leader Khaleda Zia to boycott them.

Ctg rally: 20 hurt

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tal coincides with the last date of submission of nomination papers for the polls.

Acting Secretary General of BNP Abdullah Al Noman, Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, MP, and Golam Akbar Khondker of the party, Jamaat-e-Islami-Secretary General Moulana Matiu Rahman Nizami, Jatiya Party leader Ibrahim Bin Khalil, Islami Oikya Jote leaders Rafiqullah Chowdhury and Moulana Ijharul Islam addressed the rally, among others. City BNP chief Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin presided.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and JP Secretary General Nazim Rahman Manju were supposed to attend the rally. But they did not come here to attend it.

"We will resist the CCC election at any cost... The government is pushing the nation towards a confrontation and we are being compelled to go for agitation to save the nation," said Mir Nasiruddin.

The rally was disturbed for sometime when supporters of the alliance attacked journalists leaving eight of them injured as they protested a comment of Moulana Ijharul Islam of IJO Jote.

Meanwhile, City Awami League has decided to submit nomination papers for the CCC election tomorrow to "foil any conspiracy to jeopardize the election."

They will gather at the Darul Fazal market office of the party and go to the District Council Bhawan in processions to submit the nomination papers.

Labour and Employment Minister Abdul Mannan and Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Mosharraf Hossain will also participate in the procession, sources said.

Meanwhile, security was beefed up in the port city as a wave of protests against CCC polls continued amid a tense situation.

Additional police force were deployed at all important points of the city.

Administration sources said BDR will be deployed tomorrow to maintain law and order as the opposition alliance called a 36-hour hartal in the port city, beginning from 6 am tomorrow.

The hartal was called by the opposition alliance to resist submission of nomination papers tomorrow and their scrutiny the day after.

The opposition alliance has decided to raise barricades on roads tomorrow to prevent those who want to submit nomination papers, party sources said.

Launch mishap

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Two bodies were recovered from the engine room. One of them was suspected to be a launch staff. The serang and other launch staff are still missing.

Meanwhile, BIWTA salvage ship 'Hamza' reached the spot at about 1:20 pm yesterday and salvaged the launch by 5:45 in the evening.

Out of 25 bodies recovered in Bhola yesterday, nine were identified as Noorul Islam 28, Hannan, 18, Md. Monir, 12, Akhtar, 20, Idris Ali, 50, Sahana Begum, 3, Yakub, 35, Habibullah, 18 and Shahidul Islam, 27. The victims hailed from Tajumuddin, Lalmoheon and Charfashion of Bhola.

Of the bodies recovered from different Char areas, 22 were identified as Shahinur, 22, Surma Begum, 28, Bibi Fatema, 18, Rahima, 55, Jebunnissa, 35, Akimunnissa, 40, Sofura Bibi, 60, Aklima, 7, Monir, 10, Fulbanu, 29, Marzina, 30, Suman, 5, Runu, 7, Sohel, 6, Mahfuz, 8, Karim, 7, Nur Hossain, 9, Karim, 3, Mamun, 6, Sidhu Mia, 30, Rafiqullah, 30, and Salauddin, 20.

The salvaged launch was taken to Daulatkhan thana and a case was lodged with police in this connection.

Meanwhile, the Marine Transport Directorate yesterday formed a three-member probe body to investigate the reasons behind the launch accident in Bhola.

The committee has been directed to submit its report within four days.

Jubo Dal

From page 1


Lalkhan Bazar ward Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal was gunned down by unidentified assailants at Master lane of Pashartoli area yesterday morning.

ANNOUNCEMENT

We regret to inform you that due to unavoidable circumstances the National Launch of *The State of the World's Children 2000* report, scheduled for 13 December, 1:30-3:30 pm at the LGED Auditorium has been postponed.

The National Launch of the publication will be rescheduled for 17 December. The venue and time will be announced soon.

We apologize for any inconvenience caused.



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