

What's on today . . .

Seminar: Muktijuddha Charcha Kendra has organised a day-long seminar on 'History of Liberation War and Our Curriculum: Present Perspective'. Chief guest: DU VC A K Azad Chowdhury. Venue: TSC main auditorium, DU campus. Time: 9 am.

Lucky draw of bankers' quiz: The lucky draw of quiz competition for bankers and the prize giving ceremony will be held. The Daily Prothom Alo, a leading Bangla daily and Standard Chartered Bank jointly organised the quiz competition. Chief Guest: Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria. Venue: CIDRAP auditorium, Chancellery House, 17, Tophkhana Road. Time: 5 pm.

Seminar on insurance: Bangladesh Insurance Academy has organised a day-long seminar on 'Islamic Insurance: Theories, Practices and Prospects in Bangladesh'. Keynote paper: Dr. Ma'mun Billah, Assistant Professor, Department of Law, Malaysian International Islamic University. Venue: Insurance Academy Bhaban, 53, Mohakhali C/A. Time: 9 am.

DU Alumni Assoc meet: A joint meeting of the newly-elected Executive Committee and outgoing committee of Dhaka University Alumni Association will be held. Venue: Teachers' room of TSC on DU campus. Time: 4:30 pm.

NSU seminar on XML: Professional Development programme of the North South University has organised a seminar on 'Extensible Markup Language (XML)'. Keynote paper: Abir Qasem, a software engineer at NASA, USA. Venue: NSU campus. Time: 4 pm.

BIBM seminar: Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management has organised a day-long national seminar on 'Role of Commercial Banks in Development Financing in Bangladesh'. Keynote paper: Dr. Sujit Saha, Professor of BIBM and Dr. Saiful Karim Chowdhury, Lecturer of BIBM. Venue: BIBM Bhaban, Plot No. 4, Main Road: 1, Section-2, Mirpur. Time: 9:30 am.

Seminar: The Centre for Human Rights will hold a seminar on Violation of Human Rights in Chechnya. Venue: VIP lounge of Jatiya Press Club. Time: 3:30 pm. Dr. Aftab Ahmed, Professor of Political Science of Dhaka University will present the keynote paper.

Film show: Chalachitram Film Society will screen 'Farewell My Concubine' (China) on the 4th day of its 3rd programme on the series 'A Tribute to the Great Filmmakers of the Century: A Selection of Films'. Venue: Auditorium of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi. Time: 6:30 pm.

Musical Soiree: The first solo musical soiree by Nizam Uddin Al Khasru (Uzzal) will be held. He will render English Pop, Nazrul Geeti, Gazals and Hindi songs at the programme. Venue: Bishwa Shahitya Kendra auditorium. Time: 6:30 pm.

..... and tomorrow

BISS workshop: Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies has organised a two-day national workshop on 'Impact of Globalisation on Bangladesh'. Minister of State for Planning Dr. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir will inaugurate the workshop while Prof. Rehman Sobhan, Chairman, Centre for Policy Dialogue preside over the inaugural session. Venue: BISS auditorium, 1/46, Elephant Road (West of Ramna Police Station). Time: 9:30 am.

Discussion meet: Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) and Study and Research Group of Manobik Sahajya Sangstha have jointly organised a discussion meeting on 'Country's Present Political Impasse'. Representatives of civil society, educationists, journalists, lawyers, cultural activists and other professionals will attend the discussion meeting. Venue: Seminar room of IDB Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 4 pm.

Weather

Dry weather likely

Light rain or drizzle is likely at one or two places over Khulna division and weather will remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country with partly cloudy sky over coastal area in next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Night temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country during the period, according to Met Office.

The country's highest temperature 30.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Chittagong and Rangamati and the lowest 11.4 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:52 pm and rises on Tuesday at 6:32 am.

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

| City/Town | Temperature in Celsius | Humidity in percentage |
|-------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Max | Min |
| Dhaka | 27.0 | 65 |
| Chittagong | 30.5 | 73 |
| Rajshahi | 25.5 | 69 |
| Khulna | 27.6 | 69 |
| Barisal | 27.8 | 52 |
| Sylhet | 28.5 | 58 |
| Cox's Bazar | 30.1 | 56 |

HERE and THERE

Swadesh Chinta Sangha

By DU Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said that Prof. Ahmad Sharif retrieved the Bangla literature of Middle Age through his various research and introduced it to new generation.

The discussion was held at the Teachers Students Centre (TSC) auditorium of the Dhaka University in the afternoon, marking the 80th birth anniversary of noted educationist Prof. Ahmad Sharif.

Recalling the memories of Prof. Sharif, the speakers said, "he was a true intellectual who had no party affiliation."

He was associated with different democratic movements throughout his life and he always fought against the fundamentalists and religious fanatics," they observed.

Prathoma Roy Mandal delivered the keynote speech while Abul Kashem Faridul Haq was in the chair.

Among others, Badruddin Umar, Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Bashier Al Helal, Mansur

Musa and Ahmed Kabir took part in the discussion.

An exhibition of books of Ahmad Sharif was also held at the TSC. The programme was organised by Swadesh Chinta Sangha.

BSEHR

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) condemned the confinement of three young men by Lalbagh thana in their custody for six days without having produced them in the court.

The three young men were taken into police custody in connection with the killing of Faisal on February 2.

Faisal, son of Anwarul Hossain, a government official was killed and their maid Parul was critically injured in an attack in their Azampur residence allegedly by one of their relatives.

The BSEHR condemned the police on the basis of a news report printed in this regard, the statement said noting that the victims, however, were released after an official was paid a sum of Tk 30,000.

BKL reception to PM today

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Krishak League has arranged a reception to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at 3 pm at Paltan Maidan today. The reception has been arranged to mark the awarding of medals to the PM by FAO.

Left-leaning student bodies processions on JU campus

By JU Correspondent

Left-leaning student organisations brought out separate processions and held rallies at Jahangirnagar University (JU) yesterday to drum up support for their today's gherao of Secretariat demanding a scientific and secular education policy.

Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU) brought out a torch procession from the Prantik gate in the evening, which paraded through campus. The procession dispersed at the Supritala near transport office.

Demanding abolishing of madrasa and cadet education, BCU leaders, while addressing the rally after the procession, asked to introduce a uniform policy of education for all the citizens of the country.

They also asked the government to accept their 10-point demands on education policy immediately.

BCU JU unit president Saikat Subhra Mannan and general secretary Monishankar Das Gupta, among others, addressed the rally.

Meanwhile, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF), another left-leaning student organisation, also brought out a procession from Prantik gate yesterday evening. The SCF procession, marching through the campus, ended at the starting point.

SCF also held similar rally there after the procession.

Ananda Mohan College closed sine die

MYMENSINGH, Feb 13: The Ananda Mohan College has been declared closed sine die following Saturday's attack and ransacking of halls by a section of Honours Part-3 examinees, reports UNB.

The examination was already cancelled following the trouble in which a number of students and teachers were injured. The troublemakers had also snatched away answer scripts of some 300 examinees out of about 750 who sat for the examination.

The college authorities asked the resident students to vacate the halls and sought help of the district administration to implement the decision.

Protesting the hooliganism in the examination hall, the teachers and the college today brought out a silent procession and staged a sit-in on the road in front of the press club. They demanded punishment to the troublemakers.

AFDC rally today

By Staff Correspondent

The Anti Fascism Democratic Committee (AFDC) at a meeting yesterday decided to mobilise public opinion against the Public Safety Bill (PSB) and organise a rally today in front of the BSS near the Paltan crossing at 3 pm.

Condemning the killing of Sumon at Shayampur by the DB police, it was stated in the meeting that there was no security of life and property of people due to the repression and terrorism of the government, police and administration.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by T. Ali, Tipu Biswas, Faizul Hakim, Ravi Shankar Chakrabarti, Hasibur Rahman, Jafar Hossain, Jonaed Saki, Nazrul Islam, Saikat Dewan, Faizur Rahman Khokon, Milton Chakma and Masud with Abdur Rahman in the chair.

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The Dhaka Master Plan stated that Motijheel would accommodate almost all the city's offices for up to 20 years. There are only handful of high-rises, but others could be turned into larger buildings if necessary.

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Female students of Dhaka University attired in black saree protesting the assault of a woman on the New Year's eve on the DU campus.

Civil society takes the load to explore a way out FEMA discussion on 'Present Political Impasse'

By Staff Correspondent

The Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) has organised a discussion meeting on 'Present Political Impasse' tomorrow to find a way out of the standoff between the government and the opposition.

This was disclosed by FEMA leaders at a press briefing yesterday at its Mohammadpur office in the city.

The FEMA in collaboration with the Study and Research Group of Manobik Sahajya Sangstha will hold the discussion meeting at 4:00 pm at the seminar room of the IDB Bhaban in city's Agargaon area.

Feroz M Hassan, secretary general of FEMA while addressing the newsmen said the upcoming discussion meeting has been organised to give the leaders and representatives of the civil society an opportunity to find out through discussion what they should do at present political situation.

He said the FEMA hopes that the free and frank discussion

meeting will help building consensus on the role of the civil society in bringing an end to the prevailing political impasse, he said.

He further said the discussion might pave the way for resolving the stalemate by the civil society.

Representatives of the civil society such as academics, business community, journalists, development workers, cultural activists, women activists and leaders of professional groups are expected to participate in the discussion meeting.

The FEMA further said the present political impasse is marked by deep mistrust among the key political players and lack of understanding between the government and the major opposition parties.

"Even working relationship between them (ruling party and opposition) is non-existent which is essential for functioning of a democratic system," one leader said.

Even election has become meaningless as the major opposition political parties are boycotting it in recent time which is detrimental to democratic system, FEMA leaders said.

"The present political crisis has put democracy on Bangladesh to test once again," another leader said.

The leaders said that this is the high time to initiate this sort of discussion meeting which will be useful and effective in mitigating the confrontational politics between the government and opposition parties.

The FEMA leaders expressed that the civil society representatives would be able to explore their role and articulate the ways of resolving the present political deadlock as they did in the past.

Munira Khan, Vice-Chairperson, Dr. Shawkat Aza Husain, Chairperson Media Committee were, among others, spoke in the briefing.

Violence in city

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state minister for local government Sabur Hossain Chowdhury.

But witnesses said a home-made bomb went off at Kakrail crossing when BNP chief and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia in an open jeep was crossing the area.

Without any warning, a number of plainclothes policemen, some donning bullet proof jackets with police signs emerged from different alleyways in white micro-buses and four wheelers.

They fired shots backing the tear gas shells lobbed by riot police at the demonstrators. Gun shots were fired also from the roof tops in the area, the witnesses and correspondents

covering the march said.

The DC of DB, however, denied that his men fired any shot yesterday. Asked why so many of them were there, he said they had information from 'sources' about the trouble at that spot.

The sudden charge left the demonstrators scurrying for cover. At Kakrail crossing, the rear of BNP procession was closely followed by that of Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami respectively.

The IOJ was then just preparing to follow the Jamaat marchers from the Zero Point.

In the melee and confusion, a section of demonstrators regrouped and retaliated by hurling stones and home-made bombs, torched a police van carrying empty containers of food for police on duty and a minibus that tried to plough through the marchers at Kakrail crossing.

Fire tenders later doused the fire.

Police said eight of their men were wounded in the clashes. Nine demonstrators were arrested.

But the number of wounded among the opposition activists could not be known immediately.

Secretary's Generals of the four parties told a press briefing at the residence of the Leader of the Opposition later in the evening that an unspecified number of the alliance supporters were wounded besides Shahidul Islam Master MP.

Some were hit by shot gun pellets, they added.

President

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ing the rising crimes.

Other members of the delegation were Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Rahat Khan, Habibur Rahman Milon, Shaikhur Rahman, GM Yakub, Yasin Ahmed, Baby Moudud, Monzurul Ahsan Bulbul, Swapan Saha, Altaf Mahmud, Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Akter Ahmed Khan, Abul Kalam, Azizul Islam Bhuiyan and Sharif Shahabuddin.

Amanullah Kabir, president of another faction of the BPUJ, led its 10-member delegation.

They pointed out to the President the related sections of the Public Safety Bill affecting the interest of the journalist community saying that this Bill curtails freedom of the press and the journalists laws, including the Special Powers Act, could be amended for speedy trial of all types of criminals instead of going for enacting the new harsh law which prohibits bail not only during investigation but also during pendency of appeal against conviction," they said.

A news release from Bangladesh said the BPUJ leaders requested the President not to assent to the Bill in view of the sentiments expressed by different sections of people. They also submitted a memorandum on their plea to the President.

The members of the delegation included Glas Kamal Chowdhury, Rezaul Karim, Khandkar Monirul Alam, M A Aziz, Monzurul Ahmed, Zahurul Huq, Abu Saleh, Monzurul Alam, and Ruhul Amin Gazi.

BCL activist shot dead in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 13: An activist of BCL was shot dead in Nasirabad area of the city last night, police said.

Nurul Alam, 22, an activist of BCL Akbar Group, received bullet wounds in an intra-party clash at Nasirabad at 11, police said.

He was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to injuries soon after admission.

Khulna polytech student union polls postponed

By Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Feb 13: Student union elections of Khulna Polytechnic Institute (KPI) were postponed after two BCL factions clashed today.

Three leaders of the Chhatra League were kidnapped from the polling centre, while two others injured severely during the clash.

Police and witnesses said about 20 armed young men raided the polling centre and kidnapped VP candidate Yusuf Ali Jewel, former GS Ziaul Huq Bapni and Shamim Ahmed. Police could not rescue them till filing of this report.

The armed young men opposing election of the students' union fired several shots and exploded bombs to scare the general students.

BCL leader assaulted

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Feb 13: A BCL leader was assaulted by a group of armed people in front of the Zila Parishad building in the town at about 11 am today.

Shafiqullah Monam, Cultural Secretary, Barisal district unit of BCL went to Zila Parishad today with two of his associates along for information about some contract works, police and witnesses said.

A group of armed men dragged him and chopped indiscriminately with Chinese axe and other lethal weapons when he was returning home riding a motorcycle.

Hartal

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said gunshots and tear gas shells were fired and bombs exploded indiscriminately.

Bhuiyan said at the same time police and terrorists attacked JP procession at Kakrail crossing, Jamaat procession at Paltan and IOJ procession at Zero Point.

"This simultaneous attacks clearly proved that it was a pre-planned attack, he added.

In support of the Tuesday's hartal, Bhuiyan announced that opposition parties would bring out processions and stage demonstrations in all cities, thana and district headquarters. In the capital city, the four parties will organise joint procession.

Calling it a Money Bill

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matters specified in the foregoing sub-clauses.

Article 81(2) A Bill shall not be deemed to be a Money Bill by reason only that it provides for the imposition or alteration of any fine or other pecuniary penalty, or for the levy or payment of a license fee or a fee or charge for any service rendered, or by reason only that it provides for the imposition, regulation, alteration, remission or repeal of any tax by the local authority or body for local purposes.

In addition to the above articles of the Constitution, the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Rules of Procedure 127 states as follows:

"Finance Bill means that bill ordinarily introduced in each year to give effect to the financial proposals of the government for the next following financial year and includes a Bill to give effect to supplementary financial proposals for any period."

Understood in its totality can there be any doubt in the minds of any rational, individual as to what constitutes and what does NOT constitute a Money Bill. It is abundantly clear that the provisions concerning Money Bills deal with the annual budget and matters related to it that may subsequently arise. To use this loophole to pass a bill which deals with our fundamental freedoms is nothing less than considering the people as nothing but fools, the Constitution as nothing more than a scrap of paper, and the President, who has to assent to it, as nothing more than a robot. The Constitution DOES NOT permit the use of the Money Bill provisions to bulldoze any Bill through the parliament or pressurise the Head of State and forcing him to assent to a Bill.

The question that the government must answer is WHY this Bill was classified as a MONEY BILL? The unofficial explanation has been that since the implementation of the provisions of this Bill will entail spending money from the public exchequer therefore this has been classified as money bill. Such an explanation stands neither on logic, nor on facts and much less of legal grounds.

If we accept this rationale then we should be ready to accept each and every bill as a Money Bill because almost all Bills passed in the parliament will have some financial implications while implementing its provisions.

Let us not forget that no attempt was made to solicit public opinion. Even the well known intellectuals and legal experts known for their sympathy for the ruling party were not consulted. So the question we would like to pose - Is this any way to legislate such an important law that will have such a widespread impact on our lives? If it is going to be such a good thing for the public then why was it hidden from the public at the preparatory stage? Is it the view that we-the-public do not understand what is good for us, and therefore we do not need to be consulted but only told what to do? Haven't we heard that before and haven't we rejected such views in the past.

We cannot but express our amazement as to why the Speaker, the Chairman of our Parliament and our legislative process could certify this as a Money Bill? How far will he go to accommodate every whim of the ruling party even if it means destroying the norms and trust on which the parliamentary democracy has to ultimately depend? The Speaker must have known that to certify the Public Safety Bill as a Money Bill was a gross abuse of a provision that was meant to provide flexibility to the government in dealing with money matters. It was NEVER meant for the passage of Bill such as the one at hand. Why play tricks with legal provisions and thereby set precedents that only weakens our parliamentary tradition? Has not our parliamentary system suffered severely by one of our Speaker's previous ruling dealing with the two defecting BNP MPs? How much lower will the Speaker's position be brought down?

Both because of the method in which the Bill was bulldozed through the parliament, and by the fact that it was most illogically and unjustifiably shown as a Money Bill we are forced to seriously doubt the real intention of this law. By taking this route, the government has deliberately curtailed the options of the President. To that extent the government has not been honest to him and has knowingly created a most embarrassing and ethically conflicting situation for him. As the opposition leader Sheikh Hasina called BNP's anti-terrorism bill "Mini-Martial Law", just because she is proposing a different version of it, are we suppose to welcome it as "Mega-Freedom Law"? Sorry NO.

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PM defends

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The Prime Minister said newspapers must reflect objective condition of society maintaining honesty, neutrality and objectivity in reporting.

Sheikh Hasina was happy to note that eight dailies were coming out from Bogra. The dailies would play their due roles in implementing her government's plan to attain balanced development of the country, she hoped.

"We believe in balanced development and not making hollow speeches," she said.

The Prime Minister said, "We want to ensure two square meals for every citizen through balanced development of the country."

She said the power sector received a blow during the last regime as foreign donors stopped financing the country's power sector because of widespread corruption.

The government resumed negotiations with the donors successfully and brought back the flow of financial assistance in the power sector," the Prime Minister said.

The 60-member delegation was headed by Bogra Press Club president Mozammel Huq Lahu and general secretary Mahmudul Alam Nayan.

The Prime Minister allotted 15 decimals of land and Tk 2 lakh for Bogra Press Club.

Later, the members of Bogra based Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Tengamara Mahila Sabuj Sangha led by Prof Hosne Ara Begum joined the delegation. The NGO has four lakh beneficiaries.

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Sylhet hartal

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