

'A society is not civilised if women can't move freely'

Former Chief Justice Mostafa Kamal has wondered how this society, where women cannot move safely, can be called civilised, reports UNB.

"I agree on the growth rate of development. But if the indicator of civilisation is that no woman can move safely anywhere in the country, then how this society and country can be called civilised," he said.

The former Chief Justice was delivering the convocation speech at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) during its 6th Convocation Ceremony yesterday.

Justice Mostafa Kamal said a number of positive steps have been taken for empowerment of women. "Our mothers and sisters still can't move safely during daytime or at night."

Referring to the situation in some neighbouring countries, he said there he saw women move alone even at night and their security is not hampered.

The former Chief Justice told the BUET graduates that dignity of people "came down to the level of our politics." He said: "I believe a strong and firm political will can protect us from this law and order situation and the hated game of character assassination."

Preparations underway for SMF rally Jan 27

Massive preparations to hold a grand rally of freedom fighters and people (Muktijoddha Janata) at Barisal on January 27 have generated enthusiasm among the pro-liberation forces, reports BSS from Barisal.

Organised by Sammilito Muktijoddha Front (SMF), the grand rally will be held at Gangabandhu Uddyan.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will address the grand rally as chief guest.

Leaders of SMF has launched a hectic mass contact programme in five districts of Barisal Division from January 18 to organise the biggest ever FF-people's rally, the sixth in a row in divisional headquarters.

As part of the mass contact programme, Chairman of SMF and Political Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr S A Malek exchanged views with different pro-liberation political parties, socio-cultural and professional organisations and addressed nine rallies in Barisal, Barguna and Patuakhali during the last 48 hours.

VHP sets deadline for temple construction

ALLAHABAD, India, Jan 20: Hardline Hindus at a religious summit today gave the Indian government until March 12 next year to "remove all obstacles" from the construction of a controversial temple on the site of a razed mosque, reports AFP.

Construction of the temple to the Hindu Lord Rama would begin on "any auspicious day" after March 12, which marks a major Hindu festival, on the site of the former Babri mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya, a statement issued at the summit said.

The 16th century mosque was razed by Hindu fundamentalists on December 6, 1992. The sacrifice sparked nationwide sectarian riots which left at least 2,000 people dead.

The deadline was imposed at a summit sponsored by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, World Hindu Forum) at the Maha Kumbh Mela Hindu pilgrimage on the banks of the Ganges River near the town of Allahabad.

A resolution adopted unanimously by the summit of 4,000 Hindu holy men and other religious leaders said 2002 marked the golden jubilee of the renovation of Somnath Temple to Lord Shiva.

VHP general secretary Pravindhan Togadia said the temple "may not be an agenda of the government but surely it is an agenda of Hindu society."

He was referring to a New Year warning by Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpeyi that a status quo on the temple-mosque row would have to be maintained.

"The parties which choose not to abide by our deadline or go against it will be finally wiped out from the political map," added Togadia.

BUET convocation ceremony

From Page 12 said. The government achieved a growth rate of 5.92, the highest in last 25 years, she added.

The poverty has reduced, per capita income increased and export is increasing day by day.

The Prime Minister said foreign and local investment has also increased remarkably during this present government.

She said the government has undertaken effective programmes for the spread of education and for raising the literacy rate. "In last four and half years, literacy has gone up to 46 per cent from 47 per cent."

Country's export earning has reached to 5.75 billion US dollars in 1999-2000 while it was only 3.88 billion dollars in 1995-96, she said. The government would be able to exceed the export target in the current year.

For the development of science and technology, she said,

Clash over possession of land in Faridpur: Four killed

FARIDPUR, Jan 20: Four people were killed in a clash between two rival groups of villagers at village Dobra in Boalmari upazila of the district yesterday, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as Ratan Sheikh, 56, his brother Daliuddin, 52, day labourers Abdus Salam, 25, and Billal, 19, of the village.

Police said two rival groups one led by Alim, Nannu and Chand Mia clashed with another groups led by Ratan Sheikh in the morning over possession of 56 decimal land.

Both groups used lethal weapons during an hour-long clash.

Police arrested one person in this connection and sent the bodies to the Faridpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Boalmari upazila.

Lalon's shrine

From Page 12 "We appeal to the authorities to remove all under-construction structures from the shrine area and install those at an alternative site," the statement said.

Sources in Kushtia said the huge project involves some influential men of the ruling party who would never like to see it slip away from their hands.

"The Lalon Academy which did nothing to preserve Lalon's shrine and his works is in charge of the project. The Academy has involved ruling party men in lucrative deals. Now they do not want the project stopped," said a source in Kushtia.

"Lalon's followers are not people to sit inside an auditorium. For over a century bauls and other followers of Lalon preferred to sit under trees, sing Lalon's songs and meditate. The idea of constructing a 500-seat auditorium is nothing but a pretext to make money out of a weird thought," said a lawyer in Kushtia over phone.

The bomb

From Page 1 gated iron. It was not a dynamite with analogue timing device, he said.

"The devise was fused probably with oil-soaked cloth, or a card board with gun powder around it," he said.

"The person who threw it had to ignite it earlier," he said. "Had it been an analogue timing devise, the causality would have been much more in a crowd like this."

However, a witness said that the bomb might have been wrapped in a bag and planted under the carpet on which the participants were standing. It might have exploded due to sudden pressure, the witness said.

Law Minister

From Page 12 Court by pro-opposition lawyers, filing of a case under Public Safety Act (PSA) against 16 lawyers and a BNP MP and a writ by them.

Meanwhile, the Law Minister told a group of newsmen at his residence yesterday evening that the Prime Minister already made her opinion clear on the appointment of judges in the Supreme Court.

"The Constitution was not violated in the two lawyers' appointment. If top lawyers of the country want to meet her even after her public statements at two rallies, they are welcome," he said.

PM shock

From Page 1 but did not rule out the involvement of Jamaat-Shibir or bourgeois parties in and out of power who do not like the CPB and left parties emerge as the third force.

He, however, said the incident was part of a design to disrupt stability before the next general elections. "We hope a clear picture would emerge shortly after a high-level inquiry into it."

The CPB leader also blamed police for its inaction after the bomb blast at Paltan Maidan, saying even they did not come in aid with ambulance despite fervent request for carrying the injured people to hospital.

Melancholy

From Page 1 eight years, the president announced a disbursement of federal funds: at least dls 110 million to finance hiring of 1,400 police officers nationwide.

Clinton also recalled his first radio address as president in January 1993, in which he discussed the social challenges the country faced and his "abiding faith" in the people's ability to turn things around.

"Now, my job as your president draws to a close, and the work of our new president begins," Clinton said. "Thanks to your work, he takes the reins of a nation renewed, ready to move into a new century and a whole new era in human affairs. I join every American in wishing him Godspeed."

Clinton did not mention the greatest travail of his presidency the investigation into his efforts to cover up his affair with Monica Lewinsky. That case concluded Friday with a deal through which Clinton avoided indictment by giving up his Arkansas law license for five years and admitting in writing that he gave false statements under oath about the affair.

Earlier, she laid the foundation of new administrative building of BUET at West Palash. The first phase of the 12-story twin building will be completed at a cost of Tk 3.1 crore. Apart from administrative works the building will have facilities of holding classes for 1,000 students.



State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Rafiqul Islam speaking at an open dialogue on 'Crisis in power sector: Ways to overcome', organised by the daily Prothom Alo, in the city yesterday. From left (sitting) are Nuruddin M Kamal, former chairman of PDB, Md Aziz Khan, Chairman of United Summit Power Co, Brig (retd) M A Malek, Chairman of PDB, Mesbahuddin Ahmed, Chairman of REB, Azimur Rahman, former vice-president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Kazi Zahirul Azam, Member of DESA.

Estrada forced out

From Page 1

His highly charged opponents and smaller groups of supporters got into shoving matches early Saturday near one road-block, where rocks and one small explosive were thrown. Police fired at least one warning shot but there were no reports of injuries.

The end was inglorious for the man who won popular support

to people to sit inside an auditorium. For over a century bauls and other followers of Lalon preferred to sit under trees, sing Lalon's songs and meditate. The idea of constructing a 500-seat auditorium is nothing but a pretext to make money out of a weird thought," said a lawyer in Kushtia over phone.

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