

Repeal of portrait act condemned

UNB, Dhaka

Different political and cultural organisations yesterday condemned the repeal of the act for preservation and display of the portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at government establishments.

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and Workers Party have protested the repeal of the act by the BNP-Jamaat coalition government.

CPB President Monzurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim in a statement said the contribution of Bangabandhu to the War of Independence could not be erased from the history of Bangladesh by repealing the law.

"It needs to recognise the contribution of all, including Bangabandhu, Maulana Bhasani, Moni Singh, Zia and Taher, in the history," they said in the statement.

"People are the main heroes of liberation war. Chaining them to poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, terrorism and imperialism, the government is creating political instability in the country," the statement added.

They also warned the government of dire consequences for the police attacks on the peaceful procession and rally.

In another statement, Workers Party president Rashed Khan Menon said Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's proposal for hanging the portraits of the head of the government alongside the national leaders' will give permanence to the politics of division instead of unity.

"Efforts to elevate Ziaur Rahman

4 injured in cracker explosion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four persons including a mother and her two sons received burn injuries in a cracker explosion at their South Jatrabari residence in the city yesterday noon.

The incident happened at around 1:30pm yesterday when Zahidul Islam, 8, and Saiful Islam, 6, son of Abdur Rashid, took home a tobacco container they found near a dustbin close to their house and started playing with it.

At one stage, the container exploded injuring the two brothers, their mother and another minor boy.

The injured were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The minor boy was released from the hospital after first aid.

Mild tremor in Ctg

BSS, Dhaka

A mild tremor measuring 3.6 in the Richter scale jolted the Chittagong port city yesterday morning, Bangladesh Meteorological Department sources said.

The earthquake began at 8.16 am and lasted 16 seconds. No report of casualties and damages were, however, reported.

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stration with the motive of using them for 'political gains,' badly affecting their efficiency as law enforcers. They were not sincere about punishing the criminals but simply blamed police for 'failure' to take action against them," one official said.

Meanwhile, more than 270 'listed and identified criminals' are among the 1026 aspirants who filed nomination papers for the April 25 electoral race for the posts of ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation. Police said they had not been arrested because "they have gone into hiding."

But most of them were seen leading separate processions to the returning officer's office on Wednesday to file their nomination papers. The others who filed nomination papers through their representatives were also seen moving openly in their respective areas.

Of the criminals who are commission aspirants, four are among the 23 most wanted ones and 12 are notorious terrorists. The four are Titon of Rayerbazar, Abbas alias Killa Abbas of Kafrul, Md Alauddin of Tejgaon areas and Shamim Ahmed alias Aga Shamim of old Dhaka.

Road accidents

FROM PAGE 1
Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy. The injured were also sent to the DMCH.

A case was filed with Motijheel Police Station in this regard but the driver could not be arrested till last night.

Our correspondent from Cox's Bazaar adds: Four people were killed and 30 others injured when a speeding bus rammed into a roadside market in Ramu upazila.

Police sources said the driver of the Cox's Bazaar bound Borak chair coach (Dhaka Metro Ba-14-0064) lost control of the bus as the vehicle's brakes failed, and drove it straight into the bazaar, killing four people and injuring at least 30 others.

The dead were identified as Abdul Karim, 25, Rashid Ahmed, 32, Mohammad Khaleq, 27, and Hafez Ahmed. The bodies were sent to the morgue for autopsy.

The injured were admitted to Cox's Bazaar Sadar Hospital, Ramu Health Complex and Dulahazara Hospital. Among them, the condition of Farid Ahmed, 21, and Abdul Hakim, 42, who were admitted to the Cox's Bazaar Sadar Hospital, is stated to be critical.

The driver of the coach managed to escape. Ramu thana police visited the spot.

3 jawans killed

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Z R M Ashraf Uddin is now undergoing treatment at a Dakar hospital.

Arrangements are being made to send the bodies to Bangladesh by the Forces Headquarters at UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone, the release added.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday condoled the death of four army personnel in a road accident at Sierra Leone on Thursday.

In a message of condolence, Khaleda expressed her deep shock at the death of the peacekeepers, who were working under the United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

She also prayed for early recovery of another official who was critically injured in the accident.

The prime minister conveyed her deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved families and prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls.

to the same status of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is denial of the history and people would not accept it," said the left-leaning leader.

Maulana Bhasani has also been denied in the Prime Minister's proposal, he said adding that the nation has been encased in the politics of portrait, shelving the main problems of the common people.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote held a meeting at its office with its joint convenor Wahiduzzaman Moti in the chair, protesting the repeal of the act.

Cultural activists of Bangladesh Chalochchitra League, Awami Sangskritik Jote, Awami Tarun League, Aamra Mujib Sena, Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Mela, Jatiya Hindu Moiti Parisad, Samilito Shilpi Parisad and Muktiyoddha Shilpi Parisad spoke at the meeting.

The speakers said the government has taken the side of the defeated forces of 1971 and rewarded the killers, said a press release.

"People are the main heroes of liberation war. Chaining them to poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, terrorism and imperialism, the government is creating political instability in the country," the statement added.

They also warned the government of dire consequences for the police attacks on the peaceful procession and rally.

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Befitting reply

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ders and rapes since BNPJamaat "grabbed power through massive polls rigging with the help of a partisan caretaker government".

She warned of a massive movement if the government does not stop "repression" on Awami League leaders and workers and nab terrorists to ensure security of people's life and property.

Pro-liberation forces are being subjected to political repression and revenge by BNP-Jamaat activists and are being made victims of "false sedition charges". They are engaged in an Awami League cleansing drive, she alleged.

BNP was born in the cantonment and is now being backed by anti-democratic forces. "Khaleda Zia must know history repeats itself and will never forgive a tyrant like her who does not have the minimum idea what democracy actually means," Hasina said.

Presided over by Khulna city AL President Manjurul Imam, the public meeting was addressed by, among others, former agriculture minister Matia Chowdhury, former state ministers Abul Hassan Chowdhury and Talukder Abdul Khaleque MP, former Whip Mostafa Rashidi Shuja, Faruk Khan MP and Khulna district AL President Shaikh Haroon-or-Rashid.

The former prime minister said the country is now being ruled at the instructions of those who are controlling 'Hawa Bhaban' (a BNP office in Dhaka city).

"There is no power in the country to annihilate Awami League. Rather, you prepare a list of those who are trying to disgrace the father of the nation".

She called for building movement at ward and union levels to resist BNP-Jamaat.

She also asked her party men to

prepare another list of government officials who will torture AL leaders and activists.

"BNP-Jamaat alliance will collapse very soon and fall of the government is imminent", Hasina said and urged Khaleda Zia "not to play fire".

She said, "You (Khaleda) have already failed to rule the country. So, you have no right to bluff the people". She also called the prime minister a liar.

The AL chief also called upon students to reject books in which history of the Liberation War is distorted and freedom fighters are disgraced.

Earlier in the morning, she exchanged views with local journalists at the Khulna Press Club. She called upon journalists to write against terrorists without fear.

CPA staff drowns in Karnaphuli

BSS, Ctg

Police yesterday recovered the body of a staff of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) from the port channel area.

CPA and police sources said Mohammad Nasir, 30, a staff of the cargo vessel Jharna-1, drowned in the river Karnaphuli near jetty gate no-1 last night when he along with his colleagues were supplying drinking water to the other vessels awaiting at the port channel and outer anchorage.

The body was sent to morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Bandar Thana in this regard.

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Hasina: Portrait

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journalist Harunur Rashid, who was killed by terrorists in the city on March 2.

Hasina said the opposition leaders are being arrested without any charge and put to the joint interrogation. The government is not allowing the opposition to hold protest rallies and processions. "Is this a sign of democracy?"

The AL Chief said top terrorists have filed nominations for city corporation election as BNP leaders. There is no place to go and no scope to seek justice for the common people. Even the police do not accept cases from the opposition workers.

BCL activist

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Witnesses said some JCD activists swooped on the BCL activists at Mohanganj Bazaar at about 7 pm during the attack. They also ransacked ten shops in the bazaar.

During the attack, they also ransacked ten shops in the bazaar. Baki Khan, as activist of BCL Mohanganj upazila unit, succumbed to his injuries at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital at about 11pm. Three of the injured, Lion, Farid and Bappi were also admitted to the same hospital.

Chhatra League president Bahadur Bepari and General Secretary Ajay Kar Khokan in a statement yesterday condemned the killing and demanded arrest of the persons involved.

Replying to a question about the country's prevailing law and order situation, the opposition leader said it is the responsibility of the state to ensure security of the people.

"But where the people will go when the state mechanism protects the terrorists, encourages the terrorists," she questioned adding that nobody is safe under the rule of this present BNP-Jamaat government which is "patronising the terrorists."

Not only the journalists, but also other professionals and also the opposition workers, are becoming the victims of massive torture and repression. Everybody has been suffering from insecurity, she said mentioning the assassination of

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PHOTO: STAR

Riot police on guard in front of Awami League central office at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday in a bid to crack down on any procession or rally.

Hazari's movable property attached