

Direct election to FBCCI demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Reformation Action Council of the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) yesterday demanded direct election to the posts of president and two vice-presidents.

The leaders of the council made the demand at a press conference at the federation office in the city yesterday.

Convenor of the council Md Helal Uddin Helal read out a written statement at the conference attended by Delwar Hossain, Rezaul Islam Montu, M Saiful Islam, Hazi Harun, Anisur Rahman Badsha and Joynal Abedin.

They said the direct election system will make the voting more transparent and ensure accountability of the candidates.

The council leaders condemned the intrusion of insurance sector for election in the association group.

They urged the government to promote the democratic system in the election procedure of FBCCI.

City AL extended meet today

UNB, Dhaka

An extraordinary extended meeting of Dhaka City Awami League will be held at the Bangabandhu Avenue party office at 6pm today.

The meeting will discuss party's preparations for its planned demonstrations on August 24.

All leaders of Dhaka City Awami League, and presidents and general secretaries of each thana, ward and union units have been asked to attend the meeting, said a press release.

Proshika starts relief work in flood-hit UZs

BSS, Dhaka

Proshika, one of the leading NGOs of the country, has started relief work in 127 flood-hit upazilas.

Proshika, which has already sanctioned Tk three crore for post flood relief and rehabilitation activities, started giving aid to 1.27 lakh families of the affected areas of the country.

Initially, the organisation has been providing medical services to affected people as well as cattle, supplying fresh drinking water, sanitation facilities and distributing water seal latrines. At the same time, Proshika has started agro-rehabilitation through providing credit support, seeds and other inputs.

Meanwhile, the 22-member Central Flood Management Committee, formed earlier headed by Proshika Deputy Director Qazi Haze Alma at a review meeting on Tuesday at Proshika Bhaban, directed the field-level members to send two medical teams in each badly hit upazilas and one medical team in relatively less affected upazilas.

The meeting was told that the medical teams have already started working at the badly affected upazilas.

The meeting allocated Tk 7,300 for each medical teams including Tk 4,500 for medicine purchase, Tk 2,500 for doctors' honorarium and Tk 300 as conveyance allowance. Under the programme poultry and cattle feeds are also being distributed among the needy people.



Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina speaking at a discussion marking the 27th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Engineers' Institution auditorium in the city yesterday. The Awami Jubo League organised the discussion.

Grand rally to eliminate 15000 2-stroke autorickshaws today

Govt to consider proposal for use of CNG in train, ferry engines: Huda

BSS, Dhaka

The government will consider conversion of trains and ferries into compressed natural gas (CNG)-run ones as part of its ongoing move to minimise environment pollution.

Responding to a suggestion made at a seminar in the city yesterday Communications Minister Nazmul Huda said he would soon hold discussions with relevant people on the proposal for the use of CNG in train and ferry engines through the conversion.

He agreed to the proposal of Engineer Fazle Elahi. The conversion would reduce fuel cost and corruption as well, he added.

The minister was speaking as the chief guest at a seminar on "Air Pollution and the Use of CNG" at the National Press Club. Organised by the Bangladesh Paribesh Andolan (Bangladesh Environment Movement) the seminar was presided over by Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, vice-president of the organisation.

Dr Musfiqur Rahman and Sharifa Khan jointly presented a key-note paper at the seminar. Eminent Journalist Ataus Samad, Prothom Alo Deputy Editor Mozammel Haq, former Managing Director of Rupantorito Praktik Gas Company Engineer Fazle Elahi, Nitol Group of Companies Director Selima Rahman, transport labour leader Aslam Khan

and Paribesh Andolan General Secretary Abu Naser Khan addressed the seminar among others.

Huda said that the formal declaration of the elimination of 15,000 two-stroke autorickshaws from September 1 would be made at a grand rally in the city today. Owners and drivers of two-stroke vehicles will attend the rally.

He said the remaining 5,000 autorickshaws would also go out of the city by December 31.

These few number of vehicles are getting permission for plying the city streets for only four months extra in consideration of the livelihood of a number of people who got registration of their vehicles recently, he added.

While underscoring the need for introducing CNG-run vehicles, he said it should be proper to examine whether the use of CNG would cause any problem in future.

"When the two-stroke autorickshaws came in the city, everybody welcomed them. But now all are aware of its hazards," he said.

The minister called upon experts and researchers to determine whether anything is wrong with the CNG-run vehicles.

Huda said the government would give all out support to private entrepreneurs to set up CNG stations across the country. "Wherever is a piece of govern-

ment land, may be in Dhaka or Chittagong cities, one can get it to set up a CNG station," he said.

The key-note paper presenters suggested expansion of the use of CNG to check air pollution by motor vehicles. They urged the government to increase bank loan facilities and ensure supply of natural gas to CNG pump stations.

International standard and safety of CNG pumps and the conversion process should be maintained, they said. The key-note paper revealed that smoke emitted by vehicles accounts for 55.8 per cent of the air pollution in the city while the smoke from brick fields 28.8 per cent and other industrial factories 10.5 per cent.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed said public opinion has been created against two-stroke vehicles due to campaign by the writers, journalists and environment activists.

So, the government will get popular support to eliminate the two-stroke vehicles, he said adding that the civil society would be with the government in its effort to save the environment.

Stamford Varsity gets ACBSP accreditation

The Stamford University Bangladesh has got the accreditation of "Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programmes (ACBSP)," says a press release.

Randall M. McLeod, Executive Director of ACBSP, informed this in a letter to Dr. M. A. Hannan Feroz, President and Vice Chancellor of Stamford University Bangladesh on August 12.

ACBSP is the highest accreditation body of the world in business school and business degrees.

ACBSP accredits those universities that provide international standard education and degrees and these accredited universities are evaluated on the international standard not on its own countries' standard. Harvard University, Columbia University, New York University (NYU) and Claflin University -- South Carolina, USA got the ACBSP accreditation.

Here it may be last year. The Stamford also got the accreditation of Association for Advancement of Computing in Education (AACCE) last year.



Participants at a roundtable on 'air pollution' held at the National Press Club yesterday. The Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon organised the event.

Construction of Sirajganj Power plant to begin next year

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for Power Iqbal Hasan Mahmood has said that construction of the 450-megawatt Sirajganj Power Plant would begin next year and generation in the plant is expected in three to four years.

He said the Tk 1200-crore plant would add 450 MW power to the northern region's gridline and improve the country's ongoing power situation to a large extent, he said this while he was visiting the plant site on the west bank of the river Jamuna on Tuesday.

Iqbal said the project, approved at the last ECNEC meeting would be implemented under the joint venture of the Power Development Board (PDB) and a private company, to be selected through

tender, a PDB press release said here yesterday.

During the visit, the state minister was appraised of different aspects of the project including its design and different installations, specially location of machine, approach road and location of cooling water intake outfall.

He asked the officials to finalise the land for the project at a meeting immediately on land acquisition with the Jamuna Bridge Authority.

PDB Chairman Syed Abdul Moyeed, member (transmission and distribution) Rahmutul Bari and the project director accompanied the minister during his visit.

Meanwhile, Iqbal had a meeting with PDB and Rural Electrification Board (REB) officials of Rajshahi division at Bogra circuit

house yesterday.

He urged the officials to improve their efficiency and make efforts to reduce system loss to the optimum level and realise outstanding bills.

He asked the officials to submit a joint proposal of the PDB and the REB in 15 days to solve low-voltage problem in the northern region and strengthen the activities of Power Courts and dispose of the cases within the shortest possible time.

PDB snapped 23,181 power lines for unpaid bills and 1903 for illegal connection during the last fiscal, the meeting was told.

Three Power Courts of Bogra, Rajshahi and Pabna filed 1803 cases and realised Tk 58.94 lakh as penalty from 1364 people during the period.

Shikarpur, Doarika bridges to be completed by Dec

UNB, Dhaka

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday said the work on Shikarpur and Doarika bridges on Faridpur-Barisal national highway would be completed on priority basis by December next.

He said this while addressing a review meeting on the implementation of foreign-funded communication infrastructure development projects at the Communications Ministry.

The 291-metre long Shikarpur bridge and 388-metre Doarika bridge are being constructed at a cost of Tk 140.24 crore with financial assistance from the Kuwait government.

The meeting was told that the government had sanctioned Tk 2478.89 crore in 2002-2003 fiscal year for the implementation of 34 foreign-funded projects for the development of communications and transport sector.

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