



PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) took out a silent procession at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday demanding international investigation into the incident of grenade attack on opposition Awami League rally on Saturday.

Cooperatives focal point of all dev activities

Bhuiyan tells workshop

BSS, Dhaka

The government has been working relentlessly to reduce poverty in a shortest possible time, said LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday.

He was inaugurating a two-day 'National consultation workshop on monitoring of Cooperative Credit Union in Bangladesh' at the Cirdap auditorium in the city.

"Although the cooperative movement started in 1904, we are yet to achieve the desired goal," the minister said, adding that cooperatives are the focal point of all development activities.

Secretary of Rural Development and Cooperatives Mohammad Heydatul Islam Chowdhury presided over the function, organised jointly by the Department of Cooperatives and the Cooperative Credit Union League of Bangladesh Limited.

Mannan Bhuiyan said the Cooperative Credit Union has set an example of achievement in poverty alleviation.

The cooperative sector has a bigger role to play in reducing poverty, he said.

Registrar of the Department of Cooperatives Khondaker Mizanur Rahman and Chairman of the Cooperative Credit Union League Jones Dhaki also spoke.

\$6m addl US aid for flood victims

UNB, Dhaka

The US government will soon provide an additional assistance of 6 million US dollars for flood victims in Bangladesh.

"The US government has already given 2 million US dollars. We expect another six million dollars in assistance within next few days," Ambassador Harry K Thomas said during his scheduled visit to the daily Janakantha office yesterday.

Recalling the US government's assistance at the time of natural disaster in Bangladesh in 1991 and 1955, he said, "We've always responded to" the Bangladeshis at the time of natural calamity.

The ambassador also appreciated the international community and donors for what he called doing a very good job and trying to respond to Bangladesh's flood and help people.

President, PM greet Ukraine president

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia felicitated the President of Ukraine Leonid D Kuchma on the occasion of the Independence Day of that country to be celebrated today.

In a message to Kuchma, Iajuddin expressed the confidence that the bonds of friendship and mutual cooperation that exist between the two countries would further develop in the years to come.

In a separate message to Kuchma, Khaleda hoped that the close and friendly relations that already exist between the two countries would be further strengthened in the days ahead.

They also wished the Ukraine President's good health, happiness and long life and for continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Ukraine.

GRENADE ATTACK ON AL RALLY

Resignation of govt demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Condemnations continued to pour in yesterday over the deadly grenade attack on Saturday's rally of the main opposition Awami League in Dhaka.

Leaders of various political, socio-cultural, human rights and business organisations and intellectuals condemned the attack in strongest terms and demanded immediate arrest of and exemplary punishment to the culprits involved.

They also expressed sympathy to the family of the dead and the injured.

Nineteen people were killed and over 200 others, including a number of AL central leaders, injured in the ghastly attack that sent a shock wave across the country.

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh demanded immediate resignation of the four-party alliance as it failed to ensure safety of the people.

At an extended emergency meeting of the party yesterday, its leaders strongly condemned the grenade attack and said that people have lost confidence on the government.

They also expressed solidarity with all protest programmes of the opposition parties.

Party president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury presided over the meeting. Badruddoza also visited injured AL leaders and workers at different hospitals and clinics and prayed for their early recovery.

In a statement, former state minister for foreign affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury urged all to unite against the evil forces, saying that this is a critical moment for the nation.

He also called on the government to take effective steps to check recurrence of such incidents.

Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad yesterday held a protest rally on Bangabandhu Sheikh Medical University premises demanding resignation of the government.

It also blamed the government for the attack of the AL rally.

Condemning the terrible attack, the National Teachers' and Employees' Front urged the people to unite against the evil forces setting aside the political differences.

The Front leaders also demanded immediate arrest of and punishment to the real culprits.

Supreme Court Bar Association General Secretary Bashir Ahmed inaugurated a blood donation programme

yesterday to collect blood for the injured.

The Sammilita Peshajibi Parisad said radical Islamist outfits have resorted to bomb attacks across the country to destroy the spirit of the liberation war and progressive thinking in order to establish a Taliban-like regime.

In a statement, its leaders Abdur Razzak Mia, SM Khabiruzzaman, Mustak Hossain, Prof Iqbal Islam and Nazrul Islam demanded that the criminals be brought to book for the sake of democracy.

Other organisations that condemned the attack are Bangladesh Bar Council, Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies, Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB), Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad, Forward Party, Bangladesh Krishak League, Islami Front Bangladesh, Samajik Protirodh Committee, Students' Congress, Free Political Movement, Pacific News Agency, Dhaka Ainjibi Samitee, Bangladesh Short Film Forum, Democracy Watch, Sandhani, Bangladesh Manobadhikar Samannay Parishad, Bangabandhu Parishad, Bangladesh Private Medical Practitioners' Association, Bangladesh Chalachitra League, Bangladesh Sangskritik Sangha and Bangladesh Mohila Samity.

STRIKE AT JU

Many students leave dormitories

JU CORRESPONDENT

Academic activities at Jahangirnagar University (JU) came to a virtual halt yesterday, the first day of an indefinite strike called by the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the main opposition Awami League.

The BCL enforced the strike in all educational institutions to protest the grenade attack on AL rally in Saturday.

Appeal for help



Runa Akhter, an SSC candidate, has been fighting for life in hospital bed after she suffered severe burns from a domestic accident recently, says a

press release.

Doctors have suggested immediate surgery involving Tk 2 lakh, but her father, being a schoolteacher, could not afford it.

He has appealed to the generous people to extend a helping hand to save his daughter.

Contributions can be sent to the following bank account: Runa Akhter, Savings A/C No. 21133362, Prime Bank Ltd., Motijheel Branch, Dhaka.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TO DUBAI

Judgement today

BSS, Dhaka

Women and Children Repression, Prevention Tribunal-2 here will pronounce the judgement on a human trafficking case today.

Sub-inspector Abdus Sattar filed the case with Gulshan thana on November 13, 1996 against five people including two women on charge of sending three minor Bangladeshis to Dubai to work as camel jockeys.

Judge Kazi Rahmatullah will deliver the judgement after 63 working days of the trial.

With examining 14, out of 18 prosecution witnesses, the court fixed the date for delivering the judgement after the end of arguments from both sides on August 20.

The tribunal framed charge against five accused on April 4, 1997 and the trial of the case had started in absence of one of the accused Abdul Karim.

The prosecution story is that the five accused trafficked Masud alias Shohel, Faruq and Barek -- alluring their parents to provide them better job in Dubai.

The accused Anowara Begum took Masud alias Shohel from her mother Selina Begum, a resident of Samiruddin Slum at Nur Chala under the police station giving assurance of providing her son a work.

In the same way, another accused

Ramija Khatun also took away two sons of Altabi Begum from the same place and trafficked them to Dubai.

Quran teaching project for the disabled

The Institute of Hazrat Mohammad (SAW) launched a Quran teaching project for the visually impaired and mentally and physically challenged people on Sunday, says a press release.

Speaking as chief guest at the launching ceremony, State Minister for Public Works Alamgir Kabir said the disabled are not a problem for the society -- they can also contribute a lot to the society if they are properly taken care of.

He thanked the institute for arranging such programme and assured help for it.

Eminent journalist and Editor of the weekly Ekhon Ataus Samad, monthly Madina Editor Moulana Mohiuddin Khan, Institute President Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim and Chief Advisor Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Noor Uddin Khan also spoke. Executive Director Ahmad Shafi Maqsud was also present.



PHOTO: STAR

Leaders and workers of the 11-party alliance march in a procession in the city yesterday demanding punishment to those involved in all bomb attacks across the country.