

Uphold country's Image: PM

Madrasa teachers calls on Khaleda

UNB, Dhaka

As madrasa teachers extended their support to the government action against extremists, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday called for upholding Bangladesh's image as a moderate Muslim country and working for its further advancement.

The prime minister emphasised the need for working unitedly to lead the country forward as well as consolidating the country's independence and sovereignty.

Referring to recent political developments, Khaleda said all have to work and proceed cautiously so that any wrong step doesn't cause suffering to people and the country. "True spirit and values of Islam will have to be upheld."

She said her government has been working for the welfare of all sections of people - farmers, workers, students and ulema.

Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk, Moulana Mohammad Saleh, Khulna divisional president of the organisation, Moulana Shamsul Alam Chowdhury, joint secretary (Chittagong division), and Moulana Kabi Ruhul Amin Khan also spoke.

AMM Bahauddin said the mainstream Islamic parties in Bangladesh are now united under the leadership of Khaleda Zia and the ulema would exist in the future.

(master's degree), providing scope so that Fazil and Kamil certificate-holders can take part in the BCS and other examinations, and setting up an affiliating Arabic University.

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Students lay siege to DU VC office

DU CORRESPONDENT

Six opposition-backed student organisations laid siege to the office of the vice chancellor (VC) of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday demanding immediate to press home their seven-point demands including proper investigation into the TSC bomb blasts on the Valentine's Day and release of their leader Abu Abbas Bhuyan.

The combine student organisations led by the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) also threatened to enforce an indefinite strike at DU

unless their demands are met by February 28.

The six organisations will also stage a demonstration as well as a human chain on the campus today and another demonstration on February 27.

Addressing the rally in front of the VC office, BCL General Secretary Nuzul Islam Babu said that they would call student strike at DU if the university authorities do not take appropriate measures to release Abbas.



PHOTO: STAR
Family members and other people stage a demonstration in city yesterday demanding trial of those responsible for the death of Sharmila Shahrin Polin a student of Mymensingh Girls Cadet College.

India goes ahead with linking rivers

Say environmentalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India is pressing ahead with its river-linking project though Indian High Commission in Dhaka had said that the project was still at a conceptual level, environment activists yesterday said.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolok (Bapa) at a press conference yesterday expressed its worries over India's continuing with river-linking programme.

Bapa President Prof Muzaffer Ahmad while speaking at the press conference held at the National Press Club said, "We must mobilise people in a movement to dissuade India from unilaterally diverting water of the transboundary rivers."

"Instead of going ahead with the project, India should undertake a review of the Farakka

Barrage," he added.

India's central government has constituted a committee headed by its water resources secretary to convince the state governments of the prospect of river-linking project. Prof Ahmad said citing from a news item run by the January issue of Indian magazine Dams, Rivers and People.

Quoting a water resources ministry letter to noted Indian environment activist Medha Patkar, Prof Ahmad said that India's National Water Development Agency had identified 30 inter-basin water transfer proposals including 16 peninsular and 14 Himalayan to be implemented by 2005.

Besides, the letter said that according to the National Common Minimum Programme, India will continue with the river-linking programme with focus on peninsular component.

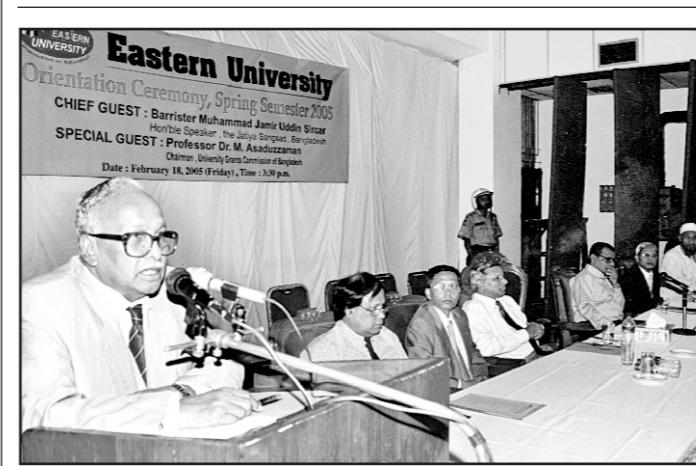
If implemented, the peninsular aspect of the water transfer move, which calls for withdrawal of water

from the transboundary rivers in the upstream areas within the Indian territory, will be hazardous for Bangladesh, said Prof Ahmad. It is disappointing that the Bangladesh government has not yet officially registered any concern or protest against the move, he added.

India should recognise that its river-linking project is based on an ecologically unsound premise and stop proceeding especially with the Himalayan component of the project, Ahmad said adding that India must address its neighbours' legitimate concerns regarding transboundary rivers.

Bapa Joint Secretary Dr M Abdul Motin said that his organisation is gearing up for a movement at national, regional, and international levels for an ecological approach to rivers.

M Feroze Ahmed and Syed ANM Wahed, among other Bapa officials, were present at the press conference.



Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar addresses as chief guest the sixth orientation programme of the Eastern University in Dhaka recently.



A media partnership agreement between Nandan Park and ATN Bangla, a private satellite TV channel, was signed recently. Mashrur Chowdhury, chief executive of Nandan, speaks at the signing ceremony on the park premises in Savar. Sitting from left are Chairman of ATN Bangla Mahfuzur Rahman, Nesar Ahmed, Shubhro Dev and Muhammad Asif Khan.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers is likely at one or two places over Sylhet division and the regions of Pabna, Kushtia, Jessore and Comilla in the next 12 hours till 6.00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country during the period, Met office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 33.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Chittagong and the lowest of 13.9 degree at Rajshahi.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:00pm today and rises at 6:23am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	28.3	19.4	69	40
Chittagong	33.0	19.2	58	43
Rajshahi	27.2	13.9	56	52
Khulna	28.7	19.3	79	63
Barisal	30.0	18.4	83	70
Sylhet	30.0	17.1	71	45
Cox's Bazar	32.2	19.0	63	75

'Raise awareness about wildlife'

UNB, Dhaka

A three-day international workshop on 'Teachers for Tigers' ended in the city on Tuesday with a call to raise awareness about the preservation of wildlife.

The Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh (WTB), Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Forest Department and Zoo Outreach Organisation jointly organised the workshop in collaboration with Dhaka Zoo and The Guide Tours Ltd.

The workshop was supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Tiger and Rhinoceros Conservation Fund and Wildlife Conservation

Society (WCS), New York.

Fifty-three environmentalists, including 35 teachers from different schools and colleges, took part in the workshop.

Amanullah Khan, adviser and patron of the WTB, Nalini Mohan from Wildlife Conservation Society and Amith Daniel from India were present at the valedictory event of the workshop.

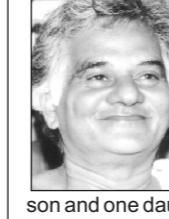
Speaking on the occasion, Amanullah Khan hoped that the participants would use the knowledge, skill and tools acquired during the workshop to "save the beautiful and wonderful species, called the world's greatest cat, from extinction."

They should also help create a mass awareness about the crucial need to conserve tigers in addition to passing on to others what they have learned, Khan said.

"The unchecked over-exploitation of nature and encroachment on forestry together with poaching should stop to prevent the quality of human life being severely undermined leading to eventual destruction of the world."

He said Biodiversity and preservation of ecology that seek a green world with flora and fauna at its heart provides the key to continued human existence.

Obituary



Abdul Wadud, a noted artist, died at Birdem Hospital on Wednesday at the age of 62, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, one son and one daughter.

His qulkhani will be held at his home at Ibrahimpur after Asr prayers today. Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qul.

Md Faruk Ahmed Dewan



Md Faruk Ahmed Dewan, senior administrative officer of Daffodil International University (DIU), died in the February 18 launch capsizel at Palaiganj. He was 35, says a press release.

His wife Ela Dewan and their one-year-old son Saif also died in the launch disaster.

The university authorities will hold a doa and milad mahfil at Matlab Jame Mosque after Juma prayers today. Relatives, colleagues and friends have been requested to attend the programme.

Quirkhwan

Quirkhwan of Abdur Razzaq Chowdhury (Lotus), founder-member of BNP and former executive committee member of FBCCI, will be held at his village home in Patuakhali after Juma prayers today, says a press release.

He died of a cardiac arrest on February 19 at the age of 76, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, three sons and two daughters. He was buried at his family graveyard in Patuakhali.

Death anniversary



Today is the 32nd death anniversary of Abdur Rob (Boga Mia), a freedom fighter and former president of Pabna district Awami League, says a press release.

Abdur Rob, an ex-member of the Constituent Assembly, was the first person to hoist the flag of independent Bangladesh in Pabna district.

He died in a car accident on February 25 in 1973.

Saleha Anwaruddin



The 4th death anniversary of Saleha Anwaruddin, former editor and publisher of the monthly Umesh, will be observed today, says a press release.

She also played an active role during the Mass Uprising of 1969. She died in 2001 at the age of 85.



Australian High Commissioner Lorraine Barker inaugurates an Australian Education Exhibition at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Minhaz Chowdhury, country manager, Austrade, Mostafizur Rahman, business development manager, Austrade, and Sharif Rahman, country director of IDP Education Australia, were also present.

DHAKA TODAY

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of 'Letters from Leicester Volume-11' and a Bangla novel titled 'Shesher Adhaya' by Dr A Akram Sayeed OBE will be held. Venue: VIP Lounge of the National Press Club. Time: 10.30am.

Discussion

Bangladesh Lekhok Shibir will hold a discussion to mark the 62nd birth anniversary of Akhtaruzzaman Ilyas. Venue: Teachers Students Centre of Dhaka University. Time: 4.00pm.

Inauguration

A new website titled 'Bangladeshnovels.com' will be inaugurated. Venue: Amar Ekushey Book Fair, Bangla Academy. Time: 3.30pm.

Seminar

Department of World Religions, Dhaka University organises a seminar on 'Bazur Rahman's contribution to the scientific study of religion'. Venue: World religions department. Time: 4.00pm.

Waste management seminar

A seminar on 'Sustainable management of urban solid waste' will be held with State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon as chief guest. Venue: Presidency University, Gulshan-2. Time: 3.30pm.

Conference

A central conference of Jatiya Olama Party will be held with Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad as chief guest. Venue: Photo Journalists' Association auditorium. Time: 4.00pm.

Rally

A rally of Jatiya Sramik League will be held in support of its various demands. Venue: Muktagon. Time: 4.00pm.