

Reforms in electoral system a must for equal representation in JS

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Reza Kibria, son of slain Awami League leader AMS Kibria, yesterday said the existing voting system is seriously flawed and too susceptible to manipulation.

He was delivering the keynote at a discussion titled, 'What is to be done in the present crisis of Bangladesh?' at BETS centre in the city.

The roundtable was organised by the weekly Mreedu Bhashan. The speakers focussed on necessary reforms in the existing electoral system for equal representation of all sections of the society in the Parliament. The danger posed by

Islamic extremist groups was also stressed.

Prof MM Akash of Dhaka University and also a leftist leader said farmers, entrepreneurs of small and medium industries, expatriate workers and workers of the garment industry are the real heroes of the country, contributing to its growth since mid-1990s.

"Unfortunately, the two major political parties and the Parliament do not represent these classes," he said. He suggested a proportionate system of allocating parliamentary seats on the basis of votes won in the polls. "This will permit representation of small parties in the House,"

he said.

General secretary of the Bangladesh Economic Association Prof Abul Barkat placed a 21-point charter of demands, including security of public life and effective Parliament.

Prof Syed Manjurul Islam of Dhaka University said hundreds of roundtables and seminars have not been able to change the situation.

Senior journalist Mozammel Hossain Manju said, "We need a civil society movement for reforms not only in the electoral system but also to fight against violence, corruption and Islamic militants."

Awami League lawmaker Sohel

Taz, Quazi Abdur Rahman, a school teacher, Ranjan Karmaker, a development worker, Dr Dipu Moni, Golam Dastogir Gazi, a businessman, Nilufar Banu, a researcher and Mahbub Zaman, a businessman and executive editor of the weekly Mreedu Bhashan also addressed the discussion.

SERGEANT ARIFUL MURDER 4 get death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

A court here yesterday sentenced four people to death and acquitted another in the sensational police Sergeant Ariful Islam murder case.

The convicts are tea boy of Abahani Club Haripada and Siraj Shaikh, Abdur Rob and Milon. The court acquitted Abul Shaikh as charge brought against him was not proved.

Judge AKM Ishtiaque Hossain of the District and Sessions Judge's Court pronounced the verdict in presence of Haripada, Siraj Shaikh and Abdur Rob. But Milon was tried in absentia.

Sergeant Ariful Islam of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP), was killed in a bomb attack on March 1 in 2003 when he was on patrol duty near Circuit House Maidan under Khulna thana in the city. The slain police sergeant was in charge of security of International Trade Fair at the Circuit House Maidan.

A case was filed with Khulna thana in this connection on the same night.



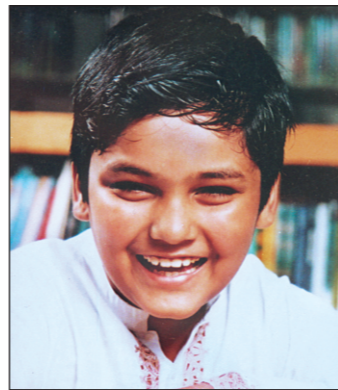
PHOTO: STAR

Dhakabasi, an organisation of the residents of Dhaka city, and the Japanese embassy organised an exhibition of kites at the Novera auditorium at the National Museum yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Dr Reza Kibria, son of slain Awami League leader Shah AMS Kibria, speaks at a roundtable titled 'What is to be done in the present crisis of Bangladesh?' at the BETS centre in the city yesterday.



Bangladeshi boy dies in road crash in S Africa

Labiq Moinuddin, a 12-year Bangladeshi boy, died in a road accident in South Africa on March 27 when he along with his parents was travelling to Namibia from Cape Town, says a press release.

His parents are Rushnan Murtaza, project director, HIV/Aids Programme, Unicef in Namibia, and Kazi Moinuddin Raj. They along with their two children were returning to Namibia from Cape Town when they met with the tragic accident. Raj was hospitalised with serious wounds.

Labiq is the grandson of Flying Officer (Retd.) MG Murtaza, former chairman of Raowa.

Slaughtered body found in gunnysack

DMCH CORRESPONDENT

Assailants yesterday dumped the slaughtered body of an unknown youth of about 25 packed in a gunnysack in Madertek.

According to the inquest report, the youth in black trousers and white shirt was beaten severely before he was slaughtered.

The police recovered the body at 11:30am yesterday at Maddhya Madertek after being informed by the locals.

"The killers tied his hands with a nylon rope," said a police officer of the Sabujbagh Police Station. He added the man's throat was half slit and there were bruises all over his body, especially in the upper part.

In another incident in Keraniganj, muggers shot an NGO worker and looted about Tk 1 lakh yesterday.

Now being treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Anwar Hossain, a collection officer of Sajeda Foundation, said he was returning to his office at Hasnabad Housing at around 2:00pm when the incident took place.

"A gang of five to six muggers stopped my auto rickshaw when I was near Bashundhara River View Housing and shot me in the right leg to take away the money," Anwar said.

1,115 more held

UNB, *Dhaka*

Police arrested 1,115 people, including one listed criminal, on various charges from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours as of 6:00am yesterday.