METROPOLITAN

Strong democratic instts a must to face external threats

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Modern armed forces and strong democratic institutions are needed to face external threats, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They said apart from enhancing military capability, good governance with the participation of civil society and consensus on national issues are needed for national security.

The seminar on 'National security of Bangladesh in the new millenium' was organised by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (Biiss) at its auditorium in the city vesterday.

In a keynote paper titled 'Traditional security of Bangladesh in the new millenium', Brigadier General (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain said lack of consensus on national issues and absence of political direction is one of the problems of

"Lack of resources for modernisation of armed forces has to be kept in view while building our security," he added.

Sakhawat said diplomacy is the first line of defence, but our diplomacy is reactive rather than

Referring to India's initiative to erect barbwires along the border, he said Bangladesh today perceives a threat from its biggest neighbour.

"Should we stand tall as sovereign country or to remain subservient to a dominant South Asian power?" he posed a question.

In another keynote paper titled Non-traditional security in Bangladesh in the new millenium'. Abdur Rob Khan, research director of the Biiss, said a link-up of traditional and non-traditional security system is important.

He said deterioration of law and order, inflow of small arms and alleged activities of insurgents, and

the activities of the outlaws are the major non-traditional security issues in Bangladesh.

Rob said only focus on statecentric military-based security may lead to double insecurity and jeopar-

country might be undermined by both internal and external factors.

"Strengthening of military capability depends on social and economic factors of a country," he

The Speaker laid emphasis on the civil society and strong consen-

Biiss Chairman Mufleh R Osmani, Director General Mohammad Abdul Matin, former diplomats and academics also



Prof Sardar Fazlul Karim inaugurates the seventh national congress of Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal (M-L) at the Mahanagar Natyamancha in the city yesterday.

'Political parties fail to bring change to people's lives'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties have failed to bring any qualitative change to the lives of common people, said Prof Sardar Fazlul Karim yesterday.

"The rich have become richer and the poor poorer. Politics have now turned into a game of money and muscle," he said while inaugurating the seventh national congress of Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal (M-L).

"People have sacrificed their lives for political and economic freedom, social justice, rule of law and democracy, but none of these

exists in the country," he said. The four-day congress of the Samyabadi Dal began at the Mahanagar Natyamancha in the city with a call to forge a unity against corruption, terrorism, communalism

and imperialism. Participants at the inaugural ceremony called for a mass movement against the BNP-led four-party

alliance, saying the religious fanat-

every sphere of society under the patronage of the government.

They urged all to be united to revive the spirit of the liberation war and establish it in every sphere of

Speaking as chief guest, CHT Regional Council Chairman Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Hill Tracts peace accord would not be implemented until there is a democratic and progressive gov-

'This government has no intention to fully implement the accord. Rather, it is supporting the antiindigenous elements in the hills

region," he alleged. Dilip Barua, general secretary of Samyabadi Dal, said many people, especially the members of minority and indigenous communities, are becoming poorer day by day because of exploitation by the BNP-

led four-party alliance government. He called on all to resist communalism and religious fanati-

He said the left-leaning parties have failed to unite the countrymen against communalism, fundamentalism and imperialism as the party leaders themselves have fallen in the whirl of political chaos after

> Economist MM Akash said the imperialist forces are now trying to establish new colonialism in the underdeveloped and developing countries in the name of globalisation and the free market

> Bimal Biswas, general secretary of the Workers Party of Bangladesh, Shaifudin Manik, general secretary of the Gono Forum, Nurl Islam, convenor of the 11-party and Sirin Akhtar, joint secretary of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, also spoke.

Khan said it is a destructive means

of protests conceived and resorted

Former state minister for for-

eign affairs Abul Ahsan

Chowdhury said it is absurd to

think that hartal can be stopped abruptly without a debate in par-

hartal is meaningless when it is not supported by the people.

Sports Fazlur Rahman Pata

assured that the BNP

Chairperson Khaleda Zia would

turn up anytime anywhere if the

opposition wants to hold a politi-

Secretary General of

Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP)

Saifur Rahman said corruption

under political patronage poses a

in funding of the political party.

He also called for transparency

Former vice-chancellor of

Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin

Ahmed, Assistant Secretary

General of Jamaat-e-Islami

Kamaruzzaman, vice-chairman of Islami Oikya Jote Muhiuddin Khan,

Prof Diĺara Chowdhury of

Jahangirnagar University,

Executive Editor of the daily Sangbad Monzurul Ahsan Bulbul

and Editor of the daily Manabjamin

Matiur Rahman Chowdhury also

presided over the discussion

serious threat to society.

cal dialogue.

Rowshan Ershad MP said

State Minister for Youth and

to in a colonial context.

Ensure transparency in activities

Speakers urge political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties themselves must practise democracy and ensure transparency in their activities

Director of News of Bangladesh Betar removed

BDNEWS, Dhaka

In compliance with a Supreme Court order, the government has removed Imam Hossain Khan, Director of News (current charge), Bangladesh Betar, from the service with effect from two years back.

A notification of Ministry of Information, issued on March 27, said Imam Hossain Khan was given retirement with effect from February 17, 2003 on attainment of 57 years

It said as per the verdict passed on February 16 by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, the date of birth of Imam has been determined as February 18, 1946 and his retirement date as February

17, 2003. Prior to attainment of his retirement date in 2003, Imam submitted a fictitious SSC certificate claiming his date of birth as January 1, 1950 and thereby extending his tenure of service for more than four years.

before they exercise state power, said speakers at a discussion yesterday. It is time to bring accountability to

the political parties, said Prof Ataur Rahman of Dhaka University in his 'Political reform is a must now,'

he said

The Centre for National and Regional Studies (CNRS) organised the discussion on 'Negative politics: Hindrance to development and democracy' at the IDB Bhaban

The trend of politics of hartal and attempts to resolve political conflicts on the streets, boycotting parliament, is widening political divisions and distrust, said Rahman, a professor of political science.

'The internal structure and practices of political parties must conform to democratic norms and they must have clear guidelines for leadership selection, nominations and discipline." he said.

Barrister Mainul Hosein said, "The most dangerous fault line in our party politics is that the wrong eople are more active and enjoy etter protection.

The BNP-led alliance government is surviving more for the failures of the Awami League than for its own successes, he said, adding, "Our political leaders seem not to know how to save themselves from the trap of criminalisation of party

On the frequent hartals called by the opposition, journalist Sadek

dise human security.

Speaking at the seminar as chief guest, Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar said security of

sus on national issues for security.

addressed the seminar.

PSC member, thrashed by drivers, now faces eviction from DU flat

DU CORRESPONDENT

Fifteen Dhaka University (DU) teachers vesterday demanded immediate removal of Prof Hasanuzzaman Chowdhury, a member of the Public Service Commission (PSC), from his DU quarters blaming him for rudeness and misbehaviour with neighbours.

The move came only two days after a group of PSC drivers including his own chauffeur had beaten him up for charging them with misuse of PSC vehicles and involvement in leakage of question papers of Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS)

Earlier, an investigation committee headed by Chowdhury had reported to PSC Chairman Prof Z N Tahmida Begum that at least six of the PSC drivers were involved in the guestion leakage of 24th and 25th BCS exams and in various scams. The committee also informed Begum that the drivers were misusing PSC transports for their personal purposes

Sources at the PSC said Begum, too, was annoyed at Chowdhury as his report also criticised her for failure to run the commission properly, resulting in the repeated question leaks. They said it was yet another reason for what they said was the pre-planned and deliberate thrashing of Chowdhury on the PSC premises by the drivers. Chowdhury later filed a case of

attempted murder with Kafrul Police Station against 11 people including his car driver Zakir Hossain "If I kept mum about the question

leakage, I would not have suffered the beating," Chowdhury told reporters at his DU quarters. "The assault on me was a planned one. It was obvious, as the

collapsible gate of the PSC office was padlocked and there were no police deployed on the day," he said. He also said, "A top police official told me they had arranged police deployment on March 27 as usual,

but the guards were withdrawn at the

directives of the higher authorities." Meanwhile, 15 DU teachers including Jahurul Haque Hall Provost Prof Zahidul Islam yester-

day submitted a memorandum to DU Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz blaming Chowdhury for creating nuisance, rude behaviour, misconduct and disturbing the neighbours.

They said the PSC member has been staying illegally for years at an apartment in Building 45 at DU Nilkhet Residential Quarters, which is meant for a house tutor, and demanded immediate eviction of him from there.

Witnesses said there was an altercation between Chowdhury and his neighbour Law Department Lecturer Dr M Rahmat Ullah at about 10:00am yesterday. The dispute arose as Rahmat Ullah protested Chowdhury's demand for arrest and interrogation of Kawsar Ali, Rahmat Ullah's car driver and brother of Zakir Hossain, to obtain information about the assault on

Ali alleged Chowdhury had beaten Hossain black and blue on Mirpur road and also threatened to beat Ali. "I'll file a general diary with police for my security as he [Chowdhury] has been threatening me ceaselessly,"Ali said.

Witnesses said at one stage of the guarrel. Chowdhury threatened to call the state minister for home and the president of Jatiyatabad Chhatra Dal to take action against Rahmat Ullah.

DU VC Prof Faiz, Pro-VC AFM Yusuf Haider, DU Teachers Association President Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique rushed to the scene and brought the situation under control. Prof Faiz assured the teachers of transferring Chowdhury to another quarters.

According to witnesses Chowdhury even misbehaved with

Rahmat Ullah said, "We'll go for legal action against Chowdhury as he threatened and misbehaved with

Almost all the staff and some 50 students of Jahurul Hague Hall protested and blamed Chowdhury for threatening and misbehaving with house tutors and other employees. But Chowdhury denied the

Private bus owners threaten strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Private bus service operators yesterday demanded that they be allowed to set up ticket counters on the roadside and the row over the issue be settled within next three

They also threatened to observe a half-day strike on April 15, a daylong strike on April 22 and a 48hour strike on May 2 and 3 if their demands go unheeded. At a press conference held under

the auspices of the Association of Bus Companies (ABC), the bus owners also urged the opposition parties to keep the bus service out of the purview of the hartal.

Association Convenor Abdul Hamid Sharif said the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) dismantled about 500 ticket counters of private bus companies on February 27,

AMIC secretary general calls on president

UNB, Dhaka

Secretary General of Asian Media Information & Communication Centre (AMIC) Dr Indrajit Banerjee made a courtesy call on President lajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban vesterday

Dr Indrajit appraised the President of the activities of the Singapore-based organisation.

The president told the AMIC secretary general that newspapers and electronic media in Bangladesh were enjoying full freedom and assured him of all cooperation to people involved in media.

causing a loss of Tk 50 lakh to the

Association leaders Mahtab Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury, Moktar Hossain Nipu, Lutfur Rahman and Abdul Latif attended the press

Indigenous cultural festival begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A weeklong indigenous cultural festival begins at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the city

State Minister for Culture Begum Salima Rahman will inaugurate the event at 5:00pm at National Art Gallery Building of Shilpakala

The festival will remain open from 10:00am to 8:00pm everyday

New DCs of Noakhali, Narsingdi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government yesterday appointed new deputy commissioners (DC) in Noakhali and Narsingdi districts,

according to an official notification. Director of Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat, Mohammad Shahadat Hossain Majumder and Director of Bangladesh Shishu Academy, Firoz Salahuddin, have been appointed DCs of Noakhali and Narsingdi districts respectively.



Dr Mahbubullah, chairman of the broad of directors, Sonali Bank, Muktijoddha Gono Parishad President Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat speaks at a press conference at the National



Death anniversary

Jahangir today

of Shaheed

The 34th death anniversary of Shaheed Dr Lt. Col. A N M Jahangir will be observed today,

On the occa-

Qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at Noyatola Dar-us-Salam Mosque (349/1, Noyatola, Modhubag Madrasa) in the city after Esha prayers tomorrow. Dr Jahangir was killed on this day

of 1971 by the Pakistani occupation forces at Comilla Cantonment at the

Dr ASM Kamal



Today is the 3rd death anniversary of Dr ASM Kamal, former director (MCHservices) and line director (ESP-RH), says a press release. A doa and milad

mahfil will be held at Mosieed-ul-Bagi near his residence after Asr

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Quazi Fazlul Haq, an industrialist and social worker, will be held at his resi-# 9, Road # 29, Gulshan # 1 after Maghrib

prayers today, says a press release. Managing Director of HAKS Industries Ltd. and founder of Quazi Fazlul Haq Women's College at Sonargaon, Haq passed away at Birdem Hospital on March 28 at the

He is survived by his wife Khurshida Haq, chief news editor of Bangladesh Television, three daughters and a number of grand-

FFs to form human chain in Kushtia today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muktuioddha Gono Parishad vesterday expressed solidarity with the freedom fighters and people who are going to form human chains in Kushtia today to press for their 11point demand The human chains will be formed

Mujibnagar in Meherpur to Kushtia At a press conference in the city, the Parishad leaders called on all

freedom fighters to join the demon-

The leaders demanded that the

at eight points on the 71 km road from

The freedom fighters are passing their days in great distress as economic disparity still prevails in the country, they said.

freedom fighters be declared as the 'national pride force' and each of them be paid Tk three lakh as onetime allowance as well as regular The 11-point demand includes five percent of the seats in parliament

for the freedom fighters and a 30

percent quota in jobs and educational nstitutions for their children. Parishad President Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat, General Secretary Sadek Ahmed Khan and leaders Mahmud Jamal Quaderi, Shaheed Bablu, Padma Rahman, Farid Bakht, Farid Hossain and Bhaskar Rasa were present at the press conference.

'Resist fundamentalists to establish women's rights'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Resist fundamentalist groups to help establish the rights of women, said the speakers at a rally yester-They said fundamentalism never

allows the empowerment of women. The rally was organised by the Bangladesh Kishani Sabha at Muktangan in the city yesterday. Around eight thousand women

> President of Bangladesh Krishak Federation Badrul Alam attended the rally as chief quest. Khurshida Akhtar, president of Bangladesh Kishani Sabha, said

> the rise of fundamentalist groups is

a threat to the gains that the women

farmers from 45districts joined the

community achieved in the last 34 vears of independence. She said the women farmers especially the land less ones are facing various kinds of repression

The Kishani Sabha announced

the beginning of an eight-monthlong united movement at different district and thana levels to establish omen's rights.

It also blamed the government for price-hike of essentials and widespread corruption.

1,820 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,820 people on various charges from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours as of 6.00am yesterday

During the period, the law enforcers recovered three firearms, one other weapon, one bullet and filed two cases against three people under the Arms Act, says a police headquarters press release.

Hou Hsiao-Hsien Retrospective

Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen three Chinese films under Hou Hsiao-Hsien retrospective. These are 'What Time Is It There?' (2001) by Tsai Ming-Liang, and 'Good Men, Good Women' (1995) and 'Goodbye South, Goodbye' (1996) by Hou Hsiao-Hsien. Venue: German Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 3.00pm, 5.00pm and 7.00pm.

Japanese film show

Japanese Embassy will screen two films titled 'Sadako Story' and 'Nodo Jiman'. Venue: Auditorium of the Institute of Modern Languages, Dhaka University. Time: 4.00pm and 7.00pm.

Film show

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust will screen a film titled 'Kranti' directed by Mirza Hasan. Venue: Spectra Convention Centre, Gulshan-1. Time: 3.00pm.

Musical evening The Srijon, a cultural forum, organises a

musical evening. Venue: Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Museum. Time: 6.30pm. Recital session

Bangladesh Abritti Samonwoy Parishad

presents a recitation of 'Sojon Badiar Ghat' by Proma Abritti Sangathan of Chittagong. Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Segun Bagicha. Time:

Launching ceremony

The launch of 'Mere Soorat Tera Aainaa' by Manzoomat-e-Mumtaz will be held. Venue: Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Dhanmondi, Time: 5.30pm

Certificate giving ceremony

The certificate awarding ceremony of Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association will be held with acting Vice-chancellor of Presidency University Dr Baqui Khalily as chief guest. Venue: Presidency University. Time: 11.15am.

AUB discussion

Asian University of Bangladesh organises a discussion titled 'Independence: Present situation and future direction with State Minister for Land Ukil Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan as chief guest. Venue:

University Auditorium, Uttara. Time:

Uttara University organises a seminar and cultural function in celebration of Independence Day with State Minister for Education Ehsanul Hague Milon as chief guest. Venue: SCITI Auditorium House-24/A, Road-13/A, Sector-6 Time: 3.00pm.

Bangladesh-Bharat Friendship Society organises a discussion and musica

Topkhana Road. Time: 4.00pm.

Discussion

AL discussion Bangladesh Awami League will hold a discussion in celebration of the Independence Day. Venue: Bangabandhu Museum premises. Time:

function. Venue: Cirdap Auditorium,

BNP rally Dhaka city unit of BNP organises a rally

Ramna. Time: 4.00pm.

Asiatic Society meeting Monthly meeting of the Asiatic Society of

Bangladesh will be held. Venue

Seminar room of the society, 5 Old

protesting the negative politics of the

oppositions. Venue: Muktangon,

Secretariat Road. Time: 4.30pm. DHÂKA TOMORROW

Hou Hsiao-Hsien Retrospective

Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen three Chinese films under Hou Hsiao-Hsien retrospective. These are 'Flowers of Shanghai' (1998), 'The Puppetmaster (1993) and 'A City of Sadness' (1989). Venue: German Cultural Centre Dhanmondi. Time: 3.00pm, 5.00pm and

Japanese Embassy will screen two films titled 'Little Elephant' and 'Ame Agaru' Venue: Auditorium of the Institute of

Japanese film show

Modern Languages, Dhaka University. Time: 4.00pm and 7.00pm. Poetry evening

Muldhara, a forum of writers, journalists and artists, organises a poetry evening.

Venue: House-15, Road-7, Dhanmondi.