



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon forms a human chain in front of the Lalbagh Police Station in the city yesterday demanding open space and playgrounds.

DIALOGUE ON BUDGET

'Bring reforms to fiscal measures'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a dialogue yesterday urged the government to make basic changes to the fiscal measures in the next budget to bring the maximum benefit to the people. They also suggested strengthening the local government bodies as the budgetary allocations do not reach local people because of highly centralised administration. The Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) organised the dialogue on 'Bangladesh budget: 2005-06' at the National Press Club, with its President Dr. Qazi Kholiquzzaman in the chair.

General Secretary Dr. Abul Barkat said the government should start work on changes in the budget immediately. In its recommendations, the BEA said the defence budget in the next fiscal should not surpass the previous year's record. It also demanded formation of a committee to monitor public expenditure and publication of white papers on corruption and the government measures to curb it. Former finance minister M Sayeduzzaman said the government should not ignore the contribution of foreign aid to the economy as over 40 percent of money for the annual development programme (ADP) comes from there. He also said the Bangladesh Bank

should be independent and there should be a system through which the central bank will explain the rationale behind its monetary steps to the people every six months. He observed that the existing macro-economic stability should continue for the economic benefit of the people. ISD President Hasanul Haq Inu demanded an allocation in the next budget for necessary reforms in the election system. He also called for the announcement of Upazila election along with the announcement of next general election to strengthen the local government. Inu also suggested withdrawal of special forces such as Rapid Action Battalion, Chita and Kobra. "Rather, the government should strengthen the police forces by providing training and modern equipment," he added. Abdur Razaq MP said the gap between the rich and the poor has been increasing rapidly. He called on the government to ensure collection of taxes and duty from the affluent people who often buy luxury cars. He also demanded an open discussion on the defence budget. Razaq said the government has become highly centralised. As a result, the people do not get any benefit from the budgetary allocations, he added. Former secretary and chairman of pay commission Mujibul Haq, Chairman of Commerce Bank ATM Alamgir, former managing director of Mercantile Bank Taheruddin, BEA Vice-President Moynuddin, Mohiudin Ahmed and Jahangir Hossain also spoke.

BDB recommendations for EC reforms

Leaders meet CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bkaipta Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) yesterday placed a 12-point recommendations to the chief election commissioner (CEC) regarding the reforms of the Election Commission.

The recommendations were formulated jointly by the BDB and the Jatiya Oikya Mancha. The BDB leaders placed the recommendations when they paid a courtesy call on CEC MA Syed whose tenure expires on May 22. They told the CEC that he had to take the responsibility for 'irregularities' that took place in Dhaka-10 by-election as it was held during his tenure. "We also asked the CEC to reveal the truth about these irregularities before his tenure is over," said BDB Secretary General Major (Retd) Abdul Mannan while talking to The Daily Star last night. Mannan said the nation would blame MA Syed for the irregularities in the by-election, as he was the CEC during that time. He, however, quoted the CEC as saying, "As I was in broad during Dhaka-10 by-polls, I cannot acknowledge the irregularities. Besides, the election commission secretariat did not bring the issue to my knowledge." The BDB secretary general said he would send the documents to the CEC relating to irregularities that took place in the by-election.



Janaza of Forroque Rahman (Apu) today

Namaz-e-janaza of Mrs. Forroque Rahman (Apu), wife of Mr. Shamsur Rahman (Mashuk), chairman, Reliance Insurance Limited, and director, Mediaworld (the owning company of The Daily Star) and the Prothom Alo, will be held today after Juma prayers at Gulshan Central Mosque, says a press release. She passed away on May 16 in Bangkok after a long battle with cancer. Her qulkhwan will be held on Sunday, May 22, 2005 after Asr prayers (5:15pm) at Gulshan Central Mosque.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty to squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions till 6:00pm today. Moderately heavy falls is also likely at places. Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country. Highest temperature 37.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 20.6 degree Celsius at Srimongal. The sun sets in the capital at 6:37pm today and rises at 5:13am tomorrow. 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	32.5	26.5	79	77
Chittagong	34.2	27.5	76	66
Rajshahi	37.0	24.3	84	75
Khulna	34.6	28.4	80	79
Barisal	33.8	27.6	80	91
Sylhet	24.1	20.7	98	81
Cox's Bazar	35.0	29.0	67	63

'Shift central jail, set up park'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday called for rapid shifting of the central jail from old Dhaka and setting up of open field and park there to maintain an ecological balance in the area. They also urged the government to allocate necessary funds in the coming budget and formulate relevant policies to implement the demands. The rally was organised jointly by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Puran Dhaka Paribesh Unnayan Forum in front of Lalbagh thana in the city. They also formed a human chain there. The speakers called upon the authorities concerned to include local people for proper maintenance of open fields and parks of old Dhaka saying these are essential for physical and mental development of the children. "Fifty years ago, old Dhaka was

the central point of the capital, but today it has turned into piles of bricks where there is no arrangement for sports and entertainment," said Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, vice-president of Bapa, while addressing the rally as chief guest. The environment of old Dhaka is deteriorating day by day, and it is high time to take effective measures to protect its environment, he added. Bapa Vice-president Prof Nazrul Islam, General Secretary Mahidul Huq Khan, and member-secretary of Puran Dhaka Paribesh Unnayan Forum Ashraf Amir Ullah, and ward commissioners of Dhaka City Corporation also spoke on the occasion. Presided over by Prof Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah of Dhaka University, the programme was conducted by Sharif Jamil, member-secretary of Bapa's programme committee on open field and park.

Rab arrests 4 child traffickers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday rescued three runaway children, who had served as camel jockeys in Dubai and left homes in fear of being sent back there. The Rab also arrested four child traffickers, who attacked the children's houses and threatened their parents to kill their sons. On information, a 13-member team of Rab-3 raided an area in Siddhirganj in Narayanganj to nab women and children traffickers at 10:00pm on Wednesday. The elite force raided the area for six hours at a stretch and arrested Sona Mia and Hablu alias Babul in the early hours yesterday. Following the arrest, the Rab nabbed Ibrahim Khalil from

Sonargaon and Shafuliq from Dewanbagh Bandar in the district. The four traffickers sent the children to Dubai five years ago to work as camel jockey, reports our Narayanganj correspondent. "As the children grew up, they were no longer eligible to work as camel jockeys and the traffickers sent them back a few months ago. Their intention was to engage them in crimes," Asadullah Jamsheer, senior assistant director of Rab-3, told The Daily Star. However, the gang was recently pressing their families to send them again to Dubai. On refusal, the traffickers became furious and threatened to kill the children. They also attacked their houses and pelted stones at them. Frightened, the children fled their houses and were staying at different places to avoid capture. Acting on information from their families, the Rab rescued Rubel, 9, son of Abul Hashem, and Selim, 12, son of Saidur Rahman, from Siddhirganj and Rubel, 10, son of Shahjahan, from Dewanbagh at 4:00am. When taken to Rab office at Adamjeeagar, they identified the four traffickers and narrated their subhuman life in Dubai. They were in Rab custody yesterday evening and will be handed over to their parents on completion of legal procedures. The three children and the traffickers were to be handed over to Siddhirganj police last night and would be produced before a court today. Rab sources said traffickers play different tricks to send women and children of low-income families to the Middle East.



Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bristi, a student of class ten, has been suffering from acute myeloid leukaemia, known as blood cancer. She has been under the treatment of Dr. ABM Yunus at Cabin No-109, Dhanmondi Hospital (Pvt.) Limited for a month now. The doctor has advised her to receive regular chemotherapy for two years. The treatment, including medicines, food and pathological tests, will cost her about Tk 8,000 a day. But her poor family is unable to afford such an expensive treatment. The poor girl has appealed to generous people and organisations to extend a helping hand to save her life. Contributions can be sent to Savings Account No.- 34094544, Janata Bank, Foreign Exchange Corporate Branch, Dhaka.

NU exams now on May 27

UNB, Dhaka

Degree pass, subsidiary and certificate course examinations-2004 of National University (NU), scheduled for May 21, will now be held at 2:00pm on May 27. The rescheduled examinations are for 3rd paper in Mathematics, Library and Information Science, and Finance & Banking.



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina consoles the family members of slain AL leader Khorshed Alam Bachchu at his residence at Tejkuni Para in the city yesterday.

'Promote hygiene practices in slums to prevent diarrhoea'

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday underscored the need for use of sodium hypochlorite solution to purify water and promote hygiene practices in slum areas in order to prevent diarrhoeal diseases. Most slums in the city lack access to safe drinking water, resulting in a high incidence of water-borne diseases among the children, they said, adding that the children

attacked by the most common water contaminant, a bacteria known as salmonella, remain sick round the year. Quoting an official estimate, they also said the people spend about Tk 500 crore a year on the treatment of diarrhoeal and other water-borne diseases in the country. Dushtha Shashthya Kendra (DSK) organised the workshop on 'Safe water system management' in the occasion. Sponsored by Plan International, Bangladesh, the workshop presented findings of a project titled 'Combating diarrhoea with household-based water treatment and storage system'. "Proper hand washing practice gives additional benefits by reducing diarrhoea episodes and pneumonia attack by 50 per cent and I strongly suggest taking such programmes forward for benefit of others as well," said Kallori Pavan, a medical epidemiologist from the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC), USA.

Dr Masudul Quader, director of DSK, presented a keynote paper while Barrister Shafigue Ahmed, president of DSK, chaired the workshop. Dr Edward Thomas, country director of Plan International, Bangladesh, Khandaker Zakir Hossain, country representative of Water Aid, Pual Edwards, chief of Water and Environmental Sanitation, Unicef, Bangladesh, Begum Meherunnesa, DCC ward commissioner, and Khaleda Akhter, representative of the Baniabad slum-dwellers, also spoke.

Daily Star-Mutual Bank debate final today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

The final of The Daily Star-Mutual Trust Bank 5th Inter-School English Debate Competitions will be held at 10:40am at the Theatre Institute, Chaffargh, Tejgaon today. Summer Fields School and College will take on Bay View School in the final on 'City Corporation should get optimum liberty when development is in question.' Noted scientist and scholar Professor Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam will grace the concluding day of the weeklong competitions as chief guest and distribute prizes among the winners.

Japanese Senior Vice-Minister arrives in Dhaka today on a three-day official visit. Tanigawa will visit Khulna to attend the opening ceremony of Khan Jahan Ali Bridge on May 21. He will meet Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and top government officials. Tanigawa's visit will strengthen the bilateral relations between Japan and Bangladesh, said a release of the Japanese embassy yesterday.

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BSS, Dhaka

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Selim Chowdhury, managing director of Group 4 Securitas Bangladesh Ltd., speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Securitas to employ 100 Bangladeshi guards in UAE

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Group 4 Securitas Ltd, a multinational security service provider, will arrange jobs for 100 Bangladeshi nationals as security guards in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) next month. Selim Chowdhury, managing director of Group 4 Securitas Bangladesh Ltd, said this is for the first time the Group 4 Securitas is sending security guards from Bangladesh to any foreign country. He was addressing a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. He said they have so far received visa clearance and other documents of 24 Bangladeshi nationals to send them to the UAE and the visa formalities for others will be completed soon. "It is a good opportunity for Bangladesh as the Group 4 is recruiting Bangladeshi nationals for sending them abroad," he said. "If members of the first batch perform their duties well it will open up an opportunity for others to work abroad," Selim added. He said his company is trying to recruit more Bangladeshis as security guards for working abroad. Earlier, it recruited Indian and Pakistani nationals as security guards for working abroad, said. Group 4 Securitas Bangladesh Ltd. is a subsidiary company of the UK-based Group 4 Securitor, which is operating in 108 countries across the globe. The Group 4 Securitas is providing security services to about 500 clients, including 17 foreign missions and embassies, multinational organisations, banks and financial institutions, international development agencies and local business groups in Bangladesh. Group 4 Securitor was previously called Group 4 Falck. Senior executives of the company Brig (retired) Selim Akhtar, Sherif Bukhtiar Daula, Gazi Musa Ahmad and Rezaul Amin were also present at the press conference.

British HC closed May 22

BSS, Dhaka

British High Commission in Dhaka and its office in Sylhet will remain closed on May 22 on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

MANIK MURDER

Court asks CID to probe case against Badda OC, 3 others

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday directed the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to probe the murder case against Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Badda Police Station and three others. Metropolitan Magistrate AJM Abdullah Baqui issued the order following the case filed by Achhia Begum for killing her son Manik alias Yusuf on December 31 last year. The accused are OC Abdul Malik, Sub-Inspector (SI) Mohammad Fazlu of the same thana, Delwar Member and Abu of east Badda in the city. In her complaint, Achhia of east Rampura mentioned that she has two houses-one at Ulon Road and the other at Rampura under Khilgaon Police station. Delwar and Abu have been hatching conspiracy to dispossess her of her property for a long time. A group of miscreants in connivance of Delwar and Abu killed her younger son Abdus Sattar at Zigatola in the city's Dhanmondi area at about 9:45pm on August 2 last year. Accused Delwar and Abu and some police sources have been

threatening to kill other members of her family since the killing of her son. They also threatened to kill her another son Manik with the help of OC, SI and a group of miscreants. The accused demanded Tk 2 to 5 lakh as toll several times. But the accused became angry as she refused to meet their demand, Achhia alleged. As per direction of the OC, at about 6:00pm on December 31 last year the SI Fazlu, Delwar, Abu and some of their sources arrested her son Manik from her Rampura residence and tortured him mercilessly. Later, her son was taken to Badda Police Station and the OC informed her to go to thana with Tk 5 lakh. Otherwise, her son will be killed. But the complainant refused to pay the money. Then the accused tortured the victim mercilessly on the thana compound, making him unconscious. The accused shot dead her son at about 11:30am the same day when he regained his consciousness, and made attempts to show it as a 'cross-fire' incident, the complainant added. Following the incident, Achhia went to Badda Police Station to file a murder case but the police refused to register it as a regular case.

Death anniversary

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Zafar Imam, an internationally acclaimed sports organiser and former secretary general of Bangladesh Olympic Association. Different sports federations and organisations will place wreaths at his grave at the Banani graveyard. On the occasion, Quarkhwani and milad mahfil will be held at the Paltan Maidan mosque after Asr prayers today.

Chehlum

Chehlum of KBM Abdul Khaleque Miah, father of Hasan Manjur, former vice-president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, will be held at his village home at Batakandi under Senbagh thana at 12:00 noon today, says a press release. Quarkhwani and milad mahfil will be held on the occasion. Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the chehlum.