

Historic June 7 today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The historic June 7 will be observed today across the country.

On this day in 1966, police and then East Pakistan Rifles gunned down 11 people including Monu Mia, Shafiq and Shamsul Haq in Dhaka and Narayanganj during a hartal.

The strike was called for the release of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other leaders detained for launching the six-point demand movement that included autonomy for East Pakistan.

The killings had reinforced the labour movement across the country and given a momentum in the student and people's movement.

The Awami League (AL) has chalked out a daylong programme, which includes hoisting of national and party flags atop the party office in the morning and placing of wreaths on the portrait of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu Bhavan in Dhanmondi. The AL will also hold a discussion at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh.

AL President and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in a message yesterday said June 7 is a milestone in the history of the movement for independence.

"This year the historic June 7 has returned to us with a call of action and movement," Hasina said.

She called for unity of the democratic and patriotic forces to ensure rule of law and democracy in the country to save it from the 'misrule' of the four-party alliance.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) takes separate programmes to observe the day that include a discussion at the party's central office in the city at 5:00pm. JSD President Hasnat Haq Inu will chair the discussion.

Runaway girl raped in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A schoolgirl was raped by a gang of hoodlums at Fatulla in Narayanganj on Sunday night.

The girl, who ran away from her home following a quarrel with her parents, was waiting at the Fatulla railway station for a train to go to a relative's house at about 8:00pm, but a gang of three youths -- Jahir, Kalam and Manik -- took her to an abandoned house and violated her at gunpoint, police said.

The victim, a student of class nine and resident of Aliganj, is now undergoing treatment at the Narayanganj Hospital.

Meanwhile, some influential quarters warned the victim's family not to file any case, in a bid to cover up the crime.

Police have detained Sakhina Begum, mother of Manik, for interrogation.

When asked, Shafiqullah, officer-in-charge of Fatullah Police Station, could not confirm the incident.

"If such incident takes place in the railway area, the railway police will take necessary steps," he said.

BLANK MADRASA EXAM ANSWER SCRIPTS

JCD leader, 4 Alim students arrested

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested a JCD leader with blank answer scripts of Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board's 2005 examinations at Azimpur area on Sunday.

The accused Abdullah al Mamun was arrested along with four of his would-be clients, all Alim examinees, police said. Mamun used to pester blank answer scripts from the Madrasa Board and sell each set for Tk 2,000 to prospective examinees for cheating in the examinations.

The four arrestees are Mustafizur Rahman, Shafiqi Mustak, Sadik Hossain and Kamal Hossain, all Alim examinees from Dhaka Alia Madrasa.

Intelligence sources said Mamun, 24, son of Pangsha Mohishali Alim Madrasa Principal Abdur Rahman of Sujanagar, Rajbari, is a former joint general secretary of JCD Alia Madrasa unit.

Mamun yesterday told the reporters at the CID office that being a first year Fazil student of Dhaka Alia Madrasa he used to get facilities from the board staff and officials being a leader of JCD. He said he helped about 30 examinees so far to change their exam sheets of the Madrasa Board with the help of their parents.

Mojibur Rahman, personal secretary of State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon, was present at the press briefing at CID conference room.

He said the minister, who was earlier informed about the gang, asked police to look into the matter. The minister also recruited his personal source to find out the culprits.

On information, senior CID official Munshi Atiqur Rahman along with his team raided Azimpur 37/5 resident Sunday night and arrested the five with blank 10 exam sheets and 33 extra scripts.

Minister for action against owners of faulty vehicles

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Legal action should be taken against the owners of defective vehicles as such vehicles and unskilled drivers are mainly responsible for road accidents, said Communications Minister Nazmul Huda at a workshop yesterday.

He also said the government is planning to bring a change to the road design in order to make the roads safer for pedestrians.

The Brac and the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) organised the workshop on road safety at the Brac Inn centre at Mahakali in the city.

The minister said that if the bus owners would be more careful about their vehicles and selection of drivers, the rate of road accidents would come down to a great extent.

Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury,

executive director of Brac, said that the Brac has taken a community-based awareness programme to check road accidents.

"It is surprising that many drivers who were trained under the programme said they didn't hear about traffic rules and signs before. They have just learned how to drive," he said.

Muyeed Chowdhury suggested setting up a road safety fund with a view to checking road accidents and helping reduce the suffering of the victims.

A Nazmul Hussain, a director of Brac, presented a paper on "Experiences from Road Safety Public Awareness Campaign on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway: A GO-NGO Collaboration".

He said that the campaign has successfully made the passengers and pedestrians aware about the

use of footpath and bus stoppage.

Samirangan Dewan, a student of class ten, who was trained and made a traffic cadet under the road safety programme, told The Daily Star, "We have learned how to cross roads and many other issues. Now we teach our fellow students and local people road safety skills."

Stein Lundebye of the World Bank presented an animation film titled 'Lal, Holud aar Shobuj' featuring road safety skills.

Communications Secretary Md Shafiqul Alam, RHD Chief Engineer AKM Faizur Rahman also spoke at his office.

Morshed Khan appreciated the efforts made by the High Commissioner during his stay in Dhaka for further strengthening the excellent bilateral relations between Dhaka and Islamabad.

The Foreign Minister expressed his satisfaction at the growing trade relations between the two countries and hoped that the existing high level of interaction would be sustained.

The High Commissioner proposed a meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries on the sidelines of the ensuing Doha South-South Summit.

EVASION OF DUTY Show cause on shipping deptt official

Regular talks to strengthen Bangla-Pak ties stressed

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh and Pakistan yesterday emphasised regular dialogue between the two countries for strengthening mutual cooperation.

The two countries also viewed that the two foreign secretaries should hold their annual consultations at an early date.

The observations came when outgoing Pakistani High Commissioner to Bangladesh Manzur Shafiq paid a farewell call on Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan at his office.

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STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The shipping ministry has issued a show cause notice on a high official of the shipping department for allegedly helping evade a huge amount of government duty while surveying and registering cargo ships, sources said.

The show cause notice was issued on the basis of an investigation conducted by the shipping department about the registration of ships between January 2003 and June 2004.

Fakhrul Islam, now posted in Barisal, was the engineer and ship surveyor of Dhaka zone at that time.

According to the investigation, a total of 347 cargo boats were surveyed and registered during the period.

Out of them, no value added tax was collected from 75 ships, while income tax evasion was alleged against 151 vessels.

The notice was issued on June 2 asking Fakhrul Islam to reply within 10 days.

Earlier, he was once suspended temporarily and made officer on special duty (OSD) for two times, sources said.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bhumi Odhikar Udjapan Parishad leaders at a press conference yesterday demanded distribution of Khas land among the landless people.

They also urged the government to set up land court in every district for quick disposal of land-related cases.

Udjapan Parishad, a platform of several non-government organisations, held the press conference at the National Press Club to mark the World Land Rights Day to be observed on June 10.

Samata Executive Director Abdul Kader said the government should take stern action against the people who are grabbing Khas land and filling up water bodies in the name of real estate business.

He said the slum dwellers in urban areas should be rehabilitated in Khas land. He also urged the government to set up a land commission for the indigenous people living in the plain land.

Samsul Huda, member secretary of the Udjapan Parishad, told the press conference that the government should take immediate steps to recover its grabbed land.

If Bangladesh wants to reduce its poverty by 50 percent by 2015, land less people have to be provided with land, he said.

The Udjapan Parishad also demanded transparency in land management system through appointing honest and skilled persons in the land recording process.

They said deforestation in the name of setting up of eco-park must be stopped in different parts of the country.

The Udjapan Parishad will hold a grand rally of landless people on June 10 in Ghuruguda Bilpar under Pabna district to mark the World Land Rights Day.

Abul Hossain, member secretary of the Udjapan Parishad and Sultana Akther Ruby of Samata, were present at the press conference.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rreetuparna Mutsuddi (Ruma), wife of Avijit Barua (Avi) and teacher of Uttara Model School, passed away due to cardio-respiratory failure at her father's house, South Kafrul, in the city on June 5 at the age of 27, says a press release.

She left behind her son Aryan.

ID card a must for free, fair election

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Introduction of voter identity (ID) card is a must to ensure free and fair election, said the speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said the rigging of polls in

the past had resulted in creating political and social conflicts hampering democracy and good governance.

The roundtable on 'Importance of Citizens' Identity Card for National Aspects including Fair Election' was organised by Bangladesh Union Sadashas Sangstha (BUSS), an organisation of the union parishad (UP) members, at the National Press Club in the city.

The EC will then send them to passport offices to issue the passports.

Justice Abdur Rouf, former chief election commissioner, rejected the idea saying that it might be an additional source of corruption in the administration.

Laying emphasis on national ID card incorporating the option for voter ID, he said, "As Bangladeshis we don't have any identity. It's a humiliation for us."

Justice Rouf regretted that he was committed to introduce the voter ID cards, but failed due to the apathy of the bureaucrats.

"It is possible to complete the

process within eight months if efficient manpower and technology are used," he said, adding that political will is the most important thing for this.

Lt General (retd) Mahbubur Rahman MP, chairman of the parliamentary committee on defence ministry, termed the introduction of voter ID card a part of reforms in the EC, and observed that it needs to be done immediately.

BUSS Chairman Golam Sarwar Milon presided over the roundtable, while Columnist Harunur Rashid presented the concept paper.

Former minister Kazi Firoze Rashid, BUSS Advisor Nabab Begum Shamsunnahar Khwaja Ahsanullah, Vice-chairpersons Prof Masuda M Rashid Chowdhury and Captain (retd) MA Quddus, Liberty Movement Secretary General Rita Rahman, Prof M Yusuf Ali, Prof Ataur Rahman, Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hossain, and FBCCI Vice-president Abul Kashem Haider also took part in the discussion.

Double budget allocation in health sector for children

Representatives of Child Parliament tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Representatives of Child Parliament at a roundtable yesterday placed their proposals on education, health and other child-related issues for consideration in the national budget of the next fiscal year.

The proposals included supply of textbooks free of charge, other educational items at subsidised rate, ensuring proper teaching, and ban on physical torture in classrooms.

Nargis Akhter, Deputy Speaker of Child Parliament, read out the proposals which were prepared in its session on April 17.

Parliament representatives Morzina Akhter from Tangail, Asma from Natore, Jahid Hasan Rasel

from Barisal, and Shaikh Fahima of Narshingdi also talked about their problems and demands at the roundtable.

They urged the authorities concerned to double the allocation in health sector ending discrimination towards children in hospitals and health care centres, and providing free treatment to the disabled children.

The roundtable on 'Budget for Children' was organised by Samunnoy in collaboration with Child Parliament, Manusher Jonno and the daily Sangbad at the National Press Club in the city.

"Such discussion on budget by children is rare in the world, and it is important for democratisation," said eminent Economist Dr Atiur Rahman.

Among the eight goals of Millennium Development Goal (MDG), the most important are achieving education for all and.

Allocation for primary education and reduction of child mortality rate needs to be doubled, he added.

"When we talk about the children, we should know how to honour them," said noted litterateur Selina Hossain.

Sangbad Executive Editor Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul moderated the roundtable while Financial Express Editor Moazzem Hossain, Deputy Country Director of Save the Children Monira Ahsan, and Programme Manager of Manusher Jonno Arifur Rahman were the panel discussants.

'No Indian separatists in Ctg'

BDNEWS, Khagrachari

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) Director General Major General Jahangir Alam yesterday told journalists in Khagrachari that Indian separatists have no existence in Chittagong.

He said this while he was inaugurating the Rifles Memorial at Ramgarh upazila to uphold the tradition and memory of the original birthplace of BDR.

BDR came into being during the

erstwhile British rule.

To keep the tradition of birthplace of BDR intact the 'Rifles Memorial' was built with eight structures of aesthetically burnt soil indicating the time of its forward marching and the consistent history.

BDR chief said, land acquiring is going on to set up new BDR battalion at Babubazar in Dighinala to strengthen the surveillance at the bordering areas.

He said, the survey of bordering

DHAKA TODAY

Seeratunnabi seminar

A seminar on the 'Role of Prophet Mohammad (SAW) in building an ideal society and today's youth community' will be held. Venue: Mohanagar Osmani Memorial Auditorium, Abdul Gani Road. Time: 3:30pm.

AGM