

Govt urged not to take action against Islamic scholars

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of Islamic scholars and religious leaders at a meeting yesterday called upon the government not to take action against Islamic scholars on random basis in the name of involvement with the recent bomb attacks.

Agrasron Protrodn Jatiya Committee organised the meeting.

They said Islam never supported militancy and those, who spread fanaticism in the name of religion, are against the spirit of Islam. They said one of the main objectives of the bomb attack was to divert the support of Islamic groups from four-party alliance government.

They vowed to continue their support to the BNP-led four-party government and protect Islam from any conspiracy.

They said the foreign intelligence agencies such as Mosad, RAV and CIA are working together for eradicating Islamic spirit from Bangladesh. The agents of those agencies are spreading every corner of the country.

A section of the ruling party activists also joined hand with those agencies and working against the independence and sovereignty of the nation, they said.

Monthly Medina Editor and Islami Oikay Jote leader Moulana Mohiuddin Khan presided. Moulana Ahmad Ullah Ashraf of Kelaftah Andolok, Moulana Mufti Mohammad Wakkas MP of Jamiat Walamae Islam, Whip Fazlul Haque Aspia, Moulana Ahmad Abdul Kader of Kelaftah Majlis, Moulana Abdul Latif Nezami of Nejame Islam Party, also spoke at the discussion at a city hotel.

The IOJ leaders said the conspirators belonging to a faction of an Islamic organisation were working as part of their blue print. They urged the religious minded people not to be misled by the anti-Islamic propaganda in the media.

Moulana Mohiuddin criticised the Islamic scholars those who held series of meetings with the opposition Awami League President Sheikh Hasina recently.

Govt has lost credibility, BDB says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said the government has lost its credibility after August 17 bomb blasts and has no moral right to stay in power any more as it is unable to provide security to citizens.

He was exchanging views with women organisations in the city about reforms to election process and caretaker government.

Sabera Begum, executive committee member of BDB, presided over the meeting. Leaders of BDB Abdul Mannan, M. A. Halim, Firoz M Hasan and leaders of Jago Nari Foundation Nurunnahar Meri, Nili Rahman and Hosne Ara were also present.

Bangladeshi shot dead by BSF

UNB, Mymensingh

A Bangladeshi national was shot dead by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at frontier Aitalok village in Haukhaupur upazila on Monday afternoon.

The Indian border guards opened fire on Abdul Motaleb, 27, while he was returning home from the field with his cattle about 3:45pm. The fatally injured Motaleb died on way to hospital.

The villagers strongly protested the brutal action of the BSF.

Janmashtami celebration Aug 26

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Puja Ujjapan Parishad yesterday urged the Hindu community to hold countrywide prayers for peace and stability during the coming Janmashtami, a major Hindu religious festival to be celebrated on August 26.

In a statement, the parishad leaders said this year's Janmashtami programmes were designed keeping in mind the country's existing situation and urged the Hindu community members to offer special prayers side by side with discussion and street marches for peace and stability in Bangladesh.

A meeting held here on Monday with the parishad's adviser Maj Gen (retd) CR Dutta in the chair, they also urged the district and upazila units of the organisation to chalk out their celebration programmes in line with the local situation. They expressed their deep concern at the recent situation in the country.

Leaders of the organisation Dr Lalith Mohon Nath, Anil Chandra Nath, Professor Nim Chandra Bhoumik, journalist Swapan Kumar Saha, Kajol Debnath and Joyanta Sen Dipu attended the meeting.

AUG 17 BLASTS

PM calls for unity to foil 'conspiracy'

UNB, Dhaka

Indicating recent serial bombings, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said conspiracy against Bangladesh started when the country is making progress and the world community is saying that the nation is attaining advances in many sectors.

"Their conspiracies will not be successful if we remain united," she asserted talking to the members of Bangladesh Hindu Boudhia Christian Kalyan Front who called on the prime minister to exchange greetings on the occasion of Janmashtami (birthday of Lord Sri Krishna) to be celebrated on August 26.

Reiterating that Bangladesh is a non-communal state, Khaleda said all Bangladeshis, irrespective of faith, have to work together for consolidating the hard-earned democracy and further advancing the country.

"Our main identity is that we all are Bangladeshis," she told the front leaders and asked them to stand against an organisation which is trying to spread "propaganda and attempting to paint Bangladesh as a 'failed state'.



PHOTO: STAR
Dr M Zahir receives a crest from eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain at the conference of Bangladesh Gonontantrik Ainjibi Samiti at the Supreme Court yesterday.

Religious militants out to destroy democracy

Speakers tell BCL discussion

DU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said religious militants have been conducting repeated bomb attacks at different places in a planned way to destroy democracy and create instability.

They said bomb attacks on different socio-cultural organisations, religious places and political rallies have a distinct motive to make the country a 'failure state' through which the fundamentalists could capture the power.

The discussion commemorating the August 21 grenade tragedy was organised by Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the main opposition Awami League (AL), was held at the Teachers' Students' Centre of Dhaka University (DU).

The speakers blamed the BNP-led alliance government for the countrywide blasts saying that the BNP-Jamaat coalition is patronising and sheltering the extremists.

They said due to governments' reluctance to nab and punish the

culprits responsible for bomb attacks at different places has established a reign of terror.

Taking part in the discussion, AL General Secretary Abdul Jallil said the August 21 grenade attack at Bangabandhu Avenue was a follow-up of 'the mission' for destroying the spirit of the liberation war through the killing of AL President Sheikh Hasina.

He said the religious militants under the shelter of the alliance government have been conducting all the bomb attacks.

Jallil blasted the four-party alliance government saying that its composition Jamaat has been hatching plots to destroy the country's democracy and sovereignty using government administration.

Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon said the link of religious militants to all bomb blasts proved that they are well organised and could destroy the country's democracy.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu said the country has become dangerous for living under

the BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

He blamed the Jamaat-e-Islami for patronising the religious militants to turn the independent Bangladesh into a province of Pakistan.

Gono Forum President Member Pankaj Bhattachariya, AL Joint Secretary Obaidul Kader, Barrister Amir-Ul Islam, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Prof Harun-or-Rashid, BCL President Liqat Sikder and General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu also spoke.

Jallil blasted the four-party alliance

POLICE TORTURE

Meherpur Jubo League leader succumbs to injuries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Jubo League leader of Gangni upazila under Meherpur district succumbed to alleged police torture on Monday night.

Mokaddes Hossain, 30, died at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital after fighting seven days for life following police torture on August 15.

He was the Tetulbaria union Jubo League joint secretary and Gangni Thana Jubo League member.

Police arrested Mokaddes and his relative Ziarul Islam while they were returning to their home after attending a programme marking the National Mourning Day on August 15.

"I found my brother lying unconscious at Gangni police station on August 16," said Tozammel Haque, brother of the victim, while talking to this correspondent.

"There were also marks of injuries on his body," he said, adding, "Mokaddes did not regain his sense till his death."

He was first admitted to Gangni Thana health complex and then transferred to Meherpur district hospital.

Later he was shifted DMCH as his condition became critical, Tozammel said.

Police beat Mokaddes to death in a pre-planned way at the instigation of the local BNP leaders, he alleged.

On the occasion, doa mahfils will be at different places in Dhaka and Rajshahi.

The offspring of late Mojib seek blessings of all.



Ivy Rahman's anniversary of death today

UNB, Dhaka

The first death anniversary of Ivy Rahman, former Women Affairs Secretary of the Awami League, will be observed today.

Family members of the slain AL leader chalked out various programmes to mark the day.

The programmes include placing wreaths at her grave in the morning, qurkhwani and milad mahfil at the deceased's residence after Asar prayers.

Ivy died on August 24 after she was seriously injured in the grenade attacks on an Awami League rally at Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21 last year.

Death of official sparks protest at Secretariat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The death of an official apparently due to the negligence of physicians sparked protests at the Secretariat in the city yesterday.

Around 200 officials and employees stormed the Secretariat Clinic after Syed Emdadul Haq, senior assistant chief of the commerce ministry, died of a cardiac arrest.

The protests prompted the authorities to take action against the physicians accused of negligence of duty.

Sources said Emdadul Haq, 45, suddenly fell sick while boarding a lift at the Secretariat at around 10:00am. He was immediately rushed to the clinic, but the cardiologist was not there at the time.

The officials and employees then asked the Civil Surgeon to provide an ambulance to take Emdadul Haq to a hospital, but the clinic chief said that the vehicle is out of order.

Although the civil surgeon finally provided an ambulance, it was too late for Haq, who died on the way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Hearing the news of his death, the officials and employees of different ministries staged a rowdy protest at the clinic and demanded punishment to the civil surgeon and the physician, who was not present during his duty.

The authorities instantly issued an order making Civil Surgeon Dr Mohammad Ali Belal an OSD and suspended cardiologist Dr Omar Farid Sarwar, who did not turn up at the clinic even after the office time started. Both of them were charged with negligence of duty.

A five-member committee headed by the joint secretary (hospital) of the health ministry was also formed to investigate the incident. It has been asked to submit its report within next three days.

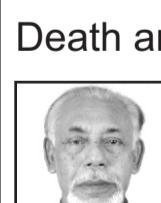
BDR-BSF meet today

BSS, Patgram

A sector commander level flag meeting between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Border Security Force (BSF) of India will be held today.

Official sources said, the meeting will be held near boundary pillar no-812 in the Indian side opposite to the Tinbigha corridor under Patgram upazila in Lalmonirhat district. The BSF will host the meeting.

Death anniversary



Today is the 4th death anniversary of Md Mojib Rahman (Nasir Mia), a social workers and former UP chairman of Ekhlaspur in Chandpur, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his house at Saktala in Comilla tomorrow after Juma prayers.

Friends and relatives have been requested to attend the mahfil.

Md Mojib Rahman

Today is the 1st death anniversary of Md Mojib Rahman, former customs official and a freedom fighter, says a press release.

On the occasion, doa mahfils will be at different places in Dhaka and Rajshahi.

The offspring of late Mojib seek blessings of all.

Anti-terrorism convention from August 30

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-day convention titled 'Unity against terrorism' begins in the city on August 30, aiming to forge a national consensus to combat terrorism and save the country.

"The incident of near-simultaneous bomb blasts across the country on August 17 is an eye-opener to the countrymen. It prompted us to build a strong unity against terrorism," said Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud, convenor of the convention, at a press briefing.

Democratic and non-communal political parties, members of the civil society and representatives of different professional groups will take part in the convention to be held at the Engineers' Institute auditorium and the Diploma Engineers' Institute auditorium.

On behalf of the families of victims of terrorism, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina will deliver a speech at the convention.

The terrorists have become more desperate with the support from the government and have been carrying out frequent bomb attacks, said Rokanuddin Mahmud.

"The countrymen will have to realise that their existence is now at stake because of frequent terrorist activities in the country," he said and called on the people, irrespective of political affiliation, to forge a strong unity to resist terrorism.

He also said the convention will remain open for any political party upholding the spirit of the Liberation War.



PHOTO: STAR
Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud speaks at a press briefing at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Awami League leader Abul Mal Abdul Muhit and on his left is theatre personality Ramendu Majumder.

A total of six seminars will be held during the convention where the participants will present papers on terrorist activities in the country, said the convenor.

A committee with 401 members from different professional groups has also been formed to make the event a success, he added.

Supreme Court Bar Association President advocate Mahbubul Alam, AL leader Abul Mal Abdul Muhit and theatre personality Ramendu Majumder were present at the press briefing held at the National Press Club.

Public varsities' contribution to society declines sharply

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While contribution of the public universities to the society has sharply declined, the private universi-



Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rafid Shadman An-Noor, aged seven and a half years, has been suffering from muscle disease since last two years.

He is now totally unable to walk, says a press release.

Doctors in Kolkata have suggested that the treatment of this disease is available only in the United States.

On inquiry, Rafid's parents came to know that the treatment is very expensive and needs a long time.

So they have appealed for generous financial support which can be sent to Husne Ara, Savings Account No: 11005087, The City Bank Ltd, Mouchak Branch, Malibagh, Dhaka, or can contact them over cell phone 0177-097360.