

BNP has lost legitimacy following HC verdict: AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday said the BNP has lost its legitimacy following the High Court verdict that declared all the actions, law and rules made under the martial law illegal.

As Maj. Gen. Ziaur Rahman formed the BNP during that period, the formation of the party is illegal, he added.

The AL leader said if Zia had not rehabilitated the anti-liberation forces in his cabinet, the collaborators of the Pakistani occupation forces would not have got any shelter in the country.

"We have to wage a legal battle soon against all kinds of misdeeds taken place during the regime of military rulers," he said at a discussion in the city.

The Bhumidasyu and Rastriyo Sampad Lunthon Protirodh Forum (forum to protect state resources and resist land grabbers) organised the discussion at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium.

Abdul Jalil also called on the pro-liberation forces to unitedly resist the anti-liberation forces who are trying to make Bangladesh a communal state.

Advocate Abdul Hamid, deputy leader of the opposition in parliament, said the Awami League may consider joining parliament if the government assures that it will arrange discussions on August 21 grenade attack, August 17 bomb blasts and killing of Shah AMS Kibria and Ahsan Ullah Master after adjourning other businesses of parliament.

Referring to the August 17 bomb blasts across the country, Hasanul Haq Inu, president of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, said the bombers were the 'actors', Jamaat-e-Islami was the 'director' and the BNP was the 'producer' and the bombs.

Prof Durgadas Bhattacharya said a series of killings have taken place in the country since 1975, but none of the culprits was brought to justice.

Had the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman been brought to book after the incident, the incident of August 21 would not have taken place, he added.

Principal Abdul Mazid, president of the Dhaka city unit of the Forum, presided over the discussion.

JCD man sues Jamaat MP's son, 4 others for torturing mother

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A local leader of Jatiyataabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has filed a FIR with Sonadanga police accusing five Jamaat and Shibir leaders of torturing his mother Selina Akhter Shahhaj at Arambag area on Thursday.

Mahbub Alam Mithun filed the FIR on Saturday evening.

The accused are shrimp trader Shah Muhammad Zubayer Nurullah, son of central leader of Jamaat Shah Mohammad Ruhul Quddus MP, Zubayer's father-in-law Mallick Fakhruil Anam, mother-in-law Helena Anam, and notorious criminals Shipper and Faraz Ali.

A three-member committee has been formed by the police commissioner to probe the incident.

Headed by DC (South) Abdullah Al Mamun, two other members of the committee are AC (Khulna Zone) Hasan Bari Noor and OC Abbasuddin.

The committee has started its investigation and recorded statements of Selina Akhter, Mithun, Milon and four eyewitnesses.

The eyewitnesses confirmed to the committee that Zubayer severely beat Selina Akhter, shaved her hair and painted face with black ink after tying up her to a tree.

According to a reliable source of Sonadanga thana, the prime accused Zubayer met the OC at dead hours of Saturday night.

He remained with the OC for about 5 minutes to utter surprise of other policemen there.

When asked, the OC however refused the allegation.

Japan to provide Tk 53.7cr for two health projects

Japan will provide financial assistance to two health projects in Bangladesh, says a press release.

These are 'Improved Health for the Poor: Health, Nutrition and Population Research Project' to be implemented by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B) and Local Initiatives Programme.

The Government of Japan will provide Tk 46 crore for the first project related to health, nutrition and population programme, and Tk 7.7 crore to promote decentralised and community participatory approaches for family planning and mother and child health.

The projects will be financed by the Japanese Counterpart Fund generated from the Debt Relief Grant Aid (DRGA) and the KR Food Aid, the release added.

SAGIR MURDER CASE 2 absconding accused arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Two absconding accused in Dhaka City (South) Jubo Dal president and notorious criminal Sagir Ahmed murder case were arrested on Saturday night from Fatullah.

The arrestees Shamim and Manik were handed over to Criminal Investigation Department (CID), which is investigating the case, yesterday morning.

Fatullah police said the two had been hiding at the house of one Yusuf Talukdar at Nayamati in Pagla for the last 14 days.

Both of them have confessed to police about their involvement in the murder.

Shamim is the son of Berek Mia of Sutrapur, Dhaka while Manik is the son of Hafizuddin of West Jatrabari.

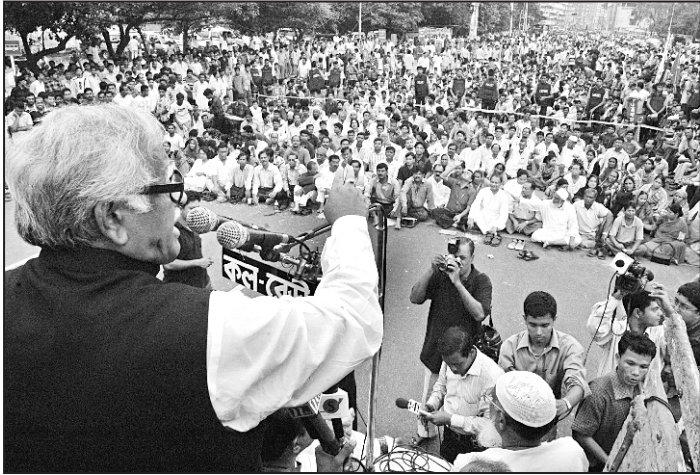


PHOTO: STAR

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil speaks at the 14-party meeting at Muktangan in the city yesterday protesting governments' interference in the judiciary after the recent High Court verdict on the fifth amendment to the constitution.

Saarc states mull setting up development fund

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Saarc countries have recommended the reconstitution of the existing South Asian Development Fund (SADF) and subsequent establishment of a Saarc Development Fund, an umbrella organisation for all Saarc development funding.

The proposed fund will have three windows -- social, infrastructure and economic, says a press release issued by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Secretariat in Kathmandu yesterday.

The recommendations were made at a two-day-meeting of financial experts that concluded on Friday in the Nepalese capital.

The social window, with an initial amount of \$300 million, is

expected to fund poverty alleviation programmes and projects, among others. Through the infrastructure window, funds will be mobilised from within and beyond the regions, to finance infrastructure projects while the economic window will fund other non-infrastructure commercial projects, it said.

The meeting also examined the proposals for creating a Poverty Alleviation and Infrastructure Development Fund and discussed the prospect of creating a South Asian Development Bank in the future.

The recommendations of the financial experts will be considered by the next meeting of the Saarc finance/planning secretaries and finance/planning ministries, adds the release.

Cable television network policy finalised

UNB, Dhaka

Policy for the cable television network has been finalised.

It will be sent to cabinet for approval soon, said an official release yesterday.

The 9th cabinet committee meeting on 'cable television network policy reformulation' took the decision at the Information Ministry yesterday after reviewing the draft policy.

Information Minister M Shamsul Islam presided over the meeting. Members of the committee Post and Telecommunication Minister Barrister M Aminul Haque and Education Minister Dr Osman Faruk

were present.

Emerging from the meeting Shamsul Islam told the journalists that in absence of a cable television network policy the trend of broadcasting programmes contrary to audience's demand is being increased.

"The cable operators are also broadcasting their own programmes which sometimes undermine tradition and values of the country," he said.

He said that the government would formulate the policy for upholding culture, tradition and values of the country and for stopping indiscriminate use of the cable television network by the operators.

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also expected at places during the period, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 35.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 24.4 degree Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:13pm today and rises at 5:42am 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	33.6	28.0	73	75
Chittagong	32.8	25.3	87	75
Rajshahi	34.4	26.6	88	77
Khulna	33.7	26.0	84	77
Barisal	32.5	26.5	84	94
Sylhet	32.9	24.4	94	91
Cox's Bazar	33.4	26.0	76	73

FOOD ADULTERATION

Mobile courts collect Tk 3.7 lakh in fines

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four mobile courts yesterday found a huge quantity of adulterated and sub-standard food items at different city stores and collected a fine of Tk 3.73 lakh.

A court headed by Magistrate Rokon-ud-Dowla found an edible oil shop in South Jatrabari and fined Abdul Hannan, owner of Bengal Traders, Tk 50,000 for selling 'Super Oil' packs without the BSTI licence.

The court also seized 200 packets of expired milk powder from the same shop. The court scraped the packets and fined the shop owner TK 1 lakh for keeping preserving those.

The court also fined shop owner Harun Bhuiyan of West Jatrabari Tk 50,000 for selling flour without expiry date. It also fined a sweet-meat shop in the same area Tk 7,000 for doing business in an unhygienic environment.

The other three mobile courts raided shops and hotels at different parts of the city and fined them for selling adulterated and sub-standard food items and for unhygienic environment.

Pakistan keen to help develop railway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newly appointed Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Alamgir Babar yesterday called on Communications Minister Nazmul Huda and expressed willingness to extend co-operation for the development of railway sector.

The high commissioner told the minister that his country can provide modern railway carriage and co-operate in conducting a feasibility study on introducing electric rail service between Dhaka and Chittagong, meeting sources said.

Huda said the government has declared railway a thrust sector and taken a number of steps to modernise it.

As part of the modernisation programme, the first electric train service would be introduced on Dhaka-Chittagong route, he added.

The high commissioner said the joint economic commission between Pakistan and Bangladesh would sit very soon and the proposal for co-operation in railway sector could be discussed there.

He said Pakistan has long experience in railway sector and it wants to share the experience with Bangladesh, according to sources.

\$ 1m aid for Katrina victims

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh announced one million US dollar humanitarian aid for the victims of the Hurricane 'Katrina' that wrought havoc in New Orleans in the United States.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia declared the help on behalf of her government and people of Bangladesh as a "token of goodwill and sympathy for the victims", DGEP Zahirul Haque said yesterday.

Subsequent Pak govts politicise our return

Say SPGRC leaders

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) yesterday said that the subsequent Pakistan governments had politicised their 'home return' issue hanging their repatriation on balance.

"Each and every head of the state from Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to Parvez Musharraf had pledged to take back us, but they shifted their position succumbing to the internal politics," said SPGRC Bangladesh President Abdul Zabbar Khan.

He was addressing a press conference at the National Press Club to announce their next action programmes to press home their demands.

The SPGRC leaders said that the Pakistan governments at different times cheated with the fates of around three lakh Pakistanis languishing here for 35 years. They made several agreements with Bangladesh government on several occasions but did really nothing to resolve the problem.

They told the journalists that since 1997, the SPGRG has constantly been demanding of Pakistan and Bangladesh governments to hold tripartite meeting with the participation of SPGRG to resolve the issue amicably across the table through mutual discussion.

To draw world attention and press home their five-point demand, SPGRC will form a human chain in front of the High Court at 11:00am tomorrow.



PHOTO: PID

Morten Giersing, the outgoing Unicef country representative, makes a courtesy call on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday.

UNICEF COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE MEETS PM Progress in edn lauded

UNB, Dhaka

The Unicef country director yesterday appreciated Bangladesh's social-sector successes in immunization, women's education and empowerment and schooling facilities for the disabled children.

Morten Giersing, the outgoing country representative of the UN agency, made the remarks when he made a courtesy call on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the afternoon.

Khaleda said her government has been carrying out various development programmes with its own scarce resources to advance the country, which has a big population.

"Timely external support will be more helpful in the country's forward march," she told Giersing.

The Unicef representative said Bangladesh's emergence as commissioner of the UN Child Right Commission is a recognition of the UN to the Prime Minister's personal initiative and steps to ensure child rights and welfare.

Giersing noted with satisfaction that the country has already achieved many of the universally designated UN Millennium Development Goals.

"It has effective controlling system for diarrhoeal diseases and made Bangladesh polio-free," he said, adding that child mortality rate has been reduced here.

He also praised government steps to provide facilities to physically challenged children for education together with normal children.

BSF returns body of Bangladeshi farmer

BSS, Lalmonirhat

Border Security Force (BSF) of India returned the body of Bangladeshi farmer Nuruzzaman yesterday after 64 hours of his killing by them here.

BSF troops fired on three Bangladeshi farmers when they went for fishing in a bordering canal near boundary pillar no 860/8S opposite to Shamsheer Nagar out-post of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in Palgram upazila on Thursday night, official sources said.

Nuruzzaman, 30, son of Abbas Ali of nearby village Purbo Jagatbar, was killed on the spot and BSF took away his body immediately to India.

His companion Ibrahim Ali, 35, son of Salim Uddin and another unidentified person were shot and somehow managed to flee the scene.

Gold ornaments, money, mobile phone sets, SIM and pre-paid cards totalling Tk 4.5 lakh were stolen from a phone-fax shop at Pallabi in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

Hasib Uddin, owner of Bismillah Enterprise at Mirpur section-12, found the locks broken when he came to open his shop in the morning.

He also found that five mobile phone sets, Tk 35,000, eight tola of gold ornaments and mobile phone SIM and pre-paid cards are missing from the shop.

Hasib locked his shop after midnight the day before.

He lodged a case with Pallabi police, but nobody was arrested.



PHOTO: STAR

Newly elected office-bearers of the Bangladesh Photojournalists' Association pose for photograph with Foreign Minister M M Hossain at his office in the city yesterday. Photojournalists' Association President AKM Mohsin led the team.

Roundtable

BUP organises a roundtable on 'Citizens' evaluation of progress made on safe water supply and sanitation in Bangladesh.' Venue: BUP Conference Room, House-50, Road-8, Block-D, Niketon, Gulshan-1. Time: 5.30pm.

Founding day

A discussion will be held to mark the ninth founding anniversary of Zaker Party Krishak Front. Venue: National Press Club Auditorium. Time: 2.00pm.

Meeting

A meeting of the executive committee of Narsingdi Zila Janakalyan Samity will be held. Venue: 27/5/A/5, Tophkana Road.

raphy of Ecole de Cinema Dhaka will be held. Venue: Photo-gallery of Alliance Francaise, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.30pm.

Actress Prema, her brother, sister arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ramna police arrested film actress Tania Shikder alias Prema, her brother, sister and a domestic help yesterday on charge of assaulting a taxicab driver and a traffic constable near the Supreme Court.

Police said Prema along with her brother Sobhan Shikder, sister Junia Shikder and domestic help Nargis was going to the metropolitan magistrate's court from her residence at Uttara by a taxicab in connection with a case.

When the taxicab reached the High Court Mazar intersection and was waiting for a traffic signal to change, she asked the driver to speed away violating the traffic signal.

As the driver, Shahnur Rahman, refused to comply, they assaulted him. They also assaulted traffic constable Rezaul Karim who stepped in to settle the matter.

Patrol police and the passers-by then took them to the Ramna Police Station.

Later, they were shown arrested after the driver filed a case against them, police said.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



The parents of an 18-year-old boy suffering from blood cancer have appealed for financial assistance for the treatment of their son.

Golam Kibria Ziko, who hails from Sherpur, is now undergoing treatment at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital in Dhaka.

The doctors said he urgently needs a bone marrow transplant, which involves about Tk 40 lakh. But his father Md Golam Rabbani, a retired soldier, cannot afford such an expensive treatment.

Ziko, the younger of the two children of his parents, has appeared in the HSC examination this year.

His parents appealed to all to extend a helping hand to save their son.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Md Salaudinn, Account No.-5582, Janata Bank, Rajani Gandhi Super Market Branch (Kachukhet), Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka. Cellphone No.-0175054092.

SM Golam Mostofa

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



S M Golam Mostofa, a boy from Chua-danga, has long been suffering from lung diseases.

The boy, a student of class nine, is now

undergoing treatment at the Islami Bank Central Hospital in Dhaka.

He needs an immediate operation, which will cost about Tk 75,000. But his father Habibur Rahman, a day labourer, cannot afford it.

He has appealed to the generous people for financial assistance for the treatment of his son.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Md Habibur Rahman, Savings Account No.-6453, Janata Bank, Laxmibazar Branch, Dhaka. Phone- 7111134



Abdul Alim's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 31st death anniversary of legendary folk singer Abdul Alim.

He passed away on this day in 1974 in Dhaka.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Bangladesh Folk Music Academy and other organisations will hold meetings in memory of Abdul Alim.

Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar will air special programmes.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Prof HR Ansari, an eminent physician, will be held at his residence at Section-11, Block-A, Road-1, House 6 at Mirpur in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Prof HR Ansari passed away due to old age complications at the age of 72 on September 2.