



Dr Ibrahim's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 16th death anniversary of Dr Mohammad Ibrahim, founder of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (Dab), will be observed today.

Dr Ibrahim, also National Professor, died of cardiac arrest at his residence in 1989.

The day has also been observed as Service Day since last few years.

Dab, Birdem and its front organisations have taken up elaborate programmes in different parts of the city and districts to observe the day in a befitting manner.

The programmes include placing of wreaths and offering of fateha at his grave.

A free camp for diabetic diagnosis and glucose test will be held in front of the National Museum from 8:00am to 11:00am.

Besides, a question-answer session between the patients and specialists at 11:00am and a memorial meeting will be held at the Birdem auditorium in the afternoon.

Women and Children's Affairs Minister Khurshid Jahan Haque will attend the meeting as chief guest.

National Professor Dr Nurul Islam, Poet Abul Hossain, Prof MA Mannan and Dab President Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud will take part in the discussion.

A free heart camp will also be arranged at Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital at Shahbag to provide free consultation and medicine, said a press release.

K M Rahman



Today is the first death anniversary of K M Rahman, an EPCS officer who retired as an additional deputy commissioner of Tangail in 1973, says a press release.

He died of cancer at the age of 88.

To mark the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil have been arranged at his village home in Kalia of Narail and in the city.

Sarat Chandra Mandal

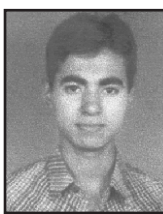


The 5th death anniversary of Sarat Chandra Mandal, a teacher of Madaripur Public Institution, will be observed today, says a press release.

To mark the occasion, recitation from the holy Geeta, discussion and other rituals will be held.

Relatives, colleagues and admirers have been requested to attend the functions and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Tohin Ahmed Bhuiyan



Today is the first death anniversary of Tohin Ahmed Bhuiyan, son of Mostaque Ahmed Bhuiyan, principal officer of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, says a press release.

Tohin, a student of Jagannath University College, was killed in a bus accident near Jangal Police Fari of Sonargaon in Narayanganj on this day last year.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

BSHRM executives

Md Mosharrif Hossain (Sr Human Resource Manager, ICDDR) and Sumon Bhattacharjee (Human Resource Manager, Cairne Energy Sangoo Field Ltd) were elected president and general secretary of Bangladesh Society for Human Resource Management (BSHRM) yesterday, says a press release.

Other office-bearers are Vice President: AK Raihan (Director, Human Resource, Dhaka Ahsania Mission), Joint Secretary: Mujib Siddiqui (Management Consultant, Business Management Consultant Ltd) and Treasurer: Syyed Aktar Hasanuddin (Human Resource Manager, HSCB Bank).

Executive committee members are Sayed Ahmed (General Manager, HR Division, Heidelberg Cement), Nuruzzaman (General Manager, HR Division, Bashundhara Group), Saiful Hossain Khan (Director, HR Division, Cyngenta Bangladesh Ltd), Parvin Sultana (Head of HR, Action Aid), Sanaulah (Manager, Corporate Affairs and Company Secretary, Singer Bangladesh).

BSHRM is working for the development of human resources in Bangladesh.

BAMBOO-RATTAN DEV PROJECT

Steering body meets today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The first meeting of the international steering committee is being held in the port city today to monitor the progress of a two-million US dollar project for improving bamboo and rattan (cane) resources.

The meeting will discuss different aspects of three-year-long project titled 'Market Development of Bamboo and Rattan Products with Potential.'

Financed by Dutch agency Common Fund for Commodities

(CFC), the project is being implemented simultaneously in Bangladesh, China, Nepal and Myanmar since July 1, 2003.

Bangladesh being the Project Executing Agency (PEA) is monitoring the progress of the project in all the four countries.

The forest and environment secretary, who is also the chairman of the steering committee, will chair the meeting.

Representatives of partner countries China, Myanmar, Nepal and Bangladesh, donor country

the Netherlands and the United Kingdom where the market would be explored for products, are participating in the daylong meeting.

"On completion of the project, Bangladesh will have the opportunity of making improved products through integrated technology of the four countries and have the market access for exporting bamboo and rattan products in large scale," said an official of BFRI while talking to The Daily Star.

Tarique trying to distance himself from extremist elements: Saber

UNB, Dhaka

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, political secretary to Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, yesterday said BNP leader Tarique Rahman is now trying to appear as a 'good guy' by distancing himself from the extremist elements after having nurtured those elements under the ruling alliance.

"Since the real character of these extremist elements in the alliance has clearly been exposed, Tarique is trying to appear as a good guy by distancing himself from them to salvage himself," he told the UNB.

Saber made the remarks on Tarique Rahman's interview with the BBC where he reportedly did not

rule out the links of the international terrorist outfits like al Qaeda with the August 17 serial bombings across the country.

"What Tarique told the BBC is contrary to what the BNP leadership, including the prime minister, had been saying for long, blaming the Awami League for all these terror acts," he said, adding that "Tarique's statement is more a political move to salvage himself."

Pointing his finger at contradictory statements by ruling party leaders on the bombs and grenade attacks, Saber recalled the prime minister's statement in parliament: "There is no existence of any militant or al Qaeda in Bangladesh; if there is anything that is Awami

League." "But her son is now telling that international terrorist outfits like al Qaeda might have links to the August 17 blasts," he said and asked, "Who is correct? The prime minister or his son?"

Mentioning the State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar's claim that the JMB and Janajuddah are responsible for the August 17 blasts, Saber wondered at the government's sudden mysterious move to link such terrorism with the JMB and Janajuddah.

Amidst such conflicting and confusing statements by the prime minister and her cabinet colleagues, investigation cannot be impartial and credible, he added.



Muktijodha Sangsad took out a broom stick procession at Muktangan in the city yesterday protesting derogatory remark on Bangabandhu made by Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Salauddin Quader Chowdhury.

3 Indians held from Shahjalal shrine area

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Three Indian nationals were arrested while they were moving suspiciously in the Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) shrine area in the city in the early hours yesterday.

They are Noman Hossain Chowdhury, 55, son of Ayub Ali Chowdhury of village Kabol, Fakhrul Islam, 26, son of Abdul Gafur and Ilyas Uddin, 20, son of Marjan Ali-both of village Dholgram under Karimganj district of Assam.

Kotwali Police said the Indians were moving suspiciously in the shrine area and they could not show any legal travel document. The arrestees might be here for spying purposes, police said.

Noman, however, said he came here to visit the shrine to pray for recovery of diseases. Karimganj district has a close border with Sylhet.

The arrestees were produced before the magistrate's court yesterday. The court sent them to the Sylhet Central Jail.

Traders call 2-hour strike in Sylhet tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sylhet Zila Bayboshayee Oikya O Kalyan Parishad has called a 2-hour strike in the city tomorrow protesting the month long fair scheduled to be started this week at the Government Alia Madrasa Maidan.

The Parishad will also hold a rally at the court point area on the day and hand over a memorandum to the finance minister through the deputy commissioner with a call to stop the fair. The business leaders will also announce fresh agitation that day.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the businessmen on Sunday night with its president Alhaj Sheikh Mokon Miah in the chair.

SQ CHY'S EFFIGY BURNT FOR DEROGATORY REMARK ON BANGABANDHU

Fuel price hike protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Sramik League, labour front of the main opposition Awami League (AL), yesterday burnt an effigy of Salauddin Quader Chowdhury in front of AL's Central Office in the city protesting the derogatory remark that he made about Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Chowdhury, an advisor to the prime minister on parliamentary affairs, recently remarked that he is still alive to wipe out the name of Bangabandhu from the history.

The Sramik League also held a rally there to protest the fuel price hike by the government.

This is the eighth time that the government has hiked petroleum prices since coming to power in October 2001.

Speaking as chief guest at the rally AL Joint Secretary Obaidul Quader said the government has no

headache for the sufferings of the people due to fuel-price hike.

The increase of fuel price will severely affect the consumers, exporters, importers, commodity producers and farmers, he added.

Obaidul said if the price hike is not withdrawn, they will launch strong agitation to oust the government.

Sramik League President Abdul Matin Master said as a result of fuel price hike, transport fare and price of essentials will be further increased causing untold sufferings to the common people.

Dhaka City AL General Secretary Mofazzol Hossain Chowdhury Maya, and Sramik League General Secretary Roy Romesh Chandra also spoke at the rally.

Later, the Sramik League tried to bring out a procession which was barricaded by the police.

Some aggrieved activists threw brickbats at the police.

WEATHER TODAY Rise in day temperature likely UNB, Dhaka Temporary light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by gusty wind is likely to occur at few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6:00pm today. Day temperature may rise slightly over the country during the period, Met Office said. Highest temperature 35.9 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakundu and lowest 25.0 degree Celsius at Rangamati. The sun sets in the capital at 6:12pm today and rises at 5:42am tomorrow. Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.



Cars remain parked along a road at Mahakhali in the city yesterday although a sign nearby reads 'No Parking'. Such parking of vehicles often leads to traffic congestion in the area.

Women workers send more remittance but face difficulty in going abroad

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Selina Aktar, a garments worker who toiled tirelessly to make ends meet 15 years ago, now considers herself a successful woman with a monthly income of about Tk 15,000.

Though she is living at a tin-roofed house in a slum area near Ershad Nagar bus stand in Tongi, she has a number of electronics appliances such as fridge and colour TV.

Her newfound wealth all started after she opted for going abroad with a job.

She went to Malaysia twice and took her husband with her. Now both of them have returned to the country and have invested their earnings to buy 50 rickshaws and a garage.

Her little girl now goes to a kindergarten school and doing well.

"We could not maintain our family with only Tk 2,000 while working at a garments factory before going to Malaysia in 1991. We faced much difficulty to manage our bread after paying the house rent and could not save a single penny at all," said Selina.

"If I had not taken any initiative to go abroad, it would have been quite impossible for me to change my fate," she added.

Selina also said she and her husband Jamal Hossain went abroad through legal channel and

they did not face any trouble.

Although many women are now interested in taking up jobs abroad, they face considerable inconvenience during the process as only seven agencies, out of 781 licensed ones, are engaged in sending women workers abroad.

The Bangladesh Ovisahi Mahila Sramik Association (Bomsa), an organisation working for the welfare of female migrant workers, demands that the number of recruiting agencies for women be raised.

"If women are assaulted abroad and we quiz the agencies concerned, which send both men and women, they simply deny that they don't send women abroad," said Lily Jahan, president of the association.

Even the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) has no proper control over these agencies due to the absence of a policy guideline, she added.

The migration of women workers could not be stopped in any way, she said, adding that the government should facilitate the process and take steps to ensure their security in the recipient country.

On the other hand, the Baira argues that all the agencies should be open for both male and female workers and the government should not fix particular agencies for recruitment of women.

It creates discrimination and the agencies tend to play a monopoly role with a deposit of Tk 50 lakh to the government, said Ali Haider, secretary general of Baira.

"The expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry has agreed to allow all the recruiting agencies to send both male and female workers under the supervision of Baira. It will give the Baira the authority to have full control on the expenses and quality," he said.

State Minister for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Major (Retd.) Mohammed Quamrul Islam said if more agencies could deposit Tk 50 lakh, the ministry will consider them eligible for sending women migrant workers.

"As it is a risky business and in the case of torture of women abroad, the agency should have the capability to compensate them. Tk 50 lakh is deposited as security money so that nobody has to face the risk. Security of the women is most important here," he said.

"The ministry is going to establish a policy soon on the basis of the recommendations of Baira. The unified contract will ensure accountability of the agencies towards Baira and it will help reduce the incidents of torture of migrant workers abroad," said Ali Haider.

A total of 11,259 women went abroad in 2004 and the remittance

they sent to the country is higher than that sent by the male workers as women have a tendency to save money, according to a Baira report.

A total of 18,919 female workers migrated to the Middle East and European countries from 1997 to 2004. The figure was 1,762 in 1997 while it rose to 11,259 in 2004.

"Saudi Arabia has a demand for two lakh domestic workers a year. Bangladesh could easily send a huge number of workers after providing training for the migrant workers," said Ali Haider.

The country needs more training centres to develop their skills, he said, adding that the Baira is going to open a training centre in September to train 400 people every month.

The country has only 16 or 17 training centres for men and one training centre for women, according to an official estimate.

Bomsa officials hoped that the migration of more women will lead to the empowerment of women and help the country achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

The Bomsa has also started a free training programme to raise awareness and develop skills of women workers.

BENIN PLANE CRASH Victims' families get compensation from UTA Airlines

UNB, Dhaka

The family members of 15 military men killed in Benin plane crash received compensation, given by UTA Airlines, from Army Chief Lieutenant General Moeen U Ahmed at the Army Headquarters yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, General Moeen said, "The sacrifice and bravery of the martyrs would always remain effulgent with the army."

The army chief assured that support for the welfare of their family members would be continued from the force.

He handed over cheques for Tk 13,16,000 to each of the beneficiary families.

While returning to Bangladesh, 15 army personnel met their tragic end as a Boeing 727 plane of UTAAirlines crashed at Katonou airport in Benin on December 25, 2003.

Earlier, the United Nations and Bangladesh Army have compensated the bereaved families. Later, with the assistance of a local law chamber known as DR Kamal Hussein and Associates, Bangladesh Army managed to realise 20,000 US dollar in compensation for each of the 15 members from the airlines.

Higher officials of the service were present at the ceremony.

Body recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered body of an unidentified youth, aged around 32, from Wasa Pukur Par of Shyampur area in the city yesterday morning.

Shyampur police said they recovered the body of the youth wearing blue jeans pants, and red and black t-shirt with a towel tied around his neck and marks of stabbing on the neck.

Police showed the body to local people but nobody recognised him. Later, police sent the body to Mitford morgue for autopsy.



Consumers' Rights Protection Committee submits a memorandum to the Deputy Director of Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution in Chittagong yesterday, calling to intensify drive against food adulteration.

DHAKA TODAY Special talk Faculty of Social Science, University of Dhaka, organises a special talk on 'The Asian giants in perspectives: Political economy of the growth experience of China and India' with Prof Srikanta Chatterjee of Messey University, New Zealand as keynote speaker. Venue: Office of the dean of the faculty, DU. Time: 2:30pm. Lecture on gender Asiatic Society of Bangladesh organises a lecture on 'Gender dimension in the process of development: Bangladesh perspective' with Prof Ashraf Uddin Chowdhury of Department of Economics, DU, as keynote speaker. Venue: Seminar room of the Society. Time: 4:00pm. Lecture session Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani Parishad organises a lecture session on 'Agro-economy in Bangladesh'. Venue: Aziz Market, Shahbagh. Time: 6:00pm. Discussion on security Bangladesh Agrisena Sangsad organises a discussion on 'National security of Bangladesh and the role of the politicians' with Communication Minister Nazmul Huda as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 1:00pm. Discussion on terrorism Global Campaign against

36 women MPs take oath

UNB, Dhaka

The 36 newly elected women MPs of reserved seats in parliament, out of total 45, took oath yesterday.

Speaker Barrister Muhammad Jamiruddin Sircar administered the oath at the Sangsad Bhaban.

Thirty of the women MPs were elected from ruling BNP, three from Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, two from Jatiya Party and one from the combine of Bangladesh Jatiya Party and Islami Oikya Jote.

The MPs from the ruling BNP are Selima Rahman, Sarwani Rahman, Begum Shamsun Nahar Khwaja Ahsanullah, Rabeya Chowdhury, Khaleda Rabbani, Syeda Nargis Ali, Advocate Khaleda Panna, Begum Rosy Kabir, Abeda Chowdhury, Advocate Bilkis Akter Jahan Shirin, Helen Jerin Khan, Yasmin Ara Haque, Advocate Ferdous Akhted Wahida, Rehana Akter Ranu, Nuri Ara Safa, Khandaker Noorjahan Yasmin Bulbul, Rawshan Ara Farid, Advocate Rina Parveen, Shahana Rahman (Rani), Principal Noor Afroj Begum (Jyoti), Rokeya Ahmed Lucky, Hosne Ara Gias (Daisy), Chaman Ara, Rayhan Akhter Banu, Kazi Sahera Anwara Shammii Sher, Sultana Ahmed, Tasmin Rana, Bilkis Islam, Shaharia Akhter Hossain and Jahan Panna.

Sultana Razia, Dr Amena Begum and Shahanara Begum took oath from Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh while Syeda Razia Foyez and Marina Rahman from Jatiya Party and Navila Chowdhury from Bangladesh Jatiya Party.

Acting secretary to the parliament secretariat Abu Noki Rezwanul Haq conducted the oath.

All the 36 candidates were elected uncontested to women's reserved seats in Parliament.

Election to the remaining nine out of the total 45 reserved seats could not take place as main opposition Awami League, which is staying out of parliament sessions, boycotted the women MP elections.

The Election Commission will further announce election schedule to fill up the nine vacancies within 21 working days after publication of the gazette notification of the 36 elected women MPs.