

AUGUST 17 BOMB BLASTS

PM's parliament speech not 'based on facts'

Say Dr Kamal and B Chowdhury

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Oikya Mancha convenor Dr Kamal Hossain and Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said the prime minister's latest speech in parliament regarding the August 17 countrywide bomb blasts has let the countrymen down as it was not "based on facts".

"The people have rejected the prime minister's speech as it is full of ambiguity and lacks specific information," B Chowdhury said while addressing a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday.

Addressing the press conference, Dr Kamal said the prime minister should have cited the name of the group, which she thinks was involved in the August 17 bomb blasts.

"After the August 17 countrywide bomb blasts, the people expected to hear from the government about the measures to check criminal activities in the country. But the prime minister's speech could not fulfil that expectation," said Dr Kamal.

The prime minister's speech has not only failed, but also panicked the countrymen, the BDB chief said, adding, "The contradictory statements regarding the August 17 bomb blasts made by the ministers of the government have confused them."

The two leaders said a national government could be framed within the framework of the constitution to tackle "crisis situation" that the country is facing now.

"We don't support unconstitutional means to change the government. Rather we welcome any change in the government under the framework of constitution," B Chowdhury said.

"Any efforts within the purview of the constitution can be accepted... even parliament members, if they

want, can do it to overcome the alarming situation threatening the national security and safety to public life and property," said Dr Kamal.

Dr Kamal said the national security has come under threat as the government has failed to take effective measures regarding the bomb and grenade attacks across the country during last 20 months.

The Oikya Mancha convenor said the "failure" of the government to run the country and their irresponsibility have damaged the image of the country.

The two leaders questioned why the investigation reports of the previous bomb and grenade attacks have not been presented before parliament or made available to the public.

They also demanded the government's explanation regarding the price hike of essentials, increase of

fuel price and its "total failure" to enhance power production in last four years.

They wanted to know why the government failed to free educational institutions from terrorism and take action against the killers of Rajshahi University Prof Yunus and BUET student Sabekun Nahar Sony.

Asked about their plan to approach the highest judiciary, Dr Kamal hinted that they might file petition in the Supreme Court seeking the reports of the investigations into the bomb and the grenade attacks.

Referring to non-functioning of the Anti-Corruption Commission, Dr Kamal said, "It seems the solution has turned out to be more problematic than corruption itself."



PHOTO: STAR Jatiya Oikya Mancha Convenor Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday while Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury looks on.

Invest more in Bangladesh

PM urges Pak entrepreneurs

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said Bangladesh and Pakistan can do a lot of things together to improve the living standard of the peoples of the two countries.

Khaleda told Pakistan Prime Minister's Advisor on Finance and Revenue Dr Salman Shah when he called on her at her office in the city. She urged the Pakistani investors to invest more in Bangladesh and enhance trade and economic relations between the two countries.

Dr Salman, who is now in Bangladesh to attend the 8th meeting of the Bangladesh-

Pakistan Joint Economic Commission, said Bangladesh and Pakistan can make an ambitious annual trade target of one billion US dollar both ways.

Describing Bangladesh-Pakistan political relations as very good, he underscored the need for increasing bilateral cooperation in various fields, including trade and investment.

He appreciated various Bangladeshi products like ceramics and said Pakistan will import more pharmaceutical items from Bangladesh.

Describing the ongoing preparations of the next Saarc summit to be held in November in Dhaka as

excellent, Dr Salman said the Pakistan Prime Minister will attend the Saarc summit.

Wishing success of the summit, he expressed the hope that the seven-nation Saarc will be strengthened further and emerge as a strong regional forum under the chairmanship of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is going to assume the chairmanship of Saarc in next summit.

Reiterating Pakistan's invitation to Khaleda, he said the President, Prime Minister and the people of Pakistan are eagerly waiting to receive her.

Mobile court fines Hotel Zakaria Tk 71,600

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday raided the bar and restaurant of Hotel Zakaria International in Mohakhali, and found them serving uncovered unhygienic food and conducting their business without any trade license from the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).

The court warned them verbally and fined them Tk 71,600.

"We saw them conducting business without any trade license from the DCC. No customer drinking at that moment could show any drinking permission," said Md Golam Sarwar, the public analyst of the DCC.

"The wine they were serving did not have any expiry dates," he added.

This was first time the mobile court raided any bar in the city since they started raiding.

The court found the hotel serving uncovered food items preserved or prepared in an unhygienic environment, a member present with the court said.

Meanwhile, owners of confectionery factories continue to use unsafe chemicals, including essence and colours.

Another mobile court led by Md Rakan ud Doulah raided four bread and biscuit factories at the Devi Das lane in the old part of the city, where they found seven different kinds of unsafe chemicals. The environment of the factories was as usual very unhygienic.

When the court reached the area, all the shopkeepers and factory owners ran away. The court found the factory owners producing their items without the permission of the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI).

The court yesterday raided Sahara bread and biscuit factory, New Jom Jom bread and biscuit factory, Bina bread and biscuit factory and Roni food Bangladesh. None of the owners, including Md Shajahan, Md Sharafat Ali, Sekandar Ali and MM Haq, were found there. The court issued warrants against them.

Another mobile court led by ABM Abdul Fattah raided different restaurants, a bakery and an ice cream factory in the Uttara area. The court filed five cases against them and collected fines of Tk 1,20,000 for not maintaining hygienic standards, the police control room sources said.

Another two mobile courts led by Mujibul Haq and Mizanur Rahman raided the Kafur and Demra areas and filed seven cases against different restaurants and fast food shops, realising Tk 40,000 from them.

'Resist vested quarters using religion for their interest'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Spiritual leaders at a discussion yesterday called on the peace-loving Muslims to be united under their leadership to resist the vested quarters carrying out militant activities, including bomb blasts, in the name of Islam.

Although the number of Islamist outfits, which are using the religion only to serve their interest, is very little, they are well-organised, they said.

Bangladesh Sufi Majlis, a forum of spiritual leaders, organised the discussion on the occasion of the 2nd Sufi Conference at the auditorium of the Institute of Engineers in the city, with Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, as chief guest.

Prof Azad said Islam teaches humanity, it teaches us to protect human beings, not to kill them. "Islam has to be established through the purification of the soul. Those who want to establish Islam with the sword are choosing the wrong track. We must resist them," he said.

Kazi Mozammel Haq, advisor to the Suji Majlis, said a vested quarter which has been using religion for their own interest are now trying to portray Islam as a religion of violence by undermining its glorious image.

M Anisul Haq Chisti Al Hosainee, president of the Sufi Majlis, said the spiritual leaders preached Islam in this sub-continent, but their mazars are now the target of bomb attacks and some Moulanas (religious leaders) have issued fatwa (religious edict) that offering prayers at their mazars is against the spirit of Islam.

Pirs (religious leaders) from different parts of the country took part in the conference.

Jamilud Din new envoy to Libya

UNB, Dhaka

Major General Jamilud Din Ahsan has been appointed Bangladesh Ambassador to Libya.

Jamilud Din was commissioned in the Bangladesh Army on October 9, 1971.

He served as the Master General of Ordinance in the Army Headquarters before being appointed as the Ambassador.



PHOTO: STAR A mobile court seizes a number of bottles of chemicals without any labels from a bakery, Roxy Bread Bangladesh, during its drive against food adulteration in the city yesterday.

VIOLATION OF JOB CONTRACTS BY MALAYSIAN CO 127 Bangladeshi workers to get compensation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 127 Bangladeshi workers, most of whom are now working in Malaysia, will get 20,000 Malaysian Ringgit (MYR) equivalent to Tk 3,53,600 each as compensation from Chung Wah plastic company for violating the job contracts, said representatives of two NGOs at a press conference in the city yesterday.

They said a verdict of Malaysian High Court on April 18, 2005 upholding the judgement of Malaysian Labour Court delivered on April 24, 2000, has made it possible for them to get the compensation.

The press conference was organised jointly by Shikha Swasthya Unnayan Karjakram (Shisuk) and Obhibasi Kalyan Forum at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) Auditorium.

Nazmul, Azhar Ali and Belayet

Hossain, ex-Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia, said workers of Chung Wah filed a case with the labour court in 1999 accusing the company of not paying increased salary, overtime and other benefits according to the job contract.

The labour court gave a judgement in favour of the workers, but the employer filed a writ petition with the High Court Division challenging the verdict and threatened the workers to withdraw the case, they added.

Under this situation, Tenganita, an NGO of Co-ordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility Asia (CARAM-Asia), and Shisuk came forward to assist the stranded Bangladeshi migrants, they said.

Shisuk Executive Director Sakul Millat Morshed said after a seven-year-long legal battle, Bangladeshi workers are going to get the compensation.

But some 116 Bangladeshi migrant workers of Linsun (Malaysia) sdn Bhd' company, are still in uncertainty about their compensation despite a court verdict in favour of them, he regretted.

The workers filed a case in 2003 against their employer alleging fake contract and stoppage of salary, and the session court gave its verdict in February 2004 asking the employer to pay the workers approximately Tk 13 lakh equivalent to MYR 8,39,936, Millat said.

But the payment of money is yet to be made due to non-co-operation of the fraud employer, he added.

Shakirul Islam of Shisuk and Suman Ashraf, Faruk Ahmed and Mahub Elahi of Obhibasi Kalyan Forum also spoke.

Some ex-Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia were present at the press conference.

Govt plans to update medical waste management rules

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to update the relevant act requiring private clinics to take responsibility for medical waste management, said Dr AKM Saidur Rahman, a medical officer of the Directorate of Health Services, yesterday.

The Medical Waste Management rules are now lying with the law ministry for vetting, he said at a seminar on 'Hospital waste management: Present situation in the country', organised by the Community Development Library (CDL) in the city.

"Procrastination in the government system of functioning, as usual, slows the pace of instituting an effective mechanism of waste management," said Dr Rahman.

However, the government has so far introduced systematic medical waste management at 13 district-level hospitals and two medical college hospitals in Sylhet and Chittagong, he said, adding that the

government initiative will cover 35 more district hospitals in the current fiscal.

Medical waste makes up seven percent, that is 220 metric tons, of the total 3,000 tons of solid waste generated in the capital a day, said Dr Nasima Akter, coordinator of the environmental resource unit of the Brac, citing her study conducted in 2002.

If disposed of improperly and untreated, medical waste poses a serious risk of transmitting infectious diseases such as hepatitis and HIV/Aids, she said.

Hospital waste is a major public health hazard because it contains poisonous chemicals, radiation and sharp clinical materials such as needle, blade and knife, said Monir Alam Chowdhury, project coordina-

tor of Prism-Bangladesh, in his keynote paper.

Lack of awareness and commitment on the part of most medical practitioners and clinic owners is a serious setback for a proper waste management mechanism, he said.

He also said that the initiatives taken by some NGOs and the government are too inadequate for a countrywide medical waste management system.

Research officer of the Institute and Policy Support Unit Md Anisul Kabir gave a presentation on medical waste management in Rajshahi city corporation area at the seminar, chaired by CDL executive committee member Prof Abdus Salam.

2 BCL leaders beaten up over factional feud on DU campus

DU CORRESPONDENT

Tension ran high among the leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the Awami League, as two of its leaders were beaten up over a factional feud on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

Sources said Abu Abbas Bhuiyan, joint secretary of the Sir AF Rahman Hall unit of the BCL, along with a group of activists beat up Qayum, a central committee leader, near the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC).

In retaliation, the BCL activists loyal to Qayum attacked Abbas, leaving him injured.

Meanwhile, the BCL-led seven-student organisation alliance staged a demonstration on the campus demanding immediate publication of the inquiry committee report on the last year's attack on students by the Jatityabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the ruling BNP.

They also demanded punishment to the JCD men responsible for the attack.

The JCD launched the attack on the seven opposition-backed student organisations, leaving at least 50 injured, and vandalised the room of Dhaka University Teachers' Association President Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique on September 11 last year.

Addressing a rally, BCL President Liaqat Sikder said the university authorities have been protecting the JCD cadres instead of taking action against them.

He also warned that they would launch tougher movement if the authorities do not take any action against the persons responsible.

BCL General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu, Shariful Kabir Swapan, Ali Hasan Tarun, Rafiqul Kabir Sujon, Jewel Ahmed Khan, Manjur Chowdhury also spoke.

Shibir ransacks RU science bldg rooms

RU CORRESPONDENT

Students led by Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) activists ransacked several rooms of Second Science building in Rajshahi University (RU) while demonstrating in support of their demands yesterday.

Some students of Applied Mathematics led by ICS activists ransacked about 10 teacher's rooms, dean's office and chamber of science faculty, two classrooms and two laboratories injuring 10 people in the 30-minute rampage.

Five teachers and as many students were injured in the incident. Md Zulfiqar Rubel, an injured student, was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital while Sujauddoula Shawan, Milonur Rahman, Shariful Islam, Abul Hashem received first aid. Rubel, Shawan, Milonur and Shariful were later arrested for their involvement in the incident.

The students started ransacking rooms as they failed to meet the dean of science faculty to talk about their demands of two classrooms, a seminar room, a complete laboratory and separate chambers for the teachers and the chairman. The Applied Mathematics department which was established in 2003 is yet to have any permanent infrastructures.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Progressive Students Alliance called a strike on September 13 separately demanding the release of arrested students within 24 hours.

Vice chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain said the authority would file a case for damage to properties. A seven-member committee headed by Prof Muhammad Shafi, dean of arts faculty, was formed to investigate the incident and report within 15 days, he added.

Obituary



Kazi Abdul Hai, an engineer and social worker, passed away at the CMH on September 7 at the age of 85, says a press release.

He left behind his sons, daughters, grandchildren and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death. He was buried at Martyred Intellectual Graveyard in Mirpur the same day and his qulqhwan was held on September 9.

Abdul Matin Sangrami

Abdul Matin Sangrami, former leader of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and vice-president of Khelaghar, passed away due to cardiac arrest at his residence in Demra on Saturday at the age of 57, says a press release.

He left behind his two daughters and one son to mourn his death. CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim in a statement yesterday condoned his death and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

WEATHER TODAY Fall in day temperature likely UNB, Dhaka

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.

DHAKA TODAY Colloquium Publication Ceremony Seminar Workshop Meeting