

Sit across table for electoral reforms

Bhuiyan urges AL

BSS, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday called upon opposition Awami League to sit across the table by shunning the path of imprudent politics to bring electoral reforms.

"We are ready to sit across the table for the sake of peaceful election. We also request you (AL) to come to parliament and raise your demand for electoral reforms," he said at a discussion in the city.

BNP organised the discussion at Mohanagar Natya Manch in observance of the National Revolution and Solidarity Day.

Mannan Bhuiyan said, "We want a peaceful election as we believe BNP will come to power again if the next election is held in a peaceful environment."

He said the Awami League, in fact, does not want reforms in the neutral caretaker government system and the electoral process, rather it wants to

disrupt the existing electoral process by raising such demands outside the parliament.

Referring to the Awami League's "grand rally" on November 22 in the city, he said it would not be possible to unseat the democratically elected government by holding such a rally. "If you gather one lakh people in your rally, we will bring 10 lakh people in our rally on the next day," he said.

He called upon the Awami League to wait for the next election to come to power by winning people's mandate and said that there was no short cut way to come to power bypassing the election.

Speaking on the National Revolution and Solidarity Day, Mannan Bhuiyan said that November 7 was a turning point of the country's political history. He said the November 7 sepoymen uprising was the result of failure of the then government to run the country.

Paying rich tribute to the memory

of president Ziaur Rahman, he said the sepoj-janata revolution on November 7, 1975 brought Ziaur Rahman to state power. He (Zia) united the army, protected independence and sovereignty of the country and restored democracy.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khondokar Mosharraf Hossain, BNP Standing Committee Member Tanvir Ahmed Siddiqui, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Moudud Ahmed, Standing Committee Member KM Obaidur Rahman, Agriculture Minister MK Anwar, Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas, Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Sadeque Hossain Khoka, Whip Ashraf Hossain, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Begum Selima Rahman, State Minister for Labour and Employment Amanullah Aman and leaders of BNP and its front organisations also spoke on the occasion.

Condition of Manekshaw improves

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

The condition of Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw has improved as he was rushed to the Army's Specialised Research and Referral Hospital in New Delhi yesterday morning.

Manekshaw, 91, who was the Indian army chief during the 1971 Liberation War, has been suffering from pneumonia and renal problems but his condition is now stable, doctors said.

He was flown to New Delhi from his home in Wellington in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

Manekshaw, the Indian Army's first field marshal, led his country to victory in the war against Pakistan in 1971.

A veteran of Burma campaign in the Second World War, he was decorated with the second highest award Padma Vibhushan after the 1971 Indo-Pak war and has settled in Wellington in Conoor district in Tamil Nadu after retirement.

He was admitted to the Military Hospital there following complaints of breathlessness four days ago.



The SSF members who will escort the Saarc leaders during the summit enter the complex of Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre during their rehearsal yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Japan to launch quake warning system next yr

REUTERS, Tokyo

Japan, one of the world's most earthquake-prone nations, plans to launch a seismic alert system next year to capture early quake movements and issue warnings of more damaging tremors, officials said on Saturday.

A test version of the system, operating in the northern prefecture of Miyagi since February, was able to sound a warning that a big earthquake would strike the city of Sendai 15 seconds before a 7.2 quake jolted the area on August 16, the daily Asahi Shimbun said.

An official at the Japanese Meteorological Agency said sensitive seismic sensors would be installed at 203 places around the country by March 2006 before the system starts operating.

"While it's true that the time between the warning and a large earthquake striking is quite short, this would allow people to turn off gas stoves or get under a table, while train companies could halt trains," the Meteorological Agency official told Reuters.

The sensors detect extremely small earthquake waves, analyse them to predict whether more damaging movements will follow later as well as how big the quakes might be, and then automatically issue a warning.

Although the warnings will at first go only to certain organisations such as train and gas companies, the agency hopes eventually to alert ordinary citizens.

The official said problems still remained, most importantly the difficulty of getting accurate information out quickly.

"Our fastest predictions may still be a bit rough, so there might be differences between the strength of the quakes we predict and the ones that actually hit. This is something we have to refine," he said.

Earthquakes are common in Japan, one of the world's most seismically active areas. The country accounts for about 20 percent of the world's earthquakes of magnitude 6 or greater.

In October 2004, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.8 struck the Niigata region in northern Japan, killing around 40 people and injuring more than 3,000.

That was the deadliest quake since a magnitude 7.3 tremor hit the city of Kobe in 1995, killing more than 6,400.

Congratulations



Nusrat Haque, a student of Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) at North South University, won the first prize in 2005 International Essay Contest for Young people (youth category) organised by The Goi Peace Foundation and sponsored by UNESCO and the government of Japan, says a press release.

A total of 3,662 contestants from 107 countries around the world took part in the competition. She will receive the award at a ceremony in Tokyo on November 12. Nusrat is the daughter of Rotary Club past president Rahimul Haque and Inner Wheel Club past president Syeda Aktari Banu.

Exhibition on Zia begins

BSS, Dhaka

A two-day exhibition of documents and photographs on work and life of late President Ziaur Rahman began at the National Museum in the city yesterday.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman inaugurated the exhibition held under the auspices of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

Cultural Secretary Ehsan Shamim and Director General of National Museum Prof. Mahmudul Haq were present.

Termining the November 7 as one of the most important days of national history, Selima said the soldiers and the masses jointly protected the independence and the sovereignty of the country under the leadership of Ziaur Rahman.

The documents and the photographs of the exhibition include some rare images on life and work, and used items of Zia. Several books written on November 7 and Zia were also displayed in the exhibition which would remain open from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.

DOMESTIC HELPS IN BAHRAIN, GULF STATES

Bangladesh unlikely to lift ban

BDNEWS, Manama

Bangladesh is unlikely to reverse a ban on its nationals to work in Bahrain and other Gulf countries as domestic helps, media reports said yesterday.

The ban was imposed in March following complaints of domestic helps being abused by sponsors and recruiting agencies.

Ambassador Dr Anwarullah Chowdhury said the embassy is trying to solve the problems faced by the Bangladeshi domestic helps, who have been working in Bahrain before the ban.

"It was a good decision taken by the Bahrain and Bangladesh governments not to bring anymore housemaids to Bahrain," he said.

Dr Chowdhury, who was speak-

ing on the occasion of National Revolution and Solidarity Day, said in most of the cases the Bangladeshi housemaids were being cheated.

He said others were either paid low wages or did not have proper work permits.

But now the government issues work permits only to qualified people to work in reputed companies, he added.

He said the embassy is exerting efforts to solve the problems of Bangladeshi living in Bahrain.

"The embassy is open to all and we are always ready to help and solve any problem within our limits," Dr Chowdhury was quoted by Gulf Daily News as saying.

Rab picks up 5 JMB men in C'nawabganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) last night raided different areas of Chapainawabganj and picked up five men of Jama'at ul Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB).

They held cloth trader Moklesur Rahman Lal Chand, mobile mechanic Abu Hasan and cosmetics trader Aminuzzaman Tia from Shibganj Bazar, traders Golam Mostafa from Gomostapur and Rafikul Islam from Nachol upazilas.

All of them were bearded and used to give money to JMB regularly. In their statement, the arrestees did not confess their involvement in the August 17 blast.

In a commando-style raid, the Rab members went to their business sites in a white microbus and took them away with them sparking rumours of kidnapping in the areas.

The rumours of kidnapping led other law enforcing agencies busy all day and they were known to have been investigating the matter until filing of this report.

A senior Rab official confirmed the report and said the arrestees would be handed over to police after interrogation.

Two killed in Barisal road accidents

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Two people were killed and one critically injured on Dhaka-Barisal highway in three separate road accidents in the last two days.

Agitated mob blocked the Dhaka-Barisal highway for more than two hours creating traffic jam during the Eid rush.

Police and witness sources said a local bus of Vurghata-Barisal route hit Farid Hossain, 26, standing at Satmal stoppage on Dhaka-Barisal highway near Barisal Cadet College at 1:20pm yesterday.

As Farid, son of the Barisal Cadet College guard Jahangir Hossain, died on the spot, agitated mob barricaded the highway by cutting trees.

Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. They opened the highway at 3:00pm after Md Qaium, additional police super and SP in charge of Barisal district assured the mob that they would arrest the bus-driver in 24 hours and send the body of the victim to his village in Bhola.

In another incident, a bus hit Yusuf Ali Farazi, 28, a bicycle rider and newly married son of Javed Ali Farazi of Vartakhal village in Uzirpur upazila, at about 10:30am on Sunday morning at Joyosi on Dhaka-Barisal highway.

The victim died on the way to hospital and the mob blocked the highway for about 40 minutes.

Uzirpur Police Station opened the highway and seized the killer bus but its driver managed to flee.

Babul, 26, a pedestrian was hit by a unknown passenger bus at Kashipur Chowrasta in the city outskirts on the Dhaka-Barisal highway and the victim was rushed to Barisal Shere Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) in a critical condition.

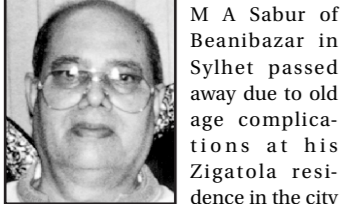
According to the suggestion of the physician, the patient was sent to Dhaka in the afternoon for better treatment.

Saarc leaders to be presented with paintings

BSS, Dhaka

Paintings of the country's eminent artists will be on the list of gift items for the heads of state/government who will attend the Saarc Summit here on November 12 and 13, said a source of Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

Obituary



M A Sabur of Beanibazar in Sylhet passed away due to old age complications at his Zigatola residence in the city

on Nov-ber 6 at the age 72, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, one son and one daughter.

He will be buried at Azimpur graveyard after his namaz-e-janaza at the Dhanmondi Eidgah mosque in the city after Asr prayers today (Tuesday).

Admirers have been requested to attend the janaza.

Death anniversary



Today is the fourth death anniversary of Advocate Alhaj Faizur Rahman Khan, former MLA, president of Dhaka Bar Association and a government pleader who hailed from Miah Bari of Bagun under Kaliganj upazila in Gazipur district.

On this occasion, a special prayer will be held and food will be distributed among the destitute at his son's residence at 22/B, Satish Sarker Road, Gandaria and his son-in-law's residence at Plot No Q/6, Noorjahan Road, Mohammadpur in the city.

Dr Rafizuddin Ahmed

Today is the sixth death anniversary of Dr Rafizuddin Ahmed, chairman of Bengal Bay Group and a social activist, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil and Qurankhwani will be held at Chowra Miah Bari, Kaliganj in Gazipur today.

Jessore Jubo Dal factions clash over drug trade

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Six people were injured, three of them critically, in a clash between two factions of Jubo Dal over capturing leadership of a drug syndicate on Sunday night at Abhoynagar in Jessore.

The injured, now undergoing treatment in Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH), were identified as Sobhan Bagha (26), Bulu (22), Zia (25), Shohag (24), Sabuj (22) and Al Amin (30). Condition of Sobhan, Bulu and Sabuj is critical, KMCH source said.

The clash took place near KG School Road at Nurbag area of Noapara. Supporters of both the factions of Jubo Dal used sharp cutting weapons and hockey sticks during the clash, police said.

According to the OC of Abhoynagar Police Station, Sunday night's clash is a sequel to enmity between two rival factions of Jubo Dal for capturing leadership of a syndicate of drugs.

Police took 17 people into custody although none filed any case in this connection as of 7:30pm yesterday.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country with chances of light rain/drizzle at one or two places over Southern part of the country till 6:00pm today.

Slight rise in night temperature is expected over the country during the period, Met Offices said.

Highest temperature 33.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sandwip and lowest 16.6 degree Celsius at Srimongal and Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:15pm today and rises at 6:10am 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	30.5	21.2	73	61
Chittagong	32.8	20.0	61	78
Rajshahi	29.8	17.7	68	82
Khulna	29.6	19.6	74	74
Barisal	30.4	18.5	82	87
Sylhet	31.7	19.2	63	90
Cox's Bazar	32.0	22.8	75	75



Buses remain stranded at Babuganj on Dhaka-Barisal highway as angry mob put up a barricade on the road after an accident yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Monga grips Bangladeshi enclaves

BDNEWS, Kurigram

About 50,000 distressed people in 18 Bangladeshi enclaves have been severely affected by Monga without any aid from the government.

The enclave people do not get any kind of help from the government of Bangladesh or of India due to complicated border law. This triggers their sufferings in the Bangla months of Ashwin and Kartik, forcing them to the brink of starvation for lack of food.

The residents of enclaves have been leading miserable lives, deprived of relief and VGF, VGD and ration cards since they have no voting rights.

Their miseries aggravate further when the chairman and members of the enclaves do not take note of them. They could not enter the Bangladesh territory due to constant vigilance by the Indian Border Security Forces (BSF). This also

deprives them of relief goods.

Abdul Jalil, 40, Darul, 35, Shahida, 45, Eshak, 50, and Abul Haque, 48, at Karla enclave told BDNEWS that they do not have voting right, so they don't have any right.

On the other hand, the residents of South Moshaldanga in Bhurungamari which is only 84 feet away from the Bangladesh border, have been starving as they fear to move to other areas.

Sayed Ali, 45, Motiar, 33, Hossain, 56, Sohrab, 60, and Abdur Rashid, 55, said they managed to escape the enclave at night, risking their lives for relief.

They said that nearly 6,000 people of the enclave are without jobs, prompting them to sell their essentials, including cattle to Indian traders.

Besides, they have to eat unhygienic food, including arum roots, causing an outbreak of diarrhoea in

the area, they added.

They said they do not even get medicines in emergency.

Meanwhile, the residents of the other part of chit Karala in Phulbari upazila said they have been starving as they are to depend on agriculture to maintain their livelihood.

"We only heard the names of VGF, VGD and Ration Cards, but we are not so lucky to have any of these.

Abia, 45, said she knows that she is a Bangladeshi, but never gets any relief for other supports.

Azizul Haque, chairman of Pathardubi, said they can not meet the demand of the main land due to insufficient supply of relief goods. How could they meet the demand of enclave?

Asked, Mahmud Hasan, upazila nirbahi officer of Phulbari, said they can not do anything for the enclave people due to bureaucratic complexities.