

Islam does not support killing of people Says Shamsul BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister M Shamsul Islam yesterday said those who kill people by exploding bombs in the name of establishing Islam are the enemies of the country, nation, humanity and democracy.

"Holy religion Islam does not support killing of innocent people," he said while addressing a function in the Circuit House auditorium here.

Jatiya Mohila Sangstha (JMS) arranged the function for distribution of cheques of microcredit among poor women.

The minister said the perpetrators of bomb attacks are engaged in deep conspiracies against the country. They want to push the country towards anarchy by destroying the democratic system, he added.

"The section has started the conspiracies when the country is progressing fast and a peaceful situation prevails everywhere," he said urging people to resist the evil force with joint efforts.

The information minister said the present government has taken massive development programmes for women as it is pledge-bound for empowerment of women.

Deputy Commissioner Anisuddin Monju, president of Munshiganj Poursabha BNP Shajahan Sikder, Munshiganj Poursabha chairman Advocate Mujibur Rahman and chairman of District Jatiya Mohila Sangstha Jahanara Begum addressed on the occasion, among others.

Earlier, the minister distributed sanitary latrines among poor people at the Mirkadim Poursabha.

Stipends awarded to 150 madrasa students STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Spandan Welfare Society (SWS) gave away stipends to one hundred and fifty bright madrasa-students yesterday in the auditorium of Press Institute of Bangladesh in the city.

Speakers at the function called upon the madrasa students to overcome all sort of backwardness and play effective role for the society and state.

To encourage the madrasa students, the SWS has been according stipends and giving stipend to them since 1999. Besides, it organises debate and cultural competitions for them.

Dr Wakil Ahmed Chowdhury, vice chancellor of National University, distributed stipends among the students as chief guest while Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron, chairman of National Debate Federation, presided over the function.

Rice production training held

The Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) in collaboration with the FoSHoL project of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Bangladesh office, conducted a four-day 'Rice production training' for agricultural extension workers at Gazipur, says a press release.

The training programme of the first batch of 21 workers of different NGOs and the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) was held at the BRRI from November 27 to 30.

The Bangladesh Rice Knowledge Bank-based training module was developed by the BRRI scientists with support and close collaboration from IRRI, Bangladesh to train the GO-NGO extension workers and farmers.

This is available in a folder as hard copy as well as in the Bangladesh Rice Knowledge Bank (www.knowledgebank-brri.org), an electronic depository of agriculture-related knowledge, and in CD. David Shires facilitated the series of preparatory workshops for BRRI scientists on communicating to non-scientific audiences.

This module is in Bangla and the users will get access to all relevant information on rice production.

The Director General of BRRI Dr M Mahiul Haque was present at the closing session of the training as the chief guest. BRRI Director Research Dr MA Baqui and FoSHoL-IRRI Project Manager & IRRI Representative for Bangladesh Dr Noel P Magor were present as special guests while Head of IRRIT Training Division Dr Jahurul Islam chaired the session.

FoSHoL is a 56-month project that has been working for the improvement of food security and livelihoods of agriculture dependent resource-poor households, mainly small and marginal farmers. This project is coordinated by International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and funded by the European Commission (EC).

Formulate policy for mentally challenged children

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday urged the government to formulate a national policy for the welfare of the mentally challenged children.

They also stressed the need for taking necessary steps to create social awareness about the children with intellectual disability.

The workshop on 'Guidelines for reporting on intellectual disability' was organised by Unicef Bangladesh and the Ramna branch of the Society for the Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled (SWID) in the city on the eve of the International Day of Disabled Persons.

Editor of the daily Prothom Alo Matiur Rahman was present as chief guest at the inaugural session of the workshop while internationally famous artist Runa Laila and noted actor MA Alamgir were present as special guests.

Pledging to work with the Unicef and SWID Bangladesh in this field, Matiur Rahman said the journalists have been playing important role in social, political, and economic sectors in the country since 1950.

He however said the welfare organisations can create pressure on the journalists to write on the issue by providing necessary information in this regard.

He said the number of mentally challenged children in the country is around 42 lakh. Besides, there are many other retarded people in the society who also need the attention of the press.

"The public figures of the society have responsibility to do something for the mentally challenged children. They are not mad and due awareness about them must be built up with the help of the government," said Runa Laila.

Bureaucratic tangle hinders implementation of the Disabled Children Welfare Act 2001 which needs amendment to meet the present day requirements, said President of SWID Bangladesh MA Baten.

Secretary General of SWID Bangladesh Jowaharul Islam Mamun presented a keynote paper at the workshop.

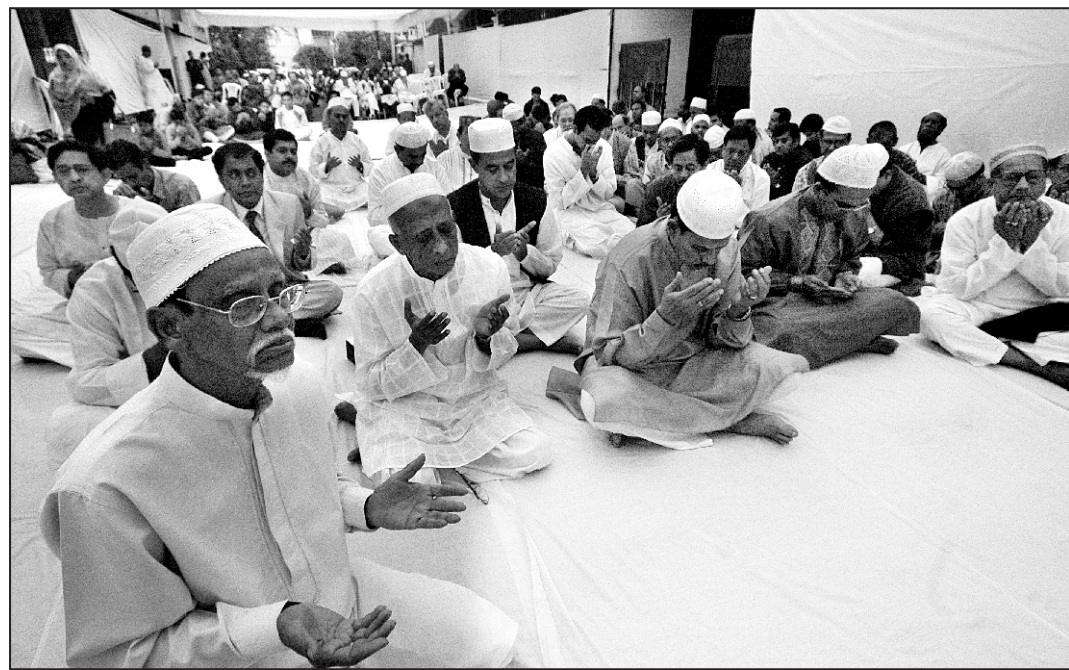
At the second session, presided over by poet Asad Chowdhury, the

speakers suggested meeting with the editors so that the national dailies give due coverage of stories related to retarded children.

They also suggested publishing books on the training of mentally challenged children, and their participation at different educational programmes in radio and television.

Unicef Assistant Communication Officer SM Rezwana-ul-Alam, Sajida Humayun Kabir of SWID Bangladesh, Dr Rawnak Hafiz of Autism Welfare Foundation, Senior Sub-Editor of the daily Ittefaq Kaykobad Milon, Cultural activist Sara Zaker, Rezauddin Stalin, mentally challenged children and their parents were present.

Meanwhile, Executive Director of Blind Education, Rehabilitation and Development Organisation (Berdo) Mohammad Saidul Haque, in a statement, called for creating an environment where the people with disability can enjoy life with dignity.



Qulkhwani of Shahadat Chowdhury, a freedom fighter and editor of Shaptahik 2000, was held at his New DOHS residence in the city yesterday.

PEOPLES' CARAVAN IN SATKHIRA

Raise agri subsidies to boost production

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

People from all walks of life including political leaders and professionals yesterday took part in the inaugural function of the 'Peoples' Caravan for Justice and Sovereignty' in Satkhira.

The campaign is part of a worldwide protest against the unfair trade policies of World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Speakers at the function accused the developed countries for using the WTO to have free access of their products in the markets of the developing countries only to destroy the agriculture and industrial sectors of the poorer countries.

"Though the developed countries are increasing subsidies to their agriculture, they are pressing the developing countries to withdraw agriculture subsidies which is injustice to us," they alleged.

They also suggested that the government should increase agricultural subsidies to boost production in agricultural sector. They alleged that the withdrawal of agricultural subsidy would seriously hamper the econ-

omy of Bangladesh, as the country is a food grain importing country.

The inaugural function of the Peoples' Caravan, organised by Anni Biswa Banijya Pratirodhe Gana Udyog (Peoples' initiative to resist unjust world trade) Committee Satkhira, floated by six local NGOs for creating awareness among the people to resist the anti-people treaty, was held on Satkhira Shaheed Minar premises with Ashraf Alam Tutu in the chair.

District Awami League General Secretary Md Nazrul Islam, Prof Abu Ahmed, Mahidul Haque, Principal Ashek E Elahi, Head Master Ashraf Ali Siddique, District NAP General Secretary Kazi Saidur Rahman, Krishak Sangram Samity Central Vice President Saifullah Laskar, District Krishak League General Secretary Monzur Hossain, Advocate Dilip Kumar Dev, Sheikh Harun Ur Rashid, Mahmud Ali Suman, M Shushanta and Jahangir Kabir Rana addressed the inaugural function.

"Millions of workers are being unemployed in the developing countries as the developed countries are

forcing the governments of the developing nations to shut down their industrial units," they alleged.

"The developed countries are setting several conditions and imposing duties of the products produced in the developing countries to hinder the easy access to their countries. On the other hand they are pressing the developing countries to withdraw the import duty of the products produced in those developed countries," they alleged.

They urged the government to finalise a comprehensive strategy for negotiations in the upcoming WTO ministerial meeting to gain maximum benefits from the process.

The exporting countries enjoy around 25 to 40 per cent price advantage as the producers there get more domestic support and export subsidy leaving countries like Bangladeshi farmers at bay, they said.

They also noted with concern that the WTO was contributing to widen the gap between the rich and the poor and urged the government to raise the issue at the WTO ministerial meeting. It will increase Bangladesh's over all import cost and put pressure on the balance of payment, they said.

The speakers asked the government to take strong stand at the upcoming WTO meeting for reviving food aid to the Least Developing Countries (LDCs) as well as duty and quota free access of their goods to the developed countries. They also urged the government not to sign the anti people treaty.

The Peoples' Caravan was organised as part of a series of programmes ahead of the WTO Hong Kong ministerial meeting to be held in December 13 to 18 for creating awareness among the people.

The Peoples' Caravan crossing Jessore, Khulna, Bagerhat, Madaripur, Gopalganj and adjoining districts will reach Dhaka on December 5 where a grand rally will be held.

APOLLO HOSPITALS Ctg info centre opens

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong Information Centre of Apollo Hospitals, Dhaka opened here yesterday.

Richard Larison, chief executive officer of the hospitals, inaugurated the centre at Nizam Road.

The information centre will facilitate easier access to 450-bed hospitals - a joint venture of Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Limited of India and STS Holding Limited of Bangladesh, said Larison.

The centre would provide the patients and the attendants with information like different departments, consultant rates, admission procedures, emergency service, ambulance and other facilities.

Specially trained personnel will be at the centre from Saturday to Thursday from 10.00am to 7.00pm with a one-hour break from 1:30pm to assist the patients.

Islamic parties protest bomb attacks

BSS, Dhaka

Different Islamic organisations yesterday strongly condemned the recent bomb blasts across the country saying killing innocent people through suicide bomb attacks cannot be a right way to establish Islam.

"The claim to establish Islam by killing judges, blasting bombs in Chittagong and Gazipur is nothing but a design to confuse the people," said Peer of Chormonai and Ameer of Islami Shashantantra Andolon Maulana Sayed Mohammad Fazlul Karim here yesterday.

Addressing a rally at the North Gate of Baitul Mokarram National Mosque, he said the perpetrators of these bomb attacks have been putting the real Islamic movement and Islamic education as well as the Ulemas under controversy.

The peer of Chormonai dubbed the bombers as the enemies of humanity and the country and called upon the people from all walks of life to forge a greater unity against these elements in the greater national interest.

Chairman of Islami Oikkyo Jote Alhaj Misbahur Rahman Chowdhury said, killing innocent people and terrorising the country in the name of Islam cannot be called jihad.

"The bombers can be dubbed either as the cold-blooded murderers, insane or heinous criminals in the eyes of Islam," he said while speaking as the chief guest at a seminar organised by Islami Jubo Jote at Motijheel area in the city.

Death anniversary



Today is the seventh death anniversary of Prof Md Yusuf Ali, an organiser of the Liberation War and the first education minister, says a press release.

Doa mahfil and other programmes will be held at his village home at Dinaipur.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Lt Ibne Fazal Badiuzzaman



Today is the 34th death anniversary of Lieutenant Ibne Fazal Badiuzzaman Bir Pratik, says a press release.

He embraced martyrdom in a face-to-face battle with the Pakistani forces at Akhaura during the Liberation War on this day in 1971.

Shaheed Lieutenant Badiuzzaman Smrity Sangsad will hold a Qurankhwani and milad mahfil at Ramdia College at his home village at Gopalganj and at his graveyard at Ajampur, Akhaura.

Ashraf Uddin Ahmed



Today is the sixth death anniversary of Ashraf Uddin Ahmed, legal guardian of the family of poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, says a press release.

A former president of Khulna Club, he was also the founder of the BIWTC Officers' Association and a founder-member of the Narayanganj Sudhijan Library.

Special prayers will be offered at the residences of his daughter and son at 146 New Baily Road, Eastern Bony, and Pallabi.

Prof Kazi Ashraf Mahmud



The 22nd death anniversary of Prof Kazi Ashraf Mahmud, a poet, scientist and anti-British movement veteran, will be observed today, says a press release.

Prof Kazi Ashraf Mahmud Smriti Parishad has taken up different programmes including placing of wreaths at his graveyard at Banani. Programmes will also be held at his village home at Gopalpur in Kalkini, Madaripur.

PROTESTS AGAINST BOMB ATTACKS



Different organisations took to the streets in the city yesterday to protest the spate of bomb attacks across the country. From top are Awami Sechchhasebak League, Metropolitan Bar Association, Bangladesh Jubo Maitry and Zia Parishad.

Diabetes may zap cognitive ability in middle age

REUTERS, New York

While several studies have demonstrated poorer cognitive function in older adults with type 2 diabetes compared to older adults without diabetes, a new study in the current issue of Neurology extends this association to middle-aged adults with diabetes.

This is important for two reasons, study author Dr Meena Kumari told Reuters Health.

"Firstly, diabetes is associated with poorer cognitive performance in younger age groups, which suggests that diabetes itself is associated with cognitive decline. Secondly, as the incidence of diabetes in younger age groups is increasing, this has implications for the management of diabetes in these groups."

It is also worth noting, Kumari continued that, "we found a poorer cognitive function score in those

that had been diagnosed (with diabetes) as early as two to five years previously and that it was explained by the metabolic abnormalities associated with diabetes."

For their research, Kumari and her colleague Dr. Michael Marmot, both from the International Center for Health and Society in London, UK, examined ties between diabetes and cognitive performance in 4,020 men and 1,627 women whose average age was 56. These individuals were participants in a study that began in 1985-1988.

By 1997-1999, a total of 208 men (5 percent) and 101 women (6 percent) had developed diabetes while 405 men (10 percent) and 192 women (12 percent) had impaired glucose tolerance, a pre-diabetic condition.

Qulkhwani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Qulkhwani of Nurul Haque, former general manager of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation, will be held at Subarna Rekha, House # 18, Road # 9/A, Dhanmondi after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.

He passed away at Lab Aid Cardiac Hospital on November 30 at the age of 78.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the qulkhwani.

WEATHER TODAY logo

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may also occur over the river basins of the country during early morning, Met office said, predicting that night temperature may remain nearly unchanged.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 30.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Chittagong and the lowest of 12.0 degree at Srimgongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:11pm today and rises at 6:27am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with 5 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 logo and list of events: Conference, Workshop, Painting exhibition, Rotary meeting.