



Workers dig a road in front of the New Market in the city to lay gas pipeline yesterday. The work has been going on for several days, causing suffering to pedestrians as well as passengers.

Price hike of agri inputs protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties protested price hike in fertiliser, pesticide and other agricultural inputs and demanded immediate reduction of prices.

Workers' Party in a statement yesterday urged people to make a success of upazila seize programme of 14-Party Alliance demanding price reduction and supply of agricultural inputs.

Bangladesh Samajibi Kendra in a statement alleged that a few unscrupulous traders are trying to create artificial fertiliser crisis to earn extra profit.

It expressed concern over the condition of the farmers of Northern region and feared low cultivation of crops including jute and boro.

Jatiya Krishok Samity O Bangladesh Khetmohor Union condemned the conspiracy of a section profiteers who are creating artificial crisis depriving the farmers from buying fertiliser in fair price. They demanded adequate supply of fertiliser and pesticide in the markets.

Join struggle for economic freedom

Speakers urge new generation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an open discussion yesterday said the war of independence has not finished yet as economic freedom of people, one of the main objectives of the liberation war, has not been achieved.

They called on the new generation to join the new struggle of independence with a patriotic spirit so that the next generation can get a truly independent Bangladesh, which will be free from poverty and where people can live in peace and express their views without fear.

Presidency University (PU) English Club organised the open discussion titled "Meet the freedom Fighters" at the PU conference hall at Gulshan in the city.

Speaking on the occasion Lt Col

(retd) Sajjad Ali Zahir Bir Pratik said the young generation has very little idea about our glorious history of liberation war.

The freedom fighters who took part in the war of liberation are not in the talks and that's why the present generation is not getting the real picture of the war, he added.

PU Pro-Vice Chancellor Harunur Rashid said, "We are still in the war of independence as we have not achieved everything for which we went for war."

"We have an independent land but we are not really independent as the countrymen are facing threats of bomb attacks," he said.

Freedom fighter Khuku Ahmed also spoke at the discussion, which was conducted by PU English Club President Idraq Hossain.



Visitors crowd around a stall at a 'Poush Mela' (winter fair) that began at Lalmohan Podder Lane in old Dhaka yesterday. The Pragati Sangha organised the five-day fair.

MIRPUR INCIDENT

Trader Osman arrested after victim's family files case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested Mirpur trader Osman Gani brother of Aftab Uddin, who was shot on Sunday, filed a case against the trader of plotting to kill Aftab.

Twelve other local criminals have also been named in the First Information Report.

They are Dish Shahin, Rezu, Shahadat, Khorshed, Montu, Mintu, Gazi Sumon, Paltan, Hassan, Zakir, Abdul Munshi and Abdul Quaimur.

Aftab's brother Afroz filed the case with Mirpur Police Station last night mentioning that Osman hired some goons to kill his brother as he defeated Osman twice in the election of a market committee at Mirpur in the city.

The complainant also mentioned that Osman, Dish Shahin, Rezu, Shahadat and Khorshed used to demand a huge amount of money as extortion from his brother.

Meanwhile, police produced Osman before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka yesterday with a petition for a seven-day remand for interrogation.

The court, however, granted Osman a one-day remand.

Two motorcyclists shot Aftab near his house at Block-E at Mirpur on Sunday sparking a violent protest by locals.

Family sources said Aftab is recovering his wound. He was shifted to Samarita Hospital from Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Law enforcers were deployed in different markets at Mirpur Section-1 yesterday while police were patrolling the road.

EXTORTION CASE

Verdict against 5 cops on Jan 3

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The defence lawyers of the extortion case against five policemen and their three informers yesterday told the court that their clients were falsely implicated in the case.

The lawyers pleaded their clients not guilty and demanded before the court for acquittal of their clients from charges of the case.

After hearing on arguments from the defence, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Shafiqul Islam of the Speedy Trial Court-1 fixed January 3 for verdict of the case.

Earlier, the prosecution completed their arguments and told the court that the charges brought against the accused were proved. So the prosecution pleaded for highest punishment for the accused.

The accused are Assistant Sub-inspector (ASI) Khalil Ullah, Nayek (non-commissioned officer) Abdul Bari and constables Shamsuzzaman, Korban Ali and Rafiqul Islam, and informers Shahadat Hossain, Mohammad Jasim and Mohammad Ripon.

They snatched silver ornaments and extorted Tk 28,000 from Sohel Rana and Habib, employees of City Silver House at Tantibazar in Old Dhaka on July 20.

Later, one of the victims Sohel filed an extortion case with Kotwali Police Station against Khalil Ullah, Nayek (non-commissioned officer) Abdul Bari and constable Shamsuzzaman and four others the next day.

Detective Branch (DB) of police on July 30 pressed charges against the five cops and their three informers in the extortion case.

DB Sub-inspector Rezaul Hossain, also the investigation officer, submitted the charge sheet to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka showing 20 people as prosecution witnesses.

Those who want to suppress madrasa edn enemies of Islam

Education minister tells view exchange meet

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Education Minister Dr M Osman Farruk yesterday said those who want to suppress madrasa education and block its improvement are the enemies of Islam.

He said that the uni-track education system focused on improving madrasa education. "Those who are opposed to the uni-track education system are not aware of the system," he said.

Addressing an opinion exchange meeting with principals and supers of Fazil and Kamil madrasas, the minister boldly supported the madrasa system, including the Kawmi madrasas.

Madrasah Education Board organised the meeting with its chairman Prof Monirul Islam in the chair.

About 500 principals and superintendents of madrasas from across the country joined the meeting at the Biam auditorium.

Emphasising the religious studies, Dr Farruk stressed the need for developing the system and make it pragmatic to cope with the changing times. He said the uni-track education system was aimed at modernising the madrasa education.

"But some people opposed it as they want to suppress madrasa education in the country," he said, adding "those who hinder improvement of the method are the enemies of Islam."

He insisted on revising the syllabuses of Fazil and Kamil classes and opined that the degrees should be considered equivalent to the Bachelors and Masters degrees of general education.

He said the Kawmi madrasas should continue as those are now. "But it would be better for the Kawmi madrasas if the government had some control," he said.

As there are widespread allegations that the Kawmi madrasas are generating Islamic militants, Dr Farruk said, "None will be able to prove that any madrasa is involved in the militancy."

"Individually, some students or teachers might be involved (in militancy), but it should not be the liability of an institution," he said. "When a student of the general system commits an offence, nobody blames the varsities as a

whole."

Talking to journalists after the view exchange meeting, the minister said that it was the duty of the Home Ministry to find out the personnel and institutes responsible for militant activities.

State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon strongly condemned the militant activities in the name of Islam.

He was proud to disclose in the

function that being requested by the local Olemas', he (state minister) himself prohibited satellite channels in Kachua, his own constituency in Chandpur.

Maulna Kamaluddin Jafri said the alliance government should not fear anyone as the madrasas are with the government. "The extent of militant activities got reduced after the Imams of the 250,000 mosques

across the country delivered anti-militant speeches at Juma prayers."

Dilara Hafiz, director general of the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Department and Jatiyatabadi Olema Dal General Secretary Maulana Shah M Nasarul Haque also spoke on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR

Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan discusses a point with Law minister Moudud Ahmed at an international conference on 'Cross Border Migration and Protection of Human Rights among the close neighbours in South Asia' at UTC Bhaban in the city yesterday. Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust organised the conference

Memorial meet held

Bangladesh Mahila Samity (BMS) arranged a memorial meeting and milad mahfil yesterday in commemoration of Dr Shahadat Hossain, a freedom fighter and former secretary general of Bangladesh Cancer Society (BCS), at the auditorium of BMS in the city, says a press release. BCS Secretary General Dr Abdul Kashem, Dr Golam Mohiuddin Faroque, Dr Abdur Razzaq and Dr Shahadat Hossain's elder sister Sufia Parvin spoke at the discussion.

BMS President Salina Khaleq presided.