



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, Green Voice and Dhanmondi Paribesh Unnayan Jote stage a demonstration on a land at Road No.-11-A in Dhanmondi yesterday demanding an end to felling of trees on the land. The trees are being felled in order to make room for a government staff quarters.

PHOTO: STAR

Read more books, develop habit of study

PM tells Ekushey Book Fair inaugural ceremony

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the people to read more books developing the habit of reading in every house, inspire children to read books and give book as gift to the loving ones.

She also reiterated her call to inspire the new generation to learn other necessary languages, including international language English.

The Prime Minister was inaugurating the month-long 'Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2006' on the Bangla Academy premises.

"Knowledge has no international boundary," Khaleda said, adding that selective books in Bangla language will have to be translated into foreign languages while books of science, technology, philosophy and creativity in other languages will have to be published in Bangla.

She said apart from further enriching and strengthening the

Bangla language, the other literatures and knowledge resources will have to be translated into Bangla.

Khaleda said spirit of the 'Ekushey' has assumed a new meaning and significance at the new post-independent perspective.

"This fair can enhance book mentality... people will have to be well educated by generating a study habit so that they can make valuable contributions in nation-building activities," she said.

"Book fair is a big part of people's culture in Bangladesh -- book is the upholder of nation's history, culture and tradition," she said.

She said her government has maintained their initiative to make book - the key element of education -- easily available as well as to raise the love of book in the society. But the mere initiative of government or state is not enough for achieving the goal.

"We all have to work en masse to attain the goal. All have to remember that knowledge-based state is a strong state," she told the inaugural function.

Ministers, state ministers, MPs, political leaders, intellectuals,

writers, publishers and other distinguished personalities attended the function.

"So, this state -- the result of huge sacrifice -- will have to be further strengthened by efforts of all through acquiring knowledge overcoming the resource constraints."

Khaleda paid tributes to the language martyrs as well as those who made contribution in different ways and at various levels before and after 1952 for upholding the dignity of and flourishing the mother tongue, Bangla.

One minute's silence was observed at the inaugural function to pay respect to the language martyrs.

The Prime Minister said so far, Bangla Academy had published 4,000 books, which is a remarkable achievement for the nation.

She said the foundation of forming a knowledge-based society has become stronger following the publishing of large number of books on language, literature, science, culture and technology by Bangla Academy in last 50 years.

Khaleda said that in last four years, she announced "Book Year", "Library Year", "Child-literature Year," and "Science Book Year" to encourage education and practice of knowledge.

The current year also has been declared as the "Technology Book Year", she said, urging the publishers to publish more worthy books to keep their contribution in building up a knowledge-based society.

Bangla Academy Chairman Prof Wakil Ahmed, Director General Dr Abul Kalam Manjur Morshed and Bangladesh Book Publishers' and Sellers' Association President Abu Taher also spoke at the function with State Minister for Cultural Affairs Begum Selima Rahman in the chair.

The Prime Minister formally inaugurated the book fair by cutting ribbon and visited some bookstalls. She also bought some books at the fair.

Earlier, she lays the foundation stone of the proposed Bangla Academy Bhaban on the academy premises.



Second death anniversary of Justice Debes today

Today is the second death anniversary of Justice Debes Bhattacharya, a champion of democratic and human rights, says a press release.

On the occasion, the construction of 'Justice Debes Bhattacharya Hospital' will begin at Ellenga, Tangail today. Feeding of the destitute has also been arranged.

The founder-president of Bangladesh Enemy Property Act Repeal Committee, Justice Bhattacharya was also a presidium member of Bangladesh Peace Council and executive committee member of Bangladesh Nagarik Committee.

He was a member of the Gono Adalat (people's court) set up to try the war criminals of 1971 and chairman of the citizen's commission set up to investigate the Jagannath Hall tragedy of October 15, 1985.

He was also a patron of Bangladesh Hindu Bouddha Christian Oikya Parishad, Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad and Mahanagar Sarbajanin Puja Committee.

Born on November 3, 1914 in a zamindar family of Ellenga, Justice Bhattacharya obtained his Bachelor of Law degree from the University Law College in Kolkata in 1938, securing first class in all the three law examinations -- preliminary, intermediate and the final. He did his MA in economics from the Kolkata University in 1940 and joined the Mymensingh Bar in 1941.

Because of his involvement in political activism, Justice Bhattacharya was put in jail by the then Muslim League government as a security prisoner for about two years during 1949-50. Following his release from prison, he started his practice at the Dhaka High Court in 1951. He was enrolled as an advocate of the Supreme Court in 1956 and as a senior advocate in 1961.

Justice Bhattacharya was nominated as a member to the Bar Council in 1960 and worked in this capacity till the coming into operation of the Bar Council Act, 1965. He was then appointed as member of the Rule Committee of the High Court.

After the independence of Bangladesh, Justice Bhattacharya was appointed as a judge of the newly established Bangladesh High Court in January 1972. He was elevated to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in June 1975 and retired from the bench in 1977.

He proved himself to be an outstanding jurist and some of his verdicts have been historically precedent setting judgements.

Justice Bhattacharya had published four volumes of essays and a book of poems. He had donated all his law books to the Supreme Court Bar Association Library.

JATIYA KABITA UTSAB BEGINS Call to raise voice against militancy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Kabita Utsab (national poetry festival)-2006 began in the capital amid festivity and enthusiasm yesterday with a call to raise voice against religious extremism.

The slogan of this year's festival is "Poetry against militancy". This year marked 20 years of the festival.

Poet Shamsur Rahman inaugurated the three-day festival at the Dhaka University Central Library Chatter by hoisting the national flag and the flag of Jatiya Kabita Parishad, the organiser of the event.

Poet Mostafa Majid read out an obituary reference at the inaugural ceremony.

The Kabita Parishad also placed wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar and at the graveyards of poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin and artist Qumrul Hasan on the DU campus.

The programmes of the festival include poetry recitation, discussion, exhibition, book fair and blood donation programme.

A number of poets from West Bengal, India, are taking part in the ceremony. They are Sunil Gangopadhyay, Utpal Kumar Basu, Rana Chattopadhyay, Kartik Modak, Bithi Chattopadhyay, Tripti Santra, Swapna Gangopadhyay, Rita Das, Chitra Lahiri, Dipak Lahiri, Amitabh Chakrabarty and Nripen Chakrabarty.

Inaugurating the festival, Shamsur Rahman said, "The situation (militancy) which we are facing now and where we are heading will not bring any good to us."

Poet M Samad read out the written speech of poet Shamsur Rahman.

Poet Tarique Sujat, publicity secretary of the Kabita Parishad, read out the declaration of the festival. The declaration called for rooting out the militancy forever and urged all peace-loving poets to raise their voice against militancy.

Talking to reporters, poet Sunil Gangopadhyay said militant activities in Bangladesh are claiming the lives of innocent people. Even the suicide bombers don't know why they are killing themselves, he added.

Only protesting the militancy is not enough, he said, adding that its root has to be found out.

Cabinet body meets to finalise Ekushey Padak

BSS, Dhaka

A meeting of the cabinet committee on National Award was held yesterday to finalise the nomination for Ekushey Padak-2006.

Minister for Environment and Forest Tariqul Islam presided over the meeting held at the Bangladesh Secretariat, an official handout said.

State Minister for Youths and Sports Fazlur Rahman and State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman attended the meeting. Cabinet Secretary M Abdul Halim, Information Secretary Barrister Haider Ali, Education Secretary Montajul Islam and Cultural Affairs Secretary ATM Ataur Rahman were present.

BNP grand rally in Ctg today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A grand rally of the ruling BNP will be held at 3:00pm today on Chittagong Outer Stadium premises in the port city.

BNP Chairperson Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is scheduled to address the rally as chief guest.

Centring the grand rally, much enthusiasm and festivity is running among the BNP leaders and activists of Chittagong division.

The city and its adjoining districts are now vibrant with the repeated announcements of the rally with loud speakers and urging people to make the event a success.

A number of archways were erected at different points of the city streets leading to the venue of the rally.

Sufficient measures were taken with deployment of over 1600 additional forces of police - 1298 in clothes, 150 in plain clothes and seven platoons from the riot gear, to maintain the security of the rally. Besides, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) will also strengthen its patrol in the city to help smooth holding of the rally.



Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad stages a demonstration at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday before submission of a memorandum to the President demanding resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner.

PHOTO: STAR

Tk 23.57 crore received in donation for cancer hospital

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) has so far received over Tk 23.57 crore in donation for the construction of Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH) at Sector-10 of Uttara model town in the city, says a press release.

The amount includes Tk 10.84 crore as cash donations or commitments from private individuals and corporate sectors, Tk 10 crore as government grant and over Tk 2.72 crore from lottery.

Different commercial and non-commercial organisations including a host of individuals also donated money for the construction of the cancer hospital.

Major donors include: Dutch-Bangla Bank Tk four crore, Barrister Rafiqueul Huq 1.60 crore, Meghnaghat Power Ltd Tk 60 lakh, Jamaluddin Kader Chowdhury Tk 45 lakh, Dhaka Bank, Mirza Gholam Erfan and his sisters and an individual who wants to remain anonymous donated Tk 30 lakh each.

Meanwhile, QA Hakim donated Tk 25 lakh, Rashida Taleb, Golam Shamsuddin Sawpan and AMM Aminur Rahman Tk 20 lakh each, Prof Hosne Ara Kamal and Engr MA Haque contributed Tk 15 lakh each among others.



Artistes sing at the inaugural ceremony of a street drama festival at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday. Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation organised the seven-day festival.

PHOTO: STAR