

Govt using militants to manipulate election

11-party leaders tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Left-leaning 11-party leaders yesterday said they have united under the umbrella of 14-party opposition alliance to establish secularism and implement 23-point national minimum programme to ensure people's rights.

Speaking at a discussion in the city, they said the country has got political independence, but economic independence is yet to be achieved.

The discussion titled 'Independence of Bangladesh: Rise of militancy, communalism and fundamentalism' was organised at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium marking the Independence Day today.

The 11-party leaders accused

the ruling BNP of giving shelter to anti-liberation war criminals and fundamentalist forces in the country.

The government has long been patronising the militants to manipulate the upcoming general election, they added.

Describing militancy as a threat to country's independence and sovereignty, the speakers vowed to eliminate it from the society.

Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon said militancy has been created due to extreme differences between the rich and the poor and the life style between urban and rural people.

As the government is sponsoring militancy, there is no way to get rid of it except a unity on the basis of the spirit of the liberation war, he

added.

Gono Form General Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik said the failure of democratic forces has given rise to militancy in the country.

Gonotantri Party President Nurul Islam said only the successful implementation of 14-party's reform proposals can foil all conspiracies of the alliance government.

Samyabadi Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua, who presided over the discussion, said the militant forces have been posted in all government sectors to turn this country into a new Pakistan.

11-party leaders Pankaj Bhattacharya, Azizul Islam Khan, Abdus Samad, Zakir Hossain and Lutfor Rahman also spoke.



BDB Organising Secretary Mahi B Chowdhury MP speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

6 engineers assaulted by Jubo Dal men in Feni

UNB, Feni

Jubo Dal activists allegedly assaulted six engineers of LGRD at Parshuram yesterday as they gave an order to stop road repair work for its poor quality.

Abu Bakar Siddique, one of the victims, said four or five activists led by Shamsul Haq Shahid assaulted them when they were returning after inspecting the repair work of Dhanikunda road at noon.

During the inspection, the engineers gave an order to stop the work for its extremely poor quality.

They came from Dhaka to inspect the work following complaints of poor work, said Siddique.

The Tk 8 lakh contract for the road repair work was awarded to M/S Abul Kalam Bhuiyan. But Shamsul Haq Shahid, joint general secretary of Phulgazi upazila Jubo Dal, grabbed the work from the construction firm.

JCD men beat DU student, 2 cafeteria staff

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the ruling BNP, beat a resident student of Dhaka University (DU) on Friday night leaving him seriously injured as he joins the procession of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) occasionally.

He was identified as Humayun Kabir, a resident student of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall.

Kabir, also a fourth year student of Law, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital with severe injuries in his body.

Later he was shifted to DU Medical Centre and was undergoing treatment there as of filing this report.

Sources said a group of 15 to 20 JCD men under the leadership of Rupun, Kalam and Kashem attacked Kabir at about 11:30pm. They also threw out Kabir's bed and valuables from his room no 505.

Meanwhile, a group of JCD men at Kabi Jasimuddin Hall ransacked the cafeteria of Suryasen Hall and beat its manager and one staff yesterday.

Witnesses said the expelled JCD activists including Delwar Hossain, Bashar Siddique and Zafar Ahmed ransacked the cafeteria in the morning when its manager told them to wait for a while for their breakfast.

The hall authorities are reportedly taking a move to file a criminal case in this regard.

Several BNP MPs to join BDB ahead of polls: Mahi

BDB to produce video documentary on govt's corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahi B Chowdhury, organising secretary of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB), yesterday said a number of BNP lawmakers will join BDB ahead of the next general election.

"When I resigned from BNP, several BNP MPs also wanted to resign with me, but they refrained from doing so after receiving threats of repression from the government," Mahi, also a lawmaker from Munshiganj-1 constituency, said at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city.

He said the BDB will produce a video documentary on BNP-Jamaat alliance government's corruption in different sectors ahead of the election.

It will also publish a white paper on the 'plundering of Tk 20,000 crore by the government', he added.

Mahi alleged that his constituency is being deprived of develop-

ment because he is an opposition lawmaker.

The district administration has cancelled an allocation of Tk 56 lakh for development work in his constituency for 2005-2006 fiscal year at the instruction of the government, he said.

The government has also cancelled Tk 15 crore projects for his constituency, he added.

"Protesting the government's discriminatory attitude, we build a two-kilometre road in my constituency with voluntary participation of several thousand people in the construction work," he said.

Mahi also said that there is no possibility of BDB forming an alliance with the 14-party opposition combine for the general election.

BDB Joint General Secretary Firoz M Hasan and Convener of Jubo Dhara ATM Kamal were present at the press conference.

WEATHER

TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country having chances of rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Tangail and Mymensingh in the next 12 hours as of 6:00 pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 38.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 17.4 degree Celsius at Jessore.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:12pm today and rises at 5:56am 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	36.4	22.5	64	37
Chittagong	32.6	22.0	76	74
Rajshahi	37.5	19.2	41	33
Khulna	36.7	22.4	75	32
Barisal	35.8	23.5	83	63
Sylhet	34.0	20.4	63	48
Cox's Bazar	32.6	22.5	75	74

Dawn-to-dusk hartal in Khulna April 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Greater Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee has called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in city on April 5 to press home its nine-point demand.

These include construction of Padma bridge at Mawa, a deep-sea port at Akram point and an airport at Khanjahan Ali, installation of 210 megawatt power plant, a full-fledged TV centre, expansion of district stadium and installation of floodlight in divisional stadium, reopening of Daulatpur Jute Mill and supply of gas through pipeline.

The decision to call a daylong hartal was taken at a rally held at Khalishpur sramik maidan on Friday.

Convener of Khulna-Jessore regional committee of Patkal Sangram Parishad' Sardar Motaharuddin presided.

Independence Day programmes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political, socio-cultural and student organisations have sketched out various programmes to mark the 35th Independence and National Day today.

Ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has chalked out a 10-day programme on the occasion. Today party leaders will place wreaths at National Mausoleum at 6:00am. Jasas will also hold a cultural programme at Ramana Batamool.

Main opposition Awami League (AL) will place wreaths at National Mausoleum at 7:00am and bring out a procession from Suhrawardi Udyan that will march to Bangabandhu Bhaban at Dhanmondi.

Jatiya Party (Manju) will hoist national flag atop of its party office at 6:30am and place wreaths at National Mausoleum in Savar at 7:30am.

Liberation War Museum will organise an amusement programme for children on its premises at 10:00am as part of its weeklong Independence Day programmes. Later veteran artists will paint, which Channel I will air live.

Bangladesh Shippakala Academy will hold a discussion and a cultural programme at the Academy auditorium at 6:30pm.

Muktijoddha Oikya Parishad will hold a reminiscing meeting and a cultural programme on 'Shikha Chirantan' premises from 8:00 am to 11:00am.

Bangladesh Chhatra Maitree will place wreaths at National Mausoleum at 8:30am.

Communist Party of Bangladesh, Workers Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Inu), Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, Jaitiya Oikya Mancha, Swadhinata Rally Ujjapan Committee, Dainik Amar Desh, Nazrul Academy, Liberal Party Bangladesh, Freedom Fighters Peoples' Council, Sonar Bangla Jubo Council, CRC Shishu Sangathan, Bhashani Moncha, have also taken programmes to mark the day.

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The government has also cancelled Tk 15 crore projects for his constituency, he added.

"Protesting the government's discriminatory attitude, we build a two-kilometre road in my constituency with voluntary participation of several thousand people in the construction work," he said.

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Obituary

Begum Afsari Rahman, wife of former ambassador KM Shamsur Rahman, passed away due to cardio-respiratory failure at the Labaid Hospital in the city on Friday at the age of 75, says a press release.

She is survived by her husband, three daughters and one son and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her death.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held at Road No 7, Dhanmondi Mosque in the city after Zohr prayers today. She will be buried in the family graveyard at Balia under Dhamrai Police Station in Dhaka district.

Her quikhwani will be held at her residence at House # 500-A, Road # 7, Dhanmondi, in the city after Magrib prayers on March 28.

Muhammad Azeem

M u h a m m a d Azeem, youngest son of MA M a n n a n , passed away due to cancer on Thursday at Los Angeles in the United States at the age of 40, says a press release.

He left behind his wife and his only daughter.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his house at 12/7, Iqbal road, Mohammadpur after Asr prayers today.

Death anniversary

Today is the third death anniversary of Afsar Uddin Sheikh, father of the owner of P a r i j a t Publications Monir Hossain Khoka, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his house at Farashganj road in the city after Asr prayers today.

Rita, Mita return to normal life, want to set up clinic for the poor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rita and Mita, the two sisters who hit the headlines in July last year for their strange lifestyle, returned to their home at Mirpur in the city yesterday after undergoing treatment for about eight months at a clinic.

On their return home, the two sisters, who had been suffering from serious mental and behavioural disorders, thanked all who helped them return to normal life.

"We will now set up a charitable clinic in our house to provide treatment for deprived people," said Rita, who is a doctor.

The two, Engineer Nurunnahar Mita and Dr Ainun Nahar Rita, being engrossed in religious practice and supernatural beliefs, had been leading an extremely confined and secluded life at their paternal house at Block-9, Section-6, Mirpur since 1996.

In July last year, a team of the Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) managed to convince the sisters and enter the house with the cooperation of Pallabi police and took them to a clinic for immediate treatment.

Since then, they had been under the treatment of psychiatrist Dr Mohit Kamal at Prottoy Medical Clinic at Banani.

The two sisters yesterday arranged a programme at their newly renovated house on the occasion of their return home.

Speaking as the chief guest, Dr Kamal Uddin Siddique, principal secretary to the prime minister, said Rita and Mita are very brilliant students and they will live a normal life again.

He also said that he would help them get jobs in their respective fields as per the direction of the prime minister.

Rita obtained her MBBS degree from Saimullah Medical College in 1988 and joined the government service in 1991 but resigned in



Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui, principal secretary to the prime minister, and his wife present bouquets to engineer Nurunnahar Mita and Dr Ainun Nahar Rita at a programme at their home in the city yesterday.

1996.

Mita, who graduated from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) in 1992, served at the Sylhet Gas Field in 1994, Gas Infrastructure Development Project in 1996 and Buet's Petroleum Engineering Department in 1997.

Psychiatrist Dr Mohit Kamal, who treated the sisters, said they have fully recovered from their mental disorders, but they now need to be rehabilitated in their professional lives.

He said they had been suffering from a serious mental disease

caused by a multi-factorial situation.

One isolates oneself from the society and social life the way the two sisters have done only when one is schizophrenic, he added.

He also said mental breakdown, suspicion, sense of insecurity and various social pressures might have caused their serious mental disorder.

Citing a WHO survey, Dr Mohit said that one percent of the population in Bangladesh suffer from serious mental diseases while 10 percent suffer from minor mental disorders.

Dr MA Hadi, president of

Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), said the case of the two sisters has sent a message to the mental patients that such diseases are curable.

Dr Firoz Mahmud Iqbal, assignment officer to the PM's Office, Advocate Elina Khan, executive director of BSEHR, AZM Zahid Hossain, secretary general of BMA, Nazmul Haque, managing director of Prottoy Medical Clinic, and Kamun Nahar Hena, elder sister of Rita and Mita, also spoke.

Hon promotion in army on Independence Day

Bss, Dhaka

A total of 29 Army and eight Navy personnel have been granted honorary promotion and commission on the occasion of Independence and National Day, according to a notification issued by the Ministry of Defence.

The Honorary Lieutenant promoted to the rank of Honorary Captain of the Army are Honorary Lieutenant Sheikh Motaleb Ali, Artillery, Honorary Lieutenant Md Nurul Amin Pradhan, East Bengal, Honorary Lieutenant Md Abdul Quayum, Engineers, Honorary Lieutenant Md Nurul Haque, EME, Honorary Lieutenant Abdul Latif, AEC, Honorary Lieutenant Md Mostafa Kamal, AEC, Honorary Lieutenant Md Kawsar Ali, Artillery and Honorary Lieutenant Md Iskandar Sayeed Khan, Artillery, said an ISPR press release yesterday.

The junior commissioned officers of the Bangladesh Army who got commission in the rank of honorary lieutenant are: Master Warrant Officer Md Abul Bashar, East Bengal, Master Warrant Officer Md Shahadat Hossain, Artillery, Master Warrant Officer Abdul Jabbar Howlader, AEC, Master Warrant Officer Md Abdul Baki, AEC, Master Warrant Officer Md Atiar Rahman, AC, Master Warrant Officer Zahurul Haque Khandakar, East Bengal, Master Warrant Officer Md Nurul Islam Khandakar, BIR, Master Warrant Officer Md Farukul Islam, EME, Master Warrant Officer Md Harunur Rashid Fakir, Engineers, Master Warrant Officer Md Mobarak Ali, EME, Master Warrant Officer Akand Md Rafiqul Islam, ACC, Master Warrant Officer SM Alauddin Kabir, ASC, Master Warrant Officer S M Moniruzzaman, Bir, Master Warrant Officer Md Delwar Hossain, East Bengal, Master Warrant Officer Md Maksuduzzaman Khan, East Bengal, Master Warrant Officer Md Alamgir Hossain, EME, Master Warrant Officer Md Showkat Alam Moral, East Bengal, Master Warrant Officer Md Shahjahan Ali, East Bengal, Master Warrant Officer Md Panna Ullah, East Bengal, Master Warrant Officer Md Mohiul Islam, AC and Master Warrant Officer Md Abdul Matin, Engineers.

The Master Chief Petty Officers (MCPO) of the Bangladesh Navy who have been granted honorary commission in the rank of honorary Sub-Lieutenant are:

Ikhtiar Uddin Ahmed, MCPO (X) (GI), Md Mozammel Haque, MCPO (Com), Md Shah Alam Chowdhury, MCPO (REG), Sheikh Md Ruhul Amin, MCPO (S/W) and Md Fazul Haque, MCPO (Med).

Besides, the honorary sub-lieutenants promoted to the rank of Honorary Lieutenant included Honorary Sub-Lieutenant MA Taher, (E), BN, Honorary Sub-Lieutenant MM Rahman, (X), BN and Honorary Sub-Lieutenant MA Hossain, (X), BN.

These promotions will come into effect from March 26, 2006, the notification added.

Militancy a blueprint of Jamaat: Jalil

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil called upon people for a national unity of pro-liberation forces to protect the country's sovereignty and independence.

He said the militant activities of Bangla Bhai and JMB were the blueprint of the ruling coalition ally Jamaat-e-Islami to destroy the progressive section of the society.

He was addressing a public meeting of 14-party opposition alliance at Durgapur College ground yesterday afternoon.

AL presidium member Motia

Chowdhury, AL advisory council member Prof Abdul Khaleque and Sardar Amjad Hossain also addressed the meeting with Durgapur upazila AL president Nazrul Islam in the chair.

Jalil said the government must bring the electoral reform proposed in the parliament. He warned that people's movement would not stop if any drama is staged over the reform.

Motia Chowdhury said the cabinet members resorted to corruption when people were dying with crises of power, fertiliser and skyrocketing prices of essentials.

Three prisoners escape from Bandarban jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Three prisoners escaped from Bandarban district jail yesterday afternoon.

According to sources, the three--Mong Braching Marma, Badal Marma and Mou Ching Marma--were working on the jail premises at about 3:00pm. Suddenly, they fled the scene, dodging the jail authorities and other prisoners.

Acting Jailor Abul Kalam Azad told journalists that Braching Marma and Badal Marma were jailed in an arms case while Ching Marma was jailed under women and Children Repression Prevention Act.



Members of Kachi-Kanchar Mela sing at an Independence Festival programme at Rabindra Sarobar stage at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday. Sammilita Sangskritik Jote organised the festival.

Modern volumetric CT angiogram facility at Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital and Research Institute (ICHR) has installed the most modern volumetric CT angiogram facility to obtain a clear 3D images of the heart.

With this new, risk-free and non-invasive technology, doctors will be able to diagnose a patient's illness much faster to commence the treatment more quickly, said the experts.

The installation of the volumetric CT angiogram facility was done under a joint venture agreement between ICHRI and BBC (Bangladesh Business Corporation).

Information Minister M Shamsul Islam formally launched the CT angiogram facility by attending a

function as chief guest at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre yesterday.

He said with this latest CT angiogram technology, people would be enormously benefited.

Bangladesh has made tremendous progress particularly in health sector in last few decades, but many things have yet to be done, the minister added.

Omar Ishrak Ph.D, chief executive officer of GE Healthcare, delivered a keynote speech on CT angiogram.

Nares Narasimham, business manager of CT (South Asia), made a technical presentation on volumetric CT angiogram.

He said this CT angiogram is non-

invasive, painless, safe and robust.

Monzur Elahi, chairman of ICHRI board of management, said even 10 years back many medical technological facilities were not available in the country for which people used to go abroad.

Now these are being installed in the country, he added.

Mohammed E Malik, chairman of BBC, said it must be under consideration to keep the cost of angiogram under the affordability of all as far as possible.

Secretary General of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh Prof A K Azad Khan and Chief Executive Officer of ICHRI M A Mokaddem also spoke on the occasion.