

Govt has politicised key public institutions

Speakers say at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday blamed the government for politicising key public institutions including the Election Commission.

They said the nation is heading towards a crisis due to failure of the political leadership.

Citing the examples of Kansat and Shanir Akhra, the speakers warned that similar incidents may happen across the country if immediate steps are not taken to contain corruption and bring back good governance in key public institutions.

The seminar titled 'Shaping the future of Bangladesh' was organised by Bangladesh Young Economic Association at the National Press Club in the city with its President AZM Saleh in the chair.

In his keynote speech, Qazi Kholiuzzaman Ahmad, president of Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA), said the nation today is beset by some fundamental problems.

"Pervasive corruption, social violence and erosion of people's confidence in key public institutions are some of the fundamental crisis we are facing today," he explained.

Corruption has been so entrenched that even the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), set up over a year ago, has not been given the power to work independently, the BEA president added.

Another stalemate has been created in the Election Commission, which has failed to prepare an acceptable voter list for the next general election, Kholiuzzaman said, adding the chief election commissioner (CEC) and other people responsible for its failure should leave the office and pave the way for others to do the job properly.

ASM Shahjahan, former adviser to caretaker government, said how people can expect a fair poll when the CEC was appointed considering his party loyalty.

"Time has come to set up another commission to identify why the Election Commission is not working properly," he added.

Shahjahan said police and civil administration cannot serve people as they are used for political purpose.

The interest of people is totally ignored and there is serious lack of accountability, he added.

He said there is autocracy in the name of democracy and the pre-

vailing situation indicates that the country has been leased to coalition government for five years.

Shahjahan said people's right to information has been severely ignored and the 'secretariat has become the biggest cold storage in the country'.

Taking part in the discussion, Khandaker Ibrahim Khaled, managing director of Pubali Bank Limited, said all national bodies have been destroyed.

The situation has turned so bad that it has pushed the back of most commoners against the wall, he said citing the example of Kansat.

There is a serious vacuum in the political leadership and that's why it has become imperative to launch awareness programme to awake people, Ibrahim added.

There is no planning, he said, adding the economy is growing but it is not growing equitably.

Ataus Samad, advisory editor of Amar Desh, said electoral reforms discussion between the ruling coalition and the opposition combine should take place in parliament immediately as the proposed committee has not been formed yet.

SIEGE PROGRAMME

130 Netrokona AL activists sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrokona

Netrokona police filed three cases with the Speedy Trial Tribunal accusing 130 Awami League (AL), Jubo League and Chhatra League activists in connection with AL's siege programme of District Commissioner's (DC) office on May 10.

Clashes erupted between AL and BNP activist on that day as AL went forward with their siege programme to protest fuel price hike and fake voters on the voter list.

Netrokona AL President Samsujjhuha, General Secretary Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru, Joint Secretary Nur Khan Mitu, Organising Secretary Bhajan Sarkar, Jubo League Convenor Omar Faruque, Chhatra League President Majibul Haque Hira and Secretary Mozammel Hossen Tuku are also accused in the case.

Netrokona police searched for the AL activists at their homes. Sources said most of the AL activists of Netrokona town and upazila headquarters have fled after the filing of the case yesterday.

Police reportedly vandalised the house of Netrokona district Jubo League leaders Aazharul Islam and Rafiqul Islam at Chhalisha in Netrokona failing to find them in their houses.

Meanwhile, at 9:00pm yesterday, BNP cadres ransacked the AL office in Kalmakanda. They also beat up 10 AL activists who were inside the office. BNP cadres also ransacked the Shidly Bazar AL office last night and damaged 10 shops in the area. They also damaged the house of Joinal Abadin, secretary of Koilaty union AL in Kalmakanda upazila.

Tributes paid to Nasreen Huq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a memorial meeting yesterday termed Nasreen Pervin Huq, late country director of ActionAid, as 'Mother Teresa of Bangladesh' for her contribution to the welfare of distressed people in the society.

They said Nasreen was a dear friend to all irrespective of race, religion and profession with special dedication for the wellbeing of challenged people and minority groups.

The meeting titled 'Homage: In Memory of Nasreen Huq' was organised by Action Aid Family at Osmani Memorial Hall in the city.

The meeting began observing one-minute silence followed by recitations from the holy books of different religions.

In her introductory speech acting Country Director of Action Aid Shahamin S Zaman said, Nasreen introduced two new areas of work for Action Aid: gender equity and social and economic justice.

Describing Nasreen as 'vibrant person', she said, "We would look forward to fulfil her dreams of a balanced society with regard to gender and economic issues."

Mahbub Kabir, team leader, and Faria Selim, associate coordinator of Action Aid, spoke on the life and works of Nasreen.

They said born in Dhaka in 1958, Nasreen took her master's degree in Nutrition Science from University College of Barkley in San Francisco, California.

Her deep love for people of the country and sense of responsibility for the society brought her back to her own country, they added.

Describing Nasreen as 'Internationalist', Action Aid Chief Executive Ramesh Singh said, "Her agenda was beyond the borders as she brought the issues of universal gender balance, and right to foods and healthcare."

Close relatives and colleagues of Nasreen from home and abroad also recalled their memories with Nasreen.

Country's leading singers and artistes performed some favourite songs and poems of Nasreen on this occasion.

Nasreen died in a car accident at her residence in Dhanmondi on April 24 last.

33 injured as villagers clash over harvesting paddy in Sirajganj

UNB, Sirajganj

At least 33 people were injured, five critically, in a clash between two groups over harvesting paddy at Rashidpur village in Kazipur upazila yesterday.

Police said there was enmity between Rezaul Islam and Mizanur Rahman over land and the clash ensued between their supporters when they went to the disputed cropland for harvesting paddy at noon.

Twelve houses were also damaged and looted by marauders during the clash.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Of the injured, 17 were admitted to Sadar Hospital.



PHOTO: STAR

Police intercept a procession brought out by 14-party at Maghbazar intersection in the city yesterday demanding supply of adequate water and uninterrupted electricity.

DEATH OF WOMAN PATIENT Angry people ransack clinic in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Angry people ransacked a private clinic as a pregnant woman died due to wrong treatment and neglect allegedly by doctors at Seba Private Clinic in Shahzadpur of Sirajganj on Friday night.

At least eight people including a nurse were injured in the attack, sources said.

Local sources said Hanufa Khatun, 28, wife of Ebad Ali of Moyakhola village, was admitted to the clinic on Friday evening when she was in labour. But the doctors did not take necessary step immediately.

As her condition deteriorated, Yusuf Ali, an emergency medical officer of the clinic, pushed her an injection and took her to operation theatre. But she died there after some time.

Hearing the news, locals and victim's relatives came to the spot and ransacked the clinic.

Victim's husband alleged that his wife died for faulty treatment and neglect of the clinic authorities and the attending doctor.

But, Babul, director of the clinic, denied allegation of neglect saying

the patient was brought to the clinic in the last moment.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Shahzadpur Police Station in this connection.

Meanwhile, several hundred people along with victim's relatives brought out a procession at Upazila headquarters protesting the incidence and demanding punishment to the authorities of the clinic.

Body recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demra police yesterday recovered a body of an unidentified youth at a ditch from Sayedabad area in the city.

Sir Salimullah Medical College Morgue sources said the body had marks of injury in the head.

Police suspect that he might have been killed two or three days ago and the body was buried deep into the mud in ditch.

AL calls hartal in Bogra tomorrow

UNB, Bogra

Awami League has called for a daylong hartal in Bogra town tomorrow protesting arrest and police action against the party activists.

Police arrested seven Jubo League leaders from a procession in the town.

A rally of Awami League led 14-party combine was scheduled near Satmatha in the afternoon that was foiled by the police apprehending clash with ruling BNP which held a rally 50 yards away at the same time.

Police obstructed the Jubo League procession at Jhautala leading to clash. Some 30 people, including five policemen, were injured in the clash. Police fired teargas shells to disperse the procession. Seven Jubo League leaders were picked up from the spot.

Additional police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were deployed at different parts of the town to ward off further trouble.

Valuables worth Tk 3.15 lakh stolen from city house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Valuables, gold ornaments and cash worth Tk three lakh and 15 thousand were stolen on Friday night from a house in the city's Badda area.

Thieves entered Monir Hossain's house in Badda's West Padaria area on Friday evening. There was no one in the house at that time.

While fleeing the scene with the booty, the locals chased the thieves and caught a thief named Abul Kashem.

Project on prevention of HIV/AIDS launched

A project on "Prevention of HIV/AIDS among Young People in Bangladesh" Phase 2 was launched at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel recently, says a press release.

In collaboration with National AIDS/STD Programme (NASP), Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) and Save the Children-USA, the project will be funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM).

The recipient of this global fund is Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Save the Children, USA, will be the management agency to implement the project through the partners Mattra, HIV/AIDS and STD Alliance Bangladesh (HASAB), PIACET, Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra, ICDDR,B and their 12 associates.

The launch celebrated the successful completion of Phase 1 of the project (two years) and the beginning of Phase 2 of the project (3 years) for which 19.9 million US dollar was received by the government from the global fund for the entire five-year project.

Phase 2 started with approval from GFATM as recorded high performance project in Bangladesh. This is a continuation of the project and is currently being implemented through partners for achieving the desired objectives and goal.

Under Phase 1 and Phase 2, 80 percent of the adolescents will have knowledge about HIV/AIDS and how to protect themselves from infection, 60 percent will have access to STI services, 50 percent will be able to access condoms as and when needed and to ensure that there will be improved commitment and support from policy makers, religious and community leaders, parents and teachers, for programmes to prevent young people getting infected with the virus.

Photo exhibition in Ctg today

CU CORRESPONDENT

A daylong exhibition of photo features begins here in the port city today.

Focus Bangla, a nationwide photo agency, organised the exhibition at Chittagong Press Club, where "My Beautiful Bangladesh", a photo album comprising 32 photo features by Nadim Qadir, advisory editor of the agency, will be displayed.

Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury will inaugurate the exhibition at 11:00am.

The album will also be available at city's Current Book Centre, Batighar, Hotel Peninsula Shopping Corner and Hotel Agrabad Shopping Corner.

The exhibition will remain open for all and ten percent of the total proceeds of albums and posters will be handed over to Acid Survivors Foundation, the organisers informed.

Journo Ayub passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Mohammad Ayub Hossain, former president of Khulna Union of Journalists (KUJ) and Khulna bureau chief of the Dinik Ittefaq, passed away yesterday at Garib Newaz Clinic in the city at the age of 65.

He left behind his wife, six sons, two daughters and a host of colleagues and admirers to mourn his death.

Ayub, also former general secretary of Khulna Press Club, joined the Dinik Ittefaq in 1958. Born in 1941 at Gungati village under Shalikhra upazila of Magura, Ayub was attacked with cancer last year. He was admitted to the clinic last week when his condition deteriorated.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held on the Khulna Press Club premises after Maghrib prayers.

Leaders of political parties, socio-cultural organisations, business community, Khulna Press Club, KUJ and KMUJ visited his residence to pay their last respect.

Outgoing president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, newly elected President Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul and Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Khulna Press Club President Alhaj Liaqat Ali and General Secretary AK Huru, KUJ President Abdul Matin and General Secretary Samwar Ahmed Kajo, MUJ President Anisuzzaman and General Secretary H M Alauddin in separate statements condoled the death.

Panni laid to rest

Bss, Dhaka

Former Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni was laid to eternal rest at his family graveyard at Tangail yesterday.

He died on May 11 at a city hospital due to old-age complications.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held at Gulshan Azad Mosque in the city. Deputy Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui, Chief Whip Khandker Delwar Hussain, Agriculture Minister MK Anwar, Food and Disaster Management Minister Kamal Ibne Yousuf, Textile and Jute Minister Shahajan Siraj, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Prof Rezaul Karim and members of parliament attended the janaza.

Earlier, the Deputy Speaker, on behalf of Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, placed a wreath on the coffin of Panni at his Baridhara residence. He also conveyed his sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.



PHOTO: STAR

Nurun Nahar, an acid survivor, bursts into tears while speaking at a meeting held in memory of Nasreen Pervin Huq, country director of ActionAid, at Osmani Memorial Hall in the city yesterday.

WEATHER
T O D A Y

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise by 1-3 degree Celsius over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 33.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rangamati and lowest 20.1 degree Celsius at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:33pm today and rises at 5:16am 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	31.3	22.0	82	62
Chittagong	31.8	23.2	79	77
Rajshahi	29.5	21.4	88	80
Khulna	32.5	23.0	87	80
Barisal	32.4	22.5	83	74
Sylhet	32.9	22.8	82	65
Cox's Bazar	32.0	24.0	87	--