

# Dr Kamal calls for integration of mass people into agitation

## ‘Politics in Bangladesh and role of Awami League’ launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A secular democratic society will not be established unless the mass people are integrated into the mainstream of the agitation, said Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday.

"Although we achieved our independence after a nine-month-long liberation war, we are yet to achieve economic freedom and empowerment of mass people," he said while speaking as chief guest at a book publication ceremony.

Dr Kamal said a united movement integrating the mass people, who are the main power of a country, is a must to make the country free from terrorism, militancy and corruption.

\* Though we (14-party) have been demanding reforms of the caretaker government, Election

Commission and removal of chief election commissioner to hold a free and fair election, our main objective is to make the country free from black money, corruption, terrorism and nepotism," he added.

"I am sure that the people will resist all the misdeeds of the BNP-Jamaat coalition government as they did in 1971 and 1990," he said.

Dr Kamal urged the leaders of AL-led 14-party opposition combine to integrate the general people in the mainstream movement to save the country.

Lauding the author for writing the book he said the book is very timely and Akbar (the author) tried to speak the truth that is rare in this time.

The publication ceremony of the book titled 'Politics in Bangladesh and the role of Awami League' written by Ghulam Akbar

Chowdhury, husband of Awami League (AL) Presidium Member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, was held at Cirdap auditorium.

The book is a compilation of 27 articles on the past history of liberation war and contribution of different AL leaders.

Abdur Razzak MP said the author upheld the exact history at the time of history distortion in the country.

He said to speak the truth courageously is a difficult thing and the author had done this tough job through the book.

Prof Anisuzzaman said the book described the past history and shows the guideline for the future.

The book also deals with criticism of some activities of AL government during its last tenure and also indicates the some guidelines and

suggestions for holding a free and fair election, he said.

Ghulam Akbar Chowdhury said the main goal of today's politics is to grabbing the power and plundering the state asset.

"We all have to come out from this types of politics," he added.

He urged people from all strata to come forward to resist the evil power of the country.

Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui presided over the ceremony while Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, editor of the Bangladesh Observer, Rashedul Haque Loba, advisory editor of Amader Somoy, Osman Gani, proprietor of Agami Prakashani and publisher of the book also spoke.

Earlier, the author and the publisher handed over the book to Dr Kamal Hossain.



PHOTO: STAR

National Adivasi Parishad takes out a procession in Rajshahi city yesterday to mark the 151st anniversary of Santal revolution.

## Prices of lentil, rice, potato rise further

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The price of lentil marked further rise yesterday with the retailers found selling the essential item at Tk 65-68 a kg against Tk 62 a day before at Karwan Bazar in the city.

"Retailers are just taking the opportunity of its less supply in the market following Indian government's ban on the export of lentil," said Abdul Baten, pulse importer and owner of the Bayzid Enterprise.

He said they used to sell a kg lentil at Tk 50-54, but the retailers sell it at Tk 65.

He said the import of pulse from India came to an almost halt as no pulse-laden truck entered into

Bangladesh from Thursday.

Baten however denied the allegation of syndication at import stage and said importers do not stock lentil.

He said they are now planning to import lentil from Turkey. It may take nearly one month for Turkish lentil to land in the local market, he added.

The price of other essentials like rice and potato also increased in city kitchen markets.

Each kilogram of coarse rice including pari and BR-28 was found selling at Tk 18.5 to 19.

The price of najirshail also increased by over Tk one a kg and was found selling at Tk 23 while miniket at Tk 27. According to the wholesalers, they are selling

najirshail at Tk 21.43 a kg and miniket at Tk 25.19.

"We bear higher transport cost than retailers but they raised the price," said Ibrahim Khalil of Ramganj Rice Agency at Karwan Bazar.

The price of sugar however remained steady.

But the price of per kg potato soared to Tk 18 this week from Tk 16 while the price of Indian garlic declined to Tk 65 from Tk 80 on last Friday.

Jahir, a potato vendor, said production shortfall in line with potato export affected the retail price of potato.

## SIMA RAPE CASE Adv Elina Khan made PP

Bss, Chittagong

The government has appointed eminent human rights activist Advocate Elina Khan as the public prosecutor and two other activists Advocate Zia Habib Ahsan and Advocate Nazmul Alam Chowdhury Noman as additional public prosecutors to conduct the sensational evidence-concealing case of raping poor garment worker Sima Rani.

Advocate Elina is the executive director of the Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) while Advocate Habib is the president of the Chittagong Metropolitan chapter and Advocate Noman the president of Comilla district unit of the organisation, a BSEHR press release said yesterday.

The case is now pending with the District and Sessions Judge's Court of Comilla.

The BSEHR filed the case against former officer-in-charge (OC) of Raozan Police Station in Chittagong and investigation officer (IO) of Sima rape case Serajul Islam, former sub-inspector of Raozan police Iqbal and former ASP of CID in Chittagong Hafizuddin Dewan.

It accused the police officials of concealing evidence of the rape case with an ill-motive for acquitting the accused policemen.

The case was filed after violation of Sima Rani in Raozan police custody allegedly by some on-duty policemen in 1996.

A court here earlier acquitted the accused policemen from the rape charges, as the allegations brought against them were not proved.

Hearing on whether Serajul Islam is involved in concealing evidence of the rape case will be held on July 9, court sources said.



PHOTO: STAR

Garments Workers Unity Forum stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday with a call to meet the demands of garment workers at EPZ.

## Seminar on Cedaw held

A seminar on 'Cultural barriers to implementing Cedaw in Bangladesh', organised by the Forum for Culture and Human Development (FCHD), was held in the city on Thursday, says a press release.

Presided over by Prof Sultan Muhammad Razzak, executive director of FCHD, the seminar was aimed at analysing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Cedaw) and identifying the cultural barriers to its implementation in Bangladeshi perspective.

Afroja Parvin, executive director of Nari Unnayan Shakti, presented a keynote paper while Mahbuba Begum, executive director of BAWSE, Mala Mahbub of Mirza Abbas Mohila Degree College, Khirunnahar Bakul of FCHD, Shahida Wahab of NUS and Shirina Ferdous of BNWLA took part in the discussion.

NGO representatives and college teachers and students attended the seminar.

## Navy Qirat, Azan competition concludes

UNB, Dhaka

The Annual Qirat and Azan Competition of Bangladesh Navy concluded at the Sailor's Colony Mosque in Dhaka Cantonment after the Juma prayers yesterday.

A total of 32 Quarries belonging to five teams of different ships and establishments of Bangladesh Navy took part in the 4-day competition, said an ISPR release.

In Qirat competition, Lance Naik MZ Abedin clinched the first prize while Mus-1 MS Islam and Leading Steward MA Kashem won the second and third prize respectively.

In Azan competition, Leading Steward MA Kashem won the first prize; Naik MA Hossain and ME-1 M Alamin jointly got the second prize while LME MW Ali and Mus-1 MS Islam jointly shared the 3rd prize.

Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral M Hasan Ali Khan was the chief guest on the occasion and distributed prizes among the winners.

Naval Administrative Authority Dhaka, Commodore M Emdadul Islam, senior naval officers and a large number of BN personnel were also present.

## Social afforestation changes lot of many people in Rajshahi

Bss, Rajshahi

Thousands of small and marginal farmers and rural poor people have attained economic emancipation in the region following smooth implementation of the ongoing participatory social afforestation programme.

According to the officials concerned, local zone of the Department of Social Forestry (DSF) has implemented massive afforestation programmes in Rajshahi, Naogaon, Chapainawabganj and Natore districts at a cost of about Tk 39 lakh during the 2005-2006 fiscal.

On implementation of the programmes, the DSF has achieved tremendous successes in alleviating poverty and achieving self-reliance of the target groups, particularly the poor.

The people have planted adequate saplings of various trees, including wood, medicinal and fruit-bearing plants, at homesteads, roadsides, office premises, embankments, forest areas, religious institutions' premises and other places during the period.

The DSF has already distributed over Tk 3.34 lakh earned from the participatory tree plantation among over 105 poor and destitute benefi-

ciary families under the command- ing areas, sources said.

Under the programmes, strip garden on 360-kilometre area, agro-forestry on 11 hectares of land, woodlot on 45 hectares, char and pond garden on 12 hectares and cane and bamboo gardens on 65 hectares of land have been created.

Apart from this, some 2000 men and women were given necessary training on afforestation on different terms.

Though these beneficiaries were once very poor, their children are now going to educational institutions wearing better clothes. Besides, they are using sanitary latrines and living a life full of hopes, officials and beneficiaries said.

They said the tree plantation has already turned into a social movement in the areas as a result of the government's initiatives along with the state-level massive campaign for the last couple of years.

The ongoing process has been contributing a lot to maintaining ecological balance, retarding desertification and improving the environment in the area, especially in the dried Barind tract.



## Charity for Labib appeals for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Charity for Labib has sought financial assistance for treatment of a 12-year-old boy named Labib who has been suffering from Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia for the last six years.

Ahmed Hamim Labib, a class five student of Charfashion Model Government Primary School, was diagnosed Leukemia in 2000.

He was undergoing treatment at Green View clinic in the city under the supervision of Dr ABM Yunus. As his condition improved a bit, the boy appeared at the school final examination and stood second.

But the disease relapsed and Labib is now undergoing treatment at Haematology department under the supervision of Dr MA Khan of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The boy is treated with chemotherapy that costs Tk 6,000 every day and his condition is deteriorating.

It is an urgent need to take the boy abroad in three months, as he requires bone marrow transplantation now, said Dr MAKhan.

It would cost Tk 40 lakh and father of Labib, Headmaster of Shashibhushan Secondary School of Bhola Foyz Ahmed finds it quite impossible as he has already spent Tk 12 lakh during the last six years.

Charity for Labib also organised a press briefing at the Rashid building at DMCH to save life of the brilliant student Labib yesterday and urged the generous people and organisations to extend helping hands for the treatment of Labib.

Convener of Charity for Labib and former President of Bangladesh National Cricket Team Aminul Islam Bulbul was present at the press briefing.

## Anis, Tipu new president, GS of CJFD

UNB, Dhaka

Anis Alamgir, current affairs editor of private satellite channel Baishakhi and Sayem Tipu, editor of private news agency News Net, were elected unopposed the president and general secretary of Chittagong Journalists Forum Dhaka (CJFD) on Friday.

The election to the CJFD executive council was held at Chittagong Bhaban at the city's Tophkhana road.

The other newly elected members are Shahin-ul-Islam Chowdhury (vice president), Santosh Sharma (joint secretary), Syed Golam Mostafa (treasurer), Moazzem Hossain Rokon (office secretary), Enamul Haque Chowdhury, Masumur Rahman Khalily, Anup Khastagir, Saif Islam Dilal, Mujib Masud, Newsheba Sabih Kabita (executive committee members).

Outgoing CJFD President Mostafa Kamal (UNB) and General Secretary Enamul Haque (BDNews) will remain as ex-officio members of the committee.

Earlier in the morning, the CJFD annual general meeting was held with its outgoing president Mostafa Kamal in the chair.

AFP, Kuwait City

Kuwait's Islamist-led opposition has gained a parliamentary majority in historic elections in which women took part for the first time although no female candidate won a seat, official results said Friday.

The opposition, a loose alliance comprising Islamists, liberals and nationalists, now has 33 seats in the 50-seat parliament, a gain of four, with Sunni Islamists faring best.

Commentators considered the result of Thursday's polls an outright defeat for the government of this oil-rich Gulf Arab state.

The opposition needs 33 seats to claim an absolute majority in the chamber, because 15 of the 16 cabinet ministers are ex-officio members who have the right to vote despite being unelected, thus taking the house membership to 65.

The opposition's resounding victory could prompt authorities to drop ministers deemed objectionable by the new opposition MPs, as one of their few powers is that of voting ministers out of office.

The Kuwaiti parliament has legislative and monitoring powers

and can also quiz the prime minister.

Under Kuwaiti law, at least one minister must be an elected lawmaker.

The cabinet will resign on Saturday and the new government must be formed within two weeks, after which parliament will open its term.

Sunni Islamist groups and their supporters clinched 17 seats, up from 14 in the previous chamber, with wins for all five candidates of the Islamic Constitutional Movement, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Liberals and their supporters, who fared badly in the 2003 polls, were reduced to six seats in the new house, down from eight.

Twenty-one of the 28 opposition MPs in the previous house who bid to retain their seats were reelected and 12 new opposition candidates won seats, while eight of the 16 pro-government MPs were defeated.

The opposition can now count on up to 33 votes, but two of the MPs elected on Thursday and categorized with the opposition could switch alliances in the house depending on the issue at stake.

Prominent losers include two former commerce and industry ministers, Yusef al-Zalzalah and Salah Khorshid, both members of the Shiite Muslim minority whose representation was cut to four seats from five in the previous parliament.

Tribal candidates won 26 seats. Ten of them are Islamists, while the rest are either pro-government or independents.

No female candidate was elected in the first ever participation by women in a legislative election in the conservative emirate.

Prominent activist Rula Dashti fared the best among female candidates, scoring 1,539 votes and finishing in fifth place in one constituency, while former information ministry official Nabila al-Anjari got 1,036. The two male winners in these constituencies won around 5,000 votes each.

Kuwaiti women turned out in force to vote after a heated campaign focused on electoral reform and corruption.

Women voters, who represented 57 percent of the eligible electorate, rushed to queue outside polling stations early Thursday, but

then slowed down and overall women turnout was estimated at between 55 and 65 percent.

At least 36 of the new MPs have publicly announced their backing for a bill calling for the number of constituencies to be slashed to five from the current 25.

The dispute over this issue led to the dissolution of the previous parliament in May.

Outgoing speaker Jassem al-Khorafi, a government ally, and veteran opposition figure and three-time former speaker Ahmad al-Saadun retained their seats.

Opposition supporters celebrated their election victory by singing and setting off fireworks in the early hours of Friday.

According to official figures, Kuwait sits on 10 percent of global oil reserves and is pumping 2.5 million barrels a day. It has a native population of one million, besides two million foreigners.

The emirate has huge foreign assets estimated at 150 billion dollars.



PHOTO: STAR

Senior leaders and activists of BNP at a rally organised by BNP at Muktangan in the city yesterday protesting what they say opposition's anarchy in the name of agitation.

## Opposition gains but no women elected in Kuwait polls