

As election nears, PM tells lies in name of religion

Hasina tells discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday blamed the prime minister (PM) for propagandising against her party in the name of religion for political gain ahead of the upcoming general election.

"When a election approaches, the PM begins telling lies in the name of religion against the AL and the '72 Constitution," Hasina said while addressing a discussion at the Institution of Diploma Engineers in the city.

Dhaka Lawyers' Association organised the discussion marking the National Mourning Day on August 15 when the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with almost all of his family members were assassinated.

Referring to PM's speech in Barisal that Bismillah (in the name of Almighty Allah) will not exist and Azan (call for prayers) will not be heard if AL is voted to power, Hasina said it is not the AL, rather the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance that stopped Azan during the speech of PM in parliament in recent years.

While Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman banned alcohol and gambling, BNP's founder Ziaur Rahman gave licence for alcohol and gambling, the AL chief said, adding that the PM's two sons have

been operating Marshal Distillery Alcohol Factory and the Industry Minister and Jamaat Ameer Matir Rahman Nizami gave the licence for the factory.

Hasina said the PM has been spreading falsehood as her government looted thousands of crores of taka through wide scale corruption and hiking up price through syndication by her two sons.

"Does Islam allow bribe or to become the owner of black money or to resort to corruption?" Hasina asked Khaleda.

The PM has been inaugurating different projects as bribe for the upcoming election, Hasina said, adding that those projects were taken during the previous AL regime.

She said the alliance government had pledged to separate the judiciary from the executive but they did not do that.

Instead, they violated the highest court's directives in this regard, she added.

The AL president said ignoring the recommendation of the chief justice, the government has appointed judges as part of its politicisation of the judiciary.

Hasina said the PM has taken steps to print the country's Constitution omitting the proclamation paper on War of Liberation.

If this proclamation paper is omitted, then the foundation of the country is denied, the AL chief said,

adding that Khaleda is so greedy for power that she (PM) has compromised with the 'killer' of her husband.

Hasina alleged that by withdrawing corruption cases, the PM says she has stopped corruption and by placing wreaths for a criminal who killed a police official she says she has stopped criminal activities.

Addressing the discussion, eminent jurist and Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain said the BNP-Jamaat alliance has destroyed the country's parliament, judiciary, and Constitution as part of their evil design.

Dr Kamal, also president of Jatiya Oikya Mancha, said 35000 lawyers will fight against the misuse of the government to form an accountable government and to separate the judiciary from the executives.

Association President Mohammad Nuruzzaman Nani chaired the discussion which was addressed by AL Presidium Member Zillur Rahman, Vice-chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud, Supreme Court Bar Association President Barrister Amir-Ul-Islam, Advocate Shahara Khatun and Mohammad Israfil.

Chemistry Olympiad from next yr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chemical Society (BCS) will organise chemistry Olympiad annually from next year.

The first such Olympiad will be held in next January.

The BCS, a society of more than 3,600 academicians and scientists working in the field of chemistry in universities, colleges and industries, will organise the programme to fulfil its constitutional obligations to promote and encourage the study of chemistry among young students of the country.

The Olympiad will be an annual event, and will be held at two levels - secondary and higher secondary.

Interested students may contact the society's office at 10/11 Eastern Plaza, Sonargaon Road, Dhaka or dial 8614683, 0152388231. E-mails can be sent to bchemsoc@bangla.net for further details.

Constable commits suicide in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A police constable of Kafrul Police Station yesterday committed suicide at his residence at East Bhashantek in the city, police sources said.

Mohammad Ali, 22, of Sheikh Para of Bhangra upazila under Faridpur district, was found hanging from the ceiling of his room with scurf. He was a member of riot police.

Police recovered and sent the body to Dhaka Medical College Morgue for autopsy.

His wife Mazeda Begum informed, that night he normally returned from duty and they slept together.

She added she saw Ali hanging from the ceiling in the early morning as she went to toilet.

Mazeda said Ali had been suffering from frustration for various reasons. Some of the policemen said heavy duty, poor salary, no time-scale payment etc. led him to commit suicide.

Intra-party clashes foil AL procession in Chandpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Intra-party clashes yesterday afternoon foiled a procession of Awami League (AL) in favour of today's daylong AL hartal in Chandpur town leaving at least 15 people injured.

Witnesses said when supporters of former district AL President Advocate Fazlul Hoque Sarker took out a pro-hartal procession in the town at around about 5:00pm, another group of AL and BCL activists intercepted their procession owing to previous conflict relating to attack on AL district president's house one month ago and also due to arrest of a BCL leader in connection with this attack a few days ago.

Altercation was going on and at one stage, clashes broke out at Shapla Chattar, Court Station area, Koralia Road and Cornilla Road areas leaving at least 15 people injured.

Police rushed to the spot and dispersed the mob. Additional police have been deployed at all the troubled spots.

Police action at Phulbari protested

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) unit of the National Committee for Protection of Oil-Gas-Mineral Resources-Electricity-Port yesterday staged a demonstration on the campus protesting Saturday's police attacks on people at Phulbari in Dinajpur that killed seven.

They also brought out a procession that paraded different streets on the campus.

The demonstrators chanted various slogans against Asia Energy Corporation (AEC) and alliance government.

They also expressed solidarity with today's countrywide half-day hartal called by National Committee for Protection of Oil-Gas-Mineral Resources-Electricity-Port.

At a rally in front of the central library, speakers demanded for immediate cancellation of Phulbari open-pit coalmine project and expulsion of AEC.

The leaders said the northern part of the country would turn into a desert if the project starts operating.

Phulbari Students' Association of RU also staged a demonstration while students of political science department formed a human chain in front of the central library.

They demanded for judicial investigation into the killings, punishment for the people responsible and compensation for the injured and families of the deceased.



PHOTO: STAR

Mobile Court Magistrate Rakanudaula examines capsules found at Karlo Pharma at Dakkhin Khan at Uttara in the city yesterday. The firm used to produce spurious capsules and medicines.

India keen to maintain good ties with neighbours

Shyam Saran tells Saarc journos

REZAUL KARIM, From New Delhi

Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran has said the main issue for India at the moment is to maintain good relations with its neighbours.

Speaking at the inaugural session of a gathering of diplomatic correspondents from Saarc countries on Monday, he said India has a vision of an "interconnected" region.

"The major issue for us is to maintain good relations with our neighbours like Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka," he told the journalists attending a weeklong course titled 'Third Diplomatic Correspondents Programme'.

The programme was jointly organised by the External Publicity

Division of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and the Foreign Service Institute in New Delhi.

One journalist from each country Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan are participating in the course.

"We have a vision for an inter-connected South Asia," said Saran, adding, "Although we haven't been able to get back to the pre-1947 level [of interconnectedness], India is in a position to contribute to greater integration of the region."

While Saran stressed the need to bring South Asia together for greater integration and prosperity, India's invitation to attend the programme was turned down by journalists in Pakistan, according to officials here.

"For the vision we have for South Asia [to materialise], the talks between India and Pakistan should resume," he said.

"But, there is a shadow of terrorism," he added.

Saran offered fellow South Asian countries to benefit from India's booming economy which could enhance "regional integration."

"Centre of gravity on development and global economic growth is shifting to Asia (from the West)," he said.

"Unless we are fully integrated, how can we be a part of it? We need to be a part and parcel [of this global trend]," Saran added.

Project to prevent HIV, crime-related drug use

The home ministry and USAID formally launched a new collaborative tripartite project at a meeting in the city on Sunday to prevent HIV and crime-related drug use in Dhaka, says a press release.

The project will be implemented by Family Health International (FHI) Bangladesh, it said.

Home Secretary Safar Raj Hossain was the chief guest at the meeting while USAID Mission Director Gene V George was the special guest with Mohammad Mohsin, additional secretary to home ministry and chairman, Steering Committee, Tripartite Project, in the chair.

FHI Country Director Dr Robert Kelly said the recent epidemiological data show that the Bangladesh epidemic is primarily driven through Injecting Drug Users (IDU). It is estimated that the country has 4.6 million drug users, among whom at least 20,000 are IDUs. There are more than 7,000 IDUs in Dhaka itself.

By collaborating with home ministry and Bangladesh Prisons, USAID and FHI will work with prisons staff to reduce the number of untreated and still addicted drug users released back into the community. By working with Police, FHI can train police

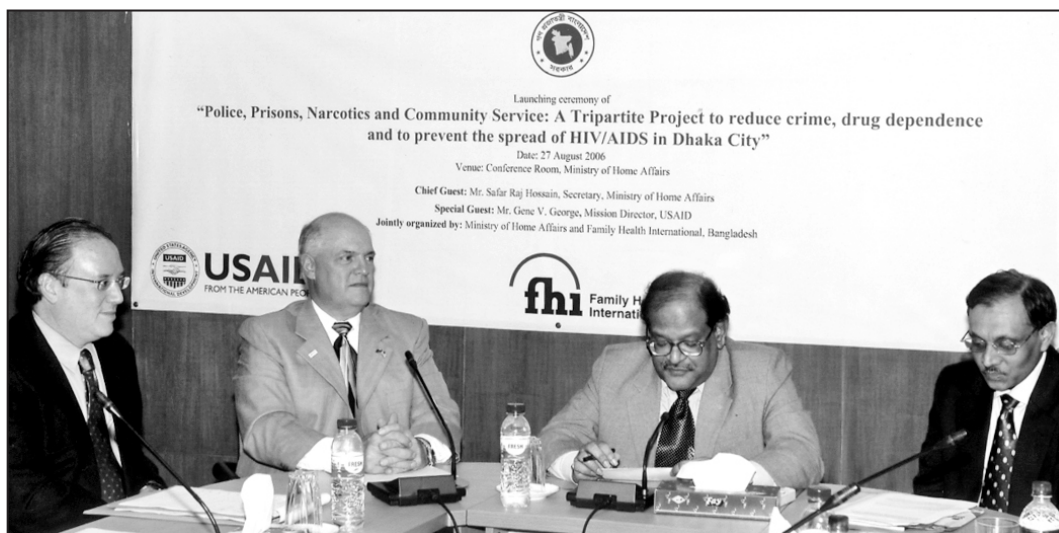
officers to identify addicts and refer them to detoxification and treatment facilities run by NGOs funded by USAID and FHI, said the press release.

Safar Raj noted that the project was a good step forward in Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) collaboration and it will utilise new, evidence-based approaches in HIV and crime prevention.

Safar Raj expressed hope that this new partnership between communities, health service providers and law enforcement agencies will help minimise the social and health problems associated with drug use.

George assured home ministry and the GoB of USAID's continuing support in preventing drug use and HIV in Bangladesh.

Senior officials of USAID, home ministry, and FHI, representative from the Police, Prisons and Department of Narcotics Control (DNC), and several non-governmental agencies attended the formal launch ceremony in the city.



Home Secretary Safar Raj Hossain addresses the launching ceremony of a collaborative project to prevent HIV and crime-related drug use in the city on Sunday. On his right are USAID Mission Director Gene V George and FHI Country Director Dr Robert Kelly while on his left is Additional Home Secretary Mohammad Mohsin.

3,000 bottles of liquor seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Members of Bangladesh Coast Guard in an anti-smuggling drive yesterday seized around 3,000 bottles of foreign liquor worth over Tk 70 lakh with two engine boats from the outer anchorage of the Bay of Bengal.

The coast guard team on board its patrol ship Rupasi Bangla conducted the drive in the outer anchorage and along Ananda Bazar at Haislahar and Parky Beach area under Anwara upazila.

Sources said the team found two suspected engine boats in the outer anchorage. As they challenged the boats, the smugglers and boatmen jumped into the sea and escaped.

Later, the coast guard members seized the liquor.

Journalist Sunil Banerjee passes away

Bss, Dhaka

Noted journalist Sunil Banerjee died of cardiac arrest at his Mohammadpur residence in the city yesterday at the age of 59.

Family sources said Sunil Banerjee has been suffering from various diseases, including cardiac problem for the last few years and was under the treatment of Prof. Motiur Rahman.

He is wife said after termination of his job from the daily Janakantha about a year back, Banerjee had been suffering from mental depression.

He left behind his mother, wife, son and host of relatives to mourn his death.

Sunil Banerjee, hailed from Sathkira, started his journalistic career in 1965. He worked in daily Banglar Bani, Dainik Bangla, daily Purbadesh and biweekly Amar Desh.

The body of Sunil Banerjee was sent to his Kacharipara village home at Sathkira for cremation.

His body was brought to Jatiya Press Club (JPC) yesterday afternoon when his colleagues, leaders of JPC and Journalist unions and Dhaka Reporters Unity paid their last respects to him.

JPC President Reazuddin Ahmed and General Secretary Showkat Mahmud expressed deep shock at the death of Sunil Banerjee. They conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

President of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ); Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul and Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan and President of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) Altaf Mahmud and General Secretary Omar Faruk in a joint statement condoled the death of Sunil Banerjee.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina speaks at a discussion at the Institution of Diploma Engineers in the city yesterday.

RMP to reduce poverty of 1.35 lakh haor people

Bss, Dhaka

A community based resource management project (RMP) of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) will reduce poverty of 135,000 poor households in Sunamganj haor (huge water body) area through providing infrastructure, credit and income-generation support.

The project titled 'Sunamganj Community Based Resources Management Project' (SCBRMP) launched in June 2003 is expected to complete in June 2014. It has the target to free the landless poor and small and marginal farmers from poverty at a cost of Tk 236 crore.

The project is funded jointly by the government and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a specialised agency of the United Nations.

Director of the project Sheikh Mohsin told BSS that the goal of the SCBRMP is to improve the livelihood of the poor through increasing assets, establishing institutional community framework, generating employment by imparting training on different skills and capital formation by regular savings and microcredit.

SCBRMP has so far been implementing five major components-labour intensive infrastructure development, fisheries development, agriculture and livestock development, micro-finance services and institutional development.

Under the infrastructure development, a total of 51 village roads measuring a total length of 65 kms and 13 village multipurpose centres have been constructed and 500 tube-wells have been installed as the hardcore poor could get better facilities to access to markets, schools and hospitals and safe drinking water.

Under the fisheries development components, 93 beels (water bodies) measuring around 2571 acres have been transferred to the project by the Ministries of Land and Youth and Sports of which 55 beels have been transferred to the fisheries community.



Fall in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at most places over Khulna, Barisal, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions and at many places over Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said in a forecast.

It said that day temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country.

Country's highest temperature 34.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 24.2 degree Celsius at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:19pm today and rises at 5:40am 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	31.4	26.5	66	81
Chittagong	31.3	25.6	75	87
Rajshahi	32.3	25.7	86	86
Khulna	32.7	25.8	90	92
Barisal	29.6	25.2	95	92
Sylhet	34.8	26.2	75	82
Cox's Bazar	30.0	25.0	76	95



PHOTO: STAR

Bangabandhu Jubo Parishad forms a human chain at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding execution of the verdict in Bangabandhu murder case.