

Govt determined to build up efficient armed forces

President tells certificate giving ceremony of graduating officers

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday said the government, despite limited resources, is determined to modernise and build up efficient and strong armed forces through better training and regular field level exercises.

Addressing the certificate awarding ceremony of the graduating officers of Defence Services Command and Staff College at Mirpur, he said obtaining a PSC degree from this renowned institution is a matter of pride for any member of armed forces.

The president termed the armed forces as the symbol of national independence and sovereignty.

He said alongside discharging the noble responsibility of protecting

sovereignty, the members of "our patriotic armed forces are also making significant contributions" in the fields of tackling natural disasters, construction of infrastructures, socio-economic development, maintaining law and order, providing healthcare services and spreading education.

Iajuddin hoped that their positive roles in these areas would be expanded in future for the welfare of the people.

Later, president distributed certificates among the graduating students and officers.

Commandant of the College Major General Mohammad Abdul Mubin gave a welcome address on the occasion.

Major General Mubin welcomed the President on his arrival at the College ground.

A total of 142 students-officers, including 72 of Bangladesh Army, 16 of Bangladesh Navy, 21 of Bangladesh Air Force and 33 from Brunei, China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Sudan attended the current course.

Advisers to the caretaker government, Chief of Army Staff Lt. General Moeen U Ahmed, Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam and Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Fakhru Azam were present on the occasion.

ACCEPTANCE OF 4 RULES

SC decision on Feb 26

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court yesterday could not deliver its decision on government prayer for acceptance of the four rules along with the amended CrPC ordinance for separation of the judiciary from the executive due to quorum crisis, as one of the judges was reportedly indisposed.

The court, however, fixed February 26 to give its decision on acceptance of the four rules.

The government issued four rules and promulgated an ordinance amending the CrPC—the long-awaited legal instruments required

for separation of the judiciary from the executive.

The hearing of the contempt cases against 13 bureaucrats for impeding the process of separation of the judiciary also could not take place on the same ground.

BSF, BDR trade fire

UNB, Panchagarh

Indian Border Security Forces (BSF) and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) exchanged fire across Balapara border in the district early yesterday.

There was no report of injury or casualty during the firing.

BDR sources said BSF battalion of Goolgaj Camp fired several rounds at sub-pillar-4 of the main pillar-398 on the border, prompting BDR jawans to return fire.

Street hawker succumbs to injuries in city

A hawker of New Market succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) yesterday evening.

Mohammad Liton, 30, a hawker who used to sell cosmetics on the footpath of New Market was injured on Wednesday noon following a feud with the other hawkers regarding possession of footpath.

The rivals hit him indiscriminately with his head with sticks and left him critically injured. Locals rushed him to DMCH where he breathed his last yesterday.

NU admission test today

Admission test for first year honours of session 2006-07 under National University will be held across the country today, says a press release.

The hour-long admission test will begin at 10:00am where a total of 236302 students will vie for 113240 seats of 173 honours colleges under National University. A total of 94 examination centres have been earmarked for the purpose.

310 firearms seized in one month

Says DemocracyWatch

Members of different law enforcement agencies recovered a total of 310 illegal firearms, 4030 rounds ammunition, 207 hand grenades, 32 cocktails, 130 cartridges, 34 locally-made arms and huge explosives from different parts of the country in last one month, said a press release of DemocracyWatch, a human rights organisation.

Of them, 27 firearms, 28 grenades, 22 cocktails and 1357 round bullets were recovered from Dhaka division, seven firearms, 25 hand grenades and nine round bullets from Rajshahi division, 17 firearms, 13 hand grenades and one round of bullet from Khulna division, two firearms, five hand grenades and three round bullets from Barisal division, 37 firearms, 11 hand grenades, 10 cocktails and 575 round bullets from Chittagong division and one firearms from Sylhet division.

The Election Observation Cell of DemocracyWatch has compiled the report on the basis of stories published in different national dailies from January 15 to February 15.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of marketing department of Dhaka University have appealed to all to make donations for the treatment of the father of a fellow student.

Dilip Kumar Biswas, father of Dipanker Kuman Biswas, has been suffering from liver cancer. He needs about Tk 15 lakh for his treatment but being an employee at the Judge's Court in Jhenidah, he cannot afford such an expensive treatment.

The students of the 10th batch of DU marketing department have come forward to raise funds for his treatment. They appealed to all to extend a helping hand to save the life of the father of their fellow student.

Contributions can be sent to Dipanker Kumar Biswas, Savings Account No. 61395214, Sonali Bank, Dhaka University Campus Branch, or directly to the students.

Interested persons can also call at 01718225725, 01817110800 and 01914903095.

Obituary

Ohidul Haider Chowdhury, former chairman of Bangladesh Tanners' Association and eminent industrialist, passed away at his residence in the early hours of yesterday, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one daughter, two sons and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Hajiribagh Tannery Workers' Union President Abul Kalam Azad and General Secretary Abdul Malek expressed deep shock at his death.

Jebunnesa Ahmed

Jebunnesa Ahmed, youngest daughter of poet Kaikobad, passed away at her R K Mission Road residence in the city on Wednesday at the age of 101, says a press release.

She left behind four sons, four daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn her death.

She was buried at Azimpur graveyard (new).

Her qulkhwan will be held at her residence tomorrow.

Death anniversary



Today is the 30th death anniversary of former Naval Officer Lt. AM Ataul Haque, says a press release.

He was acting Chief of Bangladesh Navy until April, 1972. He joined the Royal Indian Navy in 1945.

Ataul Haque, also a freedom fighter, passed away due to a cardiac arrest on February 23 in 1977 at the Combined Military Hospital, Dhaka.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to pray for eternal peace of the departed soul.

Chehlum

Chehlum of late Lutfunnahar Motijheel, lecturer of Department of Food and Nutrition of Dhaka University and wife of former secretary of Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation Mia Mohammad Golam Kibria, will be held today.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at her residence at Rangs Barnali, Apartment- C1, Road-140, house-1 at Gulshan-1 after Juma prayers.

Dilruba Chowdhury



Chehlum of Dilruba Chowdhury, wife of retired government official Golam Masum Chowdhury, will be held at her 123 New Eskaton residence after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.

Dilruba passed away due to a cardiac arrest on January 16 at the age of 54.



PHOTO: AL

US Congressman Steve Chabot calls on Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, left, at her Sudha Sadan residence and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, right, at her Banani office in the city yesterday. US Ambassador Patricia A Butenis was present at the meetings.



PHOTO: BNP

Yunus' letter

FROM PAGE 1

to keep up with the incessant flow of mails, emails, fax and sms that you have sent to me after reading my letter in the newspapers. Your letters are continuing to flood in. The replies ranged from the people in remote villages of Bangladesh to the enthusiastic expatriates. I have received many valuable advices through your letters. I thank you from the depth of my heart. I express my gratitude to you. I also thank those who have asked me not to join politics out of their love for me. To them, I only have to say that only Allah can give us respect. If one wants respect, that person should earn it himself or herself. I want to go ahead with what I think is my duty. Overall, the message that you have clearly articulated to me, is that people from all walks of life want to go forward with me with a wish to bring widespread changes. I have no way to disappoint them.

I AM JOINING POLITICS WITH YOUR ADVICE

In light of your enthusiasm, I have decided to take part in your efforts for creating a new politics. I will join politics and establish a new party. Please pray, so that I can fulfill your wishes and so that Allah's blessings are with me, as always. The foundation of my new party will gradually build up through the same consultative process I have used to come to this decision.

I have received many proposals regarding the name of the party and have decided on proposing the name 'Nagorik Shakti' (Citizens' Power) to constantly remind the people of the creation of a new politics through unleashing the hidden power among all citizens. In short, we can use "Shakti" for promoting the party. We want to establish our beloved country among the frontline countries with the slogan "March ahead, Bangladesh." We want the central motto to be the pledge being echoed inside each proud citizen today: "We Can."

I have expressed on several occasions my ideas and opinions on the objectives and programmes the party requires to build a new Bangladesh. In this regard, I am enthusiastically trying to discern the hopes and desires of the nation. The messages that I have received from you recently, contained some questions, some opinions and some preferences on this matter. You wanted to know what would be my party's goal and purpose? I will outline the goals and purpose of the party later. The party itself will decide on it once it is formed.

Let me say which aspects would characterise 'Nagorik Shakti' as a political party. I have been saying these for years. The politics of this party would be to move towards the future by coalescing the people under a unified goal; not to go around in the circles of the past by creating divisions. The activists in the towns and villages would be in charge of the party's policy making. Those who break the law will not be allowed to become its leaders. All the nominations from the party for all elections, including national parliamentary elections, would be given by the local committee; and they will decide on the candidate by comprehensively considering their honesty and competency. To maintain public relations, it will follow alternatives to grand rallies. Women and the youth would be the lifeblood of this party, they would come to the leadership in huge numbers. This party will not judge everything from the party perspective; rather it will consult all other parties, non-political citizens, experts, expatriates and others. They will move forward together. Overall, this party would be the beacon of national unity and implementation of the nation's dreams.

OUR POLITICS

Our politics would be the politics to materialise the dream of the liberation war. This politics would be a politics of unity, a politics of peace, a politics to establish honesty, a politics of labour, a politics to change the fate of the people as quickly as possible by reviving a new work ethics, a politics to send poverty to the museum. This politics will be non-communal, secular, democratic, good governance, free from corruption and against politicisation. It will be the politics of equity for women in all spheres, building the future of young generation and not to bow down to foreign power and to stand in the world holding the head high. I am urging all the citizens to come forward actively in support of this politics to make it a success.

INTERESTED IN THIS POLITICS Come, let us start our work from this moment to establish these characteristics. Let our preparations begin by maintaining the existing provision of internal politics. Key areas of our activities at this moment will be our respective constituencies, villages and wards; take initiative to form, as many possible, 20-member 'Primary Preparatory Team'. If you are staying outside your area, try to visit your

area and contact people to take the initiative. It is your task to do the work of the organisation in your area. It is also your task to select honest and competent candidates and make them win in national and local elections; others will not do it for you. And it is also your duty to contribute money and other resources for it according to your ability. Those who can afford, can set up preparatory offices and contact centres of 'Nagorik Shakti' with their own initiative and financing, if necessary at your shop or personal workplace or own house, and hang signboards and banners in this regard. It will be better if these are many in number in an area. Write name of the party and our declaration (March ahead, Bangladesh) in clear letters on them. Make arrangements as best as you can to receive phones, letters, faxes, emails from people, give information and receive people's opinion and let me know. Let the volunteers work here. Send us information and get recorded after forming a 'Primary Preparatory Team' or setting up preparatory offices and contact centres. Also encourage your friends to form preparatory teams. The success of 'Nagorik Shakti' will depend on your zeal and efforts. For the time being, begin your preparatory stage work on the basis of the draft outline as written below. The draft will be finalised after receiving opinion of all.

FORM PRIMARY PREPARATORY TEAM

Those, who will be member of the party, set up one or more offices in each ward of the villages of Bangladesh. Form preparatory teams in each ward as many as possible. Each 'Primary Preparatory Team' will comprise of 20 members with one convener. These will be formed on the basis of different groups. Innumerable such preparatory teams of same groups may be there in each ward or you alone can form several such teams. Make sure that the number of teams of women members is equal to those of the men. Special initiatives have to be taken to form teams of women. To form teams, the groups would be: 1. male students, 2. female students, 3. adolescent male workers, 4. adolescent female workers, 5. young male workers, 6. young female workers, 7. young male social workers, 8. young female social workers, 9. young male service-holders, 10. young female service-holders, 11. young male professionals, 12. young female professionals, 13. young housewives, 14. farmers, 15. workers, 16. professionals, 17. service-holders, 18. small entrepreneurs, 19. businessmen, 20. young male businessmen, 21. young female businessmen, 22. housewives, 23. elderly men, 24. elderly women. It is not mandatory that each of the groups will have to form team. If any group has small number of members they may form team after joining members of other groups.

Elect a group-convener in a ward (mahalla in the cases of metro cities) from among the convenors of all the teams in the ward. The group convenors will form a convenors team. One of the tasks of the convenors team is that it would form a 'Ward Preparatory Team' with honest, competent and enthusiastic people of the ward. It will be your collective task to bring in the right people in this regard. Electing at least one third from among women for the 'Ward Preparatory Team' and other teams at all levels is a must; but equal number of male and female members is desirable. Form Union or town or Metro-ward preparatory team with three elected members of each 'Ward Preparatory Team' or 'Mahalla Preparatory Team' in case of metro cities. With three elected members from each such team, form 'Constituency Preparatory Team'. The 'Constituency Preparatory Team' will play the key role in nominating the panel of honest and competent candidates for national and local elections and it, after getting approval at party selection at all levels of union/town/metro-ward, will later be sent to central committee. The district and national level teams can also be formed this way. By electing 'Constituency Team' at this moment quickly, we will have to begin the task of finding out honest and competent candidates for national and local elections. You yourselves will be able to turn these preparatory teams later into well-formed committees. After forming group-based 'Primary Preparatory Teams' as many as possible, you go forward to form preparatory teams at next levels. We will distribute detailed policy to all about the formation process of 'preparatory teams' at different levels to make things clear to all. I myself will begin the task of forming a general preparatory team with those among you who will be identified as more successful leaders among you and the experts.

The ward level team will have many duties. They will be responsible

for local development and political organisation. Its key duty will be freeing the area from poverty. Key among its political duties will be to review continuously who will be eligible for contesting in the elections and for which post, and taking the responsibility of electoral task, to perform the task of nominating candidates.

THOSE WHO ARE WORKING OUTSIDE THEIR AREAS

Those, who are working in a distant workplace outside their village, take a week's leave and go to your village. Going there, form as many as possible Primary Preparatory Teams and come back. These processes will not start if you do not go there. Preparatory teams would form one after another as soon as you go there. Encourage union parishad chairmen and members to establish ward-level preparatory teams. Now there's no scope in criticising politics from your living rooms. Now is the time to overturn the political culture of the past. You are the sole creator of this change. If possible, take a long leave from work and go to your home. It is doubtful whether the chance to change politics would ever come again. Do not let it slip away with indolence. Your fate and the fate of future generations are in your hands.

SUPPORTERS GROUPS

Those who cannot come within the organisational structure because of personal reasons, please establish Nagarik Shakti Supporters Group from wherever you are or join your local supporters group. Three to 20 people can join each supporters group, including members or non-members of the party. Let me know the creation of the supporters group and its future developments. Even friends who are located in different areas can establish a supporters group. You can create your supporters group through emails, telephones or even through a blog on the Internet. Contact others and encourage them to create supporters groups. This force is needed to enforce the required change.

DEAR EXPATRIATE BROTHERS AND SISTERS

I am especially thankful to you. I have received a huge number of emails and telephone calls from you. You have expressed your trust in me. You have clearly stated your interest in bringing change to the country's political arena. Now is the time to start work. Create supporters groups in the countries of residence. Establish its offices at your workplace or your home. Build up communication centres. Effectively use the modes of communication, discussion and disseminating information available through the Internet. Take steps to create supporters groups in your own village or your town back in Bangladesh. If possible, visit the country for a week or two. Go to your locality and create supporters groups. Ensure financial assistance for them. Identify and then talk to honest and competent candidates and then encourage them to join Nagorik Shakti. Constantly maintain contact with us and describe your activities. Give us your advice at every step. If possible, take leave from work or your business to come back during elections. This is your chance to earn the honour of establishing a new politics in the country with your own hands.

DEAR YOUTH

You are the greatest strength of this country. You will establish a respectful future for this country. You surely want widespread changes in the political arena, then you must come forward with innovation and enthusiasm. You will have to build up organisations across the country. You must create effective and proactive support by establishing Nagorik Shakti Supporters Groups in schools, colleges and universities. You must echo the clarion call of "March ahead, Bangladesh."

CALL TO THE WOMEN OF THE COUNTRY

Half of the country's people are women. But, your role in the decision-making process is ignored. You have to come forward in publicising the new identity of Bangladesh. You can become a very powerful force in the materialising the dream of a new country. Gather your relatives and friends. Build up Nagorik Shakti Supporters Group. Everyone from Rural women to urban women, teachers, doctors, nurses, and students, all have to come forward. Now is the time to shed your dilemmas, fears, anxieties, and divisions to march forward in resolute steps. Come forward to ensure this beautiful nation becomes a country of peace.

YOU ARE THE CITIZENS POWER

I will be very happy if preparatory teams are set up in each locality. Those who have and will express such, I will understand that they have come forward to implement the dream of creating a new politics with

their own labour, money and assets. You are the citizens' power. I want to work with you. I strongly believe that many others would follow in your footsteps. The challenge ahead of you is big, and time is short. But you cannot forget that citizens' power is a very powerful force. All of you have a strong belief in your heart "I can." We want to awaken the entire nation with the declaration "March ahead, Bangladesh." The merciful Allah will help us.

I am extremely sorry that I could not reply to your messages separately. I will certainly try to do so. But you must continue your communication with me. Your letters are shining the light on the path ahead. Please do not take this light away.

My address, fax number, phone numbers etc will remain unchanged. I am again providing them below. Others have expressed interest in volunteering on conveying your messages to me and vice versa. I will create more opportunities for them. Those who want to assist me in whichever way, please let me know in writing. I urgently need you. Otherwise, arrange the conveyance of people's messages to me by creating preparatory offices and communication centres in your own areas. I am waiting for your progress reports, advice and opinions.

Thank you and greetings

Muhammad Yunus

February 22, 2007

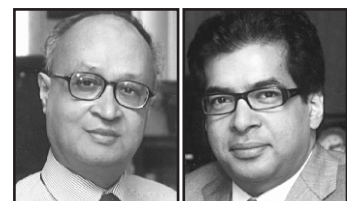
Sohel Taj finally allowed to travel abroad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government finally allowed former Awami League lawmaker Tanjim Ahmed Sohel Taj to go abroad.

Sohel Taj, son of the first prime minister Tajuddin Ahmed, left for India by an Indian airlines yesterday on a family tour.

Earlier, Sohel Taj sent two letters seeking the intervention of Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed after the immigration officials at Zia International Airport barred him from travelling to India on January 28. He was due to attend a conference in New Delhi on behalf of the Awami League.



Amanullah, Nabil CPU, Bangladesh Section president, secretary

UNB, Dhaka

A general meeting of CPU, Bangladesh Section, held at Cosmos Centre in the city yesterday elected a new committee with UNB Chairman Amanullah Khan as president, Ajker Kagoj Editor Nabil Ahmed as secretary and Danik Inqilab Editor AMM Bahauddin as treasurer for 2007-2008.

The meeting reviewed organisational matters of CPU Bangladesh Section and took a number of decisions to make it an effective and meaningful institution.

The Independent Editor Mahbubul Alam, The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam, Dhaka Courier Editor Enayetullah Khan, Jai Jai Din Editor Shafik Rehman, Managing Director and Chief Editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, Danik Inqilab Editor AMM Bahauddin, Managing Director of New Age SM Shahidullah Khan, Ajker Kagoj Editor Nabil Ahmed, The New Nation Editor Mostafa Kamal Majumdar and PIB Director General Mrdula Bhattacharya were present at the meeting.

No gas supply to Ctg Power Station for 48 hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There will be no supply of gas to Chittagong Power Station for next 48 hours beginning from Thursday's midnight (February 23) as gas production will remain suspended temporarily at Sangu Gas Field for digging a new well, said a press release of Bangladesh Power Development Board.

As a result, power generation at Chittagong (Rauzan) Power Station and Shikabaha Power Station will remain stopped totally during the period.

The overall load shedding will increase across the country today and tomorrow due to less power generation owing to shortage of gas supply, the release added.

DHAKA TODAY

Book launch

Jatiya Sahitya Prakashani will launch 'Grameen Bank O Dr Yunus' by Sardar Amin. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

Bird festival

National Committee of Pakhi Baran Utsab organises a bird festival. Venue: Mirpur Zoo Lake. Time: 9:00am.

Art competition

Education Watch Bangladesh organises an art competition to mark the Amar Ekushey and International Mother Language Day. Venue: Public Library Seminar Room. Time: 10:00am.

Launching ceremony

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) launches 'Issues of contemporary politics' by Ambassador Kazi Anwarul Masud. Venue: BILIA auditorium. Time: 5:00pm.

Discussion

Agamee Prakashani and Association of Law Watch will hold a discussion on the book titled "Ekattor 71" by Ajay Dasgupta. Venue: Room no. 129, Science Annex Building, Dhaka University. Time: 5:00pm.

Doa mahfil

BSS, Dhaka

A Doa mahfil for Sirajul Hossain Khan, former cabinet minister and renowned journalist, will be held at Gulshan Central Mosque after Asr prayers today.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the Doa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Sirajul Hossain Khan breathed his last on February 17 and was laid to rest at his village home in Habiganj district.



Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

It said night temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 30.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 11.0 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:58pm today and rises at 6:25am 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 | 28.5 | 15.6 | 60 | 43 |
| Chittagong | 29.9 | 15.9 | 61 | 59 |
| Rajshahi | 27.9 | 12.8 | 72 | 55 |
| Khulna | 27.6 | 14.0 | 78 | 66 |
| Barisal | 28.8 | 13.3 | 69 | 64 |
| Sylhet | 30.0 | 15.5 | 58 | 60 |
| Cox's Bazar | 29.1 | 15.5 | 62 | 54 |