

Ratify UN convention to ensure rights of migrant workers

Speakers urge South Asian govts

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN, from Tangail

Speakers at the Fifth Saarc Peoples' Forum yesterday called on the South Asian governments to ratify the United Nations Convention on Migration in order to ensure the rights of migrant workers.

They also expressed concern over the security issue as well as human rights issue, saying that security of small countries could be jeopardised if they are branded as 'failed state'.

They also urged all to take steps to protect biodiversity in the region and ensure the rights of small communities.

The speakers made the call at different sessions on the second day of the three-day forum being held at Ridoypur Bidyagor in Delduar at Tangail ahead of the 14th

Saarc Summit to be held in New Delhi next month.

At a working session, Jahangir Alam Joni presented a paper on 'Threat to biodiversity and disaster management' with a call to safeguard biodiversity of rice varieties and promote biodiversity-based farming practice.

"Such farming system is the main precondition for food sovereignty in the South Asian region, and we should protect all varieties of rice with ecological characteristics," Jahangir told The Daily Star.

In the second session, Salma Ali, Anisur Rahman Khan and Gurundar Kaur discussed the topic 'Issues of trafficking in women and children and issues of migration' while Krishna Soman moderated the session.

They said the South Asian governments did not take any initiatives to help migrant workers and that

restrictions on Bangladeshi women workers willing to go abroad is one of the reasons behind the increase in the incidents of trafficking.

Shalini Bhutani, Ranjita de Silva and Farhad Mazhar presented papers on 'Intellectual property rights' in the third session moderated by Mohammed Iqbal, special correspondent of The Hindu, an Indian daily.

Farhad Mazhar of Nayakrishi Andolon opposed the idea of patenting any genetic resources, including agricultural produces.

Nobody has the right to patent live forms as they are part of nature, the speakers said.

At another session, Hasib Khan of Resources Integration Centre (RIC), SM Altafur Rahman and Mohammad Hasan spoke on 'Security of small states and human rights' while Farhad Mazhar moderated the session.

They said the South Asian governments did not take any initiatives to help migrant workers and that

they stressed the need to ensure security of the people, their movement and livelihood.

Farhad Mazhar called for promotion of peace-building process through exchange of views and sharing of ideas among the Saarc states.

The speakers also called for ensuring the rights of small communities such as standard Pakistanis.

"Don't call them standard Pakistanis. Please call them Urdu-speaking Bangladeshis," said a speaker.

Meanwhile, a book titled 'Food Sovereignty and Uncultivated Biodiversity in South Asia' written by Farhad Mazhar, Daniel Buckles, PV Sathesh and Farida Akther was launched at the forum yesterday.

Help establish admin of good people

Speakers tell Election Olympiad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An Election Olympiad was held in the city yesterday with a view to raise public awareness about election.

Mirpur Regional Committee of Sujon-Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, organised the Olympiad with its President MN Islam Tapan Chowdhury in the chair.

Addressing the function as chief guest, ASM Shahjahan, former adviser to the caretaker government, urged the youth to be enlightened man in future.

Sujon Secretary Dr Badiul Alam Majumder said his organisation aims at holding a meaningful election to establish an administration of good people.

The youth can play a significant role in this respect through their

work, he added.

Dr Majumder said the reason to organise Election Olympiad across the country is to reinforcing people's responsibilities as citizen of the country.

Munshi Bazlul Basit Anju, commissioner of ward no 7 of Mirpur, said the politics of today has become the hub of evil persons as honest people do not want to involve themselves in politics.

He urged the youth to change this culture of reluctance to become good politician.

Earlier, the Olympiad began with the hoisting of the national flag in the morning at Mirpur University College.

A total of 10 colleges and univer-

sities including Mirpur University College, Mirpur Ideal Women's College, Mirpur Government Bangla College, Shaheed Zia Women's Degree College, Bangabandhu College, Pallabi Degree College, BCIC College and Tejgaon College took part in the Olympiad.

Fatima Khanom became champion and Ayesha Khanom runners up at college level while ANM Muktadir Hossain became champion and MA Mannan runners up at the university level. They were awarded certificates, medals and crests.

Besides, certificates were awarded to all the participants and medals to 20 other winners.

Workers lay siege to Latif Bawani Jute Mill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The workers and employees of Latif Bawani Jute Mill yesterday laid siege to the mill and started observing work abstention demanding payment of their salary and arrears.

The workers are yet to get four month's salary while the officers didn't get their wages in the last two months.

Abdul Haq, director (accounts) of the mill, said they have not been able to pay the wages due to financial hardship.

Located in Demra, nation's largest jute mill Latif Bawani has 4000 permanent and 2500 temporary workers in addition to its 2500 regular employees.

Monju acting CCC mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) is likely to have an acting mayor today 22 days after the post became vacant.

Monjurul Alam Monju, commissioner of CCC No 10 North Kartali Ward, is taking over the office as acting mayor at 3:00pm, said sources.

Monju was selected to run CCC as the acting mayor as per the consent and nomination of CCC Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

CCC chief executive officer received a letter containing Mohiuddin Chowdhury's nomination for Monju through the deputy commissioner of Bandarban by fax yesterday afternoon, sources said.

1293 hydraulic horns seized

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) seized hydraulic horns of 1,293 motor vehicles and filed 3823 cases against their owners in the last seven days for using hydraulic horn in restricted areas, says a press release.

Earlier, DMP restricted the use of horns from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Rahman Medical University to Sonargaon intersection, which is now extended to Shaheed Jahangir Gate.

The new restriction would be enforced from April 1.

Obituary

Afzal Hossain, former lawmaker and a freedom fighter, passed away due to old age ailment at the Ibdn Sina Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 74, says a press release.

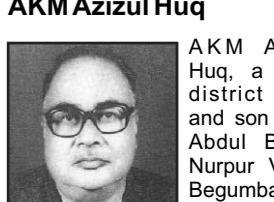
Afzal, also a former director of Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), left behind his wife, one son and one daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

He was elected member of National Assembly from Naryanganj-4 constituency in 1970.

He was laid to rest at Paikpara graveyard after Magrib prayers with state honour.

His qulkhani will be held at Babur Jam-e Mashid near his residence after Asr prayers on April 1.

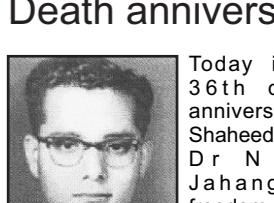
AKM Azizul Huq



AKM Azizul Huq, a retired district judge and son of late Abdul Bari of Nurpur Villa of Begumbari at Lalbagh in the city, passed away at his residence at Dhamondi on March 26 at the age of 79, says a press release.

As a judge, in his long career of 35 years, he was known for his honesty and integrity. He studied in Armanita School, Presidency College of Kolkata and Dhaka University.

Death anniversary



Today is the 36th death anniversary of Shaheed Lt Col D N A M Jahangir, a freedom fighter, says a press release.

He embraced martyrdom during the War of Liberation at the age of only 39.

On the occasion, prayers will be offered at his graveyard at Comilla Cantonment and doa mahfil will be held at CHM Jame mosque at Comilla and his ancestral house at Pangsha after Juma prayers.

Shaheed Dr Jahangir joined the medical corp after completing MBBS from Dhaka Medical College in 1953 and later obtained higher degree on Clinical Pathology from the United States.



PHOTO: STAR

Need to strengthen economic ties with China underscored

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday underlined the need for enhancing economic cooperation between Bangladesh and China.

He made the remark when the newly appointed Ambassador of China to Bangladesh Zheng Qingdian presented his credentials "One-China Policy".

President assured the Ambassador of all support and cooperation in discharging his responsibilities in Bangladesh and wished him good health and happiness.

He conveyed his greetings to Chinese President Hu Jintao through the envoy. He also invited the President of China to visit Bangladesh at his convenience.

The Ambassador termed the relations between China and Bangladesh as excellent saying that it would be further strengthened in the days to come. He said China is keen to further enhance bilateral relations with Bangladesh.

Earlier, on his arrival at Bangabhaban, the Ambassador was given a guard of honour by the president's guard regiment (PGR).

Military Secretary to the President Major General Mohammad Aminul Karim, Secretary to the President's office Mohammad Sirajul Islam, Foreign Secretary In-charge Mohammad Touhid Hossain and senior officials of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Chinese Embassy in Dhaka were present on the occasion.

Iajuddin also said the government of China might utilise our skilled and non-skilled manpower for their development.

He stated that both the countries

should explore all avenues of cooperation for the mutual benefit.

He hoped that as a new observer of Saarc, China would make valuable contribution to strengthen this regional organisation. He said Bangladesh supports "One-China Policy".

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No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 36.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and Khepupara and lowest 16.0 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:13pm today and rises at 5:52am 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	35.8	21.4	42	29
Chittagong	35.5	21.6	50	54
Rajshahi	35.3	19.6	59	22
Khulna	35.5	20.6	65	58
Barisal	35.4	19.0	52	51
Sylhet	36.6	19.7	44	31
Cox's Bazar	34.5	22.2	43	69

Banani roads renamed after war heroes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Road No. 27 at Banani in the capital has been renamed after veteran freedom fighter Moinul Hossain Chowdhury Bir Bikram in recognition of his contribution to the War of Liberation.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka yesterday unveiled the plaque marking the renaming of the road in presence of the freedom fighter, local woman ward commissioner and high officials of the DCC.

"This is a pride of my life as I achieved recognition as a freedom fighter during my lifetime," said an overwhelmed Moinul.

"A sense of responsibilities and patriotism and unequivocal support from the people have prompted me to join the War of Liberation. Many of my fellow freedom fighters embraced martyrdom during the war," he said.

He also posed a question: "Why is there still a debate over the Father of the Nation? Everybody knows who spearheaded the war."

Earlier, the DCC mayor also renamed the Road No. 11 at Banani after freedom fighter Air Vice Marshal Khademul Bashar Bir Uttam.

Shaheed Aslam Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shaheed Aslam Day will be observed in the country today.

On this day in 1986, Mazharul Haq Aslam, a Bangladeshi Chhatra Union (BCU) leader, was shot dead by criminals in front of the Arts Building of Dhaka University while taking part in a procession against the then autocratic regime of HM Ershad.

Aslam, son of Mozammel Huq, was born in 1966 at Kamrata village at Ruhitpur in Keraniganj.

Doa mahfil

A doa mahfil will be held at the residence of late veteran politician and BNP standing committee member KM Obaidur Rahman after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Relatives, friends, colleagues and admirers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil at Road No. 1, House no-59