

Be more people-sensitive than to give primacy to trade

Saarc Peoples' Forum urges Saarc leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 5th Saarc Peoples' Forum (SPF) yesterday urged the leaders of Saarc summit scheduled to be held in New Delhi this week to be more people-sensitive than to give primacy to trade and economic issues.

In a press statement titled 'Peoples Sovereignty Declaration',

the Forum expressed deep concern over the systematic erosion of peoples' sovereignty in South Asia.

The statement also urged South Asian governments to adopt effec-

tive measures to eliminate all forms of violation of human rights.

The statement was prepared following a three-day programme which ended at Delduar in Tangail on Friday. A total of 75 participants from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka took part in it.

"The participants at the forum pledged in a spirit of cooperation to continue to work together across the borders and build peace in the region," said the statement read out by Shalini Bhutani at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city.

"Peoples' sovereignty must have

to be ensured for their security... and we think peoples' sovereignty would be ensured if security of peoples' life, livelihood and movement is ensured," said Farhad Mazhar, an organiser of SPF, while replying to queries of the journalists.

The statement said corporate control of natural heritage, biological resources and peoples' knowledge is becoming the major cause of instability and violence in the region.

"The region already faced unprecedented natural disaster since last Saarc summit. Any disaster management plan will be artifi-

cial and unreal if it is not designed to address the depletion of biodiversity. The loss of biodiversity itself needs to be seen and dealt with as a disaster," it added.

The Forum in its statement also said, "Growing corporate control through increasing economic concentration and the resultant shift and consolidation of power into private hands is a severe threat to peoples' freedom and sovereignty, and the South Asian governments are increasingly using security paradigms to take away people's fundamental rights."

"We are always against the privatisation of biological resources and traditional knowledge through intellectual property rights (IPR) such as patents and plant variety protection rights," the participants of the Forum said, adding farm-saved seeds are at the centre of farming in South Asia and these are now threatened by IPR.

Referring to recent movements at Nandigram of India and Fubari in Bangladesh, the SPF strongly condemned such acts of the state in the name of economic development.

The Forum urged all South Asian countries to ratify the UN Convention on Migrants saying, "Migration is a human right, and security of movement for livelihood must be ensured."

Shree Ram Shrestha of Nepal, Ranjith de Silva of Sri Lanka, Krishna Kumar, Samuel Alexander, Ramesh Prasad Adhikari and Bhaskar Goswami of India, Qamar Mohiuddin of Pakistan, Farida Akhter, SM Altaf, Nasiruddin Elan and Palash Baral of Bangladesh were present at the press conference.

Shalini Bhutani speaks at a press conference organised by the 5th Saarc Peoples' Forum (SPF) at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On her right is Shree Ram Shrestha while on her left are Krishna Kumar and Farhad Mazhar.

PHOTO STAR

5 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Five people were killed and 25 injured in separate road accidents in Manikganj, Satkira and Rajshahi in the last two days.

Our correspondent in Manikganj reports: A man was killed and 25 injured, including two sons of a former lawmaker and a professor of Khulna Medical College, in a road accident on Dhaka-Aricha highway at Pukuria in Manikganj.

The dead was identified as Sayed Morshed Kamal Happy, 44.

Sources said the accident occurred at around 1:00am when a Khulna-bound bus of Eagle Paribahan from Dhaka skidded off the road. The bus hit a roadside tree and turned upside down, injuring 26 people.

Happy died while he was being taken to Manikganj Sadar Hospital.

One of the injured sons of former lawmaker Ali Reza Razu is Hasan Zaman Litu, 30, while the name of the other son could not be known immediately.

Another injured Dr Dhiraj Mohon Biswas is a professor at Khulna Medical College.

Police seized the bus but the driver and the helper managed to escape.

Our Correspondent from Satkira adds: Two people were killed in separate road accidents in the district yesterday.

The dead were identified as Raja Kha, 67, and Abul Hossain Shikari, 40.

Quoting locals, police said Raja Kha was knocked down by a motorcycle yesterday morning while he was standing in front of his house at Hajipur.

He was rushed to a Satkira hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

In the other incident, Shikari fell from a loaded speeding truck in

which he was coming to his village home at Deanipara bazar in Tala upazila last night.

He was rushed to a Khulna hospital where he succumbed to his injuries early morning yesterday.

On contact, Assistant Police Super (ASP) Fazlur Rahman confirmed the incidents.

Our RU Correspondent adds: A truck driver and his helper were killed in a collision between a train and a truck at the outskirts of Rajshahi city on Friday evening.

The victims were identified as Abdul Jalil, 42, the truck driver, hailing from Shyampur village and Abdul Latif, 25, the helper, of Dasmari area.

The helper died on the spot

while the driver succumbed to his injuries at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH), locals said.

The truck was totally damaged, they added.

Sources said a Dhaka-bound inter-city train knocked a speeding truck at Meherchandi railway level crossing.

The speeding truck did not follow the signal at the crossing where there was no barrier, locals added, alleging the crossing is highly risky as many speedy vehicles pass the crossing without following the signals.

Locals claimed they had been demanding a rail barricade at the crossing for long yet the railway authorities turned a deaf ear to the problem.

Law, Justice and Information Adviser Mainul Hosein will be present as the special guest at the seminar, organised by Bangladesh Political Science Association.

Professor of Washington University and chairman of the International Political Science Association Dr Jillur R Khan, among others, will take part in discourse.

Seminar on 'Rethinking political dev' tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

A daylong regional seminar on 'Rethinking political development: Security and democracy' will be held at Sheraton Hotel in the city tomorrow.

Army Chief Lt. General Moeen U Ahmed will present the keynote paper focusing on a changed paradigm in politics.

President Iajuddin Ahmed will inaugurate the programme where specialists in politics, democracy and security, from home and abroad, will present their thoughts on various aspects of the theme.

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Withdrawal of increased fees demanded at RU

RU CORRESPONDENT

Agitating residential students of four female dormitories of Rajshahi University (RU) demanded withdrawal of increased seat rent, examination and certificate fees imposed last month.

Under the banner of 'Additional Fees Resistance Committee', the female students on Friday night staged a demonstration inside their halls and announced that they would launch a tougher movement if their demands were not met.

According to sources, hall seat rent has increased from Tk 55 to Tk 105 per month while the certificate issuance and examination fees also increased manifold.

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Book on martyred intellectual published

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The publication ceremony of the 2nd edition of 'Martyred Intellectual Selina Parvin Memorial Book' (in Bangla) was held at city's Liberation War Museum on Friday.

The function was held marking the 76th birth anniversary of Selina Parvin who was the editor and publisher of 'Shiljalipi'.

Pratiti Dutta, daughter-in-law of martyred Dhirendranath Dutta, Alia Amin, mother of martyred freedom fighter Alauddin Md Jahan (Chinku) and sculptor Ferdousi Priyavashini jointly unveiled the cover of the book.

Artist Hashem Khan, Dr Razia Khan, Dr Elwari Hossain and Md Sumon Jahid, son of Selina, discussed various aspects of the struggling life of Selina on the occasion, says a press release.

Dr MH Khan was awarded Khanbahadur Ahsanullah Gold Medal for his contributions in the fields of engineering and technology at Dhaka Ahsanullah Mission auditorium in the city yesterday.

PHOTO STAR

One arrested for offering bribe to OC in Golachipa

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

One person was arrested on charge of bribing the police at Golachipa in Patuakhali yesterday.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Golachipa Police Station Golam Rahman arrested Yunus Ali Mridha, 45, of Haridevpur village under the upazila who allegedly offered Tk 3,000 as bribe to remove his name from a case.

It is learned that a case was filed on March 17 accusing Mridha and others for their alleged involvement in a land dispute and Mridha came to remove his name from the case and offered bribe to the OC.

Meanwhile, members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Motiur Rahman, sub-inspector of Kalagachia police camp under Golachipa on Thursday evening when he was taking Tk 3,000 as bribe.

Weather may remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Mild heat wave is sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Rajshahi and Ishwardi and it may spread over Barisal division and the regions of Faridpur, Dhaka and Sylhet.

Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 37.4 degree Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi and the lowest of 18.6 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:14pm today and rises at 5:50am tomorrow.

The 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	36.1	24.3	54	30
Chittagong	34.0	22.6	75	76
Rajshahi	37.4	21.5	60	34
Khulna	35.5	22.0	68	40
Barisal	35.4	21.5	75	47
Sylhet	36.0	21.6	52	44
Cox's Bazar	32.0	22.2	79	77

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