

No scope for armed forces to go back without completing present task

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called for setting up of National Security Council to help government resolve any external or internal problem.

They said coordination between the government and the armed forces should be visible in the prevailing situation of the country.

"There is no scope for armed forces to go back without completing their present tasks," they added.

The discussion titled 'Role of the Armed Forces in Upholding Democracy' was organised by Bangladesh Heritage Foundation at Bilia auditorium in the city.

Moderated by Ambassador Wali Ur Rahman, the discussion was participated by Major General (ret'd) KM Shafullah, Brigadier General (ret'd) Shahedul Anam Khan, Major General (ret'd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Barrister Harun-Ur-Rashid and Nadeem Qadir.

Wali Ur Rahman in his paper said, "The nation enthusiastically welcomed the declaration of the state of emergency on January 11. Our valiant defence forces responded to the need for defending democracy and protecting the constitution."

"I am convinced that through their action, a slow but steady progress will be made for ultimate restoration of democracy with the strengthening of democratic institutions," he added.

KM Shafullah said the country felt the need for somebody like the armed forces to save the country from the chaotic situation.

"We must have a body which will be able to take control of any situation," he told the reporters, adding that involvement of army will not be necessary if there is a National Security Council.

When asked about the initiative to keep pressure on two top leaders to go into exile, he said it would be fair to work by keeping them in their own position.

In reply to another question he

said military takeover is not good for any country.

Shahedul Anam Khan said, "We should strengthen democratic institutions to uphold and protect democracy."

"Country's experience shows that the armed forces had tried to help preserve democracy," he added.

Syed Muhammad Ibrahim said caretaker government should take steps to ensure coordination through consultation as little coordination is seen among the advisers.

"Advisory council can also hold meeting with top army officials to ensure coordination if the formation of National Security Council is not possible now," he added.

Harun-Ur-Rashid opposed the idea of forming National Security Council as he said it might create misperception which would be harmful for the image of country.

He however proposed the creation of the post of joint chief of staff, which will be the top post in armed forces.

Shaheed Matiur's mother passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Suratunnesa, mother of Shaheed Matiur Rahman, passed away at her Sabujbag residence in the city yesterday at the age of 76.

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

According to her last wish, Suratunnesa was buried at the grave of her valiant son Matiur at the Narinda graveyard after namaz-e-janza at Sabujbagh Jame Mosque after Asr prayers.

Awami League leaders Tofail Ahmed and Saber Hossain Chowdhury attended the janaza.

Matiur was killed in police firing during the anti-Ayub mass upsurge on January 24 in 1969. The martyrdom of Matiur, then a student of Nabakumar Institution, intensified the movement ending the dictatorial rule of Pakistan President General Ayub Khan.

Tofail, a hero of 1969 mass upsurge, said the day Matiur was killed, his mother told him (Tofail) to carry on the movement so her son's blood does not go in vain.

"We have kept our promise by gaining independence in 1971," Tofail said. On a personal note, he said Matiur's mother loved him like a son.

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and General Secretary Abdul Jalil in separate messages yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of Suratunnesa.

They prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed deep sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Bullet-hit robber held after gunfight with police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A robber with bullet wounds was arrested after a brief gunfight with the police in the city's Mirpur area early yesterday.

However, three of his accomplices managed to escape with booties they looted from a mobile phone shop.

The arrestee, Mozaffar Hossain, 30, received bullets in his abdomen and in his right hand during the gunfight that erupted after the robbers fired on a police patrol team who intercepted their microbus in Ahmednagar area at around 5:00am.

Police sources said the gang of four robbers was speeding away after looting valuables from a nearby mobile phone shop.

A police team patrolling the area challenged the microbus as they became suspicious of the men in the vehicle.

When the robbers fired shots, the patrol team retaliated with fire, injuring Mozaffar, the sources added.

Three other robbers fled the scene with the booties leaving behind the microbus.

Police recovered three machetes, two screwdrivers, two hammers, a calculator and a number of SIM cards from the microbus.

Later, the police took Mozaffar to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

During interrogation, Mozaffar said they committed a robbery at a mobile phone shop in Ahmednagar.

A case has been filed with the Mirpur Police Station.

Local BNP leader held in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Detective Branch (DB) of Police arrested a local leader of BNP from Court area in the district town on Wednesday night.

The arrestee Anisur Rahman Anis is the organising secretary of Delduar upazila unit of BNP and former chairman of Deolee Union Parishad (UP).

Anis is a top terror of Delduar upazila and there are 10 criminal cases against him with Delduar Police Station, police said.

Police is quizzing Anis after taking him in seven-day remand yesterday.

Three firearms, 19 bullets recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and coastguards recovered three firearms and 19 rounds of bullets from Nandabala area in the Sundarbans early morning yesterday.

According to a press release issued by Rab-6 last evening, the recovered arms and ammunition were left by a group of criminals following a shootout with the elite forces.

During their raid in the Nandabala area of the forest, the criminals opened fire on them, prompting the elite forces to retaliate. However, the miscreants were forced to flee away under severe attack.



President and supreme commander of the Armed Forces Iajuddin Ahmed attended his office at the Armed Forces Division in Dhaka Cantonment yesterday.

Road accidents kill 5, injure 17

STAR REPORT

At least five people were killed and 17 others injured in separate road accidents in Manikganj, Comilla and Satkhira yesterday.

Our Correspondent from Manikganj reports: Three day labourers, including two brothers, were killed and 17 others injured in a road accident at Dautia on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Dhamrai yesterday.

The dead were identified as Jamal, 30 and Kamal, 25, sons of Bachchu Mia and Motalab, son of Jomat Ali of Kamta village under Satoria upazila in Manikganj district. The dead are day labourer.

Dhamrai police said the accident occurred at around 6:00am when a Dhaka-bound bus from Manikganj collided head on with a truck coming from opposite direction. The bus fell into a roadside ditch after the collision.

Jamal and Kamal died on the spot and Motalab succumbed to his injuries in Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

The bodies of Jamal and Kamal were brought to their home at Kamta village under Satoria upazila in Manikganj and the body of Motalab was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

The injured were rushed to deferent hospitals and clinics in Dhamrai and Savar.

The bus and truck were seized.

A correspondent from Comilla says: One person was killed in an accident on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway at Chouddagram Bazar of the district yesterday.

The dead was identified as Abdul Haque, 70, of Ludiara village under Chouddagram upazila.

Police said an unidentified passenger bus knocked him down when the victim was crossing the road.

Police sent the body to Comilla

Medical College and Hospital for post-mortem.

A case was filed with Chouddagram Police Station in this connection.

Our correspondent from Satkhira adds: An old woman was killed in a road accident yesterday near Fingri bazar in Sadar upazila on Satkhira-Fingri road.

The deceased was identified as Tahmina Khatun, 55, daughter of Abdur Rahman Sardar of village Gobindapur in Sadar upazila.

Police quoting local people said the accident occurred when a goods-laden trolley from Bangdah Bazar knocked down Tahmina while she was standing by the side of a road, leaving her injured seriously.

Tahmina was rushed to Satkhira Sadar hospital in a critical condition where she succumbed to her injuries at about 5:00pm. Local people caught the trolley.

Training course for policemen

A two-day training course for the police personnel of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) ended at Special Branch (SB) Training School at Malibang in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Under the project titled 'Police, prisons, narcotics and community service: A tripartite project to reduce crime, drug dependence and to prevent the spread of HIV in Dhaka city', the course was designed for the sub-inspectors (SI), assistant sub-inspectors (ASI) and constables.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM) organised the course with the assistance of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Police, USAID and Family Health International (FHI) Bangladesh. South-South Centre, Bangladesh coordinated in organising the course.

The objective of the course was to sensitise the trainees about the danger of drug dependence, HIV/AIDS and their own risks as they deal with drug dependence and other high-risk groups.

On the concluding day, former inspector general of police (IGP) Hadis Uddin, also the project coordinator of South-South Centre, Bangladesh said the training is not only important for the high-risk groups but also important for the trainees who are being trained at this course because of their nature of job.

Yasmeen Ghafoor, additional DIG and commandant of SB Training School, also spoke.

313 expelled on first day of HSC exams

BSS, Dhaka

The Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC), Alim and HSC in Business Management (BM) examinations began simultaneously across the country yesterday.

Education ministry sources said on the first day of the examinations, 313 students were expelled across the country.

The board-wise expelled candidates: Dhaka Board-seven, Rajshahi Board-15, Comilla Board-six, Jessore Board-13, Chittagong Board-one, Barisal Board-nine, Sylhet Board-four, Madrasa Board-15 and Technical Board-243.

Education Adviser Ayub Quadri made surprise visits to a number of examination centres in the city and spoke to the examinees and the invigilators, an official release of the education ministry said.

The adviser visited the centres at Notre Dame College, Siddheshwari University College, Lalmatia Housing Society Boys' High School, and Mohammadpur Quaderia Toyebia Kamil Madrasa and asked all concerned to hold the examinations in a copying-free atmosphere.

He, however, expressed his dissatisfaction over the seat arrangement at Siddheshwari University College and asked the

authorities concerned to take necessary steps in this respect.

Students are also appearing at the examinations at five overseas centres in Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah, Riyadh and Tripoli.

Essay competition on combating trafficking held

Nari Unnayan Shakti (NUS) organised an essay competition on 'Combating trafficking in women and children' at its training centre at Banasree in the city yesterday, says a press release.

A total of 60 students from different schools in Khilgaon area took part in the event supported by Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum.

The competition was aimed at raising awareness among the children about the trafficking issue.

Dr Sultan Muhammad Razzak, executive director, Forum for Culture and Human Development, was present at the prize giving ceremony as the chief guest while NUS Executive Director Afroza Parvin presided over the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

Farid Hossain speaks at a workshop on 'Disaster preparedness in the educational and medical institutions and the role of media' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Catelyne Mittendorp and on his left are Hasan Shahriar, Dilrose Hossain and Wahida Bashir Ahmed.

WORKSHOP ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS 'Enhance capacity building in hospitals, educational insttts'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday called for enhancing community capacity building, especially in the hospitals and educational institutions, on disaster preparedness in order to save lives in the event of earthquake and floods.

The government should also ensure that the building code is strictly followed during any construction work and that the vulnerable structures are demolished and re-built, they said.

ActionAid Bangladesh and Commonwealth Journalists Association (CJA) in association with the European Commission organised the workshop titled 'Disaster preparedness in the educational and medical institutions and the role of media' at the National Press Club in the city.

"If a major earthquake takes place, all the multi-storey buildings in Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet will collapse, as most of them are not constructed in line with the building code," said CJA President Hasan Shahriar.

Most of the buildings being used as garment factories are not meant for use as factories, he said, urging the government to check such practice and take action against the rule violators.

He also suggested including the disaster preparedness issue in the school textbooks.

CJA Bangladesh President Farid Hossain said several earthquakes have already jolted Chittagong and Maheshkhali, giving a hint of future threats, but "We are not prepared for it."

A survey should be conducted to see whether the building code is being followed in the cities, he said, adding: "We are really vulnerable and not prepared and this became evident when a fire broke out at the BSEC Bhaban."

The print and electronic media should also highlight the issue as part of a campaign to raise awareness about disaster preparedness, he said.

Presentation a keynote paper, Farhana Ferdous, consultant (policy advocacy), Disaster Preparedness Activities of European Commission Humanitarian Office, said preparedness in the schools and hospitals is more important, as more people are concentrated there.

Every school should regularly conduct mock exercise on disaster management and have fire extinguishers and whistling system, and should train the teachers and students on first aid, she said.

"The authorities should check vulnerability of all such institutions, rectify the comparatively less vulner-

able ones and gradually demolish the more risky school and hospital buildings," Farhana added.

She also said medical students should be given orientation on mass casualty management. Such lessons could also be included in the syllabus of the medical colleges.

Hospital-based mass casualty management committee could be formed so that it could make coordinated efforts during any disaster, the consultant suggested.

Prothom Alo Joint Editor Abdul Qaiyum suggested strengthening regional information system so that they can help each other in preparing for and managing disasters.

The speakers also said that the authorities should construct more shelter centres, maintain them regularly and develop the signalling system.

Catelyne Mittendorp, project manager of DIPECHO, Wahida Bashir Ahmed of ActionAid Bangladesh, disaster management expert Faiz Shah also spoke at the workshop presided over by Dilrose Hossain, head of Identity and Resource Mobilisation of ActionAid Bangladesh.

Farid Hossain and Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, secretary general of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, moderated two sessions of the workshop.



No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Khulna, Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 36.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 23.2 degree Celsius at Khepupara.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:32pm today and rises at 5:17am 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	35.5	25.3	77	61
Chittagong	33.6	26.0	71	72
Rajshahi	34.4	24.7	76	79
Khulna	35.0	25.5	71	63
Barisal	33.0	24.0	84	82
Sylhet	35.0	24.5	68	49
Cox's Bazar	33.5	26.4	62	73



Discussion

The monthly discussion of Ahmed Safa Rastrashava on the first national liberation war of India 1857-1859 will be held. Venue: Centre for Asian Arts and Cultures (CAAC). Time: 11:00am.

Seminar

Bhabadaha Pani Nishkashan Sangram Committee organises a seminar on 'Permanent solutions to the water logging and saltiness of the south-western region, including Bhabadaha'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Launching ceremony

Bangladesh Bird Club launches a book and CD on water fowls. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

Roundtable

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) organises a roundtable on 'Eco park, indigenous people and environment: Experiences at Madhupur'. Venue: WVA auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

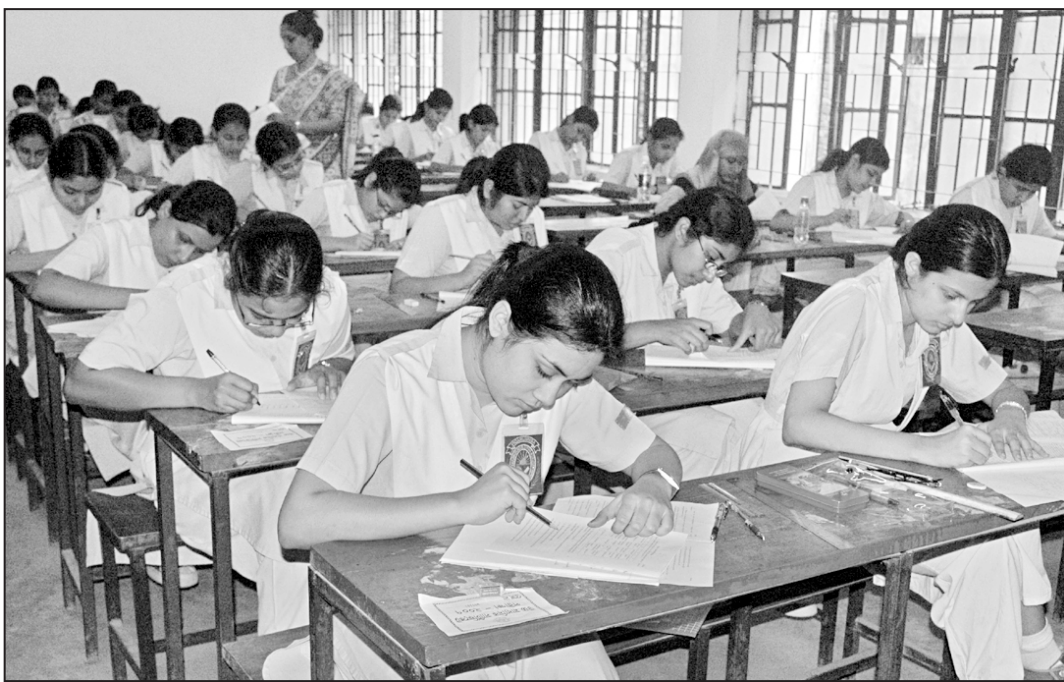


PHOTO: STAR

Examinees at a centre at Badrunnesa Women's College in the city yesterday on the first day of HSC examinations.

Noakhali Jubo Dal leader held with arms

UNB, Noakhali

A Juba Dal leader was arrested with a gun from Char Parbati village in Comiganj upazila on Wednesday.

Acting on a tip off, police raided the village and arrested Char Parbati union Juba Dal President Abul Bashir.

On his confessional statement, police recovered a single barrel gun kept in a nearby betel-leaf field.

Unilever Activation Safety Day observed

Unilever Bangladesh Limited, for the first time, observed the Activation Safety Day 2007 yesterday, aiming to ensure safe working environment for the field workers of their business partners, says a press release.

On the occasion, a workshop was held at a city hotel to raise awareness about accidents due to electric shock, fire and work at height at home, office and every working area.

Employees from 22 Activation Service Providers of Unilever took part in the workshop.

They are Market Access Private Limited, MR Enterprise, Suave

Logistic and Services Limited, Integrated Rural Activation Providers Limited, Interspeed Activation, Asiatic Events, HETS, Noyontara, CARE Bangladesh, Signage, Classic Billboards, Uttoron Art, Brothers Art, Ad Mart, End Rich, KB Sign, Digital Way, Ad Way, Step Media, Graffiti and Reminder.

The workshop was inaugurated by Naushad Karim Chowdhury, Brands and Development Director of Unilever Bangladesh Limited. Moshud Duza discussed the safety and security aspects in the workshop.

President attends office at Armed Forces Divn

UNB, Dhaka

President and supreme commander of the Armed Forces Iajuddin Ahmed attended his office at the Armed Forces Division in Dhaka Cantonment yesterday.

Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Major General Jahangir Alam Chowdhury welcomed the president.

Army Chief Lt Gen Moeen U Ahmed, Navy Chief Rear Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam, Air Force Chief Air-Vice Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman, Military Secretary to the President Major General Aminul Karim, Director General of DGFI Major General Sadik Hasan Rumi, Director General of SSF Major General Sheikh Monirul Islam and President's Secretary Sirajul Islam were Present.

Goods worth

Tk 10 lakh damaged in Khagrachhari fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

At least five shops were gutted and properties worth about Tk 10 lakh were burnt to ashes at Khagrachhari Bazaar in the hill district yesterday.

Fire Service sources said the fire originated from an electric sort circuit at Barua Shutkeer Store (Dry Fish Shop) at 4:30am and soon engulfed the five shops.

On information, fire-fighting units rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control.

Death anniversary



Today is the second death anniversary of M A min ul Haque, former director of Power Development Board, says a press release.

A doa mahfil will be held at an orphanage to mark the day.

Relatives and well-wishers are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Jyotirmoy Chowdhury

The 10th death anniversary of Jyotirmoy Chowdhury, a social worker and the eldest son of late Jughesh Chowdhury, a zamindar of Sukhar Estate at Dharmapasha in Sunamganj, will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, religious programmes will be held at his eldest son's residence at Chatlapur Tea Estate in Moulybazar and at Siddheshwari Kali Mandir in Dhaka.

RTN Ali Morshed Mahmood



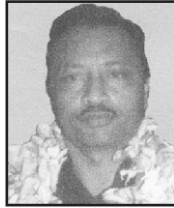
Today is the first death anniversary of RTN Ali Morshed Mahmood, eldest son of late Atiqur Rahman Mahmood.

On the occasion, a destitute feeding will be held at Cantonment orphanage after Juma prayers while a milad mahfil will be held at his Gulshan residence after Asr prayers.

His family members have requested all to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Doa mahfil

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Adoa and milad mahfil for AKM Shahidullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Association

(BFTA), will be held at BFTA office at 112, Green Road in the city at 3:30pm today to mark his 14th death anniversary, says a press release.

All are requested to attend the programme to pray for salvation of the departed soul.