



Prof Muzaffer,
Dr Matin
elected Bapa
president, secy

Prof Muzaffer Ahmad and Dr Md Abdul Matin have been elected president and general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolok (Bapa) respectively for the next two years, says a press release.

The 37-member executive committee of Bapa was elected at the 8th meeting of its National Council in the city on July 20.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, ASM Shahjahan, Prof Nazrul Islam (BEN), Prof Nazrul Islam (CUS), Prof M Feroze Ahmed, Prof Kazi Madina and Syed ANM Wahed were elected vice-presidents while Mohidul Hoque Khan was elected treasurer.

The elected joint secretaries are Tazsmin A Khan, Jk Baral, Zakir Hossain, Iqbal Habib, Mihir Biswas, Sharif Jamil, Md Shahjahan Mridha and Mahbuba Nasreen.

And the members are AMA Muhith, Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Prof AM Muzzammil Hussain, Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed, Prof Badiul Alam Mazumder, Prof Khondaker Bazul Hoque, Kazi Md Sheesh, Dr Sh Roy, Dr Shahidul Islam, Saifuddin Mahbub, M Sirajul Islam Molla, Zahedur Rahman, Dr M Nuruddin, Dr Mahbub Hossain, Dr Kamru Hasn Khan, Salma A Shafi, Dr Mahbubur Rahman, Sarifuzzaman Sharif and Alamgir Kabir.

At the meeting, the National Council and newly formed executive committee of Bapa have reaffirmed their pledge to launch all-out efforts to step up nationwide movement to protect and improve the environment in cooperation with grassroots level people, policymakers, administration and experts.

**Birth anniversary
of Abdul Alim
today**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 76th birth anniversary of renowned folk singer Abdul Alim, says a press release.

He was born in 1931 at Talibpur in Murshidabad. He received a number of national awards, such as Ekushey Padak, Purbani Chalachchitra Puraskar and Bangladesh Chalachchitra Sangbadik Samiti Puraskar.

Bangladesh Folk Music Foundation will place wreaths at his grave and offer prayers in the morning.

Channel i will air a special programme titled 'Surer Pakhi' at 4:00pm today.

**Third series of
BBC Sanglap
begins
tomorrow**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The third Series of the 'BBC Bangladesh Sanglap', an open discussion and debate programme to further strengthen the democratic practice and culture in Bangladesh, begins tomorrow.

Bangladesh Sanglap is a unique and interesting platform for debate about a variety of current issues affecting and confronting the country and society as a whole. The discussions, involving a four-member panel and invited audiences of around 150 members of the public, will take place in the capital as well as different major towns and cities across the country.

The panel members, including advisers to the caretaker government, leaders of major political parties, members of the civil society, editors of national newspapers and business leaders, answer questions and debate issues raised by members of the audience.

The first edition of the Sanglap will take place on July 28 at the media centre of Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka.

The event is recorded and then broadcast on radio and television. Last year, more than 17 million people tuned in to learn more about what is going on in Bangladesh politics and social affairs.

The ongoing Bangladesh Sanglap series is produced by the BBC Bangla Service in conjunction with the BBC World Service Trust. It will be broadcast on BBC Bangla radio at 8.00pm on Sundays and telecast on Channel i at 8.00pm on Mondays.

Amend constitution for balance of power

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political leaders and academicians at a seminar yesterday stressed the need to amend the constitution in order to ensure decentralisation of power and maintain balance of power.

The constitution should be amended to strengthen democracy, establish people's rights and eliminate corruption from all sectors, they said.

They also suggested forming a national constitutional reform committee to make recommendations regarding constitutional amendments, which will have to be passed in next parliament.

The Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) organised the seminar on 'Policy Debates on Reforms' at Spectra Convention Centre in the city.

CGS Chairman Prof Ataur Rahman said experts write constitution and it can be changed for the interest of the people.

The constitution needs amendment to maintain balance of power between the president and the prime minister, he said.

Former ambassador Walir Rahman said the country could be run well under the existing constitution if honest people remain at the helm.

Former BNP lawmaker Rustam

Ali Farazi said politicians have successes and failures, but the rate of failure is higher than that of success.

He suggested forming a supreme council to make proposals regarding constitutional amendments.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leader Shirin Akhtar said constitution can be amended for the welfare of the people.

Former Awami League lawmaker KM Jahangir, Communist Party leader Muzahidul Islam Selim, Dr Mustafizur Rahman, Zillur Rahman and Noor-e-Alam Siddique also spoke.

US\$3m SDC support to strengthen local govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) yesterday launched a technical assistance programme worth US\$3 million for local governance support project (LGSP) of the government.

The multi-year non-lending programme will be executed by the World Bank (WB) in close consultation with the government, civil society and other development partners.

Under the LGSP, the government channels bloc grants to union parishes (UP). Before this, no UP could use its annual allocation of funds without the approval of the local member of parliament.

At the launching ceremony of the programme titled 'Strengthening Local Governance in Bangladesh' at a city hotel, representatives of government, WB, SDC and experts expressed their hope that if implemented properly the non-lending technical assistance can facilitate good governance through decentralisation.

Emphasising the need to institutionalise good governance

Mohammad Anwarul Iqbal, adviser to local government, rural development and cooperatives ministry, said, "Local governments have an important role to play in strengthening our system of governance as a whole as they are more responsive to the needs of people living in village or town."

Dora Rapold, ambassador of Switzerland, described the role of local government in her country by saying, "The fundamental principles of the Swiss federal system are based on proportional representation, power sharing and regional and local autonomy. The combination of these features contributes to a peaceful co-existence of different groups."

Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, chairman of Brac Bdmal Network Ltd and former secretary to the government, said, "The attainment of millennium development goals (MDG) by 2015 hinges to a large extent on improved governance...which in turn depends to a large extent on strong local

government system."

In his keynote speech, Muyeed appreciated the LGSP, which has expanded the availability and accessibility of resources to the lowest tier of local government institution.

Constance Bernard, sector director of South Asia Sustainable Development of WB, said strengthening of accountable governance at the community level will have long term impacts on the overall governance environment in Bangladesh.

He said accountability is a system of checks and balance that prevents abuse of executive authority and ensure that difficult decisions are made in a transparent way.

Mohammad Alhossayni Toure, operation adviser of SWB, chaired the programme which was also addressed by Safar Raj Hossain, secretary to local government division, Corinne Huser, deputy chief of mission of SDC, and Junaid K Ahmad, sector manager of social development unit at WB.

In his keynote speech, Muyeed Chowdhury, chairman of Brac Bdmal Network Ltd and former secretary to the government, said, "The attainment of millennium development goals (MDG) by 2015 hinges to a large extent on improved governance...which in turn depends to a large extent on strong local

Illegal biscuit factory, Bonoful Co fined

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A mobile court in separate anti-adulteration drives in the port city yesterday unearthed an illegal biscuit factory and fined Bonoful and Company Tk 30000.

Sources said the court in a drive unearthed an illegal biscuit factory at Nasirabad Industrial Area.

It fined Kishwan Snacks Limited Tk 1 lakh for producing around 10 brands of biscuits illegally without approval of Bangladesh Standard Testing Institute (BSTI).

The factory had a license from BSTI for producing only one brand while it had been producing ten brands of biscuits, including Kishwan Special Toast, Kishwan Crackers Biscuit, Kishwan Horlicks Biscuit, Kishwan Ovaltine Biscuit, Kishwan Chocolate Cookies, Kishwan Butter Cookies, Kishwan Normal Toast Biscuit, Kishwan Tube Biscuit, Kishwan Special Cookies,

Kishwan Luxury Cookies and Kishwan Butter Crunch.

The court collected some samples of biscuits for laboratory test while it ordered the owner to collect licenses for all the brands immediately.

Meanwhile, the court fined famous Bonoful and Company Tk 30000 for producing and marketing substandard bread.

A team of the mobile court recently conducted a drive at the main showroom of Bonoful in Agrabad Chowmuhani area and collected some sample of bread it produced for laboratory test.

But the laboratory test, that was submitted to the court yesterday, showed Ph level of the bread was lower than required, said a press release.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Magistrate Mohammad Munir Chowdhury led the drive with the help of BSTI officials.

Tornado lashes 2 upazilas in Comilla

A CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

A tornado lashed some nine villages under two upazilas in the district yesterday damaging over 147 thatched houses and uprooting a large number of trees.

Power supply in the areas was also disrupted.

The affected villages are Poranpur, Barapara, Donpur at Bagmara union under Sadar Dakshin upazila and Doplur, Monohorpur, Jogtopur, Syedpur under Mohorong upazila.

The tornado, that started at around 11:00am, lasted for only three minutes.

The district administration has started assessing the damage and sending relief to the affected people.

To commemorate her death anniversary, Novera Deepita Memorial Trust will award memorial scholarship to a student who secured the highest marks in the honours examinations of the journalism department. The scholarship giving ceremony will be held at the TSC at 4:00pm today.

Teachers, relatives, friends, well-wishers and colleagues are requested to attend the ceremony.

Her family has also taken up various programmes, including offering prayers at her grave in the morning and midday mahfil.

Doa will also be offered at A n a n d a b a z a r mosque at Shewrapara after Juma prayers for the peace of the departed soul.

Other office-bearers of the 15-member committee are Vice-presidents: Wahid Murad of Jugantar and Md Abul Kalam Azad of Ajker Kagoj, Joint General Secretary: Md Abu Masud Bulbul of The Daily Star, Organising Secretary: Md Sarwar Hossain of Prothom Alo, Treasurer: Khondkar Emdadul Huq of Sangram, Literary and Cultural Secretary: Mir Md Abul Hassan of Bhoror Kagoj, Office Secretary: Debenda Majumder Deb of Sangbad and Publicity and Publication Secretary: Md Abdur Razzak of Naya Digantha.

Executive committee members are Abu Layas Mamun of Jai Jai Din, Md Harunur Rashid of Samakal, Reaz Shahi of Amar Desh, Md Sohel Ahmed of Inqulab and Md Ashraful Alam of Janakantha.

Meanwhile, Newspapers Hawkers' Welfare Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd in a statement congratulated the newly elected committee.

The inauguration of Annit Multilingual Recital will be held. Venue: Jatiya Natyashala, Shilpakala Academy, Time: 7:30pm.

Cyber Games

The World Cyber Games 2007 Bangladesh Championship will begin.

Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, Time: 10:00am.

Art exhibition

An exhibition of artworks by eight contemporary Malaysian artists will begin. Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Time: 6:00pm. The exhibition will run till July 31 from 2:00pm to 7:00pm.

Conference

Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh (ICMAB) organises International Conference 2007. Venue: Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, Time: 5:00pm.

Discussion on culture

Human Rights Review Society will hold a discussion titled 'Let healthy culture be the key to build a society'. Venue: Public Library, Time: 5:30pm.

Discussion on culture

Popular Pharmaceuticals Limited organises a discussion on 'Anticoagulant therapy in the management of ACS'. Venue: Dhaka Sheraton, Time: 7:30pm.

Workshop

The concluding ceremony of a workshop titled 'Little angels: Colourful dreams' will be held. Venue: Institute of Education Research, Dhaka University, Time: 3:00pm.

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