

DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF BANGABANDHU Observe Aug 15 at state level with due respect 52 eminent citizens urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifty-two eminent personalities yesterday called on the caretaker government to observe the 32nd death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15 at the state level with due respect and honour.

In a statement, they also urged the government to take necessary measures so that socio-political and cultural organisations could observe the day in a befitting manner.

Bangabandhu along with most of his family members was assassinated on August 15 in 1975.

The signatories to the statement include Prof Kabir Chowdhury, Hena Das, Kalim Sharafi, KM Sobhan, Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury, Gaziul Haque, Hasan Azizul Haque, Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir, ABM Musa, Kamal Lohani, Qayyum Chowdhury, Syed Shamsul Haque, Prof Anisuzzaman, Lt Col (ret'd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Ajoy Roy, Shafiq Ahmed, Abul Hossain, Anupam Sen, Dr Anwara Syed

Haque, Shariar Kabir, Prof Muntasir Mamun and Muhammad Zafar Iqbal.

"We think that Bangabandhu, as the father of the nation, is above all political controversy," they said, adding that all the citizens as well as the state should pay due respect to him and observe his death and birth anniversaries in a befitting manner.

"But we are witnessing that the non-party caretaker government is not considering the issue with due importance."

As the caretaker government is non-partisan, the people hoped that the death anniversary of Bangabandhu would be observed this year with state honour and in a befitting manner, the statement said, adding that but it is a matter of great regret that the authorities has not made any such announcement in this regard as yet.

"The government even is not giving permission to organisations who want to observe the day."

Immediately after taking over the office, Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin

Ahmed visited the grave of Bangabandhu at Tungipara and paid homage to the architect of the liberation war, said the statement.

It also mentioned that the Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed has also expressed his determination to declare Bangabandhu as the father of the nation officially. Even the National Curriculum and Textbook Board has been asked to portray Bangabandhu as the father of the nation in the textbooks, which people think is a proper initiative, the statement added.

The signatories to the statement also include Prof Razia Matin Chowdhury, Hashem Khan, Rafiqul Nabi, Rabiul Hussain, Shaymoli Nasrin Chowdhury, Mahfuza Khanam, Ferdousi Priyobhasini, Mamotaz Latif, Gazi Salauddin, Dr Shafiqul Alam, Kazol Deb Nath, Shamsul Arefin, Shamim Akhtar and Aroma Datta.

Woman dies as windowpane falls on her

STAFF CORRESPONDENT.

A woman passer-by was killed and her two-year-old daughter seriously injured when a windowpane from a garment factory fell on them at Kamalapur in the city yesterday.

The dead was identified as Kulsum Begum, 22, and the injured her daughter Suchona.

Locals said the windowpane of sixth floor of Khalil Garment Factory fell on Kulsum, who was holding Suchona in her arms, when she was carrying lunch for her sister at around 1:00pm at the factory at Kamalapur.

Locals rushed them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared Kulsum dead.



Varsity student drowns in Turag boat capsizes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fire brigade divers with the help of local people recovered the body of a university student from Turag river near Amin Bazar bridge at Savar yesterday a day after he drowned in a boat capsized.

SM Arafat Ullah Azmin, a BBA student of American International University of Bangladesh (AIUB), drowned in the river on Saturday evening as the boat he along with his eight friends was travelling in capsized near Palpara Ghat at Mirpur in the city.

His friends said they along with Arafat set off on a boat journey from Palpara Ghat at around 5:00pm on Saturday. After several rounds of trip, the boat suddenly crashed into a floating tree near the Ghat and capsized at around 7:00pm.

As they raised an alarm, boatmen and passengers of other boats came to their aid and rescued all of them but Arafat who did not know how to swim.

Receiving information, fire brigade men started a rescue operation at around 8:30pm.

Finally, the body was found stuck in water hyacinth in the river near Amin Bazar bridge yesterday evening.

Arafat lived in a mess at Mohakhali in the city.

Fresh probe into 2001 Sylhet bomb blast

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

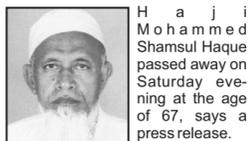
The CID has started a fresh investigation into the bomb blast that took place just ahead of an election campaign of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina in Sylhet on 26 September in 2001.

Two young men were killed in the explosion that took place at a house in the city's Fazlichist area when a group of youths was making bombs.

A court placed the prime accused in the case, Huji chief Mufti Abdul Hannan, on a five-day remand yesterday afternoon following a prayer submitted by the CID, sources said.

There had been no progress in the case so far. The case was activated after Abu Sayeed, a Huji activist, was arrested from the capital in October last year.

Obituary



Hajji Mohammed Shamsul Haque passed away on Saturday evening at the age of 67, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, four sons and a daughter to mourn his death.

He was laid for rest at the Banani graveyard the same day.

Anju Ahmed



Anju Ahmed, wife of late Mezbah Uddin Ahmed, passed away on August 11, says a press release.

Her kulkh-wani will be held at 1/3, Block D, Lalmatia in the city after Maghrib prayers tomorrow.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the doa mahfil.



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed speaks at the inaugural function of a workshop on 'monga' at RDRS auditorium in Rangpur yesterday.

THREE YEARS OF ATTACK ON HUMAYUN AZAD No headway in investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The investigation into the attack on prolific writer Humayun Azad did not make any significant progress though three years have elapsed since the attack was carried out on him.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) which is investigating the incident is yet to submit chargesheet of the case though a significant breakthrough was made in investigation after a Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh activist gave confessional statement on June 4 last year disclosing names of some JMB operatives for carrying out the attack.

Assailants critically injured Humayun Azad, also a professor of Bangla at Dhaka University and a noted linguist, with butcher's knives in front of Bangla Academy on February 27 in 2004.

He was found dead at an apartment in Munich in Germany on August 12.

"Today is the third death anniversary of my husband, but no action has been taken against the attackers," Azad's wife Latifa Kahinoor told The Daily Star yesterday.

She said in the first one year of the attack CID Inspector Kazi Abdul Malek, who is the investigation officer of the case, used to visit their house and wanted to know who might be the attackers.

Azad told him to ask Delwar Hossain Sayeedi to get the identities of the attackers as the then lawmaker Sayeedi criticised Azad's book titled 'Pak Sar Zamin Sad Baad' in parliament.

Latifa said no investigator visited them in the last two years.

Special Superintendent of CID Kawsar Ahmed Haidari told The Daily Star yesterday that the investigation at the final stage.

"We will be able to submit charge sheet in the next one month," he added.

Asked why they are taking so long time to submit the charge sheet

as one has made confessional statement, Haidari said it is taking time to find out the actual name and other genuine identities of the attackers.

A JMB Commander Minhaz alias Shaon in his confessional statement told that JMB Military Commander Ataur Rahman Sunny led the attack on Prof Azad while he and two other operatives Shamim and Shahid alias Shad took part in it.

Already executed JMB supreme Abdur Rahman, after reading the book Pak Sar Zamin Sad Baad, told them that Humayun Azad has no right to be alive as he has made indecent remarks about Allah and the prophet.

Later Rahman directed Sunny and the three to kill Prof Azad, and accordingly they made a blue print of the attack, Shaon told the magistrate.

Sunny too was executed along with five other JMB leaders on March 29.

4 new UGC members appointed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday appointed four educationists as members of the University Grants Commission (UGC) for the next four years.

The new appointments are being seen as part of the ongoing reform of UGC, said education officials and UGC sources.

The newly appointed members are professors Amena Begum from Department of Physics, Dhaka University, Tazul Islam from Department of Economics, Jahangirnagar University, Zihadul Karim from Department of Anthropology, Rajshahi University, and Abdul Hakim from Department of Political Science, Chittagong University.

The new members will take office on August 15, UGC sources said.

They will be replacing the members who resigned from UGC recently following requests received from the education ministry.

The members who stepped down are professors Faisal Islam Farouqi, M Mahub Ullah, Sultan Hossain and Tareque Shamsur Rahman.

Education Secretary M Mortuzul Islam on July 30 called the four UGC members over phone and asked them to resign.

The resignation of three UGC members—Prof Mahub, Prof Tareque and Prof Sultan—will be effective from August 15. Prof Farouqi's resignation took effect on July 31.

Traffic constable killed in city road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A traffic constable was killed when a passenger bus hit him in the Kamalapur area in the city yesterday.

The dead was identified as Al-Faruq, 32.

Faruq was hit by a Uttara-bound passenger bus of Turag Paribahan at around 9:45am while he was on duty at the Kamalapur TT Para crossroad.

Faruq was taken to the Rajarbagh Police Line Hospital and shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital as his condition deteriorated. He succumbed to his injuries on the way to DMCH, doctors said.

Police seized the bus and arrested its driver.

Appeal for help



Kawser Sheikh, a garment worker, has appealed for financial assistance for his treatment as both of his kidneys have been damaged, says a press release.

Kawser, the lone breadwinner in his four-member family, has now been receiving lifesaving dialysis treatment, which is too expensive.

According to doctors, he needs better treatment, which involves a huge amount. But it is not possible for him to manage such a big amount of money at a time when he is struggling to make ends meet.

So, he has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save his life.

Contributions can be sent to Account No. 12100031452, Mercantile Bank Ltd, Board Bazar Branch, Gazipur.

Interested persons can also call at 01724398948 to contact his family.

VOTER LISTING AT RCC 9281 enlisted on 2nd day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A total of 9281 voters were registered at 37 voter listing centres in 30 wards of Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) on the second day yesterday.

On the first day, 6393 voters were registered.

The voter-listing works including data entry, taking photographs and fingerprints started on Saturday under the newly passed electoral law.

The chief adviser to caretaker government is to visit the tasks tomorrow.

"The process is going on in full swing. Everyone is alert about his/her duties. There is great enthusiasm among the voters, especially among the female voters. Everyone is coming after dressing well for good photos," said the district election officer.

The new digitised system and security measures in voter listing process have made the voters confident of free polling ahead, he added.

"In the general election held in 2001 and RCC election in 2003, I saw that my vote was cast before I went to the polling centres. But I am now confident that I will be able to cast my own vote in the upcoming election," said 64-year-old Mohammad Borjahan.

"My photo and fingerprints were taken. Nobody can copy my fingerprints and so I can hope that I will be able to vote this time," he said at the registration centre of the Teachers' Training College (TTC).

Borjahan's friend Gias Uddin too expressed his satisfaction.

"My vote was rigged in 1991. This time anyone trying to rig my vote will be caught in moments," he added.

"I have been a voter since 1965. I am now feeling proud as I am going to get a digitised identity card (through voter listing) as the citizen of the country," said Pir Majnur Rahman, a retired government official.

"The current voter listing system deserves appreciation as it is befitting with the computer era," he added.

However, Aminul Islam, the team leader at TTC centre, was very upset at the low turnout of voters.

"We made a list of only 81 voters in two days against our target of 2100 voters in eight days. People are not coming despite our repeated requests," he added.

Data Entry Operator (DEO) Samsuda Sultana was sitting idle at the centre at noon after enlisting only six voters in the morning.

The scene was a bit different at Goltzarbagh Primary School centre at Guripara where the DEOs were very busy as people were waiting in long queues.

Sitara Begum, Abdul Malek and Hasan said they are happy after enrolling themselves as voter under the new system.

Talking to newsmen, DEO Abdul Halim said an elderly woman wearing a burqa was refusing to appear before the camera.

"We had to struggle hard to convince her," he added.

The presence of voters at Kashiadanga Government Primary School was also huge. But some machinery faults dragged down the pace of enrolling at the centre.

DEO Abdul Wahab was sitting idle with his shutdown laptop as the necessary software in his laptop was not working.



Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed speaks at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday on the occasion of the first conference on 'Indigenous people and the environment of Bangladesh'. On his right is Prof Khondkar Mokaddem Hossain and on his left is Mohidul Haque Khan.

Confce on indigenous people, environment Dec 17-18

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first ever conference on indigenous people and environment will be held in the city on December 17-18, says a press release.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), a platform to protect environment, and Bangladesh Environment Network (Ben), an organisation of Expatriate Bangladeshis, will organise the conference titled 'Indigenous people and environment of Bangladesh' at the Institute of Engineers.

This was stated at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

Bapa Vice-president and Convener of the conference organising committee Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed delivered the keynote speech at the press conference.

He laid emphasis on preserving the interest of indigenous people in order to protect the environment of Bangladesh.

The conference aims at observing the interrelation between preserving the interest of indigenous people and the biodiversity of Bangladesh, he added.

The Joint Convener of the conference organising committee Prof Khondkar Mokaddem Hossain said natural environment and habitat of the indigenous people should be considered with great importance as the community has been taking care of the forest and hill areas of the country for

long. Bangladesh can utilise its environmental and anthropological diversity to conserve both the environment and the indigenous people, said member-secretary of the conference organising committee Mohidul Huq Khan.

Referring to present miserable condition of indigenous people and their surrounding environment Bapa General Secretary Dr Md Abdul Matin said the conference will help reach a national consensus to protect the rights of indigenous community.

RELIEF OPERATION Two advisers reassigned

UNB, Dhaka

The government has reassigned two of its advisers for monitoring relief and rehabilitation operations in the flood-affected areas.

As per their new assignments, Industries and Women and Children Affairs Adviser Geeteera Safiya Chowdhury will monitor relief and rehabilitation work of Rajbari, Shariatpur, Madaripur and Manikganj, while Education Adviser Aiyub Quadri will monitor Munshiganj, Netrakona, Kishoreganj and Mymensingh, said a handout.

WEATHER TODAY Thundershowers likely UNB, Dhaka Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at most places over Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions and at many places over Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today. Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said in a forecast. Highest temperature 33.9 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 25.3 degree Celsius at Chittagong. The sun sets in the capital at 6:34pm today and rises at 5:33am 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 29.5 27.0 92 86 Chittagong 29.0 25.3 95 98 Rajshahi 31.8 26.8 86 80 Khulna 32.5 26.4 77 88 Barisal 31.0 26.5 89 95 Sylhet 33.9 26.0 72 87 Cox's Bazar -- 25.4 97 --

Relief operations continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different social, political, cultural and rights organisations yesterday continued to distribute relief materials among the flood victims across the country yesterday.

Meanwhile, the German government has donated Tk 6.50 crore for flood-affected people through Caritas International. Caritas will provide 6,000 families with relief materials, including food and medicine.

Caritas has been conducting relief and rehabilitation activities in the worst flood-hit areas in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Manikganj, Munshiganj, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Netrakona, Sherpur, Sunamganj, Sirajganj, Natore, Madaripur and Gopalganj districts.

Actionaid has sent teams to Faridpur, Sirajganj, Jamalpur and Gaibandha to assist flood victims.

After receiving flood updates from its partner organisations, Actionaid started its intervention through an assessment of the flood situation in its working area, says a press release.

Actionaid supported 1800 families in Faridpur, 1800 families in Sirajganj, 2200 in Jamalpur, 1500 in Gaibandha, 1000 in Pabna and 1500 in Sunamganj.

The staff and faculty members of Brac University (BU) donated their one day's salary amounting to Tk 1.52 lakh to Brac flood relief programme.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury handed over the cheque to Fazole Hasan Abed, president of BU Government Board at Brac Centre.

Brac has already committed Tk five crore from its own resources

and expects to raise funds of an additional Tk 15 crore from voluntary support for flood relief operations, says a press release.

Staffs of CARE Bangladesh have donated their one day's salary for flood-hit marginalised poor families living in Kurigram, Gaibandha, Bogra, Jamalpur, Sirajganj, Tangail, Sunamganj and Kishoreganj.

Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) yesterday distributed relief materials to flood-affected people in Brahmanbaria, Habiganj and Narsingdi as part of its ongoing relief operation.

Amin Mohammad Group also distributed relief goods, including water purifying tablets and dry foods, in Manda, Muga and Savar areas yesterday.

Bangladesh Awami Jubo League and Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad distributed relief materials in different parts of Dhaka city.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka distributed cooked food among the flood-affected people who have taken shelter at Moulvibazar Community Centre in Lalbagh.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) urged all its members to donate their one day's earning to the party's relief distribution programme. CPB has been distributing relief materials in different parts of the country.

Meanwhile, teachers and employees of non-government high schools, colleges and madrasas yesterday donated their one day's salary amounting to Tk six crore to the relief fund of the government.

Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote, a platform of eight organisations of teachers and employees of

non-government educational institutions, also distributed relief among 450 flood-affected people in Sirajganj district on Saturday.

Leaders of the Oikya Jote distributed rice, lentil, biscuit and dry foods at two shelter centres.

Oikya Jote chief coordinator Prof Selim Bhuiyan urged all teachers and employees to stand by flood-affected people.

Bangladesh Students' Union, Sammilta Sangskritik Jote, Shujon, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), Sheba, Samata, Dhaka University, People's Relief Committee, Workers Party of Bangladesh, Gaanchil Media Limited, Renaissance, Swaralpi Pathagar and Samaj Kalyan Sangstha also distributed relief materials in various parts of the country.

Our Jhenidah correspondent adds: Kaliganj Poursava distributed food among 50 flood-hit families who have taken shelter at Zila Parishad auditorium.

Our Gaibandha correspondent reports: Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta), Red Crescent Society Gaibandha unit and Leprosy Control Mission distributed relief packages in different parts of the district.

BSS adds: A total of 110 medical teams of Bangladesh Palli Chikitsak Samity will provide medical care to flood victims.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Samity yesterday.

A team has already visited the flood-affected areas in Sirajganj, Narayanganj and Narsingdi.

Youths want to rid country of confrontational politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Young professionals and students at a roundtable yesterday said they do not want the return of confrontational politics to the country.

They also said that the youths of the country have potential to ensure a better tomorrow for all.

The National Youth Forum of Bangladesh (NYFB) and the daily Bhorer Kagoj jointly organised the roundtable titled 'Election related thoughts of youth and the future of Bangladesh' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Presenting the keynote paper, NYFB President Dr GM Rabbani Nayan said that the youths of Bangladesh always have the potential to bring about positive changes

in society.

Citing the role of youths in historical movements of 1952, 1971 and 1990, he said they still can play a vital role in nation building braving all odds.

He said there are around four crore young men and women in the country and the number would go up to seven crore by 2020. If their spirit can be harnessed properly, Bangladesh must be developed very soon, he added.

He also blamed the major political parties for making the politics dirty.

Former BNP lawmaker Jahir Uddin Swapan said politicians are responsible for all the evil in the country.

"Things cannot go on in the

same way as in the past. We have to prevent all bad things and at the same time we have to guard against political opportunism," he said.

He also called on all to utilise the present opportunity to bring about qualitative changes in politics.

Awami League leader Dr Dipu Mani said the AL-led 14-party's 23-point national programme includes 12 programmes, which are directly related to the development of youth.

Awami Jubo League leader Sazzad Haider Liton, Chief Reporter of The Daily Star Zayadul Ahsan, and Close Up-1 star Abid also spoke at the roundtable moderated by Shyamal Datta, editor of the Bhorer Kagoj.