CEC seeks cooperation in holding free, fair polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BSS, Sylhet

Foreign Adviser Dr Iftekhar Ahmed

Chowdhury yesterday stressed the

He was speaking as chief guest at a

The adviser said the quality of

need for raising the students as wor-

discussion titled 'Role of the civil

society in expanding education in

Sylhet division' at Saifur Rahman

along with technical education at the

secondary level to help build a job-

oriented education system in the

Ahsan Chowdhury, the discussion

was also addressed by former adviser

of a caretaker government Prof Sufia

Rahman and GOC of 33 Infantry

members urge

At least 40 civil society members of

Rajshahi yesterday urged President

Prof Iajuddin Ahmed to free the 10

Rajshahi University (RU) students

convicted of torching a DGFI vehi-

charges brought against them

12 acquitted two RU teachers and a

RU official of the charge but con-

victed the 10 students and a RU

employee. They were each sen-

tenced to three years' rigorous

society members said the con-

victed students, including Abu

Sayem, a student of Bhasha O

Sanskrit (language and culture)

department and the general secre-

tary of RU Udichi unit, were not

involved with any anti-social, anti-

All the students had brilliant

academic records and were

involved with progressive activities

of the RU and Rajshahi city, the

benefit by their progressive activi-

ties," it said, adding, "The con-

victed students honoured the

pardon their conviction and pun-

ishment in the DGFI vehicle

ment include Sammilito Sanskritik

Jote Rajshahi President Abul

Hossain, Rajshahi Protection

Movement Council Convener

They requested the president to

The 40 signatories to the state-

"We believe that the state will

state or anti-people activities.

statement added.

court's verdict."

torching case.

In a written statement, the civil

imprisonment and fined Tk 5,000.

They also urged him to have the

A Rajshahi court on December

Division Maj Gen Abdul Hafiz.

Civil society

president to

free 10 RU

students

cle last year.

dropped.

RU CORRESPONDENT

Presided over by Prof Qamrul

Auditorium in the city.

country.

thy citizens and skilled manpower.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Dr ATM Shamsul Huda has urged people to enlist their name in the voter list and cooperate with the government in holding a free

tion named 'Ananda Mela2008' was organised by the Central Kachi-Kanchar Mela at its audito-

ciation that the young people are becoming voter while women are now more interested in exercising

ing the competition which will generate a culture of practising extra-curricular activities alongside academic studies.

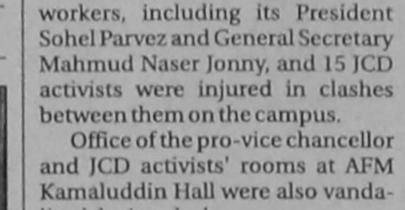
Khondokar Ibrahim said it is an tion.

nurtured to have a better personality and be responsible in their lives.

but also a responsibility towards the country' he added.

over the prizes, crests and certificates among the winners.

Architect Rabiul Hossain and wife of the CEC were present on the



BCL-JCD CLASH AT JU

today, probe

body formed

The Jahangirnagar University will

celebrate the University Day today

amid a tense situation as

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL)

has called a strike for today to

protest the attack on its president

and general secretary by

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD)

activists during clashes on

formed a three-member commit-

The university authorities

At least 35 BCL leaders and

Wednesday night and Thursday.

tee to probe the attacks.

A CORRESPONDENT, JU

BCL calls strike

lised during clashes. The BCL workers beat up several students yesterday morning for not assisting them in the clash.

BMTF develops energy-saving bio-diesel engine

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Machine Tools Factory (BMTF) has developed the energy-saving bio-diesel engine and automobile technology recently, engineers of the local company said yesterday.

The innovation would save nearly 80 percent of cost being spent for running diesel engines used in automobiles, generators and irrigation pumps, sources said adding the new technology would generate equal energy of diesel from a simple combination of gas

"A combination of 20 percent of diesel and 80 percent of gas would generate the same energy coming from 100 percent of diesel," Engineer Lt. Colonel Mohammad Anwar Hossain told BSS. The conversion cost for the purpose would also be nominal, he added.

Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed for the success, Anwar said, "His personal enthusiasm and encouragement has made it possible."

BMTF said the new technology would be able to use gas from any sources including compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied pressed gas (LPG), gas through pipeline, bio-gas or even from kitchen line. In rural areas, sources said, the engine can be run by a combination of diesel and biogas, mostly generated from cowdung in villages.

Asked about the negative impact on engine from the gasdiesel mixture, Col Anwar said that a perfect combination of diesel and gas would keep engine cool and give it a longer life.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Mohammed Barek Meah, a social

worker of Bandarban, passed away at his house in Bandarban town on Thursday at the age of 65. He was buried at the central

graveyard in Bandarban.

Death anniversary



Today is the 28th death anniversary of M Ataur Rahman, one of the organisers of the liberation war, says a press

He also played a significant role during the Tevaga Movement, anti-British movement and Language Movement.

Jononeta Ataur Rahman Smrity Parishad chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day.

His admirers will place wreaths at his grave at 10:00am while Fateha will be offered at 11:00am. A milad mahfil will also be held at Shaheb Bazar Mosque in

Rajshahi city after Asr prayers. Later, a memorial meeting on his life will be held at Chili's Hall Room at the Zero Point in Shaheb Bazar at 4:00pm.

Ostad Hasan Ali Khan



Today is the 15th death anniversary of Ostad Hasan Ali Khan, eminent composer and music director and former teacher of

Bulbul Lalitkola Academy, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held and fateha will be offered to his grave. Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the func-



Former chief adviser to the caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman inaugurates the two-day golden jubilee celebrations of Motijheel (Central) Government High School in the city yesterday.

Social ills can't be removed without boosting moral values: CJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

METROPOLITAN/NEWS

Chief Justice Ruhul Amin yesterday said social ills like corruption and terrorism cannot be removed from the country without instilling saner moral values in the corrupt. "Most of the anti-terrorism and

anti-corruption initiatives have failed to hit the root of the problems, but only Islam and Islamic legal framework are capable of doing that," he said while addressing an international seminar.

Islamic Law Research Centre and Legal Aid Bangladesh (ILRCLAB) and Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought (BIIT)

organised the two-day long semi- successful to change the very charnar styled "Islamic Law and its acters of the corrupt people," he Application in the Contemporary Society" at the Biam auditorium in the capital. In his speech at the inaugural

session, the chief justice said Islamic legal system is the most dynamic in nature and its adaptability with changing time and place is guaranteed through the window of Ijtihaad. "We have witnessed massive

corruption and huge anticorruption measures in our society and elsewhere. Although anticorruption measures have inhibited the extent of corruption temporarily, they have seldom been

ment to tackle the current crises

alone. Combined efforts of the

government, the people and politi-

cal party's are needed, so the crises

of food, agriculture, and price hike

don't deteriorate further and pub-

lic confidence gets restored," Zillur

dialogues and an agreement

between the political parties and

the government," added the acting

has not been curbed and employ-

ment opportunities have not

"For that, we have demanded

"Similarly, large-scale terrorism

has shaken the world and, as expected, anti-terrorist acts and measures have been taken up to curb terrorism. But most of these measurers have either failed to bring about desirable results or, ironically, proved to be counterproductive," Ruhul Amin added.

Justice Khalil-ur-Rehman Khan from Pakistan was present at yesterday's session as special guest while BIIT President Shah Abdul Hannan and ILRCLAB General Secretary Advocate Nazrul Islam, among others, were present.

AL: CG's main task "It's not possible for the govern-

Urging the people not to be misled by the 'propaganda', Zillur asked them to evaluate the past year of the current caretaker government's regime taking into account what it has achieved, and what positive changes have come to the nation.

Zillur, who used to be a close associate of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, said AL-led grand alliance had no other option but to boycott the now stalled Giving a rich credence to the January 22, 2007 election because BNP and Jamaat had planned to rig it with the help of the then chief adviser Iajuddin Ahmed.

He also held lajuddin responsible for putting the country 'on the verge of ruin' by becoming 'slavish' to Hawa Bhaban, known as the alternative powerhouse during BNP-Jamaat-led government's regime.

Alputout a five-point charter of the caretaker government, hamdemands to the government asking it to meet those before the election. The demands include lifting of the state of emergency and the ban on politics to generate election enthusiasm, unconditional release of its President Sheikh Hasina, General Secretary Abdul Jalil and other detained leaders, withdrawal of all charges against Hasina and Sheikh Rehana, dialogues between political parties and the government over the election and other important national issues, ensuring independence of the Election Commission and setting up of a separate secretariat for it.

increased while poverty and unemployment have risen over the last ble. year. "As not even a single megawatt of additional electricity had been generated during the BNP-Jamaat regime, its effect fell upon pering production in agriculture

and industry badly over the last year," Zillur said. several recommendations for overcoming the current crises, including suggestions to develop a dependable food security system to tackle the price hike of essentials and the grain shortage, increasing fertiliser production and ensuring its proper distribution, and arranging new loan facilities for the Sidr affected people for rehabilitation. He urged the government to try

the war criminals and to disqualify them from contesting in elections.

commission to identify the war criminals.

He demanded immediate release of the arrested teachers and students of Dhaka University, putting a stop to the 'practice of distorting history', necessary steps to place the memories of Bangabandhu at the much deserved distinguished place in national life, implementation of the verdict in Bangabandhu murder case, and a complete trial of the The said price like of essentials jall killings case.

He urged the government to curb the price hike of essentials to a reasonable level as soon as possi-

Zillur said the last year was full of 'painful events that dashed public hopes and aspirations '. He also dismissed any possibility of a joint movement with BNP in the future, and expressed determination to continue their legal and constitutional battles to free The AL leader put forward Sheikh Hasina, who has been detained since July 16 of last year.

AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Motia Chowdhury, Syed Ashraful Islam, Abdul Mannan, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Asaduzzaman Noor, Abdul Mannan Khan, Habibur Rahman Siraj, Nazma Rahman, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Dr Dipu Moni, Maj Gen (retd) Shubid Ali Bhuiyan, and ABM Mozammel Haque were present among others.

He also suggested formation of a

DHAKA

ODAY

will organise a roundtable on environment friendly, energy saving transportation system in Dhaka city. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Seminar

Centre for Law Research and Support organises a seminar on food crisis, price hike and responsibility of state. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity. Time: 3:00pm.

Workshop

organises a workshop on 'Religious institution and HIV/AIDS'. Venue:

Review meeting

Karmojibi Nari organises a review meeting on women's agendas in next election. Venue: SDC, 12/1 Segunbagicha. Time: 11:00am.

international garments and technology exhibition organised by Zakaria Trade and Fair International and Zak Trade Fairs and Exhibitions Pvt Ltd will be held. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Time:

Rotary Dhaka Central

Dhaka Central will be held. Venue:

Selim Bhiyan remanded STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Dhaka Club president

Selim Bhuiyan, arrested by the task force members on Thursday, was placed on a four-day remand yes-He was produced in a Dhaka

court, seeking a seven-day remand, but the court granted four days. Earlier, the Anti-Corruption

Commission (ACC) had filed a case against Selim Bhuiyan with Gulshan Police Station under Section 5/2 of the Corruption Prevention Acts-1947.

According to ACC sources, Selim Bhuiyan is also an accused in Niko scam case.



Detained former Dhaka Club president Selim Bhuiyan being produced

Caretaker govt steps into 2nd year ernment and political parties on by former agriculture secretary

AMM Shawkat Ali, former attorney

general AF Hasan Ariff, former NSI

chief Maj Gen (retd) Ghulam

Quader, economist Hossain Zillur

Rahman and NGO personality

appointed Chakma Raja Debashis

Roy, ex-PDB chairman Brig Gen

(retd) MA Malek and Prof M Tamim

of Buet with the rank and status of

Fakhruddin's enlarged govern-

ment now looks a little stronger to

deal with important issues more

will be visible in the coming days.

Political analysts say

The chief adviser also

before a court yesterday.

Rasheda K Chowdhury.

state minister.

FROM PAGE 1 March to ensure free, fair and transparent elections.

Although there are some misgivings in public mind about the elections according to the already announced roadmap, the chief adviser, the chief of the army staff and the Election Commission are confident and committed to hold

the polls before December 2008. The resignation of five advisers triggered speculations about the affairs of the state but quick appointment of five new advisers along with three special assistants to the chief adviser with rank and status of state minister removed

the uncertainty. The four advisers--Mainul Hosein, Tapan Chowdhury, Maj Gen (retd) ASM Matiur Rahman and Geeteara Safiya Chowdhury--were reportedly asked to resign for their poor performance. Adviser Ayub Kadri quit earlier on the Paris-bound Bangladesh artefacts scandal.

facing another vital challengestabilising the food market and keeping the prices within the reach of common people. Most analysts are of the opinion The five advisers were replaced

that a dialogue between the gov-

political and election matters is important to reach consensus on election matters. Country's development part-

ners are also keeping close watch on the evolving situation ahead of the general elections. USA, UK, EU and others are quite optimistic about the elections through which they hope the country will be able to have a sustainable democracy. British High Commissioner

Anwar Choudhury earlier stated that this year is the election year of Bangladesh when he hoped that a free, fair and credible election would be held to return the country to sustainable democracy.

effectively. The performance of the restructured council of advisers US Charge d'Affaires Geeta Pasi observed that the things are mov-Apart from the election, ing in the right direction to hold the Fakhruddin's administration is election and re-establish democracy as soon as possible, saying that the US is supportive of the caretaker government and closely working with it to achieve the desired end.

DU students to observe 2-hr class abstention DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of students of Dhaka University will observe a two-hour class abstention programme from 10:00am to 12:00noon today demanding unconditional release of the detained teachers and students of the university.

activities of the university after Eid and winter vacations last week, the students and teachers launched a peaceful movement separately for the same demand.

After resumption of academic

The group in a statement urged all DU students to make the classabstention programme a success.

The students will also bring out a silent procession from Aparajyeo Bangla at 11:00am binding black clothes around their faces.

'Lift ban on indoor politics across country'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday urged the government to lift the ban on indoor politics across the country and create a congenial atmosphere for holding a free and fair election.

Society For Peace and Progress organised the roundtable on changes after 9/11 at the Jatiya Press Club in the city.

Speaking at the roundtable, Goyeshwar Chandra Roy, joint secretary general of BNP, said people expected a lot from the caretaker government but the expectation is now in the intensive care unit. Condemning the role of the

the political parties, he said it is not A their duty but the duty of the parties. The duty of the government is to conduct reforms within the govern-Sheikh Shahidul Islam, secretary general of Jatiya Party (Manju), said

government regarding the reforms in

the changes that took place on 1/11 saved the nation and people don't want to get back to the condition that prevailed before 1/11. He hailed several government initiatives, including institutional

reforms and separation of the judiciary. However, regarding prices of commodities, he said, "They totally failed to check the price hike of

Former minister Sunll Gupta urged the government to hold the-

election as early as possible. Former state minister Nitai Roy Chowdhury said businessmen, bureaucrats and retired army officers are now dictating the political arena. And that is why our parliament often fails to fulfill the quorum.

Journalist and columnist Kazi Siraj moderated the roundtable presided over by Albert P Costa.

RMG factory gutted in Ctg

BSS, Ctg

A huge quantity of raw materials and finished products were burnt to ashes in a devastating fire at a readymade garments factory in the city on Thursday night.

Fire service sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit at the storeroom on the 3rd floor of the Seashore Apparels Ltd, located in Agrabad residential area, at around 2:20am yesterday and damaged huge quantity of raw materials and finished garments.

Roundtable Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa)

Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra LGED Bhaban. Time: 9:00am.

Exhibition The inaugural ceremony of the 7th

The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30pm.

Jamat Khan, Rajshahi Union of Journalist President Hassan Millat, former Rajshahi Union of Journalist president Mustafizur Rahman Khan, Prof Sujit Sarker, Muktijoddha Pathagar President Shafigur Rahman, freedom fighter Shajahan Ali, Badre Alam, Tanor Degree College Principal Abdul Bari, Udichi Rajshahi unit General Secretary Taj Uddin Biplob, Rajshahi Theatre President Kamar Ullah Sarker and Rajshahi Photo Journalists Association President Abdul Jabid Apu.

and fair election. Speaking as chief guest at a prize giving ceremony yesterday he said people should not cast their votes to any preferred symbol, but to honest and competent persons who will serve the nation. The prize giving ceremony of a

rium in the city. The CEC said it deserves appre-

their franchise.

He lauded the mela for arrang-

Director of Kachi-Kanchar Mela

institution where the children are 'To be a voter, is not only a right

Later the chief guest handed

The programme was rounded off with a colourful cultural func-



Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a discussion titled 'National unity to face national challenges' at

National consensus needed

adviser urged people to build a national consensus for holding a free, fair and credible election. He made the appeal while speaking at a scholarship giving ceremony

Engineers' Institute auditorium in the city yesterday. Gono Forum organised the event. (Story on Page 1)

Dr Iftekhar said the country has entered into a new chapter through the first anniversary of the caretaker

Ishankona and Syedpurareas. The adviser said the government has been upgraded to a new phase through the formation of a new councilofadvisers on Wednesday.

government is to hold a free and fair election, and all will have to reach a consensus to attain this goal, he Stressing the need for boosting

import food grains from abroad in

for credible polls: Iftekhar Earlier on Thursday, the foreign Sunamganj Deputy Commissioner Saber Hossain, Liberal Democratic Party leader in UK Syed Nurul Islam Bulu and UK-based Sunamganj Development Council President Syed Khalid Mia Walid also

> consensus to sustain institutional reforms carried out by the present

> local Islami Sahitya Parishad. The function coincided with the launching of a monthly magazine

> done by the present caretaker govern-He called upon all, irrespective of

agriculture production, the foreign adviser said it would be difficult to Self-sufficiency in food must be Deputy Commissioner Harun-urattained, reducing dependence on

at Paltee High School ground at spoke on the occasion. Addressing another function at Jagannathpur upazila in Sunamganj Sylhet district council auditorium, the foreign adviser called for a national caretakergovernment. primary education should be ensured = government-He was speaking as chief guest at a He also distributed winter clothes prize giving ceremony organised by among the poor and destitute at

> named 'Nokshikantha'. Dr Iftekhar said the national elec-At this stage, the objective of the tion will be held this year, and people should keep pressure on the elected government to uphold the reforms

> > party affiliation, to remain united regarding reforms. Chaired by Tajul Islam Fayez, the function was also addressed by Brigadier Jobayer Siddiqui, Sylhet



Awami League acting President Zillur Rahman speaks at a press conference on 'one year of the caretaker government' at the party office at Dhanmondi in

No change in temperature

degrees at Rajshahi.

Cox's Bazar

the city yesterday.

UNB, Dhaka Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged, Met Office said in a forecast. Yesterday's highest temperature of 30.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Khepupara and Patuakhali and the lowest of 11.3

The sun sets in the capital at 5:30pm today and rises at 6:44 am

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in

some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Humidityin Temperature City/Town percentage incelsius Morning Evening Max Min 29.0 15.1 Dhaka 77 27.4 16.0 Chittagong 28.3 11.3 Rajshahi 29.4 15.4 Khulna 62 30.0 14.4 90 Barisal 76 25.8 15.7 82 Sylhet

29.2 16.4