

CEC seeks cooperation in holding free, fair polls

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 and fair election.

The CEC said it deserves appreciation that the young people are becoming voter while women are now more interested in exercising their franchise.

The programme was rounded off with a colourful cultural function. 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 Wednesday night and Thursday.

BCL-JCD CLASH AT JU BCL calls strike today, probe body formed

A CORRESPONDENT, JU

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 Wednesday night and Thursday.



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.

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.



Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a discussion titled 'National unity to face national challenges' at Engineers' Institute auditorium in the city yesterday. Gono Forum organised the event. (Story on Page 1)

National consensus needed for credible polls: Iftekhar

BSS, Sylhet

Foreign Adviser Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday stressed the need for raising the students as worthy citizens and skilled manpower. He was speaking as chief guest at a discussion titled 'Role of the civil society in expanding education in Sylhet division' at Saifur Rahman Auditorium in the city.

Earlier on Thursday, the foreign 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 at Pattee High School ground at Jagannathpur upazila in Sunamganj district.

Sunamganj Deputy Commissioner Sabir Hossain, Liberal Democratic Party leader in UK Syed Nurul Islam Bulu and UK-based Sunamganj Development Council President Syed Khalid Mia Walid also spoke on the occasion.

Civil society members urge president to free 10 RU students

RU CORRESPONDENT

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 vehicle last year.



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 the city yesterday.

WEATHER TODAY. No change in temperature. UNB, Dhaka. Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours as of 6:00pm today.

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 and diesel.

"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.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Mohammed Berek Meah, a social worker of Bandarban, passed away at his house in Bandarban town on Thursday at the age of 65.

Death anniversary

Today is the 28th death anniversary of M A Taur Rahman, one of the organisers of the liberation war, says a press release.

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 Fataha will be offered at 11:00am.

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 fataha will be offered to his grave. Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the functions.

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

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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.

AL: CG's main task

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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 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 Iajuddin 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.

Selim Bhiyan remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Dhaka Club president Selim Bhiyan, arrested by the task force members on Thursday, was placed on a four-day remand yesterday.

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 Bhiyan with Gulshan Police Station under Section 5/2 of the Corruption Prevention Acts-1947.

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

Caretaker govt steps into 2nd year

by former agriculture secretary AMM Shawkat Ali, former attorney general AF Hasan Arif, former NSI chief Maj Gen (ret'd) Ghulam Quader, economist Hossain Zillur Rahman and NGO personality Rasheda K Chowdhury.

The five advisers--Mainul Hossain, Tapan Chowdhury, Maj Gen (ret'd) ASM Matur Rahman and Geeteera Safiya Chowdhury--were reportedly asked to resign for their poor performance. Adviser Ayub Kadri quit earlier on the Paris-bound Bangladesh artefacts scandal.

organised the two-day long seminar styled "Islamic Law and its 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 Ijithaad.

"We have witnessed massive corruption and huge anti-corruption measures in our society and elsewhere. Although anti-corruption measures have inhibited the extent of corruption temporarily, they have seldom been

successful to change the very characters of the corrupt people," he said.

"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 measures have either failed to bring about desirable results or, ironically, proved to be counter-productive," 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.

He also suggested formation of a 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 jail killings case.

He urged the government to curb the price hike of essentials to a reasonable level as soon as possible. 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 Sheikh Hasina, who has been detained since July 16 of last year.

AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Motta Chowdhury, Syed Ashrafur 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 (ret'd) Shubid Ali Bhuiyan, and ABM Mozammel Haque were present among others.



Detained former Dhaka Club president Selim Bhiyan being produced before a court yesterday.

Roundtable

Bangladesh Panbesh Andolon (Bapa) 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

Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra organises a workshop on Religious institution and HIV/AIDS. Venue: LGED Bhaban. Time: 9:00am.

Review meeting

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

Exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of the 7th international garments and technology exhibition organised by Zakana Trade and Fair International and Zak Trade Fairs and Exhibitions Pvt Ltd will be held. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Time: 11:00am.

Rotary Dhaka Central

The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30pm.

'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 government regarding the reforms in the political parties, he said it is not their duty but the duty of the parties. The duty of the government is to conduct reforms within the government.

Sheikh Shahidul Islam, secretary general of Jatiya Party (Manju), said 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 essentials."

Former minister Suhil 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.

DHAKA TODAY. Roundtable, Seminar, Workshop, Review meeting, Exhibition, Rotary Dhaka Central.