

Ordinance by next week to revitalise 2 seaports

Anwarul Iqbal tells 6th CAFAXPO 2008

UNB, Chittagong

The government will promulgate an ordinance within next week abolishing port dock management board and all but one trade union for revitalising two seaports, Labour and Employment Adviser Anwarul Iqbal said yesterday.

"Due to the arbitrary role of the trade unions and other organisations in the two ports before 1/11, it used to take at least 12 to 13 days to complete loading or unloading operation in a ship."

But at present it takes on an average two to three days to complete the operations as the government has managed to remove most of the irregularities there," he said.

He was addressing the concluding ceremony of the 6th Chittagong Apparel, Fabric and Accessories Exposition (CAFAXPO) 2008 as chief the guest at Engineers Institution auditorium in the afternoon.

Anwarul Iqbal said there are some 30 trade unions at present in Chittagong port though provision in the existing Labour Law allows only three unions for an institution.

"Chittagong Port had lost its international reputation to the globe due to pervasive corruption committed by the trade unions and dock management. It also became an economic burden to the exporters and importers as efficiency of the port declined alarmingly," he said.

Differing with the comment of BGMEA President Anwarul Alam Parvez on the implementation of minimum salary structure in most of the garment factories, he said there are scores of factories in the country which are not member of BGMEA where the minimum salary has not yet been implemented.

"Following the recent unrest in

the garment sector, I in person visited a number of garment factories in Mirpur area which are conducting their operations on subcontract from you (the BGMEA-member garments).

There the workers complained to me that the factories are giving them salary on previous scale," he said.

In response to a query regarding construction proposal of four-lane Dhaka-Chittagong highway, Anwarul Iqbal said ECNEC has already approved the highway from Daudkandi to Chittagong. "Also fund has been allocated. The construction work is expected to begin within the current fiscal year," he said.

BGMEA president presided over the meeting. Commerce secretary Firoz Ahmed, acting CCC Mayor M Manjur Alam and BGMEA founding vice president MA Salam attended the meeting.

"Following the recent unrest in



Covering their faces with black cloths, members of Jatiyatabdhi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student front of BNP, stage a demonstration in front of the Aparajeyo Bangla on the Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding release of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and withdrawal of emergency.

'Issue of nat'l consensus govt raised to delay election'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The issue of the formation of a government of national consensus has been brought to the fore to cause confusion in a bid to delay the parliamentary election, leaders of major political parties, including Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party, said yesterday.

Strongly opposing any form of extra-constitutional government, they said a government of national consensus could be formed after the election if the winning party or coalition wants so.

"If the election is delayed over this issue, the people would not accept it," BNP chairperson's adviser Mofazzal Karim said at the BBC Bangladesh Sanglap held at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital.

The other panellists were JP Acting Chairman Anisul Islam Mahmud, AL's Women Affairs Secretary Dr Dipu Moni and Prof AK Ashraf of Dhaka University.

BBC Bangla Service in conjunction with BBC World Service Trust organised the event moderated by Kamal Ahmed.

Prof Akash said that if any government of national consensus is formed, it would be a "unity of convenience" and would not have any ideological base.

However, such government

could be formed after the election, he added.

Responding to a question, Anisul Islam Mahmud said the parties are now facing a crisis of confidence over the issue of holding the election in time.

He also said that the political parties should hold dialogue among themselves, not with the government, to make parliament effective.

Mofazzal Karim said the election should not be delayed over any excuses, as it is currently the main

demand of the countrymen.

Dr Dipu Moni said there is doubt whether the election will be held as per the electoral roadmap, as the work to prepare ID cards is going on slowly.

Prof Akash also echoed similar views.

All the panellists, however, hoped that the election would be held in time as the chief adviser, the army chief and the chief election commissioner have repeatedly pledged to hold the election by 2008.



Ananda Alo, a fortnightly entertainment magazine, in collaboration with Citibank NA, Bangladesh introduces an award titled 'Citi-Ananda Alo Literary Award' at a press conference recently. Sitting from left are media personality Md Jahangir, Director and Head of Global Transaction Services of Citibank NA Rashed Magsood, Director General of Bangla Academy Dr Syed Mohammad Shahed, film personality Amzad Hossain and poet Asad Chowdhury.

Citi-Ananda Alo Literary Award introduced

Ananda Alo, a fortnightly entertainment magazine, in collaboration with Citibank NA, Bangladesh has introduced an award titled 'Citi-Ananda Alo Literary Award', says a press release.

The award will be given under five categories -- novel, poetry, child literature, non-fiction and bookcover.

Only the books published on the occasion of Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2008 will be eligible for the awards, said the organisers at a press conference recently.

The awards will be presented to the winners at 'Lekhak Kunja' at the book fair on February 18. Each award carries Tk 30,000 and a crest.

A panel of jury nominated by Ananda Alo and Citibank NA will select the winners.



No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Mild to moderate cold wave sweeping over the regions of Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Sitakundu, Srimongal, Sathkhira, Jessor and Kushtia may continue, Met Office said.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during early morning, it said, predicting nearly unchanged night temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 27.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Barisal and lowest 0.76 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:54pm today and rises at 6:31am 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	25.1	11.0	65	43
Chittagong	24.6	12.3	61	54
Rajshahi	24.4	08.7	82	67
Khulna	26.0	12.0	87	55
Barisal	27.0	10.5	69	54
Sylhet	24.4	11.5	72	55
Cox's Bazar	26.8	12.3	51	60

Illegal VoIP equipment worth Tk 50 lakh seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized huge illegal VoIP equipment worth about Tk 50 lakh at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

Action on tip-off, a team of Rab raided the house of Jasim Uddin, a tenant in the fifth floor of the six-storied building, at Senpara and seized the illegal VoIP equipment.

The seized equipments includes six channel box, six quantum, two fib ridge, 1 bay networks, 2 computer monitor, 2 CPU, 2 key board and 179 mobile SIM card.

Rab official said Jasim was involved with illegal VoIP business during last eight months.

CPU training on environmental reporting begins today

UNB, Dhaka

A five-day training course on environmental reporting for Bangladeshi journalists with the theme 'Environment-reporting the issues currently threatening the globe' kicks off at the UNB training room in the city today.

Commonwealth Press Union (CPU) in partnership with CPU Bangladesh Section will organise the training course.

Chief Adviser's Special Assistant for Environment and Forest Ministry Raja Devashish Roy will inaugurate the course.

Armanullah Khan, president of CPU will deliver the welcome address while CPU members Mahbubul Alam, editor of The Independent, Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, Zagul Ahmed Chowdhury, managing director and chief editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) and Enayeturrahman Khan, editor-in-chief and chief executive of United News of Bangladesh (UNB), will address the participants on various environment issues.

John Vidal, environment editor of the Guardian, London will be the course facilitator.

As many as 725 students, who won at divisional and regional levels, took part in the final competition, namely Sixth Bangladesh Mathematics Olympiad.

They also participated in the key part of the Olympiad at primary, junior, secondary and higher secondary categories.

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