

Dialogue without BNP won't be acceptable

Says Delwar

UNB, Dhaka

Khaleda Zia- appointed BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday said any dialogue or election excluding the party cannot be acceptable to anyone.

"BNP is a big party, a pro-election party. Those who want stage-managed election by keeping BNP aloof won't succeed," he told a discussion marking the Shaheed Day at the Engineers Institution.

Delwar urged the caretaker government not to make the election questionable and hand over power quickly through a free and fair election.

He asked the Election Commission not to create any new issue to obstruct BNP from participating in the parliamentary elec-

tions. "We want elections. It will be very difficult to hold elections without BNP," Delwar said.

Without naming any names, the BNP leader said those who are holding constitutional posts should not talk politics. "You are doing service. You have no right to speak against politicians."

Calling for lifting the state of emergency, he alleged that people's democratic and fundamental rights are being denied in an independent country under the emergency.

He called for halting "repression" on political leaders and workers.

The BNP leader demanded release of all political leaders, including detained party chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

Delwar also urged the BNP dissidents to forget about October 29, saying that no one will be excluded if they returned to their previous positions.

On October 29 last year, some BNP standing committee members held a meeting and made Saifur Rahman and Maj (ret) Hafizuddin Ahmed acting chairman and acting secretary general.

BNP Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan said Khaleda Zia must be freed and allowed to take part in the proposed dialogue if the government really wants a fruitful dialogue.

Presided over BNP acting office secretary Rizvi Ahmed, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by party leaders DR R A Gani, Selima Rahman, Goyeswar Chandra Roy and Mohammad Shajahan.

Release Day of Agartala case accused today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the historic Release Day of 34 accused, including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in the Agartala case framed by the Pakistan government during the Ayub regime.

In the case filed in 1968, a total of 35 political leaders and civil and military officials were charged with planning to liberate Bangladesh from Pakistan. Bangabandhu was the No. 1 accused in the case.

But a mass upsurge finally compelled the then government to withdraw the case and 34 detainees were released from Dhaka Cantonment on this day in 1969. Sergeant Zahurul Haq, 17th accused in the case, was shot dead on February 15 in 1969 while in confinement in the cantonment.

In a statement yesterday, Muktiyoddha Sanghati Parishad called on the caretaker government to recognise the accused and the hostile approvers in the case as national heroes in recognition of their contribution to the country's independence.

Previous governments had considered the issue of recognition, but nothing concrete has been done to this end, said the press release signed by Parishad Chairman Col (ret) Shawkat Ali, the 26th accused in the Agartala case.

A bill regarding the issue was also placed in the seventh parliament, it added.

The other accused in the Agartala case were late Lt Commander Moazzem Hossain (Navy), late Steward Mujibur Rahman (Navy), late LS Sultan Uddin Ahmed (Navy), late Noor Mohammad (Navy), late Ahmed Fazlur Rahman CSP, late Flight Sergeant Mozilullah (Air Force), Corporal ABM Abdus Samad (Air Force), late Habilder Daliluddin (Army), late Ruhul Kuddus CSP, late Flight Sergeant Md Fazlul Haque (Air Force), late Bhupoti Bhushan Chowdhury alias Manik Chowdhury (political leader), late Bidhan Krishna Sen (political leader), late Subedar Abdur Razaq (Army), late Habilder Mujibur Rahman (Army), late Flight Sergeant Md Abdur Razaq (Army), AB Mohammad Khurshid (Navy), Khan Mohammad Shamsur Rahman (CSP), late Risalder Shamsul Haque (Army), late Habilder Azizul Haque (Army), SOC Mahfuzul Bari (Air Force), late Sergeant Shamsul Haque (Air Force), Col Shamsul Alam (Army), late Maj Mohammad Abdul Motalib (Army), late Col Khandker Nazmul Huda (Army), late Brig ANM Nuazzaman (Army), Flight Sergeant Abdul Jalil (Army), Md Mahabuddin Chowdhury (company executive), late Lt MM Matur Rahman (Navy), late Subedar AKM Tazul Islam (Army), late Mohammad Ali Reza (Instructor, NIPA), Brig Khurshid Uddin Ahmed (Army) and Commander Abdur Rouf (Navy).

And the hostile approvers were late Kamaluddin Ahmed (Navy), late ABM Yusuf (Army), Abul Hossain and late Bankim Chandra Datta.

BCL calls for full-fledged Shaheed Minar on Ruet campus

RU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) unit yesterday urged the authorities concerned to immediately construct a full-fledged Shaheed Minar on the premises of the administrative building to facilitate teachers, students and staffs for paying tributes to great sons of the soil.

At a rally in front of the administrative building, BCL leaders criticised the authorities for not constructing a full-fledged Shaheed Minar on the campus although the Ruet authorities earlier assured them of constructing the same.

They said they will submit a memorandum to Ruet Vice-chancellor Prof Anwarul Haque tomorrow demanding construction of a Shaheed Minar on the campus.

The rally was addressed by Asif Monir, Faisal, Sabbir, Babul, Avijit and Titu.

Earlier, Amar Ekushey was observed on the campus with due solemnity.

The vice-chancellor placed wreath at Ruet Shaheed Minar in the early hours. He was followed by teachers, officers and students.

Scout Day today

BSS, Dhaka

The Scout Day marking the birth anniversary of the founder of the Scouting Lord Baden Powell will be celebrated in the country today in a befitting manner.

Bangladesh Scouts has drawn up elaborate programmes to observe the day.

A colourful rally comprising Cub Scouts, Scouts and Rover Scouts will be brought out from the National Headquarters of Bangladesh Scouts at 8:00am and it will be ended at the same place after parading different city streets.

Blood donation session, art competition and discussion have also been arranged at the National Headquarters of Bangladesh Scouts to mark the day.

Bangladesh Scouts is celebrating the centenary of scouting this year.



Kidzee Bangladesh organised a drawing competition for schoolchildren at Banani in the city yesterday to mark the Amar Ekushey and International Mother Language Day.

Army chief visits Ekushey Book Fair

UNB, Dhaka

Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday visited the Ekushey Book Fair as his book 'Nirbachita Sankolon' formally went on sale on the occasion of the Language Martyrs Day.

The army chief went to the stall of Asian Publications at about 1:00pm at Bangla Academy from where his book was published.

During his half-an-hour stay in the Boi Mela (Book Fair), he also gave away some copies of his book to buyers with his autograph.

The compilation of selected items, which was launched on Wednesday, has been reviewed by Dr Mahbubullah and Prof Salahuddin Ahmed.

Drawing competition held at Kidzee

Kidzee Bangladesh, an international chain school, organised a drawing competition for children to mark International Mother Language Day at 13 Banani school premises in the city yesterday, says a press release.

It also accorded a reception to the Language Movement veteran Gazil Haque.

Children of different ages of 50 schools in the city took part in the competition.

Renowned cartoonist Rafiqunnabi handed over prizes and certificates to the winners.

Engineer Aminul Islam, chairman of Kidzee Bangladesh managing committee, artist Ruhul Amin Kajol, Abbas Uddin Absari, senior sub-editor of the Daily Ittefaq, artists Monowar Mehedi and Pankaj Bhattacharya were present in the programme.

Free healthcare service for farmers at city hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time in the country, a four-bed special unit was opened at Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital (JBFH) in the city yesterday with a view to providing healthcare service to the poor and marginalised farmers at free of cost.

The unit titled 'Jibon Kheya' was opened under the joint initiative of JBFH and Hridoy-e Mati O Manush, a popular agriculture-based documentary programme of Channel 1, as part of their joint healthcare programme for the farmers.

Agriculture Adviser Dr CS Karim inaugurated the unit on the second floor of the hospital.

Prior to inauguration, a meeting was held at the reception room of JBFH.

Speaking at the meeting, the adviser said JBFH and Hridoy-e Mati O Manush have taken a noble initiative on a noble day.

He said about 1.5 crore farmers of the country through their labour and merit are producing food for 15 crore people but they often do not get deserved price.

"If anyone is called a national hero it is our farmers who continue their struggle in an ailing state," he said, adding, if the farmers get sick while working on the field it will affect food production and food security.

CS Karim said a specialised unit for the farmers should be opened in all the hospitals of the country for providing basic healthcare service to them.

Shykh Seraj, director of both the programme and Channel 1, said, "I am waiting for that day when the four-bed unit will become a 400-bed hospital."

He said they have already completed their farmers' healthcare programme in five districts and during the visit they noticed that most of the farmers are unaware of

the primary healthcare service. Seraj said integrated efforts by all a must to build such a specialised hospital for the farmers.

He said Hridoy-e Mati O Manush stepped into fifth year yesterday and it has become a voice of the farmers.

Dr Junaid Shafiq, chairman of JBFH, said they started their farmers' healthcare programme last year and during this time they realised that primary healthcare service is not enough for them.

"Later, we thought to open a unit for the farmers where they would get all the healthcare services including admission, test, medicine and surgery at free of cost," he added.

"Farmers are the main driving forces of the country and we (doctors) are prepared to serve them always," he said, hoping that the hospital will become a specialised hospital for the farmers.

Faridur Reza Sagor, managing director of Channel 1, and Dr Sarder A Naim, managing director of JBFH, also spoke on the occasion.

Tk 4 lakh goods gutted at Ctg stadium

CU CORRESPONDENT

Goods worth around Tk 4 lakh were gutted in a fire at a gallery box at MA Aziz Stadium in the port city early yesterday.

Sources said the fire broke out at around 3:00am and engulfed the stockpiled of timbers, tins and other goods at the box.

Eleven fire fighting units from different stations rushed to the spot and doused the fire completely.

Fire fighters could not identify the source of the fire.

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Artist Rafiqun Nabi gives away prizes to a winner of a drawing competition at Greenfield Spectrum School in the city yesterday. The school organised the competition to mark the Amar Ekushey.

'Dhaka to try for recognition of all mother languages at UNGA'

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury said the foreign ministry would try to secure greater recognition of all mother languages, including Bangla, in the United Nations General Assembly.

He unveiled the plan at an event in the ministry yesterday evening to mark 'Amar Ekushey Shaheed Dibosh' as well as International Mother Language Day.

The 21st February is already recognised as the International Mother Language Day at the initia-

tive of Bangladesh at the Unesco through a resolution adopted there in 1999.

"Bangladesh is known for its contribution to global peace and stability. In fact we are also regular sponsors of the UN resolution on 'Culture of Peace' every year. It is our view that respect for mother language is an inseparable element of a culture of peace. This is our message to the international community, and we will try to formalise it in the general assembly of the United Nations itself," Iftekhar said.

The foreign adviser said it would

be a great tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for their mother tongue, Bangla, on 21st February in 1952. It will be a memorial of global proportions to them.

Acting Foreign Secretary MAK Mahmood, UNDP Resident Representative Reneta Dessalieu and acting dean of the diplomatic corps Ambassador Ferit Ergin were present in the ceremony.

Dr Md Hamid Rashid, director general of the UN and Multilateral Economic Affairs Wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted the programme.

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