

এতিহাস আধুনিক প্রতিদিন

শুভ নববর্ষ ১৪১৫

**LUBNAN**  
ETHNIC WEAR

**Rich man**  
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Communications Secretary Dr Mahbubur Rahman and Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty exchange documents after signing a supplementary deal in the city yesterday for resumption of passenger train service between Dhaka and Kolkata from Pahela Baishakh. (Story on Page 1)

## Hold open talks with political parties

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday called on the government to hold open dialogues with the political parties instead of 'secret meetings'.

They also said that the proposed dialogue should give priority to the issue of spiralling prices of essentials to find out the way to resolve the crisis.

They also urged the government to declare specific dates for elections.

KHALEDA'S WRIT

A JCD faction rejects court verdict, another welcomes

DU CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Khaleda faction of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday demonstrated on Dhaka University (DU) campus rejecting the court verdict that discharged detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's writ petition challenging the legality of the Election Commission's (EC) invitation to Saifur-led BNP faction on reform talks.

As soon as the news of the court verdict reached the campus at noon, hundreds of pro-Khaleda JCD leaders and activists brought out a protest procession and held a rally on the campus rejecting the verdict and demanding resignation of Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda.

The JCD leaders said a certain quarter of the government has been conspiring to vanish the nationalist forces from the country. They said JCD would not accept any dialogue or election without Khaleda Zia.

JCD central unit acting President Sultan Salauddin Tuku, Organising Secretary Abdul Kader Bhuiya Jewel, Vice-president Joyato Kumar Kundu, and DU unit General Secretary Saiful Islam Feroz spoke at the rally.

However, talking to The Daily Star, pro-Saifur BNP leaders and JCD activists welcomed the verdict.

## 'Start rationing system for workers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesher Sromojibi Nari Maitri, a platform of workingwomen, yesterday urged the government to start rationing system and distribute food free of cost to working people for the next two months to avoid any famine situation.

In a written speech at a press conference in the city, Convener of the organisation Banhishikha Zamali also called for expanding the OMS operation and fixing the price of rice at Tk 15 per kg.

She urged the government to identify and arrest the people involved in the syndicate which is responsible for price hike, and reduce dependency on foreign countries for food and prioritise the agriculture sector in the next budget.

Meanwhile, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (ML) yesterday criticised the government for its failure in tackling the price spiral of essentials and distasteful comments of the top persons in the government.

At a meeting of the city committee, the party leaders said even the army chief has blamed the syndicate for price hike of essentials, but the government could not take any action against them.

They urged the government to strengthen the market-monitoring system so that the syndicate could not lower the price of rice when the Boro paddy comes to the market and make farmers suffer huge loss.

Party central leaders Badrul Alam, Abdul Mannan Azad and Mahiuddin Howlader were present at the meeting presided over by the city unit Convener Pathak Lal Goldar.

National Democratic Party organised the roundtable on the 'Proposed national dialogue: Responsibilities of the government and the political parties' at the National Press Club in the city.

Sheikh Siddique, president of Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Janata League, said such dialogues did not do any good in the past 50 years. "I have doubts about the success of the proposed dialogues as the government held secret meetings with corrupt leaders," he said.

Sheikh Shahidul Islam, secretary general of the Jatiya Party, said the dialogue should focus on how to control the price hike of essentials.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leader ASM Abdur Rob, Sheikh Shawkat Hossain Nilu of National People's Party and Advocate Nitai Roy Chowdhury also spoke at the roundtable presided over by NDP Chairman Golam Mortoza.

## Newspaper holiday Apr 14

BSS, Dhaka

Newspapers Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) will observe holiday on April 14 on account of Pahela Baishakh.

Therefore, no newspapers will be published on April 15, said a press release of the association.

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