

Grassroots leaders

FROM PAGE 1

state of emergency. They said they came to know about the programme from news reports and have taken no preparation yet to hold the protest programme under the state of emergency.

They said they are planning to seek permissions from local administrations for the programme in district headquarters. But highly placed sources said the government has yet to take any decision regarding allowing AL to protest at district levels.

"We will apply to the local administration seeking permission to hold the programme, if they allow us we will hold it," said ANM Shafiqul Haque, Sylhet district unit president of AL, adding that they however have yet to take any preparation for the protest.

But several district level leaders said they will talk to both district and central leaders in a day or two to figure out a way for holding the programme.

"As there is a ban on indoor politics, we are discussing among us to figure out a way to observe the programme without violating the state of emergency," said Maj Gen (retd) AMSA Amin, president of Kurigram district unit.

Bagerhat district unit General Secretary Sheikh Qamruzzaman Tuku and Dinajpur district unit General Secretary Advocate Mostafizur Rahman said they have yet to decide whether to observe the programme, as none instructed them about it.

"We haven't informed either officially or verbally about the programme. We have learnt about it through newspapers," said Rahman.

Malmonirhat district unit AL leader Nazrul Haque Patwari said, "It will be very tough to observe the programme here."

"When we can't even open the office, how are we to observe the programme under the emergency?" asked Feni district unit General Secretary Abdur Rahman.

Barguna district unit General Secretary Jahangir Kabir said he thinks the local administration will not allow them to hold such a political protest under the emergency.

He said they will contact the central leaders seeking guidelines

CNG Price

FROM PAGE 1

Employees Union, said, "We have information that over 100 of our fellow drivers had to be assaulted by the passengers as they demanded some extra fare."

Asked, it is not possible to wait till the government's new decision as the drivers have to pay the double price of the CNG.

Terming the government decision unwise without consulting the drivers, he said the government should have to re-fit the fare before increasing the CNG price.

Demanding the immediate re-fixing of fare, Dhaka District Auto Rickshaw Labourers Union leaders threatened, "Unless, the government would have to be responsible if any unrest is developed among the labourers."

Replying to a query, he said: "We have told him [Jiechi] of our 'One-China policy'. We have said matters pertaining to Tibet are internal affairs of China... have agreed the forthcoming Olympics in Beijing will be an occasion of pride for all Asians and [it] must not be politicised."

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Truck Owners' Association president Rustum Ali protested the government decision and termed it illegal.

He told The Daily Star, "There is no alternative to increase the fare of CNG-run truck, bus and other vehicles."

"While we have been insisting the truck and other transport owners to convert their vehicles into CNG-run, the government is discouraging them with its unwise decisions," he said.

He said about 60 percent of the trucks ply in and around the capital is CNG-run and the number is increasing day by day.

"As the CNG price is increased, we must have to increase the fare," he said and added, "The fare of truck is fixed neither by the government nor by the owners' association, it is fixed depending on demand and supply."

Moreover, the owners of the CNG-run buses ply on the roads are also considering of increasing the fare. But they did not start yet.

They said they would decide in this regard soon.

Presently, around 1,32,000 CNG-fuelled vehicles ply the roads in Dhaka, Chittagong and Comilla. The number of CNG pumps stands at 229 with 19 more set to be opened within a couple of months, said Petropetrola sources.

CNG sector consumes two percent of 1,750 million cubic feet gas produced per day, they added.

She said at least 20 employees are needed for the smooth running of the museum but now there are only 14. The two-storied museum building needs more attention of the department, she added.

The main attractions of the museum are the traditional wooden sandals, furniture, palanquin, water filter, piano, and a metal monogram of the estate, said Nahid Sultan.

On an average 150 people visit the museum every day but there are no modern facilities for them, archaeology office sources said.

The museum needs a library for Rabindra research, a guest house, and a parking lot," Nahid said.

She said at least 20 employees are needed for the smooth running of the museum but now there are only 14. The two-storied museum building needs more attention of the department, she added.

He said businesses should discover their inner confidence which will make them move forward.

"We have to unleash a culture of showing our generosity through these kinds of events," he added.

In his reaction Viyellatex Group Chairman and Managing Director KM Rezaul Hasnat said barriers are also the strength and if businesses can cross the barriers with honesty, sincerity and quality, they will achieve success.

"I believe in dreams," he said adding that he wants to get his company listed on the Fortune 500 list. "If many Indian companies can make their way to the Fortune 500, why can't we?" he added.

In her reaction, Nilufar Farooq, recipient of the Outstanding Woman in Business award, said development of women in a country is closely related with the overall development of the country.

Nilufar, who received the award for her success in flower business, said flowers are cultivated across the country nowadays and are exported. "It has a substantial potential," she added.

Receiving the Enterprise of the Year 2007 award on behalf of Bengal Plastic Industries, its Chairman Morshed Alam said he came to the stage last night crossing a lot of barriers like many other established businesses.

He wants to offer more quality products to his buyers and said his company recycles around 60.5 percent of the raw materials so that his plant does not pose any threat of environmental hazard.

His company is a performance-based one, he said adding that his future plan is to set up textile and petrochemicals.

Earlier stressing the need for a genuine trust based partnership between the government and businesses, The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam said businesses should forget petty rivalry and be united.

Leaders of pro-Saifur faction are trying to persuade the party's standing committee members to take part in dialogue on electoral reforms with the EC scheduled for Sunday.

But most standing committee members are with the pro-Khaleda faction of the party. Five of them had also sent a joint letter to the EC in favour of Khaleda Zia-backed BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

Senior leaders of the Saifur-led party held several meetings to work out strategies in the last few days to unite the party under the leadership of Saifur Rahman before holding talks with the EC.

They also said the government might change its stance on holding pre-dialogue talks with them following the Election Commission's (EC) invitation to the pro-Saifur faction of the party.

The EC on Tuesday invited Maj (retd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, acting secretary general of the pro-Saifur faction, for talks on electoral reform scheduled for Sunday.

When asked about pre-dialogue talks with the government, acting Office Secretary of pro-Khaleda faction Rizvi Ahmed last evening told The Daily Star, "We knew the talks would be held on Saturday, but we read an adviser's remarks in newspapers in which he said the talks would be held at a convenient time. But they [government] are yet to contact us."

Party leaders said they have decided to participate in pre-

Dhaka can follow

FROM PAGE 1

On the completion of a two-day visit, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi left here in the morning for Pakistan.

Dr Iftekhar Chowdhury said Bangladesh and China are partners in the new Asian Age and the visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi would further cement this relationship.

"Our friendship is rooted in history, but like all friendship relationships between nations have also to be renewed and reinvigorated from time to time, and this visit was an occasion to do just that," the foreign adviser stated.

The Chinese foreign minister has conveyed invitation to Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed on behalf of the Chinese prime minister and to the foreign adviser on his behalf.

"We'll need to work out the details," the foreign adviser said with regard to the schedules of such visits.

He added: "We discussed regional and international politics as well. I have explained to him the warmth of our relations with India and Pakistan, and the growing cooperation with all SAARC countries. Very importantly, we've talked about going ahead with the idea of a tripartite understanding among Bangladesh, Myanmar and China regarding a road linkage, something that I had raised with him earlier at a bilateral meeting in Manilla."

Asked about Chinese view on the caretaker government's performance

of the foreign adviser said:

"Minister Yang Jiechi has lauded it. I have told him we have scheduled elections for December, and he was pleased with the progress of our road map leading to it. In the meantime, he was deeply satisfied with Bangladesh's international role as a peace-loving and stabilising force."

"We both recognised that in the dawning of this new Asian Age we both have responsibilities. We must bring our peoples a much better quality of life as we are doing. We must provide each other mutual help. A new chapter in the history of the world has begun," he said.

The Chinese foreign minister has invited the foreign adviser to Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed on behalf of the Chinese prime minister and to the foreign adviser on his behalf.

"We'll need to work out the details," the foreign adviser said with regard to the schedules of such visits.

CJ urges

FROM PAGE 1

On the workshop, said there is no scope of autocracy if the constitutional rule exists.

He said everything must be done in accordance with law as none is above the law.

Twenty senior assistant judges are taking part in the workshop.

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) organised the workshop at its auditorium.

Onion price

FROM PAGE 1

and Tk 22 per kg and the prices of Indian onions were between Tk 14 and Tk 15 per kg.

Dulal Uddin, an onion trader of Pabna, told The Daily Star that the hoarders stocked onions for two weeks pushing the price upwards. He said he was selling local onions at Tk 16-20 per kg in the wholesale market of Karwan Bazar two days ago.

"It is not possible for me to run the factory in the absence of my husband. I have two daughters and a young son," he added.

Fatema Begum, 28, wife of deceased weaver Faruque Mia of the same village, said her husband had to lend several lakh taka from moneylenders and NGOs a few months back to repair his handloom factory badly damaged in the flood.

"The authorities concerned should provide proper compensation to the family members of the victims considering their poor condition," he added.

Traders said the distributors on April 20 told them that the prices of soya bean oil would go up by Tk 10 per litre and the traders hiked the price from April 21.

A five-litre container of brand soya bean oil was selling at Tk 564 yesterday while a 900ml container was selling at Tk 112 in retail.

Prices of different fishes continued to go up. The prices of all types of fish increased by Tk 10-20 per kg in retail markets of the capital, fish traders said.

Even though the supply of fish at different markets was smooth, traders said the hike was due to the season coming to an end.

The prices of coarse verities of rice remained between Tk 34 and Tk 38 per kg while the price of finer rice saw a slight drop. It was selling between Tk 40 and Tk 45 per kg in retail markets yesterday.

The price of battery chicken in retail remained between Tk 115 and Tk 125 per kg while the prices of free-range chicken remained between Tk 90 and Tk 220 as per their size.

Pulse of different qualities was selling between Tk 80 and Tk 100 per kg in retail.

Road blocked

FROM PAGE 1

AAKH Garments Factory at Hemayetpur.

Witnesses said a bus of Janoseda Paribahan ran over Nasiruddin while he was crossing the road at Hemayetpur bus stand at about 7:40am.

Nasiruddin died on the spot while the driver of the bus sped away.

When the news of his death spread among his fellow garment workers, over 100 workers of AAKH Garments factory took to the street and damaged five to six vehicles protesting the incident.

The transport labourers at the bus stand tried to prevent the garment workers from damaging vehicles resulting in a chase and counter-chase between the two groups.

Meanwhile, about 150 more garment workers came out of the factory and damaged 10 to 12 more vehicles.

Several hundred buses, trucks and other vehicles remained stranded on the highway.

Later, members of the Rab, army and police brought the situation under control.

Sub-inspector Faruk Kamal who was on duty at the scene, said vehicular movement on the road remained suspended for about two hours as the garment workers put barricade on the road.

Nasiruddin's brother filed a murder case but no case was filed in connection with the violent incident.

Savar police said the body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital for autopsy.

4 children

FROM PAGE 1

same household.

Meanwhile, Farhad, 4, son of Malek Prodhan, and Moina, 4, daughter of Kader Prodhan, also slipped into a pond and drowned in south Islamabad of Matlab (north) upazila while playing family sources said. They were also cousins.

Nature makes

FROM PAGE 16

along with 84 associates, said a press release.

"Maqsudul Alam and a collaboration of scientists from around the world have produced a genome assembly for 'SunUp', a genetically engineered and commercially produced fruit tree that is virus resistant," writes the Nature.

"Comparing the genome sequence with that of a distant relative, the grass *Arabidopsis*, the authors find that the papaya genome is three times larger but in fact contains fewer genes—which could provide clues about the evolution of seed-producing plants. The sequence contains features that offer insight into the plant's adaptation to day length in the tropics, and into how it attracts seed-dispersal agents and creates the volatile compounds responsible for its delicious flavour," it adds.

Meanwhile, there are around 25,000 Rohingya refugees in two camps in Cox's Bazar, and officials concerned estimate some 1.5 lakh Rohingyas have either been expelled or left Burma since 1948, Arab News ago," he said.

The campaign was launched with the help of the Islamic Education Foundation (IEF).

"Some people with vested interests spread a rumour that the campaign was a trap laid by the Passport Department to arrest Burmese people. Despite the rumours, the campaign was a success with people attending in large numbers," Al-Jamal said.

The campaign was launched with the help of the Islamic Education Foundation (IEF).

"We will have to take any crisis positively," he said paraphrasing an Albert Einstein quote that every crisis is an opportunity, contextualising it amid current local and global economic problems.

Abdullah Marouf, head of the IEF for Asian communities in Makkah, said he hopes the campaign will educate people to stay away from crimes.

The Saudi authorities also issued work permits to these Rohingyas considering the issue of their persecution in Burma.

Arab News said Saudi authorities recently allowed Burmese residents in the kingdom to open bank accounts without the need to present copies of their passports.

Kalihati Tragedy

FROM PAGE 16

weaver Solaiman of Rampur village, told The Daily Star that her husband's handloom factory remains closed, as all seven employees of the factory did not join work since the incident apprehending that they would not be paid timely in Solaiman's absence.

"It is not possible for me to run the factory in the absence of my husband. I have two daughters and a young son," he added.

Fatema Begum, 28, wife of deceased weaver Faruque Mia of the same village, said her husband had to lend several lakh taka from moneylenders and NGOs a few months back to repair his handloom factory badly damaged in the flood.

"The authorities concerned should provide proper compensation to the family members of the victims considering their poor condition," he added.