



Sher-e-Bangla's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 46th death anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla Abul Kashem Fazlul Huq, a great leader of the Bangladesh.

Different political and socio-cultural organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to pay their rich tributes to Fazlul Huq, popularly known as Sher-e-Bangla or Huq Sahab.

Paying his glowing tribute to the leader, President Iajuddin Ahmed in a statement said the nation recalls the great leader with great respect for his contribution to the country's socio-economic development.

The example he set by reforming education, politics and society, as the chief minister of the undivided Bengal would be remembered forever, he added.

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed in a separate statement also paid homage to the legendary personality in the political arena of the sub-continent.

Sher-e-Bangla played an important role in the society through poverty reduction, economic empowerment and education. He contributed a lot for the oppressed and exploited farmers and labourers in the country by formulating Rin Salishi Board (Debt Arbitration Board), he said.

The confident, courageous and benevolent leader would be a source of inspiration for all of us forever, he said.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote will place wreaths at his graveyard near Doyel Chattar at 8:00am today. In a statement, Secretary General of Jatiya Party Sheikh Shahidul Islam said Sher-e-Bangla contributed a lot for the oppressed and exploited farmers in the country by forming Bengal Tenancy Act, Rin Salishi Board and abolishing zamindari system.

He dreamt for an independent Bangladesh by placing Lahore Resolution in 1940.

Leaders and activists of Jatiya Party will offer Fatihah and will place wreaths at his graveyard at 8:00am.

A milad mahfil will be held at his grandson AK Faiyazul Huq's house at Banani (House-32, Road-6, Block-c) after Maghrib prayer. Admirers of AK Fazlul Huq are requested to attend the milad mahfil to pray for the salvation of his departed soul.



Abdus Samad Azad

DU CORRESPONDENT

Today is the third death anniversary of former foreign minister and Awami League presidium member Abdus Samad Azad, says a press release.

To mark the day, Awami League will hold a Qurankhwan at his Kalabagan residence in the morning while a doa mahfil will be held at Kalabagan Lake Circus Mosque after Zohr prayers.

On behalf of the Abdus Samad Azad Foundation, a special prayer will be held at his grave at 11:00am. A website styled www.abdussamadazadfoundation.com will be inaugurated at Begum Sufia Kamal auditorium at the National Museum in the city at 5:00pm.

Former minister and Chief Adviser to the Abdus Samad Azad Foundation Abul Mal Abdul Muhit will inaugurate the website. Besides, district AL units will also hold discussions and doa mahfil to mark the day.

Aftabul Qader Bir Uttam

Today is the 37th death anniversary of Shaheed Captain Aftabul Qader Bir Uttam, says a press release.

Captain Qader embraced martyrdom during a direct confrontation with the Pakistani occupation forces at Mahalchhari in Khagrachhari district on April 27, 1971.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at the residence of his elder brother former Ambassador Akramul Qader at House-79, Lake Drive, Sector-7, Uttara in the city after Asr prayers today.

Their brother Commander Shaheed Ahsanul Qader was also killed during the War of Liberation.

Take lead in creating knowledge-based society

Chief adviser urges DU teachers

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday urged the teachers of the Dhaka University to take the lead in creating knowledge-based society in the country to catch up with the advanced world.

Terming Dhaka University the highest seat of learning in the country, he said quality of education of the university will have to be maintained and stressed training of the teachers to create an educated society.

The CA made the remarks when a 26-member delegation of Dhaka University, comprising its syndicate members and Deans of Faculties led by Vice-chancellor Prof Dr SMA Faiz, called on him at his office.

Some of the teachers stressed revising the pay scale of Dhaka University teachers as many teachers are going to private universities due to low pay. They also proposed that a research fund should be created in the national budget.

Some of them also emphasised maintaining transparency in appointing lecturer for the university and introducing training programme at the entry point for lecturers.

They also opined for sharing

equipment and spaces of various departments of the university for their optimum use.

The vice-chancellor in his speech placed a number of demands, including transfer the Atomic Energy Commission Building to Dhaka University, construction of a 10-storied building at TSC for co-curricular activities of the students, construction of tower buildings for teachers' accommodation, allocation of land for a second campus of the university as primarily 500 acres of land was allocated during inception of Dhaka University, which presently possess 250 acres of land, extension of academic building and increasing overseas scholarships for higher studies.

The meeting was informed about ongoing four projects of Tk 67.18 crore for various development work of the university and an increase in qualitative standard of university education.

Of the projects, Tk 21 crore Dhaka University special development second-phase project is for construction of new girls' dormitory, flats for hall resident teachers, procurement of scientific equipment and construction of Bungalows for provosts.

Tk 20.81 crore was sanctioned

for a project for extension of academic building, extension of student halls, while a Tk 5 crore project taken for repair, renovation and reconstruction of Curzon Hall and Tk 20 crore scheme for development of infrastructure and research capability of physical, chemical and biological sciences.

The meeting was also informed about five proposed projects for the next fiscal, including Tk 154 crore Dhaka University Special Development Project, Tk 27.35 crore Extension of Jagannath Hall project and Tk 15 crore for renovation of antiquated establishments of the octogenarian DU.

The chief adviser said he is in the know about the problems as he was also the student of Dhaka University.

He assured that "despite resource constraint on part of the government, the problems would be addressed on priority basis".

He urged the teachers also to try to create the university's own sources of income.

Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman, Education Secretary Montazul Islam, Secretary to CA's office Kazi Aminul Islam and CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim were also present.



Prof Khan Sarwar Murshid speaks at a view exchange meeting titled 'Women's constitutional rights: Perspective - women development policy and recent debate' at Biam Foundation auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right are Dr Hamida Hossain and journalist Syed Abul Moksud and on his left is Advocate Shahdeen Malik. (Story on Page 16)

Press freedom a must for nation's survival

Speakers say at roundtable

DU CORRESPONDENT

Free the democracy from its captivity to overcome the present crisis in mass media, said the speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said freedom of the media is a must for the survival of the nation, as it is the most effective tool to project injustice and irregularity before the people.

The roundtable titled 'The Present Crisis in Mass Media in Bangladesh: Way to Overcome'

was organised by Dhaka University Journalists' Association (Duja) to mark the publication ceremony of its bimonthly magazine Prostab at the Senate Building.

DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz inaugurated the function where language movement veteran Dr Abdul Matin was present as chief guest. Duja President Mahabubur Rahman presided over the discussion.

All have to come forward to get rid of the present crisis of the

country, said Abdul Matin, adding, it is very difficult to predict where the country is going on.

Terming the fund crisis as the key problem in media, former DU VC Prof Moniruzzaman Miah said the rate of government advertisements should be doubled to recover the industry from the present crisis.

Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, acting chairman of mass communication and journalism department, said united stand of journalism community could be the main way to overcome the existing crisis in mass media.

Journalists must have passion for their profession, otherwise they cannot serve the nation, he added.

Editor of The Bangladesh Observer Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury urged the government to return democracy to people immediately to overcome the prevailing crisis in media sector.

Prof Anisuzzaman laid emphasis on honesty and objectivity of journalists to inform people of the right to information.

Democracy will undoubtedly help media industry flourish, he added.

Editor of Manabzamin Motiur Rahman Chowdhury said the return to democracy through a free and fair election is the only means to resolve the crisis in all sectors including the mass media.

National Press Club President Showkat Mahmud urged the caretaker government to implement the 'Right to Information Act' before their exit for the greater interest of the nation.

Prof Abul Kashem Fazlul Huq, Prof G M Chowdhury, Raquibuddin Ahmed, journalists Abdul Hye Siddique, Ilias Khan, Saleh Shiblee, Quader Goni Chowdhury and Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron were present on the occasion.

Bangladeshi channels to be broadcast in WB soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Cable Operators' Association of Bangladesh (COAB) and the Cable Operators' Association of India (COAI) yesterday said that broadcasting of Bangladeshi channels in West Bengal might start within a month.

The leaders said this at a joint press conference at the Bashundhara City on the second day of the 2nd International Cable TV Exhibition.

The COAB leaders at the press conference hoped that Bangladeshi channels will be broadcasted without any carriage fee.

Binod Shancheti, president of Cable TV Equipment Traders and Manufacturers Association (CETMA), urged the Bangladeshi cable operators to arrange dialogues between Indian cable operators and Bangladeshi channel owners.

He also called for enhancing the quality of the programmes of the Bangladeshi channels.

COAB President SM Anwar Parvez, Editor of the Broadband India magazine Dilip K Mahendra and COAB Secretary General Nizam Uddin Masud were present at the press conference organised by COAB.

Newspaper holiday on May 1

UNB, Dhaka

Offices of all newspapers and news agencies will remain closed on May 1 on account of May Day.

Therefore, no newspaper will be published on May 2, said a press release of Newspaper Owners Association of Bangladesh (NOAB).

BCU founding anniversary observed

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), a left-leaning student organisation, yesterday observed its 56th founding anniversary on Dhaka University (DU) campus amid a series of programmes.

A colourful procession with party flag, festoons and placards heralded the beginning of the BCU's anniversary programmes in the morning.

Leaders and activists of the organisation paraded different streets on the campus and ended the procession placing wreaths at anti-terrorism sculpture 'Raju' adjacent to Teacher-Student Centre (TSC).

Later, BCU arranged a founding anniversary rally on the collection centre premises of Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducus) building, while central unit President Khan Asaduzzaman and General Secretary Manabendra Dev spoke at the rally.

DHAKA TODAY

BWCCI seminar

Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BWCCI) organises a seminar on 'Budget aspiration of women entrepreneurs 2008-09'. Venue: Hotel Orchard Plaza, Nayapalton. Time: 10:30am.

Seminar

Bangladesh Economic Association organises a national seminar on state of Bangladesh economy and price of essentials. Venue: Planning and Development Academy auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

Business Award

The 6th Weekly Financial Mirror-Robintex Business Award giving ceremony will be held. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Time: 7:00pm.

Workshop

Oxfam GB and PRIP Trust jointly organise a workshop on 'Women political empowerment in the light of PRSP'. Venue: Cirdap Auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Discussion

Bangladesh Geological Society organises a discussion on 'Salient features of model PSC, 2008'. Venue: Geology department auditorium. DU. Time: 2:00pm.

Seminar

Dev Centre for Philosophical Studies organises a seminar on 'Knowledge, quality of earnings and health: some connections: A socio-philosophical analysis'. Venue: Room no 2028, Arts building, DU. Time: 4:00pm.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Md Aminul Islam, a distinguished lawyer and former judge, will be held at his residence at Natun Bazar in Sherpur town today, says a press release.

He died on March 16 at Square Hospital in the city.



Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at the Gono Forum representatives' meeting titled 'National unity to combat national challenges' at Engineers Institute in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

Growing JCD-BCL, factional clashes make DU tense

RAKIB AHAMMED

The atmosphere of Dhaka University (DU) campus is getting violent day by day as clashes and inter-clashes between the two largest student organisations JCD and BCL have been taking place frequently since last one and a half months.

Over a dozen of major and minor clashes between the leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of BNP, and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of Awami League (AL), took place on the campus during this time leaving at least 35 injured.

Four crude bombs were exploded and a blank shot was fired in three separate incidents raising further tension.

However, the university authorities are yet to take any realistic or comprehensive measures to resist such violent incidents on the campus.

Talking to The Daily Star teachers, students, journalists and student leaders have expressed their deep concern over the present unstable situation and said nobody is secured on the campus now.

"The decisions of the university authorities usually reflect the attitude of the government. It may be that the government wants to remain aloof from university incidents and as such no action has been taken in these regards," said Prof Syed Manzurul Islam, a

teacher of the English department, while talking to The Daily Star.

However, leaders of some left-leaning student organisations told this correspondent that the university authorities are virtually hostile to student leaders of JCD and BCL.

"While the cadres of BCL and JCD are resorting to violence openly on the campus, the university authorities are virtually silent about them. I suppose the authorities are somehow hostages to BCL and JCD leaders," said a left-leaning student leader wishing anonymity.

"In most of the cases the authorities are indifferent and feel relaxed after forming eye-washing probe committees to suppress the facts," he added.

To stop recurrence of such incidents, leaders of 'Paribesh Parishad', a platform of student organisations, stressed the need for resuming its activities on the campus.

They said as the Dhaka University Central Students Union (Ducus) is dysfunctional, the Paribesh Parishad could be the only platform for student bodies.

Proctor Prof AK Feroz said he has no knowledge about Paribesh Parishad.

"Student bodies should demand immediate election of Ducus, otherwise such clashes will never end," he added.

During last one and a half

months, JCD activists beat at least 12 activists of BCL and seven general students while BCL activists assaulted three JCD activists in different incidents on the campus.

Besides, 15 BCL and JCD activists were assaulted following factional clashes.

The activists of BCL and JCD have also assaulted three journalists.

Sources said most of the clashes took place over the issue of establishing supremacy on the campus.

The BCL and the JCD have been demonstrating on the campus separately demanding the release of AL chief Sheikh Hasina and BNP chief Khaleda Zia since January and trying to establish their hegemony on the campus.

Meanwhile, the division within the organisations is now clearly visible and leaders of each faction are busy in establishing their supremacy over the others.

After 1/11, a pro-reform JCD faction led by Sayeed Iqbal Titu emerged on the campus and its presence was quite visible when Khaleda's petition against the Election Commission was dismissed by the High Court.

On the other hand, a group of BCL leaders and activists, who were deprived of positions in the last central committee formed on April 6, 2006 have already expanded their hegemony on the campus chasing the main faction leaders in three occasions.



Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested five suspected Islamist militants in connection with Brahmanbaria bomb blast. From left are Md Mizanur Rahman, Md Saiful Islam, Md Shamsul Islam, Md Jamaluddin and Tajul Islam Al Mahmud alias Baba Tajul. (Story on Page 3)

DU student injured in bomb blast

DU CORRESPONDENT

A student of Dhaka University (DU) was injured yesterday following an explosion of a crude bomb in front of Sergeant Zahurul Haque Hall of the university.

Sources said Shahidul Islam, a first year student of Bangla Department, got injured in his legs with the bomb's splinters while he was passing through the hall compound at around 9:30pm.

Critically injured, he was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital after receiving primary treatments from the DU Medical Centre, sources added.

However, the reason behind the blast could not be known.

CNG price hike not right decision

Panellists tell BBC Bangladesh Sanglap

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Politicians, civil society member and lawyer yesterday said the government did not take the right decision of increasing compressed natural gas (CNG) price in right time when the prices of other essentials went beyond common people's reach.

"Increased CNG price has a wide impact, as around 80 percent impact of the increased price will affect the poor people of the country," said former adviser ASM Shahjahan while addressing BBC Bangladesh Sanglap at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city.

Commerce and Industry Affairs Secretary of Awami League Col (Retd) Faruk Khan, Office Secretary (acting) of BNP Ruhul Kabir Rizvi and Bangladesh Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Sara Hossain also took part in the Sanglap as panellists.

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

Faruk Khan said due to lack of competency CNG auto-rickshaw and taxicab drivers have increased the price before the government increases. The government has proved its lack of skillfulness in the cases of holding elections, dialogues and increasing price of

CNG. The price of CNG should have been increased phase by phase.

Rizvi said the interim government cannot take the decision to increase the price of CNG, adding that any caretaker government cannot assume power for two years.

He further said the government is "illegal" and has failed to prove its dexterity. He asked the government to quit power and hand over power to an elected government as early as possible.

"It was not right to increase price of CNG when the countrymen have to face severe problems in dealing their life with the price hike of essentials," Barrister Sara said.

Over the government decision on banning war criminals from contesting local government polls, Shahjahan, a former IGP, said the government could implement the decision both legally and principally.

Faruk said war criminals should be banned from taking part in all elections in the country.

Rizvi said it is the duty of an elected government, not others, to try war criminals. The (present) government does not have the authority to take any policy making decision. The BNP leader accused the government of delaying holding the parliamentary elections.

Over political party reforms, the

AL leader said the government did not bring about any reform in the country during the last 15 months. Even the Election Commission (EC) has not been reformed rather persons have been changed, he added.

He also said the government and the EC are not helping the political parties in carrying out necessary reforms that the countrymen want to see within the parties, rather they are obstructing in bringing reforms within the parties.

"We are not being able to bring reforms in our party due to non-cooperation from the government," added the AL leader.

Rizvi said, "We will not follow any dictation in carrying out intra-party reforms." The former adviser said reforms are necessary for the interests of people and the country.

Telemedicine service for farmers

Japan Bangladesh Friendship Medical Services Limited initiated 24-hour telemedicine hotline services for the people, says a press release.

Poor people can get doctor's advice by dialing 10600 and farmers can reach doctor by dialing 10601.