

Ensure participation of all parties for credible election

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion meeting yesterday said participation of all political parties will have to be ensured for holding a free, fair and credible election and making the results acceptable to all.

They said the government and the Election Commission will have to inform the people of the steps that they are going to take for creating a congenial environment for upcoming national and upazila polls.

The discussion titled 'Forthcoming elections: Expectations of the nation and the reality' was organised by Sammito Samajik Andolon (SSA) at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) auditorium in the afternoon.

Taking part in the discussion, former Dhaka University (DU) teacher Prof Rangol Sen said democracy cannot be established without the political parties.

"The idea of holding the local government polls in non-political manner is not a realistic one. Besides, if any big political party like BNP boycotts the next parliamentary election then its result will raise questions," he added.

He however said it will be good enough if the next elections are held in such a peaceful manner as the local government polls were held on August 4.

DU Prof Syed Anwar Hossain said there is no alternative to politicians and political parties in establishing democracy.

It is still a question whether the caretaker government would be able to create an environment

conducive to holding a free and fair election in the country, he added.

Prof Anwar Hossain observed that since the country's constitution was amended 14 times, it cannot be treated as a democratic one.

"So a state, whose constitution is undemocratic, cannot be called a democratic one in any way," he added.

He said those, who are now in the present government, are not nonpolitical since they had served during the rule of four-party alliance government.

Prof Anwar Hossain said the next election should be held under the state of emergency as the musclemen and corrupt people remain in fear under an emergency situation.

"The August 4 elections to city

corporations and municipalities were held peacefully and the participation of the voters was good. They now believe that they can cast their votes without any fear and hassles due to emergency," he said.

"I found nothing new in the immediate-past local government polls.

I thought a change would take place in the country in order to fulfill the expectations of the people, but it did not happen," he added.

Prof Anwar Hossain said the dream for establishing democracy and good governance had been shattered since the independence of the country 37 years ago.

Presiding over the discussion, SSA President Ajoy Roy said although the judiciary has been separated from the executive, the

judges could not become independent mentally.

The meeting was also addressed by columnist Syed Abul Moksud, Adviser leader Sanjib Drang and Chief Executive of the Association for Land Reforms and Development (ALRD) Shamsul Huda.

SSA General Secretary Advocate Tabarak Hossain presented a written statement at the meeting.

ATTACK ON AL RALLY

Int'l probe demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday formed a human chain on the Dhaka University campus demanding international investigation and punishment to the culprits of August 21 grenade attack incident on Awami League rally in 2004.

Around 500 BCL activists formed the human chain at the foot of the Aparajevo Bangla on the campus.

BCL President Mahmud Hasan Ripon, General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton, vice presidents Aminul Haque Kabir and Tareque-al-Mamun, DU unit President Sohel Rana Tipu and General Secretary Sajjad Sakib Badshah took part.

JCD demands

release of Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday brought out a procession on the Dhaka University campus demanding release of the BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her elder son Tarique Rahman.

Later, they held a rally in front of the arts building. Leaders addressing the rally demanded unconditional release of Khaleda for holding free, fair and credible elections in the country.

JCD President Azizul Bari Helal, Vice President Sultan Salahuddin Tuku, Organising Secretary Abdul Kader Bhuiyan Jewel, DU unit President Hasan Mamun, General Secretary Saiful Islam Firoz, Organising Secretary Obaedul Haque Nasir among others addressed the rally.

Chairman of the Forum for the Rights of Elderly KM Rashid said that it is a matter of regret that the government considers linking the issue of the elderly people with that of physically challenged persons.

Call to form national level body for elderly people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a meeting yesterday called for establishing a national level organisation for the welfare of elderly people.

Although the elderly men and women are contributing to society and their families, they are being deprived of their rights, they added.

Realising the Right of the Older People (RRPOP), a project of Resource Integration Center (RIC), in association with the Help Age International and Irish Aid organised the meeting at the Dhaka Reporters Unity office.

A draft policy for setting up a

national level organisation for the elderly people was presented at the meeting.

Under the RIC project that started working at Sirinikathi in Pirojpur in 2001, about 400 organisations for elderly people were developed in six districts so far. RIC Executive Director Abul Hasib Khan said.

Both the elderly men and women are contributing to society, but their contribution are being ignored, he said.

He also mentioned five major challenges to set up a national level organisation for elderly people. The challenges are making them aware of

a common goal, bringing them under a single umbrella, forming leadership at union, district and division levels and raising funds, he said.

Tofazzal Hossain, an executive committee member of RIC, said that not only the project members, the elderly people at the grassroots level should carry on the work towards setting up a national level organisation for them.

Chairman of the Forum for the Rights of Elderly KM Rashid said that it is a matter of regret that the government considers linking the issue of the elderly people with that of physically challenged persons.

Formulate policy against sexual harassment in universities

Speakers say at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said in absence of a specific provision to punish the perpetrators of sexual harassment in the university acts and proctorial laws, the students are being exploited and harassed by some teachers.

At the discussion organised by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) at Cirdap auditorium in the city, they said it is the time to formulate a policy against sexual harassment in the universities and incorporate it in the university proctorial laws.

It must be ensured that misdeeds of a number of teachers in the universities be tried so that integrity of the teacher community is not called in question.

BMP has prepared a draft policy to resist sexual harassment in the highest educational institutions based on detailed interviews with the students and teachers of the universities.

The policy aimed at recognising sexual harassment as a punishable crime, creating a sense of security among the victims and reliance on justice and creating an environment where everybody would be aware of the punishment of such crime and would refrain themselves from making such crime.

The speakers said the policy would create a space to file complaints against the perpetrators on behalf of the students. It would also facilitate punishment to the criminal through administrative action.

The draft policy specifies sexual harassment, formation and working procedure of the cell where the students will be able to file their complaints, punishment according to the severity of crime that starts from verbal cautionary to job termination and filing cases in the court.

"Our movement is not against a particular teacher or teacher community, rather it is the movement against the ailing culture that might engulf the whole society if not resisted," said BMP President Ayesha Khanam.

The recommendations from the discussion would be included in the policy that finally would be submitted to the vice chancellors of the universities as well as the caretaker government to stop sexual harass-

ment in the educational institutions, she added.

Speaking as the chief guest, Justice Mohammad Golam Rabbani said the policy would work as an appendix of the proctorial law, adding that it would help in reducing sexual harassment of the students in the universities.

A significant number of teachers of Dhaka, Rajshahi and Jahangirnagar universities placed their recommendations at the discussion.

The teachers said if a teacher who would be punished by the university administration and then he goes to the court, the university must stand in favour of the student and it must be ensured that the teacher is not getting exemption from the administrative and political interference.

"The policy must be incorporated in the syndicate and proctorial policy, otherwise it would not be an effective one," said Dr Maleka

Begum, adding that at the same time the issue of sexual harassment of the students should be discussed in the syndicate meetings.

"If the university authorities come forward, it is possible to turn the policy into an act through the syndicates," said Dr Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, adding, "Let us the policy to resist sexual harassment of the students start its work from the universities and gradually it should be incorporated in other educational institutions."

Prof Anu Mohammad of Jahangirnagar University said it is important to revise the proctorial law as it is outdated.

Barrister Tania Amir, Prof Mehtab Khanam and Sourav Sikder of Dhaka University, Anisuzzaman, Dr Anisur Rahman of Rajshahi University, Prof Sonia Nishat Amin and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad General Secretary advocate Masuda Rehana Begum also spoke.



Temperature may rise

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 35.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.6 degrees Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:24pm today and rises at 5:38am 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	33.3	26.6	67	92
Chittagong	31.6	26.5	77	82
Rajshahi	35.2	27.1	83	67
Khulna	34.2	26.4	80	79
Barisal	32.8	26.4	80	75
Sylhet	33.0	26.0	86	80
Cox's Bazar	32.2	25.8	72	79

DHAKA TODAY

View exchange meeting

Nagonik Sanghati and ActionAid jointly organise a view exchange meeting on human rights of migrant workers. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

Workshop

A workshop for garment factory owners on reproductive health and gender issues will be held. Venue: Hotel La-Vinci, Karwan Bazar. Time: 7:00pm.

Seminar

Bangladesh Perspective Research Foundation will organise a seminar on 'Democratic transformation in Bangladesh: Opportunity and challenges'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Concert

Dhaka University Management Club organises a concert. Venue: TSC auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of the autobiographical book 'Kato Ghare Dile Thai' by Dr Mahfuzur Rahman will be held. Venue: Words n Pages, Gulshan. Time: 5:00pm.



Dhaka University teachers wearing black badges stage a sit-in at the foot of Aparajevo Bangla on the campus yesterday demanding withdrawal of cases against seven students. (Story on Page 1)

China to finish atop

FROM PAGE 16

Kenya cleaned up the two middle-distance races.

Combat sports again provided controversy with a Cuban taekwondo exponent banned after kicking a referee, and a British boxer claiming he was bitten by his Cuban opponent.

While China took an unsailable lead, victories in the men's and women's 4x400m relays lifted the United States to seven athletics titles, one more than Russia and Jamaica with only the men's marathon on Sunday.

The US track team, who have suffered a week of ups-and-downs including losing their all-around sprint crown to Jamaica, recovered thanks to a remarkable run by women's anchor Sarah Richards.

The USA self-dubbed 'Dream Team' when they came to Beijing have endured a nightmare of disappointing performances including losing their sprint crown when trounced by Jamaica.

But it was the Jamaican-born American, Richards, who saved face when she took the baton several metres behind Russia's Anastasia Kapachinskaya and overtook her on the line.

Bekele emulated Ethiopian compatriot Tirunesh Dibaba in claiming the long-distance double - the first man to achieve the feat since another Ethiopian Miruts Yifter at the 1980 Moscow

Games.

Kenya enjoyed a double gold when Wilfred Bungei won their first men's 800m title in 16 years and Nancy Langat won the women's 1500m.

Controversies in combat sports, boiled over in taekwondo when Cuba's Angel Valodia Matos kicked a referee in the head after he was disqualified in his bout.

Matos, a Sydney Olympics winner, was immediately expelled from international competitions, according to a statement read to the crowd.

In boxing, British gold medalist James DeGale claimed he was bitten in his final with Cuba's Emilio Correa and showed journalists a mark on his chest.

The first-round incident cost Correa two points -- the eventual margin of victory.

Boxing's governing body AIBA also revealed it had been tracking "possible attempts of manipulation" for months before the Games, but insisted no fights had been fixed.

China increased their lead on the medals table with wins in table tennis, and canoeing but missed out on their quest for eight out of eight diving golds when Australian Matthew Mitcham overtook Zhou Luxin with his last dive in the men's 10m platform final.

In a dramatic baseball final, as the sport made its exit from the

Olympics schedule, South Korea upset regular gold medallists Cuba 3-2.

Meanwhile, weightlifter Igor Razorov followed his Ukrainian teammate and heptathlon silver medallist Lyudmila Blonska out of the Games when he became the sixth athlete to fail a drugs test. Razorov was placed in the -105kg category.

Low pressure over Bay

BSS, Dhaka

A low pressure was formed over the northwest Bay of Bengal yesterday afternoon, met office sources said.

Due to the low the country was sizzling under heat and humidity, the sources said. Under its influence the rains were throttled.

Until the low moves onshore, rains are not likely to wash away the heat, the sources added.

The capital recorded only 13mm rainfall yesterday, mostly around Agargaon area, which, however, failed to douse the sultry weather.

During the 12 hours between 6:00am and 6:00pm, Rangpur recorded the day's highest 17mm rainfall followed by 13mm in Dhaka, 7mm in Bogra and 3mm in Faridpur.

DU teachers observe 'Black Day'

FROM PAGE 1

"It is a token protest. We are observing the day as a 'black day' as part of the protest," Duta President Prof Sadrul Amin told The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, seven students, accused in a case on charges of torching an army vehicle last year, held a solidarity rally at the foot of Aparajevo Bangla demanding withdrawal of the case.

A number of DU teachers and student leaders attended the rally.

"I urge those who deem Dhaka University as their opponent not to bear such thoughts in their mind as students and teachers of the university do not consider anyone as their opponent," said Duta General Secretary Prof Anwar Hossain, adding that the cases against the DU teachers and students must be withdrawn.

He said, "I urge the DGFI to say they want to achieve a reconciliation with the teachers and students of Dhaka University."

Prof Anwar urged the caretaker government to lift the state of emergency immediately and hold a free, fair and credible election as soon as possible.

Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique,

former Duta president and a teacher at the mass communication and journalism department, said all cases against the university students should be withdrawn to allow them study freely without any fear.

"They should be given the chance to study in a peaceful environment," he added.

He also said the university authorities should bear the expenses for providing medical treatment to the university students tortured by the law enforcers.

Social Science Faculty Dean Prof Harun-or-Rashid said the cases against the students and teachers must be withdrawn to ensure a peaceful atmosphere on the university campus.

DU teachers Dr Muhammad Samad, Zinat Huda, Wahiduzzaman Chan, Robaet Ferdous, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) president Mahmud Hasan Ripon, its general secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton, BCL DU unit president Sohel Rana Tipu, its general secretary Sajjad Sakib Badshah, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), president Azizul Bari Helal, its organising secretary Abdul Kader

Bhuiyan Jewel, JCD DU unit president Hasan Mamun and six of the seven accused students spoke at the rally.

Duta held a discussion at the association office in the evening.

The teachers demanded immediate withdrawal of the case against seven students and also the case against four teachers on charges of instigating violence on the campus.

Three DU teachers -- Prof Sadrul Amin, Prof Anwar Hossain, Prof Harun-or-Rashid -- were sentenced to two years' imprisonment in the case. Later, the teachers filed an appeal with a Dhaka court challenging the verdict.

Meantime, Samajtantrik Chhatra Dal and Pragatishil Chhatra Jote also brought out processions on the campus demanding withdrawal of the case against the seven students.

Violence broke out on the DU campus on August 20 last year in protest against the assault of a university student by security personnel. Later, violence spread to other educational institutions across the country and lasted for three days.

Schoolboy murdered by friends in Savar

UNB, Savar

A schoolboy was murdered allegedly by his friends at village Chhoto Wadia here on Friday.

The boy identified as Rony, 13, a student of class VII of Begunbari High school, was found slaughtered on a field near their house yesterday.

Police said Rony, son of Faruque Hossain, went missing since some of his friends called him out of the house on Friday afternoon. Villagers found his slaughtered body in a field yesterday morning.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Police arrested Rony's friends -- Awlad Hossain, 18, Masud Rana, 20, Khokon Miah, 19, and Firoz, 18, in this connection.

Family sources said Rony might have been killed following previous enmity over land dispute.

BDR hands over 13 Indians to BSF

UNB, Benapole

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) handed over 13 Indian nationals to Indian Border Security Force (BSF) yesterday after completion of their prison term.

The Indian nationals were arrested by the law enforcers for trespassing into Bangladesh territory and awarded imprisonment for various terms.

They all hailed from Malda, Mursidabad and Uttar Chhabish Pargana districts of India.

Home ministry sources said prison term of 81 Indian nationals have been completed recently and they would be returned to their country soon.

Road crash kills schoolteacher

BSS, Chittagong

A schoolteacher was killed when a speeding bus hit him at Tannery Bottali area under Bayazid Police Station in the port city yesterday morning.

The dead was identified as Khairunnissa, 48, assistant head teacher of J Bottali Government Primary School.

Witnesses said the bus hit Khairunnissa when she was crossing the road on her way to school.

Qulkhwani of Abdullah Al-Mamun today

METRO DESK



Elephant Crown, at 27/1 Elephant Road, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for the salvation of his departed soul.

Abdullah Al-Mamun breathed his last on Thursday at Birdem Hospital.

Prof Zahir Haider passes away

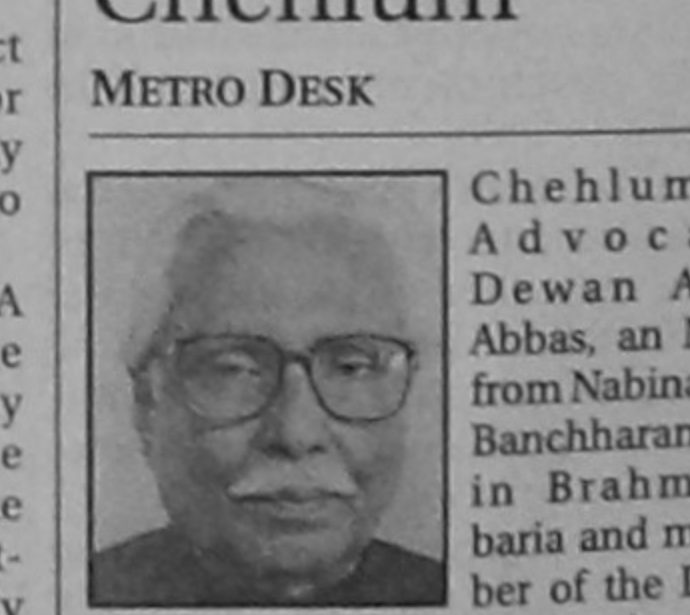
METRO DESK

Professor Emeritus Dr Syed Zahir Haider of Department of Chemistry of Dhaka University passed away due to prostate cancer at a city hospital yesterday at the age of 82, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, five sons, one daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death. He was buried at Kalshi graveyard at Mirpur in the city.

Chehlum

METRO DESK



Constitution Formulation Committee, will be held at his village home, Dewanbari, at Barkandi in Nabiganar at 11:30am today, says a press release.

Dewan Abul Abbas, also a former president of Dhaka Bar Association, passed away at a city hospital on July 16 at the age of 83.

His family members have requested all relatives, friends, colleagues and well-wishers to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.