



Bangladesh Non-govt Primary School Teachers' Samity stages a demonstration in front of the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday to realise its demands.

Free, fair polls possible under emergency: Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party (JP) will divide the country into eight provinces and reintroduce upazila court system with full-fledged upazila system to bring administration to the doorstep of the rural people if they are voted to power, said former president and JP Chairman Hussain Mohammad Ershad yesterday.

Demanding upazila election before the national polls, he said free, fair and credible elections are very much possible under the emergency as August 4 city corporations and municipal elections are good examples that emergency allowing election campaign is not a barrier to hold elections.

Ershad was speaking at JP's central extended meeting at the auditorium of Diploma Engineers' Institute in the city.

"Decentralisation of state power and administration is the precondition of developing villages in Bangladesh," he said, adding that, "Our economy is mostly agro-based as over 80 percent of total population live in villages."

He urged the presidents, secretaries and conveners of district and upazila JP committees present in the meeting to work together to put JP in power saying that earlier Awami League (AL) and BNP snatched their victories by hatching conspiracy, but in this changed situation there is hope for JP.

Full-fledged upazila system can help the nation achieve food autarky as the upazila authorities can closely monitor the employees engaged to assist the farmers to bring croplands under cultivation of multi crops, he added.

Many culprits escape thru' loopholes of law Says BDB chief

A CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday urged the people to be aware of terrorists and killers so that they cannot take part in the general election.

He was addressing a conference of the activists of Noakhali Sadar and Subornochar upazila at Noakhali Poura auditorium as the chief guest.

He said a chance has come to elect an honest and qualified person for the betterment of the future

generation.

Former president B Chowdhury said the present government arrested the corrupt people and countrymen were content, but after 18 months many of them are escaping through the loopholes of the law.

Major (ret'd) Abdul Mannan who chaired the conference said although the government has done many good works but they failed to punish the corrupt people.

"The government has to give explanation about their failure to the people," he said.



PHOTO: ISPR

Visiting 16-member military delegation of Indian higher command course led by Brigadier JM Devadoss pays a courtesy call on Principal Staff Officer of Armed Forces Division Lt General Md Abdul Mubeen at Armed Forces Division in the city yesterday.

Police foil hunger strike of community primary teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Community primary school teachers yesterday could not continue their indefinite hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city due to police interference.

Around 100 teachers under the banner of Bangladesh Community Primary Teacher Association (BCPTA) began hunger strike at 11:30am demanding an increase of their salary, but they had to abandon their programme at 1:30pm in the face of police intervention.

"Police took four teachers including me to chief adviser's office where we submitted our demand," said Habibul Ahsan Bablu, president of BCPTA, while talking to The Daily Star.

He claimed that Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury talked to them over cell phone assuring that a decision to increase their salary will be taken at today's meeting of the advisory council.

"She also told us to postpone our hunger strike, but we have decided not to take class for two hours if the government does not meet our demand," he added.

The BCPTA President said it is not possible to maintain their family with a monthly salary of Tk 1200.

Phulbari Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Committee to Protect Oil-Gas, Mineral Resources and Electricity-Port has chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the Phulbari Day across the country today.

The committee will place wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar at about 10:00am to pay tribute to the people who sacrificed their life in Phulbari Movement, said a press release.

On this day in 2006 seven people were killed as police opened fire on the locals of Phulbari at Dinajpur who were protesting the project that gave the Phulbari coalmine to Asia Energy.

The committee will also hold condolence rally, discussion, drama and film show.

Cuta election on Aug 30

CU CORRESPONDENT

The election of the Chittagong University Teachers' Association (CUTA) will be held on August 30.

Prof Dr Ershad Kamal of Economics department will compete for the post of president from Awami League backed 'Yellow' panel and Prof Dr Md Kamal Hossain of Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences will vie from four-party alliance backed 'White' panel.

Prof Kamrul Huda of Botany department will vie for the post of general secretary from 'Yellow' panel and Prof Abdul Karim of Statistics department from 'White' panel.

Other 'Yellow' panel candidates are: Dr Ganesh Chandra Roy (vice-president), Ali Asgar Chowdhury (joint secretary) and Khaled Mizbahuzzaman (treasurer).

And 'White' panel candidates are: Associate Prof Abu Taher Chowdhury (vice-president), Assistant Prof Mamtaj Uddin Kaderi (joint secretary) and Md Toyub Chowdhury (treasurer).

Meanwhile, six candidates from each panel will fight for membership of the 11-member Cuta executive committee.

98pc Biharis keen to become voters

Speakers tell press confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ninety-eight percent of Urdu-speaking people are interested in becoming voters of the country, said the speakers at a press conference in the city yesterday.

They however alleged that a certain quarter of vested group is resisting them to become voters.

The press conference was organised jointly by Urdu Speaking Peoples Youth Rehabilitation Movement (USPYRM), Shamsul Haque Foundation of Syedpur and Association of Young Generation of Urdu Speaking Community (AYGUSC) along with Refugee and Migratory Movement Research Unit (RMMRU) at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium.

Speaking on the occasion, RMMRU Convener Dr C R Abrar demanded enrolment of all Urdu-speaking people who are interested

in becoming voters.

"Although the government has started the process of enlisting the Urdu-speaking people in the voter list after a verdict of the High Court, a certain quarter is resisting them to become voter," he added.

Dr Abrar said this group is doing so because if all Urdu-speaking people become voters, their interest would be hampered.

He said as these people are mostly uneducated and are not aware of the current enrolment process, only three days for enlisting a huge number of Urdu-speaking is not enough.

He urged the government to allocate more time for enlisting the Urdu-speaking people both in and outside Dhaka as voters.

The speakers demanded punitive action against the people who are creating problems in this regard under the electoral laws.

They also demanded creation of a national taskforce with the members of the community, human rights activists, representatives of different political parties, rehabilitation experts, government and non-government organisations to look after their welfare.

USFYRM President Mohammed Sadakat Khan alleged that the vested group is threatening the people at Geneva camp in Mohammadpur to disconnect electricity and evict them from their residence if they enrol themselves in the voter list.

He urged the government to make an announcement that they would not be evicted until a durable solution is reached.

President of Shamsul Haque Foundation Mohammed Ashraf Haque Babu and AYGUSC President Mohammed Hasan also addressed the press conference.



PHOTO: STAR

Customs officials yesterday inspect stones found in 40 containers that arrived at Chittagong port from the Philippines recently. The importer concerned placed an order for steel scrap, but it was found that the containers contain only stones and sand.

Govt to introduce poverty-targeted stipend programme

METRO DESK

Government decided to introduce a poverty-targeted stipend programme to address disparities across different income groups in secondary school access and quality, says a press release.

This was disclosed at a workshop on Proxy Means Testing (PMT), a computer-based tool to identify the really poor students, held at LGED Bhaban in the city yesterday.

The programme will be implemented under the new Secondary Education Quality and Access Enhancement Project (SEQAEP).

After a successful gender-targeted Female Secondary Stipend Programme, the government decided to introduce the programme, which will cover 121 upazilas.

ATKM Ismail, additional secretary of Ministry of Education, was the chief guest at the inaugural session of the workshop while Xian Zhu, country director of the World Bank and Md Mesbahuddin, chief (Planning) of Ministry of Education, were present as special guests.

LGED Chief Engineer Md Shahidul Hassan chaired the inaugural session. Md Sirajul Islam, project director of SEQAEP, MA Akhtar Hossain, PMT coordinator, and Md Wahidur Rahman, additional chief engineer of LGED were also present.

Exhibition of 19 artists extended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The art exhibition of 19 noted artists will be continued till August 30.

The exhibition at the Liberation War Museum will remain open from 10:00am to 6:00pm everyday. The exhibition was scheduled to end yesterday.

The 19 artists are Kaiyum Chowdhury, Mustafa Manwar, Hashem Khan, Jamal Ahmed, Shahid Kabir, Muniruzzaman, Khalid Mahmud Mithu, Kanak Chapa Chakma, Abdus Shakur Shah, Mohammed Yunus, Alakesh Ghosh, Ranjit Dash, Abdul Mannan, Ashok Karmakar, Mohammed Zahir Uddin, Biren Shom, Golam Faruk Bebul, Tayaba Begum Lipi and Golam Rabbani Shamim.



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