

Unite against corrupt politicians: Dr Kamal

UNB, Dhaka

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday called upon the people to be united against corrupt politicians to protect the country's economy and politics.

"We have no compromise with the corrupt politicians. The corrupt have destroyed the economy and politics," said Dr Kamal while he was addressing a meeting on the occasion of the party's 15th founding anniversary in the city's Nattamancha auditorium.

He said Bangladesh does not belong to any individual family or person rather it is the property of the people.

He also said Gono Forum might



PHOTO: STAR

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a meeting marking the party's 15th founding anniversary at Nattamancha auditorium in the city yesterday.

be a small party but its main strength is that the party works on the basis of "dreams and expectations" of 15 crore people.

He also said that army had grabbed the state power in the past but it had to flee in the wake of people's movement.

The party paid homage to late party members Dr Abdul Hakim, Abdul Matin and Saifuddin Ahmed.

JSD President Hasanul Haq Inu, Bikalpa Dhara Secretary General Maj (retd) Abdul Mannan, Workers' Party General Secretary Bimal Bishwas and Gono Forum Presidium Members Pankaj Bhattacharya and Abdur Rouf also took part in the meeting.

11 tiny tots return home

Trafficker on remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eleven kids, rescued from Pallabi area in the city on Monday evening, returned to their parents in the early hours of yesterday.

The residents of Pallabi rescued the kids aged between eight months and 10 years while a man was transporting them in a CNG-run autorickshaw from a local slum and handed him over to the law enforcers.

The rescued children were identified as Faisal, 8, Mansura, 6, Seema, 8, Meem, 6, eight-month-old Asif, Sajib, 7, Sagar, 10, nine-month-old Rabbi, Suman, 4, Sujun, 7, and Johnnie, 9. Seema, Meem and Asif are siblings.

Mirpur police arrested CNG driver Khokon, who convinced the children playing at Muslim Camp, a slum in Pallabi, to go with him after alluring them with the prospect of getting chocolates and other delicious foods, and seized his auto-rickshaw on Monday evening.

Police sent Khokon to a Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) court asking a five-day remand to find out the reasons behind the incident.

The court granted two days' remand, Sub-Inspector (SI) of Mirpur Police Station Kumruzzaman said.

The SI also said Khokon gave suspicious information, adding that actual fact would come out after interrogation.

Visiting Muslim Camp, The Daily Star correspondent found 10 kids at their respective houses while the rest one Sagar who came to his relative's house on Monday morning returned to his home yesterday morning.

Johnnie told The Daily Star that the CNG driver gave them a ride for some time on Monday noon and left them in the place where the driver picked them up, adding that the driver came again in the afternoon and allured them of sweet-meats and a trip.

"We all got into the vehicle and

he started travelling. But he travelled for a long time and took them to an unknown place that scared us much. One of the kids Sajib jumped down from the vehicle, as it was moving slowly then," he said.

Siddique Ahmed, one of the witnesses, said when locals asked the driver to stop as one of the kids dropped from it, he tried to rush away ignoring the locals, causing suspicion among them.

But when the vehicle got stuck in a traffic jam, they discovered other kids inside the vehicle, he added.

When the driver could not give satisfactory answer and the kids raised hue and cry, locals dragged the driver out of it and handed him over to police after giving him a thrashing.

Monni Begum, mother of Johnnie, said Sagar informed his father of the incident from the spot. Later, guardians released their kids from Mirpur Police Station early yesterday.

EXTORTION CASE AGAINST HASINA

Trial deferred to Sept 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday deferred the trial proceedings in the Tk 2.99 crore extortion case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her cousin former health minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim to September 1.

Judge M Ashraf Hossain of Special Court-5 fixed the date for cross-examination of the plaintiff following a time petition.

The prosecution lawyers filed the petition saying that the plaintiff, Azam J Chowdhury, could not appear in the court due to his business-related work.

On August 18, the counsels for Hasina cross-examined the plaintiff.

Sheikh Selim was brought to the court amid tight security yesterday. Advocate Sahara Khatun stood for Hasina who had earlier been exempted from appearing at the court in person during the proceedings.

Azam J Chowdhury, managing director of Eastcoast Trading Pvt Ltd, filed the case with Gulshan Police Station against Hasina and Selim on June 13 last year on charges of extorting Tk 2.99 crore from him in exchange for awarding a contract for setting up the Siddhirganj Power Plant in Narayanganj.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court on June 15 this year sent the case to the Special Court-5 for quick disposal.

Hasina's younger sister Sheikh Rehana, who lives in London, was included in the charge sheet and shown absconding.

TAC ORDINANCE

Hearing on writ petition begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday started the hearing on the writ petition challenging the legality of the Truth and Accountability Commission (TAC) Ordinance 2008.

An HC bench of Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Mashuque Hosain Ahmed also fixed today for the next hearing after adjourning yesterday's hearing.

During the hearing, petitioners' counsel Dr Towfik Newaz told the court that the president can promulgate no ordinances other than the ones related to elections or emergency during the tenure of a caretaker government.

He argued that the ordinance bringing the Truth and Accountability Commission into being is unconstitutional because no authorities other than the lawful courts have the jurisdiction to try and mete out penalties to criminal offenders.

Supreme Court lawyer Adilur Rahman Khan Shubhro, Ubining Executive Director Farida Akhter, Awami League's women affairs secretary Dipu Moni and Odhakar Acting Director Nasiruddin Elan filed the writ petition as public interest litigation (PIL) on August 25.

Attorney General Salauddin Ahmed appeared for the government during the hearing.



PHOTO: STAR

Chhatra Federation stages a demonstration at the foot of Aparajeyo Bangla on Dhaka University campus yesterday marking the Phulbari Day.

Develop Phulbari coal mine to resolve power crisis

Chamber leaders urge govt

UNB, Dhaka

Business leaders of different chambers of northern districts at a discussion at a city hotel yesterday urged the government to move to develop the Phulbari coal mine without any further delay.

They saw the huge coal reserve at the Phulbari coal mine as the only option now to deal with future energy crisis, particularly in power generation.

"We can easily produce 3,500MW of electricity from the coal to be extracted from the Phulbari mine," said Rangpur Chamber President Mostafa Azad Chowdhury, adding that as the country's gas reserve is depleting fast, coal is becoming the only option for power generation.

Greater Rangpur-Dinajpur Industry-Business Development Forum organised the discussion on 'Industrialisation in Rangpur-Dinajpur: Energy availability' at Sheraton Hotel with President of the forum Nazrul Islam in the chair.

Former PDB member Fazlul

Haque presented a keynote paper on the topic.

Former lawmakers Mizanur Rahman Manu and Asaduzzaman Noor, leaders of eight chambers of the northern districts -- Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Panchagarh and Joypurhat -- also spoke at the function.

The speakers, supporting the open pit mining at Phulbari coal mine as it provides more than 80 percent extraction of resources, urged the government to ensure proper compensation to those who would be affected by the development of the mine.

"The authorities concerned have to ensure that the affected people would be properly compensated and rehabilitated," said former LGED chief engineer Monwar Hossain Chowdhury.

If the government fails to take the decision in proper time to extract coal from Phulbari mine, Bangladesh might lose the opportunity to use its coal, as there might be a bar on coal extraction worldwide in future, he added.

Former BGMEA president Tipu Munshi expressed his frustration over the poor attention of the government to the development of mineral resources of the northern region.

He further said the people of the northern region should not be deprived of coal resources due to the antipathy by a section of people.

Forum leader MA Majid termed the opposition to coal extraction in Phulbari an international conspiracy.

Editor of the Bangladesh Observer Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury suggested that those who oppose open pit mining and those support open pit should sit together to reach a consensus through a logical debate.

Our Staff Correspondent adds: Different political and student organisations yesterday observed the second anniversary of the Phulbari Day.

On this day in 2006, seven people were killed as police open fired to the people of Phulbari and adjoining upazilas who joined a peaceful programme to lay siege the office of Asia Energy Corporation (AEC) in Phulbari.

The National Protection Committee for Oil, Gas Minerals and Port placed floral wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar commemorating the sacrifices of the martyrs of Phulbari movement, observed one-minute silence there and held a briefing.

The leaders at the rally demanded the ousting of Asia Energy, banning export of coal, ensuring cent percent ownership

of people on the country's energy resources and implementation of Phulbari accord signed between the people of the area and the government.

Communist Party of Bangladesh, Workers Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Shamyabadi Dal, National Awami Party, Left Democratic Front, Democratic Left Alliance, Revolutionary Workers Party, Gano Shanghati Andolan, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolan, Bangladesh Jubo Union, Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), Pragatisheel Chhatra Jote (PCJ), Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF), Biplobi Chhatra Maitri, Green Voice and other organisations also placed wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Meanwhile, PCJ, BCU and SCF held processions and rallies on the Dhaka University campus demanding the cancellation of the draft coal policy terming it anti-national interest policy and implementation of the Phulbari accord.

Shangskritir Naya Shetu, a non-political student organisation, also arranged a poster and paper clippings exhibition and staged a street drama at Ducus premises.

Businessman robbed of Tk 2.6 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Firing gunshots in a filmy style, armed muggers riding on a motorbike yesterday looted Tk 2.6 lakh from a businessman in the city's Uttara area.

A gang of four muggers riding on a motorbike fired blank shots and snatched the amount from buying house owner Golam sarwar while he was returning his office at around 11:30am after drawing the money from a bank at Rabindra Sarani.

Witnesses said the muggers bared Sarwar, owner of Papia Fashion and Buying House at Azampur at Sector 6, and fired blank shots and snatched the money away from him.

Sarwar filed a case with Uttara Police Station. None was arrested in this connection.

Earlier on Monday, armed muggers looted around Tk 20.8 lakh from two businessmen in separate incidents in the city's Lalbagh and Khilkhet areas leaving one of the victims injured.

GRAFT CASES

Arrest warrant against Bulu, Alamgir families

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued arrest warrants against former commerce adviser Barkat Ullah Bulu and his family members, and detained Awami League leader Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir's family members and two others in two graft cases.

Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court issued the warrants following prayers by the investigation officers (IOs) of the cases.

The accused in both the cases are on the run.

Meantime, Bulu, his wife and their son on Monday got bail from the High Court (HC) until framing of charges in the case. But the HC order was yet to reach the lower court.

CASE AGAINST BULU

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) on Sunday pressed charges against Bulu, his wife Shamima Akhter and son Omar Sharif Mohammad Imran in a case filed for amassing wealth worth Tk 3.23 crore illegally and concealing information about it from the commission.

ACC Assistant Director Monzur Alam, also investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka, showing six people as prosecution witnesses.

The case was filed with Ramna Police Station on January 7 this year.

Shamima and Imran were accused of aiding and abetting Bulu in accumulating illegal wealth.

CASE AGAINST ALAMGIR'S FAMILY

The same court issued arrest warrants against Alamgir's wife, their two sons and a daughter and two others in a case filed for amassing wealth worth over Tk 2.58 crore through illegal means.

The accused are Sitara Alamgir, wife of Alamgir, and their sons Jalal Alamgir, Joy Alamgir, daughter Shirin Alamgir and caretaker of their house Towfikur Rahman and his wife Ipshtia Rahman.

On August 21, ACC Assistant Director Raheela Khatun, also IO of the case, submitted charge sheet to the CMM's Court, Dhaka, showing 25 people as prosecution witnesses.

In the charge sheet, the IO mentioned that Sitara amassed wealth worth more than Tk 2.58 crore through illegal means and concealed information about wealth worth over Tk 75.19 lakh from the ACC.

On December 24 last year, the ACC filed the case with Ramna Police Station against Sitara Alamgir for amassing wealth worth more than Tk 1.35 crore through illegal means. But the IO included the other five in the list of accused.

Two beaten to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two youths, including a rice trader, were beaten to death in separate incidents in the city's Shabbagh and Sutrapur areas on Monday night.

The deceased were identified as Ali Asgar Swapan, 25, owner of Jahan Traders at Babu Bazar, and workshop employee Anwar Hossain, 20, of Dayaganj.

Shabbagh police said they found Ali Asgar lying in an unconscious condition at a bus stop in the evening and rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died at around 8:00pm.

Police, however, could not ascertain the cause of the murder as well as identify the killers.

Swapan's brother Sobhan Bhuiyan told The Daily Star yesterday that he went out of their Sabujbagh residence for Mirpur at around 3:30pm.

Sobhan said since the afternoon, they could not reach Swapan's cellphone which remained still missing.

Morgue sources, however, said he was beaten to death.

In another incident, employee Anwar Hossain was alleged beaten to death by his employer Abid Miah and three other employees on charge of stealing iron from the workshop at Dayaganj.

Anwar's brother Amir Hossain said his brother died after Abid

Miah and other employees tortured him mercilessly at around 9:00pm.

Graft case filed against former BTCL official

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against former deputy director of Bangladesh Telecommunication Company Ltd (BTCL) Mohammad Towfique on charges of amassing huge wealth through illegal means.

ACC Assistant Director Towfikul Islam filed the case with Ramna Police Station.

In the first information report, he mentioned that Mohammad Towfique obtained about Tk 4 crore beyond his known sources of income. He also had Fixed Deposit Receipt (FDR) of Tk 2.81 crore at Trusk Bank, which he kept in the names of 59 different persons. ACC has seized the money.

Besides, Mohammad Towfique paid Tk 78.81 lakh from his bank account through cheques to buy two flats for his two sisters.

Mohammad Towfique, now detained in jail, submitted his wealth statement to ACC on May 19 through the jail authorities.



Moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Moderately heavy rainfalls are also likely at places during the period, Met Office said, predicting slight fall in day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 34.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.3 degrees Celsius at Rangamati.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:21pm today and rises at 5:39am 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	33.1	27.8	79	92
Chittagong	30.2	25.4	83	83
Rajshahi	34.0	27.2	81	73
Khulna	33.7	26.6	84	79
Bharisal	32.8	26.0	80	76
Sylhet	32.0	25.7	94	90
Cox's Bazar	31.2	25.5	75	82



Seminar

Independent Newspapers Readers Association, Bangladesh organises a seminar on 'readers are at the heart of newspapers'. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 11:00am.

Discussion

A discussion and cultural programme marking the 32nd death anniversary of Kazi Nazrul Islam will be held. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 3:00pm.

Seminar

A two-day seminar on corporate governance in banks and financial institutions will be held. Venue: Hotel Purbani International, Time: 9:30am.

Lecture

A lecture on 'The Shamanic and Bardic traditions in contemporary British poetry' will be delivered by Jahangirnagar University English department Chairman Dr Shamsad Mortuza. Venue: Independent University, Bangladesh, Time: 5:00pm.

Seminar

Shoishab Bangladesh organises a seminar on proposed policy on child labour. Venue: Biam Foundation auditorium, Time: 2:30pm.

Campaign launching

The launching ceremony of the democratic decentralization campaign will be held. Venue: Cirdap auditorium, Time: 9:30am.

Speech festival

SEID Trust in cooperation with ActionAid will organise an open speech festival with the participation of students of different schools and colleges. Venue: LGED Bhaban, Time: 3:00pm.

UZ POLLS OFFICERS

HC order not to recruit 85 more within one month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Election Commission (EC) not to take any step within one month to recruit 85 upazila election officers as per the announcement of the PSC chairman.

Upon a writ petition, a division bench of Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Mashuque Hosain Ahmed also issued a rule upon the government to explain within four weeks why the move to recruit the election officers without any advertisement should not be declared illegal.

The PSC chairman, the chief election commissioner and the establishment secretary have been asked to reply to the rule.

The rule came after two sacked upazila election officers -- Nazmul Ahsan and Tariqul Islam -- filed the writ petition challenging the legality of the PSC chairman's announcement for recruitment of the upazila election officers.

Petitioners' counsel advocate

Abdur Rab Chowdhury told The Daily Star that the caretaker government on September 3 last year sacked 85 upazila election officers on charges that they were appointed on political considerations during the tenure of the BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

These officers had also filed an appeal with the administrative appellate tribunal against the government action. The tribunal has recently fixed September 3 for

delivering the verdict and the Election Commission (EC) has also been informed of it.

On September 16 last year, the PSC issued a circular for the recruitment of 37 upazila election officers as per requisition of the EC.

And on August 19 this year, PSC Chairman Dr Saadat Hussain told the media that the PSC would recruit 85 more upazila election officers against the vacant posts. But no circular was issued.

2 killed in city road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people were killed and four others injured when a truck turned turtle on Airport Road in the city yesterday morning.

The victims were identified as Sujun, 30, and Sagar, 38, while the identity of the injured could be known immediately. They all were truck labourers.

Police said at around 6:30am,

a Mohakhali-bound glass-laden truck from Tongi turned turtle after hitting the pavement near Kawla Bus Stand, leaving the six truck labourers injured.

On information, police rushed the injured to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) where on duty doctors declared two of them dead and four others were admitted to DMCH.

BRIBERY CASE AGAINST TARIQUE, BABAR

Trial adjourned till today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday adjourned the trial proceeding in the Tk 21 crore bribery case against detained BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, former state minister for home Lutfuzzaman Babar and six others till today.

Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of the Special Court-3 fixed the date following an adjournment prayer from the defence. Yesterday was fixed for taking deposition of the witness.

Defence counsel Zakir Hossain Bhuiyan appealed for the adjournment, saying that the appellate division of the Supreme Court was due to hear a writ petition seeking quashment of the case yesterday.

Of the accused, Babar and Abu Sufian, director of a Bashundhara Group concern, were in the dock yesterday. Tarique was not produced before the court yesterday since he has been exempted from appearing in person during the trial proceedings. The rest are on the run.

The plaintiff, Abul Kashem, deputy assistant director of ACC, was also present.

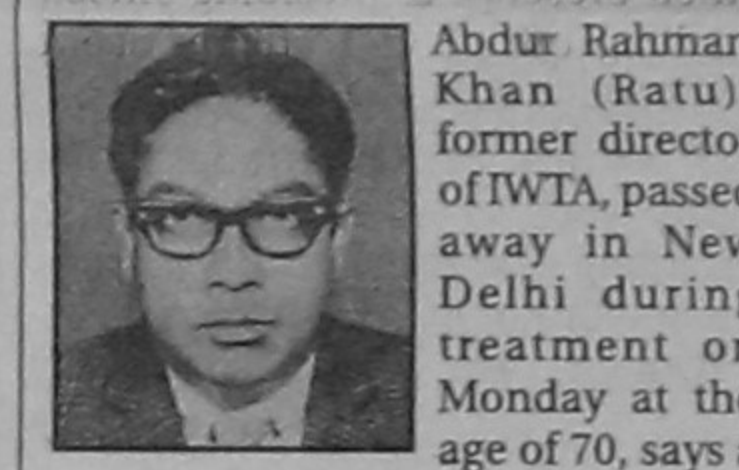
On July 14, the court framed charges against Tarique, Babar and the others.

The ACC filed the case on October 4 last year, accusing six people of bribery to cover up the murder of Bashundhara Group executive Humayun Kabir Sabir whose body was found outside a building in Bashundhara residential area on July 5, 2006.

The six are Babar, Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan alias Shah Alam, his two sons Shafiat Sobhan Sanvir and Sadaat Sobhan, Abu Sufian and Mia Nur Uddin Adu.

The names of Tarique and former BNP lawmaker Qazi Saleemul Huq Kamal were included in the charge sheet after an investigation found their involvement in the bribery.

Obituary



press release.

His body will arrive in Dhaka today and it will be kept at 1/3, Block-D, Lalmatia tomorrow before janaza after Zohar prayers at Lalmatia "C" Block Mosque.

His qulkhani will be held at the same place after Asr prayers on Friday.

Death anniversary