

Support for ban on front bodies, foreign wings of political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political leaders and civil society members yesterday extended their support for the caretaker government's move to ban front organisations and foreign chapters of political parties.

They termed the provisions in the Representation of the People Order (RPO) in this regard appropriate for bringing qualitative changes in the country's politics.

"Representation of the People Order and political thoughts" at the IDB auditorium in the city, they also praised the RPO provisions that ban war criminals from taking part in any election and provide for the "no vote" option in the ballot paper.

Observing that the parliamentary election would not be acceptable without participation of the Awami League (AL) or the BNP, the speakers urged the government to reach a consensus with major political parties to hold a free, fair and credible election.

"It was a right decision to ban the front organisations and foreign chapters of political parties and there is no alternative to this to practise healthy politics in the country," said former adviser M

Hafizuddin Khan. The foreign chapters of political parties tarnish the country's image abroad, he added.

Addressing the discussion as chief guest, he said in no country of the world political parties have front organisations and foreign chapters.

There will be no acceptability of the election without the participation of either the Awami League or the BNP, he said.

Hafiz also called for reviewing the provision for NGO officials' taking part in local body polls.

Former adviser ASM Shahjahan, adviser to BNP chairperson Mofazzal Karim, former AL lawmaker Promod Mangin and Fema President Firoz M Hasan, among others, took part in the discussion moderated by media personality Muhammad Jahangir.

The Coordinating Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB) organised the event where its President AHM Noman presented a keynote paper. CCHRB Director advocate Muhammad Shamsuddin delivered the inaugural address.

ASM Shahjahan said the government must reach a consensus with political parties to solve the

present crises and implement the electoral roadmap.

Urging the government to engage in talks with political parties regularly, he said reforms are not something to impose. He called upon the political parties to carry out necessary reforms to get registered with the Election Commission.

Shahjahan observed that the new electoral laws have only increased complexities. The existing laws are enough to deal with elections if those are implemented, he said.

He, however, opposed the provision for "no vote" and said in democracy there should not be any option for "no vote".

Khaleda's adviser Mofazzal Karim said, "Members of front organisations may support political parties but they should not have direct involvement with party activities." He implied the uselessness of the foreign chapters of political parties as they "do nothing but greet party chiefs when they go abroad".

Supporting the ban on war criminals' taking part in elections, Mofazzal said convicted war criminals should be barred from taking part in elections and getting

involved in politics.

Speaking on political parties' registration, the BNP leader said it is not possible for the BNP to change the party constitution within a short span of time since they need to hold the party council and talk to the grassroots level leaders.

Mofazzal criticised the government for making a number of decisions without consultation with the political parties and called upon the government to hold talks with the parties immediately.

"Until and unless party Chairperson Khaleda Zia is released and her son Tarique Rahman is sent abroad for treatment, the BNP will not get involved in the electoral process," he said.

Former AL lawmaker Promod Mangin said, "Banning student politics by issuing an order will arouse controversy."

He urged the government to keep a provision in the RPO for the representation of indigenous people in parliament.

Fema President Firoz M Hasan said if the political parties get registered with the Election Commission, positive changes would gradually come in the country's politics.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of the first Dhaka Inter-school Debate Competition pose with the guests at the prize giving ceremony at St Gregory's High School in the city yesterday. ACC Chairman Lt Gen (ret'd) Hasan Mashud Chowdhury, 3rd from right (standing), was present as the chief guest.

INTER-SCHOOL DEBATE ENDS

'Help stamp out corruption'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Lt Gen (ret'd) Hasan Mashud Chowdhury yesterday called on all, especially the young generation, to come forward to stamp out corruption.

Alongside the government, general people, especially the young generation, will have to come forward to curb corruption, as it is not possible to eradicate corruption by only giving punishment to the corrupt persons, he said at the prize giving ceremony of 1st Dhaka Inter-school Debate Competition as the chief guest.

He called on the schoolchildren not to engage in and tolerate corruption. "We all must resist it," he added.

The three-day inter-school debate competition was held at St Gregory's High School in the capital. A total of 38 teams from schools in the city took part in the competition.

St Gregory's High School became champion and St Francis Xavier's Girls' High School became runner-up at the junior level while Motiul Hossain's High School clinched the title at the senior level by defeating Engineering University Higher Secondary School at the final.

The Debate for Democracy and St Gregory's Debating Club jointly organised the completion marking 400 years of Dhaka.

The ACC chief, who also distributed prizes among the winners, called on the students to play a significant

role in building a corruption-free country, saying that the role of young generation is more important than any other sections of society.

He also stressed the need to arrange debates on corruption across the country.

Atiqul Haq Chowdhury, programme director of ETV, called on the students to always resist corruption throughout their life.

Debate for Democracy Chairman Hasan Ahmed Kiron said debate helps children sharpen their communication skills.

National Debate Federation Chairman Tazul Islam Chowdhury Tuhin also spoke at the closing ceremony presided over by Brother Robi Purification, headmaster of St Gregory's High School.

Country critically vulnerable to narcotics-induced hazards

Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) MA Matin yesterday said Bangladesh is critically vulnerable to narcotics-induced hazards and the number of drug users is increasing in the country leading to a great concern to the government.

While inaugurating a two-day workshop on 'Narcotics law enforcement' at a city hotel, the home adviser said though Bangladesh does not produce any narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances illegally, it is used as a transit country for drugs produced in the Golden Triangle and Golden Crescent.

Quoting the annual report of International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) published in March this year, MA Matin said, "Bangladesh has become the prime transit route for trafficking heroin to Europe from South East Asia and

heroin consignments destined for Europe are increasingly passing through Bangladesh."

According to the report, the common methods and routes for smuggling heroin into Bangladesh are by courier from Pakistan, by commercial vehicles and trains from India and by sea via the Bay of Bengal or over land by truck or by public transport from Myanmar, he added.

Speaking as the chief guest, the home adviser said the use of drugs and crime go hand in hand and many crimes are committed under the influence of drugs.

Home Secretary Md Abdul Karim, IGP Nur Mohammad and Director General (DG) of the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) Md Humayun Kabir spoke at the inaugural function as the special guests while Wanchai Disates, assistant director of Narcotics Law Enforcement, office

of the Narcotics Control Board Thailand, presented a keynote paper.

Additional IGP NBK Tripura, who is also national project director of Police Reform Programme (PRP), and Hubert Staberhofer, PRP project manager, also attended the function.

IGP Nur Mohammad termed the drugs a cancer for the society and said due to the global location of Bangladesh, it is being used as the route for drugs trafficking and smuggling.

DG of DNC Humayun Kabir said Bangladesh does not produce drugs but the people consume it, adding that Yaba is now one of the most addictive and stimulant drugs in the country.

The speakers also said drug trafficking and smuggling are also a political threat as funds from trafficking in narcotics are extensively used to fund terrorist outfits.

Law officials demand permanent jobs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law officials at a view exchange meeting yesterday called on the government to make their jobs permanent under the Attorney Service Ordinance 2008 and raise their remuneration.

"At present, there a total of 1223 law officials and their tenure of service is three years under the Attorney Service Ordinance 2008, but we want our jobs to become permanent," said Public Prosecutor Md Mohsin Miyan at the meeting held at Public Works Bhawan in the city.

He also said that a public prosecutor (PP) gets only Tk 250 per day for appearing in the court and the additional PP government prosecutor and additional PP get much less than that.

"We do not want to submit bills for payment. Rather, we want monthly salary. It takes a lot of time to receive payments through bills. We also want salary according to our status," he added.

He also demanded necessary logistical supports to do their job properly, saying that the law officials do not have separate office rooms, chairs, tables, telephone and typewriter machine or computer to do their work.

Speaking as the chief guest, Law Adviser AF Hassan Arif stressed the need to pay proper remuneration to the public prosecutors according to their status and skills.

The adviser also hoped that the ordinance would be implemented during this caretaker government.

Law Secretary Kazi Habibul Awal also spoke at the meeting chaired by solicitor Md Nurunnabi Chowdhury.

BCL protests attack on leader

DU CORRESPONDENT

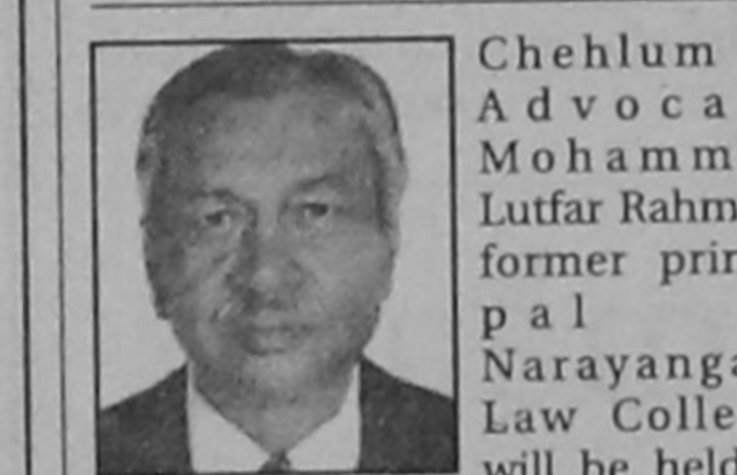
Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student wing of Awami League, staged a demonstration on the Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding proper investigation into the armed attack on Sagar Ahmed Shaheen, president of Lalbagh Thana BCL.

Shaheen was critically wounded as he was shot during the attack at Dhanmondi in the city on Wednesday night.

In a protest rally on the campus, the BCL leaders threatened to wage a tougher movement if the government fails to bring the attackers to book.

Chehlum

METRO DESK

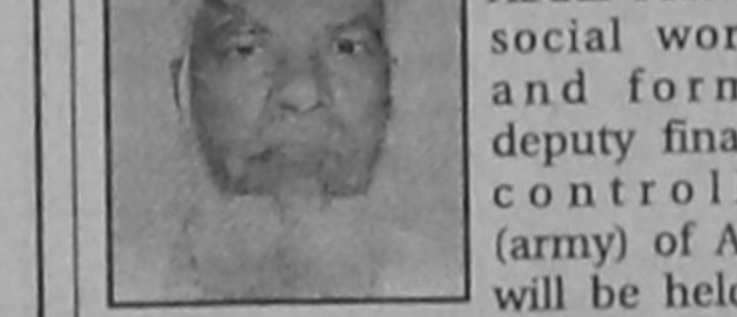


Chehlum of Advocate, Mohammad Lutfar Rahman, former principal of Narayanganj Law College, will be held at

219 Outer Circular Road at Bara Moghbazar in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Mohammad Abdul Matin

DU CORRESPONDENT



Chehlum of Mohammad Abdul Matin, a social worker and former deputy finance controller (army) of AGB, will be held at

his residence at 114 Bara Moghbazar, Kazi Office Lane in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Matin passed away due to cardiac arrest at his village home on August 21 at the age of 65.

Gono Forum 15th founding anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 15th founding anniversary of Gono Forum which was floated to end the politics of confrontation, corruption and making false promises, says a press release.

Gono Forum is also working to implement the spirit of the liberation war and establish the rights of people, it added.

On this occasion, Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain and its acting secretary Advocate Subrata Chowdhury greeted the people saying that there is a great opportunity before the nation to elect honest candidates in the coming polls to create a new trend in politics.

They demanded upazila and national elections as per roadmap of the Election Commission to empower people.

Diganta TV launched

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday called on the media to play both creative and responsible role.

He made the call while he was inaugurating a new satellite channel "Diganta Television" at a ceremony at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

He said the role of the mass media is undeniable in establishing a knowledge-based society.

Iajuddin said mass media plays a significant role in exchanging information, flourishing art and culture, mobilising public opinion on national issues and projecting important national and international events.

Senior Jamaat leaders and BNP leaders Selima Rahman and ASM Hannan Shah were present at the inaugural function.

Commodore (retired) MA Rahman, chairman of Diganta Media Corporation, also spoke on the occasion.

Diganta Television is the ninth private satellite television station and a sister concern of the Naya Diganta newspaper.

Release Tk 31cr allocated for people with disabilities

NFOWD urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) in a view exchange meeting yesterday demanded that the government release Tk 31 crore, allocated for the people with disabilities in the national budget for the fiscal year 2008-09 by this month.

NFOWD Chairman Khandakar Jahurul Alam said if the money is not handed over by this month to Jatiya Pratibondhi Unnayan Foundation, the only government-supported organisation for the disabled people of the country, it would go back to the World Bank which has given the money to the government as loan.

Styled 'Allocation of national budget and the present situation to materialise the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,' the view exchange meeting was organised by NFOWD at the WVA auditorium in the city.

Bangladesh is the 8th country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which has become effective in the world since May 3, 2008, said Jahedul Kabir and Rafiquzzaman, paper presenters and members of the forum.

Bangladesh ratified the optional protocol of the convention on May 8 this year. It also made a national policy on disability in 1995, formulated the Disabled Welfare Act in 2001 and adopted a national plan of action for the disabled in 2006, they added.

The keynote presenters further said there is no reflection of the government's commitment in allocation of national budget for this neglected group of society.

Prof Atiqur Rahman of Social Welfare Institute at Dhaka University, SEID Trust Director Dilara Satter Mitu, Executive Director of Prip Trust Aroma Dutt and Mahubul Kabir also spoke.



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 to heavy rainfalls are also likely at places during the period, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 34.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:19pm 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	29.6	26.6	93	88
Chittagong	28.4	25.2	98	94
Rajshahi	33.0	25.7	97	92
Khulna	32.6	27.4	87	89
Barisal	32.0	26.5	89	97
Sylhet	26.7	24.0	97	97
Cox's Bazar	32.4	25.9	79	81

BANGABANDHU MURDER

'Govt holds back hearing of leave to appeal'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is deliberately refraining from appointing judges to the Appellate Division for hearing the leave to appeal in the Bangabandhu murder case to help the accused escape through legal loopholes, said the speakers at a discussion meeting yesterday.

They also alleged that the government is not sincere in bringing back the absconding accused from abroad as it has not yet made any effort in this regard.

The discussion meeting was organised by Pachattur Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee (GDNC) at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city marking the 33rd death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The speakers said it took 21 years to lodge the murder case after the killing of Bangabandhu cancelling the indemnity ordinance that barred the trial of the killing, and now 33 years after the killing the nation is yet to have the justice.

Advocate Kamrul Islam, acting general secretary of city Awami League (AL), regretted that the concerned appellate division comprising seven judges does not have the required number of judges to proceed with the hearing.

AL Environment Secretary Dr Hasan Mahmud said the government has influenced the verdict in the jail killing case. He said the High Court acquitted six people of whom two were earlier given death penalty and four others sentenced to life imprisonment by the lower court.

GDNC Convener Akhter Hossain presided over the meeting.

Rab member killed in road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A member of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) was killed when a private car hit him on the highway near Zia International Airport (ZIA) at Uttara in the city yesterday morning.

Sub-Inspector Nil Ratan Saha, 36, was crossing the road when the car knocked him down at around 5:00am. Rab officials said.

Nil Ratan, who received serious injuries in the head, was rushed to the Combined Military Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries soon after his admission to the hospital.

Nil Ratan, who was posted at the Rab Headquarters, hailed from Srinagar in Munshiganj.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

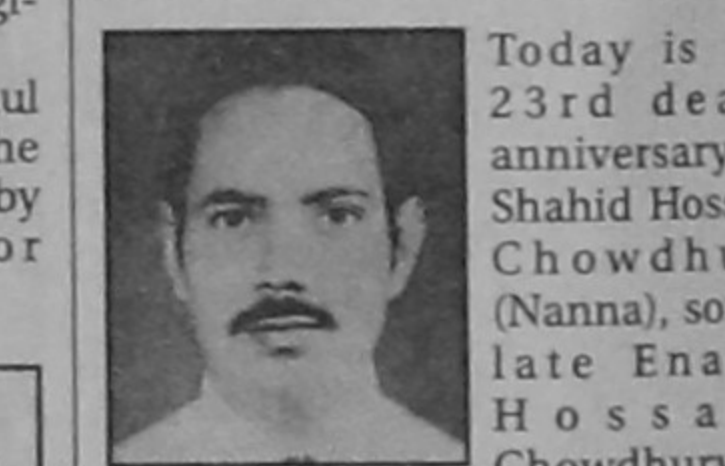
MN Alam, central leader of Bangladesh Railway Samik League and former president of Dinajpur Samik League, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at his residence in Dinajpur town at the age of 60, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and three daughters.

Jatiya Samik League President Abdul Matin Master and General Secretary Roy Ramesh Chandra condole the death.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

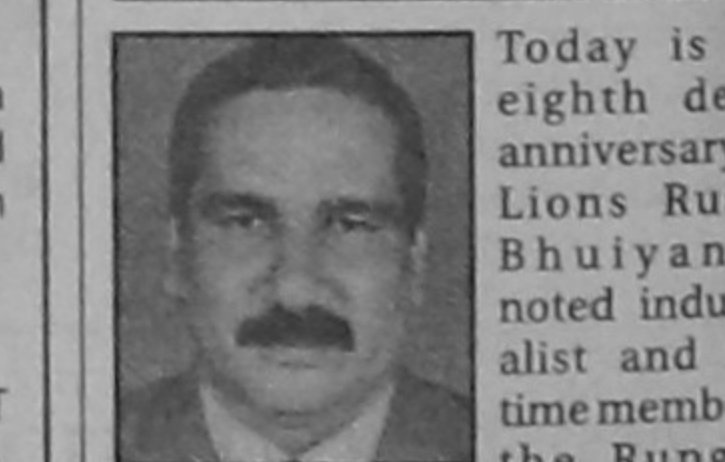


Today is the 23rd death anniversary of Shahid Hossain Chowdhury (Nanna), son of late Enayet Hossain Chowdhury of Faridpur, says a press release.

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

Lions Russel Bhuiyan

DU CORRESPONDENT



Today is the eighth death anniversary of Lions Russel Bhuiyan, a noted industrialist and lifetime member to the Ruggan's Club, says a press release.

On the occasion, Nagorik Oikya Parishad and different organisations will hold milad mahfil and discussion at his parent's residence and Russel Park after Asr prayers.

He was shot on August 26 in 2000 by a gang of criminals and succumbed to his bullet injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on August 29.

Mohammad Ismail Khan

DU CORRESPONDENT

Today is the eighth death anniversary of Mohammad Ismail Khan, a social worker and former assistant director of the water resources ministry, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at his residence at Kuistarar under Harirampur in Manikganj after Juma prayers today.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar
International Nazrul Research Centre in association with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs organises the 2nd International Seminar on Nazrul. Venue: Shipkaka Academy. Time: 5:00pm.

Orientation
Stamford College organises its Orientation 2008. Venue: Samara Convention Centre. Time: 9:00am.

Human chain
Green Voice will form a human chain protesting price hike of essentials. Venue: In front of Fine Art Institute. Time: 10:30am.

Recitation programme
The concluding ceremony of a month-long recitation programme of poems on liberation war will be held. Venue: Central Shaheed Minar. Time: 4:00pm.

Exhibition
'Eid Fashion Design' by the students of fashion department of Radiant Institute of Design will begin. Venue: Drik Gallery. Time: 4:00pm.

Sarod recital
Bengal Foundation organises a Sarod recital by Rajpara Chowdhury. Venue: Bengali Shilpalaya. Time: 8:00pm.

Discussion
Bangabandhu Sahitya Sanskritik Forum will hold a discussion on the life and

works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Venue: TSC Sarak Dwp. Time: 4:00pm.

Debate
Prothom Alo Mirpur Bandhu Sabha organises a debate workshop and contest. Venue: Mirpur Bangla High School and College. Time: 10:00am.

Alumni evening
DIIT Alumni Association organises DIIT Alumni Evening. Venue: DIU auditorium, Prince Plaza. Time: 5:00pm.

Roundtable
Welfare Society for Mental Health and Rehabilitation organises a roundtable for people with psychological disorders. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Discussion
Manabadihkar O Panishet Sangbadik Society will hold a discussion on the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and accord a reception to eminent citizens. Venue: Institution of Diploma Engineers. Time: 5:00pm.

Exhibition
Alliance Francaise de Dacca organises an exhibition of artworks by Ivy Islam and Shamim Reza beginning from today. Venue: La Galerie. Time: 6:30pm. The exhibition will remain open till September 2 from 9:00am to 12:00noon and 5:00pm to 8:00pm everyday.