

'Meet people's expectation to avoid uncertainty'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) lawmaker and presidium member Amir Hossain Amu yesterday said the country would face uncertainty if the grand alliance government fails to meet people's expectation. The government is pledged to fulfil people's aspirations by ensuring food, clothing and employment, but if it fails the country would see uncertainty, he added. Amu made the remarks at a discussion titled 'Bangabandhu Homecoming Day' organised by Bangabandhu Ain Chhatra Parishad at the National Press Club in the city.

Speaking as chief guest he hoped that the government will execute the verdicts of Bangabandhu Murder Case and the historic Jail Killing Case.

The veteran AL leader demanded the restoration of 1972 Constitution saying that it was appreciated worldwide.

On the trial of the war criminals Amu said the government should not delay the trial of the war criminals, as it is one of the major demands of the people who cast their votes in favour of this government.

Speaking as special guest Prof Dr M A Mannan, also lawmaker and member of the advisory council of the party, urged all lawmakers to work together irrespective of their parties and opinions in establishing the rule of justice in the country.

Blaming the BNP-led four-party alliance government for distorting the real history of the country during its regime, Prof Mannan urged the new government to take effective steps to inform the next generation of the country's true history.

With Mahmudur Rahaman Biswas, president of Bangabandhu Ain Chhatra Parishad, in the chair, the discussion was also addressed by Aminur Rahman Sagor, president of the Parishad.

Eight criminals arrested with firearms in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police arrested eight criminals during a raid on a club at College Road in the district town and recovered two guns and one pistol loaded with seven bullets from their possession last night.

They were identified as Apu, leader of Apu gang, and his accomplices Shaki, Rana, Azad, Badrul, Shipu, Polen and Roni -- all aged between 25 and 35. Apu is a listed criminal, sources said.

Acting on a tip-off, the police raided the United Club at around 9:00pm where the criminals were holding a secret meeting.

Community welcome programme held in Ctg

METRO DESK

Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) organised the Community Welcome Programme for the Global Xchange Team-79 at Theatre Institute Chittagong on Sunday.

YPSA has British Council, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and Nagorik Uddyog (NU) as partners for the Global Xchange Programme.

The first exchange programme was held in 2007 in Houndslow, UK and Rangpur. The current exchange programme is being held between Caithness, UK and Chittagong.

As part of the programme, the UK and Bangladesh exchange volunteers, which brings together 18 volunteers, aged 18-27 years, from both the UK and Bangladesh.

The volunteers have successfully completed the UK phase and now they are in Chittagong working with different NGOs.

Principal of Agrabad Women's College Prof Anwara Alam was present on the occasion as the chief guest while Md Zakir Hossain, chief executive, Nagorik Uddyog, Md Shafiqur Rahman, programme development officer, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and Tasneem Abedin, branch manager of British Council, Chittagong were present as special guests.

The programme was presided over by Md Arifur Rahman, chief executive, Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) and line manager, Global Xchange Programme.

400 sacks of urea seized, three held at Teknaf

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawans seized a cargo trawler laden with 400 sacks of urea fertiliser from the Naf river on Teknaf border in Cox's Bazar yesterday while those were being smuggled to Myanmar through the sea route.

The jawans also arrested three smugglers who are now being interrogated.

BDR sources said the urea-laden trawler FB Khaled entered Badar Mokam channel on the Naf en route for Myanmar through St Martin's coast on the Bay of Bengal at around 4:00am.

When a Teknaf 42 Rifle Battalion patrol ordered the smugglers to halt the trawler, it sped long the river to the Myanmar border. The jawans then chased it with a speedboat.

At one stage, the jawans fired 22 rounds of

bullets to stop the trawler that left a smuggler injured. Some smugglers jumped into the river and fled the scene. The jawans managed to arrest three smugglers.

The arrestees were identified as Md Harun, 30, of East Bakalia in Chittagong, Bachchu Miah, 40, of Maddham Auspara in Tongi and Md Harun, 24, of Majhar Para in Shah Parir Dwip in Teknaf.

The BDR jawans took the trawler to their outpost at Shah Parir Dwip.

Operation Officer Maj Helal Md Khan, who led the drive, confirmed the matter, saying that the jawans also seized 300 litres of fuels from the trawler.

A BDR official said they recovered two kilogram of heroin worth around Tk two crore and arrested a smuggler during a special anti-smuggling drive in the last few days.

Earth's magnetic field impacts climate

AFP, Copenhagen

The earth's climate has been significantly affected by the planet's magnetic field, according to a Danish study published on Monday that could challenge the notion that human emissions are responsible for global warming.

"Our results show a strong correlation between the strength of the earth's magnetic field and the amount of precipitation in the tropics," one of the two Danish geophysicists behind the study, Mads Faurischou Knudsen of the geology department at Aarhus University in western Denmark, told the Videnskab journal.

He and his colleague Peter Ruisager, of the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS), compared a reconstruction of the prehistoric magnetic field 5,000 years ago based on data drawn from stalagmites and stalactites found in China and Oman.

The results of the study, which has also been published in US scientific journal

Geology, lend support to a controversial theory published a decade ago by Danish astrophysicist Henrik Svensmark, who claimed the climate was highly influenced by galactic cosmic ray (GCR) particles penetrating the earth's atmosphere.

Svensmark's theory, which pitted him against today's mainstream theorists who claim carbon dioxide (CO2) is responsible for global warming, involved a link between the earth's magnetic field and climate, since that field helps regulate the number of GCR particles that reach the earth's atmosphere.

"The only way we can explain the (geomagnetic-climate) connection is through the exact same physical mechanisms that were present in Henrik Svensmark's theory," Knudsen said.

"If changes in the magnetic field, which occur independently of the earth's climate, can be linked to changes in precipitation, then it can only be explained through the magnetic field's blocking of the cosmic

rays," he said. The two scientists acknowledged that CO2 plays an important role in the changing climate, "but the climate is an incredibly complex system, and it is unlikely we have a full overview over which factors play a part and how important each is in a given circumstance," Ruisager told Videnskab.

Bus burns down during welding work in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bus burned down after it caught fire during welding work on its roof in the city's Sayedabad Bus Terminal yesterday.

The police said some workers carrying out welding work on the rooftop of the bus at around 11:30am, but it suddenly caught fire which engulfed the entire bus.

On receiving information, firefighters from Shyampur fire brigade unit rushed to the spot and extinguished the fire.



vehicles get stuck in a gridlock in Farmgate area in the city yesterday, causing immense suffering to commuters.

PHOTO: STAR

Muggers stab driver, take away money, cell phone

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed the driver of a private car and snatched money and cell phone from him in the city's Palashi area yesterday.

The victim was identified as Keramat Ali, 25.

The police said a gang of three muggers attacked him at around 6:00am when he was crossing the area by foot. They snatched Tk 3000 and a cell phone from him after stabbing him.

Locals rushed him to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital. His condition was stated to be critical.

DMCH sources said he sustained injuries in his abdomen, chest and back.

Experts plead to save tropical forests in peril

AFP, Washington

US experts on Monday pleaded for boosted efforts to protect tropical forests, which are key to ensuring biodiversity and fighting climate change but are increasingly threatened by deforestation.

"I am gravely concerned about what is happening with tropical forests," William Laurance, a researcher with the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama told AFP.

"There is a very high rate of destruction of the old growth, ancient forests."

He said the equivalent of 50 football pitches of virgin rainforest was being destroyed every minute amid global warming, large scale habitat fragmentation, and changes in rainfall.

Intense hunting in areas of the tropics was also leading to the disappearance of "hundreds of species of amphibians," he said.

"Now we have synergy among those different threats," Laurance said.

"So when you talk about global warming for example because it's getting hotter, species in the tropics, where it's possible, will naturally try to move up to higher elevations where it's a little bit cooler."

"In many cases they will be trapped by habitat construction, cattle pasture, degraded lands," he warned.

Laurance is one of the authors of a report presented Monday to a conference organized in Washington by the Smithsonian Natural History Museum.

Mahbubey Alam

FROM PAGE 1

Ahmed appointed Mahbubey Alam as new attorney general yesterday, a day after his predecessor Salah Uddin Ahmed stepped down following the change of government.

BACKGROUND

Alam served as the additional attorney general from November 15, 1998 to October 4, 2001.

Born in Mouchhamandra village in Louhajang in Munshiganj on February 17, 1949, he completed his BA (Hons) in political science and MA in public administration at Dhaka University.

He also attained two diplomas in constitutional law, and parliamentary institutions and procedures in 1979 from the Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) in the Indian capital of New Delhi.

He was enrolled as a senior Supreme Court lawyer in 1998 and was elected member to the Bangladesh Bar Council in 2004.

He was elected the president of the SCBA in 2005-2006 and served as its general secretary in 1993-1994.

Replying to a question, he said the state money can be laundered through different ways including opening letter of credits (LCs) in foreign countries, hundies and over invoice and under invoice and the home ministry is to examine it.

The top law officer said he will request the authorities concerned to keep the job of the efficient and honest law officers among the existing ones.

Earlier, President Iajuddin

Dalits to hold nat'l confce Jan 16-17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The dalit and excluded community will hold a two-day national human rights conference on January 16 and 17 demanding an end to the discrimination they have been experiencing.

Leaders of the dalit community said this at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the city yesterday.

Babular Sardar, president of Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM), at the press conference said, "We have been being discriminated in the society for long and people had neglected our culture. Now we are aware of our culture and there will be no compromise with our culture and dignity. The conference will be held to press home our demands."

"We are living in an inhuman situation in the colonies across the country and we demand the government rehabilitates us in the government khas lands," Babular said.

Around 20 papers will be presented at the conference organised by BDERM and Nagorik Uddyog.

Mukul Shikder, member of BDERM, read out a written statement at the press conference.

He said there is no scope to undermine the dalit people for the jobs they do. "We have participated in the liberation war, so why should we be discriminated?" he posed a question.

Generally, sweepers, cobblers and barbers, who have come from different parts of India, have been considered as dalit and excluded people.

Zakir Hossain, Chief Executive of Nagorik Uddyog, and Mani Rani Das, member of BDERM, were also present at the press conference.

Work together to make digital Bangladesh Says telecom minister

UNB, Dhaka

Post and Telecommunications Minister Razi Uddin Ahmed Raju yesterday called for working together to make a digital Bangladesh.

"Expectations of the people would be reflected if the government's plans could be implemented. It would be possible to implement the plans successfully if maximum utilisation of our limited resources is ensured," he said while exchanging views with officials of the ministry and heads of departments under the ministry at his office.

Asking the officials to ensure accountability and transparency in their activities, he urged them to reach benefits of information technology to village people.

Secretary to the ministry Dr Mahbubur Rahman chaired the meeting.



Volunteers from the UK and Bangladesh of the Global Xchange Team-79 pose for photograph with the guests at the Community Welcome Programme at Theatre Institute Chittagong recently.

EC in upazila soup

FROM PAGE 1

The ROs, who completed allotment of electoral symbols to contenders, will now have to assign symbols to the newly reinstated candidates, a task they were clearly not anticipating.

Citing a burning example of the hassle, an EC Secretariat official yesterday said the woman vice-chairman of Alamdanga upazila parishad in Chuadanga was declared elected uncontested to the reserved seat and all ballot papers allotted for the election to the post were also re-allotted to another upazila, but all that had to be reversed because a candidacy seeker suddenly appeared with a

court order.

MINISTERIAL PROTOCOL PRIVILEGES SUSPENDED IN UPAZILAS DURING POLLS

The EC on Sunday directed local administrations not to provide protocol privileges to ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers, lawmakers or any other person enjoying the status of a minister, if they visit any upazila during the elections.

The order was issued through a circular to deputy commissioners, superintendents of police, additional deputy commissioners (general), upazila executive officers, and all election officials.

The EC also sent a letter to the cabinet division request-

ing government high-ups not to visit any upazila during the elections, and not to participate in any election campaign.

If any of the dignitaries, however, is a registered voter in any particular upazila, he or she may go there to cast the vote.

A senior EC official said even if people of such status visits a constituency during the upazila elections and gets a reception, he or she must be careful not to allow any candidate attend that event.

If any candidate joins such a programme, the election there might lose its non-partisan character, the official stressed.

EC appointments under law

FROM PAGE 16

for appointment as the CEC, and two election commissioners with one of them a woman. It had sent the draft law to the immediate past caretaker government to make it law through promulgation of ordinance.

"The caretaker government however left the task for the elected government," Sohul said.

As per the draft law, the search body will consist of a High Court judge nominated by the chief justice, chiefs of the Anti-Corruption Commission and Public Service Commission, and the comptroller and auditor

general. Outgoing CEC would head the search body.

This body will prepare a panel consisting of three names against each vacant post and forward it to the Prime Minister's Office for consideration of the Bac, which is the top JS body.

The prime minister, who is also leader of the House, and leader of the opposition and senior ministers or senior leaders of political parties represented in the JS are members of the Bac.

Examining the panel, the Bac headed by the speaker will finalise it, and the president will then appoint the CEC and election commissioners from

the finalist.

The EC believes that this would end any controversies centring constitution of the EC.

The draft law emphasised administrative efficiency, honesty and neutrality as essential qualifications for an individual to be appointed as CEC or election commissioner.

An individual will be disqualified for appointment to these posts if he/she is an active member of a political party or if he/she expressed desire to become a parliamentary contender on a political party's nomination, and if he/she is aged over 65 years.

KYOCERA Copy Print Scan Fax

LONG-LIFE DRUM

Essence of award-winning MULTIFUNCTIONAL PRINTERS

FEATURES:

- Long service life
- Long life components and easy maintenance
- Environmentally friendly
- Economical to run

KYOCERA MITA Corporation (Japan)
www.kyoceramita.com.sg

Tel: 88-02-7162435

WE MOURN

Mr. Yahya Ahmed Bawany,
Past President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry and a reputed industrialist breathed his last on January 12, 2009 at Karachi, Pakistan (Innailiha Wa Innailiha Rajeu).

His death is a great loss to his family and associates. We in the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry are deeply shocked at his sad demise and express our heartfelt condolence and sympathy to the members of his bereaved family.

We pray to Almighty Allah to grant the departed soul eternal peace in the best of Heavens. Ameen.

President,
Board of Directors and Members
of
Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry

DCCI Since -1958