

## RECONSTITUTION OF PARTY

## BNP meets to finalise convening committees

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Standing Committee of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) last night continued meeting to finalise the names of conveners and joint conveners of organisational district committees in a bid to reorganise the party.

Party leaders said a four-member special committee led by party Chairperson Khaleda Zia prepared a draft list of the conveners and the joint conveners of district committees and their names would be announced after approval of the standing committee.

Meeting was going on with Khaleda, also Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, in the chair during filing this report at 10:00pm.

Earlier, the standing committee held a series of meetings during the last few weeks and decided in principle to form convening committees after dissolving all the district committees to reorganise the party from the grassroots level.

Moudud Ahmed on Friday would dissolve its district units and replace them with convening committees within a week. "The task to reconstitute the party is at final stage," he said.

The standing committee has already reviewed six divisional reports on reconstitution of party units from the grassroots level.

Joint secretaries general Abdullah Al Noman, Mirza Abbas, Selima Rahman, MA

Mannan, Goyeshwar Chandra Roy and Nazrul Islam Khan prepared the reports in consultation with upazila, thana and municipal leaders of the six divisions.

The standing committee comprises of 10 members led by Khaleda Zia. Other members are M Saifur Rahman, Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, RA Goni, Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Moudud Ahmed, Mahbubuddin Ahmad, Mahbubur Rahman and M Shamsul Islam.

Saifur has already announced his retirement from politics while some other senior members of the committee are also planning to quit politics, said the party sources.

## Drug peddlers still active at Agargaon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Drug peddlers are still running their business in the city's Agargaon area where they attacked a police patrol car and ransacked a police check post on Saturday night when a police team raided the area.

Four people including three police personnel were injured in the attack.

The injured police personnel were Sub-inspector Humayun Kabir and two constables of Mohammadpur Police Station.

Sources said the police team came under attack by over 200 drug peddlers and addicts when the team raided the houses of drug peddlers at around 7:00pm.

Humayun Kabir told this correspondent that the attackers used sticks and bricks.

A case was filed with Mohammadpur Police Station but none was arrested.

## 4 hurt as sacks of bran fall on rickshaws from truck

A CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Four people, including a schoolboy, were injured when two sacks of bran fell from an overloaded truck on two rickshaws at Jamtola in the town yesterday.

The injured were identified as Mojahid, 10, Giasuddin, 26, rickshaw puller Selim, 42 and Swapan, 40.

Police seized the truck but the driver managed to escape.

## Wasa gets temporary MD

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday assigned a joint secretary as the managing director (MD) of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) as an additional charge.

IGRD ministry assigned Shahjahan Ali (Mollah, joint secretary (water supply wing), to the position following a decision of the Wasa Board.

The Wasa Board at a meeting on Thursday decided to have someone from the ministry as the MD for the time being instead of proposing one from the Wasa, meeting sources said. The government normally appoints the Wasa MD as per proposal made by the Wasa Board.

The position of Wasa MD had been lying vacant since April 9 following resignation of the incumbent Major (ret) Raihanul Abedin on April 8.

Wasa Board Chairman Abdullah Harun Pasha also resigned on the same day. Engineer Dr Golam Mostafa was appointed chairman on the next day.

Both the chairman and the MD resigned on the same day under government pressure as various allegations were raised against them, sources said.

The newly appointed MD went to Wasa Bhawan yesterday afternoon and held meeting with the officials.

## Khaleda visits Dr Nazrul, ailing Kanganini Sufia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia visited injured pro-BNP physician Nazrul Islam and ailing noted folk singer Kanganini Sufia at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and Hospital yesterday evening.

Later, she went to Metropolitan Hospital at Mohakhali in the city to see Azam Ali Biswas, Sujannagar Poursava BNP convener, who was injured reportedly in attack by a group of local Awami League activists on April 14.



Bangladesh Upazila Parishad Association Convener Harun-or-Rashid Hawlader speaks at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

Crime on the rise in city  
Nine murdered, 20 shot in a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a span of three hours yesterday, three people succumbed to their injuries raising the number of killings to nine in the city last week, while at least 20 people, including traders and transport workers, sustained bullet injuries as armed extortionists failing to realise tolls sprayed bullets on them.

The recent spate of armed attacks on traders, business establishments, factories and pedestrians has created panic among the city dwellers.

Residents observed that law and order situation is getting deteriorated in the city as police failed to control such criminals who mostly use small arms.

Criminals are active in collecting tolls from different trade centres, garment factories and transport sectors and they are doing these crimes claiming them as the ruling party men.

Drug peddlers have also become desperate in the city. They also dared attack police patrol car and check post.

Several hundred residents of Nazimuddin Road and Chankharpool formed a human chain and staged a demonstration protesting activities of drug peddlers in the areas on Friday.

Meanwhile, around 250 drug peddlers of Agargaon attacked a police patrol car and a police check post, leaving four police wounded on Saturday, while armed extortionists the same day sprayed bullets at Epyllion Knit Wear in Pallabi, leaving its three security guards bullet hit.

Armed cadres of top listed criminals, who remain absconding still, are desperate to take jhut (garment wastage) business and extortion in bus stands and counters in their grip and for these, they carried out gun attacks at different garment factories and bus stands, leaving concerned employees dead and injured.

On April 9, armed extortionists sprayed bullets at a

travel agency at Banani that left its one employee dead and the other bullet injured.

Claiming themselves as the men of Shahadat gang, they also left a chit and a piece of shroud threatening the owners of the agency to pay Tk five crore as toll money.

Extortionists claiming them as ruling party activists made four separate attacks at bus counters, damaging 20 buses and injuring at least five transport employees at Dhakeswari bus stand in the last 12 days. The concerned bus owner filed a case with Lalbagh Police Station in this regard.

Meanwhile, at least 15 transport employees were injured in two separate

clashes over establishing supremacy over bus stands in the city's Debari and Round Square No. 1 at Mirpur yesterday, while burglars stole 50 tolas of gold and Tk 1.5 lakh from a house on Dilu Road in Moghbazar.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Shahidul Haque told The Daily Star that it is a common trend that criminal activities in such a mega city like Dhaka will witness rising and falling trends very often.

However, admitting to the recent rise in criminal activities, the commissioner said DMP has beefed up police patrolling by setting up different check posts at different crime-prone areas in the city.

44 MW PRIVATE POWER PLANT  
Supply gas to start operation

## Demand authorities

CU CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of a private 44 MW power plant here yesterday demanded immediate supply of gas to the plant which has been fully prepared to go into power generation since June last year.

The management made the demand at a press conference at a hotel in the city in the afternoon.

The private firm Malancha Holdings Limited, a sister concern of United group, set up the plant at a cost of Tk 200 crore in the Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) but could not go into generation due to lack of gas.

Company officials said as per agreement with the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) they set up the automated gas-fired plant inside the CEPZ, and BEPZA assured them of providing gas supply.

But at one stage, BEPZA asked them to manage gas supply by their own and later the Bakhirabad Gas Systems Limited (BGSL) assured them of supplying 50 percent of the total gas required by October last year and 100 percent by July this year, said Hasan Mahmood Raja, chairman and managing director of the company.

But they are yet to get gas supply to the plant from the BGSL, he said, adding that if production at the plant starts it will play a significant role in reducing load-shedding in the city after fulfilling the demand of the CEPZ in the daytime.

He informed that construction work of another 50 MW is going on in full swing there.

Company Director KMA Shamim, Moinuddin Hasan Rashid, Adviser SA Mayeed, Project Director Amir Khasru and Plant Manager Gulzar-E-Alam were present at the press conference.

## Bangladesh key ally of US: Moriarty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

US Ambassador in Dhaka James F Moriarty on Saturday here said Bangladesh is an important friend and ally of the United States.

"We have a long-standing relationship with Bangladesh and have provided more than \$5 billion in aid for the country since its independence," the envoy said while talking to local journalists at a local hotel.

Moriarty, who visited Khulna for the first time since assuming office of the embassy in Dhaka, said the average annual development assistance programmes of the US are over \$100 million.

The US will continue its strong support and look forward to working with Bangladesh to achieve its goal of a better and more prosperous future for all of its citizens, he added.

The envoy observed that the Sundarbans, world's largest salt-tolerant mangrove forest, now stands third in the voting for the New Seven Wonders of Nature.

The Sundarbans is not just the pride of Bangladesh, but also an internationally acclaimed natural forest ecosystem.

It is not only unique, but also a World Heritage Site. So, we are committed to helping improve the lives of the people who live in and around the mangrove forest, US envoy said.

He said the US government is committed to addressing global climate change threats, adding that the Sundarbans plays a unique role when it comes to climate change as the area acts as a natural buffer against disasters.

He observed that protecting the Sundarbans benefits the rest of the country. Countless lives were saved during cyclone Sidr, because the storm came ashore in the forest which bore the main brunt of the storm.

## Fresh BCL feud at JU

A JU CORRESPONDENT

Two factions of BCL Jahangirnagar University (JU) unit staged a chase and counter-chase over a trifling matter on the campus yesterday, leaving six students injured.

Sources said two BCL activists - Ullash of Mir Mosharraf Hossain (MH) Hall and Tanvir of Maulana Bhasani Hall - locked into a quarrel over eating 'pitha' on the campus on Saturday. Joint secretary of recently dissolved unit Zahed Parvej Khan Pulok compromised the matter.

But as a sequel to the quarrel, Ullash, Bitu and Meem with few other students beat up Tanvir, Himel and their friends at the dairy gate at 11:00am yesterday.

Hearing the news, Pritom and Sabbir, leaders of MH Hall, came to the central playground area with their men equipped with rods and sticks.

On the other hand, Bhasani Hall leaders Sumon, Ajgar and Abhijeet also reached the spot with 20-25 men. They were involved in chase and counter-chase.

Proctor Arju Miah and BCL leaders took the situation under control.

## Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Manzula Anwar, a freedom fighter and wife of Dr Syed Anwar Ali, one of the organisers in Swadhin

Bangla Betar Kendra during the Liberation War, passed away due to old-age complications at Apollo Hospitals in the city on Saturday at the age of 77, says a press release.

She left behind her four daughters, two sons and a host relative to mourn her death.

She will be buried with state honour at her village home in Gopalganj.

## Shah Md Ali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shah Md Ali, a freedom fighter and joint secretary, Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, passed away at his residence on Friday at the age of 54, says a press release.

He was buried with state honour at martyred intellectual graveyard in Mirpur in the city.

M Abdul Jalil Miah, former principal of Taherpur Degree College at Baghmara in Rajshahi, passed away on April 14 at the age of 65.

He left behind his three daughters and two sons to mourn his death.

## ASK concerned over death of migrant workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human rights body Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday expressed deep concern over the growing number of bodies of Bangladeshi workers being brought home almost everyday.

"Mostly, heart attack is shown the reason for their deaths. The other reason shown is accident at workplace. Though death certificates are sent with bodies, in most cases autopsies were not done," said a statement signed by ASK Executive Director Advocate Sultana Kamal.

About the body of Ikhtiar Uddin which was flown home from Malaysia on Saturday morning, the family members alleged that he died following tortures by law enforcers in a detention camp in Malaysia.

When the wage earners return in the form of corpses, there is no end of sufferings of their relatives.

"We know the poor and less educated people mainly go abroad to change their fates, but they are often cheated and many are employed in risky jobs. We do not know whether our missions abroad come to their aid in trouble times," the statement said.

"Recently, large numbers of migrant workers are returning. Though global economic recession is partly responsible for it, but Bangladesh missions' failures are also responsible for such consequences, she added.

"The arrival of increasing number of bodies has raised public concern," ASK said, urging the government to take effective measures immediately to address the problems.

## Leather Tech College classes resume today

METRO DESK

Bangladesh College of Leather Technology authorities have decided to resume classes of all the academic years except 2008-09 from today.

The decision came following a coordination meeting of the teachers, students and representatives of Directorate of Technical Education yesterday.

The college was closed since die on April 11 as its students went berserk and vandalised shops and damaged vehicles for realising their six-point demands, including reduction of examination fees.

## Indonesian team arrives today

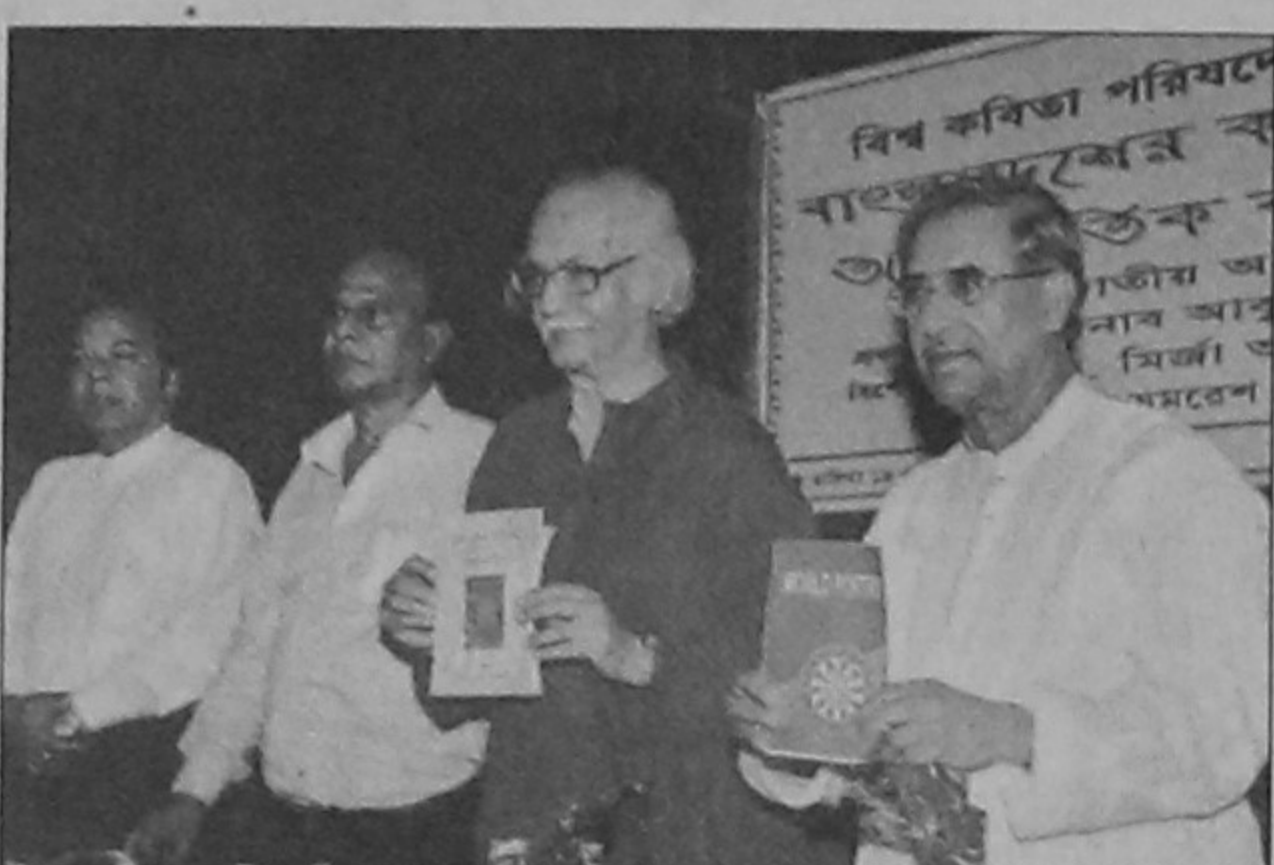
UNB, Dhaka

A six-member delegation of the Group of Bilateral Cooperation of the House of Representatives of Indonesia arrives here today on a three-day visit.

The delegation comprises the government coalition as well as of the opposition will visit here to renew and strengthen ties between the parliaments of Indonesia and Bangladesh.

The team members are looking forward to exchanging their views with their counterpart in the Bangladesh parliament, said an Indonesian Embassy release.

The delegation will also visit Grameen Bank, SK+F pharmaceutical and Ring Shine garment manufacturer.



(From right) Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad and Prof Kabir Chowdhury hold copies of a book at "Bangladeshi Poets' Grand Conference and International Poetry Festival 2009" at the National Museum in the city yesterday. The event was organised on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Bishwa Kabita Parishad.

## London discussion on Bangladesh today

ANA from London

A discussion on the prevailing situation in Bangladesh and the plans and programmes of the grand alliance government will be held at the British parliament today.

International Bangladesh Foundation (IBF) is organising the discussion.

Members of British and European parliament, representatives of international human rights organisations, civil society and politicians will take part in the discussion.

IBF has informed ANA that the participants would speak on the statements of some British and European MPs who visited Bangladesh recently.

IBF chairperson and vice-chairman of all party human rights group in British parliament Lord Avebury will preside over the meeting to be held at the no 3 committee room of the British Parliament Building from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

British MP Ann Main, Baroness Pola Uddin and Jeremy Corbyn, European MP Charles Tannock, Human Rights Watch Asia Affairs Executive Director Brad Adams and Solicitor Samir Das, Bangladesh Awami League spokesperson Tulip Siddique and UK BNP Convener Alhaj Kamaruddin will take part in the discussion.

The government's role in handling Pihkhana carnage and cancellation of the lease of Khaleda Zia's Cantonment House would figure prominently in the discussion, it has been learnt.



## Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Sylhet, Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions.

Mild to moderate heat wave may continue over Khulna and Dhaka divisions and the regions of Rajshahi, Ishwardi and Bogra, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:22pm today and rises at 5:32am tomorrow.

Highest temperature 41.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 22.5 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

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	37.3	28.2	73	54
Chittagong	31.6	28.5	81	85
Rajshahi	40.7	26.0	74	30
Khulna	38.6	23.2	76	58
Barisal	34.8	27.3	81	47
Sylhet	32.8	22.5	84	64
Cox's Bazar	33.0	28.3	73	81



## Discussion

Centre for Development Research, Bangladesh and Bangladesh Friendship Education Society jointly organise a discussion on "Cancer awareness, prevention and control programme in Bangladesh: Focus on cervical and breast cancer". Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 3:00pm.

## Rally

Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO will hold a rally marking the Global Action Week 2009. Venue: Banbels Bhaban. Time: 8:30am.

## Seminar

Dhaka University Library organises a seminar on manuscript. Venue: DU senate building. Time: 12:00pm.

## Chand Sultana Literacy Award for Saleha

METRO DESK



Saleha Begum popularly known as Saleha Chachi of Golachipa has been

selected for Chand Sultana Literacy Award-2008 of Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) in recognition of her multifaceted contribution to the field of education and social development, says a press release.

The award, which includes a cheque for Tk 30,000, a crest and a certificate, will be handed over to Saleha on April 22.

DAM initiated the award in memory of late Chand Sultana, a renowned social worker and educational material developer who died a premature death in April, 1999.

The award is being given every year since 2000 to an individual or institution for their outstanding contribution to the fields of non-formal education, materials development, cancer and HIV/AIDS.

Born in 1948 at Charmontaz union of Golachipa upazila under Patuakhali, Saleha lost her seven sons and daughters, including her husband in the devastating cyclone in 1974.

Since then, she has been playing an active role in promoting education, women's empowerment and formation of societies, development of technical education for women, creating awareness of polygamy, child marriage and dowry system in the society.



NSI field officer Akbar Hossain Khan is being produced before a Chittagong court in the port city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Laid-off Ctg Chemical reopens on April 24  
Says industries minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to reopen the Chittagong Chemical Complex on April 24 that was laid-off on December 15, 2002, Industries Minister Dilip Barua said yesterday.

He said the government will also gradually re-open the other mills and factories, including Adamjee Jute Mills, that were closed down during the previous government, based on their feasibility studies.

The minister said this while speaking as the chief guest at a conference of Building Construction Workers' Union, Bangladesh (BCWUB) at the Moni Singh-Farhad Trust Bhaban in the city.

"We also have a plan to reopen Khulna Newsprint Mill and North Bengal Paper Mill as soon as possible after their feasibility studies are done," he said.

Criticising the BNP-led four-party alliance government for shutting down the mills and factories, the minister said the present government want to introduce a new

culture of establishing new industries and reopening the closed ones for the greater interests of the nation and the workers' community.

He urged all to work together for the country's economic development and be aware of the evil forces that are trying to unsettle the government.

Earlier, Imarat Nirman Sramik Union Bangladesh placed some demands before the government at the conference.

Their demands include setting up colonies in district and upazila levels, introducing rationing system, reviewing the Labour Law 2006 and ensuring the right to trade union.

"After sitting with the ministry concerned, we will adopt an action plan for solving the problems," said the minister.

Saying the construction workers have a role to play in the making of Digital Bangladesh, the minister stressed the need for forming a regulatory body to ensure better wages for the workers.