

NEW DANGER SIGNAL SYSTEM

Awareness campaign in coastal belts soon

UNB, Dhaka

The government plans to launch a massive awareness campaign soon among the people in the coastal belts before introducing the new storm danger signal system to be initiated before November, usually a month of depression in the Bay of Bengal.

The new danger signaling system, which already got approval of the cabinet division, was prepared by the last caretaker government with a view to making it easily understandable for the people.

"Massive campaign will be launched soon among the people in the coastal belt before formally introducing the new signaling system," a senior official at the Ministry of Disaster Management told UNB yesterday.

He said the government would take initiative to widely publicise the new weather signaling system. "All modes of media will be used to disseminate the message."

The official said there are some 42,500 volunteers ready to go into action in the coastal areas and they would be given further training to help implement the weather campaign before introducing the new signaling system.

He said, "As storm usually occurs in April-May-June and October-November periods in

our country, full campaign (on the new system) will be launched keeping the timeframe in mind."

The new signaling system will be applicable in case of both maritime ports and river ports, said sources at the Meteorology Department.

According to the new system, there will be eight warnings for the maritime ports and six for river ports, said Shah Alam, deputy director of the Meteorological Department, at a workshop in the city on Saturday.

Of the signals, 5 and 7 will be omitted, with maritime ports having recourse to signals 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10, while river ports will accordingly hoist 3, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10 on the same scale ranging from cautionary to great danger.

According to Met office documents, the restructured danger signal numbers would be measured the following way -- distant warning signal number 1 and distant cautionary signal number 2 will be measured with the wind speed of 51-61 and 62-88 kilometers per hour while local cautionary signal number 3 and local warning signal 4 with the wind speed of 40-50 and 51-61 kilometers per hour, danger signal number 6 with the wind speed of 62-88, the great danger signal 8 with the wind speed of 89-117, signal 9 with 118-170 and signal 10 above with 171 kilometers per hour.

Call to stop anti-militancy drives in Quami madrasas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islamic scholars yesterday demanded an immediate halt to the recent anti-militancy drives in Quami madrasas and stoppage of 'propaganda' against the madrasas education patronising militancy in the country.

Quami madrasa leaders also postponed their scheduled rally in protest against the recent anti-militancy drives as the prime minister assured them of stopping police harassment in the madrasas and taking steps to modernise Quami madrasa education keeping its 'unique' methodology of teaching.

The rally was scheduled for today under the banner of Bangladesh Quami Madrasa Education Board.

"As per the prime minister's assurance of stopping drives in Quami madrasas, we postponed the scheduled rally and urged all Islamic scholars to join the seminar," Abdul Zabbar, a leader who joined the meeting with the premier on Saturday, said at a press conference at the National Press Club.

The leader said they would hold a national seminar on anti-terrorism and militancy on April 25 as part of their promise of helping the government in identifying the patrons of militancy and bringing them to book.

Leaders also demanded withdrawal of, what they said, 'unaccepted' comments about Quami madrasas made by the law minister, telecommunications minister and director general of the Islamic Foundation.

Meanwhile, Islami Andolon Bangladesh (IAB) at a rally urged the government not to harass the Quami madrasa students in the name of detecting militancy there.

They also demanded withdrawal of the remarks by the law minister on Quami madrasa that the Quami madrasas are breeding places of militancy in the country and removal of Baitul Mukarram Mosque Khatib Maulana Salahuddin and education commission chief Prof Kabir Chowdhury.

The rally was organised by Islami Andolon Dhaka city unit at Muktangan in the city with IAB Dhaka city unit President ATM Hemayet Uddin in the chair.

Addressing the rally as the chief guest, IAB President Charmonai Pir Syed Rezaul Karim said the government in its election manifesto said it would not do anything against Islam, but some persons of the government are trying to hatch conspiracies against the religion.

He said Quami madrasa students are not militants, rather those who are creating mayhem in different education institutions are the real militants.

IAB Secretary General Maulana Yunus Ahmed, IAB president member Syed Faizul Karim, Secretary General of Khelafat Andolon Maulana Jafrullah Khan and Ameer of Khelafat Andolon Shah Ahmadullah Ashraf also spoke.



Islami Andolon Bangladesh stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday, causing a huge traffic congestion in the area.

HISTORY OF WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Petition for banning books for distorting history

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed yesterday with the High Court (HC) to direct the government to ban the books titled 'History of Bangladesh War of Independence' published in June 2004 by then BNP-led four-party alliance government stating that Major Ziaur Rahman made declaration of independence on March 26, 1971.

Dr MA Salam, a freedom fighter and a private practitioner, filed the writ petition as a public interest litigation (PIL) praying to the court to direct the government to take action against the persons who changed the real history in the name of reprint.

After holding a hearing on the petition, an HC bench of Justice ABM Khairul Haque and Justice Md Mamataz Uddin Ahmed fixed Monday (today) for order on the petition.

During the hearing, petitioner's counsel Advocate Manzill Murshid told the court that then government on February 13, 1979 constituted an authentication committee for writing and printing of History of Bangladesh War of Liberation.

Dr Mofizullah Kabir was appointed chairman and Hasan Hafizur Rahman member secretary of the committee.

The committee published the books in November 1982 and subsequently it was reprinted in December 2003.

In both the publications, it was written that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman made declaration of independence on March 26, 1971, he said, adding that it was recognised in the Proclamation on

Independence published on April 10, 1971.

He said the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs on approval of then Prime Minister Khaleda Zia formed an authentication committee comprising Md Rejaul Karim, Prof M Moniruzzaman Mia, Prof Emazuddin Ahmed, Barrister Moinul Hossain, Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiki, Prof Sirajul Islam, Prof KM Mohsin, Prof Abul Kalam Monjur Morshed and Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmed to reprint the 15-volume books.

In June 2004, the committee published the books changing the real history of declaration of independence. It was printed in the books that Major Zia made declaration of independence on March 26, 1971, he said.

He also said those who were responsible for distort-

ing the national history had committed offence against the state and violated the Constitution.

During the hearing, the court assigned senior lawyer Barrister M Amir-ul Islam who was involved in drafting the Proclamation of Independence, as an amicus curiae (friend of court) to make submissions on the issue.

Amir-ul Islam told the court that the Proclamation of Independence, which has been protected by Article 150 of the Constitution, is a legal document and it cannot be changed.

Eight high officials of the government, including the secretaries of the cabinet division, the president secretary and the office of the prime minister, have been made respondents, in the petition.

Unilever distributor mugged of Tk 17.30 lakh

UNB, Gazipur

A distributor of Unilever Company was mugged of Tk 17.30 lakh at Chandina crossing in Sadar upazila yesterday.

Local sources said a number of armed muggers, numbering 4 to 5, swooped on Abdul Baten Liton, owner of distributing agency ST Enterprise, when he got down from his car near the BRAC Bank along with Tk 17.30 lakh at about 12:30pm yesterday.

The snatchers fired two blank shots creating panic among the local people.

They beat up Abdul Baten and snatched away his bag containing the money.

The muggers also forcibly pulled the driver out of Baten's car at gunpoint and fled the scene byt.

During the brawl, Baten snatched a loaded pistol from the muggers. He deposited the firearm with the Joydevpur police station. The car was later found in a nearby bus stand area in the town.



Comptroller and Auditor General Ahmed Ataul Hakeem hands over the annual audit report on spending from the state coffers to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

PM receives annual audit report

UNB, Dhaka

Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Ahmed Ataul Hakeem yesterday handed over the annual audit report on spending from the state coffers to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office.

On the occasion, the PM underscored the need for boosting the activities of parliamentary standing committees "to ensure transparency and accountability in maintaining government accounts".

Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office Mollah Waheeduzzaman and Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were present.

1374 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police, in separate raids, arrested 1374 people on different charges across the country in last 24 hours as of 6:00am yesterday.

Eight firearms, two bombs and 8 bullets were also recovered during the countrywide drive, said a Police Headquarters release.

Three cases were filed under the Arms Act during the period.

Besides, 21 motorcycles without valid documents were seized and 219 cases were filed.

LIBERATION WAR MUSEUM Document on lease of land handed over

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Housing and public works ministry yesterday handed over the document of a lease of 2.5 bighas of land at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar to the Liberation War Museum to set up in a permanent place.

Trustee and Member Secretary of the museum Mofidul Haque received the document from State Minister for Housing and Public Works Abdul Mannan Khan.

The museum authorities

received the land at over Tk 1.49 crore of which the market price is around 82 crore, ministry sources said.

The museum trustee said they would invite a tender this month to construct a new building on the designated spot.

Since its journey at Segun Bagicha in 1996, the museum is housed in a rented house. A number of important historical elements of the liberation war cannot display for the people due to the lack of space in the existing place.



Rashed Khan Menon hands over a crest to Kamal Lohani at a reception at Shaheed Asad auditorium in the city yesterday while Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu looks on.

Reception to Kamal Lohani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The weekly Natun Katha yesterday accorded a reception to Kamal Lohani for becoming director general of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, says a press release.

The reception ceremony was held at Shaheed Asad Auditorium in the city.

Rashed Khan Menon MP, chairman of the editorial board of Natun Katha, presided over the programme.

Cultural personality Asaduzzaman Noor MP, chairman of Shamilita Sangskritik Jote Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu, editor of Natun Katha Hazera Sultana, spoke on the occasion.

Concern over closure of RMG factory at DEPZ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Karmojibi Nari (KN) General Secretary Sharmin Kabir and Executive Secretary Rokeya Rafiq in a joint statement yesterday expressed their concern for closure of Youngone garment factory at Dhaka EPZ in Savar, says a press release.

They said the workers of the factory have been protesting the decision of the authorities to cut Tk 500 from a worker's salary and other facilities.

The authorities held several rounds of meetings with labourers, but with little or no effect. They suddenly shut down the factory, leaving the fate of the

workers in uncertainties. KN demanded immediate reopening of the factory and fulfilling the demands of the workers.

Degree pass exams begin May 12

METRO DESK

The Degree Pass, Subsidiary and Certificate Course Examinations 2008 under National University will begin across the country on May 12, says a press release.

Detailed schedule of the examinations is available now at the colleges concerned and at the website of National University (www.nu.edu.bd)

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