

President promises to make Bhairab district

UNB, Bhairab

President Zillur Rahman yesterday said he would keep on his all-out efforts to upgrade Bhairab into a district to fulfill the long-cherished demand of the local people.

"I promise you, I'll carry on my best efforts to upgrade Bhairab into a district," he told a civic reception accorded to him on the Bhairab Haji Asmat College premises.

His assurance came as the local people in their 'Address of Honour', given to the president, put forward their nine-point demand for the development of Bhairab.

Zillur said, "I'm taking on my shoulder one of your demands -- making Bhairab a district -- for its fulfillment, and asking the local MPs to meet your rest eight demands."

Their other demands include construction of Bhairab town protection dam, setting up a science and technology university in Bhairab, developing various educational institutions, mosques

and temples, constructing a trauma hospital and a tourism centre there.

He asked the authorities concerned to immediately take effective steps to rename the bridge built over the Meghna River after Syed Nazrul Islam, one of the organisers of the Liberation War and the then acting president of Bangladesh.

The aim of the liberation war, he said, was to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh. "But the country's people could not achieve the goal in over 38 years of independence. The Father of the Nation was killed along with his family members to block the path of development and democracy."

Recalling the killing of his wife IV Rahman in a grenade attack, the president said the conspirators are not sitting idle as they are moving ahead with their destructive activities. "So, we all will have to resist the conspirators."

Referring to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's declared 'Vision 2021' for building a

country based on information and technology in its golden jubilee of independence, Zillur urged the countrymen to work unitedly for implementation of the PM's charter of change. "I openly urge all to make their respective contributions towards building the nation," he said.

He expressed his gratefulness to the people of all walks of life for according him such a huge reception. "Your inartificial love has impressed and inspired me. You take my Salam," he said.

M Saidullah Miah, convenor of the citizens' reception committee and president of Bhairab Chamber of Commerce and Industry, presided over the reception. Local lawmakers Nazmul Hasan Papon and Afzal Hossain were present.

Later, Zillur inaugurated a memorial sculpture titled 'Durjoy Bhairab' in the town. He also visited his family graveyard and offered feteha and munjat, seeking divine blessings for the departed souls of his relatives.

Eve-teasers attack teachers, students

UNB, Keraniganj

About 20 teachers and students of Chunkutia Girls' High School were injured in an attack by an eve-teaser and his accomplices yesterday.

Following the attack, the authorities closed the school for an indefinite period demanding immediate arrest of the attackers.

Witnesses said Sunny, an Awami League cadre, was teasing a student of class VII at the school gate at about 4:00pm. When a teacher reprimanded him for his indecent behaviour, he got angry and left the place.

But he returned soon along with a dozen of his accomplices and launched an attack on the teachers and students. They also vandalised the classrooms and assaulted female teachers and students.

Eleven injured teachers and students were treated in clinics.

On receiving information, the police and Rapid Action Battalion rushed to the spot and arrested Islam, father of Sunny.



PHOTO: STAR

Chittagong City Corporation workers cut down a tree at the foot of Tiger Pass in the port city yesterday to make room for a garage of the corporation.

Call to monitor NGO activities to ensure accountability

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Speakers at a view exchange meeting here yesterday stressed the need for monitoring the funding and activities of the NGOs to ensure accountability and transparency in the sector.

They also called for necessary changes in recruitment policy and salary structures in NGOs and emphasised better coordination between the government and non-government organisations for development of the country.

The meeting on "Problems relating to good governance in NGO sector and responsibility" was organised by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) in association with NGO Affairs Bureau, Manusher Jonno Foundation, Brac and Oxfam at the Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC) auditorium.

Divisional Commissioner MAN Siddique was the chief guest at the meeting with

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Farid Uddin Ahmad Chowdhury in the chair.

NGO Affairs Bureau Director General Mushtaque Hasan Md Iftekhar was the special guest at the meeting.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekaruzzaman moderated the open discussion session while Manusher Jonno Foundation Director Dr Shamima Imam gave vote of thanks.

Around 100 government officials including deputy commissioners, upazila nirbahi officers, representatives from several NGOs from 11 districts under the division attended the meeting.

Assistant Director of NGO Affairs Bureau Pranab Kumar Ghosh and TIB Fellow (Research and Policy) Sadhan Kumar Das presented two keynote papers.

Sadhan presented the TIB conducted research titled 'Problems of good governance in the NGO sector: Way to overcome' showing lack of

transparency and accountability in the sector and serious irregularities.

He said though the number of NGOs has increased in the country, but their activities are not being properly monitored due to acute shortage of manpower in the NGO bureau.

Speakers called for formation of separate cell to monitor recruitment and salary structure of the NGO officials to ensure transparency in the sector.

Siddique said proper coordination between the government and NGOs is a must to make the development projects effective as well as establishing good governance in the sector.

He said NGOs are playing a vital role in the development of livelihoods in the rural areas.

Mentioning that a section of NGOs are learnt to have been funding militant or terrorist activities, Siddique urged the government to take strict steps to check such activities.

He underscored the need for a similar citizen charter for all the NGOs to ensure good governance.

Mushtaque emphasised on strict monitoring of the NGO activities to ensure good governance and proper development of the country.

He urged the NGO officials to submit documents on their activities to the local administration to ensure transparency.

He also emphasised determining the arena of activities of NGOs so that several NGOs could not engage to implement same project in a particular area.

Dr Iftekaruzzaman said monitoring over the NGO activities are essential as they are working in various sectors like good governance, right to information, micro credit and others.

Fruit festival at Nat'l Press Club

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A fruit festival was held at the National Press Club in the city yesterday aiming at promoting as well as publicising the country's nutrition-rich local fruits.

National Press Club and British-American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB) jointly organised the festival, says a press release.

President of the press club Shawkat Mahmud inaugurated the festival where a total of 25 native fruits, including mango, jackfruit, banana, pineapple and star fruits, were put on display.

"We have to encourage the commercial cultivation of local fruits with a view to upholding the Bangalee culture and heritage," he added.

Press Club General Secretary Kamal Uddin Sabuj, BATB Head of Corporate and Regulatory Affairs Jakir Ibn Hye and a horde of senior journalists were present at the function.



PHOTO: STAR

Visitors at a fruit festival held at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. The press club and British-American Tobacco Bangladesh jointly organised the festival.

MK Alamgir

FROM PAGE 1
against the lower court judgment.

The lawyers said it is the first HC verdict to rescind the conviction and sentence handed down by the special court during the last caretaker government's tenure against any person for amassing illegal wealth and hiding information about it.

ACC counsel advocate Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that the commission will file an appeal with the Supreme Court against the HC verdict after receiving a copy of the judgement.

When asked about the HC verdict's implication for similar cases, he said more than 80 people have been convicted and sentenced on parallel charges during the emergency rule. Similar verdict might follow in such cases, he added.

Alamgir's counsel barrister Rafique-Ul Huq told journalists that there was no legality in the special court's verdict in the case against his client. The rule of law has been established following the HC verdict.

He said the ACC secretary on February 18, 2007, issued notices on behalf of the commission on 50 people including Alamgir, asking them to submit their wealth statements.

The secretary had no jurisdiction to issue such notices as per the ACC law. But cases were filed against them on the basis of the "illegal notices" bringing similar charges against them, he said.

Most recipients of the notices were convicted and sentenced to imprisonment during the emergency period, the lawyers said.

The court scrapped the conviction and sentence against Alamgir on the grounds that the notice and filing of the case have no legal effect.

Rafique-Ul Huq said the caretaker government had promulgated an ordinance giving legitimacy to issuance of such notices by the ACC secretary. Since the present government has not ratified it, the notices ceased to have effect.

ACC Deputy Director Jibon Krishna Roy filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station on March 6, 2007, accusing Alamgir of making a huge fortune through misuse of power. He also charged the former state minister with concealing information in the wealth statement submitted to the ACC.

Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of Special Court-3 set up at the MP Hostel in Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex on July 26, 2007, sentenced Alamgir to 13 years in prison and fined him Tk10 lakh in the case.

Six killed in road accidents

METRO DESK

Six people were killed and 27 others injured in separate road accidents in Chittagong and Natore yesterday.

Our CU correspondent reports: Three people were killed and seven others injured in a road accident at Chunar under Lohagara upazila in Chittagong yesterday.

Two of the deceased were identified as Mohammad Aziz, 18, son of Abdus Salam of Lohagara upazila and Ali Mostafa, 35, son of Pakhi driver of the same upazila, while identity of another victim aged around 12 years could not be known.

The accident occurred when a Chittagong-bound passenger bus on Chittagong-Cox's Bazar highway knocked a jeep, locally known as 'Chander Gari', from behind, leaving them dead on the spot and

seven others injured.

Three of the injured were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital while rests were admitted to Lohagara Health Complex.

A correspondent in Natore adds: Three people were killed and 20 others injured in separate two road accidents in Natore yesterday.

The dead were identified as Shaymol Kumar, 43, and Arun Kumar, 45, of Gobindagonj Sadar upazila in Gaibandha and Abdus Samad, 48.

Police said a Bonpara-bound power tiller fell into a roadside ditch at Harishpur village at 6:30am losing its control, leaving Shaymol and Arun dead on the spot.

In another accident, Samad was killed and 20 others were injured as their bus fell into a ditch losing its control at Kumgram village under Singra upazila.

Robbers kill trader in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A businessman was killed and four others were injured during a robbery at a house at Qayampur under Fatullah upazila in Narayanganj district yesterday.

The murdered businessman was identified as Shawkat Ali.

A gang of seven to eight robbers broke open the collapsible gate of Shawkat's house in the early morning and tied the hands and legs of the inmates of the house at gunpoint.

Sanjida Akhter Konika, daughter-in-law of Shawkat, said after entering the house the robbers held them hostage at gunpoint and took the keys of almirah and wardrobe.

Then the robbers pointed a pistol at her head and dragged her from the first floor to the second floor where the tenants were told to open their door saying that her father-in-

law was ill, she added.

Tenant Monir opened the door and seeing the arms in the hands of the robbers he started shouting.

The robbers pushed a knife into his abdomen and fled the scene quickly.

Later Konika came downstairs and found that the robbers also injured her husband Shafiqul, father-in-law Shawkat and mother-in-law Nasima Begum seriously by hitting them with sharp weapons.

Shawkat died on the spot. The robbers looted Tk 20,000 in cash and 12 tolas of gold ornaments.

Fatullah police went to the spot in the morning, recovered the body of Shawkat and sent it to Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy.

Seriously injured Monir was shifted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

Police are yet to arrest anybody in connection with the robbery.

Muggers stab auto-rickshaw driver to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed an auto-rickshaw driver to death and took away his three-wheelers in the city's Damra area yesterday.

Demra police said at about 12:30am, three muggers in the guise of passengers stabbed the driver, Forkan Khan, 25, at Haji Badsha Mia Road and sped away.

Local people rushed the driver to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital from where he was referred to Chest Diseases Hospital where he died at noon.

Buet exams from July 28

METRO DESK

The term final examinations of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) will begin July 28 instead today, says a press release.

The decision was taken at Academic Council meeting of the university with Vice Chancellor Prof Dr AMM Safiullah in the chair.

NU Hons exams from Aug 20

METRO DESK

The first year honours examinations 2008 under National University (NU) will begin on August 20, says a press release.

Detail schedule of the examinations has already been sent to the colleges. The schedule and other information will also be available on the website (www.nu.edu.bd) of the university.



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