

Abul Mansur Ahmad's 111th anniversary of birth today

METRO DESK

Today is the 111th birth anniversary of Abul Mansur Ahmad, a renowned litterateur, journalist and statesman of the sub-continent, says a press release.

Doa mahfil will be held at Dhaka and Mymensingh on the occasion.

One of the greatest satirists of Bengali literature, Abul Mansur Ahmad was also a renowned politician, lawyer and a leading journalist. He was the editor of daily Krishak, Nabajug and Ittehad in undivided Bengal and a pioneer in progressive journalism.

A successful politician, Abul Mansur Ahmad was the provincial education minister in the United Front cabinet under Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq and the central commerce and industries minister in the Awami League government of Prime Minister Hossain Shaheed Suhrawardy. He was known for his strong stand on matters of interest to East Bengal.

Abul Mansur Ahmad's publications include great satires like Aina, Asmani Purdah, Gulliver's Safer Nama and Food Conference. His works also include important writings on social and political history of Bengal. He has two autobiographical writings -- Atma Katha (About myself) and Amar Dekha Rajnitir Panchash Bachar (50 years of politics as I have seen it).

Abul Mansur Ahmad always propagated secularism in a manner unparalleled in the forties, fifties and sixties. His contribution towards opposition movement in the early days of Pakistan was extremely significant.

He wrote about the language issue from the early forties and contributed to the Language Movement as the editor of the Ittehad. He was the author of the election manifesto of Jukta Front (a grand coalition of the three giants of our politics, Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq, Moulana Bhashani and Shaheed Suhrawardy) in the 1954 election in which the Muslim League was ousted from power. The 21-point programme (Ekushey Dafa) was the first comprehensive articulation of the political, economic and cultural demands of the Bengalis of the then eastern part of Pakistan.

Abul Mansur Ahmad was one of the greatest political personalities of Bangladesh who combined rare talents in three distinct fields -- politics, journalism and literary writing.

BCL confines JCD men to Madhu's Canteen

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday confined leaders and activists of Jatiyatabdhi Chhatra Dal (JCD) to Madhu's Canteen at Dhaka University for an hour on charges of pasting JCD posters on those of BCL on the canteen walls.

A tense situation was prevailing in the canteen when some top leaders of both the organisations exchanged some heated words, campus sources said.

They said JCD men attached posters, which were published to mark the first anniversary of the release of Tarique Rahman, on the posters of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the walls and doors of the canteen.

The JCD men were freed on condition of tearing off their posters from the walls around 1:00pm.

Joint Secretary of DU unit JCD Obaidul Haq Nasir told reporters that the JCD posters were attached as August, the month of mourning, went by, adding that there was no political motivation.

DU unit BCL President Sohel Rana Tipu said they called on the JCD men to remove their posters from those of Bangabandhu and they did it understanding their mistakes.

Bangladesh 'model' state in South Asia

Says US deputy secy of state

UNB, Dhaka

US Deputy Secretary of State James B Steinberg on Tuesday said Bangladesh is a model in South Asia and has the potential to become a middle-income country soon.

He made the remarks when he received a copy of the Credential Papers from Akramul Qader, ambassador designate of Bangladesh to USA, in a simple ceremony at the State Department in Washington, said a message received here yesterday.

By virtue of this ceremony Qader becomes functional as 'ambassador-appointed' till presentation of the original Credential Papers to President Obama at the White House.

The Deputy Secretary of State also informed that President Obama will receive Ambassador Qader shortly to

present original Credential Papers.

Steinberg stated that he was encouraged to see the democratic transition in Bangladesh, and hope that the historic relations between the two countries will be further strengthened during the tenure of the new Ambassador.

Qader briefed the deputy secretary on the latest reform and development initiatives undertaken by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and assured Steinberg that Bangladesh is doing its best to address counter-terrorism.

The ambassador also availed this opportunity to reiterate Bangladesh's request to the US government to grant duty free access to Bangladeshi products.

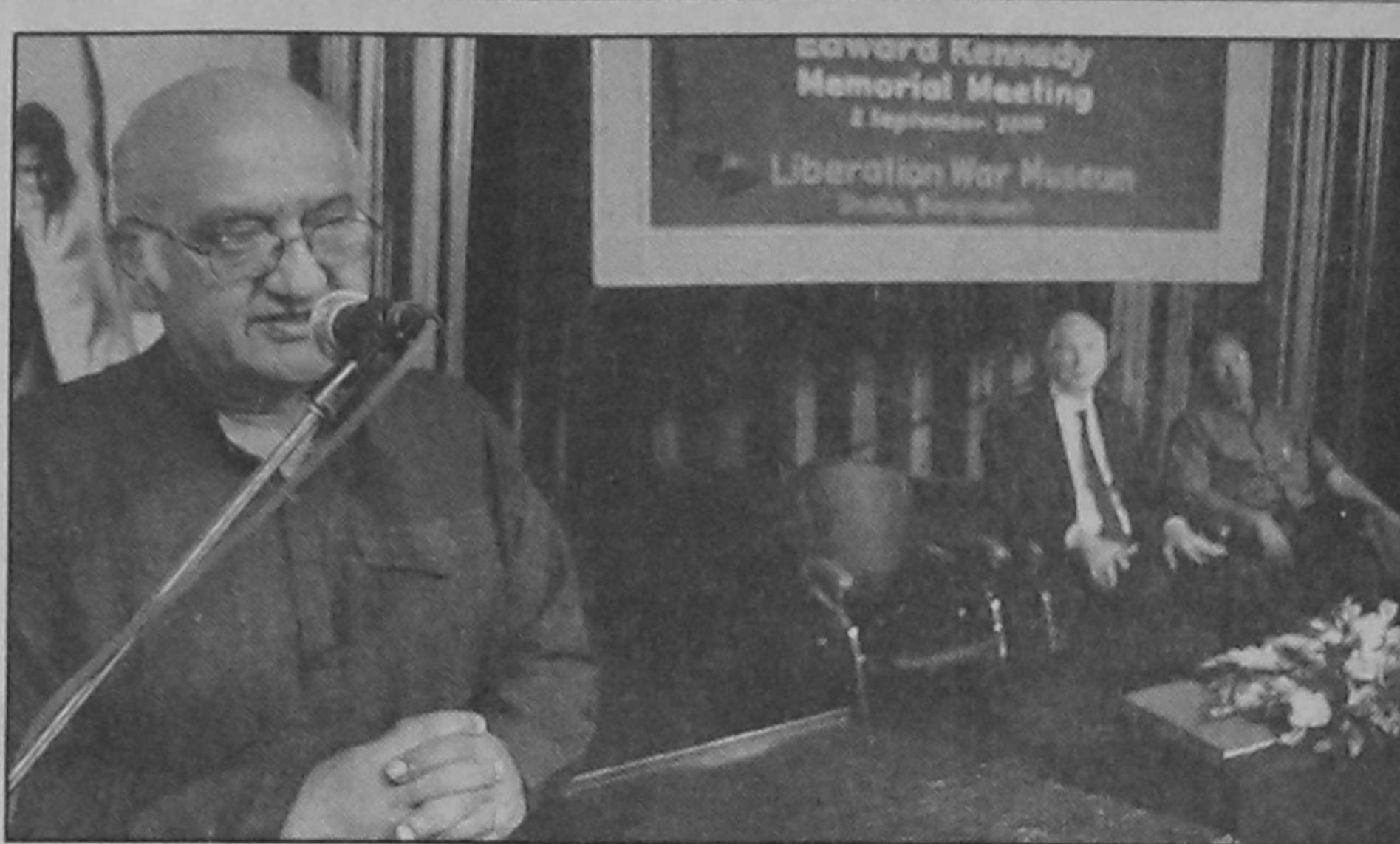
During the discussion, the issue of counter terrorism also

came up.

Appreciating the track record of Bangladesh, Steinberg stated that Bangladesh should remain alert, as perpetrators are always active in their bid to harm people.

Referring to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's directive to show 'zero' tolerance to extremism and proposal for forming a South Asian Task Force on terrorism, Qader assured Steinberg that Bangladesh is doing its best to address counter-terrorism.

Sheikh Mohammed Belal, deputy chief of the Bangladesh Mission, and Deputy Chief of Protocol Denis Ross, Protocol Officer Jeniffer Weroneski and Bangladesh Desk Officer Elena Soderblom were also present.



Noted economist Prof Rehman Sobhan speaks at a programme organised in memory of veteran US Senator Edward Kennedy at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

New admission prerequisites for 7 DU departments

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University decided to introduce some prerequisites for admission into honours courses under its seven departments this year as in the last year.

These prerequisites for admission in the academic year 2009-10 will apparently bar Madrasa and English medium students from getting admitted to these departments.

The academic council of the university, which comprises all professors, took the decision at a meeting with Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique in the chair.

Seven departments under the faculty of arts and social sciences -- Bangla, English, Mass Communications and Journalism, International Relations, Women and Gender Studies and Linguistics -- have introduced some separate conditions for admission seekers which disqualify Madrasa and English medium students.

Bangla department decided not to allow admission to students who did not study Bangla of 200 marks in their higher secondary or equivalent courses, while English department has fixed 200 marks for English in their higher secondary levels.

Four other departments -- Journalism, International Relations, Women and Gender Studies and Linguistics -- decided not to allow students who did not study Bangla and English of 200 marks each in

higher secondary levels and Economics department fixed studying of basic economics in higher secondary levels.

Madrasa and English medium students would not be able to take their admissions in seven departments as they study English and Bangla of 100 marks in higher secondary levels and Islamic economics instead of basic economics.

Sources said similar prerequisites were introduced ahead of the last admission but cancelled later following a High Court (HC) verdict. The court in a decision termed the prerequisites discriminatory and illegal.

The VC told reporters that the HC gave the decision against some decisions taken by the authorities concerned. But, the court has not cut the power of taking a decision by the university authorities.

The decision has been taken maintaining all procedures. It was first approved in concerned departments' academic committees, then it came through the concerned faculties, deans' committee, general admission committee, general admission committee and finally, it has been approved by the academic committee," he added.

Prof Arefin said the decision was not approved by the academic council last year.

He also said the 1973 Order of the university allows departments of taking such decision to maintain the academic excellences.

The admission process at the university under the new

academic year will start from November.

Madrasa students on Tuesday formed a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city demanding cancellation of the decision.

Protesting the same decision, a group of madrasa graduates allegedly led by Islam Chhatra Shibir, vandalised the VC's office spreading panic on the campus on October 18 last year.

No punitive action was taken against the culprits in 10 months yet.

MOUDUD CASE HC issues rule on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within four weeks why the law enforcers' action seizing materials from the chamber of former BNP minister Moudud Ahmed should not be declared illegal.

A vacation bench of the HC came up with the rule following a writ petition filed by Moudud challenging the law enforcers' action.

Moudud stated in his petition that the law enforcers raided his Motijheel chamber on March 14, 2007, and seized 49 items, including his bank accounts, papers and computer hard disks, without showing any reason.

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Hazari freed on bail

A CORRESPONDENT, Fen

Former Awami League (AL) lawmaker Joynal Abedin Hazari, who was released from jail on bail yesterday, threatened to take action against the party reformists.

Talking to reporters at the jail gate in the morning, Hazari claimed that he is still the general secretary of Feni district Awami League.

He came out of the jail at around 10:00am and was greeted with flowers by a group of AL leaders and activists.

Hazari said many in the past plotted against him and tried to mislead the party chief about him but their all efforts went in vain.

The High Court on August 27 quashed an arms case against him in which he was sentenced to life.

In Aug 2003, a Feni court sentenced Hazari, and his personal assistant Farooq Hossain, to life after police recovered illegal arms and ammunition from his house in 2001.

Later at a press conference at his residence, Hazari said Feni AL steering committee should not exist further as it has become controversial for different reasons.

Committee to Protect Oil, Gas announces fresh action programmes

UNB, Dhaka

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports yesterday announced fresh action programmes in protest against the police action on its protest procession that left over 30 people injured.

The action programmes include countrywide protests, rallies and processions tomorrow, demonstrations and a procession towards the Prime Minister's Office on September 10 and a rally at Muktangan in the morning the same day. Besides, rallies and processions will be held every day from September 4 to 9 across the country.

Addressing a press conference at Mukti Bhaban of CPB office, Convener of the national committee engineer Sheikh Muhammed Shahidullah urged the government to stop 'anti-people activities' immediately.

Otherwise, he said, the national committee will launch tougher movement such as blockade and hartal.

Meanwhile, BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia visited the Square Hospital yesterday evening to see Prof Anu Mohammad, member secretary of the national committee, who was injured in the police action.

She also condemned the 'attack' on him.

Different organisations also condemned the 'police action' on the procession.

The organisations include Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Communist Party (M-L), Gonotantrik Bam Morcha, Samajtantrik Mahila Forum, Samajtantrik Sramik Front, Garment Workers' Unity Forum, Gonotantrik Biplobi Party, Chhatra Shibir, Samajtantrik Forum, Gonotantrik Okiya, Bangladesh Khetmajur Samity and Green Voice.

The minister also called on all not to speak or give statements on the issue to such manner that can influence the verdict in court.

He hoped that the hearing in Bangabandhu murder case would be held in the Appellate Division on October 5.

State Minister for Culture Promod Mankin and General Secretary of Sangskritik Jote Golam Kuddus also spoke.

Speaking as the chief guest, Qamrul also claimed that the last BNP-Jamaat alliance government had repeatedly tried to divert the case into a separate sector.

Terming the attack an attempt to kill AL President Sheikh Hasina, the minister said the conspiracy is still going on against Hasina and her party.

He called on the pro-AL leaders, workers, supporters and all concerned to stay alert to the conspiracy.

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He said that many foot overbridges were set up without any proper plan and the committee would examine how those expensive structures were installed.

The committee will sit on August 27 and raise the issue of pedestrian facilities, he added.

DCC Town Planner Sirajul Islam said, "It is unfortunate and unlike other countries that pedestrians don't get priority in transport planning in our country."

Despite repeated attempts

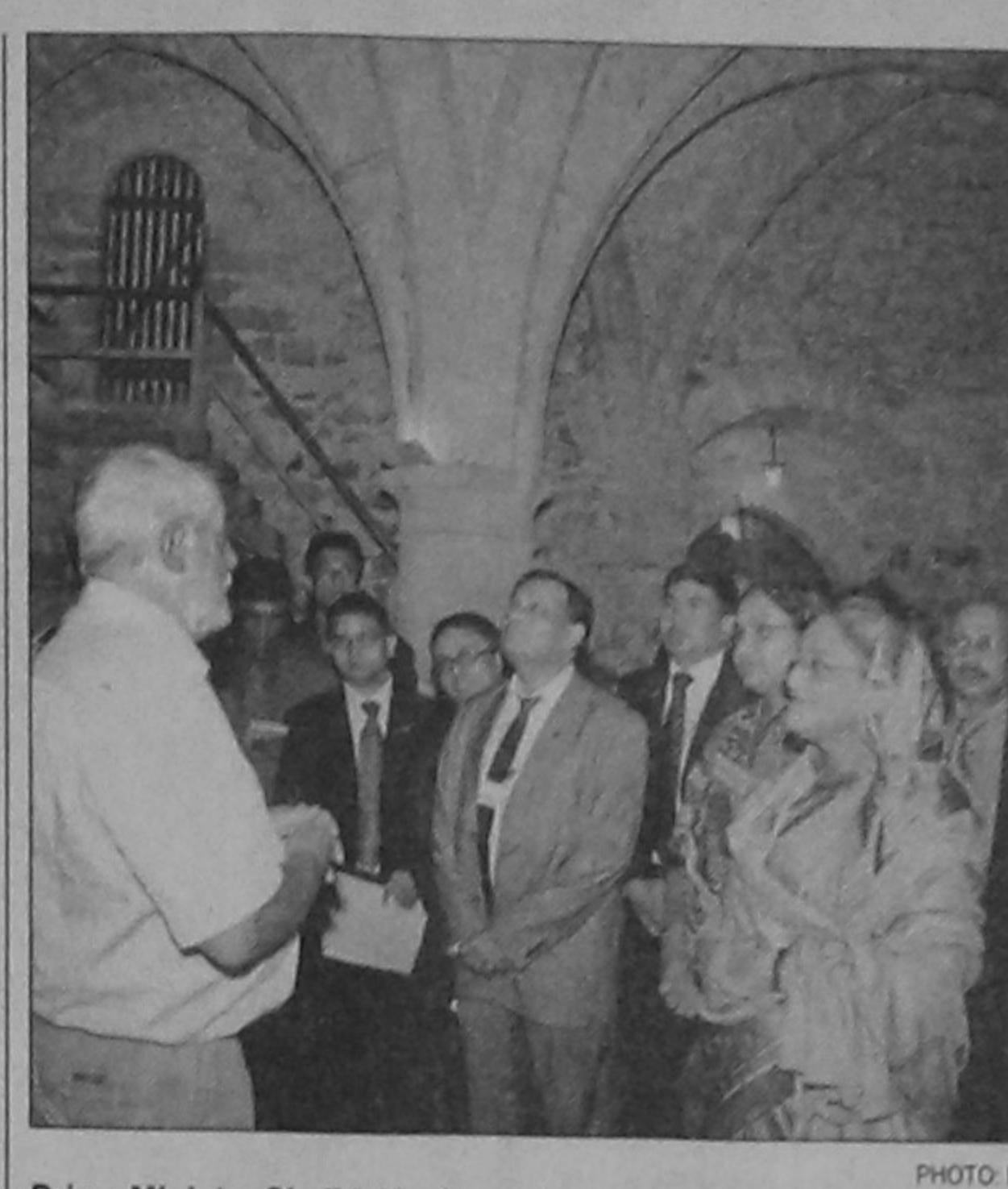


PHOTO: PID
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visits historic Chateau de Chillon in Switzerland yesterday. The premier is now in Geneva to attend the five-day UN-sponsored conference on climate change.

'Implement RTI Act to ensure accountability'

BSS, Dhaka

information in line with the spirit of the constitution.

He hoped that the Information Commission would try its best to provide the masses with necessary information.

The chief and other commissioners apprised the president of regular activities of the commission.

They also pointed out some of the problems they are facing now, including lack of a permanent office, manpower and other logistic support.

The commission also sought all-out cooperation of the president to smoothly discharge their duties.

President Zillur Rahman gave them a patient hearing and hoped that the government would take immediate measures to solve the commission's existing problems.

During the meeting, Zillur stressed ensuring right to

BNP to observe Tarique Release Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP and its associate bodies will observe Tarique Release Day today as the party's former senior secretary general Tarique Rahman was released from jail on this day last year.

Different programmes including processions, placing of wreaths at the grave of late president Ziaur Rahman and discussion meetings have been chalked out to observe the day.

BNP lawmakers will bring out a procession from Namib building at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area to mark the day.

Jatiyatabdhi Chhatra Dal will bring out another rally from the party's central office at Nayapaltan at 12:00 noon and organise a discussion meeting at Mohanagar Natya Mancha at 01:00pm.

Party leaders at a press briefing yesterday urged all to make the programmes a success and asked the government to withdraw all the cases filed against Tarique.

No senior leaders of the party were however present at the briefing.

"Tarique Rahman is under treatment in abroad now. We are demanding withdrawal of all cases