# Pledge to fight militancy

DU CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of different progressive political parties and social organisations yesterday pledged to work unitedly against militancy and communalism.

They made the pledge at a rally of Sampradayikata-Jangibad Birodhi Mancha (a platform against communalism and militancy) on the Central Shaheed Minar premises.

Hundreds of leaders and workers of different political and social organisations joined the rally.

The speakers at the rally called on the government to contain the rise of militancy and find out those financially backing militancy and communalism.

They also demanded the government try the war criminals immediately, snubbing any kind of threat.

An eight-point demand was also placed before the government at the rally.

The demands include instating a constitution in the spirit of the liberation war, ensuring trial of the perpetrators of August 21 grenade attack on an Awami League rally and bomb explosions on other programmes, resolving problems of the readymade garment workers and curbing price hike of essentials, tender manipulation and extortion.

Speaking as the chief guest, Deputy Speaker Col (retd) Shawkat Ali said the patrons of communalism and militancy are enemies of the

He urged all to be united against these ene-mies. State Minister for Law Advocate Qamrul Islam reiterated the government's pledge to try thewar criminals.

He said there is no place for communalism and militancy in the country.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haque Inu urged the government to try the war criminals before the next parliamentary election.

CPB Secretary General Mujahidul Islam Selim said Bangalees have to roar back against the conspiracy being hatched by the pro-Pakistani quarters.

Lawmaker and Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon alleged that BNP and Jamaat are hatching a conspiracy so that the trial of the war criminals cannot take place.

Shirin Akhter of Karmojibi Nari, Dr Maleka Banu of Mahila Parishad, Mujibul Bashar of Tarikat Federation, Awami League leaders Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Gono Forum leader Pankaj Bhattacharya also spoke at the rally presided over by Ajoy Roy, president of Sammilita Samajik



Visitors admire pictures at a three-day solo photography exhibition of artist Ragib Uddin at Ramna Park in the city yesterday.

### RMG storehouse Int'I support to prevent gutted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A storehouse of garment wastes and ten makeshift houses were gutted in a fire at Maddhya Rasulpur of Kamrangirchar in the city yesterday.

Police and fire brigade sources said the fire originated from a leakage in a gas pipeline when an electrical transformer blasted on an adjacent pole at around 5:30am.

Quoting witnesses police said following the blast the fire engulfed seven makeshift houses of Mujibur Rahman's slum and then spread to two adjacent houses of Amir Hossain and to the storehouse of garment wastes of Haji Abdur

Police said the blaze gutted the garment waste storehouse on the rooftop of the adjacent four-storied building though the other floors of the building were not damaged.

Nine firefighting units doused the fire after two hours offrantic efforts.

However, no casualties were reported, police said.

## Hospital fee hike to deprive poor of services

Say rights activists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health rights activists yesterday opposed the government's recent decision to increase 'user fee' in public health facilities, saying that such a move would deprive poor women, children and elderly people of health services.

The fee hike would also help increase corruption in public health facilities, as it is not explained how the user fee would be utilised, they said at a view exchange meeting at the National Press

It would also create discrimination in health services, the activists said.

Health Rights Movement National Committee and Health Reporters' Forum Bangladesh organised the meeting titled 'Imposing user fee at public hospitals and health rights of people' in association with Action Aid Bangladesh.

In a gazette notification recently, the government increased the 'user fee' in all health facilities, including 50-bed upazila and district hospitals.

Speaking on the occasion, Health Minister Ruhal Haque said that the ultra-poor would be exempt from the 'user fee'. But he did not explain how the ultra-poor would be identified and get access to healthcare free of cost

He also said the government has been trying to

digitise the health service system and that people would receive its benefit soon.

The rights activists said healthcare is the constitutional right of people. So, why user fee would be imposed on them?

Eminent economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said the government is yet to make any formal commitment that the poor will have access to primary healthcare free of cost. "It has been proved that investment in primary

healthcare is three times more beneficial than the investment at tertiary level. But our investment in primary healthcare is very little," he said.

Prof Rashid E Mahbub, president of Health Rights Movement National Committee, said the government should formulate a framework on how to bring the grassroots people under the safety net.

Shashanka Baran Roy of PSTC presented the keynote paper.

Dr Mahmudur Rahman of Dhaka Community Hospital, Bangladesh Medical Association General Secretary Dr Mohammad Sharfuddin, Swadhinata Chikitshak Parishad General Secretary Iqbal Arslan, Moniruzzaman Uzzal of Health Reporters' Forum Bangladesh, Nitai Kanti Das of PSTC, Dr Lenin of Health and Hope Hospital, Jibon Boral of Proshika, Sardar Arifuddin of Action Aid also spoke.

### Workers' Party congress begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The five-day 8th congress of the Workers' Party of Bangladesh will begin in the city tomorrow.

With the slogan 'Carry on anti-imperialism movement and secular democratic politics, forge unity of left alternative forces', the congress will be held at Mahanagar Natyamancha.

The congress will select the next leadership and set out the party's plan of activities for the next four years, politburo member of the party Fazle Hossain Badsha MP said at a press conference in the city yesterday.

The new central committee of the party will be elected on the last of the congress. The party has already

completed all of its district councils.

In a written speech, Fazle Hossain Badsha said the Workers Party has organisational activities in all districts of the country. There are wellorganised party units in 56 districts and district councils were held in 52 districts.

The congress will discuss political issues like consolidating and protecting secular democratic system, party's views on the grand alliance government and on the movement for protection of oil, gas, power and port, protecting national interests from the interference of Western forces, and the growing alternative

Communist party leaders from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Vietnam, Spain and North Korea will attend the congress.

An international seminar on 'Global Economic Recession and the Working Class' will also be held at the Jatiya Press Club on November 15 at 3:00pm on the sidelines of the congress.

Party leadera Anisur Rahman Mallik, Hafizur Rahman Bhuiyan, Nur Ahmed Bakul, Kamrul Ahsan, Abdur Razzak, Liakat Ali Liku, Mozammel Haque Tara and Anwarul Haque Bablu were present at the press conference.

#### HIV stressed The foreign minister said STAFF CORRESPONDENT these while talking to Dr Nafis She said HIV/AIDS consti-Sadik, special adviser to the UN tutes a global emergency and Foreign Minister Dr Dipu poses one of the most formi-Secretary General on HIV/AIDS Moni yesterday stressed the in Asia and the Pacific, when she dable challenges to the develimportance of enhanced opment, progress and stability called on the foreign minister international cooperation and

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b) All students graduating by Fall 2009 and willing to

c) Graduating students are therefore advised to

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scheduled to the first week of February 2010. For

details please visit BRACU website

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BABY NEEDS

here yesterday. During the meeting, they discussed human rights, HIV/AIDS, child and mother health, child mortality, family planning, women empowerment, reproductive health and may other issues. CLOTHING

Nafis Sadik appreciated that HIV/AIDS programmes has been successful with national HIV prevalence still below 1 percent among the high-risk population groups in Bangladesh. The foreign minister men-

tioned that having common borders with high prevalent countries like India and Myanmar, Bangladesh is vulnerable to HIV/AIDS due to legal and illegal migration and practice of unsafe behavior.

# DOMINAGE Lake & South facing 'Help address challenges of climate change'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has initiated a number of programmes aiming at achieving long-term solution in disaster management and to address impact of climate change.

the sufferings of people. Natural disaster is a curse for the nation. That is why we have already taken and will take a number of programmes to have long-term solution in disaster management," said Food and Disaster Management Minister Dr Abdur Razzaque yesterday.

guest on 'Role of disaster management in poverty reduction' organised by Daridro Bimochon Forum (Poverty Reduction Forum) at the National Press Club in the city yesterday in commemoration of the departed soul those

NGOs and people of different professionals to work together to address the challenges of the impact of climate change, the minister said only coordinated efforts could help us to get prepared

"In the developed countries the people do not suffer as much as our people suffer because they have a lot of technological and logistic support to address the post-disaster challenges. So, eradication of poverty is the prime prerequisite for a "The government is pledged bound to reduce healthy disaster management plan," he said

Blaming the developed countries for climate change, he said that the government is preparing for securing sufficient compensation from the international community at the international climate change conference scheduled to be held at Copenhagen next month.

Addressing the discussion ASM Firoz, whip in the parliament, urged the government through the food minister to take immediate steps to reconstruct the embankments which were damaged by Sidr and Aila.

Former adviser to the caretaker government ASM Shajahan presided over the meeting, while Calling upon the representatives of different Chief Information Commissioner M Azizur Rahman, Director General of Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation Md Jahirul Haque, former secretary Abdul Halim, among others, spoke at the programme.

# for addressing the challenges.

He was addressing a discussion as the chief

killed on November 12, 1970 cyclone.



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### ENGLISH LEARNING

### BBC launches new programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BBC World Service Trust has new way of learning English using mobile phone and the internet.

The mobile phone subscribers will be able to learn English by dialing 3000 from world. any operator who will charge Tk 1 per minute, which is half the charge for the typical Interactive Voice Response (TVR) calls and SMS.

conference at Hotel Sheraton in the city yesterday.

UK Department for in English. International Development funded this project through a major educational initiative English in Action.

Allan Freedman, country director of the BBC World Service Trust, said over 250 audio lessons and SMS quizzes will be given to the subscribers and each of the audio lessons will be of three minutes.

The audio lessons are 'Essential English' for beginners, 'Pronunciation' for intermedi-

ates and 'How to tell a story' for those more advanced.

The mobile lessons will be launched a new programme supported by the website named BBC Janala offering a www.bbcjanala.com where a virtual community will be able to access learning content for free, upload their profiles and interact with other learners in Bangladesh and around the

BBC Janala will work alongside the newly launched programme BBC Buzz, providing weekly lessons on mobiles related to Rinku's World, an This was said at a press animation series on the show building learners confidence and tackling common mistakes

"Younger people have told the BBC that they would like to learn English and want our help. It is central to their aspirations to get a better job, educate their children and connect with the world," Allan said.

DFID Country Representative Chris Austin said potential earning of the workers would increase if their English is good, so this programme would help them to learn English and earn more.

### 50m doses of H1N1 vaccine for developing countries METRO DESK

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) will donate 50 million doses of its adjuvanted pandemic H1N1 influenza vaccine to the World Health Organisation (WHO) for distribution to developing coun-

To this end, GSK and WHO had signed a deal, it was announced yesterday. GSK is working with WHO and

health authorities to prepare for initial shipments of the vaccine by the end of November, says a press "GSK is committed to support-

ing governments and health authorities around the world in their efforts to protect their populations against this pandemic. Our commitment recognises the needs of developing countries, and this donation of 50 million doses will enable vaccination to begin soon in some of the world's poorest countries," said Andrew Witty, CEO of GlaxoSmithKline.

"We welcome this very generous donation by GlaxoSmithKline, which will go to protect the health of the world's poorest people. This is a real gesture of global solidarity towards those who would not be otherwise able to have access to the vaccine," said Dr Margaret Chan, director general of WHO.

# (Government & UGC Approved)

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