## 'Article 70' vital to ensure discipline within party

#### AL, BNP leaders tell BBC Sanglap

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two high-profile leaders of Awami League (AL) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) at a BBC dialogue yesterday said article 70 of the constitution, which is known as the 'Anti-Defection Law', is imperative to "ensure discipline within the party".

ber of BNP Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain and AL presidium member Matia Chowdhury, also agriculture minister, said the culture of boycotting parliamentary session should come to an end, as it is threat to democ-

and confrontational as well as and band singer Maqsoodul country and democracy is not revengeful attitude of the Haque.

"The seat of a parliament both the ruling and opposimember shall vacate if he tion parties for their mistrust, votes against the party that distance and disrespect to nominated him as a candidate in the election whereby he became parliament member."

This single provision pro-Standing committee mem- vides the prime minister with exclusive power over the Matia said: "Article 70 of the members of his/her party.

> the panellists at the BBC Bangladesh Sanglap styled 'Democracy' held at South money. Plaza Complex of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in the city.

They also called on the include former adviser to a said. political leaders to bring an caretaker government Maj end to the culture of disbelief Gen (retd) Ghulam Quader terpart Mosharraf said, "Our the dialogue."

Audience at the According to the article, programme sharply criticised each other that, according to them, "paved the way for cratic rule".

Replying to a question, constitution is a must in the The two leaders said this as context of our country where political leaders can be bought or sold using muscle power or

inside the political party once acceptable in democracy," he Two other panellists article 70 is amended," she said, adding: "We should get

in a position to lift article 70."

"But I believe someday will come when article 70 will not be needed and it would be lifted from our constitution."

Quader and Magsood strongly supported the opinions of the audience, saying military as well as undemo- that article 70 must be deleted from the constitution for the sake of strong democracy.

On parliament boycott issue, the BNP leader said this culture must be avoided for the sake of democracy.

Culture of boycotting parliament is also a threat to The will be no discipline democracy and it is not rid of this culture. BBC's Echoing Matia, her coun- Mithila Farzana moderated



Syeda Rezwana Hasan speaks at a workshop at Shahbagh in the city yesterday. On her left are Advocate MM Obaidullah, Zillur Rahman, Ataus Samad and Chashi Nazrul Islam.

Include gender perspective in climate change policies

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday called for incorporating gender perspective in climate change adaptation and mitigation policies.

children are disproportionately vulnerable to environment changes and during the natural disasters which rationalise the need.

The speakers pointed out dowry related torture increases. that natural disaster creates social unrest and increase a number of divorces.

against women and children also increase. Desperate of women and children is also women and children searching for livelihood migrate to urban areas and they often fall pray to

traffickers. The workshop titled 'Climate change, religion and state: The continuous struggle of women and children' was

JS secretariat's

The parliament secretariat

in a clarification said the

report on the fourth meeting

of the parliamentary stand-

ing committee on Public

Accounts Committee (PAC)

published in the print media

and aired by television chan-

nels on December 21 was

committee in its meeting on

December 20 decided to ask

the finance secretary to

appear in the next meeting

and explain why he did not

The report said that the

not correct.

clarification

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

PAC MEETING

Society for the Enforcement of impacts of climate change are Human Rights (BSEHR) with already in sight. Although assistance from Manusher women are more at risk, there Jonno Foundation (MJF) at is no adequate planning about Shahbagh in the city.

The speakers went on saying They said women and that poverty, resulting from Women's Environment and natural disasters, increases Development Organisation, child marriage, multiplying vulnerability of girl children. They no longer receive formal education and incidents of

hear about disaster warnings women over 40 was 31 percent. increasing risk of their own More than 70 percent of the Different forms of violence lives and their children, they said, adding that displacement tsunami were women. another major factor.

director of MJF, said the NGOs of the country must set up a on the government to formu- Myanmarin 2008. late policies.

it yet, she added.

According to UNFPA and women and children are 14 times more likely to die than men during natural disasters. The 1991 cyclone in

Bangladesh killed 140,000 Women are often the last to people -- the mortality rate of dead from the 2004 Asian

Their report added that an estimated 87 per cent of unmar-Shaheen Anam, executive ried women and 100 per cent of married women lost their main source of income when cyclone watchdog to create pressure Nargis hit the Irrawaddy delta in

Syeda Rezwana Hasan,

organised by Bangladesh a theoretical matter. The Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (Bela), on the other hand, stressed representation of Bangladesh in

> Copenhagen climate summit. She said, "The Bangladesh government only negotiated on how much donation we can get from the developed nations which was a wrong approach."

Prof Asif Nazrul said there was only pledge from the developed nations to cut carbon emissions. A pledge means nothing unless it is bound by strict legal strings. The government failed to present this issue at the summit.

Former ambassador -Hedavetul-Islam Chowdhury, journalist Ataus Samad, filmmaker Chashi Nazrul Islam, BSEHR Secretary General Sigma Huda and Vice Chairperson Shirin Sheikh Mainuddin also spoke.

# Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon takes out a bicycle procession in the city yesterday with a call to ensure bicycle-friendly environment in the capital.

Call to ensure bicycle-friendly

environment

DU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday called for ensuring bicyclefriendly environment in the city in order to make the city lively and liveable.

Such an initiative would also help protect the environment, improve public health and also boost economy, they added.

The speakers said the mortality rate is increasing day by day due to various diseases, such as diabetes, cardiac ailments and blood pressure. But only 30 minutes of cycling a day can reduce this

The rally was held at the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the city before the start of a bicycle procession jointly organised by Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) and WBB Trust. The procession ended at the National Press Club.

The speakers also said pollution of the environment is increasing alarmingly due to a rise in the number of motor vehicles. Emission of carbon from such vehicles is also contributing to the global climate change.

Promoting the use of bicy cle can cut the rate of carbon emission, they added.

They also called on the government to reduce high tax on bicycle and launch awareness campaign to encourage the city dwellers to use bicy-

They demanded that bicycles be distributed among students at a low price and separate lane be introduced in the capital for bicycle riders.

cles.

They also called for improving the quality of pub-

lic transport service. Astronomical Association President Prof AR Khan, former member of planning commission Dr Anisur Rahman, Bapa leader Prof Nazrul Islam spoke at the rally presided over by Kamrul Ahsan Khan.

BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE

#### Execution of verdict may take 2 more months

Says state minister

UNB, Chittagong

It would take one or two months more to execute the verdict of Bangabandhu murder case, State Minister for Law Advocate Qamrul Islam said yesterday.

His remark incidentally comes in rebuff to reports that the process of executing the apex-court verdict upholding the death sentence on a dozen ex-army officers for the assassination of Bangabandhu the port city. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had got underway following the judgment to the condemned "torture on people of minor-

UNB, Dhaka

Dry weather likely

the country in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

unchanged night temperature over the country.

in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Max

24.3

23.2

23.6

24.2

25.6

24.0

25.5

Temperature in

Celsius

may continue, Met office said.

7:40am tomorrow.

City/Town

Chittagong

Cox's Bazar

Rajshahi

Khulna

Barisal

Sylhet

Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky over

Khulna and Barisal divisions and the regions of Tangail,

Mymensingh, Faridpur, Madaripur, Comilla and Srimongal

midnight till morning, Met Office said predicting nearly

Light to moderate fog may occur over the country during

The sun sets in the capital at 6:20pm today and rises at

Country's highest temperature 25.6 degree Celsius was

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded

Min

12.8

12.5

06.9

10.4

09.2

11.1

13.0

Humidityin

percentage

Morning

49

73

96

68

86

100

60

Evening

42

55

73

69

78

80

recorded today at Barisal and lowest 6.0 degrees at Jessore.

Prevailing mild to moderate cold wave over Rajshahi,

The minister said the activities of the court for war criminals' trial would start after the execution of this verdict.

"A place at the old High Court building has already tribunal for trying warcrime cases in a wide area," he said at a view exchange meeting with lawyers and assured that the government human rights workers at the circuit house auditorium in

He further told the meet that the inquiry commission delivery of the copies of the formed to investigate the

ity communities" during the 4-party alliance government's rule will report its findings within two months.

He called upon lawyers, human rights activists and victims of the torture to coopbeen selected to set up the erate with the commission through providing informa-

tion to the investigators. The state minister for law has taken step to increase the allowances of government lawyers and it will be effective immediately.

He said more judges will be recruited to dispose of the backlog of cases in the courts.

### council today

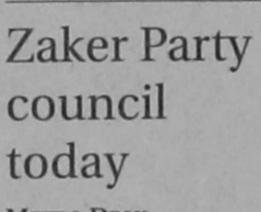
METRO DESK

The National Council 2009 of Zaker Party will be held at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city today, says a press release.

and delegates, including the country are expected to attend the council beginning at 10:00am.

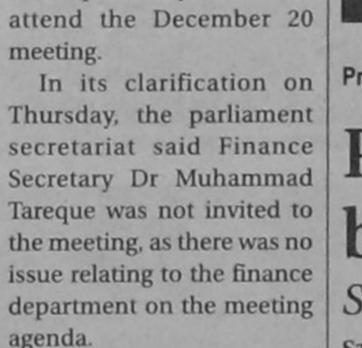
Newly re-elected party

session in the afternoon, councillors are expected to approve re-election of the party chairman, discuss amendments, if any, to the party constitution, decide on central office bearers and discuss other organisational matters.



Around 50,000 councillors women delegates, from across

chairman Pirzada Mostafa Amir Faisal will inaugurate the council by hoisting the national flag and party flag. At the close-door council



So, the committee did not discuss the issue of his absence and any decision in this regard, which was published in the media, was not taken in the meeting, the clarification added.

On December 21, different newspapers and television channels published the report on the meeting. The report was based on the briefing by committee chairman KH Rashiduzzaman.

When his attention was drawn to the clarification, Rashiduzzaman denied having made such statements in the briefing.

"I did not actually said that the finance secretary has been asked to appear before the next meeting of the committee and explain reasons of his absence in the December 20 meeting," he told The Daily Star yesterday.



Proshika employees shout slogans during a raid on its office building in the city yesterday.

#### Police raid Proshika Obituary building

Sticks and pieces of bricks seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police searched the Proshika building in the city vesterday on receiving information that firearms and lethal there, but they found only pieces of bricks and 50 Gajari pieces of bricks and sticks.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Proshika Mahbubul Karim, however, said the brick chips and sticks might have been leftover construction materials or they had been thrown into the NGO office building by the hired men of its expelled chief Qazi Faruque Ahmed in an earlier attack in August following a row over the NGO leadership.

He also alleged that Qazi Faruque has been trying to take control of Proshika by misleading the police and the administration and that the raid is the outcome of such an effort.

Witnesses said a team of Pallabi police raided the Proshika building at about search for about four hours.

the building.

12:00 noon and conducted a The police suspended their search around 4:00pm and left

Officer-in-Charge of Pallab Police Station Iqbal Hossain said the police conducted the raid following intelligence reports that firearms have been piled up there. During the weapons have been piled up search, they seized broken

> and bamboo sticks, he added. He also said they lodged a general dairy (GD) before the raid but would not file any case in connection with the seizure.

> When asked whether they acted on information from Qazi Faruque, the police officer replied in the negative and said that got information from their own sources.

Talking to The Daily Star over phone yesterday, Qazi Faruque, however, said the police raided the Proshika office as part of their efforts to ensure his security, as the home ministry recently asked the police to ensure his security following a court direc-

Proshika CEO Mahbubul Karim, however, claimed that Qazi Faruque has misinterpreted the court verdict to gain undue favour from the administration.

BSS, Bogra

Khandakar Manzur Murshed, a leading income tax adviser of the town, passed away due to a massive cardiac arrest at Mohammad Ali Hospital here

last night at the age of 51. He left behind his wife, three sons and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

He was buried at Namaz Garh Anjuman Graveyard after namaz-e-janaza at the Chalksutrapur Jame Mosque after Asr prayers yesterday.

Death anniversary METRO DESK



Today is the 31st death anniversary of Prof Dr MA Quader, a renowned ophthalmologist,

says a press release. He was the head of the ophthalmology department of Mitford Medical College and Hospital.

On the occasion of his death anniversary, his family has organised various programmes, including milad mahfil and feeding of the destitute.