

Help govt step up regional cooperation

FM urges opposition parties

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday called on the opposition parties to help the government strengthen cooperation with the regional countries, particularly with India, for the greater interests of the country.

If the opposition leaders blindly oppose the government, just for the sake of relationship, in its efforts to maintain good relationship with India, the country will not be able to move forward, she added.

Dipu said this while speaking as the chief guest at a seminar on 'South Asian regional cooperation: Problems and possibility' organised by Bazlur Rahman

Foundation at the National Press Club in the city.

She also said that there is no alternative for Bangladesh but to establish a close rapport with India.

"India's import trade costs \$300 crore per year, and we should take it as a chance to run our trades," she said.

The government is relentlessly working to develop both bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the South Asian nations to resolve different problems regarding security, technology, water sharing, electricity, environment and culture.

Hasanul Huq Inu MP said a comprehensive security structure should be built for the South Asian region through

building confidence among the countries.

He hoped that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina would take an initiative in this connection.

Bazlur Rahman Foundation President Khondker Ibrahim Khaled presided over the seminar, which was also addressed by former adviser CM Shafi Sami, former diplomats Muhammad Zamir and Mostafa Faruq Mohammad, Centre for Policy Dialogue Executive Director Mustafizur Rahman, senior journalist Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, Editor of the News Today Reaz Uddin Ahmed and Editor of the New Age Nurul Kabir.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury was also present.



Foreign Minister Dipu Moni speaks at a seminar on 'South Asian regional cooperation: Problems and possibility' organised by Bazlur Rahman Foundation at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On her left is Khondker Ibrahim Khaled.

Tremor jolts country

UNB, Dhaka

A moderate tremor jolted the capital city and different parts of the country early yesterday with no reports of casualties or damage.

The 5.4 magnitude earthquake was felt in Dhaka, Chittagong, Bandarban, Rangamati and some other parts of the country at 5 hours 19 minutes 56 seconds BST.

The quake originated in Myanmar region. Its epicentre was 387 km from Bangladesh Meteorological Department Seismic Center at Agargaon in the capital.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sadekul Islam, 47, who was a migrant worker in Saudi Arabia, had to return home five years back following a road accident that injured his spinal chord severely.

He cannot even walk now. Doctors have suggested he should undergo a surgery, but he cannot even afford to buy medicines after spending all his savings for his treatment in the last five years.

So, he has appealed to the affluent section of the society to extend their help.

He is now admitted to the Ward-19, Bed - Extra 4 at the Department of Neurosurgery at Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Financial assistance can be sent to Md Nure Alam, Savings Accounts No. 12610132892, Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd. Elephant Road Branch, Dhaka.

Interested people can also dial 01556316944 for details.

Sabuj Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sabuj Khan, 16, a student of class X, has been suffering from Aplastic Anemia for the last two years.

He is now undergoing treatment under Prof Dr ABM Eunus at the Department of Hematology, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

Doctors have said Tk 30 lakh is needed for his treatment, his family poor family cannot afford it.

So, his mother has requested the affluent section of the society to extend their help.

Financial assistance can be sent to Taslima Begum, Savings Account No 126-10192007, Dutch Bangla Bank Limited, Elephant Road Branch, Dhaka.

Interested people can also dial 01715951637 or 01715951638 for details.

Int'l standards to be ensured in war crimes trial: Faruk

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan yesterday said the government will start the process of trying war criminals soon and it will be conducted in line with international standards.

"We will certainly try the war criminals because the government is pledge-bound to do so. But we will have to ensure international standards in the trial procedures so that the trial remains as an example not only in the country's history, but also in the world's."

The minister said this as the chief guest at a seminar styled 'Communal politics: Thoughts of Generation' organised by The-Editor, an online newspaper, at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

He termed the execution of the killers of Bangabandhu the green signal for starting the procedures for war crimes trial.

Evil forces use religion to have their political gain and try to mislead people, who have come to realise their tricks, he said, adding that evil forces were boycotted in the last general elections.

"Poverty and lack of proper education are the major causes of developing communal

politics in the country. If we can overcome the barriers, it would be easy for us to root out militancy and communal politics," he said.

Noted historian Prof Syed Anwar Hossain pointed out that the base of communal politics and militancy in the country was built during the post-1975 period and later it developed gradually.

He termed the 8th amendment of the constitution a barrier to consider Bangladesh a non-communal democratic country and drew attention of the government to this amendment.

Dr Sadeka Halim, commissioner of Information Commission, expressed concern over entering communalism in teachers' politics at different universities.

Barrister Tania Amir stressed the need for proper plan of action, legal framework and specific time frame of the government to root out militancy and communal politics from the country.

Chief Executive Officer of RTV M Hamid presided over the seminar, which was moderated by The-Editor Managing Director Dr Shamim Haider Talukder.

Domestic help dopes 3, loots cash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A female domestic help doped all the three members of a family and made off with Tk 20000 in cash and two cell phone sets from a residence in the city's Segunbagicha area yesterday.

Victims Lipi Begum, 45, her daughter Nabila Akter, 22, a student of Brac University, and her son Sayed Niloy, 16, an O-Level student, were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and then shifted to Islami Bank Central Hospital.

Lipi's husband Sayed Jamal Uddin, a businessman, told The Daily Star that Nabila rang him up and asked him to come back home as soon as possible before becoming unconscious.

Jamal said the victims fell unconscious after taking the breakfast prepared by the domestic help Hasi Begum, aged around 30, at their apartment on the fourth floor of a multi-storied building.

Hasi started working at his house two days ago, but they did not know her address, he said, adding that they only knew that she hails from Tangail.

Mahmudur assaulted in London

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of the Amar Desh, was reportedly assaulted by a group of people in London on Friday.

A few media reports said Mahmudur Rahman claimed that the attackers were the supporters of Awami League who chased him shouting 'thief, thief'. But their identity could not be known.

Meanwhile, BNP and its front organisations, Bangladesh Association of Bangladesh and Association of Engineers Bangladesh have condemned the attack on Mahmudur Rahman, also former energy adviser to former prime minister Khaleda Zia.



Obituary

METRO DESK

Muhammad Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan, a freedom fighter and principal of Sumaiya Academy, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases in the city on Thursday at the age of 57, says a press release.

Habib, son of Matiur Rahman Bhuiyan of village Bhawal Monoharia in Keraniganj, left behind his mother, father, wife, two daughters, two sons, five sisters, four brothers and a host of admirers to mourn his death.

He was laid to rest with state honour at Joynagar graveyard after his namaz-e-janaza on the Ati Bhawal High School premises in Keraniganj after Esha prayers the same day.

His kulkhwani will be held at his village home Bhawal Monoharia in Keraniganj upazila after Zohr prayers today.

PROCLAIMER OF INDEPENDENCE 'Govt to take action against those violating constitution'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Law Quamrul Islam yesterday said the government will take action against those who are violating the constitution by claiming that Ziaur Rahman is the proclaimer of independence.

Everyone must comply with the High Court (HC) verdict regarding the proclamation of independence, he said.

The HC on June 21 last year in a verdict ruled that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the first to proclaim independence of the country on March 26, 1971.

The government will take action against those violating the constitution, the state minister said while replying to questions from reporters at Biam auditorium in the city.

Earlier, he attended the inaugural ceremony of a two-day training for 14 assistant secretaries on law and legislative affairs of the law ministry at the auditorium as the chief guest.

Replying to a query, Quamrul said the Supreme Court (SC) verdict regarding the fifth amendment to the

Ershad proposes provincial govt to decentralise power

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday proposed that provincial government system be introduced dividing the country into eight provinces to reduce pressure on Dhaka, decentralisation of power and balanced development across the country.

According to his new formula, he outlined the map of the provinces, which include Northern province, Jahangirnagar province, Jalalabad province, Baharendra province, Jahanabad province, Chandradwip province, Mainamati province and Chattala province.

Ershad, also a lawmaker and former president, placed his proposal at a seminar titled 'Planning of provincial government system in Bangladesh' at a city hotel.

He said each province would have a council of 600 members and a separate cabinet with a chief minister at its head while the central government would be a federal one.

Amid huge support from two former advisers to the caretaker government, leaders of different small political parties, university

US supports Bangladesh's counterterrorism approach

BSS, Dhaka

The United States has supported strongly Bangladesh's regional counterterrorism approach and assured necessary assistance for making this effort more effective in the coming days.

This was stated by United States Attorney General Eric Holder when he received, in his office in Washington DC, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Shafique Ahmed and Attorney General Mahbub Alam on March 11, according to a message received here yesterday.

Appreciating the existing excellent Bangladesh-US relations, the US Attorney General expressed his total support to further strengthen this relation in the coming days.

Barrister Shafique briefed the US Attorney

Tamim bats

FROM PAGE 16

Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium here yesterday.

After a commanding batting display England further tightened their grip courtesy of Bangladesh's top-order collapse. But Tamim was exceptional during his unbeaten 115-ball 81 that still the home side were reduced to 154 for five before stumps were drawn for the day.

Bangladesh are still 246 runs behind the follow-on mark.

Riding on Paul Collingwood's magnificent 145 and Ian Bell's 84 on the day, England declared their innings on 599 for 60 runs after resuming the day on 374 for three to put the Tigers under a pile of runs.

Bangladesh made an awkward start in reply to the massive total as they lost two wickets before the tea break. Pacer Stuart Broad's strategy to test the Bangladesh top-order worked brilliantly as Imrul Kayes and Zunaed Siddiqui both fell victims to him. After Broad, it was off-spinner Graeme Swann who picked up three wickets, though another local boy, Aftab Ahmed, was unlucky, to make the job difficult for the home team.

After three quick dismissals, Mahmudullah Riyad, who got a promotion in batting order to number five, joined Tamim to repair the damage but the impressive 94-run partnership came to an end when Riyad unnecessarily tried to sweep against Swann only to reach Collingwood. Riyad made 51 off 64 balls that included seven boundaries and a six.

Captain Shakib Al Hasan also threw away his wicket as the left-hander played a rash shot only to see his stumps dismantled.

Sahara

FROM PAGE 16

drug trading in the country.

The instructions were issued while she was speaking on the occasion of a ceremonial incineration of huge quantities of narcotics at the RAB-1 headquarters in the city's Uttara area.

The home minister said the guardians and teachers should come forward to make students aware about adverse effects of drug addiction as well as to motivate them to eschew from taking drugs.

She also sought cooperation from the mass people in the combat against the drug menace.

"A vested quarter is trying to destabilise the prevailing peace and law and order in the society as the law-and-order situation is improving in the country," she alleged.

Blaming the past BNP-Jamaat alliance government for destroying the law-enforcing agencies through politicisation, State Minister for Home Shamsul Haque Tuku told the drug-demolition function that the incumbent government made the law-enforcers consolidated, resulting in improvement of the law-and-order situation.

"A few high-ups of political parties are trying to worsen law and order to serve their self-interests," he headed.

Narcotic substances worth about Tk 5 crore were damaged after the discussions on the hazards of drugs and actions against drug syndicates.

Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad, Director General of RAB Hasan Mahmud Khandaker, senior officers and representatives of various professions also addressed the function.

BNP threatens 'oust govt' movement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The leaders of BNP and its student body Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday threatened to oust the government by launching tough movements if "tormenters" on the opposition leaders and activists issued.

They issued the threat at a protest rally in front of central office of BNP in the capital's Naya Paltan, organised by JCD in a protest against the "death threat" delivered to opposition chief whip Zainul Abidin Farroque over phone on Friday.

"Different forms of mass movements will be waged across the country under the leadership of BNP Chairperson Khaleda against

Protests death threat on Farroque

Sheikh Hasina's government to stop tortures on the opposition activists," said Shahiduddin Chowdhury Annie, student affairs secretary of BNP.

Annie, also a former president of JCD, said people are not interested anymore to see government's misdeeds one after another and the prime minister never pay attention to public sentiment.

He said Awami League is angry upon opposition chief whip Farroque as he has recently mentioned that the prime minister's son was involved with an illegal VoIP business and took bribe from a foreign company by rewarding it work order without tender.

JCD men brought out a protest procession after the rally.

Fazlul Huq Milon alleged that AL men served the death threat to Farroque as he spoke out the truth.

He said BNP will continue protesting misdeeds of the government and no threat will be successful to stop the protest.

Milon demanded the people, responsible for the threat, to be arrested immediately.

JCD President Sultan Salauddin Tuku said, "The student body will start movements with all its strength across the country soon to oust the government if 'tormenters' on opposition men continued."

JCD men brought out a protest procession after the rally.

EDEN GIRLS' COLLEGE 4 expelled from BCL

DU CORRESPONDENT

Four leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League unit of Eden Girls' College in the capital were expelled from the organisation yesterday in connection with a conflict between two groups of the unit.

They are the unit's vice president Champa Khatun, organising secretary Sharmin Sultana and Tania Sultana and assistant secretary Kaniz Fatema.

The leaders claimed that central president of BCL Mahmud Hasan Ripon had taken the decision unilaterally ignoring the charter of the organisation.

Instead of dissolving the committee past its tenure, Ripon expelled them as he had taken favour from the college unit president Sharmin Shamima Nijhum at different times earlier, they decided.

Ripon said the decision was made on charges of violating organisational rules and regulations. He urged college administration and police to ensure congenial atmosphere at the institution by taking stern action against troublemakers.

A tense situation was prevailing on the college campus for the last two days as a group of leaders revolted against the college unit president accusing her of being involved in "admission trade" for honours courses at the institution, and torturing general students.

T O D A Y

Roundtable
The Energy and Power in association with GTZ will organise a roundtable on 'Potentials of wind power: Vision 2021'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

Prize giving ceremony
The annual prize giving ceremony of Willes Little Flower School and College will be held. Venue: Institute auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

Roundtable
Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) organises a roundtable on 'Bangladesh-China dialogue'. Venue: BISS auditorium. Time: 10:30am.

Discussion
Economic Reporters' Forum will hold a discussion on 'Impact of financial crime on the economy'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 11:00am.

WEATHER

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:07pm today and rises at 6:08am tomorrow.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 14.0 degrees at Srimongal.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

| City/Town | Temperature in Celsius | | Humidity in percentage | |
|-------------|------------------------|------|------------------------|---------|
| | Max | Min | Morning | Evening |
| Dhaka | 32.7 | 20.2 | 37 | 34 |
| Chittagong | 30.7 | 21.7 | 77 | 68 |
| Rajshahi | 34.2 | 16.5 | 51 | 36 |
| Khulna | 33.8 | 20.2 | 64 | 46 |
| Barisal | 34.0 | 22.4 | 79 | 44 |
| Sylhet | 32.8 | 18.2 | 44 | 34 |
| Cox's Bazar | 33.0 | 23.0 | 72 | 68 |