

Long march to Phulbari Coal Mine Oct 24

UNB, Dhaka

National Committee to Protect Oil-Gas and Power-Port will launch a long march to Phulbari Coal Mine in Dinajpur on October 24 to press home its seven-point demand.

The demands include expulsion of Asia Energy from the country and cancel its deal with the government on Phulbari coal mine, scrapping all anti-state deals with foreign companies on power and energy, strengthening the state-owned gas exploration company BAPEX and ensuring proper utilisation of natural resources for the development of the country.

The long march will reach Phulbari on October 30.

Tribute paid to Malek Ukil

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 23rd death anniversary of Abdul Malek Ukil, a former president of Awami League, organiser of the War of Liberation and renowned politician, was observed yesterday.

He was a close aide of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and a speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad.

In a statement, President Zillur Rahman paid rich tributes to the memory of Abdul Malek Ukil.

"As a committed leader of the Awami League, he dedicated his life to build the nation. The nation remembers him for his outstanding contribution as the Leader of the Opposition in the East Pakistan provincial assembly and later a Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad and a former minister," said the president in a press release.

"He played an important role in mobilising world opinion in favour of the War of Liberation, formulating the country's constitution and keeping the party organised after the killing of Bangabandhu in 1975," the president said.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil was held at his village home in Noakhali.

Divers cry for rescue



Divers on a rescue operation in the River Turag near Salehpur Bridge of Amin Bazar in Savar on October 10 after a city bus plunged into the river.

PHOTO: STAR

SHAHNAZ PARVEEN

Two days after a teenage girl went missing in the river Someswari, the entire village of Durgapur in Netrokona swarmed the riverbank. They curiously watched a team of Fire Service and Civil Defence rescue divers attempt to salvage the body.

"As I prepared the gear I could almost feel the heartbeats of the villagers," said Md Alauddin, a veteran diver of Fire Service and Civil Defence, recalling an incident three months back.

The girl went missing while bathing in the river. A whirlpool was the only place in adjacent areas where the divers thought the victim's body might lie whirling.

Despite safety concern from his colleagues, Alauddin jumped in with a lifeline in the fierce whirlpool. In a few minutes, the villagers

watched intently as he emerged with the body.

As gruesome as the task may seem, returning dead bodies to the distressed families from some of the most treacherous waters is Alauddin's profession for 20 years.

Fire Service and Civil Defence has only 25 divers like Alauddin for the entire country that saw 47 accidents in the waterways during the last 9 months and a loss of 77 lives.

This year four rescue divers were chosen for the prime minister's medal for their outstanding bravery.

Brig Gen Abu Nayeem Md Shahidullah, director general of the fire service, said the divers have earned their names. "Sometimes we even get requests from other South Asian countries for assistance," he said mentioning the Nepalese government asked for Bangladesh's assistance after a German tourist

went missing in Nepal.

Despite being national heroes and finest rescue workers, Alauddin and his colleagues work in appalling conditions. "The job comes with immense danger in the first place," said diver Md Masudul Haque.

In addition, understaffing often puts the divers under a lot of pressure involving frequent diving in a limited time, which is not recommended by doctors. This poses the risk of health problems, some potentially fatal, including hearing loss and liver, retina, heart damage and paralysis.

"Regrettably, the department has no medical expert who can provide special healthcare suited for the divers," he mentioned.

They are not entitled to insurance or compensation either. In case of accidents, the only assistance comes from employees welfare

fund, which pays treatment costs partially. The divers get Tk 520 for risk allowance in addition to Tk 4,400 of their basic salary.

Masud alleged private insurance companies refuse to open life insurance policy for divers.

"We do not complain much about our incentives but lack of respect of the society for our profession often demoralises us," said Masud, who had to hide facts about his profession while getting married.

In the search for the bus that plunged into the river Turag on Sunday, fire service divers and other rescue workers had to calm angry relatives who accused them of delaying the rescue process. The divers had to work day and night to salvage the missing bus 54 hours after the plunge.

Mourning relatives often turn on divers when things are not as fruitful as expected. "During a search for a body the mourning relatives vent their grief and frustration on us," said another diver Md Azizul Haque.

Three months ago after an engine boat capsized in the Shitalakkhya, angry relatives attacked the divers leaving three of them grievously injured. "The current was too strong and we could not salvage any body for the whole day," added Aziz.

But nothing discourages these brave souls. "No matter how gruesome it may seem, someone has to recover bodies from capsized boats or pullout a missing teenager from the river. It is an essential work," said Md Abul Khayer, one of the winners of this year's prime minister's medal.

"And I will continue serving people in distress as long as my body permits."



Aziza Idris passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mirza Aziza Idris, a veteran woman leader and one of the organisers of the Liberation War, died at Birdem Hospital in the city yesterday. She was 85.

Also a member of the Gonoantr Party Advisory Committee, she left behind her three sons, three daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her death.

She was laid to eternal rest at Jurain graveyard in the city after namaz-e-janaza at Eskaton Garden Jame mosque after Asr prayers. Leaders of different political parties and noted personalities attended the janaza.

Hearing the news of her death, political leaders and distinguished personalities went to her residence. They prayed for salvation of the departed soul and expressed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

The leaders and personalities, among others, are Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka; Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon; Communist Party of Bangladesh President Manjurul Ahsan Khan; Ajoy Roy; Pankaj Bhattacharya; Gonoantr Party Advisory Committee Chairman Azizul Islam Khan and General Secretary Nurur Rahman Selim; cultural personality Syed Hasan Imam; journalist Kamal Lohani; Prothom Alo Editor Matiuur Rahman; and women leaders Ayesha Khanam; Maleka Begum; and Mahfuza Khanam.

Born in Mirzapur village in Atwari upazila of Dinajpur on March 21, 1926, Aziza throughout her life was involved in progressive and non-communal politics.

She got married to noted writer, journalist and litterateur Qazi Mohammad Idris in 1947. She was the presidium member of the Gonoantr Party during its establishment.

Also a social worker, Aziza joined politics following the ideals of her husband. She maintained equal hospitality for all.

She was also the presidium member of Ekota Party and NNP, a central member of NAP and vice president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, says a press release.

Her chehlum will be held at her elder son Qazi Mohammad Shish's Eskaton Garden residence after Asr prayers on Friday.

Gonoantr Party President Mohammad Afzal, General Secretary Nurur Rahman Selim and other leaders of left-leaning parties expressed profound shock at her death.

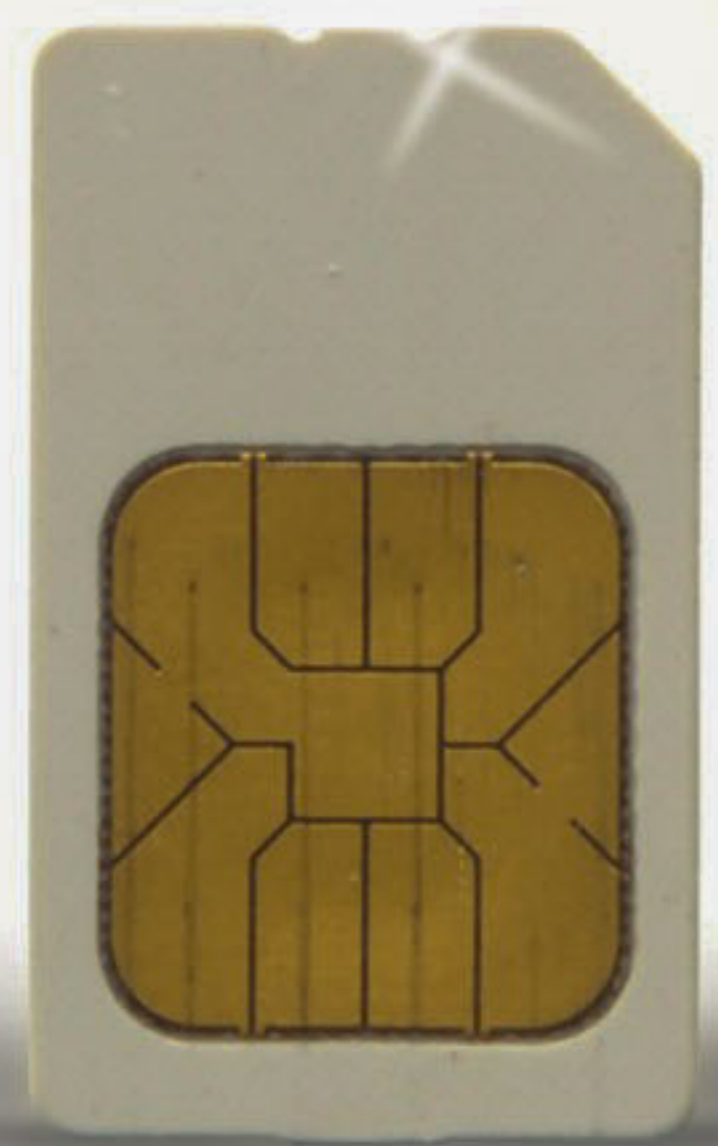
In a statement, they prayed for salvation of the departed soul and expressed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon and General Secretary Anisur Rahman condoled the death of Aziza.

In a message, they said Aziza Idris played a crucial role in women's movement and democratic movements against Pakistani military rulers and mass upsurge in 1969.

Gonoantr Party, 11-party, Bangladesh Biplobi Workers Party and Narigrantha Prabartana also condoled the death.

নতুন সংযোগ কিনুন আরও সহজে



বিটিআরসি'র নতুন নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী নতুন সংযোগ কিনতে যা প্রয়োজন:

জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র

এক কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজ ছবি

একজন সনাক্তকারীর প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্য

(সনাক্তকারীর নাম, ফোন নম্বর ও জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র নম্বর)

বিস্তারিত জানতে হেল্পলাইনে ডায়াল বা ওয়েবসাইটে ভিজিট করতে পারেন:

বোলফোন নাম্বার: 121, www.banglalinkgsm.com | গিটিসেল নাম্বার: 121, অ্যা নম্বর থেকে 01199121121, www.citycell.com
গ্রামীণফোন নাম্বার: 121, www.grameenphone.com | রবি নাম্বার: 123, 01819400400, www.rbi.com.bd | টেলিটক নাম্বার: 1234, www.telitalk.com.bd
ওয়ার্ড নাম্বার: 786, অ্যা নম্বর থেকে 01678600786, www.warditel.com.bd

'Bangladesh example of communal harmony'

BSS, Mymensingh

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Advocate Promod Mankin has said Bangladesh has set a bright example of communal harmony.

The people of all faiths perform their religious festivals peacefully in the country, he said while visiting different Puja Mandaps in the district yesterday.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Toady is the 28th death anniversary of Rahatullah Sarker, an organiser of the War of Liberation, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankh-wani and a milad mahfil will be held and food will be distributed among the destitute people at his Parbatipur residence.

Rahatullah actively participated with AK Fazlul Huq, Maulana Bhasani and Hussein Shaheed Suhrawardy in forming the United Front in 1954.

He also worked very closely with CR Das and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman during the liberation war.

Dilruba Shiparin Jayanti

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the third death anniversary of Dilruba Shiparin Jayanti, wife of Mohammad Khairul

Islam, a personal assistant secretary to the prime minister, says a press release.

Dilruba was a former government officer and a member of Bangla Academy. She was also a former vice president of Bangladesh Chhatra League of Monnujan Hall unit of Rajshahi University.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held after Maghrib prayers at her husband's government residential quarter in the city. Relatives, friends, and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

DHAKA
T O D A Y

Seminar
Centre for Sustainable Development (CFSD) will organise a seminar. Venue: Sheraton hotel, Time: 10:00am.

Street rally
Bangladesh Workers Party will hold a street rally. Venue: Malibagh More, Time: 4:30pm.

Meeting
Bangladesh Sangskritik Academy Foundation will organise a meeting. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 3:30pm.

Discussion
Sectors Commanders Forum will organise a discussion. Venue: Liberation War Museum, Time: 4:00pm.

Meeting
Sammitila Ulama-Mashaiekh Parishad will arrange a meeting. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 3:00pm.

Human chain
Campaign for Good Governance will form a human chain. Venue: National Museum, Shahbagh, Time: 11:00am.

Poster exhibition
United Nations Information Centre, Alliance Francaise and Hope Multimedia will jointly organise a weeklong poster exhibition. Venue: Alliance Francaise, 26, Mirpur Road, Time: 5:00pm.

Hunger strike
Jatiya Ghat Sramik League will hold a token hunger strike. Venue: Mukhtangan Time: 8:00am.

Seminar
National Press Club organise a seminar and book fair on the occasion of its 56th anniversary. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 11:00am.

Meeting
International Nazrul Research Centre will arrange a meeting. Venue: National Museum auditorium, Time: 5:00pm.

Art competition
Sheikh Russel Jatiya Shishu-Kishore Parishad will organise an art and cultural competition. Venue: Osmari Smriti auditorium, Time: 9:01am.

Cultural programme
Bangladesh Shishu academy will organise a meeting and cultural programme on the occasion of Sheikh Russel's birthday. Venue: academy auditorium, Time: 4:00pm.

WEATHER

No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet days in 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 5:30pm today and rises at 5:58am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 34.3 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Patuakhali and lowest 22.8 degrees Celsius at Madaripur.

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	32.6	26.2	69	73
Chittagong	32.7	25.0	63	76
Rajshahi	30.2	25.2	93	92
Khulna	33.4	24.7	78	81
Barisal	32.5	25.0	81	84
Sylhet	33.7	25.4	68	81
Cox's Bazar	33.5	25.5	73	74

Nine houses gutted in Ctg fire

A CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Nine semi-pucca houses and properties worth around Tk 4 lakh were gutted in a fire in city's Nimitala area early yesterday.

Fire Service and Civil Defence said the fire broke out at a house in Khayrati Basti, owned by one Mohammad Alamgir Hossain, and quickly engulfed eight adjoining houses.

Five fire fighting units from different fire stations of the city rushed to the spot and doused the fire after a one-hour effort.

The fire originated from an electric short-circuits and damages were estimated at Tk 4 lakh, said the sources.