

Start fresh politics
Suranjit urges BNP
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) Advisory Council Member Suranjit Sengupta yesterday urged the main opposition BNP to begin its politics anew after visiting the grave of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

"Today, BNP is in a grave crisis. To overcome this crisis, the party should visit the grave of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and begin politics anew," he said while addressing a discussion at IDEB Building in the city.

The period of 'negative politics' is over, said Suranjit, while calling upon the main opposition to join parliament to discuss their demands and other problems in the country and thus strengthen democracy.

Janatar Prattasha, a pro-AL organisation, organised the discussion marking the Victory Day.



Sacks of fertiliser, spoiled due to being left out in the open for a long time, at Majhirhat in Chittagong city spread toxic odour over the locality. The fertiliser is also polluting the Karnaphuli River. PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Ulfa claims son of Paresh freed after 'torture'

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Two days after United Liberation Front of Assam's (Ulfa) military Chief Paresh Barua claimed that unidentified people kidnapped his son, the insurgent outfit yesterday alleged that Paresh's son Arindam was released after 'torture' and 'interrogations on his father'.

"Arindam was kidnapped from the main road. The faces of the abductors were covered with black clothes," Ulfa's Publicity Secretary Arunudoy Dohotia, said in an e-mailed statement to the media.

Arindam was tortured physically and the abductors even threatened to kill him, he alleged. Though Arindam was forced to call up his father, they could not establish the communication, the state-

ment alleged.

"The teenage boy was asked about his father's assets, location, purported business, etc and was threatened not to disclose the abduction incident," Dohotia claimed.

Condemning the incident, Ulfa reiterated that the leaders 'cannot be asked at gunpoint to sit across the negotiating table'.

Stating that such incidents do not 'forebode a good future', Ulfa claimed it has identified some of the abductors and would disclose their identities soon.

The statement did not specify when and where Arindam was kidnapped nor did it say when he was released.

A few days ago, the outfit had claimed that two of their operational leaders Antu Chawdang and Pradeep Chetia were picked up in Bangladesh on December 13.

Four workers wounded in city fire
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least four people were wounded in a fire incident on the Dhaka International Trade Fair premises in the city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar last night.

The injured are Jakir Hossain, 36, his nephew Ripon Mia, 30, Mohammad, Yusuf, 28, and Shahjahan, 55. All of the were working for setting up a stall for the upcoming international trade fair.

The injured were rushed to the Burn Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Out of them, condition of Jakir and Ripon was stated to be critical.

Victim Shahjahan said they were sitting around a small fire to get warmth in the field around 10:30am. Suddenly, their colleague Rabiul poured fuel in the fire to get better warmth. Subsequently, the fire spread soon to its adjacent areas that burnt the four workers.

Later, local people brought the fire under control.

Eight killed, 40 injured in road accidents

METRO DESK

At least eight people were killed and 40 others injured in separate road accidents in Dinajpur, Chittagong Noakhali and Sunamganj yesterday.

Our correspondent from Dinajpur reports: Two people were killed and another was injured critically in a road accident at TNT intersection in Ghoraghat upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased are Bijoy Murmu, 30, son of Kaliya Murmu village Ratanpur of Birampur upazila of Dinajpur and Md Mofidul Islam, 32, of Phulbari upazila of the same district.

Kabirul Islam 30, son of Ayesah Uddin village Kushalpur of Phulbari upazila was critically rushed him to Ghoraghat Upazila Health Complex. Later, he was shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Police said the accident took place when a driver of a Dinajpur-bound truck lost his control and the bus fell into a roadside ditch leaving two people dead on the spot.

A correspondent from Ctg adds: Two people were killed and 13 others injured after a Cox's Bazar-bound bus hit a three-wheeler (tempo) at Patiya upazila in the district yesterday.

Both from Azimpur of Patya, Jahangir Alam, 40, died on the spot and Ahmed Nur, 35, on the way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

The injured were admitted to CMCH and nearby hospitals.

Our correspondent from Noakhali says: A motorcyclist was killed and his accompany injured in a road accident at Sreepur in Senbagh upazila.

The deceased is Md Sagor Hossain, 22, and injured Md Alamgir Hossain was admitted to Senbagh Upazila Health Complex.

Mokter Hossain, officer in-charge of Senbagh Police Station, said the accident occurred when a Senbagh-bound bus from Chittagong hit the motorcycle while it was coming from opposite direction, leaving motorcyclist dead on the spot.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Noakhali General Hospital for autopsy.

UNB from Sunamganj adds: Three people were killed and 25 others injured in minibus-truck head-on collision on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway at Aushkandi in Jagannathpur upazila yesterday.

The deceased are Birai Ullah, 65, Dulu Mia, 65, and Sabaru Mia, 80, of the upazila.

Witnesses said the accident occurred around 1:00pm when a Jagannathpur-bound minibus with a Chandrachhari collided head-on with a stone laden truck, leaving three people dead on the spot.

The injured were taken to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital and different clinics.

A case was filed in this connection.

NTPC to finalise power projects in Bangladesh

BSS, New Delhi

National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) of India is expected to finalise its proposed 2,640 megawatt (MW) power projects in Bangladesh.

It is to be implemented in a joint venture with the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) at an estimated cost of Rs 13,200 crore, said media reports.

IJ Kapoor, director (commercial) of NTPC, said NTPC on Wednesday held a meeting with BPDB at New Delhi where both parties talked of implementing two 1,320 MW (each) thermal power projects at Khulna and Chittagong in Bangladesh.

Work on Khulna project would be taken up first, Kapoor added, saying, "The discussions today are on project implementation and certain things required to be done to meet the schedule."

"Though we are not doing the feasibility studies for any of the projects, Khulna is one which we are now taking up with the Bangladesh government," the Financial Express quoted Kapoor.

NTPC in August signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with BPDB to set up two coal-based power projects in the neighbouring country.

Meanwhile a high-level Bangladesh delegation are in the Indian capital to see the development of the projects that the two countries are likely to implement as per the Joint Communique signed between the two countries when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid an official visit to Delhi early this year.

The delegation included Economic Affairs Adviser to Prime Minister Dr Moshirur Rahman and Foreign Affairs Adviser Dr Gawher Rizvi.

War crimes trial to build rule of law
Says Dipu Moni

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni yesterday said the rule of law in the country would be established by completing the trial of war criminals.

"The government has started the trial of war criminals who committed crimes against humanity during the War of Liberation in 1971 and the trial would be completed during the tenure of the present government," she said.

She was addressing as the chief guest a discussion organised by Dhaka City Chhatra League (south) where State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam was present as the special guest.

Qamrul said the trial of at least six people who led war criminals during the War of Liberation in 1971 would be completed by next year.

Criticising the main opposition BNP, the state minister said they have become desperate to save the war criminals.

He rejected the TIB report and said the organisation is out to tarnish the image of the main organs of the government by presenting baseless reports.

With Dhaka City Chhatra League (south) President Anisur Rahman Anis in the chair, the discussion was also addressed, among others, by parliament members Mizanur Rahman Dipu, Sanjida Khanam and Nazrul Islam Babu, Bangladesh Chhatra League President Mahmud Hasan Ripon and General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Rotan.



Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote forms a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday urging all to say "no to hartal."

Criticise govt constructively
Azad urges media

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad yesterday hoped that the new executive committee of Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) would put in its best efforts in further helping increase professionalism of journalists.

DRU should organise more seminars, symposiums, workshops and skill development programmes to help enhance the skill of journalists and their quality of reporting, he said.

The information minister was distributing prizes on the DRU premises in the city among reporters for best reporting.

The awards were given at the closing session of installation ceremony of the newly elected executive committee of DRU.

With DRU President Mostaque Hossain in the chair, the function was addressed, among others, by General Secretary Jamal Uddin, President of Economic Reporters Forum (ERF) and senior journalist Monwar Hossain and Convener of the programme organising committee Shamsuddin Ahmed.

DRU Women Affairs Secretary Alpha Arzu, the first-ever elected woman office bearer of the reporters' platform, conducted the function.

Azad said reporting in English is very important for the country and stressed the need for enhancing the quality of reporting in English alongside Bangla for projecting Bangladesh before the world community.

He sought support from the media for constructive criticism of the government's activities. "You (journalists) should criticise the government by providing the people with correct information," said the minister.

Eight reporters got the award for their excellent reporting on education, investigation and War of Liberation.

They are Keramat Ullah Biplob of ATN Bangla, Saiful Hassan of Boishakhi TV, Sharifuzzaman Pintu of Daily Prothom Alo, Zakir Hossain of Daily Jugantar, Hasan Arif of Jai Jai Din, Rahener Islam of Dainik Kaler Kantha, Arifur Rahman of Dainik Bangladesh Protidin and Zakir Hossain of Daily Jugantar.

Ruhal for another struggle against anti-liberation forces

BSS, Sathkhira

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr AFM Ruhul Haque yesterday said the new generation and children of freedom fighters have to wage another struggle.

This struggle would be against the anti-liberation forces to free the nation from all disgraces and build it up as a dignified nation, he said.

In this view, youths of the new generation must be groomed up with the spirit of War of Liberation, he told a discussion on Victory Day at Shaheed Abdur Razzak Park here.

Muktijoddha Command Council District Commander Enamul Haque Biswas was in the chair.

The health minister said the killers of Bangabandhu were prosecuted to establish the rule of law and free the nation from disgrace.

Those who were against the country's independence should not have any space in the country, he said, adding that the section, out to protect the anti-liberation forces, should not also have any place in politics.

Ruhul said the government is taking initiatives to create a trust to support insolvent freedom fighters.

Lawmaker and Sathkhira Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Central Muktijoddha Command Council former vice president Mir Mostaq Ahmed, upazila Chairman Nazrul Islam, freedom fighters Abu Nasim, Abdus Salam and Mahit Khan Chowdhury and former parliament member Monsur Ahmed spoke, among others, on the occasion.



An exhibition of Bakarkhani, a type of traditional biscuit of Dhaka, at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. Dhakabashi organised the event on the occasion of the 400 years of Dhaka.

WEATHER TODAY

Light to moderate fog likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Mild cold wave is sweeping over the regions of Rajshahi, Iswardi, Dinajpur, Chuadanga, Jessore, Mymensingh, Tangail, Sirimongal and Sitakunda and it may continue.

Night temperature will remain and nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:19pm and rises tomorrow at 6:40am.

Country's highest temperature 37.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 07.9 degrees at Rajshahi.

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	25.3	11.5	64	58
Chittagong	25.3	13.5	78	45
Rajshahi	24.3	07.9	88	86
Rangpur	24.0	09.8	99	76
Khulna	25.5	12.4	89	65
Barisal	25.5	10.2	91	87
Sylhet	25.1	13.1	78	75
Cox's Bazar	26.6	14.2	69	64



Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal brings out a procession in the city yesterday protesting price spiral of essentials and demanding the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) to be efficient.

Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

Mohammadullah Chowdhury, father of former president of Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) and senior reporter of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Mahfujur Rahman, passed away at his Ramganj village residence in Laxmipur last night at the age of 91, says a press release.

He left behind his two sons and four daughters.

Chowdhury was buried at his family graveyard yesterday after namaz-e-janaza.

His Kulkhwani will be held on Tuesday at his Dumuria village residence at Ramganj of Laxmipur.

DHAKA TODAY

Conference
Micro Biology dept of Dhaka University will organise a conference. Venue: TSC auditorium, DU, Time: 4:00pm.

Meeting
Peshajibi Samannay Parishad will organise a meeting. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 3:00pm.

Conference
Nature Human Centric Peoples Movement, Bangladesh will arrange a conference. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 9:30am.

Launching ceremony
The launching ceremony of the Turkish Airlines will be held. Venue: Radisson hotel, Time: 7:00pm.

Meeting
Jatiya Party-JP will hold a joint meeting. Venue: Central office, Lalmeta, Time: 5:00pm.

Workshop
Bangladesh University of Professionals will organise a workshop. Venue: BUP campus, Mirpur Cantonment, Time: 9:00am.

Meeting
BCSIR will arrange a council meeting. Venue: BCSIR conference room, Dhanmondi, Time: 11:00am.