

Jamaat programmes to free leaders from Feb 5

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday announced a series of programmes from February 5 to press for various demands, particularly tackling soaring prices and releasing its detained top leaders.

Jamaat Acting Secretary General ATM Azharul Islam announced the programmes at a press conference at its central office.

Jamaat will arrange rallies across the country on February 5, 8 and 12 calling for bringing down prices of essentials to reasonable state, keeping law and order under control and ensuring smooth supply of water, gas and electricity.

Jamaat will arrange discussion and offer doa mahfil on February 18 and 21 to mourn the martyrs of the language movement.

They will also arrange rallies, discussion meeting and doa mahfil marking the Pilkhona massacre of February 25-26, 2009.

They will observe 'Political Prisoner Free Day' on February 28 throughout the country to press for immediate and unconditional release of all leaders and activists of the party including Jamaat Ameer Matiur Rahman Nizami, Secretary General Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mujaheed, Nayeb-e-Ameer Delwar Hossain Sayedee, and Assistant Secretaries General M Qamaruzzaman and Abdul Quader Mollah.

Urdu speaking people demand citizen facilities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two organisations of Urdu-speaking people yesterday demanded ensuring of all sorts of citizen facilities to improve their life standard.

Their demands include rehabilitating the Urdu-speaking people in the country, creating employment, free education up to graduate level, repairing of roads and proper sanitation in all the Geneva camps across the country, says a press release.

Urdu Speaking Peoples Youth Rehabilitation Movement held a long march from its office at the city's Pallabi to Mirpur Section-11 to press their above-mentioned six-point demands and later they submitted a memorandum to the prime minister's office.

In a separate statement, Bangladesh Mohajir Welfare and Development Committee leaders, including its founder president Eaz Ahmmed Siddique, member secretaries Anwar Alam, Abdul Kuddus Sawal, Tofayel Korawise, Shajada Selim and Abdul Kalam Azad, also placed the same demand.



The English Road park at Tantibazar in the city has turned a dump of construction rubbles and rubbish since two years.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

ENGLISH ROAD PARK Now a rubble dumpsite

HELEMUL ALAM

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has chosen the only park at Tantibazar on English Road as a convenient place for dumping construction waste.

It started dumping rubble there around two years back and since then a big portion of the park is always seen occupied by a huge pile of rubbish. No one would recognise that the place was once a green patch of land where people from neighbourhoods used to go in their leisure time for recreation.

Even before the dumping of waste began, one part of the English Road Park was being used for parking trucks and pushcarts for several years, taking advantage of the authorities' apathy to its maintenance, said locals.

Asked who is responsible for the dumping, Abul Hasnath, superintending engineer of circle-1 of the DCC, pointed the finger at the DCC waste management department and said it is the department's duty to remove rubbish from the place now.

Biponon Kumar Saha, DCC chief waste management officer, however, has a strange argument in favour of dumping waste in the park. He said dumping waste keeps people from using the park for other purposes like parking vehicles.

He went on to say that the truck drivers would have had control over the park if the DCC removed the garbage.

About saving the park, he said the DCC engineering section is responsible for the maintenance and development of the park.

He added that before the dumping of waste, a private firm named Heritage sought approval from the DCC to beautify the park, but the company worked only on a small part of it.

Biponon Kumar Saha blamed the private firm for the present situation of the park.

Asked about his remark, Managing Director of Heritage Rafeya Abedin said, "We are still ready to beautify the remaining part of the park but the DCC will have to give guidelines and necessary financial help in this regard as it is a matter of huge money."

Faraz Ali, a resident of the area, said that during the rule of HM Ershad, slipper, cradle and seesaw were set up in the park for children, but those have either been destroyed or become unusable.

He said the park was a major attraction for children and elderly people in the area. Children used to play and people suffering from diabetes used to walk in the park in the evening.

Now only a few come to the place since there is no other place to go, he added.

Abdus Sattar, a 30-year-old of Tantibazar, said, "I have spent my childhood playing in the park. But there is no place for our children to play."

Besides, the park had been a spot of greenery in the area but it has become a bare land with 80 percent trees already felled, he added.

Abu Taleb, a resident of Bangshal, said after the DCC started dumping rubbish on the eastern side of the park, locals also joined in.

The park has become a place of junkies after night falls and shops on both sides of the road are closed, he added.

Produce Jamaat leaders on Feb 6: Court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked the jail authorities to produce four Jamaat-e-Islami leaders, including its Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami, before it on February 6 in a case filed against them for hurting religious sentiment of Muslims.

Three other leaders are: The party's Secretary General Ali Hossain Muhammad Mojahid, Nayeb-e-Ameer Delwar Hossain Sayedee and city unit Chief Rafiqul Islam Khan.

All of them were earlier arrested following an arrest warrant issued from another Dhaka court, as they were absent from the court on June 29 last year.

Later they all were granted bail from different courts, but they could not get released as several other cases against them are now pending with different courts.

First Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate AHM Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan passed the order after scrutinising case dockets and other relevant document.

The court also fixed the same date for hearing on charge framing against the accused.

One more accused in the case, city Islami Chhatra Shibir President ASM Yahia earlier granted bail in this case.

On March 21 last year, Syed Rejaul Haque Chandpuri, secretary general of Bangladesh Tarikat Federation, filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka against five Jamaat leaders.

Legal notice to protect two Savar villages

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) yesterday sent legal notices to different government officials to protect the environment of Kumkumari and Chandgoan villages in Savar.

The notice says the toxic chemicals discharged from different industries are polluting the environment of the two villages, destroying the farmlands, and posing severe health threat, said a press release yesterday.

According to the notice, most of the industries and factories do not have effluent treatment plant (ETP) that is mandatory for an industry as per the court order.

So, necessary measures should be taken to protect the environment and farmlands of this locality, demanded Bela in its notice.

The notice was sent to the secretaries of the ministries of land, LGRD, agriculture, industries, environment and forests, and fisheries and livestock, and director general of the Department of Environment (DoE), and concerned officials of Savar upazila.

Call to conserve water bodies

BSS, Dhaka

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday on the eve of World Wetland Day called for wetlands and forests landscape conservation by complying 1971 landmark Ramsar Convention objectives through strong enforcement, restoration, afforestation and watershed management for economic uplift and sustainable development.

They also call for immediate arrest of encroachment of wetlands and stop degradation of forests and ecologically critical areas and Ramsar sites like the Sunderbans, Tanguar Haor, Nijjum Deep, Char Kukri-Mukri and Zamadar Char. The speakers asked for mounting campaign for conservation of forests and waterbodies.

They were addressing a roundtable titled "Forests for water and wetlands" - the theme

of this year's world wetlands day organised by Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) at National Press Club chaired by FEJB Chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury.

Sayed Marghub Murshed, former environment secretary, BRAC University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Ainun Nishat, Dr Rezaul Karim UNESCAP former environment division chief, Dr Mohammad Nasiruddin, environment ministry joint secretary and Hasan Hafiz, FEJB general secretary, took part in the discussion also marking the International Year for Forests 2011.

Dr Nishat explained how deeply interlinked the forests and wetlands with human lives and livelihoods and asked for conservation of all ecologically critical areas, wetlands and forests for the greater national interests and securities.



Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia speaks at the introduction ceremony of Dhaka Lawyer Bar Election panel at her Gulshan Office in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: BNP

DU student hurt in city road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A female student of Dhaka University was wounded as a covered van hit her rickshaw from behind at Muktangan in the city last night.

Samia Rahman, a masters student of the institute of education and research (IER) of DU, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. She is also office secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, DU.

She was going to Gulistan when the accident happened around 10:00pm. The van dragged the rickshaw and its passenger some 15 to 20 feet away, said a witness.

Local people captured the driver of the covered van and beaten him up before handing him over to police.

Writ filed in HC to save Dhanmondi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed with the High Court yesterday, seeking its directions to the government to evict all illegal commercial institutions and stop their operations from Dhanmondi residential area of the capital to maintain and protect its residential character.

President of Dhanmondi Residential Welfare Association MA Masud and its Secretary MA Matin Chowdhury jointly filed the petition as a public interest litigation.

Petitioner's counsel Advocate Manzill Murshid said the petition has stated that hundreds of illegal commercial organisations are running operations damaging residential character and environment of Dhanmondi.

But no step has been taken to remove the commercial operations from the residential area to maintain and protect its character and environment, he said.

He also said the authorities concerned have failed to perform their duties in protecting the residential area.

The HC bench of Justice Mohammad Momtazuddin Ahmed and Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore may hear the petition today (Wednesday), he said.

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