

Hasina's Homecoming Day today

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Awami League and its associate bodies will celebrate the Homecoming Day of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today.

On this day in 1981, Hasina returned home after about six years in exile.

AL and its associate organisations have chalked out an elaborate programme marking the day.

The programme includes placing of wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in the city, doo seeking good health and long life of Hasina, meeting with injured freedom fighters and distribution of foods at orphanages.



A few minutes of heavy rainfall relieves city dwellers around 1:00pm yesterday after the hot spell prevailing over the last couple of days. The photo was taken from Motijheel in the city.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

CJ refuses to receive farewell from SCBA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Khairul Haque yesterday refused to receive farewell from the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) that severely criticised him throughout his tenure, insiders say.

SCBA President Khandker Mahub Hossain at a press conference urged Justice Khairul Haque to announce that he won't head the next caretaker government. Chief Justice Khairul has done everything to "destroy" the judiciary after he assumed office in September last year, said the president of SCBA, which is dominated by pro-BNP lawyers.

Earlier in the morning, Attorney General Mahubey Alam and two senior lawyers -- Barrister Ajmalul Hossain and Advocate Tawfiq Nawaz -- informally accorded farewell to Justice Khairul, who retires today, at the court No-1 of the Appellate Division during proceedings.

Mentioning some important verdicts delivered by the outgoing chief justice in different cases, they said the judiciary will remember him forever for his contributions.

Meanwhile, the SCBA led by Khandker Mahub Hossain refused to accord felicitation to two new judges of the Appellate Division. However, the attorney general and the leaders of SCBA's ruling Awami League faction accorded felicitation to them.

Additional police forces were deployed on the SC premises to avoid any untoward incident.

TWO JUDGES TAKE OATH

Justice M Mamtaz Uddin Ahmed and Justice Md Shamsul Huda yesterday took oath as judges of the Appellate Division in absence of 36 out of 88 High Court judges at the Judges' Lounge.

Outgoing Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque administered oath to the judges who were dropped from confirmation list of the HC judges during the previous BNP-Jamaat-led rule.

The president in an order on Sunday promoted them to the Appellate Division bypassing a number of senior HC judges.

All the judges of the Appellate Division including Chief Justice (designated) Md Muzammel Hossain attended the oath-taking ceremony.

Reasons behind the absence of the HC judges could not be known immediately, as reporters are not allowed to approach the judges.

Leaders of the SCBA, however, said the senior HC judges refrained from attending the ceremony as appointment of two Appellate Division judges was made superseding "at last 50 HC judges".

ATTACK ON CPB RALLY Maulana Farid discloses several names IO tells court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Maulana Sheikh Farid, a leader of banned outfit Harkat-ul Jihad al-Islami, has disclosed names of his accomplices who were involved in the bomb attack on a CPB rally in 2001, a CID official told a Dhaka court yesterday.

Inspector Mrinal Kanti Saha of the Criminal Investigation Department, investigating officers of the case, produced Farid with a forwarding report before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Keshob Roy Chowdhury on expiry of his remand.

Farid was produced before the court on completion of his five-day remand in the case. He was earlier remanded in the August 21 grenade attack case.

Mrinal in his report mentioned that Huji leader Abu Zandal in a confessional statement to a magistrate on October 10 in 2010 told about Farid's involvement in the attack on the CPB rally.

But Farid, during his remand period, disclosed several names of his accomplices who were also involved with the bomb attack at Paltan Maidan in the city on January 20 in 2001, the IO said, adding that for the sake of investigation, names of the attackers gathered from Farid will be published later.

Farid, also known as Shawkat Osman, was arrested in Tongi on April 26.

Five people were killed and 50 others injured in the attack. So he [Farid] needs to be confined in jail until the investigation completes, the IO said.

English in context of Bangladesh needed

Say speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday said Bangladesh is yet to have any effective plans to an English language development programme in tune with country's socio-cultural context.

While focus increased on using "communicative approach" to teach English since the 90's, progress of English language education in the country remained minimal, they said.

The opinions came at a press conference in the city's Jatiya Press Club ahead of the 5th Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (BELTA) International Conference 2011 to be held in the city's Biam Foundation from May 20 to 22.

The conference will be jointly organised by BELTA and English in Action (EIA), a not-for-profit language education programme.

"English language curriculum reform in Bangladesh needs to address the requirements for appropriate teaching materials and a suitable assessment system," said Dr Sharmistha Das, educational adviser of EIA.

However, the reform needs a holistic approach with collaboration from all relevant authorities and stakeholders including students and their parents, the speakers said.

"We need to announce that, yes, we need change in how English is taught," said Arifa Rahman of BELTA, adding, "This reform needs a collaborative effort."

The conference seeks to bring together over 550 teachers, researchers and experts from 10 countries to share experiences, research findings and opinions on ways to improve English teaching, the speakers said.

"In some ways, Bangladesh is way ahead when it comes to English language education," said Mike Solly, head of secondary intervention, EIA, adding that there is room for much improvement.

The EIA programme, a nine-year 50-million-pound project, is designed to change approaches to learning English, aiming to benefit around 25 million Bangladeshis, Solly said.

BELTA President Dr Rubina Khan, Vice President Dil Afroze Quader and EIA Team Leader Marc Van Der Stouwe also spoke.

Govt lacks teamwork, coordination

Says Obaidul Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League Presidium Member Obaidul Quader yesterday strongly criticised the government for what he said "lack of coordination and teamwork" in increasing price of compressed natural gas (CNG) and instability in share market.

Quader, also chief of the parliamentary standing committee on information ministry, said both the ruling and opposition political parties are not concerned over resolving people's sufferings compared to their concerns over political crisis.

"If we cannot address our common danger, the country may face a grave situation and can turn into a weak coun-

try like Pakistan," said Quader, who went to jail during the last caretaker government in 2007 for corruption charges.

He was addressing a discussion on a fiction titled "Ethnic Cleansing", organised by Amity for Peace at city's Jatiya Press Club. Salam Azad wrote the fiction based on atrocities on Hindu minorities after the 2001 general election.

Quader said the concerned ministry and Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission should have assessed consequences before increasing price of CNG.

He also said politicians as well as the political parties have almost lost their ideology due to "politics of vote" and "politics of power".

'Save Kayettuli playground'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Kayettuli area of Old Dhaka and leaders of Save the Environment Movement (SEM) yesterday demanded to save Kayettuli playground from being converted into a multi-storied colony for Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) employees.

Speaking at a human chain and rally held in the area, they also demanded to save all playgrounds and parks in Old Dhaka from land grabbers, says a press release.

This is the only playground for Agamasi Lane, Nobab Katra, Abdul Haid Lane, Nimtali and Aga Sadek Road areas, said speakers at the rally.

The authority concerned set up a water

pump in a corner of the playground after independence and the rest was empty. People of all ages use the field everyday for their recreation, they said.

Wasa, influenced by its Sramik Union, started to construct the colony on April 25 for its fourth-class employees and was stopped after locals protested. They are trying to resume again, they said.

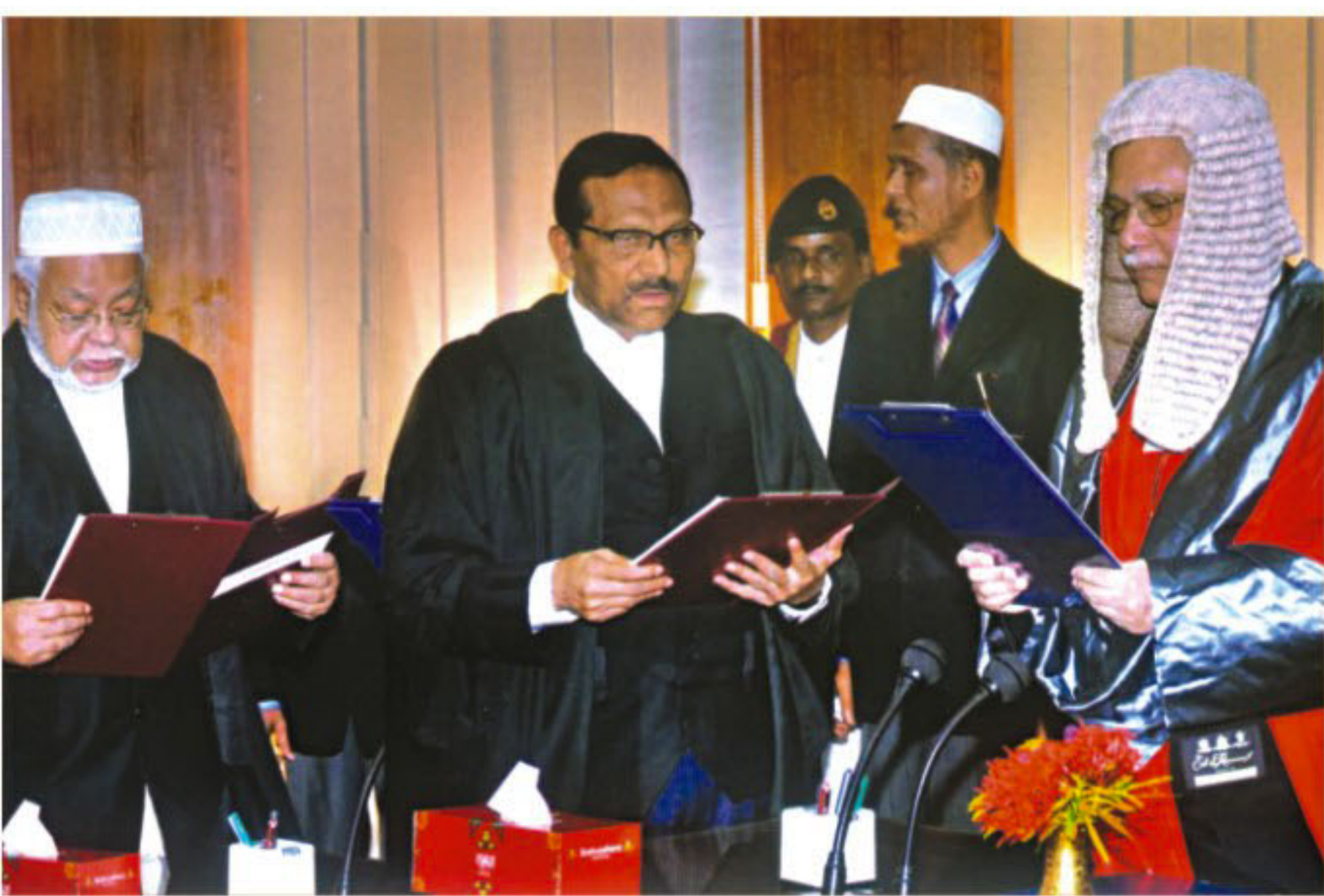
SEM Chairman Abu Naser Khan, presiding over the rally, said it is necessary to protect the few playgrounds remaining in Old Dhaka.

Columnist Syed Abul Maksud; Shafi Kamal, director of Department of Theatre of Shilpakala Academy; and Md Faruk, convener of Kayettuli Panir Pump O Math Rakkhya Committee; addressed the rally.



Marc Van Der Stouwe speaks at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday ahead of the 5th Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (BELTA) International Conference 2011 to be held in the city's Biam Foundation from May 20 to 22. On his right is Dr Rubina Khan and on his left are Dil Afroze Quader, Mike Solly, Dr Sharmistha Das and Arifa Rahman.

PHOTO: STAR



Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque administers oath to Justice Md Mamataz Uddin Ahmed and Justice Md Shamsul Huda, newly appointed two judges of the Appellate Division, at the Supreme Court Judges' Lounge in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Help write region-based history: Info minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People will get a detail and objective history of the Liberation War of 1971 once Bangla Academy has successfully finished writing the region-based history of the war, said Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad yesterday.

Addressing a seminar on writing of the region-based history as the chief guest, the minister said it could not be possible in 40 years to write the detail and objective history of the liberation war.

So the initiative of Bangla Academy of writing such root level history of the war is

timely and necessary, he observed.

He called upon researchers and others concerned to help the academy with documents and others to finish the initiative successfully.

Prof Kabir Chowdhury presided over the seminar at Bangla Academy seminar room.

Bangla Academy Director General Shamsuzzaman Khan, Maj (ret) Kamrul Hasan Bhuiyan, Shahriar Kabir, Tarek Ali, Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, Prof Shantanu Kaiser, Prof Abul Ahsan Chowdhury, Shafiqur Rahman also spoke.

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