

Tributes paid to Bangabandhu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation yesterday observed the historic Homecoming Day of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with due respect.

On this day in 1972, Bangabandhu returned to independent Bangladesh after nine and a half months' confinement in the jail of the then West Pakistan.

Pakistani occupation forces arrested him on March 25, 1971 from his Dhanmondi residence during the late-night crackdown on the people of Bangladesh (then East Pakistan).

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also Bangabandhu's daughter, in the presence of ministers, state ministers and senior party leaders placed wreaths at Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's portrait in Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in the city yesterday.

Different associated bodies of the Awami League also placed wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu and his grave at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

Milad and doa mahfil were organised in different religious establishments seeking peace of the departed soul of the country's great leader.

AL and different socio-political organisations held discussions in the city and elsewhere in the country on the glorious political life of Bangabandhu, who struggled for two decades for the freedom of the Bangalee.

After placing wreaths, AL General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam asked the main opposition BNP to return to the parliament and place their demands.

Bangabandhu Parishad held a discussion chaired by its general secretary Dr SA Malek to mark the day.

On the occasion, Bangladesh Muktijuddha Sangsad organised different programmes including hoisting the national and the sangsad's flag and placing wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, along with party leaders, places a wreath at Bangabandhu Bhaban in the city's Dhanmondi area yesterday observing the historic Homecoming Day of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

PHOTO: PMO

AL wants strong EC: Suranjit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League will propose a strong and neutral Election Commission (EC) during its dialogue with the president scheduled for Thursday, Railways Minister Suranjit Sengupta said yesterday.

"The Election Commission, not the government, conducts polls. So we need an independent and free EC", he told reporters at his office at Railway Bhaban.

Suranjit, who is also an advisory council member of the AL, said the EC has already proved its freedom in some elections, in which the ruling party candidates lost. The EC has been "enjoying freedom more than the Roman emperors", he said.

He also said, "The EVM (electronic voting machine) has been successfully used in the Comilla City Corporation polls. This has made the election process almost impossible to manipulate for any government".

The AL leader also ruled out the possibility of restoring the non-party caretaker government in line with the demand of the BNP and its allies. "This is impossible to go back to the mother's womb, a comfortable place, once you come out", he said, referring to the caretaker government issue.

Stressing that dislodging an elected government through conspiracy is impossible, Suranjit said, "BNP has to come to the parliament to place their demand on caretaker government". The present government has made election arrangements under an interim government as per the original constitution framed in 1972, he said.

DEADLINE TO APPEAL ENDS

Fate of 20,000 Bangladeshis in Malaysia uncertain

PORIMOL PALMA

Fate of around 20,000 Bangladeshi jobseekers, who have yet to avail passports from the Bangladesh mission in Kuala Lumpur, has become uncertain as the Malaysian government's deadline to appeal for regularisation ended yesterday.

"Yes, there is some sort of uncertainty for those who did not secure their passports. We hope Malaysia will extend the deadline because it has a huge shortage of labour," Bangladesh's labour attaché Mantu Kumar Biswas told The Daily Star over phone yesterday.

Ayubur Rahman, a Bangladeshi worker in Kuala Lumpur, said many working in faraway places from the Bangladesh High Commission might have not known about the deadline and did not apply.

Besides, the mission made it mandatory for the workers to be physically present for interview to

secure passports. But these workers could be dependent on brokers and could be cheated, he added. The high commission put in place the arrangement to check fraudulence by the brokers who abuse passports in various forms and defraud the migrants.

Asked about this, Mantu Kumar said the high commission publicised the deadline for regularisation through newspapers and community meetings. It also urged all to make sure that all those who registered get their passports in time.

Starting from August 1 last year, around 2.68 lakh irregular Bangladeshi workers got registered with the Malaysian immigration under the

amnesty programme aimed at allowing them to return home without any penalty or get regularised. The regularisation process started on October 15.

The migrants found it an immense opportunity, as they had been fleeing or facing arrests or harassments for not having work permits or passports.

Of those who got registered, around 2.25 lakh Bangladeshi workers applied to the high commission for passports. As of January 9, nearly 2.2 lakh were issued passports, informed Mantu Kumar.

Around 5,000 fortune-seekers returned home without facing any penalty, while 21,000 had passports, but not valid work permits. This means around 17,000 Bangladeshi workers did not apply

for the passports.

Mantu Kumar could not say for sure the number of Bangladeshi workers who already got regularised or applied for it to the Malaysian immigration.

Malaysia is home to around 5 lakh Bangladeshi workers. The Southeast Asian nation froze recruitment from Bangladesh in early 2009 on the plea of economic recession, though experts in the sector believe it was because of malpractices in the recruitment system.

The present government is trying to reopen the labour market since assuming power.

Insiders at the expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry say the country will come up with any new decision only after making an assessment of the labour needs of Malaysia.

"The government actually wanted that the irregular workers have a chance to work and earn, because many of them were cheated in jobs earlier," a ministry official observed.

Bangladesh hopes Malaysia will extend the deadline because it has a huge shortage of labour

Councillors for hike in honorarium

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Municipal councillors at a press conference yesterday called for an increase in their honorariums alongside mayors'.

They have demanded monthly honorarium ranging between Tk 10,000 and Tk 15,000 while the current amount ranges from Tk 3,000 to Tk 5,000.

Bangladesh Municipal Councillor Association organised the conference at the Jatiya Press Club.

Mayors' honorarium has been fixed at Tk 20,000 from Tk 5,000 recently, General Secretary of the association Saiful Islam Madhu said.

The association also placed a 20-point demand including rise of status of a councillor to first class magistrate, and unique identity card for them.

Dr. Sabina Sultana Renowned Paediatrician & Neonatologist is now in Apollo Hospitals Dhaka

Appointment: (02)-8845242, 01841 APOLLO, 01729 APOLLO,
01195 APOLLO, 01612 APOLLO, 01971 APOLLO;
APOLLO Signifies: 276556



Dr. Sabina Sultana graduated from Mymensingh Medical College in 1989 and started her career as a research fellow in ICDDRDB after which she worked in Dhaka Shishu Hospital. In 1994, after she joined Government service, she was posted in different health complexes of the country enriching her experience. She completed her Diploma in Child Health and MCPS in paediatrics in 1995. After that, Dr. Sabina served in Dhaka Medical College as Registrar. Later on she obtained MD in General Paediatrics in 2001 from Dhaka University and MD in Paediatric Nephrology from BSMMU in 2004. She joined Uttara Adhunik Medical College as a Consultant in 2005. In addition to general paediatrics, she has demonstrated expertise in newborn care and Paediatric Nephrology. She is also trained in Neonatal Ventilation. She has also been awarded Young Researcher Award in 2010. She has many publications and has presented research papers in many seminars home and abroad.

Before joining Apollo Hospitals Dhaka, she was working in Uttara Adhunik Medical College as Associate Professor of Paediatrics.



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21st
Anniversary
of
The Daily Star
BANGLADESH
THE YOUNG AND THE FUTURE

On the occasion of our 21st anniversary, we at The Daily Star have planned to dedicate our anniversary supplement to recognise both the achievements and visions of the youth of Bangladesh. The supplement which will be titled 'BANGLADESH, THE YOUNG AND THE FUTURE' will aim to highlight and bring to national attention the work of young achievers from every corner of the country.

But to do so we need the help of our readers.

If you know of any young people who have managed to set themselves apart with diligent work for the greater good, please drop us a nomination. We will run a tooth-comb over it and if the work is indeed exceptional we will share the story with a national audience.

The categories under which the nominations will be sorted are:

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|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Technology (also science) | 5. Academia (also vocational learning, skill development, etc.) | 7. Arts (music, film, etc.) |
| 2. Public Service (also professions) | 6. Labour (including young workers inside garment factories) | 8. Agriculture |
| 3. Politics | | 9. Sports |
| 4. Entrepreneurship | | 10. Environment |
| | | 11. Gender |



If you are willing to share a story please e-mail us at elita@thedailystar.net with the name of the individual or group and a brief write-up (no longer than 400 words) of what they are doing. Deadline for submissions is **January 15, 2012**. This is your chance to get recognised. So get your nominations in.

In Stars, you shine forever...

Grameenphone family is deeply shocked at the sudden demise of Bangladesh Cricket Board CEO, Manzur Ahmed. We pray for the salvation of the departed soul and convey our heartfelt condolence to the members of his bereaved family.

His dynamic leadership has given Bangladesh Cricket an admirable stand in the Global arena.

May his soul rest in peace.

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