

Sit for dialogue

Barrister Rafique-ul Huq urges Hasina, Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted Jurist Rafique-ul Huq yesterday urged the two top political party chiefs to sit for dialogue to resolve the ongoing political instability of the country.

"Dialogue between the two gentle ladies [Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia] can resolve the instability of the country," he said while addressing a gathering at the capital's Engineers Institute.

Nagorik Samaj, a civil society platform, organised the programme.

Concerning the next national election, Huq said most people support a neutral government to hold the election in a free and fair way.

He said that the country will benefit more if voters vote for honest and patriotic leaders.

Speaking about Nobel Laureate Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus, he said, "We should not humiliate noble persons by speaking ill of them."

Barrister Rafique-ul Huq said if the government provides the young generation with standard education and employment, there would be no such incidents like picketing during hartal and vandalism in mills and factories.

Referring to the attitudes of the prime minister and opposition leader, former AL leader Mahmudur Rahman Manna said the two would not sit for dialogue without any personal gain for them.

He said the two leaders should be honest to contribute more to the nation.

Advocate Shadeen Malik also spoke among others.



TIB Chairperson Sultana Kamal addresses the inaugural ceremony of a national conference organised by Sachetan Nagorik Committee and Youth Engagement Support (YES) at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital yesterday. On her left is TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman and on her right are TIB Trustee Board Member M Hafizuddin Khan and former chief election commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda. (Story on Page 1)

Two Tahrir men arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Police arrested two members of banned outfit Hizbut-Tahrir at Fulbari village in Nachole upazila on Thursday evening and a court sent them to jail yesterday.

The arrestees are Shakib Rahman, 32, son of Nasim Uddin of Baliaghat village in Gangni upazila of Meherpur and Mainul Islam, 35, son of Abdul Mannan of Kajla Maholla under Motihar Police Station in Rajshahi.

Local people caught them while the two were distributing leaflets and books of the outfit among the villagers and informed Nachole police of it.

The police arrested them at around 7:00pm and recovered the leaflets and books from their possession.

ASI Ismail Hossain of the station said they produced them before the court and it sent them to jail.

POLICE ATTACK ON JOURNALISTS Moudud asks Shahara to quit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member Moudud Ahmed yesterday demanded resignation of Home Minister Shahara Khatun and blamed her inexperience for the recent "actions" of policemen.

"Journalists and lawyers are being tortured by police, even the girls are being harassed in court area. Yet the minister said the behaviour of police was improving, while the state minister suggested newsmen to keep distance from police," he said, addressing a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club.

Moudud said the home minister and her deputy had no experience to run an important ministry like that of home affairs, and that was why they had failed to discharge their duties properly. Both of them should resign right away, he said.

"Law and order situation is deteriorating rapidly. Police could not find out Ilias Ali as yet. The killers of journalist couple Sagor-Runi and Saudi diplomat are

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Seminar
University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh will arrange a seminar; Venue: Hotel Washington, Gulshan-1; Time: 10:00am.

Memorial meet
Ekattorer Jatri will organise a memorial meeting; Venue: National Museum; Time: 11:00am.

Seminar
Bangladesh Auto Re-Rolling & Steel Mills Association will organise a seminar; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:00pm.

Citizens' rally
Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Adi Dhakabashi Forum will

TOBACCO CONTROL ACT Very limited impact on people: Experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although seven years have passed since the enactment of tobacco control act, it has very limited impact on the people's lives and lifestyles due to severe loopholes in it, said speakers at a press conference yesterday.

The Smoking and Using of Tobacco Products (Control) Act, 2005 needs to be reviewed thoroughly as implementation of the law would not be ensured effectively keeping the loopholes, they said.

Bangladesh Bar Council in association with Tobacco Free Kids (USA) organised the press conference to share the findings of a study at Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital.

Presenting findings, Dr Asif Nazrul, a professor of Law Department of Dhaka University, said: "The tobacco control act is one of the non-implemented laws in our country as we didn't feel its presence in our lives even after seven years of its passage."

He said the law does define certain important terms like workplace, tobacco advertisement and promotion, tobacco sponsorship and second hand smoke.

He also said the definitions of tobacco product, authorised officer, public place and public transport as provided in the law are

defected or not comprehensive. Asif further said one of the serious flaws relating to the enforcement of the law lies in the definition of the authorised officer since it defines authorised officer from a narrow context.

According to the law, authorised officer means Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) or upazila health and family planning officer or any officer of health directorate, he said. "It is impossible to enforce the law with these few officers in the context of Bangladesh."

"These officers generally remain busy with other tasks. It is impossible for them to see who is smoking where," Dr Asif said, suggesting appointment of authorised officer in every institution and providing them the authority to fine.

Regarding health warning, he said the warning message should cover at least fifty percent of the principal display areas of the cigarette packets.

Apart from textual warning, pictorial warnings depicting the effects of smoking should be introduced in the packs to discourage the people from smoking who cannot read, he said.

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Join JS budget session Akbar Ali Khan urges BNP

BSS, Dhaka

Former adviser to a caretaker government Dr Akbar Ali Khan yesterday requested the main opposition to join the budget session in parliament saying it is the moral responsibility of the opposition to inform the people about the flaws in the budget.

He was speaking at a roundtable on "Budget 2012: Tax Proposals".

For making the budget session more democratic and meaningful, the former adviser said the opposition must join budget discussion; steps must be taken for pre-publication of statutory regulatory order (SRO) and allowing discussion of the budget in the meetings of parliamentary standing committees.

Akbar Ali Khan said the rules of procedure must be changed to allow the parliamentary standing committees to discuss the budget in their meetings because it is allowed in all countries having Westminster style democracy.

People's representatives get only around three weeks to discuss the budget which is not adequate for a 'democratic budget', he said.

About SRO, he said in any civilised country, an SRO is published about a month ahead for taking public opinions into consideration but such practice is entirely absent in Bangladesh.

The daily Bhorer Kagoj organised the roundtable which was addressed, among others, by editor of the Financial Express Moazzem Hossain, editor of the Amader Samoy and Adamder Arthaniti Naimul Islam Khan, former chairman of the NBR Badiur Rahman and Shah Zikrul Ahmed MP.

Editor of Bhorer Kagoj Shayamol Datta moderated the discussion while tax lawyer Jahangir Alam Chowdhury presented the paper.



(From left) MA Mohit, Plan Nepal Country Director Donal Kean, Bangladesh Ambassador in Nepal Prof Nim Chandra Bhowmik, and Nishat Majumder at a reception ceremony at a Kathmandu convention centre. Plan Nepal accorded the reception to Bangladeshi mountaineers Mohit and Nishat for their recent Everest feat yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: COURTESY

Govt not upset about Teesta deal Says Gowhar Rizvi

Says Gowhar Rizvi

BSS, Lalmonirhat

Prime Minister's foreign affairs adviser Dr Gowhar Rizvi yesterday said the government was not upset about the fate of the proposed deal on sharing the Teesta waters with India but it depends on the upper riparian country when the deal would be inked.

"It depends on them but the (Bangladesh) government is not worried (about the fate of the proposed deal) ... the Teesta treaty will be signed during the tenure of the incumbent government," he told a view-exchange with local civil society representatives at Dahagram union parishad.

He, however, acknowledged that the obstacle in signing the deal was created "somewhere" in India and feared that unless the treaty was signed a part of the northwestern Bangladesh would experience desertification.

After a short visit to Dahagram and Angarpota enclaves, through the Tin Bigha corridor, he said: "Bangladeshi people are being harassed and tortured unnecessarily by the Indian border security force (BSF) personnel though the treaty was signed for 24-hour access to the enclaves of Dahagram-Angarpota through the Tin Bigha area."

Rizvi assured the local people of solving the issue bilaterally with Indian government, for this, the people of Dahagram-Angarpota have to wait with patience.

Some positive signs are seen with Indian part to exchange Indian corridors located in Bangladesh, he said.

"If the corridor exchange is finished peacefully then it would bring bright future and smuggling would be reduced in border areas," Rizvi said.

Earlier, Dr Gowhar Rizvi visited the biggest irrigation project Teesta barrage.

The view exchange was addressed, among others, by sector commander of Rangpur of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Col Neyamul Islam Fatemi, Deputy Commissioner of Rangpur Makhlesur Rahman Sarkar and Administrator of Rangpur District Advocate Matiar Rahman.

Boy dies in Ctg fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A boy was killed in a fire incident in the port city yesterday.

The deceased is Mohammed Mamun, 12, son of Abdus Salam of Monipur village in Noakhali.

Fire service sources said a fire originated from an electric short circuit at a kachcha house in Saraipara area around 5:00am and spread to three other adjacent houses.

Mamun was killed during the flame. Fire fighters doused the blaze after half an hour of their efforts.

Valuables worth around Tk 5 lakh were damaged in the fire, said fire officials, quoting Nur Hossain, one of the owners of the houses.

Meanwhile, another fire broke out at a warehouse in Pahartali around 1:40pm, gutting valuables worth around Tk 10 lakh.

Official sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit at the factory cum warehouse of Raven Fashion and Fabrics.

Two fire fighting units from Agrabad extinguished the flame around 3:30pm.

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হাফেন্স আন্সবেই