

NEWS IN *brief*

HR body calls on int'l clothing brands to ensure workers' rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and its Bangladeshi member organisation Odhikar urged international clothing brands to pressurise their supplier factories in the country to ensure workers' rights.

The brands should put the security and fundamental labour rights of workers at the forefront of their sourcing practices, they said in a joint statement yesterday.

The supplying companies have an obligation to ensure safe and fair working conditions that comply with internationally recognised human rights,

European journalists visit WFP programmes in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists from several reputed European news agencies and newspapers including BBC and Le Figaro attended a number of United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) assisted programmes in the country from November 26 to 29.

The journalists spoke with several of the 30,000 women who are supported by European Union funded Food Security for the Ultra Poor (FSUP) project, said a WFP press release yesterday.

Cuet convocation held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The second convocation of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) was held yesterday.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid presided over the ceremony while Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, vice chancellor of University of Asia Pacific, was the convocation speaker.

A total of 1,718 graduates from 2006-2007 sessions were awarded certificates while four students also received gold medals. Besides five MPhil and five MSc engineering students also received certificates.

Dr Md Jahangir Alam, vice chancellor of Cuet, also spoke at the programme.

Anjuman Ara Jamil passes away

UNB, Dhaka



Anjuman Ara Jamil, wife of Brig Gen (retd) Jamil Uddin Ahmad Bir Uttam who was assassinated along with Bangabandhu and his family members on August 15, 1975, passed away yesterday.

The former lawmaker was suffering from old-age complications and passed away at the age of 74.

Anjuman, survived by four daughters, will be laid to rest at Dhaka Cantonment Graveyard after a namaz-e-janaza at Mohakhali Old DOHS Mosque after Juma prayers today.



Citizens' rally

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and Bangladesh Jwالبayو Paribartan Karmasuchi will organise a citizens' rally demanding a stop to green house gas emission; Venue: In front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Human chain

Nagorik Chhatra Oikya will form a human chain demanding probe into the fire broke out in an Ashulia

garment factory; Venue: Before Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Rally

Bangladesh Labour Welfare Foundation will stage a rally on the occasion of World AIDS Day; Venue: In front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Sit-in

Protibadi Tarunya will stage a sit-in demanding food items free from



WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may rise by 1-3 degree Celsius and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:11pm and rises tomorrow at 6:24am.

Country's highest temperature 28.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 10.8 degrees at Chuadanga.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	27.5	15.7	68	63
Chittagong	26.8	15.6	81	75
Rajshahi	27.0	11.5	70	73
Rangpur	26.6	13.5	85	83
Khulna	27.5	13.7	74	72
Barisal	27.2	13.0	81	90
Sylhet	28.3	16.5	78	72
Cox's Bazar	28.2	16.0	72	76



A throng of voters queue up in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday as the election to Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) was underway at the BMA office. The photo was taken around 11:30am.

PHOTO: STAR

No immediate plan to ban Jamaat politics

Says Syed Ashraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The government has no intention to ban politics of Jamaat-e-Islami right now, said Local Government and Rural Development & Co-operatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam yesterday.

However, there would be no concession for those who committed crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War, he added.

Ashrafur, also the Awami League (AL) general secretary, was talking to journalists at Biswanath upazila headquarters in Sylhet after laying the foundation stone of the upazila auditorium.

He said the government agencies were sincerely trying to find the whereabouts of former lawmaker and BNP Organising Secretary (Sylhet Division) M Ilias Ali and, once known, his family would be immediately informed.

Biswanath is part of the constituency (Sylhet-2) of Ilias. He and his driver went missing on April 17 and police found his abandoned car in the capital's Banani the next morning.

Elected representatives of the upazila presented a memorandum to Ashrafur

through the Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sonamoni Chakma, seeking assistance in finding Ilias.

The signatories to the memorandum include Biswanath Upazila Parishad Vice-Chairman and the upazila BNP General Secretary Gous Khan, Vice-Chairperson Shova Akhtar Angura and Biswanath Union Parishad Chairman and the upazila BNP President Jalal Uddin.

Earlier addressing a views-exchange meeting of the district and city AL at Circuit House, Ashrafur said there was no alternative to an election in forming a government in a democratic system.

AL, having been long in the politics for the people, will come to power again through people's mandate. "We rely on the masses. We do not have the strength of arms or money," he said.

Despite the controversies, there will no doubt be a free and fair election in Bangladesh and the opposition will hopefully get their good senses and join it, he said.

Sylhet city Mayor and city AL President Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran was also present.

Don't attack police like cowards

Matia tells Jamaat-Shibir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury yesterday asked Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir to openly announce the date and time of encounters instead of attacking law enforcers like cowards.

"Why you cowards [Jamaat-Shibir] make freak attacks on police? Give a date and let's know the place, then come," she told a rally, organised by the Awami Jubo League at Shaheed Noor Hossain Square in the capital. She said, "Let the country's people see where you have stashed your arms and grenades."

Criticising the violence of Jamaat-Shibir, Matia, also an Awami League presidium member, said her party's youth wing, the Jubo League, was more than enough to face off the Jamaat-Shibir attacks along with people.

Referring to the opposition leader's announcement of countrywide road blockade on December 9, the AL leader said Khaleda Zia announced the programme only to boost up the morale of the Pakistani army in the month of victory.

About Khaleda's claim that the present government has been trying to declare a state of emergency in the country, Matia said those having public support and records of democratic politics did not go for emergency.

The minister also criticised Khaleda for claiming her two sons to be honest. Matia said if she [Khaleda] had the courage, she should tell her sons--Tarique Rahman and Arafat Rahman Koko--to go to the USA where they would face imprisonment.

EXTORTION CASE HC extends Tarique's bail for six months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday extended for six months its earlier order that granted bail to BNP leader Tarique Rahman in an extortion case filed during the regime of immediate past military-backed caretaker government.

The HC also extended its order that had stayed the proceedings of the case against Tarique, senior vice-chairman of BNP and son of its Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

The court passed the order after hearing a petition filed by Tarique's lawyer Mahbub Uddin Khokon on November 28 seeking extension of the HC's earlier order of bail and stay.

On April 1, 2007, Mir Zahir Hossain, managing director of Mir Akhter Hossain Ltd, filed a case with Dhammondi Police Station accusing Tarique's business partner Gias Uddin Al Mamun and six others of extorting Tk 53 lakh from him in 2004.

Tarique was shown arrested in the case on April 23, 2007.

In August, 2008, the HC granted bail to Tarique in this case and stayed the proceedings of the case, and later on extended the order of bail and stay at different times.

Tarique is accused in 14 criminal cases and on bail in 10 cases.

MKA lambasts Khaleda for road block call

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir yesterday lambasted BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia for announcing on Wednesday the December 9 countrywide road blockade over the demand for restoration of the caretaker government system.

"Roads belong to the country's people. It is illegal to block roads. Any particular person or group cannot go against the law. If Khaleda Zia blocks people's roads in the name of their wellbeing, I would say she is doing wrong," he said.

Muhiuddin was talking to journalists after addressing a meeting in Shankarpur Adarsha Dakhil Madrasa in Chandpur.

He said, "We, on behalf of the government, will try to make her take the right decisions. The government will take necessary action if Khaleda blocks people's thoroughfares stating the excuse of working for people's benefit."

Ensure security of defence lawyer's office

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tribunal led by Justice ATM Fazle Kabir with members Justice Obaidul Hassan and Judge M Shahinur Islam issued the directive following a petition of the defence.

On October 10, Abdur Razzaq, chief of the defence, told the tribunal some plain-clothes law enforcers had entered the chamber of Tajul Islam, a senior member of his team, at Paltan and interrogated lawyers present there the previous day.

As the tribunal asked the defence to file a written petition, they placed it on October 14 seeking the court's intervention to "stop harassment by the law enforcers".

Following the petition, the tribunal directed the Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Paltan Model Police

Station to submit reports in this regard.

Justice Kabir yesterday said they had received two separate reports from the DMP and Paltan police that said no members of law-enforcement agency went to Tajul's chamber that day. The tribunal, however, directed the police to remain alert about the lawyer's chamber to avoid any untoward incident.

Yesterday was fixed for recording testimony of the fourth defence witness against Jamaat leader Abdul Quader Mollah, but Tajul Islam said they could not produce the witness due to illness of a relative of the witness.

"We have asked you [the defence] to produce two defence witnesses today [Thursday]," said Justice Kabir.

"Couldn't you produce anyone?" asked Justice Hassan.

Tajul said they were facing different problems, as their witnesses were being "intimidated".

"We have asked you to give us a list of your witnesses so that we could ensure their security. But you did not submit the list and now you did not produce your witnesses. What can we do now?" said Justice Hassan.

"We will produce witness on Sunday," said Tajul.

The tribunal fixed Sunday for the case proceeding. **KAMARUZZAMAN AND MOJAHEED'S CASES**

The tribunal completed recording cross-examination of Majibar Rahman Khan Panu, 14th prosecution witness in the case against Jamaat leader

M u h a m m a d K a m a r u z z a m a n and adjourned the proceeding until December 4.

The tribunal also completed recording cross-examination of Ranjit Kumar Nath alias Babu Nath, seventh prosecution witness in the case against Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mojaheed before adjourning the case proceeding until December 5. **SAYEDEE'S CASE**

War crimes accused Jamaat leaders' counsels yesterday questioned the credibility of the investigation officer (IO) of the case against Jamaat leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee.

Defence counsel Abdur Razzaq said if IO Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Helal Uddin was proved as unreliable, statements of the 15 "absentee

HC quashes graft case against Sajeda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday scrapped the proceedings of a corruption case filed against Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, deputy leader of the parliament.

On July 10, 2008, the Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case on charge of amassing illegal wealth worth Tk 13.75 lakh and concealing information about the wealth.

The HC quashed the case's proceedings saying that the charges against Sajeda Chowdhury were not specifically disclosed in the case.

The verdict was prompted by a petition filed by Sajeda saying that the proceedings could not go on since the ACC could not complete its investigation within stipulated time.

SC upholds HC stay on CCCI polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a November 12 High Court order which stayed till December 11 the process for elections to the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), scheduled for December 6.

The HC also asked the CCCI authorities to explain why elections based on the then voter list should not be declared illegal.

The order came following a writ petition filed by a voter, Kaniz Farzana Rashed, challenging the list's legality, claiming that names of some persons were listed several times.

She prayed for elections after the flaws were corrected.

Yesterday, the SC disposed of a recent CCCI petition seeking stay on the HC order and asked the HC bench to dispose of the HC rule by December 12.