

Left parties to besiege ministry for power price hike tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Left-leaning parties will lay siege to the power, energy and mineral resources ministry tomorrow to protest government's initiative to hike power prices.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) and Gonotantrik Bam Morcha, an alliance of some left-leaning parties, announced the programme yesterday.

Mujahidul Islam Selim, president of CPB, declared the programme at a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital, said a press release issued jointly by the CPB and BSD.

The government is working to increase power tariff once again, and people should not bear the increased electricity prices this time, Selim told the rally, which was jointly organised by CPB and BSD.

Meanwhile, leaders of Gonotantrik Bam Morcha announced their protest programme on the same day regarding the issue.

Describing the initiative to increase power tariff as an anti-people step, the alliance has called upon the people to make their December 30 programme a success, it said in a separate press release.



Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Chairperson Sultana Kamal addresses a press conference TIB organised in the capital's Cirdap Auditorium to reveal its bi-annual "Corruption in Service Sector: National Households Survey 2012". On her left is TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

PHOTO: STAR

## SYLHET AIRPORT 400 passengers stuck in 18-hr flight delay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

About 400 Biman passengers demonstrated at Sylhet Osmani International Airport yesterday after announcement of an 18-hour delay in flight.

Officials said the flight was rescheduled by the traffic control office in Dhaka, and the local office had nothing to do with that.

There has been frequent flight rescheduling by Biman Bangladesh Airlines recently for a host of reasons, particularly shortage of aircraft.

Of the Biman passengers, 296 were bound for London, 32 for Jeddah, 27 for

Qatar and Dubai, 17 for Muscat and Kuwait, and 34 for Dhaka.

The Sylhet-Dhaka-London flight was to take off 2:30pm yesterday. It was rescheduled to leave Sylhet at 8:30am today.

An official said the Biman aircraft, which was supposed to take the passengers to London, did not land at Sylhet as per schedule yesterday.

The waiting passengers exchanged heated words with officials when informed of the flight delay.

Jeddah-bound passenger Hossain Ahmed said he might lose his job as his job visa would expire today (Saturday).

## 6 arrested with drugs in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives arrested six alleged drug traders with huge quantities of different drug items in separate drives in the capital on Thursday night.

In a drive, members of Detective Branch (DB) of Police arrested Anwar Hossain Kalu after raiding the house of one Solaiman Miah at Nizambagh at Kamrangirchar around 7:30pm.

DB's Senior Assistant Commissioner Mohammad Asaduzzaman said they also seized 1.6kg of heroin packed in 17 polythene bags and 2,500 pieces of Yaba tablets from the house.

"Kalu used to sell the drug to some drug retailers in the capital. He and his mother brought the drugs from the areas bordering with Indian and Cox's Bazar," he said.

"We are looking for his mother," he added.

In another drive, the DB arrested five people with 5,000 bottles of Phensedyl from the capital's Rampura area on that night. They also seized a truck carrying the drugs.

The arrestees were Masud, Wasim, Saju, Billal, and Biplob.

DB's Additional Deputy Commissioner Mashirul Rahman said acting on a tip off they raided the truck in front of Zahirul Islam City Gate around 9:35pm.

## Cycle procession held in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

With a view to popularise cycling in Chittagong city, the first ever cycle procession titled "Chittagong Critical Mass" was held yesterday.

Chittagong Adventure club organised the programme with assistance from Alliance Française de Chittagong.

The procession started from GEC intersection at 8:00am and ended at Shilpakala Academy.

## Country's democracy bloodstained: BNP

UNB, Dhaka

Opposition BNP yesterday alleged that democracy got bloodstained while human rights shackled in the country due to the misrule of the current regime.

"It seems the country is their (ruling party's) paternal property and they engage in looting where ever they get the chance. This is the present scenario of the country. Now human rights are enshackled, while democracy is choked with blood," BNP spokesperson Tariqul Islam told a rally in the capital.

Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of the BNP, arranged the programme in front of BNP's Nayapaltan central office demanding release of all the detained BNP leaders and activists, including acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, and withdrawal of 'false' cases filed against them.

People are passing through a critical time as the prices of all commodities have gone beyond their buying capacity, Tariqul said.

Refuting Awami League leader's allegation that BNP and Khaleda Zia were trying to save war criminals, he said, "We have repeatedly said, we are now saying and will say always that we are not trying to save the war criminals."

BNP wants the trial of the war criminals as it is a party of freedom fighters, but the trial has to be transparent and fair maintaining international standard, he added.

BNP joint secretary general Amanullah Aman, and its Dhaka city unit member secretary Abdus Salam also spoke on the occasion.

13 held while going to Malaysia illegally

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

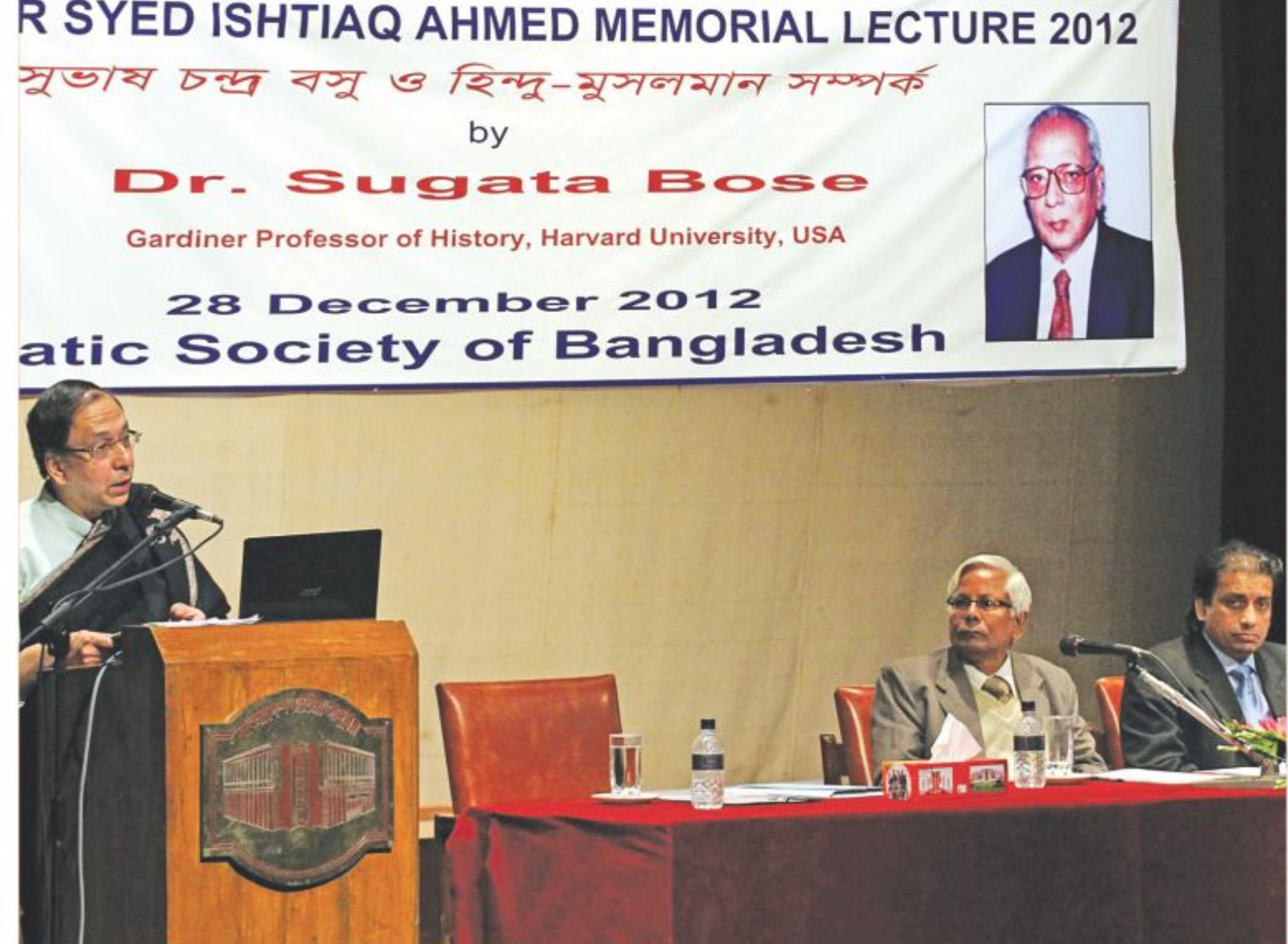
Thirteen people were detained from Cox's Bazar town on Thursday while attempting to go to Malaysia illegally.

Tipped-off, a team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-7) conducted a drive and nabbed the persons while they were boarding a boat at Sea Crown point in the town's Kalatoli area around 10:00pm on Thursday.

Rab sources said the detainees hailed from different villages of Jessore.

During primary interrogation, the detainees told the law enforcers that a human trafficking gang took them to Cox's Bazar from Jessore, promising to send them to Malaysia through sea ways.

The detainees were handed over to Cox's Bazar Model Police Station.



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## Beautify Dhaka city: Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

HM Ershad, former president and current member of parliament, yesterday emphasised the dire need for beautification and maintenance of the Dhaka city.

He also stressed the need for decentralising this city as it is burdened with overpopulation.

He made the remarks while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the renovated Baridhara Lakeside Park in the capital.

Ershad said, if he wins the next election, he will divide the whole country into seven provinces with provincial governments.

Mashrur Arefin, deputy managing director of City Bank, said the renovation of Baridhara Lakeside Park took 10 months to complete, with the work beginning in 2011 with Rajuk's permission.

City Bank financed the Tk 1.7 crore renovation project while Baridhara Society supervised it and Spotlight, an event management firm, carried out the year-long work, he said.

The renovation works included addition of walkways, sitting spaces, toilets within park area and jet fountains on the lake, he added.

The ceremony concluded with fireworks and a presentation showing the park before and after the renovation.

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