

Participants at a roundtable "Nuclear Power in Bangladesh: Prospects and Concerns" in The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



## HOLDING NATIONAL ELECTION Dr Kamal calls for non-partisan govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Against the backdrop of political crisis over the election-time government, Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday opined for a national dialogue to reach a consensus on preparing a framework for a non-partisan neutral government.

"We all want to see a free and fair election...The election will be acceptable to all if held under an independent election commission with a non-partisan neutral government," he said.

He was addressing a rally titled "National unity to defend national interest", attended mainly by leaders and activists of Gonoforum and Nagarik Oikya, a civil society platform, in the capital's Mohanagar Natyamancha.

Dr Kamal urged people to unite in creating a national consensus to overcome the crisis.

Expressing concern over the present state of the country's democracy, Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to a caretaker government, said the country was witnessing violent politics.

"The much talked about issues like religious bigotry, communalism and terrorism are not the disease, rather symptoms. Violent politics is the main disease...The prevailing condition showed bankruptcy of the political system," he observed.

About the prevailing political crisis, he, however, said, "External forces would not be able to solve the problem. Political problems should be solved through political processes."

Nagorik Oikya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna said people want to see dialogues between the two biggest political parties to resolve the political crisis but it was hardly possible in the prevailing situation.

"We are urging both leaders (of the ruling and opposition parties) to come on the right track. Otherwise, we all will take steps to bring you on the right track," he said, declaring to continue movement against "criminalised politics".

Former FBCCI president AK Azad, journalist Abu Sayeed Khan, eminent jurist Shahdin Malik, eminent columnist Syed Abul Maksud, and Shujan General Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar also spoke at the rally, moderated by Mostafa Mohsin Mantu of Gonoforum.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Khaled Shariful Islam, *left*, a Bangladeshi, holds his crest with two other winners and a host of a global idea contest on how to effectively raise awareness among people with hearing impairment. The award ceremony was held at a hotel in California, USA, on April 13.

## Amin Ahmed Chowdhury laid to rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Valiant freedom fighter Maj Gen (retd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury (Bir Bikram), who died Friday night, was laid to rest in Banani Graveyard in the capital yesterday.

The Bangladesh Army gave him a guard of honour before the burial after Asr prayers. Earlier, a namaz-e-janaza was held at Azad Mosque in Gulshan.

UNB reports, Acting President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed their deep shock at the death of Amin Ahmed.

In separate condolence messages, they recalled the contributions of Amin Ahmed to the nation, and said the nation lost a patriotic and dedicated personality.

Besides, Sector Commanders' Forum Chairman Air Vice-Marshal (retd) AK Khandaker, Citizens Rights Movement President Maj (retd) Md Mafizul Huq Sarkar, and its General Secretary Tusar Rehman expressed shock over the death.

## 20 injured in clash over stalking in Gazipur

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

At least 20 people were injured in a clash between people of two villages on two sides of the Shitalakkhya river at Raed Bazar in Kapasia upazila of Gazipur yesterday.

Ferry movement between Raed Ghat and Borama Ghat was cut for three hours after the clash.

Quoting locals, police said the villagers of Raed Bazar and Borama in Sripur upazila engaged in the clash around 9:00am over stalking of two Borama women by some Raed Bazar young men.

Since April 14, tension had been prevailing between the villagers of the two villages over the stalking at Borama Ghat, police added.

## IMPROVING CTG TRAFFIC SYSTEM

# Mass awareness, political will must

The Daily Star roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Improvement of Chittagong city's traffic system, mainly stuck due to a lack of mass awareness and political will, essentially requires transport planning and traffic management, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

The roundtable, "Traffic System in Port City: Ineffectiveness & Way Out", was jointly organised by The Daily Star and Rotary Club of Chittagong Mohanagar at The Daily Star Conference Centre, Chittagong.

Town planner Subhash Barua said the city's master plan of 1995 must be implemented to improve the system.

"Rail and waterway services around the city should be introduced to improve traffic system and reduce traffic congestion," he said.

Chowdhury Hasan Mahmud Hasni, a councillor and panel mayor of Chittagong

City Corporation, said the local government institutions should be strengthened and given more authority to work freely in addressing traffic problems.

Footpaths should be freed from illegal occupiers so that people can walk without hindrance, said Delwar Hossain Majumder, ex-president of the Institution of Engineers, Chittagong.

Private schools should be relocated to the outskirts and a law should be enacted so that city schools provide buses to ferry students, he said.

He also emphasised on identifying and solving faults in roads and junctions and on continuous motivational and awareness raising campaigns.

Kafil Uddin Ahmmad, president of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners' Federation, opined for changing the approach to improve the traffic system.



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