

Quader annoyed by BCL flattery

Rebukes its leaders, activists in Rajshahi for politicising govt programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader rebuked Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders and activists who were chanting political slogans in a government programme in Rajshahi city yesterday.

"Bangladesh has now turned into a factory for producing leaders. Many kinds of leaders -- atineta, patineta, sakineta, adhulineta -- have fanned out across the country," he said.

The road transport and bridges minister launched into a blistering criticism after BCL activists started chanting slogans welcoming him on behalf of different city and district unit leaders when his name was announced as the chief guest at Digital Innovation Fair on the Rajshahi Government College ground.

"It is a digital fair, not any political meeting, rally or even a political discussion. Therefore, there is no need to shout political slogans," Quader said.

As he criticised, BCL men started clapping, only adding to his disappointment.

Quader said, "Those who are being criticised for chanting slogans are now clapping. You have to come out of such

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From left, Masud Karim, Muhammad Abdul Mazid, AMA Muhith, Siddiqua Zaman and Dr Pabitra Sarker at the screening of a documentary based on life and work of noted educationist Prof Anisuzzaman in the capital's Bangladesh National Museum yesterday, marking his 80th birthday.

Prof Anisuzzaman a lighthouse

Speakers tell documentary screening marking his 80th birthday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman is a lighthouse for the nation, said speakers yesterday at the screening of a documentary based on the noted educationist's life and work marking his 80th birthday.

Organised by Masud Karim, convener of Bangladesh Documentary Filmmakers Association, the screening was held in the auditorium of Bangladesh National Museum.

The 45-minute documentary titled "Batighar" is made by Masud.

"His (Anisuzzaman) speeches, even if it is two or three minutes long, motivate the audience to think deeply," said Finance Minister AMA Muhith. "All the things he had done for the nation cannot be forgotten."

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Red meat crisis hits Dhaka residents hard

Traders threaten countrywide strike to press home their demands

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

It was one of the happiest days for Kazi Mashur Rahman yesterday as it was the wedding day of his beloved youngest daughter Khushi.

The Rahman family had made all arrangements for a traditional Old Dhaka gala wedding on Larmini Street in Wari where hundreds of guests had been invited.

With all the nitty-gritty details of the big day already taken care of, an eleventh-hour crisis sunk the father's heart to rock bottom -- there is no red meat in the market.

What he would treat his guests with, Kazi pondered.

Being desperate to save the day, Kazi scurried to the cattle market in Gabtoli and bought a cow for the wedding feast.

A pale and weary Kazi was found wiping the sweat off his eyebrows while trying to hastily finish preparations for the wedding and at the same time explaining his ordeal to the Daily Star last evening.

The red meat crisis hit Dhaka residents hard when meat traders went on a six-day strike last Monday, protesting "overcharging" of fees (hasil) by the lessee at Gabtoli cattle market, the prime source of red meat in the city.

The crisis deepened on the weekend when the demand is usually high for the high-protein commodity in a family meal.

With shutters closed at most of the



A meat seller at Dayaganj in Jatrabari area dozes before his shop having no meat to sell during the strike being observed by meat traders of the capital.

butcher shops, the demand for red meat has been increasing all around the city.

If the red meat was found at any store, it was selling at an exorbitant price.

Several of the chain grocery outlets such as Meena Bazar and Swapno had been carrying the item, but their prices ran as high as Tk 545 a kg for beef and Tk 799 a kg for mutton.

A Swapno official told The Daily Star seeking anonymity that under normal circumstances, his store sells around 300 kg of beef each day on an average, but "today, we could arrange only 50 to 60 kg for the customers."

Saurav Rahman, a customer shopping for red meat at Wari outlet of Swapno, was upset to see a high price tag for beef there.

He, however, left the store after buying beef from the outlet as he had "family pressure".

With red meat unavailable, demand for chicken shot up, triggering a hike in its price by Tk 60 per kg.

Amir Hossain Khan arranged a feast for his grandson's circumcision, but entertained his guests with chicken instead after failing to find beef at a reasonable price.

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Kirton event attacked in Noakhali ashram, 2 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A group of people attacked the participants of a kirton, a session of Hindu devotional songs, at an ashram in Noakhali's Companiganj upazila Thursday.

The attack closed the programme at Sree Sree Radha Krishna Seba Ashram.

Police arrested two attackers and filed a case with Companiganj Police Station against 40 to 50 people in connection with the incident.

The ashram's president, Prabir Kumar Sheel, said 40 to 50 people led by local auto-rickshaw drivers Badsha Miah, 42, and Abu Sayed, 24, broke through the gate and attacked the participants including women and children.

They turned off the loudspeakers and vandalised some equipment, forcing the panicked people to leave.

On information police rushed in and detained the two.

Officer-in-Charge of Companiganj Syed Fazle Rabby said the two men tried to turn off the loudspeakers during Magrib prayers.

Superintendent of Police of Noakhali Elias Sharif visited the spot yesterday.

Short stories, big smiles

MAHDI AL MUHTASIM

There is a sense of yearning and curiosity connected to a short story. An incomplete sensation -- even though it lingers, can be gratifying as well.

A short story may highlight seemingly little events or incidents of our lives, or focus on little delights or melancholies, but as Rabinranath Tagore has said, "shesh hoye hoilo na shesh" (it ended, yet it did not), a short story can leave an enduring impression on our psyche.

Like previous years, this year's Ekushey book fair also drew flocks of curious readers -- buying, making queries and turning pages of the short story collections of their favourite authors.

Dr Md Fazle Elahi, a textile engineer, was flipping through the pages of "Abul Mansur Ahmader Shreshtha Galpo" (best stories of Abul Mansur Ahmad) edited by Dr Nurul Amin at the stall of Daily Star Books at the Suhrawardy Udyan premises of the book fair yesterday.

"When I first read his satirical story 'Relief Work' in the textbook of Class-IX, I became a fan of his writing that depicted the realities of the society," said Elahi, who came to the fair with his wife and children. "I bought the compilation of his (Abul Mansur) short stories for my collection," he added. "The print quality is also good."

"But, 'Aina' (mirror) and 'Food Conference' are still my favourites," said Elahi's wife Laila Arjumand, standing next to him. Meanwhile, their daughter, Maryam Zafira, a third grader, cheerily said, "And I bought 20 books."

Yesterday being a holiday, booklovers were seen swarming the stalls at the Bangla Academy and Suhrawardy Udyan premises of the book fair.

Surrounded by stalls of children's litera-



ture -- the Shishu Chattar, set up around a banyan tree, was filled with children. Even the overcrowding did not dampen their spirit. Some sat on their fathers' shoulders to catch a glimpse of their favourite characters of TV show Sisimpur.

"People are mostly looking for collection of short stories at our stall," said Shahadat Hossain, proprietor of Anwasha Prokashani. Nimish Hoque's "Hasir



Golposamagra" and Humayun Ahmed's "Shishu-Kishor Golposamagra" were in high demand, he said.

Humayun's "Golposamagra" (collection of stories) and "Amar Prio Bhoutic Golpo" (my favourite ghost stories) were getting much attention at Kakoli publication.

Meanwhile, Ghashphoring (grasshopper)'s stall, was filled with children's laughter. Little bookworm Mithila was all smiles as she got an autograph of writer-cartoonist Ahsan Habib after buying his book "Bhoot Samagra" (collection of ghost stories).

"Earlier, a writer used to start their literary journey through short stories. Short stories remain an important part of Bangla literature,

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