

BNP demands new election commission

Several thousand join Ctg rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Speakers in a public rally organised by Chattogram division unit of BNP yesterday demanded cancellation of the present Election Commission (EC), and formation of a new one.

"People have no trust in the Election Commission and electoral system, and very few voters -- around 15 percent -- were present in the by-elections," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir.

"So, we demand that this election commission be cancelled and a new one be formed comprising of qualified persons accepted by everybody," he said.

He was addressing the rally as chief guest, on Nur Ahmed Road in Kazir Dewri area of the port city, demanding release of party chief Khaleda Zia from jail.

Several thousand supporters and activists of the party joined the rally, without any major hindrance. Although Chattogram Metropolitan Police gave permission for the rally only on Friday -- on 27 conditions -- a large number of people flocked to the event from different upazilas of Chattogram and other neighbouring districts.

"They [government] are even interfering into the work of media," Fakhru said, adding that the government has made the judiciary, police and administration partisan.

Criticising the budget for 2019-20 fiscal, Fakhru said it would favour the rich and bring miseries to the poor.

"Prices of essentials have already increased after the budget was passed," he said, also criticising the increase in gas price.

Demanding that Khaleda Zia is freed from jail, Fakhru said the government was not providing her with proper treatment.

"She is critically ill... the government will have to free her for her proper treatment," he said.

BNP national standing committee member Khondokar Mosharraf Hossain said the EC published detailed results of national polls after six months, where it was seen that 100 percent votes were cast in 213 polling centres.

"This shows what kind of election it was," he said.

"The government tried to destroy BNP, but BNP cannot be destroyed," Mosharraf said.

Moudud Ahmed, also a standing committee member, said the government is responsible for creating a great crisis by not repatriating 11 lakh Rohingya refugees.

"It is the diplomatic failure of the government, for which no country stands by us," he said. "Now the government is making permanent shelters for the Rohingyas... they would spread terrorism after a few days."

"Rohingyas will have to be repatriated

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



BNP activists chanted slogans demanding release of party Chairperson Khaleda Zia, at its divisional rally on Chattogram city's Nur Ahmed Road yesterday. Inset, Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir addressed the gathering.

PHOTO: STAR

Taskforce formed to check milk adulteration

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'singh

Amid concerns about the quality of packaged and non-packaged milk available in the market, the authorities of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) yesterday formed a taskforce to check adulteration of milk.

The seven-member team will collect samples from different dairy farms and test those at BAU laboratory, said Prof Dr Md Harun-or-Rashid, head of dairy science department.

It will examine standard of milk and milk products through research and publish the findings, said Dr Harun, also chairman of the taskforce.

The taskforce was formed upon directive of Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Lutful Hassan, said its member secretary Dr Mohammad Ashikul Islam of dairy science.

The other members are: Prof Md Nurul Islam of dairy science; Prof MAM Yahia Khandoker, director of BAU research unit; Prof SM Lutful Kabir of microbiology and hygiene department; Prof Razia Sultana of agricultural chemistry; and Prof Kazi Rafiqul Islam of pharmacology.

Various antibiotics and lead being found in pasteurised and non-pasteurised milk have dominated news headlines over the last couple of weeks.

TRAFFIC CHAOS IN CTG

CPA chairman denies liability of port activity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) Chairman Rear Admiral Zulfiqur Aziz yesterday denied that activities in the port was in any way responsible for the recent week-long acute traffic congestion on the port city's important thoroughfare, that links the city with the port and the airport.

He opined that vehicular movement was being hampered on the road since it was narrowed down at many points mainly due to cracks developed on it, following heavy rainfall and waterlogging, immediate repair work by city corporation on those damaged portions and also due to the ongoing construction work of elevated expressway on a portion of the road.

The port chairman was addressing a press conference, following reports published in media accusing CPA of the gridlock.

The city's traffic was badly disrupted for more than a week till July 17, hurting business activities at the two adjoining export processing zones and causing sufferings to

thousands of city commuters; many who had booked air tickets to travel had to miss their scheduled flights due to it.

Zulfiqur Aziz, however, admitted that due to a lack of alternative road, goods- and container-carrying vehicles to and from the port have to use the same road.

Hundreds of those vehicles remain waiting in long queues on a part of the thoroughfare throughout most of the day before getting entry to the port as there is no truck terminal in the city, and it apparently worsened the congestion but the port is not responsible for this, he said.

He claimed that during the period, daily delivery of containers from the port were less than 4,000 TEUs (twenty equivalent units), which was not much higher than a normal busy day, and that shows that the port's activities were not the main reason for the gridlock.

The daily delivery at different times in the last few months rose up to 5,000, to 6,000 TEUs, but such traffic jam was never created before, he said.

He underscored the need for

immediate construction and development of two proposed alternative ring-roads including one stretching from Agrabad Access Road to EPZ Road through Boropole and Anandabazar, and the other connecting GEC-Sagarika-City Protection Embankment for the use of port-bound vehicles.

Development of these two roads would reduce traffic on the existing thoroughfare to airport as well as enhance the port's productivity, he said.

Aziz informed that the CPA initiated to construct a truck terminal at its proposed Bay Terminal site, which would be make operational by the end of 2020.

CPA is preparing a database of the port users as well as drivers and helpers, and that is why it has made submission of documents like driving licence and NIDs mandatory for them, as part of ISPS (International Ship and Port Facility Security) Compliance, said the port chairman, adding that they would now issue passes at several spots beside the port gates in order to expedite it and reduce the delay.

Reform in politics a must: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A political reform is necessary as the country's present political practices fell victim to criminalisation and are failing to establish democracy and good governance, said speakers at a roundtable in Rajshahi yesterday.

They suggested formulating laws with guidance of the constitution to appoint a neutral Election Commission and reforming the electoral system, as the recent election has failed to achieve people's confidence.

The speakers were addressing a discussion on "Political reform in Bangladesh and citizens' perspective" at a city restaurant, organised by civil society platform Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan). Ahmed Shafiqul Islam, president of its Rajshahi chapter, chaired the event.

Nearly a hundred discussants including politicians, professionals, development workers, social activists and journalists took part in the roundtable.

Reading out the keynote paper, Shujan's central coordinator Dilip Kumar Sarker presented an 18-point proposal for political reform.

He said they would collect people's opinions from all divisions and sit with political leaders to fix a set of proposals with an aim to bring about a change in politics and build a country with ideologies of the Liberation War.

Local Awami League leader

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Woman's body recovered from launch cabin

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

Police recovered the body of a woman from a cabin of a launch at Barishal Launch Terminal yesterday morning.

The woman was identified as Akhi Aktar, 25, said Md Nurul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station.

The woman had rented a staff cabin of MV-Surovi from Sadarghat in Dhaka; she was travelling with a man, who her father confirmed was not her husband, said the OC.

According to the inquest report, Akhi was strangled to death, he added.

The man was seen in CCTV footage of the launch, but he could not be identified yet, Nurul told The Daily Star.

The body was sent to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Asked whether she might have been raped, the OC said it would be known after autopsy.

A murder case was filed with the police station.



PHOTO: TITU DAS

HISTORY ON WHEELS... Students of Sher-e-Bangla Girls High School look at Liberation War memorabilia at a mobile Liberation War Museum in Barishal city. They were seen lining up to board the bus in front of the school on Thursday, inset. The mobile museum will travel through eight upazilas of the district for one month, museum sources said.

Road accidents kill 4, injure 9

STAR REPORT

Four people were killed and nine injured in road accidents in three districts yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Chattogram, a man was killed and six people were injured in a head-on collision between a truck and a CNG-run auto-rickshaw in Mirsharai upazila.

Oli Ahmed, 35, driver of the auto-rickshaw from the upazila's Alokdia area, died on the spot, said Joraganj Police Station Sub-inspector Sirajul Islam.

The injured -- who were aboard the vehicle -- were taken to Chattogram

Medical College Hospital, said the SI. The trucker fled the scene leaving the truck, he added.

In Faridpur, two people were killed and three injured after a truck fell into a roadside ditch in Shibrampur area of Sadar upazila.

Robin Islam, 22, and Kamrul Islam, 35, died instantly, Karimpur Highway Police Station SI Joynul Islam quoted locals as saying.

The accident took place as driver of the Pirojpur-bound truck lost his control over the vehicle, said the SI. The injured were taken to Faridpur Medical College Hospital, he further said.

Police seized the truck but the driver fled the scene.

In Netrakona, a youth was killed as a truck hit him on Purbadhala-Birishiri road in Razar Bazar area of Purbadhala upazila.

The victim -- identified as Shamim Mia, 25 -- was from Elashpur village in Purbadhala.

Purbadhala Police Station Officer-in-Charge (investigation) Md Mizanur Rahman said Shamim died on the way to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Police seized the truck and arrested helper Tareq Mia, 22. The driver managed to flee, said the OC.

Malaysian labour market to open in August: minister

BSS, Gopalganj

The labour market in Malaysia is going to open again, as the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers will start from next month, said Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Imran Ahmed yesterday.

"The decision of returning illegal workers to the country from Malaysia has been finalised. Recruitment of new workers will begin in August as the first step in this regard is done," he said.

The minister was talking to reporters after paying tribute to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at his mausoleum in Tungipara of Gopalganj.

"We have discussed the issue [labour market] with Malaysia. From now on, trained female workers will be sent so that they could work there without difficulty," he added.

The minister offered a special prayer for the departed soul of Bangabandhu and his family members.

Wage Earners' Welfare Board Director General Gazi Mohammad Julhas; Bangladesh Overseas Employment Service Limited Managing Director Maran Kumar Chakraborty; joint secretaries Zahid Hossain and Mozaffar Hossain; lawmaker Benjir Ahmed; and Deputy Commissioner Shahida Sultana were present there, among others.

Aurora

3 Bedroom Apartments at Uttara

Asset DEVELOPMENTS

Please Feel Free To Call

Tel: (+8802) 55068001-5

01713 063243

01714 016717

01713 367486

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)
BARC Campus, New Airport Road
Farmgate, Dhaka-1215
Bangladesh

Vacancy Announcement

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) under the framework of SAARC has been working for strengthening agricultural research and technology transfer through regional network among agricultural research/extension institutions and policy makers in the South Asian Region. SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) is inviting application for the following Professional Position(s).

1. Senior Program Specialist (Fisheries)
[to be recruited from the nationals of the SAARC Member Countries]
2. Senior Program Specialist (Crops)
[to be recruited from the nationals of the SAARC Member Countries]

Age and qualification may be relaxed for highly deserving candidates.

The application form, details of appointment notice, qualification and experience, terms and conditions, salaries/allowances, facilities and benefits etc. shall be available at the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), BARC Campus, Farmgate, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh and in website: <http://www.sac.org.bd>.

All applications should reach to Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) not later than 20th August 2019.

All rights reserved by the authority.

Dr. S. M. Bokhtiar
Director, SAC

GD-1247