



Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka, which stands as a tribute to the martyrs of the Language Movement, is still buzzing with crowds three days after February 21. People from all walks of life were seen taking a stroll through the monument site on the weekend, maybe taking a bit of the proud history with them as well. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Malaysia sees investment opportunities in Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

There is huge potential for Malaysian investment in Bangladesh, especially in palm oil, rubber and timber industries, as the demand for such commodities has increased in Bangladesh in recent times, Malaysian Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin said.

Bangladesh's rising market of 180 million people and growing housing and construction industries are a good opportunity for Malaysia to invest, the minister said at a press conference at a city hotel yesterday.

Zuraida arrived on February 23, after visiting India, to see the potentials of boosting bilateral trade and investments.

"Compared to last December, palm oil import from Malaysia to Bangladesh has increased by 113 percent. Similarly, import volume of other products like timber and rubber has also gone up."

Bilateral trade between the two countries is more than \$2 billion.

The minister held meetings with the prime minister, commerce minister, finance minister, business community. After returning to Malaysia, she will meet Malaysian investors and convince them that Bangladesh is a lucrative investment destination.

'Govt relying on repressive laws to gag voices'

Says CPB president at party's 12th congress

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming the Digital Security Act (DSA) a "repressive law", Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Mujahidul Islam Selim yesterday said the government is formulating such laws to gag the people's voices.

"The ruling party has lost its public support. Instead of depending on people, it is now relying on bureaucracy and the state machinery to keep its hold on power," Selim said.

"The government is retaining power forcibly to continue its collective plundering and avert punishment for its misdeeds," he added.

He said this at the inauguration of CPB's 12th congress yesterday, at Kazi Bashir Auditorium in the capital's Gulistan.

Selim called upon left-leaning and progressive political parties, persons and forces to unite to get over personal interest and create a larger platform to bring a change and ensure peace, security and rights of people.

"We revived democracy through bloodshed against the military. But democracy is now seized. Election has become a farce, and people's right to vote has been taken away," he said.

The country is now dealing with four dangers – communalism, imperialism, plundering and undemocratic practices – said the CPB president.

"It is time to work with a specific agenda to put left democratic forces in power as an alternative," he said.

CPB adviser Manzurul Ahsan Khan said the country fought in the Liberation War over voting rights.

"The ruling Awami League has grabbed all power. Its absolute power has given birth to

absolute corruption," he said.

To sort out the crisis, citizens will have to fight for the right to vote first. A greater united movement of CPB and other like-minded political parties will have to be formed to face the crisis, he said.

CPB adviser Shahidullah Chowdhury said CPB is a party for working-class people. "Developing CPB as a party for working-class people should be the aim of the 12th congress," he said.

Underscoring the need for creating unity among left-leaning parties, CPB general

The ruling party has lost its public support. Instead of depending on people, it is now relying on bureaucracy and the state machinery to keep its hold on power.

MUJAHIDUL ISLAM SELIM
CPB President

secretary Mohammad Shah Alam said like the ruling parties, the larger political parties of the country not only follow capitalism but have also created amity with fundamentalists like Jamaat-e-Islami.

The session was inaugurated by hoisting the national and CPB flags. CPB leaders and activists started gathering at the programme grounds since early morning.

Representatives of several countries sent messages on the eve of the congress, where a total of 229 party veterans were awarded for their contributions.

Australia to recruit IT professionals from country

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Australia will recruit IT professionals from Bangladesh, and a deal has been signed between two companies of the respective countries in this regard.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Bangladesh's state-owned recruiting agency – Bangladesh Overseas Employment Services Ltd (BOESL) – and Australian company Sterning – on Thursday.

BOESL Managing Director Billal Hossain and Sterning Operation Director Paul Egan signed the deal via an online ceremony.

Under the MoU, to be effective for three years, Sterning will arrange jobs for Bangladeshis in the IT sector for its client companies in Australia, Bangladesh embassy in Canberra said in a statement yesterday.

From the Bangladeshi end, BOESL will arrange the supply of these professionals.

BOESL Executive Manager Mahabubur Rahman, Bangladesh Consul General in Sydney Khandker Masudul Alam, Bangladesh Embassy in Canberra Counsellor (Labour) Md Salahuddin and Sterning Founder and CEO Joseph Merz were

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Aiming to develop trade, communication

Info minister holds talks with Assam CM, governor

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud said he had successful discussions with state leaders of Assam on how to develop trade and communication with the neighbouring Indian state.

"Successful discussions were held on raising trade along with road, rail, river and air connectivity between the north-eastern bordering state and Bangladesh," he said.

Dr Hasan said this following two separate meetings with Assam Chief Minister (CM) Himanta Biswas Sarma and Governor Jagdish Mukhi at the Chief Minister's office and Raj Bhaban, respectively, on Thursday afternoon.

During the meeting, Governor Jagdish and the minister discussed raising trade, cultural activities and communication, aiming to accelerate close relations between Bangladesh and Assam. At the same time, they underscored the need for afforestation to maintain balance between the ever-increasing industrialisation and the environment.

The Assam governor also expressed interest in organising a folk festival in Gawhati, considering the proposal of Bangladesh lawmaker and singer Mamta Begum, who was present during the meeting.

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'Truth yet to be uncovered' Says Mirza Fakhrul about BDR mutiny

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is a conspiracy behind withholding the investigation report of the BDR mutiny, alleged BNP yesterday.

"It [BDR mutiny] was not just a rebellion; there was a far-reaching conspiracy behind it. The main reason for this was to break the morale of the army and that was their main objective," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

"We have not yet received a proper investigation report on who was really behind the revolt, nor has the report of the army's investigation been released," he said.

He said this after paying homage to the victims of the carnage at the capital's Banani army graveyard in the morning.

"Today, even after so many years of our misfortune, we have not been able to find out the truth. Who was behind it, and why did it happen? We think there is a conspiracy behind the fact that the investigation report is not being published," said the BNP leader.

Fakhrul said February 25 is a very sad and terrible day for the whole nation, as 57 army officials were killed on the day through the BDR mutiny.

"Our national security system completely collapsed through this incident," he said.

Fakhrul expressed deep shock at the loss of lives in the BDR mutiny and prayed for the salvation of the departed souls.

He along with party leaders and former army officials went to the graveyard and placed wreaths at the monument.

PRAYER
TIMING
FEB 26

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5:15	12:45	4:30	6:05	7:30
Jamaat	5:50	1:15	4:45	6:10	8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

A time just for children

Shishu Prahor held at Boi Mela

DIPAN NANDY

As per tradition, "Shishu Prahor" was set to be held on the first Friday of Amar Ekushey Boi Mela. But due to the pandemic, it was held yesterday instead, on the 10th day of the fair. The fair ground was packed with children of all ages, who visited with their parents.

Among these enthusiastic visitors, ten-year-old Ayushi Tarunima had visited the fair with her mother Tasnim Afroz, who said she came to the fair on the holiday mainly for her daughter. Ayushi had bought her favourite rhyme book, which she was proudly carrying around.

Another young book enthusiast, Ayaz Binte Rahman (8), visited the fair with his father Ashutosh Rahman all the way from Rampura. Ayaz said he liked ghost stories and informed that he too was working on a ghost story book that he was drawing himself. This is why he bought a ghost storybook for inspiration.

Azad, manager of Shishu Mela stall

at Shishu Chattar, said, "Our sales have increased a lot today, as compared to other days. The children are going to different stalls to buy their favourite books."

Talking to this correspondent, popular science-fiction writer and novelist Muhammed Zafar Iqbal said when a child grows up, their own preferences will branch out. There is no point in forcing children to read a specific genre as long as the child develops the habit of reading.

According to Bangla Academy, hundreds of new books were published at the fair yesterday. Among them were Snehashis Roy's "Sadhu o Soshaner Upokotha" (Danar Moray), Samyasthee Bhowmik's "Amra Shorbonam" (Anyaprokash), Abu Ali's "Sharebazarer Shohojpath" (Jyotiprokash), Saif Ibne Rafique's "Corporate Chagolta Goru Hote Chai" (Antivirus Publication), and Suraiya Parvin's "Judhobondi Shoishob" (Koly Publications). Shishu Prahor will be held again today from 11:00am to 1:00pm.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

During Shishu Prahor, a segment traditionally held at the book fair for children, a young reader was seen attentively going through the pages of a picture book. He flips through the pages with his one free-hand, while the other daintily grasps onto the books that'll accompany him home. Many children of different ages, like this little one right here, visited the fair in search of their favourite reads yesterday.

Woman's body found in Ashulia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Police yesterday recovered a woman's body from the roadside in Savar's Ashulia, on the outskirts of Dhaka.

The body of the woman, aged around 34 years, was found in a sack on the southwest side of Rangamati Bridge in Ashulia's Shimulia union around 1:00pm yesterday, said Delowar Hossain, Ashulia Police Station's SI.

Police assume that she died three or four days ago, as the body was partially decomposed, said the SI.

Police recovered the body after being informed by locals. The identity of the victim and cause of death could not be known immediately.

The body is being sent for an autopsy, added Delowar.