

Zia's 42nd death anniversary today

UNB, Dhaka



The BNP will observe the 42nd death anniversary of its founder and former president Ziaur Rahman today.

The party and its different associate bodies have chalked out a 13-day programme to observe the death anniversary across the country with due respect.

The observance of Zia's death anniversary programmes began yesterday through a discussion programme at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, which will end on June 10.

The programmes include arranging discussion meetings, seminars, photo exhibitions, wearing black badges, publishing posters and supplements in newspapers and distributing food and relief materials among the destitute.

Ziaur Rahman who founded the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in 1978 was assassinated by a group of disgruntled army officers at Chittagong Circuit House on May 30, 1981.

3 Bangladeshi peacekeepers injured in IED blast in Mali

UNB, Dhaka

Three Bangladeshi peacekeepers were injured in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast in Mali on Sunday morning.

The blast took place at around 9:30am local time in Mali, when a motorcade of a patrol team under the Bangladesh Formed Police Unit (BANFPU-2) reached a remote desert road along the mountains of Gundam-Tongka-Niaphungke Highway, some 15km off from the Gundam Super Camp in Mali's Timbuktu Region, according to a press release issued from Police headquarters here yesterday evening.

The Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC), which was carrying the policemen, was also damaged in the incident, the release added.

The Police headquarters did not disclose the identities of the three injured Bangladeshi police peacekeepers.

The patrol team was part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

Boy killed as rod

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Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead around 12:45pm, Inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of the DMCH police outpost, told The Daily Star.

Matin Biswas, a sub-inspector of Banani Police Station, said they, after primary investigation and talking to witnesses, learnt that the rod fell about 60 feet to the ground below.

An employee of a shop nearby said, "This is sheer negligence. People walk there and trains run. Workers should have been on the ground to stop people and divert them."

During a spot visit, this correspondent saw workers working on the expressway even though people were walking beneath. The same was noticed at the Mohakhali level crossing where people walk, and vehicles and trains ply under the expressway.

An expressway worker, who was about 100 yards away from the incident, on condition of anonymity, told this newspaper, "No one was deployed beneath to prevent people's entry there."

"We only restrict people's movement during a major work like lifting girders or viaducts ... The authorities usually do not take adequate security measures during minor work on the viaducts," he said.

AHMS Kamal, project director of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway, could not be reached for comments despite multiple attempts.

This paper tried to talk to expressway officials at the site office in Banani, but they refused to comment.

On August 15 last year, five people were killed after a segment of a box girder of the BRT project fell on a car at the Jasimuddin Road intersection on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway. The crane that was lifting the girder segments toppled.

The highway was neither closed nor was the traffic diverted for the work.



Smoke coming out of a brick kiln in Chechuri village of Khulna's Dumuria. Bricks are baked in such earthen ovens set up at several homes in the village. People make the bricks and sell them ignoring the harm they are doing to the environment.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Russia hits military facility in Ukraine

5 aircraft damaged, Odesa port hit

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russia yesterday said its military had hit Ukrainian air bases in overnight strikes and Ukrainian forces had shelled industrial facilities inside Russia as both sides sought the upper hand ahead of what Kyiv hopes will be a decisive counter-offensive.

In a rare acknowledgement of damage to a military "target", Ukraine said that work was under way to restore a runway and that five aircraft were taken out of service in the western region of Khmelnytskyi, although it did not name the site or sites.

A large military airfield was located in the region before the war. "At the moment, work is continuing to contain fires in storage facilities for fuel and lubricants and munitions," the Khmelnytskyi region governor's office said.

Russian state-owned news agency RIA cited the defence ministry as saying more than one air base was hit, but there was no confirmation from Ukraine of damage to any other air bases.

The Ukrainian capital came under attack for the 16th time this month in the morning after a second successive night

of bombardments. But officials said most of the drones and missiles fired overnight had been shot down and no targets were hit in the morning.

Ukraine's military said an attack on Odesa port had caused a fire and damaged infrastructure but did not specify whether the damage threatened grain exports.

Ukraine has stepped up drone and sabotage attacks against targets inside Russia as it prepares for the counteroffensive. The governor of Russia's Belgorod region, which borders Ukraine, said several frontier settlements were shelled simultaneously by Ukrainian forces yesterday.

Two industrial facilities were hit in the town of Shebekino and four employees were wounded, Vyacheslav Gladkov wrote on Telegram.

Russia said yesterday that the Black Sea grain deal would no longer be operational unless a UN agreement with Moscow to overcome obstacles to Russian grain and fertiliser exports was fulfilled.

This month Moscow reluctantly agreed to extend the Black Sea grain deal until July 17, but said more progress had to be made to advance its own interests.

SUDAN CONFLICT

Heavy clashes in capital as truce set to expire

UN says nearly 1.4m people displaced from their homes

REUTERS, Dabai

Gunshots and artillery fire rocked the Sudan's capital yesterday, residents said, hours before the expiry of a shaky ceasefire deal that had brought some respite from a six-week-old conflict but little humanitarian access.

Fighting continued from Sunday into yesterday in the south and west of Omdurman, one of three adjoining cities that make up Sudan's greater capital. Across the River Nile in southern Khartoum residents also reported clashes late on Sunday.

Sudan's army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been locked in a power struggle that erupted into conflict on April 15. Nearly 1.4 million people have now been displaced, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in a new report.

Both sides have said they are considering extending a deal for a week-long ceasefire brokered by Saudi Arabia and the United States that was designed to allow for the distribution of aid and was due to expire at 9:45 pm (19:45 GMT) local time yesterday.

Woman's body recovered from in-law's house

Husband detained

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police last morning detained a man after recovering his wife's hanging body from her in-law's house at West Charandwip village under Chattogram's Boalkhali upazila.

Nur Nahar, 19, was married to Kader for one and a half years and she was the mother of a five-month-old daughter, said Abdur Razzak, officer-in-charge of Boalkhali Police Station.

According to the victim's family, Kader and his family members used to torture her over dowry soon after their marriage.

"They presumed that Nur Nahar was tortured to death and her body was later hanged to make it look like a suicide," said the OC.

Police recovered her body from her bedroom around 8:00am. The body was sent to Chattogram Medical College Hospital Morgue for autopsy, said the OC, adding that filing of a case in this regard is underway.

8 get death penalty for killing BCL leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A Lakshimpur court yesterday sentenced eight people to death in a case filed over the killing of BCL leader Mehedi Hasan Jasim in 2013.

Seven of the convicts were present at the court and the other, Hizbur Rahman Swapan, remains a fugitive. The seven convicts are Ali Hossain Bachchu, 43, Mostafa, 43, Khokon, 48, Abul Hossain, 68, Mubarak Ulla, 61, Kabir Hossain Ripon, 26, Zafar Ahmad, 61.

Mehedi Hasan Jasim was the Literature Affairs Secretary of Chandraganj Kofil Uddin Degree College's BCL unit.

On February 10, Jasim went to his relative's house in Radhapur village and stayed there. On that night, the accused broke into the house and shot Jasim before fleeing the scene. On the following day, a murder case was filed with Sadar Police Station.

On March 27, 2014, police submitted a charge sheet against 12 accused in the case. Later four of the accused died.

OIC chief visits Rohingya camps

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary General Hissein Brahimi visited several Rohingya camps in Ukhiya of Cox's Bazar.

He reached Cox's Bazar by air in the morning and went to Kutupalong Four Extension Camp in Ukhiya. Later, he visited several other camps in Ukhiya.

At the camps, the OIC Secretary General held a meeting with representatives of the Refugee Affairs Commission, Rohingya representatives and officials from various NGOs and INGOs.

Additional Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (Deputy Secretary) Md Shamsud Douza said the OIC Secretary General exchanged views with the Rohingyas and talked about their problems.

Bangladesh all for peace

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of UN Peacekeepers 2023 at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC).

"We want a peaceful solution to any conflict," she said. "We don't want an arms race because women, children, and each family suffer the most for it. Therefore, our goal is to protect them from the sufferings."

Sheikh Hasina said ensuring peace in the world is now more difficult than in the past.

"With the recent development and advancement of technology, new threats of evil forces are increasing," she said.

She said technology is giving people opportunities in all fields including socioeconomic development, but "we also see that the evil forces are also using technology creating confusion among the people and is taking away the peace of people's lives".

Big chunks go to power, fertiliser

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growth has been sluggish in the two sectors.

Finance ministry officials said bearing in mind the uncertainty in the global economy, the allocation for remittance and export incentives will be kept the same as the outgoing fiscal year.

The government kept aside Tk 9,025 crore as incentives for exports in the current fiscal year since there was a 34-percent growth in exports in the previous fiscal year.

But exports grew only 5.38 percent between last July and April this year. Not only that, in April, exports dropped by 16.52 percent year-on-year, according to Bangladesh Bank data.

A finance ministry official said more allocation can be made for export incentives in the revised budget for the next fiscal year if exports pick up.

So, peacekeepers in UN peacekeeping missions have to deal with complex multidimensional situations, she noted.

"Hence, the need to enrich peacekeeping missions with advanced technology has increased manifold," she opined.

Sheikh Hasina mentioned that her government has always prepared Bangladeshi peacekeepers with the latest training to deal with complex situations in the world's most challenging and dangerous regions.

"We are ensuring the supply of clothing, other essential items, and modern military equipment compatible with the mission area's environment, weather, and terrain," she said.

In this connection, she mentioned that the government incorporated modern mine-resistant and ambush-protected vehicles into the Bangladesh contingents and

state-of-the-art technology for peacekeeper communications.

"Incorporating modern technology and training are an ongoing process that we will continue in the future," she added.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, Chief of Army Staff General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed and the United Nations Resident Coordinator Gwyn Lewis also spoke at the programme.

At the outset of the event, a one-minute silence was observed to pay tribute to the lives of the heroes sacrificed for establishing peace.

A video documentary "Bangladesh in Global Peace" was screened at the ceremony.

The prime minister handed over awards to five deceased peacekeepers and their family members received it. She also handed over awards to five injured peacekeepers.

The premier later unveiled International Peacekeeper Journal.

Another official said incentives should be given to those who are exporting new and diversified products and exploring new markets.

Allocation for incentives in remittance will remain the same – Tk 6,200 crore – in the next fiscal year.

Remittance inflow has grown only 2.37 percent between last July and April this year despite growth in manpower exports. In April, remittance dropped by 16.28 percent year-on-year, according to the central bank.

Over the 16 months ending in April, Bangladesh sent 15 lakh workers abroad, according to the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training.

Zahid Hussain said the exchange rate policy of the government is one of the reasons for the low growth in remittance.

He said expatriate Bangladeshis are getting better exchange rates

Suspend DSA

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rights live in fear and intimidation, he added.

"These developments will not only scare off the very investors the country is trying to attract, but also will create an obstacle to the realisation of economic and social rights.

"You cannot deliver healthcare, education or social protection without also improving accountability and transparency," the special rapporteur said.

He acknowledged Bangladesh's significant progress, but observed that the progress remains fragile as those lifted out of poverty may become poor again anytime as they cannot withstand any shock.

This is more so because of the climate change impacts as well as poor social protection systems mired with irregularities in a country where income and asset inequalities are quite high, he said.

Schutter said in 2000, 48.9 percent Bangladeshis were counted as poor, and the figure dropped to 18.7 percent in 2022. Extreme poverty fell from 34.3 percent to 5.6 percent during the same period. However, general indicators do not tell the whole story as income inequality is rising.

Measured in Gini coefficient, income inequality stood at 0.499 in 2022, up from 0.458 in 2010, he said.

The special rapporteur said a category of "new poor" is also emerging. The households, which are just above the poverty line, have little to no savings, and are highly vulnerable to becoming poor after a shock.

The Gini coefficient measures the extent to which the distribution of income within a country deviates from a perfectly equal distribution.

A 2022 survey conducted in Dhaka by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies found 51 percent of the people in poverty fell below the poverty line to become "new poor".

Against such a backdrop, inflation has become a major concern,

becoming the "enemy of the poorest people", Schutter said, suggesting that the government focus on strengthening the resilience of households to shocks.

He said strong social protection system is, therefore, very important, but it is "a patchwork of 119 schemes that emerge on an ad hoc basis, are poorly coordinated and do not provide the level of income security that Bangladeshis should expect".

Also, in many cases, people need to pay bribes for benefits of social protection, he added.

Schutter said the government must move away from its reliance on cheap labour if it is to ensure a rights-based development after Bangladesh's LDC graduation. "A country's comparative advantage cannot lie in keeping its people poor."

He said Bangladesh has put an over-emphasis on physical infrastructure. When it is important to build roads, bridges and dams, high numbers of child marriages and secondary school dropouts remain a major concern, he observed.

This is deeply problematic, especially when the country graduates out of LDC, the UN official said.

Martinez excited

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for a charity football match at Mohunbagan club, many fan engagement programs, sponsors felicitation and promote the beautiful game. I know Kolkata and Bangladesh has huge Argentina fans and I am very excited to meet them," he wrote on his official Facebook account.

Satadru Dutta, the Kolkata-based sports promoter who is bringing the Argentina and Aston Villa goalkeeper to the subcontinent, said he would come to Bangladesh soon to apprise everyone about the details of the tour.

"We all know Emiliano Martinez has a star in this part of the world and he is very excited to come to Bangladesh," Dutta told The Daily Star over phone on Monday.