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Stand by people, help uphold law and order

Tarique urges BNP men, visits Naya Paltan office for first time as PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairman and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman last night instructed party leaders to stand by the people in addressing the country's ongoing problems, saying people across the country are looking to the party with high expectations.

"People are looking at the party with many hopes. So all leaders and activists here, and across the country, must remain patient and stay within the bounds of law and order," he said.

"There are many problems in the country. We have to explain things to the people, stand by them, and help them remain patient."

Tarique made the remarks from the second-floor balcony of the BNP central office in Naya Paltan while addressing leaders, activists, and supporters of the ruling party.

It was his first visit to the office since taking office as prime minister, and he spent around two hours there.

At about 7:20pm, Tarique got out of his car and entered the office, waving at supporters and activists.

At the entrance, BNP Standing Committee member and Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed welcomed him as thousands of leaders and activists greeted him with applause and slogans.

The large gathering had halted traffic in the area since the afternoon.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



BNP Chairman and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman waves at the crowd after arriving at the party's central office in Nayapaltan yesterday evening. It was his first visit there since assuming office as prime minister. During the visit, Tarique exchanged views with ministers, members of parliament, and party leaders.

PHOTO: PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Reforms to reflect expectations of the people

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said the constitu-



tional reforms would give the highest priority to public expectations and the aspirations of those martyred in the student-led mass uprising in 2024.

He also said all amendments would be completed through consensus on the basis of the July National Charter signed by political parties.

"Based on the July National Charter, we will frame everything on a priority basis. The expectations of the people of Bangladesh and the dreams of the martyrs of the July uprising will be given importance there," he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Amina Ahmed passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Language Movement veteran and former lawmaker Amina Ahmed passed away yesterday. She was 90.

Amina was the wife of late Prof Muzaffar Ahmed, an adviser to the Mujibnagar Government during the Liberation War in 1971 and president of a faction of the National Awami Party (NAP).

She breathed her last around 11:00am while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Dhaka. She was buried with state honours beside her husband's grave at Elahabad village in Cumilla's Debidwar

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Multilateralism central to our foreign policy

Says foreign minister

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman has said Bangladesh continues



to place multilateralism at the heart of its foreign policy, a stance it has upheld since joining the United Nations in 1974.

The minister made the remarks while addressing a reception hosted by Bangladesh's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York, marking the country's 56th Independence and National Day on Friday.

Reaffirming Dhaka's commitment to global peace and security, he highlighted the country's significant contributions to UN peacekeeping missions and its sustained humanitarian support for the Rohingya people.

"Over the past five

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Politicisation clouds youth understanding of Liberation War

Say speakers at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Liberation War has been politicised for so long that many young Bangladeshis are growing up confused about what freedom really means, speakers said yesterday.

They also called for a more open, inclusive, and rights-based understanding of independence.

They made the remarks at the unveiling of the Independence Day issue of Tiffin, a children's and youth magazine, and a discussion titled "The aspiration for independence through the eyes of the younger generation", held at the Bishwo Shahitto Kendro in Dhaka.

"If we do not understand individual freedom, it will be difficult to understand the collective freedom we speak of afterwards," said Saimum Parvez, special assistant to the BNP chairperson's Foreign Affairs Advisory Committee.

He said independence alone was not enough if citizens did

not enjoy freedom of expression, civic liberty, and protection from arbitrary restrictions.

He also cautioned against attempts to pitch the July uprising against the Liberation War.

Prime Minister's Adviser Zahed Ur Rahman said the history of the Liberation War had too often been confined to a single narrative.

"We are trying to lock the history of the Liberation War into a fixed frame, where nothing can be said beyond it," he said.

Zahed said the key issue was whether the state allowed room for open historical inquiry, adding that the struggle to ensure equality, dignity, social justice, rule of law, and fundamental rights remains unfinished.

"We have come to a point where many people do not even know what their aspirations should be, or what they should be asking from the state," he said, adding that freedom must also mean the right to live without intimidation.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

2003 MV NASRIN-1 CAPSIZE

Victim families await compensation

Appeal against HC verdict pending with apex court

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

It has been nine years since the High Court delivered a verdict directing authorities to provide compensation to families of victims of the capsizing of Launch MV Nasrin-1 in 2003.

However, the families have yet to receive any payment as compensation, as an appeal against the HC's judgement in the case remains pending with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, despite no stay order being issued on the HC verdict.

MV Nasrin-1, a Bhola-bound triple-decker from Dhaka that was deemed unfit, capsized with 700 on board at the confluence of Padma, Meghna and Dakatia rivers in Chandpur on July 8, 2003, leaving 110 people dead, about 200 missing and many others injured.

The launch owner also died in the incident, according to a

AT A GLANCE

9yrs after HC verdict, victim families yet to be compensated

Appeal remains pending with SC, although no stay order was issued

Launch capsized left 110 dead, around 200 missing, and many others injured

HC ordered Tk 17.11cr in compensation for 170 deceased, one injured victim

government investigation report.

Following the launch accident, the deputy commissioner of Chandpur published a list of 400 people who were affected by the incident. Accordingly, the shipping

and disaster trustee boards gave Tk 15,000-20,000 to the families of the injured and deceased persons.

In 2004, on behalf of the victims, BLAST filed a case with the 3rd Joint District Judge's Court of Dhaka, claiming that the compensation was inadequate. More than Tk 28.93 crore was demanded as compensation in the case, where the number of the deceased was mentioned as 171. The case was sent to the 7th Joint District Judge's Court in 2012.

In its verdict on February 2, 2016, the Dhaka court asked the government to give Tk 17.11 crore to the families of the affected people -- 170 deceased and one injured -- within 60 days.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and the launch owners' association filed a revision petition against the verdict on October 24, 2016.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

'Clean schools, no mosquitoes' DNCC launches dengue prevention drive in 536 educational institutions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To curb dengue risks among students, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday launched a special cleanliness and mosquito-control campaign across 536 educational institutions under its jurisdiction.

The initiative comes as schools, colleges, and madrasas reopen after the Eid holidays -- a period when stagnant water in unused premises can increase the breeding of Aedes mosquitoes.

The campaign, titled "Clean School, No Mosquito", was inaugurated at Dhaka Residential Model School and College by DNCC Administrator Md Shafiqul Islam Khan.

"Educational institutions are reopening after a long closure. This programme is being conducted with special emphasis on preventing Aedes mosquito breeding on campuses," he said.

He also stressed the need for public

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

TANGAIL TRAIN TRAGEDY Gaibandha villages mourn 5 lives cut short Most victims were RMG workers returning to Dhaka after Eid holidays



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A shadow of grief fell over Nizpara village in Gaibandha's Sadullapur upazila yesterday as residents gathered to bury four of their own.

The deceased -- Nargis Begum, 35; her son Md Nirob, 11; Sultan Mahmud, 25; and Ripa Khatun, 20 -- were among five people run over by a train at Kalihati upazila in Tangail on Friday night.

The fifth victim, Dola Begum, 35, was from Chatragachha village of Sadullapur upazila.

Heart-wrenching scenes unfolded when the bodies arrived yesterday morning, with relatives and neighbours crowding for a final glimpse.

Police in Tangail said passengers of a Dhaka-bound bus had stepped off after the driver pulled over on the highway when the vehicle ran out of fuel. Some sat on the nearby railway tracks, where the Sirajganj Express struck them.

Sub-Inspector Mizanur Rahman of Tangail Railway Station outpost said the bodies were handed over to families late Friday night.

Relatives said most of the victims were garment workers returning to Dhaka after the Eid holidays.

Ripa's father, Abdur Rashid, a marginal farmer, broke down in tears. She had been working for four years to support the family.

"I had hoped to arrange her marriage soon, but those dreams are now shattered," Rashid said.

Sultan was the sole breadwinner of his family, as his elderly father is unable to work.

Side-by-side graves were dug for Nargis and her son Nirob.

In Chatragachha, neighbours said Dola had just celebrated her only daughter's wedding during the Eid holidays before heading back to work.

Family members said the victims were buried after Zohr prayers.

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