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Liberation War is our identity and existence

Says Fakhrul

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Moulvibazar

Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday said the Liberation War of 1971 is our identity, pride, tradition, and existence as a nation.

"I am very saddened when some politicians try to belittle the Liberation War. To those who want to deny it, I want to make it clear that the Liberation War is our identity, pride, tradition, and existence," he said.

Fakhru, also BNP secretary general, added that the Liberation War officially started from Teliapara in Madhabpur



SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



A roadside factory worker sprays water along the Postogola-Narayanganj road to reduce dust, constantly stirred up by speeding vehicles. Heavy dust pollution in the area has reduced visibility to near zero, posing serious health risks to pedestrians. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Need inclusive reforms to curb unlawful detention

Say speakers at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said it is possible to eliminate unlawful arrest and detention in the country through inclusive social reforms without considering the government and law enforcement stakeholders as opponents.

They called for effective enforcement of laws, stronger accountability, and compensation for victims to this end.

The discussion titled "Arrest and Detention in Bangladesh: Context and Legal Analysis", was organised by the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka.

Presenting the keynote paper, Prof Muhammad Mahbubur Rahman of Dhaka University's law department said implementation of existing laws remains weak, pointing to concerns over unlawful and informal arrests without warrant, lack of judicial control over detention, poor enforcement of anti-torture protections, abuse of

A single judgement or legal amendment can not solve wider problems in the criminal justice system. In reality, when discretion is curbed in one place, abuse often reappears in another form.

MUHAMMAD MAHBUBUR RAHMAN
Professor of Law, DU

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

He was 'Einstein of structural engineering'

Architects hail FR Khan at bti commemorative event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Professionals associated with the field of architecture have described internationally acclaimed structural engineer and architect Fazlur Rahman Khan as the "Einstein of Structural Engineering."

They made the remarks at a commemorative event held yesterday evening at Lakeshore Grand in Gulshan, organised by Building Technology & Ideas Ltd (bti) on the occasion of his 97th birth anniversary.

Reflecting on Khan's legacy, Prof M Shamim Z Bosunia, an academic and structural engineering expert, said, "While Einstein taught us to understand the universe, FR Khan taught us how we can touch the sky."

Renowned architect Rafiq Azam described Khan as "more of a philosopher than an architect-engineer."

He said the new generation remains largely unaware of Khan's significant contributions, attributing this to the state's limited efforts to celebrate national intellectual figures.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



LABOUR MARKET

Govt looks to Malaysia amid Gulf slowdown

Expatriate welfare minister, PM's adviser to visit Kuala Lumpur as Dhaka explores alternatives

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN
and RASHIDUL HASAN

The ongoing war involving the US, Israel, and Iran has slowed Bangladesh's labour market in the Middle East, particularly in Saudi Arabia, prompting the government to prioritise reopening Malaysia and explore alternative destinations to sustain overseas employment and remittance flows.

Malaysia, the second-largest destination for Bangladeshi workers after the Middle East, has remained closed to them since June 1, 2024.

Now, with growing uncertainty in Gulf markets, the government is treating reopening the Malaysian labour market as a priority.

As part of the effort, Expatriates' Welfare and



4,76,672 Bangladeshi workers went to Malaysia in 2022-2024

Remittances from Malaysia saw 57.3% increase from 2021-24

Remittances rose to \$1.89 billion in FY25 (till March)

Malaysia's labour market closed since June 1, 2024

Around 18,000 workers ready in 2024 could not go to Malaysia

Other countries sent 3,00,000+ workers to Malaysia since 2024

Overseas Employment Minister Ariful Haque Chowdhury and the prime minister's adviser Mahadi Amin are expected to visit Malaysia on April 8 for discussions, according to ministry sources.

Confirming the development, Ariful told The Daily Star, "We have received an invitation from the Malaysian labour ministry. They want to hold discussions with us, and we are preparing to hold discussions at the government level."

"We are hopeful, but the market is sensitive and has had past complications. We aim to guarantee that individuals do not face any form of harassment. This is particularly important at a time when some of our other labour markets have slowed."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Rokia Afzal Rahman's third death anniv today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today marks the third death anniversary of Rokia Afzal Rahman, an eminent entrepreneur, philanthropist, and trailblazer for women's empowerment.

She served as chairperson of Mediaworld Ltd, the owning company of The Daily Star, a post she held for 21 years continuously. She was also a director of Mediastar Limited, the owning company of Prothom Alo.

Rokia Afzal Rahman passed away peacefully in her sleep on the morning of April 5, 2023, at the age of 82, at Mt Elizabeth Novena

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

18 killed, 912 injured in political violence last month: HRSS

BNP internal conflicts dominate; rights concerns persist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 18 people were killed and more than 912 injured in 113 incidents of political violence in March, according to a monthly report by the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS).

Internal conflicts within the BNP accounted for 45 incidents, leaving nine dead and 501 injured. Clashes between the BNP and Jamaat resulted in five deaths and 109 injuries, while confrontations between the BNP and the Awami League led to two deaths and 156 injuries.

The report also documented violence involving the National Citizen Party and other political groups.

The rights body further recorded 28 incidents of post-election violence, resulting in three deaths and 109 injuries. Law enforcement activity remained high, with around 1,500 people arrested during special joint-force drives and more than 28 political cases filed, naming 303 individuals.

The report also raised concerns about freedom of expression and the treatment of vulnerable groups, noting that 59 journalists faced harassment or abuse in March.

It documented abuse of 273 women and girls during the month, including 72 rape victims. Of them, 16 were victims of gang rape, while five --

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Bangla literature evolving amid digital, reading shifts

Say speakers at Star Itihas Adda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangla literature is undergoing multiple changes amid shifts in reading habits, digital platforms, language, and the wider social context, speakers said yesterday.

They made the remarks at the 16th episode of The Daily Star's Itihas Adda, titled "Kon Dike Bangla Sahitya", held at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Poet and Prothom Alo Executive Editor Sajjad Sharif said the key question is not only where literature is headed, but also what readers expect from it.

"Literature is that place where language speaks," he said, adding that literature cannot be confined to fixed prescriptions, as writers of the same period do not write in the same way.

Referring to the changes brought by satellite television, the internet, social media and mobile phones, he said the broader cultural environment of literature had changed significantly over time.

He also cautioned against judging literature only by popularity or sales, saying important works may initially reach only a small number of readers.

Sajjad also highlighted changes in language, the growing presence of women

writers, and a rise in autobiographical writing in Bangla over the past three decades.

"Over the last 30 years, so many autobiographies have been written in Bangla," he said, adding that many people felt their lives were tied to history.



Participants at the 16th episode of The Daily Star's Itihas Adda, titled "Kon Dike Bangla Sahitya", held at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

National Book Centre Director Shakhawat Tipu said the future of Bangla literature cannot be separated from the future of the Bangla language. "When we speak of Bangla literature, we are essentially speaking of the Bangla language," he said.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6



A city corporation worker sprays larvicide into stagnant roadside water on the Dhaka University campus to eliminate Aedes mosquito larvae ahead of the monsoon. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Yunus, former advisers must join protests, save reforms

Says Nahid Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and his fellow advisers

must take to the streets to protect the achievements of the previous interim government, said National Citizen Party Convener and Opposition Chief Whip Nahid Islam yesterday.

He made the remarks during a press briefing at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport upon returning after performing Umrah.

The Dhaka-11 lawmaker said those who led the interim government, including Prof Yunus and Asif Nazrul, must take responsibility, as the BNP

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1