

'Strengthen local govt for overall development'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday observed that there is no alternative to strengthening the local government for overall development of the country.

They said the newly formed Gram Sarkar units could not function effectively as the units were formed without people's participation.

Rather, the system might destroy the union parishad tier of the local government, they added.

The Bangladesh Centre for Development of Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) organised the workshop on 'Role of media in strengthening local government' in association with the Local Government and Development Journalists Forum. The Local Government Initiative (LGI) sponsored the workshop.

Presenting a survey on Gram Sarkar, based on newspaper reports, Journalist Ajay Dasgupta said more than 40,000 Gram Sarkar units were formed across the country during the period from August 2 to September 15, 2003.

But in most cases, Gram Sarkar had been formed without having quorum or in violation of rules and regulations, he added.

The opposition parties also boycotted Gram Sarkar in most cases, Ajay said, adding that even common people were not aware of its activities.

Dr. William James Cartier, chief of party of LGI-USAID initiative in Bangladesh, Nayeemul Islam Khan of BCDJC, Deputy Editor of the Prothom Alo Mozammel Hossain Monju, News editor of the Jugantor Ahmed Faruk Hasan and Mustafiz Shafi also spoke.

14 projects implemented to develop Rajshahi city

UNB, Rajshahi

Some 14 development projects have been implemented in the city at a cost of Tk38.43 crore.

The Rajshahi Development Authority has implemented the projects with Tk 11.05 crore from its own fund and Tk 27.38 crore from the government exchequer.

The projects included expansion of three roads, construction of bus and truck terminals and Rajuk building,

setting up of parks, development of four residential areas and construction of 745 shops.

According to a PID handout, seven more development projects are being implemented in the city at a cost of Tk 63.38 crore.

The projects include formulation of a master plan for the city, construction of inter-district bus terminals and bypasses, and development of residential and commercial areas.

Nine more projects, including construction of an 11km road, development of various residential areas, construction of shops and a six-storey market-cum-apartment, have been undertaken.

Over 2,000 held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 2,056 more people, including three listed criminals, during their ongoing nationwide drive in the last 24 hours till 6.00am yesterday.

They also recovered 11 firearms and 129 rounds of bullet. Cases were also filed against four people under the Arms Act.

