

Reform Village Court Ordinance to ensure justice

Legal experts tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Legal experts at a roundtable yesterday called on the government to bring reforms to the Village Court Ordinance 1976 to make the village courts more effective in order to ensure justice for local people.

They said the Union Parishad chairmen who act as judges in the village courts should be well educated and properly trained and they must not be politically biased while delivering judgements.

Madaripur Legal Aid Association organised the roundtable titled 'Mobilising opinion on the reforms of Village Court Ordinance 1976' at the National Press Club in the city. Presenting a survey on the

village courts in Madaripur, Dr Mirza Hassan of Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust (BLAST) said the Village Court Ordinance was formulated 30 years ago, but it has not been reformed so far in line with the economic and social changes.

Making the court more effective through development of necessary infrastructures is a must as it is a vital tool in helping the rural women and the poor, he said.

He also noted that the village courts where the UP chairmen are comparatively younger and educated are more active.

In some cases, however, the UP chairmen have shown reluctance to conduct trial for political rea-

sons, Dr Mirza said and called for making it mandatory for the chairmen to conduct trial.

"It has been observed that the chairmen who accept the cases and conduct trial are more popular in their areas," said Advocate Fazlul Haque, secretary of Madaripur Legal Aid Association.

Presiding over the roundtable, Justice Naimuddin Ahmed said making judgement is a highly technical and professional procedure and those who are sitting in judgement should have extensive knowledge and professional skills.

Advocate Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain O Salish Kendra, said the people today are more interested in informal justice system rather than the formal

one because they think they have to face harassment in the formal system.

She said strengthening the village court is linked to strengthening the local government, but there is no political commitment in this regard.

Dr Badiul Alam Majumder, country director of the Hunger Project, said the UP chairmen are aligned with political parties and carry out executive functions. So, empowering them to make judgement is not consistent with the principle of the separation of the judiciary, he added.

Journalist Ataus Samad and Acting Editor of the Shaptahik 2000 Golam Mortoza also spoke at the roundtable.



Advocate Fazlul Haque, secretary of Madaripur Legal Aid Association, speaks at a roundtable on Village Court Ordinance at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right are Justice Naimuddin Ahmed, Ataus Samad and Dr Badiul Alam Majumder.

Woman commits suicide with child

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman, along with her one and a half-year old child, committed suicide jumping before a speeding train at Khilgaon Rail Crossing in the capital last Wednesday evening.

The woman was identified as Nazmun Nahar Beena, 32 and the child as Khalequ Azam Surjo.

Witnesses said that the woman jumped before the Bahadurabad-bound train with the child in her lap at the rail crossing near Khilgaon Bazar at 7:00pm. They were spot-dead. Railway police said.

The locals said that they saw the woman roaming around that afternoon.

Mohammad Manik, a brother of the deceased, said that Beena came to her sister in law's house at Katasur of Mohammadpur a month ago, along with her husband Khandker Enamul Haque, for treatment of his child.

On Wednesday, at about 2:30pm, Beena left the house with Surjo, saying she would visit a doctor, but did not return.

"It is only Thursday morning when we came to learn from the newspaper that a woman, along with her child committed suicide jumping before a speeding train," Manik told The Daily Star.



BCS '84 Forum executives

Khalid Mahmood of BCS Administration and Mosud Mannan of BCS Foreign Affairs were elected president and general secretary of BCS 1984 Forum at a meeting at the Officers' Club in the city recently, says a press release.

Other office-bearers are: Vice-Presidents: Mohammad Javed Hatwary, MA Khaleque, Kalipada Haldar, Mohammad Asifuzzaman and Md Abdus Sattar Miazi, Joint Secretaries: Dilbar Ahmad and Faiz Ahmed Bhuiyan, Treasurer: Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury, Assistant Treasurer: Md Emdadul Haque, Literary and Publication Secretary: Helal Uddin Ahmed, Social Welfare Secretary: Md Sohrab Hossain, Cultural Secretary: FM Emdadul Haque, International Affairs Secretary: Imtiaz Ahmed, Research Secretary: Md Mashur Rahman, Information and Publicity Secretary: Md Sarwar Alam, Development and Management Secretary: Arshad Hossain, Office Secretary: AKM Sahidul Haque, IT Secretary: NM Shim and Organising Secretary: Md Shrab Hossain.

Concern over sexual exploitation of street children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Child rights activists yesterday expressed concern over the sexual exploitation of street children, saying that vested quarters are using them in pornographic movies.

There is an alarming rise in the victimisation of street girls aged between 9 and 18 by pornographers, they said and called for combined efforts of the government and NGOs to combat it.

Such movies are available in CDs and sold openly at specific areas in the city, the activists said at a press conference organised by the Incidin Bangladesh, a child rights organisation.

The organisation has taken an initiative to conduct a research on the issue and placed some recommendations to prevent sexual exploitation of children.

AKM Mustaque Ali, executive director of Incidin Bangladesh, said legal reforms and strict enforcement of laws are a must to stop production, import and distribution of child pornography.

Legal action should be taken against the producers under the Prevention of Women and Children Repression Control Act 2002, he said.

The speakers also stressed the need for strengthening the supervision and monitoring system of the law enforcing agencies to curb such

activities. They also called for raising awareness among the community members about the issue and providing support to the victims.

Advocacy Chief of the organisation Nasimul Ahsan, Coordinator of Misplaced Childhood Project Aminul Islam Khan and Coordinator of Childhood Protection Project Musfiqur Rahman were also present at the press conference held at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium.

BNP protest today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will demonstrate and hold rallies throughout the country today, protesting anarchy, terrorism and subversive activities.

The main rally will be held at Muktangan in the capital at 4:00pm. BNP Secretary General and LGRD and cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will address the rally.

He also called upon all district and upazila committees to make this programme a success and prevent any attempt to foil development activities of government.

PRAN Football Challenge

Delwar wins air ticket to Germany

The winners of 'Pran Football Challenge: Chumuke Germany' received prizes at a ceremony at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium yesterday, says a press release.

This was the 3rd phase of gift distribution ceremony of the consumer programme organised by the PRAN-RFL Group.

The consumer programme was launched on March 10 and it will continue until the end of World Cup Football in Germany. The consumers can claim their gift up to July 20.

Those who received gifts are Delwar Hossain of Chittagong (air ticket to Germany); Liakut Ali of Bogra (colour TV); Badsha and Mukul of Mymensingh, Md Sami and Halim of Tangail, Taposh Sarker of Sherpur, Md Anwar of Bhola, Ajoy Chowdhury of Chittagong and Habib Mia of Dhaka (VCD sets); and Md Shahin of Narayanganj and Ajgor of Mymensingh (mobile phone sets).

Executive Director of Pran Elias Mirza gave away the gifts to the winners. GM (Marketing) Kamruzzaman Kamal, GM (Sales) Maj. (ret'd) Anisur Rahman, GM (Beverage) Md Wahid-un-Nabi, Brand Manager Sanka Basu, Product Manager Abdullah-Al Mamun and other top officials of the company were also present.

The officials said numerous gifts are printed on the scratch cards given along with the PET Bottle of Pran Up, Pran Lemon and Pran Cola and under the green crown of Pran Mango Juice and Pran Cola glass bottle.

Appeal for help

A father has sought financial assistance for the treatment of his son who has been suffering from thalassaemia, says a press release.

Twelve-year-old Animesh Kundu of Sakhira has been suffering from the disease since his birth. He has to have blood transfusion in every 25 days.

According to doctors, he needs bone marrow transplantation immediately, which involves about Tk 15 lakh. But his father Jagadish Chandra Kundu has already spent all his savings on the boy's treatment and is now going through severe financial hardship.

He has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save the life of his son.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Jagadish Chandra Kundu, Savings A/C No-11944, Janata Bank, Ashashuni Branch, Sakhira.

BOU to introduce BBS programme

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) is going to introduce Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS) programme to expand the opportunity of business education at degree level through its distance education system.

The decision was taken at a meeting of BOU Curriculum Committee with its Dean of Open School Dr M Arshed Ali in the chair yesterday. BOU Vice Chancellor M Ershadul Bari was present as chief guest, said a BOU press release.

The BOU teachers and executives at the meeting said that by acquiring proper knowledge through the programme, the learners would be able to keep an important role in socio-economic development of the country.

UDICHI KILLING

Fresh probe demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations demanded reinvestigation of Udichi killing and exemplary punishment to the culprits who killed 10 people and injured more than 100 by a deadly bomb blast.

In different statements they stated that if the government fail to punish the culprits it would encourage them to do it again, following a verdict by a Jessore court that acquits all the 23 accused of the deadly blast on March 7, 1999.

In a statement, Communist Party of Bangladesh said that the government can not avoid the responsibilities since they failed to punish the offenders.

The role of government regarding anti-terrorism activities raises question as they could not punish the killers of Udichi killing and CPB killing at Paltan, they added.

In a different statement, the Workers' Party of Bangladesh said that the government was not sincere regarding the case.

"That is why the government did not present any witness at the court during the hearing of the case," their press release stated.

Bangladesh Students' Union, the student wing of the Communist party stated the incident as the government's tendency to safeguard the culprits. They also demanded exemplary punishment to the killers.



Work on laying of sewer pipes has been going on at a road at Ahmabagh in the city for over a week, causing suffering to passers-by.

FFs threaten agitation, submit memo to PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Country's freedom fighters will take to the streets to compel the government to realise their 11-point demand.

They gave a two-month ultimatum to the government to meet their demands, otherwise they will go for tougher agitation.

The ultimatum was issued from a representatives' meeting of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Oikya Parishad at Gullistan Natyamancha in the capital.

Thousands of freedom fighters from different parts of the country attended the meeting and vowed to continue their agitation until their demands are met.

After the meeting, the freedom fighters submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia with a request to implement their demands immediately.

Their main demands are burial of freedom fighters with state honour, Tk 3000 monthly allowance for each freedom fighter and

reservation of 30 percent job quota for freedom fighters' children.

The freedom fighters at the meeting said Razakars (collaborators of Pakistan Army in 1971) are being rewarded with all kinds of state facilities.

"Anti-liberation forces have occupied all high positions in both government and non-government sectors including the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs," said Abdul Motin, a veteran language hero, while addressing the meeting.

He urged the freedom fighters to be united to revive the spirit of the liberation war and spread it in every sphere of life.

"The political parties have failed to bring any qualitative changes in the lives of the common people. The rich have become richer and the poor have become poorer. Politics has turned into a game of money and muscle," he said blasting the political parties.

Major General (Retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim Bir Protik said freedom fighters sacrificed

their lives for political and economic freedom, social justice, rule of law and democracy, but none of these exist in the country.

Journalist Ataus Samad said politicisation of administration began during the liberation war, and it was strengthened slowly depriving the freedom fighters of their rights, he said, adding, "By the time a new elite group had captured the politics and economy of the country."

"Political parties have used us for gaining their interest but leaders of these parties did not take any effective steps for the welfare of the freedom fighters," he added.

Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Oikya Parishad Convenor Sheikh Ashraf Uddin presided over the meeting which was addressed by Muktiyoddha Gono Parishad President Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat and Secretary General Sadek Ahmed Khan, freedom fighters Dr Nazim Uddin Ahmed, MA Sahid Bablu and Mizanur Rahman Khan.

DHAKA SIEGE

11 lawyers sued for contempt of court

UNB, Dhaka

Eleven lawyers were yesterday sued for contempt of court for staging demonstration on the Supreme Court premises on June 11 when the opposition enforced Dhaka siege despite a ban on the programme.

The petition for drawing contempt proceedings against the lawyers for "violating court orders" was filed by the lawyer who had secured the ban on the siege programme hours before it kicked off.

Boycott of any court and demonstrations on court premises are banned by a High Court order.

The petitioner, Gazi Rabul Islam Sagar, in his petition cited the June 11 court boycott and sit-in at the entrance of the Supreme Court by the pro-opposition lawyers under the banner of Supreme Court Bar Association.

He mentioned that the High Court had earlier banned boycott or agitation on the premises of any court.

Court sources said the contempt petition is likely to come up for hearing on July 2, the day the Awami League-led 14-party opposition combined has planned to enforce countrywide road-rail-waterway blockade.

A division bench comprising Justice M Joynul Abedin and Justice Mashaq Hussain Ahmed are to hear the contempt case.

Those facing the contempt of court charges are former Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) presidents Abdul Baset Majumder, Ozair Farooq and Mahbub Alam, SCBA Secretary AM Amin Uddin, former SCBA secretary M Enayetur Rahim, SCBA Vice-President Abdul Mannan Khan, Khondker Mahbub Hossain, KM Saifuddin Ahmed, Nurul Islam Sujon, Bashir Ahmed and Subrata Chowdhury.

Obituary

Alhaj Sharajul Haque, father of Prof Nurul Islam, director of Institute of Appropriate Technology (IAT) of Bangladesh

University of Engineering and Technology, passed away due to old-age complications at Barisal Medical College Hospital on Wednesday, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, three sons and three daughters.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at Channari Mosque in Barisal after Juma prayers today.

Admirers are requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Air Commodore (Retd) Md Shamsul Islam will be held at his Banani residence after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani.

Badsha Mia

Qulkhwani of Mokslesur Rahman Khan Badsha Mia will be held at House-7, Road-32A, Sector-7 at Uttara after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Badsha Mia, father of KMR Manjur, former president of Bangladesh Film Producers and Distributors' Association, passed away on Tuesday.

Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote President Alamgir Kumkum and General Secretary Tarana Halim condole the death of Badsha Mia and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Doa mahfil

A milad and doa mahfil will be held at Ahmedbag (Bashabo) Jame Mosque in the city after Asr prayers today to pray for salvation of the departed soul of Syed Nurul Haq, says a press release.

Nurul Haq, retired director of Bangladesh Power Development Board, passed away due to cardiac arrest on June 27 at the age of 82. He left behind his three sons and two daughters.



Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan speaks at a discussion organised by Jatiyabadi Ainjibi Forum at the Supreme Court Bar Association hall yesterday to protest the conspiracy to make constitutional posts and institutions ineffective.



Court Reporters' Assoc executives

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Monzur Alam of The Daily Independent and Mohammad Mahbubul Haq of The Daily Sangbad have been selected president and general secretary of Court Reporters' Association for 2006-2007 on Wednesday.

Other office-bearers are Assistant General Secretary: Ashraf-Ul-Alam of The Daily Prothom Alo, Treasurer: Abul Kalam Azad of The Daily Ajkaler Khobar and Office and Publicity Secretary: Khodaker Newajul Bari of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha.

Executive committee members are Nurul Iman Babul of The Daily Shyam Bazar and Anwarul Kabir Babul of The Daily Samakal.

President Syed Ahmed Gazi of The Daily Inqilab and Advisor Abdul Haq Bhuiyan of The Daily Manabjabin selected the committee.

Shahjahan Khan of The Daily Ittefaq was nominated chief advisor of the association.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar
Bangladesh MBA Association organises a seminar on "The National Budget 2006-2007". Venue: National Press Club. Time: 05:00pm.

Hajj discussion
A discussion will be held on "Learn about the Holy Hajj". Venue: Spectra Convention Centre. Time: 04:00pm.

Book launch
A book titled "Politics in Bangladesh and the Role of Awami League" by Gloom Akbar Chowdhury will be launched. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 04:00pm.

Office inauguration
The corporate office of Speed Life Export Import Ltd will be inaugurated. Venue: Beacon Noorjahan Tower, 136 New Circular Road, Bara Moghbar. Time: 4:00pm.

Art exhibition
Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts organises a solo art exhibition by Rony Ahmed. Venue: Bengal Shipalaya. Time: 07:00pm.

Library inauguration
The inaugural ceremony of Ahmed Safa Memorial Library will be held. Venue: Centre for Asian Arts and Cultures. Time: 12:00noon.

Kite rally
Bangladesh Kite Federation and Dhakabasi Sangathan jointly organise a kite rally. Venue: Shishu Academy. Time: 11:00am.

Discussion
A discussion will be held to mark the 151st anniversary of Santal Revolt. Venue: Biam auditorium. Time: 03:00pm.

Inauguration
New auditorium of Central Womens' College will be inaugurated. Venue: College campus. Time: 04:00pm.

Anniversary
The 11th anniversary of Ramna Workshop on "Fostering latent talents in self-development" will be celebrated. Venue: Ramna Park. Time: 09:00am.

Roundtable
Doctors for Health and Environment and Pharmacy Graduates Association jointly organise a roundtable on "National drug laws: current situation." Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.