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'Consensus on key issues must for democracy'

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury yesterday said for developing a proper parliamentary culture the political community should put their heads together so that they can arrive at a consensus on major political issues, reports BSS.

He said this during a discussion with the visiting officials of the Washington based National Democratic Institute (NDI) at the Sheraton Hotel.

Stressing the need for reaching a consensus on major political issues, the Speaker said without it democracy cannot sustain for long in the midst of political disturbances in a country like ours.

Chowdhury said, as part of preparations to face challenges of the new millennium, Bangladesh Parliament has taken a number of steps including reforms in the parliamentary committee system, introduction of Prime Minister's question-time and implementation of a comprehensive project for strengthening parliamentary democracy funded by UNDP.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Khasru, Whip Vice-Principal Md Abdus Shahid, Whip Prof Khaleda Khanum, Prof Dr M S Akbar MP, Akhteruzzaman MP, Lt Col Md Faruk Khan MP and Bruce Chamberlain, among others, took part in the discussion.

Hasina thanks her wellwishers

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday thanked all the well-wishers who extended her greetings and felicitations on winning UNESCO Peace Award and on her 53rd birthday, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister extended her personal thanks and gratitude to them for sending her greetings cards and felicitation messages on the occasion.

DU signs MOU with German university

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed recently between the University of Dhaka and Martin-Luther University of Germany to establish a relationship specially between their Bengali departments, reports BSS.

Under this agreement both the universities will exchange publications, research fellows and faculty members.

The MOU was signed by Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof A K Azad Chowdhury and Rector of the Martin-Luther University on behalf of their respective institutions, a DU release said yesterday.

FM greets his new Japanese counterpart

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad has congratulated new Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono on his appointment to the post, reports UNB.

BR signs agreement for AC coaches

Bangladesh Railway (BR) has taken up a programme to convert some of its existing non-AC coaches to AC to provide better and comfortable service to passengers, reports BSS.

An agreement to this effect was signed between Bangladesh Railway, RITES India, and Nescom Bangladesh yesterday at the Rail Bhaban Conference Room. Chief Electrical Engineer (East) of Bangladesh Railway Anisur Rahman, Executive Director of BITES India DC Mishra and Managing Director of Nescom Bangladesh Nasir Ahmed Chowdhury signed the agreement on behalf of their respective agencies, a BR release said.

Director General of Bangladesh Railway Atikul Hossain Khan, Additional Director General (RS) M A Rahim, Director (Tech) of RITES India HRS Tyagi and senior officials of Bangladesh Railway, RITES India and Nescom Bangladesh were present on the occasion.

RITES India in participation with Nescom Bangladesh will bring its investment, equipment and materials for the conversion and undertake their operation for four years. The converted coaches will be operated in Suborna Express of Dhaka-Chittagong and Parabat Express of Dhaka-Sylhet route.

The earnings from these AC coaches will be divided between Bangladesh Railway, RITES and Nescom for four years. After that the coaches will be transferred to Bangladesh Railway at no additional cost.

This BOT programme will be first of its kind in Bangladesh Railway's history.

AI,B rally today

By Staff Correspondent

Amnesty International, Bangladesh (AI,B) will hold a rally today protesting torture on women in Pakistan. They will also submit a memorandum to the Pakistan High Commissioner at Gulshan.

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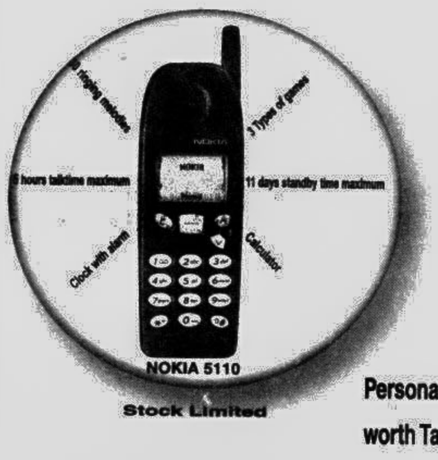

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