

Democracy meaningless without independence of judiciary

Chief Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury says

BSS, Dhaka
Chief Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury on Thursday described democracy as meaningless without the independence of judiciary and said the nation was now in need of such a judicial system where people could repose their full trust in the judges as well as lawyers.

In this respect, he put maximum emphasis upon a powerful and independent judiciary as inevitable for a democratic country since the independent role of judiciary determines the difference between autocracy and democracy in upholding the people's fundamental rights. "Autocracy's first move is to deny independence of judiciary," he said.

Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury was addressing a reception held in his honour at the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court as per the convention after he took over as the Chief Justice.

Earlier, President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed conducted the

oath to the new Chief Justice at Bangabhaban in the morning. Attorney General Mahmudul Islam and President of Supreme Court Lawyers Association Barrister Moinul Hossain also spoke on the occasion. Barrister Nazmul Huda chaired the reception.

The new Chief Justice referred to a demand from different organisations and individuals for accountability of judiciary but they could not give any proper idea or conception as to where, how or to whom, this accountability should be made.

"In a democratic country with independence of judiciary, the judges will remain accountable only to the Constitution, laws of the land and their own consciences," he said and lauded the role of lawyers in upholding the independence of judiciary.

Emphasising the need for a powerful bar in terms of knowledge and expertise, Justice Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury described active cooperation of the

lawyers as indispensable for properly conducting judicial activities.

"The most important factor for disposal of cases in the quickest possible time is the best ever cooperation of lawyers," he said expressing the hope that the lawyers will come forward to protect the judiciary from any attack in future as they have done in the past.

He referred to the successful efforts in different countries of the world for disposal of any dispute through negotiated settlements and said that such initiatives can also be undertaken in our country.

The lawyers in this respect can play their due role wherever necessary, he said.

The Chief Justice also termed the judiciary as the last resort of the people's hopes and aspirations and said the nation now wants disposal of their cases in a short period with low cost.

"No nation can exist with dignity by disregarding the judiciary," he added.



Dr Astrid Nøklebye Heiberg, president of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, called on President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban on Thursday.

Home-bound passengers' rush begins

Temporary exodus of millions from the capital city

UNB, Dhaka
People have already started leaving the capital city for their hometowns and villages to celebrate the holy festival of Eid-ul-Azha with their families.

A 3-day Eid vacation starts from March 6, after only two workdays following the weekend. The vacation will be followed by two days' weekend closure. So many people are making most of the opportunity by prolonging the vacationing to a minimum of nine days taking French leave for the two work days on March 4 and 5.

As most people started streaming out of the capital city on Thursday, from the 9:00 am-5:00 pm rush at the bus and launch terminals, and railway stations.

A government official who left Dhaka yesterday told UNB that since he would be buying a sacrificial animal on his way to his village home, he leaving going four days ahead of the festival.

Tickets at the bus, train and launch terminal counters have

long been sold out. Passengers alleged that the tickets are being sold on the black market at prices three or more times higher than the usual rates.

Sohag Paribahan, plying to Khulna, Benapole and Cox's Bazar, has increased its bus fares ahead of Eid. The usual fare at a non-AC bus has been increased to Tk 270 from Tk 210.

Abdul Ali, who left Dhaka last evening, bought a ticket for Tk 280 from black market after he failed to get one at the counter.

Bangladesh Railway and BWTIA has launched special trains ahead of Eid to facilitate the homebound passengers.

A pair of special trains will run between Dhaka and Noakhali from today to Tuesday. One train will leave Dhaka at 8:35 am and the other Noakhali at 3:00 pm. A special train will run between Dhaka and Jamalpur from March 9 to 12. It will leave Dhaka at 10:20 am and depart from Jamalpur at 2:40 pm. Between March 2 to 6, special train will run between Chittagong and Chandpur.

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