

Maudud tells BNWLA discussion Independent anti-corruption commission under consideration

BSS, Dhaka

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Maudud Ahmed yesterday said an independent and permanent public prosecution system would be developed in the country for quick dispensation of justice and disposal of cases.

"The present government is also actively considering formation of an independent anti-corruption commission to ensure transparency and accountability in the administration," he said while speaking at a discussion on Women and Children Repressions Act, 2000.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) organised the discussion at the auditorium of Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) to discuss the human rights issues and effectiveness of the Special Court set up in line with the law.

Chaired by BNWLA President Advocate Sigma Huda, the inaugural session was addressed by Chief Metropolitan Magistrate of Dhaka S K Adhikari, Judge of the Special Women and Children Repression Prevention Court Mohammed Shah Alam Miah, former public prosecutor Advocate Abdur

Rezak, PP of the Special Women and Children Court Advocate Arfanuddin Khan, BNWLA Executive Director Advocate Salma Ali and BNWLA lawyer Tawhida Khondkar.

Barrister Maudud said that speedy disposal of cases and ensuring fair justice were being hampered in the country as "our public prosecution system is very weak".

Referring to United States example, he said it is possible for a PP in the USA to appoint an independent lawyer at the cost of state money to try even a sitting President. "But we cannot develop such system overnight," he added.

On the planned "independent anti-corruption commission," he said it is funny that the current anti-corruption bureau never lodged any case against any sitting minister.

"But when a government is changed, the anti-corruption officials are seen filing cases against ex-ministers and other high-ups of the outgoing administration."

"This is because there is no independent anti-corruption agency in the country," he said.

The law minister said the judges and the lawyers have significant role to play for quick dis-

posal of the cases despite the fact that there are many loopholes in the existing laws.

"If there is commitment and strong will on the part of concerned personnel it is possible to ensure fair trial and quick disposal of the cases," he said.

Underscoring the need for proper orientation of the judges, the law minister said that investigation officers, doctors and PPs should also play their due role for speedy disposal of cases, particularly the cases relating to acid attacks and oppression of women and children.

Maudud also called upon the authorities to be cautious about misuse of laws so that the innocent people do not become victims.

The minister said the government is totally committed to ensuring rights of women and children as "empowerment of women is the global agenda in today's world".

Termining the present Women and Children Repression Prevention Act a "tough law," Maudud called upon the organisers of the discussion to find out the loopholes of the act and put forward suggestions to remove those. He assured that his ministry would look into these suggestions.



A procession was brought out in the city yesterday protesting repression on religious minorities and demanding release of journalist-writer Shahriar Kabir.

Price hike of oil, gas protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) yesterday strongly protested the government's decision to raise the price of oil, gas, electricity and water and demanded immediate withdrawal of the decision.

Addressing a rally at Mirpur, the leaders termed the decision 'autocratic' and said general people would suffer most due to the price hike.

The prices of essentials are already out of the reach of the common people, and the hike of oil, gas and electricity would push

the price of the agricultural products, commodities and transport fare upward, the leaders said.

They said the government took such decision bypassing the parliament.

Demanding immediate withdrawal of the decision of price hike, the leaders urged the countrymen to be united to resist such 'anti-people' act.

Among others, Shaiful Haq, convener of LDF, Ashraf Hossain Ashu, Kamrul Ahasan, Poreh Saha, Abu Taher, Sabba Ali Collins and Sazedul Haq Rubel spoke at the rally.

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Minister for advanced weather forecasting system for SAARC

BSS, Dhaka

Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf yesterday called for developing and effective short-term disaster forecasting system to save human lives and economy in South Asia.

The forecasting system has immense economic value," he said at the inaugural session of a two-day weather forecasting seminar attended by 25 meteorologists from home and abroad including six from Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bhutan.

The medium and short range forecasting, called by experts as "Nowcasting" predicting disasters three to 72 hours ahead of the hit, could help protect people and their belongings in the disaster-prone South Asian countries frequently hit by tropical cyclones, storm surges, floods, nor'westers, tornadoes, droughts and earthquake, he added.

He underlined the need to take

deterministic approach in forecasting, saying that every SAARC country should try to develop modern and advanced observation systems at their own and then put in their joint efforts to make a regional communication network.

Defence Secretary K M Ehsanul Haq delivered keynote speech at the inaugural session chaired by Director of the SAARC Meteorological Research Centre (SMRC) Mohammad Akram Hossain.

Ehsanul Haq said weather plays a very important role in socio-economic development of the region and therefore, all SAARC countries should be equipped with modern weather observation and reliable communications systems to detect and predict disasters within a short span of time.

He also said that the capacity of "agro-meteorological" forecasting based mainly on medium range forecasting system should be more deterministic rather than the present mode of forecasting based on synoptic and statistical

method. Akram Hossain said the SAARC countries are dependent on each other for meteorological observation, prediction and warning and they need a common platform to cope with the problems caused by the natural disasters.

3 new subjects in RU curriculum

BSS, Rajshahi

Rajshahi University (RU) authorities have decided to introduce three new subjects in its curriculum.

The subjects are International and Comparative Law, Business and Trade Law, and Personal Law and Society.

It was decided at a meeting of the university academic council here recently.

The council also decided to rename the Department of Law as Department of Law and Justice.

The final approval will be given by the syndicate.

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