

Decide number of tiers of local govt thru' consensus

Speakers suggest at roundtable in city

BSS, Dhaka

Speakers at a roundtable conference yesterday stressed the need for deciding the number of tiers of local government through national consensus to give the local governance at the grassroots a solid foundation.

They viewed that fair election to local bodies could be possible once the tiers were decided and this would make the decentralisation of power effective and meaningful.

The Khan Foundation organised the roundtable conference on "Ensuring Local Governance at Grassroots level."

LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan attended the conference as chief guest while Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud and chief whip of the opposition in parliament Principal Mohammad Abdus Shahid attended it as special guests. Executive Director of Khan Foundation Advocate Rokhsana Khondoker was in the chair.

Mannan Bhuiyan said power was centralised in the past in the name of decentralisation. Citing examples of administrative cen-

tralisation he said the present government was committed to strengthening the local governance system as per the manifesto of BNP.

The minister underlined the need for ensuring accountability at the grass roots level to make local government more effective in future.

Betar to air Ekushey functions live

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Betar will air the Ekushey functions live from Central Shaheed Minar from the zero hour of February 21 on the occasion of Shaheed Dibash and International Mother Language Day.

Dhaka Station of Bangladesh Betar will broadcast the programme live on its 1000-KW medium wave and all regional stations will relay it simultaneously, said an official handout.

Information Minister Abdul Moyeen Khan, members of parliament Lt Col (Retd) Muhammad Faruque Khan MP, Ghulam Mohammad Quader MP and Mushfiqur Rahman MP, BRAC executive director Abdul Moyed Chowdhury, former cabinet secretary Fazlur Rahman Khan, USAID representative Jan P Emmert, Communist Party chief Manzoarul Ahsan Khan and Professor Abu Ahmed took part in the roundtable.

Dr Tofail Ahmed of Public Administration Department of Chittagong University presented the keynote paper that contained recommendations for the policy makers for helping them to establish a strong local government.

The recommendations were formulated in the light of the programmes being conducted by the Khan Foundations for promoting sound local governance system in the country.

Dr Ahmed said the present system of reserve seats for women is creating a new problem rather than solving the issue of women's empowerment.

Suraiya Begum, a UP member said that they did not like to be in reserved status in the parishad rather the women members should be elected directly.

The speakers were unanimous that under present system of electing one woman for each three wards was creating pressure on the women.



Narayanji Zila Unnayan Bastabayan Parishad staged a token hunger strike in front of the Pourasabha office in Narayanji yesterday demanding immediate election to the Pourasabha.

Anaesthesiologists' AGM Mar 10

The annual general meeting and scientific seminar of Bangladesh Society of Anaesthesiologists will be held on March 10 at 9.00 am in BISM conference room at 63 Eskaton in the city, says a press release.

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain will be present as chief guest.

Building construction

RDA seeks power to control quality

BSS, Rajshahi

The authority has no power in controlling the quality of building constructions under the existing law of the country, Rajshahi Development Authority (RDA) officials said.

They said the structural design of building should be controlled by the authorities concerned or the government considering an earthquake threat for the region.

"We have no control on the builders for maintaining quality as the building construction act 1952, the only law in the country regarding building construction, provides no authority on this issue," said Abul Kalam Azad, an officer of RDA.

Azad, the only official to oversee the building construction works of Rajshahi City was talking

to BSS on Saturday last on the new projects of the authority including housing society, shopping complex and road maintenance.

Although Rajshahi is under the moderate risk area of any possible future earthquake having a few high rise, the RDA should have a strong national building code to ensure quality of any future constructions, he said.

The RDA official observed that the proposed national building code formulated by the previous BNP government was a good approach in this regard and it should be turned into an Act immediately for the whole country.

RDA's Executive Engineer Abdullah Kafi said the authority has 11 projects under implementation to expand and modernise the city.

These included construction of four-storey RDA Bhaban at airport road, construction of inter-district bus terminal and nine by-pass and connecting roads, he added.

Besides, project worth Tk 82 crore have been taken for expanding the city in a planned manner.

Under its self-financed programme, RDA is implementing the housing projects and shopping complex.

These are Chandrima Housing at Bhadra area, Chhayabithi Housing at Sahampur area, Bandota Housing (extension) at Paba area and shopping complex at Talaimari area.

A total of Tk 33 crore will be spent for the projects, Abdullah Kafi said.

Bangla TV donates Tk 24 lakh to PM's relief fund

BSS, Dhaka

Firoz Khan, executive chairman of London based Bangla TV yesterday handed over a cheque for 30,000 Pound Sterling (Approximately Tk 24 lakh) to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office towards Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

Receiving the cheque Khaleda thanked Khan for the donation and urged expatriate Bangladeshis to increasingly invest in Bangladesh. She said her government has created the Expatriate Welfare Ministry as per her election pledge.

11-party leaders visit puja mandap

Leaders of the 11-party alliance yesterday visited the puja mandap at Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University marking Saraswati Puja, one of the religious festivals of the Hindu community.

The leftist leaders including Dilip Barua, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Mujahidul Islam Selim and Bimal Biswas exchanged pleasantries with the Hindu devotees, said a press release of the alliance.

Call to rewrite history of language movement

BSS, Chittagong

Speakers at a discussion meeting in the city yesterday stressed the need for writing a real history of the great Language Movement.

The discussion on "Language Movement" was held at district council auditorium in observance of the 50th anniversary of the movement.

Organised by monthly "Charga Digest" the discussion was attended by Vice-chancellor of Chittagong University Prof. AIM Nuruddin Choudhury as chief guest while editor of the monthly Mahbulullah presided over.

The speakers said in recent past some people who had no contribution to language movement were included in the books while some real heroes of the movement who played important role in the movement were kept out of the history due to political motivation.

Veteran language hero Mohammad Ezaharul Haque, Principle Mohammad Hossain Khan, Engineer Monowar Ahmed and Mohammad Nurullah were, among others, who took part in it.

CU admission test

16 vie for each seat

CU CORRESPONDENT

A total of 42,138 students will sit for the admission tests of Chittagong University (CU) for the first year honours courses under 2001-2002 academic session.

But the university will enrol only 2718 candidates, that means 16 students will vie for each seat this year.

Last year, the ratio of admission seekers to seats was 15:1.

A record number of students - 43,000 - bought the application forms this year, nearly 9,000 up from the last year's number.

The admission tests will begin on March 18.

A total of 11,570 students have submitted applications for admission into science faculty against 889 seats.

There are 831 seats in the arts faculty, but the number of admission seekers is 7321.

As many as 17,696 applications have been submitted against 453 seats in the Bachelor of Business Administration faculty.

Social science faculty received 6,105 applications against 489 seats and the law department will enrol 116 students from 4,423 admission seekers.

The environmental science and forestry subjects drew the lowest number of students. Only 175 candidates submitted applications against 63 seats.

And the BBA emerged as the most sought-after faculty. Nearly 39 students will vie for each seat this year.

Bid to kidnap college student in Ctg

BSS, Chittagong

Police foiled an attempt to kidnap a college student and arrested one person in the city yesterday.

Three kidnappers were waiting in an autorikshaw in front of the government City College gate to kidnap Abu Obedey Pervez, 24, a degree examinee from Muslim Education Society College, Police sources said.

As Parvez came out of the examination hall at about 2:30 pm, the gang stopped him.

When the student raised an alarm, a mobile team of Kotwali police rushed to the spot and arrested Abdul Wahid, 26, son of GM Monir Ahmed of Amirabad village of Lohaghar thana.

Other members of the gang managed to flee from the scene.

Poverty Elimination Through Rice Research Assistance (PETTRA)

Call for Concept Notes on System of Rice Intensification (SRI)

The System of Rice Intensification (SRI), first developed in Madagascar, is an innovative technique of rice production, which is being evaluated in some South and Southeast Asian countries.

PETTRA is now issuing a call for concept Notes to assist the on-going research within Bangladesh. Competent and qualified organizations (Government or Non-government or private sector) are encouraged to submit concept notes. Concerned agencies must already be working with SRI technology and must have a track record of commitment to agriculture development for resource-poor farm households. Research will be targeted to the specific regions of Bangladesh.

PETTRA is a demand-led, participatory research initiative with the purpose to enhance the productive potential of rice-based farming systems in Bangladesh. It is funded by UK Department for International Development and managed by the International Rice Research Institute in close partnership with the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute. The main goal of the project is to substantially increase domestic rice production and rural incomes by 2008, so that these achievements can contribute towards a 50 percent reduction in rural and urban poverty by 2015.

Closing date for submissions is March 17, 2002.

Specific details may be obtained by contacting :

IRRI-PETTRA

GPO Box 64, Ramna, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.

Tel: 8827210, 8817639-40; Fax: 8825341.

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Dhaka University Alumni Association General Meeting, Election & Alumni Day
Date : 1 March 2002 Friday ★ Place : TSC
All ex-students of DU are requested to pre-register by 27 February and attend the whole day program.
Contact : Secretary General Prof. Khodadad Khan
Tel : 9661920-4775, 9662947, 011805567, 017458894

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(স্বাক্ষর) সনদস্বাক্ষরিত
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3. Allynugger and Chaltapore Tea Estates owned by the Allynugger Tea Company Limited.
4. Chandpore Tea Estate owned by The Chandpore Tea Company Limited.
5. Mazdehee Tea Estate owned by The Mazdehee Tea Company Limited.
6. Luskpore, Silloah and Rajkie Tea Estates owned by Surnah Valley Tea Company Limited.
7. Chaklapunji Tea Estate owned by Eastland Camellia Limited.

By order of
ASMO Subhan
Managing Director

Duncan Brothers (Bangladesh) Limited
Agents/Secretaries of the Above Tea Companies.

D-153