

# Strengthen democracy, bring transparency

Seminar urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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He urged the prime minister to take firm steps to make the government more accountable to the people.

Former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin Ahmed said instead of increasing the number of members, the government should take initiative to make the present parliament functional.

"What is most important is to make parliament effective where members of both the treasury and the opposition benches will discuss the national issues leaving aside their confronting politics," he added.

Owen Lippert, resident director of the National Democratic Institute, presented a paper titled 'Coalition building in Bangladesh politics: Current state and future direction' was organised by Bangladesh Political Science Association at RC Majumder Arts auditorium of Dhaka University.

Taking part in the discussion, Barrister Mainul Hosein said, "We cannot strengthen our democracy if we appoint party-men in administration, police department and

Former caretaker government

advisor M Hafizuddin Khan said democracy without accountability is totally meaningless.

Emphasising the role of standing committees to ensure accountability of the government, he said, "We cannot call a parliament effective when its committees do not run properly."

Association President Prof M Ataur Rahman said civil society cannot replace political parties but they can co-operate with each other on different issues.

He said in building coalitions, the policy positions of the parties must be taken into consideration.

Prof Aftab Ahmed and Prof Harun-ur-Rashid Pathan also spoke at the seminar.

He said in a democratic system, parliament should be the centre of all debates and street agitation like hartal and strike can do no good to people.

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