



The road at Fakirpool goes under water whenever it rains, but the authorities seem indifferent to the problem.

## Call for persuasive policy to stop influx of Rohingyas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Civil society members at a discussion yesterday called for a persuasive policy towards Myanmar to stop 'continuous' influx of Rohingyas into Bangladesh and ensure repatriation of the refugees.

They also suggested formulating a national policy on refugees to solve the refugee problem properly.

The Centre for Development Studies, Human Rights Forum and Bandhujona Lawyers Association co-organised the discussion on the Amnesty International report on violation of human rights of Rohingyas at the National Press Club.

The report published in May revealed that the Muslim ethnic minority, known as Rohingyas, continue to suffer multiple restrictions and human rights violations. They even need to take permission from the authorities to leave their

villages.

The speakers blamed the big powers and the international media for playing double standard role in raising voice against human rights violations.

When human rights are violated in East Timor, the super powers become vocal, but none of them raises voice against such violations taking place in Palestine and other Muslim states, said former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru.

The report says the Rohingyas' freedom of movement is severely limited. They are also subjected to forced eviction, land confiscation and various forms of extortion and arbitrary taxation, including financial restriction on marriage.

Rohingyas continue to be used as forced labourers on roads and military camps, it added.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed

termed the Rohingya issue an internal matter of Myanmar.

The government does not want to hurt Myanmar, a friendly neighbour country, by interfering in its internal matter, he added.

"We have repatriated 1.8 lakh Rohingyas through negotiations with Myanmar," Moudud said, adding that talks with the Myanmar government are on to send back the remaining 20,000 refugees.

Prof. CR Abrar of Dhaka University said according to unofficial figure, tens of thousands of Rohingyas have been staying in Bangladesh.

Many of the repatriated Rohingyas again entered Bangladesh as the human rights situation in their homeland remains the same as before, he added.

Former state minister for foreign affairs Abul Hassan Chowdhury emphasised the need for settling the issue with Myanmar through a consistent persuasive policy and raising the issue in different international forums.

Dr Asif Nazrul criticised the UN and other bodies for not raising voice against the human rights abuse in Myanmar.

### AAA celebrates US Independence Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The American Alumni Association (AAA) celebrated the US Independence Day with a dinner and live music by Pentagon, a music band, at the Blue Grass Café in the city on Friday.

US Ambassador Harry K Thomas, who was present as chief guest, formally launched the new AAA website and the association's first membership directory at the programme.

He also gave away crests to new life members of the association.

Michelle Jones, deputy director of the American Centre, also attended the programme.

AAA President Syed Almas Kabir, Secretary Ayesha Dasgiri and executive committee members Dr M Enamul Huq and Quazi M Ahmed were also present.

### Obituary

The funeral service of Dr. Mina Malakar will be held at 4.00pm tomorrow at the Assembly of God Church, New Eskaton, in the city, says a press release.

Dr. Mina Malakar died of old age complications on July 2.

## Resume BRTC bus service in N-dists

### Passengers' assoc demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The North Bengal Passengers' Welfare Association yesterday demanded immediate resumption of the state-owned bus service in the northern region of the country.

The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) operated up to 50 buses on different routes in the 16 districts of the region but it withdrew its services on June 28, causing much suffering to the passengers, said Mozahedur Rahman Biplob, convenor of the association, at a press conference in the city yesterday.

The bus service brought a remarkable change to inter-district communication network but the authorities stopped the service following frequent attacks on the buses and its passengers and looting of valuables, said Badal Sarker, member-secretary of the association.

He said a vested quarter carried out the attacks to force the authorities to withdraw the bus service that benefited students, employees, workers and even the disabled people

who could travel in the BRTC buses free of charge.

Badal, who hails from Bogra, sought intervention of the prime minister in this issue.

Badal said they will continue their agitation unless and until the BRTC resumes its services in the northern region.

The association will form a human chain in front of the Supreme Court today to press home its demand.

Rafiqul Islam of Natore and Rashedul Islam Khokon of Dinajpur also spoke at the press conference held at the National Press Club.

Contacted, BRTC Chairman Taimur Alam Khondaker said, "The bus service has been stopped as the private bus owners were creating obstacles to the plying of buses. But people are in favour of the BRTC service."

On resumption of the services, he said, "I have already informed the higher authorities of the problem. And I will act according to the decision of the government."

## Indigenous women urged to unite to fight repression

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called on the indigenous women to unite to fight all forms of social repression they are facing.

They pointed out that indigenous women suffer multiple discriminations, first as women and second as people from indigenous community.

The Garo Indigenous Michik Association organised the seminar at a city hotel.

Speaking as chief guest, Norwegian Ambassador Aud Lise Norheim said women in Bangladesh, especially the indigenous women, are vulnerable to repression.

She called for raising social consciousness among the indigenous women and educating them.

The ambassador also suggested involving them with the world forum

of the indigenous women.

Sanjeeb Dron, general secretary of Bangladesh Forum for the Indigenous People, said most indigenous women are subjected to social repression.

The traditional social norms of the Garo community have already been abolished, leading to the obliteration of the matrilineal society, he said.

Mamun-ur Rashid, a dramatist, said the government should take measures to uphold the culture and traditions of indigenous people.

Professor Sedaga Halim said indigenous women are more vulnerable to repression by the majority community.

"When an indigenous woman goes out of their locality she faces more problems than the girls from the majority community," she said.

The indigenous girls pointed out some problems they face at different level -- lack of networking among themselves, accommodation crisis, acute poverty, social insecurity and sexual harassment.

Pabitra Manda, secretary general of Michik Association, also spoke at the seminar presided over by its President Papri Areng.

## Be objective to reach truth

Shafik Rehman urges journo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists, while performing their professional duties, must be objective to reach the truth, said Jai Din Editor Shafik Rehman at a training programme in the city yesterday.

He said they must consider facts as sacred and be free from bias and prejudice while telling the truth.

The four-day training programme on Human Rights Reporting was jointly organised by the British High Commission and Democracywatch at the latter's premises.

Shafik Rehman said the media persons must protect the right to privacy while gathering information.

They are to protect the image and security of the victims of human rights violation, he added.

Shafik Rehman said media organisations too have to maintain balance and objectivity while catering the news.

They should carefully consider the sensitivity of all kinds of readers before running stories and pictures, he said.

Taleya Rehman, executive director of Democracywatch, said risk is an integral part of journalism profession and the journalists have to acquire skills to cope with this challenge.

The topics to be covered during the training include universal declaration of human rights and Bangladesh constitution, journalism and terrorism, good taste and decency, investigative journalism, accuracy and impartiality.

## Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Md A Mannan, a former executive engineer, will be held today, says a press release.

A milad mahfil has been organised to mark this occasion at Flat No. A-5, Park Palace, House-74, Road-12/A, Dhanmondi after Maghrib prayers.

Mannan died at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital on July 3 at the age of 72.

He left behind his wife, three sons, two daughters and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

## Shraddha

Shraddha of Modhu Sengupta, a newspaper agent, will be held at his family residence at D C Road, Dewan Bazar, West Bakaria, Chittagong on July 8, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the shraddha and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Modhu Sengupta died at a hospital in Kolkata on June 23 at the age of 42.



Motor parts traders stage a demonstration in the city yesterday protesting arrest of Bangladeshi businessman Fazlur Rahman in Kolkata. Later, they submitted a memorandum to the Indian High Commission in this regard.

## 2.25 lakh leave country as migrant workers a year

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 225,000 people leave the country every year through official channels as migrant workers, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They said about US \$3.37 billion came into the country from migrant workers in last fiscal year alone.

The seminar was organised by Bangladesh Migration and

Development Forum (BMDF) to mark the first anniversary of the 'Entry into Force of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families' in the city yesterday.

The speakers urged the government to ratify the convention and called for reducing the cost of fees for obtaining passport and launching a training programme for migrant workers for better understanding of their jobs abroad.

They said although the UN General Assembly has adopted the convention and opened it for adaptation, migration has grown into a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon both at national and international level.

Speaking as chief guest, Daliluddin Mondal, secretary of the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment, said the government has already taken some steps, including launching of the online data base registration file programme for ensuring easy migration.

At the seminar, the BMDF launched a Bangla version of the draft of 'International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families' with a view to assist the migrants in ensuring their rights.

Bangladesh became a signatory to the convention in October 1998

while 25 countries have so far ratified it.

Presided over by Wahid-uz-Zaman, director general of the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, the seminar was addressed by Tasneem Siddiqui of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit, Ali Haider Chowdhury, secretary general of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies, and Eric Hanley, advisor to Department for International Development.

## Harris admits irregularities, says Saber

UNB, Dhaka

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, political secretary to opposition leader Sheikh Hasina, yesterday said prime minister's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury had to recognise the fact that there were irregularities in the Dhaka-10 by-polls.

In a counter-statement, Saber thanked the PM's political secretary and said Harris retreated from his earlier position about the photographs published in different newspapers on fake vote casting.



US Ambassador Harry K Thomas gives away a crest to a new life member of the American Alumni Association at a programme marking the US Independence Day in the city recently.



Indonesian Ambassador to Bangladesh Mansjur Maddolengeng casts his vote at the embassy at Gulshan in the city yesterday. General election in Indonesia was held yesterday to elect president and vice-president.

## DHAKA TODAY

### Installation ceremony

The 28th installation ceremony of the office bearers of Rotary Club of Ramna for 2004-05 will be held. Venue: Kurmitola Golf Club Auditorium, Dhaka Cantonment. Time: 7.30pm.

### Seminar

An international seminar on Islamic Law, co-organised by International Islamic University Chittagong and World Assembly of Muslim Youth, will be held with Law Minister Moudud Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: National Museum Auditorium, Shahbagh. Time: 10.30am.

### BCDJC discussion

Under its programme 'Face to face with women journalists', BCDJC organises a discussion with Danish Ambassador Niels Severin Munk as guest speaker. Venue: BCDJC seminar room, 53 Central Road. Time: 11.00am.

### Poetry evening

Pathik, a literary group, organises an evening of poetry. Besides recitation, a discussion on poetry will mark the event. Venue: Bishwasahitya Kendra Auditorium, Bangla Motor. Time: 5.00pm.

### Launching ceremony

The launching ceremony of the Website of the Society for the Welfare of Autistic Children will be held. Venue: 7/1 A,

Block-C, Lalmaita. Time: 5.30pm.

### Closing ceremony

The closing ceremony of 27th National Science, Information and Communication Technology Week will be held. Venue: Osmani Memorial Auditorium. Time: 4.00pm.

### Blood donation

Quantum Foundation organises a voluntary blood donation camp. Venue: ICMA Bhaban, Kalabari. Time: 10.00am to 8.00pm.

## DHAKA TOMORROW

### Painting exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of a painting exhibition by Sheikh Alzal will be held with Japanese Ambassador Matsushiro Horiguchi as chief guest. Venue: Saju Art Gallery, Gulshan-2. Time: 6.00pm. The exhibition will remain open till July 17 from 10.00am to 8.30pm daily except on Friday.

### Roundtable

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) organises a round table on 'Morocco's role in international affairs and its ever-growing relations with Bangladesh'. Venue: BILIA Auditorium, House-22, Road-7 Dhanmondi. Time: 3.00pm.



A T M Hayatuzzaman Khan, member of the Dhaka Bank Foundation, handed over a cheque for Tk 30 lakh to Kazi Rafiqul Alam, Executive Director of Dhaka Ahsania Mission, at a simple function at the central office of the Bank in the city yesterday.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over the country with moderately heavy falls at places till 6.00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and the lowest 25.0 degree Celsius at Maizidee court.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:17am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.0	26.0	78	91
Chittagong	31.8	26.5	80	77
Rajshahi	34.6	27.5	83	94
Khulna	33.0	28.2	88	90
Barisal	32.6	27.0	95	79
Sylhet	28.8	26.0	93	98
Cox's Bazar	31.0	25.5	81	90