



Bangladesh Chhatra League (Dhaka city-south) organised a discussion to mark the 29th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Mahanagar Natyamanchi in the city yesterday, with Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil as chief guest.

UNDP scheme for very poor flood victims

UNB, Dhaka

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will launch labour-intensive infrastructure-reconstruction works, in partnership with the government, to help those who lost income

opportunities in the devastating floods in Bangladesh.

The scheme aims at "helping to rebuild devastated public services and providing employment to the very poor in the worst-affected areas," a UNDP announcement said yesterday, while the visiting UN development agency's administrator, Mark Malloch Brown, continued discussion with government leaders on the bailout plans.

"To further economic recovery, weavers, small shop owners and other small-scale entrepreneurs will be provided with capital grants to restart their business," it said.

Maldives urged to release Zaki

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) has expressed deep concern over the arrest of Ibrahim Hussein Zaki, one of its board members, and other persons associated with the democracy movement in the Maldives.

Zaki, former secretary general of Saarc, is one of the most widely regarded and respected personalities in South Asia for his continuing involvement with civil society initiatives across the region to promote cooperation in

South Asia.

Zaki has also served as foreign secretary, minister for tourism and minister for planning and national development in his country.

In a joint statement yesterday, the SACEPS board members urged the government of the Maldives to release Zaki and his colleagues and to deal with their concerns within a political framework which is consistent with the rule of law and the principles of democracy.

The board members are Prof Rehman Sobhan, executive director of SACEPS and chairman of CPD, Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, executive director of CPD, Dr Kamal Hossain, former foreign minister, Laila Rahman Kabir, former president of MCCI, Farooq Sobhan, former foreign secretary, Prof Mohammad Yunus, managing director of Grameen Bank, Prof Arjun Sengupta, chairman of SACEPS and former member of Indian Planning Commission, Prof Muchkund Dubey, former foreign secretary of India, Dr Dwarika N Dhungel, executive director of IIDS, Nepal, Prof Sridhar K Khatri, executive director of RCSS, Colombo, Dr Mohan Man Sainju, chairman of IIDS, Kathmandu, Rita Thapa, coordinator of Tewa, Kathmandu, Binod K Chaudhury, president of Confederation of Nepalese Industries, Syed Babar Ali, pro-chancellor, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan, Dr Akmal Hussain, senior fellow of Pakistan Institute of Development Studies, Dr Humayun Khan, former foreign secretary of Pakistan, Khawar Mumtaz, coordinator of Shirkat Gah, Lahore, Dr Godfrey Gunatilleke, deputy chairman of Marga Institute, Colombo, and Dr Saman Kelgama, executive director of Institute of Policy Studies, Colombo.

Law for 4 tribal cultural academies soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will formulate a law for four tribal cultural academies that now run under an executive order.

A ministerial level committee will submit a draft of the law to the cabinet soon.

The government recently formed the

CTG CBA POLLS

Voter list illegal

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court (HC) yesterday declared illegal the voter list and election schedule for holding election to the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) of Chittagong City Corporation.

The court also ordered the registrar of trade unions of Chittagong division to prepare a fresh voter list for holding the CBA election.

The orders came upon a writ filed by Chittagong City Corporation Sramik-o Karmachari League that challenged the legality of voter list prepared by the registrar of trade unions on November 3, 2002, depriving a large number of workers as voters. The High Court had stayed the election till disposal of the case.

Making the rule issued earlier absolute, a division bench comprising Justice M Abdul Matin and Justice Tariq-ul Hakim delivered the verdict.

committee led by Minister for Environment and Forest Tarique Islam to prepare a draft of the law.

The committee has so far held four meetings in this regard.

"We are trying to bring the tribal cultural academies under a law as those are running under an executive order for years. We will seek opinion from the representatives of the Chittagong Hill Tracts affairs ministry to finalise the draft," said a senior official of the cultural ministry.

The academies in Netrakona, Cox's Bazar, Rajshahi and Sylhet are working to promote the cultural heritage of the ethnic people.

But in absence of clear guidelines,

the academies are not functioning properly, the official said.

"We are facing problems in dealing with various issues such as retirement of employees of the academies," said Dildar Ahmed, cultural advisor of the ministry.

35 ships fined

BSB, Chittagong

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) magistrate has fined Tk 2.5 lakh to 35 inland ships for evading port tax, violation of Port Acts and polluting environment in the port channels.

Magistrate Mohammad Monir Chowdhury carried out the raid.



Sammilita Sangskritik Jote organised a condolence meeting in memory of journalist and columnist Santosh Gupta at Central Shaheed Minar yesterday.