

The closing session of a three-day conference on 'Human Rights and Governance: Local and Global Perspective' was held at Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) auditorium in the city yesterday.

Homegrown policy for good governance underscored

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a conference yesterday underscored the need for a specific time-bound plan of action to ensure good governance. They also observed that the donor-driven policy cannot ensure good governance; there should be a homegrown visionary policy reflecting the genuine aspirations of the people.

initiatives are not always adequate to reap long-term benefits for the citizens, he said. 'The international institutions are welcome to participate in our development effort, but we have to design our own agenda,' he added.

MM Akash observed that the World Bank (WB) often made suggestions on various sectors but it itself did not follow those.

He also questioned the transparency in the activities of the bank and criticised it for seeking immunity for all its activities in Bangladesh.

Mahfuz Anam stressed the need for a check and balance on the executive to ensure good governance.

The donors got the chance to make suggestions because of the failure in governance, he observed.

Rashid Anam said good governance is a prerequisite for economic development in the country.

He called for framing a specific time-bound plan of action for important sectors on an urgent basis.

At the open discussion, the participants called for a united movement to realise various demands. They also opposed the project-based development by donor agencies and multinational companies.

At another session on 'Civil society activism, media and role of state for good governance', the speakers stressed the need for a concerted pressure on the government to ensure good governance.

They said a strong bond between media and civil society is vital to monitor different social and economic issues.

Speaking at the discussion, Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed regretted that the civil society is sharply divided on political lines, which sometimes create problems in mobilising public opinion.

'At present, the state stands beside those who are plundering the nation's wealth. So, the civil society and the media will have to take a stand against those activities,' he said.

Prof Sayeed also mentioned that

the country would continue to suffer unless the civil society of the country is not united.

Motiur Rahman, editor of the daily Prothom Alo, said the media is trying to play its due role in ensuring good governance.

'Despite some limitations, the media is trying to consolidate democracy through creating public opinion on different issues,' he said.

He blamed the political parties for creating division among the people and various crises in the country.

Motiur Rahman also criticised the professional bodies for creating division among themselves on political line.

Chaired by Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, the session was also addressed by Aroma Dutt of PRIP Trust and Farida Akhter of Ubinig.

\$25,000 Citibank grant for Brac schools

Citigroup Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Citibank, contributed 25,000 US dollar to Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (Brac) to support the reconstruction of schools under Brac's 2004 flood rehabilitation programme in Bangladesh, says a press release.

The flood in 2004 had caused extensive damage to educational infrastructures and educational materials disrupting the education of hundreds of thousands of students.

A total of 9,855 Brac schools and 1,799 Kishori Kendras got severely affected in this catastrophe.

Mamun Rashid, chief executive officer of Citibank Bangladesh, presented the grant to Fazle Hasan Abed, chairman of Brac.

Brac Executive Director Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury was present.

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Free election from influence of black money

Bhuiyan tells Democracy Fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local government has to be strengthened to establish democracy at the grassroots level, said LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at a democracy fair yesterday.

He said a democratic society is a prerequisite for the institutionalisation of democracy in the country.

The Democracy Fair 2005 was organised by Khan Foundation in the city to highlight democracy and relation between the people and local government.

The LGRD minister said election must be free from the influence of black money and muscles-power to elect honest representatives in parliament.

Speaking as guest speaker, US Ambassador to Bangladesh Harry K Thomas laid emphasis on human rights and good governance for sustainable democracy.

'As a possessor of a new democracy, Bangladesh has a challenge to strengthen the institution,' he said, adding that the fair would help increase people's participation in democratic institutions.

Dutch Ambassador Kees Beemsterboer and German Ambassador Dierich Andreas were present.

Executive Director of Khan Foundation Advocate Rokhsana Khondker presided.

Funded by USAID and ARD, the fair was marked by discussions, cultural programmes and display of books.



Noor's mother passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amina Begum, mother of Asaduzzaman Noor MP a cultural personality and publicity secretary of Awami League, died at Metropolitan Medical Centre in the city yesterday at the age of 85.

Amina, wife of late Abu Nazem Mohammad Ali, was the headmistress of Nilphamari Government Girls' School. She was involved in teaching for 33 years and in social welfare activities.

She left behind two sons, one daughter and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her death.

Her youngest son Dr Asaduzzaman Mohammad Ali is a professor of the department of mass communication and journalism of Dhaka University.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held on the Nilphamari Rest House Mosque premises at 11:00am today.

AL chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of Amina Begum.

In a condolence message, Hasina prayed for the salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil and Joint Secretary Obaidul Quader also condoled the death of Amina Begum.

BUSINESSMAN HARUN MURDER CASE One to die, 5 others get life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal, Chittagong yesterday sentenced one person to death and five others to life imprisonment in shipping businessman Harun murder case.

Judge M Hasan Imam handed down the death penalty to Md Shafiqul Islam alias Shafi at a jam-packed court room. The other convicts are Saiful Islam alias Babu, Ujjal Barua, Md Nurul Alam, brother of Shafi, Md Nurul Absar and Md Golan Molla, general secretary of Momenbag Housing Society. Of them, Ujjal and Nurul Absar were tried in absentia.

The court also fined Saiful and Ujjal Tk 10,000 each. If they fail to pay, they will have to suffer another one year's imprisonment. Nurul Alam, Nurul Absar and Golan Molla were also fined Tk 1,000 each, in default to suffer an additional one month's imprisonment.

Another accused Md Nurul Islam died during the trial.

According to the prosecution, Shafiqul Islam and other accused equipped with firearms started erecting a wall around a piece of land owned by SM Iqbal Hossain, plaintiff of the case, at Hamzarbag Colony in the city on February 15, 2000.

Iqbal along with his brother-in-law SU Ahmad Harun, a shipping businessman, and other relatives tried to resist the gang, but Shafi shot Harun in his chest when he was rushing to call the police on the phone.

Harun was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he

died the same day. Local people caught Shafi and two other accused with firearms and handed them over to police.

Iqbal filed a case with Panchlalaish Police Station in this connection. And the investigating officer of the case submitted a charge sheet accusing Shafi and four others on August 10, 2000.

The case was transferred to Criminal Investigation Department (CID) police. It was sent to divisional speedy trial tribunal on July 31 last year.

Advocate Quamrul Islam Chowdhury and Advocate Ahsanul Haq Hena appeared on behalf of the state and the plaintiff while Advocate Salauddin Haider Siddiqui, Advocate Najim Uddin and Advocate Monzurul Alam Ansari defended the accused.

French envoy meets Hasina

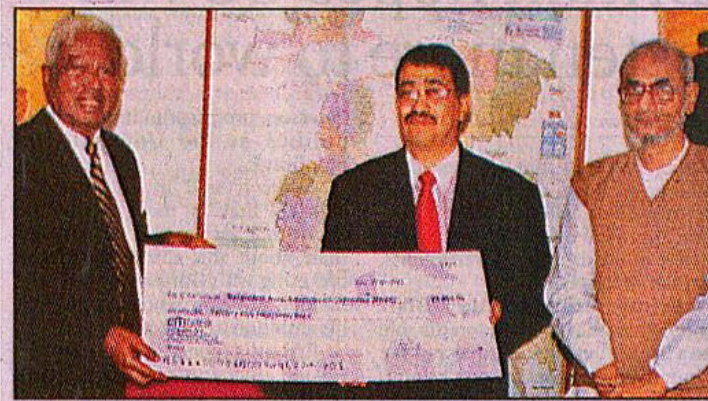
UNB, Dhaka

French Ambassador Jacques Andre Costilhes made a courtesy call on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina at her Dhanmondi house.

They discussed matters of bilateral interest.

Trade and economic cooperation between Dhaka and Paris as well as domestic political issues came up for discussion during the meeting, Awami League sources said.

Party leaders Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Montaz Hossain were present.



Citibank NA Chief Executive Officer Mamun Rashid presents a grant of 25,000 US dollar to Brac Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed while Brac Executive Director Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, right, looks on.

DHAKA TODAY Launching ceremony Talk Workshop Prize giving ceremony Memorial meeting



Noted painter Qaiyyum Chowdhury and Standard Chartered Bank Chief Executive Officer Osman Morad pose for photograph with the winners of a children's painting competition. Standard Chartered Bank organised the painting competition.

Home loan product Mortgage launched

Standard Chartered Bank has launched its home loan product Mortgage in Bangladesh, says a press release.

Noted painter Qaiyyum Chowdhury and Standard Chartered Bank Chief Executive Officer Osman Morad launched the product at a ceremony at the Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium on January 14.

M Sajidur Rahman, head of Consumer Banking and M Masihul Huq, head of Secured Loans, were present.

Qaiyyum Chowdhury also inaugurated a three-day children's painting exhibition organised by the bank at the Shishu Academy. These paintings were selected during a children's painting contest organised by Standard Chartered Bank in November last year.

The 'Paint Your Dream House' contest was marked to celebrate the launching of Mortgage, which is a home loan product with unique features. Around 5,000 children from different city schools participated in the contest.

A total of 2,000 entries were selected for the exhibition. The paintings were on display at Shishu Academy from January 14 to 17. The best 57 child painters received awards from Qaiyyum Chowdhury.

'This is great timing for us, to start with the children, to talk about dreams and colours as we celebrate 100 years of Standard Chartered Bank in Bangladesh,' said Osman Morad.

Qaiyyum Chowdhury said, 'It is a great event involving the children, giving them an opportunity to express their minds. Children have great imaginations and their thoughts are pure and colourful, he added. The sheer number of entries show that they are eager to share their dreams with others and their dreams are beautiful and attractive, he said.'

Qulkhwani

UNB, Dhaka

Qulkhwani of AK Mohiuddin, father of Bangladesh High Commissioner in New Delhi Hemanayuddin, will be held at his Dhanmondi residence after Magrib prayers tomorrow.

AK Mohiuddin, also father-in-law of Home Secretary Muhammad Omar Farooq, died of old age complications on Sunday.

Belta executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Arifa Rahman and Dr Rubina Khan have been elected president and general secretary of Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (Belta) for 2005-06.

The election was held at the annual general meeting of Belta at the St. Joseph's campus auditorium of Stamford University on January 15.

Other office-bearers are Dr Md Shahidullah and Abdus Selim -- vice presidents, Dr Dil Afroze Quader -- treasurer, Najma Shams -- joint treasurer, and Dr Deena P Forkan -- publication secretary.

Prof Sayeed also mentioned that



Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk gives away a trophy to a student as chief guest at the annual prize giving ceremony of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College in the city yesterday.

2 get 30 years

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A court in Dhaka yesterday sentenced two muggers to 30 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) for killing an auto-rickshaw driver on January 30 last year.

Judge Golam Mortuza Majumder of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-2 handed down the verdict in presence of the convicts Mohammad Mizanur Rahman alias Mizan and Shahin Alam alias Shahin.

According to the prosecution, two muggers in the guise of passengers hired the auto-rickshaw of one Bachchu Mia from in front of Notre Dame College at Motijheel to go to Gulshan. But the muggers attacked the driver with sharp weapons to snatch away the auto-rickshaw when it reached Road No. 113 of Gulshan. The locals caught the two re-handled and handed them over to police.

WEATHER TODAY Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

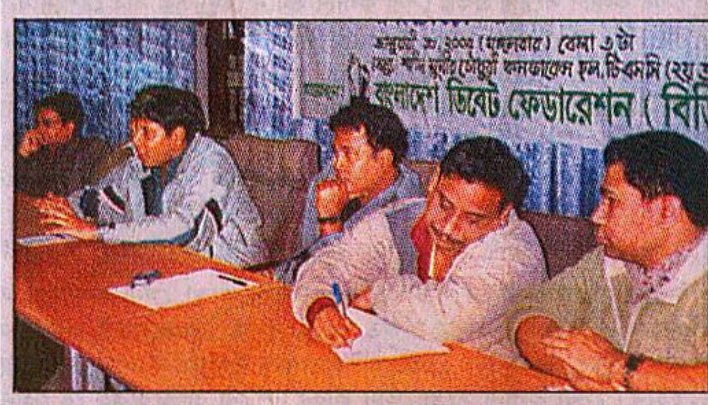
Light rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and regions of Jessore, Kushtia and Comilla till 6.00pm today. Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country with light to moderate fog during morning, met office said.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. Highest temperature 29.1 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 9.3 degree Celsius at Srimangal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:36pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

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

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening)



Bangladesh Debate Federation (BDF) President Bulbul Hasan speaks at a roundtable on 'contemporary thoughts about debate' at the TSC auditorium at Dhaka University yesterday. Debaters from different universities and colleges took part in the roundtable organised by the BDF.

ঢাকা ইলেকট্রিক সাপ্লাই কোম্পানী লিঃ (ডেসকো) বাড়ী নং-৩, রোড নং- ২৪, ব্রক-কে, বনানী মডেল টাউন, ঢাকা-১২১৩। পবিত্র ঈদুল আযহা উপলক্ষে বিশেষ বিজ্ঞপ্তি