

Recruit skilled crew, master to check launch accidents

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday called for recruiting skilled crew and master in launches to check launch disasters.

They also demanded that the probe reports on launch disasters be made public and the persons responsible brought to book.

Paribesh Bachao Andolan (Save Environment Movement) organised the roundtable on 'Safe water transport and our duties' at the National Press Club in the city.

Presenting a keynote paper, Prof Dr K Shahriar Iqbal said the government forms a probe committee soon after a launch sinks but the reports never see the light of day.

As a result, the experts could not find out the real cause of launch capsize, he added.

Prof Iqbal also suggested avoiding overloading, recruiting skilled staffs and ensuring fitness of launches to check launch tragedy.

Paribesh Bachao Andolon Chairman ASM Shajahan said more than 10,000 people have died in launch accidents since independence and more than 300 launches could not be salvaged.

He identified lack of coordination among government agencies and private organisations as a major factor responsible for launch disasters.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed said, "We could reduce launch accidents by 50 percent through recruiting trained master in launches."

He also called for raising awareness among passengers about various aspects of launch accidents.

Golam Mohammad Siraj, chairman of parliamentary standing committee on shipping ministry, said that although the majority of people

use the river route, this sector faces many obstacles due to poor allocation of funds.

Dr Md Riaz Hasan Khandakar, chairman of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, also spoke at the roundtable attended by leaders of launch owner's association, BIWTA officials, advocates and social workers.



Former IGP ASM Shahjahan speaks at a roundtable on 'Safe water transport' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed.

Bangladesh's future in youths' hands

Harry says at seminar

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador Harry K Thomas yesterday said Bangladesh's future is not in the hands of the prime minister or the opposition leader, it's in the hands of the youths.

Students should avail of the studies of preparing policies and strategies as "future of the country lies in their hands, rather than the politicians," he said.

The outgoing US envoy made the remarks while addressing as guest speaker a seminar on 'Business Policy and Strategy: A Synergetic Approach to Success and Satisfaction' at the North South University at Kamal Ataturk Avenue in the city.

Harry advised the students to find out a better way to organise capital within the earliest possible time to develop infrastructure for the

progressive business sectors like agriculture, food processing, fisheries and so on.

"It's better to browse the development issues, rather than browsing Michel Jackson on net," he said as a wise word for the students present at the function.

The diplomat advised the youths to visit the American Centre looking for visa and go to the USA for higher studies.

He disclosed that the United States has a plan to assist bright students of Bangladesh through IELTS, SAT and other language courses for obtaining higher education facilities in his country.

NSU Vice-chancellor Dr Hafiz GA Siddiqi, Dean Dr Meskatuddin, CEO of Citi Group Mamun Rashid and NSU Pro-VC Khairul Bashar also spoke.

Zaker Party to donate Tk 5cr to DRU Fund

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Zaker Party Chairman Mostafa Amir Faisal Mujaddedi yesterday announced that he will donate Tk 5 crore to the Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) Welfare Fund.

He will give Tk one crore in October and the remaining Tk 4 crore next year, the Zaker Party chief said at DRU's 'Meet the Press' programme at its auditorium in the city.

The title of the programme was 'Religion Based Politics: Anti-Bangladesh Propaganda'.

Blaming the Jamaat-e-Islami for the rise of extremist groups in the country, Mostafa Amir Faisal warned that this party will not support the BNP in the next election if it does not sever relationships with the Jamaat.

The Zaker Party chief called on the two major political parties to sit across the negotiation table for the sake of national interest.

DRU President M Shafiqul Karim and General Secretary Shahkhat Hossain Badsha were present at the programme.

Suu Kyi's release demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion demanded immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar's opposition leader who turned 60 years yesterday.

They also urged world leaders to seek her release and work for establishing democracy in Myanmar.

The discussion was organised by Rakhain Women Union (RWU) at the National Press Club in the city.

The discussants dubbed Suu Kyi as Myanmar's symbol of peace, and said the military junta promised her release on different occasions, but did not release.

Rather, they confined over 1350 NLD leaders to jail with Suu Kyi who is the daughter of Myanmar's independence hero Aung San and the winner of Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, they said.

"Suu Kyi's release is essential as it would be the first step towards Myanmar's democracy," said Mrs Raza Linn, chairperson of RWU.

Awami League leader KM Jahangir, human rights activist Khushi Kabir, Workers Party leader Haider Akbar Khan Rano, Aleana Khan of Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights and RWU leaders also spoke.

Earlier, over 50 leaders and workers of Democratic Forces of Arakan staged a demonstration in front of the High Court demanding immediate release of Suu Kyi and all political prisoners of Myanmar.

Workers' Party demands trial of Mosharraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Workers' Party yesterday demanded immediate arrest and trial of AKM Mosharraf Hossain who resigned as state minister for energy over Tk 1 crore Lexus car scam.

Removing the state minister over such a scam is not enough -- the government should also find out what other facilities he received from Canadian company Niko Resources, said party General Secretary Saiful Haque at a meeting.

"We will not give any chance to the government to cover up the irregularities and corruption in the energy ministry by removing its minister," he said.

Workers Party leaders Bonhishikha Jamili, Poresh Chandra Saha, Abdus Salam, Akbar Khan and Akhtaruzzaman Azad also spoke, says a press release.

Obituary

UNB, Dhaka

Syed Mozammel Haque, cousin of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, died from heatstroke in Gouranadi upazila of Barisal yesterday at the age of 82.

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, in a condolence message, expressed her deep shock at his death.

RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Call to change political culture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Country's political culture needs a change to ensure the rights of indigenous people, said Deputy Minister for Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Affairs Mani Swapan Dewan yesterday.

He was speaking at the publication ceremony of a book titled 'Tribal Peoples, Nationalism and Human Rights Challenge: The Adviasis of Bangladesh' by Tone Bleie at the YWCA Auditorium in the city.

Swapan said present political culture is not suitable for the welfare of the indigenous people, but repression on the weak takes place all over the world, and Bangladesh is not an exception.

However, this is the appropriate time for the indigenous people to be united and take rational decisions, he said, adding that the indigenous

leaders also need to admit their previous faults and go for better leadership.

The deputy minister said the United Nations could play an important role to organise a discussion on the indigenous peoples of South East Asian countries.

Parshuram Tamang, a representative of UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, highlighted the resolutions of the recently held meeting of the forum.

He said the meeting decided to protect the multi-ethnic culture in every country by initiating primary education through mother language.

Counsellor of the Royal Norwegian Embassy Hans Peter Melby said ensuring the rights of minorities is the part of a democratic society.

Published by the University Press Limited, the book is a valuable docu-

ment on the indigenous peoples of the country.

It narrates how the indigenous people have been deprived of their due recognition although they were the earliest inhabitants of Bengal and played significant role in all national movements.

The book also tells about the needs of the indigenous people, their increasing discrimination, lack of security, forced migration and dilemma in their livelihood.

Chakra Circle Chief Raja Devashish Roy, General Secretary of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Front Sanjeeb Drong, Prof Dalem Chandra Barman, Prof Mesbah Kamal, Prof Ishrat Shamim, Prof HKS Arefeen and Chandra Roy of UNDP Regional Office of Bangkok also spoke on the occasion.

Child Parliament urges Saifur to consider its proposal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Child Parliament Bangladesh, a mock parliament of children, yesterday urged Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman to consider its recommendations before passing the budget for FY 2005-06.

The call came from a press conference of the mock parliamentarians at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Providing free textbooks to students up to class-IX, and computer and Internet facilities to all primary and secondary schools and madrasas figure prominently in the recommendations first mooted at a mock session of the child parliament on April 17 this year.

The child parliamentarians had forwarded those proposals to the finance minister, education minister, health minister, and to the chairmen of four relevant parliamentary standing committees.

The other recommendations include prohibiting publications of guide books and private coaching, shunning the trend of changing textbooks every year, making separate toilets for girls compulsory at every school, ending maltreatment of students in classrooms, giving stipend to poor boys alongside the girls, ensuring free treatment for physically and mentally challenged children.

"The elders are still reluctant to take heed of what we say. And sometimes even if they listen to us, they do not translate those words into action," said a child parliament member, speaking at the press conference.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in the mock parliament's

budget session on June 17, last year assured the mini-parliamentarians of considering their views in the next budget to protect child rights.

If a set of recommendations on child rights is sent to the government through the Child Parliament two months before the next budget, the government will consider the proposals, he said, taking a question from Laboni Siddique, a child parliament member from Tangail.

Sujon Mahmud, another young parliamentarian from Munshiganj, at yesterday's press conference said, "We know that government every year allocates fund for us. But

we don't know where does that money go."

The press conference was organised with assistance of Save the Children-Australia, and USAID.

Jasmin Akhter Lima, Munia Zaman Laboni, Tanvir Ahmed Russel, Ria Rani Dev, Razia Sultana Sathi, and Asma Khatun were among the mock parliamentarians present at the conference.

Besides, Zahidul Hasan Russel and Laboni Siddiqui, two advisors to the children's parliament, attended the conference.

Child parliament has a total of 128 mock parliamentarians, two for each of the 64 districts. They are elected for two years.



Zahidul Hossain of Child Parliament Bangladesh speaks at a press conference on proposed national budget at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

BDR-BSF meet today

BSS, Panchagarh

A high-level conference between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Border Security Force (BSF) of India will be held at Banglabandha border today.

The meeting is expected to finalise the modalities and implementation plan of the joint border patrolling by the border guards of the two neighbouring countries, official sources said.

'Remove illegal fish markets'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fish and kitchen market traders yesterday demanded immediate removal of illegal fish markets from different places of the city.

At a rally, they also called on the Dhaka City Corporation to take steps to keep the kitchen markets clean and hygienic.

The traders held the rally in front of Karwan Bazar kitchen market under the banner of Association of Small Fish Traders of Dhaka City Fish Market to press for their five-point demand.

"An influential quarter has set up

the illegal markets at the roadside. As a result, we are losing our customers," said Anwar Hossain Sikdar, convener of the association.

President of Karwan Bazar Fish Market Association Oliur Rahman called on the government to provide loans on easy terms for the fish traders.

The association will also submit a memorandum to the director general of the fisheries directorate and the divisional commissioner on June 21 as part of their ongoing movement.

WEATHER TODAY

No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind likely at a few places over Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions till 6:00pm today.

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

Highest temperature 37.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 22.9 degree Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:49pm today and rises at 5:11am 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	34.0	28.7	74	75
Chittagong	35.2	27.5	69	73
Rajshahi	36.8	26.2	80	62
Khulna	35.8	25.5	84	78
Barisal	34.0	26.5	84	75
Sylhet	31.1	22.9	95	80
Cox's Bazar	33.0	27.0	76	80



Citizens of Myanmar residing in Bangladesh stage a demonstration in front of the High Court in the city yesterday demanding release of Aung San Suu Kyi.

'Evolve new agri technologies'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a book publication ceremony yesterday called for evolving new technologies to face the challenge of growing more crops on less land and reaching the technologies to farmers.

The book titled 'Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh' was launched at the Cirdap auditorium in the city.

The 300-page book is a documentation of major areas of research on extension methods under the recently completed 'Poverty Elimination Through Rice Research Assistance (Petra)', a project funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) and managed by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in collaboration with Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI).

Speaking as the chief guest, State Minister for Agriculture Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir called for introducing new technologies to farmers to make the farming method cost-effective.

Dr Quazi Shahabuddin,

director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), stressed the need for strengthening the linkages between the extension workers and the agricultural researchers.

He also called for country-wide replication of successful extension technologies as depicted in the book.

Yolande Wright, environment and livelihoods adviser to DFID, reaffirmed that the DFID is committed to development of agricultural research in Bangladesh.

Reaching the 13 million-strong farming community through extension network is a big challenge, she said.

DG of Brri Dr M Mahiul Haque, DG of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Ibrahim Khalil and Irri Liaison Scientist Dr MA Hamid Miah also spoke.

Irri Representative and Pettra Manager Dr Noel P Magor made a brief presentation on the book highlighting its salient features.



PHOTO: STAR

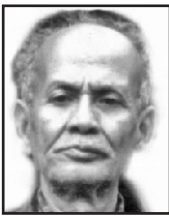
The publication ceremony of the book titled 'Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh' was held at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. Sitting from left are Director General of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) Dr Quazi Shahabuddin, Minister of State for Agriculture Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, Director General of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Ibrahim Khalil and Environment and Livelihoods Adviser of Department for International Development (DFID) Yolande Wright.

Death anniversary

Today is the 21st death anniversary of Ahmad Sobhan, a prominent lawyer and former president of Supreme Court Bar Association, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his Dhanmondi residence after Maghrib prayers today.

Md Abdul Jabbar



Today is the fifth death anniversary of Md Abdul Jabbar, former Vice-Principal of Mymensingh Ananda Mohan College, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil and quankhwani will be held at 11.00 am at his village home at Musuli under Nandail upazila in Mymensingh.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Begum Khodeja Nahar, wife of AM Shahidullah, will be held at her residence at 5/13, Block-D, Lalmatia in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Khodeja died at her residence on June 18 at the age of 64.

She left behind her husband, two sons and two daughters to mourn her death.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani.

DHAKA TODAY

Discussion

Bangladesh Consumer's Society organises a discussion titled 'Abnormal price hike of essentials: Public life disrupted' with Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Advocate Abdul Hamid as chief guest. Venue: Press Institute of Bangladesh, Circuit House. Time: 4:00pm.

Inauguration

The office of Bangladesh-Bharat Sampriti Parishad will be inaugurated with Jute and Textile Minister Shajahan Siraj as chief guest. Venue: Nahar Plaza, Sonargaon Road. Time: 4:30pm.

Muktijoddha meeting

A meeting of the Central Command Council of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad will be held with council chairman Principal Abdul Ahad Chowdhury in the chair. Venue: House-22, Road-7, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:00pm.

Prize giving ceremony

The prize giving ceremony of an IT Festival, organised by Chattagram International Islamic University, will be held. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, Rod-7, Dhanmondi. Time: 11:00am.

Roundtable

A roundtable on the 'Role of transports in building a green city', organised by Manusher Jonno Rasta, a coalition of NGOs, will be held. Venue: National

DHAKA TOMORROW

PressClub. Time: 11:00am.

CPB rally

Communist Party of Bangladesh organises a rally to protest the proposed budget for FY 2005-06. Venue: Muktagong, Ramna. Time: 4:30pm.

Citizen's rally

Jonoudyog, an NGO, organises a citizen's rally demanding the recovery of all wetlands in and around Dhaka. Venue: Shahbagh Crossing. Time: 11:00am.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen two films titled 'Glengary Glen Ross' and 'Death in a French Garden'. Venue: Academy Auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6:30pm and 8:30pm.

Conference

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association organises 'LDC conference of trade chambers/associations in the contexts of the US Trade Bill 2005' with Foreign Minister M Moshed Khan as chief guest. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 3:00pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen a South African thriller titled 'Second Skin'. Venue: Academy Auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6:30pm.