

'Integrated institutional framework a must for rural development'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for developing an integrated institutional framework and strengthening the local government bodies to promote rural development.

Reintroduction of upazila system and better coordination between government and non-government organisations are also a must to ensure development in the rural areas, they said.

They also observed that active participation of local government bodies can expedite the development process in rural areas.

The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (Cirdap) organised the seminar titled 'Revisiting the institutional framework for promoting rural development in Bangladesh' at its auditorium in the city.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan attended the inaugural session as the chief guest while eminent economist Prof Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, a civil society think-tank, chaired the plenary session of the seminar.

Cabinet Secretary Dr Saadat Hussain, Rural Development and Cooperatives secretary Hedayetul Islam Chowdhury and Cirdap Director General Dr Durga P Paudyal also spoke as special guests at the inaugural session.

Prof Rehman Sobhan said the entire rural development activities are overseen by the ministries and there is no coordination among the line ministries concerned.

It even appears that there is no functional local government bodies to accelerate the development activities, he added.

He called for a holistic approach to achieving development in agriculture as well as in infrastructure.

The government should develop an integrated institutional framework to address all the problems in rural development, he said.

At the inaugural session, LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan stressed the need for rethinking the strategies to make the government institutions more effective in order to gear up the rural development.

Cabinet Secretary Dr Saadat Hussain called for better coordination between the government agencies and NGOs in their efforts to ensure rural development. Apart from poverty alleviation activities, the NGOs should focus on other issues such as



PHOTO: STAR

Centre for Policy Dialogue Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan speaks at a seminar at the Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left is Cirdap Director General Dr Durga P Paudyal and on his right is Cirdap Director Dr Momtaz Uddin Ahmed.

healthcare services, he added.

Several papers were presented at the plenary session. Abdul Mueeed Chowdhury, executive director of Brac, presented a paper on 'Institutional mechanism for rural development in Bangladesh: Role of NGOs with the special reference of Brac'. Dr Momtaz Uddin Ahmed, director of Cirdap presented a study on 'Institutional framework for rural development in Bangladesh' and Dr Abdus Samad Mallick, director general of Bangladesh Rural Development Board, presented a paper on 'Institutional mechanism for rural development in Bangladesh: A case study of BRBD.'

Economist Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman and Dr Qazi Mesbahuddin, member of General Economic Division (GED), Planning Commission took part in an open discussion on the papers.

Wasa drive begins today

Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) starts a drive from today to snap illegal connections and to take action against bill defaulters, says a press release yesterday.

A Wasa team led by a magistrate will start the disconnection drive.

Ctg Club fined for keeping stale food

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The mobile court of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC), conducting drive against adulterated food, yesterday fined Chittagong Club Limited Tk 1,75,000 for dirty kitchen, preserving stale chicken and running a bakery without BSTI license.

The court during the drive also picked up its secretary Col (Retd) Sharif Waliur Rahman for refusing to pay the penalty and misbehaviour with magistrate Sayeda Sarwar Jahan. He, however, was released after two hours on payment of the fine. The magistrate also warned club security officer Md Yousuf and supervisor Shariful Islam as they tried to stop her from entering the club premises and kitchen.

"I am shocked to see the kitchen environment of the elite Chittagong Club," said Sarwar

Jahan.

She said 'I found several pieces of half-boiled stale chicken with bad smell in the refrigerators.' The kitchen staffs when asked told us that the chickens were preserved for using in sandwiches, she said.

Earlier, the security officer Yousuf and supervisor Islam tried to prevent magistrate Sarwar Jahan from entering the club.

Sarwar Jahan yesterday also levied Tk 75,000 on Dearly Bakery at GEC Intersection for selling stale bread and failing to show BSTI license, Tk 10,000 on Hotel Al Imam at Zakir Hossain Road for dirty kitchen and existence of a latrine inside the kitchen, Tk 5,000 on Mohammadia Hotel for keeping uncovered food and other items and Tk 3,000 each on three fruits traders for selling stale fruits.



PHOTO: STAR

Pieces of stale chicken were found at the Chittagong Club restaurant during a mobile court operation against food adulteration and unhygienic environment in hotels and restaurants yesterday.