

# 'Strengthen local govt for good governance'

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called on the Union Parishad (UP) chairmen and members to make concerted efforts to strengthen the local government in order to establish good governance.

An appropriate organisational structure of the local government has already been in place and now the chairmen and members should work together for the smooth functioning of the Union Parishad, they said.

The Democracywatch has

organised the discussion on the occasion of the opening ceremony of Dhaka divisional office of the Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF) in the city. The office is located on the Democracywatch premises.

Addressing as the chief guest,

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka said central politics have still been dominating the UP elections, which is a major reason that the honest people who really want to work for the public cannot be elected as chairman or member.

It is a very bad practice of the central leaders that they use the UP chairmen and members for their own interest, he added.

The government should also take effective steps to strengthen the local government for the development of the country by properly utilising the limited resources, the mayor said.

Dr Prof Tofael Ahmed, advisor to the BUPF, said decentralisation of power is a must to resolve the national crisis.

Taleya Rehman, executive director of the Democracywatch, said her organisation has been working at 103 upazilas in 12 districts for three years to strengthen the local government and facilitate the capacity building of the UP members and chairmen.

She also called for introducing 'city government' at the divisional level for smooth functioning of the administration and the promotion of good governance.

BUPF President Md Golam Sarwar demanded more authority and status for the UP representatives and increased budgetary allocation for the UP.

Chief of Party of LGIARD Stephen L Rid and BUPF Secretary General Mustakur Rahman Mafur also spoke at the ceremony chaired by General Secretary of BUPF, Dhaka division, AH Abdul Mannan A

## Meet to fix date of Shab-e-Barat today

UNB, Dhaka

The National Moon Sighting Committee will hold a meeting at the Islamic Foundation office in the city at 7:00pm today to fix the date of holy Shab-e-Barat.

State Minister for Religious Affairs and President of the Committee Mosharraf Hossain Shajahan will preside. The meeting will also review reports of sighting the moon of the month of Shaban.

It has requested all to inform the committee if the moon of the month of holy Shaban is sighted in Bangladesh.

The contact telephone numbers are: 9559493, 9556407, 9555951, 9558337, 9559643 and 9555947 and the fax number is 9563397.