

Help build a people-oriented information society in world

ICT experts adopt Dhaka Declaration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ICT experts from home and abroad at a workshop in the city yesterday adopted the 'Dhaka Declaration' with a call to help build a people-oriented information society in the world at large.

The experts said the information society must provide people with a basic information and communication technology infrastructure at grassroots level to facilitate full utilisation of ICT.

They were speaking at the concluding session of a three-day international workshop on 'Building Information Society: Road 2 Tunis' where ICT stakeholders representing

governments, private sectors, academicians and civil societies from five countries adopted the declaration.

The Dhaka Declaration endorsed the importance of ICT so that it can play a vital role in achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Science and Information and Communication Technology Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan conducted the workshop as moderator.

Speaking at the workshop, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury said if any country does not tap the potential of ICT, the pace of development would be slower.

"ICT can accelerate the economy

and thus contribute to the development much faster," he added.

To establish an information society, the civil society members and the private sector actors must work together, said Abdul Mueyed Choudhury, executive director of Brac.

Managing Director of Grameen Phone Erik Aas, Director Platform 1 of UK Stephen Young, Project Manager of Korea Telecom Cheon Do Park, Chairman of Tunisian IT Chamber Faouzi Zaghib, and Executive Director of Brazilian Chamber of e-Commerce Cid Torquato were present at the closing session.

Women burned to death for dowry in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife in the city yesterday was burned to death for dowry allegedly by her husband.

Khaleda Begum, 22, wife of Md Mamun, a private car driver, of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the early hours yesterday with severe burn injuries.

Later she succumbed to her injuries at about 12:30 noon. Hospital sources said 90 percent of Khaleda's body was burnt and her husband was also under treatment for his burn injuries in hand.

The family members of the housewife told newsmen that a case was filed accusing Mamun for killing Khaleda by burning.

Later police arrested Mamun in this connection.

Khaleque Mridha, father of Khaleda, alleged that Mamun demanded Tk two lakh as dowry to buy a car and he often beat her for the money.

He also alleged that husband and wife had a quarrel on Monday night and on one stage Mamun set fire on her body by pouring kerosene.

AUG 17 SERIAL BLASTS

JS sect official remanded again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Abu Taleb alias Babul Ansari, assistant security officer of the parliament secretariat, on a three-day fresh remand in connection with the August 17 serial bomb blasts case.

Detective Branch (DB) of police produced Ansari before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka on completion of his five-day remand.

The investigation officer (IO) submitted a petition for a seven-day fresh remand in which the IO said during his five-day remand Ansari tried to suppress the incident.

It made the IO confused about the incident and became sure that Ansari was directly involved in the August 17 serial bomb blasts. So he needs to be quizzed to find out the vital clue about the incident and whereabouts of his accomplices, the IO added.

After hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Nani Gopal Biswas granted him a three-day remand for interrogation.

Police arrested Ansari at his Green Road Staff Quarters residence on October 5 in connection with his militant link.

Later, he was shown arrested in a case filed with Tejgaon Police Station in connection with the August 17 serial bomb blasts and taken on a 12-day remand in two phases.

HC orders govt to pay salaries to 112 college teachers, staffs

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The High Court ordered the government to pay the unpaid salaries of 112 teachers and staffs of 39 non-governmental colleges.

After hearing 39 separate writ petitions filed by 112 teachers and staffs of 39 colleges, the High Court also issued a rule upon the authorities concerned to show cause as to why the order of the director general's office stopping payment of the salaries to the petitioners should not be declared illegal.

The rule made by a division bench of the High Court comprising Justice MA Matin and Justice Rezaul Haque is returnable within three weeks.

The office of the director general of the directorate of secondary and higher secondary education issued an order stopping the payments of salaries, popularly known as 'stop payment' order, from May this year, against about 3,000 teachers and staffs of about 500 nongovernmental colleges.

Some 96 teachers and staffs of 33 nongovernmental colleges, including Nimgachhi Degree College, Pabna, and Moulana Tarkabagish College, Sirajganj and 16 teachers and staffs of 3 colleges filed separate writ petitions on Tuesday and Monday respectively with the High Court challenging the 'stop payment' orders.

Earlier, the HC passed similar orders following the writ petitions filed by 179 teachers and staffs. But, seven teachers of them filed a contempt petition against the director general of the directorate of education as the respondents did not implement the order. The High Court ordered three respondents, including professor Dilara Hafiz, director general of the directorate of education, to appear before the High Court to show cause in this regard.

On October 23, professor Dilara Hafiz and two other officials appeared before the High Court and sought unconditional apology to the court for non-implementation of the court order. The office of the directorate of education, on October 20, paid the due salaries to the seven teachers who filed the contempt petition.

Senior advocate ABM Nurul Islam moved for the petitioners before the court.



PHOTO: STAR

Ohid Mia, a sapling seller, expresses his utter frustration after extortionists damaged all the saplings in his nursery on the footpath near the High Court mazar in the city yesterday as he refused to pay Tk 20,000 in toll.

EU lauds PRSP but unhappy over lack of full political participation

UNB, Dhaka

The European Union (EU) lauded publication of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) portraying a realistic picture of the development challenges in Bangladesh.

The EU, however, registered its disappointments over a lack of full political participation in the documentation process.

"The Poverty Reduction Strategy provides a realistic picture of the development challenges in Bangladesh and acknowledges upfront the role of NGOs and private sector in realising the MDGs," says an EU joint statement.

"However, the European Union notes with disappointment that full political participation in the PRSP process was not achieved," said the statement issued in Dhaka yesterday.

With UK in its present capacity as holder of the EU Presidency, the British High Commission in Dhaka, on behalf of the EU member states and the European Commission, issued the statement to confirm the Union's long-term partnership with Bangladesh in its drive for development.

"The EU commends the Bangladesh government for its com-

mitment to poverty reduction and its commitment to the MDGs as set out by its ambitious and comprehensive strategy 'Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction'," the statement reads.

Praising the PRSP highly, the EU said that the Strategy's analysis reflects the multidimensional nature of poverty for Bangladesh and correctly seeks to build on past gains, stop slippage and address implementation. "This will help build on the remarkable progress already made by Bangladesh on macroeconomic stability, growth and human development," says the European Union encomium over the donor-prescribed development recipe.

It noted that the Poverty Reduction Strategy rightly identified weak governance, poor human security, and its violation of some human rights as significant challenges to improving the livelihoods of poorest and women, and to stronger economic growth.

The EU pointed out that corruption hinders service delivery, and this holds back growth and progress on development.

These issues also constrain the successful implementation of govern-

ment plans, the statement said. "Likewise political and ethnic violence, as well as recent bomb attacks, add to human insecurity and are significant threats to continued development."

The EU hoped that the government of Bangladesh would demonstrate its commitment to addressing all these issues during implementation of the strategy.

In the statement the EU hailed government effort to consult international partners and sections of civil society during the drafting of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The EU hopes for a stronger cross-party engagement during implementation of the strategy and continued commitment to the strategy beyond the next elections in 2007.

"Bangladesh continues to confront fundamental development challenges. The European Union values its partnership with Bangladesh and looks forward to a successful implementation meeting on November 15-17," the statement said.

Member-countries of the union of European nations repeated their stance on extending the EU support to Bangladesh in this challenging process.

Two Ctg police officials accused of attempted rape

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A case was filed against two police officials of Halishahar Police Station in Chittagong yesterday, accusing them of taking bribe and attempting to violate a housewife on remand.

Metropolitan Magistrate Monwarul Islam took the case into cognisance and ordered a judicial investigation into it, sources said.

The housewife, Hasina Akter alias Hasi, filed the case against officer-in-charge (OC) Abul Kashem and Sub-Inspector (SI) Monir.

According to sources, Hasi alleged that the police officials took her on remand in connection with a case against her on October 21 instead of October 19, which was fixed by the court. They took a bribe of Tk 30,000 in two phases and in an attempt to rape, they also assaulted her as she refused to pay more bribes, she alleged.

She also alleged that the police officials detained her brother when he appeared at the scene.

According to sources, Ferdousi Rahman, a resident of Halishahar, filed the case against her sister-in-law Hasi over a family feud on September 5.

Bomb explodes at house in Khulna, one arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A powerful bomb exploded on the premises of a three-storied building at Pabla Hajipara in Khulna city yesterday afternoon.

However, no-one was injured in the blast that damaged windows and doors of a flat on the ground floor at around 4:30pm.

The police arrested Ujjal, 24, son of house owner Delwar Hossain, as a suspect. Local people said Ujjal is an outlaw.

According to the police, the bomb, which was kept hidden on the roof of the building, went off after it fell down.

The building is adjacent to the house of BNP leader Mizanur Rahman Bablu, who was killed in a bomb attack at Daulatpur on Sunday night.

MUGGING CASE AGAINST 3 JCD LEADERS

Verdict today

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Judgement of the mugging case against three pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders of Dhaka College unit will be given today.

The case was filed against Golam Ohab Liton, 24, science and technology affairs secretary of JCD Dhaka College unit, Azizul Haq, 23, a member and Mohammad Ruhul Amin, assistant general secretary of the college unit JCD for mugging Tk 12 lakh from a jewellery shop employee on June 19.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza of Speedy Trial Court-6 will pronounce the verdict at 11:00am, court sources said.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 17 prosecution witnesses.

Motijheel police arrested Liton and Azizul Haq, who were caught red-handed after mugging the sum from a jewellery shop employee in Motijheel area.

Their companion Ruhul Amin is still at large.

The investigation officer pressed charges against them on June 28, showing 25 people as prosecution witnesses.

Dhanmondi police on June 19 seized about Tk 10 lakh from a room at the International Hostel of Dhaka College following the arrestees' statements.

Mohammad Abul Kashem, manager of Uma Jewellers, filed a case against three JCD leaders with Motijheel Police Station under the Speedy Trial (Law and Disruption) Act.

Police filed another case under the Arms Act against Liton and Azizul Haq.

3 get 30 yrs' RI for forcing two girls into prostitution

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced three people, including a pimp, to 30 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) for forcing two minor girls to prostitution nine years' ago.

The convicts are Noor Jahan alias Barsha, Joyal Abedin and Barsha's domestic help Baby.

Mohammad Mujibul Kamal of the First Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression handed down the sentence.

Of them, Barsha was present in the court during the delivery of the verdict while two others were tried in absentia.

The punishment to the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender, the court said.

The court fined them Tk one lakh each, in default, to suffer six months more RI in jail.

According to the prosecution, Joyal Abedin of Charfasion in Bhola district took two minor girls -- Rahima Begum, 14, and Seful, 15 -- to Dhaka on July 24, 1996 and later they were sold in a brothel of Noor Jahan of Bara Mogbazar. Noor Jahan forced them to prostitution. But the victims fled on September 22 the same year.

Later, Mohammad Shahidul Islam, father of the victim Rahima filed a case against Noor Jahan and two others the next day.

Assistant Public Prosecutor Kazi Abdus Salim appeared for the state while advocates Mohammad Hanif and Anwarul Kabir Babul defended the accused.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Prof Bashira Mannan and Dr Khalilur Rahman will be held at the Neurology Foundation Hospital at 3/1 Lake Circus, Kalabagan after Juma prayers (2:30pm) on Friday, October 28, says a press release.

A doa and milad mahfil will be held on the occasion.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to attend the programme and pray for the salvation of the departed souls.

Death anniversary

Today is the 12th death anniversary of Giasuddin Chowdhury, a former lawmaker and industrialist, says a press release.

He was the founder-president of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry and founder-chairman and managing director of Shetu Corporation Ltd., Shetu Agro Industries Ltd. and Shrimp & Fish Processing Plant Ltd. and founder-chairman of the country's first general insurance company in private sector.

Milad mahfils will be held at his village home at Dulhazara in Chokoria after Asr prayers and at his house at Lal Khan Bazar and at Shrimp and Fish Processing Plant at Sagarika Road in Chittagong after Esha prayers.



Sher-e-Bangla's anniversary of birth today

Today is the 132nd birth anniversary of Bengalee's great leader Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at the residence of Sher-e-Bangla's grand son AK Faiyazul Haque at Road#4, House#59, Block C, Banani in the city.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the mahfil after Asr prayer today.

Save quake victims in Pakistan, India

Two NGOs appeal to France, EU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Frères des Hommes- France and Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER) have jointly urged the European Parliament and the French government to take necessary diplomatic and political initiatives to save thousands of earthquake victims in Pakistan and India.

In letters to the presidents of the European Parliament and France, the two non-government organisations said, "More than two weeks after the earthquake that struck Pakistan and India, we are still counting the tens of thousands dead and injured, while several million remain homeless, and thousands of villages and settlements cut off."

"Rain, snow and cold are threatening to decimate the survivors," said the letters signed by Jean Pierre Dardaud, president of the Frères des Hommes and Karamat Ali, director of the PILER.

They said faced with the grave situation, the mobilisation for rescue remains tragically and scandalously insufficient.

"Tents, blankets, helicopters, medicines and necessary logistics exist at the international level. Urgency demands that all these be rushed towards the devastated regions in cooperation with the Pakistani and Indian authorities," they added.

The letters said in this region that has been marked by decades of armed confrontation and militarisation, it is essential that the local NGOs and other actors of Pakistani and Indian civil society, who are known for their non-partisan character, and for their action in favour of development, democracy and peace, should be associated to guarantee the effectiveness of aid.

"Sincere efforts require the reallocation of all military aid, and of priority in economic assistance towards earthquake rehabilitation and reconstruction," the joint letter added. Copies of the letters were also sent to the prime minister and foreign minister of France, president of the foreign affairs commission of the French Parliament, president of the French Senate as well as to secretary-general of the Council of the European Union and the presidents of the parliamentary groups in the European Parliament.

'Create special facilities for breast cancer treatment'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Dam) yesterday urged the government to help create special facilities for breast cancer detection and treatment in the country.

The call was made by Dam President Kazi Rafiqul Alam during a meeting with Health Minister Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain in the city yesterday.

Rafiqul Alam, who was leading a delegation of Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH), also called for specific actions in creating breast cancer awareness.

In a representation to Mosharrif Hossain, he also stressed the need for intervention at upazila and district levels for prevention and control of breast cancer.

The minister and members of

the delegation reached a consensus on the formulation of a national cancer policy and cancer treatment protocol.

They also underlined the role of Health Education Bureau in the dissemination of information and raising awareness among the people about breast cancer.

The minister urged the non-governmental entrepreneurs to come forward to develop the treatment sector.

He also assured the delegation of taking necessary initiatives in this regard by calling a meeting of the National Council for Cancer Control at an early date, says a Dam press release.

The delegation included former health secretary Mohammad Fazur Rahman and Managing Director of AMCH Prof MA Hai.



Dhaka Ahsania Mission President Kazi Rafiqul Alam hands over a representation to Health Minister Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain in the city yesterday.

Cancellation of revised women's rights policy demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop in the city yesterday demanded of the government to cancel the revised policy on women's rights.

Centre for Women Journalists, Bangladesh (SWJB), Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha (BNPS) and Institute for Environment and Development (IED) organised the workshop on "National Women's Development Policy 1997 and Women Rights" at the National Press Club for the young women journalists of print and electronic media to sensitise them to the revised policy.

SWJB President Nasimun Ara Haque said young women journalists should know that the amended policy 2004 is

contrary to the Beijing Declaration, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Constitution of Bangladesh.

IED Advocacy Coordinator Shanaz Shumi presented the keynote paper on the occasion.

She pointed out that the change of original language in Women's Rights Policy 2004 in the articles 7, 8, 9, 12 relating to equal rights of men and women in inheritance and employment will impede the establishment of women's rights.

Professor Dr Mahmuda Islam, Professor Mahfuja Khanam and Numan Ahmad Khan also addressed the programme.



UNB, Dhaka

Temporary rain or thundershowers accompanied by gusty wind is likely at one or two places over the country till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country during the period, Met office said.

Highest temperature 34.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and lowest 20.0 degree Celsius at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:23pm today and rises at 6:02am tomorrow.

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

Table with 5 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.