

## Army launches tree plantation programme

4 lakh saplings to be planted

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Army has undertaken a massive programme to make the National Tree plantation Campaign-2006 a success.

Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Moeen U Ahmed formally inaugurated the tree plantation campaign by planting a 'mehagani' sapling at a field adjacent to Army Central Mosque yesterday, said an ISPR release.

Senior Army officers were present on the occasion.

As part of its programme, the Bangladesh Army will plant four lakh saplings in different army establishments across the country this year.

In addition, as part of government initiatives to make the capital a green city, the Bangladesh Army has undertaken special tree plantation drive in the city's military outfits, which includes plantation of 30,000 saplings of fruit, timber and medicinal species.

Bangladesh Army has received national awards for its contribution to enhancing forest resources of the country.



PHOTO: ISPR

Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Moeen U Ahmed inaugurates the Tree Plantation Campaign-2006 of Bangladesh Army by planting a Mehagani sapling at a field adjacent to Army Central Mosque yesterday.

## Cirdap can help capacity building in rural dev

BSS, Dhaka

The chief of Cirdap (Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific) yesterday said the organisation can help capacity building in rural development for poverty reduction of two billion people in this region.

Calling upon all to use Cirdap expertise in rural development, Director General Dr Durga P Paudyal said strong political will of the governments and effective local government functionaries are necessary to articulate the dynamics of rural development.

Talking to BSS on the eve of 27th founding anniversary of Cirdap, Dr Paudyal, a Nepalese, said Bangladesh, as a pioneer in rural development, can focus itself in this region through Cirdap and can feel proud of the organisation here.

Thanking the host government for extending all out cooperation to Cirdap in running its activities here, Dr Paudyal also praised the role of different rural development agencies, including BARDA, RDA and BRDB in the country.

Cirdap is an intergovernmental body of 14 states. The countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan,

Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The DG said Cirdap could be further developed as a regional platform for policy dialogue, disseminating skill, sharing experience and strengthening network for integrated rural development among the member countries.

Referring to the changing world order in the perspective of globalisation, Dr Paudyal said steps should be taken by the governments so that voice of rural development does not get lost.

International rural development bodies like Cirdap needs more funding from the donor agencies and member countries for running its activities smoothly as Cirdap functions to give rural development an institutional shape, he observed.

Dr Paudyal said Cirdap as an intergovernmental organisation is mandated to facilitate the provision of services that will influence policy formulation and programme of action towards rural development and poverty alleviation through network of Cirdap contact ministries and link institutions.

Cirdap was established in 1979 at the initiatives of the countries of the Asia-Pacific Region and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations.

## Probe body fails to identify JU hall intruders

JU CORRESPONDENT

A committee formed to investigate the incident of intrusion of two youths into Jahannara Imam Hall, a dormitory of female students of Jahangirnagar University (JU), has failed to identify the intruders.

The committee submitted its report to the hall authorities at a meeting held at the dormitory at 7:00pm on Tuesday, with its provost Prof Nasiruddin in the chair.

The committee also failed to gather any important information leading to identification of the male intruders who entered the dormitory after midnight and

injured a female student on June 7.

It also could not make any headway in the allegations against four people at the hall in this regard.

In the report, the committee charged the night guards of the hall with negligence and suggested taking action against them.

The authorities' indifferent attitude towards the issue has helped the intruders slip out, they said and demanded that the intruders be tracked down immediately.

"We will send a copy of the report to the vice-chancellor and act accordingly," said Prof Nasiruddin.

Students of the dormitory yesterday expressed dissatisfaction over the failure of the probe body to track down the intruders.

The authorities' indifferent attitude towards the issue has helped the intruders slip out, they said and demanded that the intruders be tracked down immediately.

Meanwhile, the police also could not retrieve any important information from two canteen boys arrested following the incident. A Dhaka court has sent them to jail.

## Rejoinder and our reply

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rejoinder says the home ministry already proposed to the finance ministry budgetary allocation for it. The programme appears in the budget book. However, allocation for the programme is under discussion subject to finalisation of the contract with the successful bidder.

On the issue of framing a law to make national ID cards mandatory, the rejoinder said the ministry has already started the process of framing the required law.

Referring to the proposed National Registration Department (NRD), it said the home ministry has approval from the establishment ministry to set up the NRD, giving an outline of the human resources required. The home ministry has also taken up the issue with the finance ministry.

On the reported influence of the alternative centre of power, the home ministry said it is not aware of any such centre of power. The ministry is aggressively pursuing the scheme so that Bangladeshis are allowed to travel overseas in future for work as well as business without facing any harassment. There is also a growing demand from the international communities as well as expatriate Bangladeshis for MRP.

Turning to tagging of ID card with passport, the ministry said it is being done as per recommendations of

the national committee and the cabinet committee concerned. The prime minister has approved the recommendations.

The ministry has set up a programme management unit to supervise implementation of the programme.

On the appointment of a consultant, the ministry said that was based on the prime minister's approval. As the programme will be funded from the revenue budget, no donor involvement for hiring consultant is required since there is no foreign funding.

The rejoinder said a high-level interview committee headed by the state minister for home and consisting of a number of key secretaries interviewed the consultant and recommended his appointment. The consultant has done similar IT projects in Pakistan, US and the Maldives.

The tax-free income was the condition proposed by the consultant, who is a US citizen and already pays tax to the US government, and Bangladesh does not have double taxation agreement with US as yet.

The additional secretary of the home ministry was not removed from the ministry, rather he was promoted and transferred elsewhere in due process.

The consultant did not fix the criteria for selection of firms. It was

decided by the home ministry in consultation with experts from within and outside the ministry.

On the issue of tender documents favouring a particular bidder, the ministry said the documents were prepared in consultation with the Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation Department (IMED) and the specifications following ICAO requirement were made by a high-powered committee comprising experts from different fields outside the home ministry. Only the consultant did not prepare the documents.

All the amendments to the tender documents were made as per government rules and guidelines.

On sub-contracting, the ministry said it will sign contract with one bidder having required experience for the ease in managing and executing the programme. There is no compulsion for subcontracting in the rules.

Referring to open/restricted tender, the ministry says it went for an open tender where 34 firms submitted expressions of interest. Of them, four were qualified according to the criteria given by the ministry. Tender documents were distributed among all the four firms strictly following the PPR, O3 and tender norms.

**Our Reply:**  
The rejoinder fundamentally did not contradict The Daily Star report on the main issues.