

# Formulate nat'l urban policy

## Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Urban planners, engineers and developers yesterday suggested formulation of a national urban policy and detail area plan for all the major cities as those run the risks of becoming posh slums with fast growing population and unplanned urbanisation.

They also suggested for human settlement and urban land use policies saying that the cultivable land in the country may soon reduce to a very small amount, as the developers are aggressively buying even low lands adjacent to the townships.

The suggestions came at a roundtable titled on 'Planned urbanisation and Dhaka City Building Construction Regulations 2006' organised jointly by Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (Rehab), Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB), Institute of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB) and Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) at a city hotel.

The Dhaka City Building Construction Regulations 2006, to be effective from January next, has provisions for modern concepts including Floor Area Ratio (FAR) system, said Rehab President Engineer Abdul Awal.

In his keynote presentation Architect QM Mahtab-uz-Zaman of Brac University said residents of



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed speaks at a roundtable at Hotel Sonargaon in the city yesterday. On his right is Iqbal Uddin Chowdhury and on his left are Abdul Awal and Architect Mobashwar Hossain.

the buildings with FAR will have enough fresh air, light, playground and neighbourhood that will ensure good mental and physical health.

Presiding over the roundtable Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, chairman of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, said, "We want to turn Dhaka City from slum to garden."

Superintendent Engineer Faruk Aziz of Dhaka City Corporation said 25 percent of the land in the urban areas should be allocated for roads, while Dhaka city has only eight percent.

Prof Nazrul Islam, chairman of the Centre for Urban Studies of

Dhaka University, said benefits of development and power should be decentralised in reducing the urban problems. If facilities of employment and education are ensured in rural areas, people will not rush for urban areas, he observed.

Secretary to housing and public works ministry Iqbal Uddin Chowdhury urged all the developers to follow the new regulation.

Journalist Muhammad Jahangir suggested formation of a watch group to monitor the urban problems of Dhaka and regular TV programme on such issues.

IAB General Secretary Dr

Mahbubur Rahman, Chief Architect of Architecture Department Abdus Salam, IEB Honorary Vice-president Shariful Islam, Honorary General Secretary Khan Monjur Morshed, BIP General Secretary Prof Golam Mortoza, Deputy Commissioner (traffic) of Dhaka South Firoz Muzahid Khan, Rajuk Urban Planner Dr Zahurul Haque and Joint Secretary to housing ministry Shamsul Alam Khan also spoke.

## Dhaka greatly values friendly ties with US: President

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed said Bangladesh greatly value close and friendly relations with US.

He made the remark when US Ambassador to Bangladesh Patricia A Butenis made a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban yesterday.

The US envoy expressed her satisfaction on the gradual improvement of health condition of the president. She wished complete cure and long life of the president.

The president thanked the envoy for enquiring about his health.

Patricia hoped that the existing excellent bilateral relations between the two countries will be further strengthened in coming days.

During the meeting, other issues of bilateral interest were also discussed.

Military Secretary to the president Major General Mohammd Aminul Karim and Press Secretary M Mukhlesur Rahman Chowdhury were present on the occasion.

## WB delegation meets UGC chairman

BSS, Dhaka

The visiting three-member World Bank (WB) delegation led by its Knowledge Management Officer of South Asian Region Juan Blazquez Ancin called on Chairman of University Grants Commission (UGC) Prof M Asaduzzaman here on Wednesday.

The delegation emphasised the need for instituting internet connectivity of Bangladeshi universities with other universities and research organisations of the world to share knowledge and information, said a press release yesterday.

UGC Chairman briefed the delegation about the activities of his organisation and its role in enhancing the quality of higher education in public and private universities of Bangladesh.

## Concern distributes reliefs in Jessore

Concern Worldwide Bangladesh, an international NGO working in Bangladesh, recently distributed reliefs among some 3,275 families affected by water logging in Jessore district, says a press release.

Rice, lentils, cooking oil, sugar, salt, baby food, biscuits, toilet and laundry soaps and health kits were distributed by Samadhan, a local NGO at Haridaskathi, Samkur and Durbananga unions under Monirampur upazila.

The relief package is a 15-day ration for each family. In addition to this, 1,500 families, who have taken shelter on roads, were given poly-thene sheets.

On September 4, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mominur Rahman had formally inaugurated the relief distribution programme where local union parishad chairman and members were present.

# Force govt to implement electoral reforms: 14-party

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a call to build up door-to-door resistance to force the government to accept electoral reform proposals, hundreds of leaders and workers of 14-party opposition combine yesterday took to the streets in eight constituencies of the capital.

They also held rallies and brought out processions in a move to warm up people for the grand rally in the city on September 18.

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina is likely to announce the final course of anti-government agitation programmes from the grand rally to force the BNP-led four-party coalition government to bring reforms to the caretaker government and the Election Commission (EC).

The rallies were also organised to protest police atrocities on opposition leaders and workers, including AL lawmakers Mohammad Nasim and Asaduzzaman Noor, during Prime Minister's Office siege programme on September 12.

The 14-party held rallies at Syadabad Bridge and Dholaipar areas under Dhaka-4 constituency, Khilkhet Bazar under Dhaka-5, besides Bangladesh Bank under Dhaka-6, Nababpur Raod and Doyaganj under Dhaka-7, Lalbagh Kella Intersection under Dhaka-8, Mohammadpur Town Hall under Dhaka-9, Muktangan under Dhaka-10, Mirpur-11 and Mirpur-12 under Dhaka-11 constituency.

Addressing a rally at Muktangan, AL Presidium Member Tofail Ahmed said they would build up door-to-door and village-to-village resistance to pressure the government to accept electoral reforms.

He warned that if the government hands over power to Justice KM Hasan, the probable head of the caretaker government, before implementing the electoral reforms, vigorous movement including indefinite hartal would be launched to paralyse the country.

Vowing to resist any election in the country without electoral

reforms and participation of AL, Tofail said, "The next election is our last battle for our existence. We will have to win the election."

"If we lose the election, the BNP-Jamaat government will completely destroy the spirit of the War of Liberation," he added.

Hasanul Haque Inu vowed to halt government machineries through vigorous programmes.

Obaidul Quader said if the government does not accept electoral reforms, people with national flags in hands would stage a 'red-green' revolution in the capital on September 18.

Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya called for taking revenge for all the attacks on the opposition leaders and workers.

In Mirpur, AL Presidium Member Motia Chowdhury directed the party workers to resist any blueprint election in the country.

## MOHAMMADPUR 14 MURDER CASE Court decision Nov 1

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court will decide on November 1 on framing charges against 18 accused, including Taher Uddin Thakur in connection with the Mohammadpur 14 Murder Case.

After the hearing on the discharge petitions filed by the defence lawyers for five accused, including Taher Uddin Thakur, Judge Mohammad Monzurul Bachhid of the Fourth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court set the date.

Fourteen people were killed in a cannon fire on the night of August 15, 1975 at Mohammadpur when founding father of the country Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated along with most of his family members in a bloody military putsch.

A cannon shell fired by military personnel taking part in the putsch on the night fell on two houses in Mohammadpur, killing the 14.

On the fateful night 30 years ago,

the army personnel who took part in the Bangabandhu killing operation also killed Habibur Rahman, Anwara Begum-1, Anwara Begum-2, Moyful Bibi, Sabera Begum, Abdullah, Rafiqul, Safia Khatun, Shahabuddin, Kasheda, Aminuddin, Honufa Bibi, Rezia Begum and her daughter Nasima in Mohammadpur.

On November 29, 1996, Mohammad Ali, a resident of Sher Shah Suri Road who was injured in the attack, filed the case with Mohammadpur Police Station against Lt Col Syed Farook Rahman, Lt Col Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Major Bazul Huda, Lt Col Khondaker Abdur Rashid, Lt Col Shariful Haq Dalim, Lt Col SHMB Noor Chowdhury, Maj AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed, Lt Col Abdul Aziz Pasha, Capt Abdul Majed, Capt Mohammad Kismat Hashem and Lt Col MA Rashed Chowdhury.

## Govt has set all mechanism for election engineering: Joy

UNB, Dhaka

Sajib Wazed Joy, son of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, yesterday said the BNP-Jamaat alliance government has set all mechanisms for election engineering.

"Free and credible polls can never be possible without implementing the opposition's reform proposals," he said, adding that if free and fair polls could be held Awami League would win the elections.

Joy was talking to the journalists at the VIP lounge at Zia International Airport prior his departure for the US.

The US-educated computer engineer criticised the government for unleashing repression on opposition leaders and workers which, he said, "is not the sign of democracy—it's autocracy."

Hasina was present at the airport to see off her son.

## JCD activist assaulted by fellow men

DU CORRESPONDENT

A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activist was injured seriously as fellow men beat him up on Dhaka University (DU) campus.

The injured was identified as Mujahid Jahid, a second year student of International Relations and resident of Surya Sen Hall, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Witnesses said Jahid was sitting with one of his friends, a female student, at Teacher-Student Centre (DU) at noon yesterday.

While passing them, Pollen, Sumon, Fahad and Salman, Zia Hall unit JCD activists and first year students of different departments, teased the female student, witnesses added. As Jahid protested, they beat him up leaving him severely injured.

After the incident, DU unit JCD held an urgent meeting at Dhaka University.

## RAJSHAHI GAS PROJECT 30 families worried about losing lands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Some 30 families at Kharkhari in Rajshahi where the foundation stone of Rajshahi Gas Distribution Project was laid are worried about losing their lands during acquisition of lands for the project.

Although the prime minister inaugurated the project at Kharkhari, 10 kilometres off the divisional city, on Wednesday, no land was acquired for the project.

Land acquisition section officials at Rajshahi Deputy Commissioner's office yesterday said that some 3.75 acres of land in the area were earmarked for acquisition in 2004, but the process remained stalled.

The foundation stone was built overnight just beside Dhaka-Chapainawabganj bypass road, blocking a rural road, local people said. The area is surrounded by croplands, a papaya garden, a banana garden and an agricultural farm.

An elderly man ran a small shop nearby, but he was evicted ahead of the inauguration ceremony.

"I had a small shop under a tree just beside the foundation. I used to earn Tk 20 a day for a living for my wife and myself. But the police evicted me on Tuesday," said Joyal, 62.

He, however, said that the police had told him to set up the shop again after the prime minister's function.

Local people said Rajshahi city Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu came to the area on September 8 to identify the location for the foundation stone. A huge number of policemen have been deployed at the scene since then.

"I asked the mayor how I would maintain my family if my land (about 40 decimal) is used for the gas project without any compensation being paid, but policemen drove me off," said Abdul Gafur.

Jalal, a villager, said, "I have engaged my men to look after my pond on 1.5 bighas as I am worried that they (government) might capture my land like the land taken for erecting the foundation stone."

Siddique, another villager, said he was baffled by the government move. The foundation stone has blocked the road to Kharkhari Paschimpara and an agricultural farm, he said.

The inauguration of the US \$430 Rajshahi Gas Transmission and Distribution Project drew widespread criticism that it is merely a 'political stunt' ahead of parliamentary elections.

## Two brothers swept into sea

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two brothers have been missing after being swept into the sea while they were taking a bath on the beach in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

They were identified as Shad, 18, an HSC student of CODA College, and Asif, 15, a student of class eight of Mastermind School in Dhaka.

According to the police, Shad and Asif along with their father Ekolil Mondal and sister Ena, 23, a BBA student of North South University, were taking a bath at Labonee point at 11:40am when they were swept into the Bay.

Yeasir Lifeguard members managed to rescue their father and sister.

## ATTACK ON BRITISH HC Four on fresh remand in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sylhet Sadar Cognizance Court yesterday granted fresh remand for four people who were earlier remanded for 10 days in connection with the grenade attack on British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury.

Magistrate Ershadul Haque granted 10-day fresh remand as the criminal investigation department (CID) of police sought for it for quizzing them in connection with the grenade attack on the AL meeting venue in Sylhet on August 7, 2004.

CID's Senior ASP Munshi Atiqur Rahman in his remand prayer said significant information regarding the other grenade attack had been gathered from the arrestees during the 10-day quizzing.

Now they are to be further quizzed in the attack on mayor and others at Gulshan Centre, he added.

Rab and DGFI men picked up the four people from different areas of Sylhet division on September 2 and 3.

They are Sharif Sahedul of Maishdi village under Chandpur Sadar, Hafiz Syed Nayeem of Syedpur village under Jagonnathpur upazila of Sunamganj district, Badrul Alam Mizan of Habiganj Sadar upazila and Delwar Hossain Ripon of Kulaura upazila under Moulvibazar district.

Among them Delwar admitted his complicity in the attack, an official claimed.

## SYMPOSIUM ON 'GLOBAL ECONOMIC JUSTICE' ENDS

# 'Set up commission to look into secret deals'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two-day symposium on 'Global Economic Justice: Strengthening Social Movements and Challenging Neo-liberal Discourse' ended in the city yesterday with a call to establish an independent commission to look into the secret and unfair deals the country has signed with different multinational organisations.

Also, a new forum styled 'International Forum of Global Economic Justice' has been formed.

During a session on 'Regional economic integration: Recent trends and challenges', the participants said the least developed countries (LDCs) should not merge into large coalitions or alliances before exacting concrete commitments from the developing

members.

Tanim Ahmed, assistant editor of The New Age, presented a keynote paper on 'North within the South: Advanced Developing countries'.

Dr Salimullah Khan said, "The country should adopt a 'national policy for economy', otherwise we will cling on to servitude of universal capitalism."

Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman said the country has to ensure its ownership on natural resources.

The speakers placed some recommendations at the daylong symposium jointly organised by ActionAid Bangladesh, Asia Pacific Network for Food Sovereignty, South Asia Network on Food, Ecology and Culture and Department of Development

Studies, University of Dhaka.

The recommendations include strengthening the platform to listen to the vulnerable and marginalised people, ensuring structural adjustment by reinvigorating the state-run BRTC, BTMC and BADC, minimising the trade imbalance and ensuring fair wage and right to trade union even in the EPZs.

They also suggested enriching the domestic industries such as jute, silk, handloom, textile, paper and cotton, assisting the LDCs in negotiating duty- and quota-free access of goods and establishing a framework for labour migration.

# Deposit retirement fund at govt coffer

## Non-govt teachers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of non-government high schools, colleges and madrasas yesterday demanded to deposit the teachers' retirement fund at the government exchequer and release the retirement allowance through the district education officer and headmaster to eliminate corruption.

Teachers under the banner of Bangladesh Shikshak-Karmachari Samannaya Parishad also alleged that Prof Selim Bhuiyan, member secretary of Non-Government Educational Institutes Retirement Board, in connivance with some corrupted officers, has gobbled down thousands of money through corruption.

The Samannaya Parishad yesterday held a representatives' meeting at the auditorium of Bangabandhu Avenue National

Library Centre in the capital where teachers from all districts took part protesting the irregularities and corruption of retirement board.

Sheikh Abdus Salam, secretary general of Samannaya Parishad, said around Tk 50 crore of the Retirement Board has been swallowed in the last two years by Prof Selim Bhuiyan who did it in connivance with some officers of education ministry.

He also said that teachers face unending harassment in getting retirement allowance from the retirement board.

Teachers called upon the government to take stern measures against Selim Bhuiyan and other corrupted officers of the education ministry.

Samannaya Parishad President Prof Rabiul Haque presided over the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil welcomes Head of the European Commission delegation Andrew Bruce at his residence at Gulshan in the city yesterday while Sajib Wazed Joy, son of AL President Sheikh Hasina, looks on.

# Resignation of CEC demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief election commissioner and the election commissioners must resign for the greater interest of a free and fair election, speakers said at a rally in the city yesterday.

People who are eligible and faithful to the democracy should be recruited as election commissioners after discussing with the leaders of ruling and opposition parties, they demanded.

Sammilita Peshajibi Parishad organised the rally with a view to bringing out reforms in election commission and in public administration on the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) premises.

Addressing the rally Dr Abdul

Aziz, joint convener of the Parishad, said that the contentious Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz should not be given the responsibility of holding general election.

The Parishad placed their eight-point demand that include ban of all recruitments in the administration on contract basis and a non-political Public Service Commission (PSC).

On the other hand, skilled and meritorious candidates should be recruited to such posts, it said.

The speakers vowed to continue their movement until their demands are met.

The Parishad later submitted a memorandum to the prime minister.

**CD launch**

Bengal Foundation will launch an audio CD titled 'Nana Ronger Dinguli' by Ifrat Ara Dewan. Venue: Shaheed Zia auditorium. Time: 7:15pm.

**Workshop**

Spectrum Lanka Technology Solutions Limited and South Asia Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF) will jointly organise a workshop on 'Production cost reduction techniques'. Venue: Brac Centre Inn auditorium. Time: 9:00am.

**Drama**

People's Repertory Theatre will stage 'Swanper Bhuvan', a play based upon a Swedish tale. Venue: Kochikacha auditorium. Time: 11:00am.

**Birth anniversary**

Mazharul Islam Folklore Institute will

celebrate the 78th birth anniversary of Prof Mazharul Islam. Venue: national Museum auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

**Human chain**

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) will form a human chain protesting the earth filling of different water bodies. Venue: In front of Sonargaon hotel. Time: 10:30am.

**Seminar**

Negative Blood Group Association, Bangladesh will organise a seminar on 'The importance of negative blood and the responsibilities of the donors and receivers'. Venue: WVA auditorium. Time: 11:00am.

**Exhibition**

The first exhibition of 'Troee' will be held. Venue: Gallery Chitrak. Time: 4:00pm.

## People to resist AL if it tries to foil polls

Says Noman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman yesterday said BNP-Jamaat alliance is capable of facing Awami League (AL) politically and people will resist the party if it tries to foil the upcoming general election.

Noman said this while he was speaking at a view-exchanging meeting organised by Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP-Matin) at the National Press Club with BJP President Abdul Matin in the chair.

He said election will be held as per constitution and AL to be isolated if it tries to foil election.

There is nothing substantial in the Awami League proposals to reform Election Commission and the caretaker government system, he added.

He said 80 per cent of AL reform proposals are being implemented through routine works by the administration and the EC.

AL will have to hold dialogue with the ruling alliance to bring in the remaining 20 percent reforms, he added.

Prof Matin said AL is suffering from political contradiction.

Moazzem Hossen Alal MP, city BNP President BNP Abdus Salam, BJP president members Habibullah Belali, Jahangir Majumdar and Abu Naser Muhammad Rahmatullah also spoke.

### No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

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

Highest temperature 34.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 22.8 degree Celsius at Sayedpur.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:02pm today and rises at 5:45am 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	33.8	26.4	69	67
Chittagong	33.7	26.0	71	76
Rajshahi	34.5	25.8	83	83
Khulna	34.1	27.0	77	77
Barisal	32.6	25.2	82	90
Sylhet	33.2	24.2	78	77
Cox's Bazar	33.0	--	--	--