

Basic reforms a must before election

Says British official

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Rowan Laxton, deputy head of the South Asia Group in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the UK, said the British government as well as the international community is hopeful about the future of democratic process in Bangladesh.

Democracy should be restored here as soon as possible, he said, but some effective measures for reforms should be taken before the elections.

Time is not so important, but the long-term and the basic reforms are a must, he added.

The British official made the comment while talking to The Daily

Star yesterday afternoon at the regional liaison office in Sylhet after separate meetings with Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, Divisional Commissioner Aziz Hasan and officials of the Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Head of Chancery in the British High Commission in Dhaka Duncan Norman accompanied him during the meetings.

Laxton came to Sylhet yesterday as part of his five-day visit to Bangladesh. He arrived in the country on Tuesday.

He said the caretaker government has got a great chance to address some issues, which the

previous government failed to accomplish, and bring some fundamental changes to different sectors.

The international community is also expecting early process for credible election in the country, Laxton said, adding that to drive against corruption is a must before the election.

The ongoing British assistance for the development of Bangladesh will not be hampered in the near future, the official said.

Referring to his meeting with people in the last two days, he said, "I think it is possible to organise an acceptable election within a year or one and a half years."

city dwellers.

The acting mayor urged the concerned officials and staff to build up CCC as a corruption-free institution as per the directive of the present government.

The CCC officials and ward commissioners at the ceremony hailed Monju in his new office.

CCC Chief Executive Officer Mostafa Kamaluddin, ward commissioners Syed Golam Haider Mintu, Iqbal Hafiz Jubraiz, Saleh Ahmad Chowdhury, Md Shahidul Alam and woman ward commissioner Advocate Rehana Kabir Ranu also spoke at the ceremony.

While talking to journalists, Monju said the CCC would investigate all the reported irregularities in CCC performance.

"If anyone is found guilty, immediate action would be taken against him," he added.



Monjurul Alam Monju

by fax on Thursday afternoon.

After taking the charge, the acting CCC mayor called upon the CCC officials and staff to discharge their duties with utmost sincerity and honesty in order to ensure proper service and civic amenities to the

Man throws acid on mother-in-law over dowry in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A woman sustained severe burn injuries as her son-in-law threw acid on her in the port city on Thursday night dowry.

The victim, identified as Rasheda Akther, 35, wife of Abul Kalam Azad, hailing from Munshipara of Gaibandha, was living at a slum adjacent to city's Sholoshorah Railway Station.

Sources said Rasheda married off her daughter Anjuman Ara Begum to Manir Hossain with a dowry of Tk 50,000 last year.

Few months after the marriage Monir reportedly started torturing Anjuman for more dowry and forced her to go back to her father's house around two months ago.

On Thursday evening, Monir along with his nephew Akther Hossain came to his in-law's house to settle the matter.

At one stage, they asked Rasheda to come out of the house saying they have something 'important' to tell her. As she stepped out of the house, they threw acid on her.

Rasheda was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital. Doctors said Rasheda had burns on her chest and neck.

Death anniversary

Today is the 3rd death anniversary of Dr Noorunnahar Fyznessa, a professor of the Institute of Education and Research (IER), Dhaka University, says a press release.

She played a significant role in the movement for establishing women's rights and the country's liberation struggle.

The first elected woman member of DU Syndicate, Dr Fyznessa was an eminent personality widely respected in academic and liberal political circles. She initiated the Liberation War memorials on the DU campus and Rokeya Hall premises.

The founder of Chayanee, she launched a merit scholarship project, Rokeya Memorial Foundation. She was also the president of Dhaka City Mahila Parishad and Usha and the vice-president of Women for Women.

Dr Fyznessa was also a member of the Pay Commission and Asian Regional Population Association, Bangkok. She also served as provost of the Rokeya Hall of DU.

On the occasion of her death anniversary, food will be distributed among the students of Deep Shikha, a school for the underprivileged, and among orphans at an orphanage in Dhaka.

DHAKA TODAY

Annual sports

The annual sports and cultural competition 2007 of Sheikh Borhanuddin Post Graduate College will be held. Venue: Institute of Diploma Engineers. Time: 5:00pm.

Launching ceremony

The launching ceremony of the 3rd outlet of ETC, a concern of Etcetera Bangladesh Pvt Ltd, will be held. Venue: RAK Tower, Utara. Time: 11:00am.

Handicrafts exhibition

A month-long handicrafts exhibition will begin. Venue: Public Works Directorate ground. Time: 4:00pm.

Art competition

Dhamondi Kachikanta High School organises a national art competition on the occasion of the Earth Day. Venue: School premises. Time: 9:00am.

Award giving ceremony

Dr MH Khan will be awarded Khanbadur Ahsanullah Gold Medal. Venue: Dhaka Ahsan Mission auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Memorabilia sale

The concluding ceremony of the 'Celebrity memorabilia sale' organised

WEATHER TODAY

No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporarily partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. Met Office said in a forecast.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 37.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi and Jessore and the lowest of 17.0 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:14pm today and rises at 5:51am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in celsius	Humidity in percentage	Morning	
	Max	Min	43	32
Dhaka	36.7	22.4		
Chittagong	35.6	21.3	65	73
Rajshahi	37.0	20.4	65	44
Khulna	36.3	22.0	62	34
Barisal	35.5	21.0	76	56
Sylhet	36.1	20.3	38	32
Cox's Bazar	32.5	22.2	72	70

Housewife held for torturing domestic help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife was arrested for allegedly torturing her domestic help in the city on Thursday night.

Receiving information about torture, police arrested Shikha Rani from her house at Uttarkhan at around 8:00pm.

The police also rescued the domestic help, Jyoti Rani, 12, and took her to One-Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital. She had injury marks on her hands and cheek.

When asked about the injury marks, Jyoti said her employer Shikha Rani beat her while preparing bread on Tuesday morning.

Later at night, Shikha also pressed a hot iron pot to her hands and cheek, Jyoti added.

However, Shikha denied all the allegations and said Jyoti received injuries while cooking.

Police sent Shikha to jail yesterday.

CA offers fateha at grave of freedom fighter

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed visited the grave of martyred freedom fighter Lt. Col. Dr SA Hai and offered fateha at the Azimpur Graveyard in the city after Juma prayers yesterday.

He also prayed for the salvation of the departed souls of those who sacrificed their lives for independence.

Lt. Col. SA Hai, brother-in-law of the chief adviser, was shot dead by the Pakistani army at Jessore Cantonment on March 30 in 1971.

Khaleda attends doa mahfil for KM Obaid

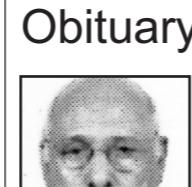
UNB, Dhaka

A doa and milad mahfil in memory of veteran politician and BNP leader late KM Obaidur Rahman was held at Banani Chairmanbari ground in the city yesterday.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, party standing committee members Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Dr RA Gani, Advocate Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed and Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman, Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammed Mujahid, Workers' Party leader Rashed Khan Menon, JSD leader ASM Abur Rob, Hasanul Huq Inu and leaders of other political parties attended the programme.

Later, the BNP leaders exchanged pleasantries with Khaleda.

Obituary

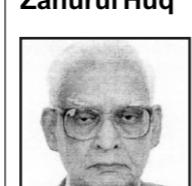


Justice Mohammad Abdul Jalil, a former election commissioner and former chairman of Labour Appellate Tribunal, passed away due to old age complications at his residence at Paribagh in the city on Thursday at the age of 77, says a press release.

He is survived by two daughters and four sons.

His qulkuwani will be held at his residence after Asr prayers on April 1.

Zahurul Huq



Zahurul Huq, former director (commercial) of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC), passed away due to old age complications on March 28 at the age of 84, says a press release.

He left behind two sons, one daughter and a host of relatives and admirers.

He hailed from Saturia at Rajapur in Barisal and served McLean Kilburn, RS IGN and Pak Bay before independence.

His qulkuwani will be held at his residence after Asr prayers today.

Moulavi Md Altaf Uddin



Moulavi Md Altaf Uddin, father of photojournalist Rafiq Uddin Enayet of The New Nation, passed away at his house in Hatiya on Thursday at the age of 75, says a press release.

He is survived by nine sons, a daughter and a number of grandchildren.



Visitors at a three-day Housing Fair that began at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Bangladesh Real Estate Directory organised the fair.

PHOTO: STAR

ROUNDTABLE ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

'Introduce community-based training to raise awareness'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday stressed the need to prepare a comprehensive disaster preparedness plan in order to reduce losses and sufferings.

They also laid emphasis on introducing disaster preparedness and management in the national curriculum and adequate publicity in mass media to help raise awareness in building awareness about the issue.

The speakers also recommended introduction of community-based disaster management training to meet any situation that may arise following severe storms, earthquake, fire or building collapse.

CDRB Chairman Mizanur Rahman Shelley said, "We have built many high-rise buildings in the city but paid a little attention to build a safe city."

Disaster preparations have not been taken properly and people also are not aware of proper steps resulting in more casualties, he added.

"We must take lessons from different accidents of immediate

disaster management is very poor and there is no preparedness at individual, familial, organisational and community level in the country.

They urged both print and electronic media to publish and broadcast relevant programmes on disaster management more frequently as they can play a significant role in building awareness about the issue.

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Disaster preparations have not been taken properly and people also are not aware of proper steps resulting in more casualties, he added.

"We must take lessons from different accidents of immediate

past and prepare ourselves with a comprehensive accident management," he said.

Barrister Harun-ar Rashid said disaster management is taught at school level in the developed countries but we don't have any such system in our country.

The issue of disaster management should be included in the school curriculum so that the next generation could have a practical knowledge from their early age, he added.

Selim Newaz Bhuiyan, deputy director of the Department of Fire Service and Civil Defence, said disaster preparedness is not possible without the training of the first responder or the neighbour as concerted and coordinated actions are needed to face the situation.

He said training on disaster management has been going in different units of the fire service.

Abu Naser Khan, convener of Paribesh Bachao Andolon, said real

estate companies are building beautiful houses in one hand and on the other hand pushing the city towards disaster by not keeping any open space around their high-rise buildings.

He urged them to