

Build trust in govt thru' transparent governance

Education adviser tells national consultation workshop

BSS, Dhaka

Adviser for Education Ayub Quadri yesterday said Bangladesh is committed to achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by reducing poverty rate and improving the quality of life of the people through building trust in government.

He was addressing as the chief guest the opening session of the national level consultation workshop on the 7th Global Forum organised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded project 'Developing Civil Service Capacity for 21st Century Administration' at a hotel in the city.

Cabinet Secretary Ali Imam Majumder, Secretary of the Chief Adviser's Office Kazi M Aminul Islam and UNDP Resident Coordinator Renata Lok Dessallien also spoke.

Quadri expressed his dismay that he had to witness the erosion in the governance in the post-1990 as secretary during different political governments and regretted that people lost their confidence in their political leaders.

He emphasised the need for building trust in government by practising a transparent governance in the forms of political, economic and social decisions for ensuring the quality of governance.

The adviser for education attached importance to the role of the civil society and information and communications to safeguard democracy.

Cabinet Secretary Majumder favoured building trust in the institutions of democracy and said confidence of the people could be raised by including all sectors of society in the political process.

UNDP's Renata pointed out that Bangladesh is well known for its creativity and innovation and said now is the right time to rebuild trust in the country's government.

Kazi Amin asserted that the present caretaker government is building trust in the government by bringing in drastic reforms in the judiciary, executive and legislative branches of the government.

Through the participation of government officials, business leaders, civil society representa-

tives and other stakeholders, starting from the local to national level, he said, the government has reached the concluding stage to finalise the Bangladesh Country Paper, which will be presented in the 7th Global Forum at the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna from June 26-29 on the theme "Building Trust in Government".

Earlier, the project organised three consultation workshops in the divisional headquarters in Sylhet, Rajshahi and Khulna. In line with the 7th Global Forum, the objective of the country consultation workshops was to sensitise the people on the need for sound governance and pro-poor public administration in Bangladesh.

The 7th Global Forum will offer plenary sessions and a series of parallel capacity development workshops on different aspects of revitalising governance and public administration to build trust in government.

Its participants will include ministers, senior government officials, parliamentarians, mayors, civil society representatives,

and the private sector from all over the world.

The first-ever global conference on reinventing government was organised in Washington in 1999 to bring together officials who understand the vital link between efficient government and a prosperous economy and are eager to share ideas and effective practices for improving government services.

Since then every two years, the Global Forum on Reinventing Government offers senior public officials from around the world an opportunity to meet with experts, receive training and exchange strategies for improving public administration and governance.

Since the 2nd Global Forum, UN organisations have become the key partner organisations in organising the Global Forums. Moreover, in its 57th session, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on public administration and development and asked the United Nations Secretariat to provide support for the global forum.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad General Secretary Ayesha Khanam speaks at a view exchange meeting on budget and women at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On her left are former adviser Akbar Ali Khan, Bela Nabi and Rekha Chowdhury. (Story on Page 8)

Foreign envoys have no qualms with govt's plan to hold polls

Ifttekhar tells at press briefing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Affairs Adviser Ifttekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday said foreign envoys and delegates have no qualms with the government's plan to hold elections by the end of 2008.

"The election will be held within the stipulated time set by the government, and as the chief adviser said, we will not stay a single day more than necessary," he said at a press briefing yesterday.

Asked to comment on recent calls by foreign envoys and delegates for the government to hold elections at the earliest, Ifttekhar

said the foreign delegations, such as the European Union Troika, who have asked him of government plans, appreciated the government's plan on elections.

"But, the people of Bangladesh will determine their own destiny," he added.

Ifttekhar termed his recent trip to Australia a 'success' saying not only has Australia pledged a 33 percent aid increase, but both Dhaka and Canberra have taken significant steps to bring "a sense of structure" to their bilateral relationship.

The adviser said improved relationship between Dhaka and Canberra on the international level would also help Bangladesh's relationship with other countries including the United States.

He informed that Bangladesh

would get 39,000 tonnes of wheat worth \$14 million from Australia with possibilities in assistance in other sectors soon.

Ifttekhar also expressed his 'deep sadness' at the continuing fighting between Hamas and Fatah in Palestine, saying, "This kind of conflict will not bring gain for anyone, least of all for the Palestinian cause. We would urge calm upon all sides."

"Unity among the Palestinians is essential to achieve their aspiration, which we also share, that is a separate and sovereign State for the Palestinian people. That is the goal on which the Palestinians and the international community should remain focused," he added.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Former law minister Moudud Ahmed, left, and Awami Swachchhabhak League General Secretary Pankaj Debnath, right, are being produced before a court in the city yesterday.

Raise awareness about climate change

Speakers say at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for raising awareness about the impact of climate change which is still a remote issue for most of the people of the country.

The seminar titled 'Climate change: Bangladesh in deep crisis' was organised by Gono Unnayan Gronthagar at its auditorium in the city.

"The awareness programme has just started but we are not aware of the entire issue. Why don't we take initiatives to protect our water bodies, forests or farm land if we are well aware of the situation?" asked Prof Mozaffer Ahmad, president of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), while delivering a speech as chief guest.

Dr Ahsan Uddin Ahmad, executive director of Centre for Global

Change, in his keynote speech presentation showed how the climate change will cause frequent disasters.

"The intensity of heat will be increased, the amount of rain and its duration will also be increased which will lead to droughts and frequent and prolonged flood," he added.

Dr Ahsan said due to this climate change, the people would face risks from frequent natural disaster, food scarcity, unemployment problems and health hazards.

"Within three to four decades, our Sundarbans might disappear due to increased salinity in water caused by climate change" he added saying that people at grass-roots level have to be brought to the initiatives of adaptation.

Prof Nasreen Ahmed of geography and environment department of

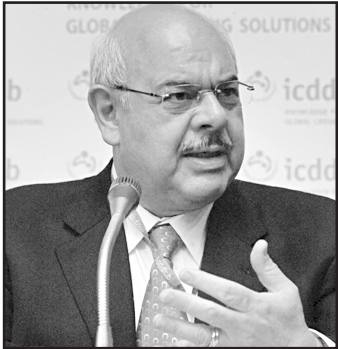
Dhaka University, said the policymakers should sincerely think of the environmental refugees, who will have to be relocated from vulnerable places.

Prof KBS Rashid stressed on research and strong database so that the people concerned can get a clear view of the situation.

He said though there is a climate change cell in the environment department, they are not involved in disseminating their information.

Md Abdus Salam of environment department said leading newspapers or electronic media are not cooperating with them in broadcasting the information through advertisements.

The programme was moderated by Rashed Iqbal.



Dr Cravioto new executive director of ICDDR,B

Dr Alejandro Cravioto has been appointed the executive director of ICDDR,B effective from June 17, says a press release.

He is replacing Dr David A Sack, who has been in this post since 1999.

Dr Cravioto is a national of Mexico and has a distinguished scientific career in public health. He has authored many publications, including textbooks on vaccines and pediatric diarrhea. He has also received the National Award in Public Health given by the Mexican government. He has been with ICDDR,B as deputy executive director for the past two years.

His work has also been recognised by the Nestle Nutrition Award in 1990 and the Glaxo Award for Clinical Research in 1991.

The three-day half-yearly meeting of The Board of Trustees of ICDDR,B was held on June 15. It reviewed the scientific progress of ICDDR,B in terms of the approved strategic plan of the Centre.

The Board have elected Dr Timothy G Evans the new chairperson of the Board.

Meanwhile, at a press conference at Sasakawa auditorium of ICDDR,B Dr Cravioto yesterday said ICDDR,B would continue its collaborative programmes and would increase its research work.



Dr Mahabub Brac executive director

Dr Mahabub Hossain, a renowned development economist, has joined Brac as executive director, says a press release.

Prior to joining Brac, Dr Hossain was the head of the Social Sciences Division and Programme Leader, Rainfed Ecosystems Programme of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines. He was also the director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) from 1989 to 1992.

Dr Hossain, known for his substantial contributions to research on development economics and agriculture policy in South and Southeast Asia, was awarded the Bangladesh Agricultural Economist Association's first Gold Medal in 1984 for his work.

Dhaka for unity of Palestinian factions

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh has urged unity among the Palestinian factions in view of the latest outbreaks of fight between the supporters of Hamas and Fatah.

In response to a query on the situation in Palestine, Foreign Adviser Ifttekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday said: "We have been deeply saddened by the news of continued fighting among the Palestine groups. This kind of conflict will not bring gain for anyone, least of all for the Palestinian cause."

"We would urge calm upon all sides. Unity among Palestinians is essential to achieve their aspiration, which we also share, that is a separate and sovereign state for the Palestinian people," he said.

That is the goal on which the Palestinians and the international community should remain resolutely focused, the adviser added.



PHOTO: PID

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Zheng Qingdian calls on Industry, Textile and Jute Adviser Geeteara Safiya Chowdhury at the Industry Ministry in the city yesterday.

BAF tree plantation programme inaugurated

UNB, Dhaka

Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman inaugurated tree plantation programme of Bangladesh Air Force by planting a star-apple sapling on Air Headquarters premises yesterday.

Principal staff officers of air headquarters and senior BAF officers also took part in the tree plantation programme.

Similar programmes have also been taken in different BAF establishments and base areas. Bangladesh Air Force Women Welfare Association will also take similar programme.

Workshop

ASICT project organises a workshop on 'Awareness creation on e-government'. Venue: LGED Bhaban. Time: 9:30am.

Discussion

Bangladesh Mahila Samity will hold a discussion on the occasion of the fifth death anniversary of Dr Nilima Ibrahim. Venue: Samity auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Seminar

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) organises a seminar titled 'The impact of deforestation on climate change'. Venue: Bapa Solar Room. Time: 5:00pm.

Consultation meeting

The opening session of a consultation meeting on 'Capacity building and strategic policy development' will be held. Venue: Hotel Sarina. Time: 9:00pm.

UNESCO Workshop

UNESCO Dhaka in collaboration with UNESCO Bangkok and UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning organises a workshop on 'Improving quality of mother tongue/ bilingual literacy

Mentally challenged girl commits suicide in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 11-year-old mentally challenged girl who had a strange fascination for playing game of hanging committed suicide at Demra in the city on Saturday night by hanging herself.

Family members found Yeasmin, a student of class two of Shaheed Nabi high school and daughter of Abdur Razzak, hanging by her scarf from the ceiling of their house at Konapara at 9:00pm.

Police recovered the body at 9:30pm and sent it to Sir Salimullah Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Yeasmin's mother Amena Begum told reporters that Yeasmin used to laugh abnormally while playing the strange game of hanging with rope at times in a day.

"Yeasmin entered the room at 8:00pm and locked the door from inside after putting the television on. I was first to see her hanging by the ceiling through the window," said Hasina Begum, sister-in-law of the girl.

An unnatural death case was filed with Demra Police Station.



Death anniversary of Dr Nilima Ibrahim today

Today is the fifth death anniversary of Dr Nilima Ibrahim, late founding president of Bangladesh Mahila Samity, says a press release.

To mark the day, Mahila Samity organises a discussion on the life and work of Dr Nilima, renowned educationist and one of the pioneers of women movement in the country, at its office at 4, Natok Saroni (New Bailey Road) in the city at 4:00pm.

Prof Rafiqul Islam will be present at the programme as chief guest while Mahila Samity President Selina Khaleq will preside over it.

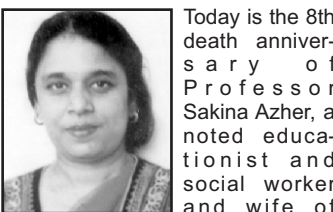
In the morning, wreaths will be placed at the grave of Dr Nilima at Mirpur Martyred Intellectual Graveyard at 8:00am.

Gour Chandra Bala A CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Today is the second death anniversary of Gour Chandra Bala, a former minister of Jukto Front Government and one of the organisers of the liberation war.

On the occasion, different programmes have been chalked out at this Jhittuli residence in the town.

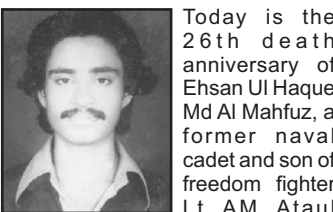
Professor Sakina Azher



Quazi Azher Ali, a former secretary, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil and Qurankhwani will be held at her Dhaka residence.

Ehsan UI Haque



Haque of Bangladesh Navy, says a press release.

He died on this day in 1981 at Combined Military Hospital, Chittagong, just four days after he joined Bangladesh Navy.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Qulkhwani

BSS, Dhaka

Qulkhwani of Abu Sayed Choudhury, former additional secretary and chairman of EPB, will be held at his residence at Concord Casamaria at Road No: 104, House No: 3, Gulshan-2 (adjacent to Sikder Hospital) after Maghrib prayers today.

Friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani.

He died on Thursday. He was buried at Azimpur Graveyard in the city yesterday.

MERCANTILE BANK AWARD MR Khan donates Tk 50000 from prize money for treatment of poor

National Professor Dr MR Khan yesterday donated Tk 50000, prize money of Mercantile Bank Award which he won recently, to a fund raised by Institute of Child Health and Shishu Shasthya Foundation to provide healthcare facilities to poor, at a ceremony in the city, says a press release.

AKM Shahidul Haq, deputy managing director of Mercantile Bank, attended the programme as the chief guest.

Professor Khan urged everyone to come forward to help the children of the country.

Shahidul Haq praised the foundation for its activities and expressed hope that Mercantile Bank would participate in future activities of the foundation specially in its micro-credit programmes.

Manindra Kumar Nath, executive vice president of Mercantile Bank and Dr Mohammad Shahidullah, executive secretary of the foundation, also addressed the programme.

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Intermittent moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at most places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy rainfalls are also likely at places, Met office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Under the influence of active monsoon over Bangladesh, heavy to very heavy rainfalls are likely at places over all the six divisions of the country in the next 12 hours until 2:00pm today.

Highest temperature 35.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Mongla and lowest 23.1 degree Celsius at Ishwardi.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.48pm today and rises at 5:11am 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	31.8	23.5	98	94
Chittagong	31.2	24.0	84	88
Rajshahi	32.2	24.0	98	88
Khulna	33.2	25.5	84	95
Barisal	32.7	24.8	87	97
Sylhet	26.0	23.8	100	96
Cox's Bazar	33.0	27.2	83	80