

### Land depression over W Bengal, adjoining Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka  
The land depression moved slightly northwestwards and lies over West Bengal and adjoining Bangladesh yesterday afternoon.

It is likely to move in a west-northwesterly direction further inland slowly and weaken gradually by giving precipitation, said a Met office bulletin.

Under its influence, steep pressure gradient persists over north Bay.

Squally weather may continue to affect the maritime ports.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal number three.

Low-lying areas of the coastal districts and their off-shore islands and chars are likely to be inundated by a wind driven surge of 2-3 feet height above normal astronomical tide.

All fishing boats and trawlers over north Bay have been advised to remain close to the coast and proceed with caution until further notice.

### Rehab president resigns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Engineer Mohammad Abdul Awal resigned as president of Real Estate Housing Association of Bangladesh (Rehab) yesterday.

In a statement, Awal said the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) had recently filed a case against former minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain in which he was also implicated with others.

Awal said he decided to resign from his post as his alleged involvement in the case might damage the reputation of Rehab.

## 'Political will needed to build gender equitable society'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday underscored the need for political will and conceptual clarity of 'gender mainstreaming' in order to build a gender equitable society.

They also urged the authorities to treat women as the target of development instead of using their contribution as the agent of development.

Department of Women and Gender Studies (DWGS), Dhaka University and Gender, Justice and Diversity Unit of Human Resource Division (HRD), Brac jointly organised the workshop titled 'Gender Mainstreaming: Theory to Practice' at the Brac Centre Inn Auditorium in the city.

The workshop is aimed at creating a platform of exchanging views and experience of the challenges and achievements of different organisations, said DWGS Founder Chair Prof Najma Choudhury.

The workshop will also create an environment where students will be able to gain practical knowledge and also develop a network with gender experts working in various organisations, Prof Najma added.

DWGS Chairperson Prof Ayesha Banu presented the keynote paper.

"Since the past century women have won the rights to vote, to speak out in public, to own property, to increased access to higher education and to earn their own living," she said.

Gains have been made, but there are still many more challenging fronts to overcome to take women's questions even further as an integral part of all development effort, she added.

Explaining the term, Prof Ayesha said 'gender mainstreaming' involves ensuring gender perspectives, and attention to the goal of gender equality is central to all activities, including policy develop-

ment, research, advocacy, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.

Representatives of Nari Pokkho, Oxfam, Brac, Steps Towards Development (Steps), and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP)

shared their experiences on the issue at the workshop.

BMP General secretary of Ayesha Khanam laid emphasis on the conceptual clarity on gender issue, saying that there is a lack of clarity even among the activists working to ensure gender equality.

"Women are considered as the agent of development rather than the target of development," she said.

Referring to the political commitment, Ayesha suggested that the government should launch goal-based initiatives rather than implementing short-term project.

Mainstreaming means to sensitise all the other sectors such as health and education to gender issues, said Steps Executive Director Ranjan Karmaker.

Brac HRD Director Sheepra Hafiza, HRD Programme Coordinator Habibur Rahman HRD Senior Manager Khadija Leena, Women for Women President Prof Dr Mahmuda Islam and DWGS Lecturer Syed Md Saikh Intiaz also spoke.



DWGS Chairperson Prof Ayesha Banu speaks at a workshop at the Brac Centre Inn Auditorium in the city yesterday. On her right is DWGS Founder Chair Prof Najma Choudhury.

PHOTO: STAR



Students of Maple Leaf prepare packets of medicines on their school premises in the city yesterday for distribution among the flood victims.

PHOTO: STAR