

WB, IMF blamed for holding back country's development

A seminar on 'Multi-Stakeholder National Consultation: CSOs and Aid Effectiveness' was held in the city yesterday.

The seminar was organised jointly by a research and advocacy organisation VOICE and a global networking organisation 'Reality of Aid' at the Brac Centre, said a press release.

The daylong seminar aimed at making aid more effective in a more right-based approach through engaging multi-stakeholders like donors, government and NGOs.

The seminar discussed five principles upraised at the Paris Declaration 2005, which was signed by Bangladesh government.

The principles are ownership, alignment, harmonisation, mutual accountability and managing for results.

The opening session was chaired by Prof Badiul Alam Majumder with a group of panelist with Prof Mustafizur Rahman, research director of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Farida Akhtar, executive director of Ubinig, AbdulAwal of Supro.

Ahmed Swapan Mahmud, executive director of VOICE, moderated the sessions.

Antonio Tujan Jr, member of the advisory group of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development- Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), and chairperson of The Reality of Aid Network, presented two keynote papers on 'Objectives of the Consultation' and 'Mandate and Programmes of Advisory Group'.

Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, executive director of COAST Trust, also read out another keynote paper titled 'In Between Aid and Effectiveness'.

Different stakeholders, donor agencies, NGOs, activist groups, think tanks, trade union and representatives from various networks working in the development sector expressed their opinions and helped develop a national consultation to give feeds to its regional forum.

Antonio Tujan Jr in his papers stated about the reform initiatives taken in the Paris Declaration to make the aid more effective.

He also put importance on the role of the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) making the aid actually work for the poor of the underdeveloped countries.

As getting aid is a right, he said, it is also not fair for the donors to impose conditions and ties while giving loans, grants or aid.

He said International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) are the main culprits for holding back Bangladesh from effective development with their malicious conditions and tied sanctions.

The speakers also presented several case studies in the development sector which failed to reach its goal although it followed the donor-agencies prescription.

They demanded that the government should make all its development policies transparent and provide adequate information on the aid-related programmes to reach its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The CSOs also urged the government to open space and create opportunities for them to help eradicate poverty in the country.

The summary of the consultation would feed into a regional consultation and High Level Forum (HLF) to be held in Ghana in 2008, the release added.



AKM Iftekhar Ahmad, managing director of Eastern Insurance Company Ltd, hands over a cheque for Tk 10 lakh to Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed for the flood-affected people at the latter's office recently.



Sanofi-Aventis Bangladesh Managing Director Iftekharul Islam, right, hands over a cheque for Tk 24.15 lakh to Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at the latter's office recently on behalf of its employees (one day's salary) and the donation from corporate headquarters in Paris.



Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury receives a cheque for one lakh US dollar from Indonesian Ambassador in Dhaka Warmas Hasan Saputra at the Foreign Ministry in the city on Sunday.



A team of Lifebuoy Friendship Hospital distributed relief among the flood-affected people of Char Bakuria, Khatiamari, Nichintopur, Ziadanga, Bage in Gaibandha district recently.



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) in cooperation with Chalan Bil Udyog, a local NGO, distributes relief among the flood-affected people of Chatmohor in Pabna on Saturday.

He also put importance on the role of the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) making the aid actually work for the poor of the underdeveloped countries.

As getting aid is a right, he said, it is also not fair for the donors to impose conditions and ties while giving loans, grants or aid.

He said International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) are the main culprits for holding back Bangladesh from effective development with their malicious conditions and tied sanctions.

The speakers also presented several case studies in the development sector which failed to reach its goal although it followed the donor-agencies prescription.

They demanded that the government should make all its development policies transparent and provide adequate information on the aid-related programmes to reach its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The CSOs also urged the government to open space and create opportunities for them to help eradicate poverty in the country.

The summary of the consultation would feed into a regional consultation and High Level Forum (HLF) to be held in Ghana in 2008, the release added.

BSF returns 4 Bangladeshi teenagers

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) yesterday returned four Bangladeshi teenagers, trafficked to India three years back, to Bangladesh Rifles (BDR).

They were identified as Soma Khatun, 14, Reshma Khatun, 15, Parvin Khatun, 15 and Arun Dutta, 15.

Sources said the teenagers were allured of better jobs by the traffickers.

On their first day in India, police picked them up.

Later, Sanglap, an NGO, took the teenagers under its custody and provided them with legal and other kinds of assistance.

Lifebuoy Friendship Hospital distributes relief

A team of Lifebuoy Friendship Hospital distributed relief among the flood-affected people of Char Bakuria, Khatiamari, Nichintopur, Ziadanga, Bage in Gaibandha district recently, says a press release.

The team distributed rice, pulse, sugar, salt, suji, oral saline and water purification tablets.

The Lifebuoy Friendship Hospital is a joint initiative between Unilever Bangladesh Ltd and the humanitarian group "Friendship" wherein a barge was converted into a floating hospital that has been extending basic healthcare facilities to the people of hard to reach areas of Bangladesh.

Unilever Bangladesh managers also contributed from their salary to provide relief materials to the flood-affected people in 14 areas across the country through their regional offices in Dhaka, Sylhet, Bogra and Khulna.

Unilever Bangladesh also handed over a cheque for Tk 20 lakh to the Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed for the flood-affected people at his office recently.

Fusion Music Concert tomorrow

The High Commission of India in collaboration with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is going to organise a concert titled 'Fusion Music Concert' at Shilpakala Academy in the city at 7:00pm tomorrow, says a press release.

Eminent Indian classical singer Pt Sarathi Chatterjee and famous Bangladeshi rock singer James will perform at the concert.

The presentation will provide a unique blend of Indian Classical music and popular Bangladeshi rock music to produce interesting new numbers.

Complementary passes for the concert may be collected on a first come basis from the High Commission of India, Road No 142, House No 2, Gulshan-1 and the Indian Cultural Centre, Road No 96, House No 25, Gulshan-2 and Dance and Music Department, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at Segunbagicha.



President of Chevron Bangladesh Steve Wilson and Executive Director of FIVDB Zahin Ahmed Chowdhury sign an agreement launching the second phase of the Alternative Livelihood Programme recently.

38,550 tonnes Australian wheat for ultra-poor

Australia has donated over 38,550 tonnes of wheat worth about Tk 78.2 crore to Bangladesh to support its food-based programmes for the ultra-poor, says a press release.

Australian High Commissioner Douglas Foskett handed over the donation to Shafiqul Islam, joint secretary, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, at a ceremony at the Chittagong Port on Sunday.

Edward Kallon, deputy country representative of World Food Programme (WFP), and Peter Duncan-Jones, first secretary, Development Cooperation, Australian High Commission, were also present.

"This contribution is a continuation of Australia's long standing support to Bangladesh for improving food security of ultra-poor people and nutrition of primary school children," said Foskett.

"This will also support skill development training for more than 100,000 families to help them find sustainable livelihood options to overcome poverty," he added.

The Australian food contribution will be used for the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) and School Feeding programme being implemented in partnership with WFP.

This will help 550,000 poor people to meet their food and nutritional needs through VGD programme. In addition, 93,400 primary schoolchildren will be provided with nutrient-fortified biscuits to reduce short-term hunger, increase their attention span in class, and improve learning and nutrition.

Road accidents kill 2

STAR REPORT

At least two people were killed and 20 others injured in separate road accidents in Pabna and Lalmonirhat yesterday and on Sunday night.

Our correspondent from Pabna reports: A woman was killed and 20 others were injured in a road accident in Santhia upazila under the district on Sunday night.

The accident occurred when a Pabna-bound passenger bus from Dhaka skidded off Dhaka-Pabna Highway at village Gangulhati at about 10:00pm as the driver lost his control over the steering, leaving one woman dead on the spot and 20 passengers injured.

The dead was identified as Shamsunnahar, wife of Md Khaleed of village Shalgaria in Pabna Sadar upazila.

The injured were rushed to Pabna General Hospital. Of them, condition of five was stated to be critical. They are Kusum, 20, of Salgaria village, Rahena Banu, 45, of Singa, Raja, 30, of Bonogram village of Pabna and Azad, 32, of Munshiganj.

A correspondent from Lalmonirhat adds: A young bicyclist was killed in a road accident at Kaliganj upazila in Lalmonirhat early yesterday.

The victim was identified as Moshrakul, 18, son of a day-labourer of Bakdokra village under Gangachhara upazila in Rangpur.

Police and local sources said the accident took place when his bicycle hit a minibus while tried to overtake a tractor at Kaliganj Medical More.

The victim was identified as Moshrakul, 18, son of a day-labourer of Bakdokra village under Gangachhara upazila in Rangpur.

Police and local sources said the accident took place when his bicycle hit a minibus while tried to overtake a tractor at Kaliganj Medical More.

Valuables looted from ex-secy's residence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

A gang of robbers looted valuables, including a refrigerator, from the residence of a former secretary at Srinagar in the district in the early hours of yesterday.

Sources said a gang of about 10 robbers broke into the residence of Mahe Alam, a former secretary of the Ministry of Establishment, at Rarikhal at Srinagar at around 3:30am and made away with a refrigerator and other valuables.

The robbers also took away cash from Monu Mia, the caretaker of the house, after hitting him on his head.

Floods worsen in central, south areas

FROM PAGE 1

Forecasting and Warning Centre (WWFC) bulletin said almost all the rivers in the country marked significant rises.

However the bulletin also said the monsoon is going to be less active in India as well as in Bangladesh showing signs of improvements at different upstream river points in the northern region. But rainfall is likely to occur in upper hilly areas of Sylhet region including Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura, deteriorating the situation there.

However the flash flood situation in the hilly region is going to mark an improvement, said the bulletin.

Quoting Water Development Board (WDB) officials our Sylhet correspondent reported that the overall flood situation remained unchanged in Sylhet and Sunamganj regions yesterday with a lesser amount of rainfall, but all rivers in the region continued to flow above the danger levels at all points.

Rural people there have been suffering badly due to a shortage of fodder. Villagers in Gowainghat, Beanibazar, Kanaighat, and Golapganj upazilas are harvesting green paddies from the inundated fields to use those as cattle fodder.

Road link between Gowainghat upazila headquarters and the district headquarters remained snapped for the third day yesterday as the road remained under water at many points.

Our Mouvibazar correspondent reported that the Monu and Dholai rivers are rising, flowing above the danger marks and already inundating a vast tract of land for the third time this season.

At least 50 houses with household goods, cattle, and poultry in Gazipur village under Hazipur union of Kulaura upazila were washed away. Sixteen unions under Kulaura, Juri, Kamalganj, and Rajnagar upazilas were affected by the flood.

According to the preliminary reports available, more than 25,000 people of the four upazilas were marooned. About 20,000

acres of cropland with aman paddies on them were inundated in Talimpur, Sujanagar, and in Borni unions of Juri upazila.

Our Siraganj correspondent reported that the flood situation there deteriorated further yesterday, as the Jamuna River continued to rise.

The government sources said at least 6.5 lakh people in nine upazilas of the district are still marooned. The affected people are being infected with different waterborne diseases. At least 1,000 people have already been infected with diarrhoea and other waterborne diseases.

An acute scarcity of fodder is plaguing the district, making livestock owners very worried. The district agricultural department said about 20,000 hectares of croplands with ropa amon, seedbeds, and vegetables on them in nine upazilas were inundated, completely destroying the crops.

Sources in the district office of primary and secondary education said more than 400 educational institutions remained unofficially closed.

Thousands of looms came to a grinding halt again rendering a similar number of weavers unemployed.

Our Netrakona correspondent reported that the flood situation there deteriorated further yesterday evening with 35 unions of Kalmakanda, Durgapur, Khallajuri, Netrakona Sadar, Mohongoni, and Barhatta upazilas getting inundated, leaving at least 1,20,000 people marooned.

Floodwater damaged newly planted aman crops on about 35,000 hectares of land and several hundred hectares of vegetables fields, Netrakona Agricultural Extension Department (AED) sources said.

Water levels in the rivers Sumeshowary, Magra, Kongsha, and Dhanu — the four major river of the district — continued to rise.

Some 35 metres of Netrakona-Kalmakanda road broke off due to strong currents of floodwater yesterday morning. Erosion of land by the river Sumeshowary continued devouring 20 houses in

2nd phase of alternative livelihood programme

President of Chevron Bangladesh Steve Wilson and Executive Director of Friends In Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB) Zahin Ahmed Chowdhury officially launched the second phase of the Alternative Livelihood Programme in an agreement signing ceremony recently, says a press release.

The implementation of the second phase is slated to take off this month to benefit over 700 more underprivileged families living near the Bibiyana Gas Field in Nabiganj, Habiganj.

Chevron Bangladesh launched the Alternative Livelihood Programme (ALP) in Bibiyana area in 2006 in partnership with FIVDB, a national NGO. Under the programme, it has been providing assistance to some 600 underprivileged families with an aim to increase their life skills through training, adult functional literacy and awareness building.

After necessary training, Chevron with the help of FIVDB is now transferring assets to the project participants to spur the growth of small businesses and farms.

During the agreement signing ceremony, Chevron President Steve Wilson said, "People do not want charity, what they want is help to begin their own ventures to generate income. Chevron Bangladesh is proud to provide that assistance and is pleased with the fact that the Livelihood programme has a positive impact on small businesses in the area."

More donations to CA's Relief Fund

UNB, Dhaka

Eighteen more organisations and individuals yesterday donated Tk 1,71,54,669 to the Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund for relief and rehabilitation of the flood victims.

The donors handed over the cheques for the amount to Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office.

According to an official of the CA's office, Bangladesh Association of Banks donated Tk 1.30 crore while Chittagong College Ex-Students' Council Tk 50,000, Vigarunnisa Noon School and College Tk 1.10 lakh, Islamic University of Technology, Dhaka Tk 2.62 lakh, Daffodil International University Tk 1.23 lakh, Eastern University Tk 2 lakh, Presidency International School, Chittagong Tk 80,000 Computer Source Ltd Tk 2.83 lakh, Bangladesh Leasing and Finance Companies Association Tk 11.60 lakh, Geologists Ltd Tk 4.50 lakh, Bangladesh Caterers' Association, UK Tk 10 lakh and Gulshan Spinning Mills Ltd Tk 3 lakh.

Besides, Benuka Lalitakala Kendra donated Tk 30,000, Welfare Association of Bangladeshi Expatriates from Iraq and Kuwait, Dhaka, Tk 1,000, one day salary of officers and employees of Narail Zila Parishad Tk 2,911, Boidyapur Sheikh Para Jame-Mashjid, Kalaroa, Satkhira, Tk 200, Warden Force of Bakhra Girls' High School Highway, Bogra Tk 501 and ATK Ludi, president, Greater Sylhet Samity, Jedha Tk 1 lakh.

Call for enhancing trade with Bhutan

Envoy presents credentials to president

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed underlined the need for enhancing bilateral trade and commerce between Bhutan and Bangladesh.

He also stressed on exchanging of visit of trade delegation between the countries for exploring the all avenues of economic co-operation.

"Bangladesh attaches great importance to its bilateral relations with Bhutan", Iajuddin said when Ambassador of Bhutan to Bangladesh Dasho Tshering Dorji presented his credentials to him at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Welcoming the new Ambassador, the president congratulated him on his new assignment.

He expressed satisfaction at the existing bilateral relations between the two neighbouring countries and hoped that it would be further strengthened and deepened in the days to come.

Iajuddin recalled with gratitude the invaluable support by Bhutan during our War of Liberation and recognised Bangladesh on December 7, 1971.

He told the envoy that Bhutan may import our world class standard pharmaceuticals, melamine, garments and jute goods at a very competitive price. He also gave due importance on educational exchange programme for the benefit of the two countries.

The president said there is a huge potential for cooperation between the two countries in the area of hydro-electrical power generation.

Iajuddin recalled the contribution being made by King Jigme

Singhe Wangchuk for promoting regional cooperation under Saarc.

The president assured the envoy of all support and cooperation in discharging his duties in Bangladesh and wished him a good health and happiness. He conveyed his greetings and best wishes to the King of Bhutan and invites him to visit Bangladesh at his convenient through the envoy.

The Ambassador said the relations between Bhutan and Bangladesh are excellent and it would be further strengthened in the days to come.

He said Bhutan is eager to work with Bangladesh for enhancing bilateral trade and commerce.

Confce on neonatal health

With a view to increasing awareness on maternal and neonatal health, DAB Perinatal Care Project organised a conference at Birdem auditorium in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Director General of Directorate of Health Dr Mohammad Shahjahan Biswas attended the conference as the chief guest while President of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (DAB) Prof AK Azad Khan presided.

Chief Executive Officer of Women and Children First, UK Rose Davis, Director of Institute of Child Health, London Prof Anthony Costello and Project Director of DAB Perinatal Care Project Prof Kishwar Azad also spoke on the occasion.

8 JMB men charged

FROM PAGE 16

Abdur Rahman before the joint interrogation cell said Shahiullah Tarek, adopted grandson of militant kingpin suspect Asadullah Al Galib, and Shahiullah Mahbub, husband of the executed JMB leader Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai's niece, were the masterminds behind the killing, sources said.

The others accused in the case are JMB militants Abu Isa Enamul and Golamur Rahman Mostafa — also adherents of Galib's Ahle Hadith Jubo Sangha — Abul Kashem Tufan, Abdul Matin Bomaru, Abdur Rahman Arif and Zakir Zayed.

The IO said a group of 10 militants committed the murder, adding that one of them, Ibrahim, was murdered in 2005 and Abbas is yet to be identified.

Quoting the confessional statement of Tarek Mahbub, the IO said Yunus was killed because he was an "atheist".

"Prof Yunus was an anti-Islamic force and he was an abettor and godfather of the communist outlaws. This is why, he was killed," the IO quoted the confessional statement.

Abdur Rahman ordered Mahbub to kill him several weeks before the murder, the IO said.

Mahbub allegedly selected a team of 10 militants and in the early hours on December 24, 2004, the gang stabbed and beat Prof Yunus with iron rods while he was out for his morning walk.

The CID, however, brushed aside previous police findings of

Shibir involvement in the killing.

They asked former Binodhpur Shibir president Sirajus Salehin, Zillur Rahman, Mizanur Rahman, Nazimul Islam and Monirul Islam to be acquitted of the charge.

During police investigations, two eyewitnesses in separate judicial statements narrated the murder of Prof Yunus by four assailants. The police also explained in their reports to courts that the statements of the eyewitnesses were backed up by other circumstantial evidence and witnesses' accounts, sources said.

Jahangir Ali, a rickshaw-van puller and an eyewitness, in his statement in January 2005 said he identified only Shibir cadre Jafar Babu of Satbaria among the four killers.

A rickshaw-puller Shahidul Islam Babu on May 8, 2005 in his statement said he could identify Zillur Rahman, a RU security guard and an ally of Jafar, among the killers. He said Zillur threatened to kill him unless he went away from the crime scene.

Yunus had lodged a complaint with police in connection with an attack on him by Shibir cadres in 1995. He earned the wrath of alleged militant kingpin Galib in 1998 when he found out Galib had a 11-day secret tour of India.

Abdul Halim, Yunus's brother filed the murder case with Motihar Police Station. He in the case said Yunus had no personal enemy, only political enemy.