

'Amend laws to ensure rights of persons with disability'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a policy dialogue yesterday underscored the need to bring amendments to the existing laws related to the rights of the persons with disability in line with the UN convention.

They also called for promoting rights-based approach towards empowerment of persons with disabilities instead of charity-based approach.

Actionaid Bangladesh and Advancing Public Interest Trust (APIT) organised the policy dialogue titled 'Rights of the disabled persons: Coherence between reality and international policy framework,' at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

The dialogue was organised ahead of the inter-governmental ministerial meeting on the 'Mid Point Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled persons, 2003-2012' to be held in Bangkok from September 19 to 21 to review the progress and challenges in the implementation of Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF).

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) had adopted the resolution of 'promoting an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disability in the Asian and Pacific region in the 21st century'.

Bangladesh as well as 50 other countries of the region will submit a review study at the inter-governmental ministerial meeting.

Actionaid Bangladesh and APIT jointly prepared an alternative



PHOTO: STAR

Social Welfare Secretary MA Hai Hawladar speaks at a dialogue at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left is Mansur Ahmed Choudhury and on his right is Khandaker Zahirul Alam.

research paper highlighting the challenges and recommendations in the light of the BMF priorities.

Presenting the research paper, Maliha Shahjahan, director, Research and Policy Audit, APIT, criticised the role of the authority with regard to budget allocation for the development of physically challenged persons and highlighted the vulnerable condition of women with disability.

"The state remains apathetic to the fundamental requirement of women with disabilities to create equal opportunities," she said.

Although the 'National Disability Welfare Act 2001' emphasised the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, the present state of rehabilitation infrastructure remains weak with unskilled medical personnel and inadequate medical rehabilitation services, she observed.

National ICT Policy has no

transparent stand on the ICT-related accessibility issues for physically challenged persons to turn them into human resources, she maintained.

However, Mosharrar Hossain, country representative of Action on Disability and Development, appreciated the government's role as the first ever country to enact a law to establish the rights of persons with disability.

Social Welfare Secretary MA Hai Hawladar, Secretary General of Asia Pacific Disabilities Forum Ryo Matsui, Deputy Director of Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disability Etsuko Ueno and Chairperson of National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled Mansur Ahmed Choudhury also spoke.

Call to raise awareness to reduce incidence of suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a seminar yesterday underscored the need to raise awareness to reduce the incidences of suicide among suicide-prone persons.

A person commits suicide every 40 seconds in developing countries, they said, but the rate in Bangladesh is not so high.

The Department of Psychiatry at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and Family and Community Empowerment Support jointly organised the seminar titled 'Curb-ing incidences of suicide' at BSMMU in the city.

Presenting a keynote paper, Dr Noor Ahmed Giasuddin said people suffering from mental disorders are at high risk of committing suicide.

Besides, hereditary reasons and social factors such as unemployment, poverty and physical and mental torture lead persons to commit suicide, he added.

Proper probe into Momin murder demanded Second death anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of slain college student Kamrul Islam Momin demanded proper investigation into the killing and trial of the killers, as his 2nd death anniversary will be observed today.

A group of criminals shot Momin dead on his way to college on September 13 in 2005. He was a 3rd year student of the department of management at Dhaka Commerce College.

Momin's family have alleged that hired goons killed him over a land dispute between him and the then Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Motihheel Police Station Rafiqul Islam.

Momin's eldest brother Shamsul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday that they mentioned the names of 26 accused, including OC Rafiq, in the First Information Report. But a CID investigator submitted the charge sheet dropping the names of 18 accused, including OC Rafiq, he added.

Meanwhile, Shaheed Kamrul Islam Momin Smity Sangsad in a statement yesterday said the killers of Momin are yet to be brought to book, although two years have already passed after the murder.

Rather, a vested quarter is trying to save the prime accused of the case OC Rafiq, it said.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of Bangladesh Awami League (AL), also demanded punishment to the prime accused and his accomplices.

On the occasion of the 2nd death anniversary of Momin, Momin Smity Sangsad will place wreaths at his grave at 10:00am. A milad mahfil will also be held at his residence at 155 Kafirul, Ibrahimpur at 5:00pm.

DU admission tests begin Nov 30

DU CORRESPONDENT

Admission tests for first year honours courses of Dhaka University (DU) for the sessions 2007-2008 will start from November 30.

Sale and submission of the primary admission forms will continue from November 4 to 18.

Admission tests will start with C unit under Business Studies Faculty on November 30. Admission test for A unit under Science Faculty, B unit under Arts Faculty, and D unit (transferred) under Social Sciences Faculty will be held on December 7, December 28 and January 4 respectively.

The decision was taken at a meeting of general admission committee, which oversees the university's admission process, with Vice-Chancellor (VC) Prof SMA Faiz in the chair yesterday.

Through the four admission tests, over 4,500 students will get admission in the departments under seven faculties and institutes. There are 1,348 seats in A unit, 2,336 seats in B unit and 844 seats in C unit.

The price of admission forms has been fixed at Tk 250 each like the previous years.

Admission forms of C unit will be available at DU Registrar Building branch of Sonali Bank while admission forms of B and D units will be available at the TSC branch of Janata Bank. Curzon Hall branch of Agrani Bank will sell A unit admission forms.

Excluding fourth subjects, students, who achieved GPA (grade point average) 7.5 for science background, and GPA 6 for humanities group and 7 for commerce group in the SSC and HSC examinations will be eligible to sit for admission test.

Last year the minimum GPA requirement for being eligible for C unit admission test was 6.5.

The application forms must be duly filled in by the concerned applicants and submitted to the deans' offices of concerned units during office hours, the website said.

AB Bank support for Sabina's treatment

AB Bank has donated Tk 2 lakh for treatment of the ailing renowned singer Sabina Yasmin, says a press release.

Sabina is now undergoing treatment in Singapore.

She was flown to Singapore for better treatment in July this year. Sabina, better known as the nightingale of Bengal, has been suffering from cancer.

AB Bank is a strong believer in corporate citizenship and strives to reach out to people and help change lives. This donation is given from the bank's charity fund.

Concern over closure of CSB

UNB, Dhaka

Leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists' (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists' (DUJ) yesterday expressed deep concern over closure of private TV channel CSB.

BFUJ President Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, DUJ President Altaf Mahmud and General Secretary Omar Faruk said jobs of many journalists and other staff have become uncertain after the closure of the TV channel.

They hoped that the authorities would take immediate steps to remove the uncertainty.

IOJ against transparent ballot box

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Placing the party proposals on the table, a 10-member IOJ delegation to the meeting asked for enhancing the election-spending ceiling to Tk 25 lakh from Tk 5 lakh and reducing party-registration fee to Tk 5,000 from Tk 25,000.

Led by Secretary General Maulana Abdul Latif Nezami, the delegation of the IOJ, a partner of the immediate-past coalition government led by BNP, lent support to the EC proposal that there should be no student and foreign units of the political parties.

"Students, expatriates and different professionals can establish organisation independently and lend support to any political party, but they can't be affiliated with any," the IOJ secretary general told reporters after the meeting held in the EC conference room.

The party also suggested making the provision for 33 percent female representation on the party committees optional.

"Female representation, starting from the grassroots level to central committee, cannot be possible to be maintained for most of the parties because of the socio-cultural scenario of the country," the IOJ secretary said.

IMF terms to be made public before any deal

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After the meeting the adviser briefed the journalists about the discussion.

The adviser said the IMF is yet to offer any new deal to Bangladesh. The IMF may offer new deal after assessing Bangladesh's present economic situation, he said.

If IMF offers new package deal in financial or any other form in near future, the government will review it before making any decision and if there is any condition that goes against national interest, the government will not sign the deal, he said.

"I cannot make any promise that I will not deliver," the adviser said.

Aziz said at this moment, the government will not go for any package deal with IMF. In case of any such package deal, transparency will be ensured and conditions behind the deal will be made public.

The government does not follow tight monetary policy at this time and there is not any pressure from the IMF to follow the policy, he said.

He said price hike in international market is the reason behind surging prices of essential commodities in the local market.

There is no relation between

One cardinal proposal tags the condition that for getting registered with the EC the political parties should have polled least 2 percent of cast votes in the last general election, which the IOJ delegation dubbed as unnecessary.

The other registration condition is that the parties should have offices in 32 district and upazila headquarters with minimum 1,000 members in districts and 200 in upazilas, and they suggested it to be in 16 districts.

The agenda of the dialogue focussed on the Representation of People Order 1972, the Political Party Registration Rules 2001 and the Election Codes of Conduct 1996. Besides.

The members of the IOJ delegation were Senior Vice-Chairman Maulana Muhiuddin Khan, Secretary General Maulana Abdul Latif Khan Nejami and central leaders Mufti Mohammad Fayyullah, Maulana Hafiz Abdullah Mohammad Hassan and Maulana Wasel, Maulana Abdur Raqib, Maulana Mujibur Rahman, Maulana Abul Kasem, Maulana Jubair Ahmad and Maulana Abu Bakar.

The EC delegation members were Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda, Election Commissioners M Sohul Hussain

Moon Sighting body meets today

Bss, Dhaka

A meeting of the National Moon Sighting Committee will be held today at the conference room of Islamic Foundation (Baitul Mukarram) at 6:45pm to review reports on moon sighting for the holy month of Ramadan, 1428 Hijri.

Chairman of the committee and Religious Affairs Adviser Maj Gen (retd) Dr ASM Matiur Rahman will preside over the meeting, an Islamic Foundation press release said.

People have been requested to contact the foundation if they saw the new moon at 9559493, 9556407, 9555951, 9559643, 9558337 and 9555947 or fax at 02-9563397, the press release added.

Detained Sylhet mayor submits wealth report

Shows Tk 2cr assets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The detained mayor of Sylhet City Corporation, Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, submitted his wealth statement to Cornilla jail authorities on Tuesday.

The prison authorities will send in the statement to the Anti-Corruption Commission, which gave the mayor seven working days to hand in his wealth information.

According to the statement, the mayor and his family's property exceeds Tk 2 crore, of which movable property is estimated at Tk 15,04,450 and immovable property at Tk 1,94,02,764.

The Kamran family have a total of 24 accounts with different banks in Sylhet: he has 10 accounts, his wife Asma Kamran seven, daughter Fatema Yasmin Asha two, son Arman Ahmed Shiplu five, son Adnan Ahmed one and daughter-in-law Shahana has one bank account.

The mayor has Tk 64,48,043, wife Asma Tk 1,24,67,555, sons Shiplu Tk 17,655, Adnan Ahmed Tk 58,076 and Shahana has Tk 713 in their accounts.

Kamran and his wife do not have any money in two of their accounts, said the statement, adding that the mayor also owe a Tk 2 lakh loan.

The joint forces arrested the mayor at a Sylhet hotel on 28 May.

ORBIS to provide eye care to slum people in urban areas

UNB, Dhaka

ORBIS International, a flying eye hospital, will provide eye care to slum people in the country's urban areas through the government-sponsored Urban Primary Health Care Project.

Executive Director of ORBIS International Geoffrey Holland and Country Director Dr Abu Raihan said this when they called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

The president thanked Geoffrey for visiting Bangladesh and praised ORBIS for its significant contributions to the treatment of blind people, especially the poor, allover the world.

"The people of Bangladesh enthusiastically welcome the ORBIS activities for providing ophthalmic treatment to blind people," Iajuddin said.

Geoffrey told the president that his organisation is working here for the treatment of blind people, including prevention of child blindness, operating eye banking (cornea collection, preservation, distribution and plantation) and providing training to ophthalmologists and nurses.

ORBIS provides eye treatment through the National Institute of Ophthalmology (NIO) Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), Islamia Eye Hospital and "Sandhani" in Bangladesh, they said.

He also informed the president about its plan to collaborate with Birdem Hospital for providing ophthalmologic treatment to diabetic patients separately.

They sought cooperation from the president in running their activities.

Death anniversary



Today is the 7th death anniversary of Mahboob-ul-Huq Payera, a journalist and social worker, says a press release.

On the occasion, doa and milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at his residence at Mizan Road in Feni.

Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Mahboob-ul-Huq was the younger brother of veteran journalist Obaidul Huq.

Qulkhwan



Qulkhwan of freedom fighter and social worker Md Mozifuzul Islam will be held after Zohr prayers today at his village home in Mohajampur under Sonargaon police station of Narayanganj, says a press release.

Mozifuzul Islam passed away on Monday due to a cardiac arrest at the age of 55, leaving behind his wife and four daughters.

He was buried at his village home with state honour.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwan and pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

DHAKA

T O D A Y

Seminar
Ministry of commerce and Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) will jointly organise a seminar to disseminate the findings from a triangular study of producers, traders and consumers. Venue: LGED auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

Web portal launch
The launching ceremony of the web portal www.rotarydistrict3280.org of Rotary in Bangladesh (Rotary International District-3280) will be held. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:30pm.

Roundtable
The Energy and Power, a magazine, in association with GTZ will organise a roundtable on 'Energy efficiency: Third fuel for Bangladesh'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

AGM
The 7th annual general meeting of Pragati Life Insurance Limited will be held. Venue: Radisson Water Garden Hotel. Time: 11:00am.

Exhibition

The participating museums of the 2nd Regional Meeting of Asian Site Museums of Science will organise an introductory exhibition. Venue: Liberation War Museum. Time: 10:00am.

Cultural programme
A seminar and cultural programme will be held to mark the 103rd death anniversary of Dr Syed Muztaba Ali. Time: 3:30pm.

View exchange meeting
Campaign on Citizen's Right to Information organises a view exchange meeting on international financial institutions. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity. Time: 10:00am.

Open Day
The Open Day 2007 of Department of Textile Engineering, Southeast University (SEU) will be held. Venue: Seminar hall, SEU. Time: 11:00am.

Rotary Greater Dhaka
The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Greater Dhaka will be held. Venue: Hotel Eastern Residence, Banani. Time: 6:00pm.

WEATHER TODAY

No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at most places over Chittagong division and at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna,

Barisal and Sylhet divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy rainfalls are also likely at places over Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions, Met Office said in a forecast predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 34.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and Jessore and lowest 24.0 degree Celsius at Sathkira.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:05pm today and rises at 5:44am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in	
	in celsius		percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.3	25.7	77	75
Chittagong	29.7	25.8	90	90
Rajshahi	34.6	24.8	87	95
Khulna	31.0	26.0	97	90
Barisal	30.5	27.0	92	92
Sylhet	32.6	24.5	92	79
Cox's Bazar	31.3	25.5	83	--

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from five parliamentary seats. Her arrest is an unfortunate event," he said.

This is the first time Jamaat, an ally of the former ruling four-party alliance, gave its reaction to the arrest of Khaleda Zia.

Talking to the news agency at Jamaat central office, Nizami urged the president and the chief adviser to keep it under their special consideration so that there should not be any situation that will push a political party towards boycott and find an excuse for boycotting the future elections. "That situation will not be conducive to an acceptable election," he observed.

Nizami, who returned home on September 10 after performing Umrah in Saudi Arabia, said the president declared the state of emergency and cancelled the January 22 elections to create a congenial atmosphere for free, fair and acceptable elections.

The Jamaat chief said his party has extended support to the ongoing anti-graft drive and welcomed the initiatives for political reforms.

"But political reforms must be done spontaneously through a normal process at the initiatives of the political parties themselves," he said.

"Anything imposed from outside through an artificial manner will not help flourish healthy politics in the country. This should be kept in consideration of all for building a sound political culture."

On political party reforms, Nizami said differences of opinion in major

political parties on the issue of reforms are creating internal crises in parties, which is a matter of concern and is contrary to the trend of healthy politics.

"It's the demand of the time to introduce a healthy political process in the interest of the nation," he said, adding that the ultimate results will not be welcoming ones if the normal political process is impeded.

Asked about the lifting of ban on indoor politics, Nizami said many people raised the question about consistency of the chief adviser's speech and subsequent instructions.

He said keeping the ban on political activities in districts and upazilas will not help the political parties take decisions in a democratic process.

About dialogue with the Election Commission (EC), Nizami said Jamaat is not opposed to the dialogue but said an environment must be created for a meaningful dialogue. "By sidetracking the main political parties, decisions on basic issues will not be realistic," he said.

In reply to another question, the Jamaat chief said dialogue with the EC will not be meaningful without the participation of major parties. "We'll observe the decisions of major parties on this point," he added.

to ensure smooth supply of commodities throughout the country, the government decided to

make sure that the lessees of launch, bus and other transport terminals collect tolls following the rates set by the government.

Furthermore, the DCC would be asked not to allow the allottees of its markets to rent out their stalls or locations.

At the request of the traders, the vehicles transporting commodities to and from the wholesale markets would now be allowed to ply the city streets till 7:30am.

A proposal seeking ban on export of vegetables was rejected at the meeting.

Mobile Court
During the month of Ramadan, the government will operate several mobile courts at footpaths, rail and bus stations under all 33 thanas in the city to protect the consumers, said Home Secretary Abdul Karim.

The main objectives of the mobile courts would be to check adulterated foods, short-measuring customers and black-marketing of transport tickets, Karim added.

Jalal Ahmed, chief metropolitan magistrate (CMM) of Dhaka, said

upon the approval of the chief adviser, 21 more mobile courts would join the nine mobile courts that are already active in the city now.

The CMM added that the mobile courts would also raid engineering workshops that manufacture and market tampered weights to wholesalers and retailers.

Abdul Karim, home secretary, Golam Moshtakim, additional secretary to commerce ministry, Kamal Uddin, DC of Dhaka, Jalal Ahmed, CMM of Dhaka, Col Abdul Halim, coordinator of Trade and Commerce Monitoring Cell of BDR, Naim Ahmed, commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Hassan Mahmood Khandker, director general of Rab and Saifuddin Ahmad, chief executive officer of DCC participated at the meeting.