

World Human Rights Day today

UNB, Dhaka

The World Human Rights Day will be observed in the country today.

On this day in 1948, the Universal Human Rights Charter was signed in Paris and its principles and philosophy were later included in various international human rights charters for implementation in many countries.

On the eve of the 59th World Human Rights Day, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed in a message said the caretaker government is determined to make democracy more functional and relevant for the people of Bangladesh by ensuring good governance, strengthening legal norms and institutions that would protect fundamental human rights.

The decision to establish the national human rights commission is a manifestation of the government's total commitment in this regard, he said.

United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will hold a discussion with Chief Justice M Ruhul Amin as the chief guest. UNAB president Prof Muzaffer Ahmad will preside over the programme.

Court accepts charge sheet against Nikita

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A court in Dhaka yesterday accepted the charge sheet of a case filed against Zannatul Ferdous alias Nikita, known as 'yaba dealer', for possessing 34 yaba tablets at her Shantinagar residence in the city.

After scrutinising the case dockets and other relevant documents, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Hemayetuddin passed the order in this respect discharging Nikita's parents and her brother from the charges as per the plea submitted by the investigation officer (IO) of the case.

The court then sent the case to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) for its transfer to the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court for trial.

Earlier on Wednesday, Sub-Inspector (SI) Selim Badshah of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-3), who is also the IO of the case, submitted the charge sheet against Nikita to the CMM's Court, showing 26 people as prosecution witnesses.



Obituary

KM Jahangir Aminul Huq, a noted businessman and social worker and elder brother of the daily *Manabzamin* Editor Mahbuba Chowdhury, passed away at St Joseph Hospital in London on Friday at the age of 59, says a press release.

In his student life, he was the general secretary of the Students' Union of Notre Dame College.

Huq worked for Pakistan Television and later for Bangladesh Television (BTV) as a newscaster. He also contributed to a number of leading newspapers in the country.

He was a board member of Westminster Primary Care Trust and the chairman of an independent police advisory committee in London.

He left behind his wife, two daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Sheikh Azharul Islam

Sheikh Azharul Islam, former administrative officer of Urban Development Department and a social worker, passed away due to cancer at New York in the United States on December 1 at the age of 67, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons, and three daughters to mourn his death.

He will be buried at Mukambazar graveyard, Bhadeswar in Sylhet immediately after arrival of his body from the USA.

Md Nazrul Islam

Md Nazrul Islam, a resident of Jafrahd at Dhamondi in the city, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at a city hospital on December 4, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one daughter and one son to mourn his death.

Haji Moshuiddin

Haji Moshuiddin, uncle of Mohammedan Sporting Club Vice-President Shariful Islam, passed away due to old age complications in the city yesterday at the age of 78, says a press release.

Rizia Khatun

Rizia Khatun, mother of former footballer Abdus Salam Mursedi, passed away due to cancer at Salam's Gulshan residence in the city yesterday at the age of 90, says a press release.

She left behind her four sons and two daughters to mourn her death.

Continue move to check corruption

Governance experts tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent governance experts and academics at a seminar yesterday lauded the government's initiatives for institutional reforms and trial of the corrupt; but said these will not bear fruits as long as the scope for power abuse remains in the absence of legal and ethical standards.

They suggested identification of legal and institutional weaknesses with necessary amendments so that political will that has been created in the country to combat corruption must be sustained.

The seminar titled 'UN Convention Against Corruption: Implications for Bangladesh- What Next?' was organised jointly by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city.

The seminar was organised on the occasion of the International Anti-Corruption Day 2007.

Speaking at the seminar, ACC Chairman Lt Gen (Retd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury urged the authorities concerned to be prepared in line with the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) to reap its benefits in the recovery of assets and checking corruption.

"UNCAC itself does not make us corrupt-free. We should be prepared to change the domestic laws in line with the UN convention," said the ACC chairman, adding that there are gaps between domestic legal instruments and the UNCAC.

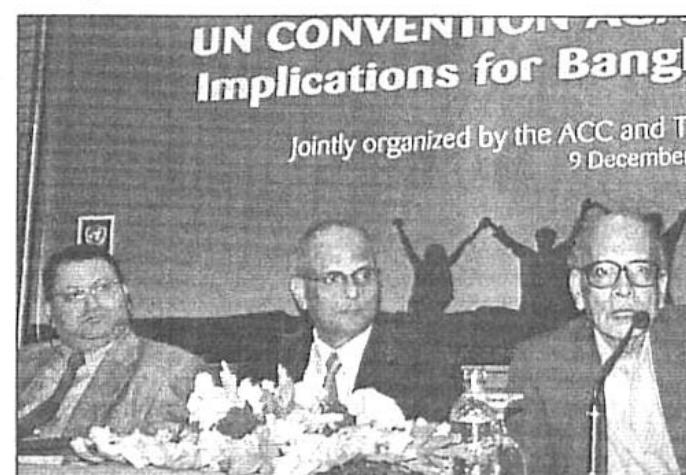
The political will to combat corruption must be sustained and no agency should be able to divert the attention of the government to check corruption, he observed.

Replying to a question, Mashhud said there is no scope for debate between ACC and proposed Truth Commission because the latter must have legal basis and people's support.

Chairing the seminar, TIB Trustee Board Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said there is weakness in detecting financial crimes in Bangladesh.

Taking the advantage of the absence of any anti-monopoly act, the big businesses monopolise, and it helps corrupt the government functionaries, he said.

The banking system is also



TIB Trustee Board Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad speaks at a seminar at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday. On his right are ACC Chairman Lt Gen (Retd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury and UNDP Country Director Manoj Basnyat.

designed in such a way that there is no legal authority over it allowing deposition of illegal money, he said, adding that according to UNCAC by Bangladesh has created opportunities for getting help from other countries in recovering the assets smuggled out illegally.

Prof Muzaffer said two very important sectors, education and health, remain out of the reforms as of now and hoped that the ACC will look into the matters.

"If corruption remains, human rights will never be established. Contribution of corruption in creating inequality is so much that it must be checked," the eminent educationist said.

Lauding the policy of institutional reforms, TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman in his keynote presentation said, "These reforms can neither bear fruits nor can be sustained without establishing convincingly that appointments, promotions, postings and transfers in public service are based on performance and merit and not on political influence and bribery."

To sustain public support, people must be convinced that in the end the anti-corruption drive is going to add value for them and reduce hardships for them," he added.

Establishment Secretary Abdus Salam and ACC Director General Abu Talib Miah also spoke.

At the seminar, winners of TIB-organised cartoon competition and UNDP-organised photographic competition were given.

The day was also observed by 36 Conscious Citizens' Committees through rallies, debate competitions and other programmes across the country.

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