

SAARC YOUTH CAMP INAUGURATED

Join regional dev activities

Chief adviser urges youths of Saarc countries

UNB, Savar

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday urged the youths of Saarc countries to actively participate in nation-building and regional development activities, saying their determination to bring changes in society constitutes the most vital ingredients for progress of the countries.

"On our part we remain committed to building partnership with you in activities relevant for our progress. Your passion for change and resolve to lead a life of significance would enable us to turn challenges into opportunities," Fakhruddin told the young men and women taking part in the first-ever Saarc Youth Camp.

Fakhruddin declared 'First Saarc Youth Camp 2007' open at National Youth Centre in Savar on the outskirts of Dhaka.

He released colorful balloons and pigeons in the air marking the inaugural of the four-day youth

camp.

The main theme of the first Saarc Youth Camp 2007 is 'Connecting South Asian Youths'. The camp arranged in a bid to increase communication, cooperation and fraternity among the youths of the member countries.

It also aimed at creating an opportunity for exchange of experiences and cultures, strengthening friendly relations and developing leadership among the youths of the region.

Around 120 youths are participating in the camp. Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, youth participants Saugat Das from India and Nazmus Sadat from the host country, Youth and Sports Secretary Dr Golam Mostafa Talukder and chairman of the National Organising Committee of Saarc Youth Camp

2007 and DG of Department of Youth Development Ismail Hossain also spoke at the function.

Youth and Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury chaired the inaugural function.

The chief adviser said this youth camp is an indication of Saarc's determination to connect the minds and hearts of the people of the member countries, generate greater cohesion and understanding, and bridge the gap, if any, in the mindsets of regional countries.

"It's aimed at bringing the young people of South Asia under one roof thereby creating an environment for closer interaction among those very people who will lead us to face the challenges of the new millennium," he said.

The chief adviser said the Saarc Youth Camp will bring young minds from Mazar-e-Sharif to Male, Quetta to Kathmandu, Colombo to Kolkata, and Thimphu to Dhaka for meeting annually in an institutionalised but informal sittings.

Welcoming the participating youths, he said they have already

earned recognition as outstanding young people with leadership qualities, strength of character, intellect, knowledge and skills.

"The enthusiasm, resilience and courage of our youths make us hopeful about our future. Their ideas, visions, energy, and most importantly willingness to bring about changes in society stimulate us."

"Their indomitable urge to overcome the status quo and the courage to take risk constitute the critical elements needed for our progress."

They represent our future and remind us our own responsibilities for the future generation," he added.

He said as the Saarc countries strive for a common identity for the 1.6 billion citizens of South Asia, the meeting of the young men and women from the region bears significance.

Fakhruddin said direct interaction with each other might turn out to be the first critical step towards building an enduring relationship of understanding and cooperation that would lead the region to the cherished goal of socioeconomic prosperity.

He said Saarc has come a long way over the past two decades in consolidating regional responses to many challenges that confront before them and youths remain at the centre of many of these regional initiatives like education, health, poverty alleviation or tackling socio-cultural vices like drug abuse, human trafficking and violence.

He, however, said one important area which had not received due attention in the past was creation of a common forum for direct interaction between youths of the Saarc countries.

Bangladesh proposed holding of the Annual Saarc Youth Camps in the 14th Saarc Summit in New Delhi in April last. "I'm grateful to my colleagues in other South Asian capitals for welcoming my proposal," the chief adviser said.

Later, the chief adviser visited the display centre of the self-employed youth of Bangladesh at the National Youth Centre.



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed inaugurates the 'First Saarc Youth Camp 2007' by releasing balloons at National Youth Centre in Savar yesterday.

EXTORTION CASE Khulna ward commissioner acquitted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Khulna court yesterday acquitted KCC ward commissioner Hafizur Rahman of extortion charges.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Md Shahidul Islam delivered the verdict.

According to the prosecution, Hafiz, a ward commissioner of Khulna City Corporation (KCC), was arrested by joint forces on July 23 after one of his sisters-in-law filed an extortion case against him.

Sub-Inspector Golam Kibria of Sonadanga Police Station had submitted a charge sheet to the court on August 8 accusing the ward commissioner of extorting Tk five lakh from the complainant.

More donation to army relief fund

BSS, Dhaka

Forty-five organisations and individuals yesterday donated about Tk 3.92 crore in cash and various kinds of relief materials to the army's relief fund.

The donors are Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) Tk 50 lakh, Rahim Steel Mills Company Ltd., National Bank, Social Investment Bank and IFIC Bank Tk 25 lakh each, Orient Overseas Container Line Tk 20.7 lakh, Tata Group and Navana Group Tk 20 lakh each, NTV Tk 7.2 lakh, Padma Islami Life Insurance, Pragati Insurance, TK Group of Industries Chittagong, EBA Group, Rosh Bangladesh, NCC Bank and Summit Group Tk 10 lakh each, Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) Tk 9.62 lakh, Bangladesh Chemical and Perfumery Merchant Association, Pink City Gulshan, Apex Spinning and Knitting Mills Ltd., Apex Food Ltd. and KDS Garments Chittagong Tk 5 lakh each, Islampur Cloth Merchant Association Group-1 Tk 7 lakh and 3,000 pieces of saree and group-2 Tk 8 lakh, Mercantile Bank Tk 6 lakh, Korean Minting and Printing and Bangladesh Expatriate in Qatar Abu Taleb 10,000 US dollar each, Bangladesh Paints, Dyes and Chemicals Merchant Association Tk 4 lakh each, Bangladesh Polymer Importer Association and Bangladesh Paper Importer Association Tk 3 lakh each, Dhaka Cantonment Ladies Club Tk 2.8 lakh, the Optimist 3,000 US dollar, Baridhara Society Tk 2.5 lakh and Kurmitola Golf Club Tk 3.6 lakh.

CTG BOOK FAIR BEGINS

'Try war criminals'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A weeklong book fair titled 'Muktijuddher Boi Mela' began in the port city yesterday with a call for raising voice for trial of the war criminals.

Lt Col (ret) Abu Osman Chowdhury, commander of Sector-8 of the Liberation War, inaugurated the fair on behalf of the Sector Commander's Forum in a ceremony at the city's DCHill premises.

Muktijuddher Shaheed Smriti Pathagar, Chittagong organises the fair for the second time in association with Grameenphone with a view to shining the new generation with the spirit of the liberation war.

On this occasion speakers at a discussion observed that after 36 years the whole nation is now united again to establish a democratic and corruption free country as well as united with a common demand of trial of the war criminal.

They urged the government to start the process of trial of the war criminals and collaborators in order to form a society based on justice.

Prof Dr Anupam Sen, a social scientist and also the fair chairman, presided over the discussion.

Acting Chairman of Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmla Committee and Writer and Researcher Shahrier Kabir, Revolutionary Binod Bihari Chowdhury, actress Shami Kaiser, who is also the daughter of martyr intellectual Shahidullah Kaiser and Grameenphone Finance Manager Javedur Rahman among others

spoke on the occasion.

Fair Secretary General Kamrul Hasan Badal made the welcome address.

Abu Osman said war criminals have no right to do politics and participate in the national elections in any civilised country in the world.

He said establishment of democracy and holding of a fair and credible election could be impossible until trial of the war criminals is ensured.

Shahrier Kabir urged the government to form a commission and publish a list of war criminals and collaborators in such a way they published lists of corrupt politicians. The speakers hoped the fair could draw the attention of the young generation to the glorious history of the Liberation War.

Nine artists of the Swadhin Bangla Biplobi Betar Kendra Mihir Nandi, Shila Momen, Probal Chowdhury, Mrinal Bhatyacharjee, Bani Kumar Chowdhury, Jayanti Lala, Sujit Ray, Sakina Begum and late Shefali Ghosh were given reception in the fair.

The seven days of the fair would be dedicated after the names of the seven Birshrestha (War heroes) while the first day was dedicated to the Birshrestha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir.

Several noted publishing houses from Dhaka and Chittagong including Agami Prokashani, Muktaadhar, Anya Prokash, Maola Brothers, Dibya Prokash, Bidya Prokash and Hate Khori set up stalls in the fair.

Chief justice calls on president

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Justice Mohammad Ruhul Amin called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

During the meeting, the chief justice informed the president about various activities of the judiciary, particularly after its separation from the executive.

The president expressed satisfaction over the present situation of the judiciary.

Military Secretary to the President Major General Mohd Aminul Karim, Secretary to the President office Sirajul Islam, President's press secretary Abdul Awal Howlader were present on the occasion.

Dinajpur road crash kills 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least two people were killed and three others injured in two separate road accidents in Dinajpur yesterday.

The dead were identified as Rahima Begum, 25, of Foteyabong village under Chirirbandi upazila and Md Hazzar Ali, 32, son of Rahmat Ali of Dhanotla village under Bochaganj upazila.

Police sources said while Rohima was crossing the Dinajpur-Saidpur highway hurriedly a motorbike hit her. She was rushed to the Dinajpur Medical College Hospital where she succumbed to her injuries. Three riders of the motorbike were injured.

On the other hand, a speedy truck rammed Md Hazzar Ali while he was crossing the Pirganj-Bochaganj highway. He succumbed to his injuries at Dinajpur Medical College Hospital.

Doa mahfil



A doa mahfil will be held for Muhammad Hossain, former controller of examinations of Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh, at his youngest daughter's residence at Dhanomdi in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Muhammad Hossain, also an organiser of Liberation War, passed away on October 30.

He was laid to eternal rest on October 31 at his village home with the state honour.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for the salvation of his departed soul.



Chief Justice Md Ruhul Amin speaks at a symposium on Human Rights Day at a city hotel yesterday. Sitting from left are Prof Muzaffer Ahmad and UNAB Secretary General Syed Mohammad Shahed. United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) organised the event.

Only independent judiciary can protect human rights

Chief Justice tells discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Md Ruhul Amin yesterday said only an independent judiciary can protect human rights. Speaking at a discussion in the city he said impartial judgment is needed to protect fundamental rights of people.

The chief justice said a culture of impunity may develop if the judges and prosecutors do not play their due role in ensuring justice.

He said people must have full confidence in the ability of the judiciary to carry out its functions in an independent and impartial manner.

When this confidence begins to erode, neither the judiciary nor the individual judges will be able to fully perform their task, he noted.

The discussion was organised by the United Nations Association of Bangladesh in observance of

Human Rights Day in the city with UNAB President Prof Muzaffer Ahmad in the chair.

Speaking as chief guest, the chief justice said human rights are inherent, inalienable and universal, and these rights are best protected in a democratic framework. He said the principle of judges' independence was not invented for their personal benefit, rather to protect human beings against abuse of power.

"Thus judges cannot act arbitrarily in any way by deciding cases according to their own personal preferences, but their duty is to apply the law properly," he added.

Stressing the need for strong, independent and impartial prosecutors the chief justice said, "Unless judges and prosecutors play their respective roles properly in ensuring justice, there is a serious risk that a culture of impunity will take deep

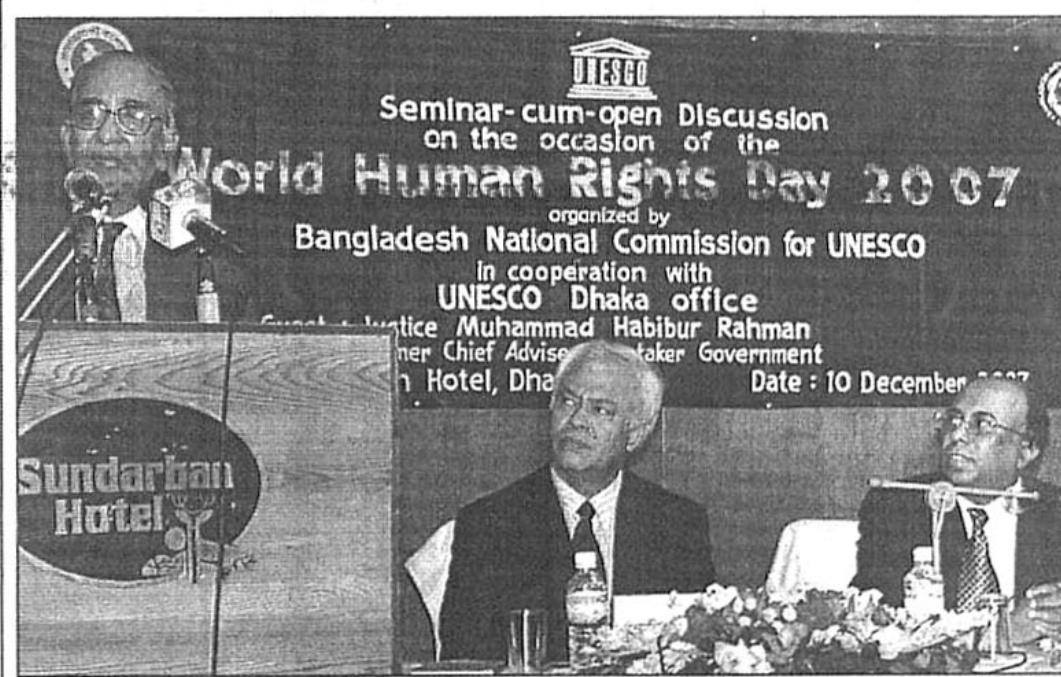
root in the society, thereby widening the gap between the people in general and the authorities."

He urged people to be more conscious about their own responsibilities, otherwise human rights and global terrorism will always be on the platform of disagreement.

Lauding the promulgation of ordinance on Human Rights Commission, Barrister Amir-Ul Islam, who addressed the discussion as special guest, expressed the hope that the proposed commission will have "teeth" to ensure human rights.

"Let's hope on today's Human Rights Day that our fundamental rights would be freed from the eclipse of emergency with the advent of the New Year," he said.

Prof Muzaffer Ahmad stressed the need for ensuring parity in attaining employment opportunity and flourishing talent.



Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman speaks at a seminar on World Human Rights Day 2007 at a city hotel yesterday. Sitting from right are Unesco Representative Malama Meleisea and Additional Secretary to the education ministry AKM Abdul Awal Majumder.

Establish right to info to ensure human rights

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for establishing the right to information in order to ensure human rights in the country.

The right to information is the mother of all rights, they said, adding that human rights will not be ensured unless the right to information is established.

Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco in cooperation with the Unesco Dhaka office organised the seminar at a city hotel to mark the International Human Rights Day 2007.

Speaking as the chief guest, Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman, former chief adviser to a caretaker government, said national election must be held in the country as it is a matter of prestige and democracy.

Referring to the present situation, he said, "We will return to normalcy and to a good situation." "We are hopeful of moving towards the betterment of the nation," he added.

Justice Rahman also said it is the human being who establishes human rights as well as violates it. Criticising the previous elected government, he said, "They were always unwilling to sign human rights accords fearing signing of such accords may lead to unwarranted situation for them."

Unesco Representative Malama Meleisea said that ensuring freedom of expression and right to information is a must for protecting human rights.

Prof SMA Faiz, vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, said violations of

human rights are taking place everywhere and its victims range from the people in cyclone-affected areas to demolition workers at the Rangs Bhaban.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said, "Corruption is an obstacle to establishing a healthy society as well as establishing human rights."

"We will have to resist corruption to ensure human rights," he added.

He called on all to uphold the positive changes taking place in the country recently.

Advocate Rokhsana Khondker presented a keynote paper at the seminar presided over by Additional Secretary to the education ministry AKM Abdul Awal Majumder.

Help establish human rights in society

Dr Kamal urges all

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain has called upon all to unite and help establish human rights in the society for which lakhs of people shed their blood during the liberation war.

He made the call while speaking as chief guest at a discussion meeting at Chittagong University (CU) yesterday. The meeting was organised by CU Law Faculty marking the International Human Rights Day.

"During the liberation war we all fought for establishing human rights and not for becoming millionaire in illegal ways," said Dr Kamal.

He said, "It is our fundamental rights to reap the benefit of independence for which people of every village paid a high price."

Dr Kamal said lakhs of people shed their blood to materialise the dream of establishing a state and society based on equity and non-

discrimination. "But such a state and society is yet to be established," he regretted.

Dr Kamal called for resisting corrupt people, black money holders and militant fundamentalists to materialise the dream of the martyrs. He said at present there is a possibility to establish rule of law in the society and urged the student community to avail the opportunity for setting up a discrimination-free society.

Presided over by Dr Abdullah Al Faruq, the meeting was also addressed by Social Science Faculty Dean Dr Gazi Saleh Uddin, Law Faculty Dean Prof Md Zakir Hossain, CU Teachers' Association President Prof Siddique Ahmed Chowdhury, Japanese Honorary Consul to Bangladesh Nurul Islam, Advocate Dr Nayeem Ahmed and Md Moniruzzaman of UN Information Centre in Dhaka.

Death anniversary



Today is the death anniversary of Shaheed journalist Syed Nazmul Huq, says a press release.

Nazmul Huq was killed by the collaborators of the Pakistani occupation forces on this day in 1971 during the War of Liberation.

On the occasion, Syed Nazmul Huq Smriti Sangsad will arrange Qurankhwani and milad mahfil and distribute foods among the poor.

The collaborators picked up Shaheed Syed Nazmul Huq in the small hours of December 10 in 1971 and took him blindfolded to the Rayerbazar Baidyabhumti. They killed him by charging bayonets and spraying bullets on him.

Shahnaaz Ahmed (Jessie)



Today is the third death anniversary of Shahnaaz Ahmed (Jessie), says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at Banani Graveyard and at the Shishu Bikash Kendra at Rayer Bazar.

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

Obituary



Dr Debabrata Roy, a paediatrician of Colchester Regional Hospital, passed away in Canada on December 6

due to stomach cancer at the age of 54, says a press release.

He started his career as a doctor at Alfadanga Upazila Hospital in Faridpur, and then he went on to work for Dhaka Children's Hospital, IPGMR in Dhaka, and in Sulaimania Children's Hospital and King Fahd Medical Centre in Riyadh.

He joined Colchester Regional Hospital in Canada in 2005.

Dr Debabrata left behind his wife, a son and both of his parents.

Mohammad Serajul Islam



Mohammad Serajul Islam, a noted educationist and former deputy registrar of Jahangirnagar University, passed away

due to a cardiac arrest yesterday at the age of 66, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two daughters, four sons and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death. Dr Fahmida Khatun, an economist and senior research fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), is his eldest daughter.

His qulkhwani will be held at his residence at House # 30, Road # 63, Gulshan # 2, after Asr prayers on December 13.

Zaglu Karim Shamim



Zaglu Karim Shamim, a businessman and son of Abu Ahmed Fazlul Karim, former state minister for health and public works,

passed away due to stroke at Apollo Hospitals on December 9 at the age of 51, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, a son and a daughter.

He was buried at his hometown in Kishoreganj after Zohr prayers yesterday.

Hazrat Abdul Karim Al Chishti



Hazrat Abdul Karim Al Chishti, father of Prof Ruhul Amin, chairman of Microbiology and Immunology

Department of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib Medical University, passed away due to cardiac arrest yesterday at the age of 92, says a press release.

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

All are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Fakir Shah Syed Iqbal Hossain Shahbazi, Peer Sahib of Islampur Nawab Bari, will be held at his residence

Mohammadpur residence after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.

Shahbazi, son of Fakir Shah Syed Mehbub Hossain Shahbazi, passed away on December 7 at his Khanka-e-Sharif at Bhulta under Rupganj in Narayanganj.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 28.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 11.0 degrees Celsius at Jessore.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:12pm today and rises at 6:31am 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	26.0	14.0	72	58
Chittagong	25.3	16.3	71	68
Rajshahi	26.0	12.8	74	74
Khulna	25.8	14.0	72	72
Barisal	26.5	13.6	79	82
Sylhet	25.7	13.6	64	65
Cox's Bazar	28.0	17.5	63	68