

Govt to provide necessary support to judges

Says law secretary

BSS, Dhaka

Law Secretary Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday said the dignity of the district judges is 'very high' as they have to maintain the universal norms and behaviour in all areas of their lives.

The role of the district judges is very important as they need to contribute a lot in the overall improvement of the judgments, he said while presiding over an opinion exchange meeting at the conference room of the Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) in the city.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry organised the meeting, which was also addressed by Additional Law Secretary Syed M. Harun Osmani and Registrar of the Supreme Court Md Ikhted Ahmed.

The law secretary said the district judges should be sincere in developing uniformity in their judgment through making interactions among themselves.

Responding to the problems highlighted by the district judges at the meeting, he said many problems will be addressed in a reasonable time, as the government is always sincere to provide all necessary supports to the judges despite its constraints.

Ikhted Ahmed said the separation of the judiciary was a long-standing demand of the people and the constitutional obligation of the people has a sky-high expectation of the judiciary system.

He said the appointment of 391 candidates in the judiciary is under process of the Judicial Service

Commission and their appointment would be made soon.

A good number of disputes were settled during the first month after the judiciary was separated, which was possible by sincere and efficient judicial magistrates.

"Best talents were appointed as judicial magistrates, and no one was appointed as judicial magistrates against whom there could be any allegation raised," he added.

Enhancement of their facilities, including financial benefits and upgrading of their services is under active consideration, he said.

The judges from different districts raised the problems in the services and made recommendations for resolving those.

A total of 169 participants attended the meeting.

ASSASSINATION OF BENAZIR

Politics of Asia might become unstable

Says Zillur

UNB, Dhaka

Acting Awami League (AL) President Zillur Rahman yesterday expressed his apprehension that the politics of Asia might become unstable through assassination of former Pakistan prime minister Benazir Bhutto.

"But this incident will have no impact on Bangladesh's general election," he said and urged of the caretaker government to take necessary initiatives for holding the election at the earliest possible time after withdrawing the state of emergency.

The acting AL chief raised the demand while talking to the reporters at his Gulshan residence.

He urged all democratic and progressive forces of Bangladesh to remain united against the fundamentalist forces. He also requested them to come forward to establish democracy in the country.

The fundamentalist forces in Bangladesh might feel encouraged seeing the heinous acts in Pakistan, he said.

Zillur said: "I've come to know that al-Qaeda has committed this incident (in Pakistan). al-Qaeda is a fundamentalist organisation that does politics using the name of Islam. And it is the enemy of democracy."

He mentioned that those believing in fundamentalism made an abortive bid to kill AL chief Sheikh Hasina on August 21, 2004.

Zillur, who lost his wife and central AL leader Ivy Rahman in the grenade attack on AL rally on August 21, hoped that the incumbent caretaker government would complete the investigation into the incident.

In the wake of Benazir's killing, the AL leader urged the caretaker government to strengthen the security for the detained Awami League president and BNP chairperson.



PHOTO: STAR

Media personality Muhammad Jahangir speaks at a seminar on 'Employment opportunities in KSA' at Hotel Sheraton in the city yesterday. The seminar was organised by scholarsbangladesh.com as part of the First Non-Resident Bangladeshi Conference 2007.

Five killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Five people were killed in separate road accidents in five districts yesterday.

A correspondent in Faridpur reports: A sub-inspector (SI) of Kotwali Police Station in Faridpur was killed and a police informant was injured seriously in a road accident at Shibrampur yesterday.

The dead was identified as SI Noor Ahmad Al Morshed, 33. He hailed from Elishkul village in Baliakandi, Rajbari.

Sources said a speeding truck hit his motorcycle at around noon, leaving him and his companion informant Biman Poddar injured. SI Noor Ahmad died on the way to hospital while Biman was admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

Our correspondent in Jhenaidah adds: A microbus driver was killed and three people were injured in a collision between the microbus and a bus at Kaliganj town yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mintu Ali, 30, son of Ashraf Ali of Bhutiar Gathi village.

Witnesses said the Jessore-

bound microbus and the bus collided head-on near Sree Lakshmi Cinema at around 12:00 noon, leaving four people injured.

They were rushed to the Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital where Mintu succumbed to his injuries.

Police seized both the vehicles. But the driver and helper of the bus managed to escape.

A correspondent in Madaripur adds: A person was killed and 20 others injured when a bus rammed into a truck on Bhangamawa highway at Shibchar in the early hours of yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mesbahuddin Molla, who hails from Barisal.

Witnesses said the Dhaka-bound bus from Matigharia hit a standing truck from behind, leaving Molla dead and 20 others passengers injured. The truck also fell into a roadside ditch.

The injured were taken to different hospitals in Dhaka and Faridpur.

Our Correspondent in Gaibandha adds: One person was killed and two others were injured in a road accident on Gaibandha-Nakaihat road yesterday.

The dead was identified as Sukumar Chandra. He was returning home from a market when a motorcycle hit him at Sunderjahan turning point. Two motorcycle riders were also injured as they fell to the ground during the accident.

In a critical condition, Sukumar was rushed to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. Two others are undergoing treatment at Gaibandha Hospital.

Our RU Correspondent adds: A nine-year-old girl was killed when a microbus ran over her at Guripara in front of Gulgar High School in Rajshahi city.

The girl was identified as Shika, daughter of Munjur Hossain, a resident of Guripara area.

Police said the Chapainawabganj-bound microbus from Rajshahi hit Shika when she was crossing the road, leaving her dead on the spot.

The microbus sped away immediately, sources said.

An unnatural death case was filed with Rajpara Police Station in this connection.



PHOTO: STAR

Dr Alnun Nishat speaks at a seminar on 'Flood management system' at Hotel Sheraton in the city yesterday. On his right is Sabuj Iqbal and on his left is Dr Mohammad Ayub Miah. The seminar was organised by scholarsbangladesh.com as part of the First Non-Resident Bangladeshi Conference 2007.

Body of Sidr victim recovered in Sharonkhola

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

One more decomposed body was recovered from a paddy field at cyclone-hit Khurikhali village under Southkhali Union of Sharonkhola upazila yesterday.

The victim was identified as Rakib Howlader, 12, son of Dulal Howlader of Khurikhali village.

With recovery of this body, the death toll from November 15 cyclone now stands at 683 in Sharonkhola upazila.

3rd Graduates' Forum of James P Grant School of Public Health

The Third Graduates' Forum of the James P Grant School of Public Health, Brac University was held at ICCDR,B on Thursday, says a press release.

The batch consists of 26 students from Afghanistan, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Myanmar, Singapore, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, USA and Bangladesh, all of whom graduated in Master of Public Health.

Pro-Vice Chancellor of Brac University Dr Salehuddin Ahmed chaired the forum while Prof AMR Chowdhury, Dean, School of Public Health, delivered the welcome address.

Professor Richard Cash of Harvard University delivered the keynote speech titled 'In the Eye of the Storm: Contributions of Bangladesh to the Reduced Public Health Impact of Natural Disasters'.

Dr Abbas Bhuiyan also spoke on behalf of ICCDR,B.

Abebul Zerihun of Ethiopia won the 'FH Abed Award for Best Overall Performance to an International Student' while the 'Allan Rosenfield Award for Best Overall Performance to a National Student' went to Tarique Md Nurul Huda.

Om Prasad Gautam from Nepal won the 'WB Greenough III Award for the Best Dissertation'.

Fazle Hasan Abed, chairperson and founder of Brac, distributed the prizes among the winners.

Four drug peddlers held

BSS, Rajshahi

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested five alleged criminals, including four drug peddlers, and seized heroin and phensidyl from different areas in three northern districts during last 24 hours till yesterday noon.

Acting on a tip-off, the elite force rounded up the drug-peddlers Monjira Begum, 38, Nayan, 19, Zanif, 30 and Mahub Hassan, 31, with 85 grams of heroin and 67 bottles of phensidyl in Rajshahi and Joypurhat districts.

Rab arrested a wanted criminal identified as Mimi, 25, son of late Ashraf Babu, from his home at Sultannagar in Rangpur.

NRBs want to help improve healthcare

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Renowned healthcare professionals at a seminar yesterday called on the public and private sectors to create 'scope' for them to work towards improving healthcare facilities in the country.

They also called for steps to remove the bureaucratic hurdles to working together with the country's healthcare experts.

Scholarsbangladesh.com organised the seminar at Sheraton hotel in the city as part of First Non-Resident Bangladeshi Conference 2007, with Health Adviser ASM Matiar Rahman as the chief guest.

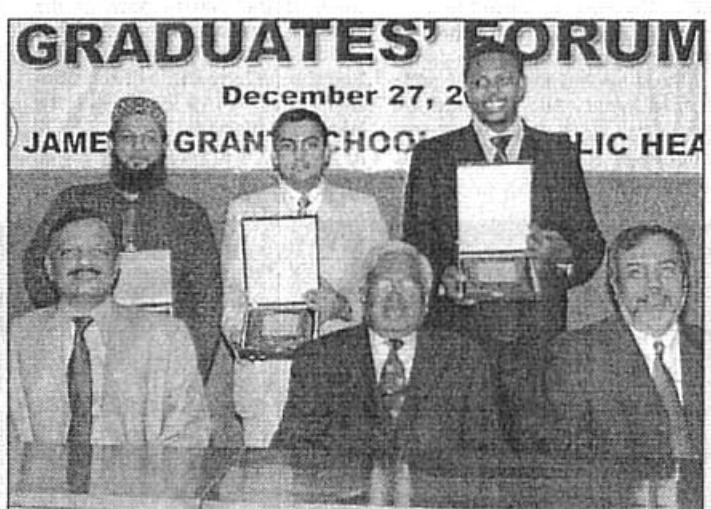
Dr Ziauddin Ahmed, associate professor of Medicine, Drexel University College of Medicine, Philadelphia, spoke on 'How NRB

can help in improving healthcare in Bangladesh'.

Sultan Salahuddin Ahmed, clinical associate professor of Family Medicine, Nova Southeastern University & University of Miami, USA, stressed the need for 'Continuing Medical Education (CME)' programme in order to improve the quality of healthcare professionals.

Murad Husain, vice president, Regulatory Affairs, Savient Pharmaceuticals, USA, gave a talk on 'Drug policy in Bangladesh' and other related issues.

Dr Abul Faiz, principal of Dhaka Medical College, Dr Ed L. Hansen, CEO of Apollo Hospitals, Dhaka, also spoke at the seminar moderated by Dr Zafarullah Chowdhury, Director of Gonoshasthaya Kendra.



Award winners pose for photograph with Fazle Hasan Abed, chairperson and founder of Brac, and other guests at the Third Graduates' Forum of the James P Grant School of Public Health, Brac University, at ICCDR,B in the city on Thursday.



No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over northern part of the country and the river basins and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during early morning, Met Office said, adding that night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 27.9 degrees Celsius was recorded at Cox's Bazar and the lowest of 10 degrees at Rajshahi and Jessore.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:21pm today and rises at 6:40am tomorrow.

The 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	24.8	14.6	85	71
Chittagong	24.7	14.8	87	80
Rajshahi	22.4	10.6	100	83
Khulna	24.0	13.0	95	86
Barisal	25.2	12.4	100.7	9
Sylhet	26.2	15.1	87	74
Cox's Bazar	27.9	16.2	73	75

Sea turtles

FROM PAGE 16

Green turtles, Hawksbill turtles, and Leatherback turtles. All of these species are endangered globally. In Bangladesh they are found in the area stretching from the Sundarbans to Saint Martin's Island.

Olive Ridley are graceful saltwater reptiles measuring up to 73cm in length, and weighing up to 45kg. Found primarily in tropical oceans and beaches, the females usually lay eggs 2 to 3 times a year, numbering up to 100 eggs in each phase. The eggs hatch after 7 to 10 weeks of laying.

In Bangladesh their breeding grounds are the Sundarbans in the southwest, and Sonadia Island, Cox's Bazar, Teknaf, and Saint Martin's Island in the southeast. They start breeding in September continuing until March -- January and February being the peak period.

These magnificent omnivorous sea creatures consume an unusual assortment of prey including fish, jellyfish, crustaceans and other shellfishes, sponges, and tunicates, they also eat sea grasses, and algae. However, they often become prey themselves.

People in the coastal belt capture the turtles when they come to beaches to lay eggs. Egg collection after the turtles leave the nests is also popular. The sea turtles require more than 7 to 9 years to attain reproductive maturity.

"People in our country are unaware of the importance of wildlife conservation. They capture these creatures to survive from poverty. They don't know anything about endangered species," said Md Anwarul Islam, chief executive of the Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh. "The turtles are already endangered, if capturing of mature females continues, and if the eggs are taken away, the turtle population will decline sharply," he added.

"Major threats include human activities such as illegal harvesting of adults and eggs, destruction of feeding and nesting grounds, floating plastics, pollution, and incidental capturing with fishing nets," Islam said.

Injuries from collisions with boat and ship propellers are also common.

In Bangladesh, turtles are protected by national laws and international conventions. Presently there is a ban on killing or capturing any wild animal in the country, Islam mentioned.

Moreover, Bangladesh is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), where sea turtles are covered under Appendix I of the agreement, receiving protection from trade by all countries that signed the treaty, Islam added.

"The threats facing the sea turtles are numerous and humans are the worst threat. We urge the government to take immediate protection measures for those endangered sea turtles. Awareness building and amendments to existing laws are also necessary," he noted.

'Shun path of West'

FROM PAGE 1 Bangladeshis to be successful. Be proud of who you are in your country," said Clarke, who is the son of a Bangladeshi expatriate from Sylhet.

"The culture and attitude (at present) of your politics need to be eliminated; you need to return to your traditional values of serving the people," said the senator in his speech that earned huge applause from the audience.

Stressing the need for a leadership that can bring out the potentials of the citizens, session chair Dr Kamal Hossain said, a good leadership is essentially dynamic and it allows individuals' potentials to find room for utilisation.

People yearn for contributing to their country, he said. "Not passive and second class subjects, people need to be truly empowered citizens."

The eminent jurist observed that people should have the right to choose their leadership which will listen to them, involve them in decision-making and empower them properly.

British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury said the NRBs can bring Bangladesh access to global markets through their links and networks, their expertise and belief and confidence in the possible.

"The way that can keep them

here is to build legal infrastructure to provide them security. If you give them that, they will take the lead for a new beginning," he said.

"Why don't you break away from it? Many countries have done that," the envoy said when some speakers remarked that bureaucracy remains stuck in a colonial mode though 60 years have passed since the end of colonial rule.

Expressing their will to contribute to the development of the country, the expatriates urged the government to facilitate the process of exploiting their expertise.

Morshed Alam, voter assistance commissioner of New York City, presented the keynote paper on "The Benefits of NRB Active Participation in the Politics of Their Country of Residence." Ehsan Taqbeem, president of Bangladesh American Public Affairs Committee, Michigan, spoke on "Our Political Voice in the USA. What Worked in Michigan."

Dr Hallimur Khan, assistant professor at US Air Force Academy, Colorado, spoke on "National Leadership in Bangladesh: Challenges and Opportunities" and Maj Gen Md Aminul Karim, military secretary to the president, dwelt on "Transformational Leadership - Bangladesh Bureaucracy."

Meantime, taking part in a

morning session on "How NRBs Can Help Bangladesh Children," Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury said while education in Bangladesh has become merely a vehicle for collecting certificates and diplomas, non-resident Bangladeshis are often privileged to have the highest level of education and exposure to cultures where education is an end in itself, not a means to a job.

Stressing the need to find a mechanism to encourage the NRBs to contribute to Bangladesh's education system, he said, "NRBs and their children can volunteer to help train our teachers, especially to teach English."

On the NRBs' pivotal role in the transfer of technology, especially in the IT sector, he said, "The digital divide is growing. We must reverse the trend. NRBs can make a huge impact in reducing the divide."

Zakia Khan of Voice of America, who runs radio programmes to enlighten people about Bangladesh's history, hoped the conference would play an important role for the second generation NRBs' contribution to the country.

Foreign Secretary Touhid Hossain said the second generation NRBs should come back and actively get engaged in business, development and politics.

Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

Alhajj Mohammad Sujayetullah, former official of National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSM) and father of journalist Anwar Kabir, passed away due to a massive heart attack at a city hospital yesterday morning at the age of 87.

He left behind his five sons, one daughter, grandchildren and a host of admirers to mourn his death.

He was laid to eternal rest at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard, family sources said.

His qulkhani will be held after Asr prayers at his residence (367/1, Purbha Nakhalpara) tomorrow.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhani.

Sector Commanders Forum, a platform of the Liberation War sector commanders, in a statement condoled the death and conveyed sympathy to the members of bereaved family.

Md Abdul Mottalib

Md Abdul Mottalib, member of Bangladesh Printing Industries Association and proprietor of M/s Eastern Art Printers, passed away due to a brain stroke on December 14 at the age of 79, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, three sons, five daughters and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Bangladesh Printing Industries Association President Md Rabbani Jabbar expressed deep shock at his death and conveyed sympathy to the members of bereaved family.

ABM Wali Ullah

UNB, Chandpur

ABM Wali Ullah, a renowned educationist and professor of English at Chandpur Govt. College, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at his residence in the town on Thursday at the age of 85.

He left behind his wife, one son and three daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

He was buried at his village home in Shahrazi upazila yesterday.



Death anniversary

Today is the 12th death anniversary of renowned journalist Monajatuddin, says a press release.

He died on this day in 1995 after falling into water from a ferry while working on an investigative report on boat capsize in the river Brahmaputra.

Born in Rangpur in 1945, Monajat started his journalism career with the Boga Bulletin. He was also the editor and publisher of the daily Rangpur. He also worked with the Sangbad and Janakantha.

Monajatuddin was awarded Ekushe Padak (posthumous) for his outstanding contribution to journalism.

Charon Sangbadik Monajatuddin Smriti Sangsad will hold a discussion and Monajatuddin Smriti Award-2006 ceremony at Dhaka Reporters' Unity at 3:00pm today.

AM Golam Mostafa

Today is the first death anniversary of A M Golam Mostafa, a freedom fighter, a language veteran, a communist leader and former Potuakhali district unit president of Bangladesh Krishak Samity, says a press release.

He also contributed to the movement against the British rule.

On this occasion milad mahfil and discussion will be held at his Narinda residence in the city and village home at Indrokrul under Baofal upazila in Patuakhali. Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the milad mahfil and discussion.

Moazzem Hossain

Today is the ninth death anniversary of Moazzem Hossain, founding secretary general of Bangladesh Photojournalist Association and a senior photojournalist of The Bangladesh Observer, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil and Quankhwan will be held at his village home at Dhakkhin Dharmapur in Penti.

DHAKA TODAY

Symposium

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) organises a national symposium on engineering and technological education in Bangladesh. Venue: Central Auditorium, Buet. Time: 9:30am.

Seminar

Iran Cultural Centre, Embassy of the IR of Iran, Dhaka organises a seminar on 'The role of Velayat in the solidarity of Muslim Ummah' to mark the holy Eid-e-Ghadir. Venue: Iran Cultural Centre auditorium. Time: 3:45pm.

Discussion

War Crimes Facts Finding Committee organises a discussion on genocide. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:30pm.

Scholarship

Fair and Lovely Foundation will distribute cheques among winners for higher education scholarships 2004 and 2005. Venue: Radisson Water Garden Hotel. Time: 2:00pm.

Prize giving

Prize giving ceremony of Charon Sangbadik Monajatuddin Smriti Puraskar 2006 will be held. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity. Time: 3:30pm.

Workshop

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs organises a workshop on role of religious leaders in preventing repression on women. Venue: Biam Auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Roundtable

Governance Coalition organises a roundtable to review the recommendations of the local governance strengthening committee. Venue: Cirdap Auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

DCCI seminar

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) organises a seminar on 'Access to finance for agro-based small and medium entrepreneurs (SMEs)'. Venue: DCCI auditorium. Time: 11:00am.

Workshop

Bangladeshi-American Pharmacist Association and Pharmacy Graduates' Association, Bangladesh jointly organise a workshop on preparing uniform curriculum for all public and private universities and making it time befitting. Venue: Planning and Development Academy. Time: 10:00am.