

Involve NRB resources in urban environmental management

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday said the issue of urban environmental management is one of the massive challenges facing the city fathers.

The seminar was organised as part of a three-day conference of Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) at Hotel Sheraton in the city.

The speakers said it would be easier to meet the challenges by involving NRB resources in urban environment planning and other development work provided corruption is curtailed.

In that case the NRBs will have the atmosphere to come forward with their investment, education, insight and skill in solving various matters, they added.

Speaking on the occasion Michigan State Senator Hansen Hashim Clarke said global economy is not a one-way avenue for

Bangladesh that it will only be at the receiving end, it goes both ways.

He said Bangladesh has lots to offer to the world and Non-Resident Bangladeshis have proved this in many ways.

At the seminar ATM Nurul Amin, professor of Urban Environmental Management at the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand, delivered a keynote speech on 'Informal sector and urban environmental management legacies in planning'.

He said before Dhaka could complete building the basic infrastructures like housing, road network or water supply the city is burdened with managing solid waste as well as water and air pollution which will be a massive challenge in future."

He said it is important to integrate the informal sectors like waste pickers or those involved in recycling business into mainstream urban planning and environmental management.

"We have to learn how to turn waste dumping sites into gold mines," he added.

He said it is also important to influence human behaviour to curb environmental disaster.

Aziz Khandker, vice-president of Lakeshore Engineering Services Ltd in Michigan, spoke on water supply, public sanitation and environmental issues saying that it is seriously related to public health and urban environmental management.

"The water supply and sewerage network in Dhaka city is in bad shape because the system is very old. Sewer spill over, water logging during rain and contaminated water are degrading the environment posing serious threat to public health," he added.

The speakers shared video clippings of automated machines used in the developed world to

repair underground sanitation network and cutting edge technologies used in treating polluted water.

They also discussed lack of coordination among the major government agencies, accountability and long-term commitment of the officials concerned, and offered to help build a better Bangladesh.

Rajuk Chairman K A M Harun said, "To build transparency Rajuk has introduced a 'Citizen's Charter'. We are trying to monitor the on-going work."

Dhaka City Corporation Chief Executive Officer Md Alauddin said, "The pressure of 10 million population is immense. Added to this is budget constraints and inadequate infrastructure."

ASM Rashidul Haq, secretary to housing and public works ministry, was present as chief guest at the seminar.



LGRD Adviser Anwarul Iqbal speaks at a seminar titled 'The Democratic Local Government System of Bangladesh' at Hotel Sheraton in the city yesterday. The seminar was organised by scholarsbangladesh.com as part of the First Non-Resident Bangladeshi Conference 2007.

Three of family die of food poisoning in Chittagong

BSS, Chittagong

Three girls of a family died apparently of food poisoning at Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) in the early hours of yesterday.

Hospital sources said the victims are Nisha Begum, 6, Afroz Begum, 16 and Hosnara Begum, 18, daughters of Ali Ahmed of Rangikhalia area under Teknaf upazila in the Cox's Bazar district.

Ali Ahmed said his daughters fell sick with severe stomach pain after having the dinner along with other family members on Thursday night. They were instantly rushed to a local hospital.

As the condition of the patients deteriorated further, they were shifted to the CMCH where Nisha and Hosnara died at about 3:00am and Afroz at 5:00am, hospital sources said.

Prof Zakir new principal of Dhaka Dental College

BSS, Dhaka

Government has appointed Prof Md Zakir Hossain as the Principal of Dhaka Dental College recently.

Prof Zakir was graduated (Bachelor of Dental Surgery) from Dhaka Dental College in 1981. He joined in health service in 1981, a press release said.

He was awarded Japanese Government Scholarship (Monbushu) and deputed in Japan as a representative of Bangladesh government to conduct higher studies in Orthodontics (specialised branch of Dentistry).

He conducted higher studies especially in the field of orthodontics in Osaka University, Kyushu University and Hiroshima University of Japan.

He obtained PhD degree on the same field from Hiroshima University in 1989. Dr Zakir is also the Head of the Department of Orthodontics, Dhaka Dental College and Hospital.

Prof Zakir is the 6th son of late Md Ayub Ali and late Zamila Khatoon of Gazaria, Munshiganj.

'Form self-administered local govt to institutionalise democracy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Self-administered local government with financial solvency and accountability should be formed to institutionalise democracy in the country, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They said a strong local government system is a crying need to lessen dependency on the central government.

The seminar titled 'The Democratic Local Government System of Bangladesh' was held as part of the first conference of Non-Resident Bangladeshis organised by ScholarsBangladesh at Sheraton Hotel in the city.

A book titled 'Gonotantrik Sthanika Sarkarer Ruprekha' (Outline of Democratic Local Government) was launched on this occasion.

In his book Abu Taleb, a researcher now living in New York,

gave 25 outlines for proper democratisation of local government.

He pointed out that the local government system should be divided into two parts.

The city corporations and municipalities will be urban local government while rural local government will be formed with the districts, upazilas and union parishads, he added.

He said power division in local government is also important for its proper functioning and local government should be separated from legislative body.

Speaking as special guest Secretary to LGRD and Cooperatives ministry Safar Raj Hossain talked about government's vision of local governance, government's initiatives to strengthen local government institutions, and implementation of viable recommendations of the Reform Committee.

ME Chowdhury Shamim of Scholars' Publishers, Advocate Bashir Ahmed and Barrister Mahbub Uddin also spoke at the seminar.

He also spoke about women ward commissioners who actually don't get any chance to work and face discriminations.

However, the City Corporation Act has been changed recently and in absence of the city mayors, a mayor panel has been formed where a position for woman has been made compulsory, said Adviser to LGRD and Cooperatives ministry Anwarul Iqbal.

Speaking as chief guest he said a unified act for the city corporations would be made for its implementation before the next city corporation elections.

"We should also think of ways to strengthen local government financially," he added.

ME Chowdhury Shamim of Scholars' Publishers, Advocate Bashir Ahmed and Barrister Mahbub Uddin also spoke at the conference.

A debate contest and a cultural programme were also held on the first day.

Earlier, the participants at the conference observed a minute's silence in memory of the Sidr victims.

US humanitarian body demands release of Hasina, Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties have condemned the killing of former Pakistan prime minister Benazir Bhutto on Thursday evening.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim in a joint statement said Pakistan is the worst example of how the imperialist and fundamentalist forces work together to create anarchic situation in different countries.

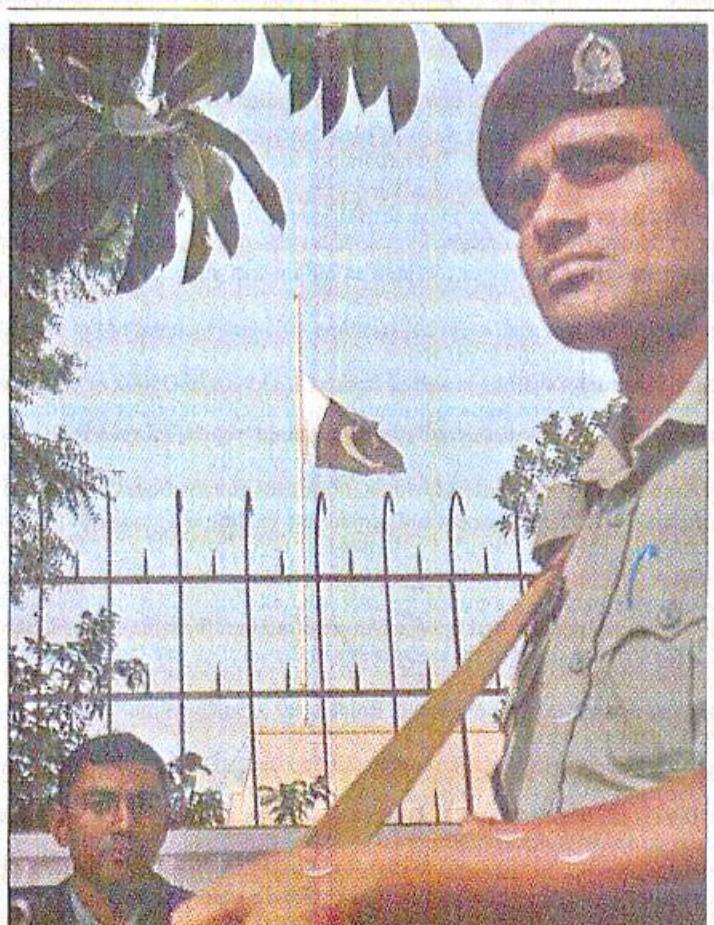
They said US imperialism and US Army tend to interfere directly in the countries taking the chance of such chaos.

Iran and Afghanistan are also the victims of such US politics and Pakistan is going to meet the same fate, they added.

The CPB leaders also urged all to resist communal forces and their patrons in the sub-continent.

Left Democratic Front, Workers Party of Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and Chhatra Union also condemned the killing of Benazir.

They demanded exemplary punishment of the killers and conspirators and expressed sympathy for the members of the bereaved family.



A Pakistani flag flies at half-mast on the premises of the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka yesterday as Pakistan mourns the death of former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto.

Volunteers of American Community, a humanitarian organisation, has submitted a memorandum to Bangladesh President demanding release of two former prime ministers Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina and the withdrawal of the state of emergency.

The memorandum was handed over to Bangladesh Consul General in New York Mohammad Shamsul Haque on December 27, reports ANA.

It is said in the memorandum that the international community is observing different kinds of repression that are taking place in the country in the name of emergency.

The memorandum signed by the Community President Abul Hashem Bulbul and Secretary Kazi Azam also called for President's intervention to bring an end to the situation.

Copies of the statements made by 15 US senators and 61 Canadian parliament members were also attached with the memorandum.

Amnesty Int'l team arrives

Jan 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A human rights delegation led by Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan will visit Bangladesh from January 5 to 10 to discuss human rights situation in the country.

The team will have meetings with government officials, civil society members, non-government organisations working with the issue and human rights activists with their focus on the rule of law and institutional reform necessary to promote human rights in the country, says a press release.

The team will also visit Rajshahi and meet survivors of human rights violation.

The team members will meet Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and Law Adviser Mainul Hosein and Irene Khan will also launch the Bangla website of Amnesty International on January 9 during a meeting on freedom of expression.

CONFCE OF YOUTH

ENDING HUNGER

Youths urged to help curb corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 12th national conference of Youth Ending Hunger-Bangladesh began at Gono Shasthya Kendra auditorium in the city yesterday.

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Hasan Mashud Chowdhury inaugurated the two-day conference.

Speaking on the occasion, the ACC chief said the young generation has to come forward to curb corruption. They should also create awareness among people in this regard.

Addressing the youths, eminent economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said, "You have to build a society free from repression and injustice."

"Corruption would certainly be eliminated from the country if the youths raise their voice against it," he said, adding, "Liberation War freed us from injustice and repression but we failed to sustain it."

Dr Badil Alam Majumder, global vice president of The Hunger Project, said if the young generation takes the responsibility the country would be freed from immorality, injustice, repression and corruption.

Manjur Ahmed, director of Institute of Educational Development, Prof Mesbah Kamal of Dhaka University, Nazrul Islam Khan, joint secretary of Education Ministry, Saiful Islam Shishir, executive director of Gono Shasthya Kendra, were also present in the inaugural ceremony while former adviser to the caretaker government Sultana Kamal, eminent litterateur Selina Hossain, University Grants Commission Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam and Transparency International Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman were present in another session at the conference.

A debate contest and a cultural programme were also held on the first day.

Earlier, the participants at the conference observed a minute's silence in memory of the Sidr victims.



Students of Dr Khastagir Government Girls' School perform a dance number at the inaugural ceremony of a celebration marking the 100th anniversary of the school in Chittagong yesterday.

Khastagir School celebrates 100th anniversary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A two-day programme marking the 100th founding anniversary of Dr Khastagir Girls' High School, the first academic institution for girls in Chittagong, began yesterday amid enthusiasm and festivity.

Headmistress of the school Dr Sufia Begum said the school has played a great role in spreading female education through producing many scholars.

Earlier, hundreds of former students carrying banners, placards and festoons brought out a colourful procession from the school premises at around 10:00am.

Former adviser to the caretaker government Dr Sufia Begum, also a former student of the school, was present at the inaugural ceremony as the chief guest.

Hasnat Jahan chaired the 'Inaugural' ceremony while Satabarsha Uddyan Parishad President Surma Chowdhury delivered the address of welcome.

Country's first female Brigadier General Dr Suraiya Rahman, Deputy Secretary of Land Ministry Afroza Moazzem, Mahila Parishad President Nurjahan Khan and Jubaida Munawar, all former students of the school, and woman leader Dr Maleka Begum were also present as special guests.

The two-day programmes also include recitation by past students, cultural show, reception to former students, debate competition between former and present students and dance show.



Poet Asad Chowdhury speaks at a publication ceremony of a book titled 'Sristipuran O Onyanya Lokokatha' at Hotel Sheraton during the First Non-Resident Bangladeshi Conference 2007 yesterday. From left are Quazi Johirul Islam and Zahid Hyder.

The Daily Star

Coming out tomorrow - Star Campus

Linking Young Minds Together

The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views.

Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents.

Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine of the students, by the students and for the students.

Star Campus helps link young minds together.

