

Formulate policy to save over 400 haors

Justice Habibur Rahman says at haor convention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman, chief adviser of a former caretaker government, has called for formulating a 'Haor Policy' to save more than 400 haors of the country and improve the livelihood of people living around the haors.

"Not only the livelihood of more than two crore people but also a different folk culture will be threatened if we cannot save the haors," he said while inaugurating the first ever 'Haor Convention' in the country yesterday.

"The rivers and wetlands are dying due to wrong policies of the governments in the past," said Justice Rahman at the programme held at the Institute of Engineers in the city.

Speakers at the inaugural session also urged the govern-

ment to formulate separate policies for protecting the ecology of haors and ensuring sustainable development of haor basins.

Mostafa Zabbar, convener of Haor Convention, chaired the session which was also addressed by Prof ASM Shafiullah, vice-chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), AMA Muhit, former minister, Dr Abdul Razzak, former lawmaker, Farah Kabir, country director of Action Aid, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, director of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Ziaul Haque of Oxfam and Nirmal Bhattacharya of Nagorik Udyog.

Prof Shafiullah said development plan for haor area must be taken considering the ecosys-

tem. Syeda Rizwana Hasan said the livelihood issue of the local people should be addressed properly while making a policy.

Farah Kabir said a flexible school calendar should be formulated for the children of haor region as people of haor areas are marooned for six months a year.

In his welcome speech, Nirmal Bhattacharya said though haor area is neglected, it can provide three months' food for the whole country.

In the two-day-long convention, the participants are discussing several issues related to haor people, their livelihood and culture to make a set of recommendations and work plan.

Engineer Md Helaluddin is conducting the session.

Mob beats top criminal to death in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

A criminal on police list was beaten to death by an angry mob in 40 Quarter area under Double Mooring Police Station in Chittagong early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Kamrul, 35, son of Suruj Mian in the city's Madarbari area. He was accused in five cases, including for murder and robbery, Double Mooring police said.

Sources said local people chased and caught Kamrul after his group, numbering six to seven, assembled in the area at about 12:30am, presumably to commit robbery. They gave him a good beating, leaving him seriously injured.

He later died at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Police recovered a cut rifle and two rounds of bullet from him.

Earlier on Tuesday, a mugger was beaten to death in the city's Sholoshahar area.

Directive to bring back rescued Bangladeshis from Sri Lanka

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday asked the foreign secretary and the expatriate welfare secretary to initiate steps on emergency basis to bring back Bangladeshi nationals rescued from a boat in Sri Lanka.

In an instruction from Madaripur, Iftekhar who is also in charge of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry, said if necessary the rescued Bangladeshis must be brought back by using money from the Welfare Fund.

Besides, the adviser gave instruction to the Bangladesh High Commissioner in Colombo to look after the Bangladeshis.

Iftekhar advised guardians and well-wishers of workers not to allow anybody to go abroad taking the risk of life.

Rationalise quotas in govt jobs

Survey report suggests

UNB, Dhaka

The report of a World Bank-assisted survey on quota system for civil service recruitment in Bangladesh was submitted yesterday, suggesting rationalisation of quotas in government job.

The survey report was handed over to Bangladesh Public Service Commission (PSC) chairman Dr Sadat Hussain. PSC members and World Bank adviser Dr Zaidee Sattar were present on the occasion.

In the wake of controversies over different quotas, PSC with the assistance of the donor agency carried out the survey. Former adviser of caretaker government and chairman of the Regulatory Reform Commission Dr Akbar Ali Khan and former secretary Kazi Rakib Uddin Ahmed conducted the study.

It contained background, current situation of Bangladesh's quota system and recommendation for "rationalisation" of quotas.

"The survey is expected to play a significant role in development of country's administration," an official announcement on the report said.

Acid violence declines significantly

Says ASF report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 221 people were the victims of acid violence in 180 incidents in 2006, while the numbers of victims and incidents were reduced to 187 and 154 respectively in 2007, said a report of the Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) yesterday.

The report was revealed at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city.

The ASF organised the press conference to announce its awareness building programmes on the occasion of the International Women's Day tomorrow.

Speakers at the programme urged all to work together to resist acid violence that causes devasta-

tion to a person not only physically but also emotionally.

Though the number of incidents of acid violence reduced significantly in the last couple of years, the campaign against acid violence will have to be carried on to eliminate the social menace completely from the society, they added.

Speaking on the occasion, SAM Shawkat Hossain, acting chairperson of the ASF, said the campaign against acid violence is a social movement and people from all walks of life should take part in it.

Abdul Quayum, joint editor of the Prothom Alo, said, "Though we are living in a modern era we could not come out from our discriminatory attitudes towards women."

Announcing the programmes, Monira Rahman, executive director of the ASF, said a unique rally of male persons, poetry recitation, cultural function and lighting of candles will be held at Rabindra Sorobor at Dhanmondi today.

Rallies of male persons will also be held in 12 districts tomorrow. Ekushey Television will broadcast the programme live.

Hasina Akter, an acid survivor, Shamim Shahed, programme manager of Ekushey Television, Shamsul Alam Bakul of Campaign to Work with Men and Boys Network, Dr Khalilur Rahman, trustee of the ASF and SAM Sajjad Hossain, deputy managing director of Express One also spoke.

VoIP equipment seized in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday seized Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) equipment from a house at Gulshan in the city yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, members of Rab intelligence wing raided the fifth floor of the house at Road # 1 at around 4:30pm and seized 184 tellurars, 14 Quintums and two channel banks.

BNCC website

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (BNCC) yesterday launched its website for providing information about the organisation.

Any one can get information about BNCC from the website www.bncc.org.bd



Former chief adviser Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman speaks at Haor Convention at the Institute of Engineers in the city yesterday.

Only 39 percent use improved sanitation system

Speakers tell view exchange meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although the country has attained 85 percent sanitation coverage, few people are using sanitary latrines, speakers at a view exchange meeting said yesterday.

Only 39 percent of people across the country are using improved sanitation systems, which include flush or pour flush to piped sewer system, septic tank, pit latrine or ventilated improved pit latrine with slab and composting toilet, they said.

They called for raising awareness about improved sanitation to promote good hygiene practices among the people so that they

always use sanitary latrines and wash their hands with soap or ashes after defecation.

Bangladesh Nari Sangbadik Kendra (BNSK) and Unicef jointly organised the meeting on International Year of Sanitation. DFID supported the programme.

Considering the importance of sanitation, the UN General Assembly declared 2008 as the International Year of Sanitation (IYS). The government will launch the programmes of IYS on March 22.

The objectives of IYS are to improve sanitation in the country and raise awareness about good hygiene practice, said Qumrun

Nahar, water, environment and sanitation (WES) specialist of Unicef.

Improvement in sanitation would contribute to good health, she said.

Hygiene practice will also help save the environment, said Paul Edward, chief of Water and Environmental Sanitation Section, Unicef.

Chief of Communication Section of Unicef Christine Jaumues, BNSK Chairman Nasimun Ara Huq Minu, journalist Hasan Shahriar, Communication Specialist of Unicef Arifa S Sharmin and government officials were present at the meeting.

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