

# Reforms a must to strengthen local govt system

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local government representatives and politicians at a roundtable yesterday called for reforms to strengthen the local government system for a sustainable development.

They however differed over the time of holding the local government election as union and upazila parishad chairmen demanded it ahead of national poll while some politicians wanted parliament election first.

The roundtable was organised jointly by Bangladesh Union Parishad Oikya Jote and the Bhorer Kagaj at the National Press Club in the capital.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haque Inu said if the local government election is held before the national poll under

the existing system, then the local government would not be strengthened.

So the local government system should be reformed first, he said, adding that an integrated local government act is needed to make it powerful.

Inu however suggested holding of local and parliamentary polls on the same day.

BNP chairperson's Adviser AH Mofazzal Karim said every government in the past agreed to the demand of strengthening the local government system but no government took any initiative in this regard.

He said the influence of MPs over the local government representatives should be curbed.

"There is no problem in holding the local polls before the national one provided the government can

ensure parliamentary poll according to the roadmap," he added.

Awami League leader Col (ret'd) Faruque Khan said the Election Commission is already lagging four months behind the roadmap and as such they cannot hold the local government elections.

Quoting some provisions of the constitution he said the caretaker government has no mandate for holding the local government elections.

He also said before holding the election of local bodies concerned laws should be reformed to make them powerful.

The representatives of local governments however demanded their elections within the October saying that the term of union and upazila parishads is already over, and the political governments would not hold the local govern-

ment polls as they did before.

Supporting the local government representatives, Jatiya Party Presidium Member GM Quader said the central government wants to keep power with it and as such it does not want to hold the local government polls.

"Our experiences show that political governments always exercise power to influence the local government elections. So to make them impartial, the local polls should be held before the national one," he added.

He also suggested holding of parliamentary and local elections on the same day.

Bhorer Kagaj Editor Shyamol Dutta moderated the roundtable which was presided over by Chairman of Bangladesh Union Parishad Oikya Jote Mahabubur Rahman Tulu.



Visitors admire artworks at Zainul Abedin Gallery at the Institute of Fine Art of Dhaka University yesterday. Six students of the institute organised the seven-day exhibition.



Green Voice forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday on the occasion of its 3rd founding anniversary. They also demanded steps to free playgrounds from land-grabbers.

## Concern over move to fell trees on DU campus

DU CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) have expressed grave concern over the Dhaka University decision to fell a number of trees at Jagannath Hall (DU) to construct a new residential building for the students, says a press release.

A team of Bapa has recently visited the spot and observed that the primary work for the building

has begun and a number of trees have been marked to be felled.

The team thinks the proposed building can be constructed without chopping down the trees and Institute of Architects Bangladesh could provide technical support free of cost. They added that different development activities could be conducted at the hall if there is an effective master plan.

Hall Provost Prof Ajoy Kumar

Roy told the visiting team that they will fell the trees within the layout of the proposed structure for the sake of constructing the building.

He added that they will arrange a view exchange meeting with students, journalists and the engineering department of the university with a bid to save the trees if possible.

Bapa Joint Secretaries Mihir Biswas, Iqbal Habib and Sharif Jamil were in the visiting team.

## Export of jute goods thru' Mongla port increases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Export of jute and jute goods through Mongla port to international markets has increased.

Member of Mongla Port Authority (MPA) Md Lutfor Rahman yesterday said four foreign ships had left the port for their respective destinations since January last.

Of them, MV Bangla Lanka left the port carrying 6820 metric tons of jute and jute goods on January 17, MV Banglar Mukh left on March 19 with 10000 metric tons of jute and jute goods, MV African Lark left on March 25 with 8798 metric tons of jute and jute goods, and MV Banglar Maya left on April 10 with 9968 metric tons of jute and jute goods.

All these jute and jute goods were exported to Pakistan.

Besides, MV Bangla Lanka will come back to Mongla port on April 25 to load 7000 metric tons of more jute goods for the same country, said Rahman.

He said export of other goods including processed frozen shrimps along with jute and jute goods will gradually gain momentum giving rise to foreign exchange earning of the port.

It will also provide job opportunity to port workers enabling them to earn their livelihood, he added.

## BBC Bangladesh Sanglap today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 34th edition of the BBC Bangladesh Sanglap will be held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital today.

Awami League presidium member Amir Hossain Amu, Joint Secretary General of BNP Salima Rahman, former adviser to the caretaker government Shoaib Ahmed and Chairman of Bangladesh Krishi Bank Khondaker Ibrahim Khaled will take part in Sanglap as panelists.

The recorded programme will be aired on BBC Bangla Service at 8:00pm tomorrow and on Channel 1 at 8:00pm on Monday.

## Provide rations to needy employees

Finance adviser asks enterprises

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Adviser Dr AB Mirza Azizul Islam yesterday advised the profitable enterprises to provide rations to their needy employees for a certain period of time as part of their social corporate responsibility.

"Many enterprises that made significant profits can give rations to limited number of their employees for a short period of time," he said at the inaugural ceremony of the Alumni Day of Institute of Business Administration Alumni Association (IBAAA).

The comment came from the finance adviser when price hike of essentials, especially of rice, has become a crucial issue not only in Bangladesh, but also in many parts of the world.

Stating that "growth needs human face", the finance adviser said he frequently receives demands from some particular sectors that the government should provide rations to the workers of their sector.

"The government cannot make discrimination for some particular industrial workers," he said at the programme at Radisson Water Garden Hotel, urging the industries to bring fundamental changes in corporate social responsibility for the welfare of workers.

Calling upon the business administration graduates to help accelerate growth through efficient business management, Azizul Islam said many industries have not reached the desired hallmark of efficiency because they might have not been able to shift from protected environment to open market policies.

"Energise your companies to become more competitive... professional management therefore is a high priority," he said, emphasising on diversification of industrial goods.

"Our exports have become mono-exports. And, domestic consumption has also not been much diversified," the finance adviser said.

He asked industries to emphasise on human resources development, saying that many of the industries hire foreign workers, which would not have been required if the industries could help develop efficiency of junior executives.

IBAAA Advisory Council Chairman Prof Muhammad Ziaul Haq Mamun said IBA graduates placed at different key positions have been making outstanding contribution to the nation building through management not only in the corporate world, but also in the

socio-economic development of the country.

IBAAA President Syed Abu Naser Bukhtear Ahmed said the Association serves the community of IBA alumni by providing lifelong connections to each other and to IBA that opens doors to new experiences and friends.

It also plays role to promote fraternity among its members, augmenting and disseminating professional knowledge and securing greater social recognition for management profession, he said.

IBAAA conferred Alumni Award 2008 on International University of Business Agriculture and Technology Vice Chancellor Prof M Alimullah Miyan for his contribution to management education, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) President Fazul Hoque for his contribution to business development, BOC Bangladesh Ltd Managing Director Waliur Rahman Bhuiyan for his contribution to corporate management, Asset Development and Holding Limited Chairman Salim Akter Khan for his contribution to entrepreneurship and Standard Chartered Bank Bangladesh for supporting management development by employing significant number of IBA graduates.

## Call to raise awareness about reproductive health

CU CORRESPONDENT

Experts yesterday stressed the need to raise awareness about reproductive health among adolescent boys and girls who make up 25 percent of the total population.

The adolescents very often encounter an array of health and social vulnerabilities and that the awareness would help them overcome such vulnerabilities, they said at the launching ceremony of a project titled 'Strengthening adolescent reproductive health in Bangladesh' at a city hotel in the port city.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Canadian International Development Agency (Cida) and Plan Bangladesh jointly launched the project in cooperation with eight non-government organisations (NGOs).

The project aims at improving the quality and delivery of services in reproductive health.

The project will be implemented in five years with an estimated budget of \$ 5.504 million. Cida will contribute \$5.0 million to the project, while Plan International Canada will provide the rest \$0.504 million of the fund.

Health Secretary AKM Zafar Ullah Khan was present as the chief guest at the programme, with Plan Bangladesh Country Director Edward Thomas in the chair.

## FA airs concern at Israeli military attacks in Gaza

UNB, Dubai

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury expressed 'grave concern' at the news that Israeli military actions have killed 19 people, including children, in Gaza.

"Killing of innocents will only render a grave problem even graver," he said in a statement.

"Restraint, calm and a deep commitment to negotiations and peace are called for at this time, if the problem is to be resolved, and the sufferings in Palestine are to end. It is the responsibility of the international community to ensure that," the foreign adviser said.

Iftekhar A Chowdhury issued the statement while on his way to Accra, Ghana, via Dubai. He will lead the Bangladesh delegation at UNCTAD XII conference in Accra.

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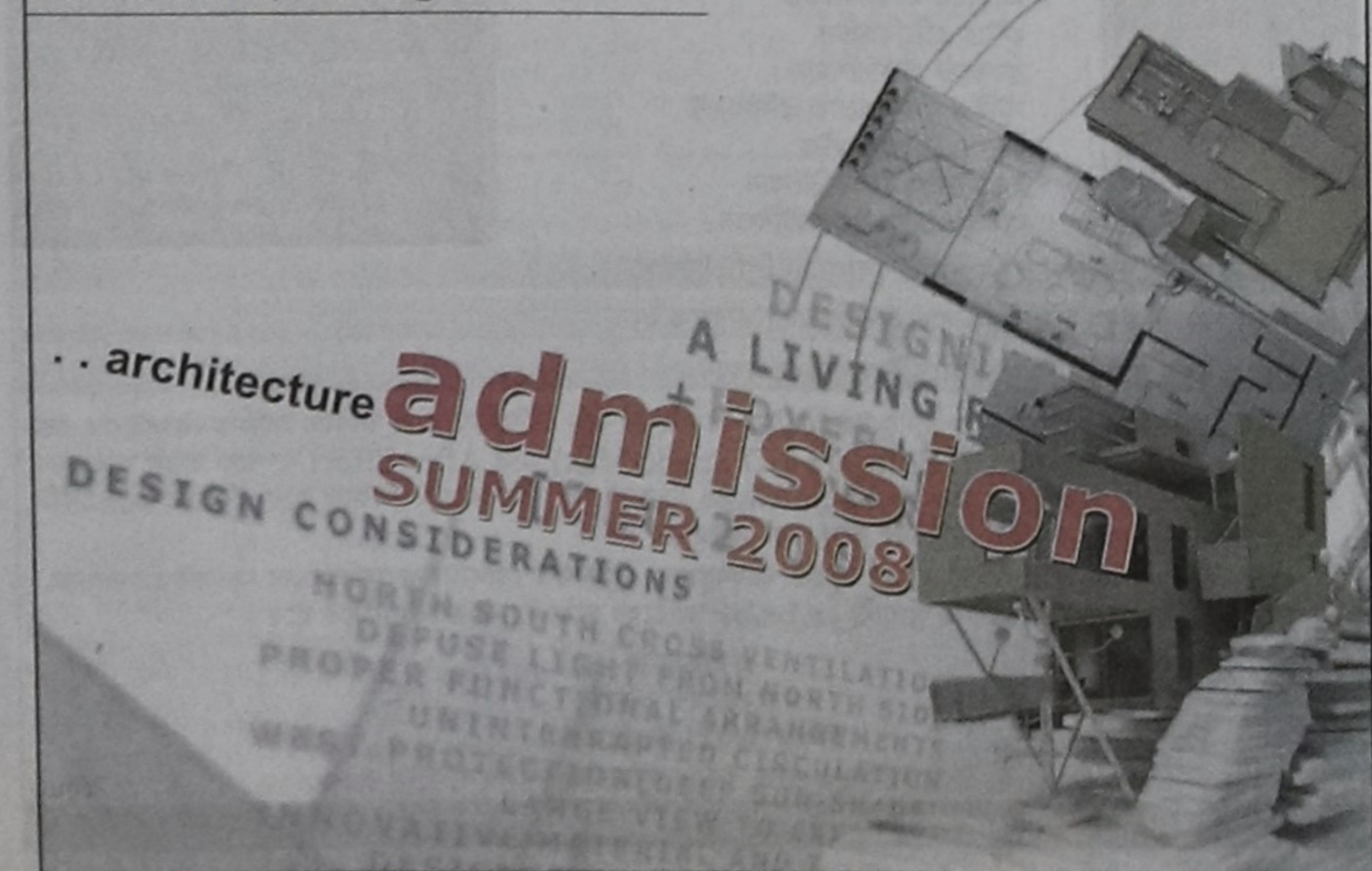
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The program is led by Professor Dr. Saleh Uddin Badal of University of Missouri-Columbia, USA

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পুলিশ প্রাঙ্গণ কনকর্ড গুলশান



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