

Form Haor Development Corporation

Speakers urge govt at roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday urged the government to form an autonomous Haor Development Corporation for the overall development of haors and the people living in adjoining areas.

They said a huge amount of cultivable land in haors remains unused every year due to lack of government's sustainable development policy.

If this land could be utilised properly, the country would not have to face food scarcity, they added.

The roundtable was organised jointly by Nagorik Sanghati and Weekly Britter Baire at the National Press Club in the capital.

The speakers said there are haors in 48 upazilas of seven districts and one-fifth of the total production of Aman and one-third of Boro come from these areas.

But the farmers in these areas cannot harvest the fruit of their

labour due to draught, flood and waterlogging, they said, adding even the seeds and fertilisers are not always available due to bad communications.

The speakers stressed the need for coordinated efforts for the development of haor areas by declaring it as 'special zone' and allocating adequate budget for disaster management.

Former minister Dr M Osman Farooq said short and long-term actions should be taken to develop the haor areas.

He said agricultural assistance should be provided to yield maximum quantity from the existing varieties of crops.

Besides, modern technologies should be used for preservation and marketing of fishes, while solar power and windmill could be established in those areas for power generation, he added.

Dr Farooq also suggested formation of an autonomous Haor Development Corporation as the

present Haor Development Board is not working at all.

"Most of our plans lie unimplemented due to lack of coordination," said economist Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, suggesting a coordinated haor development policy alongside the national development planning on priority basis.

The speakers also placed specific recommendations for the development of infrastructure, agriculture, livestock, biodiversity, land and water management, education, health and sanitation of the people living in haor areas.

M Taher Uddin read out the keynote paper at the roundtable.

Nagorik Sanghati President Prof ASM Atikur Rahman of Dhaka University, former secretary Syed Abdul Mukhtar, Weekly Britter Baire Editor Abu Rayhan and Awami League leader Nurul Islam Nahid also spoke on the occasion.

Dhaka proposes 5-point strategy to address security concerns

UNB, Singapore

As climate change posed a new challenge to humanity, Dhaka has proposed a five-point strategy to address looming security concerns from such non-traditional factors in the Asia-Pacific region.

"Non-traditional security concerns such as those incurred by poverty, disease, climate change and food scarcity are often overlooked and need to be stressed more," Foreign Adviser Iftikhar Ahmed Chowdhury said while proposing the strategy at a conference here yesterday.

The two-day conference on 'security and environment' is being attended by foreign and defense ministers of the region as well as from the UK and the USA.

The foreign adviser elaborated on the five imperatives: a balanced approach to climate-change debate emphasising both mitigation and adaptation aspects; 'depolicising' the climate-change discussions and rewarding those who pollute less or not at all; the setting up of a 'technology transfer board' in any Post-Kyoto Agreement to facilitate eco-friendly policies by least developed countries; strong leadership by the UN, including the creation of the post of High Representative for Climate Change; and the establishment of an International Food Fund with 'special drawing rights' for poor countries.

Iftikhar Chowdhury also attended a luncheon given in honour of the participating ministers by Singaporean Defence Minister Teo Chee Hean yesterday.

Swasthoseba Hospital opens at Bogra

The Bogra Swasthoseba Hospital under the Health Care Development Project of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (DAB) opened in Bogra yesterday with a view to bringing the health care services to the doorsteps of the people in the northern region, says a press release.

Health Adviser AMM Shawkat Ali inaugurated the hospital while Dutch Ambassador Bea M ten Tusscher and Vice-President of National Council of DAB Maj Gen (Retd) Prof AR Khan were present as special guests.

Mohammad Sayef Uddin, secretary general of DAB, was present as a main speaker. The programme was presided by Amjad Hossain Tajma, president of Diabetic Association of Bogra.

The Health Care Development Project, taken by DAB in association with the Netherlands, has been working to provide health care facilities to diabetic as well as non-diabetic patients.

Construction work of more hospitals in Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Pabna and Sirajganj under the project are nearing completion.

Film Censor Board publishes citizen's charter

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Film Censor Board has published a citizen's charter with detailed description of its services.

The charter contains the details of its board activities, service providing system, film review system, common policy for film review, rate of film review and screening fee, film club-related activities, summary of rules and regulations relating to activities taken for film-related irregularities, movie house inspection and mass awareness programme.

People can avail of better services of the organisation if steps are taken as per the instructions, said an information ministry handout.

They may also have information about the services over telephone (9330218) from the helpdesk of the board.

All information about the censor board could be known through its website: www.feb-bd.org <<http://www.feb-bd.org>>. The email address is: info@feb-bd.org <<mailto:info@feb-bd.org>>.

TRIAL OF WAR CRIMES Expats in US to meet June 7

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expatriates for the Trial of 1971 War Crimes (ETWC), a USA-based organisation, will hold its first general meeting at Raleigh in North Carolina on June 7.

The mission of ETWC is to raise awareness about the war crimes and to promote a campaign to document the atrocities and genocide during the Liberation War.

Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker, Lt Gen (ret'd) Harun-ur Rashid and Maj Gen (ret'd) Jamil will attend the meeting.

The meeting will be followed by a cultural programme.



Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain visits ailing Binod Bihari Chowdhury, an anti-British movement veteran, at Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday morning.

SUPERVISION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS NGO to implement only the pilot project: Adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury yesterday said a non-government organisation (NGO) has been given permission to supervise all primary schools in 20 upazilas across the country through a pilot programme for improving the standard of primary education.

"We need supports from all stakeholders including NGOs for improving the quality of education in primary level. With this end in view, we gave an NGO the responsibility of monitoring all the primary schools in 20 upazilas across the country. It is an experimental programme, not a permanent one," the adviser said this at a publication ceremony.

She further also said ministry and directorate of primary education will monitor the pilot project and make a report after completion of mid-term and final supervision evaluating the performance of the NGO.

"The ministry will cancel the pilot project if the NGO fails to reach its target," she mentioned

while addressing at the publication ceremony of 'Haalkhata-2008', the annual report on primary education by private research organisation Power and Partnership Research Centre (PPRC) at Agargaon LGED Bhaban in the city.

Earlier on May 23, the government took the decision to hand over the project to Brac for supervising the primary schools in 20 upazilas. But the teachers of primary schools strongly criticised the decision, saying it is an initial process to privatise the primary education.

The adviser denied the allegation, saying that the monitoring programme of the government on primary education has not been given to any NGOs.

"I ask the media to disclose this issue clearly so that misunderstanding among the teachers and countrymen can be eliminated," she added.

Rasheda said the Brac training programme will run on holidays without interrupting the ongoing regular training programme of directorate of primary education and also total academic activities.

"The pilot programme of Brac will assist the government's second phase of Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP-II)," the adviser added.

Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman said the government's different policies on education will be relaxed in the practical field.

"We take decision sitting in the secretariat, but the decision may not be adjusted in the field level. Now we decided that the government policy will be relaxed evaluating the field-level observation. Otherwise, the target of ensuring quality education for all will not be achieved," he added.

Primary and Mass Education Secretary Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Prof Ahmed Kamal and Dr Atiur Rahman also addressed the function.

In a press release yesterday, Bangladesh Primary Teachers' Association said it will observe work abstention for two hours in all primary schools on June 14 and 15 demanding the withdrawal of the government decision.

Dr Kamal visits ailing Binod Bihari Chy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain visited ailing Binod Bihari Chowdhury, an anti-British movement veteran, at the Cardiac Care Unit (CCU) of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) yesterday morning.

"You are the source of our inspiration. We all should try to protect the glorious achievement we had earned through the Liberation War in 1971," Dr Kamal told the veteran leader during the meeting.

"You would inspire the present generation so that they could protect the achievements," he added.

Talking to Dr Kamal, Binod Bihari called on the young generation to be imbued with patriotic spirit and united to fight against all kinds of inhuman activities.

"Our homeland is now passing through a crucial period and we have to protect the country," he said.

Dr Kamal also enquired about his treatment.

Binod Bihari was admitted to the hospital with age-old complication on Wednesday.

Separate dev authority demanded for DND area

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a view exchange meeting demanded a development authority for Dhaka Narayanganj Demra (DND) area and effective measures for welfare of its residents.

They also demanded to declare the area as a residential area.

DND Development Forum organised the meeting at a community centre at Narayanganj yesterday.

Vice-president of the forum Sheikh Md Nuruzzaman presided over the meeting while president of the forum and also a socio-economic specialist Dr MA Nasir spoke in the meeting as the chief guest.

Nasir said unplanned residential area developed in DND area and industrial waste and water logging causing suffering of the people of the area.

Around five hundred local people attended the programme.

BCF forms central committee

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra Federation (BCF), a left-leaning student body, has formed its 15-member central committee, says a press release.

Ariful Islam and Mahub Imran have been selected president and general secretary in the committee at a two-day indoor conference of the federation.

Educationalist Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury inaugurated the conference in the city on May 29 and 30.

MJ Ferdous has been selected vice president, while Mohammad Mahiuddin and Helal Uddin have been selected joint secretary and organising secretary in its 9th central committee.

Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

Founder chairman of Rural Electrification Board (REB) Brig Gen (Retd) Shabihuddin Ahmed died in Maryland, USA on Thursday.

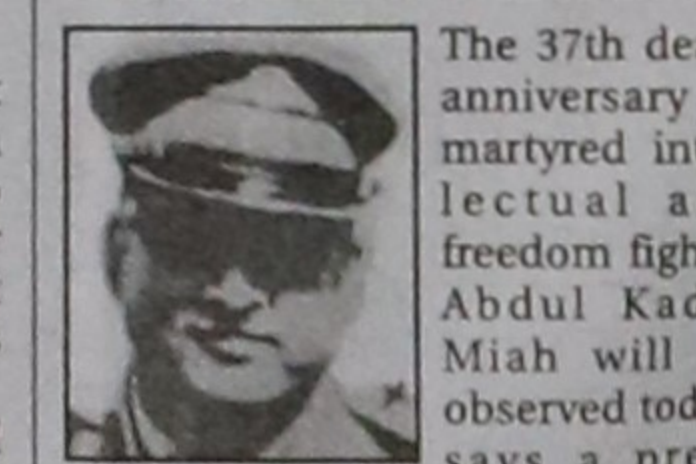
He was buried at George Washington Mount Lebanon Graveyard after a namaz-e-janaza at a local mosque, according to a message received yesterday.

Ahmed left behind his wife, two daughters and a host of grandchildren and admirers to mourn his death.

His qukhani will be held after Asr prayers at Gulshan Azad Mosque on June 6.

Death anniversary

DU CORRESPONDENT



release.

On the occasion, milad mahfil will be held at his home at Jamirata village in Shahjapur, Sirajganj and at Debiganj Jame Mosque in Panchagarh.

During the Liberation War, Abdul Kader Miah, then officer-in-charge of Debiganj Police Station, hoisted the Bangladesh flag at the police station on March 27.

The government published a commemorative stamp in his honour on November 15 in 1999.

Tobacco to kill 5 million people in 2008

Says Union report

BSS, Dhaka

Tobacco will kill more than five million people, mostly youths, globally this year superceding the death tolls from tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria, according a report of The Union, a France-based charity.

The report published on 'World No Tobacco Day' said the death toll would rise to eight million each year by 2030. This year's theme of the day is 'Tobacco and Youth'.

The burden is growing fastest in low and middle-income countries where 85 percent of world's 1.8 billion young people aged between 10 and 24 live in, it said.

Tobacco use among young people is a major challenge, said the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (IUATLD), which is called The Union in brief.

It said the younger children start to smoke or use tobacco and more likely they are to become regular consumers and the less likely to quit.

The Union suggested for imposing ban on tobacco promotion, imposing more taxes, and introducing graphic warning.

In Bangladesh, smoking prevalence was found to be 50 percent among men and 3 percent among women. In addition, 22 percent of men and 39 percent of women use smokeless tobacco in chewable form. Altogether, 62 percent of men and 41 percent of women either smoked or chewed tobacco products.

Five army men injured in pick-up plunge in Bandarban

UNB, Bandarban

Five army men were injured when a pick-up van fell into a hilly ravine at Farook para on Bandarban-Chimbur road yesterday.

Army sources said the accident occurred in the afternoon as the driver of the Ruma Garrison-bound pick-up, carrying the army personnel, lost control of the steering.

Injured Corporals Shafiullah and Shah Alam and soldiers Moslem, Shahin and Mosleh were admitted to the Military Hospital.



No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Chittagong division and at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 37.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 20.2 degrees at Cox's Bazar.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:42pm today and rises at 5:11am 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	35.0	25.2	82	72
Chittagong	30.7	24.0	75	72
Rajshahi	36.4	22.5	76	66
Khulna	35.5	26.5	80	88
Barisal	35.0	27.6	79	74
Sylhet	31.4	22.7	73	73
Cox's Bazar	31.5	20.2	63	74