

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Demand compensation from developed nations

Environmentalists urge affected countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the countries, including Bangladesh, who are severely affected by global climate change should demand compensation from the developed countries who are mainly responsible for it, environmentalists said at a seminar yesterday.

These countries should collectively undertake strong international advocacy and lobbying at the United Nation level to protect the environment, they added.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Nagorik Uddyog jointly organised the seminar on 'Environment and climate change: A human rights perspective' at WVA auditorium in the capital.

They speakers said the government should formulate a community-based climate change mitigation and adaptation plan and form disaster management committees at the union level.

Speaking as the chief guest, Bapa President Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said the global climate change would jeopardise the right to food.

Regional food production is likely to decline because of increasing temperatures, which causes grain sterility, desertification and a rise in sea level, he said.

He also said that the countries affected by climate change should raise the demand of compensation from developed countries for environmental damage.

Qazi Kholiqzaman Ahmad, president of Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA), said the developing countries like Bangladesh and poor people are the worst victims of climate change.

Bangladesh should take an initiative globally to ensure sustainable environment in the world, he said.

The developed countries should be made to adhere to internationally agreed-upon environmental targets and commitment to supporting developing countries, he added.

Zakir Hossain, joint secretary of Bapa, presented a keynote paper at the seminar. Prof Asif Nazrul, Prof Kazi Madina and Prof Nurul Nabi also spoke.

Dispose of charges

82 hajj agencies appeal to govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eighty-two hajj agencies yesterday appealed to the government to dispose of the allegations of mismanagement against them while handling the hajjis in 2007.

"If we are proved committing any wrongdoings, give us punishment but do not hang up the matter," said the leaders of the Society of Affected Hajj Agencies (Saha), a platform of the 82 hajj agencies, at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city.

"We urged the government to dispose of the allegations quickly and not to hang up the matter for months," said Abdur Rashid, proprietor of Al-Mamun International.

"If we are guilty, then tell us and take action accordingly," he said, adding, "We are not informed of the final decision whether we were proved committing wrongdoings or not."

"We are not allowed to handle the intending hajj pilgrims this year as an administrative team of the government brought allegations of mismanagement which is yet to be proved," said Mosleuddin Alamgir.

"The last date for submitting moallem fees is July 6 and if the authorities do not dispose of our matter quickly, we will incur huge losses," he said.

The accused hajj agencies also urged the government to allow them to work for intending hajjis until they are proved guilty.

Two robbed of Tk 2.5 lakh

3 muggers caught

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three muggers were captured and beaten up by a mob on Tajmahal Road at Mohammadpur in the capital yesterday while the fourth mugger of the same gang got away with Tk 50,000 after stabbing a butcher.

Five bombs and two knives were recovered from the three muggers - Selim, 30, Anwar, 40, and Jahir, 28.

Meanwhile in Badda, another gang of muggers snatched Tk 2.04 lakh, a cell phone set and a gold ring from a driver of a textile factory.

In the Mohammadpur incident, four muggers on a CNG-run three-wheeler waylaid butcher Mansur Bhandari alias Mansur Kasai, 40, in front of Central College while he was returning home after withdrawing Tk 50,000 from Al Arafah Islami Bank, Tajmahal Road branch at around 2:30pm, said police and witnesses.

The criminals stabbed Mansur severely as he resisted the robbery and tried to run to safety.

As the victim screamed out for help, locals chased three of the muggers down and handed them over to police after beating them up severely. Police later recovered the bombs and the knives from the criminals. Police also sent the victim to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

At Badda, two muggers abducted Dulal Miah, 35, a driver of Azad Textile and a resident of Adarshanagar at Badda, on a CNG auto-rickshaw from the road where he was waiting for a transport to go to Motijheel at around 2:00pm.

The abductors beat him up and dropped him off at Merul area of Badda at around 5:00pm after snatching his belongings -- Tk 2.04 lakh, a cell phone set and a gold ring.

Environment Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the World Environment Day-2008. The day is being observed in the country as elsewhere around the world with a view to creating awareness about low carbon emission and other environmental hazards.

Keeping in mind the much-talked-about global warming issue, this year the theme of the World Environment Day is 'Kick the Habit! Towards a Low Carbon Economy.'

While reading out a written text at a press conference at the secretariat yesterday, Environment and Forest Secretary AHM Rezaul Karim said, "It is not only making our lives vulnerable but related to existence of our next generations."

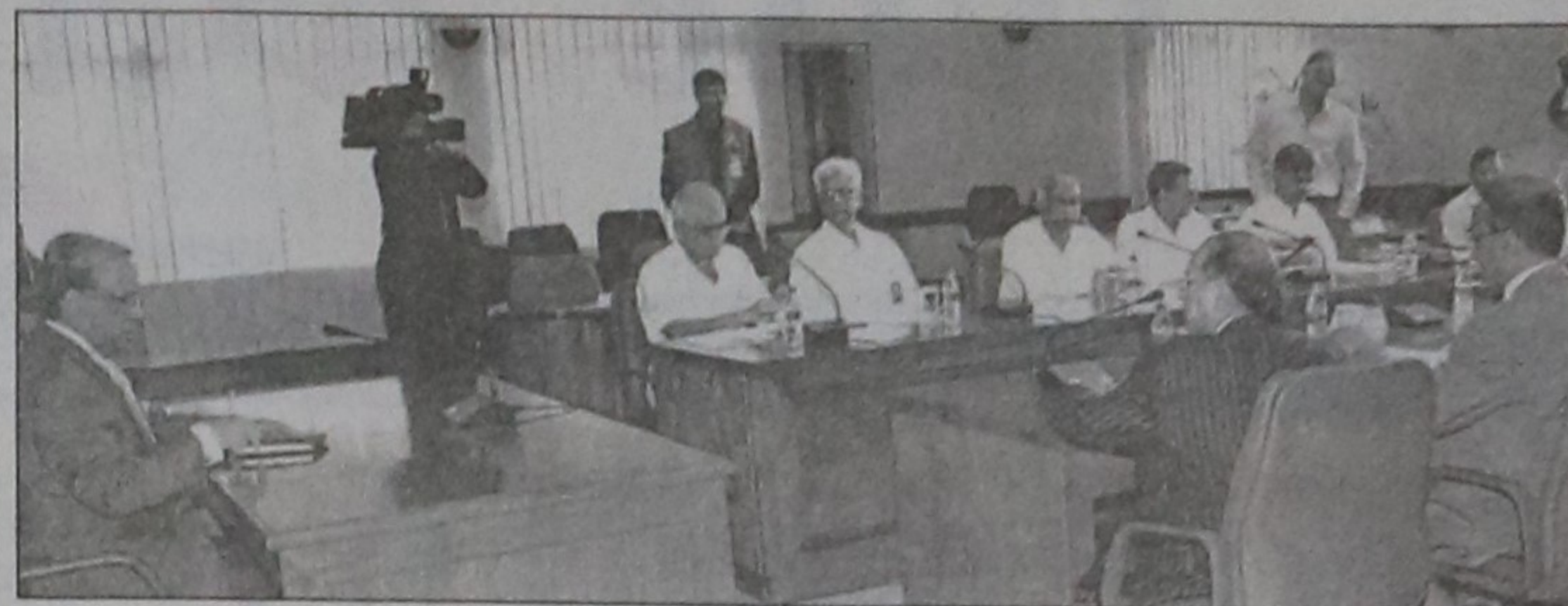
The conference was organised to announce a two-day programme on the eve of the World Environment Day.

Addressing the press conference, Chief Adviser's Special Assistant for Environment and Forest Raja Debashish Roy called on all to use renewable energy to face the threat of the climate change.

"Now the environment issue is not a thing to be tackled only by the government. All the citizens should come forward to face the crisis," he said.

He also said people in Bangladesh do not emit much carbon compared to that of the developed countries, but they are the worst victims of global warming.

A two-day Environment Fair begins in the city today to mark the day.



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed holds a meeting with Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) at his office in the city yesterday as part of the formal dialogue with the political parties and the government.

Challenge between West, Islam is clash of ignorance

Says US special envoy to OIC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Visiting US Special Envoy to Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Sada Cumber yesterday said the challenge between the West and Islam is not really a clash of civilisation, it is a clash of ignorance because Muslims need to learn to respect all the faiths.

There are misperceptions in the Muslim world when it comes to the role of the United States of America, he added.

Sada Cumber, who is in a two-day visit in Dhaka, said this while addressing a talk titled 'The USA and the OIC: Prospects for Engagement' at the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) at Gulshan in the city.

About the alleged harassment of Muslim travellers at the US airport, the US special envoy said these

issues have been relaxed so that Muslims from Bangladesh and other places and non-Muslims when they enter the US are received with dignity and respect.

"I assured the Bangladesh foreign ministry today that insaallah we will address these issues soon," added Sada Cumber.

He said, "There is a large presence of Bangladesh community in the US. I have already engaged myself in the dialogue with the Homeland Security secretary in dealing with some of these issues."

About his visit to Bangladesh, the US special envoy said, "The most encouraging thing that I've found in Bangladesh in the last 14 hours is that I see a great opportunity here."

He went on saying, "For the last 14 hours, ... I have seen that this is a truly pluralistic society that you have developed."

About his visit to Islamic University of Technology, he said what the Muslim World lacks today is good institution where we can have lots of research works.

"Where the Muslim Ummah is today is not absolutely acceptable. With 20 percent of the global population that represents 1.5 billion Muslims and having a GDP of less than 7 percent is not acceptable," he observed.

Sada Cumber's appointment as special envoy to OIC is part of the US effort to prove the quality of dialogue between the US and the Muslim world.

US Ambassador James F Moriarty and BEI President Farooq Sobhan also spoke at the talk.

Born in Karachi, Pakistan in 1951, he came to the United States in 1978 and has been a US citizen since 1986.

Make national budget gender responsive

Speakers tell govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday demanded of the government to make the national budget gender responsive.

They called for tax exemption from women's income, capital and their resources.

The speakers recommended exclusion of women from paying gift tax and women entrepreneurs from paying tax on cash loan worth over Tk 50,000.

They said non-government commercial banks should be provided with some incentives to encourage providing loans to women entrepreneurs.

The seminar was organised jointly by Bangladesh Nari Progoti Sangha (BNPS) and the Institute for Environment and Development (IED) at the National Press Club in the capital.

While presenting the keynote paper, a researcher Pratima Paul said revenue earning structure has created hindrance to achieving gender sensitivity in the national budget.

She said one of the purposes of tax policy is income redistribution, but it is not taking place in the country.

Since last few years it is also seen that no steps were taken to collect money from the rich and flow it towards the poor and women, she added.

Economist Dr Qazi Kholiqzaman Ahmad said if the policy structure is not strong, the budgetary tool would not be effective.

"There should be disaggregated analysis on budget to see its effect on women," said Dr Atiur Rahman, another economist, adding that budget monitoring must be strengthened.

Executive Director of Bangladesh Nari Progoti Sangha Rokeya Kabir, Ranjan Karmakar of Steps Towards Development, Ayesha Khanam of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Noman Ahmed Khan of IED, Dr Kaniz Siddiqui, Dr Rashid E Mahbub, Nurul Islam Nahid and Nasimun Ara Huq were present on the occasion.

Legal experts welcome Govt Attorney Service Ordinance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The legal experts yesterday hailed The Government Attorney Service Ordinance 2008 under which the government attorney department has been set up for dealing with cases in courts and performing other duties on behalf of the state.

Supreme Court Bar Association President Barrister Shafique Ahmed said if the attorneys are recruited through the Supreme Judicial Commission (SJC), their appointment would be more transparent and impartial.

As per the rules of the government attorney service ordinance, they will be recruited through the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the executive will have the control in the matter of appointment of the law officers, he added.

Former Additional Attorney General Barrister Abdur Razaque Khan said new attorney service is a good step, as the system will ensure dispensation of justice in a fair and impartial manner.

The attorney department was formed through a notification issued on Monday as per the provision of The Government Attorney Service Ordinance 2008, which was formulated on May 18 this year.

Ismail Hossain, joint secretary of the law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry, has been appointed director general (DG) of the government attorney department on deputation on Sunday. Talking to newsmen yesterday, he said he will join the office at AG Building on the Supreme Court (SC) premises today.



CPD Executive Director Mustafizur Rahman speaks at a press conference organised for the release of a paper on "State of the Bangladesh Economy in Fiscal Year 2008 and Outlook for Fiscal Year 2009" at CPD office in the city yesterday. On his right is Uttam Kumar Deb. (Story on Page 1)

Orbis working towards cataract-free nation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh chapter of Orbis International has been working towards making the country cataract-free by 2020, its officials said at a press conference in the city yesterday.

To achieve the goal, the organisation will treat two lakh cataract patients each year up to 2010 and the number will increase up to three lakh each year until 2015.

The sight-saving organisation is now working in five districts -- Manikganj, Joypurhat, Munshiganj, Jhenidah and Lalmonirhat -- to make them cataract-free, the officials said.

Blindness is a major public health problem in Bangladesh and major causes of blindness include cataract, childhood blindness, corneal infection and trauma, uncorrected refractive error and

diabetic retinopathy.

Eighty percent of the total blindness of the country is either preventable or curable with available quality treatment and sight restoring surgeries, the Orbis members said.

Some 7.5 lakh adults and 40,000 children are blind in the country while 1.5 million children and 6.5 million adults are suffering from various types of visual impairment. Every one million population has 4,000 cataract patients, said Orbis Country Director Dr Abu Raihan.

Ann Marie Gothard, director, Global Communication and Branding of Orbis International, Taskina Haq, media consultant, Orbis Bangladesh, and Dr Hasib Mahmud, senior programme officer, also spoke.

One stabbed to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unknown miscreants stabbed a sanitary carpenter to death in the city's Dakshinkhan area in the early hours of yesterday.

The victim, identified as Humayun Kabir, 27, of Sayedabad was found dead on the railway track at Shikdarer Bosti.

Quoting some of the slum dwellers, his elder brother Emran Hossain Lito said three to four criminals stabbed Humayun Kabir while he was returning home from Tongi.

Later, locals rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

DU student commits suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A female student of Dhaka University committed suicide at her residence at Paribagh in the city last night.

Rehnuma Taslim Antu, a student of economics, was found hanging from the ceiling with a scarf in her bedroom at around 10:15pm, her father Aftab Uddin Khan, a retired government official, told reporters.

He said Antu had been very upset for the last few days as she could not obtain first class in her master's examinations.

Aftab Uddin rushed Antu to Dhaka Medical College Hospital but the doctors declared her dead.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over all the six divisions, with moderately heavy rainfalls at places, in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

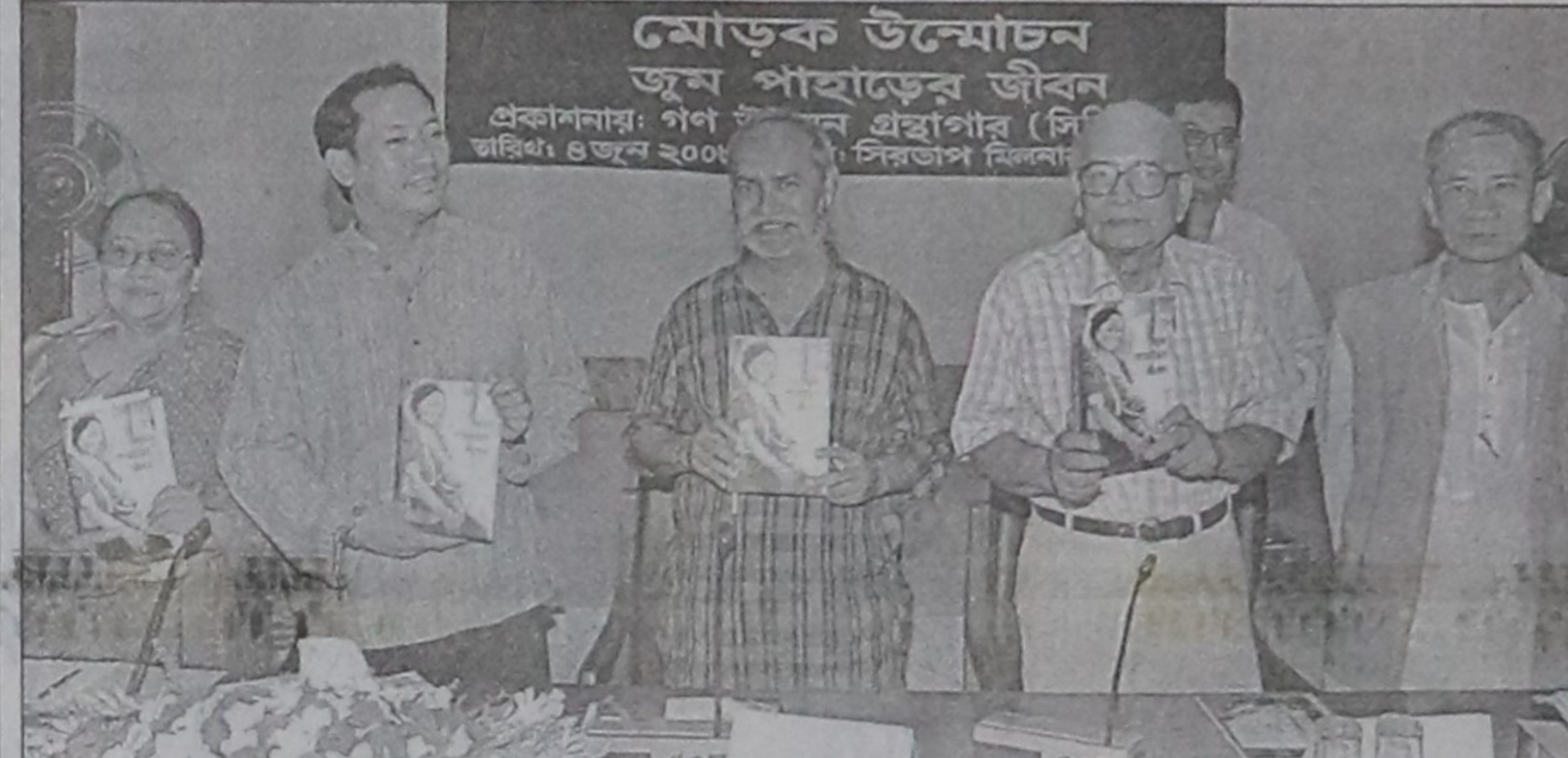
Met Office said day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country while rainfall activity may increase.

Highest temperature 36.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Comilla.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:44pm today and rises at 5:11am tomorrow.

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	34.4	26.8	77	69
Chittagong	31.1	26.2	76	81
Rajshahi	36.0	25.8	66	55
Khulna	35.2	27.5	81	58
Barisal	34.0	26.8	84	83
Sylhet	31.6	25.0	92	88
Cox's Bazar	32.9	26.0	77	75



The publication ceremony of a book titled 'Jhum Paharer Jibon' (Life in the Hill Tracts) was held at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. From left are writer Selina Hossain, Special Assistant to Chief Adviser Raja Debashish Roy, CDL Chairman Mohiuddin Ahmad, economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad and Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council Chairman Jotirindra Bodhipriya Larma.

Implement CHT agreement to solve problems of tribal people

Speakers tell publication ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a publication ceremony of a book yesterday said problems of the indigenous people should be solved with the implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts peace agreement and according to the guidelines of the constitution and focusing the peace agreement.

They said the main problem of the area is the land-related problem. It should be solved according to the guidelines of the constitution and focusing the peace agreement.

Speakers said this at the publication of the book titled 'Jhum Paharer Jibon' (Life in the Hill Tracts) published by Community Development Library (CDL) at the Cirdap auditorium in the city.

Eminent economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad opened the cover of the book.

Special Assistant to Chief Adviser Raja Debashish Roy was present at the inaugural function as the chief guest with CDL Chairman Mohiuddin Ahmad in the chair.

The speakers further said development programmes in the hilly areas should be taken after consulting with the local people so that the environment of the areas is not hampered.

Raja Debashish said some acts were passed according to some clauses of the peace agreement, but still many provisions of the agreement are not recognised in the state policies.

"To establish the rights of the indigenous people some guidelines were given in the constitution and programmes should be taken to establish those rights," he added.

Raja Debashish further said, "Talks should be held with all the stakeholders to finalise the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) including the tribal people."

He said if the development programmes in the hilly areas do not focus on the environment of the area, people will face scarcity of water and other problems will also rise further.

Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said the main problem in executing the peace agreement is the problem of land management in the area.

"Taking the main spirit of the

agreement, the next elected governments should solve the problems of the people of hill tracts."

He said such development programmes should not be taken that will pose a threat to the environment of the area.

He urged the government to include a clause in the National Women Development Policy for the development of tribal women.

Prof Muzaffer also called for conducting researches on the life in the hills.

Speaking at the ceremony, Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council Chairman Jotirindra

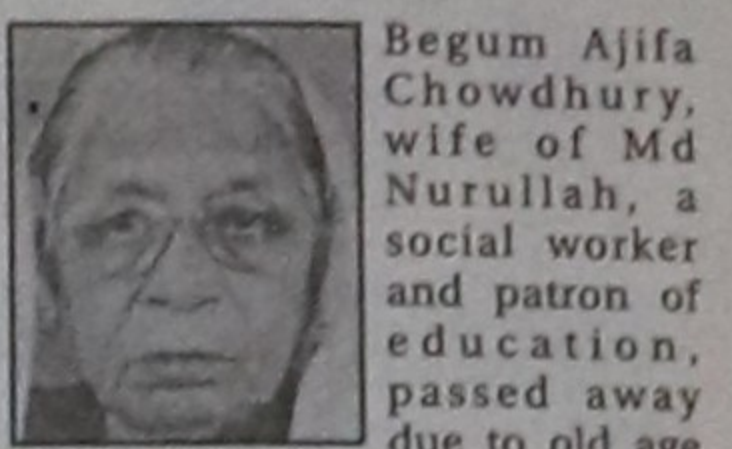
Bodhipriya Larma said, "Changes should be made in the social structures to establish our rights as the feudal thoughts are still in our society."

He said books should be written on the life of the tribal people of the plainlands.

He said, "When the agreement was signed, the government promised to execute it but now it is not showing any sign of executing the treaty."

Eminent litterateur Selina Hossain, Dhaka University Prof Dr Sadeka Halim, women leader Chaitali Tripura and Rabinadrath Sharen also spoke.

Obituary



Begum Ajifa Chowdhury, wife of Md Nurullah, a social worker and patron of education, passed away due to old age complications at her residence in the city on Tuesday at the age of 79, says a press release.

She left behind her three sons, two daughters and a host of admirers to mourn her death.

She was buried at the graveyard adjacent to Ojibad Jame Mosque of Charchamita in Lakshimpur yesterday.

MA Jalil

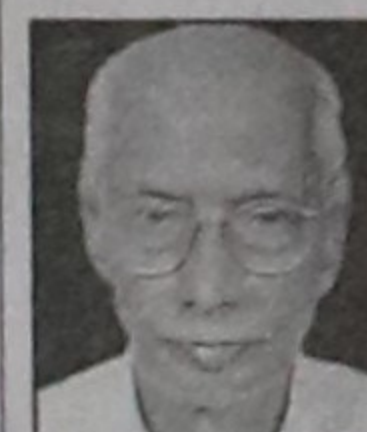


MA Jalil, member of the central committee of Bangladesh Jatiyatobadi Samik Dal, passed away at the age of 95, says a press release.

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

He was buried at his family graveyard at Bhanipour under Uzurpur upazila in Barisal.

Manoranjan Das



Manoranjan Das, a devotee of Gurubhajanand, passed away at his residence at Maghbazar in the city on May 25 at the age of 95, says a press release.

A prayer for salvation of his departed soul will be held at Gurudham in the city tomorrow.

Death anniversary



Today is the first death anniversary of Prof AIM Mofakharul Islam, a renowned physician and former principal of the Mymensingh Medical College and founding principal of CBMCB, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at Jobeda Community Centre in Mymensingh after Asr prayers.

Relatives, friends, colleagues, teachers, students and admirers are requested to attend the programme and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Atiqur Rahman



Today is the 20th death anniversary of Atiqur Rahman, an organiser of the War of Liberation and founder president of city of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), says a press release.

His relatives, friends, colleagues and admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

Lutfunnessa Ibrahim



Today is the 8th death anniversary of Begum Lutfunnessa Ibrahim, wife of Justice Late Mohammed Ibrahim, says a press release.

On this occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at her residence in the morning.

Food will also be distributed among the destitute and wreaths will be placed at her grave at Banani Graveyard in the city.

Workshop on exstrophy bladder ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A nine-day workshop on "Exstrophy bladder", a complex paediatric urological birth defect, concluded in the city yesterday.

Paediatric surgery department of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BMMU) and Association of Paediatric Surgeons of Bangladesh (APSB) organised the workshop at BSMU Hospital, Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), and Dhaka Shishu Hospital, says a press release.

Bladder exstrophy is an abnormality of the lower part of the stomach where the bladder, the urethra, the pelvis and the genitalia are affected. These defects can be corrected by operations.

During the workshop, operations were successfully conducted on 10 patients with bladder exstrophy at BSMU, DMCH and Dhaka Shishu Hospital.

Paediatric surgeons and post graduate students took part in the workshop.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) in collaboration with Unicef will organise a seminar on 'Ecological sanitation for healthy environment and sustainable agricultural development in Bangladesh'. Venue: Cirdap Auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

Rally

Department of Geography and Environment of Dhaka University will hold a rally to mark the World Environment Day. Venue: In front of the department. Time: 9:30am.

Discussion

United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) organises a discussion on 'Towards a low carbon economy' to mark the World Environment Day. Venue: Scouts Bhaban. Time: 4:00pm.

Seminar

Department of Environment, Waste Concern, Grameen Shakti and Rahimafrooz Renewable Energy Ltd jointly organise a seminar on 'Unlocking mitigation potential through renewable energy technologies in Bangladesh'. Venue: Osmani Memorial auditorium.

Photo exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of a photography exhibition on climate change will be held. FK Bangladesh Network organises the exhibition. Venue: Dik Gallery. Time: 4:00pm. The exhibition will remain open till June 11 from 3:00pm to 8:00pm everyday.

Roundtable

Forest and Environment Sub Committee of Bangladesh Awami League organises a roundtable to mark the World Environment Day. Venue: Engineers Institute. Time: 10:00am.

Seminar

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) and Bangladesh Inland Navigation Authority with the support of World Health Organization (WHO) organise an anti-tobacco seminar. Venue: DAM auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of the book 'Tajuddin Ahmed: Bangladeshher Ahayuddi Abong Tarpur' (Tajuddin Ahmed: Emergence of Bangladesh and afterwards) will be held. Venue: Liberation War Museum. Time: 4:30pm.