

Form nat'l commission to ensure indigenous people's rights

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A study of Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) yesterday revealed that some 61.44 percent of indigenous people still face discrimination, 41.86 percent are victims of corruption, and 18.67 percent evicted from their ancestors' land.

The study titled 'Legal and human rights of ethnic minorities in Bangladesh' was conducted on 332 indigenous people of Jessore, Mymensingh, Chapainawabganj, Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Pabna, Rangamati and Sylhet districts from April 2007 to March 2008.

According to the study, 50 percent of these people are not getting fair price of their agricultural products while 49.39 percent complained that they are not getting treatment in public hospitals.

Presenting the findings at a

workshop at the Cirdap auditorium in the city, Prof Nazrul Islam of Dhaka University said as around 1.2 million indigenous people of the country are yet to be recognised as special or indigenous communities constitutionally, they are deprived of enjoying their rights and facing discrimination.

He said some 30.12 percent of indigenous people are not getting educational facilities while 22.89 percent of them are facing threats and violence.

He called for strengthening security of life and property of the minority communities in the country and upholding the basic human rights of all citizens as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Prof Nazrul also called for halting land grabbing and forced eviction of the indigenous communities ensuring full implementation

of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Peace Treaty, and monitoring the activities of law enforcement agencies in the CHT by an independent body.

"Laws in the CHT should be revised to meet international human rights standard and a National Human Rights Commission should be formed as a matter of priority to address the human rights situation in the CHT," he added.

As it is very expensive to ensure Human Rights (HR) through the High Court, it is a must to establish an independent National HR Commission immediately, said Prof Mesbah Kamal of Dhaka University, adding that the representation of indigenous people in the HR Commission must be ensured.

He said by providing voter ID cards, a process is going on to

legalise the settlers including those who went to CHT areas even two to three months ago.

"The problems regarding ethnic minorities will remain until the plurality is recognised in the country," said Prof Kamal, highlighting the grabbing of lands of indigenous people in different areas.

Demanding institutional recognition, Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, urged the government to enact national laws in the light of ILO Convention, Conventional Biological Diversity and Child Rights Convention (CRC) that have been ratified by the government.

He also called for recognising the human rights of indigenous people.

Presided over by Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelly, the workshop was moderated by Advocate Alena Khan, executive director of BSEHR.

Create alternative force to overcome present crisis

Leaders of small parties call at dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of different small political parties yesterday called for unity among themselves to create an alternative force to help overcome the present crisis.

The call was made at a national political dialogue titled 'Remedies of present crisis' at the National Press Club in the capital.

Leaders of around 33 small political parties attended the dialogue organised by Krishak Sramik Janata League (KSJL) President Kader Siddique Bir Uttam.

The leaders said the only way to come out of the crisis is to hold the national election and form a democratic government.

Kader Siddique said they would formulate a guideline soon for forming unity with other political parties.

"The country got its independence under a single leadership, then was run for long under a single leadership in many forms, but now people do not want single leadership any more," he added.

Kader Siddique said only collective leadership can ensure the fruits of independence for all.

He blamed the political leaders for irresponsibility that caused the changed in January 2007.

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) Secretary General Maj (ret) Abdul Mannan said owing to weak

leadership the country lags behind in many respects.

He said the political parties should get united to bring out the country from the crisis.

Maj Mannan said handing over power to an elected government is the only way to end the crisis.

"If the caretaker government fails to hold the election by December then the people would have no other option but to go for movement," he added.

Najim Uddin Al Azad, president of Bangladesh Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP), said unity among the

political parties is the need of the hour.

He said some try to divide the parties terming small and big ones, but the fact is that the big one cannot go to power without the help of small parties.

National Peoples Party Chairman Sheikh Shawkat Hossain Nilu, Jatiya Gonatantrik Party President Shafiul Alam Pradhan, National Awami Party (Bhashani) President Sheikh Anwarul Haque, and Chairman of a faction of Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) Mlsbahur Rahman were present at the dialogue.



PHOTO: STAR
Krishak Sramik Janata League President Kader Siddique speaks at a political dialogue at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Maj (Retd) Abdul Mannan and on his left are Shafiul Alam Pradhan, Shawkat Hossain Nilu and AB Khandaker Golam Mortuza.

ROAD NETWORK

JBIC team arrives in Ctg today to conduct study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A 14-member team of Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) arrives in Chittagong today to conduct a special assistance for project formation study for two projects to develop road network and flood protection embankments.

Under the two projects financed by JBIC, two four-lane roads-cum-embankments would be developed along the coast and the river Karnaphuli to form parts of the Outer Ring Road of the city at a cost of Tk 10,000 crore.

In the first week of March, JBIC signed an agreement with the government to carry out the study on these two projects - Coastal Road Construction and Embankment Strengthening Project and New Karnaphuli River Road Construction Project.

According to sources, seven Japanese experts and engineers led by Kazuhiro Hasegawa of Nippon Engineering will arrive here today to join the 14-member JBIC team.

Nippon Engineering and Japan Engineering Consultant are the two Japanese firms appointed as consultants through an international tender held in Tokyo on April 20 for implementing the project, sources said.

UK firm keen to introduce WiMax tech in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Augere, a UK-based broadband infrastructure developer, has expressed interests to introduce WiMax technology in Bangladesh.

Sanjiv Ahuja, chief executive officer of the company, yesterday met the telecoms regulator chief and expressed his desire to work with Bangladesh in setting up satellites in orbit.

Augere is a new company headquartered in London and it focuses on broadband internet infrastructure development.

According to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) officials, Ahuja, who is also chairman of UK-based Orange Telecom, showed keen interest to be involved in Bangladesh's telecom sector.

Ahuja's new company, Augere, will undertake processes to acquire license for WiMax, said BTRC officials.

WiMAX is a wireless digital communications system, which can provide broadband 'wireless' access across 30 miles for fixed phone, and 3-10 miles for mobile stations.

According to BTRC plans, they will introduce WiMAX and 3G by this year.

The Bangladesh government recently announced its plans to send satellites of its own into earth's orbit to develop the sky communication infrastructure.

'Declare DA for non-govt teachers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote yesterday demanded the government declare dearness allowance for non-government teachers by June 16, says a press release.

In a statement, its leaders said non-government teachers and employees are upset to see that there is no declaration in the budget about their dearness allowance.

The statement added that the education secretary in a recent meeting with the government employees had earlier said that non-government teachers would also get dearness allowance.

Prof Ali Imdad passes away

BSS, Chittagong

Former Pro-Vice Chancellor of Chittagong University Prof Ali Imdad Khan passed away due to old age complications on Monday night at his residence in Dhaka at the age of 73.

Prof Khan left behind his three daughters and one son to mourn his death. CU Vice Chancellor Prof M Badiul Alam, in a condolence message yesterday, expressed his profound shock at his death.

Death anniversary

Today is the 7th death anniversary of Dr MM Hossain, a noted physician and a social worker, says a press release.

On the occasion, Quarkhwal and milad mahfil will be held at his son's residence at Gulshan in the city.

Delwar Hossain

BSS, Dhaka

Today is the 5th death anniversary of Delwar Hossain, news editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his Mirpur journalists Housing Society residence while Quarkhwal will be at his Kafilur house. Foods will be distributed at Kafilur orphanage. A milad mahfil will also be held at this village home at Gazaria in Munshiganj the same day.

India destroy Pakistan

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removed as was the prolific Mohammad Yousuf. Akmal slammed two sixes and four boundaries but he tried one too many shots and capitulated at the hands of debutant Yusuf Pathan to give Praveen his fourth wicket. The Meerut-born swing bowler, who relies on his variation, took his third four-wicket haul in only his sixth ODI.

Pakistan skipper Shoaib Malik made a 67-ball 53 but by then, the game was well and truly over as Misbahul Haq and Shahid Afridi were gone by that time although their run-rate was above

five runs an over. Piyush Chawla weaved his leg-spin around the Pakistan middle and lower order, taking four wickets for 40 runs and completed the rout with the wicket of Wahab Riaz in the 36th over.

But it was man-of-the-match Sehwaq's initial explosion that destroyed Pakistan's morale. On a belter of a wicket, Sehwaq cut and drove his way to nine boundaries and smashed a six over long-on as he reached 89 in no time. But it ended when he tried to play a late cut-off left-armed Wahab but it went as far as Akmal's gloves. His partnership with Gambhir yielded 155 runs in just 21.3 overs with the left-hander hitting a run-a-ball 62 with six boundaries.

Yuvraj Singh's half-century complemented the Delhi pair's opening act as India looked on course for a 300-plus score.

Not only through their poor bowling, the Pakistanis helped out in the field by dropping two chances offered by Gambhir and Sehwaq, on 43, edged to Akmal but when he almost reached the dressing room, he was sent back by his teammates after replays suggested that the ball fell short of the Pakistani wicketkeeper. Third umpire ruled and the batsman was given a reprieve.

Yuvraj smashed Afridi over mid-wicket twice and slammed Rao Iftikhar for his third six over long-off. The stylish

left-hander also stroked three boundaries in his 54-ball 55 before Umar Gul terminated his innings.

India wobbled for a while after Rohit Sharma fell but Yuvraj's 38-run stand with skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni provided the innings its final push towards a huge score. Dhoni pulled, slashed and backed Wahab for three boundaries in the 42nd over but the Indian captain's knock was cut short when he fell leg-before to a Sohail Tanveer full-toss for 25 off 24 balls.

None of the Pakistani bowlers made any impact on the match and it got worse when Wahab Riaz was given the marching orders before he could finish his ten-over spell for bowling two batters in the 24th and 46th over. He gave away 86 from 9.2 overs to cap off a pathetic day.

While the Pakistanis pondered who will bowl the four balls that remained, captain Shoaib Malik was seen pointing to his shoulders when Younis Khan suggested he bowl.

In the middle of all that mess, Suresh Raina slammed two huge sixes in his 22-ball 26.

Gul finished with three wickets and there were two each for Afridi and Wahab while Tanveer took one.

Tomorrow, Bangladesh take on India in the final league match of the competition at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

56 Bangladeshis return home after serving in Indian jail

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A total of 56 Bangladeshi citizens, who served two years in Indian jail, were handed over yesterday to the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel and immigration police by the Border Security Force (BSF).

Another 53 people were handed over a day before by the BSE. With this, a total of 109 Bangladeshi citizens were handed over to the Bangladesh authorities.

Police said these people went to India two years ago searching for better jobs and were caught by Indian police and sent to Damdam Jail in Kolkata.

Of them, 54 workers were from Sathkira, one from Sylhet and the other from Dhanpur districts.

Bangladesh Mahila Ainjibi Samity brought them back by contacting the jail authorities.

BMAS Officer advocate Sadeka Khatun and Programme Officer Lavlu Mia received the workers from the Benapole land port police.

Human chain

to save N'ganj Kumudini sports ground

DU CORRESPONDENT

Sportsmen, sports organisers and leaders of different local organisations yesterday formed a human chain in front of the district press club demanding steps to save Kumudini sports ground in Narayanganj, says a press release.

Leaders of different local sports organisations participated in the programme.

They called on the authorities of Kumudini Welfare Trust (KWT) to hold view exchange meetings with local sports organisers and leaders of other organisations before selling the sports ground.

Later, three separate memoranda were submitted to the deputy commissioner, police super and KWT authorities in order to save the ground. They will observe a token hunger strike in front of the press club on June 13, Narayanganj District Sports Association General Secretary AZM Ismail Babu and Vice President Kutubuddin Afsar took part.

Prof Rahman Math Society president

Prof M Shamsur Rahman, a mathematician and fellow of the World Innovation Foundation, has been elected president of the Bangladesh Mathematical Society for the year 2008-09, says a press release.

Prof Rahman taught at Dhaka, Rajshahi and Jahangirnagar University in Bangladesh and Islamabad University in Pakistan.

A good number of papers and features of Prof Rahman were published in recognised journals at home and abroad.

PK Roy made council chair of Lions Clubs International

In PK Roy was elected council chairperson of Lions Clubs International, Multiple District 315 for 2008-2009, says a press release.

He became member of Lions Club in 1988 through Lions Club of Dhaka Shahab.

Abducted girl rescued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police yesterday rescued a 12-year-old girl, who was abducted on June 7, in front of the Eastern Plaza Market at Hatirpool in the city.

The police earlier arrested two kidnappers - Sara, 20, and Mintu, 22. The girl, a student of Ideal School and College, was abducted in front of her school, the police said.

Motijheel police first arrested Sara in Dhaka after a case was filed. And Mintu was arrested from Gurudaspur in Natore on Monday night.

The victim's father received a call yesterday from an unknown person saying that the girl is now waiting in front of the Eastern Plaza.

On receiving information, the investigation officer rushed to the scene and rescued the girl.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) organises a seminar on 'Elimination of worst form of child labour: Role of the government and the civil society'. Venue: Meghna Hall, Biam, Time: 10:00am.

Festival

Dhakabashi organises a seasonal fruit festival beginning from today. Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy premises. Time: 4:45pm.

Conference

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) organises the Second National Conference on 'Trends in militancy in Bangladesh and possible responses' and will launch the book 'Countering terrorism in Bangladesh'. Venue: BEI conference room. Time: 9:00am.

Seminar

Bangladesh Astronomical Society and Bangladesh Open Source Network organise a seminar on zero gravity experience. Venue: FREPD auditorium, Nilkhet. Time: 5:00pm.

Discussion

Community Participation and Development will hold a discussion titled 'The role of media in eliminating child labour'. Venue: Social Welfare Directorate. Time: 10:30am.

View exchange meeting

National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) organises a view exchange meeting on 'The right to employment of persons with disabilities'. Venue: LGED Bhaban. Time: 10:00am.

Seminar

Imagine a New South Asia (INSA) and Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad organise a seminar titled 'Food security and water issues in South Asia'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Scholars Debate organises a discussion on ways to get rid of criminalisation. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

View exchange meeting

Acid Survivors Network and Poriprekshiti will organise a view exchange meeting on a documentary made by acid survivors. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity. Time: 3:00pm.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Moderately heavy to heavy rainfalls are also expected at places during the period. Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 34.7 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 23.7 degrees Celsius also at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:46pm today and rises at 5:10am 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	30.0	25.7	88	76
Chittagong	30.8	25.5	77	83
Rajshahi	31.6	24.4	88	72
Khulna	31.0	25.0	95	85
Barisal	29.5	25.5	100	88
Sylhet	34.7	23.7	81	74
Cox's Bazar	31.4	24.2	88	77