

# Make UN stronger to prevent torture across globe

## Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations has lost its credibility to prevent torture across the world, speakers at a roundtable said yesterday.

They also said that the state-sponsored torture of politicians and common people can never be supported.

Odhikar, a human rights organisation, organised the roundtable at the National Press Club in the city to mark the United Nations International Day in Support of the Victims of Torture.

Speaking at the roundtable, BNP Secretary General Khandaker

Delwar Hossain stressed the need for making the United Nations stronger.

"Most developing countries are now questioning the role of the United Nations. But if there was no such entity, the imperialist forces would commit misdeeds mindlessly," he said.

Presenting the keynote paper, Adviser to Odhikar Farhad Mazhar said, "As Bangladesh has ratified the Convention against Torture (CAT) in 1998 and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in 2000 and has adopted Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman

or Degrading Treatment and Punishment in 2006, the government is obliged to be accountable to international community."

He said information extracted from detainees through torture is being used against the victims, which is unethical.

Senior journalist ABM Musa said that before the election, every political party makes a commitment to prevent torture, but as soon as they go to power, they become torturers.

Each government will have to be held accountable for their acts of torture one day, he said.

It is the responsibility of every citizen to ensure that the govern-

ment does not commit torture, said Prof Dr Mizanur Rahman.

"If any government commits torture, it must make public apology and compensate the victims," he said, adding that the rule of law is a must for good governance.

Chairman of Bangladesh Policy Forum Mahmudur Rahman, former attorney general Abdur Reza Khan, Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kori, Dr Anwar Hossain, journalist Ataus Samad, Advocate Shimul Biswas and Secretary of Jatiya Mukti Council Dr Fayzul Hakim Lala also spoke at the roundtable moderated by Advocate Adilur Rahman Shuvo.

# Call for social movement to fight drug abuse, trafficking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Adviser Maj Gen (retd) MA Matin yesterday said drug abuse and its illicit trafficking is a major problem which cannot be resolved only by enforcing laws and issuing threat of punishment.

Side by side applying laws, the home adviser underscored the need for waging a massive social movement and creating awareness against drug abuse to root out the menace from the personal life, family and the society.

"Awareness should be created in every individual, while the head of every family must have to be alert in order to fight the problem effectively," he told a function organised by the Department of Narcotics Control at the Jatiya Natyashala auditorium in the city to mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

Drug abuse is not an internal problem of Bangladesh rather it is a transnational one where developed countries are unable to keep them above the problem, he added.

"Different preventive measures in this regard have proved to be futile as the deadly drug and its economy cost are having a corrosive effect on the society through many newly invented means," he said, adding drugs are hampering social tranquility and stability.

To manage money for drugs, the home adviser said desperate users involve themselves in various crimes that are a constant threat to the country's law and order situation.

"Drugs have eaten into the vitals of the human lives, especially of the younger generation resulting in 40 crore people addicts worldwide," he said, adding that the turnover from drug business is amounted at \$400 billion per year.

Listing a number of steps taken by the government, Matin called on all to come forward and play an active role to win the fight against drug

abuse and its illicit trafficking.

To observe the day, different organisations chalked out programmes aiming at motivating the people, especially the younger generation to refrain from using drugs.

Jatiya Ganatantrik League at a discussion at its office urged the government to provide an alternative agricultural production facility for those who are involved in drug production in the country.

The United Nations and the developed countries should grant subsidy for alternative food production to stop drug production and illicit trafficking, it added.

Bangladesh Nari Mukti Andolon also organised a discussion at its office at Lalmitia stressing the need for a halt to drug production and distribution through alternative food production.

Presided over by its President Fatema Khatun, the speakers at the discussion said women in poor families are more vulnerable as most of the drug abusers are male and they

have a tendency to repress their wives for money.

This year the day has been observed with the slogan "Do drugs control your life? No place of drugs in your life and community."

Ahban, a drug addiction rehabilitation centre, organised a seminar and brought out a procession to give due importance on the issue of public awareness and its impact on the young generation at Shanta Mariam University of Creative Technology at Uttara.

Marking the day, a rally was also held in front of the Brac University followed by a discussion.

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) organised a press conference at its office at Lalmitia stressing the need for a halt to drug production and distribution through alternative food production.

DAM President Kazi Rafiqul Alam and former inspector general of police Dr M Enamul Huq addressed the press conference.



Former adviser M Hafizuddin Khan speaks at a press conference at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left is Prof Muzaffer Ahmad and on his right is Shahzada Akram. TIB organised the press conference to unveil the Global Corruption Report 2008. (Story on Page 1)

# Tk 622.7cr CCC budget announced

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) yesterday announced a Tk 622.06,76,000 budget for 2008-09 fiscal.

Acting Mayor M Monzur Alam declared the budget at the auditorium of Theatre Institute of Chittagong on noon.

He said special emphasis has been laid on five new projects worth over Tk 365 crore for massive infrastructure development of the port city having around 40 lakh population and one lakh 21 thousand holdings.

He however said the implementation of the projects aimed at making Chittagong a commercial capital in true sense depends by and large on getting government allocation or fund in due time, an issue that has long been holding back the expected progress of the city.

"Against Tk 396,79,92,000 budget of last fiscal (2007-08), we actually got Tk 208,22,50,000 to run the CCC," he added.

Pointing to this 'frustrating' scenario regarding government's allocation, Monzur alleged that the CCC is an example of deprivation for a long period, and said no project of the corporation had been incorporated in the annual development programme (ADP) in last 15 years until recently when a Tk 96 crore project was included in it.

Against such a reality, the five ambitious projects that have been taken up are: (1) Tk 190.80 crore project for the development of infrastructure, drainage and environment, (2) Tk 100 crore project for the development of kuchcha roads in least developed wards, (3) Tk 24.98 crore Rajkhal canal excavation-cum-approach road project, (4) Tk 24.80 crore project for completing the works of Shah Ananar International Airport Road-cum-Moheshkhal canal, and (5) Tk 24.75 crore garbage preservation and processing project.

"We hope to get the first installment of Tk 100 crore against these projects in next fiscal year," he added.

Citing 'zone-wise' decentralisation of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), the mayor emphasised the need for similar model for the CCC.

and said he has already sent a letter in this regard to the ministry concerned asking for dividing the CCC into six zones and approve the proposed organogram.

He said a huge amount of dues worth around Tk 296 crore remains unpaid by different government organisations and it is another factor that holds the corporation back to a large extent.

"Of this, the largest defaulter is Chittagong Port Authority that owes a total of Tk 221 crore 75 lakh to us, followed by Bangladesh Railway Eastern Zone (Tk 45 crore 44 lakh), Chittagong Development Authority (Tk 7 crore 41 lakh) and different government educational institutions (Tk 4 crore 6 lakh)," the mayor said, adding that the dues are unpaid for over 15 to 16 years.

"We could successfully carry out

many of our development projects without any financial assistance from the government if we get these unpaid dues soon," he said.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Hossain Jamil, who was present as chief guest, termed the CCC budget a 'balanced' one and urged all to play their respective role for the greater benefit of the port city.

He advised the CCC mayor to take appropriate steps and knock at the proper places in the ministries concerned to resolve the issue of unpaid dues of the corporation.

Chief Executive Officer AKM Khairul Alam, Secretary Md Shamsuddoha, Chief Accounts Officer Narayan Chandra Paul, chairman of different standing committees and ward commissioners were also present on the occasion.



## Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Day temperature may fall slightly over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sayedpur and lowest 25.1 degrees Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:14am 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	32.8	27.5	76	69
Chittagong	31.5	26.0	73	89
Rajshahi	33.5	26.5	81	77
Khulna	33.4	26.8	79	74
Barisal	32.0	26.5	95	84
Sylhet	31.6	27.0	88	78
Cox's Bazar	30.2	25.4	80	90

# Iajuddin's condition improves

UNB, Dhaka

Health condition of President Iajuddin Ahmed, now undergoing treatment at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the city, improved further yesterday, Bangabhaban officials said.

Speaker Barrister Muhammed Jamiruddin Sircar, Navy Chief Vice Admiral Sarwar Zahan Nizam, Air Chief Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman and Cabinet Secretary Ali Imam Majumdar visited the ailing president yesterday and inquired about his health.

The president was admitted to the CMH on June 23 with high viral fever.

## BSF kills 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidaha

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi national on Shamkur border under Mohehpur upazila of Jhenidaha district early yesterday.

The victim was identified as Jamal, 25, son of Abul Kader of Shamkur village under the upazila.

Locals and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) sources said a patrol team of Indian border guards opened fire on some Bangladeshi nationals while they were trying to cross Shamkur frontier near pillar no 60 at around 3:30am.

Jamal received bullets and died instantly, while others managed to escape. The BSF men took away the body and did not return as of 5:00pm yesterday.

# Journo Balu's 4th death anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Journalists will observe the fourth death anniversary of Dainik Janmabhumi editor Humayun Kabir Balu here today through various programmes.

The programmes include laying of wreaths at his memorial plaque at 9:30am, a discussion at 10:00am and a milad mahfil at 11:30am at the Khulna Press Club VIP lounge.

Khulna Union of Journalists (KUJ) will arrange a discussion at its office on the occasion. Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, former president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) will attend the discussion as the chief guest.

Humayun Kabir Balu, editor of the local daily Dainik Janmabhumi was bombed to death on this day in 2004 in front of his residence-cum-office at Haji Ismail Road under Khulna Sadar Police Station.

Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddho) claimed responsibility for the murder in a faxed message to Khulna Press Club.

The judge of Khulna Speedy Trial Tribunal Abdus Salam Shikder delivered the judgement in the murder case on February 13 this year acquitting all the seven accused of the charges.

But the case pertaining to explosive substances act is still under trial in the Special Court No-3, Khulna.

# 3 arrested with phensidyl in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police yesterday arrested three people from the Dumuria upazila bus stand here with phensidyl.

Police said the arrestees identified as city Awami League leader Matir Rahman Moti, Kauser Khan and Mintu Kabir were carrying phensidyl to Khulna from Bhomra border of Satkhira district.

Daud Hossain, officer-in-charge of Dumuria Police Station, said 42 bottles of Indian phensidyl were recovered from their possession.

Police also seized a motorcycle. Police said Moti has confessed to the crime during the interrogation in Dumuria Police Station. He was also arrested on December 31 last year with 30 bottles of phensidyl smuggled from India through Bhomra border, police added.



Awami League acting President Zillur Rahman addresses a meeting of the AL Central Working Committee at the party office at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

# 4 women injured in Satkhira blast

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Four housewives, including three of a family, were injured when a bomb went off at village Krishna Nagar under Tala upazila in Satkhira yesterday.

The injured are Etika Rani Sarker, 46, wife of Nirapada Sarker, Sabita Rani Sarker, 24, wife of Milon Sarker, Bijoli Rani Sarker, 20, wife of Uttam Kumar Sarker and Amita Rani Sarker, 36, wife of Mrinal Sarker.

Local people rushed them to a local hospital in critical condition. Later, Sabita Rani and Amita Rani were shifted to a Khulna hospital as their condition deteriorated.

Quoting local people police said Etika Rani got a small box with lid while fishing in a canal yesterday.

She brought the box home thinking there might be either money or valuables inside the box, but when they opened the lid, it exploded.

# Mayor aspirants for SCC stand at 29

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

With nine more candidates collecting nomination papers yesterday, the total number stood at 29 for Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) election.

The number of aspirants, who collected their nomination papers for the ward commissionership, stood at 244 with 49 forms collected yesterday.

Meanwhile, nine more women aspirants took their nomination papers for the reserved seats putting the total figure at 45, said Deputy Election Commissioner for Sylhet division Khondker Mizanur Rahman.

Nomination forms were also collected yesterday in the names of detained mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran and former upazila chairman Babul Hossain Babul.

Other nomination seekers are Zia Mancha Convenor Dr Arif Ahmed Mumtaz Rifa, freedom fighter (FF) Mohiuddin, FF advocate Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, incumbent ward commissioner Rezaul Hasan Lodi (Koyes Lodi), JP Sylhet city chief advocate Abdul Hai Quaiyyum, Md Salah Uddin Rimon and Manoranjan Talukder.

However, Lodi also collected another nomination form to run for ward commissioner.

On the other hand, only M Kutub Uddin Ahmed of Liberal Party yesterday filed his nomination paper so far for mayorship. He ran for the mayorship during the first SCC polls in 2003.

He said the purchase process was initiated by the BNP government in 1991 and was implemented during the Awami League rule in 1996.

## IODINE DEFICIENCY

# 38m children born globally at risk of brain damage every yr: Unicef

Unicef yesterday issued a major report on iodine deficiency disorders (IDD), the single greatest cause of preventable mental retardation, which looks at progress made in preventing the problem over the past two decades, lessons learned and guiding principles for future success, says a press release.

IDD results from a diet low in iodine, which is particularly damaging during early pregnancy because it retards foetal development, especially brain development, causing a range of intellectual, motor and hearing deficits.

However, the problem is easily and inexpensively prevented by iodizing all salt for human and animal consumption, highlights the report titled Sustainable Elimination of Iodine Deficiency.

"The report shows how governments, the salt industry and communities, with Unicef support, have made great progress over the past 20 years in eliminating iodine deficiency

## DRAMA FESTIVAL BLAST

# Galib, 5 others acquitted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Chief of Ahle Hadith Andolan (Ahab) Asadullah Al Galib and five other accused were acquitted yesterday in a case filed in connection with the explosions at a drama festival in Takier Bazar of Gaibandha on December 20, 2004.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Sharafuddin Azad delivered the verdict in a packed courtroom, where Galib and the five accused were present, saying that the prosecution failed to produce adequate evidence.

The five charge-sheeted accused are Habibur Rahman Jubayer, Raju Sarder, ATM Taibur Rahman, Harun-ur-Rashid and Rawnakul Islam Khushi. All six received bail earlier.

Closing arguments of the prosecution and the defence concluded on June 12.

The prosecution said on the night of December 20, 2004, four bombs exploded near the stage in

Takier Bazar of Palashbari upazila, Gaibandha injuring 15 people. Palashbari police filed the case against 21 people and Galib was shown arrested in the case.

On April 23, 2005 charge sheet against the six were submitted. Charges were framed under Explosive Substances Act, 1908.

The defence said the play was going on without prior permission from the administration and there was a dispute within the theatre group.

Blaming rival groups for the blasts, the defence said the sentiment of locals was also against the play.

Galib is still accused in eight criminal cases filed in different districts. He was acquitted in criminal cases filed in Rajshahi, Naogaon and Bogra.

He is still under arrest in other cases and was brought to the court under strict security. Supporters of Ahab thronged the court premises to have a glance of their leader.

## MIg-29 PURCHASE SCAM

# Hearing adjourned until July 3

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The hearing on charge framing in the MiG-29 warplane purchase scam case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and six others will resume on July 3.

Judge Golam Mortuza Majumder of the Special Judge's Court, Dhaka division adjourned the hearing after an hour yesterday and set a date for the next hearing.

Hasina's counsel argued for quashing of all charges against her in the case.

Hasina's attorney Barrister Shafique Ahmed said this is the first time in the history of the country that the entire armed forces have been dragged to a court in an alleged graft case, which is a very dangerous move for any nation, and democracy.

He said the allegation of the prosecution does not stand as the purchase deal was made in compliance with all prescribed government rules.

Narrating the case history, Barrister Shafique said the process was initiated in 1992 during the BNP rule following a devastating cyclone in 1991 that damaged several aircraft of the Bangladesh Air Force in Chittagong.

He said the purchase process was initiated by the BNP government in 1991 and was implemented during the Awami League rule in 1996.

He further told the court that the bidding prices for the eight MiG-29 warplanes were US\$ 289 million and Hasina's government were able to bring down the price to US\$ 123m through state-to-state negotiations, saving the nation US\$ 166 million.

After an hour long hearing, the court adjourned the trial following time plea from the defence counsel.

Advocate Sahara Khatun represented Hasina as she had been exempted from appearing personally at trial proceedings in the court during her stay overseas for treatment.

Former army chief Gen (retd) Mustafizur Rahman, also accused in the case, was produced before the court yesterday.

Other accused in the case are former air force chief Jamaluddin Ahmed, former defence secretary Syed Yusuf Hossain, Air Commodore (retd) Mirza Akhter Maruf, former joint secretary Mohammad Hossain Serniabat and Unique Group Managing Director Nur Ali.

The now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) filed the case against Hasina and four others with the Tejjagon Police Station on December 11, 2001, accusing them of causing a loss of Tk 700 crore to the national exchequer by purchasing eight MiG-29 jets while she was in power.

# Road crashes kill five

STAR REPORT

Five people were killed and 25 others injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka and Natore yesterday.

Our staff correspondent reports: Three people, including two women, were killed in separate road accidents in the city yesterday.

Sources said Moksed Ali, 55, was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus while he was crossing the road with his son Golam Mostafa at Banani in the city at about 3:30pm.

Mostafa was scheduled to fly for Malaysia last night.

In another accident, a young girl was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus when the bus hit the motorcycle she was riding on at Shewrapara in the city in the afternoon.

Her fellow rider escaped unhurt. Mob set fire to the bus, but the driver and the helper managed to escape.

Later, fire fighters rushed to the spot and doused the fire.

Besides, police recovered the body of one Parveen Begum from the city's Maniknagar Bishwa Road area in the early hours of yesterday.

Police said she was crushed under the wheels of an unknown motor vehicle.

UNB adds: Two passengers were killed and 25 others injured in a road accident on Bonpara-Hatikumrur toll road at Bejur crossing in Natore yesterday morning.

The accident occurred when a Rajshahi-bound bus from Dhaka turned turtle as its driver lost his control over the steering, killing former commander of Chapainawabganj Muktioddha unit Raziar Rahman Bishu on the spot and injuring 26 others.

Another unidentified injured died on the way to Sadar hospital. Of the injured, nine were admitted to Sadar hospital while six others to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

## Low over Bay

UNB, Dhaka

A low has developed over north-west Bay and adjoining area and it is likely to intensify.

Under its influence, steep pressure gradient lies over north Bay. Squally weather may affect maritime ports and adjoining coastal area, said a special bulletin of Met Office.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal number three.

All fishing boats and trawlers over north Bay and deep sea have been advised to come close to the coast and proceed with caution until further notice.

# ESO BANGLADESH GORI Road show held in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A road show titled 'Eso Bangladesh Gori' was held in Tangail yesterday aiming at building a new Bangladesh.

The main objective of the show was to encourage people of all classes, including farmers, to boost production and fight corruption.

Agriculture ministry, food and disaster ministry, home ministry, telecommunications ministry, Election Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission, Tourism Corporation and BTRC jointly organised the road show.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Tangail Akhter Ali Sarkar received the road show caravan on Wednesday afternoon when it reached the Mirzapur Cadet College area.

Students of Bharateshwari Homes welcomed the caravan with traditional songs and dances.

Following the road show, a discussion was held at Tangail Stadium yesterday morning with DC Akhter Ali Sarkar in the chair. Food Secretary Molla Waheduzzaman was present on the occasion as the chief guest.

Act