

Establish good governance to ensure human rights

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As in the present governance system people's participation is limited to electing the representatives only, the country needs a system of self-governance to ensure rights of people, said Justice Mohammad Golam Rabbani at a workshop yesterday.

The workshop on 'Rights and Governance' was organised by Women for Women at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

Speaking as chief guest Justice Rabbani said self-governance needs local government having administrative and financial power to carry out development activities.

He said although the caretaker government is talking about reforms, it has failed to present a guideline for reforms in the absence of a self-governance system.

The workshop was organised to disseminate the results of Rights and Governance Project funded by Manusher Jonno Foundation.

The project aims at improving the government service system through the development of skills of government personnel for establishing a good governance to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.



PHOTO: STAR

Justice Mohammad Golam Rabbani speaks at a workshop on 'Rights and governance' organised by Women for Women at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right is Prof Mahmuda Islam and on his left is Prof Jahanara Huq.

The objectives of the three-year project that ends in September next also include assessing the level of awareness of government actors about governance and rights and their practice on dispensation

of right-based approach in government service system.

The project is also aimed at strengthening the capacity of government training institutes to enhance the knowledge and skills

of government personnel towards promoting human rights and good governance.

Speaking as special guest, Executive Director of Manusher Jonno Foundation Shaheen Anam said there is no way to separate rights from governance.

"The rights are violated often as our regulatory mechanism is not working well," she said, adding, if we cannot establish good governance our rights will continue to be violated.

The speakers said the project would play an important role in increasing awareness among the government officials that human rights are incorporated into good governance.

Prof Mahmuda Islam, president of Women for Women, chaired the inaugural session while Vice-president Prof Jahanara Huq read out the keynote paper.

Chairman of Public Service Commission Dr Saadat Hossain, Dr Mohammad Mohabbat Khan, Dr NA Kalimullah, Dr Asif Nazrul, former adviser to a caretaker government ASM Shahjahan, Dr Saira Rahaman Khan, UM Habibunnessa and Additional Inspector General of Police Hasan Ul Haider also spoke on governance, judiciary and human rights at the workshop.



PHOTO: STAR

Freedom fighters stage a sit-in in front of the office of the liberation war affairs secretary in the city yesterday demanding trial of war criminals.

Adopt strategy to protect rights of migrant workers

Speakers urge South Asian countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day regional dialogue yesterday recommended that South Asia should have a mechanism to monitor the state of labour migrants both in sending and receiving countries to protect their rights, as migrant workers are subjected to exploitation and abuses.

South Asian speakers said the countries can involve all stakeholders, including international organisations, NGOs, independent women's organisations, media agencies, migrant associations and civil society organisations, in the process.

The region should also adopt a regional legal instrument on migration based on international human rights laws to uphold migrants' rights, they added.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) jointly organised the dialogue on 'Implementation of international instruments on protecting rights of migrant workers' on August 18-20 at a city hotel.

Government representatives from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka as well as from international organisations, NGOs, civil society groups and private sector took part in the dialogue.

Acknowledging that South Asia is a major labour sending region and their workers overseas face similar challenges, the speakers said the region should have a common strategy to address the challenges of labour migration and develop an institutional framework at official level to facilitate the process.

"Speakers said there could be shared solutions to these challenges. Therefore, there is a need for cooperation and collaboration in the field of labour migration among these countries," said IOM regional representative in Dhaka at the closing session yesterday.

The speakers further noted that women migrant workers are particularly vulnerable and they face exploitation of specific forms that emerge from discrimination based on their sex, gender and the nature of their work, which

Punishment to Ruby's killer demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different rights organisations condemned the killing of a female garment worker on August 18 at Malibagh Chowdhurypara in the city while she was going to her workplace.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) President Ayesha Khanam and Secretary Maleka Banu in a statement said the incident of killing the garment worker has raised questions in the role of the law enforcers.

"How could the assailant manage to flee the spot after committing such a crime in broad daylight?" they questioned.

The women leaders demanded exemplary punishment to the killer to avoid recurrence of such incidents in the country.

In another statement, Bangladesh Trade Union Centre President Nurul Islam and Secretary Dr Wajedul Islam Khan said as teasing women on the streets by derailed youths is not considered as a crime and the youths involved in teasing are not arrested by the law enforcers, such spate of killings are increasing rapidly.

They also demanded immediate arrest of the culprit as well as forming social resistance to combat such crimes.

Garment worker Ruby was stabbed to death by Morshed, a bakery worker, on Monday as her father turned down his proposal to marry her a day before the incident.

require a special attention.

The dialogue suggested that South Asian countries should set up institutions for capacity building of overseas jobseekers, enabling them to be competitive in accessing the global labour market and exchange information and expertise on global labour markets.

The speakers said South Asian countries should also consider institutionalising the cooperation between IOM and Saarc through the conclusion of an MoU for better migration management.

At national level, the regional dialogue suggested adopting gender-sensitive policy on labour migration and providing support to migrant workers and their families for protection and welfare.

It said the governments should establish a national committee on migration comprising all stakeholders in migration, including IOM, UNIFEM and other international organisations, NGOs, independent women's organisations, and civil society organisations, migrants' associations as well as the private sector.

The speakers said the governments should also sign bilateral agreements with the labour receiving countries and strengthen the capacity of their missions abroad to ensure protection, entitlements and monitoring of the entire migration process.

The governments also need to consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the dialogue said.

UNIFEM Bangladesh Programme Manager Naheed Ahmed also spoke.

Call to observe 'Phulbari Day' at state level

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Electricity and Port yesterday called on the government to observe the 'Phulbari Day' at state level.

The committee made the demand at a press conference at the Maitri Conference Hall in the city yesterday.

On August 26 in 2006, at least seven people were killed when police and Bangladesh Rifles men fired to the locals demonstrating against open-pit coalmine project at Phulbari in Dinajpur.

Prof Anu Mohammad, member secretary of the committee and Jahangirnagar University economics teacher, said at the press conference that by the sacrifices of the martyrs of Phulbari struggle, Bangladesh has escaped a great danger and for that the day should be observed at the state level.

Prof Anu also demanded ousting the Asia Energy and banning extraction of coal in open-pit mining method according to the Phulbari Accord signed on August 30, 2006.

The press conference was also addressed by convenor of the committee Engineer Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, members Nur Mohammad, Ruhin Hossain Prince and Bazlur Rashid Firoz among others.

'Allow CCC mayor to stay beside ailing daughter'

CU CORRESPONDENT

A total of 2217 students, faculty members and staffs of Premier University yesterday urged the government to allow arrested Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury to stay beside his ailing daughter who is undergoing treatment at a hospital in Bangkok.

In a press release, they urged the government to consider the matter from humanitarian point of view and said Mohiuddin's presence beside his daughter would help improve her condition.

Fawzia Sultan Tumpa, a student of the Department of English Language and Literature of the university and daughter of the mayor who is the founder of the university, has been suffering from cancer and was admitted to a hospital in Bangkok.

"At present Fawzia's condition is not good and her teachers, friends and university staffs are very worried about her," the release added.

BAF observes Matiur's death anniversary

METRO DESK

Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) yesterday observed the 37th death anniversary of Birshreshtha M Matiur Rahman with due solemnity, says an ISPR press release.

On the occasion, milad mahfils were held at the central mosques at all BAF bases after Asr prayers.

Officials and members of all ranks of the Bangladesh Air Force attended the milad mahfils.

Earlier in the morning, Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Admin) Air Commodore M Delwar Hossain visited the grave of Matiur at the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard at Mirpur in the city and offered fateha for salvation of the departed soul.

Saiful Islam Khan Shamim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the ninth death anniversary of Saiful Islam Khan Shamim, director of Islam Polymers and Plastics Ltd, and son of former lawmaker and minister late Shamsul Islam Khan, says a press release.

His family members requested all to pray for his departed soul.

Sharif Md Nurul Hossain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 11th death anniversary of Sharif Md Nurul Hossain, former additional district magistrate of Brahmanbaria, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to pray for his departed soul.

FRESH MOVE TO REUNITE BNP Leaders of both factions meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 50 former BNP lawmakers belonging to both the factions -- 'pro-Khaleda' and 'reformist' -- held a meeting at the Nam flat of a pro-Khaleda leader in the city last night to discuss the party's reunification process.

The meeting that began at 9:00pm at the Nam flat of Shah Nurul Kabir Saheen continued up to midnight, meeting sources said.

Meeting sources said that the 'reformist' BNP leaders agreed to work under the leadership of Secretary General Khandaker Selim Reza Habib, Abdul Momin Talukder, Rezaul Bari Dina, Ehsanul Haq Milon, Shamsul Alam Pramanik, Zafrul Islam, Ataur Rahaman Angur, Sahiduzzaman Beltu and Nasirul Haq Sabu.

NOR'WESTERS, TORNADOES 'Better forecasting can minimise casualties'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to exchanging scientific ideas, meteorologists from the Saarc countries have sat together to find out a way for a better weather forecasting and timely warning of nor'westers and tornadoes.

The experts said although natural disasters including nor'westers and tornadoes cannot be prevented but loss of lives and damage of properties can be minimised by better forecasting.

The seminar on 'Nor'westers and Tornadoes over the Saarc region and their Forecasting and Preparedness' began at the Saarc Meteorological Research Center (SMRC) auditorium at Agargaon yesterday.

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