

# CA reaffirms support for development of Africa

UNB, New York

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed on Monday reiterated the Bangladesh's firm commitment to further strengthening its support and cooperation for the development of Africa.

The head of the caretaker government made the remarks while intervening the second high level roundtable meeting on 'Africa's Development Needs: State of Implementation of Various Commitments, Challenges and the Way Forward'.

The roundtable was held at the ECOSOC Conference Hall at the UN Headquarters, which was preceded by high level plenary meeting on the same theme in the morning.

President of Rwanda Paul Kagame and President of Finland Jari Halonen co-chaired the roundtable attended by heads of

government and state of various countries.

President of Mozambique, president of Madagascar, US secretary of state and executive secretary of ECA also spoke at the roundtable.

Earlier, the CA attended the High Level Plenary Meeting, at the UN General Assembly Hall, on the Theme 'Africa's Development Needs: State of Implementation of Various Commitments, Challenges and the Way Forward'.

Fakhruddin said: "Within the framework of South-South cooperation, countries like Bangladesh can meaningfully contribute to Africa's sustainable development."

"Over the years, Bangladesh has successfully pioneered a number of innovative ideas to development like micro credit, non-formal education and women empowerment."

He said Bangladesh is willing to

share her 'Green Revolution' experiences with the fellow LDCs especially those in Africa. "We must remain comrades in our quest for peace, development and prosperity."

He said micro credit has now been replicated in around 100 countries, including many in Africa.

As a member of the organisational committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, he said Bangladesh is actively engaged in supporting the ongoing development efforts in Burundi and Sierra Leone.

He said the development partners and the international community should also take steps to help Africa integrate into the global economy through foreign direct investment.

"We are deeply concerned that since 2005 the ODA-GNI ratio for developed countries has declined

from 0.33 percent to 0.28 percent.

It falls far short of the G-8 Gleneagles pledge in 2005 to double aid to Africa," he told the roundtable.

Fakhruddin said Bangladesh has been an active and ardent proponent of peace and development for Africa. There has hardly been a UN Peacekeeping mission in Africa in the last two and half decades in which Bangladesh did not participate.

Currently around 10,000 Bangladeshers are working in 12 UN peacekeeping missions, he said.

Bangladesh sends its peacekeepers even to the highest risk areas. "We do so in line with our deep commitment to the UN charter and in the spirit of solidarity with our African brethren," he said.

Foreign Adviser Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury and Permanent Representative to UN Ismat Jahan also attended the roundtable.

## 48,560 Bangladeshis to perform hajj this year

UNB, Dhaka

Some 48,560 Bangladeshis are expected to perform hajj this year, both under government and private managements.

Of them, 7,474 will perform the hajj under official management, said a PID handout yesterday.

A total of 206 hajj agencies will send them this year through 234 government-allowed agencies.

This year the hajj pilgrims from Bangladesh are expected to get better services from new hajj mission, which was shifted to Misfalah in Makkah, an area of Bangladesh, last month.

## Special A/C train on Eid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Bangladesh Railway (east zone) will arrange a special air-conditioned train service 'Eid Special' for three days from September 28 on Dhaka-Chittagong route to help the home-bound holidaymakers ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Thirteen A/C coaches, imported four months' earlier among 30 such coaches from China and have been lying at the railway workshop, will be included in the special service charging Tk 380 per person.

Sources said after the service, the coaches would be taken back to the workshop again since the launching of a regular train is yet to be decided due to lack of required locomotives.

The special train service will begin from Chittagong at 4:20pm on September 28 while it will leave Dhaka at 6:20am for Chittagong everyday.

Railway authority imported 30 new A/C coaches manufactured by China Machinery Export and Import Corporation under a Tk 106-crore project titled 'Procurement of A/C coaches' to introduce two new inter-city trains between Chittagong and Dhaka with a view to providing better service for the commuters.

Earlier, 50 coaches were imported in three phases last year from the same company.

Railway authority claimed that most of the coaches were added to four inter-city trains on the same route including Suborno Express, Turna Nishitha, Mohanagar Probbati and Mohanagar Godhuli replacing old ones.

Divisional Engineer Ibrahim Khalil said they tried to continue the service, but it is yet to be decided due to shortage of locomotives.

"We will run the special train hiring locomotives from any of the ongoing services like Suborno or Probbati," he added.



PHOTO: STAR

DCC Slum Development Project employees stage a sit-in along with their children on the Nagar Bhaban premises in the city yesterday demanding arrears of salary.

## 50 injured as RMG workers clash in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 50 readymade garment (RMG) workers were injured during separate clashes with the policemen in Uttara and Uttarkhan areas in the city yesterday.

Around 20 workers of a garment factory were injured in a clash with policemen in the city's Uttara area.

The clash ensued when the police charged baton on the workers who put up a barricade on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Azampur demanding payment of their salary arrears, Eid bonus and night allowance.

Witnesses said around 800 angry workers of Root Apparels Ltd, which was closed a month ago without informing the workers at Uttarkhan, erected a barricade on the road for around one hour from 3:00pm that resulted a severe traffic jam in the area.

At one stage, police resorted to

baton charge to disperse the agitating workers that left the workers injured.

The angry workers gave an ultimatum to the garment factory authorities, threatening that if their demands are not met by today, they would go for a tougher movement.

Meanwhile, around 30 workers of a garment factory at Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) were injured as police charged baton on them while they were staging a sit-in in front of the factory with the same demands.

The workers also ransacked at least 10 vehicles after blocking Dhaka-Tangail Road for around one hour from 11:00am.

Witnesses said some 700 workers of Honor Way Textile and Apparels (Pvt) Limited staged the sit-in in the morning demanding payment of their salary arrears as the authorities shut it down on July 17 after its owner had died.

## Physiotherapy students, teachers threaten agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Physiotherapy Students-Teachers-Professionals' Coordination Committee yesterday announced to go for tougher agitation on October 13 if their demand is not met by this time.

They have been demanding establishment of a physiotherapy college and withdrawal of false cases against the physiotherapy students.

At a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) auditorium, the students, teachers and professionals also demanded that the classes and examinations begin immediately.

They also demanded punishment to those who were involved in assaulting physiotherapy students on September 4.

Convener of Bangladesh Physiotherapy Students' Union (BPSU) Rasel Rana said that a vested quarter had been trying to stop the physiotherapy course and hindering establishment of a physiotherapy college on a distinct campus.

"A group of teachers and employees of National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR) led by Dr Arif Anwar, Dr Nuruddin and Dr Shamim attacked the physiotherapy students on September 4 which was directed by NITOR Director Dr Ishaq," he said.

The physiotherapy students are not even allowed to go to their campus and their future hangs in a balance as the classes and examinations are halted.

While reading out the keynote paper, Convener of the Parishad Mohammad Kamruzzaman said that the health ministry meeting was supposed to choose a piece of land for a separate College of Physiotherapy on September 16. But no committee was even formed to choose a piece of land to this end.

Convener of the Parishad Pradeep Kumar Saha and Member Secretary Manirul Haque said the health ministry was even formed to create posts of physiotherapists at upazila health complex level since 1980, but it paid little heed to the issue.

## DCC project workers begin sit-in for salary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three hundred employees of Slum Development Project of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) started an indefinite sit-in programme along with their children on Nagar Bhaban premises yesterday demanding their arrears salaries of 15 months.

"We will continue our sit-in programme during office hour everyday until our arrears salaries are not paid," said Zahid Hossain, a caretaker of the project.

"We started our job under Slum Development Project in 1986 which ran in the name of Urban Basic Service Delivery Project from 1996 to 2000 and then in the name of Support for Basic Services in Urban Areas Project from 2001 to June 2007," said Md Abu Yusuf, a senior caretaker of the project.

As the project was closed on June 30, 2007, DCC did not give any salary to the employees.

Chief executive officer of DCC in late 2007 asked the 10 zonal executive officers to submit their opinion whether the slum development activities are needed to be continued or not. Every zonal executive officer reported positively, he said.

A letter of the Ministry of LGRD and Cooperative also asked the DCC to bring the employees under revenue sector of DCC but it is yet to be implemented, he added.

"We the 300 employees of the project are deprived of salaries for last 15 months due to the negligence of DCC authorities," he said.

Khandakar Millatul Islam, chief slum development officer, said the employees were working under a project of Local Government Engineering Department and DCC was only the implementing agency.

"We have written four letters to the Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives asking block allocation to give salary to the employees but did not get any response yet," he said.

The process of bringing the employees under revenue sector of DCC is going on and a board meeting in this regard will be held on October 13, said Millatul adding after getting the approval of the board they will send it to the ministry for final approval.

Parvin Akhtar Rita who has been working for the last 10 years as a health worker participated in sit-in along with her two children Mim, 5, and Mehdi, 7, said as her husband is sick since long she has to face problems to run her family.

"It is very tough to run our family with the income of my husband who earn only Tk 500 weekly," said Nargis Akhtar, a health worker, who also came with her 11-month baby to participate the sit-in programme.

Bangladesh City and Municipality Employees' Federation President Md Amiruzzaman and Secretary General SM Mosharrar Hossain Milon expressed their solidarity with the movement of the employees and demanded intervention of DCC mayor to solve the problem.

## Two shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people were injured as criminals opened fire in two separate incidents in the city yesterday evening.

Witnesses said Panir Hossain, 25, and Mohammad Arif, 16, cable workers of Malibagh, were standing in front of a Punjabi shop when local criminals Mintu, Nadim, Siam and another unknown person shot three rounds of bullets on their chest at around 6:00pm and fled away.

They were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in a critical condition.

Relatives of the injured at the DMCH told the reporters that the local Zakir group demanded Tk 10,000 as tolls from them.

They might have been shot since they refused to give the tolls, they added.

Other sources said the incident could occur due to past enmity. Meanwhile, Zakir Hossain, 23, and Mohammad Tuhin, 22, employees of a car showroom at Kakrail,



PHOTO: STAR

Litterateur Selina Hossain addresses a view exchange meeting at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city yesterday. On her left is Ranjan Karmakar and on her right is Shamima Chowdhury.

## Formulate policy to ensure gender sensitivity in TV, radio ads

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a view exchange meeting yesterday urged the government to formulate a policy for advertisements to ensure gender sensitivity in the TV and radio commercials.

The view exchange meeting on 'Gender sensitivity in advertisement: Our thoughts' was organised by Gender in Media Forum (GIMF) at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city.

The speakers said that a regulatory committee should be formed to monitor gender sensitivity in the advertisements.

Although the state is committed to ensuring gender equality, no such committee exists in the country, they added.

While presiding over the meeting, GIMF President and noted litterateur Selina Hossain said women are being presented as objects in the TV and radio commercials in the country and that should be stopped now. She said that men and women should be shown as equals in the advertisements.

Munir Ahmed Chowdhury, chairperson of Unirend, an advertisement agency, said advertisements that show discrimination should not be broadcasted.

Ranjan Karmakar, general

secretary of GIMF who moderated the session, said, "Unless we could ensure participation of more women at the policymaking level, women empowerment is impossible."

He also said that women and children issues get the least attention in the media.

## Top criminal Munna jailed for 12 yrs in Ctg

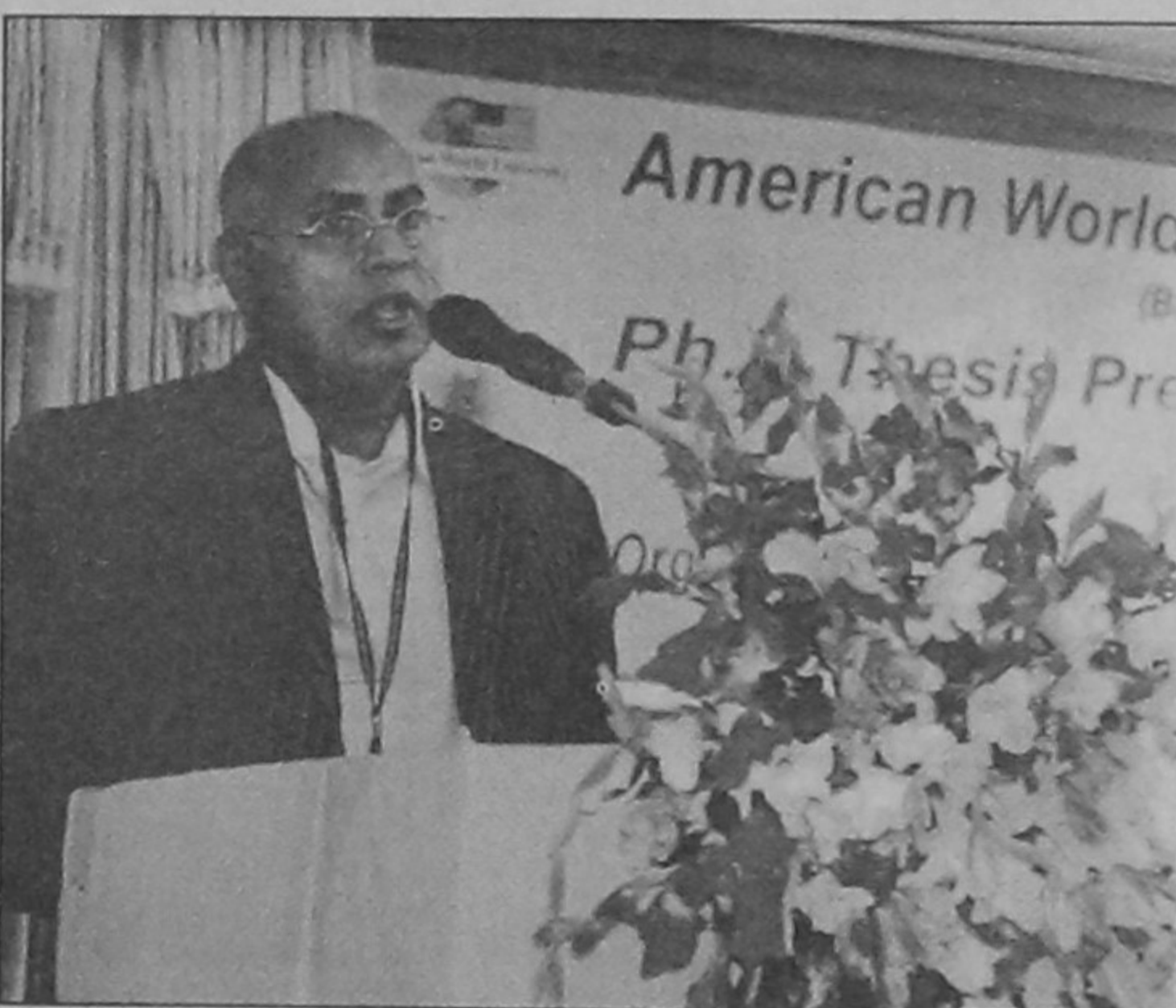
UNB, Chittagong

Dulaluddin Munna, a top criminal of Fatikchhari, was yesterday sentenced to 12 years in prison for illegal possession of arms and ammunition.

District and Sessions Judge Maznun Ahsan handed down the punishment to Munna, who is in his 40s, in a crowded court.

Munna was caught after gunfight with members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at Fatikchhari on June 10, 2005. One of his bullet-hit legs had to be amputated.

Following his confessional statement, Rab had recovered one AK-47 assault rifle with 22 bullets from his Mandakini hideout at Hathazari.



American World University, California, USA (Bangladesh Study Centre) and Centre for Executive Development Studies (CEDs) organised a thesis presentation programme at the Institute of Diploma Engineers in the city recently. Students of the university M A Nasir, Md Sahjahan and Abdur Razzak presented their papers in the programme. Justice Arayes Uddin was present as the chief guest at the function with Prof Dr Salim Bhuiya, chairman of Board of Trustee of the university, in the chair.

## One to die, 4 get life for murder in Munshiganj

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a man to death and four others to life in jail for killing their neighbour Anisur Rahman Bepari of Munshiganj in September 2005.

The convict with death is

Mohammad Litu Khan while the lifers are Sohrab Khan, Mizan Khan, Jamal and Monir.

Judge Mohammad Israil Hossain of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 handed down the sentence in presence of the convicts at a packed courtroom.

The court acquitted Halem Khan, Kashem Khan, Mannan Khan, Amir Mollah, Hazrat Ali and Khorshed as the charges brought against them were not proved.

The court sentenced all the five convicts to 10 years' more in jail for injuring three others by firing the same day.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence had completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 19 prosecution witnesses.

According to the prosecution, a group of miscreants led by Sohrab Khan attacked the Anis and his family members equipped with firearms and sharp weapons at Purbia Rakhiv village in Munshiganj district at about 8:00am on September 15, 2005. Of them, Litu Khan fired gunshots indiscriminately that left Anis dead and injured three others.

Victim's father Sorab Bepari filed a case with Munshiganj Police Station against Litu and 15 others the same day. But the investigation officer pressed charges against 11 people including Litu on November 25, 2005.

## Govt firm to ensure more transparency in hajj management

UNB, Dhaka

Religious Affairs Adviser AF Hassan Ariff yesterday said the government is determined for bringing about necessary reforms to ensure more transparency and accountability in the hajj management process.

He said this while he was discussing with some senior officials who were imparting training in MATT-2 course organised by the Ministry of Establishment.

The officials apprised the adviser of the pilot programmes taken for the reforms in hajj management.

The adviser assured all out cooperation to implement the reform programmes.

He stressed the need for changing the mindset of those people specially the travel agency people, for better result.

He also underlined the need for introduction of checklists at different stages of hajj procedure and urged to communicate the reform programmes to the pilgrims from rural areas.

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