

Remain cautious so that none can use ACC

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) must remain cautious so that none can use the commission and its anti-graft drive for political purposes, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

However, ACC Chairman Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury said the ongoing anti-corruption drive would continue the same way it has been in the last two years and the commission would not favour anyone in the matter.

"No effort can yield success if it is politically motivated. Not only politicians but every sector riddled with corruption must be looked into," said former education minister Osman Faruk at the roundtable titled 'Applying Lessons From the 13th International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) to Bangladesh.'

The roundtable was the concluding event of the five-day 'Anti-Corruption Week' that began on March 18.

"The Anti-Corruption Commission

must be allowed to work independently. None should influence the commission in pursuing corruption cases," said Dr Manzoor Hasan, director of institute of government studies of Brac University.

The week was launched under the Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (Prograti) programme, funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to raise awareness about reducing corruption in Bangladesh.

"I hope the present elected government will fulfil its election pledges about fighting corruption and give us necessary assistance in this regard," said Mashhud.

"The anti-graft drive will face obstacles if an elected government lacks political commitment to curb corruption," Mashhud added.

"The commission will work considering the real situation. But it will not make compromises while dealing with corrup-

tion," Hasan Mashhud added. Four papers were presented at the roundtable.

Quoting corruption database report of Transparency International Bangladesh, the paper titled 'The Private Sector, Gender and Corruption' said, "The private sector is seen to be among the most corrupt sectors locally. Some 14.3% of private sector employees are estimated to be involved in corrupt practices." Selima Ahmed presented it.

The paper titled 'Role of Civil Society and Media in Combating Corruption', prepared by Dr Shahnaz Karim, said, "Bangladesh needs to strengthen existing civil society coalitions, networks and public-private partnerships to raise awareness about corruption."

Safar Raj Hossain presented a paper titled 'Corruption in the Government and Public Sector' while barrister Manzoor Hasan presented another titled 'The 13th

International Anti-Corruption Conference: An Overview."



Newly appointed Australian High Commissioner in Dhaka Dr Justin Lee pays a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

Australia reaffirms support in boosting trade

UNB, Dhaka

Newly appointed Australian High Commissioner in Dhaka Dr Justin Lee paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) yesterday.

The envoy reaffirmed Australian support in boosting Bangladesh's trade and business and in flourishing all development sectors, including the energy and power.

Lee greeted Hasina for the Awami League-led Grand Alliance's massive victory in the polls and assuming office as the prime minister.

The PM welcomed the envoy to Bangladesh and thanked the Australian government for extending its cooperation in holding the December 29 parliamentary polls in a free, fair and neutral manner.

The High Commissioner expressed deep shock at the death of army officers in the February 25-26 Palkhona carnage.

He highly praised Hasina for her "wisdom and farsightedness" in resolving the BDR crisis quickly and peacefully.

Hasina said deaths of talented and well-educated army officers are an irreparable loss to the nation.

The December 29 parliamentary polls could take place in a free and fair manner as the army earlier presented the nation with a flawless voter list, she said.

As the expatriate issue came up during the discussion, the PM requested the envoy to ensure all facilities to the Bangladeshi people living in Australia for education and other purposes.

The PM and the High Commissioner expressed the hope that the existing friendly relations between the two countries would be strengthened further in the coming days.

Fake cosmetic factory unearthed

RU CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch (DB) of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP) unearthed a fake cosmetic factory in the city on Saturday night.

Acting on a tip-off, detectives raided 'Nondini Cream' cosmetics factory in Baliapukur area at around 11:00pm and seized fake cosmetics, medicines and raw materials.

Police could not arrest the factory owner as he fled the scene, sensing the presence of the law enforcers. Police sealed the factory in front of local people.

Earlier on March 3, the DB police unearthed three fake cosmetic factories in the city and arrested five people including a woman.

Trial of war criminals still possible

Says Dr Helen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Trial of the war criminals in Bangladesh is still possible although a long time has elapsed, much like in the case of Cambodia, Dr Helen Jarvis, chief of Public Affairs of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), said yesterday.

She was delivering the founding anniversary memorial lecture of the Liberation War Museum marking its 13th founding anniversary and the Independence Day at the museum.

The Cambodian people found many barriers, both domestically and internationally, in bringing the Khmer Rouge war criminals to book. But, the trial began when the tide had at last turned definitely against the Khmer Rouge, Dr Helen said in her lecture titled 'Justice delayed need not mean justice denied'.

Cambodia has started trial of top five men of the Khmer Rouge government who are charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity during their regime 34 years ago.

A hybrid court (ECCC) comprising Cambodian and international judges, prosecutors and staff was set up to try the war criminals in Cambodia, she said.

The ECCC not only has time constraint but it also has other

limitations. It can bring to book only 'senior leaders of Democratic Kampuchea' and those most responsible for certain crimes under international law for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, crimes against cultural property and crimes against internationally protected persons and under Cambodian law for murder, torture and religious persecution, she said.

"We also hope that our experience and our model may possibly be a contribution and example to those in other countries who are still awaiting justice for mass crimes committed in the past," she added.

Later, she inaugurated a weeklong book fair on the liberation war.

Trustee of the museum Ziauddin Tariq Ali delivered the welcome speech at the programme while Trustee and Member Secretary Mafidul Haq presented the annual report.

Dr Helen Jarvis delivers the founding anniversary memorial lecture of the Liberation War Museum at the museum in the city yesterday.



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Bain loom in dying state

Speakers say at regional confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a regional conference yesterday said centuries old back-strap weaving craft of the indigenous people is in danger of becoming extinct in absence of patronisation for its immediate revival.

Though there has always been a growing demand for Bain (back-strap handloom) textiles in domestic and international markets, Bangladesh has not yet been able to tap it due to various impediments, said Founder Chairman of Brac Fazle Hasan Abed.

Abed said this while inaugurating the three-day regional conference on back-strap loom styled 'Bain: Weaving the past, present and future' organised by National Crafts Council of Bangladesh (NCCB) at a city centre to identify multiple challenges

for the traditional utilitarian household loom and find outways.

UNDP Resident Representative Renata Dessallien said though handicraft is one of the oldest crafts of human civilisation, it may disappear in South and East Asian regions with women artisans giving up the occupation in the face of cheap availability of synthetic textiles.

A collective endeavour could revive and save it from being dying, she said.

Talking to The Daily Star, NCCB General Secretary Tourem Robin said indigenous women have been running this utilitarian craft since the 4th century to meet personal and household needs for clothes.

Bain is not only a craft, it reflects manifestation of artistic subtlety, intricacy, sensitivity, tradition and lifestyle of an ethnic community, he added.

"But, it is alarming that the practice of loom is declining fast in each of the communities because the craft is time-consuming, labour-intensive and low-productive," Robin said.

Prasenjit Chakma, chief (policy and confidence building) of CHT development facilities (CHTDF) of the UNDP, said back-strap loom has been a household affair of all 11 indigenous and ethnic groups in all three hill districts.

CHTDF, a 50-million-dollar project for development and confidence building in the hill districts, has sponsored the conference.

The event is aimed at facilitating knowledge sharing and network building among the indigenous peoples from nine Asia-Pacific countries, including Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand and Bangladesh.

Representative of the Bohmong chief Chaw Hla Prue Jimmy and NCCB President Shahid H Shamim also spoke.

The event will showcase various delicately woven Bain products.

'Ensure security of female students'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday demanded proper investigation into the mysterious burn and death of a residential student at Barisal Government Women College.

In a statement, the women leaders also demanded security of other residential students at the college hostel.

Citing news clipping of different national dailies the parishad leaders said police rescued the burnt body of Monzila Sharmin, 18, from the roof of college hostel.

They also urged the administration to ensure security of the female students at all educational institutes.



Brac Founder Chairman Fazle Hasan Abed visits a back-strap looms exhibition at Spectra Convention Centre in the city yesterday.

GlaxoSmithKline
vaccination

Kaniz Almas Khan
Beautician & Woman Entrepreneur

Sharmin Lucky
TV Personality

Monalisa
Model & Actress

Don't Let Cervical Cancer Threaten Her

Cervical cancer is one of the leading causes of death of women worldwide. In Bangladesh, 18 women die of cervical cancer everyday and almost 13 thousand women are diagnosed every year*

Every woman may be at risk of cervical cancer. Immensely spread Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is the main cause of cervical cancer. This cancer can be prevented by vaccination.

Know about cervical cancer, protect yourself and your dear ones.

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR NOW HELP X OUT CERVICAL CANCER

*Source: WHO/ICO

Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital opens new CCU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital and Research Institute opened a new Coronary Care Unit (CCU) on the 3rd floor of the hospital in the city Saturday.

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed formally inaugurated the 'Amena Rahman CCU' as the chief guest.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister called on the affluent section of the society to come forward to develop the health sector, saying that it is not possible for the government alone to ensure healthcare for all.

Two more witnesses -- Habibur Rahman and Abdul Malek -- also gave their statements yesterday and were cross-examined by lawyers.

Earlier, 18 other prosecution witnesses had given their statements before the court.

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