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REPORT BY NOW-DEFUNCT LGC Unified law suggested for local govt bodies

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The now-defunct local government commission (LGC) recommended forming a unified law to govern all local government institutions repealing the existing acts for local government bodies. Besides the functioning ordinances and acts, there are more than 100 subordinate laws related to the local government institutions, said the LGC in its report published before the ordinances lost their effectiveness last month. It said a single law could be formulated instead of a number of related laws to run all local government bodies like union parishads, upazila parishads, municipalities, city corpora-

tions and Chittagong Hill Tracts district councils.

In its maiden report, the LGC suggested that a permanent local government commission comprising independent and neutral persons and professionals and experts be formed which would benefit the local and central government.

A separate budget for local government bodies can be placed before the parliament and a local government service structure can be established to appoint officials of local government institutions, the report suggested.

The report may be treated as the first and last report of country's first LGC. The report was

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Encroachers filling up Gulshan-Baridhara-Banani Lake at two points—one near Mariam Tower-1, left, and another at Karail, claiming to have plots in the water body, in gross violation of the Wetland Conservation Act.



PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Take lessons from past misrule

Hasina tells
partymen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked her partymen to work for people who voted AL to power rising above all personal interests.

"Serve people who put their faith in Awami League (AL) and voted it to power," said the premier adding: "We must put highest premium on their faith."

Hasina was addressing a discussion at the city's Institution of Engineers Bangladesh organised by AL to mark the Independence Day.

The PM told them to take

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Encroachers filling up Gulshan-Banani lake

TAWFIQUE ALI

A group of influential people have started encroaching upon the Gulshan-Baridhara-Banani Lake just after this government assumed power, taking advantage of the slack stance of authorities concerned.

Filling of the lake at Shahjahanpur Jheelpar, between Mariam Tower-1 and Gulshan-Shahjahanpur link road, has been going on for last two months in violation of the Wetland Conservation Act, 2000.

FM Abdul Haq Bhuiyan and his mother-in-law Sofia Begum have been filling an eight-katha piece of land on the Gulshan-Banani Lake at Karail (T&T colony) point for a month.

"The lake is identified as a lake in the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP) and the layout of the lake is in accordance with Wetland Conservation Act," said Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) Town Planner Abu Hasan Mortuza adding, "Filling of the lake is illegal."

He said it is identified as a lake as it is inundated during the monsoon season.

Abdul Haq said, "It is not a lake, it is just a lowland under several feet of water." He claimed he is the owner of a piece of land there and he purchased it in 1983.

Mortuza said project director (PD) of the lake development and conservation is primarily responsible for the protection of the lake.

But PD Zahid Hasan Faruqi said he had nothing to do with the filling of the lake.

Rajuk Chairman Shafiqul Islam said they regularly file cases against filling of wetlands. "If needed, I will ask the PD to take further actions," Shafiqul said.

As many as 20 people, including real estate developers, an High Court (HC) judge, retired government officials, brother of a local ward councillor and an army officer, claimed ownership of land at Jheelpar.

Bhuiyan claimed, "We are not filling a wetland, we are just developing a low-lying land. It

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Kill lights for 1 hour today for action on climate change

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lights in businesses, homes and even national landmarks in around 400 cities across the globe will remain turned out for an hour this evening as a reminder of the urgent need to cut energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

They will go off at 8:30pm local time.

From Bangladesh, at least one business outfit, Westin Dhaka, will join the event styled 'Earth Hour'.

Organised by World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the lights-out programme

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Children of army officers killed in February 25-26 carnage at the BDR headquarters march in procession near the Jahangir Gate of Dhaka Cantonment yesterday, urging the government not to spare those responsible for the killings.

PHOTO: STAR

'Rich-poor gap widening for wrong policy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Wrong government policy has widened the urban-rural and rich-poor gaps in the last couple of decades despite an overall reduction in poverty, Regulatory Reforms Commission Chairman Dr Akbar Ali Khan yesterday said.

"The urban-rural and rich-poor gaps have been continuing to widen because of wrong state policy. Yes, poverty has been reduced slightly but the number of hungry people is increasing day by day," the former caretaker government adviser said at a friendly debate programme.

Akbar Ali also said the practice of liberal democracy can overcome these problems, especially the urban-rural and rich-poor gaps.

"Women and children are the worst sufferers because of the persisting hidden famine. The people will not enjoy the real taste of independence until women and children are freed from poverty," he said.

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Nor'wester lashes several districts, two killed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country experienced its first nor'wester of the season in many districts of North-Bengal region in the early hours yesterday.

At least two people were killed in separate incidents in Kishoreganj and houses, trees and crops damaged as rain accompanied with thunderbolts lashed the northern districts.

The deceased include a girl identified as Swapna, 6, of Bhutta and Manzil Mia, 30, of Raikhola of the upazila, reports UNB.

According to the locals, thunderbolt struck Manzil when he went to field to call the cattle home around 8:30am. Lightning also critically injured Swapna's cousin Shipu, 16, as he and Swapna were on their way to Chanpur around 9:00am, locals added.

Shipu was admitted to the local health complex.

Meantime, no report of further injury was received from the northern districts though hundreds of thatched and tin-shed houses, trees and crops on vast tracts of land were damaged in the region.

Our correspondent from Thakurgaon reports: Over a hundred thatched and tin-roofed houses were damaged, many trees uprooted, several hundred acres of maize and wheat fields, mango and litchi orchards damaged as the storm pounded most parts of the district early yesterday.

The storm with heavy rain that started at about 3:30am with a speed of 80 to 90 kilometres per hour blew away tin-roofs in four other upazilas.

Most affected villages are Farabari, Akcha, Nurgun, Puratan Thakurgaon, Chameshwari and Chandipur under sadar

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Malaysian couple held for 'fraud'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Malaysian couple was arrested from the city's Baridhara area yesterday on charge of defrauding a number of people of a huge amount of money.

Police said Md Jaïman and his wife Rohani-Binte Abdul Wahab were sent to jail after they were produced before a court.

Gulshan police arrested the Malaysian nationals after Azad Pervez, who was allegedly cheated by them, filed a case against them. The couple took Tk 8.65 lakh from Pervez, according to the case.

Police said they received two more complaints against the couple. It is likely that they were taking money from a number of people promising them to send abroad, police said.

Muggers kill vegetable vendor in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed a vegetable vendor to death at Badda in the capital early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Abdul Kader, aged around 23, a vendor of Badda vegetable market.

Family members of the victim told reporters that Kader came under attack when he refused to hand over his cell phone and Tk 4,000 to a group of two muggers on Badda-Gulshan link road.

The gang, who came there riding on a motorcycle, then stabbed the vendor and took away his belongings. Kader was waiting there for going to Farmgate in the early hours.

He died on the spot and police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Police suspect that previous enmity might be the reason behind the killing.

Prayer Timing		
March 28		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-20
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-20	6-25
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Christian Science Monitor prints its last edition

Starts new era as
online publication

AFP, Washington

The Christian Science Monitor printed its final edition yesterday, bringing a 100-year run as a daily newspaper to an end but beginning a new era as an online publication.

The Boston-based Monitor announced plans in October to eliminate its daily print edition and become the first national US newspaper to adopt a Web-based strategy.

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The photo shows the front page of the March 26 issue of the Boston-based daily Christian Science Monitor.



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