

UN indigenous forum calls for consultations on patents

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A United Nations conference on indigenous affairs wrapped up its two-week gathering yesterday, making a host of recommendations including worldwide establishment of a mechanism requiring patent offices to publicise origins of products derived from indigenous knowledge when exclusive rights to the designs are requested.

The 8th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues also called on the states and corporations to involve indigenous people in all negotiations relating to the entry of mining industries, infrastructure projects and other development schemes into their communities.

One of the texts approved by the Forum, a subsidiary of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), called on the international community to ensure the application of culturally relevant, gender-balanced and gender-based analysis and gender budgeting as critical elements of economic and social development, consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The declaration, a landmark text adopted in 2007, outlines the rights of the world's estimated 370 million indigenous people and outlaws discrimination against them. It sets out rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health, education and other issues, according to a UN release received here yesterday.

The 16-member Forum - which drew around 2,000 indigenous representatives from all regions of the world as well as representatives of member states, civil society, academia, some 35 UN entities and other intergovernmental organisations - approved a provisional agenda for next year, including a half-day discussion on North America.

In a bid to transform the historic UN declaration into "living law", the Forum invited states to adopt or endorse the document, substantively inform the Forum about its implementation and effectiveness locally and nationally and recommended that they do the same in core reports to human rights treaty bodies and the Human Rights Council's universal periodic review.

One of four orally amended and adopted on its eighth session by consensus, the Forum recommended that the declaration -- a new foundation for the rights of indigenous peoples and a legal basis for all related activities -- be integrated into the policies, projects and strategies of UN agencies, funds and programmes and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Furthermore, the Forum called on the states to consult with indigenous peoples and fully respond to their needs and rights when crafting relevant legislation as well as to adopt or endorse the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ILO Convention.

Key to those efforts was the Forum's adoption of its first general comment with an aim to give effect to the Declaration's

article 42, which stipulates that the UN must promote respect for and full application of the declaration and its incorporation into national law, court systems and administrative decisions of the various countries.

By a text on economic and social development, indigenous women and the 2nd International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, the Forum urged the World Bank to expand its operational budget to ensure adequate management of its \$30 billion increase in infrastructure spending for developing nations.

Transnational corporations must adopt minimum standards as a requirement of due diligence, particularly in creating a human rights policy, while states should ensure that corporations comply with standards laid out in the declaration and ILO convention.

The Forum recommended that the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) organise an international expert workshop on the theme of 'Indigenous peoples and health, with special emphasis on sexual and reproductive health', and submit a report to the Forum's ninth session.

It urged the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues to hold an international technical expert seminar on well-being indicators to be used in monitoring indigenous peoples' situation.

The Forum further recommended that states, UN agencies and indigenous peoples' organisations actively engage in the mid-term evaluation of the decade and submit reports on its national implementation.

Among other recommendations, the Forum appointed three of its members to undertake a study on the impact of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures on reindeer herding and another on indigenous fishing rights in the seas.

It called on UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to conduct a fast-track assessment of the short-term drivers of climate change with a view to starting talks for a global agreement on reducing black carbon emissions.

The Forum recommended that World Health Organisation (WHO) study the health effects on indigenous peoples caused by radioactive poisoning, uranium mining, dumping of radioactive waste and nuclear testing on traditional lands to submit a report to the ninth session.

Similarly, it appointed a Forum member to study the 'Doctrine of Discovery', a legal concept which served as the basis for human rights violations against indigenous peoples, and to submit a report in 2010.

The Forum supported a plan to hold the first World Indigenous Nations Games in Winnipeg, Canada, in 2012, and decided to hold a half-day session on the theme of 'Addressing racism against indigenous peoples' during its 10th session in 2011.



Detained Abdur Rauf Daud Merchant speaks to reporters denying his involvement with Mafia don Daud Ibrahim at Detective Branch of Police office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

Rahim, Sahab tell of ISI link

FROM PAGE 16 intelligence service Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) were involved with the plan of smuggling the seized arms. They also disclosed the names of two officials of foreign organization involved with the incident.

However, the two former officials of ISI accused each other for assisting to reach the arms consignment to Indian secessionist organization Ulfa.

High officials of CID think though Rahim and Sahab gave statements accusing each other from their statements the main truth of the plan of smuggling the arms surfaced. From their statement it came out that ARY Group and Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka financed for bringing the arms consignment and the arms were brought with the assistance of ISI for Ulfa.

Many ISI officials including these two knew the matter. Brigadier Rahim in his statement mentioned Sahab's direct involvement in maintaining contact with ISI and ARY for reaching the arms consignment to Ulfa.

Sahab in his confessional statement in the court admitted holding several meetings at home and abroad under the directive of his senior officer Brigadier Rahim. However, he tactfully avoided the issue of his involvement in these works.

Though Sahabuddin in his interrogation at TFI cell in Dhaka gave elaborate description of the plan of smuggling the arms in the confessional statement in the court he avoided many of the facts. In the statement given to the court instead of mentioning names of ISI or any of its officials he mentioned meeting with foreigners. He also did not mention involvement of any country with the arms smuggling. However, during the interrogation at the TFI cell he mentioned the names of the foreigners and for which intelligence agency they work.

However, Brigadier Rahim in his statement mentioned the names of ARY and ISI, and clearly mentioned when, where and with which official he met. Even in his confessional statement at the court and during interrogation at the TFI cell he mentioned the name of the ISI Director General and admitted that he met with him in London. But he did not give any indication that plan to smuggle arms was made in these meetings. Rather he indicated that the issue of arms smuggling was finalised during Sahab's meeting with the ISI officials.

Brigadier General Rahim on Wednesday afternoon gave confessional statement under section 164 in the court of Chittagong metropolitan magistrate Osman Gani. Earlier USH Commander (retd) Sahabuddin Ahmed gave similar confessional statement in the court of Chittagong magistrate Mohammad Abu Hannan on May 15.

A CID official involved with enquiry and investigation process said, "From the statements of these two former ISI officials we have been able to be confirmed of many unsettled truths. These truths added new speed to the investigation of the case."

The official said now the investigating officials are finalizing how the people of ISI or other agencies got involved with this incident. The charge sheet of the case would be prepared on the basis of this.

PAKISTAN In his confessional statement given in the court Rahim said when "he (Sahab) was appointed deputy director

(security) he appealed to me and enticed me to make him my PS. As he was the director (security) and PS simultaneously he carefully used his power to meet with the detective officers of foreign embassy and exchange information. He developed good relations with ISI official brigadier Mogisuddin and Col Shahed Mahmud working in the Pakistan High Commission. I came to know this from his frequent meeting with them."

In the interrogation at the TFI cell he also informed, Sahab embezzled huge amount of foreign exchange in the name of checking Money Change office at Motijheel. But he could not catch him for want of evidence.

ABOUTARY On the Dubai-based business firm ARY Group chief's Dhaka visit in 2004 Rahim told TFI cell, the Group MD Salman Iqbal came to Dhaka accompanied by an engineer. Sahab received them at the airport. Sahab arranged everything for them. He also gave his car for their use.

On the other hand Sahab in his confessional statement said, Director General Abdur Rahim directed him to take care of the ARY Group officials. On his (Rahim's) order he gave his car for their use. Bill of their lodging and food was also met from the NSI fund.

Admitting his going to London and meeting the ISI officials the former NSI chief said, he went to London to discuss about the payment of the money after Tk 2.5 crore mobile phone bugging devices were bought using the money received from ISI. There he had discussion with the ISI director general. During the discussion it was informed that these devices are gift on behalf of Pakistan. During the discussion Col Abdus Salam (a relative of Rahim), minister consul at London High Commission, was present.

However, on the meeting at London Rahim informed the TFI cell, when he went to London he took British Pound worth Tk 2.5 crore with him. He mentioned that the money was from NSI's government fund. He also admitted that he changed the money to Pound through Sahab and Liakat. He took the money for paying the price of telephone bugging devices.

However, earlier in interrogation on the same issue Sahab informed the amount was given to the ARY Group Director General as gift. Later he changed the money to Pound.

On contact with Dubai-based ARY Group as financier of the consignment of 10 truck arms and ammunitions, Brigadier Rahim in his confessional statement said, "About me Shahed Mohammad and brigadier Mogisuddin contacted with ARY and my PS Sahab Uddin coordinated. I used to frequently view ARY and QTV at my office. Observing my attraction to those TV channels Sahabuddin proposed me to become the local agent of QTV. Later he discussed the matter with the ISI officers. He made a guideline of the matter on which Bangladesh's NSI and Pakistan's ISI could cooperate."

However, Rahim told the TFI cell, ARY Group is a business firm, which enjoys blessings of ISI. And the officials of Pakistan High Commission are main patrons of Ulfa. During interrogation Sahab said he came to know the matter of Pakistan High Commission's request to help Ulfa from the Director General.

Admitting his going to Dubai at the invitation of ARY Brigadier Rahim in his confessional statement said, "On an invitation from ARY Group I along with my wife went to Dubai in June-July 2003 in connection with setting up QTV. We stayed in Dubai for three days. There we met with ARY Group MD Salman Iqbal and his father Haji Abdur Razzak Yusuf. We discussed whether there would be transmission of QTV in Bangladesh. They said if Bangladesh government gives permission they are interested."

In the statement at the TFI cell Rahim said, he was told on behalf of the ARY Group that if QTV were set up in Bangladesh he would be appointed its local agent. Ulfa

Regarding Ulfa Brigadier Rahim said, Sahab Uddin tried to talk with him about Anup Chetia in March 2004. He said, "As I was not interested, he dropped the issue and said we should help Ulfa."

"I got infuriated at his proposal and said, 'Shall we give Bangladesh to Ulfa?' Then he (Sahab) got a pale face and left the place."

However, Sahab in his confessional statements in the court and in the TFI cell said, after the ARY Group officials came to Dhaka, the Director General held meeting with them at his personal Safe House. A meeting was also held at his residence. In that meeting Ulfa military chief Paresh Barua, two officials of ARY Group and officials of Pakistan High Commission were present.

ARMS SMUGGLING On smuggling of arms and its seizure Rahim in his confessional statement said, "On April 2, 2004 when I reached Daudkandi Bridge on my way to my village the then state minister for home asked me over phone whether I know anything about seizure of arms at Chittagong. I told him that I know nothing. He told me "I suppose some people from NSI are involved. Though I got upset I recalled Sahab Uddin's uttering about helping Ulfa. I told the state minister, there is a black sheep in my office. His name is Sahab Uddin. He might be involved."

During interrogation at TFI cell Rahim said, one day after the arms consignment was seized he went to the Prime Minister's office and met her. He told the PM that Shahab Uddin is involved with the arms consignment. In exchange of huge amount of money from Indian Intelligence agency Sahab and Akbar leaked the news of the consignment.

During interrogation in this regard Sahab told the investigating officers, after he left the CMH for home on May 1, 2004 Major Liakat informed him about the seizure of the arms at deep night over phone. He told the TFI officials that when he phoned the Director General about this Brigadier Rahim told him not to discuss the matter over phone, come to his house and talk.

Sahab told the TFI officials, when later he wanted to know the Director General told him, "The Prime Minister's Office does not trust him (Sahab)." Sahab thinks, Akbar informed the police about the incident.

CID officials said it is not worth believing that the officials of an important state agency like NSI would cooperate in smuggling 10 trucks arms keeping the chief of the agency in dark. They said, they are examining the statement given by Rahim and Sahab.

Obituary

METRO DESK



Azimuddin Chowdhury, son of late Advocate Ashrafuddin Chowdhury, died of cancer in the city on May 26 at the age of 69.

He is survived by wife, a son, two daughters and two grandchildren.

Azimuddin retired as a senior executive of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation.

He was buried at the graveyard on the premises of the shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal (R) in Sylhet after his namaz-e-janaza in Dhaka and Sylhet on the same day.

Prayer will be held for the salvation of the departed soul at his Dhakamandi residence in Dhaka after Asr prayers on June 5 (Friday).

Rashida Begum Bina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Rashida Begum Bina, wife of Kazi Enamul Haque, director of United Commercial Bank and daughter of former lawmaker SA Khaleque, passed away at a city hospital on Friday at the age of 37.

She left behind her husband, two daughters and a host of relatives to mourn her death.

Her qulqhawani will be held tomorrow at her father's residence in Mirpur in the city after Asr prayers.

Dr Zainul Abedin

METRO DESK

Dr Zainul Abedin, an eye specialist, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Apollo Hospitals in the city on Friday at the age of 75, says a press release.

He left behind his son, a daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

His qulqhawani will be held after Asr prayers on Tuesday at his residence in the city.

Suhashini Devi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Suhashini Devi, an activist of anti-British movement, passed away due to old-age ailment at a hospital in Sylhet yesterday at the age of 94.

She left behind her daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn her death.

Indian government honoured Suhashini for her laudable role in the anti-British movement. Bangladesh government also honoured her for social services.

Her body will be cremated today.

Death anniversary

BSS, Dhaka



Today day is the 36th death anniversary of Nuru Haque, a freedom fighter and former lawmaker.

On the occasion, Nuru Haque Foundation has taken various programmes, including Qurankhwani, milad mahfil, feeding of destitutes and discussion.

Besides, Amra Muktyoddhar Santan, a platform of children of freedom fighters, has taken programmes on the occasion.

Jamil Akhtar Ratan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 21st death anniversary of martyred student leader Jamil Akhtar Ratan, says a press release.

Ratan, former president of Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH) unit of Bangladesh Chhatra Moitri, was shot and hacked to death on the day in 1988 by Islami Chhatra Shibir cadres on the college campus.

Jamil became the target of Shibir cadres when he led a tough movement against the 'state religion bill' brought by the former autocrat HM Ershad.

On the occasion, a discussion will be held at Chhatra Moitri central office in the city at 4:00 pm. Similar programmes will also be observed in Rajshahi.

Focus on villages for overall development

President urges Lions

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged Lion leaders to focus on villages as the country's overall development depends on socio-economic progress of its rural areas.

"I hope that voluntary organisations like Lions Club would increase their activities gradually targeting the underprivileged people apart from the government," he said.

President Zillur was addressing the inaugural session of the 22nd annual district convention of Lions Club International Multiple District-315 at a city hotel.

Council Chairperson PK

Roy, Convention Chairman Khandaker Jahangir Kabir, Lions Club International Director Bishnu Bajoria, Past International Director Sheikh Kabir Hossain and International Director Endorse Qazi Akramuddin Ahmed also addressed the function.

A total of six lions club districts are operating in Bangladesh with more than 10,000 members and the district-315 is the sixth largest in the world in terms of the number of members.

Referring to welfare activities of lions of the country, the president said lions operate eye hospitals and education and health programmes,

drawing attention of all.

The president hoped that they would give a further boost to their welfare activities to help the county's distressed people by motivating themselves with their motto of 'We Serve'.

Referring to the present government's commitment to build a hunger and poverty-free Bangladesh, Zillur said the government is working relentlessly in this regard under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

A good number of lions, including all district governors and past governors, from different parts of the country attended the convention.

Rab arrests 5 professional killers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-3) members arrested five alleged killers of Dhaka divisional commissioner's office staff in the city on Friday night.

The victim was identified as Aminul Islam Khadem, administrative officer, of Kharampur village under Akhaura in Brahmanbaria.

Rab officials said the arrestees are professional killers and they slaughtered the staff, who was also the general secretary of Kolya Shah Mazar Committee in Brahmanbaria, at the lure of Tk 1.5 crore by former general secretary Saidur Rahman Khadem, 58.

Saidur is also one of the five arrestees. Others are Shamim Ahmed, 28, Mohammad Biplab, 35, Mahub Alam Liton, 25, and Mohammad Sohel, 25.

Rab men said the professional killers slain Aminul on May 3 at Malibagh, adding that they are listed criminals of the law enforcement and intelligence agencies with various criminal records.

Sources said the victim was killed following a long-lasting feud over the control of Kolya Shah Mazar.

At a press briefing at Rab-3 office, Saidur admitted that he had hired the killers to take revenge on Aminul as he had ousted him from the mazar committee on corruption charge.

Firearms seized in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized two firearms from Shaheed Nagar area under Bayezid Police Station in the port city on Friday night.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab raided in the area while some armed miscreants were preparing to commit crime at around 11:30pm.

Sensing presence of the Rab, the miscreants fled the scene immediately.

Later, the Rab seized a light gun and a three-quarter gun searching the area.

DU summer vacation begins tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

The month-long summer vacation of Dhaka University (DU) will begin tomorrow.

Class of different departments and institute of the university will remain suspended but examinations will be held during the vacation.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of ACI Pure Salt Deshke Jano, an online quiz competition, pose for photograph with the guests at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

Grand civil festival held at Buet

BSS, Dhaka

Civil Engineering Students' Association (CESA) of the Department of Civil Engineering of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) has organised a three-day 'Grand Civil Festival' on the campus.

Buet Vice Chancellor Prof Dr AMM Safullah inaugurated the festival at the Buet auditorium on Wednesday as the chief guest, says a Buet press release.

The festival included an inter-university civil engineering software competition, job fair, material exhibition along with cultural programme, film show and staging of drama.

The colorful festival ended successfully with a concert.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely occur at one or two places over all the six divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:40pm today and rises at 5:11am Friday.

Country's highest temperature 35.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 21.7 degrees Celsius at Chittagong.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.