

# Ensuring accountability key to better urban governance

Speakers tell seminar

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Strengthening the capabilities of urban municipal service delivery and enhancing the accountability in municipal management is the key to improving urban governance, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They said migration of rural population to urban areas has increased tremendously putting pressure on municipal authorities while civic amenities did not develop in comparison to increased population.

The experience-sharing seminar titled 'Implementation of Urban Governance Improvement Action Programme (UGIAP)' was organised by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) at its auditorium in the city.

The speakers informed that around four crore people currently live in urban areas which make up about 27 percent of the total population.

"About 3500 new faces are joining urban population everyday. With this rate, the ratio of rural and urban population will be equal by the year 2031," they added.

The UGIAP project aims at developing urban infrastructure facilities such as roads and bridges, water supply, sanitation, drainage, solid waste management and other municipal services such as kitchen markets, slaughterhouses and bus terminals to meet the demand of growing urban population.

The project is also aimed to enhance accountability and capacity building of municipal management and increase people's participation.

Starting in 2003, a total of 33 municipalities have so far participated in implementing the three-phase project supported by the ADB. It will end in 2010.

The participating pourasavas are required to implement UGIAP with a limited allocation of project funds to cover the most urgent

requirements.

The actual progress made by the participating pourasavas in implementing UGIAP will determine their eligibility for receiving continuing support from the project.

Sharing their experiences, mayors of the participating municipalities demanded increased budget allocation along with infrastructure development.

LGRD Secretary Sheikh Khurshid Alam said internal migration is increasing everyday putting tremendous pressure on urban infrastructure.

The municipality mayors are under heavy pressure to provide service to increasing population, he added.

He said organisational capacity building is important to improve governance and provide better services to people.

State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Jahangir Kabir Nanak said the demand for development is very high

compared to limited resources of the country.

"We have to ensure sustainable development with this limited resources," he added.

The municipalities must work to scale down their dependency on the central government. They have to increase their own income to provide services to people. Increasing tax collection is important in this regard," said Nanak.

He hoped the municipality mayors would learn from the successes and challenges faced during the first phase of the project.

AKM Mozammel Huq MP, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on land ministry, Nurul Huda, deputy country director of ADB, Wahidur Rahman, chief engineer of LGED, and Md Azizul Haque, director of Urban Management Support Unit and superintending engineer (urban management) of LGED also spoke on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR  
Police stand guard in front of the main hostel of Chittagong Medical College yesterday following a clash between two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League on Tuesday night.

## KAMRANGIRCHAR MURDER

# Two accomplices of UP chairman arrested

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested two accomplices of Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Monir Hossain in connection with the murder of a youth at Kamrangirchar in the city on Tuesday.

The arrestees are Nazimuddin Nazu, a member of Sultanganj union parishad, and Abul Hashem Hashu, a trader.

A youth was killed and another received bullet injuries as Monir sprayed bullets on a crowd at Ashrafabad.

Investigation Officer of the case MA Jallil told this correspondent that they arrested them from their houses at Kamrangirchar and took them to two-day remand.

Monir and his other accomplices have been absconding since the incident.

Police are raiding different places to catch them.

The arrestees have admitted that they are close aides of Monir but they were not on the spot when the incident occurred, Jallil said.

Meanwhile, Ismail Hossain, a cousin of Monir, has quoted

him as saying that the youth was killed by the bullets of an Awami League (AL) man.

Monir only opened fire in the sky, he added.

He also claimed that the case was diverted politically as the plaintiff of the case is an AL man and for that they are doubtful about getting justice.

Kamrangirchar Thana Swechchasebok League President Golam Maula Reza filed the murder case with the local police station against Monir and 17 others in the early hours of yesterday.

Those involved in harassing politicians must stand trial  
Says Moudud

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leader Moudud Ahmed yesterday said those who harassed and persecuted politicians during the tenure of the immediate past caretaker government must stand trial.

His party would cooperate with the government in bringing to book those responsible, he said and agreed with the law minister's remark that the politicians were harassed during the tenure of the caretaker government.

Moudud said this while talking to reporters at his Motijheel chamber.

He also said that BNP will decide at its meeting today whether the party would join the budget session of parliament.

On Tuesday, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed blamed the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) for harassing politicians during the caretaker government by filing cases against them.

## Obituary

### METRO DESK

Alhaj Kalimur Rahman, a former government official and former general secretary of Association of Vegetable Oil Refinery and Finished Leather Products, passed away in Sydney, Australia yesterday at the age of 87, says a press release.

He left behind his seven sons, one daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

**DHAKA TODAY Seminar**  
Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and JICA jointly organise a seminar on 'Strengthening capacity for water quality analysis and monitoring system in Bangladesh'. Venue: DPHE auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

**BISS seminar**  
Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) organises a seminar on 'Bangladesh-Myanmar relations'. Venue: BISS office. Time: 11:00am.

**Seminar on child labour**  
Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum organises a seminar on 'Elimination of worst form of child labour: Our role' to mark the World Day Against Child Labour. Venue: LGED conference room. Time: 9:15am.

**Roundtable**  
Centre for Human Rights, Development and Human Security organises a roundtable on citizenship, human rights and human security of people living in enclaves. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

Khaleda given security as per law: Sahara

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday said Leader of the Opposition and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is being provided with security as much as she deserves in accordance with the law.

"Security for the opposition leader is being provided as per the law. It won't change in future," she said rejecting BNP's allegation that the government has withdrawn police deployed for her security.

Sahara was talking to journalists after a meeting with Saudi Ambassador Abdullah bin-Nasser Al Bushati at her ministry office.

The home minister said security had been beefed up on all court premises and other important establishments across the country apprehending terrorist and militant attacks.

Referring to simultaneous bomb attack in 63 districts in 2005, she said they have taken the precautionary measures after being alerted about possible attacks.

The minister called on all to watch out for the militants and hand them over to law enforcement if found anywhere.

About the meeting with the ambassador, she said they discussed sending trained workers to Saudi Arabia, ensuring securities for Bangladeshi workers there and ensuring facilities for Bangladeshi Hajj pilgrims.

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He also said that BNP will decide at its meeting today whether the party would join the budget session of parliament.

On recruitment of more workers, he said, "I have heard from the foreign minister asking for more Bangladeshi to be appointed. But for the time being, it will be very difficult to do that. As you know that the UAE economy is privately driven."

Nahyan said his country is interested in projects relating to power since Bangladesh has the crisis.

More than 700,000 Bangladeshis are working in different sectors in the UAE.



Bangladesh Chhatra Union forms a human chain at Muktagan in the city yesterday demanding allocation of eight percent of national income for the education sector in the budget.

Give highest priority to nat'l interest  
President urges journalists

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged journalists to disseminate news giving the highest priority to national interest as he said the present government believes in the freedom of the mass media and free flow of information.

He noted that the government has passed the Right to Information Act and consequently the responsibility of the journalists also increased as regards propagating information through the mass media.

The president particularly urged the media men to act more responsibly while discussing or making remark on sensitive issues, including country's sovereignty and national interests.

He made the suggestion during a meeting with Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) executive committee at Bangabhaban. DRU President Shamim Ahmad and General Secretary Pathik Saha led the delegation.

Appreciating the courageous role of the journalist community in building opinion on important national issues, he said powerful writings of the journalists are contributing to the advancement of democracy and establishing the rule of law and human rights.

He expected that the journalist community would always stand beside the people in establishing justice and truth in national interest.

DRU President Shamim Ahmad said journalists always stood for democracy and the rule of law and hoped that the country would achieve economic progress under the able leadership of President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

DRU General Secretary Pathik Saha spoke about professional activities of their organisation and put forward certain demands, including a piece of land for DRU's permanent office at Segunbagicha.

**VITAMIN A PLUS CAMPAIGN**  
**Probe body to submit report today**

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The investigation committee formed to find out the links between the Vitamin A Plus campaign and children's illness, such as diarrhoea, stomachache and nausea, will submit the report today.

The committee is mainly investigating the technical issues.

Following a visit to Faridpur Medical College Hospital, Bhanga, Sadarpur and Charbhodrasan health complexes and talking to the local people and UNOs and chairmen, the committee found that the situation has become almost normal by this time.

Meanwhile, the deputy commissioner of Faridpur also formed a three-member committee to find out the people responsible for creating panic among the people by using loudspeakers, according to our Faridpur correspondent.

"Although the national vitamin A campaign was scheduled for June 6, it was launched two days earlier at Char Shalipur and Char Hazar Biga under Charbhodrasan upazila considering the remoteness of the areas. We will investigate the matter. It may float the programme schedule, but it has no connection with sickness," Dr Jahangir said.

Our Munshiganj correspondent adds: the situation of diarrhoea in Munshiganj is also normal now and an investigation committee will be formed soon to investigate the death of Urmia, a seven-year-old girl, of Ballalbari village at Sadar upazila.

Talking to the media after laying the foundation stone of

**Medical student drowns in Padma**

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A student of Bangladesh Dental College in the city yesterday drowned in the Padma river at Mawa point in Munshiganj.

The victim was identified as Shamsul Arefin, 22, a third-year student of the college and only son of his doctor parents Dr AKM Shamsuddin and Dr Ismat Zakia, of Shankar in Dhanmondi area, family sources said.

Bappi, one of Arefin's friend said, "We, five friends, went to Mawa by a private car for a trip. After playing football in the afternoon, we went for swimming, but Arefin went missing suddenly."

On information, local people rescued the victim from the river in the afternoon and rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

**SEDITION CASE AGAINST AKHTAR HAMID**

**Hearing on bail petition deferred for 4th time**

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A Naogaon court yesterday deferred the date for hearing on the bail petition of former deputy speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui for the fourth time in the sedition case filed against him.

The court of the District and Sessions Judge Habibur Rahman fixed Sunday for the hearing after Public Prosecutor (PP) GM Moazzem Hossain fell ill in the court before the hearing could resume, sources said.

The lawyers of the BNP leader submitted the petition for his bail in the case on June 1 and the court deferred the date for various reasons, including the PP lacks preparation and his illness.

Naogaon police arrested Hamid from his house at Mohadevpur upazila on March 22 under the Special Powers Act for making statements subversive to the government as well as the state.

According to the home ministry directive, Ilias Fakir, officer-in-charge of Mohadevpur Police Station, later filed the sedition case against him for making statements subversive to the government as well as the state.

Fakir alleged that Hamid warned him that the Awami League government would not last long referring to incident of BDR mutiny.

The police officer also alleged that Hamid threatened him that he would attack the police.

Talking to The Daily Star, Farida Tajin Siddiqui, a lawyer and daughter of Hamid, termed the sedition case to be a farcical show to harass the ex-deputy speaker.

## CHAOS INSIDE CTG JAIL

**Shibir Nasir, 7 others shifted to Comilla, Sylhet jails**

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Notorious criminal Mohammad Nasir alias Shibir Nasir and seven others, including six convicted murderers, were shifted from Chittagong jail to Comilla and Sylhet jails on Tuesday night.

They were shifted on charges of attacking the warders and staging hunger strike inside the jail on Saturday reportedly in an attempt to create chaos.

Of them, Shibir Nasir, an accused in 37 cases, Shaiful Azam alias Shafi, Shamim and Md Azam were shifted to Comilla jail while one 'Golakata' Rashid, Taslim Uddin Montu, Md Solaiman and Ali Akbar alias Dhakaiya Akbar shifted to Sylhet jail.

Excluding Nasir and Ali Akbar, the other six were awarded death penalties in different cases, including Bahadurhat eight murder cases.

Sources said the Chittagong jail authorities shifted them following an order from Deputy Inspector General (Prison) Fazlur Rahman, who along with Deputy Inspector General (HQ) Golam Haider, rushed to the jail and conducted an

inquiry into the attack on warders and hunger strike by the inmates.

The decision of shifting the prisoners was finalised after Inspector General (Prison) Md Moqbul Hossain visited the jail on Monday, the authorities said.

In the inquiry made by the DIG (prison) of Comilla range, the involvement of 30 prisoners, including 17 convicted murderers, were identified in the attacks and hunger strike.