

Raise voice against impacts of climate change

Says JCI global president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Junior Chamber International (JCI) World President Jun Sup Shin yesterday urged its members to raise voice against disastrous effects of climate change, saying that local protests will greatly help change the world.

"It is time to save our motherlands. If we can take actions, we will be able to change the world," he said at a roundtable on 'Climate change: Stop climate change before it changes you.'

JCI Bangladesh, International Union for

Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Star Campus, a weekly magazine of The Daily Star, jointly organised the roundtable at the Prothom Alo conference room.

JCI is a worldwide community of young people aged between 18 and 40 who share the belief that collective action is necessary to create positive change. The global platform of young generation has been officially working with the UN since 1954.

JCI has 2,00,000 young members in 115 countries. The members will launch initiatives both locally and

globally in 2009 to raise environmental awareness and tackle climate change.

Climate change is the abnormal behaviour of climate, said Ainun Nishat, country representative of IUCN.

The global climate change would pose a serious threat to food security, he said, adding that if the global warming increases by 3 degree Celsius, global rice production would come down by 30 percent.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, and Aftab Khurshid, president

of JCI Bangladesh, also spoke at the roundtable.

Anam lauded the role of JCI in creating good leaders across the world. "A leader means many things. A good leader is a creative person. A good leader is also a good follower," he said.

Emphasising the need to develop leadership skills, he said the meaning of internationalism is to respect other's culture, heritage and nationalism.

Anam also urged the young generation to develop leadership skills to move the country forward.



Participants at a roundtable on climate change held at the Prothom Alo office in the city yesterday. JCI Bangladesh, IUCN and the Star Campus, a weekly magazine of The Daily Star, jointly organised the roundtable.

CLIMATE CHANGE

'One-third of country's population to be forced to migrate'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a training course yesterday stressed the need for understanding the impact of climate change to face its challenges through environment-friendly measures.

They said it is very important to identify the areas where proper research should be conducted in this regard.

The three-day training course on 'Facing the challenges of climate change: Issues, impacts and adaptation strategies for Bangladesh with focus on water and waste management' began at the ITN seminar room in the city.

The course has been organised by International Training Network (ITN) and civil engi-

neering department of Buet in cooperation with the British Council, Dhaka.

Around 50 participants from different organisations working on environment, UNDP and government engineering bodies are taking part in the course.

It is aimed to enhance knowledge about climate change issues and develop a functional network of professionals, academics and decision makers to face the challenges.

While inaugurating the course Vice Chancellor of Buet Prof Dr A M M Safiullah said climate change would affect Bangladesh in many ways.

"It would harm our agriculture, infrastructure and waste

management and force one-third of total population to migrate to safer places," he added.

"As the ground water is depleting two to three metres a year, it would affect our sanitation and water demand. Sea level rise and intrusion of sea water into coastal belt would increase salinity of land hampering our agriculture and food security," he said, adding, "If we understand the challenges and nature of the problem we would be able to find out solution."

Rashed Khan Menon, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the education ministry, said though Bangladesh is least responsible for climate

change, it has become the worst victim.

Speaking as chief guest he said at the recent G8 conference the developed countries agreed to allocate more money to mitigate the effects of climate change and to aid the victim countries.

"But the donor countries must give us the scope to utilise the money according to our needs," he added.

Menon said, "We should also scrutinise the impact of Tipaimukh dam and raise the issue at a greater platform."

Prof Dr Mohammad Zoynul Abedin, head of the Department of Civil Engineering, Prof Dr M Habibur Rahman, director of ITN, and Prof Dr Jobair Bin Alam also spoke on the occasion.



Bangladesh Jatiya Congress forms a human chain at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding steps to keep the prices of essentials within the purchasing power of people.

GRAFT CASE HC grants bail to Hazari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted an interim bail to former Awami League (AL) lawmaker Joyal Hazari in a graft case in which he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in absentia.

The HC bench of Justice Md Abdul Wahab Miah and Justice Md Abdul Razzaque granted the bail after holding hearing on an appeal filed by Hazari against his conviction.

The order will continue till disposal of the appeal.

Advocate Sayed Ahmed Raza, a lawyer for Hazari, yesterday told The Daily Star that his client would not get released from jail following yesterday's HC order of bail, since he has been shown arrested in another case.

On November 27 last year, Hazari was convicted and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and fined Tk five lakh in his absence in a case filed against him for amassing wealth of Tk 1.13 crore through illegal means.

He was sent to jail after he surrendered before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court of Feni on April 15 this year.

Advocate Abdul Baset Majumder appeared for Hazari.

CTG ARMS HAUL Rezaqul files petition for bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detained former director general of National Security Intelligence (NSI) Major Gen (Retd) Rezaqul Haider Chowdhury yesterday filed a petition with the High Court (HC), seeking bail in the sensational Chittagong arms haul case.

Former attorney general AJ Mohammad Ali's chamber filed the bail petition on behalf of Rezaqul Haider Chowdhury, sources said.

Deputy Attorney General (DAG) KM Jahid Sarwar Kajal yesterday told The Daily Star that he received a copy of the bail petition filed by the former NSI chief and hearing of the petition may be held today before the HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice Md Rais Uddin.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arrested Rezaqul Haider Chowdhury from his Dhanmondi residence on May 16 in connection with the 10 truckloads of weapons seized in Chittagong in April 2004.

Rezaqul was director (counter-intelligence bureau) of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) when the police and the coastguard seized the arms at the jetty of Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd (CUFL) on April 2, 2004, sources said.

Govt directive to start classes on first day of academic year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government directed all the educational institutions of all mediums in secondary level to start classes from the first working day of January.

The education ministry in a circular yesterday said this directive would be applicable for all mediums - general, madrasa and technical education.

Though the academic year in the secondary level starts in January, it takes time to start the class due to many reasons, wasting a significant amount of time in an academic year.

The ministry also asked the institutions to complete all necessary activities, annual examinations, result publication, admission and preparing class routines before the start of the classes next year.

GATS begins to assess status of tobacco use

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) formally began in the country yesterday to measure the status of tobacco use among people above 15 years of age.

With the support of WHO and Bloomberg Global Initiative, the survey will track prevalence of adult tobacco use, exposure to risk, knowledge of laws and variety of tobacco consumption.

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg has allocated Tk two crore for the survey.

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, NIPORT, NIPSOM, and oncology department of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSSMU) are working on it.

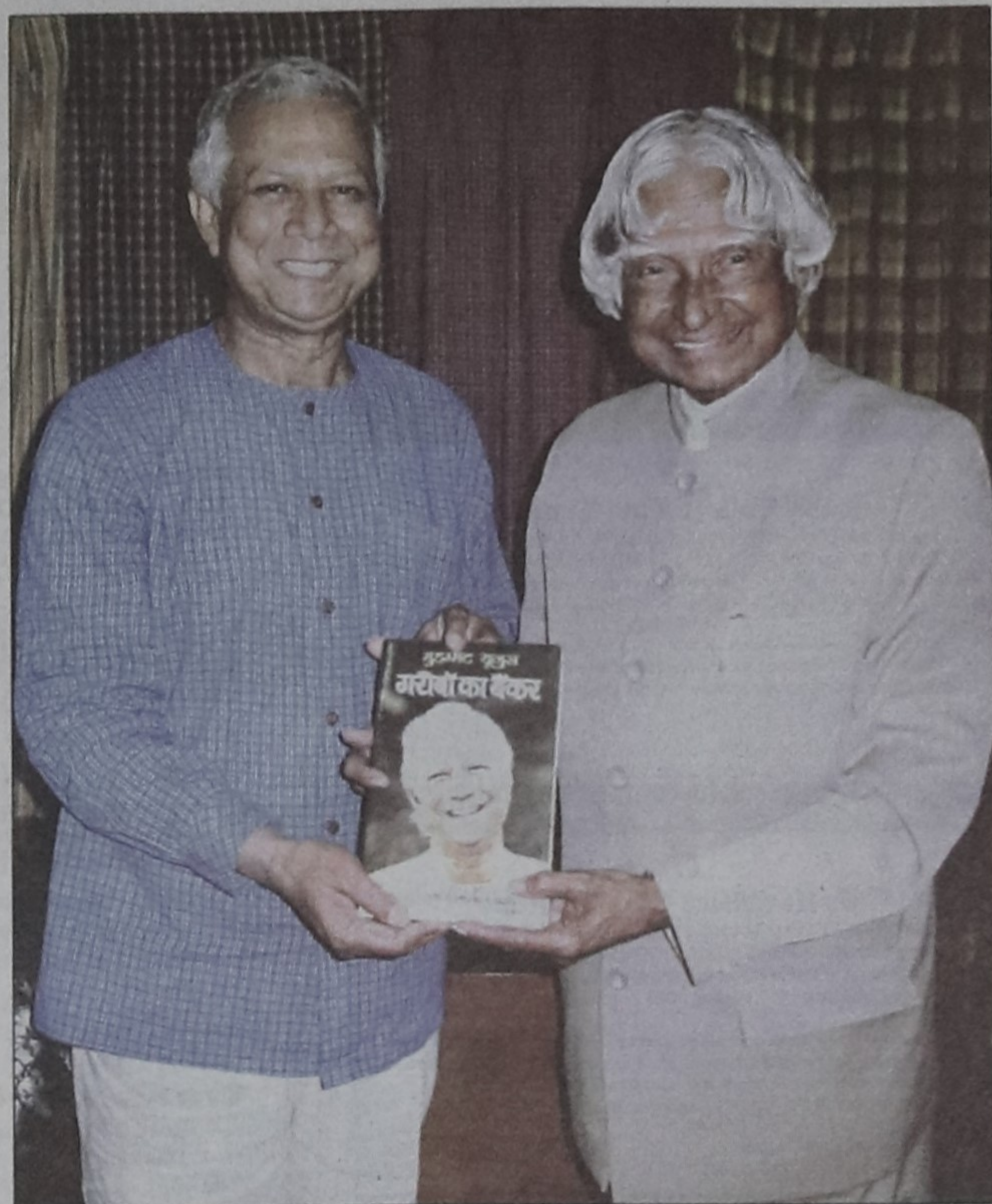
Health Secretary Sheikh Altaf Ali is the head of the steering committee, while joint secretary, WHO, Anowar Hossain Munshi is spearheading the technical committee.

A total of eighteen teams comprising four data collectors and one supervisor are working across the country in 400 primary sample collection units. Total sample size is 12,000.

NIPSOM Director Prof Abdur Rahman is the principal investigator, while Associate Prof Amirul Hassan, occupational health expert Prof S K Akhter, epidemiologists Prof Anisur Rahman and Dr Shafiqul Islam, oncologist Prof Syed Akram Hussain and WHO National Programme Officer Dr Mostafa Zaman are the co-principal investigators.

Initially, the GATS is conducting the survey in 16 low and middle-income countries where more than half of the world's smokers live and that bear the highest burden of tobacco use.

The countries are Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Russian Federation, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay and Vietnam.



Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus presents a brand new Hindi edition of his book titled 'Banker to the Poor' to former Indian president APJ Abdul Kalam at the Grameen Bank head office at Mirpur in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

Another housewife burned to death

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

About a year ago, Asma came to Dhaka from Barisal to save herself from her husband's torture, but by a cruel twist of fate, she was burned to death by her second husband.

Asma, who worked as a garment worker, died on July 17 from burns she suffered after her husband Monir Hossain set her on fire at their house on July 3. She had been under treatment at the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for 14 days.

The 23-year-old woman came to Dhaka in search of a happy life, but she was trapped into getting married to Monir, who earlier married her niece Ferdousi.

Monir married Ferdousi after her first wife died. He had also a son Shuvo, born to his first wife. But the four-year-old boy died from burns on December 29 last year and Ferdousi ended up in jail after Monir filed a case against her on charges of killing the boy.

Then Monir started pressuring Asma, who took shelter at her niece's house at Kachukhet after coming to Dhaka, to get married to him.

He also threatened to file a case against her and her family members if she would

refuse.

Three months ago, Monir, his brother Kalam and nephew Nurul Islam came to Asma's garment factory and took her to a house in Gabtoli where she was forced to put her signatures on some papers. Monir then claimed that she has now become his wife.

Asma had narrated her agonising ordeal to this correspondent before her death when she was undergoing treatment at DMCH.

After their marriage, they started living in a shanty at Moti Mia's slum at Baganbari in Bhasantek. But Monir recently had been pressuring her to be a witness in the Shuvo murder case.

On the night of July 2, Monir came to the shanty in a drunken state and beat up Asma as she refused to be a witness.

At around 3:30am, Monir locked the room from inside and set fire to her.

"I woke up in agonising pain and saw my husband was standing at a corner of the room with the key of the lock. Soon I lost my consciousness," Asma said.

Hearing her screams, neighbours rushed in and rescued her from the room and rushed her to DMCH.

Monir went into hiding after the incident.

Shanu Khan, father of Asma, told The Daily Star, "Asma was the third wife of Monir. His first wife, who is also one of our relatives, died from unknown reasons. Later, he married Ferdousi to look after Shuvo, who was one-year-old at that time."

During a visit to Monir's shanty at Bhasantek, this correspondent talked to some neighbours who said they rushed into the room after hearing the screams of Asma.

"There are only two bathrooms for 30 families in the slum. The two bathrooms smelled of kerosene on that day. We suspect that Monir might have set fire to the room to kill Asma," said Ali Hossain, a neighbour.

"We saw Monir opening the door with a key and we all tried to beat him as we thought that he tried to kill Asma by setting fire to her, but Asma claimed that a burning mosquito coil sparked off the fire and she requested all to rescue her," he added.

Nazmul Haq, sub-inspector of Kafrul police station, told The Daily Star, "We visited the shanty and recorded a case against five people, including Monir. We are trying to arrest them."



Rokia Afzal Rahman, former adviser to the caretaker government, admires a saree after inaugurating 'Ava Neer', the first branch of Traditions, at House-54, Block-F, Road-11, Banani in the city yesterday.

'No decision yet to probe illegal torture'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said that the government is going to constitute a commission to probe and try the incidents of tortures and repressions that took place between 2001 and 2008, he said that it was a personal opinion of Alamgir.

The law minister said it while talking to the reporters at his secretariat office yesterday

government's stand about the

demand of Awami League lawmaker Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir that the government is going to constitute a commission to probe and try the incidents of tortures and repressions that took place between 2001 and 2008, he said that it was a personal opinion of Alamgir.

Replying to a question on the

afternoon.

Alamgir, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on Public Undertakings, on July 18 told the reporters after joining a meeting at Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (Bilia) auditorium in the city that a number of politicians and businessmen, including religious minority people, were illegally tortured between 2001 and 2008.



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