

## Democracy not possible without ensuring fundamental rights

### Speakers tell Democracy Olympiad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Without ensuring the fundamental rights of the people it is not possible to ensure democracy and good governance in the country, students participating at the first ever Democracy Olympiad said yesterday.

The students, however, added that one must know about the fundamental rights first and the responsibilities that come along with it.

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) organised the Olympiad at Prime University at Mirpur in the capital.

About 400 enthusiastic students from 16 universities

and colleges attended the Olympiad where they pledged to become better citizens and work for the country.

The Olympiad started with a quiz.

Participating students also joined in debates and shared their views about the country's current situation and how good governance can be strengthened.

Md Mawdud Ahmed and Md Mehedi Hasan of Prime University became champion and runner-up in the university section.

While Shathi Akter from Bangla College became the champion in the college section and Md Musfikul Azam of Dhaka College became runner-up.

Another 20 participants were also awarded for their performances at the Olympiad.

The guests attending the Olympiad stressed the role of the youth as the advocates of good governance.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Chairman M Hafiz Uddin Khan said democracy is the foundation of good governance.

"We are still lagging behind in establishing good governance in the country. The youth must take the leading role in creating awareness and establishing democracy," added Hafiz, a former adviser

to a caretaker government and also the vice chairman of Shujan.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumder said the purpose of the Olympiad is to engage youths in the democratic process of the country.

They have to work together to bring changes, he added.

He also stressed bringing back the lost glory of student politics that shaped the history of the nation.

ASM Shahjahan, executive member of Shujan and former adviser to a caretaker government, Dr M Abdus Samad, vice chancellor of Prime University, and Mir Shabbuddin, pro-vice chancellor, also spoke.



Dhaka City Corporation launches an eviction drive against the illegal structures erected on the footpath in front of Bangladesh Shishu Academy in the city yesterday. Vendors used the footpath to sell colourful earthenware.



Visiting US Marine Commander for Special Operations, Pacific Command, Rear Admiral Sean A Pybus holds a meeting with the high officials of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at its headquarters in the city yesterday.

## Child labour eradication policy hailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Save the Children Sweden-Denmark (SCSD) and Together with Working Children (TWC), a platform of seven organisations working to ensure the rights of the children, yesterday hailed the government for approving the National Child Labour Eradication Policy 2010.

At a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity, the speakers of the organisations said the policy would certainly help eradicate child labour from the country gradually.

The main feature of the policy is that it includes a code of conduct for the employers of the child labourers, as it is not possible to stop child labour instantly.

The code of conduct

involves working hours and the wage of the child labourers, education of these children, health and nutrition, working environment, entertainment, treatment, meeting with the families etc.

Quoting the data of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2002-03, the speakers said that there are 7.4 million child labourers in the country who earn a meager amount of money confronting different types of hazards.

"We hope the policy would bring benefit not only to the working children of Bangladesh but also be inspirational to other countries in the region where child labour is a burning issue," said Niels Bentzen, country representative of Save the Children Sweden Denmark.

## US to help Rab fight terrorism, militancy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Visiting US Marine Commander for Special Operations, Pacific Command, Rear Admiral Sean A Pybus yesterday assured Rapid Action Battalion of providing support to fight terrorism and militancy.

He made the assurance when he paid a courtesy call on Rab Director General Hassan Mahmood Khandkar at the Rab headquarters.

Pybus, who led an eight-member delegation, also said terrorism and religious militancy in this part of the world need to be contained.

He also lauded Rab's role in different activities specially fighting militancy, says a Rab press release.

Pybus also pledged to help set up a forensic laboratory for the elite force.

## Woman found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of an unidentified woman from a flat at Khilgaon in the city yesterday.

Officer-in-Charge of Khilgaon Police Station Nazimuddin said one Mohammad Rubel, 25, husband of the woman aged about 20 rented the flat last month.

At about 5:00am yesterday, Rubel requested the owner of the building to

open the gate saying that his father had been admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and Rubel should go there.

During the day, when the owner of the building saw that the bulbs are switched on, he found that the flat was under lock and key.

Sensing something wrong, he informed police who breaking the door found the woman lying dead on the floor, Nazimuddin added.

## US naval ship starts training programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The US naval ship USS Ingraham on a goodwill visit started a three-day exchange of training programme with Bangladesh Navy in the Bay of Bengal near the offshore Island of Kutubdia under Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The ship with some 200 US naval personnel, including 25 officers, led by Commander Adam J Welter, reached the deep sea, some eight kilometres to the west of Kutubdia and 60 km to the south of Chittagong port, on Monday.

The US ship made the stop for the exchange of training on its way to Singapore from Bahrain where it was engaged in anti-terror vigilance until some two weeks back.

Talking to journalists on board the ship about the aim of the programme, Adam said, "The training aims at strengthening relationship through mutual cooperation and understanding."

"Both the US and Bangladesh Navy would exchange experience in the training when we would be sharing our knowledge on helicopter operation from the naval ship."

## Vow to stamp out fanaticism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) celebrated 40 years of hoisting the national flag on its campus yesterday with a vow to fight for ensuring the immediate trial of war criminals and building a non-communal Bangladesh.

On March 2, 1971, the then vice-president of Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) ASM Abdur Rab hoisted the national flag of independent Bangladesh on behalf of Swadhin Bangla Chhatra Sangram Parishad atop the DU Arts Building.

Jayaddhani, a campus-based cultural group, organised the programme to celebrate the date in commemoration of those wartime turbulent days in 1971.

Around 500 students gathered in front of the Arts Building where they took an oath of making the country non-communal and free from war criminals based on the spirit of the liberation war.

Former vice-president (VP) of Ducusu Mahfuza Khanam administered the oath.

Popular songs of the liberation war, including 'Joy Bangla', 'Teer Hara Aei Dheuer Sagar' and 'Karar Oi Louha

Kopat' were rendered by the members of the organisation.

Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra singer Rathindranath Roy also sang at the programme.

Addressing the programme, DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said students were the pioneers in the liberation war, now they will have to contribute to building a modern Bangladesh.

He said violence on the campuses might have been a plot to destroy the traditional student politics.

Former Ducusu VP Mujahidul Islam Selim, also general secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh, said violence erupts on the campuses due to lack of the exercise of student politics there.

Pro-VC Prof Harun-or-Rashid, Treasurer Prof Mizanur Rahman, Awami League leader Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Dhaka University Teachers Association President Prof Khondaker Bazul Haque also spoke at the programme.

Nazmul Hossain, a master's student of Mass Communication and Journalism department, moderated the programme.

## Dhaka seeks ITU help to launch satellite

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh sought special assistance from International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for launching its own satellite to make telecommunication system effective in remote areas and during the natural disasters.

Post and Telecommunications Minister Raziuddin Ahmed Razu sought the assistance when visiting ITU Secretary General Dr Hamadoun I Toure made a courtesy call on him at the former's Secretariat office in the city.

The minister also sought cooperation to stop uncontrolled cyber crime and combat illegal Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) and establishing Bangabandhu Telecom University.

Expressing satisfaction over the progress of Bangladesh's telecommunication sector, the ITU secretary general expressed hope that Bangladesh would be made a model country in the South Asia in the telecommunication sector.

## Opposition walks out

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7:45pm and did not return to the House.

The House yesterday also witnessed an unscheduled debate between the lawmakers of both the treasury and opposition benches as lawmakers took the floor on points of order and launched broadsides against each other.

Ending the debate, Speaker Abdul Hamid, who was presiding at that time, refused to accept their entire arguments as points of order in line with the rules of procedure.

Earlier, BNP lawmaker Golam Mostafa alleged that "Sheikh Mujibur Rahman mysteriously surrendered to the Pakistani army on March 25, 1971 and hid himself in Pakistan". He also made derogatory remarks on the funeral of Bangabandhu.

The treasury bench lawmakers protested Golam Mostafa's remarks.

After BNP's walkout, Deputy Speaker Col (retd) Shawkat Ali, who was presiding over the session at that time, said it is very unfortunate that the opposition lawmakers walked out without giving him scope to say anything.

He said he would take necessary steps to scrutinise if there was any unparliamentary word in AL lawmaker Shafiqul's speech.

Taking the floor, treasury bench ASM Firoz drew the deputy speaker's attention to Golam Mostafa's remarks on Bangabandhu. The deputy speaker said he would also take proper steps to this effect.

question, which is within the cognisance of the speaker.

A point of order may be raised in relation to the business of the House at the moment, it says.

However, lawmakers almost every day take the floor in the name of points of order and make statements blaming each other on different issues.

At the beginning of yesterday's sitting, Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Faroque and two other BNP lawmakers sought the floor on points of order.

As the speaker allowed Zainul to speak, he blasted some ruling party lawmakers for their remarks on the opposition made earlier in parliament.

Zainul accused AL lawmakers Jahangir Kabir Nanok and Mirza Azam of being involved in the BDR carnage. He also accused Azam of plotting the cocktail blast in front of the BNP chief's office.

Citing a "confessional statement" of AL lawmaker Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, the opposition chief whip alleged that Selim confessed that Nanok and Azam were involved in setting fire to a bus in front of Sheraton Hotel that killed 11 passengers during the rule of BNP.

Zainul also castigated AL lawmaker Suranjit Sengupta for his Monday's remark labelling BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami as patrons of militancy.

He submitted a CD to the speaker containing Selim's "confessional statement" reportedly given when he was behind bars during the past caretaker government's rule.

The treasury bench lawmakers launched a counter attack on the opposition lawmakers.

"Former BNP lawmaker Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, Jamaat leaders and UPDF are involved in creating unrest in the Chittagong Hill Tracts," treasury bench Chief Whip Abdus Shahid said taking the floor on a point of order.

Treasury bench Whip ASM Firoz demanded formation of a parliamentary probe body to identify the masterminds of the recent unrest in the CHT.



Language Movement veteran Abdul Matin unveils the cover of the books 'Amar Bhabna' and 'Thikanar Mukhomukhi Shera 133' by Sayeed ur Rob and 'Print-Electronic Sangbadikatar Kala Kousho' by journalist Mostafa Kamal at a programme at the Samarai Convention Centre in the city recently organised to celebrate two decades of New York-based Bangla newspaper Thikana.

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Zonta Club IV arranged a cultural evening at a city hotel recently to raise funds for its charitable and humanitarian activities. The photo shows officials and members of the club along with the performers.

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