

Call to stop culture of secrecy in information dissemination

METRO DESK
Speakers at a consultation meeting hoped that the Right to Information (RTI) Act would build informed citizens and ensure transparency in information dissemination process to make existing democratic norms more functional. They stressed the need for coordinated efforts at individual and institutional levels to stop culture of secrecy in information dissemination. The RTI Act overrides the Official Secrets Act and similar laws and rules enacted in the heart of the century-old practices in the government offices and public establishments. Management and Resources

Development Initiative (MRDI) organised the meeting supported by USAID Progoti in Barisal yesterday. Government officials, development workers and rights activists, journalists, academics and members of the civil society took part in the open discussion, moderated by Farid Hossain, Bureau Chief of Associated Press (AP). Deputy Commissioner of Barisal SM Arif-ur-Rahman said enforcement of the RTI Act will help government officials to be more accountable to the people. "The main job of the government officials is to serve the people and they can provide better services through

proper use of the RTI Act," he said. The speakers urged to preserve information accurately so that people can bring social and economic changes. Legal expert MM Kabir in his keynote presentation pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of the law and limitations of the Information Commission. Hasibur Rahman, executive director of MRDI, said civil society organisations must act as a bridge to elicit information using the act to serve the interests of poor and marginalised people. If civil societies are active, the RTI Act will be a useful instrument to ensure social justice, he opined.

KURIL BISWA ROAD Remove cables by Aug 31: Desco

UNB, Dhaka
Dhaka Electric Supply Company Ltd (Desco) asked the cable operators to remove the hanging and risky cables from Abdullahpur to Kuril Biswa Road by August 31. Recently the government has decided to set up underground cable network system by removing the hanging cables from the electric poles for increasing beauty of the city. As per the government directive, the Desco served a notice to the cable operators to remove the risky and hanging cables by August 31.



PHOTO: COURTESY BY DHAKA CLUB
Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury hands over the "Life Time Achievement Award" to Planning Minister Air Vice Marshal (Retd) AK Khandker as the chief function in Dhaka Club recently. On her left are Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad and Dhaka Club President Sadat Hossain Salim.



Local people burn tyres blocking Dhaka-Mawa Road in South Keraniganj in the outskirts of the city yesterday demanding uninterrupted power supply.

3 BNP leaders get bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The High Court (HC) yesterday granted anticipatory bail to BNP leaders Moudud Ahmed, Rafiqul Islam Mian and Shah Moazzem Hossain in separate cases filed on different charges. An HC bench comprising Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice AKM Zahirul Hoque also issued rules upon the government to explain why the accused should not be granted regular bail in the cases. It passed the orders following separate petitions filed by the accused BNP leaders seeking bail in the cases. They also appeared before the bench during hearing of petitions. Additional Public Prosecutor SM Sazzad Ali of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court filed the case with a court in Khulna on Sunday against Moudud Ahmed and former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taher for making "anti-state" statement. Besides, local Awami League leaders filed nine cases against Rafiqul Islam Mian and Shah Moazzem Hossain in Dhaka, Sirajganj, Bogra, Bhola, Narail, Munshiganj, Chittagong, Panchagarh on different dates for threatening Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a BNP rally at capital's Muktangan on July 25.

One commits suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
An employee of a private bus company allegedly committed suicide by jumping from the roof of a six-storey building at Sutrapur in the city yesterday. Identified as Sheikh Ershad Ali, 42, a supervisor of a city bus service, jumped from the roof of his rented residence at around 12:30pm, leaving him dead on the spot. His wife Syeda Rashid Chaity, an employee of a private bank, was at office and their son at his school during the incident. Hearing the news of the death of Ershad, Chaity rushed to the residence at Hemandra Nath Road. Quoting seven-year-old domestic help Rafiq, Sub-Inspector Shariful Islam of Sutrapur police station said Ershad was found dead several minutes after he went to the rooftop. Chaity said her husband has been suffering from mental illness and earlier, he was admitted to National Mental Health Institute due to his mental health problem.

AK Khandker, 25 others honoured

METRO DESK
Dhaka Club recently conferred the "Life Time Achievement Award" on Planning Minister Air Vice Marshal (Retd) AK Khandker for his contribution to the War of Liberation as Deputy Chief of Liberation Forces of Bangladesh, says a press release. AK Khandker, also a member of Dhaka Club, received the award at a function in the club on the occasion of the club's 99th founding anniversary. On the occasion, the club also honoured its 25 other elderly members with the award of "Living Legend" who enriched Dhaka Club with their close association for many decades and made remarkable contribution to the society. Recipients of the award are Zahiruddin Ahmed, MA Rouf Chowdhury, Latifur Rahman, Shaquar Hamid, Chowdhury Monwar Ahmed Siddiqui, M Anis-ud Dowla, Dr Muhammad Zahir, Emam Hossain Khan, Tariq Ibrahim, Dr Zaglur Rahman Khan, Tariqul Alam Khan, Shamsul Abedin Akhand, Obaid R Jaigirdar, SA Reza Hussain, CJ Haider, Ghulam Akbar Chowdhury, Md Sirajul Islam, SE Kabir, M Iftekharul Alam, MM Ispahani, Atauddin Khan, Sadruddin H Jewa, FK Ghuznavi, Syed AK Mahmud Haque and Habibullah Khan. Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury handed over the award as the chief guest. She congratulated the recipients and thanked the club president for honouring the senior members of the club. She lauded AK Khandker for his leadership during the War of Liberation and role that he played to build up public opinion against the forces of anti-liberation forces through the Sector Commanders' Forum. Dhaka Club President Sadat Hossain Salim in his speech paid rich tribute to AK Khandker and other recipients for enriching the club tradition and significant contribution to the society. Ramendu Majumder moderated the programme. Club members and their spouses and guests, including the high officials of UCB, the title sponsor of the event, attended the programme. The programme was followed by a musical soiree by Aditya Mohsin.

Make visa process easier

Says West Bengal minister
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet
Panchayet and Local Government Minister of West Bengal Md Anisur Rahman said the existing visa process between India and Bangladesh should be made easier for raising mobility of the people. The West Bengal government has already approached the central government of India in this regard, he said adding, "We hope things would be done soon." Anisur said this at a view exchange meeting at Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) yesterday afternoon. He is on a short visit to Sylhet region. He said the West Bengal as well as India has a long standing historic and cultural relations with Bangladesh. He hoped that the bond between the two countries would be strengthened further in the days to come. The number of people interested to visit Bangladesh from the Indian states, including the West Bengal, are on rise day by day. So, Bangladesh should make easier the existing visa process, said Anisur. "If the EU states can make things quicker and easier among themselves, why should we remain behind," he said. The SCC Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed welcomed the minister. Later, Anisur Rahman visited Jafflong picnic spot.

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WEATHER TODAY

Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at a few places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said. The sun sets in the capital at 6:36pm today and rises at 5:32am tomorrow. Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.1	27.8	73	73
Chittagong	33.0	27.3	83	78
Rajshahi	36.8	26.8	77	65
Khulna	34.6	27.2	70	65

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