

Proactive disclosure a must for promoting people's right to info

Says chief info commissioner

METRO DESK

Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) Muhammad Zamir yesterday stressed the need for complying with principles of disclosure of public information that will promote people's right to information, said a press release.

Maximum proactive disclosure is the main principle of the concept of Right to Information. Transparency and accountability in all areas of the society can only be ensured if the demand and supply sides of information disclosure are strengthened, he said.

The CIC was addressing the inaugural ceremony of a two-day training for Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) officials on Right to Information (RTI) act at a local hotel.

Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) organised the training with support from USAID PROGATI, aiming to guide the ACC officials on the use of the RTI law in disclosing information to the public.

The CIC said media has a vital role in ensuring effective implementation of the RTI law. Significant steps have been taken by the media in promoting



PHOTO: MRDI

Chief Information Commissioner Muhammad Zamir speaks at the inaugural session of a training programme titled 'Right to information' organised by Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI). On his right is Shahjahan, director general of Anti-Corruption Commission and on his left is Hasibur Rahman, executive director of MRDI.

the right to information regime around the world, he added.

He said transparency and accountability are two vital elements of good governance that can be ensured through free flow of information. The media occupies a critical place in the

governance process. A vital part is the role of a gatekeeper, disseminating critical messages to the public and highlighting issues, concerns and initiatives.

Muhammad Zamir said the training is appropriate for ACC officials and will

help them play their role in implementation of the RTI law and serve people with required information.

Shahjahan, director general ACC, welcomed the initiative and said people have the right to know but there are rules that protect the officials' right not to disclose certain information. This training will enable ACC officials to determine which information should be disclosed and which should not be.

MRDI Executive Director Hasibur Rahman in his opening remarks mentioned the major challenges in implementation of the RTI law. He said unless the government and non-government organisations (NGOs) implement the RTI law, its strength, weaknesses, limitations and appropriateness would not be ascertained.

He laid emphasis on the proactive role of NGOs in creating public awareness about the RTI law that ensures people's right to get information both from the government and NGOs.

Twenty senior officials of ACC are participating in the fifth batch of the training. A total of 100 ACC officials have been trained in five batches under the programme.

Army detonates explosives at Bogra

METRO DESK

A team of explosive experts of Bangladesh Army safely detonated 153 cocktails, 14 grenades, a demi mine and an artillery shell recently at Matidali near Bogra town, says an ISPR release.

The explosives were removed from Bogra Sadar Thana.

On January 6, 2009, two police constables were injured when some of the cocktails, being taken from the thana premises to a secure place, exploded.

After the incident, a team of explosive experts from Bogra Cantonment visited the area on the request of police.

The team decided to remove the explosives by a transporting trailer, made by Army Headquarters Ordnance Directorate, as no organisation in the country has it.

An explosive expert team from Army Headquarters led by Lt Colonel Sohrab Hossain and another team from Bogra Cantonment removed those explosives and detonated those on August 9, 2010.

Local administration and police provided necessary assistance.

Bangladesh lacking in resources to ecology, environmental protection

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh is facing huge resource gap to finance massive scaled programmes to protect degrading ecology and dwindling environment due to adverse impacts of climate change.

The country requires urgent implementation of such comprehensive short, medium and long term programmes to combat the on-going onslaught of environmental catastrophes side by side conserving the fragile ecology and managing natural resources efficiently.

Bangladesh has already scaled up its conservation programmes with her scarce domestic resources for the protection of depleted natural resources in the face of impacts of disasters and adverse impacts of climate change.

But the country also requires massive global support to face these additional stresses on its national budget.

The country needs at least US \$7 billion for implementing all its climate change, natural resource management and environment programmes already taken. But so far less than US \$1

billion could be managed. The rest should come from development partners and international community.

The observations came when Director of Washington-based Environment and Climate Change Asia Dr John Michael Kramer called on Chairman of Asia-Pacific Forum of Environment Journalists (APFEJ) and Forum of Environment Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) Quamrul Islam Chowdhury at APFEJ/FEJB office yesterday.

"Bangladesh is a frontline country in the face of climate

change and needs adequate support for building its resilience power and coping capacity," said Dr Kramer adding that development partners should come up with necessary financial assistance.

Quamrul Chowdhury pointed out that Bangladesh has already formulated a number of plans, strategies, action plans and programmes with its own domestic resources. But very few of them received adequate support from the global community and development partners, which should massively scale up efforts.



PHOTO: STAR

Jatiya Shok Dibas Udjapan Parishad (National Mourning Day Celebration Parishad) organises an artwork exhibition at Fine Arts faculty of Dhaka University yesterday on the occasion of the death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Six killed, 33 injured in road accidents

METRO DESK

Six people were killed and 33 injured in separate road accidents in Brahmanbaria, Comilla and Manikganj districts yesterday.

Our correspondent from Brahmanbaria reports: Four people were killed and at least 22 injured in a road accident at Suhagpur village under Ashuganj upazila of the district.

The deceased are Renu Mia, 40, of Comilla district, Khalilur Rahman, 45, of Lalbag in Dhaka, Muslaem Mia, 40, of Sunamganj district, and Samim Mia, 42, of Barisal district.

Police said a Dhaka bound bus collided head on with a truck on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway at 4:00pm leaving Muslim dead on the spot.

On information police rushed to the spot, seized the bus and truck and sent the injured to hospitals.

Renu, Khalilur, and Samim succumbed to their injuries on the way to hospital. Out of the injured passengers, 12 were sent to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital, eight to Ashuganj

Suhrab Medical Hall and the rest to Bhairab Upazila Health Complex.

The drivers and helpers of the both vehicles managed to escape the scene.

A case was filed at Ashuganj Police Station in this connection said Abuzafar Ahmed, officer in-charge (OC) of the station.

Our correspondent from Comilla reports: One person was killed and 10 others were injured in a road accident at Hasanpur area in Daudkandi upazila of the district.

Transport movement on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway route halted for three hours following the accident.

The deceased was identified as Shohel Kabir, 36, of Rawjhan in Chittagong district.

Police said the accident occurred at about 9:00am when a Dhaka bound bus collided head on with a Chittagong bound truck leaving Shohel dead on the spot.

The critically injured were sent to different hospitals in Daudkandi and Comilla.

A case was filed with Daudkandi Police Station and the body sent to Comilla Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Our correspondent from Manikganj adds: A covered van driver was killed and his helper injured in a road accident in Manikganj.

The dead victim was identified as Murad Hossain, 28, of Micegram in Magura district.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Manikganj Sadar Police Station Azizul Haque said the accident occurred when a Paturia Ghat bound covered van hit a stationary truck from behind, in front of Bashundhara Steel Mills on Dhaka-Aricha Highway at around 2:30am.

Murad died on the spot and the helper injured seriously.

The helper was taken to Manikganj Sadar Hospital for treatment and the dead body was sent the hospital's morgue for autopsy.

A case has been filed with Golra Highway Police in this connection.



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