

Court has nothing to do with constitutional amendments

Says Menon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming the debate over amendment of the constitution "unnecessary," Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon MP yesterday said only the parliament has the authority to amend it.

"Only the parliament can amend the constitution and the court has nothing to do with amendment to the constitution, it (the court) has just declared the martial law proclamations illegal," he said while addressing a discussion on the constitutional recognition of indigenous community.

Almost everybody is getting involved in an "unnecessary debate" over the amendment, said Menon, also a member of the special committee of the parliament for constitutional amendment.

He said the indigenous community should be recognised in the constitution. "Indigenous people do not want to identify themselves as tribal rather want to be termed indigenous people and the matter should be settled after discussion with them," he said.

Manusher Jonno Foundation and Kaapeng Foundation jointly organised the discussion titled 'Constitutional Recognition



Mangal Kumar Chakma speaks at a discussion meeting at Cirdap Auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left are Syed Abul Moksud, Ghulam Rabbani, Ayesha Khanam, Rabindranath Saren and Pankaj Bhattacharya.

of Indigenous People: Context and Relevance' at Cirdap Auditorium in the city.

Mangal Kumar Chakma, adviser of Kaapeng Foundation, presented the keynote paper.

Columnist and researcher Syed Abul Maksud said the indigenous people would get their rights of self-identity through recognition in the constitution.

The indigenous people should be recognised in the constitution after discussion with all concerned in such a

way so that no controversy can arise in the future, he said.

Shaktipada Tripura, organising secretary of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), said no one can say indigenous people as "tribal" as the community is termed "ethnic minority" in the law, passed by the government recently, about the cultural institutions of indigenous people.

Both the constitutional recognition of indigenous people and at the same time its implementation is

important, he said.

Sanjib Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, said before including the provisions about indigenous community in the constitution, discussions should be organised with the representatives of the indigenous people.

Pankaj Bhattacharya, vice president of Sammito Shamajik Andolan and Ayesha Khanam, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, also spoke at the discussion chaired by justice Ghulam Rabbani.

New act to help solve power crisis quickly

Says PM's energy adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has framed the Power and Energy Fast Supply Enhancement (Special Provision) Act, 2010 with a view to taking quick steps to address the power crisis in the country.

Prime Minister's Energy Adviser Dr Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury said this while he was speaking at a workshop titled "Development of power sector and role of media" at Bidyut Bhaban in the city yesterday. Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) organised the workshop.

"The new act has been framed to squeeze the steps which got restrained due to time shortage in the previous act," he said, adding that it would help solve the energy problems quickly.

He said the act precludes the lower court's jurisdiction to review actions done under this law.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, State Minister for Power Enamul

Haq and Additional Secretary of Power Division Taposh Pal also spoke at the workshop.

The speakers underscored the need for domestic coal for power generation in order to reach the target of total power generation capacity of 35,000 to 40,000 megawatts (MW) within 2030.

"Of the total generation, at least 15,000MW of power would have to be from coal, making it important to develop our coal mitigating the environmental and other issues," said BPDB Chairman ASM Alamgir Kabir.

Stressing tariff rationalisation, Kabir said though the electricity tariff needs to be increased by 53 percent, a board proposal suggesting 12 percent tariff increase in every six months has been sent to the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC).

He said the government would withdraw its decision of giving new power connections to the consumers from November 1, and rather provide con-

nections in phases as a huge number of people are in the queue.

Kabir said the new potential consumers should install solar photovoltaic (PV) systems to decrease the load.

Presenting the current scenario of the power sector in a keynote paper BPDB Director (system and planning) Mizanur Rahman said they have a plan to produce 11,456MW of power by 2015.

The presentation showed that the work of eight quick rental power plants, four rental power plants and few peaking power plants is going on beyond the target.

The contract of Barisal rental power plant might be cancelled as its work is going on very slowly, Mizanur said.

Journalists from different media put up recommendations at the workshop.

Azad urged the media to present the proper scenario of the country's electricity situation before the masses apart from giving constructive criticism.

Training to make domestic helps self-reliant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirteen-year-old Tumma, a domestic help of the city's Bangladesh Institute of Management, Executive Director of ASK Sultana Kamal distributed the certificates.

Children Right Unit of ASK imparted the three-month training on block, boutique and tailoring to them.

Addressing the function, Sultana Kamal said, "You have become self-dependence. I hope you will go far in your life. I thank the employers who allowed you to take the training at ASK."

She hoped that other employers will also allow their house-holds to take such kind of technical training.

technical education to 35 domestic helps of the city at Bangladesh Institute of Management, Executive Director of ASK Sultana Kamal distributed the certificates.

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About one crore children of the country are engaged in different types of dangerous works and become victims of repression by their owners. It is difficult for the government to resolve such problems, Sultana Kamal said adding that if employers want, the problem could be solved easily.

Geeta Chakrawarti, senior deputy director of the Children Right Unit hoped that other employers will be encouraged to allow their domestic helps to have this kind of training.

Employers of the children were also present at the programme.

CU admission tests begin

A CORRESPONDENT

The admission test of honours courses of Chittagong University for the 2010-2011 session started yesterday.

Admission examinations for Unit Ka of Faculty of Science and Unit Cha of Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences were held on the first day.

No untoward incident was reported in the campus, said

police sources.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Md Alauddin told the Daily Star that the student's participation in the exams was satisfactory on the first day.

Admission examinations for Unit Ja of Faculty of Biology and Unit Cha of the Institute of Marine Science are due to be held today on 10:00am and 2:30 pm respectively.

Trader stabbed to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was stabbed to death at Shyambazar in Sutrapur of Old Dhaka early yesterday by two unidentified assailants.

The deceased, Shah Alam Sheikh, 40, was a wholesaler of vegetables at Shyambazar.

Mohammad Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Sutrapur Police Station, said they have detained Sumon, 20, Alam's employee and lone witness of the incident for further interrogation.

Quoting Sumon, the OC said Alam was walking towards a truck parked around fifty yards from his shop at about 3:35am, to pay for the fresh supply of vegetables he had received. On the way, two unidentified men beckoned him to the bank of Buriganga.

As Alam stepped down the bank Sumon heard him screaming. He rushed to the spot only to find Alam groaning with stab injuries to his abdomen. The two goons were seen fleeing on a boat sailing towards Keraniganj on the other side of the river.

Terrified, Sumon shouted for help which brought a number of locals to the spot. They rushed Alam to the National Hospital in Old Dhaka but he succumbed to his injuries on the way, said Nazrul.

OC Nazrul said Alam had two business partners who had gone to Kushtia to buy vegetables.

Police have not ascertained the motive behind the killing yet but will interrogate the two partners to unravel the mystery.

Alam's wife Mina Begum filed a murder case yesterday.

Hand washing can halve diarrhoeal deaths

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Proper and regular hand washing could halve diarrhoeal deaths of under-five children in Bangladesh.

The Smiling Sun Franchise Programme (SSFP) revealed this at a press conference held at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

SSFP organised the conference to announce its month-long campaign to promote hand washing across the country with a view to commemorate the third annual Global Hand Washing Day on October 15.

"In Bangladesh, diarrhoea is a major killer and about 17,500 children below 5 years of age die every year due to diarrhoea alone," said health officer Arefin Amal Islam of SSFP.

"Hand washing with soap at key periods can reduce diarrhoeal deaths in children by 50 percent, and this is one of the most inexpensive ways to prevent many waterborne and respiratory diseases," he added.

Also, SSFP official Juan Carlos Negrette said proper hand washing is a simple, healthy and cost effective way to avoid diseases like Diarrhoea and ARI, which take lives of many children every year.

To communicate this message to the masses, the SSFP collaborated with Advanced

Chemical Industries (ACI) Limited Bangladesh to train nearly five lakh people in 64 districts of the country on how to wash hands appropriately, the speakers said.

The programme is being conducted from the 323 SSFP clinics throughout the country, starting from yesterday, the speakers added.

As for the rural people, they either tend to use ash to wash their hands or simply rinse them with water, said Islam.

A 2008 baseline study of Institute of Cholera and Diarrhoeal Diseases and Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B), presented after the conference, shows that rural people tend to wash hands in only 55 percent of the 20,546 'critical times' observed before preparing or eating foods, before feeding a child, after defecation and such.

These hand-rinsing practices should be transformed into washing hands with soaps, said Islam.

"Soaps have detergents that takes away the greasy elements from your hand, and thus are more effective in fighting germs," he added.

SSFP Managing Director Brigadier General (Retd) Dr Shahid Khan, ACI Business Director Ashraf Bin Taj and Business Manager Qamrul Hasan were also present at the press conference.

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