

# Political stability crucial for fair polls

Says US envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Continued political stability is crucial to hold Bangladesh's next general elections on time in a free, fair and credible manner, said US Ambassador to Dhaka Dan W. Mozena yesterday.

Political instability allows abuse and violation of human rights, he said while addressing the media following an hour-long meeting on the issue of human rights with the officials of Odhikar, a rights organisation, at its Gulshan office in the city.

It is time for Bangladesh to take off economically and to address various issues like political stability, corruption and power crisis, he said.

As the United States of America is keen on upholding human rights across the world, it works with media and police to enable them to better deliver their respective services with regard to human rights.

"An independent media is absolutely critical in defending human rights, shedding light in the dark corners and exposing the abuse of human rights," said Mozena.

He said they worked with Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) to establish an internal enquiry cell within the Rab to check those Rab personnel whose conduct or activities might be causing human rights violation.

The US issues an annual report to give an assessment on human rights in each country of the world.

Odhikar shares its findings on human rights violations with various right bodies and diplomats, said its Secretary Advocate Adilur Rahman Khan. It works in collaboration with the New York-based Human Rights Watch.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presides over the Generals' Conference of Bangladesh Army at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: PMO

# This govt to sign Teesta deal: Rizvi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Teesta water sharing agreement will be signed within the tenure of the incumbent government, Foreign Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister Gowher Rizvi said yesterday.

"The Indian government has responded to Bangladesh and I hope some agreements related to the ongoing issues including Teesta water sharing will be signed", he said.

Replying to a query from reporters, he said Bangladesh always protested border killings by India's Border Security Force (BSF) and the frequency of the killings has come down.

The PM adviser made the remarks

while talking to journalists after attending a seminar on "the role of NGOs in the development process" held at the city's IDB Bhaban yesterday.

Though Bangladesh became independent with the agenda to establish democracy and social justice, the agenda has not been fully materialised for the last 40 years, Rizvi said at the seminar, adding that there is no room for the civil society if democracy does not exist.

He urged the non-government organisations (NGOs) to work for the welfare of the people and the country in cooperation with the government beyond politics so that

the real problems of the people can be solved.

Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau Nurun Nabi Talukder said the bureau will formulate an NGO-friendly law and urged the non-government organisations to ensure accountability and establish good governance so that people cannot term their activities negative.

Rokeya Kabir, chairperson of the Association of the Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB), the organisation which organised the seminar, was in the chair. ADAB vice chairperson Rafiqul Alam and treasurer Majeda Shawkat Ali, among others, also spoke.

# Corrupt have no moral right to do politics

Says human rights body boss

UNB, Dhaka

The Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Dr Mizanur Rahman, yesterday said many ordinary people are humiliated by a section of educated people.

"We usually point the finger at law-

enforcing agencies, including the police and RAB, as we think that the incidents of violation of human rights are only committed by them. But the way general people are humiliated by educated people is very rare in civilised countries," the NHRC Chairman said.

He made the remarks while addressing a function to unveil the cover of a monthly human rights magazine, 'Manobadhikar Khabar', at the Jatiya Press Club.

Dr Mizan said violation of human rights is not limited only to physical torture. "When plunderers loot public wealth, the common people have to pay for that."

Referring to the 'dream' of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to establish rule of law and human rights in the country, he said those who run the administration should quit if they are unable to materialise her dream.

Taking a swipe at corrupt politicians, the NHRC chairman said the plunderers have no

moral right to do politics. "Occupying the streets may be part of politics but it can't bring success... they (politicians) should win the hearts of people," he said.

About the war crimes trial, he said the ongoing trial of crimes against humanity should be geared up as people want to see the perpetrators punished.

Presided over by Mubaidul Islam, chairman of the editorial board of Manobadhikar Khabar, the function was addressed, among others, by its editor Md Riya Uddin, ex-Additional IGP Abdur Rahim Khan, adviser of Human Rights Review Society Md Kamal Uddin and Md Muslem Uddin.

# Illegal embankment removed from river

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Upon directives of the Department of Environment (DoE), local encroachers have removed a 200-foot embankment built illegally on the river Gaghot in the sadar upazila of Rangpur.

The structure erected for commercial use of sand transportation and trading was obstructing the natural flow of the river and threatening its aquatic life, says a press release.

The DoE summoned the river grabbers, including Mokhesur Rahman and Abdul Monnaf of the upazila's Sit-Uttam village, to appear at its Dhaka office on January 31.

As they showed up, DoE Director (enforcement) Mohammed Munir Chowdhury warned them of penalty and cases if they do not remove the structure.

Recently, the grabbers removed the embankment and informed it to the DoE.

The department took the action after receiving complaints from the local people.



Class-IV employees of Dhaka Medical College Hospital stage a sit-in programme before the Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University yesterday protesting the government plan to upgrade the institution into a full-fledged medical university.

PHOTO: STAR

# TRUCKER MURDER Three robbers land in jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent three robbers to jail after they surrendered and sought bail in a case filed for robbery by killing a truck driver and his helper in January last year.

The robbers are Helal Uddin, Ramzan Ali, and Alope Chandra Das.

According to the prosecution, a group of robbers hijacked a rice-laden truck in Tongi and killed the driver Nurul Islam and his helper Enamul Haque of Naogaon on January 2, 2011. They dumped the bodies in a water-filled ditch in the city's Banani, which were recovered on January 9, 2011.

Following the incident, police detained 11 men at different places for their involvement with the robbery and the killing. Four of them had given confessional statements to magistrates, saying that they killed the victims as they obstructed the looting of the truckload of rice.

Judge Mohammad Akhteruzzaman of the Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order for sending the three robbers to jail.

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