

# Poverty will exist as long as corruption

Says Gowher Rizvi  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister's International Affairs Adviser Dr Gowher Rizvi yesterday said Bangladesh cannot reach the middle and higher income status by 2021 and 2041 respectively without poverty alleviation, and poverty will exist as long as corruption exists.

He emphasised the necessity of alleviating poverty and curbing corruption at a seminar titled "Implementation of National Integration Strategy (NIS): Selected 'Good Practices'" at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.

"The core challenge for us has been governance. Governance lies at the core of all our problems, and also of solutions to our problems. Unless we can address the problems of governance then there is no way to get out of poverty, and no way to realise the dream of a golden Bangladesh," he said as the chief guest.

He said all should make NIS a part of daily life to help establish good governance.

Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said there is firm commitment from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in NIS's implementation.

He also echoed Rizvi and emphasised curbing corruption.

Mikio Hataeda, chief representative of Jica, Bangladesh said the country needs to encourage more private investment to ensure faster growth in the country. At the same time, it should implement the NIS to enter the next level of economical growth, he added.

The Bridges Division, Bangladesh Bank, Road Transport and Highways Division, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and the Anti-Corruption Commission

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Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique speaks at a token hunger strike of primary school teachers on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the capital yesterday, expressing his solidarity with their demands that the government retain the benefit of time scale for the teachers and upgrade their official status. Bangladesh Prathomik Shahokari Shikhhak Oikyajote Kendrio Committee organised the demonstration.

PHOTO: STAR

# DEMAND FOR MEDICAL COLLEGE ADMISSION TEST RETAKE Promise of public efforts makes hunger strikers break fast

Prof Anu Muhammad makes them drink juice

DU CORRESPONDENT

After the assurance that a public investigation committee will be formed with intellectuals, teachers, and doctors to look into the medical college admission test question leak, agitating candidates ended their fast unto death last evening.

Economist Prof Anu Muhammad fed juice to the protesters at 6:30pm, on the capital's Central Shaheed Minar premises where they had stayed continuously for nearly 32 hours since Wednesday morning.

Around 60 admission aspirants and

guardians took part in the strike, and some of them had fallen sick.

A professor of Jahangirnagar University, Anu Mohammad, said he would invite intellectuals, doctors, and teachers to a meeting at the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of Dhaka University on October 19 to form the committee.

They will do it because the government did not form any investigation committee in the last 27 days since the leak occurred, he said.

"This committee will publish a report after collecting all evidence on the leak and will submit it to the

authorities concerned of the government for taking necessary action," he said.

The professor said if the government did not act upon the report, they would build public opinion in favour of their demand.

Earlier, one of the demonstrators, Akash, said they were determined to continue their hunger strike until the health ministry accepted the demand for a fresh test but he fell sick later due to starvation and was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Meanwhile, some medical interns

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# UPCOMING PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT Developed countries must sign legally binding deal: TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday demanded that developed countries sign a legally binding agreement under the "common but differentiated responsibilities" policy in the November 30 to December 11 climate change summit in Paris and compensate victim countries accordingly.

TIB also demanded incorporating a transparent and accountable financing mechanism, and vulnerable and marginal groups, including indigenous people, in all adaptation activities.

Developed countries have not allocated committed compensation funds and some are trying to offer it as loans, it said, demanding that the government raise its voice limiting the world's mean temperature rise within two degrees Celsius.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman, addressing a press conference at TIB's auditorium in the capital,

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# KHALEDA'S GRAFT CASE 3 more witnesses cross-examined

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Counsels for BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday completed cross-examination of three prosecution witnesses in her absence in the Zia Charitable Trust graft case.

The witnesses, Dr Hafizur Rahman, Md Aminuddin and Poritosh Dey, are all former officials of Sonali Bank's Prime Minister's Office branch.

The court also recorded statements of three officials of Standard Chartered Bank's Motijheel branch: Md Nawshed Mahmud Aminul Islam and Alok Kanti Chakrobarty.

A total of 13 prosecution witnesses have so far testified before the makeshift court at Bakshibazar in the capital.

Earlier on September 17, Khaleda was also absent as she was abroad.

After recording statements, Judge Abu Ahmed Jomadar of the Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka fixed October 21 for Khaleda's lawyer Khandker Mahbub Hossain to cross-examine the witnesses.

Before that, Mahbub

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# Mirza Fakhrul gets bail in vandalism case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in a case filed with Paltan Police Station on December 9, 2012 over hurling bombs and vandalism during a road blockade that day.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ali Mashud Sheikh also granted time petitions submitted for another 35 accused who cited different reasons for not being able to appear.

The court also fixed

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A joint team of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and the Dhaka district administration demolishing illegal structures on the bank of the Buriganga river in Old Dhaka yesterday. Officials said they removed some 150 illegal structures, including tin-roof buildings and makeshift shops, during a raid along 2km of the bank from Swarighat to Loharbigat.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

# UN acknowledges 8 successes in disaster risk reduction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eight communities, including one in Bangladesh, living with the threat of floods, storms, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions were recognised as Champions of Disaster Risk Reduction by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) on Tuesday.

"Today we mark International Day for Disaster Reduction by highlighting communities around the world that have demonstrated the ability to live with risk through their local, traditional and indigenous knowledge," said the UNISDR head, Margareta Wahlström, in a press release.

"These communities in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Colombia, Italy, UK, Philippines, Sudan and Vanuatu are on the front line of extreme weather and seismic events.

"They all have one other thing in

common and that is social cohesion which is vitally important in reducing disaster losses. Sustainable development and the eradication of poverty are not possible without such efforts to manage disaster risk," she said.

The recognition came at an event in Geneva. East Sujanathi of Bangladesh was recognised for its engagement of children in environmental protection and recovery efforts after Cyclone Sidr.

In Cameroon, it was the residents of Nkolbikok, in the capital Yaoundé, for reducing the risk of floods and epidemics by harnessing community volunteers to clear drainage ditches and create a rubbish disposal system.

In Colombia, it was the indigenous people of Nasa, threatened by an active volcano and other hazards, for their risk management and local develop-

ment initiatives; and in Italy, the Province of Potenza for its "Network of Resilience" among 100 municipalities cooperating on earthquake safety and other initiatives.

In the UK, it was East Salford for multiple initiatives against the risk of flooding and for involving both youth and older persons; the Philippines -- the Ifugao tribe for putting their traditional knowledge to work in protecting the environment and the 2,000 year rice terraces of the Cordilleras, a UNESCO world heritage site; Sudan -- the people of Tuti Island live in harmony with the river Nile and their traditional systems of flood warnings have ensured little or no loss of life in major flood events; and Vanuatu -- the value of traditional cyclone shelters and other buildings proved their worth when the archipelago was hit earlier this year by Category 5 Cyclone Pam.

# Attempted robbery in Gulshan amid beefed up security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Claims of an increase in police check posts, pat-downs and law enforcing personnel in the capital's Gulshan following the September 28 shooting death of an Italian man have done little to deter four youths who attempted to rob three flats on Tuesday night.

Arriving on two motorcycles around 8:00pm, the four kept a security guard hostage at gunpoint and knocked at the doors on the first floor flats, including one housing a beauty parlour, in the six-storey House 11 on Road 108, where the French embassy is situated.

There was none in two flats while a house help in the third closed the door immediately after seeing the armed youths outside. Describing the incident, the hostage, Anwar Hossain, told The Daily Star that the youths fled immediately afterwards.

Shahida Nazneen, one of the flat owners, filed a general diary last night with Gulshan Police Station. Officer-in-Charge Sirajul Islam said they were investigating the matter.

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# Lawmakers make case for attention to haor people

Planning minister responds to call; pledges Tk 475cr

STAR CORRESPONDENT

Though the haor people significantly contribute to ensure the country's food security, they are largely deprived of basic rights and suffer from malnutrition, some lawmakers said yesterday, seeking special attention of the government.

"Lands are no more in the haor people's possession. People like us, the educated and the rich, have grabbed the lands and made the haor people's lives miserable," said State Minister for Social Welfare Promod Mankin, speaking at a national dialogue.

The discussion on the "Seventh Five-Year Plan and Development of Haor Regions" was organised by the All Party Parliamentary

Group (APPG) on Haor Livelihoods at a hotel in the capital.

Lawmaker Afzal Hossain said due to siltation, vast tracts of paddy fields had turned barren, and those needed restoration through proper dredging.

Fakhrul Islam, an opposition whip, said influential people were carrying out unplanned development works in the khas land of the haor areas.

Citing loss of haor lands in erosion, lawmaker Ziaul Haque Mridha demanded embankments on river banks.

Following their demands, Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal pledged to allocate an additional Tk 475 crore for the

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Mr. Iftekharul Islam, Vice Chairman of Uttara Bank Limited and Managing Director of Aftab Group handed over a cheque of Tk. 1 (One) crore on behalf of Uttara Bank to the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the Prime Minister's Relief Fund at Ganobhaban recently.

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