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Free media vital for democracy

Says Irene Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The power of the press always overcomes the power to suppress, former Amnesty International chief Irene Z Khan has said.

"In a democracy, free expression allows citizens to challenge political leaders, journalists to uncover information for the public and the public to ensure the accountability of their government," she said yesterday.

Irene was delivering a lecture titled "Free speech and free media: help or hindrance to development" at The Daily Star office on the occasion of the newspaper's silver jubilee celebrations.

"Without free media and free speech, there can be no development or democracy," said Irene, currently the director-general of International Development Law Organisation (IDLO), a Rome-based intergovernmental organisation promoting the rule of law.

Starting with the Language Movement's objectives including free speech and freedom of media, Irene in her



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Swimmer Mahfuza Khatun Shila proudly shows the two gold medals she won from the 12th South Asian Games in Guwahati, Assam after bagging the second in record time in 50m breaststroke event yesterday. Story on page 14

PHOTO: STAR

Justice Manik returns 65 judgments, orders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik, a former judge of the Appellate Division, yesterday submitted 65 judgments and orders written after his retirement, along with the relevant case files to the apex court.

"The office of Justice Md Imman Ali, a judge of the Appellate Division bench where I was a member, has received 65 judgments and orders and their files from me," Justice Manik told The Daily Star.

There were 85 cases pending with him and he has completed writing judgments and orders in all of them. But yesterday, he did not submit the judgments, orders and the related files of 20 cases, he said.

"Justice Md Imman Ali has said his office will receive the remaining judgments and orders and their files later," Manik added.

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL Prosecutor withdrawn from cases

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The chief prosecutor's office has withdrawn a prosecutor "in the public interest" from all the cases he was dealing with at the International Crimes Tribunal.

In an order on February 4 signed by Chief Prosecutor Ghulam Arief Tipoo, Mohammad Ali was asked to stay away from the case proceedings before the tribunal until further notice.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of the

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Pakistan summons Bangladesh envoy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Amid a diplomatic tension between Dhaka and Islamabad, Pakistan authorities summoned Bangladesh High Commissioner in Islamabad Suhrah Hossain yesterday.

Suhrah Hossain confirmed The Daily Star that he was summoned by the Pakistan foreign ministry yesterday afternoon.

He, however, did not specifically say why he was summoned. A source in Islamabad said an additional secretary at the Pakistan foreign ministry summoned the Bangladesh envoy. The director general of South Asian wing of the ministry was also present.

Diplomatic sources in Dhaka see Pakistan's move as an act of retaliation following Dhaka's summoning of Pakistan High Commissioner Shuja Alam on February 2.

Alam was summoned after a Bangladesh mission staff in Islamabad went

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Our ministers tarnished my image

Says Ershad, warns of action if leaders violated party decisions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday said three of his party leaders tarnished his image by taking up ministerial posts.

The former military ruler made the comment at a time when he himself holds the post of prime minister's special envoy with the status of a cabinet

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24 migrants drown in Aegean Sea

AFP, Istanbul

Twenty-four migrants, including 11 children, drowned in the Aegean Sea yesterday as they tried to cross from Turkey to Greece, Dogan news agency said.

The agency initially said at least 35 migrants had died in two separate accidents off western Turkey, but later reported that there was a single incident with 24 deaths.

The migrants died when their boat sank off the district of Edremit in the western province of Balıkesir in an apparent bid to reach the Greek island of Lesbos, Dogan said.

Two were rescued both by air and by sea in a search and rescue operation by the Turkish coastguard, Dogan news agency said.

Twelve were still missing.

Turkey, which is hosting at least 2.5 million refugees from Syria's civil war, has become the main launchpad for migrants fleeing conflict, persecution and poverty to Europe.

The deaths came as German Chancellor Angela Merkel was meeting Turkish officials in Ankara for talks on reducing the influx of

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Leopard hurts six in Indian school

BBC ONLINE

A male leopard which entered a school in the Indian city of Bangalore injured six people trying to capture it.

A scientist and a forestry employee were among those mauled during the near 10-hour long effort to corner the

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Robbers kill housewife in Ashulia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Robbers hacked a housewife to death in her house in Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital last night.

The dead, 45-year-old Tahmina Begum, was from Niribili Residential Area in Ashulia.

Police quoting the victim's relatives said a gang of armed robbers entered Tahmina's house about 8:30pm during a power outage and put her family members under gunpoint.

When the housewife tried to scream for help, the robbers hacked her in the head and shoulder with sharp weapons and left the house with Tk 20,000 and gold ornaments.

Locals later rushed Tahmina to Enam Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead.

The woman died of excessive bleeding, said Anwar Kader Nazim,

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Turkish coast guards carry the body of a boy off a rescue boat yesterday at Altinoluk district in Balıkesir. At least 24 migrants drowned in the Aegean Sea as they tried to cross from Turkey to Greece, Turkish media said.

PHOTO: AFP

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SOMALIA DROUGHT

Over 58,000 kids starving: UN

AFP, Mogadishu

Over 58,000 children will starve to death in Somalia without urgent support, the United Nations warned yesterday, amid severe drought and war sparked a famine killing more than a quarter of a million people.

Some 950,000 people "struggle every day to meet their food needs," the UN said, adding that 4.7 million people in total, or nearly 40 percent of Somalia, are in need of aid.

Floods and failed rains caused by the El Nino weather phenomenon have sparked a dramatic rise in the

number of people going hungry in large parts of Africa.

Northern Somali areas, including self-declared independent Somaliland along the Gulf of Aden and semi-autonomous Puntland, are especially hard hit.

"The food security and malnutrition situation in Somalia is alarming, especially in parts of Puntland and Somaliland, which have been hard hit by drought exacerbated by El Nino," the UN said.

"We are deeply concerned...with

number of people going hungry in large parts of Africa. Northern Somali areas, including self-declared independent Somaliland along the Gulf of Aden and semi-autonomous Puntland, are especially hard hit. "The food security and malnutrition situation in Somalia is alarming, especially in parts of Puntland and Somaliland, which have been hard hit by drought exacerbated by El Nino," the UN said.

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SIBL
Social Islami Bank Limited
Banc of Lutfiarrah

PRAYER TIMING
FEBRUARY 9

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	5-30	12-45	4-15	5-52	7-15
JAMAAT	6-05	1-15	4-30	5-56	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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