



Dignitaries at the final day of the two-day international conference on “Cities Forum: Building Knowledge Networks and Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Development in Bangladesh” in the capital. World Bank together with Municipality Association of Bangladesh, Institute of Architects Bangladesh, Bangladesh Institute of Planners and Institute of Engineers Bangladesh organised the conference.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Most local govt bodies

FROM PAGE 16

He also demanded 40 percent allocation of the annual development programme for the local government institutions.

“The elected mayors fall behind in carrying out development programmes due to want of financial ability though they have legal mandate,” said Syeda Zarina Hossain, architect and planner, Institute of Architects of Bangladesh.

Terming the mayors as the driving force of the current century deemed to be the century of cities, she said networking among the professionals and elected local government representatives was necessary.

Achievement of the sustainable development goals in regard to urbanisation is only possible through empowering the local government institutions, said Prof SM Nazrul Islam, president of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh.

Local government institutions have to lobby the central government time and again to get their problems resolved, arguing that it is the same people who voted both of them with some aspirations, said Ralph Becker, former mayor of Salt Lake City of the USA.

State Minister of Finance MA Mannan called upon the country's mayors to submit specific project proposals in a bid to get government funds.

Municipal Association of Bangladesh placed some demands, including increasing fund for municipa-

lities.

The state minister said he would forward their demands to the higher authority.

“The government has taken many initiatives to develop the country. Stay beside the government to strengthen it,” Mannan added.

Alberto Maia de Rocha Paranhos, senior adviser to the Institute for Research and Urban Planning of Curitiba, said the philosophy of their city was to promote public transport like buses, not the private cars, when he was explaining how Curitiba had been turned into a planned city.

“Conserving rivers and greeneries is a foremost aim of the city's master plan.”

He added that an innovative system had been introduced in his city for waste management. For communities of narrow areas inaccessible for waste collection vehicles, people were offered one kg of vegetables, fruits or milk in exchange for bringing their waste themselves to the municipality collection vehicles.

Architect Syeda also said local government enjoyed planning power in other countries. They have decision making power as well.

Unfortunately in Bangladesh, the power is less, and it shrinks further if it is a development authority, she added.

The municipal authorities have to depend on the government financially, and sometimes the allocation gets disrupted due to the political culture, Syeda said.

Azmat, of the Municipal Association of Bangladesh, said a local government body had to face many problems while implementing projects, and the main problem was managerial management.

If the management job is given to the local government bodies, projects will be implemented successfully. Otherwise there will be lots of problems.

AWARDS

For the first time, four municipalities were given “Champion Pourashava Awards” in four categories -- champion in capital investment planning, champion in public finance management, champion in citizen engagement and champion in good governance.

Gopalganj Poursava Mayor Kazi Liakat Ali received champion in capital Investment planning award for inclusive and comprehensive planning, while the mayor of Phulpur Poursava Aminul Haque was handed champion in public finance management award for adopting sustainable financial management.

Chapainawabganj Poursava Mayor Nazrul Islam was awarded as champion in good governance for introducing transparent governance system.

The state minister handed Nilphamari Poursava Mayor Dewan Kamal Ahmed champion in citizen engagement award, as the jury found that projects in his municipality had been implemented timely and with innovation.

Paying more troublesome

FROM PAGE 16

accounts until the server went back up.”

“My house was without electricity for seven hours since morning.”

Echoing the same, Abdul Aziz, a resident of the city's Panchlaish Residential Area, said he had to go to the PDB office, around three kilometers off his residence, as there was no refill-booth near his house.

“If we are to travel three kilometers and stand in long queues to refill our meter-account, what is the benefit of a pre-paid metering system?” he asked.

Adding to their hassles, through a circular published in different newspapers recently, PDB announced that each of the single-phase pre-paid meter clients will have to pay Tk 40 a month and three-phase pre-paid meter clients will have to pay Tk 250 monthly as rent for the meter in addition to the electricity charge.

Ali Akbar, a resident of Khulshi area, said Tk 40 in addition to the electricity charge would hurt their monthly budget. “We are tenants...why shall we pay the meter-rent?” he asked.

According to PDB sources, around 1.30 lakh clients in Agrabad, Khulshi, Stadium and Pahartoli divisions of PDB, Chittagong have been brought under the pre-paid metering system under a project named Prepayment Metering Project for Distribution Southern Zone of PDB that began in November last year.

China Hexing Electrical Company got the tender for the project worth Tk 137 crore, said PDB sources, adding, each meter costs Tk 5,230.

The project was initiated to provide hassle-free service to the clients, said Mohammad Moniruzzaman, senior assistant director of PDB, Chittagong.

“Earlier, many clients alleged that they were getting ghost bills...they had to pay for what they did not use,” he said, adding, “The pre-paid metering project has been initiated to give relief to the clients from ghost bills and to reduce system loss of electricity.”

Asked about the sufferings of clients, Kamal Uddin, a superintendent engineer of PDB, Chittagong and project director of prepayment metering project, said the server seldom

remains down and that it was not a regular incident.

“The server is centrally controlled from Dhaka,” he said, adding, “Since January, this sort of incident happened just three to four times.”

Regarding inadequate refill-booths, he said tender for a project named Third Party Vending would be floated soon to recruit refilling-booths in selected shops in every area.

“Clients can soon refill their meter-accounts from nearby select shops once the project is implemented,” he said.

Regarding the rent of meter, Kamal said they had nothing to do with it as the Ministry for Power, Energy and Minerals in a circular on May 7, instructed them to realise the meter-rent from the clients.

Kamal said more people would be brought in under the pre-paid metering project. “Around 1.5 lakh people in some other divisions including Rampur, Bakalia and Madarbari would be brought under pre-paid metering system by June 2018.”

There are around six lakh consumers in the port city, he added.

Miller blows Tigers away in tour-ender

FROM PAGE 1

second run-out of the innings. In the next over, Saifuddin hit Beuran Hendricks straight to point to end the innings on a sorry 141 in 18.3 overs.

The chase started in blistering fashion, with Imrul Kayes once again starting the innings off with a boundary off Beuran Hendricks as he had done in the first T20I. Soumya Sarkar added a six and a four in that over, helping Bangladesh get 17 in the first over. Robbie Frylinck then dropped a sitter at mid-on in the second over from skipper JP Duminy, giving Soumya a second life on 11. But the over seemed fated for a wicket as off the last ball Soumya hit to covers and Miller threw it to keeper Mangaliso Mosehle, who took off the bails before Imrul could get home.

In Duminy's next over, opposite number Shakib Al Hasan stepped away to hammer it to the leg side but the swing connected only with air as the ball clattered onto the stumps and Shakib walked back for two. The third-wicket partnership lasted exactly one over as Mushfiqur Rahim's scoop off Frylinck looped into the gloves of Mosehle and Bangladesh were 32 for three in 4.2 overs. In the next over and five runs later Sabbir Rahman hit Duminy straight to mid off to end a wretched tour.

Soumya meanwhile had carried his good form in the first T20I into yesterday's match, and was timing the ball well

as he hit six boundaries and a six and added 35 runs for the fifth wicket with Mahmudullah Riyad. But he failed to get to a fifty here too, holing out to deep midwicket off Aaron Phangiso in the ninth over for a 27-ball 44. At 72 for five after nine overs, a repeat of their 90 all out in the first Test at this ground at the start of the tour loomed, but Mahmudullah avoided that embarrassment by putting on 21 with Liton Das for the sixth wicket. Liton was next to go when he was caught off a top edge off Dwaine Pretorius in the 12th over. Mahmudullah was stumped off Phangiso in the following over for 20. From 98 for seven, the tailenders concentrated on avoiding a 100-run defeat, and in that they proved successful.

Earlier, Miller hit an unbelievable 35-ball century, the fastest in T20I cricket, to take South Africa to 224 for four. He was well on his way to establishing another record as five sixes off the first five balls from Mohammad Saifuddin in the 19th over had gone for six, but the powerful left-hander missed out on emulating Yuvraj Singh's feat of six sixes in an over as the last ball was a single, making it just 31 runs from the over. 15 more runs came off the last 10 overs as Miller helped South Africa plunder a scarcely believable 146 runs in the last 10 overs.

But it started very differently after Shakib won the toss and chose to field.

For the first 10 overs of South Africa's innings, Bangladesh were not just in the hunt but seemed to be lining up for something special as AB de Villiers walked back after 9.5 overs with the score reading 78 for three. However, since that four-run over from Saifuddin, Miller and Hashim Amla just went after the bowling.

Shakib had taken the first two wickets, bowling Mosehle for five in the third over and then doing the same to opposite number JP Duminy in the fifth over. He bowled his four overs at a stretch after opening the bowling and had great figures of two for 22. The rest however had sorry analyses as Saifuddin had two for 53 off four, Mehedi Hasan Miraz had none for 46 from four, Taskin Ahmed's three wicketless overs went for 41 and Rubel Hossain conceded 51 off his four.

The De Villiers dismissal, caught well at long off by Imrul Kayes for a 15-ball 20, started the carnage. Hashim Amla and Miller put on 79 runs in just 6.4 overs before Amla became Saifuddin's second victim in the 17th over, caught at deep square leg off a slower ball for 85 off 51 balls.

After the 31-run over, Miller hit two boundaries and took two couples to reach the fastest T20I hundred, eclipsing the previous mark of 45 balls set by countryman Richard Levi against New Zealand in Hamilton in 2012. Miller finished unbeaten on 101 off 36 balls

Make sure Aziza's killers are punished

JS body urges

UNB, Dhaka

A parliamentary body yesterday suggested that the government ensure exemplary punishment of the killers of Aziza, who was burnt to death “for stealing a mobile phone” in Narsingdi's Shibpur.

Aziza Begum, a class-V student, who was set on fire allegedly by her aunt, Beauty, for “stealing a mobile phone” in Khainput village on Friday night, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Saturday.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Women and Children Affairs Ministry also recommended taking steps so that college students could be taught the affects of child marriage at least an hour every week.

The parliamentary watchdog came up with the suggestion at its 39th meeting held at Jatiya Sangsad with Rebecca Momin in the chair.

Funeral for late Thai king draws to a close

AFP, Bangkok

A year of official mourning for Thailand's late King Bhumibol Adulyadej was to end yesterday after a lavish five-day funeral full of pagentry and religious ritual.

Bhumibol, a beloved monarch who died last October aged 88, was cremated on Thursday after a day charged with emotion that brought the nation to a standstill.

At his death he was the world's longest-serving monarch, spanning seven decades of Thailand's turbulent modern history to become its leading symbol of unity.

But he left behind a kingdom deeply divided along political, economic and social lines, with a military junta in charge and democratic government a distant prospect.

As dusk fell yesterday, Bhumibol's son and heir 65-year-old King Maha Vajiralongkorn and his sister, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, carried a pair of golden urns containing their father's relics from the Grand Palace to two Bangkok temples where they will be housed.

A ceremonial cavalry unit with soldiers in full regalia -- including blue plumes in their helmets -- led the convoy, in a sombre but small procession capping the \$90 million funeral.

Buddhist monks led prayers at the temples while black-clad mourners sitting on pavements outside clasped their hands together in respect.

Bhumibol's reputation as “father of the nation” was burnished by a careful palace PR machine, while criticism of the king and key senior royals is banned under a tough lese majeste law.

Thais have dressed in black or subdued tones for much of the last year, with black and white ribbons tied to school gates, temples and government buildings.

The prolonged display of official mourning for the late king ended at midnight yesterday.

BCL leader

FROM PAGE 2

Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Kajol Mallick, medical officer of Jessore Medical College Hospital said the BCL leader was hit by three bullets in his chest.

Locals said Emon had been protesting against drug peddling in the area and was also active in the community policing committee. He had received threats on his life earlier.

Emon's body was sent to Jessore Medical College morgue for an autopsy.

Locals brought out a procession in Jessore town carrying his coffin.

Man dies

FROM PAGE 16

RMCH in the early hours of yesterday, they added.

But Sohana Moni, elder sister of Soheli Rana, said law enforcers picked up her brother from their house in Haldibari around 10:00pm Saturday. The police also demanded Tk 1.5 lakh for his release, she added.

They killed him as the family refused to give the money, she alleged.

“We demand punishment of the police officials responsible for my husband's death,” said Runi Begum, Soheli's wife.

ABM Zakir Hossain, additional superintendent of Rangpur police, denied the allegations. He said Soheli stood accused in different drug peddling cases and was an addict.

11 Freedom Party men

FROM PAGE 1

In the case filed for attempted murder of now Prime Minister Hasina, the judge sentenced each of the convicts to 20 years, while each of them was given life (30 years) in jail in the case filed for blasting bombs.

Sources said the convicts would have to serve 30 years in prison.

Judge Md Zahidul Kabir of the Fourth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka delivered the verdicts in presence of nine accused.

The court also fined each of the convicts Tk 40,000. In default, they will serve one year more in jail.

Of the convicts, Soheli alias Freedom Soheli, Golam Sarwar Mamun, Joj Miah and Syed Nazmul Maksud Murad are in jail, while Mizanur Rahman, Khandokar Amirul Islam Kajol, Md Shahjahan alias Balu and Kazi Imam Hossain are on bail.

Lt Col (retd) Khandakar Abdur Rashid, Zafar Ahmed Manik and Md Humayun Kabir are fugitives. The punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest.

The court acquitted Humayun Kabir alias Humayun, now on bail.

Earlier, the court recorded statements of 12 prosecution witnesses, including the complainant and investigation officers of the cases.

On August 10, 1989, activists and leaders of Freedom Party attacked the then house of Awami League President Hasina on Dhanmondi Road-32.

According to the case statement, Freedom Party members Kajol and Humayun, who is a fugitive, along with 10-12 men attacked the house with bombs and firearms.

They chanted “Faruk-Rashid Jindabad” as they left the place.

Following the incident, Zahurul Islam, a security guard of the house, lodged two cases -- one for plotting to kill Hasina and the other for hurling

bombs -- with Dhanmondi Police Station.

In 1997, eight years after the attack, the Criminal Investigation Department pressed charges against 19 people, including Freedom Party leaders and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's murderers Lt Col (retd) Syed Farukul Islam, Lt Col (retd) Khondaker Abdur Rashid, and Maj (retd) Bazlul Huda in the two cases.

On July 5, 2009, charges were framed against 16 accused.

During the trial, two of the accused -- Gazi Liakat Hossain and Rezaul Islam Khan -- died, while Syed Faruk and Bazlul Huda were executed in the Bangabandhu murder case.

Ex-secy's wife

FROM PAGE 16

Nagar Police Station, told The Daily Star that police went to Sofia's home to collect evidence after the body was recovered.

Quoting Reza, the OC said Sofia, after a quarrel with her husband, went to her room, locked herself in, and fired a shot into her chest.

Hearing the gunshot, Reza and his two daughters, who were at home then, broke the door and found Sofia lying in a pool of blood.

They took her to Square Hospitals where doctors pronounced her dead, said the police official, citing family members.

The family members claimed that Sofia was mentally unstable.

Police recovered a gun from the scene, which the family members claimed was licensed. “We are investigating the matter,” said the OC.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for an autopsy.

Reza is on Leave Preparatory to Retirement (LPR).

'Beijing with Dhaka'

FROM PAGE 1

Aung Hlaing earlier this week and urged a swift and safe return of the Rohingyas.

The US is also weighing targeted sanctions against key military leaders.

The European Union decided not to invite the army chief and other senior commanders of Myanmar armed forces to the EU and its member states.

But inside the country, support for the army has surged -- an unlikely turnaround for a once feared and hated institution that ruled for 50 years and whose lawmakers lost heavily in 2015 polls.

Those elections sent Aung San Suu Kyi's pro-democracy party into power, but the Rohingya crisis has put her government on the backfoot.

Demonstrators carried banners lauding Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing and rebuking the international community for “pressuring the army”.

EU COMMISSIONER TO VISIT CAMPS

EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos Stylianides will arrive in Dhaka this evening to visit the Rohingya refugee camps.

He will go to Kutupalong in Cox's Bazar tomorrow, see the plight of refugees and meet high government officials and depart on the evening of

November 1.

The EU has pledged over €51 million for the Rohingyas this year.

“We stand united for the right cause. The cause of stateless people who have suffered for too long: the Rohingya... We have a moral duty to give these people hope,” said Stylianides in a statement.

US DELEGATION'S VISIT

Simon Henshaw, US acting assistant secretary of state for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration would lead a delegation to Myanmar and Bangladesh on October 29-November 4 to discuss ways to address the humanitarian and human rights concerns stemming from the Rakhine State crisis.

The issue of improving the delivery of humanitarian assistance to displaced people in Myanmar as well as in Bangladesh, would be on the delegation's agenda, reports UNB.

A diplomatic source said the delegation is likely to visit Myanmar first before coming to Bangladesh on November 2-3.

The delegation would visit affected communities in Cox's Bazar to hear the stories of the people who have fled, assess the impact of the emergency humanitarian response, identify gaps in assistance, and advise on ways to improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Huge rally

FROM PAGE 16

“I'm here to defend Spanish unity and the law,” said Alfonso Machado, 55, a salesman standing with a little girl with Spanish flags in her hair.

SLIGHT UNIONIST LEAD

The poll of 1,000 people by Sigma Dos for newspaper El Mundo, which opposes independence, showed anti-independence parties winning 43.4 percent support and pro-independence parties 42.5 percent.

The survey was taken from Monday to Thursday, just as the central government prepared to take control of Catalonia.

Madrid said on Saturday that secessionist politicians, including Puigdemont, were free to take part in the Dec 21 election. The headline CUP has been unclear if it would.

With weeks still to go before that date, the poll showed the CUP, kingmaker for the pro-secessionists in the dismissed 135-seat parliament, would win seven seats, down from a current 10.

The pro-independence coalition Junts pel Si, which held 62 seats previously, was split into parties PDaCat and ERC for the poll as they are unlikely to run on a single platform. The two parties would win between 54 and 58 seats in total, the poll showed.

In a speech at yesterday's unity rally, former European Parliament president Josep Borrell called for voters to turn out en masse in December to ensure independence supporters lose their stranglehold on the regional parliament.

“Maybe we're here because many of us during elections didn't go and vote. Now we have a golden opportunity. This time, nobody should stay at home,” Borrell said to cheering crowds.

DAMAGE TO CATALONIA

Puigdemont, speaking from the Catalan nationalist stronghold of Girona on Saturday, called for peaceful opposition to Madrid's takeover. But he was vague on precisely what steps the secessionists would take as Spanish authorities move into Barcelona to enforce control.

European countries, the United States and Mexico have also rejected the Catalan declaration of independence and expressed support for Spain's unity.

But emotions are running high and the next few days will be tricky for Madrid as it embarks on enforcing direct rule and putting officials in administrative roles. National police were accused of heavy-handedness during the Oct 1 referendum.

Officers of the regional police force, called the Mossos d'Esquadra in Catalan, were stationed in main public and government buildings yesterday.

But the force is believed to have divided loyalties. The central government has removed the Mossos' chief, Josep Lluís Trapero, and said units could be replaced if warranted.

The main secessionist group, the Catalan National Assembly, has urged civil servants not to follow orders from the central government and to mount “peaceful resistance”, while the pro-independence trade union CSC has called a strike.

Since the return of democracy in the late 1970s Spain has suffered several traumatic episodes, including an attempted military coup in 1981, a violent Basque separatist conflict, and more recently an economic crisis. The Catalan issue is however the biggest challenge to the territorial integrity of what is now a progressive European Union nation.