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SHAH CEMENT

Development hollow sans democracy

Say speakers at a roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's development cannot be sustained for long without establishing meaningful democracy, eminent citizens said at a roundtable yesterday.

Pointing out the growing income disparity and corruption stemming from lack of accountability and transparency in different sectors, they said the government's present narrative of development remained questionable because only a section of people benefited from it.

The observations came at a roundtable on "Democracy and Sustainable Development" organised by Dhaka Forum, a think tank, at the Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

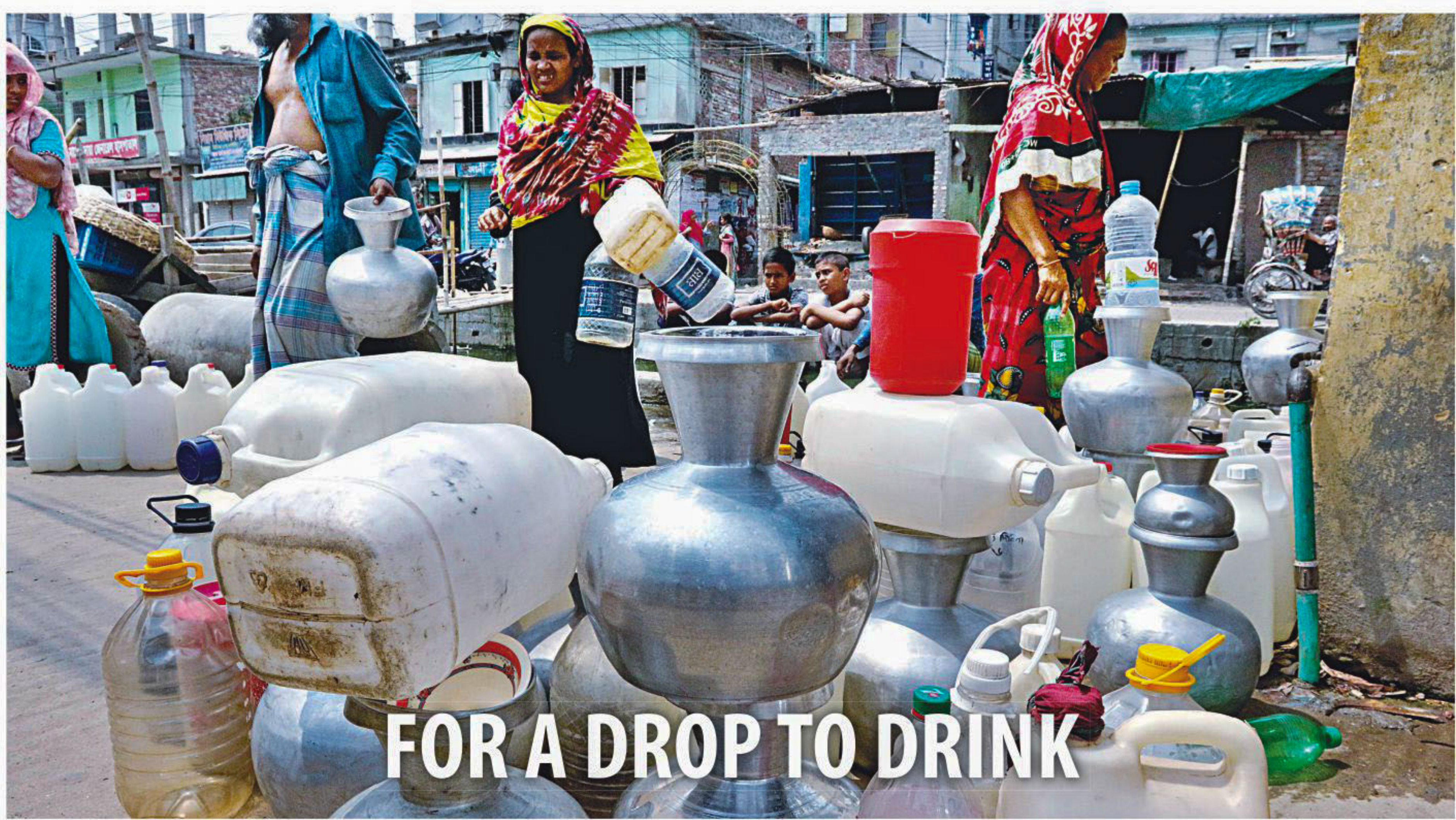
Presenting an "issue paper" on the topic, former Bangladesh Bank governor Dr Salehuddin Ahmed said shrinking space for democracy led to uneven distribution of capital which was evident in the country at present.

The debate over whether development or democracy comes first is depriving the countrymen, he said, adding, development without democracy was meaningless.

"It's not possible to walk much on one foot," he added. It is true that Bangladesh is making economic development, however, there was growing inequality, said Dr Ahmed.

Lower and lower-middle income groups are being deprived of benefits of the development in various ways, he said.

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FOR A DROP TO DRINK

Locals of Jurain and Dholaipar put jerrycans, pitchers, and bottles as placeholders in a queue at a Wasa deep tube-well tap in east Dholaipar. They alleged that dirty and stinky supply water and no supply at all force them to collect water from the well every day. The photo was taken at 1:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

3 killed in 'gunfights'

Of them, 2 'outlawed party members', one 'drug peddler'

STAR REPORT

Two alleged members of the outlawed Purbo Bangla Communist Party (PBCP) were killed in a "gunfight" between two rival groups in Bogura's Sherpur upazila early yesterday, police said.

Liton Sarkar, 40, and Afsar Ali, 45, were from Sirajganj's Raiganj and Tarash upazilas respectively, said Humayan Kabir, officer-in-charge of Sherpur Police Station.

Both of them were members of the PBCP Sarbohara faction, the OC claimed. However, he could not name the other faction involved in the incident.

On information that two rival factions of the banned outfit were exchanging fire in Bhanipur Bazar Bridge area, a team of police led by Additional Police Super Sonaton Chakraborty went to the spot around 2:00am and rescued the two with bullet injuries, the OC also said.

They were taken to Bogura's Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital

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Only 13pc prefer courts for justice

Justice Audit 2018 finds; 34 lakh cases backlogged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Only 13 percent people of Bangladesh prefer going to courts to get justice, and the rest, despite having faith in the judiciary, would rather have community leaders solve their issues, according to Justice Audit Bangladesh 2018.

The country's courts have a backlog of 34 lakh cases and the situation could have been "different" if everyone went to the courts with their issues, said the audit conducted last year in all 64 districts.

The law ministry in association with GIZ, a German organisation working on international cooperation, UK Aid, and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) carried out the audit claimed to be the first of its kind in the world.

The findings were unveiled during a seminar at the Supreme Court Auditorium in Dhaka yesterday.

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain said inadequate number of judges and the growing number of new cases were the reasons behind the huge case backlog.

Speaking as the chief guest, he said he would sit with judges within a month to prepare a plan for solving the issue.

The report said the number of cases pending with chief judicial magistrates' courts increased 14

percent between 2016 and 2017. At the sessions' judges' courts and the High Court Division, pending cases rose 16 and nine percent during the same period.

If the growth of pending cases continued at this pace, the audit projected that by 2022, chief judicial magistrates' courts, sessions' judges' courts and the High Court Division would have 72, 82, and 89 percent of the cases before it pending.

The backlogs cause unbearable sufferings to justice seekers and increases the "prison population" rapidly, the audit report said.

Currently, the country's prisons have twice the inmates their capacity even though crime has not increased that much, it said.

The audit found that most rural people prefer to seek justice from community and local representatives, like union parishad chairman, and village court as they consider this process is less complex and faster than courts.

Presenting the findings, Promita Sengupta, one of the researchers involved in audit, said the data of the audit were collected from citizens and courts of all districts.

"It opens an opportunity to find what the problems are and where the diagnosis is needed in the judiciary. You have to find the solution now,"

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Airplane hotel takes luxury to new level



CNN ONLINE

The Four Seasons Private Jet is getting a very glamorous upgrade.

A fully customized Airbus A321 LR, part of the new Airbus NEO family, is being brought in to replace the current model, the luxury group has announced.

Due to take flight in early 2021, the new aircraft will feature "the widest and tallest cabin in its class" as well as spacious lavatories and an expansive lounge area.

The state-of-the-art plane has room for 48 passengers -- with a layout design that ensures guests can socialize easily while in their seats.

Each of the leather handcrafted chairs offers six and a half feet (two meters) of personal space

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Mahfuz Ullah passes away (1950-2019)

UNB, Dhaka

Senior journalist Mahfuz Ullah passed away at a hospital in Thailand yesterday morning. He was 69.

He had been on life support at the Bumrungrad International Hospital.

"My father is no more. He breathed his last at 10:05am today. We are taking preparations to bring his body home after completing necessary formalities," his daughter Nusrat Humaira told UNB.

Mahfuz had been suffering from various complications in the heart, SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Lorry kills 2 in Jatrabari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two pedestrians were killed when a lorry hit a rickshaw and then ran them over in the capital's Jatrabari last night.

Police said the lorry hit the rickshaw at Dhohpur intersection of Jatrabari around 8:00pm and ran over the pedestrians who were on the street.

Kamal Hossain, 40, died on the spot while Samia, 16, died of her injuries at Mugda General Hospital, said Kazi Wazed Ali, officer-in-charge of Jatrabari Police Station.

The rickshaw puller, his passenger, and Samia's mother were injured in the accident.

Police seized the lorry.



A man tries to help out a traffic policeman by attempting to fix a broken fan in the traffic island near Bangabazar intersection in the capital. With temperatures soaring to the mid-30s for days, city dwellers continued to suffer in the heatwave yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Stashed in stomach

11 packets of yaba found inside a body at DMC morgue; carrier may have died as 'pills melted inside'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forensic surgeons at Dhaka Medical College morgue found 11 packets of yaba pills while conducting autopsy on a body yesterday morning.

Sohel Mahmud, head forensic medicine department at DMC, said they found the yaba pills inside the stomach of 35-year-old Zulhas, of Netrokona, and informed police.

According to DMC morgue sources, the medical college authorities found 47 yaba pills in a packet when counted. Zulhas may have died as yaba pills melted inside his stomach, the sources added.

According to police, six packets of yaba pills were found melted inside the body.

Omar Faruque, officer-in-charge of Motijheel Police Station, said Zulhas was accused in at least two drug related cases.

He was found unconscious around 5:00am on Friday in front of Biswash Tower in the capital's Motijheel area, he added.

On information, police recovered Zulhas and sent him to Mugda General Hospital where doctors declared him dead around 11:00am, the OC added.

Zulhas's younger brother Mehedi Hasan told reporters that Zulhas headed towards Dhaka on April 21 and had not communicated with family members since then.

Earlier on April 2, doctors at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College found 57 packets of yaba pills, 1500 pieces to be exact, inside the stomach of an unidentified woman during autopsy.



PRAYER TIMING APRIL 28

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-20 12-45 4-45 6-29 8-00
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-00 6-34 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION