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The Daily Star organised the first part of a series of discussions titled “Mass-Student Movement and Constitution Reform Outline” at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

‘Reform constitution based on equality and social justice’

Speakers call for change in line with Liberation War, July revolution principles

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday called for reforms to certain clauses of the constitution in line with the principles of equality, human dignity, and social justice – key tenets of the Liberation War and the July revolution.

They argued that political and constitutional reforms should be implemented in a way that prevents any future autocratic rule.

Advocate Arif Khan, a constitutional specialist, suggested that a party chief should not become the prime minister, and that a prime minister should not serve more than twice.

The Daily Star organised the first part of a series of discussions titled “Mass-Student Movement and Constitution Reform Outline” at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Khan said since the Liberation War, people have distanced themselves from political parties due to their disregard for the constitution, resulting in a failure to secure the rights promised within it.

He highlighted four key areas for amendment to improve the political environment: balancing power between the president and prime minister; ensuring the Election Commission’s financial independence; revising Article 70 to allow MPs to vote against their party’s decisions; and completely separating the judiciary.

Prof Ahmad Mostofa Kamal of Independent University said changing the constitution alone will not alter the nation’s fate; rather, those who implement it must also change.

Ali Ar Raji, assistant professor at Chittagong University’s Communication and Journalism department, emphasised that constitutional changes should reflect cultural and traditional values rather than being imposed from above.

Tamanna Akhter, a Dhaka University student, advocated for setting educational qualifications for parliamentary candidates and reinstating the caretaker government system.

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1.94 lakh sued in 268 cases since AL govt fall: MSF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, at least 268 cases have been filed against 1.94 lakh people, mostly targeting AL leaders and activists including party President Sheikh Hasina.

Of them, 26,268 people were named and around 1.68 lakh others were unnamed, said Manabdhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF) in a report yesterday.

Around 100 of the cases were filed against former prime minister Hasina, mostly over the killings of protesters, said the rights organisation led by Sultana Kamal.

MSF came up with the finding by analysing media reports and collecting inputs from local human rights defenders.

It said at least 809 persons were killed and over 33,000 others injured between July and August due to the violent clashes and indiscriminate firing by members of law enforcement agencies.

As the protest turned into a one-point demand, which was the resignation of Hasina, the law enforcers, as well as the activists of the AL and its front

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STREET CHILDREN REHABILITATION Staff bring accusations of graft, neglect

NILIMA JAHAN

Serious allegations of corruption, negligence, and irregularities have surfaced against the Street Children Rehabilitation Programme under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

Last week, employees of the programme sent a letter to the MoWCA secretary, stating such issues are harming the street children’s overall development and wellbeing.

According to the letter, there has been gross negligence in providing medical treatment to the children.

Despite the available allocated funds, employees claim they are forced to cover medical expenses from their pockets. When they request funds for treatment, the programme’s accountant, Md Toufiqul Islam, allegedly responds with rude and dismissive behaviour.

“Even though there is a vehicle allocated for the programme, it is not available in times of emergency hospitalisation and the staff have to pay for CNG (auto-rickshaw) fare out of their own pockets,” the letter added.

Kamrunnahar Ratna, the resident rehabilitation consultant of the Kamapur centre, told The Daily Star that on August 5, a child required immediate medical treatment due to prolonged fever and fatigue.

However, when they approached the authority for hospitalisation, assistant project director Abul Kalam Azad behaved rudely, saying the programme lacked proper budget for such activities.

“Although we send him prescriptions of children who need immediate medical treatment, most of the time, he remains silent and does not direct us to take any action,” she added.

“If the children die without treatment, who will be responsible?” she asked.

The letter to the secretary also mentioned that the programme fails to provide the necessary educational materials. No vocational

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Staff cover medical costs from their own pockets

Children lack materials and training

Embezzlement, nepotism harm programme’s integrity

Death anniv of Nurjahan Murshid today

DU CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 21st death anniversary of Nurjahan Murshid, a women’s rights activist, renowned politician and organisers of the 1971 Liberation War, said a press release.

Marking the day, wreaths will be placed at her grave around 11:00am at Mirpur Intellectuals’ Graveyard in the capital today. Besides, food items will be distributed among the destitute.

Her family members, Nurjahan Murshid Sangskritik Kendra and Broti sought prayers from the country’s people for her eternal peace.

In 1954, Nurjahan Murshid won as a member of the Provincial Council as a candidate of the

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ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE Dhaka submits treaty to UN

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has officially acceded to the International Convention for Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Bangladesh’s Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, Ambassador Muhammad A Muhith, deposited the Instrument of Accession to the International Convention for Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) to the UN Secretary General’s Office on Friday.

David K Nanopoulos, chief of the Treaty Section at the UN, received the copy on behalf of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, according to a statement.

During the handover, Ambassador Muhith stated that the current interim government in Bangladesh, led by Prof Muhammad Yunus, is deeply committed to upholding all human rights and fundamental freedoms of the country’s people.

“The government’s commitment is aptly demonstrated in the fact that, within 20 days of installation, the government completed all internal procedures for accession to this important human rights treaty,” he said.

Nanopoulos congratulated Bangladesh on this historic occasion and informed that the UN will immediately issue all necessary notifications on Bangladesh’s accession to the ICPPED.

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Hatirjheel lake, scenic spot or a crime scene?

At least 36 bodies recovered in last 5-6 years; locals point at inadequate security

RAFUL ISLAM

A master’s student of International Islamic University Chittagong, Azizul Islam Mehedi, came to Dhaka on October 10, 2020 to attend a job interview.

Two days later, his body was found in Hatirjheel lake with his hands and legs tied to his neck.

Police later found that a childhood friend called him to Dhaka over financial issues, murdered him in Khilkhet and dumped the body in the lake at night.

This event is not an isolated case. Over the past five to six years, at least 36 bodies have been recovered from the Hatirjheel lake area, due to inadequate security and vigilance in the area.

On Wednesday, the body of 32-year-old Rahanuma Sarah, a newsroom editor at the private TV channel GTV, was found floating in the same lake.

Police suspect many of these cases are suicides. Meanwhile, the insufficient lighting around the lake only exacerbates its vulnerability to criminal activities.

In some instances, criminals have used Hatirjheel lake as a dumping ground for bodies, as was the case with Mehedi.

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) on July 1 this

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Winners of the 3rd “Climate Justice Idea Competition 2024” along with judges and dignitaries at the capital’s The Daily Star Centre yesterday. The winning teams -- Atlas, Unanimous, and Swaccha -- received awards for working in three critical areas: Circular Economy, Water Rights, and Energy Transition. The grand finale of the competition was held at The Daily Star Centre, jointly organised by ActionAid Bangladesh and The Daily Star. Out of 156 teams from across the country, nine finalists were selected to present their ideas at the event.

PHOTO: STAR

CLIMATE JUSTICE IDEA COMPETITION Three teams emerge victorious

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three young teams won the 3rd “Climate Justice Idea Competition 2024,” yesterday for presenting innovative solutions to the ongoing climate crisis.

The grand finale of the competition was held at The Daily Star Centre, jointly organised by ActionAid Bangladesh and The Daily Star.

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Team Atlas was awarded for their innovative IT-enabled robotics system, “Agrover,” designed to enhance efficient and

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