



MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: NEWS EDITOR

First national consultation on Human Rights begins tomorrow

DHAKA: The Ministry for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), will begin a series of national consultations on human rights in Dhaka tomorrow.

The first of these consultations will involve Ministry Officials and representatives from civil society, major NGOs, and academic institutions. Through a series of working sessions, the participants will seek to understand the major obstacles faced by citizens, especially the disadvantaged, when they try to access justice.

H.E. Barrister Moudud Ahmed, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, will attend the national consultation as Chief Guest. The Special Guests will include, Mr. Md. Asaduzzaman, Secretary to the Ministry, H.E. Ms. Lorraine Barker, the Australian High Commissioner in Bangladesh, and Mr. Jorgen Lissner, the UNDP Resident Representative.

Over the next few months, three more such consultations are planned with the following groups:

- ?? **National institutions** – to identify institutional shortfalls that hinder citizens, especially the vulnerable and poor, from accessing justice, and to discuss possible solutions being developed to overcome these barriers.
- ?? **Donor agencies** – to enhance coordination by collecting information on the type of initiatives being supported in the justice sector nation-wide.
- ?? **Detainees and victims of offences** – to gain, first-hand, an understanding of the obstacles facing vulnerable groups in accessing justice.

The results of these consultation are expected to help decision makers develop a strategy for improving people's access to justice. In addition, the results will assist UNDP to design a large-scale programme of assistance to Bangladesh in the area of human rights. **ENDS....**

Please note: The consultation will be held on the 3rd floor of the IDB Bhaban from 9.30am. All media welcome.

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