



Students of the Department of Management Studies of Dhaka University yesterday bring out a colourful procession on the campus on the opening day of Management Week '06.

'Japan's observer status to add new dimension in Saarc'

Int'l conference on Japan-Saarc cooperation begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An international conference on 'Japan-Saarc Cooperation' will be held in the city today.

Some 500 delegates including 10 from Japan and 30 from Saarc countries will take part in the conference.

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan will inaugurate the conference at Hotel Sonargaon.

Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University (DU) Prof S M A Faiz will preside over the session.

Japan Study Centre at DU organises the conference with the help of Japanese Embassy.

At a press briefing yesterday Prof Ataur Rahman, director of Japan Study Centre, said the conference will

bring some of the best minds of Saarc region and Japan in order to highlight the issues where Japan can work together with Saarc states to advance a common agenda of cooperation.

He said the conference is also aimed to sensitise new awareness of common interests in the emerging regional order and convergence of domestic and regional priorities and needs.

"South Asia needs to forge much more cooperation under the umbrella of Saarc. This realisation was reflected in the 13th Saarc summit in Dhaka when Japan and China were accorded observer status in the Saarc," said Prof Rahman.

"Japan wants to see South Asia more stable and economically developed and managing disasters like

flooding, earthquake and tsunami. Energy sector could also be the area of cooperation," he added.

"Japan has a good relation with Bangladesh for long time. Recently it has got the new dimension through our bilateral initiative," said Masami Tamura, counsellor for development cooperation and economic affairs.

"Japan's observer status in Saarc is poised to add a new dimension to our overseas cooperation in the region, which holds tremendous potential," he said, adding that one good international seaport could serve the whole region and Japan is getting involved in this sector.

Abdullah-al-Mamun, lecturer at Japan Study Centre, was also present at the press briefing.

10 NOTED SCIENTISTS AWARDED GOLD MEDALS

Evolve new tech to remove poverty

Khaleda urges scientists

Bss, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged the scientists of the country to engage themselves in tougher struggle in the coming days with a firm commitment for implementing the nation's development aspirations.

Assuring the scientists of providing all sorts of support in their innovative efforts, Khaleda asked them to become more active in evolving newer technology and updating existing ones to accelerate the pace of socio-economic progress and remove poverty.

She was speaking as the chief guest at the gold medal award giving ceremony of Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS) at the International Conference Centre (ICC) in the city. The prime minister awarded BAS gold medals to 10 renowned scientists of the country in recognition of their outstanding contributions in the field of science and technology.

They were: Dr Arun Kumar Basak, Dr M Saidur Rahman, Dr SM Imamul Huq, Dr M Mukhlesur Rahman Khan, Dr Hasan Askari, M Nazmul Ahsan, Dr S Shahnewaz Ahmed, Dr M Kaykobad, Dr AA Mamu, Dr M Rafiqul Islam and Dr Anwarul Azim Akhand.

Extending her sincere thanks to the gold medal awardees, Khaleda called upon the scientists to go for optimum utilisation of the existing scope and facilities and to overcome various limitations to prove their greatness.

She underlined the need for turning the BAS into a 'centre of excellence', and said the nation expects more from the scientists in the present age of knowledge-

based society and globalisation.

The function was addressed also by Science and ICT Minister Abdul Moyeen Khan, President of BAS Prof M Shamsheer Ali, and Secretary of BAS Prof Naiyyum Choudhury.

National Professor Dr AKM Aminul Haque read out the citation of the awardees.

Prime Minister said that the present government has signed an agreement with the US government for carrying out latest research in the field of science, industry and agriculture.

Khaleda said the government has arranged additional operating fund in revenue budget considering the important role of the agriculture scientists in poverty alleviation and socio-economic development.

New projects, she said, have been taken up on agriculture technology in collaboration with the World Bank to gear up research and expansion activities.

She said the country's agriculture scientists have already taken joint projects with USA and FAO (food and agriculture organisation).

The prime minister said the nation regards highly the scientists who are working sincerely and showed their excellence in their respective fields despite limitations.

Khaleda expressed the hope that the scientists would be successful in their efforts to change the society and ensure welfare to mankind.

Recalling the immense contributions of scientist in different phases of civilisation, she mentioned the contributions of Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Sina, Abu Rushhd, Al Zeber, Al-Kimi and Al Farabi.

The prime minister said the

government has already provided Tk five crore to 'endowment fund' of the BAS and appreciated the activities of the organisation.

Khaleda laid stress on sustainable application of science and technology to accelerate the pace of socio-economic progress to cope with the developed world.

She recalled the contribution of late President Ziaur Rahman in forming science and technology division in 1980 and announcing the

national science policy.

Khaleda said her government in its last tenure had elevated the science and technology division into a full-fledged ministry and reconstituted the ministry as Science and ICT ministry during the current tenure.

She also listed various steps taken by the government for the development of science and technology.

These included introductions of

e-governance, linking the country to information super highway through submarine cable, adoption of a project to set up a hi-tech park at Gazipur, formulation of biotechnology policy and sector-wise guidelines, she added.

Ministers, noted scientists, vice chancellors and academicians were present.



Juddho Birodhi Chhatra Sangram Parishad burns an effigy of Israeli prime minister at the foot of 'Aparejeyo Bangla' on the Dhaka University campus yesterday protesting Israeli attacks on Lebanon.



PHOTO: STAR

Artists working at the Jamuna Art Camp: More than a dozen of country's renowned senior and young artists produced dozens of paintings using indigenous painting materials at the four-day Jamuna Art Camp that concluded yesterday on the Jamuna Resort Limited premises. Organised by GalleriKaya, the camp utilised traditional pigment making technology maintained by the country's last scroll artist Shambhu Acharya, while the artists exchanged their ideas about the paint and painting techniques.

BUYING OF HEALTH MINISTRY TENDERS

Rab picks up 15 for creating obstacle

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday picked up 15 people from the Construction Maintenance Management Unit (CMMU) of the Health and Family Welfare Ministry allegedly for creating obstacles to buying schedules for three projects to be implemented at around Tk 400 crore.

A team of Rab-10 stormed into the office of the chief engineer of CMMU at Motijheel at around 1:30pm and picked up the suspects, including an agent of Khandaker Tanvirul Islam Joy, one of the 23 top listed criminals.

Director of Rab-10 Lt Col Maniqr Rahman said some innocent contractors might be caught. "We're carrying out a scrutiny to identify the criminals, the innocent ones will be released," he said. He also said that one of the detainees admitted that he is an associate of Joy.

Maniqr said some of them are members of different criminal groups who used to create obstacle to selling and buying of tender schedules.

Sources said August 1 was the last date for selling schedules for three projects involving around Tk 400 crore under the development budget. The projects are upgrading

50 upazila health complexes to 50 beds from existing 31 beds at Tk 250 crore, construction of six Institute of Health Technology building at six divisional headquarters at Tk 108 crore and construction of five new 20-bed hospitals at Tk 30 crore.

August 2 was the submission deadline for tender schedules, which are being sold at 36 places across the country, the sources added.

Duty-free shop opens at ZIA

Bss, Dhaka

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir inaugurated a newly built duty-free shop and a drinks corner at the Zia International Airport in the city yesterday.

Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) has set up the shop and the drinks corner at a cost of Tk 7.50 lakh and Tk 17 lakh.

BPC sources said the new facilities will provide quality food for the outgoing passengers and are expected to earn Tk 7.50 crore annually.