

# Metropolitan

## Minister addresses UNESCO plenary session Importance of education, science, technology stressed

The Minister for Education, Science and Technology, ASHK Sadique has said that economic and social emancipation of the peoples of the developing countries largely depend on creating education systems tailored to the unique cultural context of each society, reports BSS.

Speaking at the plenary of the 29th session of the general conference of UNESCO now being held in Paris, he said, for Bangladesh basic education was not an ideal to be pursued, but essentially an instrument of empowerment leading to poverty eradication.

Recalling the participation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the fifth international conference on adult education, held in Hamburg this year, the education minister endorsed the important finding of that conference on the crucial role that learning can play in sustainable development particularly in poverty eradication, income generation and consolidation of democracy, according to a message received here from Paris yesterday.

The Education Minister laid emphasis on the importance of education, science and technology particularly in their pivotal role in development efforts and their implications for our everyday life.

At a time when globalization and instant communication are fast breaking the barriers that insulated peoples and nations in isolated pockets, he said, the development and dissemination of knowledge and know how, which is the major pre-occupation of UNESCO, has assumed new significance.

While break-through in science and technology has enabled us to address the age-old problem of poverty and deprivation, it has also given rise to many basic moral and ethical issues.

UNESCO with its over-riding ethical mission and as a universal forum for intellectual debate and discourse has increasingly crucial role to play, the education minister said and added Bangladesh's strong support in all efforts at strengthening UNESCO so as to enable it to fulfil its enhanced role.

Extending support to the proposed world conference on higher education to be held in 1998 and the world science conference in 1999, the minister hoped that a world-wide plan of action could be adopted for the development of higher education and establishment of centres of excellence in research and training in different regions of the world.

The minister said that edu-

cation continued to be the priority concern of the government and conveyed its commitment to achieving the goals of the world conference on education for all and the world summit on children.

Referring to the government's declared policy of eradicating illiteracy within ten years, he spoke of the total literacy movement, a comprehensive package of activities geared to rapid eradication of illiteracy in a targeted area, which was being successfully carried out in the country.

Apart from participating in the deliberations of the general conference, he met his counterparts from Botswana, Egypt, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the UK minister in charge of department for international development.

The Bangladesh delegation to the 29th session of the general conference of UNESCO, which is being led by the minister, includes the Secretary of the Education Ministry, Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmed, the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Dr AK Azad Chowdhury, Professor K Mustafa Chowdhury of Dhaka University and also the ambassador and permanent delegate of Bangladesh to UNESCO, Tufail K Haider.

## 'Concert of Tablatura' begins Nov 9

A concert of 'Tablatura', a musical instrument ensemble of Japan, will be held at the auditorium of National Music on November 9, reports UNB.

Japanese Embassy in Dhaka will organise the concert, sponsored by the Japan Foundation, said a press release.

Some Bangladeshi artists are also expected to perform at the concert.

## Indian envoy calls on Faezul

Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Dev Mukharji called on State Minister for Jute and Textiles A K Faizul Huq at the latter's office yesterday, reports BSS.

During the meeting they discussed matters relating to bilateral, regional and mutual interest, a PID handout said.

They also discussed the various activities of International Jute Organisation (IJO) and its future action programme.

## Sajeda greets PM

Acting president of Awami League Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury has congratulated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for receiving Doctorate of Philosophy in Liberal Arts from the University of Abertay of the United Kingdom, reports UNB.

In a message of greetings yesterday, she described Sheikh Hasina's conferment of the degree as a pride for the country and the nation.

"This will help further brighten the country's image in the international arena," hoped Sajeda Chowdhury, the Environment and Forest Minister.

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## No immediate DCC plan to crack down on rickshaws

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has no immediate programme on its agenda to crack down on the increasing number of rickshaws plying on the city streets with fake number plates.

Sources in the DCC said they needed to physically come onto the streets and then confiscate the illegal rickshaws for which a decision must come from the higher echelon of the corporation. "There is no such programme at the moment," said an official.

Another official said that the matter was politically 'sensitive'. Therefore, "a political decision was needed to clamp down on these illegal three wheelers," he said.

Several trade unions are issuing fake number plates to rickshaws charging fees of up to Tk 300 for each registration. Unchallenged by the authorities on the city streets, the number of such rickshaws have now risen to about 2.5 lakh. Officially, there are 80,000 registered rickshaws in the city.

Leaders of one trade union, Rickshaw Sramik League, a front organisation of the

Sramik League backed by Awami League admitted that it has issued more than 30,000 such number plates. But an official of the RSL said those number plates were issued to prove that the rickshawpuller was a registered member of the union. "The number plate is not an authorisation to ply on the street," he claimed.

Meanwhile, preparations are underway to start issuing new number plates to the 80,000 registered rickshaws for the coming year. An official said the procedure to renew the number plates would be the same as before. DCC will announce the date for this purpose shortly.

When asked why the DCC was not implementing the law on rickshaw lights at night, the official said several attempts in this regard failed in the past and they do not have any programme either to see that the Rickshaw By-laws are implemented.

## 8th Asian Art Biennale begins Nov 6

The gala 8th Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh - 1997 will begin in Dhaka on November 6 with the participation of around 650 artists and painters from 35 countries of the world, reports BSS.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the country's biggest art exhibition at 10 am on the day at the imposing Osmany Memorial Auditorium.

A two-day seminar titled 'Limits of Modernity: The end of the Century Perceptions of Asian Art' in five sessions will also be held on November 7 and 8 at the National Museum.

A meeting of the publicity sub-committee held at the Shilpakala Academy yesterday was told that nearly 50 leading artists and art critics will visit Bangladesh on the occasion which would last for 25 days.

As many as 164 artists of Bangladesh with 201 pieces of art work will take part in the exhibition.

Countries participating in the exhibition are: Australia, Armenia, Bahrain, Bhutan, China, Georgia, India, Iran, Japan, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Kirgizia, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Egypt, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Turkey, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen and Vietnam.

## State Minister for Religious Affairs off to Jakarta

State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana Mohammad Nurul Islam leaves Dhaka today for Indonesia on a seven-day official visit to Jakarta to attend the 6th Conference of OIC's member country's Ministers for Awaqaf and Religious Affairs beginning there from tomorrow.

The State Minister will lead a two-member delegation. The other member of the delegation is the administrator of Bangladesh Waqf administration Asadul Haque.

During his stay in Indonesia the state minister will meet his counterparts attending the conference from different Muslim countries to discuss bilateral issues specially with regard to administration and management of Waqf estates in their countries with special reference to religious activities in the Muslim countries of the world.

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