

Art competition for children today

The Liberation War Museum organises an art competition for the children and a musical programme at 10:00am today on its premises at 5 Segun Bagicha in the city to mark the death anniversary of Shaheed Sergeant Zahurul Haque.

Interested children (up to class eight) have been asked to register

for the competition at the museum by 9:30am. They have also been requested to bring in boards, paints and brushes, says a press release. Sergeant Zahurul Haque, an accused in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, was killed by the Pakistani army at Dhaka Cantonment in 1969 when he was under trial.

1,663 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,663 more people, including two identified criminals, on various charges during their countrywide drive in the last 24 hours till 6.00am yesterday.

The law enforcers also recovered nine firearms and 14 bullets.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud speaks at a dialogue on 'Attaining MDG Targets in Bangladesh: Progress and the remaining challenges' at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right are State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mizanur Rahman Sinha, CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan and former minister ASHK Sadek.

Bangladesh 'on track' to achieve millennium development goals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's performance on all the millennium development indicators has been impressive and it has already achieved the goals relating to elimination of gender disparity in schooling opportunities.

But attaining the goals with respect to child malnutrition and primary school enrolment and completion would be challenging, according to a World Bank study on attaining millennium development goals (MDG) in Bangladesh.

This was revealed at a dialogue organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at the Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday.

CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan chaired the event while Prof Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud, State Minister for Health Mizanur Rahman Sinha, former minister ASHK Sadique, Prof Masum, Dr Zafarullah, Dr Quazi Meshbahuddin Ahmed and Dr Atique Rahman took part in the discussion.

In the case of reducing gender disparity, Bangladesh has done a better job than India and Pakistan, the WB study said.

"Other than Sri Lanka, Bangladesh is the only country in

South Asia to achieve parity in male and female enrolment not only at the primary level but also at the secondary level."

This is an impressive achievement for a country that is one of the poorest in the world with per capita gross national income of only \$1,770 (in PPP term), the report said.

"Attainment of two other MD goals -- reduction of consumption poverty and under five mortality -- is also feasible," the report added.

Professor Anil B Deolalikar, director of the public policy initiative at the University of California, conducted the study and presented it.

In the case of child malnutrition, the projection suggests that Bangladesh might come very close to MD goal of having no more than 34 per cent of its children under weight. However, it will be very challenging for the country to attain the rate of net primary enrolment and primary completion exceeding 83 per cent to 86 per cent by 2015, the report observed.

Wahiduddin Mahmud observed that enormous changes took place in the social sectors because of infrastructure development. He pointed out that the per capita expenditure in social sector of Bangladesh is lower

than that of India.

He stressed the need for understanding the reasons behind the changes in the public mindset, which could also help in taking steps regarding violence against women and the rise in religious fundamentalism.

Mizanur Rahman Sinha said the country is heading towards achieving all the goals set up by the United Nations (UN). He contradicted the views that 75 per cent of the doctors in the government hospitals remain absent. He, however, admitted that some doctors may remain absent but the percentage is not that high.

Dr Zafarullah Chowdhury underscored the need to decentralise the administration to reach the benefits to the poorest. He also called on the government to use the buildings constructed for health care services for the villagers.

Presenting a keynote paper, Dr Quazi Meshbahuddin Ahmed, member of the planning commission, said Bangladesh is on track in respect of most social millennium goals.

He, however, said that progress was less than satisfactory in the cases of income poverty, adult literacy, rate of immunisation and maternal mortality.

Changes in admin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday brought some changes to the administration by giving new assignment to two OSD secretaries and transferring some mid-level officials.

Newly promoted Secretary Suvash Chandra Roy, who was made OSD after the promotion, has been appointed director general of Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy, according to an official notification.

Prior to his promotion, Roy was the acting chairman of Bangladesh Forest Industries Development Corporation. He along with 18 other additional secretaries were promoted to secretary on February 15.

Roy has replaced Sekander Ali

Mondal, who was transferred as chairman of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC). On the other hand, Chairman of BSCIC Solaiman Khan was made an OSD.

Former secretary-in-charge of the Power Division Ehsan Samim, who was made OSD recently, has been appointed secretary-in-charge of the ministry of cultural affairs.

Meanwhile, two deputy secretaries of the information ministry -- Tajul Islam and Dr AKM Ferdous Chowdhury -- have been transferred to the ministries of finance and food, disaster management and relief.

Deputy secretary of food, disaster management and relief ministry Mainul Hasan has been transferred to the information ministry.

'No place for terrorism in Islam'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is no place for terrorism in Islam, said the speakers at a seminar in Rajshahi yesterday.

They said Islam is a religion of peace and harmony.

The daylong seminar titled 'Terrorism and Islam' was organised by the Centre for National and Regional Studies (CNRS) at Zafar Imam Tennis Complex.

Maulana Mohiuddin Khan, editor of the monthly Modina, delivered the keynote speech at the seminar while former chief election commissioner Justice Mohammad Abdur Rouf, former director general of

Islamic Foundation Syed Ashraf Ali and Pro-vice-chancellor of Rajshahi University Dr AKM Shahadat Hossain Mondal took part in the discussion.

Chairman of Sonali Bank Dr Mahbubullah chaired the seminar.

The speakers said anarchy and conflict have spread throughout the world as the Muslims get away from the real teachings of Islam.

It is time for self-criticism and correction instead of blaming the Jews and Christians, they observed.

The Muslims need to be united and patient to challenge a pre-planned propaganda against Islam, they said.



PHOTO: STAR

Visitors admire Japanese dolls at an exhibition organised by Bangladesh-Japan Jubo Moitree Samity and Japanese Language Institute Alumni Association on the Central Public Library premises in the city yesterday.

'Eliminate crimes, corruption to fulfil FFs' dream'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a meeting yesterday called for materialising the dreams of freedom fighters by establishing a country free from poverty and hunger.

The meeting titled 'From the

Language Movement to Liberation War and Today's Bangladesh' was organised by Amra Muktiyoddhar Santan, an organisation of freedom fighters' descendants, at the Liberation War Museum in the city.

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal

Hossain told the meeting that the freedom fighters fought the war with a dream to establish a country where the people would be the main source of power.

"It is our duty now to be imbued with the spirit of the liberation war and materialise their dreams by eliminating crimes and corruption from the society," he said.

Dr Kamal said some vested quarters are engaged in creating divisions among the people in the name of religion only to continue their exploitation.

Dhaka University Teachers' Association President Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique stressed the need for increased practice of mother language.

"Although we are living in an independent country, we are still dependent on others for many things," said Humayun Kabir, president of the organisation.

He said people's aspirations were not fulfilled even 34 years after the independence as all governments in the past were indifferent to the spirit of the liberation war.

Journalist KG Mostofa, Vice-president of ATN Bangla, Noajish Ali Khan, Muktiyoddha Sangsad Chairman Abdul Ahad Chowdhury and Vice-chairman Khan Md Belayet Hossain also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a discussion organised by Amra Muktiyoddhar Santan on the Liberation War Museum premises in the city yesterday.