

Police prevent BDB from holding meet at BSCIC instt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday prevented the Uttara thana unit of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) from holding its scheduled meeting and training programme at the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) Training Institute at Uttara in the city.

Later, the BDB held its programme at a restaurant in the area.

The BDB Uttara thana unit booked the BSCIC auditorium for its programme. But the police drove away the BDB leaders and workers when they tried to enter the venue, said a party press release.

BDB leader Mahi B Chowdhury MP condemned the incident, terming it an undemocratic attitude of the police.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DC-north) Obaidur Rahman said, "No BDB leaders came to me to seek permission for the meeting today. But a Baul group came to me, saying that they wanted to hold a Baul song programme in the name of BDB. I told them that the government is not giving any permission for such programme at present."

Enforce code of conduct to check child labour

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Enforcement of an appropriate code of conduct is imperative to check child labour in the country, said the speakers at a discussion yesterday.

The discussion on 'Code of Conduct in Employing Child Labourer' was organised by Shishu Jonyama, an NGO, at LGED Bhaban in the city.

Child labour is a huge challenge before Bangladesh, said Country Manager of Save the Children Sweden-Denmark Olof Risberg.

He said it is crucial to frame and enforce an employer's code of conduct for child workers.

Termining the elimination of child labour a human and social obligation, General Secretary of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Samik Dal Zafrul Hasan said, "Children are exploited and abused routinely in the country."

Expressing his solidarity with the need for a change to child labour code, Hasan said 93 percent of child labourers are engaged in informal sector which hardly follow any code of conduct in recruiting them.

Discrimination against the child labourers has increased many times compared to the past, said noted economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad who chaired the discussion.

"We have to update the code of conduct not only for urban child workers but also for the grassroots level child labourers," he said underlining the need for child education, awareness and prevention of child marriage.

Though Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association has signed a deal with the International Labour Organisation to eliminate child labour, we lag behind in this regard for various reasons," said President of Bangladesh Jatiya Samik Federation Md Abul Bashar.

Poverty is the sole reason of child labour, he said stressing on tougher law and mass awareness to prevent it.

Representatives from Incidin Bangladesh, Ain O Salish Kendra, Nari Moitree, Society for Underprivileged Families, Shaishab Bangladesh, and Community Participation and Development and commissioners of different city wards were present on the occasion.

AMCH LOTTERY Prize money to be awarded today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) is organising a function at its auditorium in the city today to award prize money among the winners of the Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH) lottery.

Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain will attend the function as chief guest while DAM President Kazi Rafiqul Alam will deliver the welcome address.

Dr Md Enamul Haque, former IGP and chairman of the lottery management committee, and Md Fazlur Rahman, former secretary and managing director of AMCH, will also be present.

The draw of the lottery was held at the National Press Club on September 18.

The Daily Star ROUNDTABLE

'Set up exam centre under RCPS of UK'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Medical specialists at a roundtable yesterday strongly recommended setting up an examination centre in the country under the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons (RCPS) of the United Kingdom.

The recommendation came in the wake of a recent debate among the medical professionals over the opening of such a centre.

A section of senior doctors representing the Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS) have been opposing the idea. They defended their stance, saying that once the examination centre is allowed to operate in the country, the importance of and the respect for the BCPS would gradually diminish.

The BCPS senior doctors feel that such a centre should not be opened in order to protect the integrity of the BCPS and the national interest since the medical education system in Bangladesh is still in its budding stage.

But the speakers at the roundtable argued that the nation needs quality surgeons and specialist physicians and that is why the local doctors should get the opportunity to expose themselves to a medical education of international standard.

They pointed out that diseases of the human being are similar and the diagnosis process is the same all over the world whether the patient is in the



Prof Md Suhrah Ali speaks at a roundtable on 'Introducing higher medical degrees (MRCP/MRCS/MRCOG & MFDS) and PLAB examination centre under the Royal College of the UK' at the British Council auditorium in the city yesterday. Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, moderated the roundtable organised by The Daily Star in collaboration with the Post Graduation Doctors' Association (PGDA).

North America or in South Asia.

They also said that patients often opt to go abroad for treatment as they cannot rely on the diagnosis by the local doctors due to lack of quality clinical care.

The Daily Star in collaboration with the Post Graduation Doctors' Association (PGDA) organised the roundtable on 'Introducing higher medical degrees (MRCP /

MRCS/MRCOG & MFDS) and Professional Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) examination centre under the Royal College of the UK' at the British Council auditorium in the city.

The speakers said doctors in the neighbouring countries have focussed on enhancing quality of patient care, which is possible only through improving quality of medical

education. Those countries are also sending quality doctors to other countries lacking medical care of international standard.

"The syllabus of medical education is universal as there is hardly any difference in the pattern of the diseases and diagnosis globally," said Prof MA Zaman, principal of Bangladesh Medical College (BMC).

In the era of globalisation, medical education should be open to all, he said, adding that if any doctor fails to offer quality care, patients would opt to seek treatment elsewhere.

Prof Md Suhrah Ali, dean, School of Health Sciences, State University of Bangladesh, said the young doctors should get the opportunity to expand and update their knowledge through obtaining foreign higher degrees.

"In the last 34 years, the country have produced enough specialist doctors. But technology is evolving almost everyday. So, we have no right to confine local doctors to home. Instead, we should support the opening of examination centres under the Royal College," said Prof Ali, also the vice-president of the PGDA.

Prof Shahla Khatun, a noted gynaecologist and obstetrician, said, "There is no justification in putting barriers to obtaining foreign degrees. In fact, those who graduated from the Royal College got better jobs in the global market. If our young doctors are able to obtain foreign degrees from home, we should feel proud."

She also dismissed the rumours that the talents who obtain foreign degrees do not return home to serve the nation. "Many private hospitals are now recruiting doctors and paying them as per international standard. I am sure they (local talents) too would get equal opportuni-

ties," she added.

Md Monirul Huq Choudhury MP said, "I see no point why examination centres should not be set up immediately. If there are any more conditions to be fulfilled, I am sure that we are ready to do that, but we should not delay any longer over the issue." He also suggested seeking help from the high-ups in the government to realise the demands of the PGDA.

Dewan Sultan Ahmed, vice-president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), said there are as many as 26 public and private medical colleges in the country and a sizeable number of young doctors are graduating every year.

If these doctors get opportunity for higher education of international standard, they could compete in the international market, he added.

Dr Luthfor Rahman, chief cardiac surgeon of Lab Aid Cardiac Hospital, said, "I have been very lucky to be able to work under a number of well-known foreign surgeons at home. Those who are not fortunate enough like myself should be given equal opportunities to obtain foreign training courses under foreign fellowship programmes."

Dr Rakibul Islam Litu, secretary general of PGDA, presented a keynote paper at the roundtable moderated by Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

Formulate modalities of collaboration for poverty cut

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday advised the Cirdap governing council to formulate modalities of collaboration between this Asia-Pacific institution and other regional organisations for uplift of the multitudes left out of the glares of urban areas.

"It is now well established that economic growth is necessary but not adequate for poverty reduction. Perhaps for this reason, poverty still is prevailing as an acute problem in the Asia-Pacific region despite being the fastest-growth region of the world," she told an audience from across the region.

The Prime Minister was addressing the inaugural session of the two-day 15th regular meeting of the Governing Council (GC-15) of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (Cirdap) at the International

Conference Centre (ICC).

Bangladesh is hosting a second such ministerial-level meeting of the organisation as earlier in 1993 it had hosted the ninth meeting of the governing council of Cirdap.

The Centre was set up in 1979 under the aegis of FAO to assist national programmes, promote regional cooperation and act as a research and training institution in the field of rural development.

Cirdap has 14 members -- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and Iran.

Cirdap Chairperson (Governing Council-14) and Secretary General of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Indonesia, Progo Nurdjaman, vice-chairperson (GC-14) and Pakistan LGRD Minister Justice (Retd) Abdul Razzaq Thahim, Bangladesh LGRD

and Cooperative Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Cirdap Director General Dr Durga P Paudyal also addressed the inaugural function.

Khaleda said considering the fact that poverty is disproportionately concentrated on the rural areas of the Asia-Pacific region, Cirdap is playing an important role in facilitating coordination of policies and programmes on rural development and poverty alleviation among the member states.

She mentioned a new strategic framework developed by Cirdap under the leadership of its director general Dr Durga Prasad Paudyal for adjusting its activities with contemporary realities.

She said the GC-15 meeting should thoroughly discuss various aspects of this strategic framework and hoped that the meeting would provide useful guidelines to make Cirdap capable of successfully facing new challenges in the changed scenario.

"Assistance of development partners would encourage in implementation of Cirdap vision and mission as well as translate its policies and programmes into reality," Khaleda told the function.

The PM noted that five member countries of Saarc, including Bangladesh, are also members of the Cirdap as the mission of both the organisations is to improve the living standards of the peoples of this region.

She said a similar context exists in the Asean region. "It is, therefore, heartening to know that Cirdap is attempting to develop institutional linkages with both Saarc and Asean."

Listing her government's various successes, policies and programmes, she said Bangladesh has finalised its national strategy for poverty reduction, after in-depth consultation with all stakeholders, with four strategic components.

The components are creation of employment opportunities through growth, promotion of integrated rural development, implementation of targeted poverty reduction and social safety-net programmes and increased investment in health, education and nutrition to reduce human poverty.

Khaleda said Bangladesh's national targets conform closely with UN Millennium Development Goals and the country has already succeeded in achieving two targets removing gender disparity in primary and secondary schools and ensuring access to safe drinking water.

"We are close to attaining two other goals reducing income poverty and under-five mortality," she apprised the rural development planners from the region.

She said Bangladesh's successes in non-formal primary education, oral re-hydration, micro-credit programmes, government-NGO collaboration in the field of rural development, poverty alleviation, social mobilisation and empowerment of women have emerged as models for many other countries of the world.



Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina calls on West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharya in Kolkata yesterday.

GMO a threat to Saarc states

Speakers tell press confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Introduction of Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) on commercial basis has become a threat to Saarc countries, said the speakers at a press conference yesterday.

Ubinig, an NGO, organised the press conference at National Press Club in the city as a follow up of its three-day conference on 4th Saarc Peoples' Forum at Ridoypur in Tanga last month.

A total of 87 participants from Pakistan, Nepal, India, Malaysia, the United Kingdom and host Bangladesh took part in the conference that discussed various issues affecting the lives of people living in South Asia.

The issues included agriculture, food sovereignty, natural resources, trade, migration and trafficking, technology, population, security and human rights.

A declaration which was adopted at Ridoypur conference was also placed at the press conference.

The declaration said with the monopoly over the global food chain, the developed nations have been making the people of least developed countries insecure in food and nutrition.

Such trade could only promote industrial food production and destroy agriculture, it apprehended. The speakers demanded multi-lateral agreement to eradicate hunger and cancellation of India's river linking project.

They rejected the report of Trafficking in Persons by US State Department saying the report unduly blames the source countries of trafficking but there are no actions against the user and receiving countries.

The speakers said the declaration adopted in Saarc Peoples' Forum should be included in the Saarc Convention on Preventing and

Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

A copy of the declaration will be submitted to the delegates and ministers before the Saarc summit in Dhaka and WTO ministerial

meetings, they added.

Farida Akhter of Ubinig, Dr Shahid Zia of Pakistan, Bhaskar Goswami of India and Subodh Raj Pyakurel of Nepal were present at the press conference.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia speaks at the 15th regular meeting of Cirdap governing council at the International Conference Centre (ICC) in the city yesterday.



Moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or Squally wind is likely at most places over the country with heavy to very heavy falls till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 32.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and lowest 23.0 degree Celsius at Rangamati.

The sun sets in the capital at 5.43pm today and rises at 5:51am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	27.5	24.0	93	88
Chittagong	32.5	24.0	82	83
Rajshahi	29.0	24.6	97	95
Khulna	28.2	23.5	96	92
Barisal	26.6	23.6	92	92
Sylhet	29.0	23.9	83	89
Cox's Bazar	32.0	24.0	76	80

57 pc of road accidents caused by buses, trucks

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Country's 57 percent of total road accidents are caused by buses and trucks which constitute only 15 percent of total vehicles in transport sector, said the speakers at a roundtable in the city yesterday.

They said the accidents take place because of drivers' lack of knowledge about traffic rules and lack of proper maintenance of roads and highways.

The roundtable was organised by Society of Human Endeavour of Broad Achievement (SHEBA) for Bangladesh to discuss the role of transport owners, road builders, law enforcers, BRTA and NGOs in preventing road accidents.

G M Siraj, member of parliament and chairman of Bangladesh Bus Truck Owners' Association (BTOA), chaired the roundtable.

"As road maintenance costs less than one percent of the total amount of money spent on road construction, Roads and Highways Department (RHD) and Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) should take care of the pot holes, broken edge, bridge, culvert and other uneven areas on the roads and designate appropriate signs and marks there," said Zakir Hossain, executive engineer of RHD Road Safety Division.

For instance, the recently installed speed breaker at Manik Mia Avenue in the city has not been marked till date. Siraj said he will raise the issue at the next session of parliament and request the World Bank to provide a special fund only for road maintenance.

"Instead of checking only the fitness of the buses, patrol police should also detect the speed of the buses and trucks while moving on roads to help stop accidents," Hossain added.

He said it is also important for the transport owners to provide necessary facilities including weekends, bonus and proper treatment to the drivers in order to mitigate their stress.

The government has already taken the initiative to install trauma centre at every police station near the highways. Around seventeen of them have already been installed, he added.

"Drivers should have necessary training and certificate on road study in addition to their licenses," suggested Dr Ahmed Kamal, professor of history department of Dhaka University.

He recommended for a separate fund for the rehabilitation of the injured drivers.

ABM Abu Bakar Siddiqui, accident data analyst of BRTA, said they have launched a website to check the validation of licenses through computers.

"Driving licenses should be verified strictly by BRTA as fake licenses have increased alarmingly. Besides, accidents committed by the drivers should be recorded in their licenses," said Babu Ramesh Chandra Ghosh, managing director of Shyamoli Paribahan.

According to a report of BRTA, 2,968 people were killed in road accidents last year.

Forty percent of the total accidents were 'head-on collision' due to lack of road dividers on the highways, it added.

Dr Iftekhar, Rafiq Khan get extension

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

According to official notification, Bangladesh Permanent Representative to UN Mission Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and High Commissioner to Canada Rafiq Ahmed Khan have got one year extension.

Obituary



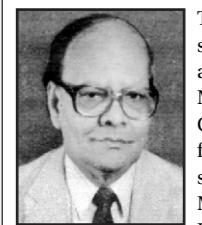
Ruma Hossain, wife of former Deputy Attorney General Bakhtiar Hossain, passed away at the Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital on

Saturday at the age of 67, says a press release.

Ruma, also charter member of Inner Wheel Club of Dilkusha, had been suffering from cancer for long.

A Quankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at the Milan Kunja of Dhanmandi at 10:00 am on October 8 for the salvation of the departed soul.

Death anniversary



Today is the second death anniversary of Maqsood Ahmed Choudhury, former joint secretary, Ministry of Information,

says on press release. On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at the Lalmeta C Block Mosque after Asr prayers today.