

Business-NGO cooperation a must to improve quality of pry edn

Speakers tell meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Active cooperation between the business community and the NGOs is a must to ensure quality education at the primary level, said the speakers at a meeting yesterday.

They said the business community has to involve themselves in the quality education programme in order to build up a conscious consumers group and good human resources for their corporation.

The meeting on 'Business-NGO sharing: Improving basic education' was organised jointly by Advancing Public Interest Trust (APIT) and MRC-Mode Limited at the Brac Centre Inn in the capital.

APIT and MRC-Mode Ltd organised the meeting as part of their

project titled 'Building corporate education sub-sector in Bangladesh' with the support from the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF).

Speaking at the meeting noted economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said, "It is very unfortunate for our children that they are getting primary education in 11 separate ways."

He said the present expenditure per primary student is under \$8, but for quality education it should be minimum \$20.

The business community can reduce this resource gap of about \$12 by engaging themselves in the education sector, he added.

He said after completing primary

education from Viqarunnisa Noon School, a student gains 67 percent competency rate of quality education. On the other hand, a student of a grassroots level school achieves only 1 percent of that rate.

Prof Muzaffer who moderated the meeting said, "To meet this gap we have to allocate education resources in the reverse way, from grassroots level school to capital level school."

"For quality education, we need quality teachers, but if a teacher has to give a huge bribe in getting job, then how the teacher would give quality education to students," he raised the question.

Prof Muzaffer said the ownership of education is now in the hand of donor agencies, and if it is not

handed over from the donors to the government, the quality will not be ensured.

He said there is a huge gap between teacher-student ratio and if this gap is not removed, the quality of education will not be achieved.

Managing Director of Asiatic Marketing Communication Ltd Aly Zaker, said every corporate house has to maintain Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) along with their obligation to the society and earning profit as well.

The corporate houses and business community have to engage themselves to ensure quality education to create conscious consumers, he added.

He also stressed on broader cooperation among the civil society, corporate sector and NGOs.

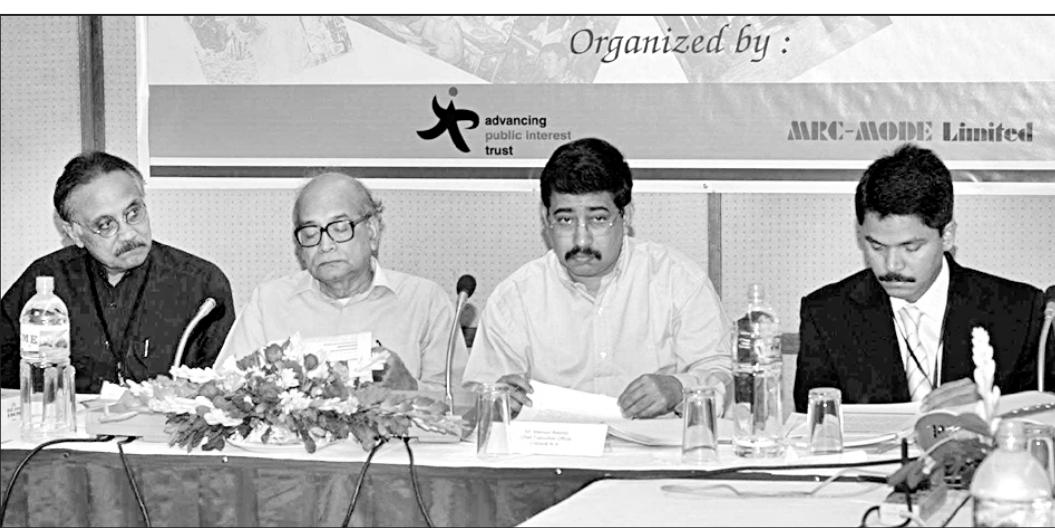
Senior Awami League leader Nurul Islam Nahid said, "The donor agencies give a lot of fund for the education sector, if we can use the fund properly the quality of education will be ensured."

Chief Executive Officer of Citibank NA Mamun Rashid, Managing Director of Satarupa Textile JL Bhawmik, Managing Director of Araf Apparels Shahriar Alam, Head of Corporate Affairs of Standard Chartered Bank Shah Masud Imam, Programme Director of Save the Children UK David Humphrey, Executive Director of MRC-Mode Ltd Tawfiq Ahmed, Programme Officer of CEF Sarana Muzaddid and Country Co-ordinator Mustakim Tanvir, Executive Director of Friendship Hospital Runa Khan and Executive Director of APIT Sabir Bin Shams also spoke on the occasion.

Organized by :

advancing
public interest
trust

MRC-MODE Limited



Speakers at meeting on 'Business-NGO sharing: Improving basic education' organised by Advancing Public Interest Trust (APIT) and MRC-Mode Limited at the Brac Centre Inn in the city yesterday. Sitting from left are Aly Zaker, Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, Mamun Rashid and Shahriar Alam.

Bela demands expulsion of 'toxic' ship

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association (Bela) has issued a legal notice to the authorities demanding immediate steps to expel MT Alpha Ship carrying toxic and harmful substances from the territorial waters of Bangladesh.

It also urged the authorities to take necessary steps so that the ship cannot be used for scrap in the country as it will have an adverse impact on the environment.

The notice was sent on April 27 to the secretaries to the ministries of environment and forest, shipping, industries, commerce and labour and employment, director general of Coast Guard, deputy commissioner of Chittagong, chairman of Chittagong Port Authority, president of Ship Breakers' Association and owner of National Steel.

Quoting a report of Greenpeace, an international environmental organisation, Bela said MT Alpha is one of the 50 contaminated ships in the world.

The ship has docked at the outer anchorage in Chittagong, said a Bela press release.

2 killed as train hits motorcycle in Tangail

BDDNEWS, Tangail

Two people were killed when a train crushed their motorcycle at Elenga level crossing in Kalihati, Tangail, yesterday morning.

Khushimohan Mondol, 50, headmaster of Sarail Primary School, and one of his relatives riding a motorcycle were crossing the level crossing at about 9:30am when the train hit them, Railway officials said.

A case was filed in this connection.

Congratulations

Ashok Chowdhury, a student of Govt. Jubilee High School in Sunamganj, has been selected as a finalist to participate in the Linking Individuals, Knowledge and Culture: Youth Exploration and Empowerment Programme conducted by Relief International-School Online, USA, says a press release.

The project is sponsored by the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau of the US Department of State. The three-week programme will be held at Los Angeles, California.

Relief International-School Online committee has selected Ashok through several interviews. He is the son of Prithwick Kumar Chowdhury.

Dutch assistance for water, sanitation, hygiene programme

BSS, Dhaka

Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Kees Beemsterboer and chairperson Brac Fazle Hasan Abed yesterday signed an agreement to launch a water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme aimed at attaining the MDG targets on water and sanitation in Bangladesh.

Brac Executive Director Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury said a unique feature of the programme is to apply separate methodologies of hygiene promotion for men and women. Toilet facilities exclusively for women will be installed in public usage areas, including schools.

As part of a strong gender orientation, WASH focuses on women in all situations to participate in the programme and to raise their voice in decision-making process, said BRAC Health Programme Director Faruque Ahmed.

Brac's experience of working with rural people since 1972 will be very useful for implementation and sustainability of this programme, he said, adding the local government institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations, the donor community and related programmes/projects will be integrated into this programme.

The Dutch ambassador mentioned that Netherlands allocates about four billion euros (equivalent to 0.8% of GNP) worldwide each year to spend on sustainable poverty reduction and achieving other MDG targets.

He said the Netherlands government is committed to continue support to Bangladesh in this regard, like it has been supporting Bangladesh since its independence.

The Netherlands has so far contributed about 1.5 billion euros to development activities in Bangladesh, its current development cooperation programme focuses on water management and basic education and healthcare, he pointed out.

He said the Netherlands government will be set up for extremely poor families, providing subsidies amounting to Tk 1000 to construct sanitary latrines, he said adding to ensure the quality of water supply, existing nonfunctioning water sources like ponds, boreholes, pumps will be improved/renovated. Installation of



National University Vice-Chancellor Prof Wakil Ahmed distributes prizes among the winners of inter-university cultural competition held at Bangladesh Open University recently.

'Form permanent pay commission'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Government Employees Coordination Council demanded implementation of their five-point demand including extension of the retirement age to 60 years.

They also demanded formation of a permanent pay and service commission, payment of dearness allowance by 30 per cent and continuation of recruitments in vacant posts.

Council leaders placed their demands at a press conference in the city yesterday.

Reading out a written statement, the Council General Secretary Salauddin Selim said "These are no longer new demands rather recognised by the prime minister four years ago."

The leaders also demanded upgrade of diploma nurses, BTTB, Roads and Highways employees to a second-class status including technical status of health assistants.

Department of Nursing should be declared as directorate, they demanded.

Addressing the conference, Council President Abdul Mannan alleged that Abul Kalam Haolader, deputy secretary and Abdur Rab Haolader, joint secretary of the Ministry of Establishment are not carrying out their due responsibilities to make the contingency employees in development sector permanent even after the government order.

The leaders said they would go ahead with their fresh programmes in case their demands are not met by May 7.

They will hold rallies and submit memorandums to the deputy commissioners across the country on May 8 and stage demonstration at the upazila levels on May 9 and will eventually organise a grand rally in the capital on May 24.

Acting President Moazzem Hossain, Additional General Secretary Shadat Hossain Shahid, MA Hannan, SM Ali Sheikh, Joint Secretaries MA Sattar, Selim Bhuiyan and other leaders of the Council were also present at the briefing.

Khulna Divisional Press Club Federation formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A new federation of press clubs styled 'Khulna Divisional Press Club Federation (KDPFC)' was formed at a meeting held here yesterday.

A 23-member ad hoc committee was also formed with Khulna Press Club President Alhaj Liaqat Ali as convener and General Secretary AK Hiru as its member secretary.

Earlier, a meeting was held at the VIP auditorium of the club in the morning.

Presided over by Liaqat Ali, the meeting was attended by all presidents and general secretaries of the press clubs in 10 districts of the division.

Speakers at the meeting stressed the unity of journalists sinking petty differences to fight against repression and criminal activities.

Businessman robbed of Tk 8 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A real estate businessman was robbed of Tk 8 lakh while a hotel cook was critically injured in two separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Abdul Mannan Helal, 42, owner of National Construction Developer, was returning home along with one Milon, the buyer of his flat, after drawing Tk 8 lakh from Dhanmondi Branch of Standard Chartered Bank at around 2:00pm.

As soon as Mannan got off from Milon's car in which he was escorted to his Shahjadpur residence, an armed man fired shot at him and snatched away the money.

Police held Milon for quizzing.

In another incident, three masked criminals cut off the penis of Monsur Chowdhury, 40, a cook of Hotel Sonargaon, at around 2:00pm at his West Shevpurapara house in Mirpur.

Police suspect the incident might occur as a sequel to family feud as nothing was stolen from the house.

Police said he had married three times and divorced the first two earlier.

Cab driver murdered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A taxicab driver was murdered on Jotigolla Road in the district town on Friday night.

Locals found the body of Nur Mohammad, 26, lying on the driving seat of his taxicab with his throat cut.

Being informed, police recovered the body, two knives, a blood-stained shirt and a pair of sandals from the spot.

Abdus Salam, grand father of the victim, lodged a murder case with Joydepur Police Station in this regard.

Police suspect that Nur Mohammad might be killed in an attempt to carjack as it has become a common phenomenon on Dhaka-Gazipur route these days.

Obituary



Moksed Ali, chairman of Bhaiya Group and Prabhati Insurance, passed away at LabAid Cardiac Hospital on Friday night at the age of 57, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, three sons and a number of grandchildren to mourn his death.

He was buried at his family graveyard at Duria Bishnupur in Laksam.

Siddiqur Rahman

BSS, Dhaka

Siddiqur Rahman, a noted writer, passed away at Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital in the city on Friday night at the age of 66.

Siddiqur Rahman, a former zonal manager of Bangladesh House Building Corporation, wrote several books in Bangla and English.

He left behind two daughters, one son and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death.

Kazi Shaziruddin Ahmed

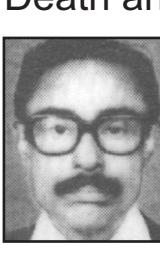
UNB, Dhaka

Kazi Shaziruddin Ahmed, former chief engineer of BADC, passed away at his Gulshan residence on Friday at the age of 82.

He left behind his wife, one son and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

He was buried at his family graveyard at Muradnagar in Comilla.

Death anniversary



Today is the first death anniversary of Advocate Dabirul Haider Dasgupta, father of senior reporter Pinaki Dasgupta of the daily Jugantor, says a press releases.

Religious programmes will be held at his village home at Morolganj in Bagherhat on the occasion.

Relatives and well-wishers have been requested to attend the programme.

Qukhwani



Qukhwani of Nurjahan Begum, mother of photojournalist Bulbul Ahmed, will be held at her home at Madhya Badda after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

She passed away at her home on April 27 at the age of 70.

Relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend the qukhwani.

Save the Environment Movement forms a human chain in front of the Institute of Fine Arts in the city yesterday demanding proper hospital waste management.



PHOTO: STAR

URDU-SPEAKING PEOPLE

'Dubious allegiance obstructs their rehabilitation'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing total allegiance to Bangladesh and denouncing all types of loyalty to Pakistan is the first step towards rehabilitating the camp-based Urdu-speaking people often termed as stranded Pakistanis, said the speakers at a consultation programme yesterday.

They said dubious allegiance of Urdu-speaking people is obstructing their rehabilitation in Bangladesh.

Police held a press conference to decide first "Who I am and what I want to be."

He said allegiance is the precondition for citizenship.

Justice Nayeemuddin Ahmed said there is no constitutional barrier for the children born in Bangladesh to become its citizens and enjoying constitutional rights as long as they show complete allegiance to this country as per the court's directives.

But in establishing their rights, they are to be vocal in their demands, the civil society can offer them some guidelines only, he added.

Taleya Rehman of Democracy

Watch said even the donor agencies

are apathetic in initiating any independent rehabilitation programme for Urdu