

## ATTAINMENT OF MDGS

## 'Bring people with disability to mainstream of dev'

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People with disability must be brought to the mainstream of development to attain the country's millennium development goals (MDGs), said the speakers at a consultation meeting in the city yesterday.

They also suggested inclusion of nutrition-related issues in textbook curriculums at primary and secondary levels to create awareness about malnutrition leading to disability.

The consultation meeting was organised by National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFWOD) in collaboration with ActionAid Bangladesh and Manusher Jonno at LGED Bhaban in Agargaon.

The meeting was held in advance of the regional mid-point review of the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for

Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific (BMF) at a high-level intergovernmental meeting to be held in 2007.

"To achieve the goal of the BMF, seven priority areas, 18 targets and 15 strategies have been identified. Bangladesh has been actively involved in the initiation process and the mid-point review of the BMF," said Theima Kay, director of emerging social issues division of Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Ecap) while speaking at the opening session of the workshop.

"The distress condition of the people with disability will not change until they are brought to the mainstream of the development," said Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahed while speaking as chief guest.

He said the government has

decided to reserve 10 percent government jobs and two seats in every passenger bus for people with disabilities.

Khandaker Zahurul Alam, president of NFWOD, said many factors including violence, road accidents, natural calamities and malnutrition are pushing up the number of handicapped people in the country.

He said if given proper social assistance, people with disability could contribute significantly to the wellbeing of the country.

AHM Noman Khan, secretary general of NFWOD, said women with disability are subjected to more discrimination than men.

"Challenged women are more neglected in society and family than their male counterparts and rural women with disability are passing their lives in miserable conditions," he added.

The participants said country's development is not possible ignor-

ing a huge number of challenged people.

They estimated that 1.40 crore or 10 percent of the population are challenged and among them 70 lakh are women.

The speakers laid emphasis on community-based approach for preventing the causes of disability, reaching out to persons with disabilities in rural areas and raising awareness and advocacy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all social, cultural and religious activities.

They also stressed the need for disseminating the knowledge of nutrition as many people have become disabled due to malnutrition.

Representatives from different ministries and directorates and people with disabilities also took part in the workshop.

CLASH WITH POLICE  
Transport workers block  
Dhaka-Gazipur  
highway

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Transport workers barricaded the Dhaka-Gazipur highway for one and a half hour disrupting traffic movement, following a feud with police for beating a driver yesterday.

Witnesses said a Haluaghata-bound bus stopped on the road at Chandina intersection creating traffic congestion at around 11:00am.

A police wrecker reached the spot and dragged the bus to a nearby place.

The driver of the wrecker, Nayek Mithu, demanded Tk 1200 which the bus driver refused to pay. Both of them locked horns with each other and when Mithu got into the bus, it started to move towards Mymensingh.

Police chased the bus and rescued Mithu two kilometres away from Chandina.

As the news spread that police have beaten the bus driver, fuming transport workers barricaded the Dhaka-Gazipur highway.

Traffic movement resumed at around 12:30pm after a discussion between transport leaders and police officers.

SUST VC  
returns to  
campus amid  
tight security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Vice-chancellor (VC) of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) Dr Mosleh Uddin yesterday returned to the campus amid tight security.

Earlier, Dr Mosleh Uddin declared his resignation from the post of VC in the face of violent protest by the students following the death of a BBA student of the university in police firing on May 14.

Following the flared-up violence, the authorities closed the university for an indefinite period.

Campus sources said pro-BNP-Jamaat teachers, officials, employees and Chhatra Dal and Shibir leaders and workers welcomed Dr Mosleh Uddin chanting slogans and taking out processions after he came to the campus at around 11:30am.

He entered the VC office under strong police cordon.

Leaders of Teachers' Association, Chhatra Dal, Officers' Association and Employees' Union paid courtesy call on Dr Mosleh Uddin at his office.

Leaders and workers of Chhatra Shibir organised a rally outside the VC office at that time.

The return of Dr Mosleh Uddin has created a mixed reaction among the general teachers, students and officials, said sources.

The VC told a group of reporters at his office that he has returned to the campus by the grace of Allah and with the cooperation of all.

He said he will take steps to open the university calling a syndicate meeting in a week's time.

He also said after discussion in the syndicate meeting, punitive action would be taken against those responsible for the incident of May 14.

Mosleh Uddin said he would stay in Sylhet despite he was advised to continue his office in Dhaka.

This year, around 24 lakh seedlings of 1500 species, worth around Tk 3.64 crore were sold in the fair.

Addressing the ceremony as chief guest, the minister also said nationwide tree plantation programme in the country has largely contributed to poverty alleviation, employment generation and sustainable development in the country.

Forestation along the highways, railways and dams cost little but bring immense benefits to the poor and destitute, he added.

Deputy Minister for Environment and Forest Jafur Islam Chowdhury said sixteen coastal districts of the country are under the threat of submerging in the sea due to global warming. Only massive plantation programme in the country can avoid the catastrophe, he added.

Secretary to the Ministry for Environment and Forest Jafur Islam Chowdhury said Vietnam and Korean model of 'artificial and continuous forestation' would serve double purpose: it will maintain the environmental equilibrium and attract tourists.

With a view to encouraging the young generation in tree plantation, the forest department organised painting and essay competitions where 19 students in different categories were awarded with crest and certificates.

Seven stalls were awarded with



PHOTO: STAR

Badrunnesa College students stage a demonstration on the campus protesting hike of hostel charges and demanding various facilities at the hostel.

Govt to renovate state-run  
sugar, fertiliser mills

Bss, Dhaka

The government will undertake necessary measures to increase productions in state-run sugar mills and fertiliser factories through their modernisation and renovation.

Finance and Planning Minister M Saiful Rahman said this while talking to journalists after emerging from a meeting on a new roadmap of developing the state-run sugar and fertiliser factories under the Ministry of Industries in the conference room of Finance Ministry yesterday.

Industries Minister Motiur Rahman Nizami also attended the meeting.

Secretaries and senior officials of the ministries concerned were

present.

Officials said the meeting reviewed the current situation and different aspects of the roadmap of modernising the mills and factories to increase their production and make them profitable.

Saiful Rahman said the state-run sugar mills have a huge potentiality in this changing situation of the global sugar market.

"Most of the state-run sugar mills and fertiliser factories become dilapidated because they were not properly run during the last several years, but now we are finalising a plan of modernising and renovating these mills to meet the demand of the country," he said.

The FM said the new situation in

the global sugar and fertiliser market has created a huge prospect for the state-run mills and factories, and the government is ready to provide all supports, including financial ones, to them to utilize the potentiality.

The finance minister said about Tk 100 crore would be needed to turn the state-run sugar mills into profitable ones and make the country self-reliant in sugar production.

He said proper steps would also be taken by the government to make the country self-reliant in fertiliser.

In this regard, he attached priority to the production of mixed-fertiliser and reducing the use of urea in farming for better result in the country's agriculture sector.

## NATIONAL TREE FAIR 2006 ENDED

Asset worth Tk 6000 crore  
generated in 15 years thru'  
social afforestation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Only through social afforestation, asset worth Tk 6000 crore has been generated during the last 15 years in the country, said Environment and Forest Minister Tariquil Islam yesterday.

He also said country's 56 thousand partners of social forestation, who look after the trees, have got a total amount of Tk 86 crore only in last year.

The minister was speaking in the concluding ceremony of a month-long National Tree Fair-2006 at the National Parade Ground in the city.

Nine government and semi-government organisations, eleven NGOs and a number of private enterprises took part in the fair with 143 stalls.

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With a view to encouraging the young generation in tree plantation, the forest department organised painting and essay competitions where 19 students in different categories were awarded with crest and certificates.

Seven stalls were awarded with

crests and certificates in three categories.

Environment and Forest Minister handed the prizes over to the winners.

Chief Forest Conservator Mohammad Osman Goni and Forest Conservator (administration) Shamsul Islam were also present at the programme.

Cop kicks old  
woman to  
death in Savar  
Investigation reveals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An old woman in Savar was killed after being kicked by a Sub-Inspector on July 2, an investigation of a rights organisation reveals yesterday.

A three-member team of Bangladesh Institute of Human Rights (BIHR) visited the spot on July 3 and 4 and investigated the incident. During the course of investigation, the investigators talked to the victim's son, daughter-in-law, a grandchild and other relatives who were with her during the incident.

The BIHR investigation report said three policemen in civil dress led by SI Mokhlesur Rahman wanted to enter the room of Nayan Banu, 65, of Bagnibari village in Savar but she prevented them from entering her room as they were unknown, leading an altercation.

At one stage, Mokhlesur kicked Nayan Banu to the wall, which left her dead on the spot.

Soon SI Mokhlesur left the scene with other policemen sensing bad, the report said.

The BIHR condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment of those responsible for the killing.

The authorities have already suspended Mukhlesur Rahman and constables Aleem and Munnaif of Savar Police Station after preliminary investigation found them guilty of murdering the old woman.



PHOTO: STAR

Underprivileged children pose for photograph at the Mango Festival organised by Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel at the hotel in the city yesterday.

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ON RISE

200 women fall victim to  
violence last month

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The women rights organisations expressed concern over the increasing rate of violence against women in the country.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) in a press release yesterday presented an analysis of the news reports, which show that a total of 200 women fell victim to violence only in the last month.

The report also shows that rape and dowry remain the most prevailing forms of violence against women.

Meanwhile, speakers at a press conference yesterday said a total of 169 women were victims of violence last year at several places in the capital according to the records in Khilgaon and Sabujbagh police stations.

Nari Maitree organised the press conference titled 'Creating aware-

ness to stop violence against women' as part of its project 'We, only, can stop all sorts of violence against women at the National Press Club in the city.

Presenting a written statement, Shahin Akter Doli, executive director of Nari Maitree said, "Most of us are not aware of the fact that women rights are part of human rights."

As a result, women fall victim to violence regularly in the spheres of family, society and state, she added.

Doli pointed out domestic violence as special form of violence against women as women are oppressed at home both physically and mentally.

Speakers also identified the lack of rule of law as a major obstacle to stop violence against women.

They suggested that the condition be changed through creating awareness among people at all levels.

The male members of every

family may play a significant role to change the condition, they said.

According to a report of Ain O Shalish Kendra, a total of 356 women were victims of violence for dowry last year across the country while only 134 cases were filed against the dowry violence, they said at the press conference.

Advocate Salma Ali, executive director of BNWLA, told The Daily Star over phone that the cases of repression on women cannot be carried out successfully for absence of 'Victim Witness Protection Act'.

For poverty, gender biased shalish system at the grassroots level and fear of losing dignity in the society, women often seem to be reluctant to take legal action, she added.

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Former students and associates of the five eminent doctors will also be present at the function.

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