

CG to take all possible steps for better life of people with disability

Fakhruddin assures NFOWD members

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday assured that his government would take all possible steps for a better life of the country's people with disability, as advancement of a nation entails advances of all sections of society.

He made the remarks when a 12-member delegation of the National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) led by its Chairman Khondokar Zuhurul Alam called on him at his office in the city.

NFOWD is the apex body of presently 253 local, national and international organisations working in the country for the people with disability.

According to NFOWD, 5.6 per cent of the population is physically or mentally challenged.



A delegation of National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) calls on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office in the city yesterday.

The CA referred to his April 12 address to the nation wherein he mentioned his government's strong intention for the welfare of all types of people with disability, as national advancement entails advances of all sections of society.

The Forum leaders put forward some proposals, including identity card for all the people with disability in the country, necessary amendment to the Disabled Welfare Act

2001, approval of national plan of action on disability issues, signing and ratification of International Convention regarding the people with disability, amendment to government rules of business, reorganisation, empowerment of the National Foundation for Development of Disabled and allocation of land to the NFOWD in the city.

Responding to the proposals

positively, the chief adviser said the government would consider the matters, some of which are under process of implementation, and asked the concerned authorities, particularly the Social Welfare Ministry, for follow-up action.

About land allocation to NFOWD, he assured providing land to the organization.

Social Welfare Adviser Geetiara Safiya Chowdhury was also present.

Verdict in graft case against Shamim Osman April 30

A CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A Narayanganj court will deliver the verdict in a graft case against former Awami League lawmaker Shamim Osman on April 30.

Special Judge Abdul Quddus Mia yesterday fixed the date of delivering the verdict at the end of arguments in the case.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case against Shamim Osman on April 4 as he did not submit the statement of his wealth in stipulated time.

Huge spurious drugs, cosmetics seized 11 arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in a raid at Kotwali area in the city yesterday arrested 11 people and seized huge amount of spurious medicines, cosmetics and other materials for producing rubber products from a house.

A team of Rab-10 raided a floor of the house owned by Azgar Mia at Syed Hasan Ali Lane at 2:00pm and seized the products.

Later, a mobile court led by Magistrate Rokon-ud Doula sen-

tenced each of the 11 people to three years of imprisonment and fined Tk 49.5 lakh after examining the seized products.

The court also sentenced the owner of the house, who went into hideout after the incident, to four years of imprisonment and also issued arrest warrant.

The arrested are Shamol, Tasim, Mostakim, Kamrul Hasan, Monwar Hossein, Syed Ali, Sohag Ali, Sentu, Munnu Mia, Mohammad Hossein and Monsur.



A team of mobile court led by magistrate Rokon-ud Doula conducted a raid on Sheikh Distribution & Co. at Babubazar in the city and sentenced 11 people to one year's imprisonment each for marketing spurious medicines.

Earthquake jolts country's northern part

UNB, Dhaka

An earthquake jolted country's northern part yesterday morning.

The 4.30 magnitude quake was felt at 9 hours 09 minutes 14 seconds, said a Met office bulletin.

The distance of the epicentre was about 90 kms north-northeast from Rangpur Seismic Observatory. The intensity was light.

Anti-corruption cultural festival begins at Khulna University

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A four-day Anti-corruption Cultural Festival 2007 began on Khulna University (KU) campus yesterday.

KU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Mahbubur Rahman inaugurated the festival.

Khulna unit Sachetan Nagorik Committee Convener Hafizur Rahman was the chief guest while TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman was present as the special guest.

The festival is jointly organised by nine cultural organisations, Rotaract Club, Prothom Alo Bondhushova in cooperation with Transparency International Bangladesh and Sachetan Nagorik Committee.

Programmes of yesterday's inaugural function included a discussion and a cultural programme.

Electronics goods worth Tk 10 lakh gutted at CEPZ

CU CORRESPONDENT

Valuable electronic goods worth around Tk 10 lakh were gutted in a fire at a factory at Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) yesterday morning.

Fire sources said the fire broke out at around 7:30am on the ground floor of a two-storied building of a Malaysian electronic goods factory - Bexktronikk (BD) Limited at Sector 1 of the CEPZ.

The fire spread fast engulfing the whole floor and gutted ready electric meter, starter, and other goods and machineries.

Seven fire fighting units from city's fire stations rushed to the spot and extinguished the fire after one and half hours of effort.

The fire was originated from electric short circuit and damages in it were estimated at Tk 10 lakh, fire sources said.

Iftekhar leaves for Yangon

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury left Dhaka for Bangkok en route to Yangon yesterday on a four-day official visit to Myanmar.

During his visit, he is expected to hold bilateral talks with the Secretary-1 to State Peace and Development Council and Acting Prime Minister of Myanmar Lt General Thein Sein, Foreign Minister Nyan Win and other dignitaries in Yangon.

Call to reduce mobile phone call charges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday called on mobile phone operators to reduce call charges and offload shares of the companies for the greater interest of the nation.

They said the private cellphone operators are making a huge profit of 400 to 500 percent through high call charges.

These companies are also luring the young people into using their respective network through advertisements and lower call rate at night time, which is contributing to the degradation of social and moral values among the youths, the speakers said.

Citizens' Rights Movement organised the press conference at the National Press Club in the city.

The cellphone operators should reduce call charges to 25 paisa,

offload shares and stop all sorts of advertisements that have negative impact on young people, said Tusher Rehman, secretary general of the Citizens' Rights Movement.

Comparing the call rates in different countries, he said the interstate call rate in India is one Rupee per minute, which is 40 paisa from different operators within a state and 20 paisa in the case of calls from the same mobile company.

The cellphone call rate in the United States is three cents or Tk 1.5, whereas it is Tk 2.5 to Tk 3 in Bangladesh, Tusher said, regretting that the Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) is allowing such rates without considering the public interest.

The Citizens' Rights Movement also placed some other demands including reducing the line rate of land phone to Tk 50 and connection

fee to Tk 2000, taking stringent measures against the companies that used VOIP illegally and not providing VOIP (voice over internet protocol) licence to foreigners.

Noted economist Prof Anu Muhammad said it is very unfortunate that the government hired a US-based multinational consulting firm to assess the cost of the mobile phone operators.

"Are there no people in the country to do such a job that the government has to hire a company with the loan from the World Bank," he posed a question.

There are major social effects of lower call rates at night time by the mobile operators targeting the young people, he said.

Justice Golam Rabbani, Group Captain (retd) Mohammad Alfaz and Barrister Sadia Arman also spoke at the press conference.



Prof Anu Muhammad speaks at a press conference of Citizens' Rights Movement at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right are Barrister Sadia Arman, Tusher Rehman and Justice Golam Rabbani.