

WEB-BASED INFO PORTAL 'THE EDITOR' LAUNCHED

Exercise freedom to ensure free, fair election by Dec '08

Speakers urge media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a launching ceremony of a web-based news agency yesterday urged the media to exercise its freedom to ensure a free and fair election by December 2008.

They said the people of Bangladesh are politically conscious and they know which newspaper is practising embedded and bottle-fed journalism and which one is playing a pro-people and balanced role.

Speaking at the launching ceremony of 'The Editor', a web-based information portal and resources, at the National Press Club in the city, the speakers also discussed various issues regarding recent journalistic practice in the country.

The Editor has officially appeared as a new web-based news agency and is committed to practice 'community journalism'.

The new thing in it is that people from all over the country can actively participate in reporting. The web-address is www.the-editor.net.

Speaking as chief guest, veteran journalist ABM Musa said, "We badly needed '1/11', otherwise we would have got a February 15-like election. The media should not do anything that will make room for the caretaker government to linger the electoral process."

"Similarly, if the caretaker government is truly committed to its roadmap, it need not announce the election schedule everyday...this type of announcement can create mistrust in people on the prospect of election," he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Veteran journalist ABM Musa speaks at the launching ceremony of a web-based news agency at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left are Prof Anu Muhammad and Prof MM Akash.

Appreciating Bangladesh media for its unique way of journalistic practice, Musa said, "Still some newspapers are twisting news...and very often they are publishing exaggerated news which is coming from unverified sources."

Emphasising the role of internet-based news agency, Prof Anu Muhammad said the web-based news has become the 'alternative media' and now considered to be a 'counter hegemony' to 'controlled media' across the world.

"The US people had been kept away from news very cleverly. They never knew the aggressive role of the US government and the massacre it is carrying out in Iraq and Afghanistan. At that time internet

became the source of getting balanced news and it started changing the mindset...People are now launching anti-war movement," he observed.

Prof MM Akash of Dhaka University appreciated the new approach which will entertain people's participation.

He said pro-people bias is a healthy practice in journalism but ruling-class bias is not only worth abandoning but also dangerous.

Maj Gen (Retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim, Editor Dipu Hasan and Managing Editor Dr Shamim Talukdar of The Editor also spoke on the occasion.

Jubo Dal leader held in Benapole

UNB, Benapole

A poura commissioner and Jubo Dal leader along with four others were arrested from a gambling corner here yesterday.

Azimuddin Azim, ward commissioner, also general secretary of Benapole Transport Owners' Samity, was picked up from the gambling corner at Shahjahan Building and seized Tk 18,000 from the spot. A wanted criminal, Azim remained fugitive for long, police said.

Others arrested from the spot are Shahjahan Ali, Shaheb Ali, Idris Ali and Arshad Ali.

Later they were sent to jail when produced before the court.

Road crash kills 2

A CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

At least two people were killed and two others injured in a road accident on Kandirpar-Chwekbazar road v in Comilla town yesterday.

The dead were identified as Rabiul Hossain, 26, and Abul Mia, 23 of Noapara village of Sadar upazila.

Police said the accident occurred at about 6.30am when a bus of Corodova Paribahan from Tomsom bridge collided head-on with a tractor, leaving two tractor labourers dead on the spot and two others injured.

The injured were rushed to the Upazila Health Complex in critical condition.



PHOTO: STAR

An exhibition of paintings by Moly Kumar Bala began at Zainul Gallery at the Institute of Fine Arts in the city yesterday. The exhibition will remain open from 11:00am to 8:00pm daily up to September 5.

Water park launched in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

Concord Entertainment Company Limited has launched a water park named Sea World at its Foy's Lake site in the port city.

Concord Group Chairman SM Kamal Uddin inaugurated the Sea World on Friday evening through a colourful function.

Dance artist Towfiq Babu and his group performed dances, Rahat

delivered instrumental sound effects and popular Band LRB enthralled the audiences with their melodious numbers.

A large number of visitors thronged the park with their nearest and dearest ones on the first day of its journey in a festive mood and enjoyed the water events introduced in Chittagong for the first time.

Speaking on the occasion, Concord Marketing Manager Asaduzzaman hoped that the water park would attract huge number of local and foreign tourists.

"The park is a milestone in the amusement sector of the port city," he added.

The water park, around one kilometre off the Concord's Amusement Park at Foy's Lake, includes different rides for people of all ages.

The rides include wave pools, slide world, family pool, tube slides, multi slide, waterfall, doom slide, play zone and dancing zone.

The water park also provides lockers, separate changing rooms for ladies and gents including local and international foods and motel facilities.

Entry fee for the park is Tk 330 per person including all rides and free entry to Foy's Lake.

Concord Group Vice-chairman Farida Kamal, Managing Director SK Lala and Deputy Managing Director Shahriar Kamal were present on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ashraf Shamim, second from right, inaugurates the electrification and tree plantation programmes as the chief guest at Baralia Government Primary School at Patiya in Chittagong recently. Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) President Shahidul Alam, third from left, presided over the inaugural function.

Chechnya referendum on Dec 2

AFP, Moscow

Chechnya will hold a referendum on December 2, voting on changes to the local constitution which would extend the republic's presidential and parliamentary terms and slash the number of lawmakers, the electoral commission's chief told AFP.

"(Chechnya's) president (Ramzan Kadyrov) suggested extending the presidential and parliamentary mandate from four to five years, as well as abolish one of the parliament's chambers and bring down the number of deputies" to 41, Ismail Baikhanov explained late Friday.

"The parliament would also have the right to make changes to the constitution, also the president would not be elected but appointed," Baikhanov said.

The referendum would be held on December 2 to coincide with the elections to Russia's State Duma, the lower house of parliament, which would allow the war-torn republic to reduce costs.

Located between the Caspian and Black Seas in the Caucasus mountains, Chechnya fought wars for independence from Russia in 1994-1996 and again from 1999.

The Kremlin-backed Kadyrov, who was sworn in as Chechnya's president in April, is accused by human rights organisations of personal involvement in disappearances and torture.