

One third of physically challenged people visually impaired

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One third of the physically challenged people in the country are visually impaired although 80 percent of such cases are preventable, speakers at a discussion said yesterday.

The speakers also said that it is possible to conduct only one-third of the cataract surgeries in the

country every year and so political commitment and mass awareness are a must to prevent blindness.

Shaptahik 2000 and Sight Savers International jointly organised the discussion on 'Vision for Children' at the National Press Club in the city to mark the World Sight Day.

Highlighting a survey result conducted by National Institute of Ophthalmology and Sight Savers

International, M Enamul Kabir, country representative of Sight Savers International, said around 8.50 lakh people in the country are visually impaired.

While presenting the keynote paper, Dr Mohammad Alamgir Hossain briefly portrayed the situation and cause of blindness especially child blindness in the country.

Terming cataract as the main reason of child blindness, he said amongst 40,000 of the visually impaired children, 49 percent are aged below three-years and suffer from cataract.

"Blindness has social and economical impact. Even if one percent of the total population of the country is found visually impaired, it is enough to lag the society behind," said Columnist Syed Abul Maksud.

"The government is not blind. So the government should think of it. It should take necessary steps to rehabilitate the people with blindness so that they can contribute to the society," he added.

Prof Jamal Nezam Uddin, associate professor of National Institute of Ophthalmology, said visual impairment is not a matter of poverty.

"It is found that annual income of the family of 10 percent visually impaired children is above one lakh," he said.

Executive Director of Centre for Service and Information on Disability (CSID) Khandakar Zohurul Alam said the issue on disability was never considered as rights issue, rather it was believed as a welfare issue.

"For this reason, education and other issues of the people with disabilities are directed by the Ministry of Social Welfare, which deprives a huge number of children with disabilities from receiving education," he said adding that there are only 1200 seats for the physically and mentally challenged children, whereas 16 lakh of the physically and mentally challenged children need to go to school immediately.

Acting editor of Shaptahik 2000 Golam Mortoza moderated the discussion while Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, former lawmaker GM Kader, economist Dr Atiur Rahman, Prof Dr Syed Maruf Ali, director of NIO, Dr AHM Enayet Hossain and litterateur Imdadul Haque Milon also spoke.

Cop, source arrested for taking bribe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch of police arrested a sub-inspector (SI) of Khilgaon Police Station and his source for taking bribe from a youth at Rampura in the city on Monday night.

The arrestees identified as SI Khan Nurul Islam and his source Mahiuddin Bachchu were produced before the court yesterday.

Police said Bachchu went to the house of one Bappi at East Rampura in the city and demanded Tk 10,000 on Monday night.

DB police caught Bachchu red-handed while he was receiving Tk 1000 as bribe from Bappi.

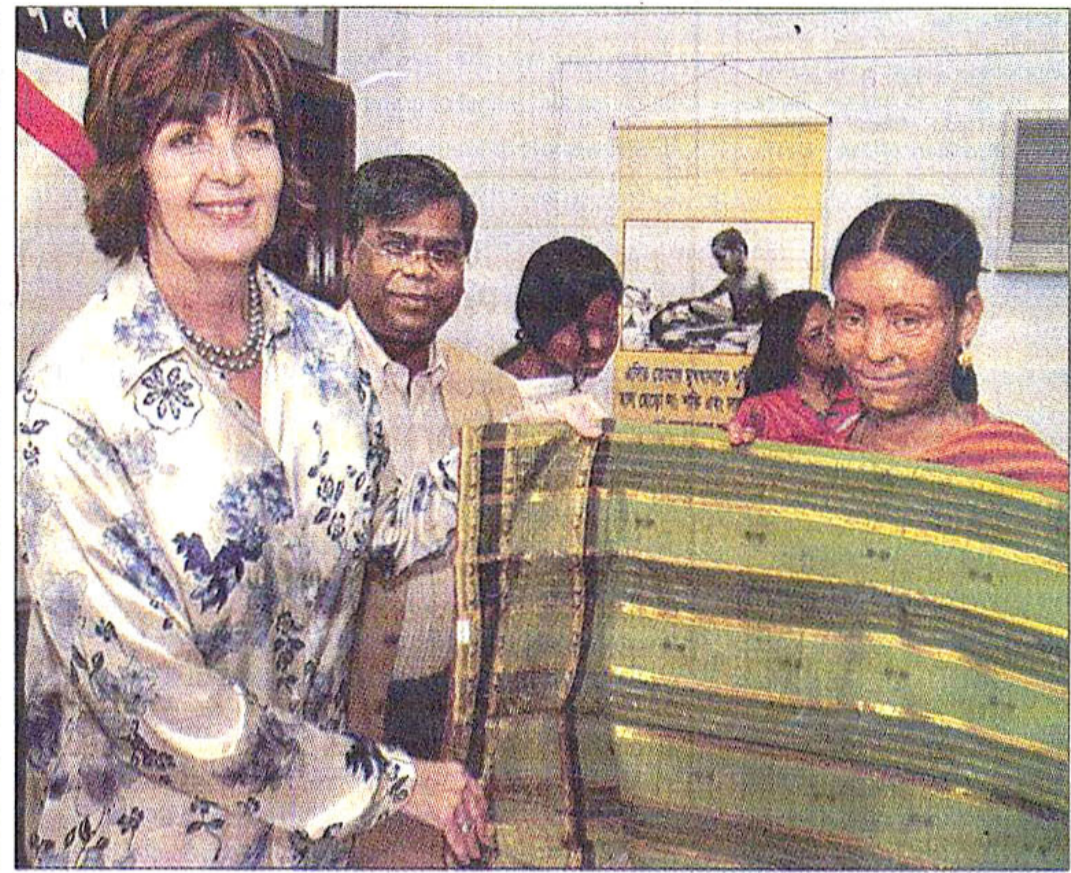
Later, they arrested SI Nurul Islam following the confession of Bachchu the same night.

Locals said Nurul Islam and Bachchu while patrolling Rampura area picked up Bappi on October 3 and beat him up.

They threatened Bappi of filing a drug peddler case against him if he does not pay Tk 10,000 which Bappi agreed to pay on Monday.

Family members of Bappi then informed it to DB police.

Bappi's sister Farhana Karbir filed a case with Khilgaon Police Station in this connection.



Canadian High Commissioner Barbara Richardson presents acid survivors with gifts at Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) in the city yesterday on the occasion of holy Ramadan and Eid.

'Enforce laws to check acid violence'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Canadian High Commissioner Barbara Richardson yesterday underscored the need for enforcement of laws to check acid violence across the country.

"Laws are good but it needs to be enforced as the events of such violence represents law and order situation of the country," she said while visiting the acid survivors at Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) in the city.

The Canadian high commissioner greeted the acid survivors and presented them some gifts as part of the holy Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr celebration.

While expressing the background about her visit, Barbara said she was visiting ASF to share the joy and happiness of Eid with the acid victims and to give them a morale boost.

A total of 40 survivors, including 26 staff and 14 patients, received dress, sari, and toys as Eid gifts.

On behalf the survivors, Hasina Akhter expressed their gratitude towards the High Commissioner of Canada.

She also said that such initiative of the Canadian High Commission would also inspire the survivors to go forward.

ASF Executive Director Monira Rahman in her welcome address reiterated the need for a comprehensive social movement to stop acid violence.

ASF Acting Chairperson SAM Shawkat Hossain pointed out that the rate of acid attacks has decreased recently.

ASF report shows that a total of 129 people fell victim to acid violence till the last month this year, whereas the number was 164 until September 30 last year.

Khulna journo gets 2 yrs' RI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A court in Khulna yesterday sentenced a journalist to two years' rigorous imprisonment in an extortion case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Shefina Begum delivered the judgement. Accused Jamirul Islam, Khulna correspondent of 'Dainik Alor Diganita' published from Dhaka, was in the court during the judgement.

The prosecution story in brief is that joint forces arrested Jamirul Islam on August 19 from near Khulna Judge's Court while taking Tk 1500 as bribe from farmer Aris Sheikh of Dumuria upazila in Khulna.

Aris filed a case with Khulna Sadar Police Station accusing Jamirul of taking bribes giving threat to write a report against him.

Sub-Inspector Din Mohammad, investigation officer of the case, submitted a charge sheet to the court on August 26.

Deals with pvt sponsors to set up 10 small power plants soon

UNB, Dhaka

The government is likely to sign deals with private sponsors this month to set up 10 small power plants across the country.

The private sector sponsors will

British HC warns people against hoax e-mails

UNB, Dhaka

The British High Commission in the city yesterday warned people against being duped by Internet scams, which claim to offer large financial rewards in return for an initial payment.

Head of Trade and Investment at the British High Commission Kevin Ringham urged for the caution following a number of recent inquiries from Bangladeshi nationals, who have received unsolicited e-mails, purportedly from UK companies.

The e-mails have told them that they have won large amounts of money on a UK-based lottery, or they have inherited a large sum, or been offered a lucrative job in the UK.

He said these hoax e-mails, from fake companies, attempt to defraud unsuspecting recipients by asking for bank details or requesting initial payments for the release of funds as 'insurance' or an 'administrative fee'.

Victims of the scam pay the fee but then never hear from the company again, Kevin Ringham added.

"These are hoax e-mails. The people behind them are attempting to defraud you by obtaining your bank account details or asking for money. We advise that you do not respond, give bank account details or send money," Kevin Ringham said.

He explained that Internet crime, such as identity theft, is a growing international problem.

He mentioned that in the UK alone this has meant losses of approximately £1.7 billion a year and said that fraudsters using personal details to gain access to bank accounts, run up bills, launder money, create false documents such as passports or birth certificates and carry out benefit fraud.

"The UK is committed to tackling this problem. Raising awareness and promoting personal vigilance against scams and identity theft are important first steps," he added.

set up the plants, each having 10 to 30MW capacity, at separate locations on Build-Own-Operate (BOO) basis.

Of the projects, Local Summit Group will set up four plants -- a 10MW plant at Ullapara in Sirajganj, three each 30MW plants at Jangalia in Comilla and Rugganj in Narayanganj and Maona in Gazipur.

Asian-Entech Power Corporation Ltd (AEPCL) will set up three plants, each 20MW capacity, in Feni, Tangail and Narsingdi.

Saiham Textile will set up a 10MW plant at Mohipal in Feni and Regent Textile install a 20MW Barabkunda plant in Chittagong.

Energypac-Confidence Power Venture will set up a 10MW plant in Habiganj.

The state-owned Power Development Board (PDB) will purchase electricity at different rates from the projects for the next 15 years.

The energy ministry had selected 10 private sponsors through the bidding process a few months back for the proposed plants.

The Cabinet Purchase Committee had approved the

private sponsors' bids for the projects in July last and then the deed and documents were vetted by the law ministry, the commerce ministry and National Board of Revenue (NBR).

"We've already got the draft agreements vetted by the relevant ministries and now we're preparing to invite the sponsors after Eid vacation to sign the agreements," said an energy ministry official.

Sources said four types of agreements -- Land Lease Agreement (LLA), Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), Implementation Agreement and the Gas Sales Agreement (GSA) -- will be signed with each sponsor of the projects.

The sponsors will have to sign the first three agreements with the Power Development Board (PDB) while the last one with Petrobangla.

The proposed 10 power plants will have a capacity of 200MW which will add to the national grid by mid next year.

As per terms and conditions, the private entrepreneurs will have to install and start commercial production from their respective plants within eight months from the date of signing the deals.



Acting editor of Shaptahik 2000 Golam Mortoza speaks at a discussion at the National Press Club in the city yesterday to mark the World Sight Day. On his right is economist Dr Atiur Rahman and on his left is Dr MA Matin.

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