

PRIMARY EDN DEV PROJECT-II

# Dropout rate rises to 47pc

Says study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The dropout rate among students of primary schools under the Primary Education Development Project (PEDP-II) has increased to 47 percent in 2006 from 33 percent in 2002, according to a study conducted by 10 NGOs working at the grassroots level.

Besides, the net enrolment rate declined to 93 percent in 2005 from 97 percent in 2002, it added.

The NGOs presented the study at a press briefing on 'Grassroots Review on PEDP-II' at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium.

Advancing Public Interest Trust (APIT), The Bangladesh Association for Community Education (BACE), Coastal Association for Social

Transformation Trust (COAST), National Forum of Organisations Working with Disabled (NFWOD), Noakhali Rural Development Society (NRDS), Wave Foundation, Sablamby Unnayan Samity (SUS) and Other Vision Communication (OVC) jointly organised the press briefing.

Describing the PEDP as the biggest project ever in the education sector, Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, executive director of COAST, said, "PEDP-II is a macro plan of the government in primary education sector for the period of 2003-09 (extended up to 2010) targeting to ensure quality primary education for all by 2009."

PEDP-II, a Tk 4,933 crore project funded by the government (63.9 percent) and development agencies (36.1 percent), involves 80,000 government and registered non-government primary schools across the country, he said.

Jibon Dey Shaymal of SUS said there is a lack of coordination on the implementation of the project. The only achievement is that the project has contributed to the development of infrastructure, he added.

He pointed out that adequate teachers have been recruited and provided training under the project.

However, he said, teachers and school management committee members do not have any proper idea of PEDP-II, as many of them consider it as 'development activity' -- constructing buildings and

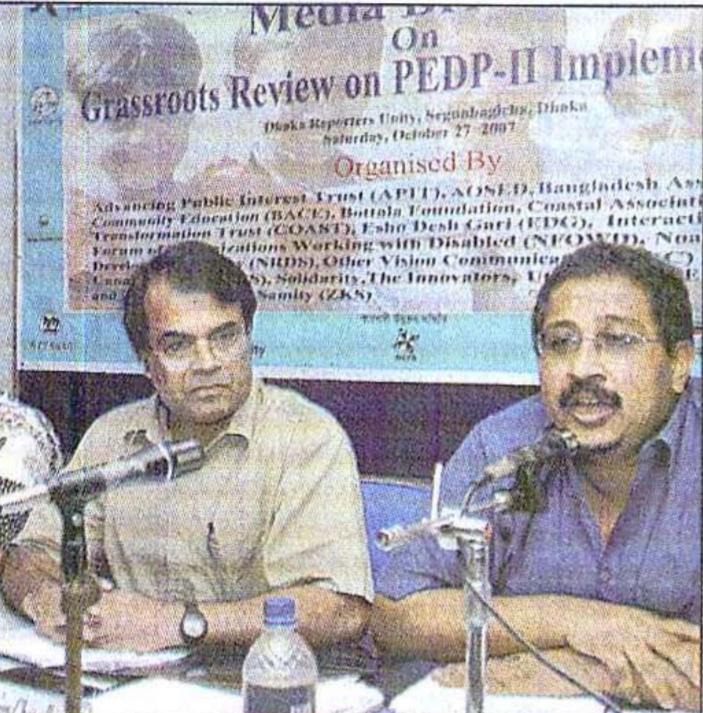
creating new posts.

Khondoker Johurul Alam, president of NFWOD, said most consultants of the projects are from overseas and they do not consider the issues related to the grassroots level while developing programmes. As a result, the project may fail, he added.

Referring to official statistics, he said 96 percent of physically challenged children or 16 lakh still remain out of school.

Sabbir Bin Shams, executive director of APIT, criticised the recruitment of foreign consultants as it involves Tk 16.5 million.

The speakers called for community participation and proper monitoring in order to ensure successful implementation of the project.



APIT Executive Director Sabbir Bin Shams speaks at a press briefing on 'Grassroots Review on PEDP-II' at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right are COAST Executive Director Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, NFWOD President Khondoker Johurul Alam and Sirajul Dara Khan.

## Master of cargo vessel fined in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A regional conference on 'Media Reporting -- Armed Conflict and Violence' will begin at Sheraton Hotel in the city today with the participation of 22 editors and columnists from the Saarc countries.

Editors will make four presentations and conduct panel discussions with diplomats, academics and students of journalism, a press release said.

Information Adviser Mainul Hossain will be present at the inaugural session of the conference as the chief guest, beginning at 9:30am.

On the second day, Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury will be present at the concluding session as the chief guest, beginning at 4:00pm.

The Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University, Press Institute of Bangladesh and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have jointly organised the seminar.

from Patenga estuary yesterday.

On interrogation, the court found that a 2nd class master was operating the cargo vessel.

The court ordered the authorities concerned to cancel the certificates of the master and recruit an experienced and skilled master for the sake of security at the port area.

Sources said MV Sagar Siraj abruptly came on the way of an outgoing Bangladeshi flag carrier merchant vessel MV Bongbiraj on that day.

Neglecting the signal of the pilot of Bongbiraj, vessel Sagar Siraj came so close to the ship that it was about to hit MV Bongbiraj.

But the pilot of the merchant vessel narrowly avoided the accident by controlling his vessel, sources said.

Following an allegation, Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Magistrate Mohammad Munir Chowdhury seized MV Sagar Siraj.

It was the Second Meeting of the Saarc home ministers.

A mobile court yesterday seized an inland cargo vessel on charge of creating risk of collision with a merchant vessel at the Chittagong port channel on Friday.

The court fined the master of the cargo vessel MV Sagar Siraj Tk 40 thousand, in default, to suffer three months imprisonment and seize his certificates.

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The certificate award ceremony of workshops on five thematic issues on literacy/non-formal education for mid-level government and non-government managers, policymakers and other stakeholders was held at the Ahsania Mission Bhaban Auditorium in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Dhaka Ahsania Mission in association with Unesco, Dhaka, organised the workshops to strengthen the capacity of the stakeholders.

The subjects included planning and management of literacy & non-formal education, post literacy planning and management, material development of literacy & non-formal education; role of teachers/facilitator of literacy & non-formal education; and monitoring and evaluation of literacy & non-formal education.

Md Rafiquzzaman, director general of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education, attended the certificate award ceremony as the chief guest and Abdur Rafique, national programme officer, Unesco, Dhaka as special guest. Kazi Rafiqul Alam, president of Dhaka Ahsania Mission, presided over the session.

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