

14TH DHAKA BOOK FAIR 2007 INAUGURATED

Promote book reading habit for progress: Chief adviser

Buy at least one book each month and present book to loved ones

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday called for promoting book-reading habit every nook and corner of society as a movement to march on the path of progress.

The head of caretaker government also requested people to buy at least one book each month as per capability as well as present book as gift to the loved ones in social functions.

Fakhruddin made the call while inaugurating the fortnight-long 14th Dhaka Book Fair 2007 yesterday at the National Parade Square at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city organised by the Cultural Affairs Ministry and Jatiya Grantho Kendra (National Book Centre).

The theme of this year's fair is 'Anando O Samridhahir Jonya Boi' (Book is for Pleasure and Prosperity). About 123 publishers are participating in the fair.

On behalf of civil society, former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui and Mohiuddin Ahmed, the proprietor of University Press Ltd (UPL), on behalf of publishers also spoke at the inaugural function with Cultural Affairs Secretary ABM Abdul Huq in the chair. Director of the National Book Centre M Mahmudur Rahman delivered welcome address.

The chief adviser said, nowadays, the tradition of presenting book as gift at family and social functions has almost disappeared.



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed flips through a book at a stall at the 14th Dhaka Book Fair 2007 at the National Parade Square in the city yesterday while Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, second from left, looks on.

Instead, giving unnecessary or eye-catching items has become a practice of the day. "Let's give up this habit," said Fakhruddin, whose caretaker government has kicked off widespread socio-political reforms.

It is universally recognised that there is no alternative to book to build a knowledge-based society, he said. However, in many cases, it's not possible in Bangladesh to build up family or personal library. But it is not impossible at all to

establish library at each para or village, or at least in union, with combined efforts, he noted and hoped that local governments would play their pivotal role in the future in this matter.

He, however, said many socially conscious individuals and institutions have already come up in this sector as mobile library has been set up in some places.

Appreciating such initiatives, the CA held out government support in this regard, if necessary.

"Book movement has a close relation with library and book fair. We will have to further strengthen this movement to build up skilled and creative human resources in the country."

He told the audience that appeal of book is forever and universal so the demand and necessity of book did not decrease even in the age of Information Technology and Internet.

Responding to the suggestions made by Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui and publisher Mohiuddin Ahmed, he hoped that the Cultural Affairs Ministry would take those into account for realisation and examination.

In his speech Prof Zillur Rahman said in a country library plays a big role in expansion of writing and reading book. "There may be library movement merely in name but not in existence in the country," he told the function. Citing newspaper reports about misuse of money in the name of book project in the past, he said for this reason "fake writers and publishers have been created".

He emphasised publication of good books, creation of atmosphere of buying books and holding book fair all the year round in various parts of the country on small and big scale.

Mohiuddin raised some demands regarding national book policy, waiving tax on book publication.

Later, the chief adviser went around some bookstalls at the fair.



Participants observe a one minute's silence at a reunion of freedom fighters at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. Eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain, sixth from left, was also present.

EARTH FOUNDATION

Suppliers call for govt steps to get payments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of businessmen who supplied various types of goods and equipment to the Earth Foundation called on the government yesterday to take measures so that they can get their payments from the organisation.

They alleged that the Earth (Effective Assistance and Rehabilitation for Tormented Humanity) Foundation did not pay off over 80 business houses who had supplied various goods and equipment worth Tk31 crore.

The businessmen also demanded punishment to detained Earth Foundation Chairman Khan Mohammad Khalid Hossain and others who are involved in the cheating.

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Khalid Hossain on November 18 on charges of cheating the suppliers. At least 30 cases were also filed with various police stations in the city against him.

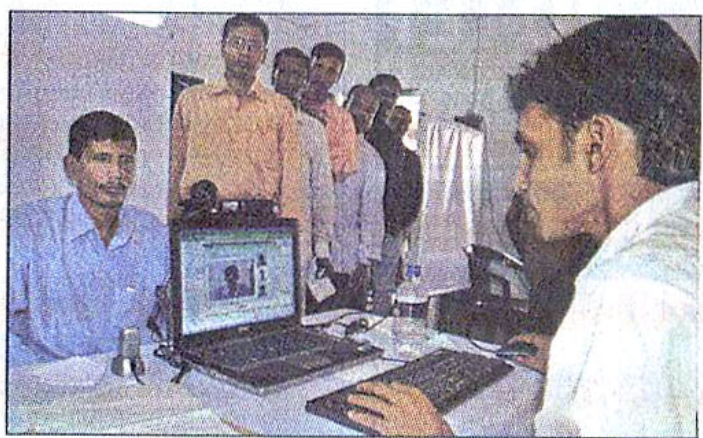
At a press conference, the businessmen also alleged that around 10 lakh people who became members of the foundation's micro-credit schemes are neither given any loans nor they got back their

deposited money.

Each of the members deposited Tk 200 with the foundation, they added.

Humayun Kabir of Shamim Enterprise, Mamun Akbar of Ema

Medical Ltd, Nurul Alam Mallik of MN Mallik and Co and Musleh Uddin Ahmed of Allegiance Consortium spoke at the press conference held at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) auditorium.



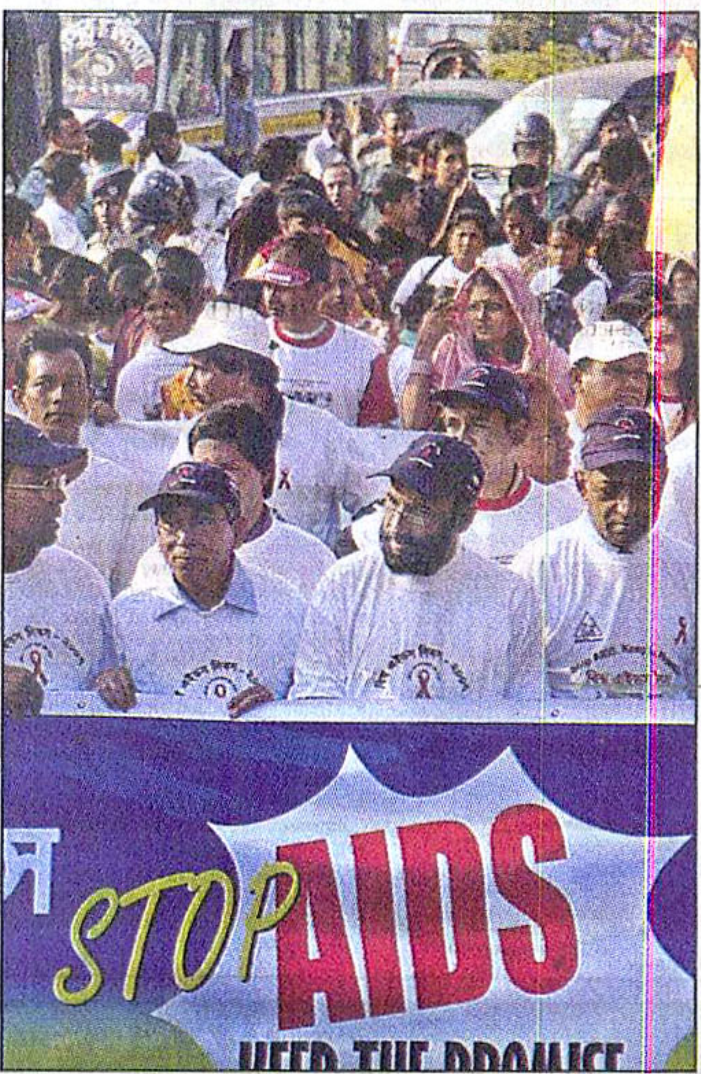
A voter has his photograph taken during voter registration at Bangabhaban Government Primary School in the city yesterday while others wait in a queue for their turn.

World AIDS Day observed

Nari Unnayan Shakti (NUS), a development organisation working for the welfare of women and children, observed the World AIDS Day yesterday with various programmes across the country, says a press release.

The programmes, including rally, mass awareness campaign, discussion, cultural programme and street drama, were held at different places in Dhaka, Chittagong, Barisal, Noakhali and Pabna.

Afroja Parvin, executive director of NUS, inaugurated the day's programme in Dhaka with a meeting titled 'Youth leadership in combating HIV/AIDS'.



A colourful procession was brought out from Manik Mia Avenue in the city yesterday on the occasion of the World AIDS Day.

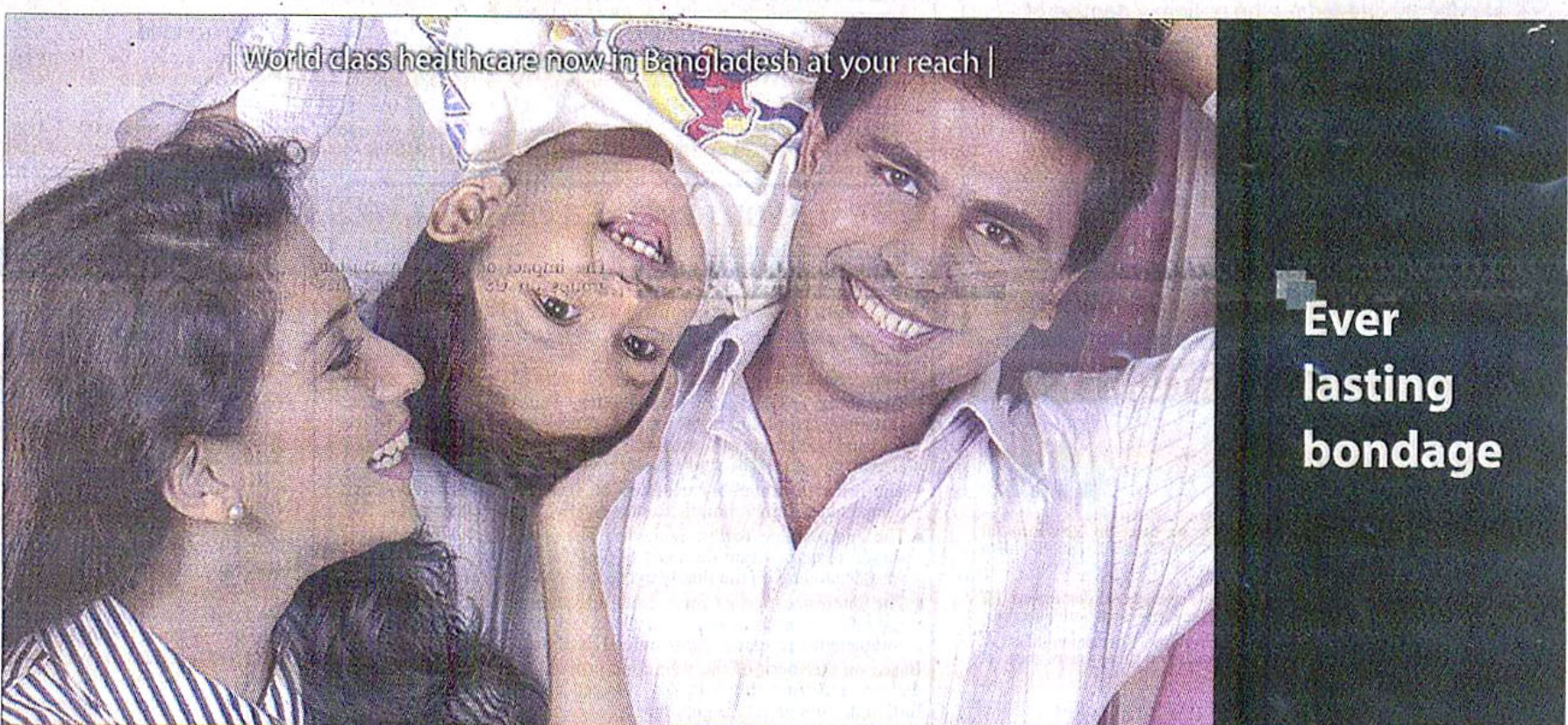
More help for cyclone victims

UNB, Dhaka

Thirty more organisations and individuals yesterday donated about Tk 1.85 crore to the CA's Relief Fund for the country's cyclone victims.

They are Karnaphuli Fertiliser Co Ltd Tk 1,54,61,427, Bangladesh Supreme Court Tk 2,82 lakh, teachers and students of Khulna Medical College Tk 1,21,700, Citi Bank NA and Citigroup Tk 10 lakh, Association of Cargo Agents of Bangladesh Tk 3 lakh, Hamdard Laboratories Tk 5 lakh, Bangladesh Scientific Equipment Trading Association Tk 2.16 lakh, Arshad Memorial Trust Tk 3 lakh, Mahbub Mawdudur Rahman and Saima Rahman Tk 10,000, M/S Gani Brothers Tk 20,000, Modern Dyeing and Screen Printing Ltd Tk 27,000, RM Enter Owners' Cooperative Society Tk 25,580, one day's salary (Tk 11,856) of Rajshahi district council staff, United Lubricants, Multipurpose Cooperative Society Tk 10,000 and freedom fighter Mahbubul Alam Tk 10,000.

Shibpur Union Hefazate Islam Juba Sangha, B'baria donated Tk 2,000 while Imon Telecom (Pvt) Ltd Tk 5,000, Begum Nilufa Yasmin Tk 2,000, Noor Mahal Tk 5,000, Dr Golam Farooq Tk 1,000, M Obaidur Rahman Tk 20,000, Kazi Maqbul Hossain Tk 22,000, M Sajjadul Karim Tk 10,000, M Golam Tayeb Tk 2,000, Mujiunni Residential Area Welfare Association, Khulna Tk 17,350, Noakhali Swapnil Krira Chakra Tk 50,000, one day's salary (Tk 27,196) of teachers and staff of Noakhali Science and Technology University, Golam Mawla Tk 5,000, Abdul Wahab Tk 900 and a man unwilling to be named Tk 20,000.



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