

SAARC YOUTH CAMP INAUGURATED

Join regional dev activities

Chief adviser urges youths of Saarc countries

UNB, Savar

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday urged the youths of Saarc countries to actively participate in nation-building and regional development activities, saying their determination to bring changes in society constitutes the most vital ingredients for progress of the countries.

"On our part we remain committed to building partnership with you in activities relevant for our progress. Your passion for change and resolve to lead a life of significance would enable us to turn challenges into opportunities," Fakhruddin told the young men and women taking part in the first-ever Saarc Youth Camp.

Fakhruddin declared "First Saarc Youth Camp 2007" open at National Youth Centre in Savar on the outskirts of Dhaka.

He released colorful balloons and pigeons in the air marking the inaugural of the four-day youth

camp.

The main theme of the first Saarc Youth Camp 2007 is 'Connecting South Asian Youths.' The camp arranged in a bid to increase communication, cooperation and fraternity among the youths of the member countries.

It also aimed at creating an opportunity for exchange of experiences and cultures, strengthening friendly relations and developing leadership among the youths of the region.

Around 120 youths are participating in the camp.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, youth participants Saugat Das from India and Nazmus Sadat from the host country, Youth and Sports Secretary Dr Golam Mostafa Talukder and chairman of the National Organising Committee of Saarc Youth Camp

2007 and DG of Department of Youth Development Ismail Hossain also spoke at the function.

Youth and Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury chaired the inaugural function.

The chief adviser said this youth camp is an indication of Saarc's determination to connect the minds and hearts of the people of the member countries, generate greater cohesion and understanding, and bridge the gap, if any, in the mindsets of regional countries.

"It's aimed at bringing the young people of South Asia under one roof thereby creating an environment for closer interaction among those very people who will lead us to face the challenges of the new millennium," he said.

The chief adviser said the Saarc Youth Camp will bring young minds from Mazar-e-Sharif to Male, Quetta to Kathmandu, Colombo to Kolkata, and Thimpu to Dhaka for meeting annually in an institutionalised but informal settings.

Welcoming the participating youths, he said they have already

earned recognition as outstanding young people with leadership qualities, strength of character, intellect, knowledge and skills.

"The enthusiasm, resilience and courage of our youths make us hopeful about our future. Their ideas, visions, energy, and most importantly willingness to bring about changes in society stimulate us."

"Their indomitable urge to overcome the status quo and the courage to take risk constitute the critical elements needed for our progress.

They represent our future and remind us our own responsibilities for the future generation," he added.

He said as the Saarc countries strive for a common identity for the 1.6 billion citizens of South Asia, the meeting of the young men and women from the region bears significance.

Fakhruddin said direct interaction with each other might turn out to be the first critical step towards building an enduring relationship of understanding and cooperation that would lead the region to the cherished goal of socioeconomic prosperity.

He said Saarc has come a long way over the past two decades in consolidating regional responses to many challenges that confront before them and youths remain at the centre of many of these regional initiatives like education, health, poverty alleviation or tackling socio-cultural vices like drug abuse, human trafficking and violence.

He, however, said one important area which had not received due attention in the past was creation of a common forum for direct interaction between youths of the Saarc countries.

Bangladesh proposed holding of the Annual Saarc Youth Camps in the 14th Saarc Summit in New Delhi in April last. "I'm grateful to my colleagues in other South Asian capitals for welcoming my proposal," the chief adviser said.

Later, the chief adviser visited the display centre of the self-employed youth of Bangladesh at the National Youth centre.



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed inaugurates the First Saarc Youth Camp 2007 releasing balloons at National Youth Centre in Savar yesterday.

EXTORTION CASE
Khulna ward commissioner acquitted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Khulna court yesterday acquitted KCC ward commissioner Hafizur Rahman of extortions charges.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Md Shahidul Islam delivered the verdict.

According to the prosecution, Hafiz, a ward commissioner of Khulna City Corporation (KCC), was arrested by joint forces on July 23 after one of his sisters-in-law filed an extortions case against him.

Sub-Inspector Golam Kibria of Sonadanga Police Station had submitted a charge sheet to the court on August 8 accusing the ward commissioner of extorting Tk five lakh from the complainant.

More donation to army relief fund

BSS, Dhaka

Forty-five organisations and individuals yesterday donated about Tk 3.92 crore in cash and various kinds of relief materials to the army's relief fund.

The donors are Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) Tk 50 lakh, Rahim Steel Mills Company Ltd, National Bank, Social Investment Bank and IFIC Bank Tk 25 lakh each, Orient Overseas Container Line Tk 20.7 lakh, Tata Group and Navana Group Tk 20 lakh each, NTV Tk 7.2 lakh, Padma Islami Life Insurance, Pragati Insurance, The Group of Industries Chittagong, EBA Group, Rosh Bangladesh, NCC Bank and Summit Group Tk 10 lakh each, Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) Tk 9.62 lakh, Bangladesh Chemical and Perfumery Merchant Association, Pink City Gulshan, Apex Spinning and Knitting Mills Ltd, Apex Food Ltd, and KDS Garments Chittagong Tk 5 lakh each, Islampur Cloth Merchant Association Group-1 Tk 7 lakh and 3,000 pieces of saree and group-2 Tk 8 lakh, Mercantile Bank Tk 6 lakh, Korean Minting and Printing and Bangladeshi Expatriate in Qatar Abu Taleb 10,000 US dollar each, Bangladeshi Paints, Dyes and Chemicals Merchant Association Tk 4 lakh each, Bangladeshi Polymer Importer Association and Bangladesh Paper Importer Association Tk 3 lakh each, Dhaka Cantonment Ladies Club Tk 2.8 lakh, the Optimist 3,000 US dollar, Baridhara Society Tk 2.5 lakh and Kurnitola Golf Club Tk 3.6 lakh.

CTG BOOK FAIR BEGINS

"Try war criminals"

OUR CORRESPONDENT, CTG

A weeklong book fair titled "Muktijuddhe Boi Melo" began in the port city yesterday with a call for raising voice for trial of the war criminals.

Lt Col (retd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, commander of Sector-8 of the Liberation War, inaugurated the fair on behalf of the Sector Commander's Forum in a ceremony at the city's DC Hill premises.

Muktijuddher Shahed Smriti Pathagar, Chittagong, organises the fair for the second time in association with Grameenphone with a view to showing the new generation with the spirit of the liberation war.

On this occasion speakers at a discussion observed that after 36 years the whole nation is now united again to establish a democratic and corruption-free country as well as united with a common demand of trial of the war criminal.

They urged the government to start the process of trial of the war criminals and collaborators in order to establish a society based on justice.

Prof Dr Anupam Sen, a social scientist and also the fair chairman, presided over the discussion.

Acting Chairman of Ekattore Ghatak Dalai Nirmul Committee and Writer and Researcher Shahriar Kabir, Revolutionary Binod Bhuiyan, actress Shami Kaiser, who is also the daughter of martyred Shahidullah Kaiser and intellectual Shahidullah Kaiser, Ananya Prokash, Maolik Brothers, Dilbya Prokash, Bidya Prokash and Late Shefali Ghosh were given reception in the fair.

The seven days of the fair would be dedicated after the names of the seven Birsreshtha (War heroes) while the first day was dedicated to the Birsreshtha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir.

Several noted publishing houses from Dhaka and Chittagong including Agami Prokashani, Muktabdhara, Ananya Prokash, Maolik Brothers, Dilbya Prokash, Bidya Prokash and Late Shefali Ghosh were given reception in the fair.

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