

Groom talented youths to accelerate development

President tells 36th AGM of Bangladesh Scouts

UNB, Gazipur
President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday stressed the need for grooming all the talented youths through providing them with proper education and training facilities for accelerating the country's socio-economic development.

"We should help them by grooming their good qualities, including patriotism, honesty, sincerity, benevolent activities and responsibility. Scouting can play a vital role in achieving that," he said while addressing the inaugural programme of the 36th annual general meeting of the National Council of Bangladesh Scouts at National Scout Training Centre in Mouchak here.

Paying rich tributes to Lord Baden Powell, the pioneer of scouting, Iajuddin hoped that the scout movement would be greatly promoted and expanded through united efforts of all and proper leadership.

He mentioned the participation of Bangladesh Scout members in relief operation in the Sidr-affected areas and said, "It's the expectation of the nation that the youth, imbued with the spirit of serving the distressed humanity, would stand beside the people when the country needs it."

Describing various successful scout events both at the national and international levels marking the celebrations of scout centennial founding anniversary, he said, "We all will have to uphold this reputation through multifarious development activities."

He also urged the top scout national leaders to increase the number of scouts in the country and give special attention to scouting so that its movement does not remain limited in urban areas and depend only on formalities.

"Although scouting is visible in urban schools and colleges, its activities is limited in rural educational institutions. I think it is imperative to give a clear idea to teachers and guardians to further expand and make this activity popular," he added.

Assuring of his all-out cooperation as the chief scout, Iajuddin called upon all concerned to come forward in expending the activities of scouts.

President of Bangladesh Scouts Dr Shah Mohammad Farid presided over the meeting. Chief National Commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts Mohd Fazlur Rahman also spoke on the occasion.



Award winning Scouts pose with President Iajuddin Ahmed at the 36th annual general meeting of the National Council of Bangladesh Scouts at the National Scout Training Centre in Mouchak, Gazipur yesterday.

Govt to encourage labour export from 'monga-prone' areas

UNB, Dhaka
The government yesterday decided that a number of measures would be taken to encourage export of labour from 'monga' areas of greater Rangpur to alleviate poverty.

The decision was taken at a meeting with Foreign Adviser Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury in the chair.

The decision is in line with the 14-point package announced by Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed following an Advisory Council meeting at Rangpur on Saturday.

Iftakhar, also the Adviser to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and

Overseas Employment, told reporters that a steering committee would be set up headed by the Secretary to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment to supervise this effort.

Representatives of Foreign Ministry, BMET, BOESL, Labour Ministry, Bangladesh Bank and Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) will be on the steering committee.

Iftakhar said that targeted poor would be provided credit support by NGOs and Banks. The Technical Training Centre (TTC) in Rangpur would be inaugurated soon, and the one in Lalmonirhat would be

strengthened to upgrade skills of workers to meet international demand, he added.

He said recruiting agents could also be given a quota for recruitment in Monga affected region.

The adviser said it will be important to change the mindset of the people and the culture of the region so that overseas employment becomes more appealing to them.

He said already the existing actions of the government was bearing fruit and in 2007 nearly 10,000 workers went abroad from that area compared to less than 3000 the year before.

One arrested in GP official murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested one person on charge of killing Grameenphone official Md Belal Hossain.

Belal was stabbed to death by a gang of snatchers at Kalyanpur in the city on Friday.

The arrestee identified as Md Selim was arrested by Rab-4 members from Kalyanpur Porabosti at around 1:00pm.

Quoting Selim, Rab said the arrestee and three others - Saju, Azim and Swapan - committed the crime.

They said the criminals stabbed Belal when he tried to resist them.

The miscreants took away Tk 12,000, a cellphone set and other valuables from Belal, Selim told the Rab men.

Rab officials said they recovered a knife and a jacket from Selim's possession and are hunting for three others.



Children pose for photograph with HSBC officials at a workshop on film in the city recently.

HSBC workshop on film for underprivileged children

The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) Ltd in Bangladesh recently sponsored a daylong workshop on film for the underprivileged children in the city on the occasion of the 1st International Children's Festival, says a press release.

Eminent filmmakers Katherine Masud and Morshedul Islam, celebrated artist Mustafa Monwar and writer Muhammad Zafar Iqbal shared their experiences on the art of film at the workshop.

HSBC also provided 20 street children the opportunity to attend the opening day of the festival.

Besides, HSBC also arranged a special screening on February 1 for more than 70 students from School of Hope, a school set up for disadvantaged children in Gulshan and Badda area.

Speaking on the occasion, Sami Hafiz, head of Corporate Responsibility at HSBC, said "Film can have a great influence on the development of young minds and can help children express themselves in more innovative and creative ways. We were therefore delighted to be able to support the first ever International Children's Festival in Bangladesh and provide this opportunity for so many children."

Helen Keller Int'l distributes fruit saplings

Helen Keller International (HKI), Bangladesh has undertaken post-flood rehabilitation programmes with the distribution of 60,000 fruit saplings among 10,000 households in northern char areas, says a press release.

As part of the rehabilitation programme HKI distributed vegetable seeds and seedlings among hundreds of Homestead Food Production Programme (HFPP) beneficiaries at Hatshepur union in Sariakandi upazila recently.

Sariakandi Upazila Agriculture Officer Zalaluddin inaugurated the programme organised by Gram Unnayan Kormo (GUK), a partner organisation of Helen Keller International.

Rejwanul Karim Anik, programme manager, Aminuddin, deputy programme manager, Abdul Baten, programme coordinator of HFPP, Mobarok Hossain Talukder, a consultant of GUK, and Mokhlesar Rahman, acting headmaster of Khudrodalail High School, was present on the occasion.



A human chain was formed in front of the Chittagong Press Club yesterday under the banner of 'We are the people of Chittagong' demanding release of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Special CID probe team to be posted in districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Police authorities will post a special investigation team from Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in each district in phases who will visit crime scenes and preserve evidences alongside the metro and district police.

The special team will also assist metro or district police force in investigating cases and will take over the task of investigation of complicated cases to bring the offenders to book.

Police Reforms Programme (PRP) will provide all the necessary assistance in this regard.

It was disclosed at the orientation ceremony and the first executive committee meeting of Bangladesh Police Service Association (BPSA) at Rajarbagh Telecom auditorium in the city on Sunday night.

Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad, BPSA President NBK Tripura and senior police officials were present on the occasion.

Aussie varsity project on e-governance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Australian National University (ANU) will conduct a project on e-governance capacity building in Bangladesh, says a press release.

Ausaid Public Service Linkage Programme (PLSP) is funding the one-year project titled 'e-Government capacity building through knowledge transfer and best practice development' designed on ongoing PhD research by Ahmed Imran of ANU.

The project will be implemented in three phases which will include development of know-how among key decision makers and government officials for effective use of ICT, development and delivery of training package to bridge knowledge gap on e-Government process and process reengineering, develop strategies for the effective uptake of ICT and to support and encourage ongoing projects and championship in this area.

ANU Professor of Information System Prof Shirley Gregor will lead the project with assistance from other ANU academics and experts from different government and non-government bodies in Australia.

"I'm really excited about the huge potentiality and the impact in terms of knowledge delivery to

Bangladesh government and ICT sector," said Imran, one of the key consultants of the project.

The PSLP aims to improve public sector capacity in selected Asian countries for governance and management for nationally determined development outcomes and support strengthening of sustainable development-focused public sector bilateral and regional linkages.

Ministry of Science and Technology will be the lead counterpart organisation and Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security and Studies will act as the third-party organisation.

\$2.70 lakh Malaysian aid

UNB, Dhaka
Malaysia has provided 270,000 US dollar in aid of the victims of natural disasters in Bangladesh.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Dato Seri Syed Hamid Albar handed over a cheque for the amount to Bangladesh High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur M Khairuzzaman at a presentation ceremony at the Malaysian Foreign Ministry yesterday.

VIOLATION OF EPR Release of Hasina, Khaleda demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong
Over 50 people covering their faces with black clothes formed a brief human chain in front of the Chittagong Press Club yesterday demanding immediate release of former prime ministers Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia and BNP leaders Tarique Rahman and Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury and withdrawal of emergency.

The demonstrators, however, hurriedly left the scene before the police stepped in.

Two or three unidentified people also addressed the 10-minute gathering held under the banner of 'Amra Chattagram Basi' (we are the people of Chittagong) and 'Amra Fatikchhari Basi' (we are the people of Fatikchhari).

Sources, however, suspect the demonstrators are loyal to SQ Chowdhury.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) officials said it was a clear violation of Emergency Power Rules (EPR) as the demonstrators didn't have any prior permission to hold such programmes.

"We are looking into the matter and trying to identify the violators of the EPR before taking any legal action," said Ashikul Haq Bhuiyan, assistant commissioner of the detective branch of police.

He said the demonstration was sudden and brief, and the demonstrators just ran away before the police reached the scene.

Witnesses said around 50 or 60 youths, all covering their faces with black clothes, suddenly appeared in front of the press club at around 11:45am with banners and posters of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Ziaur Rahman, Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia, and formed a human chain.

In the afternoon, the demonstrators sent a set of three press releases to newspaper offices here, claiming that 'Amra Chattagram Mahanagar Basi', 'Amra Chattagram Uttar Jela Basi' and 'Amra Chattagram Dakshin Jela Basi' had held the demonstration. Abu Sufian Babla, Sree Rana Das and Rabi Chakrabarty signed the press releases separately.

A source at the CMP said, "We believe the demonstration was mainly aimed at demanding the release of SQ Chowdhury and the names they used in the press releases are fake."

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