

Nation needs enlightened people to remove darkness

Speakers tell prize giving ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation badly needs enlightened people to show lights amid darkness all around and only reading books can help build up such enlightened people, said the speakers on the concluding day of a prize giving ceremony in the capital yesterday.

They said today's school students, who will lead the country in future, will have to be encouraged for reading books so that they can make it a permanent habit.

The prize giving ceremony was organised by Bishwa Sahitya Kendra at the Ramna Batamul. At the concluding session of the two-day ceremony, around 1930 students from 34 schools were given books.

In all 6000 students from class six

to ten of 100 city schools received the prizes for their performances in book reading programme conducted by Bishwa Sahitya Kendra last year.

While delivering his welcome speech, Syed Manzoor Elahi, former adviser to a caretaker government, said book is the ultimate shelter of human being.

There is no alternative to book in flourishing the beauty of human mind, he added.

Artist Mustafa Monowar said people could be enlightened by reading more and more books.

"When you read books, environment around you also becomes pleasant. It also enriches your life," he added.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno, said today's

students will lead the country in future and they can be groomed as honest citizens by encouraging them for reading good books.

Architect Mobashwer Hossain said, "Our students are the freedom fighters of today who will lead the country tomorrow."

"The injustice and corruption that we are facing today are the results of the activities of some educated people, but I hope today's prize winners will always hate corruption," he added.

Novelist Imdadul Huq Milon said the country needs more enlightened people and it is possible if people inculcate the habit of reading books.

"I believe the prize-winning students will not be the part of those people who indulge in corruption,"

he added.

The function came to an end with the handing over of illuminated candles to the students by Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, founder of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, wishing that

this light would brighten the country removing all darkness.

With the dream of creating enlightened people in the society, Bishwa Sahitya Kendra has been continuing the programme across the country since 24 years.

The Prothom Alo was associated with the book reading programme while Grameen Phone djuice sponsored the award giving ceremony. Delta Life Insurance Limited Company provided the books that the winners received.

Call to hold elections without delay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a view exchange meeting yesterday stressed the need to hold the parliamentary and upazila elections simultaneously and without delay.

The Election Commission should also take necessary steps to make the elections free from the influence of black money and muscle power so that the nation cannot go back to pre-1/11 situation, they said.

Language movement veteran Abdul Matin said everybody should work together as the country is passing through a transitional period. "The country is already in the grip of political crisis and an acceptable election is necessary to overcome the problems," he added.

He also said that power should be handed over to politicians, but necessary measures should be taken so that they could no longer resort to corruption.

Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori, said local government bodies should be strengthened and financially self-reliant to reduce its dependency on the bureaucracy.

Anwarul Haque Bablu, chairman of Shenamukhi Union Parishad in Joypurhat, presented the keynote paper.

Muktijoddah Gono Parishad President Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat, former Chatra Union leader Nazmul Alam Lal and former general manager of Bangladesh Railway Deen Mohammad also spoke at the meeting held at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium.

Baul artistes to perform in Japan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of Bangladeshi Baul artistes left for Japan yesterday at the invitation of Japan Folk Art Association (JFAA) and the Ministry of Culture of Japan.

Of the 12-member group, eight bauls are from Palli Baul Shamaj Unnayan Sangstha and three bauls are from Pagla Bablu Group from Kushtia. Golam Sarwar of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is leading the team.

They will come back on February 23 after performing some special cultural events. They will also visit three other countries in this tour.



Students of economics department of Dhaka University stage a demonstration in front of Aparajeyo Bangla on the campus yesterday protesting death threat to Prof Abul Barakat and demanding arrest of and exemplary punishment to the culprits.



Students hold up lighted candles at the closing session of the prize distribution ceremony of 'Book Reading Programme' of Biswa Sahitya Kendra at Ramna Batamul in the city yesterday.

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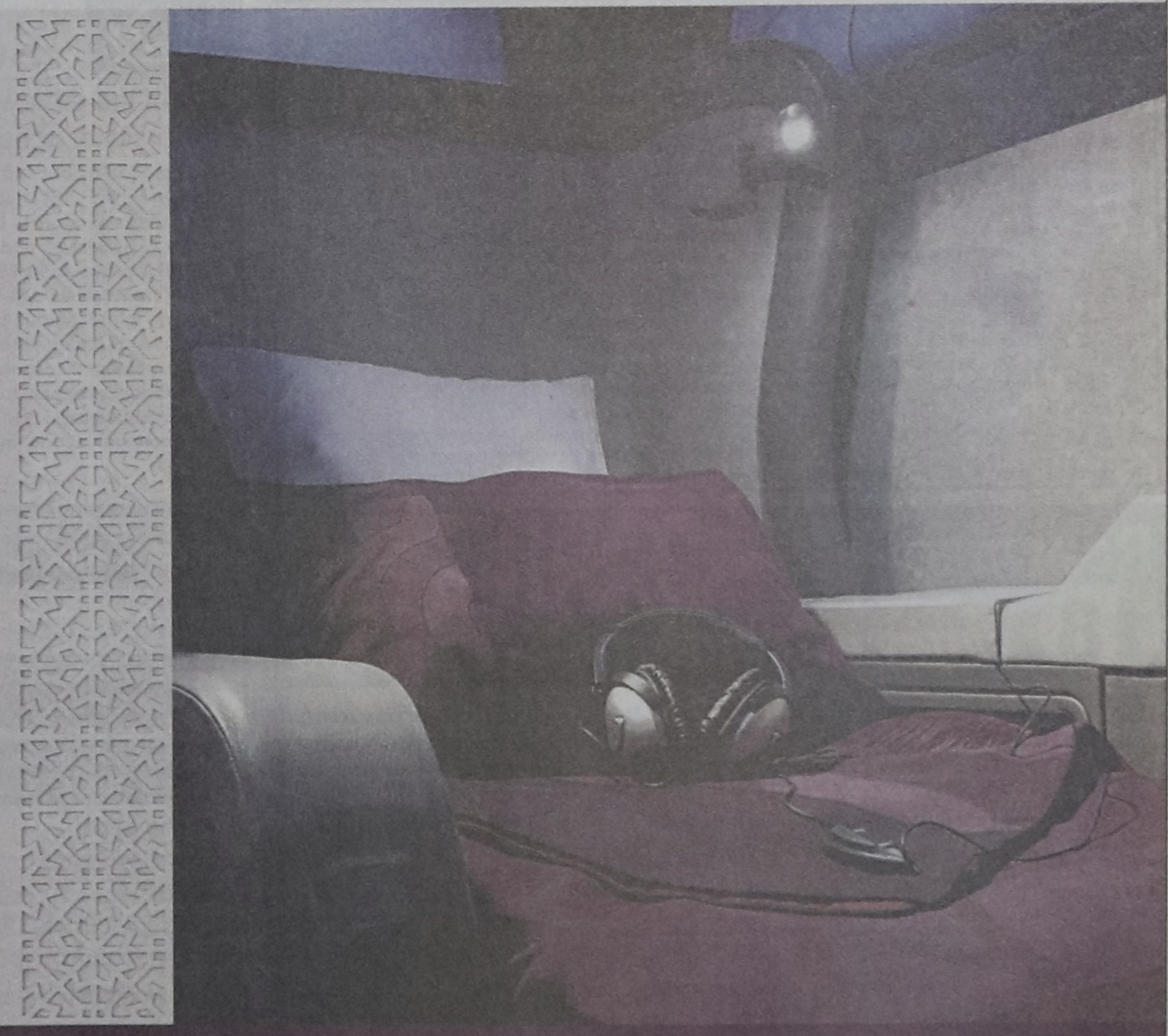
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