

New textbooks for all primary students from next year

Adviser tells Asia South Pacific Education Watch Report launching ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury yesterday said primary students of all government and private schools will get new textbooks from next year.

"Now primary students get 50 percent new books and 50 percent old books. Many students are not encouraged due to lack of new textbooks. We hope all primary students will get new textbooks instead of old books from 2009," she said while addressing as chief guest at the launching ceremony of Asia South Pacific Education Watch Report in the capital.

She also laid emphasis on quality education and said, "We have taken some initiatives not only for increasing the number of students at primary level but also for improving the quality of education."

tion."

The launching ceremony was organised by Campaign for Popular Education (Campe) in cooperation with Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) at LGED auditorium in the capital where Asia-South Pacific Education Watch reports on Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Cambodia were presented.

According to Bangladesh Watch Report, public expenditure for each student in a year in government primary schools was Tk 1728 in 2005 followed by Tk 1656 in ebteyee madrasas and only Tk 664 in registered non-government schools.

"At the secondary level, Tk 2461 was spent per student in government-assisted schools and Tk 3810 for secondary level (dakhil)

madrasas," the report pointed out.

The report also revealed that 43 percent of government primary school students and 85 percent of government-assisted secondary school students had private tutors.

"Private tuition is the largest single private expenditure. The annual cost of private tuition for each student in government schools was Tk 4700 which is 42 percent of the total cost of their education, Tk 2210 in non-government schools which is 29 percent of the total cost, and Tk 1202 in madrasas which is 21 percent of the total cost," the report added.

The report also pointed out that 10 types of institutions offer primary education, and in 80397 institutions, a total of 16225158 students were enrolled with a total number of 344789

teachers.

At the secondary level, there are 18500 institutions, 238158 teachers and 7398552 students.

"The education sector has been receiving the highest public budgetary allocation in recent years. During the last five years, the allocation has been around 14 percent of the total national budget comprising about nine percent in revenue budget and about five percent in development budget," said Azizul Haq, director-in-charge of Campe, while speaking at the launching ceremony.

Campe Deputy Director Tasneem Athar, ASPBAE Analyst Rene Reya, Asia Advocacy and Campaign Coordinator Raquel D Castillo and Education Watch Advisory Board Chairperson Kazi Fazlur Rahman were present on the occasion.



Guests hold copies of 'Asia South Pacific Education Watch Report' at a launching ceremony at LGED auditorium in the city yesterday. From left are Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Md Azizul Haq, Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury, Kazi Fazlur Rahman and Md Azizul Haq.

Nasreen Memorial Award announced

ActionAid Bangladesh has announced the Nasreen Memorial Award 2008.

The award ceremony will be held at the Pachibibi Upazila Parishad auditorium in Joypurhat today, two days before the second death anniversary of the noted human rights activist, says a press release.

The award is given out to individuals, groups or organisations who have special achievement in their lives and work in upholding the voices and rights of the unheard, the oppressed and the marginalised.

This year's winners are Sign language Users Reflect Circles (AISDUR Jhenidah) for their role in ensuring enabling environment for the persons with disabilities, Gono Unnayan Federation (Munshiganj) Self Help Group in the field of local governance and civil rights, Azima Khatun, a landless woman activist from Noakhali Char Jabbar area for her role in land movement and Mofela Begum of Pachibibi in Joypurhat for her role as a rural agriculture-based woman entrepreneur.

Noted writer Selina Hossain and Coordinator of Nijera Kori Khushi Kabir will be present at the ceremony alongside Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Pachibibi ATM Siddique Rahman and Country Director of ActionAid Bangladesh Farah Kabir.

5 to die for killing trader in city

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced five people to death for killing Sumon Hossain, a trader at Adabar in the city in June in 2004.

The convicts are Mohammad Asif, Junayed Sikder Babu, Saiful Islam Shamim, Habibur Rahman Soheli and Mohammad Hossain alias Biplob. Of them, Asif and Biplob were tried in absentia.

Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the sentence in presence of three convicts at a packed courtroom.

The punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender, the court added. The court acquitted Milon and Badsha Faisal Ahmed, as their involvement with the killing was not proved.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence had completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 23 prosecution witnesses.

According to the prosecution, a gang of miscreants led by Asif shot Sumon dead at about 10:00pm on June 11, 2004 at House No. 68, Road No. 5 in the city's Adabar area.

Following the incident, victim's

father Moklesur Rahman filed a case against Asif and six others the following day.

The investigation officer pressed charges against them on March 3 last year.

New stipend fund formed

DU CORRESPONDENT

A research stipend fund titled "AKM Abdul Hamid and Begum Selina Jahan Research Stipend Fund" was formed at Centre for Advanced Research in Arts and Social Sciences of Dhaka University (DU), says a press release.

Two Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) researchers of the centre will receive stipend from earnings of the fund.

Mashful Azam, son of Abdul Hamid and Begum Selina, handed over a cheque of Tk 10 lakh to DU Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz yesterday for the fund.

DU Treasurer Prof Syed Abul Kalam, Director of the centre Prof H Ahmed Kamal and Acting Registrar Syed Rezaul Rahman were present at the cheque handing over session.

WOMEN DEV POLICY

Govt urged not to receive review body suggestions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Sanjuktta Works' Women Commission (BSWWC) yesterday urged the government to implement the National Women Development Policy (NWDP) and not to receive the suggestions of the review committee.

In a statement, the president and the general secretary of the organisation said more than half of the total population of Bangladesh are women and are contributing to the country's economy alongside men.

The NWDP is an up-to-date one, which would guide the country to achieve the millennium development goals, implement the Cedwa, the statement read.

They also condemned the remarks of some fundamentalist groups against the women development policy.



Newly appointed US Ambassador to Bangladesh James F Moriarty presents his credentials to President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday. (Story on Page-1)

AL leader Mollah charged, arrest warrant against Quader's wife

Jamaat leader to be interrogated at jail gate

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against detained former Awami League (AL) lawmaker Habibur Rahman Mollah in a case filed for amassing illegal wealth and giving false information submitted to the commission.

Meantime, a Dhaka court issued an arrest warrant against Ishratunnesa, wife of detained AL Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader, in a case filed for assisting her husband in acquiring wealth through illegal means.

Besides, ACC got permission from a court to interrogate detained former Jamaat lawmaker Dr Syed Abdullah Mohammad Tahir at the jail gate about his wealth statements submitted earlier to the commission.

Investigating officer (IO) ACC Assistant Director Mahabubur Rahman submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, showing 25 people as prosecution witnesses.

On October 3 last year, ACC Assistant Director Syed Ahmed filed the case with Ramna Police Station against Habib for concealing information worth over Tk 2 crore in his wealth statement submitted to the ACC.

According to the complainant, the accused hid information about his movable and immovable properties worth Tk 1.81 crore in the city's Shyampur area.

He also did not mention about his Mitsubishi V-6 jeep, which he purchased at Tk 9.20 lakh and Tk 9.20 lakh deposited with Habib Agro Products Ltd.

ISHRATUNNESHA CASE After scrutinising the case docket and other relevant documents, Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order.

Concern over death in police custody

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday expressed concern at the death of Fakir Chan in police custody at Siddhirganj Police Station in Narayanganj, says a press release.

The organisation also demanded proper investigation of the death at police custody.

The order for arrest warrant came following a plea submitted by the IO, as she has been absconding since the case was filed.

On Sunday, ACC Assistant Director, and investigation officer (IO) of the case, SM Shahidur Rahman submitted the charge sheet to the CMM's Court of Dhaka, showing 34 people as prosecution witnesses.

Quader is also accused in the same case for accumulating wealth illegally and concealing information in the wealth statement submitted earlier to the ACC.

ACC Assistant Director Ashrafur Islam filed the case against Quader, also former state minister for youth and sports, and his wife on October 30 last year, for concealing information about wealth worth Tk 15.55 lakh and accumulating wealth worth Tk 62.85 lakh illegally.

The joint forces arrested Quader on March 9 last year. He was on the second list of graft suspects published by the ACC.

An anti-graft court on September 25 sentenced Ishratunnesa to eight years' jail in a tax evasion case. Quader was also convicted and sentenced in a tax evasion case filed by the National Board of Revenue, which the High Court stayed after he

challenged it in the same court.

TAHER CASE

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani passed the order after IO ACC Assistant Director ABM Mahubub submitted a petition to interrogate the lawmaker Tahir at the Kashimpur jail gate.

The court directed the IO to interrogate the accused on April 27. In the petition, the IO said that Tahir had earlier submitted his wealth statements to the ACC. But those were not scrutinised. So, he prayed for a permission to interrogate Tahir at the jail gate to gather more information about his wealth statements.

The joint forces had arrested Tahir from his Shyamoli residence in the city on March 7 last year.

SALAHUDDIN CASE

The case against detained former BNP lawmaker Salahuddin Ahmed filed for misuse of government relief materials was transferred yesterday to the ACC for investigation.

The case was filed against him with Shyampur Police Station on February 1 for misuse of 360 pieces of corrugated sheets (CI) seized from his Shyampur residence on November 22 last year.

DU VIOLENCE

Punishment to perpetrators demanded

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Pragatisheel Chhatra Jote (PCJ), an alliance of left leaning student organisations, yesterday staged a demonstration at Dhaka University (DU) demanding exemplary punishment to those responsible for creating violence on the campus on Sunday.

At least eight people, including three activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), were injured following a clash between its two factions on the campus on Sunday.

Several hundred PCJ leaders and activists brought out a procession from Madhu's Canteen at around 12:00pm that paraded different streets on the campus and held a rally in front of the collection centre of the Dhaka University Central Student Union to press home their demands.

Expressing concern over the Sunday's violence, the PCJ leaders said the university authorities were indifferent to the problem when hundreds of general students fell victim to the trouble and ran helter-skelter to save their lives.

They demanded a congenial atmosphere on the campus and condemned the attack on DU Prothom Alo Correspondent Anu Anwar by the JCD activists and Dainik Dinkal DU Correspondent Jahidur Arman by the BCL activists while they were on their professional duty.

Anu was beaten by a group of JCD activists in front of Kabi Jasim Uddin Hall at the early hours on Sunday while Arman was injured during the factional clash of BCL.

Later, PCJ leaders met Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz at his office and urged him to take stern action against the people who were behind the violence on the campus.

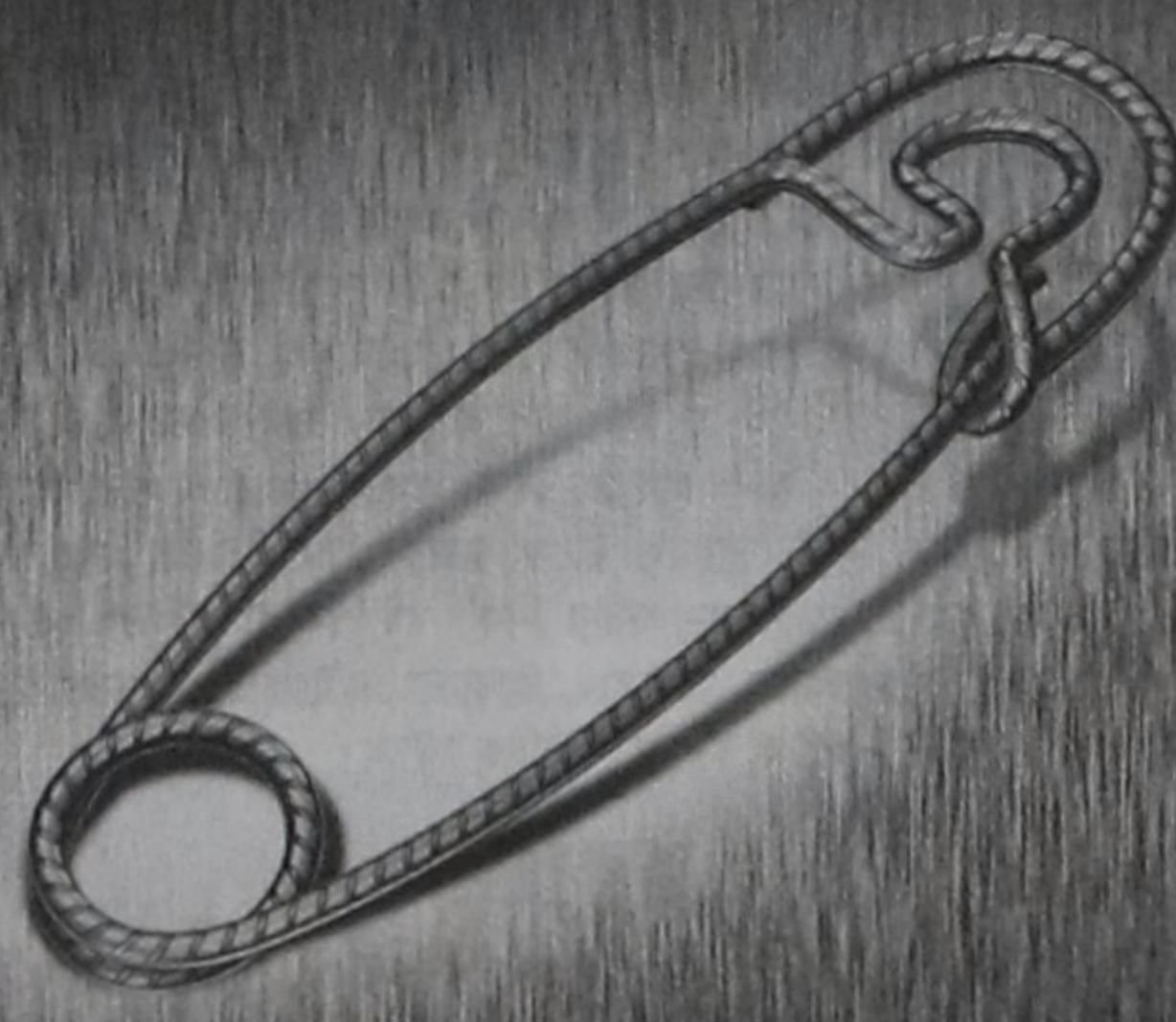
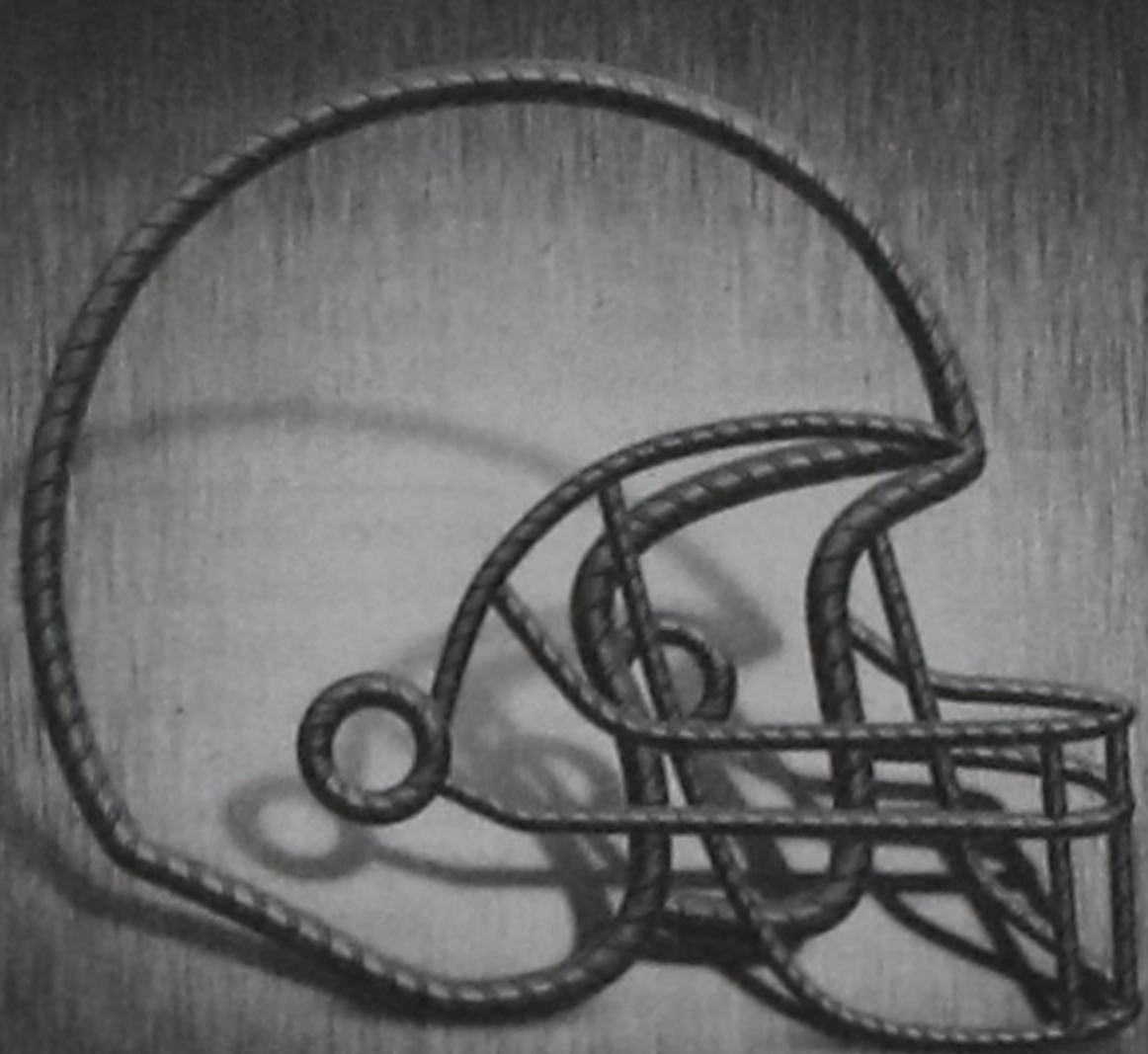
Prof Faiz told the leaders that the university authorities formed an investigation committee in this regard and assured them of taking punitive action against the persons responsible for the chaos according to the probe committee report.

Bangladesh Chhatra Union General Secretary Mita Mahedi, Samajtrantik Chhatra Front President Hossain Ahmed and Bangladesh Chhatra Federation leader Preetom spoke at the rally.

Meanwhile, Dhaka University Journalists' Association (DUJA) took out a silent procession and held a rally demanding exemplary punishment to the persons responsible for the attack Anu and Arman. DUJA submitted an application to the VC on Sunday in this regard.



Sammita Samajik Andolon President Ajoy Roy speaks at a press conference on 'Current food crisis in Bangladesh and food safety' at Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the city yesterday. On his right are Ziauddin Tarek Ali and Rajia Samad Dalia and on his left is Advocate Tobarak Hossain. Sammita Samajik Andolon organised the press conference.



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