

'10pc of population suffer from some forms of disabilities'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Jatiya Pratibandhi Unnayan Foundation (JPUF) yesterday welcomed the government for its decision to donate Tk 150 crore to the JPUF in the recent budget allocation and said it would be helpful for the development of the people with disabilities in the country.

As around 10 percent of the total population is suffering some form of physical or mental disabilities, specific intervention is needed for them. At the same time it needs to increase the capacity of the non-government organisations (NGOs) working for the development of the people with disabilities.

The donation would be utilised through the project 'Promotion of Opportunities and Services to the Persons with Disabilities' for five years and maximum fund would be used for capacity building of the NGOs to work for them.

The speakers at a press conference at the National Press Club said the donation would facilitate specific interventions for the physically and mentally challenged people and the foundation would also take necessary steps to provide soft loans for these people for income generation through the NGOs.

While reading out the keynote paper, President of JPUF and former governor of Bangladesh Bank Dr Muhammad Farashuddin called



Dr Muhammad Farashuddin speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left is Farida Yasmin and on his right is Monsur Ahmed.

on the government to exclude duty and value added tax (VAT) from the imported equipment that are used for the autistic and physically and mentally challenged people.

He also sought the government's support to create a 'Disabled and Autistic Development Endowment' by depositing 10 percent of the total donation and to start a census to know the exact number of the autistic and physically and mentally challenged people in the country.

He thanked the caretaker gov-

ernment as it has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the People with Disabilities and also allocated a house for the semi-autonomous body.

"The foundation has already recruited its managing director through a high-powered search committee and is committed to utilise the resources for achieving their rights in employment, health, education, housing and other social sectors," he said.

The difficulties of the people with disabilities and autistic are

not beyond impassable. Rather, it could be overcome through changing the attitude of the society, the speakers said, adding that the people with disabilities should be brought into the mainstream so that they can ascertain their quality in employment, education, sports and other sectors.

They also demanded 10 percent quota system for the employment of these people.

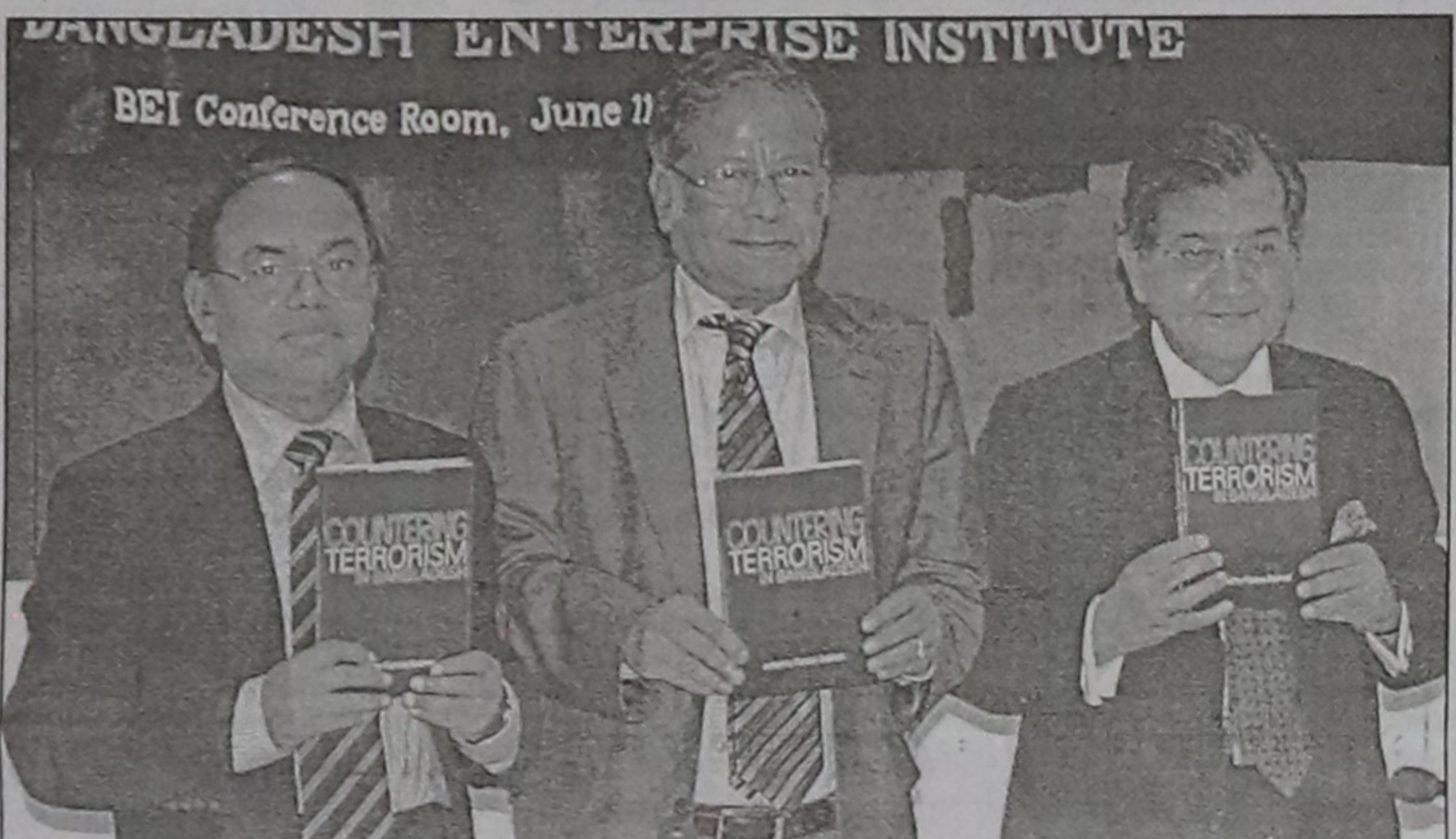
Managing Director of JPUF Monsur Ahmed and Board of Director Farida Yasmin also spoke.

Meanwhile, leaders of National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) at a view sharing meeting titled 'Rights of the People with Disabilities in Employment' also demanded steps to implement one percent quota system in the first-class posts, including BCS, and 10 percent quota in class three and class four posts in public sector.

The meeting was organised at LGED auditorium in the city with NFOWD President Khandaker Zahurul Alam in the chair.

The speakers said in spite of having quota system, it is not implemented due to various legal bindings.

There is no alternative way of empowering the people with disabilities except creating employment opportunities for them, they added.



(From right) Bangladesh Enterprise Institute President Feroq Sobhan, Health and Family Welfare Adviser Dr A M M Shawkat Ali and M Shafiqullah hold copies of a book titled "Countering Terrorism in Bangladesh" at its publication ceremony at Bangladesh Enterprise Institute conference room in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

SUMMER GRADUATION PARADE HELD Remain always ready to safeguard independence

Air chief asks newly commissioned officers

UNB, Jessore

The Summer Graduation Parade marking the commissioning of No 53 and 57 Flight Cadet Course Short Service Commission Course and No. 6 Special Short Service Commission Course of the Bangladesh Air Force was held at the BAF Academy Parade Square here yesterday.

Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman attended the ceremony as the chief guest. He reviewed the smartly turned-out parade and took salute at the impressive march past. He handed over awards, certificates and flying badges among the Flight Cadets.

Flight Cadet Wing Under Officer Monjur Morshed was presented with the coveted "Sword of Honour" for the best all round performance in No 57 Flight Cadet Course. He also got Bir Shreshtho Flight Matru Rahman Trophy for his best performance in Flying Training.

Flight Cadet MA Zahid Hossain got Commandant's Trophy for best performance in general service training while Flight Cadet Md Shahadat Hossain received "Chief of Air Staffs Trophy" for his best all round performance in 57 Flight Cadet Course (Ground Branch).

Meanwhile, the Number Two Squadron was adjudged the Champion Squadron and was given Academy Colour.

Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM

Ziaur Rahman called upon the newly commissioned officers to build up themselves as an able successor of future leadership by discharging duties with honesty, sincerity and devotion and remain always prepared for supreme sacrifice for safeguarding the independence and sovereignty of the motherland.

Chief of Air Staff remembered the memory of the members of Armed Forces, including Bir Shreshtho Flight Lieutenant

Matiur Rahman, with high esteem who sacrificed their lives during the War of Liberation in 1971.

He advised the just commissioned officer to follow the predecessors.

A total of 31 Flight Cadets, including 10 female cadets, were commissioned this time.

Flight Cadet Wing Under Officer Monjur Morshed commanded the parade, which was followed by spectacular fly past of different aircraft of BAF Academy.



Apollo Hospitals Dhaka organised a healthcare awareness programme on physical and daily diet for hypertension/cardio/diabetes and related surgery at the Institution of Engineers in the city recently for the members of the institute. Dr Syed Sakib Nazir, Dr Sohail Ahmed and Dr Zulfikar Haider conducted the programme.

Punishment to Surma's killers demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Adivasi Odhikar Andolon (BAOA), an organisation fighting for the rights of indigenous people, yesterday demanded punishment to the killers of Surma Sna, who was killed at a residence at Baridhara in the city recently.

The BAOA leaders claimed this in a press release signed by General Secretary of the organisation Mesbah Kamal.

Quoting Surma's sister Smrity Sna, the release said she worked as a domestic help in Sri Lankan businessman's house Sabbir Hossain and was sexually abused by him and his brother Munna Hossain.

On May 30, Surma was raped and killed by them and was hanged her from the ceiling, it added.

The BAOA leaders said Smrity Sna went to the Cantonment Police Station to file a murder case in this connection, but the police did not lodge the case. Instead, they filed an unusual death case.

The BAOA leaders requested the police to file a murder case and take necessary action against the killers.

Alliance Française opens 3rd branch at Uttara

Alliance Française (AF) de Dacca opened its 3rd branch at Uttara in the city yesterday, says a press release.

This is the third branch of AF in the city after the inauguration of its 2nd branch at Baridhara in 2006.

France Ambassador Charley Causseret formally inaugurated the new branch.

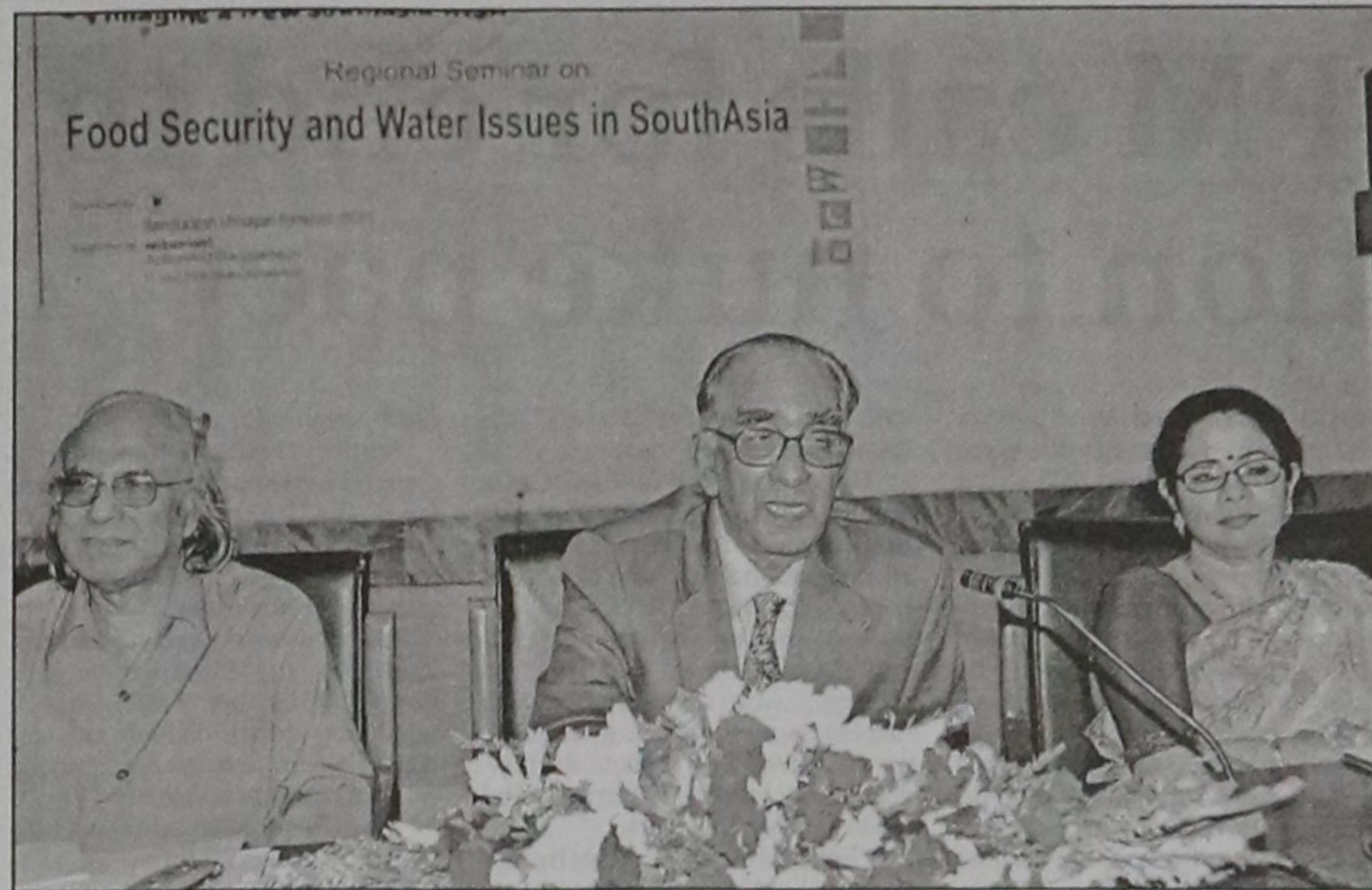
The release said the opening of the two branches of AF within a period of two years clearly demonstrates another example of the existing deep-rooted cultural cooperation between France and Bangladesh.

The new branch includes six classrooms of which two are already in service.

A total of 25 students have already started their course from early this month and the number of learners is expected to double from the next session which will start in July.

The AF has been functioning in Bangladesh since 1959 and is going to celebrate its golden jubilee next year, the release added.

Alliance Française de Dacca is one of the links of a vast network of 1071 AFs across the world. The AFs not only welcome 450,000 students every year for learning the French language, but also invite 6 million people for participating in various cultural activities round the year.



Former chief adviser to a caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman addresses a regional seminar on 'Food Security and Water Issues in South Asia' at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left is Cultural Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury and on his right is Dr Qazi Kholiqzaman Ahmad.

TRANS-BORDER ANIMAL DISEASES Saarc veterinary experts adopt roadmap for early alert system

FROM PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Veterinary experts from Saarc countries wrapped up their two-day meeting here yesterday adopting a roadmap for regional cooperation with special emphasis on an early alert system on trans-border animal diseases including the deadly bird flu.

The meeting identified action points both at regional and national levels and called for regional disease reporting mechanism, building up network of quality diagnostic laboratories and harmonisation of veterinary services across the South Asia.

The senior veterinary officers of

the member-countries analysed the animal health situation in the region with special focus on Trans-boundary Animal Diseases (TADs) like high pathogenic avian influenza, foot and mouth disease and pest-related diseases, and identified the critical gaps in resource mobilisation and manpower availability.

The meeting came out with a set of recommendations for timely information sharing, adopting biosecurity measures in animal production, regional surveillance as an early warning system, capacity building, and progressive harmonisation of veterinary services for effective management of TADs in the region.

The recommendations will be placed before the next meeting of the Saarc Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and subsequently at the meeting of Saarc Agricultural Ministers scheduled to be held towards the end of this year.

As the current chairman of Saarc, India reiterated its commitment to discharge its responsibilities on non-reciprocal basis by offering assistance in the diagnosis and management of major trans-border diseases, including avian influenza.

In his valedictory address, N Ravi, secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, emphasised the need for regional cooperation in tackling serious problems of livestock diseases both for the benefit of livestock farmers and for the protection of human health against the possibilities of pandemics in the region.

Earlier inaugurating the meeting on Tuesday, Indian Animal Husbandry Secretary Pradeep

Kumar said Saarc countries have similar livestock systems and faced the same problems, and it was, therefore, imperative that they share veterinary information especially on trans-border diseases.

He said Saarc countries India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives and Afghanistan suffer from inadequacies of veterinary infrastructure and shortage of technical staffs.

Kumar also underlined the need for regional cooperation as there is steady movement of people and goods across the boundaries of South Asian countries.

The meeting was held after India and Bangladesh were severely hit by bird flu earlier this year.

UK-Bangladesh joint exercise Shimanto Prohari ends today

The UK-Bangladesh joint exercise styled 'Shimanto Prohari' ends in Chittagong today, says a press release.

Experts from a wide range of agencies from both the countries joined together to take part in the exercise from June 9 to 12.

The joint exercise, hosted by School of Maritime Warfare and Tactics of the Bangladesh Navy, aimed at assessing the country's needs and generating ideas on how different agencies can cooperate to strengthen border management processes.

British High Commission Defence Adviser Lt Col Philip Spicer said, "The benefit of inter-agency cooperation on issues like this is a more joined-up approach to sharing information and know-how. This is a unique opportunity to bring together such a wide and varied pool of talent and expertise and look at ways to strengthen border management in future."

The exercise was led by a mixed group of Bangladeshi and UK trainers, drawn from the police, UK Border Agency, parts of the military and the UK's Serious and Organised Crime Agency.

They worked with the expert participants from a wide range of Bangladeshi organisations including the emergency services, law enforcement, home ministry, security agencies, customs and immigration authorities and other relevant bodies.

"I am delighted that this exercise has been a success. It is another fine example of the constructive relationship being built between the two countries on defence issues," Lt Col Spicer added.

READY APARTMENT FOR SALE AT UTTARA

One approx 1330 sft newly finished Apartment on 5th Floor, South Facing, at "Monlova Manor", House-13, Road-8, Sector-6, Uttara, Dhaka. The Apartment has Living, Dining Cum Family Living, 3 Bedrooms with foreign tiled floor, 3 Bathrooms, 3 Verandahs, 1 Servant Toilet, Proportionate Kitchen and 1 Reserved Car Park. The Complex has Lift and Generator of reputed Brands.

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