

Ensure voting rights of persons with disabilities: President

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday said the caretaker government is working relentlessly for holding a free, fair and neutral election ensuring participation of all.

He urged the government and the Election Commission to extend all-out cooperation to the persons with disabilities to ensure their voting right through different initiatives, including setting up polling centres for them.

"I hope that the persons with disabilities along with general voters will take part in different activities of electioneering side by side casting their votes in a festive mood," he said.

He made the call while addressing

the inaugural session of the 4th national convention on democratic rights of persons with disabilities at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city.

Action on Disability and Development (ADD) organised the convention in partnership with national, district and grassroots-level non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working for the physically challenged persons.

Women and Children and Cultural Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury and former adviser of caretaker government Rokia Afzal Rahman spoke as special guests, while Country Director of ADD Mosharrar Hossain and President of Trinamul Pratibandhi Sangstha (TPS) Aktar Hossain also spoke on

the occasion.

The president believes that the persons with disabilities could be made financially independent ensuring their jobs. They could put important contribution to the decision-making process as well.

"The overall development of the country cannot be achieved at the desired level if the persons with disabilities are not involved in the mainstream of national development, as they are an inseparable part of the population," he said.

He called upon the conscious and well-off people of the society to come forward with the spirit of humanity for the welfare of the persons with disabilities, alongside the government.



PHOTO STAR

Shiree, a poverty alleviation fund supported by DFID, organised a knowledge fair for NGOs at the British Council auditorium in the city yesterday.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION NGOs asked to come up with projects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shiree, a programme supported by DFID with a fund of \$130 million, launched its website yesterday.

The programme aims at lifting over 10 lakh people out of extreme poverty.

Speakers at the launching ceremony of the website asked the NGOs to come up with poverty alleviation projects to get funds.

The NGOs can apply for funds for poverty reduction projects from Shiree by logging into its website

Shiree also organised a Gyan Mela (Knowledge Fair) at the British Council in the city to let the NGOs know about them.

Communication Officer of Shiree Faruque Hasan said with the funds hardcore poor would be pulled out of the worst form of poverty.

NGOs that would apply for the fund should be registered with the NGO Affairs Bureau and should have its own annual revenue of at least Tk 10 crore.

However, Shiree would not fund micro-credit projects but any project other than micro-credit is eligible, said Faruque.

Verdict in bomb blast case against Galib, 5 others on June 26

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A Gaibandha court yesterday fixed June 26 as the date for pronouncing the verdict in Takier Bazaar bomb blast case against Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (Ahab) chief Asadullah Al Galib and five others.

The district and sessions judge fixed the date after completion of the arguments.

Galib and five other accused Habibur Rahman Zubayer, Raju Sarder, ATM Taibur Rahman, Harun-ur-Rashid and Rawnakul Islam Khushi are now on bail.

Galib, who is now arrested in other cases, was brought to the court yesterday amid tight security.

According to the prosecution, four powerful bombs exploded at a Jatra show at Takier Bazaar in Palashbari on December 20, 2004, leaving 15 people injured.

Palashbari police filed a case against 21 people in this connection and Galib was shown arrested in this case.

The police submitted the charge sheet against six people, including Galib, on April 23, 2005.

ABDUCTION OF KALPANA CHAKMA Call to make probe report public

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rangamati.

Leaders of Hill Women's Federation (HWF), loyal to Parbatya Chattagram Jano Sanghati Samity, yesterday formed a human chain demanding steps to make the probe report public on Kalpana Chakma's abduction, exemplary punishment to those involved in it and execution of the CHT Peace Treaty.

They formed the human chain in front of the Institute of Fine Art at Dhaka University to mark the 12th year of Kalpana's abduction.

On this day, Kalpana Chakma, the then organising secretary of HWF, was kidnapped from her residence at New Lallahona of Bhaghaichhari upazila in

A judicial probe committee was formed to investigate the matter but the report of the committee was not made public, though the committee submitted the report to the government.

Dhaka University professors Robat Ferdous and Sourav Sikder, Awami League leaders Dr Dipu Moni, Workers' Party leader Hajera Sultana, Karmojibi Nari President Shirin Akhter and former president of HWF Chaitali Tripura took part in the programme.

Speakers called on the government to include a clause in the National Women Development Policy about the development of tribal women.

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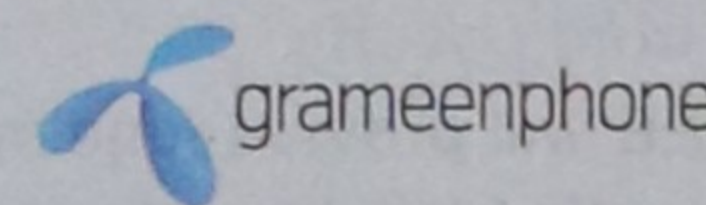
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