

Involving locals in running schools begins to show results

SURANJITH DEABNATH, back from Bogra

A government initiative to involve local communities in the improvement of education imparted by government primary schools has begun to show results in some schools.

Under the initiative and with training provided by the Second Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP II) under the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), a local school in Sherpur has already begun to show great success by involving the local community in its running.

Last December, we held a two-day long workshop under PEDP-II at the DPE central office where

teachers from 40 schools were trained on how to motivate local communities to get involved in the schools," DPE Director Mufad Ahmed told The Daily Star.

"Following that training, Bishalpur Government Primary School under Sherpur thana in Bogra has now become a model for others," Murad said.

Abu Sayed Sarkar, headmaster of the school said, "Alongside government funds, we run the school with financial aid from the local community. Our School Management Committee (SMC), Parent Teachers Association (PTA), Welfare Trust, and the School Level Improvement Programme (SLIP) committee are highly active and this helps us run the school better."

Sarkar, along with other teachers of the school, began to motivate their local community since January this year and the quality of the schooling has greatly improved in the last eight months.

"At first locals did not want to donate any money or get involved as the school was a government institution. But we tried to make them understand and now locals think of it as their own school," the headmaster told The Daily Star.

With financial aid from the community and their involvement, the school has now expanded their library, gardens and playing fields and has added extracurricular activities for the students. They have also appointed two private

teachers for the school with the private funds.

This has tremendously helped with the improvement of education imparted here, the headmaster said.

Teachers at the school use different methods to teach the students. After a typical class, a teacher divides students into different groups and allows them to discuss the lessons with each other for a better grasp of the lessons. After that the teachers provide students, who still feel they are not clear with their studies, with extra help.

The school also encourages the personal development of students and the classrooms are now decorated with the student's works. They are also regularly taken out on study tours and field visits.

With its extra efforts, Bishalpur Government Primary School has already achieved 100% pass rate in its exams.

"We don't need private tuition at home anymore as our teachers help us understand all the lessons. I feel proud when my poems, stories or drawings are displayed on class walls or the magazine board," Sharzina Akhtar Jenin, a student of class four, said.

Mufad Ahmed said that DPE has trained teachers of another 40 schools last June towards involvement of the local community alongside government support.

"It is impossible for the government to bear all expenditures of primary schools because we are not a rich country and our education budget is limited. Without involving the community, we can't ensure quality education in our highly populated country," he said explaining the introduction of these initiatives.

DPE has a plan to gradually spread this new idea across the country through training to more teachers, he added.



Bishalpur Government Primary School.

Lack of adequate number of ferries causes immense traffic jam at Daulatdia

UNB, Gollanda

About 200 vehicles, including buses, were stranded at Daulatdia ferryghat yesterday noon, causing immense suffering to the travelers and delay in transportation of goods and commodities.

Inland Water Transport Authority (IWTA) officials said inadequate number of ferries resulted in the traffic congestion on both sides of the river, Paturia and Daulatdia. Two out of the nine ferries on the route went out of order.

Besides, shoals came up on the bed of the river requiring to detour to the extent of 5km on the way and strong current took each ferry more time to cross the river.

They said Shah Amanat, one of the big ferries, was lying inactive for the last few days. It will soon be sent to Narayanganj dockyard for renovation. Another big ferry, Shah Poran, went out of order on Monday resulting in shortage of ferries.

The officials hoped that the situation would be improved with the two ferries returning to the service.

Course on human disaster, risk mitigation held

METRO DESK

A daylong orientation course on 'human disaster and risk mitigation' was held at Naval Headquarters multipurpose hall in the city yesterday, says an ISPR press release.

Bangladesh Scouts, and Population Services and Training Centre (PSTC) in cooperation with European Commission and ActionAid Bangladesh organised the course.

Twenty-five naval and air scouts were trained up in the course on capacity building on disasters.

Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Personnel) and Commissioner Naval Scouts Commodore M Farid Habib distributed certificates among the participants as the chief guest.

EWU scholarships distributed

Metro Desk

The merit scholarship awarding ceremony of East West University (EWU) for the summer-2008 was held at the university auditorium yesterday, says a press release.

Sixty students received full and half tuition merit scholarships in the ceremony.

Dr Rafiqul Huda Chaudhury, acting president of Board of Directors of the EWU, attended the programme as the chief guest and handed over the scholarship certificates to the students.

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Call to set up 'legal clinics' in all UZs to help victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a seminar yesterday said 'legal clinics' will have to be set up in all upazilas across the country for creating mass awareness against human trafficking and providing legal aid to the victims.

A comprehensive legal framework is needed to combat trafficking, especially women and child trafficking, and assist for rehabilitation of the survivors, they added.

Legal Education and Training Institute (LETI) and Bangladesh Bar Council in association with International Organisation for Migration (IOM) organised the seminar on 'Trafficking in persons: Emerging need for comprehensive legal framework' at the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium in the city.

The experts said poverty, illiteracy and lack of awareness are the main causes for human trafficking and women and children are mainly victimised.

Chairman of LETI barrister Amir-Ul Islam suggested setting up of legal clinics in all upazilas where all kinds of legal aid and consultations will be provided to the victims, their relatives and mass people.

"A core group comprising lawyers, police and other legal community has to be made for setting up and running the legal clinics," he said while addressing the seminar.

Additional Secretary of home ministry Sheikh Abdur Rashid said border security forces are not enough to stop women and children trafficking.

"Mass awareness and sensitisation against trafficking have to be spread out to the grassroots level. Otherwise, it is difficult to wipe out the network of traffickers," he added.

IOM Regional Representative for South Asia Rabab Fatima said cross-border movement is commonplace in South Asia and taking this opportunity, a network of traffickers has been created in this region including Bangladesh.

Justice Syed Rezaat Ahmed presented a keynote paper at the seminar while USAID Bangladesh Mission Director Denise Rollins, barrister Tania Amir and advocate Abdul Halim Khan also spoke.

The certificates were also distributed among the lawyers who participated in a two-day training about trafficking recently.

'Protect local species of fish' President releases fish fry in Bangabhaban pond

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday called for initiating effective steps to protect the traditional local species of fish in the public interest, as it is the country's major source of protein.

He urged all to speed up the ongoing 'social movement' on fisheries extension to increase fish production as well as to protect their natural habitats, saying that contribution of the fisheries sector is significant in the national economy and in employment creation.

The president made the remarks while speaking at a function on the occasion of releasing

fish fry in the 'Singha Pukur' on the Bangabhaban premises.

He released fish fry in the pond as part of the ongoing eight-day 'Fisheries Development Drive-2008'.

Iajuddin said the government has already taken various steps to conserve fishes, but it needs all-out public cooperation for proper implementation of the measures.

Though Bangladesh is a natural land of diverse fish resources since long, the fish production has been declining alarmingly due to high density of population and other factors including catching of fishes during the breeding period and using harmful nets, he said.

Fisheries and Livestock Secretary Syed Aatur Rahman and Director General of Fisheries Department M Rafiqul Islam also spoke at the function.

China blast kills 4

AFP, Beijing

An explosion at a chemical plant in southern China killed 11 people, injured 57 and forced the evacuation of more than 11,500 others on Tuesday, a local government website reported.

Another eight people were missing after the blast, which touched off a raging blaze that filled the surrounding area with smoke, according to hqwang.cn, the official website of Hechi prefecture, where the plant was located.

Local authorities ordered the evacuation of more than 11,500 residents living near the plant in the Guangxi region near the border with Vietnam, it said, fearing further blasts and chemical leaks.

The website reported that the fire had been extinguished and there was just a little smoke still left in the air.

"Leaders of the region have arrived at the scene, and they are handling the accident," an official at the Guangxi Work Safety Bureau told AFP earlier.

Rescuers said several explosions were heard, the official Xinhua news agency said earlier.

One witness told the official China News Service he was sleeping when he heard a huge noise that he thought was an earthquake and he and his neighbours fled their homes out of fear the smoke was poisonous.



Ikhitar M Chowdhury, Bangladesh Ambassador to the Philippines, gives away certificate to a participant of a month-long course on 'TV News Presentation' at Bangladesh Institute of Journalism and Electronic Media (BIJEM) conference room in the city on Saturday. On his right is BIJEM Executive Director Mirza Tarequl Qader. BIJEM organised the course.



PHOTO: STAR

Police intercept non-government primary teachers as they were trying to stage a demonstration to press home their demands at Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday.

Bangladeshi diaspora plays laudable role in British society

Says UK envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

British High Commissioner in Dhaka Stephen Evans yesterday said the Bangladeshi community in the UK has been playing a laudable role in the British society for long.

We are proud of their contributions in the fields of British economy, industry and other sectors, the envoy said, adding that these people are committed and also contributing largely to make the country like Bangladesh a more prosperous one.

Highlighting the natural beauties of Sylhet region, the British envoy said, "I am delighted to be here among the successful people from the British-Bangladeshi community along with the people of Sylhet."

He was addressing a gathering of businessmen at the Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) auditorium with SCCI Senior Vice President Nasim Hossain in the chair.

Underscoring the need for teaching the youths with better English, he said Bangladesh leaders

should take immediate measures for producing skilled manpower to face the challenges of the new age worldwide.

The setting up of special economic zone (SEZ) in Sylhet region will raise the opportunities of huge foreign investments, he said, adding that an investment-friendly environment in real sense should be established there so that non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) can come up.

"Sylhet is a little more important to the UK as around 97 percent of people there are Bangladeshi origin. I am proud of the community for their massive contributions to the local bodies in the UK also," he added.

He said there had been a long-standing and deep relationship between the UK and Bangladesh, adding that the relations will be promoted further in the days to come and both of us are the active partners on various issues.

The British envoy further said both the countries are active on how the working relations can be made

more effective and workable on the issues like facing extremism, safe migration, human rights and expanding the fields of cooperation in terms of common interests.

VESSELS COLLIDE IN MEGHNA

Four staffs feared drowned

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Four staffs of a cargo vessel were feared drowned in the Meghna near Mohanpur area under Matlab North upazila of the district as it sank after a violent collision with another vessel on Monday night.

Police and cargo staff sources said MV Beauty of Ferdous laden with stones suddenly capsized when it was allegedly hit by another cargo vessel MV Venus coming from the opposite direction at around 7:00pm.

Four staffs of the vessel went missing just after the incident while three others managed to swim ashore.

They are yet to be traced despite a frantic search by the river police of Mohanpur police outpost and relatives of the victims.

The victims were identified as Laskar Md Jashim, 30, and Mohammad Jahangir, 40, of Chittagong, Soleman Laskar, 35, of Bhola and Sukani Md Shah Alam, 35, of Feni.

The Bhola-bound vessel was carrying stones worth Tk 90 lakh aboard, sources added.

Master of the sunken vessel Abdus Sobhan filed a case with Matlab North Police Station on the same night.

Asset DEVELOPMENTS
Home... Live n' Enjoy

CORONADO

3 Bedroom Apartments at UTTARA



Asset Developments & Holdings Ltd
91 Gulshan Avenue Dhaka
(Office of Corporate & Management Services)
Tel: 8857230, 8857231, 8857232, 8857233, 8857234
8857495, 8857496, 8857497, 8857498, 8857499
Mobile: 01714 039847, 01714 039843, 01714 016887
01713 065055, 01713 044911, 01713 032448
01713 018408, 01713 018405
01711 426854, 01711 438431
Fax: 880 2 8828272 E-mail: asset@agni.com

Workshop on Hyogo Framework of Action held

METRO DESK

A consultation workshop to review the implementation status of Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) in Bangladesh and finalise the yearly progress report of the HFA, which Bangladesh government will submit to the concerned desk of the United Nations, was held in the city yesterday.

Disaster Management Bureau in cooperation with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organised the consultation titled 'HFA progress monitoring'.

HFA was taken in the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in 2005 in Japan. Five main areas of HFA are mainstreaming risk reduction, defining risk environment and early warning, education and knowledge, reducing the risk factors, and emergency responses. A total of 165 countries including Bangladesh are the signatories of the historic document.

The workshop suggested for better coordination and strengthening monitoring mechanism in implementation of risk reduction initiatives across the country.

KH Masud Siddique, director general of Disaster Management Bureau, addressed the consultation as the chief guest while UNDP Senior Advisor Jean-Claude Rogivue spoke as special guest.

UNDP Assistant Country Director Tank ul Islam presented a paper on monitoring mechanism of HFA and implementation status in Bangladesh.

PRIMEASIA UNIVERSITY

a mission with a vision
(Approved by UGC & Govt)

Admission Fall 2008

School of Science

B.Sc.(Hons.) in Microbiology
B.Sc. (Hons.) in Biochemistry
B.Sc. (Hons.) in Public Health Nutrition
B.Pharm. (Hons.)

Pharmacy Council of Bangladesh has granted ACCREDITATION to our Pharmacy education

School of Business

BBA (Major: Accounting, Marketing, Finance, HRM, Bank Mgt.)
MBA (Major: Marketing, Finance, HRM, Bank Mgt.)
MBA in Textile & Apparel Marketing
Executive MBA
Evening BBA

School of Engineering & Technology

B.Sc. in Textile Engineering
B.Sc. in Electronics & Telecom. Engineering
B.Sc. in Comp. Science & Information Tech.
B.Sc. in Comp. Science & Engineering

Special Attractions of Primeasia University:

Located at the university hub at Banani
Spacious, 15-story building with modern computer labs
Excellent job prospects for graduates in Textile Engineering and Microbiology from Primeasia University
Generous scholarship / financial aid
75 full time faculty with current enrolment of over 2000 students
Collaboration & credit transfer arrangement with 24 top universities in UK, USA & Australia

Prof. Dr. Giasuddin Ahmad
Vice Chancellor
(Former Dean, Faculty of Engineering, BUET)

HSC/A-Level (appeared) candidates may sit for the admission test on the basis of an undertaking that they will not be admitted unless they pass the HSC/A-Level examinations with minimum GPA 2.5

Admission test: 05 September 2008
Last date of application: 03 September 2008

100% of the graduates of our Textile & Microbiology department have got employment

Prof. Dr. ANM Meshquat Uddin
Pro Vice Chancellor
(Former Dean, School of Business & Director BBA, MBA & EMBA Programs, NSU)

Admission office: HBR Tower, 9 Banani C/A, Dhaka 1213
Phone: 8825155, 8860905, 8853386, 9895234, 8817534
Website: www.primeasia.edu.bd