

Improve quality of care for abandoned children

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called on the government to ensure safety of the abandoned and victimised children through improving the quality of care for them.

They also called for taking up programmes to prevent the separation of children from their families.

The safest place for a child is his or her family and separating a child from the family constitutes the gravest threat to normal development of a child, they said.

They also urged all to welcome children's opinions and to look at the world through the children's eyes to ensure better childhood and proper development of children.

Shishu Palli Plus (SPP) organised the discussion titled 'Safe custody of children in Bangladesh'

in association with Save the Children-UK at Cirdap auditorium.

"In Bangladesh, poverty is the main reason for children entering alternative care. Other reasons are prolonged illness, disability or death of parents, abandonment by parents; and family breakdown causing neglect, abuse and exploitation of children," Dr Mizanur Rahman, a professor of law faculty, Dhaka University, said in his key-note paper.

"The number of children in custody has declined in recent weeks. I hope that the day will come when all the children will remain in their mothers' lap and not a single child in the custody," he said.

Australian High Commissioner Douglas Foskett, Director of Department of Social Services Habibur Rahman and SPP's Overseas Director Patricia Karr and Director Khadija Sultana also spoke at the seminar moderated by Habibun Nessa of the Save the Children-UK.

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Youth found dead in Intellectual Graveyard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of an unidentified youth from the Martyred Intellectual Graveyard at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

Mirpur police said they recovered the body of the youth aged around 30 from inside the graveyard and sent it to the DMC morgue for autopsy.

He was clad in a red T-shirt and blue trousers.

Police said the body bore a black mark of injury around his neck and a bruise behind his head.

Meanwhile, one of the six people injured on Wednesday after criminals fired gunshots on them at a slum at Karail in the city's Gulshan area succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) on Friday night.

Identified as Zahurul Islam, a rickshaw-van puller, the deceased suffered a bullet wound in the waist.

Harmony among different faiths stressed

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Akhandamandali, a religious organisation of the students, celebrated its fifth founding anniversary with two-day programmes on the campus.

It held a discussion on 'Inter-religious harmony and character building' on the Jagannath Hall premises as part of the programmes on Friday, the last day of the celebrations.

The invited audience said the government has no success other than the steps of political reforms by preparing the electoral roll, adding that people want accountability and holding of a successful parliamentary elections.

They stressed the need to promote harmony among different faiths to build a prosperous nation.

Tapas Kumar Sarkar, general secretary of the organisation, delivered the welcome address.

Earlier in the morning, the organisation took out a colourful procession on the campus and also held a voluntary blood donation programme.

The panel members were BNPs

Chairperson's Adviser ASM Hannan Shah, Awami League Organising Secretary Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Prof Anu Muhammad and Bangladesh Women Entrepreneurs' Association President Nasreen Minto.

The audience raised a number of questions about the recent bail and release of the political leaders and independence of work of the judges.

Answering to a question, Anu

Muhammad said crossfire and trial process cannot go along at the same time.

Hannan Shah replying to a question about the recent death of an innocent individual in the face of the protest of JCD activists at the news of injury of a BNP leader said the incident was merely an accident.

On the recent court verdict on the Jail Killing Case, Manna said

they would appeal against the verdict.

Anu Muhammad said the verdict was a farcical one while Nasreen Awal said such incidents should not take place again.

The hour-long programme, moderated by BBC Bangla's Masud Hasan Khan, will be broadcast on BBC Bangla Radio at 8:00pm today and on Channel-i at 9:00pm tomorrow.

Sheikh Nafiz Imtiaz of Hermann Gmeiner School was adjudged the 'Debater of the tournament'.

Prothom Alo Mirpur Bandhusava in association with Bangladesh Debate Federation (BDF) organised the contest at Mirpur Bangla High School and College. Hasan Mahmud Biblob moderated the final round of the debate.

A total of 32 schools in Mirpur, Shah Ali and Pallabi areas took part in the two-day competition.

Speaking as the chief guest at the closing ceremony, former adviser to a caretaker government ASM Shahjahan said, "We, the elderly people, are responsible for the backwardness of our country.

The leaders of our generation are facing towards darkness. They should be made to turn around so that they face towards light, which will help bring stability to the country."

Deputy Editor of the Prothom Alo Anisul Haque, poet Kazi Rosy, Dr Abdur Nur Tushar and Principal of Mirpur Bangla High School and College Badruddin Hawlader also spoke.

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