

INT'L LITERACY DAY TODAY

# Call for launching drive against illiteracy

METRO DESK

Today is the International Literacy Day.

The day is observed every year throughout the world as per the UN declaration.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed have given separate messages on this occasion.

This year the theme of the day is 'Literacy: Key to health and well-being'.

An elaborate programme has been chalked out to observe the day in a befitting manner.

The inaugural function of the day organised by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education will be held at the Osmany Memorial Auditorium in the city.

The chief adviser will be the chief guest at the function and distribute awards among the winners of competitions held earlier to observe the National Education Week.

As part of the day's programme,

rallies and discussion meetings will be held at divisional, district and upazila level to enhance awareness among people.

Bangladesh Television will telecast and Bangladesh Betar will broadcast special programmes highlighting the importance of the day.

Tomorrow, Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco and Bureau of Non-Formal Education will jointly organise a roundtable on literacy at the Banbeis Conference Room at Plassey at 4.00pm.

The Adviser for Primary and Mass Education Rasheda K Chowdhury is scheduled to chair the function.

Meanwhile at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday, the Coalition of Local NGOs, Bangladesh (CLNB) called for launching a national drive against illiteracy to raise the number of literate people in the country.

In a keynote paper, CLNB Chairman Harunur Rashid placed

a seven-point demand that included teaching of at least one subject in the mother tongue of indigenous children.

He said as many indigenous groups do not have their own alphabets they should be taught their mother language using Bangla alphabet.

He also demanded recruitment of 50 percent primary teachers from indigenous community.

The coalition members also protested the government's effort to bring primary education under the supervision of the Brac.

They supported the movement of government primary teachers to free the primary education from NGO authority.

Santal leader Nobin Pahan, CLNB Executive Chairman Syed Saidur Rahman Syed, Joint General Secretary of Bangladesh Sanjukta Samik Federation Mohsinul Kabir and President of Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association Shamsul Alam also spoke at the press conference.

## ACC hands over annual report to president

UNB, Dhaka

A delegation of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) led by its chairman Lt Gen (Retd) Hasan Mashud Chowdhury called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

The delegation included ACC commissioners Habibur Rahman and Abul Hasan Manzur Mannan.

During the meeting, the delegation handed over the ACC's annual report (February 2007-June 2008) to the president and apprised him of different aspects of the report.

They informed that the Anti-Corruption Commission Act was promulgated in 2004 and the Rules in 2007. The activities of ACC are being run according to its Act and Rules.

The ACC delegation also informed the president that about 1,300 cases were filed by the Commission of which verdicts in 75 cases were given while appeals made on a number of cases.

Earlier, it required prior permission from the government to file some cases. But now it does not require any permission, they said.

The delegation told the president that this is the first time the ACC published its annual report, though according to section 29 of the ACC Act 2004 the commission shall submit a report of its activities to the president every year.

The delegation informed the president that the Commission has taken motivational programmes outside the capital to create awareness among the people against corruption.

Iajuddin expressed his satisfaction over the preparation of such a report by the ACC. He hoped that the report would help people know about the activities of the Commission.

Secretary of the President's Office Md Sirajul Islam, Military Secretary to the President Maj Gen Mohammad Ruhul Amin and President's Press Secretary Abdul Awal Howlader were present.

## Three join JP

DU CORRESPONDENT

Former Biman official Mohammad Mashru Rahman, former government officer Dabir Uddin Ahmed and noted businessman Mohammad Dewan Zillul Haq Chowdhury yesterday formally joined the Jatiya Party (JP), says a press release.

They joined the party handing bouquets to former president and JP Chairman Hussain Muhammed Ershad at his residence at Banani in the city.

JP Secretary General ABM Ruhul Amin Howlader, Joint Secretary General Advocate Rezaul Islam Bhuiyan and International Affairs Adviser to the Party Chairman Habibur Rahman were also present on the occasion.

## Woman arrested for drug peddling in Ctg

BSS, Chittagong

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a woman on charges of illegal drug peddling from her residence at Chotopol under Halishahar Police Station in the port city on Saturday.

The arrested woman was identified as Nazma Akhtar, 35, wife of one Harun ur Rashid hails from Lakshimpur.

She also recovered 48 bottles of phenidyl from her possession, a Rab press release said yesterday.

## Demand for separate physiotherapy college iterated

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students of the physiotherapy department of National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR) yesterday reiterated their demand to establish a separate college for physiotherapy in the country.

They also demanded immediate withdrawal of cases filed against the students of the institute in connection with the violent incident that occurred between the students and the NITOR hospital employees on Thursday and a proper investigation into the incident.

The student made the demands at a solidarity rally that held at the base of Aparajeya Bangla at Dhaka University.

Noted theatre activist Mamanur Rashid, former adviser to the caretaker government Dr Akbar Ali Khan, DU teachers Prof Ajay Roy, Prof Akmal Hossain, and Dr Tanjimuddin Khan expressed their solidarity with the students participating at the rally.

Expressing solidarity, speakers blamed the attack on students by the employee and urged the government to establish a separate college for the physiotherapy students.

In support of their demands, students also brought out a procession that marched different streets on the DU campus.

Leaders and activists of different left leaning student organisations including Bangladesh Chhatra Union and Bangladesh Chhatra Federation (BCF) also expressed their solidarity with the demonstrating students.



PHOTO: STAR

People wait in a long queue amid scorching heat to collect water from Maghbazar Wireless Pump in the city yesterday. City dwellers have been facing acute water crisis during the last few days.

## NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR ELECTION MONITORING LAUNCHED Vow to institutionalise democracy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eight non-government organisations yesterday launched a grouping, National Alliance for Election Monitoring (NAEM), with an aim to strengthen citizens' vigilance over electoral process and institutionalise democracy.

NAEM Secretary Sharmin Murshid said, "This alliance aims at monitoring and working for credible elections in the country independently."

She said this at a press conference organised to launch the election monitoring alliance at the National Press Club in the city.

Sharmin further said the monitoring of polls is a must as long as politicians continue to abuse power and manipulate elections.

The organisations that joined hands with the alliance include Unnayan Shamannay, Unnayan Dhara Trust, Nagorik Uddyog, Save the Underprivileged and Needy (SUN), Power, Participation and Research Centre (PPRC), Bangladesh Nari Progoti Sangha, Indigenous Peoples' Development Services (IDPS) and Brotee.

The alliance members said the organisations, which have experience of working on elections, women, ethnic and religious minorities and conducting surveys in remote areas, will put together strength to ensure comprehensive and systematic monitoring of the next polls.

While the nation waits for the national polls due in December this year, many reforms have been made, but many others are left out, Sharmin said, adding "Yet, we wait to see whether this election will wipe away all the injustices and sorrows of the past."

She further said, "The need for plural voice is a fundamental criterion of democratic environment. The emergence of this alliance will be a contribution to that environment."

Tendency to politicise electoral observation process by some quarters made the task controversial, Sharmin Murshid, also chief executive officer of Brotee, said, adding that criticism by media and political parties unnecessarily jeopardises the task of election monitoring.

The formation of the alliance will protect and safeguard the integrity of election observation as an objective tool for gathering vital electoral information during the polls without prejudice, she said.

To ensure neutrality of the polls monitoring, NAEM will put special focus on methods and tools, which must be scientific and statistically justified, she said, adding that gathering both qualitative and quantitative information and ensuring objective reporting, reliable data and unbiased analysis would ensure credibility of the polls observation.

Sharmin said, "NAEM would

build capacity of citizens' groups to monitor elections and thus strengthen the base for election monitoring at all levels and encourage local observation initiatives by such groups."

The alliance will also support the Election Commission (EC) with timely and reliable information so that it can take necessary actions or corrective measures to check any wrongdoings, she added.

NAEM secretary said it will undertake long-term and continuous monitoring of all the issues linked to electoral process like voter rolls, demarcation of the constituency, proportion of polling centers to voter population, adequacy of logistics, behaviour of political parties, enforcement of rules and regulations, disenfranchisement of voters, especially the vulnerable, and monitor violence.

Asked about the recently held local government elections, Sharmin Murshid said it was safe and neutral and voters' turnout rate was high. "We want such an election, but the challenge for the EC will be to ensure such an environment without emergency."

Zakir Hossain of Nagorik Uddyog, Sanjeeb Dron of IDPS, Ziauddin of PPRC, Walid Islam of Unnayan Shamannay, Aminur Rasul of Unnayan Dhara Trust, Nizamuddin Anan of SUN and Abdullah Al Hatun of Brotee were also present.

## Iajuddin greets Zardari

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed has congratulated the newly elected President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari.

In a message of felicitation yesterday, Iajuddin expressed the hope that the excellent relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan would be further strengthened during his tenure as president.

He wished the newly elected president good health and happiness and the friendly people of Pakistan continued peace and prosperity.

## HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR ELIMINATION PROJECT

### Each of 30000 families to get Tk 10000

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Families of some 30,000 children engaged in hazardous labour will receive Tk 10,000 each as part of the government's initiative to eliminate hazardous child labour in the country.

This was stated by Labour and Employment Adviser Mohammad Anwarul Iqbal at a meeting at the ministry yesterday.

He said as the government is committed to eliminate hazardous child labour, it has strengthened the credit distribution programme under the Hazardous Child Labour Elimination Project (2nd phase).

Under the project, a total of Tk 20 crore will be distributed to the families of 30,000 children.

Some 20,000 families will receive Tk 10,000 each in the first phase.

A decision in principle has been taken to distribute the money through Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) and the non-government organisations.

The project will cover Savar, Keraniganj, Uttara, Dhaka Metropolitan area, Chittagong, Sylhet, Khulna, Barisal City Corporation area, Narayanganj, Tongi and Bogra industrial area.

The students have been providing with non-formal education that started in November 2006 and would come to an end in October 2008.

They will be provided with skilled development training from November this year.

Acting secretary to the Ministry of Labour and Employment Dr Mahfuzul Haque, Joint Secretary AK Nazmuzzaman and BRDB Chairman Mohammad Ismail Hossain were present on the occasion.

## 'Introduce separate pay scale for public university teachers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association on Saturday called on the government to introduce a separate pay scale for the public university teachers in order to improve the quality of education by attracting meritorious individuals to the profession.

They also urged the government and the newly formed pay commission to take immediate steps to this end at a meeting at Dhaka University Club.

They also said that the discrimination in salaries between the teachers of public and private universities should be removed.



PHOTO: STAR

Physiotherapy Students' Union stages a demonstration in front of the Aparajeya Bangla on the Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding release of detained students.



অসম জৰুৰি কুকুৰ—এৰ বাইৰ, হংস অৰ মৰ্টে

সব মিলে শক্তি দেয় বটপটি

Tribune/Star/Crown