

'Religious leaders, NGOs can help fight HIV/AIDS'

UNB, Dhaka  
Information Secretary Jamil Osman yesterday said religious leaders and non-government organisations (NGOs) can play a vital role in sensitising people about HIV/AIDS.

Statistics on HIV infection is in favour of Bangladesh, but more efforts are needed to combat the spread of the deadly virus, he added.

He said this at the opening of a two-day training consortium on HIV/AIDS at the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PID) office in the city.

The consortium was jointly organised by health and family welfare ministry, Padakkhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra and Save the Children-USA to sensitise officials and trainers of different departments and institutes under the information ministry about HIV/AIDS, says a PID hand-out.

The secretary said intensive monitoring and evaluation of the impact of HIV/AIDS prevention programmes should be in place, adding that an effective communication strategy can deliver better result in the fight against the spread of the virus.

Padakkhep Executive Director Iqbal Ahammad chaired the training consortium.

Additional Secretary to Information Ministry Md Mamunur Rashid Chowdhury and Joint Secretary Kamaluddin Ahmed and Padakkhep Adviser Shahjahan Muzamdar also spoke on the occasion.

Pay wages, arrears to workers before Eid Demands Nagorik Sanghati

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nagorik Sanghati yesterday staged a silent sit-in programme on Dhaka University campus demanding payment of wages and arrears to the workers of different government and non-government sectors including jute, sugar and railway before Eid-ul-Fitr, says a press release.

It also demanded 20 percent dearness allowances for workers of all sectors like the officials and employees of jute mills.

At the programme, leaders of Nagorik Sanghati stressed the need for bringing to book the concerned officials who helped to turn the jute mills sector into non-profitable sector.

Terminating the recent statement of LGRD adviser a policy of using force they said such a speech would only instigate the workers to be more aggressive.

Around hundreds of people from different professions took part in the programme holding banners and placards.

General Secretary of Nagorik Sanghati Sharifuzzaman Sharif read out a written statement on this occasion.

Noted columnist Syed Abul Maksud, Dhaka University teachers Mokaddem Hossain, Sheikh Hafizur Rahman Karzon and Robayet Ferdous, politician Ruhin Hossain Prince and Vashkor Rasha were present at the programme.

'PLAYING WITH COLOUR'

Children with disabilities display their talents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Tareq, a 16-year-old boy, can now draw pictures.

One of his framed pictures has been put on display in an exhibition titled 'Playing with Colour' which showcases similar illustrations by children with autism, intellectual and multiple disabilities.

In his picture, Tareq drew two houses under a cloudy sky and a river flowing by it.

"I love to draw. My madam taught me how to draw," he said showing his picture after the inauguration of the exhibition at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts at Dhanmondi in the city.

He, however, was not capable enough to elaborate the picture. The five-day exhibition, organised by SEID (Special Education for Intellectually Disabled) Trust and Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, began yesterday. It has been sponsored by Golden Harvest.

Tareq's middle-aged mother Jaheda Khatun said she has four sons and two daughters, but all the sons are intellectually disabled.

One of them is Nasir who often leaves the house and returns after a few days on his own whims.

"We took our children to many hospitals, but got no treatment. People are also unwilling to rent us their house. We are forced to rent a room at Geneva Camp (a camp for the stranded Pakistanis) of Mohammadpur," Jaheda said.

She said only being admitted to SEID Trust School for about a year her sons can now write their names and one of them can draw pictures.

Jaheda is the wife of a man who had a furniture business. But as he is sick now he cannot work. So she runs the family by sewing cloth.

She thinks her children would have improved much more if they could be admitted to such a school like SEID Trust in their early ages.

Another autistic child Adil Haque, 18, who drew a picture of Cleopatra offering a flower to Antonio, has a different story.

Her mother Dr Leedy Haque said when she got to know that Adil has autism, they took him to London where he was treated for



A five-day drawing exhibition titled 'Playing with Colour' by children with disabilities began at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

four years.

"I used to supply him various toys and books. One day I saw him taking interest in a book on Egypt. The next day he pronounced the word 'Egypt' and then 'museum'.

Then I provided him with a number of books on Egypt and made his room look like a museum. Thus Adil developed a special interest in Egypt," said Dr Leedy, who has now become a professional autism consultant.

She said autism is a neuron development problem, but the brain of an autistic child could be improved up to a high level if not totally cured.

Special care to the intellectually disabled or autistic children may be possible for affluent and educated parents like Dr Leedy, but problems are acute in the cases of the parents of low-

income groups.

"That is where we work. Our support is for the underprivileged families," said Dilara Satter Mitu, director of SEID Trust, which has two schools with 150 children with intellectual and multiple disability and autism.

This non-government organisation provides medical support, special education, educational materials, speech therapy, vocational training, nutritional support and transport services to the children.

As part of advocacy to raise awareness about the rights of people with disabilities, SEID Trust arranged an art competition in June this year where 115 such children took part. Their 60 pictures have been selected for the exhibition Playing with Colour.

Quoting World Health

Organisation, Dilara Satter said 10 percent of total population in Bangladesh suffer from disability and three percent of them are intellectually challenged.

"I applaud this wonderful outcome with the hope that it would work for them as a bridge over the troubles they have endured for a better world," said South Korean Ambassador in Dhaka Suk Bum Park who spoke as chief guest at the inaugural function.

Women Entrepreneurs Association of Bangladesh President Nasrin Awal Mintoo, SEID Trust Chairperson Dr Naim Ahmed, Bengal Foundation Managing Director Luva Nahid Chowdhury, and Golden Harvest Group Chairperson Zaheda Khatoon also spoke on the occasion.

CA's visit boosts ties with China

Says Iftekhar

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday said that the recent visit of Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed to China has strengthened bilateral ties between the two friendly countries, raising them to new heights.

He said this in a statement upon the return of the chief adviser and his delegation from China in the early hours of yesterday. The foreign adviser was also a member of the delegation.

Iftekhar said that the chief adviser held talks with the key leadership of China, including President Hu Jintao, Vice President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao.

The discussions underscored the fact that Bangladesh-China relations were "time-tested" and "all-weather", and that they symbolised a "comprehensive partnership for cooperation", he added.

The foreign adviser stated that some new potential areas for

cooperation and possible Chinese support also came up this time.

These included the construction of future seventh and eighth Friendship bridges planned on Meghna and Meghna-Gomti, collaboration on nuclear power technology with a view to implementing the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant and on the production of hybrid seeds for expanding agricultural production.

Another important subject that was discussed was a future road link between Bangladesh and China through Myanmar, the foreign adviser further stated. "It was agreed that both sides will take it up with Myanmar," he said.

As for cooperation on education, the Chinese side, in response to a request from the chief adviser doubled the number of scholarships offered to Bangladeshi students from 50 to 100.

They assured that facilities could be made available to other students as well, Iftekhar said.

He further said, "The three agreements signed during the visit on economic and technical cooperation, exchange of hydrological information on

Brahmaputra and scientific cooperation in the field of agriculture and all these would contribute to deepening our bilateral partnership."

The foreign adviser further stated that the chief adviser addressed a well-attended gathering of Chinese business houses and investors, apprising them of the mutual advantages of broadened commerce and investments.

The Chinese investors were told that a Special Economic Zone would be established for them so that Chinese technology and Bangladeshi trained manpower could collaborate to manufacture products for third markets, he further added.

"The visit most certainly strengthened the ties that bind our two Asian and developing countries. China is important for us, as Bangladesh is for China," he said.

"I have every confidence that all governments to follow will bear this in mind, and that close ties with China will be an eternal pillar of Bangladesh's foreign policy. I know the Chinese side also shares these sentiments," he said.

JU Eid, Durga Puja vacation begins today

A CORRESPONDENT, JU

Jahangirnagar University (JU) will go on a vacation today on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr and Durga Puja.

The university will remain closed for 25 days. However, the examinations will be held on schedule during the vacation and the offices will remain open until September 28.

Sources said the offices will reopen on October 9 and classes will resume on October 14.



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Members of Nagorik Sanghati form a human chain in front of Milon Square on the Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding payment of salary arrears to the workers in jute and other sectors.

Deputy Managing Editor

The Daily Star, the English national daily with the highest circulation in the country, is going to appoint a DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR. Ideal candidate must be an MBA or Masters in Management/Human Resource or equivalent degree in Economics or Commerce with outstanding leadership qualities and proven track record of achievements to lead a highly motivated and talented team to raise revenue and circulation. She/He must also create new products to capture hitherto untapped markets. She/He must possess high-level management experience. Applicants must have minimum 10 years practical experience with any reputed national or international organization to qualify for the post. Highly active, dynamic candidates with innovative, creative minds and familiar with modern IT based management system would be given preference. Attractive pay package with 24-hour office car will be provided to the selected candidate. Applicants with above qualities are requested to apply along-with complete bio-data and a passport size photograph to reach the following address by 25 September, 2008.

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Envelopes must be marked "Application for Deputy Managing Editor" at the top.

CPB protests govt move to increase price of gas, electricity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday protested the government move to increase the price of electricity and gas saying it will add to the sufferings of people amid ongoing price spiral.

The government plans to increase the price of electricity and gas by 41 percent and 53 percent respectively, says a CPB press release.

Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission has arranged mass hearing on the price increase of electricity and gas, and has already completed a hearing on electricity price while September 24 has been fixed to hold hearing on gas price.

In a statement, CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said the hearing will bring no good if the government takes decision in this regard ignoring opinion of the experts.

They said increased gas price would also increase the price of industrial products.