

Take special projects to ensure education for deprived people

Rasheda tells dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury yesterday said special projects will have to be taken to ensure education for all and reach the target of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) by 2015.

"We have performed well in many fields especially declining of dropout rate and gender disparity. But we are yet to reach our target in some deprived areas like Char, Haor and Monga-hit region and the people of Dalit community. Now time has come to focus on them," said Rasheda at a dialogue in the city.

She said professional courses like TOEFL might be introduced for enhancing the quality of teachers.

"I hope the next elected government will take this type of programme to improve the quality of teachers," she added.

The dialogue on 'Achieving Universal Primary Education with Quality and Equity' was organised jointly by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and Campaign for Popular Education (Cape) at Brac Centre Inn where educationists, experts and top officials of education ministry and concerned bodies took part.



Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury speaks at a dialogue on 'Achieving Universal Primary Education with Quality and Equity' at Brac Centre Inn in the city yesterday. On her right are Prof Rehman Sobhan and Badrul Alam Tarafdar.

CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan, who moderated the dialogue, said new thoughts and ideas on how to ensure quality education for all will have to be gathered through continuing dialogue on education.

"A total of 82 percent of boys and 87 percent of girls are attending the schools in 2008 while this partici-

pation was 63 percent and 51 percent respectively in 1988," said Dr Mahabub Hossain, executive director of Brac, while presenting his keynote paper.

Identifying the main causes behind the dropout from the school, he said boys are dropped out to give labour to family enterprises while the girls for early mar-

riage.

Manzoor Ahmed, senior adviser of the Institute of Education Development of Brac University, also presented a keynote paper where he suggested introduction of unified or common school system to implement the right to education.

"Primary education should be extended up to class eight," he said, adding that one ministry titled 'Education and Human Resource' should be made merging existing two ministries of education, and primary and mass education.

Primary and Mass Education Secretary-in-Charge Badrul Alam Tarafdar, former education minister Sheikh Shahidul Islam, Prof Siddiqur Rahman of Dhaka University, former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Kazi Saleh Ahmed, Education Expert Amir Chowdhury and primary school teachers BM Asadullah and Shamsul Alam also took part in the dialogue.

People's Engineering Day Nov 8

DU CORRESPONDENT

Diploma engineers will observe the 'People's Engineering Day' on November 8 with a call to establish technology-based political culture to help tackle economic crisis.

The Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh (IDEB) has drawn up month-long programmes to observe the day, which also marks the 38th founding anniversary of the institute.

The programmes include view exchange meeting between the leaders of the diploma engineers' association and IDEB, voluntary blood donation, discussion, rallies, reception to noted personalities and cultural functions.

Speaking at a press conference yesterday, IDEB leaders observed that there is no alternative but to establish a technology-based political culture to offset the impacts of the global financial meltdown.

They also placed a 15-point recommendation including use of proper technologies to face natural disasters, development of poly-technic institutes and introduction of technology education in school, establishment of industries and generation of 4,000 megawatt electricity.

IDEB President Rafiqul Islam Bhuiyan, General Secretary Kazi Nazrul Islam, Pradeep Kumar Goshal and Azizur Rahman were present at the press conference.

HC commutes death sentences of 3 convicts to life term

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday commuted the death sentences of three convicts to life imprisonment for 1999 killing of engineer Humayun Kabir in Dhaka.

The trial court in 2003 convicted and sentenced to death Faisal Alam Ansari, his brother Mohammad Saiful Alam Ansari and their goon Rana Ahmed.

Convict Faisal, a partner of Kabir's oil business in the US, is now in jail, while Ansari and Rana Ahmed remained absconding.

Justice M Imman Ali of the single death reference bench, delivered the judgment commuting the death penalty to life term.

Earlier, on November 22, 2005, a two-judge HC bench passed dissenting orders in the murder case. Justice Khondker Musa Khaled affirmed the trial court death sentences, while Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury opposed it and passed life term imprisonment.

Kabir was gunned down at Central Road in Dhanmondi in the city on the night of November 21, 1999 when he went with Faisal to see a would-be bride.

After trial, Judge Mohammad Sirajul Islam of the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the verdict on July 29, 2003 awarding death sentences to the three accused of killing Kabir in a bid to grab his property.

Advocate Abdul Malek and Anisul Huq appeared for Faisal while Gulzar Hossain pleaded for the state.

Medical college admission test tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

The admission test of the government medical colleges for the academic session 2008-09 will be held tomorrow.

Details of the seat plan will be displayed on the bulletin boards of the respective examination centres, officials of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) said yesterday.

ELECTION MANIFESTOS

Include decentralisation, local govt issues

Speakers urge political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Governance Advocacy Forum yesterday demanded that the political parties include the announcement of decentralisation and strengthening the local government bodies in the election manifestos.

The forum, a platform of 33 organisations working to strengthen local governments, placed an 11-point demand at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

The leaders of the forum also demanded the parties take steps to adopt a policy for administrative, financial, political and economic decentralisation.

Coordinator of the forum Mohsin Ali said though the political parties

had promised in the manifestos in the past to strengthen the local government bodies but they did not do so.

The policy for decentralisation and strong local government bodies are needed for sustainable development and poverty reduction in the country, he added.

Justice Gholam Rabbani said the rules of the people's representatives in the decentralised administrative spheres are needed to solve the problems in the parliamentary democracy in the country.

The demands include ensuring women's participation in the local government commission and one-third representation of women in all local bodies, giving the responsibilities of conducting service works of

the state like education, health, agriculture and rural development to the local bodies.

The forum leaders also demanded holding of the district council elections and transparency and accountability in every sphere of the administration.

Executive Director of SAP Bangladesh Syed Nurul Alam, Programme Manager of Manusher Jonno Foundation Ziaul Kabir, Chief Director of Angkor Bangladesh Md Helaluddin, Convener of Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum Mahabubur Rahman Tulu, Executive Director of Voice Ahmed Swapna Mahmud and Nasimul Hasan of Incidin Bangladesh also took part in the press conference.



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia speaks at a meeting of four-party alliance at her Gulshan office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

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