

1.6m children under five die a yr for lack of clean water

BSS, Dhaka

Every year, 1.6 million children under the age of five die lacking access to clean water while 110,000 children of the same age bracket fade out in Bangladesh from water borne diseases.

According to official health statistics, 65 million under five children are affected by water borne diseases because of lack of sanitation.

The UN sources said under the

global scenario urbanisation and population growth are threatening one of the UN's most ambitious millennium development goals. The UN had hoped to halve the number of people without access to clean drinking water and sanitation by 2015.

But, progress has slowed due to population increases and expected high migration to urban areas, say the World Health Organisation and Unicef. They estimated some 1.1 billion people

worldwide lack clean drinking water.

Some 2.6 billion people have no sanitation and, every year 1.6 million children under the age of five die because of such a lack of access. And it is hampering the achievement of other millennium development goals. In education, for example, young girls who have to walk miles to fetch the family's water do not have time to go to school.

The report by the WHO and

Unicef reveals that an additional 300,000 people would have to be provided with water supplies everyday for the next 10 years to achieve the goal on clean water. On sanitation, the goal will not be reached unless 450,000 people get services every day from now until 2015.

The number of people without clean water in urban centres actually doubled between 1990 and 2004. Meanwhile, many rural areas have not been reached at all.

Idu, Habibul elected Udichi president, secy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gulam Mohammad Idu and Habibul Alam were elected president and general secretary of Bangladesh Udichi Shilpogoshi on the concluding day of its two-day conference yesterday, says a press release.

Bijan Ray was elected treasurer of the 71-member committee.

They were elected at the 16th national conference of the Udichi held at Shilpakala Academy in the city.

Prof Jatin Sarker administered the oath of the office-bearers of the new committee.

Road crashes kill 2

METRO DESK

Two people were killed in separate road accidents in Rajshahi and Panchagarh yesterday.

Our RU correspondent reports: One person was killed and one seriously injured in separate road accidents in Rajshahi yesterday.

The deceased is identified as Dulal Mondol, 37, of Alipur village of the upazila.

Police said the accident occurred when a 'Bhututi', a locally made engine-propelled vehicle, fell into a roadside ditch at Bijoynagar in Godagari leaving Dulal seriously injured.

Locals rushed him to the local health complex where he succumbed to his injuries.

In another accident, Hasibul

Hossain, 27, was seriously injured when a Dhaka-bound speeding truck knocked his motorcycle at Binodpur in the city.

Our correspondent from Thakurgaon adds: One person was killed in a road accident on Thakurgaon-Panchagarh road at Pathraj bazar under Boda upazila in Panchagarh yesterday.

The victim was identified as Shabul, 18, son of late Akbar Ali of Tunirhat village under Sadar upazila.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred when a Panchagarh-bound bus knocked Shabul down from behind leaving him dead on the spot.

Police sent the body to Panchagarh Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Novartis Int'l Biotechnology Camp held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Novartis International Biotechnology Leadership Camp, an annual event for postgraduate students with high management and leadership potential, was held in Hong Kong recently, says a press release.

Leading biotechnology experts and 55 selected students from top universities worldwide took part in the four-day camp last month.

Two Bangladeshi students -- Rashidul Hasan and Kazi Ali Tahzeab of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University, -- played a significant role in the camp. Novartis (Bangladesh) Limited sponsored them.

AUAP 8th confce held

METRO DESK

The eighth general conference of the Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific (AUAP) was held at Hotel Westin in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury inaugurated the conference while University Grants Commission Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam and AUAP President Prof Ju Vai Pan attended the programme as special guests.

Vice Chancellor of American International University-Bangladesh and also the incoming president of AUAP, delivered the welcome address.

In the conference importance was laid on three areas -- understanding of knowledge management, re-engineering of current practices of knowledge management and combined efforts of key stakeholders in order to create a synergy in the area. Importance was also laid on creating atmosphere for developing human resource by government, universities and industries.

Presidents, vice-chancellors and rectors of universities, and government representatives from Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Iran, Thailand, Malaysia and Philippines attended the programme.



Tiny Tots (Junior Section) and Summerfield International School organise an art competition for the students on their campus in the city yesterday on the occasion of their 35th anniversary.



PHOTO: STAR

GPA-5 achievers in the HSC examinations from Vigarunnisa Noon School and College pose for photograph with their parents and guardians at a reception programme on the school premises in the city yesterday.

BTV held hostage under OSD's dictatorship

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD, Ctg

Bangladesh Television (BTV) has been under the dictatorship of an officer on special duty (OSD) for the last three weeks.

Kamaluddin Ahmed, who was made OSD at the establishment ministry after he was relieved of the charge as director general (DG) of BTV on October 13, is still continuing in the office.

Previously, he had been the joint secretary (development) at the information ministry and serving BTV as its DG under an additional duty.

He was made the OSD following a written complaint submitted against him by a renowned female writer (of drama Sakal Sandha).

The higher authorities appointed one Mokhesur Rahman, another joint secretary ranking officer, as the joint secretary of the information ministry to replace Kamaluddin and handed him over the charge of DG BTV as an additional duty.

But Kamaluddin is still occupying both the posts at BTV and the ministry. Despite repeated attempts to contact, he was not available for comments.

When asked, Joint-Secretary (Broadcast) Abu Taher, who is also taking care of the administrative activities both at BTV and Bangladesh Radio, on Thursday confirmed Kamaluddin's becoming OSD and his continuation at BTV as DG till date.

Meanwhile, while clinging to the DG post, Kamaluddin also transferred a tele-print operator to BTV Chittagong Centre from where the latter was stand-released on charge of different irregularities only four months ago.

Sources said the transfer order was considered as tantamount to disregarding the chief adviser (CA) since tele-print operator Alauddin along with cameraman Mohammad Hossain was stand-released on July 3 at the directive of the CA.

Alauddin joined his previous workplace at BTV Chittagong Centre on November 1 and joined the news section on November 4 that triggered a huge resentment among the employees, particularly female newscasters and artists who were harassed by him.

RU 'controversial' staffs lay siege to VC office

RU CORRESPONDENT

Some 200 'controversially appointed' fourth-class employees of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday kept Acting Vice Chancellor Prof Mammunul Keramat confined to his office for one hour to press home their demand for regularisation of their jobs.

The agitating employees laid siege to the VC's office and staged a sit-in in front of the office.

During the demonstration, they also demanded resignation of Prof. Mammunul Keramat for his failure to confirm their jobs by the deadline they gave earlier.

The employees also urged the chief adviser and the University Grants Commission (UGC) chairman to take necessary steps for confirmation of their jobs.

They threatened not to cooperate in the upcoming admission test if their demand goes unheeded.

Later, a seven-member team of the employees held talks with the RU authorities at the VC's office.

RU Treasurer Prof Dr Mozammel Haque, Registrar Prof Mohammad Shafi, Proctor Enamul Haque, Student Adviser Faridul Islam Pintu and high-ups of the law enforcement agencies were present at the meeting.

Sources said the acting VC assured the agitating employees that he would meet UGC chairman today and request him to take necessary steps to regularise their jobs.

Following the assurance, the employees withdrew their sit-in demonstration at around 3:00pm.

Earlier, they took out a protest procession on the campus and paraded different streets.

A large number of police were deployed on the campus to avert any untoward incident.

When contacted, Prof Mammunul Keramat said, "We will talk with the higher authorities about their jobs."

The university authorities had appointed 544 third- and fourth-class employees against 255 vacant posts in 2004 in gross violation of the university rules. Jobs of about 300 employees were regularised during the rule of the BNP-Jamaat coalition.

Later, the High Court stayed the recruitment following the filing of a case.

BSAF executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Wahida Banu was elected chairperson of the executive board of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) for the term 2008-09, says a press release.

Other office bearers are ANM Imam Hasanat, co-chairperson, and Tariqul Islam, treasurer.

The election was held at the 17th annual general meeting of the forum held at LGED Bhaban auditorium yesterday.

Garment Workers' Demand Fortnight begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Garment Workers' Demand Fortnight is being observed from November 8 to 22.

The demand includes wage compatible with market price, 50 percent dearness allowance, factory-based rationing system, right to trade union and residence and withdrawal of false cases against the workers.

At a press conference in the city yesterday, Bangladesh Garment Workers Trade Union Centre (BGWTUC) announced different programmes to observe the fortnight.

These include a hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar on November 14 from 10:00am to 5:00pm.

The other programmes are human chain, meeting and rally on the premises of garment industries.

Political and labour leaders, intellectuals, poets, litterateurs, economists and people from other professions will take part in the programmes to express their solidarity with the demands of the workers, says a press release.

BGWTUC General Secretary KM Ruhul Amin read out the keynote paper at the press conference.

BGWTUC Adviser Montu Ghosh, President Idris Ali, Sadequr Rahman Shamim and Nasima Akhter were present on the occasion.



Monsur elected to UN body on rights of persons with disabilities

METRO DESK

Monsur Ahmed Choudhury, a visually impaired development practitioner in Bangladesh, has been elected a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, says a press release.

The First Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities elected a total of 12 independent experts to the committee at the United Nations in New York on November 3.

Monsur Ahmed, managing director of Jatiya Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation, who was nominated by the government for this position, secured the highest number of votes. He will lead the committee from January 1, 2009.

This committee will work as the monitoring committee to ensure full protection and promotion of rights of persons with disabilities in every member state who ratified the convention and the committee will work in close cooperation and support from the UN office of the High Commission of Human Rights in Geneva.

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MEMBER REHAB

'119 acid, 419 rape victims in 10 months'

BSS, Jessore

Speakers at a workshop here yesterday said 119 women fell victim of acid violence and 419 were raped during the last 10 months across the country.

They said violence against women had risen due to lack of proper initiative against this vice and also awareness among the people in the country.

Human Rights Organisation 'Odhiakar' and the district administration jointly organised the workshop in association with ActionAid.

Additional District Magistrate Sanjoy Kumar Banik, deputy manager of ActionAid Tahmina Haq, editor of The Daily Kalyan Ekramuddaulah, president of Jessore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Shahidul Islam and Advocate Abul Hossain, among others, spoke at the workshop.



PHOTO: STAR

Participants at the 3rd Ittefaq-Stamford National Debate Championship-2008 in the city on Thursday. From left are Ittefaq Editor Rahat Khan, Stamford University Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr K Moudud Elahi, Sara Advertising Ltd Chairman Md Nazrul Islam Sikdar and SDF Chief Coordinator Tahsina Yasmin.

Ittefaq-Stamford national debate contest begins

METRO DESK

The 3rd Ittefaq-Stamford National Debate Championship-2008 began at Siddeswari campus auditorium of Stamford University Bangladesh in the city on Thursday, says a press release.

Prof Dr K Moudood Elahi, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Stamford University, was present at the inaugural ceremony as the chief guest while Rahat Khan, editor of the daily Ittefaq, and Md Nazrul Islam Sikdar, chairman of Sara Advertising Ltd, were present as special guests.

More than 100 teams are participating in the championship. They include Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Jagannath University, North South University, American International University, Motijheel Ideal School & College, Rajuk Uttara Model College, St Joseph School and College and Motijheel Govt Boys' School and College.

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