

Constituency advocacy can ensure education for all

Says Rasheda K Chy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

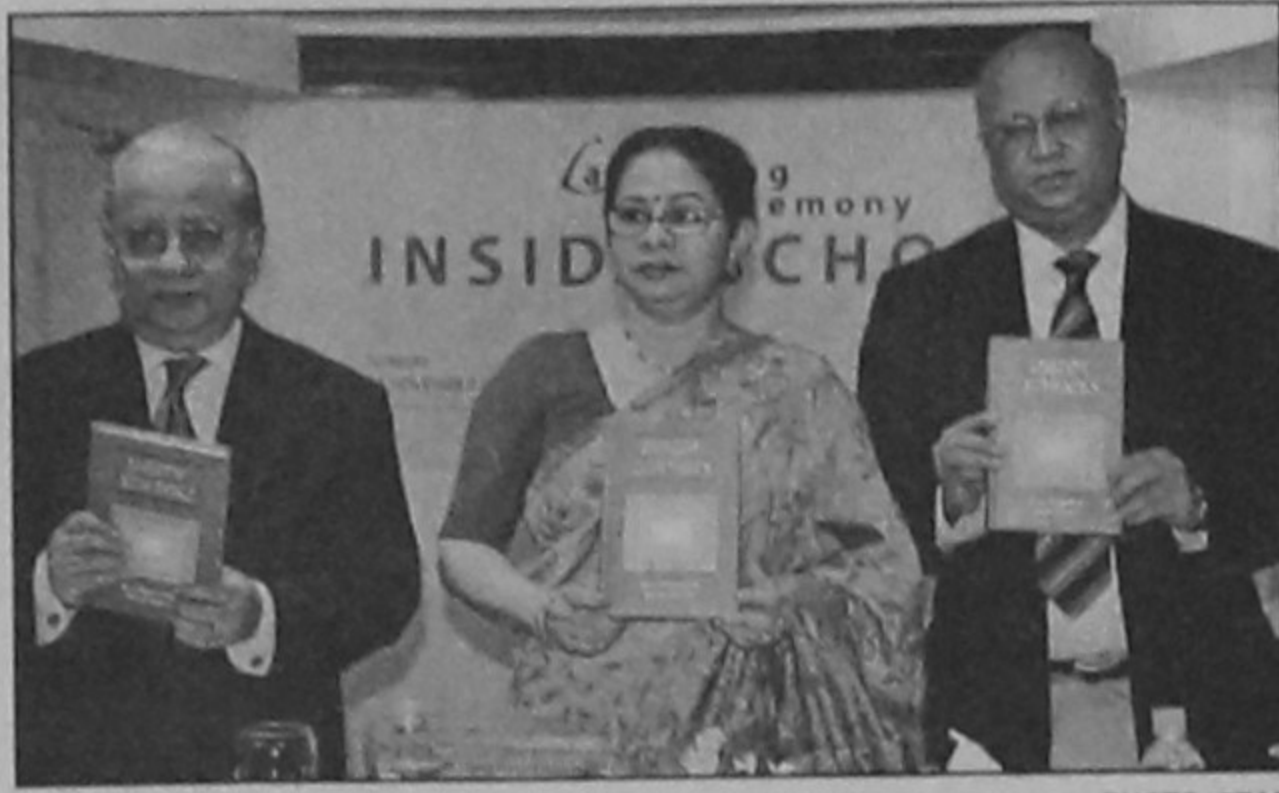
Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury yesterday underlined the importance of constituency advocacy to ensure education for all (EFA) and reach the target of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

"Still it is a big challenge for all to bring all the children to primary schools by 2010. We are yet to reach our target due to some deprivation in pocket areas like char land, monga region, children with disabilities, indigenous and Dalit communities," she added.

Rasheda said, "Time has come to address these deprivation areas and for this reason, constituency advocacy is needed ahead of the ninth parliamentary election."

She was speaking at the launch of a book titled 'Inside Schools' jointly written by Samir Ranjan Nath, research coordinator in the research and evaluation division of Brac, and Amina Mahbub, chief of research evaluation and dissemination unit of Plan Bangladesh at Brac Centre Inn in the city.

Unveiling the cover of the book, the adviser said political parties usually give priority to education in their electoral manifestos, but they did not



(From left) Former adviser Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury and Brac Executive Director Dr Mahbub Hossain hold copies of a book titled 'Inside Schools' at its launch at Brac Centre Inn yesterday.

implement their pledges afterwards.

"We have performed well in many fields, especially in reducing the dropout rate and gender disparity. But, we face troubles to bring children of extreme poor and deprivation pockets in the schools due to objections from the guardians," she added.

Rasheda said the prevailing class culture would have to be changed especially by ensuring the education of the children from hard-core families.

She also encouraged the third group research for identifying the key points on how to reach education in the deprivation points.

Samir said, "The book is an outcome of an ethnographic investigation in four medium category government primary schools. Key theme of the research was 'school culture'. How the people in schools do things was the centre of the study, which included knowledge, belief, behaviour, morals, law, custom and other capacities and habits."

Former adviser Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Director General of Primary Education Directorate Nazrul Islam Khan and Brac Executive Director Dr Mahbub Hossain also took part in the programme.

Agyan Party member beaten to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A member of Agyan Party was beaten to death and another injured in the city's Jatrabari area on Saturday night.

The dead, identified as Prince, 25, and the injured Rokeya Begum, 30, were residents of Konapara in Jatrabari.

Police said Prince and Rokeya tried to enter a flat in Jatrabari owned by Bulbul, a trader, as guests at about 8:15pm on Saturday.

As the residents started screaming, locals rushed to the spot and gave them a good beating.

Police rescued the two and took them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where Prince succumbed to his injuries at around 2:30am on Sunday.

Quoting Rokeya, Jatrabari police said they are members of Agyan Party.

Police said Bulbul was not present at the house and they entered the house introducing themselves as relatives of Bulbul.



Sightsavers Int'l chief arrives today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chairman of Sightsavers International Lord Nigel Crisp will arrive in Dhaka today on a three-day visit, says a press release.

During his stay, he will visit various programmes and activities supported by Sightsavers in Bangladesh.

Lord Crisp will also meet the Deputy High Commissioner Duncan Norman and the DFID Country Representative Chris Austin at British High Commission; the Brac chairman; and other senior government and non-government officials.

Sightsavers is an international agency based in the UK preventing blindness in 34 countries across the world.

In Bangladesh, Sightsavers has been operating since 1973.

HC issues rule on govt, EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule upon the government and the Election Commission (EC) to explain within four weeks why the provision of the Representation of People Order (RPO) barring NGO chief executives from contesting the parliamentary elections should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.

After hearing a writ petition, a division bench of Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana and Justice M Rezaul Haque, issued the rule.

M Iman Ali, Executive Director of Pally Samaj Unnayan Sangstha in Kurigram, also a candidate for the December 29 parliamentary election from Kurigram-1 constituency, filed the writ petition with the HC challenging the validity of the particular RPO provision. Advocate Tajul Islam appeared for the petitioner.



BNP leader MK Anwar, left, and Awami League leader Syed Ashraf Islam, right, talk to reporters after their meetings with election commissioners at the Election Commission office in the city yesterday.

'Ensure equitable wages for domestic helps'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The women domestic helps of Dhaka city at a dialogue yesterday placed a 10-point demand that includes recognising them as labourers, ensuring equitable wages and framing a code of conduct for them.

ActionAid Bangladesh and its partner organisation Assistance for Slum Dwellers (ASD) jointly organised the dialogue on the experience of women domestic helps of Dhaka city at LGED Bhaban.

Eminent litterateur Selina Hossain moderated the dialogue while Assistant Professor of Women and Gender Studies department of Dhaka University Sohele Khadiza Azad presented the keynote paper at the dialogue where some hundred

women domestic helps shared their experiences.

The demands include bringing domestic work under labour law, establishing a tripartite commission which will declare leave, wage work period and overtime, framing a minimum code of conduct through establishing a committee to determine the work environment, establishing a special cell, where the domestic helps can lodge complaints, and arranging food and necessary medication at the workplace.

They also demanded right to union under labour law.

Child rights have to be ensured in the case of employing child labourers and gradually employing children as domestic helps should be banned,

emphasising their alternative employment and right to education, they also demanded.

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Labour Ministry will conduct special campaign to create awareness about the responsibility of those who engage domestic helps at their houses, they added.

The speakers, however, observed that the government should play an important role to this end.

Associate Professor Maleka Begum of Dhaka University, Executive Director of Steps Towards Development Ranjan Karmakar and Programme Coordinator of Save the Children Sweden-Denmark (SCSD) Selina Ahmed also spoke.

GRENADE ATTACK CASE Defence lawyers cross-examine complainant

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Defence lawyers of seven accused, including detained former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu and Harkatul Jihad (Huji) chief Mufti Abdul Hannan, yesterday cross-examined Sub-Inspector Sharif Faruque Ahmed in the August 21 grenade attack case.

The grenade attack on an Awami League rally took place in 2004. SI Faruque is the complainant of the case.

Judge Mohammad Masdar Hossain of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 recorded statements of the complainant and fixed November 30 for the next hearing. On that day, lawyers of 14 other accused will cross-examine him.

During yesterday's hearing, 14 out of 22 accused, including Pintu and Hannan, now in jail custody, were produced before the court.

Food & Cultural Festival begins today

METRO DESK

A seven-day Bangladesh Food & Cultural Festival begins at Radisson Water Garden Hotel in Dhaka today, says a press release.

This is the second Bangladesh festival organised by the Radisson Hotel.

Chefs of the hotel will present local delicacies of specialised cuisine of different regions in the country.

There will be food stalls representing different divisions and regions of Bangladesh along with many local delicacies.

A cultural team will also perform to showcase Bangladeshi culture every evening.

AIDS awareness fair ends

METRO DESK

A two-day 'HIV and AIDS Targeted Intervention (HATI) Mela' aiming to raise awareness among the people about the deadly disease ended in Sylhet yesterday, says a press release.

NASP and Unicef are jointly organising the event.

Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran was present as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony at the United Centre on Saturday.

On the first day, 400 NGO workers took out a colourful procession in the city.

NASP and Unicef have been managing the HIV and AIDS Targeted Intervention Project (HATI) since September 2004 in collaboration with different NGOs to prevent HIV infection among the Most At Risk (MAR) groups. This fair disseminated the lessons and experiences learnt from the project among the stakeholders.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kamal Uddin Talukder, director (finance) of Bangladesh Telephone Company Ltd and lifetime member of the Dhaka University Economic Department Alumni Association (DUEDA), passed away at Birdem hospital in the city on Saturday, says a press release.

Dr Abdul Sattar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Abdul Sattar Hawlader, a physician of Niamoti port at Bagerganj upazila in Barisal, passed away due to old-age complications on Friday at the age of 75, says a press release.

He left behind his two wives, eight children and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

He was buried at his family graveyard in Razapur upazila.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Dipti Lohani, an artiste of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, says a press release.

She helped the freedom fighters during the Liberation War by giving shelter to them in her house.

A Qurankhwan and milad mahfil will be held at her village home in Ullapara.



Supporters of two Awami League leaders who did not get party nomination clash near Sudha Sadan at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

EMBEZZLEMENT CASE Moudud gets ad-interim bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted ad-interim bail for three months to former BNP minister Moudud Ahmed in an FDR embezzlement case filed by the government.

Meanwhile, another HC bench of Justice Muzammel Hossain and Justice Afzal Hossain Ahmed upon two separate petitions stayed for four weeks the proceedings against Awami League Joint Secretary Obaidul Kader in two bribery cases.

In response to a writ petition filed by Moudud, an HC bench comprising Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice Farah Mahbub stayed the proceedings of the case for three months and issued a rule upon the government to explain within four weeks why the inclusion of the case under the Emergency Powers Rules (EPR) should not be declared illegal.

Counsel for Moudud, Barrister Ahsanul Karim said his client would not get released as he was arrested in another case.

He said the police filed the FDR embezzlement case against Moudud with Motijheel Police Station on October 27.

He said Moudud filed the writ petition with the HC challenging the legality of bringing the case under the EPR.

Advocate Motahar Hossain Sajj, lawyer for Obaidul Kader, said the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) had filed the bribery cases with Paltan Police Station on September 30 last year.

The ACC accused Obaidul Kader of taking Tk 47 lakh and Tk 57 lakh in bribe from contractors at different times for clearing their due bills and awarding more development works under the National Sports Council by abusing power, he added.

He said his client was earlier granted bail by the HC in the cases.

Supporters clash over AL nominations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least two people were injured as supporters of two Awami League leaders, who were rejected party tickets, clashed outside the party chief's Sudha Sadan residence at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

The clash ensued at around 12:45pm as the adherents of Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiullah of Narayanganj and Dr Hannan Firoz of Jhalakathi tried to take their position before a TV screen on an information that Sheikh Hasina would address the leaders and activists through a video conference.

During the 15-minute clash, both the groups first scuffled and then used sticks and bricks that left two supporters of Shafiullah -- Iqbal and Kiron -- injured. Police charged baton on the angry supporters to disperse them.

Earlier, supporters of Shafiullah, who sought the AL ticket for Narayanganj-1 but failed to get it, assaulted the followers of another nominee

Gazi Golam Dasgir.

Since AL started giving nominations last week, supporters of several deprived leaders have been staging demonstrations outside Sudha Sadan in frantic efforts to get the party tickets for their expected candidates.

Similar demonstrations have also been going on at different parts in the country.

Meanwhile, the AL president yesterday met delegations of the deprived candidates separately for the second day.

The delegations of Mohammad Ali who sought nomination from Narsingdhi-1, barrister Amirul Islam from Kushtia-3, Shamsul Alam Dudu from Joypurhat-1, Dr Hannan Firoz from Jhalakathi-1 and Barrister Zakir Ahmed from Brahmanbaria-5 met Hasina and requested her to reconsider the nominations in those constituencies.

The party chief assured them of considering their demands after holding inquiries into those constituencies.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may fall slightly over the country, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 31.9 degree Celsius was recorded at Feni and the lowest of 12.0 degree at Rajshahi.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:11pm today and rises at 6:20am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	28.0	18.2	54	52
Chittagong	28.8	19.5	69	63
Rajshahi	28.0	12.0	71	-
Khulna	27.7	17.5	55	61
Barisal	28.7	17.5	67	82
Sylhet	29.1	17.0	73	72
Cox's Bazar	30.3	19.7	61	60



Dialogue

Centre for Policy Dialogue organises a dialogue on 'Regional disparity in Bangladesh: An emerging concern'. Venue: Brac Centre Inn. Time: 2:45pm.

Workshop

Press Institute of Bangladesh organises an orientation workshop for Mol officials on Right to Information Ordinance. Venue: PIB seminar room. Time: 9:00am.

Discussion

A discussion will be held on speedy trial of war criminals. Venue: Liberation War Museum. Time: 4:00pm.

EU seeks lifting of emergency

FROM PAGE 16

Stefan Frowein told reporters after the EU Troika's meeting with Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

He said the chief of the Election Observation Mission (EOM) was scheduled to arrive Sunday night to lead the long-term election observation. The core team of the EOM is already in Dhaka and short-term observers will come later to monitor the elections on December 29.

French Ambassador Charley Causseret who currently chairs the EU presidency said they want free, fair and fully participatory elections on time.

Ambassador of Sweden Britt Hagstrom was present as a Troika member.

During the meeting Frowein read out a message from European Commissioner for External Relations Dr Benita Ferrero-Waldner to Iftekhar.

In her message Ferrero-Waldner said the European Commission has consistently demonstrated its strong support for the democratic process in Bangladesh through substantial assistance to the preparation of voters list with photographs and decided to re-deploy the full EOM.

"I have followed closely the efforts which have been made by the authorities to reform the political and electoral system and to secure participation by all major parties in the parliamentary elections," she said.

Ferrero-Waldner said all stakeholders must work in a spirit of compromise for a solution to the present difficulties which best guarantees the stability and prosperity of Bangladesh and ensures that the new parliament is fully reflective of the democratic will of the people.

BSMMU VC REMOVAL CASE HC issues rule on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within two weeks why the government action removing MA Tahir from the post of the vice-chancellor of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) should not be declared illegal.

Following a writ petition filed by Tahir, an HC bench of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam

Siddiqui issued the rule.

On November 4, the government removed Tahir following various allegations of corruption, particularly, forgery concerning medical certificate for former BNP lawmaker Mosaddak Ali Falu.

Tahir filed the writ stating that the President had appointed him VC of BSMMU for three years and there was no provision in the law for removing the VC before the expiry of three years after the appointment.



Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim submits nomination papers for Awami League President Sheikh Hasina for Gopalganj-3 constituency to a returning officer in Gopalganj yesterday.

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Mosharraaf, Akhter freed on bail

FROM PAGE 16

Medical University at about 4:00pm. Inspector General of Prisons (IG-Prisons) Brig Gen Zakir Hassan said while talking to The Daily Star.

Sources said both the former state minister and former secretary were granted bail by the HC last week.

Earlier, a special court rejected the bail petition of Mosharraaf on November 10 and ordered to send him to jail after his surrender to the court in Barapukuria coal mine case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

On November 3, the HC had directed the former state minister to surrender before the trial court by November 9 to face the proceedings of Barapukuria coal mine corruption case filed against

him.

Former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and 10 other former ministers, including M Saifur Rahman, Matiur Rahman Nizami and Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid are also accused in the case.

The ACC filed the case on February 26 this year accusing them of causing a loss of Tk 159 crore to the state exchequer by awarding a contract for operating Barapukuria coal mine to a Chinese company through abuse of power.

Besides, Akhter was arrested in February from the premises of ACC where he went to submit his wealth statement. His name was also on the first list of 50 corruption suspects published by the ACC on February 18.

Another special court sentenced the former power secretary to 10 years' imprisonment on January 30 for amassing wealth worth Tk 2.23 crore illegally and concealing information of his wealth about Tk 80 lakh from the ACC. The court also fined him Tk 1 lakh in default of which he will have to spend three more months in jail.

His wife Nazneen Banu was also awarded three years' imprisonment for abetting her husband in amassing wealth illegally. Nazneen was fined Tk 50,000 and in default, she will have to suffer three more months in jail.

The court also ordered confiscation of the property acquired illegally by Akhter Hossain.