

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

'Introduce inclusive education at primary level'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a view-exchange meeting yesterday called for immediate introduction of inclusive education at primary level for children with disability.

The meeting was organised by National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) with the support of ActionAid Bangladesh at the Cirdap auditorium in the city.

The speakers said although the government recognised inclusive education in principle under Primary Education Development Programme-2 in 2004, it is yet to take any effective initiative in this respect.

By signing the Salamanca Declaration in 1994 and Dakar Declaration in 2000, the government took the obligation of ensuring primary education to all children including those with special needs, said Forum Director Dr Nafisur Rahman while present-

ing the keynote paper.

He said the government introduced a policy on disability in 1995 and enacted the Disability Welfare Act in 2001.

In the light of this act, the government formulated a national work plan in 2002 and the National Coordination Committee on Disability accepted the work plan in 2006, he added.

But all these efforts turned into futile exercise as none of them fulfilled the requirements of the people with disability, said Dr Rahman.

He called for integration of children with minor and mid-level disability into the mainstream school with structural reforms in education system to implement the inclusive education system.

Presiding over the meeting, Forum President Khandaker Jahurul Alam said, "We heard many rhetoric for the people with disability in the last eight years, now we

want to see the fulfillment of our requirements."

Speaking as chief guest, Director General of primary education directorate Mohammad Nazrul Islam Khan assured of including sign language in textbooks.

He said primary schools are yet to be ready for incorporating inclusive education, and media can play a major role in this regard.

Forum General Secretary Jawaharul Islam Mamun, Chairperson of the Committee of Act and Policy of the Forum AHM Noman Khan, Chairman of the Specialised Education Section of the Institute of Education and Research Dr Sharmin Haque, and Deputy Director of the Campaign for Popular Education Tasnim Atahar also spoke on the occasion.

Experts and stakeholders related to specialised and integrated education system also took part at the meeting.



PHOTO STAR

Members of Freedom Fighters' Day Observation Committee pay respect to the martyred freedom fighters after placing wreaths at the Shikha Chirantan at Suhrawardy Udyan in the city yesterday.

Rab man beats 2 photojournos in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Two photojournalists were assaulted by a member of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and his friends at Chandipur in Rajshahi yesterday.

The photojournalists are Azhar Uddin of the daily Prothom Alo and Abdul Jabid Apu of the daily Shamokal. They were rushed to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital and taken home after treatment.

The Rab member and his friends at the locality assaulted the photojournalists while they were taking snaps of dragging out of a human hauler driver from his vehicle. The human hauler allegedly hit the motorcycle of the Rab member. Locals rescued the photojournalists and took them to RMCH.

Rab officials said they had already initiated an inquiry. "If any Rab member is found guilty, departmental action will be taken," said an official.

Rajshahi Union of Journalists, Rajshahi Metropolitan Press Club, Rajshahi Photojournalists' Association and Rajshahi Rakkha Sangram Parishad condemned the attack and demanded punishment to the culprits.

IPI DELEGATION MEETS HASINA State of press freedom discussed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A delegation of the International Press Institute (IPI) called on Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at her residence at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

"We have discussed the role of media during election," David Dudge, director of the Vienna-based IPI who led the delegation, told reporters after the meeting.

He also said they discussed the situation of press freedom in Bangladesh and commitment of political parties to ensure freedom of the press.

Dudge informed journalists that the IPI dele-

gation would also meet Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and other political parties to know their views on freedom of press.

He also told newsmen that IPI's recommendations on press freedom will be published at a press conference today.

Owais Aslam Ali, secretary general of Pakistan Press Foundation, Padma Singh Karki, national committee chairman of IPI, Nepal, and Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, an IPI member from Bangladesh, were on the delegation.

AL presidium member Matia Chowdhury and AL Election committee co-chairman HT Imam were also present during the meeting.



PHOTO AL

International Press Institute Director David Dudge meets Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at her residence at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.



PHOTO PID

A delegation of Election Commission led by CEC ATM Shamsul Huda calls on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

SCULPTURE VANDALISED

DU students continue protest

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) students continued to stage demonstrations on the university campus yesterday protesting the attack on sculpture 'Balaka' by the activists of Ulama Anjuman-e-Al-Bayinat in the capital's Motijheel on Saturday night.

Several hundred students under the banner of Sangskriti Rakkha Andolan brought out

protest processions, held rallies, and organised street painting on the DU campus demanding exemplary punishment of the people responsible for the incident.

They also put blockade at around 12:00 noon on the roads near the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) intersection for about two hours to press home their demand.

The protesters also

demand a ban on all communal outfits including Al-Bayinat, Al-Yhsan and Hizbut-Tahrir.

The DU Students brought out a procession on the campus at about 11:00 am carrying placards inscribed with the words -- save culture, be united against fundamentalists, save art, save Balaka, save Lalon and save Bangla.

They said the attack on Balaka was not an isolated

incident. The attacks on Lalon sculpture in front of Zia International Airport and Balaka are closely intertwined.

The DU students said they would continue staging demonstrations on the campus today. They will bring out processions and hold rallies in the morning and also organise a cultural function in the evening at the foot of Raju Bhaskarja on the campus.

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