

## UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN, DROPOUTS Create second option for edn

Edn adviser tells view exchange meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman yesterday said the number of children who need a second option to continue education stands now at one crore and it is the duty of the government to create an option for them.

Speaking as the chief guest at a view exchange meeting on 'Open education for underprivileged students: Experience and potential', he said the main challenge is how to achieve the scale with a population of 15 crore.

The meeting was organised by Campe, Bangladesh Open University (BOU) and Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) with a view to extending an education programme for the underprivileged children.

Campe and BOU have been implementing the 'Junior School Certificate' pilot programme to bring the children who are dropped out from formal education through 'Open Distance Learning' system.

Under this project, some 2000 underprivileged and dropouts are being provided with education and vocational training by six organisations and through 40 centres.

The adviser said, "Often we create wonderful models of development but if we cannot go

through a large-scale programme, the success will be partial," adding that the government needs to think of transitioning the children, who are receiving the open education, to one crore.

If the next government considers three priority issues for it, education would be the first priority, he added.

Presenting a slide show on the programme and its rationale,

Research Fellow of PPRC Khandker Shakhawat Ali said this programme creates an opportunity to receive education at any stage of life along with part-time job and skill development training.

However, the challenges of the programme are typical attitude of the teachers, lack of coordination in management, partnership and implementa-

tion over by Biswa Sahitya Kendra Prof Abdullah Abu Syeed, the meeting was attended by BOU Dean Dr Ali Noor Rahman, Dhaka Ahsania Mission Executive Director Ehsanur Rahman and Dr Monzoor Ahmed of Brac as the panel discussants.

BOU Treasurer AKM Ruhul Amin Akand, acting director of Campe Md Azizul Haque, Director General of the Directorate of Primary and Mass Education Nazrul Islam Khan spoke at the meeting.



Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman speaks at a view exchange meeting at LGED Bhaban in the city yesterday. On his right is Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury and on his left is Md Azizul Haque.

tion sectors and lack of opportunity to utilise ICT elements and practical learning.

Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury

stressed the need for objective and independent evaluation of the pilot project. She also sought continuous monitoring from the education ministry.

## Security beefed up for polls

UNB, Dhaka

Some 50,000 military and adequate paramilitary troops started patrolling all metropolitan, district and upazila areas yesterday to build up foolproof security for the ninth parliamentary elections.

The security personnel went on patrol as part of extensive security measures taken up by Home Ministry following instruction of the Election Commission to help in holding peacefully the polls now scheduled for December 29 after lots of political hiccups.

A total of 6,000 members of Rapid Action Battalion as well as a sufficient number of Armed Police Battalion will also start performing their election-security duties from December 24 to further beef up the security bulwark.

Besides, about 466,000 members of Ansar will be on

duty for the election.

Home Ministry officials said the members of the armed forces, BDR, Coast Guard, Rab and Armed Police would work as striking forces to thwart any trouble and "maintain peace in every constituency across the country".

A total of 35,216 polling centres will be set up with 177,107 polling booths for voting across the country.

Security planning has been done dividing the polling centres as general and important categories.

A team of 18 law-enforcers comprising police, Ansar and village police will be deployed at each important polling centres while 14 at general polling centres to maintain security in metropolitan areas. The number is 16 and 14 outside the metropolitan areas.

Eighteen teams comprising Navy and Coast Guard will

be on duty as striking force in the coastal districts. The Armed Forces Division will keep ready adequate number of helicopters to transport manpower and goods as well as for maintaining peace in remote areas, including the hill districts.

Members of the law enforcing agencies who will be deployed at polling centres will have to be present at the respective station along with the Presiding Officer, Assistant Presiding Officers, Polling Officers and polling goods a day before the polling date.

Similarly, they will return from the centre with election-eering goods after completion of the election.

"Members of the law enforcing agencies will be under the Presiding Officer concerned until depositing ballot papers, ballot boxes and election results after election," a Home Ministry release said.



Speakers at a book launching ceremony hold copies of a book titled 'Update: Handbook on Election Reporting' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. From left are Farid Hossain, Hasan Shahriar, Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, Philip Gain, Prof Imtiaz Ahmed and Kim Mcway.

## Trader shot by extortionists in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Extortionists shot a trader in the city's Bagicha area yesterday while he was going to his business centre from his house.

The injured was identified as Mohammad Shamim, 38, son of Tofazzol Hossain of Bagicha at Motijheel. His business centre, Alif Tower House is on Khilgaon Biswaroad.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Jayadul Islam said a gang of five extortionists led by Suhrawardy of Bagicha area shot Shamim in his head and left knee, leaving him seriously injured.

Locals rushed him to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

Shamim's brother-in-law Mosharraf Hossain Babul said about 15 days ago Suhrawardy along with his accomplices beat up Shamim at his business centre when he refused to pay them extortion.

He filed a case against them with Motijheel Police Station on December 5 in this regard.

Suhrawardy became desperate following filing of the case against him, Babul said. He said his brother-in-law (Shamim) was shot yesterday following the previous incident.

## People still in doubt about holding of polls as per schedule

Speakers say at book launching ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a book launching ceremony yesterday expressed their anxiety over the holding of the general election as per the schedule.

Citing the example of the political leaders who think a conspiracy is ongoing to foil the election, they said common people are still in doubt about the election although there are just seven days left.

Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD) organised the programme at the National Press Club in the city.

The book titled 'Update: Handbook on Election Reporting' published by SEHD contains election laws and analysis, election reporting, election code of conduct, election area, number of voters, and the list of political leaders with their names and contact numbers.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Trusty Prof Muzaffer Ahmad was present on the occasion as the chief guest.

He said not only the journalists, but also common people

would be benefited from the book since it contains election related information.

He lauded the SEHD initiative and said it will also help the foreigners.

President of the Commonwealth Journalists' Association Hasan Shahriar said corrupt leaders have got the party tickets yet again. "So, why did we lose two years?" he posed a question.

Referring to the committed voters, who always vote for a particular party no matter what, Prof Imtiaz Ahmed of Dhaka University said democracy cannot be reinstated if the number of the committed voters is not reduced.

Criticising the election manifestoes of the political parties, he said the parties are not serious about their election manifesto and they prepared the manifestoes without proper planning.

With Prof Sakhawat Ali Khan, chairman of SEHD, in the chair, the programme was also addressed by Kim Mcway, country representative of Asia Foundation, and Bureau Chief of AP in Bangladesh Farid Hossain.



Amra Muktiyoddhar Santan forms a human chain in front of the National Museum in the city yesterday urging people not to vote for 'Razakars'.

## 'Do not vote for Razakars'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amra Muktiyoddhar Santan and Muktiyoddha Jubo Command jointly formed a human chain in front of the National Museum in the city yesterday urging people not to vote for 'Razakars', says a press release.

Syed Ashrafur Islam Nayan, central general secretary of Amra Muktiyoddhar Santan and Nazrul Islam Bachchu, central president of Muktiyoddha Jubo Command, led the human chain.

Principal Abdul Ahad Chowdhury, chairman of Muktiyoddha Sangsad Kendrio Command Council, General Secretary Manurul Haq Khan Lavlu, Alexander Roderick, Syed Shajahan Ali Chowdhury Selim and Fakir Sheikh Ziauddin were present at the programme.

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