

Quality edn govt's top priority

Says minister

BSS, Chittagong

Shipping Minister Dr Afsarul Amin yesterday said the present government of Sheikh Hasina is giving utmost importance to quality education to turn the future generation into skilled human resources and achieve Digital Bangladesh by 2021.

He was speaking at the chief guest at a reception at Laldighi Maidan, Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) accorded the reception to 5929 meritorious students of 154 schools and madrasas, who secured GPA-5 in the SSC and Dakhil examinations in 2007 and 2008 and also the students who got the mayor and junior scholarships during the same period.

CCC Mayor Alhaj ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury presided over the function while Vice Chancellor of Premier University Dr Anupam Sen, former pro-vice chancellor of Chittagong University Prof Abu Yousuf Alam, Chairman of Chittagong Education Board Dr Mohammad Yousuf, Chairman of the CCC Standing Committee on Education Shahidul Alam and Chief Education Officer of CCC Prof Raushan Akter Hanif spoke at the function.

Dr Amin said this recognition would inspire the students and help them grow up as talented students.

He said bringing a qualitative change in the education is a must for establishing Digital Bangladesh by the year 2021.

Later, the minister and the mayor distributed prizes among the meritorious students. The CCC authorities gave Tk 4000 to each selected student who passed from 41 CCC-run schools and Tk 2000 to each student who passed from other educational institutes in the port city.

Inter-university debate begins at JU

BSS, Savar

The second inter-university debate competition started at Jahangirnagar University (JU) on Thursday.

University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Dr Nazrul Islam inaugurated the three-day competition, organised by Jahangirnagar University Debate Organisation, said a press release.

A total of 26 public and private universities and medical colleges are taking part in the debate competition.



Cops carry one of their fellow policemen out of the emergency ward of Gazipur Sadar Hospital (left) and another policeman (right) injured in a grenade explosion at Gazipur yesterday. A JMB member exploded the grenade at a press briefing at the office of the Police Superintendent. (Story on Page 1)

'CRIME INDEX BANGLADESH'

19 incidents took place an hour in 2007

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 19 crime-related incidents took place every hour in 2007 mainly due to poverty, growing unemployment and illiteracy, revealed a research book yesterday.

The book titled 'Crime Index Bangladesh-2007' written by Muhammad Umar Faruk and Nurjahan Khatun said a total of 1.65 lakh incidences of crime occurred during the period.

Jhalakathi is the top crime zone, while the less crime district is Naogaon, it also mentioned.

Among the incidents, 15 percent occurred in violent crime, 34 percent in property-related crime, 34 percent crime related to hatred, 16 percent in organised crime, 23 percent in victimless crime

and one percent in innocent victimisation.

TIB Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad as the chief guest unveiled the cover of the book at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city.

Editor of the Prothom Alo Motiur Rahman, Academic Press and Publishers Library and Centre for Development Research Bangladesh (CDRB) Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelley, former judge Rafiqur Rahman Patwari, Deputy Editor of Prothom Alo Anisul Haq and former IGP Dr Enamul Haque were also present.

Prof Muzaffer said criminal activities are on the increase day by day due to lack of proper administrative system.

"The number of crime incidents is much more than the reported incidents,

because mass media and police do not cover all criminal activities. Without removing poverty and unemployment problems, crime cannot be stopped," he added.

Motiur Rahman said police reform is necessary to annihilate crime from the society, adding, "Police should be kept out of political interference so that they can take proper steps against criminals."

The book said Barisal is the highest division where highest number of crime incidents occurred in the country, while lowest number of crime occurred in Rajshahi division.

It further mentioned that most crime occurs at night-time, especially from 9:00pm to 12:00pm, while criminals choose Friday and Saturday in a week for operating the crime incident.

Utilise energy resources for country's development

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion called for exploiting and utilising minerals and other natural resources for the country's development instead of leasing out fuel, gas and coal blocks to foreign companies.

They also expressed concern that open pit mining at Phulbari in Dinajpur even on an experimental basis would cause serious damage to the environment.

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Power, Mineral Resources and Port organised the discussion at Muktangan in the city on Thursday.

The speakers demanded resignation of Energy Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury for his failure to realise compensation for Magurchara and Tengratila gas field blowouts.

Prof Anu Muhammad, member secretary of the committee, said: "Presently, the country has an acute shortage of gas in the local industries. In such a situation, we should utilise our energy resources for internal purposes. Leasing out the blocks in the Bay of Bengal would harm the interests of the country."

Using the energy resources in the local industry without exporting them would be cost-effective, he added.

Researcher Nur Mohammad said, "The committee is not against extraction of coal from Phulbari mine, but it has to be with a safer technology that does not damage cultivable lands and displace the local people."

Open pit mining will have serious environmental impacts in the region, he added.

Prof Akmal Hossain of IR department at Dhaka University said, "There should be an open discussion regarding the vital issue in parliament. However, none of the previous and current parties in power discussed the matter in parliament."

Leaders of Socialist Party of Bangladesh, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Biplobi Workers' Party, National Awami Party, Jatiya Gono Front, Biplobi Chhatra Moitri, Gonotantrik Biplobi Party and Gonosanghati Andolon also spoke.

'Asia, Pacific highly vulnerable to climate change'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Speakers at the concluding ceremony of a regional conference in Khulna yesterday said that the Asia and the Pacific are highly vulnerable to the

consequences of climate change.

The Khulna Declaration was also adopted on the occasion held at a city hotel.

Prodipan, a non-government organisation,

organised the regional conference where experts from 12 countries took part.

The speakers in the Khulna Declaration said that they are committed to develop community-based policies for addressing the consequences of climate change on short, mid and long-term basis.

Calling for immediate and adequate financing for community-based adaptation and mitigation measures, they urged the international community to pay special attention to disaster-prone low-lying countries and small states like Bangladesh, the Maldives and the island countries in the Pacific region.

In the Khulna Declaration, they also said coordinated action can reduce the negative impacts of climate change and safeguard the rights of the vulnerable communities to live a life with dignity.



Students of Saint Francis Xavier's Greenherald, an English medium school, sing at a programme to mark the Amar Ekushey on the school premises in the city on Thursday.

২১শে ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০০৯

একুশের প্রথম প্রহর... ১২.১ মিনিটে সালান, রফিক, জন্মার, বরকতসং আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষার সকল শহীদদের প্রতি অগাধ শ্রদ্ধাভরে ভরে উঠুক যজ্ঞারো শহীদ মিনার।

TRANSFORMER ELECTRONICS PHILIPS



Relatives of Abul Bashar, who along with four members of his family were burnt alive at Duajipara in Sitakundu, wail yesterday. (Story on page 1)

Mohiniyattam dance course begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The second session of a workshop on Mohiniyattam dance, a lyrical classical dance tradition originating from Kerala in India, will begin at Dance and Music Training Centre of Indian High Commission at Dhanmondi in the city today.

Pallavi Krishnan, a leading exponent of Mohiniyattam, will conduct the session, says a press release.

PM for change in politics

FROM PAGE 1

Hasina said in the morning after distributing the Ekushey Padak 2009 to 13 distinguished individuals for their contributions in their fields of work.

"Those who contribute to the nation, must be rewarded. I welcome all of you. You keep on serving the nation and the country, and I promise you all out government assistance," Hasina said as the chief guest of the award ceremony in Osmany Auditorium in the capital.

She complained that Bangla as a language has not been properly nurtured, endangering the Bangalee culture.

"Bangla should be spoken like Bangla. Rural dialects are far better than speaking Bangla with an English accent," the prime minister quipped.

Hasina said her administration will take steps to preserve the languages of all ethnic minorities as well.

"February 21 makes us dream of change. We have come to power with the pledge of bringing changes. We will welcome your constructive criticisms in order to preserve all languages, cultures, and creativity," she said.

Ekushey Padak is one of the highest civilian awards, introduced in memory of the martyrs of the language movement of 1952. Each awardee received a gold medal, a cheque of Tk 40,000, and a certificate.

"We must ensure high standard of education to meet the challenges of the 21st century," Hasina said.

"Mother tongues must be given the priority in primary level education in every single community in the country. Bangla is a modern language and it will not be tough to pursue knowledge in Bangla," she added.

The history of the Bangalee nation would have been different, had it not been for the Ekushey, she noted.

"Ekush is our permanent

address. We run to the Shaheed Minar whenever we feel threatened. The Shaheed Minar is not merely an installation of bricks and mortars. It's our shelter," she said.

"No one could ever dominate our nation and none will be able to either. Ekush protects us from all attacks," she declared.

She also said the government will resume the work of building the International Language Institute.

Ekushey Padak 2009 winners are Dr Borhan Uddin Khan Jahangir in education, Dr Syed Anwar Hossain in research, late Mahbub Ul Alam Chowdhury for his participation in the language movement, late Ashraf Uz-Zaman in journalism, Begum Bilkis Nasir Uddin in journalism, late Manik Chandra Saha in journalism, late Humayun Kabir Balu in journalism, Selina Hossain in literature, Shamsuzzaman Khan in research, Dr Quazi Kholiqzaman for poverty reduction, Dr Muhammad Rafi Khan in social work, Monsur Ul Karim in fine arts, and Ramendu Majumdar in theatre.

Hasina handed over the awards to nine of the 13 winners while relatives of the five posthumous awardees, received the awards on their behalf.

Cabinet members, members of the parliament, high civil and military officials, diplomats and other distinguished personalities attended the event broadcast live on state-owned Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar from 11:00am.

The event was presided over by Cultural Minister Abul Kalam Azad while Cabinet Secretary MA Abdul Aziz was the master of ceremony.

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