

One-third of children die of malnutrition in country

One Million Campaign launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around one-third of children in the country die of malnutrition which can be prevented easily by creating awareness about breastfeeding, said the speakers at the national launching of One Million Campaign, a global web-based initiative to support women to breastfeed, in the city yesterday.

The campaign was launched with the slogan 'No more milk scandals like the one with melamine'.

The launching programme was organised by Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation (BBF) with the support of Plan Bangladesh, Save the Children, USA and the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN).

The campaign aims at

reaching at least one million people to raise awareness about breastfeeding and create support for mothers.

The speakers said Bangladesh spends about Tk 4 000 crore annually to import milk powder and other breast milk substitutes.

This large amount of money can be saved by promoting breastfeeding, they added.

The speakers call for restrictions on unethical advertisement of breast milk substitutes that hinder the promotion of breastfeeding. They also stressed on creating proper atmosphere for breastfeeding both at home and workplace.

Abul Kalam Azad, minister for information and cultural affairs, said breastfeeding provides all possible

benefits to a child at the beginning of life and there is no substitute for it.

He said there are some common misconceptions prevailing among the mothers in the country about breastfeeding, which should be eliminated.

Raising awareness against them is an urgent task, he added.

According to a study, breastfeeding within one hour of birth can save 31 percent of neonatal death.

Experts say babies should be given breast milk exclusively for first six months.

In Bangladesh only 43 percent of babies are exclusively breastfed while the rest are fed with a combination of artificial baby food and breast milk, said the study.

It also says child mortality increases by 25 percent if they are dependent on breast milk substitutes.

Duangvadee Sungkhobol, country representative of WHO, said breast milk is the most cost-effective method of providing food to babies.

It is also healthy and easily available, she added.

She expressed concern over the use of artificial baby food during disasters in the country.

Birthe Locatelli-Rossi of Unicef, Dr Hosne Ara Tahmin, additional director general of health service, Director General of family planning department Dr SK Roy, BBF Chairperson Prof Sufia Khatun and Secretary Dr Fatema Parvin Choudhury also spoke on the occasion.



Newly appointed Chinese Ambassador Zhang Xianyi calls on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office in the city yesterday. (Story on page 3)

Move to protect arable land

JS bodies suggest action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of enormous decrease of agricultural land in the country, another parliamentary body has started working to protect arable land from building establishments on it.

The parliamentary standing committee on agriculture said one has to take 'no objection certificate' from the agriculture ministry before building establishment on arable land provided it is unavoidable.

The parliamentary watchdog body specially asked industrialists to build establishments vertically using less amount of land.

Earlier on May 19, the parliamentary standing committee on the planning ministry recommended that the government legislate against construction on arable land.

It also asked the land ministry to draft a law and place it before parliament.

"We are also working on how to protect arable land from building establishment on it," said Shawkat Momen Shahjahan, chairman of the committee, while talking to reporters after a meeting at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"As you know the number of people is increasing every day while on the other hand arable land is decreasing very fast. We should therefore do something to protect the agricultural land," Shawkat added.

He however said it would not be logical to leave no arable land for building new industries, as in that case there would be no industrialisation in the country.

"If unavoidable, one has to take no objection certificate from the agriculture ministry to build structure on arable land," Shawkat said, adding, "In that case, we will ask industrialists to construct their buildings vertically instead of expanding them horizontally."

"We will come to a decision soon and recommend the government after more discussion on this issue," said the head of the committee.

The committee at the meeting also asked the ministry officials to publish an advertisement within May 31 for appointment in vacant posts.

The ministry officials informed the standing committee that there are 5,528 posts vacant in 15 departments under the agriculture ministry.



An Army contingent comprising 107 members going to board the UN chartered aircraft at the Zia International Airport on Wednesday night. They left for Sudan to join UNMID.

Govt to stamp out militancy, crimes at any cost: Sahara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday said the government would stamp out militancy, crimes and extortion from the country at any cost.

She said this while speaking as the chief guest at the installation ceremony of the newly elected executive committee of Crime Reporters' Association of Bangladesh (CRAB).

State Minister for home Tanjim Ahmed Sohel Taj, who attended the ceremony as a special guest, also vowed to bring to book those who tried to hide the truth during investigations into various cases, including the 10-truck arms haul case and August 27 grenade attack case.

He said the government directed the law enforcers and intelligence agencies to conduct fair investigation into those cases.

Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner AKM Shahidul Huq and Standard Bank Chairman Kazi Akram Uddin Ahmed were also present as special guests at the function held at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium.

Poor salary of teachers obstacle to quality education

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although teaching is a noble profession and the education sector always gets the highest allocation in the national budget, the poor salary of teachers is pushing them to the verge of frustration, said the speakers at a workshop yesterday.

They said enhancing professional skills of teachers is not enough, their living standard should also be raised as it is not possible for low-paid and deprived teachers to ensure quality education.

The workshop titled 'Importance of secondary and untrack education in the context of Bangladesh' was organised by Bangladesh Shikshak Samity at the National Press Club in the city.

Stressing the role of teachers in secondary education, the speakers laid emphasis on recruiting skilled teachers and motivating them with adequate salaries and facilities.

They said non-government teachers get Tk 100 as house rent and Tk 150 as medical allowance, which are nothing but a mockery considering the present economic conditions.

"Teachers are deprived in terms of both living standards and professional skills. This reality needs to be taken into consideration to improve the quality of teachers to realise the

dream of a digital Bangladesh," said Shikshak Samity General Secretary Abdus Salam Khan.

The discussants also called on the government to introduce untrack education system up to class ten instead of class eight, saying that it will make the country's standard of education more acceptable at the international level.

"A untrack education system will help students gain elementary knowledge in different fields," said Shamsul Huq, chairman of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board of Dhaka.

Speaking as chief guest Major General (ret) Subid Ali

Bullet-hit snatcher held in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the snatched money and cellphone sets and arrested a snatcher who was bullet injured by law enforcers in the city's Jatrabari area yesterday.

The arrestee was identified as Mohammad Salam, 22, of Jatrabari area. He was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he was undergoing treatment under the policy custody, police said.

Police shot at the victim, leaving him injured as he tried to attack police with a knife when police tried to detain him in front of Nizam hotel near Dayaganj Railway Bridge around 12:30am.

Sub-Inspector Mollah Zakir of Jatrabari police outpost said a gang of four muggers led by Salam intercepted trader Sohel, 40, near Sayedabad Truck Stand area around 9:30pm and snatched Tk 11,000 and two cellphone sets from him.

Following the incident, Sohel, hailing from Narayanganj, informed police and petrol team of police and Rab-3 who chased the gang, he added.

The gang ran to the Dayaganj area where a team of police caught Salam who tried to attack the police team with the knife in his hand.

Police said they shot at him and arrested him, while three other snatchers managed to flee the scene.

200 detained for taking liquor

84 shown arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police detained over 200 people on charge of taking liquor without having permit and seized several hundred cans and bottles of liquor after raiding four bars from Ramna, Shahab and New Market areas in the city early yesterday.

Police said they conducted raids at Piashi at Moghbazar, Golden Dragon at Eskaton, Sakura at Paribagh and Galaxy at Mirpur Road under New Market Police Station, detained the people and seized the liquor from the bars during the raids started from 9:00pm and ended around 3:00am.

Police said they conducted the raids on information that avoiding the government rules, bar-goers were taking liquor and the bar authorities were also selling the alcoholic drink to them.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Ramna Zone of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Atiqur Rahman said of the arrestees, police showed 84 arrested while the remaining

Dinajpur social welfare official stand released for filing GD against AL men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The deputy director of Dinajpur Social Welfare Department was stand released and transferred to Barguna yesterday for filing a general diary (GD) against some Awami League leaders who tried to assault him.

The AL leaders had also wanted to transfer him from Dinajpur as he declined to issue any card for the allowance for elderly persons on political consideration, according to official sources.

Sources said Dinajpur Social Welfare Department and the Deputy Commissioner's office received the release order sent by the social welfare ministry on Tuesday. The order came into effect yesterday.

According to Dinajpur police sources, Md Abdul Matin Khaled, deputy director of Dinajpur Social Welfare Department, filed the GD seeking security of his life, saying that two AL leaders threatened to kill or transfer him as he declined to issue any old age allowance card on political consideration.

In the complaint, the official mentioned that AL leaders Md Ataur Rahman Azad Bablu and Taiyab Uddin Chowdhury, president of Dinajpur town AL, hurled abusive words at him in front of the government officials on the Deputy Commissioner's office complex on May 5.

The leaders also tried to assault him, said the deputy director who filed the GD on the same day.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner Md Abdul Jalil said that his office has nothing to do with this matter.

Govt BL College BCL goes on rampage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Around 100 students of Daulatpur Government BL College went on a rampage on the campus at about 11:00am yesterday after failing to get their seat allotment in the Haji Mohammad Mohsin Hall.

They caused widespread damages to the office of Principal Prof Ahmed Reza, four residential halls, classrooms of nine departments and administrative building during the attacks that lasted for over half-an-hour.

Sources said all the furniture, doors and windows of the structures were badly damaged by the unruly students who belong to Bangladesh Chhatra League, student wing of the ruling Awami League.

At one stage, the agitating students confined the principal in his office asking him to allot at least 75 out of total 100 vacant seats in the hall without any condition.

On information, police rushed to the spot and freed the principal from captivity.

The BCL-linked students resorted to vandalism carrying clubs and iron rods and showering brick chips and stones leaving six persons, three of them severely injured.

The three critically injured admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital were identified as peon of the college Idris Ali and Chhatra Shibir-linked students Shahinoor Rahman and Azizur Rahman.



Major General (ret) Subid Ali Bhuiyan speaks at a workshop at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Nurul Amin and on his left is Abul Bashar Howlader.

Condolence meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Association of Physicians of Bangladesh (APB) held a condolence meeting on Wednesday in memory of the teachers of different medical colleges who have recently passed away.

APB President Prof AKM Rafique Uddin chaired the meeting at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) while lawmaker Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin attended the meeting as the chief guest.

Dr AKM Mosharrif Hossain, secretary general of the APB, Prof Dr Deen Mohammad, Prof Dr Shahana Rahman and Prof Dr Tahir also spoke at the meeting.

The APB members prayed for the salvation of the departed souls of Prof Dr Waliullah, Prof Dr Muniruddin Ahmed, Prof Dr Mirza Quamrul Haque, Prof Dr M A Khaleque, Prof Dr Abdul Karim Mollah, Prof Dr Masuda Khanam, Prof Dr Hasan Mohammad Khan and Prof Dr Badruddin Mahmud.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Mild heat wave, which is sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Rangamati, Comilla, Dhaka and Patuakhali, may continue.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:38pm today and rises at 5:13am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 37.3 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and Mongla and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Cox' Bazar and Teknaf.

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	36.5	27.8	65	49
Chittagong	34.5	25.0	65	71
Rajshahi	37.3	25.0	69	53
Khulna	37.0	26.3	54	52
Barisal	34.0	26.4	66	58
Sylhet	33.0	26.0	78	72
Cox's Bazar	35.0	24.0	57	63

BDR CARNAGE

Army probe report army's internal affair

Says Gen Moeen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army Chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed yesterday termed the army probe report on BDR carnage an internal affair of the army and said no decision has yet been taken in this regard.

"It's our internal matter. We have not taken any decision yet. We have to maintain certain procedures and we're following those," reports Channel 1 quoting the army chief.

Mentioning that the families of the army officers who were killed in the BDR carnage have been allocated residences for two years, the army chief said that the families will be given flats permanently at DOHS.

Many of the families of the army officers will be provided with Tk 40,000 for 10 years, he said.

"We have already donated Tk 5 lakh to each family -- arranged their shelter -- they have been given residences from the army housing project for two years. As an alternative, we are arranging at least one apartment for each family at the DOHS," he said.

Gen Moeen made the remarks while talking to reporters after a function organised at the principal branch of Trust Bank Limited to provide financial assistance to two institutions from the profit of the bank.

MISSION ANNAPURNA IV

Bangladeshi mountaineers leave for Nepal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of mountaineers of North Alpine Club Bangladesh (NACB) is leaving Dhaka for Nepal today with an aim to climb the Annapurna IV of the Himalayas.

At a press conference organised by the NACB at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) in the city yesterday, Musa Ibrahim, general secretary of NACB, put forward the programme of the team.

"This is the first time such an initiative has been officially taken from the country," he said, adding that such events should be supported by the authorities concerned.

A two-member team is leaving for Nepal today while the rest of the nine-member team will start on May 26.

NACB has a plan to climb the Everest by 2010.

"The successful journey to Annapurna IV will boost our bid to conquer the Everest," said Lt Col MM Iqbal Alam, adviser to NACB.

"The adventure would set an example before the youths of the country and its success will be a pride for the nation," he added.

This venture requires minimum 40 days and the team will literally start climbing up from the base on May 29, the day when Hillary conquered the Mount Everest.

The team has to get past four camps to reach Annapurna IV.

The members of the team are Musa Ibrahim, Touhid Hossain, Dhruva Jyoti Ghosh Mukul, MH Jayedi, Munira Farzana Tania, Abdul Halim, Badruddin Omar, Jahid and Md Sadekur Rahman.

The title sponsor of the programme is Navana Group while Matra, Kohinor Chemicals, Summit Group and Destiny Group are event partners.

Obituary

RU CORRESPONDENT

Salina Ahmed, Rajshahi city unit treasure of Mahila Awami League, passed away due to old age complications at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) on Wednesday.

She left behind her husband, three daughters, two sons and a host of admirers to mourn her death.

Salina was buried at the Sopura Graveyard in Rajshahi city.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 6th death anniversary of Prof Azgar Ali, a language veteran and founder president of Sarishabari Samity, Dhaka, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at Matir Masque in Khilgaon residential area in the city after Asr prayers.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the programme and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

DHAKA TODAY

Human chain
Ubining and Naya Krishi Andolon will form a human chain to mark International Biodiversity Day. Venue: In front of National Museum. Time: 11:00am.

Seminar
Bangladesh Statistical Association organises a seminar titled 'Economic statistics: Collection and dissemination'. Venue: NEC auditorium, Planning Commission. Time: 10:00am.

Nazrul conference
Nazrul Academy organises Nazrul Conference 2009 beginning from today. Venue: Shishu Academy. Time: 5:30pm.

Discussion
Projonmo '71 will hold a discussion on the trial of the war criminals. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity. Time: 4:00pm.

Publication ceremony
Palak Publishers organises the publication ceremony of a book commemorating the 74th birth anniversary of academic and litterateur Razia Hossain. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

Debate
The final round and prize giving ceremony of NCC Bank 1st Inter-School Debate Contest 2009 organised by Motijheel Govt Girls' School Debating Club will be held. Venue: Motijheel Govt Girls' School. Time: 10:00am.

Recital
The High Commission of India in association with Shadhona, Centre for Advancement of South Asian Music and Dance will organise a recital of Sitar and Esraj by Ashit Biswas and Satyajit Chakravarty. Venue: Indian Cultural Centre. Time: 8:30pm.

Photography exhibition
An exhibition of photographs on the people who are working to develop Bangladesh will begin. Venue: Drik Gallery. Time: 3:00pm.

Seminar
Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) organises a seminar titled 'Zero waste industrial management in Bangladesh: Dholaikhal experience and more...'. Venue: WVA auditorium. Time: 10:30am.

Talk
14 December Er Dal organises a talk on the trial of the war criminals. Venue: Central Shaheed Minar. Time: 5:00pm.