

## PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

## Bangladesh to submit reports before UN committee

DIPLOMATIC  
CORRESPONDENT

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child began its meeting at the Palais Wilson in Geneva to review the promotion and protection of children's rights in France, Sweden, Mauritania, Bangladesh, Niger and Romania under the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The meeting, which began on Monday, will continue till June 12, according to a message received here from UN

office in Geneva yesterday.

The committee will also review the efforts of Slovenia and Oman with regard to their implementation of the two optional protocols to the convention -- on sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on involvement of children in armed conflict.

The committee was formed in 1991 to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

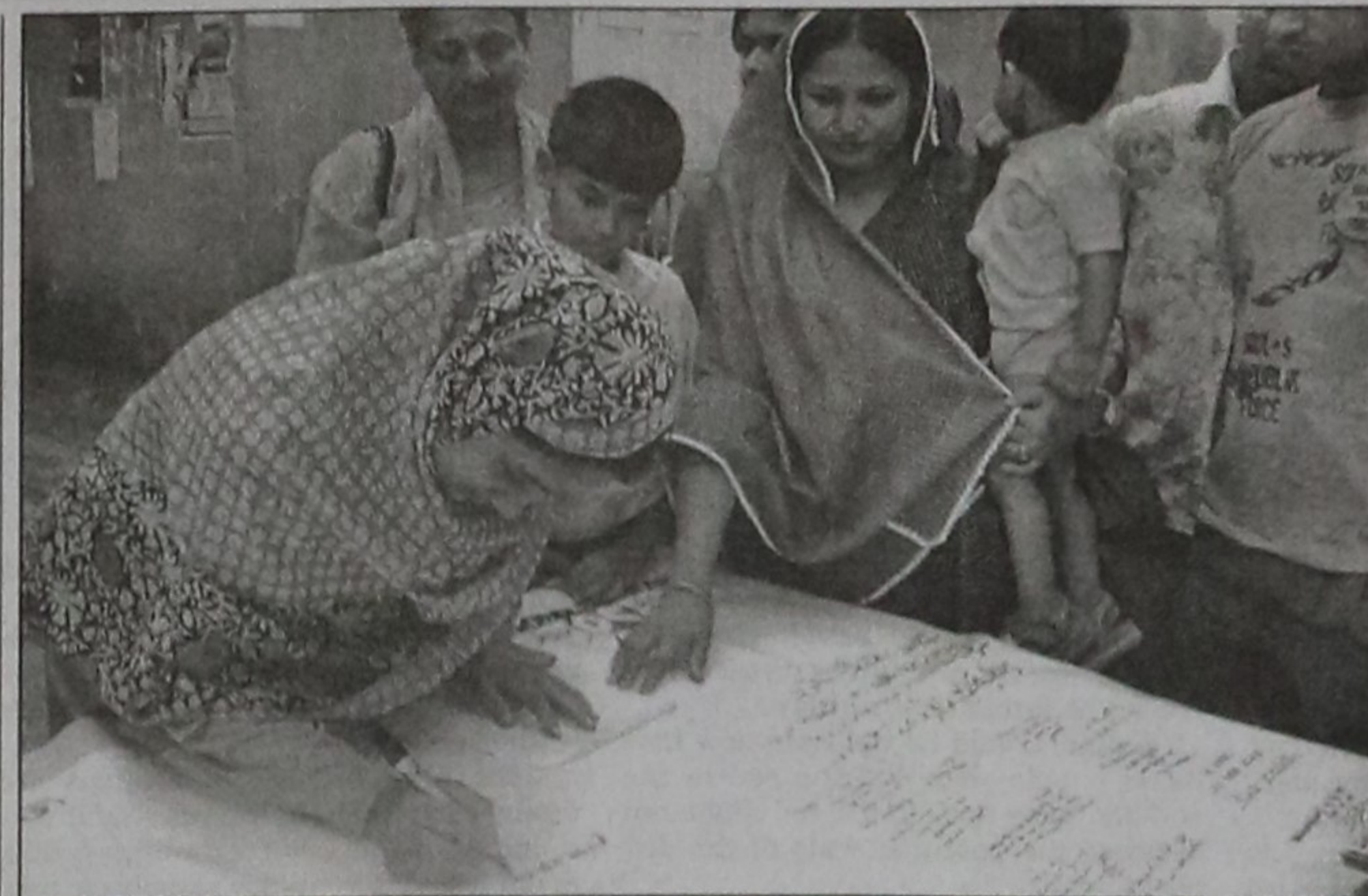
At the committee's fifty-first session, Mauritania and Niger will present their second

reports, France, Bangladesh and Romania will present their combined third and fourth periodic reports and Sweden will present its fourth periodic report on measures taken to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child nationally. Delegations from the Slovenia and Oman will also be presenting their initial reports under the convention's two optional protocols.

During the session, in addition to consideration of country reports, the committee will continue its discussion

of ways and areas in which existing cooperation with various relevant bodies could be further strengthened to enhance the promotion and protection of the rights of the child.

The committee will also pursue its discussion concerning its future work as well as to discuss its treaty-specific reporting guidelines. It will also pursue the elaboration of a general comment further clarifying the concept of child participation as contained in the convention.



Rupali, a 12-year-old domestic help in Chapainawabganj, writes her pledges on a banner yesterday as part of the 'Bodle Jao, Bodle Dao' (Change yourself, change others) campaign of the daily Prothom Alo.

## C'nawabganj people vow to change society

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Chapainawabganj

People from all walks of life in Chapainawabganj yesterday pledged to change themselves to bring about a positive change in the society as part of the 'Bodle Jao, Bodle Dao' (Change yourself, change others) campaign of the daily Prothom Alo.

To mark the concluding ceremony of the campaign, Prothom Alo Bandhusabha organised a programme on Shaded Satu Hall premises in Chapainawabganj town.

Superintendent of Police Nazrul Hossain, Principal of Balugram College Saidur Rahman, Headmaster of Rehaichar Girls' High School Selina Hafiz, Iqbal Hossain of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Sada Moner Manush Ziaul Islam Zia and Kanai Chandra Das, social activists Shafiqul Islam and Naimul Bari, Abu Sayed of Dhaka Bandhu Sabha and Anwar Hossain Dulu, local correspondent of the daily Prothom Alo, spoke on the occasion.

Urging everyone to keep the pledges to change the society, the speakers said the educated people would have to play a leading role to this end.

## Radio Today gets nod for 6 stations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Radio Today, an FM radio station, yesterday got the government permission to set up its six new stations in different cities across the country.

The radio will install the centres at Barisal, Khulna, Sylhet, Bogra, Mymensingh and Cox's Bazar.



Staffs of Bangladesh Betar and traffic policemen bring out a motorcycle rally from Shahbagh Betar Transmission Centre in the city yesterday marking the 4th anniversary of FM 97.6 of the state-owned radio station's traffic transmission programme.

## Lawmakers' team to visit Tipaimukh

FROM PAGE 16

He said the team will see as to how Bangladesh could derive benefit from the Tipaimukh dam on the Borak River.

"If Tipaimukh dam is not beneficial for Bangladesh, then it will not be put in place. Bangladesh will not give its clearance for the project," Faruq said.

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and Saarc Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Saarc CCI) jointly organised the seminar titled 'Regional Connectivity: Potential for Infrastructure Development and Energy in South Asia.'

Saarc Chamber President Tariq Sayeed, FBCCI President Anisul Huq and Vice-President of Saarc CCI Mir Nasir Hossain also addressed the business meet.

Addressing the seminar, the commerce minister said the South Asian region is rich in terms of water and energy

resources. But, for a lack of equal distribution, this potential still remained untapped.

He viewed that this is the proper time to utilise the opportunity and potential as all the countries in the region have got democratic governments.

Emphasising regional connectivity, the minister said Bangladesh is very much interested to establish a regional road and railway network.

He also suggested building a trans-border gas network from Iran to Myanmar, connecting Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and other countries in the vast region.

Referring to the huge hydro potential, Faruq said there could be thousands of megawatts of power generation from this hydro resource.

The commerce minister offered the country's Mongla seaport to turn into a regional port to be used by China, Bhutan and Nepal as well.

Mir Nasir Hossain said freedom of movement should be allowed for more people for contacts across the borders and the visa regime in South Asia needs to be more open.

He proposed issuance of five-year multiple visa without police reporting and city restriction for at least 500 businessmen and increase in Saarc visa exemption stickers from 100 to 300 for each country.

FBCCI President urged an increase in the regional trade and infrastructure under Saarc umbrella.

He noted that the Saarc region is yet to achieve the goal of establishing a regional free-trade area like NAFTA or ASEAN.

He observed that still the intra-Saarc trade within the regional countries is only 5 percent while it is in NAFTA 52 percent, in the European Union 52 percent and in ASEAN 24.5 percent.

## UN body's session on Lanka begins

DIPLOMATIC  
CORRESPONDENT

The UN Human Rights Council yesterday began a special session in Geneva to address the human rights situation in Sri Lanka.

The special session is being convened following the request by Germany on behalf of the following members of the council -- Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Mauritius, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and Uruguay. "It is hoped that the holding

of this special session will contribute towards the cause of peace", stated Human Rights Council President Martin Theohghian Uhomobhi, according to a message received here yesterday.

"The council cannot be silent when innocent civilians are caught up in armed conflicts. The international community must strive to deliver justice to victims of human rights violations wherever they occur and ensure that those found guilty of such crimes are held accountable for their actions," he added.

This is the eleventh special session of the council.

## CYCLONE AILA

## Concern over loss of lives, resources

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties yesterday expressed deep concern over the huge loss of lives and resources in the Cyclone Aila that hit the country's southwestern coast on Monday.

In separate statements, the parties urged the government to start relief activities immediately in the affected areas as well as ensure treatments of those who are injured due to the storm.

They also prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon MP and General Secretary Bimal Biswas urged the party leaders and

activists as well as people from all walks of life to extend their helping hands to the affected people. They also called on the government to take prompt initiatives to repair the damaged households.

Jatiya Party (JP) Secretary General Sheikh Shauidul Islam in a statement urged all the government, political parties and the non-government organisations to stand beside the affected people.

Communist Party of Bangladesh President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim expressed shock at the death of people in the cyclone and conveyed sympathy to the affected people.

## Local govt gets top ADP priority

FROM PAGE 1

education ministry 33 per cent and health and communications ministries 22 per cent.

In the revised ADP this year, dependence on foreign aid was high, and it has come down in the next ADP. Foreign resources totalled 56.47 per cent in the revised ADP.

The highest allocation in the next ADP goes to Local Government Division -- Tk 6,486 crore or 21 per cent of the total ADP funds, next comes Power Division with Tk 3,233 crore or 10.27 per cent, health ministry got Tk 3,063 crore or 10.05 per cent, communications ministry Tk 2,889 crore or 9.47 per cent, primary and mass education ministry Tk 2,828 crore or 9.27 per cent, education ministry Tk 947 crore or 3.11 per cent, agriculture ministry Tk 860 crore or 2.82 per cent, and Energy and Mineral Resources Division Tk 683 crore or 2.24 per cent.

In the next ADP allocations for power and agriculture sectors increased minimally over those in the revised ADP this year. Power Division got 11 per cent increase, and agriculture ministry eight per cent.

The Local Government Division got 38 per cent higher allocation, primary and mass

education ministry 33 per cent and health and communications ministries 22 per cent.

To address regional disparity, additional allocation has been made for different projects in Rajshahi, Khulna and Barisal divisions. Rajshahi Division got Tk 1,268 crore, which is 4.15 per cent of the total ADP allocation, Khulna got Tk 1,563 crore or 3.18 per cent and Barisal Tk 1,019 crore or 3.34 per cent.

For empowerment of women and bringing about gender parity, Tk 4,23 crore has been allocated in the new ADP. The projects for this include those for development of women and children with no asset, district-wise women computer training centres, city-based distressed women development programme, rural employment and road maintenance programme, nursing institute etc.

In the ICT sector, Tk 544

crore has been allocated in the new ADP, compared to Tk 294 crore in the revised ADP.

The next ADP has set aside Tk 660 crore for special development sector. However, no separate allocation has been made for 39 ultra-poor areas. The last caretaker government kept Tk 40 crore in the current ADP for the purpose.

Of the total ADP allocation for next FY, 57 per cent is for poverty alleviation purposes, the planning ministry said in a report.

The number of projects in the next ADP is 886. Of this, 851 are carried over to the next FY from the current FY, and 35 projects are new.

Besides, 487 unapproved new projects in the list of next ADP got no allocation. However, Tk 1841 crore has been set aside for these projects, and the amount will be allocated after the projects get approval.

## WB offers help for hydroelectricity

FROM PAGE 16

democracy was not allowed to be practiced uninterrupted in the past.

"After a long time, the patriotic people of Bangladesh have got democracy through the free and fair election on December 29. And the government has already been able to establish an environment of confidence among the people. Now, the nation is advancing towards its cherished prosperity," the premier said.

She reaffirmed her government's strong commitment to ensure maximum welfare of the mass people. "People's welfare is the government's topmost priority."

As the PM laid emphasis on the development partners' cooperation in development of energy, power, infrastructure sectors, including road transport, railway and waterway in the country, Pulkos assured her of providing necessary assistance.

Government works on the

Padma Bridge were also discussed.

Pulkos said Bangladesh could take WB assistance for generating hydroelectricity and exploration of gas.

The PM said though the country's power sector had not seen any development in the last seven years, the present government has already been able to improve the situation through planned activities.

She said the present government is working hard to create a social safety net through eradicating poverty and providing quality health services to people of every walk of life.

Hasina apprised the WB executive director that the previous Awami League government had a project to set up 18,000 community health clinics across the country.

But the next BNP-Jamaat government had stopped the project though several thousand of the total community health clinics were set up, she said.

"The present government will set up the health clinics which will be greatly effective to reach quality health facilities to the grassroots people of the country."

The premier and the WB executive director also discussed the impacts of global warming and the way out of the hazards of climate change.

Hasina said the present government is fully conscious about the hazardous impacts of the climate change.

"We have planned capital and maintenance dredging of the rivers, which will be very helpful in preserving water and reclaiming agricultural lands."

The PM further laid emphasis on regional cooperation in trade and business for economic emancipation of the people.

Dr Mashiur Rahman, economic affairs adviser to the PM, PM's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman and former ambassador Ziauddin were present.

## 2,726 schools

FROM PAGE 16

Dinajpur. Under Madrasa Board 2,327 institutions achieved cent percent success while it is 56 under Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB).

However the number of institutions having cent percent pass rate has declined in all education boards except Sylhet, Madrasa and Technical Education Board while exams were held for the first time under Dinajpur Education Board this year.

The number of schools having cent percent pass rate in seven general education boards was 484 last year which has declined to 343 this year among the eight general education boards.

The number of schools and madrasas having cent per success was 774 in 2007 and 1429 in 2006, statistics of Education Board Computer Centre show.

Besides, the number of least-performing institutions in SSC, Dakhil and SSC (Vocational) exams has come down to 72 from previous year's 91.

Seven schools from Dhaka, three from Rajshahi, two from Jessore, one from Chittagong, seven from Barisal, one from Sylhet, one from Dinajpur, 23 under the BTEB and 27 under Madrasa Board failed to have any successful candidate this year.

In the Comilla Board, the number of educational institutions having no success is nil for the second consecutive year.

The number of least performing schools and madrasas was 248 in 2007 and 193 in 2006.

The number of expelled examinees has also been falling sharply for the last five years.

A total of 541 students were expelled this year, while the number was 707 last year, 985 in 2007, 1,291 in 2006, 1,746 in 2005, 3,381 in 2004, and 13,217 in 2003.

## BNP's 'media' plots under JS scanner

FROM PAGE 16

Asha Poly and Packaging (five katha), Shah Alam, managing director of M/S Schemtex Ltd (6.23 katha), Jahid Traders (four katha), Tipu Alam, director, Baishakhi Media Ltd/daily Purbabhsh (21.5 katha), KM Shahid Ullah, editor and publisher of daily Pathajatra (one bigha), Mohammad Atiq Ullah, managing director, Rupali Sweater (Pvt) Ltd (36.7 katha, and an additional 1.37 katha), former lawmaker Hafiz Ibrahim, publisher, daily Khabar Patra (0.75 bigha), M Shahjad Ali, director, Bangladesh Telecom Ltd (0.79 bigha), Mashfiqul Haque, managing director, Royal Filling Station (1.6 katha), Azam Chowdhury, managing director, Greenways Industries (BD) Ltd (9.75 katha), Md Giyasuddin Al Mamun, managing director, Channel 1 (17.5 katha), Fasrobe Garments (10 katha), Abdul Haque, chairman,

Bangla Vision/Shyamol Bangla Media (17.5 katha), Shaju Hossain, wife of Barrister Mainul Hussein also publisher of Robbar Publications Ltd of daily Ittefaq (12 katha, they took possession of 9.76 katha and want to take back the money for the rest), Ummeh J Khan, wife of Major General (ret'd) ZA Khan, Earn Dyeing and Sweater Knitting Ltd of Khan Fashion Chaloman Group (five katha), Begum Tahmina Shawkat, wife of Mir Shawkat, owner, daily Shokaler Khobor, (12.8 katha), Tanvir Islam, director of Focus Fashions Ltd. (21.04 katha), AYM Kamal, managing director, daily Purbabhsh (21.5 katha), Jahir Uddin Mahmud, director, Impress Telefilm Ltd (Channel 1) (9.5 katha), Hotel Sugandha (3.65 katha), Md lub Hossain, managing director, Bangladesh Auto Corporation (14 katha), Kazi Izabul Khalid, managing partner of Loma

Engineering Ltd (0.75 katha), Pacific Chemicals Ltd of former lawmaker Ali Asgar Lobby (19.44 katha), Md Nabi Soleman, managing director of Dhaka Fibres Industries Ltd (0.97 bigha), M/S City Wears Ltd (3.69 katha), Sony Chocolate Industry Ltd (three katha), Padma Poly Cotton Knit Fabrics Ltd (10.70 katha), Tejgaon Re-rolling Company (7.8 katha), Bangladesh Auto Service Ltd, (10 katha), Aziz and Company Ltd (three katha and nine chhatak), Standard Chemical Industries (3.79 katha), Motijheel Ideal School and College (12 decimal), Hazaribagh Aziz Tannery Ltd (14.83 katha), Protibeshi Samaj Kalyan Parishad of Shahjahanpur area which was the constituency of former housing minister Mirza Abbas (three katha), Purbanchal Bahumukhi Shomobay Samity (1.5 acre),

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