

Help build nation with trained, competent manpower

President urges Scout leaders

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged the scout leaders to extend their activities to remote areas and help build a nation with trained and competent manpower matching with the milieu of the modern world.

"You know that there is no alternative to competent and trained manpower in building the nation," he said while addressing the President Scouts and President Rovers' Scout Award-giving ceremony at Bangabhaban in the afternoon.

For building the young generation as competent and world standard citizens, he put emphasis on following up-to-date educational curriculum and teaching method at all levels from primary to higher education.

"From childhood, they've to be imbued with moral and social values alongside the formal education," he said.

The president said the scout activities should be massively spread out across the country for developing the leadership quality in the young generation. "It's laudable that you are playing constructive role in building the nation through active participation in the scout movements."

With deep homage he remembered the pioneer of

scout movement -- Robert Baden Powell -- who launched scout movement in 1907, more than a century ago. "Today his scout movement has extended all over the world," he said, adding that the aim of the movement is to build the young generation as man of good character, self-reliant, patriotic and ideal citizens.

He said the scout movement has been playing an important role in rearing the country's young and juvenile as competent and ideal citizens. "I admire their activities."

He hoped that today's young generation, being enriched with proper IT knowledge, would be able to move forward to attain the goals of the nation.

The president congratulated the award winners and said the scouts should be devoted as volunteers to developing the country by reflecting the spirit of scouts in their personal, familial and social lives through exercising hard labour.

President of Bangladesh Scouts Momtazul Islam, Chief National Commissioner Abul Kalam Azad and National

Commissioner (Programme) Mesbahuddin Bhuiyan as well as Scout leaders, and guardians were present at the award-giving ceremony.

A total of 126 scouts were awarded. Of them, some 119 recipients got president scout award and seven received president rover scout award.

Abul Kalam Azad informed the function that there are some 10 lakh scouts across the country at present and by 2013 they have a target to raise the number to some 15 lakh. "The force of scouts can be utilised in facing any kind of national crisis," he said.



Recipients of President's Scout Award and President's Rover Scout Award pose for photograph with President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

Inclusion of disability issues in mainstream policy vital for dev

Speakers tell conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a conference in the city yesterday said inclusion of disability issues in the mainstream policy and development practice is a must for the overall progress in the country.

Persons with disabilities (PWDs) constitute about 10 percent of the total population of the country. They remain almost totally isolated from the social, economic and political mainstream, they added.

They further said the disability issues have been compartmentalised only under the health, welfare and charity package, which should be changed, adding that a rights-based approach is necessary for mainstreaming the issues.

The speakers said this at the conference on 'Reaching the unreachable through

CAHD' organised by Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) in association with Handicap International with support from European Commission under the project 'Proximity services for a full participation of persons with disabilities in all spheres of life' at the LGED auditorium.

Social Welfare Minister Enamul Haque Mostafa Shaheed said instead of terming them 'burden', the persons with disabilities should be transformed into skilled manpower.

The government doubled the budget for social welfare ministry in the current fiscal, he added.

He called for assistance from organisations working with PWDs to utilise this budget properly and identify the actual number of disabled persons in the country.

AHM Noman Khan, executive director of CDD, said, "We cannot just address disability issues from a few Dhaka-based centres with a medical approach. Services should be delivered to the PWDs living in all the 64,000 villages of the country."

An exhibition of the projects, activities and services delivered by these organisations was also part of the conference. The exhibition showcased 'assistive devices', including education materials for the blind, custom-made wheelchairs, prosthetic limbs and other devices, produced by CDD for free distribution.

There was also a demonstration of Bangla sign language which was recently compiled by the same organisation.

The organisers informed that they are currently operating a floating rehabilitation

hospital in the country completely free of charge. Four free medical camps for patients with cleft lips are also held.

A day care centre for the blind deaf children will be launched in September, they said.

Hassan M Mahamud, country director of Handicap International, said empowering PWDs through inclusion of their issues in development activities, ensuring equal participation and increasing access to opportunity is necessary.

CDD Chairman Sheikh A Halim, Director Nazmul Bari, National Forum of Organisations Working for the Disabled President Khandakar Jahurul Alam, Secretary General Jowaherul Islam Mamun and Action on Disability in Development Country Director Mosharraf Hossain also spoke.



Children present health-related information in the form of a drama at the launching ceremony of a project titled 'Mayer Hashi' or Smiling Mother at a city hotel yesterday.

'Restore '72 constitution'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Democratic Lawyers' Association of Bangladesh (DLAB) formed a human chain on different demands on the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) premises yesterday.

Their demands include restoration of the principles of 1972 constitution, cancellation of the decision of enhancing court fees, ensuring the management of vested properties as per the Supreme Court directives, start trial of the war criminals, and proving power to the judicial magistrates to take offences into cognizance.

Import of 2.50 lakh metric tons of fertiliser okayed

UNB, Dhaka

The Cabinet Purchase Committee yesterday approved a number of tender proposals for the import of 250,000 metric tons of urea fertiliser for the next farming season.

A meeting of the cabinet body, presided over by Finance Minister AMA Muhith, gave the nod to the import of such essential agricultural input.

According to the proposal

of industries ministry, which is responsible for production and import of fertiliser, the whole import will cost Tk 493.04 crore.

Of the fertiliser, half (125,000mt) will be imported through Chittagong port while the rest through Mongla port.

A total of six international suppliers will make the bulk import of fertiliser on behalf of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) under the industries ministry.

A metric ton of fertiliser

will have variable costs from 273.92 US dollar to 302.52 US dollar as those will be imported from different countries by different suppliers.

The committee also approved a proposal of the education ministry for procuring 8,000 metric tons of paper and 850 metric tons of cartridge paper to print books for the secondary schools for 2010 session.

This procurement will cost Tk 59.10 crore.

Hena Das cremated with state honour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The funeral of veteran leader of women rights and leftist movement Hena Das was held with state honour at Narayanganj crematorium yesterday.

Earlier, thousands of people from all walks of life paid their last respect to the leader of the poor at the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) central office where her body was covered with party and national flags.

CPB leaders and different left-leaning parties placed wreaths at the revolutionary leader's coffin.

The body was then taken to the offices of Bangladesh Shikshak Samity and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and later to Central Shaheed Minar where she was given a guard of honour.

Muktijoddha Central Command Council also provided a guard of honour to her.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid and State Minister for Science and ICT Yafes Osman placed wreaths at the coffin.

Different political parties, including CPB, Workers' Party of Bangladesh led by Haider Akbar Khan Rofo, Gono Forum led by Dr Kamal Hossain and Pankaj Bhattacharya, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal led by lawmaker Hasanul Haque Inu, National Awami Party, Communist Kendra, Democratic Left Alliance, Trade Union Kendra, Khetmajur Samity, Jubo Union, Sammilita Sangskritik Jote, Chhatra Union, Udichi Shilpi Gosthi, Khelaghar Asar and Garment Sramik Trade Union Kendra also placed wreaths at the coffin of Hena Das.

Later, the body was taken to Narayanganj Girls' High School, Narayanganj district CPB office and Narayanganj Shaheed Minar where cross section of people paid their rich tributes to the woman leader.

Hena breathed her last at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University on July 20 with a number of old-age complications various at the age of 85.

Healthcare project to save mothers launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The health ministry and EngenderHealth jointly launched a project titled 'Mayer Hashi' or Smiling Mother to make mothers free from the danger of repeated and unplanned pregnancies and to promote child health.

"This four-and-a-half-year project will not only save our mothers, it will also save our infants by raising awareness," Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque said while inaugurating the project as the chief guest at a city hotel.

The project will help improve women's and children's health through raising awareness and ensuring access to family planning methods, he added.

Speaking as a guest of honour, US Ambassador James F Moriarty said, "Mayer Hashi, in English, means 'smiling mother'. The name conjures up the image of a healthy, smiling mother free from the dangers of repeated, unplanned pregnancies."

The slogan of the project is 'Moving forward for healthy and happy families'. It will be initially implemented in three divisions -- Sylhet, Chittagong and Barisal.

The project is a \$12 million health initiative funded by the US Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Mayer Hashi will also work to raise awareness among healthcare workers about pregnancy-related complications, allowing them to identify and treat life-threatening conditions at an early stage.

Additional Secretary to health ministry BD Mitra, Country Director of EngenderHealth Bangladesh Dr Abu Jamil Faisal, Vice President (programme) of EngenderHealth, New York, Dr Isaiah Ndong, Mission Director of USAID Denise Rollins, Director General of Directorate General of Health Services Dr Shah Monir Hossain and Director General of Family Planning Md Abdul Qayyum also spoke.



People from all walks of life pay their last respects to woman leader Hena Das when her coffin is kept at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday.

20 CASES AGAINST KHALEDA, FAMILY MEMBERS PP begins scrutinising dockets, documents

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Metropolitan public prosecutor of Dhaka begins scrutinising dockets and documents of cases filed against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her family members who had earlier submitted applications for withdrawal of 20 cases filed against them.

Talking to The Daily Star Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Mohammad Abdullah Abu yesterday said, "I had asked the authorities concerned to sort out the case documents submitted by Khaleda Zia and her family members for withdrawal of the cases. Following my order, the case documents were placed before me yesterday and I started scrutinising those. After scrutinising, I would give opinion within a short time whether the cases would be withdrawn or

not. "If I find the cases filed against Khaleda Zia and her family members were politically motivated and filed for harassment, I will give my opinion for withdrawal of the cases," Abdullah Abu said.

He had earlier recommended withdrawal of 500 cases filed against Awami League leaders and activists during the regimes of BNP and the last caretaker government considering those to be "politically motivated" and meant for "harassment".

The cases were filed against Khaleda Zia, her sons Tarique Rahman and Arifat Rahman Koko during the last caretaker government.

On July 20, Abdullah Abu had also recommended withdrawal of two cases filed against former law minister and BNP leader Moudud Ahmed and former

food minister and BNP leader Mir Shawkat Ali.

Khaleda, also former prime minister, stands accused of graft in four cases.

Her elder son Tarique Rahman faces 11 cases--seven for extortion, three for corruption and one for tax evasion charges--while her younger son Arifat Rahman Koko is accused in five cases--three for corruption and one each for money laundering and extortion.

Meanwhile, the government decided to withdraw over 243 cases filed against Sheikh Hasina and other political leaders. But it rejected the petitions for withdrawing 25 cases as those were filed on charges of theft, robbery, murder and rape.

Sheikh Hasina, Khaleda Zia and many other political leaders had petitioned for withdrawal of 2,781 cases filed against them.



Visitors look at a group photo at an exhibition on the life and works of Tajuddin Ahmad, the first prime minister of the country, at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. The museum authorities organised the exhibition to mark his 84th birth anniversary.

PHOTO: STAR



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