

# Vow to stamp out corruption in education ministry

Minister seeks help from all

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday vowed to continue his battle against corruption and bribery in his ministry.

"No illegal activities will be allowed in the education ministry, directorate and department. Every office under the ministry has to follow proper rules while carrying out their duties," he told reporters at a view exchange meeting at his secretariat office.

Bribes and corruption usually take place during the process of issuing MPO (Monthly Payment Order), appointments and transfers, the minister said, adding that he is shocked to see reports of allegations of bribery involving approvals for MPO and various academic activities.

But action cannot be taken due to lack of proper evidence, he added.

"The situation will not change overnight. But we will continue our fight against bribes and corruption," he said and sought cooperation from all,

including journalists, in the fight against corruption.

Stringent action would be taken against any persons found involved in corruption, the minister said and urged all to inform him of any kind of corruption with proper evidence through telephone, fax or e-mail.

The phone number is 02-7161395, fax number 7163322 and e-mail address minister@moedu.gov.bd.

Education Secretary Syed Ataur Rahman and other officials were present at the meeting.



PHOTO: PIB OF INDIA  
Newly appointed Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Ahmad Tariq Karim presents his credentials to Indian President Pratibha Devi Singh Patil at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi yesterday.

## Dhaka, Delhi can benefit from cooperation in security issues

Says new Bangladesh envoy

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Bangladesh and India face the scourge of terrorism and can benefit from meaningful cooperation in security-related issues.

Newly appointed Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Ahmad Tariq Karim said this while presenting his credentials to Indian President Pratibha Devi Singh Patil at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi yesterday.

Karim said neither India nor Bangladesh could afford to allow forces that are unfriendly to each other's interests to grow or thrive in each other's territory.

Stressing the need for enhanced bilateral trade and economic relations, he said Bangladesh and India could particularly cooperate in minimising the power and energy gap, increasing exchange of goods and services and encouraging more investment.

In her response, the Indian president recalled her earlier meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during Saarc parliamentarians' conference and expressed confidence that Bangladesh would prosper at an accelerated pace under Hasina's dynamic leadership.

She extended an invitation to President Zillur Rahman to visit India at his earliest convenience.

nience.

The Bangladesh high commissioner, on behalf of the president, also invited Patil to visit Bangladesh.

According to the Press Information Bureau (PIB) of India, the newly appointed ambassadors of the USA and Thailand to India also presented their credentials to Patil at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

In her interaction with the three envoys, Patil said terrorism constitutes a grave threat to world peace, prosperity and stability and that the international community needs to act swiftly and collectively to defeat it.

The president also said that India seeks friendly relations with all countries and to build cooperation in diverse sectors, including education.

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## RMG workers demand payment of salary arrears

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Labour leaders of Bangladesh Garments and Shilpa Samik Federation (BGSF) yesterday demanded payment of salary arrears and other allowances of the last one year to the workers of a DEPZ-based garment factory.

"The workers are passing their days in great hardship for the last one year as the owners shuttered up Honourway Textile and Apparels (Pvt) Ltd on July 17, 2008 without any prior notice. We call on the owners to pay full salaries with compensation to the workers," they said.

The labour leaders placed the demand at a token hunger strike at Mukangan in the city, says a press release.

Other demands include reopening of the factory, withdrawal of 'false and fabricated' cases against workers and sought the government's interference in resolving the prevailing crisis of the company.

The leaders also called on the government to take an initiative to resist any evil attempt to unrest the garment sector and create a congenial atmosphere in the garment business.

BGSF President Rafiqul Islam Sujan and Shahidul Islam Suman spoke at the programme.

## JP's national mourning day programmes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party (JP) has taken a number of programmes to observe the National Mourning Day on August 15, says a press release.

The programmes include hoisting of national flag at half-mast at the central party office, placing wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu at Dhanmondi and discussion.

JP chairman and former minister Anwar Hossain Manju and its secretary general Sheikh Shahidul Islam in a statement asked all the party men across the country to observe the day with due respect.



PHOTO: STAR  
Photographs showing the condition of children with disabilities put on display during a seminar at the LGED auditorium in the city yesterday.

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

## Special instructors to be appointed in PTIs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has a plan to appoint special instructors in all 54 Primary Training Institutes (PTI) in the country to train teachers on special education for children with disabilities.

Under the plan, the recruitment process will be completed by January, State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Md Motaahar Hossain said at a seminar yesterday.

The plan is aimed at creating better educational atmosphere for the children with disabilities, he said, adding that enrolling all such children in schools will be ensured by 2011.

The Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) in association with Art Action organised the seminar on education and social inclusion of

children with disabilities at the LGED auditorium in the city.

Speakers at the seminar urged the government to immediately review the Bangladesh Persons with Disabilities Welfare Act-2001 to incorporate the persons with disabilities into mainstream development.

CIDS President Khandakar Jahurul Alam said the children with disabilities suffer a lot while trying to have access to education, as schools often refuse to enrol them.

Besides, lack of facilities for them in the school causes them to drop out, he said, adding that if they are given better facilities and support, they can also perform well.

According to a survey conducted by World Health Organisation in 2000, persons with disabilities account for

ten percent of the total population in the country. The total number is around 1.5 crore.

However, only four percent of them receive formal education.

Monsur Ahmed Choudhury, a member of the UN Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, urged the government to implement the article 7 and 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disability to ensure their rights to education.

Mir Shaukat Ali Badsha MP, Nazma Shams, chairman of CSID, AHM Noman Khan, executive director of CDD, and Jawaherul Islam Mamun, secretary general of NFOWD, also spoke.

Later, children with disabilities presented a colourful cultural show featuring song, dance and drama.

## People block road for water in Badda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The residents of Uttar Badda in the city blocked one lane of Pragati Sarani for one and a half hour from 11:00am yesterday demanding supply of water.

They came down on the street carrying pitches, buckets, jugs and other water containers and chanted slogans blocking the road.

People of the area said they have been suffering for water crisis for long, but the authorities concerned are not taking any initiative to solve the problem.

## A\$2m for WFP for food security

METRO DESK

Australia yesterday confirmed a further A\$2 million to Bangladesh to support the ongoing emergency operation of United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to address the impact of increased food prices on the poorest people, says a press release.

"I am pleased to announce this contribution for WFP's emergency operation and hope this will provide assistance to communities affected by recent economic and environmental shocks, including communities recovering from cyclone Aila," said Justin Lee, the Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh.

According to a recent joint study by WFP, Unicef and the Institute of Public Health Nutrition, high food prices had a serious impact on household food security and nutrition. Between 2005 and 2008, real household income dropped by 12 percent and by 2008 households spent 62 percent of their income on food, the highest for over a decade. An earlier study found an estimated 7.5 million people were pushed back into poverty due to high food prices.

## 'Poverty main cause of gender disparity'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Poverty reduction should be prioritised in the government's intervention programmes for women's development based on dignity and equality to reduce gender discrimination as poverty is the main cause of disparity, said Dr Amrita Chhachhi, lecturer in Women, Gender and Development Studies at Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands, yesterday.

In most cases in the South Asian countries, she said, there are more policies or principles of the intervention programmes, but there are insignificant examples of real development of women, adding that the planners should be

more careful in this regard.

Dr Chhachhi said this at a lecture session on 'Gender and poverty' organised by Women and Gender Studies department of Dhaka University at Nabab Nawab Ali Senate Bhaban on the campus.

As a resource person at the programme chaired by Chairperson of the department Soheli Khadiza Azad, Dr Chhachhi defined poverty as absence of people's rights which are entitled to them.

Regarding micro-credit, she said it hardly helps women to be empowered; rather the system helps them to be consumerist.

Dr Chhachhi stressed the need for recognising household chores to help women becoming productive which

will help increase the gross national product (GNP).

Stressing the need to count household work in GNP, she said women are the citizens of the country, they are productive members of society but the state doesn't recognise their contributions to GNP at all which should be changed immediately to change the society," she added.

In Cuba, there is an equal share of male and female members to household chores, but here household work goes to women traditionally. Such type of stereotyped thinking needs to be changed to reduce gender discrimination.

"Nothing will change if the macro-economic policy cannot be changed," Dr Chhachhi emphasised.

## Rotary Dhaka Cosmopolitan executives

METRO DESK

The installation ceremony of newly elected executives of Rotary Club of Dhaka Cosmopolitan was held at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city on Sunday, says a press release.

Former adviser to the caretaker government Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui attended the function as the chief guest and Rotary District Governor AKM Shamsul Huda as special guest.

Presided over by club president Syed Saiful Haque, the ceremony was also addressed by MA Ali Bhuiyan, Ghulam Mustafa, Nurun Nessa Begum, GWM Mortaza, Firojul Haque, Raquib Sarder, Secretary Neyamatullah Majumder, ex-president Alauddin Ahmed and ex-secretary MA Majid.

The newly elected office-bearers of the club are President Syed M Saiful Haque Mintoo, IPP Alauddin Ahmed, PE M Mustafa Kamal, Senior Vice-President Ashish Kumar Mondal, Vice-President MA Majid, Secretary Neyamatullah Majumder, Joint Secretary AK Chowdhury, Treasurer Tofazzal Hossain Patwary, Trainer Ghulam Mustafa, Editor M Raquib Sarder, Sergeant-at-arms Syed Abu Zafar, AFM Jahangir Alam, and Directors Saifur Rahman, Mohammad Ibrahim, Syeda Ajanta Israt, Hosne Ara Begum and Firajul Haque.



PHOTO: STAR  
A month-long photo exhibition on the life and works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman began at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. The museum organised the exhibition to mark the 34th death anniversary of Bangabandhu. Renowned photojournalist Aftab Ahmed took the photographs.



PHOTO: LIONS CLUB OF DHAKA GREEN RAJDAHANI  
The installation ceremony of cabinet members of Lions Clubs International, District 315 A1, Bangladesh, was held at Sonargaon Hotel in the city on Sunday. Lion District Governor Khandaker Abu Ashfaq and immediate past district governor Md Mobarak Hossain were also present.



PHOTO: ROTARY CLUB OF DHAKA COSMOPOLITAN  
Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui speaks at the installation ceremony of newly elected executives of Rotary Club of Dhaka Cosmopolitan at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city on Sunday.



PHOTO: COURTESY  
Poet Belal Chowdhury speaks at a discussion on two books of Dr Rakibul Hassan at 'Words 'n Pages' in the city on Monday. Ghasfool, a mass media house, organised the event.



PHOTO: APOLLO HOSPITALS DHAKA  
A meeting of the Apollo Patient Forum was held at the Apollo Hospitals Dhaka recently to exchange views between the consultant and management of the hospital and the guardians of children with congenital heart defects who underwent successful operations. Dr Attawar Sandeep and his team performed the operations. Acting CEO of the hospital Shahjahan Majumder and General Manager (Business Development) Dr Shagufa Anwar were also present.

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