

Int'l confce on war crimes in US on Oct 18

BSS, Dhaka

A daylong international conference on 'Bangladesh 1971: Addressing claims or war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity' will be held on October 18 at Wilkins Theater for Performing Arts of KEAN University at New Jersey of USA.

President of the university Dr Daud Farah will inaugurate the conference, according to message received here yesterday.

Bangladesh Study Group and Human Rights Institute of the university have jointly organised the conference.

A large number of professors and experts from USA, Canada and Bangladesh will participate in the function.

'Work unitedly to stop hazardous child labour'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday called on the government, private organisations as well as NGOs to work unitedly with a view to stopping hazardous child labour.

They made the call at the workshop on 'Action to stop hazardous child labour: Perspective Bangladesh' organised by The Good Earth in association with Manusher Jonno Foundation at Biam auditorium in the city.

Speaking as the chief guest, Labour and Employment Secretary Ataharul Islam

underscored the need to create an opportunity for the child labour to receive education.

He asserted that children should not be appointed in hazardous jobs, especially in bidi or cigarette factories, automobile or battery factories, transportation, ship-breaking industries, etc.

Rina Roy, director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; Rafiqul Islam, former joint secretary; and representatives from FBCCI, BEMEA and Tannery Owners' Association were present.

Lux-Channel i Superstar 2009 audition round begins in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The two-day Chittagong regional audition round of Lux-Channel i Superstar 2009 contest began in the port city yesterday.

The audition venue at The Peninsula Chittagong, a hotel close to GEC intersection, wore a festive look as intended young superstars thronged the spot amid enthusiasm.

A total of 750 contestants, who got their names registered for the audition earlier, appeared before the judges until the audition of the first day concluded in the afternoon.

Of them, 18 participants got "Yes" cards till 3:30pm. "An equal number of participants would appear for the audition today, said Moshrefuzzaman Raju of the event management firm.

"Chittagong is the last of the seven venues for audition round. After wrapping up the audition round here, the second round would be held in the capital," he said.

The audition round started in Mymensingh on the October 1 and continued in Bogra, Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet before Chittagong.

Popular TV artists and models Tazin Ahmed, Tarin, Shamim Shahed, Farah Ruma, Tushar Khan and Shihab Shahin were the judges of the audition round.



PHOTO: STAR

'YES' cardholders of Chittagong regional audition round of Lux-Channel i Superstar 2009 contest pose for photograph at a port city hotel yesterday.

DU diploma on disaster management

UNB, Dhaka

Social Welfare and Research Institute of Dhaka University has taken a decision to introduce post-graduate diploma course on disaster management.

The 14-week long course will be introduced with the assistance of Food and Disaster Management Ministry and UNDP.

Those having post-graduate degrees in social welfare, social work or relevant subjects and others currently working in the field of disaster management in government or non-government organisations and eager to perform duties in the future are eligible for admission to the course.

Interested persons have been requested to be present at the office of Director of Social Welfare and Research Institute at 4:00pm on October 16 along with application, two copies of passport sized photographs, bio-data and copies of all certificates.

TALKS WITH GOVT ON GAS

Nat'l committee places proposals

DU CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Port yesterday put forward some proposals to the chairman of parliamentary standing committee on power, energy and mineral resource ministry in response to their invitation for discussion.

The standing committee on Saturday sent a formal letter inviting the national committee to have an exchange of views on the issue on October 15.

The national committee has been demonstrating protesting the government's recent move to award offshore gas blocks to two foreign companies.

In a letter to the chairman of the parliamentary standing committee, the national committee said with a view to making the discussion suc-

cessful, it is forwarding some proposals for discussion in the meeting scheduled for October 15.

The proposals included discussion on Model PSC 2008 and the process of present contract on three sea blocks, implementation of six-point demand for scrapping Phulbari Coal Project, immediate steps to resolve gas and electricity crisis, and increasing the capability of Bapex and Petrobangla.

The national committee opined that to make the discussion successful the process of finalising the contract with two foreign companies under Model PSC 2008 should be postponed and parliamentary standing committee in this regard should give formal direction to Petrobangla.

The national committee said they are prepared to sit for discussion if they get positive response to their proposals.

Int'l Standards Day tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

The 40th 'International Standards Day' would be observed in the country as elsewhere across the world tomorrow.

The day is going to be observed with a call to maintain quality of products in line with the international standards.

The issue of climate change has been focused as this year's theme of the day is 'Tackling climate change through standards'.

Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI), a state-run watchdog agency for monitoring food items and manufacturing products, has taken elaborate programmes to mark the day.

BSTI will organise a discussion in its auditorium at 10:15am in the city where Industries Minister Dilip Barua will be present as the special guest.

National newspapers will bring out special supplements, while Bangladesh Betar, Bangladesh Television and private radio and TV channels will air special programmes highlighting the significance of the day.

Yusuf joins BERC as chairman

BSS, Dhaka

Syed Yusuf Hossain joined Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) as its chairman yesterday, says an official release here.

A gazette notification about the appointment was issued on Sunday.

According to Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission Act of 2003, the tenure of the appointment is three years.

Earlier, Yusuf served the post of the comptroller and auditor general.

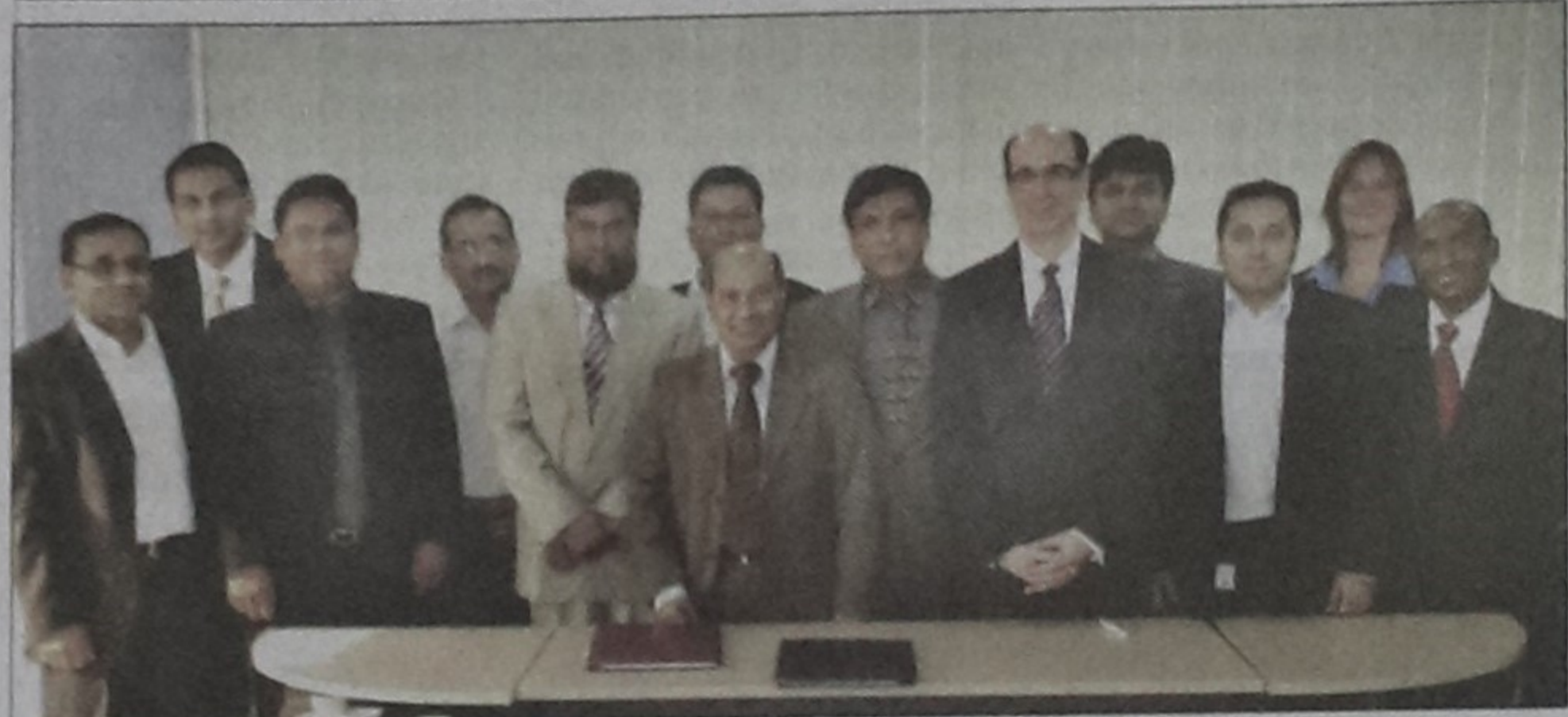


PHOTO: COURTESY

Representatives from six mobile phone operators with Allan Freedman, country director of the BBC World Service Trust, Bangladesh, at the signing ceremony of a project to enable people to learn English on their mobile phones at the Trust office in the city yesterday.

Workshop on social inclusion begins today

METRO DESK

Sightsavers International organises a three-day workshop on social inclusion at Spectra Convention Centre in the city beginning today.

The theme of the workshop is 'An exploration of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) in the light of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD)', says a press release.

The objective of holding the workshop is to develop common understanding of social inclusion among the mass people to promote equal rights and to make the world accessible to all.

The global overview of the UNCPRD, current global initiatives, and interaction of different stakeholder will be discussed with a focus on Bangladesh perspective.

A Plan of Action for concerned stakeholders in Bangladesh in line with UNCPRD is expected to be developed as the outcome of the workshop.

Learning English on cellphone

BBC signs deal with mobile phone operators

METRO DESK

BBC World Service Trust and the country's six mobile phone operators joined hands to enable people to learn English on their mobile phones.

The scheme will give mobile subscribers of all levels access to an extensive range of audio and text lessons on their handsets. The service is likely to be launched later this month.

Leading figures from Aktel, Banglalink, Citycell, Gramophone, Teletalk and Warid and the BBC signed a deal to this end at the Trust office in the city yesterday, says a press release.

The cellphone operators have combined forces under the umbrella of the Association of Mobile Telecommunications Operators of Bangladesh

(AMTOB) with the BBC.

Standard tariffs have been reduced for Interactive Voice Response (IVR) calls and SMS in order to ensure the widest possible affordability and uptake across the nation.

BBC Learning English content is being offered free of cost to the mobile operators as part of the English in Action project, supported by the UK government through the Department for International Development.

Zakiul Islam, president of AMTOB, said, "By virtue of this project, mobile operators are demonstrating their commitment to development."

Allan Freedman, country director of the BBC World Service Trust, Bangladesh, said, "We are delighted to be bringing accessible and affordable English learning to those that want and need it."

Swarna rice brings smiles to growers in Rangpur

BSS, Nilphamari

Swarna sub-1, a new flood tolerant rice variety, developed in Dhaka by International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), has brought smiles to farmers in flood prone regions in greater Rangpur.

Swarna sub-1 saplings, which can survive in flood waters for 15 days, start growing faster after the floodwaters recede, farmers raising the new variety said.

Crop fields in the region were flooded late, this year, as monsoon was delayed by climate change.

The rice variety has created a new optimism for the farmers in the perennially flood prone districts of Nilphamari, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur and Gaibandha.

Each year, Aman rice on about 1.20 lakh hectares used to be damaged by floods in the five districts in greater Rangpur.

It was in this backdrop that RDRS, an NGO, in association with IRRI introduced the flood tolerant rice variety in the region to minimise the growers' losses.

The farmers are happy with Swarna sub-1, with an output of four to five tons per hectare, even if the crop goes under water, said RDRS, working with the farmers.

The people in the region expect that rice variety would help them get rid of the curse of 'Monga' in the months of Ashwin and Kartik.



Students of Sara International School and College at Dhanmondi and their teachers pose for photograph during their educational tour at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novotheatre in the city recently.

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