

Include different mediums in mainstream education

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday underscored the need for a unified education system, incorporating English medium and madrasa education into the mainstream with a view to putting an end to discrimination in the sector.

The education policy reflects the character of the state and the society, they said, adding that the nation wants a unified, scientific and realistic policy, which will produce competent citizens as well as complete human beings.

Eminent citizens organised the roundtable titled 'Education and Education Policy' at the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh in the city.

Presiding over the roundtable, Justice Ghulam Rabbani said it is the education system, not religion, that can make a man rational, courageous, benevolent and selfless.

He urged all to work

together to build a non-communal and democratic nation.

Noted academic Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury said the nation wants a unified education system that will be free of discrimination, communalism and commercialisation.

People from the ethnic minorities and remotest areas should be entitled to the quota system, he added.

He also suggested providing subsidy to the poor students, minimising the financial gap between civil and military-run educational institutes, developing the curriculum and textbooks and increase the social status of the teachers.

Speaking as the chief guest, Rashed Khan Menon, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on education ministry, said the absence of an education policy since the independence gave birth to different educa-

tion systems.

There was an attempt to incorporate different mediums into the mainstream in the proposed education policy, he said, adding that, "Implementation of the policy can be started from January 1 next year as we had said that the policy would be implemented in phases."

"We could not yet implement the universal, people-oriented, democratic and non-communal education system as stated in the constitution, but the new policy is indeed a good start," he said.

Prof Anu Muhammad of Jahangirnagar University said the education system has been commercialised which needs to be addressed immediately.

Many of the speakers, however, raised questions about the educational expenses and methods of the cadet colleges arguing that the draft education policy does not say anything about cadet

colleges.

Prof Yasmin Haque of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) said the expenditure being spent on the students of cadet colleges is 40 times higher than the students of public universities.

Prof M Shamsul Alam of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) presented a keynote paper while Kabery Gayen and Prof Abul Kashem Fazlul Haque of Dhaka University (DU), Prof Shamsuddin Ilyas of Rajshahi University, Prof Sushanta Kumar Das, Prof Reza Karim Khandaker and Prof Tuli Kumar Das of SUST, Dr Nazrul Islam, president of technical education sub-committee of National Education Policy-2000, Shyamoli Kanti Ghosh, director general of Directorate of Primary Education, and Khandaker Asaduzzaman of Anti-Corruption Commission also spoke.

Primary exam results likely tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The result of the Primary Education Terminal Examination, the newly introduced public exam, is likely to be published simultaneously tomorrow.

The examination, which is considered the largest public examination, began on November 21 with the participation of over 18 lakh students of class V.

Primary and Mass Education Ministry sources said the ministry and the directorate of primary education have almost done necessary preparation to publish the result.

But, they may take a day or two more for extra-caution as such public exam being held in the country for the first time, said a source of the ministry.

From now on, there will be no separate scholarship examination, said ministry sources. Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of their results in two categories -- talent-pool and general -- half to boys and half to girls.

Govt launches propaganda against Tarique

Allege former JCD leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of former student leaders of Jatayatatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday alleged that propaganda is being conducted against Tarique Rahman, senior vice chairman of BNP, and accused the government of the smear campaign.

They asked the ruling party to stop spreading scandals as well as propaganda against Tarique and urged the people to be prepared to forge movement against the government if the propaganda is not stopped.

The former JCD leaders and office bearers of Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) made the call at a press briefing at the National Press Club in the city.

Former vice-president (VP) of Ducusu Amanullah Aman, who is currently the joint secretary of BNP, read out a written statement.

Aman said an "illegal and unconstitutional caretaker government" took the state power on January 11, 2007, and started hatching conspiracies against late president Zia's family by arresting former prime minister Khaleda Zia and her two sons -- Tarique Rahman and Arafat Rahman.

"Still, conspiracies are being hatched as the effort to assassinate the character of Tarique Rahman is going on like the immediate past caretaker government," he said.

Aman said the caretaker government filed 13 'false' cases against Tarique and the present government has started making criticism against him.

BNP lawmaker Shahid Uddin Chowdhury Annee, former Ducusu and JCD leaders Shahab Uddin Laltu, ABM Mosharraf Hossain, Habib-un-Nabi Khan Soheli, Nazim Uddin Alam, Shamsuzzaman Dulu and Khairul Kabir Khokan were present.



PHOTO: STAR

Guests hold CDs containing biographies of 56 freedom fighters at its launching ceremony at Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. From left are Rokeya Hasan Lily, Mili Rahman, Sayeda Mortaza and Zeba Mahmud.

CD on biographies of 56 FFs released

DU CORRESPONDENT

With a view to making the young generation familiar with the valiant freedom fighters of the liberation war, a CD (compact disc) containing biographies of 56 freedom fighters was released yesterday.

Sayed Mortaza, wife of martyred intellectual Mohammad Mortaza, unwrapped the cover of the CD titled 'Mohima Tobu Udvasto, Muktiyuddho Khondo I' at a function on the premises of the Liberation War Museum in the city.

Gunjani, an organisation that archived memories of noted personalities, arranged the programme. It has prepared the disc in a bid to preserve the memories of those gallant war heroes and present it before the young generation.

The price of the CD has been fixed at Tk 100 and it will be available at various bookshops at Aziz Supermarket.

The CD contains the biographies of freedom fighters and liberation war organisers, including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Mohammad Mansur Ali, Tajuddin Ahmed, AHM

Kamruzzaman, Syed Nazrul Islam, Khademul Bashar, Mohammad Ataul Gani Osman, AK Khandaker, Abu Osman Chowdhury, Rafiqul Islam, Ziaur Rahman, ATM Haider, Khaled Mosharraf, KM Shafulah, ANM Nuruzzaman, Chitta Ranjan Dutta, Mir Shawkat Ali, Nazmul Haque, Kazi Nur-Uzzaman, MA Manzur, MA Jalil, Abu Taher, M Hamidullah Khan, Mahiuddin Jahangir, Mohammad Ruhul Amin, Motiur Rahman, Nur Mohammad Sheikh, Munsir Abdur Rauf, Mostafa Kamal, Mohammad Hamidur Rahman, Altaf Mahmud, ANM Golam Mostafa, AFM Abdul Alim Chowdhury, Anwar Pasha, ANM Moniruzzaman, Gobinda Chandra Dev, Gias Uddin Ahmed, Jotimoy Guha Thakurata, Dharendra Nath Dutta, Nizam Uddin Ahmed, Fazle Rabbi, Fazlur Rahman Khan, Mamun Mahmud, Munier Chowdhury, Moyazzem Hossain, Mofazzal Haider Chowdhury, Mohammad Mortaza, Ranada Prasad Saha, Rashidul Hasan, Shahidullah Kaiser, Shaheed Saber, Santushchandra

Bhattacharya, Sirajuddin Hossain, Selina Pervin and Habibur Rahman.

Recalling memories at the function, Rokeya Hasan Lily, daughter of martyred intellectual Rashidul Hasan, said: "I along with my mother have been carrying out memories of my father for the last 38 years. I felt adventurous when I heard that those memories would be preserved."

She called on the government to start the trial of war criminals immediately.

Zeba Mahmud, daughter of martyred intellectual Mamun Mahmud, urged the freedom fighters to wage another war to bring the war criminals to book.

She hoped that the young generation will stay beside the freedom fighters in the war.

Mili Rahman, wife of Bishreshtha Motiur Rahman, hoped that it would help new generation know the history of supreme sacrifices by the freedom fighters for the noble cause of independence.

Alongside the biographies of the freedom fighters, the CD also carries photographs and various written as well as audio-visual documents on them.



PHOTO: STAR

Labour Welfare Directorate brings out a procession in the city yesterday on the occasion of the International Migration Day.

WORKERS' FESTIVAL IN N'GANJ

Govt plans to build dorms for women RMG workers

Says labour minister

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Labour and Employment Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday said the government is planning to build separate dormitories for female workers of garment sector.

"A good number of workers among 30 lakh workers in garment industry are female. The government is planning to build separate dormitories for the betterment of female workers," he said.

The minister said this as the chief guest at the concluding session of the 2nd Workers' Festival organised by the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) at Osmani Pouro Stadium in Narayanganj.

Mosharraf also called on the workers to remain alert against conspiracies

against the garment industries.

He said, "I don't believe that anybody can set fire to the factory units of this largest foreign exchange earning sector. Foreign spies and vested quarters as well as conspirators are trying to create chaos at garment industry using the names of workers."

Inaugurating the event in the morning, State Minister for Home Shamsul Haque Tuku said the law enforcement agencies have been directed to take stern action against any quarter who would try to create a bar to production.

Without a united attempt by the workers and owners, proper industrialisation is impossible, he added.

The government is making its efforts to ensure security in mills and industrial units. Owners should pay the wages

on time while workers should resolve any crisis through discussions, he added.

Hundreds of garments workers took part in the daylong event with much enthusiasm.

Workers at the function rendered patriotic songs and folk songs, performed dance numbers, cracked jokes, participated in drama and fashion show.

The razzle-dazzle display of firecrackers the cloudless night sky of Narayanganj sparked in the evening followed by a cultural show.

BKMEA officials said apart from Dhaka, workers from a number of garment factories, including Gazipur, Narayanganj and Saver, took part in the function.

BKMEA President M Fazlul Haq said the main objective of the festival was to strengthen the bond of relations between workers and owners.

Children with disabilities display talents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Children with disabilities took the stage as they danced, recited poems, sang and staged drama in front of hundreds of people at the Shishu Academy auditorium in the city yesterday.

Every dance step and every syllable uttered at the stage was greeted with rounds of applauds from the audience.

"More events like this should be organised so that the children can get a platform to prove that they are also gifted and talented like any other child," said Sultana Rahman, a parent from the audience.

The 'Cultural event by girls with disabilities' was organised by the National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) in association with the Shishu Academy and ActionAid.

Over 40 girls took part in the event.

Speaking as the chief guest, Asiatic Society General Secretary Prof Mahfuza Khanam said, "These children may have some physical disabilities, but that should not hamper their growth as an individual citizen."

NFOWD President Khandakar Zahurul Alam and Secretary General Zowaherul Islam Mamun also spoke.

Owners, workers of sand-carrying cargoes begin strike

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Owners and workers of sand-carrying cargoes plying on the rivers Meghna, Dhaleshwari, Turag and Buriganga began a 48-hour strike yesterday protesting extortion by the leaseholders.

Sirajul Islam Swapan, a leader of the owners' association, said the leaseholders force people to buy sands and if anyone refuses, the goons of the leaseholders snatch money and beat workers.

The owners and workers staged a protest rally at the riverside in Mukhtarpur and threatened to go for an indefinite strike if the problem is not solved by 48 hours.

However, Shafiqul Islam, superintendent of police, said the complaints of extortion are not true and nobody had complained against the forceful activities of the leaseholders.

35 shops, 4 shanties, 3 godowns gutted

METRO DESK

Thirty-five shops, four shanties and three jute godowns were gutted in separate fire incidents in Chittagong, Magura and Chapainawabganj in the last two days.

Staff correspondent in Chittagong reports: Seven shops and four shanties were gutted in a fire in the port city's Mansurabad area yesterday.

Sources said a fire broke out at a thatched shanty at Mia Bari of Mansurabad area at around 1:35pm.

The fire spread fast and engulfed its adjoining shanties and shops.

Three other thatched houses and seven shops, including three groceries, two tailoring shops and two cosmetics shops, were gutted in the fire.

Three fire fighting units extinguished the blaze at around 2:40pm.

Sources in the Fire Service and Civil Defense said the fire originated from an oven in the

kitchen.

Our correspondent in Magura reports: Goods of 17 shops and three jute godowns worth about Tk 2 crore were gutted at Radhanagar Bazaar under Sreepur upazila in Magura early yesterday.

Fire brigade sources and locals said the fire originated from an electric short circuit in a grocery shop at 2:00am.

Fire fighting units from Magura rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze after about five hours.

Our correspondent in Chapainawabganj adds: Eleven shops were gutted in a fire at a market at Rahonpur puratan bazar under Gomostapur upazila in Chapainawabganj on Thursday night.

Mahbub Haque, station manager of Chapainawabganj fire station said, the fire allegedly originated from an electric short circuit of a shop at around 11:00pm. The flame spread rapidly and engulfed the areas.

Handcuffed youth dies jumping out of train

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An arrested youth in handcuffs died while trying to escape by jumping out of a running train in Gazipur early yesterday.

Samal Chowdhury, 28, who was arrested with drugs by Narcotics Control Department personnel in Brahmanbaria on Thursday night, was being taken to Dhaka by the 'Surma Mail', but he jumped from the train when it reached Arkhola in Kaliganj, the police said.

The police found the body lying beside the rail line in the morning and informed the Government Railway Police (GRP) who recovered the body at around 3:30pm, said Officer-in-charge (OC) Abdul Awal of Kaliganj Police Station.

Khaleda condemns threat given to Amar Desh editor

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia expressed grave concern and condemned the reported threat given to the Amar Desh Editor Mahmudur Rahman by "two ministers and a leader".

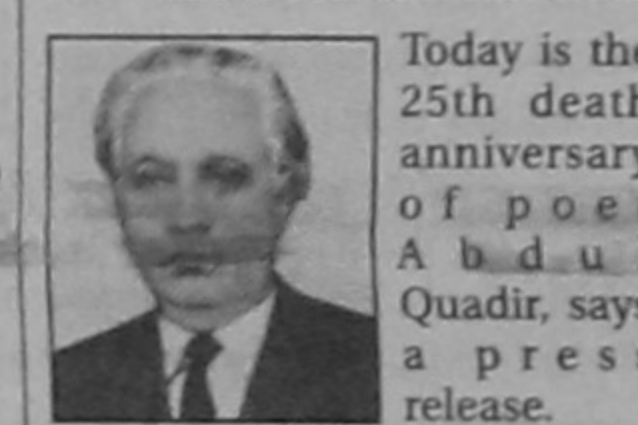
"Such threat is against the freedom of the press and publication of the truth," she said in a statement yesterday.

Khaleda also said, "This threat was aimed at covering up crimes and manipulating investigation. This threat exposes the ruling party's Bakshali and autocratic mindset."

The BNP chief asked all, including journalists, to raise voice against such mindset.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK

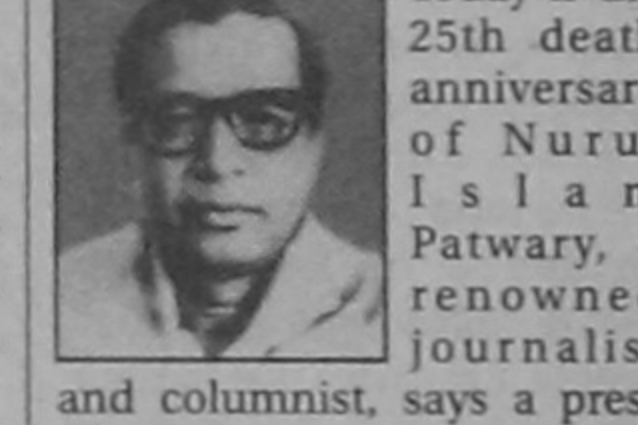


Today is the 25th death anniversary of poet Abdul Quadir, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held after Maghrib prayers at the residence of his youngest daughter at Flat No. # 10/C, Green Garden Tower, 25/A Green Road, Dhanmondi, in the city.

Nurul Islam Patwary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



and columnist, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residence at 1133/A, Bitul Aman Housing Society, Shyamoli in the city after Asr prayers.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the programme.

Sarwar Alam

METRO DESK

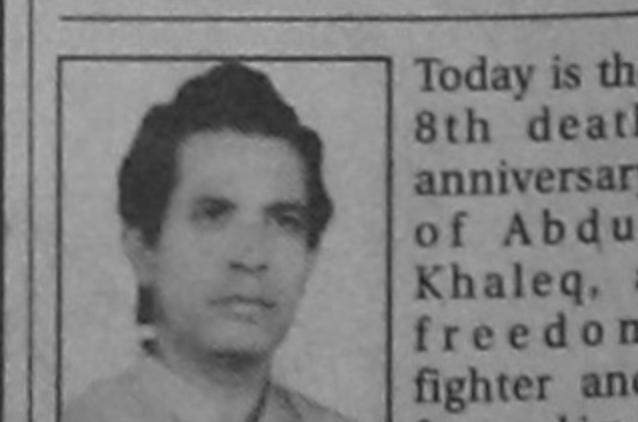


Today is the seventh death anniversary of Sarwar Alam, a former joint director general of Bangladesh Railway, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his Mahakkhali DOHS residence. Relatives and admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Abdul Khaleq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 8th death anniversary of Abdul Khaleq, a freedom fighter and founding president of Agrani Bank Employees Union, says a press release.

The union leaders will place wreaths at his grave at Dhanichkora village in Choddogram, Comilla.

A doa and milad mahfil will be held at his residence at Manik Nagar in Dhaka after Asr prayers.

A memorial meeting will also be held at the central office of the union at Motijheel in Dhaka at 6:00pm tomorrow.



No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate rain or drizzle may occur at one or two places over Rajshahi division and the regions of Jessore and Khulna, Met Office said.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged during the period.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:15pm today and rises at 7:36am tomorrow.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 30.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Cox's Bazar and the lowest of 11.8 degrees at Srimongal.

The 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	28.3	16.4	73	76
Chittagong	29.3	17.0	75	49
Rajshahi	26.3	13.7	95	83
Khulna	29.0	16.5	90	76
Barisal	29.5	15.0	85	80
Sylhet	27.9	16.1	78	67
Cox's Bazar	30.5	17.3	70	87