



PHOTO: STAR

Participants of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra's book reading programme hold burning candles and take a vow to spread the light of knowledge at the award giving ceremony at Ramna Batamul in the city yesterday.

BOOK READING PROGRAMME AWARD CEREMONY Students vow to read more books

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of students vowed to read more books at the prize giving ceremony of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra's yearly Book Reading Programme yesterday.

The Kendra awarded 3554 students of 49 city schools at the colourful ceremony at Ramna Batamul.

Speaking at the programme, founder of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed said, "Textbooks do not enlighten your mind. You can enlighten your mind by reading storybooks or poetry."

"Food is necessary for your life. But you cannot live without oxygen. Textbooks are your food and books of literature are your oxygen,"

headed.

Only reading books will not be enough, these knowledge should be used to save the environment, too, said Vice Chancellor of Brac University Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury.

Lauding the initiative of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, noted writer Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal said the Kendra has done something that should have been done by the government.

Editor of the daily Prothom Alo Matiuur Rahman, eminent writers Selina Hossain and Anisul Haque and Prof Anisur Rahman were also present as special guests.

The guests distributed the prizes among the winners.

Over 1.5 lakh students participate in the countrywide programme every year.

Tk 1 cr heroin seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized heroin worth Tk one crore from a passenger bus in Chandipul area on the outskirts of the city on Thursday night.

Acting on a tip-off, the law enforcers stopped a bus of Shyamoli Paribahan, which was going to Sylhet from Kushtia, on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway.

They found two packets of heroin while searching the bus. But nobody claimed its ownership.

Rab handed over the heroin to the Sylhet Kotwali Police.

Dhaka highly vulnerable to quake: Expert

Adequate preparation needed to minimise casualties

UNB, Dhaka

Adequate preparations are needed to minimise casualties and the loss of property in case of any possible earthquake, as Dhaka is highly vulnerable to tremor under Madhupur Fault.

ASM Maksud Kamal, national adviser on Tsunami, Cyclone and Earthquake Risk of the CDMP, told UNB that Dhaka is highly vulnerable to earthquake under Madhupur Fault, as the phenomenal urbanisation, density of population and high-rise structures are growing fast here.

"We can't even imagine how much casualties and economic losses will be there in the city in case of a powerful tremor originating from Madhupur Fault," he said.

According to a government study, some 131,029 people will die instantly while another 32,948 will be injured if a 7.5 magnitude earthquake from Madhupur Fault jolts the city.

In case of an 8 magnitude earthquake from plate boundary Fault-2, the study says, there will be about 69,874 instant deaths while 81,916 others will need to be admitted to hospital. In this case, the casualties will be less despite stronger tremor because of distance of its epicentre.

The incidence of earthquake has

become too common across the world with the recent one hitting Haiti, leaving some 200,000 people dead. In 2004, Indian Ocean tsunami killed at least 230,000 people across a dozen of countries.

Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) under Food and Disaster Management Ministry conducted the study with the help of Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UK Department for International Development (DFID) and European Commission provided financial support for the research project conducted from February 2008 to August 2009.

The study reveals that at least 10 major hospitals in the capital will be destroyed completely and another 241 hospitals and clinics partially in case of a 7.5 magnitude quake, mounting pressure on the city's other hospitals and clinics to treat the possible huge injured people.

It shows that only 24,242 hospital beds will be available on the day the quake will jolt for the use of the already-admitted patients and earthquake-injured people after the 7.5 jolt, which is only 41 percent of the demand.

A week after the shake, only 54 percent

of the beds will be available for the use while 72 percent after a month, the study said.

About 37,625 hospital beds, which are only 63 percent of requirement, will be available for the treatment of injured people on the day of an 8 magnitude earthquake. About 76 percent of the beds will be back in service after a week while about 87 percent will be fully operational after a month.

Citing four low to moderate tremors, the study apprehended that moderate to strong earthquakes may hit three major cities -- Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet -- as those are situated in three separate risky earthquake zones. "Millions of people will die if a strong earthquake jolts the regions."

Maksud Kamal, also a professor of geological sciences of Dhaka University, said most of the healthcare centres in the capital have been set up for just making money, not for providing healthcare services, as no contingency plan taken for recovery from earthquakes.

"The highly vulnerable healthcare centres were constructed without any plan or maintaining the Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC)," he said.

CITIZENS' RIGHTS FAIR BEGINS

NGOs could not make public institutions accountable

Says Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The non-government organisations (NGOs) could not create massive social awareness to make public institutions accountable for providing basic rights like education and healthcare for the poor, noted economist Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud said yesterday.

"At personal and family level, there has been a silent revolution. Bangladesh did better than many other countries in the world in terms of school enrolment of the girls, population control and reducing mortality rate," he added.

The NGOs could not ensure if the children going to schools are getting quality education or people as a whole are getting good healthcare. The institutions concerned could not be made accountable, said Prof Mahmud.

Former chief adviser to a caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman said stronger local government system is imperative to establish strong foundation of democracy and ensure

citizens' rights.

The speakers said this at the inaugural ceremony of a two-day 'Citizens' Rights Fair' at Shilpakala Academy in the city organised by an alliance of 57 grassroots development organisations working across the country.

The fair includes exhibition of the activities the NGOs are operating to promote citizens' rights and their socio-economic development by setting up stalls, organising cultural shows and discussions.

Prof Mahmud, also a former adviser to a caretaker government, said strong democratic institutions, citizens' awareness and quality of political leadership are essential for strong democracy.

Quality political leadership and strong democratic institutions are still absent, he said, suggesting that massive social awareness on citizens' rights be created.

Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman said Bangladesh has made good achievements against many odds in the last 38 years.

"The prime minister, leader of the opposition and three important ministers are women. These are successes, but still acid is thrown on women, they are victims of torture in inhumane ways. It is like darkness under light," he said.

Former chief justice Rahman called for qualitative political leadership, which will strengthen local governments, to institutionalise democracy that ensures equal rights of all citizens.

Brac Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed said the poor people, especially the women, children and ethnic people of the country, are struggling for their existence, and they are deprived of their basic rights.

"They have a misperception that all are not equal. But, through this fair, we want to tell them that the constitution of Bangladesh has given equal rights to all and they have to realise their rights."

Calling on all to work for citizens' rights, Abed said they want to form an effective network to work for the cause. Brac will start a programme to file public interest litigation, he noted.



PHOTO: STAR

Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman, former chief adviser to a caretaker government, inaugurates the 'Citizens' Rights Fair' by beating a drum at Shilpakala Academy in the city yesterday. Fazle Hasan Abed and Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud were also present on the occasion.

In the name of Allah The Most Beneficent The Most Merciful

CMCCI

The nation celebrates another milestone of progress.

Chittagong Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce & Industry

emerges today in the horizon, with a commitment to promote business potentials of Chittagong, play a vital role in the overall economy of the nation through its effort to strengthen the trade linkage with the rest of the world and serve as a key platform to nurture business harmony within the existing business sectors of the country to harness cohesive efforts to accelerate the growth engines of the country.

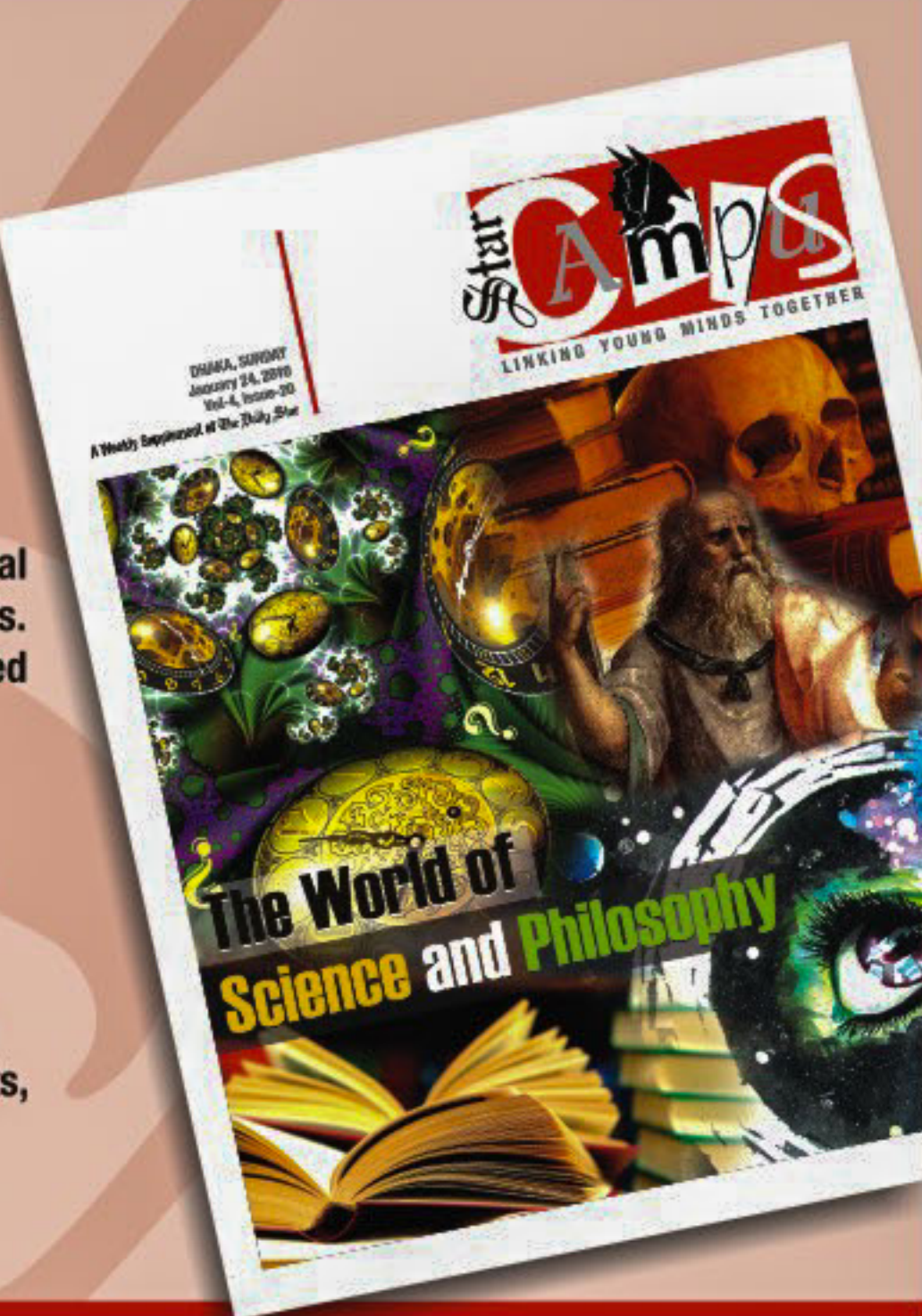
Lt. Col. Faruk Khan (Retd), M.P., Honorable Minister of Commerce, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, will grace the occasion as the Chief Guest of the Installation Ceremony of the Board of Directors of CMCCI (Chittagong Metropolitan Chambers of Commerce & Industry)

CHITTAGONG METROPOLITAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

The Daily Star Coming out tomorrow - Star Campus

Linking Young Minds Together

The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views. Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents. Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine Of the Students, By the Students and For the Students. Star Campus helps link young minds together.



One killed in bridal party bus crash in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

One person was killed and 25 others were injured when a bridal party bus rammed a roadside tree at Fakir Hat on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Sitakunda early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Tilakananda Bhixmu, 25, son of Lokananda Bhixmu, of Miani Barua Para village.

The accident took place when the bridal party were returning to Barayar Hat in Mirsarai after joining a marriage ceremony in the city at night.

The driver of the bus had lost control over the steering, the police said quoting witnesses.

Sixteen injured people were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where Tilakananda succumbed to his injuries.

Ten others were given first aid at Sitakunda Health Complex.