

'Work to ensure women's right to habitation'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government and non-government organisations (NGOs) should work together to ensure women's right to habitation, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

Men should also come forward to this end, said Rowshan Ara, director general of woman and children affairs ministry.

The NGOs are playing a vital role in implementing the government's programme, she said, adding, "Now the family members and social leaders should give women the scope for taking policymaking decisions to be empowered."

Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) and Participatory Development Action Programme (PDAP) jointly organised the seminar on 'Women empowerment and their land and habitation rights' at the National Press Club.

Benojir Ahmed, a member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Land, said she would recommend to the committee and the land ministry to allocate khas lands to the distressed women.

He also said that the Awami League government will not evict the slum dwellers without rehabilitating them as many women and children might become displaced.

ADAB Chairperson Abdul Matin moderated the seminar while PDAP Executive Director Kazi Baby read out the keynote paper.



Winners of the book reading programme of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra hold their prizes at the prize giving ceremony at Ramna Batamul in the city yesterday, the last day of the two-day ceremony.

AWARD GIVING CEREMONY Enlighten yourselves thru' reading books

Speakers tell students
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today's children are tomorrow's freedom fighters. They will have to enlighten themselves through reading books and fight for the emancipation of people.

Speakers at the prize giving ceremony of a book reading programme of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra said this yesterday, the last day of the two-day ceremony.

Thousands of students assembled at Ramna Batamul in the city to receive prizes. A total of 25,000 students took part in the book reading programme-2010.

On the first day, renowned intellectuals, academics, media personalities and cultural activists distributed prizes among 3,554 students.

Another 1808 students from 26 schools received prizes on the second day.

At the closing session, the speakers said today's school students who will lead the nation tomorrow would have to enlighten themselves first.

"You are our freedom fighters. You will have to fight for the emancipation of people after enlightening yourselves," Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, founder of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, told the students.

He hoped that today's winners will become enlightened people through reading books and take the nation forward successfully.

Media personality Ali Imam said students should be encouraged to read good books in order to mould them into honest citizens, as they will lead the nation in the future.

Architect Mobassher Hossain and media personality Abdun Nur Tushar also spoke.

DU VIOLENCE Duta demands punishment to culprits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) leaders yesterday demanded punishment to the culprits involved in January 18 clashes on the Dhaka University (DU) campus.

Duta President Prof Khondoker Bazul Haque and acting General Secretary Prof Abul Hasnat in a statement also expressed concern over the untoward incident on the campus.

They urged the law enforcement agencies to find out the culprits through video footage broadcast on different TV channels and photographs published in different dailies.

They also urged them to take necessary steps to maintain peace on the campus in future.

At least 25 people including a proctor were injured during the clashes.

INT'L CHILDREN FILM FESTIVAL BEGINS

Make at least one quality film for children a year: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged the filmmakers to make at least one quality film for children every year, and announced cash incentives for such innocuous films that will inculcate values and vision of life into the children's mind.

She made the call while addressing the inaugural function of the seven-day 3rd International Children Film Festival arranged by Children's Film Society, Bangladesh, at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city yesterday afternoon.

"Our history, tradition, liberation war, culture, etiquette, human values - all these can be imprinted on children's mind easily through a quality film."

Make children-friendly films. The government will provide necessary cooperation in this regard," the prime minister said.

She announced that, from now on, the government will provide donation for five films a year, at least one of them children-oriented.

"If you (filmmakers) can satisfy the children, the number of child films receiving state donation may double," she said.

The prime minister requested the filmmakers to put their best effort in flourishing human qualities of the

children through their films.

"Make such films watching which our children can love their motherland, become a philanthropic, and real human being, and all of a family can watch those movies together," she said in her direction for the filmdom.

The premier observed making children's films is a difficult task as

elder people many times cannot understand children's psychology, their liking, disliking properly. "I thank those who are doing such a difficult task," she told the function.

She said the Bangalee can feel proud as it has great litterateurs and artistes like Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Michael Madhusudan

Datta, Jibonananda Das, Saratchandra Chatterjee, Lalan Shah, Hason Raja, Zainul Abedin, SM Sultan, Kamrul Islam and Sattajit Ray.

Films can be a strong tool to combat all social malaises like bigotry, hatred, conflict, militancy, corruption, drug addiction and oppression.

Mustafa Manower, chairman of the festival advisory committee, presided over the programme. Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, Information Ministry Secretary Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury, Children's Film Society President Prof Dr Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, festival director Morshedul Islam, Unicef Bangladesh Representative Carel de Rooy and CEO of Warid Telecom Munir Faruqi also spoke at the programme.

By lighting candles Hasina inaugurated the film festival, which will be held at 12 different venues from January 23 to 29. The children will have free access to the venues from 11:00am to 6:30pm everyday.

A total of 243 child films from 50 countries will be screened at the festival. Central Public Library will be the main venue for the filming.

The children's film festival will be followed by traveling (mobile) film festival to be started from February 3 and to continue over the year across the country.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurates the 3rd International Children Film Festival by lighting a lamp at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

BSMMU signs agreement with Indian medical instt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS) have signed an agreement to increase cooperation and exchange of knowledge and expertise.

As per the agreement, a faculty exchange programme will be encouraged as well as student and trainee exchange programme and participation in joint research and publication projects will take place.

Exchange of research results and technical facilities will also be facilitated.

Vice Chancellor of BSMMU Prof Pran Gopal Datta and Director of AIMS Prof Ramesh Chandra Deka signed the agreement on January 12.

Prof Pran Gopal Datta said 200 health professionals in the next five years as per the agreement.

Regarding student and trainee exchange, all the decisions of methods of selection, status accorded by the receiving institutions, qualification of credit etc will be made under the existing rules and regulations and policies of both institutions, he said.

'Give martyrs of 1969 mass upsurge due recognition'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday called for giving the martyrs of the 1969 mass upsurge due recognition.

The mass uprising in 1969 set the stage for the liberation war, they added.

They were speaking at a programme organised at the Liberation War Museum in the city to pay homage to Shaheed Asad, Shaheed Matiur and Shaheed Rustam, the trio who embraced martyrdom during the 1969 mass upsurge.

Shaheed Asaduzzaman was an MA final year student of the Department of History, Dhaka University during the movement.

He was killed on January 20 when police opened fire on a procession.

Shaheed Matiur Rahman Mallik, a student of Nabakumar Institution in Dhaka, and Shaheed Rustam Ali were shot dead on January 24 during a procession protesting the death of Asad.

A veteran of 1969 uprising, Abdul Khaleq, who helped carry the corpse of martyred Rustam, presented his blood stained shirt to the museum as a memorabilia.

The younger brother of

Asad announced that Asad's blood stained shirt will also be presented to the museum.

Remembering his son Azhar Ali Mallik, father of Shaheed Matiur, said the martyrs of 1969 gave direction to millions of Bangalees, seeking liberty from tyranny.

The corpse of Matiur may be snatched away by the assassins but his ideas lived on.



Dr Sarwar Ali, trustee of Liberation War Museum, speaks at a programme at the Museum in the city yesterday, organised to pay homage to Shaheed Asad, Shaheed Matiur and Shaheed Rustam, the trio who embraced martyrdom during the 1969 mass upsurge.

PHOTO: STAR

Prof HM Maniruzzaman, younger brother of Shahid Asad, said, "Although Asad was a student of the history department, renowned historians of Dhaka University never remembered him properly. They also failed to depict the true history of the liberation war."

Dr Sarwar Ali, trustee of the museum said, "The mass uprising of 1969 was like a dress rehearsal that eventually set the final stage for liberation war in 1971, inspiring millions of Bangalees to embark on an armed struggle against the Pakistani tyrants."

Students were the key factor behind the uprising, he added.

Abdul Ahad, another veteran of the movement who also carried the corpse of martyred Rustam, said the name of Rustam has almost sunk in the oblivion.

Singer Susmita Ahmed and Kranti Shilpi Goshthi presented special songs paying tribute to the martyrs while Kazi Arif recited the legendary poem 'Asad Shirt' (The Shirt of Asad) by poet Shamsur Rahman.

Mafidul Haque, trustee and member secretary of the Liberation War Museum, was also present.

Call to set up land commission for indigenous people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should establish a separate land commission to ensure land rights and food security of the indigenous people, Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adibashi Forum, said yesterday.

"The government should work to establish the land rights, otherwise the large number of indigenous population may face food scarcity in the near future," said the rights activist at the inaugural ceremony of a regional consultation workshop at a city hotel.

Association for Land Reform and development (ALRD), Asian NGOs Coalition for Agrarian Reforms (ANGOC), Land Watch Asia (IWA) and International Land Coalition (ILC) jointly organised the two-day workshop on 'Access to land, agrarian reform and climate change adaptation for food security'.

To ensure food security for all, the government can think of growing some new crops at plain land, Sanjeeb said, adding that, "Crops which are mainly cultivated in the hilly area by indigenous people;

those crops should be cultivated in the plain land round the area."

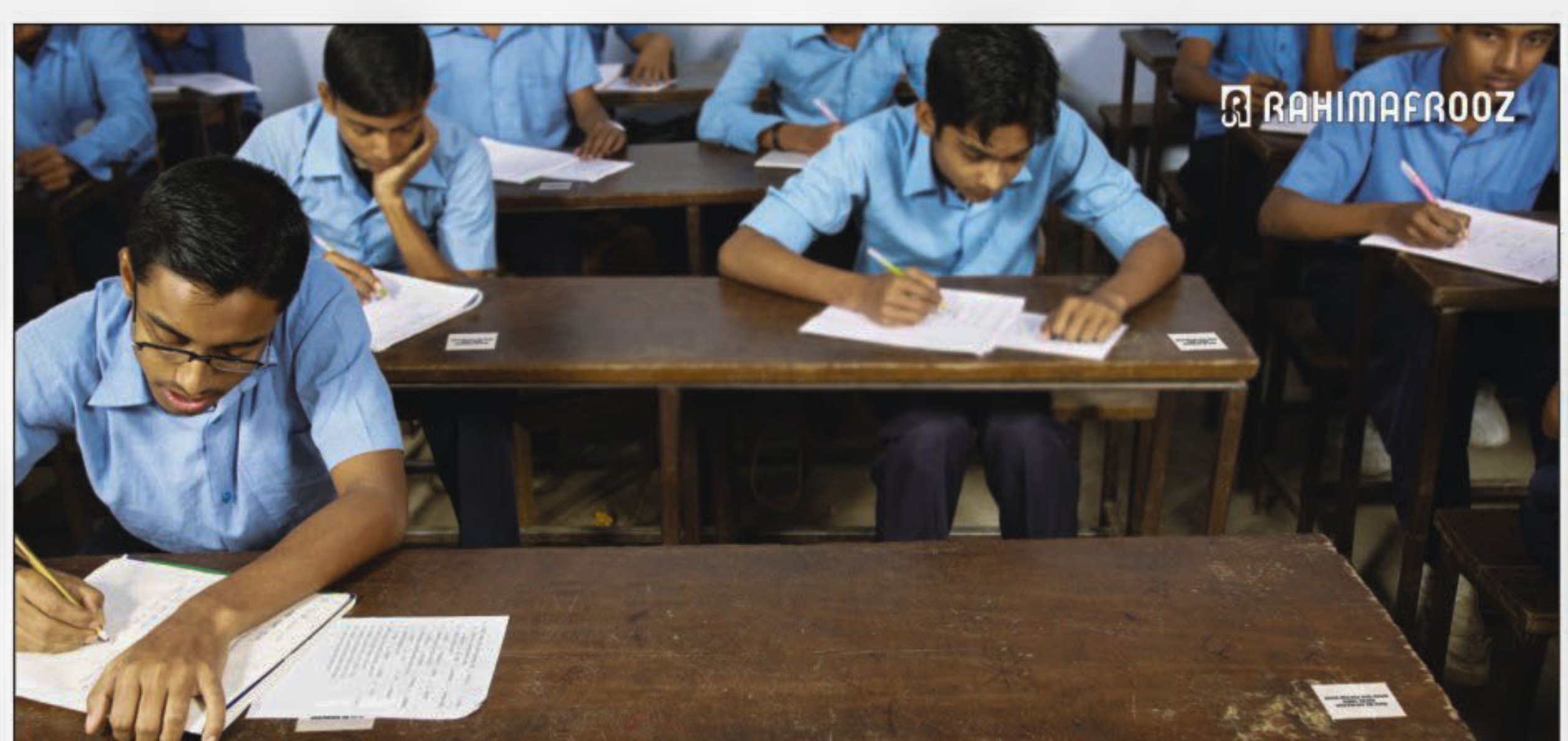
Representatives from 30 NGOs from India, Philippines, Pakistan, Nepal, Indonesia, Cambodia and the host country are taking part in the workshop.

In his opening remarks, Director General of Cirdap Dr Ruma Paudyal said that the recommendations from this workshop would be discussed at the ministerial meeting of Cirdap from January 25 to 28 to work together to ensure food security of this region.

Khushi Kabir, chair of ALRD, presided over the inaugural session while Syeda Rizwana Hasan, executive director of Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (BELA), Tony Quizon of ANGOC and Rajendra Agrawal of AVARD also spoke at the workshop.

Rizwana Hasan suggested that all Asian countries should work together to address common problems.

If the sea level rises by one metre, 17 percent of land will go under water and two crore people would be displaced, she added.



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