

PM to open Int'l Mother Language Instt bldg Feb 21

BSS, Dhaka

The first phase of the construction of International Mother Language Institute building has been completed in the city after a long wait.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the building on February 21, the International Mother Language Day.

Project officials said the last Awami League government has started construction of the building to uphold the glorious history of supreme sacrifices for language by the Bangalees and spread the spirit of February 21 across the world.

But the subsequent BNP-Jamaat alliance government stopped the construction, though 80 percent of work of the foundation was completed.

The last caretaker government, however, realised the importance of the project and resumed the construction on 11 April, 2008, at a cost of Tk 14.20 crore.

Construction of three floors of the 12-storey International Mother Language Building is

now complete. The building is located on the north of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at Segunbagicha and east of Ramna Park.

Constructed under the supervision of Education Engineering Department with modern architectural features, the building currently has classrooms, plaza, lobby lounge, auditorium, museum, library archive, canteen and VIP meeting room.

Assistant Project Director Saifa Sultana told the news agency yesterday that 95 percent of the work has been completed. The rest of the work would be completed in a few days.

After the inauguration of the building, the work on appointment of manpower will begin, she added.

Academic activities will begin in the institute in July, the official hoped.

Though the main thrust of the institute will be research on language, it will conduct courses on foreign languages to develop skilled manpower keeping in view the demand in international job market.



A devastating fire breaks out at Mohammad Ali colony, adjacent to Amin Jute Mill, in Chittagong early yesterday, causing huge damage to the area. (Story on Page 16)

VACCINATION STARTS TODAY 20m children to be vaccinated against measles

METRO DESK

More than 20 million children against measles will be vaccinated during a two-week measles campaign across the country starting today and ending on February 28.

All children aged nine months to less than five years will be given measles vaccines, while all children aged 0 to five years will be given two drops of polio vaccines.

More than 50,000 health staff, 600,000 volunteers and NGO workers have been mobilised in order to carry out the campaign. They will work in 120,000 vaccination sites.

Bangladesh conducted a major national measles campaign in 2005-2006. About 35 million children between ages of nine months and 10 years were immunised. As a result, the number of measles outbreaks registered in 2006 was only 7 compared to 27 registered in the first two months of 2006 prior to the campaign. No measles outbreak was reported in 2007 and only one occurred

respectively in 2008 and 2009.

However, 25 to 30 percent of children in each birth cohort remain susceptible to measles. That's why, the health ministry decided to conduct the measles campaign with the objective to particularly target those children who were born after the last campaign in 2005-06.

The children, who had measles vaccines before or those who suffered from measles, will also need to get the measles vaccine during this campaign as a second dose of vaccine is recommended to ensure that the child is fully immunised.

"Measles vaccination campaigns can significantly reduce morbidity and mortality among children," said Unicef Country Representative Carel de Rooy.

"It is unfortunate that measles continues to kill children when such avoidable deaths can easily be prevented through immunisation. I call on all the parents to bring their children to the immunisation sites so they will be protected against this

child-killer disease."

In 2001, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Unicef adopted a joint strategic plan for global measles mortality reduction, which was endorsed by World Health Assembly in 2003. The objective of the national plan of action is to reduce measles mortality by 90 percent by 2010 in comparison to 2000.

Dr Duangvadee Sungkhobol, country representative of WHO, said: "Globally, measles remains the leading cause of vaccine-preventable childhood death and disability. Maintaining good immunisation coverage and conducting periodic follow-up campaigns reduces measles cases and deaths considerably."

To cover all the 20 million children through this fortnightly campaign, 23 million doses of measles vaccines, 29 million doses of polio vaccines, 23 million auto-disinfecting syringes, 2.3 million reconstitution syringes and 150,000 safety boxes have already been procured and distributed.

Punishment to killers of Rupam, Faruk demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra Moitri, a left-leaning student organisation, observed the 15th death anniversary of its Rajshahi University (RU) leader Debashish Bhattacharjee Rupam yesterday.

On the occasion, different left-leaning student leaders placed wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar, says a press release.

They also organised a rally and demanded trial of the killers of Rupam and recently killed Faruk on the RU campus.

Chhatra Moitri President Rafiqul Islam Sujan presided over the rally while Bangladesh Chhatra League-JSS President Hossain Ahmed Tafsir also spoke.

US ship Safeguard arrives in Ctg port

UNB, Dhaka

US Navy ship Safeguard (T-ARS 50), the lead ship of the Safeguard class and the Navy's only forward-deployed rescue and salvage ship, arrived in Chittagong port yesterday.

The ship has 51 officers and mariners of different ranks.

An ISPR press release said during its stay in Bangladesh, members of Safeguard along with Bangladesh Navy will jointly take part in special exercise relating to salvage operation.

Safeguard is expected to leave Bangladesh on February 19.

The USNS Safeguard last visited Bangladesh in November 2008.

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