

# Basic knowledge on ICT to 1,000 schools by next year

Says Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the government would take an initiative to spread the primary knowledge on information and communication technology (ICT) to 1,000 secondary schools across the country by next year.

The education ministry through its mobile ICT laboratory will carry out the work with a view to introducing the students of remote areas with ICT, he added.

The minister said this at the inaugural ceremony of mobile ICT van programme at Mohammadpur Government High School in the city.

"A bulk number of students out of 26,000 secondary

schools and madrasas in the country cannot even see a computer. The main aim of the programme is to give the students of remote areas a basic knowledge of computer and internet."

Improving Quality Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP), a project of the ministry, will carry out the work.

Under the programme, a total of 17 minibuses and pickup vans furnished with modern ICT equipment, will visit different secondary schools to make the students familiar with different equipment as well as give them a basic practical knowledge on ICT.

The minister said the mobile ICT vans would go to

1,000 secondary schools within the next one year.

The officials concerned said each of the vehicles, which is being used by 14 Teachers Training Colleges (TTCs), is equipped with five laptops, five wireless modems, multimedia projectors, web cameras, scanners, multifunctional printers, handy generator, interactive boards and speakers.

A total of 350 teacher educators would lead the vehicles, they mentioned.

Nahid said, "We could provide computers only to around 1,000 schools and many of them even do not have trained computer teachers. Yet, we incorporated computer-related issues in the textbooks. These vehicles will

help them give a primary idea of a computer."

"The students, who are reading about computer in the textbooks, will have a chance to see it."

Asked about the education policy, the minister said the draft education policy would be placed in the cabinet within one or two weeks.

"The draft policy has already been prepared and it will be sent to the cabinet within one or two weeks."

Prof Noman-ur-Rashid, director general of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), Nazrul Islam, project director of TQI-SEP, and Benzir Ahmed, headmaster of Mohammadpur Government High School, also spoke.

# NGOs asked to set up Info Delivery Unit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) yesterday in a circular asked all foreign-funded NGOs to establish Information Delivery Unit and appoint an official to implement the Right to Information Act 2009.

"We issued the circular to stop all sorts of irregularities and mismanagement of foreign information to all," Muhammad Ibrahim, deputy director of NGOAB, told The Daily Star.

"As there are some serious allegations against some NGOs and instability exists in the development sector, we think the unit might help NGOs to be transparent and free from corruption," he said.

"Earlier we issued letters to all 2,479 foreign-funded NGOs to establish information unit, employee appointment for the unit and also give details about these to the NGOAB. As most NGOs did not follow the instruction, we sent them the notice again and we will take drastic action if anyone fails to implement the instruc-

tions", said Ibrahim.

The regulatory authority for foreign-funded NGOs also asked the NGOs to send the details of the unit's responsible officers, their names, positions, telephone numbers, email and website addresses to the NGOAB and make it public.

According to section 10 of RTI Act 2009, a responsible officer must be appointed to run the "information providing unit".

Sources at the NGOAB also informed our correspondent that the government is serious about the establishment of the information providing unit as there are a number of allegations of foreign funds' misuse, involvement in militancy and extremism against some NGOs.

"We hope, anti-state activities and irregularities in handling foreign funds might be stopped through NGOs," Ibrahim added.

In the last two months, the NGOAB investigated activities of at least eight NGOs after getting complaints about their involvement in anti-state activities and misuse of foreign funds.

# President flies to Singapore tonight for check-up

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman leaves for Singapore for medical check-up tonight.

He will undergo "all medical checkups at Mount Elizabeth Hospital", official sources said.

A scheduled flight of Singapore Airlines will carry the President Zillur Rahman and his entourage.

He will be accompanied by his family members, secretaries of the president's office and other officials.

The president is expected to return home on March 4.

# Obituary

BSS, Tangail

Abdul Wahab, a valiant freedom fighter and one of the witnesses in Bangabandhu murder case, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at his Salimabad village home under Nagarpur upazila here on Monday at the age of 67.

Wahab is survived by his wife, four sons, two daughters, a large number of relations, admirers and friends to mourn his death.

He joined the Pakistan army's artillery corps on March 13, 1963 and took active part in the Indo-Pak war in 1965 in the Baki sector. In 1971, he fled the Jessore Cantonment and joined the War of Liberation in April under the Baten Bahani.

Wahab along with other freedom fighters fought the Pakistani occupation forces at Kamalpur and Mohindaganj in Jamalpur district during the War of Liberation.

After his retirement from the army, he joined Bangladesh Betar. He was on duty on August 15 in 1975 when Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with most of his family members was killed.

Wahab was laid to eternal rest at the local graveyard with full state honour after namaz-e-janaza at the Salimabad playground after Asr prayers on Monday.

# Md Rahmat Ullah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Rahmat Ullah, a photojournalist of the Daily Sangbad, passed away due to kidney disease at the Kidney Foundation Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 35, says a press release.

He left behind his wife. He was laid to rest at Norillah village in Laxmipur district after namaz-e-janaza on the Bangladesh Photojournalists Association premises in the capital.

# Syed Nuruzzaman

METRO DESK

Syed Nuruzzaman, chairman of Rafid Poultry and Hatchery Ltd, breathed his last due to old-age complications at the Square Hospital in the city at the age of 76, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two daughters and two sons to mourn his death.

He was buried at Jummatul Mawlagravedyard.

Chairman and Managing Director of Butterfly Marketing Ltd MAMannan condeoled the death.



Newly appointed High Commissioner of the Maldives Ahmed Sareer calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

# PM keen to work with Maldives on climate issues

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her desire to work with the Maldives regarding climate change issues and global warming that put both the countries in danger.

She said both Bangladesh and the Maldives are in the front line among the most vulnerable countries of the world due to the global warming and the impact of climate change, which are mainly caused by the developed countries.

Hasina made the remarks when newly appointed Maldives High Commissioner to Bangladesh Ahmed Sareer called on her at the Prime

Minister's Office in the city.

The PM said the bilateral relations, including economic cooperation, between the two friendly countries would have to be expanded.

In this regard, she said the Maldives could import pharmaceutical items, ceramics, and readymade garments from Bangladesh, which are of high quality and produced here in abundance.

"The Maldives can import these items from here, as they import from different countries," she said.

Sareer told the PM that the Maldives president took an initiative to hold a summit titled

'Asia Summit on Climate Change Issue' for having a common platform

before the next 16th United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNCCC) scheduled to be held in Mexico.

Hasina appreciated the move of the Maldives president about the adverse impact of the climate change.

She also emphasized on united effort to eradicate poverty from the Saarc region. "We are working hard on poverty alleviation and to upgrade the living standard of the people."

Hasina said the common problem of the region and "we will have to work unitedly to eradicate poverty from the region."

Deputy Press Secretary to the Prime Minister M Nazrul Islam briefed reporters after the meeting.

# Medical education in Bangla on the cards

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said the government would take a step to introduce medical education in Bangla medium as part of its massive move to establish the language at all levels.

"The High Court will start to deliver the verdict in Bangla soon. The lower courts are already delivering their verdicts in Bangla," he added.

The minister said this as the chief guest at a reception to six language movement veteran physicians at Dr Milan Hall at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

"The government is also trying to establish Bangla as an official language in the United Nations."

BSMMU Teachers Association organised the reception to the physicians, including Dr Sharfuddin Ahmed, Dr Ahmed Rafique, Dr

Sayed Haider, Dr Abdul Kader Khan, Dr KM Humayun Hai and Dr Ali Asgar, who contributed a lot during the Language Movement in 1952.

Language movement veteran Dr Ahmed Rafique, also a Bangla Academy award-winning writer, said doctors played a great significant role during the movement and even in constructing the first Shaheed Minar in Dhaka.

"So, the young doctors should remember the veteran doctors and respect them for their contribution and uphold the spirit of language movement, which was mainly started by the doctors."

Dr Rafique called on all to remember some other unknown language veterans who are still staying backstage in the history of the movement.

He named some such veterans, including Ali Azamal of Shahjadpur, Monjur Hossain of Naogaon, Shaheed

Alim Choudhury, Abdul Kader Khan, Fazlul Karim of Kishoreganj, Yeahia of Laxmibarria and Faridul Huda of Brahmanbaria still remain neglected in history.

Speaking as the special guest, Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said: "Our existence was attacked by the Urdu-speaking government in 1952 and our language heroes sacrificed their valuable lives to establish Bangla as their mother tongue."

"An attack on language means an attack on intellectual, political and cultural rights," he added.

President of the association Prof Md Moazzem Hossain chaired the programme while Adviser to Prime Minister Syed Modasser Ali, BSMMU VC Prof Pran Gopal Dutta and Bangladesh Medical Association Secretary General Prof Md Sharfuddin Ahmed also spoke.



Ahmed Sharif's anniversary of death today

METRO DESK

Today is the 11th death anniversary of Dr Ahmed Sharif, a renowned scholar, researcher in Bangla literature and a forerunner of free thought movements, says a press release.

On the occasion, Swadesh Chinta Shanga has arranged Dr Ahmed Sharif commemoration lecture and award giving ceremony at Dhaka University Business Studies Faculty auditorium at 4:00pm today.

Former vice-chancellor of Rabindra Bharati University Prof Prabrita Sarker will deliver the commemoration lecture. Chief Justice M Fazlul Karim will be the chief guest.

Anti-imperialist movement leader Engineer M Shaidullah and social thinker Prof Dr Rangalal Sen will receive the commemoration awards at the function with Prof Abul Kashem Fazlul Haq in the chair.

# CUSTODY OF SON SC rejects ETV chairman's appeal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday upheld a High Court (HC) order that directed Ekushey Television (ETV) Chairman Abdus Salam to hand over his son Shihab to the custody of his divorced wife Farzana Islam Shilpi.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim passed the order after rejecting a petition filed by Salam against the HC order.

The HC on February 16 directed Salam to hand over his four-and-a-half-year-old son to Shilpi.

Shihab was handed over to his mother the same day. Since the divorce of his parents, Shihab had been in the custody of his father as per an order of a magistrate's court in Dhaka.

Advocate TH Khan appeared for Salam while Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah and SM Sabbir Hamza Chowdhury stood for Shilpi.

# 4 BCL men lose studentship for abusing girl

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Chittagong Medical College (CMC) authorities here yesterday temporarily cancelled the studentship of four leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) CMC unit for their alleged involvement in abusing an unidentified teenaged girl on Thursday night.

CMC authorities in a meeting of its academic council yesterday afternoon took the decision following daylong agitation of the general students demanding cancellation of studentship of the four BCL men.

CMC Disciplinary Committee will take the final decision after further investigation into the allegation, said the sources.

The four were identified as BCL CMC unit Joint Secretary Asibul Islam Limon, Kazi Md Foyzal and two activists Sohag and Rabbi.

Meanwhile, BCL CMC unit in a meeting on Monday night expelled the four leaders and activists from the organisation for indefinite period on the same charge.

CMC Principal Professor Dr SMC Mohammod Jahangir told The Daily Star that the disciplinary committee will take the final decision after further investigation.

Earlier, over 200 general students of the college demonstrated in front of the principal's office during the meeting of the academic council.

BCL CMC unit also expressed solidarity with the general students' demand while BCL General Secretary TM Fahad Nasif spoke at the rally among others.

The four BCL men on Thursday night allegedly took away an unidentified female to the remote hilly area beside the CMC playground and abused her, according to a witness. The victim, however, did not make any complaint in this regard.

# 2 Hizb-ut members arrested in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested two members of banned Islamist organisation Hizb-ut Tahrir when they brought out a procession at the city's Paltan and National Press Club areas yesterday.

Identified as Sifat and Omar Faruq, the arrestees

were taken to Shahbagh police custody for interrogation.

The government on October 22 last year banned all kinds of activities of the organisation in the interests of public security.

Police said around 30 Hizb-ut men brought out a procession from Mukhtangan around 12:30pm.

# Nizami warns govt of 'dire consequences'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Matiuur Rahman Nizami yesterday warned the government of "dire consequences" of shutting the democratic door on Islamic politics.

"With a bit of a warning I want to say that undemocratic doors will open up if the lawful and democratic doors are closed, and that will not be good for anyone," Nizami said at a meeting of Jamaat backed labour organisation Bangladesh Sramik Kallyan Federation, held in Al-Falah Auditorium at Boro Maghbazar of the capital.

Supporting Jihad, the Jamaat chief said Jihad and terrorism are not the same. "Allah and his Rasul (pbuh) talked in favour of jihad in the holy Quran and Hadith. The present government is turning the country into a place where no woman will be allowed to wear a hijab, and no one will be allowed to follow the Quran," Nizami claimed.

Other Jamaat and Sramik Kallyan Federation leaders said the present government is working to rout Islam out of the country.

The Jamaat leaders urged its activists to vow to foil such "government conspiracies".

Jamaat leader Abdul Kader Mollah, and Sramik Kallyan Federation leaders Mujibur Rahman, and Kabir Ahmed also spoke among others.

# Sales up at Ekushey book fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The sale of books and a record turnout of visitors have been marked in the Amar Ekushey Book Fair in the last couple of days.

Book lovers came to the fair to scan through the books of their choice and looked at different titles. They also bought whatever books they liked from the new ones.

"I am searching for some books on liberation war and science fictions and have bought a few. I think I will come to the fair every day in the last days of the fair."

Some booksellers said the fair has witnessed a good sale in the last few days. He is upbeat about the sale.

Meanwhile, a total of 72 new titles have hit the book fair. Of them, most books are novels and poems.

The new titles include Kabita Amimangshito Ramani of Nirmalendu Goon, Bangladesher Advasi Muktijoddha of Shafiuddin Talukder, Himur Neel Jotsna of Humayun Ahmed, Smriti 71 of Tarik Mahmud and Bangla Bhashar Birudhhey Sharojontro O Bangaleer Sangram of Dr Nigar Chowdhury.