

Call to implement SAPNA package to reduce poverty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Development Organisation of the Rural Poor (DORP) demands implementation of Social Assistance Programme for Non-Asseters (SAPNA) package to eradicate poverty from the country.

The leaders of the organisation said SAPNA is a safety net programme with five types of support simultaneously for those who are getting the maternity allowance.

Firstly, it includes health, nutrition and birth control support to a family, next support for education and culture, a house and a safe environment, block allocation for livelihood development and then micro-credit, if necessary.

The DORP leaders placed the demand a seminar 'Incorporation of SAPNA package based on maternity allowance

in the national budget' at LGED auditorium at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city.

DORP and Embassy of Spain jointly organised the seminar yesterday.

"If a family can be provided with these supports for 20 years at a stretch, it will eradicate poverty from that family," said AHM Nouman, secretary general of DORP.

He called on the government to initiate the package programme at seven upazilas of seven districts as a pilot project.

Former adviser to a caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan, Spanish Ambassador in Dhaka Arturo Perez Martinez, lawmaker Junaied Ahmed Polok, Planning Commission Member Prof Shamsul Alam and Shishu Odhikar Forum Chairperson Wahida Banu were present.



PHOTO: STAR

Overhead cables catch fire following an electrical short circuit in the city's Karwan Bazar area yesterday, disrupting a good number of internet connections in the area.

Water transport workers threaten work abstention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The leaders of Bangladesh Noutjan Sramik Federation, a platform of water transport workers, yesterday threatened to go for an unidentified work abstention throughout the

country from March 16 if the government fails to meet their 27-point demand by March 15.

They said this at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity. Vice President of the Federation M Shah Alam read out a written statement.

He said they had been demanding an increase in their salary and allowance since 2008, but to no avail.

Amid agitations, the immediate past caretaker government assured them of increasing the salary of the launch

workers from January 2009 and interim allowance from July 2008. However, the decision has not been finalised yet, he said.

Shah Alam said they had already informed the authorities in 2010, but no step had been taken in this regard.

Course on financial services for poor ends

METRO DESK

A two-week course on 'Financial services for the poor', jointly organised by the Brac Development Institute (BDI) of Brac University and Alliance Forum Foundation, concluded recently, says a press release.

The certificate distribution ceremony of the course was held at the Brac Centre auditorium in the city on March 8. Acting Vice Chancellor of Brac University Dr Md Golam Samdani Fakir distributed certificates among the participants.

Prof Syed M Hashemi, director of BDI, and Taku Furukawa, managing director of Alliance Forum Foundation, spoke on the occasion.

The course was targeted to an international audience. It is grounded in the experience of Bangladesh but provides a broad global picture of the state of microfinance, its emergence and challenges and the diversity of financial products on offer.

This is the second time that the course was offered and 20 Japanese participants took part in the course.

BDI is a resource centre promoting research and building knowledge on practical solutions for addressing poverty, inequality and social injustice. Alliance Forum Foundation was founded in 1985 in California by George Hara. Its mission is to nurture new technologies, create new industries for the post-computer era, and foster a new form of capitalism which can provide solutions to problems encountered by shareholder centric management.

Saarc Seed Forum starts journey

UNB, Dhaka

The Saarc Seed Forum (SSF) was launched in a meeting at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city.

The meeting, attended by the members of the SSF with its first Convener and Director General of the Seed Wing of the Agriculture Ministry Anwar Faruque in the chair, took a five-point decision.

A sub-committee headed

by Dr Nazmul Huda was also formed to make the draft of the constitution.

The Saarc Centre has been entrusted with the responsibility to place the SSF to its ministerial meeting for approval.

The meeting decided to hold its first congress in Dhaka in February next year.

As per a decision of the SSF, businessmen, trading houses, researchers and public and private research organisations

could be the founder member of the forum by paying a fee of \$300.

Malavika Dadlani of Indian Seed Science and Technology, Nepal Seed Association President Mitra Raj Dewani, Convener of Bangladesh Seed Association (BSA) Mahub Anam, Director of Saarc Agriculture Centre Dr Rafiqul Islam Mondal and Senior Programme Officer Dr Ibrahim Mohammad Syed were also present at the meeting.

Huge Indian clothes seized

UNB, Comilla

Members of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized a huge quantity of Indian clothes from Kazipara in sadar upazila on Tuesday night.

Acting on a tip-off, a special patrol team of 33 Rifles Battalion led by Major Maksudul Alam conducted a drive in the area and seized the contraband items worth Tk 52.5 lakh.

The seized items included 636 sarees, 239 three-pieces and 115 scarves.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Participants of a course on 'Financial services for the poor' pose for photo with the guests at its certificate distribution ceremony at Brac Centre auditorium in the city on Monday. Brac Development Institute (BDI) of Brac University and Alliance Forum Foundation jointly organised the course.



O/A level results
on Thursday 11 March '10 at 2pm (approx.)

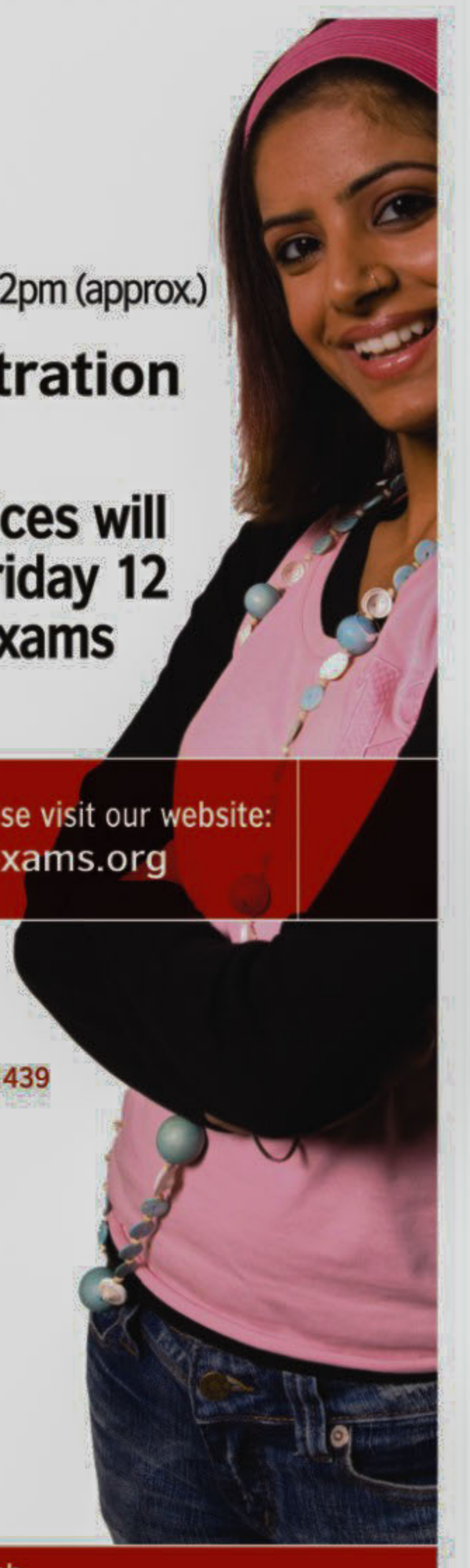
O/A level registration
continues until 14 March '10

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