Call to ensure free flow of information

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique yesterday said the free flow of information should be ensured in all sections of the administration for the socio-economic development of the country.

Prof Arefin said every citizen has the right to know information, but some people cannot convey information from their grip to others due to lack of developed attitude.

The DU vice-chancellor was speaking at an open discussion on "Flow of information at the university: expectations and duties," at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban on the campus. The Department of Mass Communication and Journalism organised the programme.

Prof Arefin called upon the DU officials and employees to be more liberal in distributing general information.

The DU VC said setting up an information desk at the university is under consideration and they will take steps to launch a campus radio and a television channel.

Journalism Department Chairperson Prof Gitiara Nasreen chaired the session while Assistant Professor Shameem Reza gave the welcome speech.



Doctors stage a sit-in at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday protesting the attack on veteran physician Prof AKM Rafiquddin by criminals on May 9. (Story on Page 5) PHOTO: STAR

'Who's Who: Women Leaders at a Glance' launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first ever directory on biographies of women leaders of Bangladesh in different sectors, 'Who's Who: Women Leaders at a Glance 2010', was launched yesterday.

Published by Bangladesh Alliance for Women Leadership (BDAWL), the book celebrates the accomplishment of the women who influenced progress in Bangladesh.

as a key resource in identifying women experts enforcement, media and more. and help recognise their roles, speakers said at the launching ceremony at a city hotel yesterday.

Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni formally unveiled the book at the ceremony. The foreign minister said, "Women's empowerment is at the top of current government's agenda"

"The country is proud of its women leaders and their contribution needs to be recognised", she stated acknowledging the contribution of 64 women lawmakers in current house, about 1300 directly elected women in the local government, the garment workers who toil to earn the biggest chunk of foreign currency for the country and many other unsung heroes.

She said it is time to redefine the role of

The directory also contains a complete list of women lawmakers in the 9th parliament, gender analysis of past three elections, women's share of seats in the parliament. It also tries to shed some light on women voters.

Biographies include women in politics, Portraying 134 biographies, the book will serve judiciary, academia, civil service, business, law

> **BDAWL Executive Director Nasim Firdaus** said, "The biographies of women leaders in this directory are a testament to the growing strength

> BDAWL Chairman Barrister Rabeya Bhuiyan and Lauren K Moriarty addressed the audience that included former advisers to the caretaker government Rasheda K Choudhury and Gitiara Safia Chowdhury, ActionAid Bangladesh Country Director Farah Kabir, Democracywatch Executive Director Taleya Rahman and Information Commissioner Prof Sadeka Halim.

Waterborne diseases claim 20 lakh children a year: Experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 20 lakh children die of waterborne diseases in the country a year, said physicians and researchers at a discussion yesterday.

Diarrhoea alone causes 90 percent of deaths of underfive children, they said. The waterborne diseases include diarrhoea, cholera, hepatitis, polio, typhoid, allergy and dermatitis.

Amar Health, a health news portal, and Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), an environmental group, jointly organised the discussion on 'Water contamination in Dhaka, health injury and ways out at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city.

Water supplied in the capital byWater and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) is not only inadequate but also filthy, stinky and toxic, said Amar Health editor Dr Aupurba Pandit in the keynote presentation.

He also said the city dwellers pay about Tk 500 crore for the treatment of waterborne and the rest is extracted from diseases every year.

The packaged water is not safe either, as many unscrupulous traders sell unsafe water, he added.

Although the underground water is normally clean and safe, it gets contaminated due to rundown and crude supply system and faulty connections to households, said Prof Firoz Ahmed of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

"Toxic substances coming from untreated industrial effluents released by mainly textile industries are very much responsible for water contamination of the rivers around Dhaka," he said.

Industrial wastes constitute at least 60 percent of the contaminants of Dhaka rivers while medical wastes, domestic and human sewage constitute the rest, said Md Khairul Islam, country director of Wateraid.

Expressing his concern over excessive dependence on ground water, Islam called upon all to help prevent wastage in water consumption pattern.

More than 200 tons of medical wastes are generated everyday in Dhaka city.

Wasa produces at best 190 crore litres of water against a daily demand for 220 litres. Of the total production, only 13 percent is taken from the rivers Buriganga and Shitalakhya around the capital underground.

The government has to undertake effective plan to stop industrial pollution of riverwater at source, said Bapa President Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, who chaired the discussion.

Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, a lawmaker from Lalbagh area, said bureaucratic tangle is a major obstacle to resolving any problem.

Prof Dr Rashid-e-Mahbub, former president of Bangladesh Medical Association, and Dr Md Bangladesh, also spoke.

Shahadat Hossain and Dr SK Roy of International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research,



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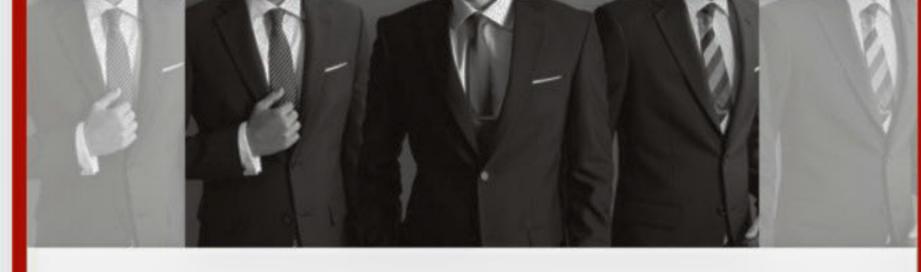
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