

Bangladesh supports equity-based approach to fight child poverty

Hasina calls for effective implementation of strategy to make the MDGs a reality for the world's children

UNB, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has lent her government's unequivocal support to Unicef's equity-based approach to fighting child poverty, urging effective implementation of the strategy to make the MDGs a reality for the world's children.

Addressing a Unicef-sponsored event on the sidelines of the UN Summit at the UN Headquarters on Wednesday, Hasina also called for more low-cost techniques to ensure that the equity approach has the right kind of tools at its disposal.

The equity approach, which she said conforms to the principle of 'Intergenerational Equity' first agreed upon by world leaders in 1992, focuses on the fact that in the push to reach

development goals by their 2015 deadline, the poorest of the poor are falling further and further behind.

On low cost techniques, Hasina said Unicef could mobilise the international community, governments and local NGOs to use low-cost techniques as was done in the 1980s with growth monitoring, oral re-hydration for children's diarrhoea, breastfeeding, and immunisation against six deadly childhood diseases.

Hasina referred to a study in The Lancet on the effects of healthcare payments on poverty, which indicates 2.7 percent of the population or 78 million people in 11 countries, including Bangladesh, end up with less than one dollar per day after paying for healthcare.

She mentioned that Oral Re-

hydration Therapy (ORT), termed by leading medical journal The Lancet as "potentially the most important medical advance of the 20th century", was discovered while treating cholera in the refugee camps during Bangladesh's War of Liberation in 1971.

The PM also called for a strong commitment and collective support to achieve the goals set for the children.

"Let us collectively strive and succeed in translating the promises into reality," she said.

Hasina went on to stress enhanced strategic partnerships for Unicef with the private sector, civil society and NGOs, which would be useful in responding to humanitarian emergencies, as well as times of peace.

Bangladesh assumes the presidency of Unicef this year, followed by

the vice-presidency next year, and the prime minister promised her government's all-out support to facilitate Unicef's implementation of its mandate over the coming period.

To end, the PM evoked a famous verse from national poet Rabindranath Tagore, who said "Every time a child is born, it renews my faith that God has not given up on man."

CNN anchor and reporter Jim Clancy moderated the programme while the other panelists are Slovenia President Dr Danilo Turk, chief minister of Human Rights Secretariat of the Presidency of Brazil Paulo Vannuchi, Rockefeller Foundation President Dr Judith Rodin, Unicef Goodwill Ambassador Mia Farrow and Unicef Executive Director Anthony Lake were also present.



PHOTO: COURTESY

A two-day long orchid exhibition begins at House Cen C-2 on Road 95 of the city's Gulshan today. The exhibition, organised by the Orchid Society of Bangladesh, will remain open from 10:00am to 5:00pm. The society, established in 1989, has been organising such event every year presenting wide varieties of orchids from home and abroad.

HR body chief slams orthopaedic hospital docs for negligence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Prof Dr Mizanur Rahman yesterday slammed the doctors and staff of the orthopaedic hospital for mismanagement and negligence in treatment.

On a sudden visit to National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR), Dr Mizan was also angry for the absence of doctors and nurses as he found the patients not supplied with bandage and medicines provided by the government.

He rebuked the hospital authorities for giving a bed to a serious patient in exchange for bribe, and keeping the beds dirty.

Cheated and neglected, some of the patients and their relatives complained to the NHRC chairman who urged all concerned with health care service to bring a change in the mindset.

Prof Mizan said he will visit all the government hospitals gradually and prepared a report with recommendations for solving the problems.

PM's daughter Saima attends session on Autism

UNB, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's daughter Saima Hossain attended a special programme for the Third Annual World Focus on Autism, hosted by Autism Speaks, the world's largest autism research and advocacy organisation on Wednesday.

Ban Soon-Teak, wife of the UN Secretary General and Hosts Suzanne and Bob Wright of Autism Speaks joined by co-hosts Dee and Tommy Hilfiger and more than 10 first spouses discussed solutions to combat the global crisis of autism.

Best use of tech in edn a must to build skilled human resources

Says education minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the government wants to make the best use of new technologies in the education system to build efficient human resources for meeting the challenges of 21st century.

"We need to focus on our development needs and incorporate technology into teaching and learning method," he said. The minister was speaking at the launching of a new range of materials and services by the British Council for learners and teachers of English.

British Council organised the launching ceremony at a city hotel where the new global materials including web-based and online resources, CD-ROMs, materials for newspapers and radios were put on display.

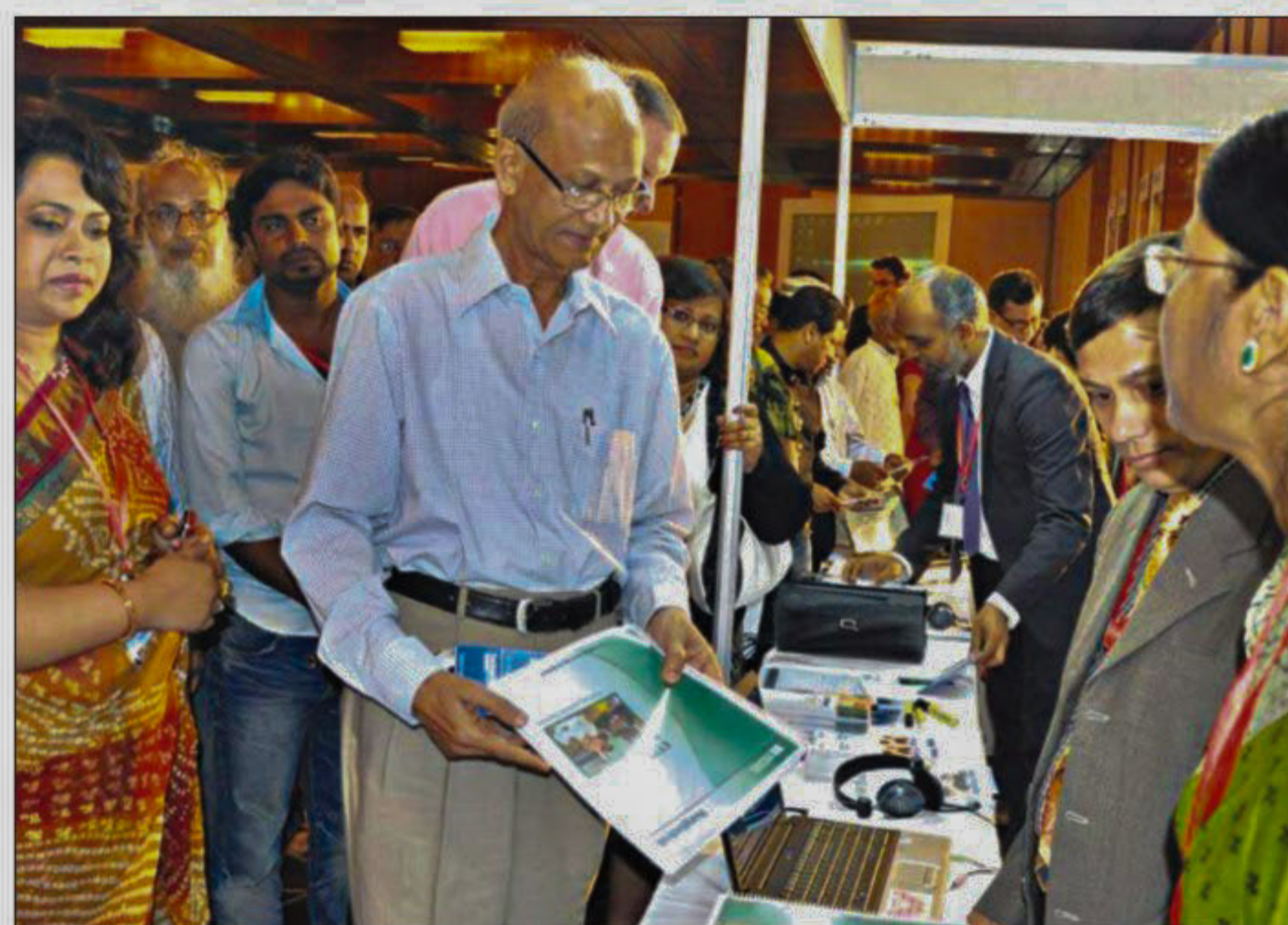


PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid goes around stalls after inaugurating a new range of materials and services by the British Council for learners and teachers of English at a city hotel yesterday.

Inaugurating the materials, the minister said learning will not be limited to the classrooms only as technologies of digital libraries, video lectures and multimedia classrooms will be introduced.

English is and has always been an important tool for development, he said.

He added that National Education Policy 2010, recently approved by the government, puts special emphasis on using technologies to learn subjects especially maths, science education and English language.

Nahid said the government plans to make Information and Communication Technology (IT) education compulsory at secondary level by 2013 and at primary level by 2021.

"We need to provide vocational and lifelong education opportunities for youths to enhance their productivity," he added.

Charles Nuttall, director

of the British Council, said English is the primary language of communications, information technology, business, aviation, entertainment, diplomacy, radio, and of course science.

He said out of 162 million people in Bangladesh only 3.5 million people can use English effectively.

These resources would be of great use to people, as they will be able to improve their language skills within their own time and pace.

The materials and resources put in the display are "Teaching English (TE)", "Teaching English Radio", "Teaching Speaking Training Video", "Learn Website", "Learn English Newspapers" and "Premier Skills".

Andy Jones, English language training consultant of British Council and Nick Low, deputy high commissioner of British High Commission, also spoke on the occasion.

Qulkhwani

METRO DESK

Qulkhwani of Shamsul Alam, a tea expert and tea exporter, will be held at his residence at Road No. 5 at Dhanmondi in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Shamsul passed away after prolonged illness at his residence on Tuesday at the age of 75. He left behind his wife, three sons and a daughter.

He was a senior executive of Adamjee Tea, Ispahani Tea and different tea companies.

Friends, well-wishers and relatives are requested to attend the programme.

Chehlum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chehlum of Wasil Uddin, former chief sub-editor of the daily Sangbad, will be held at his residence at Uttara para in Savar today, says a press release.

Wasil, former executive committee member of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ), passed away at a hospital in Savar on September 18.

On the occasion, Quarankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his residence.

DHAKA

T O D A Y

Seminar
Sammilita Islami Jote will organise a seminar.
Venue: National Press Club, Time: 11:00am.

Meeting
Ministry of Commerce will arrange a meeting.
Venue: Hotel Sarina, Banani, Time: 5:30pm.

Launching ceremony
British Council will organise an English learning materials launching ceremony.
Venue: Sonargaon Hotel, Time: 11:00am.

Lucky draw ceremony
Agora will arrange a lucky coupon draw ceremony.
Venue: Agora, Dhanmondi, Time: 11:00am.

Govt moves for new public universities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has moved to establish a number of new public universities including a specialised one titled "Digital University" to ensure use of most sophisticated technologies and expedite sustainable economic development.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said this in parliament yesterday while replying to lawmakers' queries.

The minister said a draft law has already been prepared to establish Digital University proposed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

According to Nahid, the education ministry has formed a committee to prepare concept paper for the university, which will be built as "centre of excellence".

The committee has already started holding discussions with experts to this end, Nahid said in a scripted answer. "Construction works of the university will begin soon after introduction of the law."

Jatiya Party lawmaker Salma

Islam in a scripted question referred that the government has acquired 75 bighas of land at Chandra in Gazipur, enquiring when the establishment of the digital university will be complete.

The education minister, in a scripted answer to another query, said the government has undertaken to set up some more public universities including a textile university and Rabindra University.

BNP lawmaker ABM Ashraf Uddin Nizan, who was absent in the House, made the query in a written form.

Nahid also mentioned an agreement that the government has recently signed with World Bank to receive a loan of Tk 681 crore for development of higher education.

Primary and Mass Education Minister Afsarul Amin, meanwhile, said a total of 2.26 lakh posts including teachers and officials have to be created to extend primary education up to class VIII, in line with new education policy.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Borhan Ahmed, founder editor of the Daily Sakaler Khobor and former executive editor of the daily Janakantha, a press release.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil will be held at his Gulshan residence after Maghrib prayers.

Friends, well-wishers and relatives are requested to attend the programme.

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Charles Nuttall, director

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