

Remove social stigma of HIV/AIDS

Workshop urges mass media

UNB, Dhaka

Physicians, development partners and NGO workers at a workshop yesterday urged the country's print and electronic media to remove social stigma on HIV/AIDS by reporting news objectively and in a positive light.

They also emphasised the need for creating awareness among the people about the deadly disease, its causes and prevention

with a view to containing the spread of this disease in the country.

UNAIDS and Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) Bangladesh jointly organised the workshop

entitled 'Media Orientation on Reporting on HIV and AIDS' at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel where senior journalists and government officials took part in the discussion.

"There is a stigma in our society about the HIV and AIDS...we cannot freely discuss it at our dining table as it is very much related to sexual transmission and drug injections," Dr Md Abdur Rahman, line director of National AIDS and STD Programme (NASP) told the

function.

Abdur Rahman in his welcome address mentioned that there is a massive lack of knowledge about HIV and AIDS and misconceptions among males and females in the country. Sex workers, drug users, floating and migrating people are more vulnerable to the deadly disease, he added.

"Low income people who are found floating are at risk of spreading HIV," he said.

Dr Salil Panakadan, country coordinator, UNAIDS in his presentation mentioned that although there is low prevalence of HIV and AIDS in the country, it's very vulnerable due to high prevalence in neighbouring countries.

Among the regional status, HIV and AIDS prevalence is 2.1 million in India, 61,000 in Nepal, 7,500 in Bangladesh and 240,000 in Myanmar, he stated.

Editor of the Bhorer Shagoj Shyamal Dutta, VSO Country Director Shahana Hayat, Munir Ahmed of UNAIDS and Executive Director of Ashar Alo Society Habiba Akhtar also spoke on the occasion.

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Locals put leaves and branches into the manhole to signal to people that its lid is broken. The open manhole on the main street in Patchlish-Katalganj area in the port city causes accidents almost every night.

Fake journalist held at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University authorities early yesterday detained a youth, aged about 25 years, impersonating a journalist from the university's Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall and handed him over to police.

Five fake identity cards of two private television channels, a news agency and of three DU departments were recovered from his possession.

DU Proctor Prof AKM Saiful Islam Khan said the youth was illegally living in a room of the hall for the last four months and involved in making fake certificates, visa papers, identity cards and other official documents.

Majedul Islam Nayan, resident of the hall, said the youth frequently pretended to talk to the home minister. Claiming influence, he offered another resident, Tanin, admission in Bangladesh Army in return for Tk 1 lakh, Nayan added.

Students of the hall said he used different names such as Sohag or Kamruzzaman to identify himself.

While talking to reporters, the youth admitted to living in different halls of DU for more than three years, using different names and addresses.

RURAL TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Poverty cut rate doubles in project area

UNB, Dhaka

An impact study of World Bank (WB) shows that female employment rate increased by almost 50 percent and non-agricultural assets increased by 25 to 50 percent as a result of the government's Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP).

Similarly, poverty reduction rate almost doubled in the project areas.

New rural roads have made it easier for the children to go to school, health care facilities are now more accessible and new economic opportunities have opened up for villagers.

The WB is supporting the government in 21 districts in improving the rural transport infrastructure.

The RTIP, since its inception in 2003, has maintained and improved more than 2,500 km of rural roads and built or improved more than 110 growth market centres and 30 jetties. The project so far created employment for more than 30,000 persons in the project area.

The project's impact area covers over 44,000 square km in 21 Districts.

The final Socio-Economic Monitoring and Evaluation study submitted in September 2010 shows that travel times are now reduced by 58 percent during the dry season and 65 percent during monsoon for motorised vehicles, while travel times decreased by 53 percent during dry season and 61 percent during monsoon for the non-motorised vehicles.

Tk 271 cr irrigation project may get Ecnec nod

UNB, Dhaka

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec) may consider an irrigation project for 60,000 hectares of land in Barendra area at today's meeting.

Ecnec Chairperson and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting at the

Ecnec office in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city.

An integrated area development project involving Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur and Joypurhat will be implemented at a cost of Tk 271 crore, said the planning ministry sources.

Barendra Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) under the agriculture

ministry will implement the project with cash from GOB funds.

Under the project, some 1,200 deep tube-wells will be installed apart from re-excavating 100-metre canal and 50 ponds, and sowing of two-lakh saplings. The project will be implemented in 28 upazilas of the four districts.

JATRABARI TRIPLE MURDER

Sumon, his 2 men killers

Says DB investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatrabari triple murder victims' relative Sumon and two of his cohorts committed the killings to grab properties of the family and loot its valuables, disclosed detective branch (DB) of police yesterday.

Mizanur Rahman, along with his wife Bithi Rahman and mother Sufia Begum was shot and stabbed to death at his Jatrabari residence on Shahid Faruq Road on September 30.

DC Monirul Islam of DB said they arrested all the three "killers." In preliminary interrogation they informed that Sumon would have got the properties while the two looted valuables from the victims' flat.

He told a press briefing at his Minto Road office yesterday after arresting the third alleged killer Hira Mian on Sunday.

Police earlier arrested Mizanur's nephews Sumon and his cohorts Delwar Hossain Delu and recovered Mizanur's pistol, which was used in the killing.

17 get Australian scholarships

UNB, Dhaka

Seventeen high prestigious Bangladesh professionals have been offered prestigious Australian Leadership Award (ALA) scholarships to undertake postgraduate studies at universities in Australia.

Australian High Commissioner Dr Justin Lee announced the scholarships yesterday saying, "These seventeen outstanding people have been identified for their potential to assume leadership roles that can influence social and economic policy reform and development outcomes in Bangladesh and the region on their return home."

"These scholars can be justifiably proud of winning a prestigious award that will equip them to serve as future leaders of their field, and I congratulate them all," he said.

The Australia Awards initiative demonstrates Australia's commitment to developing leadership and building partnerships and linkages and addressing priority development issues of Bangladesh, Lee said.

The awardees will undertake studies at Australian universities in fields such as health, climate change, and public policy. They will also participate in a tailored leadership development programme to strengthen their leadership skills, establish regional networks and enhance their understanding of regional development challenges.

The 17 successful Bangladeshi candidates were selected out of 133 applicants from Bangladesh and a total of 403 from around the South Asia region. 205 ALA scholarships have been awarded globally for study in 2011. The Australian government has awarded more than 300 scholarships to Bangladeshis since 2005.

ALA scholarships are implemented by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) as part of the Australia Awards initiative. The ALA programme aims to develop leadership, build partnerships and enduring linkages between developing countries and Australia.

Ansar platoon commander held with fake certificates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested an Ansar platoon commander with some fake fundamental training certificates and seals from his possession at the Ansar camp of Gulistan Shopping Complex in city's Paltan on Sunday.

Platoon commander Moktarul Hossain, 25, also commander of the camp, hails from Pirganj of Thakurgaon.

On information, a Rab team raided the Ansar camp on the fifth floor of the building at 7:00pm and recovered the certificates and seals from his possession and arrested him.

In preliminary interrogation, Moktarul informed Rab that he collected a real certificate with the help of some Ansar members and used it to produce fake ones to sell those to unemployed youths at Tk 500 to Tk 1,000.



Visitors view photos yesterday at a photo exhibition titled "Living in the urban jungle", organised by Unicef and Drik Picture Library at the Sonargaon Hotel in the city. The photos in the exhibition were taken by 20 children living or working on the streets.

CPA starts issuing workers' ID cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) started distribution of identity (ID) cards among its workers yesterday.

Workers at the port have been demonstrating for the last few months to realise various demands, including issuing of the ID cards.

CPA Director (Security) Lt Col Kamrul Islam distributed the ID cards among the workers in front of his office around 11:00am.

CHT LAND OWNERSHIP Application submission deadline extended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Land Commission yesterday asked all citizens, including indigenous people living in CHT region, to submit applications to the commission claiming land ownership.

The land owners who did not submit applications within October 21, will be able to submit their application stating reasons for not applying within the earlier timeframe, says an official release of the commission.

If they do not submit the application, they will lose the opportunities of getting their land back, it says.

The last date of submitting the applications was October 21, it says adding that the process of the submission will continue.

Meanwhile, Syeda Sazeda Chowdhury, the deputy leader of the House and the convener of CHT Peace Accord Implementation Committee, yesterday visited the land commission office in Khagrachhari.

Girl 'commits suicide'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 13-year-old girl allegedly committed suicide by hanging with a rope from the ceiling at her house in Mirajnar Paschim Para under Keraniganj Model Police Station yesterday afternoon.

Police recovered the hanging body of Rozina Akhter, daughter of Aisar Ali at 2:00pm.

Rozina's mother Sufia Khatun said she went to collect grass for cows at around 12:30pm, leaving her daughter alone in the house.

When she returned and called for her, Rozina did not respond. Sufia's neighbours informed the matter to police.



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