

Prioritise children's education in disaster-hit areas

Say speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDG) would suffer a setback if education is not given proper importance during emergency periods like disaster and in the areas affected by natural calamities, said speakers yesterday.

They were speaking at an inaugural ceremony of a two-day long national convention titled "Education in emergencies" at Shishu Academy in the city.

Education Cluster Bangladesh, a platform of 30 government and non-government organisations, working to continue children's education during disaster period, with the cooperation of Unicef, ActionAid and Save the Children organised the convention.

Though food and relief are being provided in the disaster-hit areas during any disaster, educational activities there remain neglected for a long time, they

said, suggesting chalking out a future plan to ensure children's education.

They urged the government and non-government organisations to work together to help continue children's education in the aftermath of a disaster.

Speaking on the occasion as the chief guest, Food and Disaster Management Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque stressed on the need for special emphasis on economical development in the disaster-prone areas to continue children's education.

"If we could reduce poverty rate in the disaster-prone areas by keeping up economical development there, we would be able to reduce the risks created by the aftermath of the disaster," he said.

About Aila-affected people, the minister said people of four upazilas hit by cyclone Aila could not go back to their homes while their children are yet to return to schools.

Mentioning the government's effort to rebuild the damaged embankments, he said, "We hope that the embankment rebuilding work would end by December or January. We will then rebuild the educational institutions."

Unicef education programme Head Navendra Dahal said though few NGOs are giving funds to help continue education during disaster period but the amount is too small against the problem.

ActionAid Country Director Farah Kabir urged to incorporate the issue of education in the Disaster Management Act.

Students and teachers present there narrated the sufferings and how the educational activities get disrupted during a disaster.

AKM Musa, country director of Concern Worldwide, and Suman Sen Gupta of Save the Children also spoke on the occasion.

Prof Yunus faces court summons

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus faces summons to appear in a Mymensingh court on January 18.

Advocate Nazrul Islam Chhunu, joint secretary of Mymensingh unit Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), filed a defamation suit against Prof Yunus on January 21, 2007 for his remarks on politicians in an interview with international news agency AFP.

Yunus reportedly said the political leaders of this country do politics only to gain money and there is no ideology of these political leaders.

The suit referred to the interview with AFP at the head office of Grameen Bank on January 17, 2007.

It was also said in the suit that the news item regarding the interview was published in different newspapers the following day.

Court sources said being aggrieved by the remark of Prof Yunus, Chhunu filed the suit with the Cognizance Court No-1.

Judicial Magistrate Jagangir Hossain conducted a judicial inquiry into the case and submitted its report with the court in December this year.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Mohammad Habibullah of the court issued the summons yesterday.

District unit President of Ganatantri Party Prof Atiqur Rahman, JSD Secretary Advocate Sadik Hossain, Secretary of Workers Party of Bangladesh Dr Sujit Barmon and Advocate Abdul Motalab Lal, among others, made their deposition before the judicial inquiry, according to the source.



Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Md Abdul Hamid Advocate hands over lifetime achievement award to actress Anwara at Cute-Channel i Film Festival held at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

'Ensure rights of ethnic minorities for dev'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Consensus among different religions, opinions and ethnicity in Bangladesh is needed for its overall development and moving ahead, said renowned academicians yesterday.

There are a number of ethnic groups other than the mainstream Bangalees who have been living in the country for decades. So, it should be ensured that the rights of these minority groups are preserved and they are included in the mainstream activities for the expected development in all sectors, they added.

They told the concluding session of a two-day international conference on Islam and Politics in South Asia at the Brac Centre Inn in the city.

Attending the conference, Prime Minister's Adviser Dr Gawhar Rizvi said secularism does not mean absence of religion and separation of religion from the state.

Two separate concepts -- "Modern World" and "Islamic World" have been developed in Bangladesh after the 9/11 incident, he said.

The discussants said attempts were made to include Islamic contents in the education curriculum and other sectors in Bangladesh in between 1980s and '90s.

Some quarters had tried to include some specific portion of Islam in politics and society, they observed.

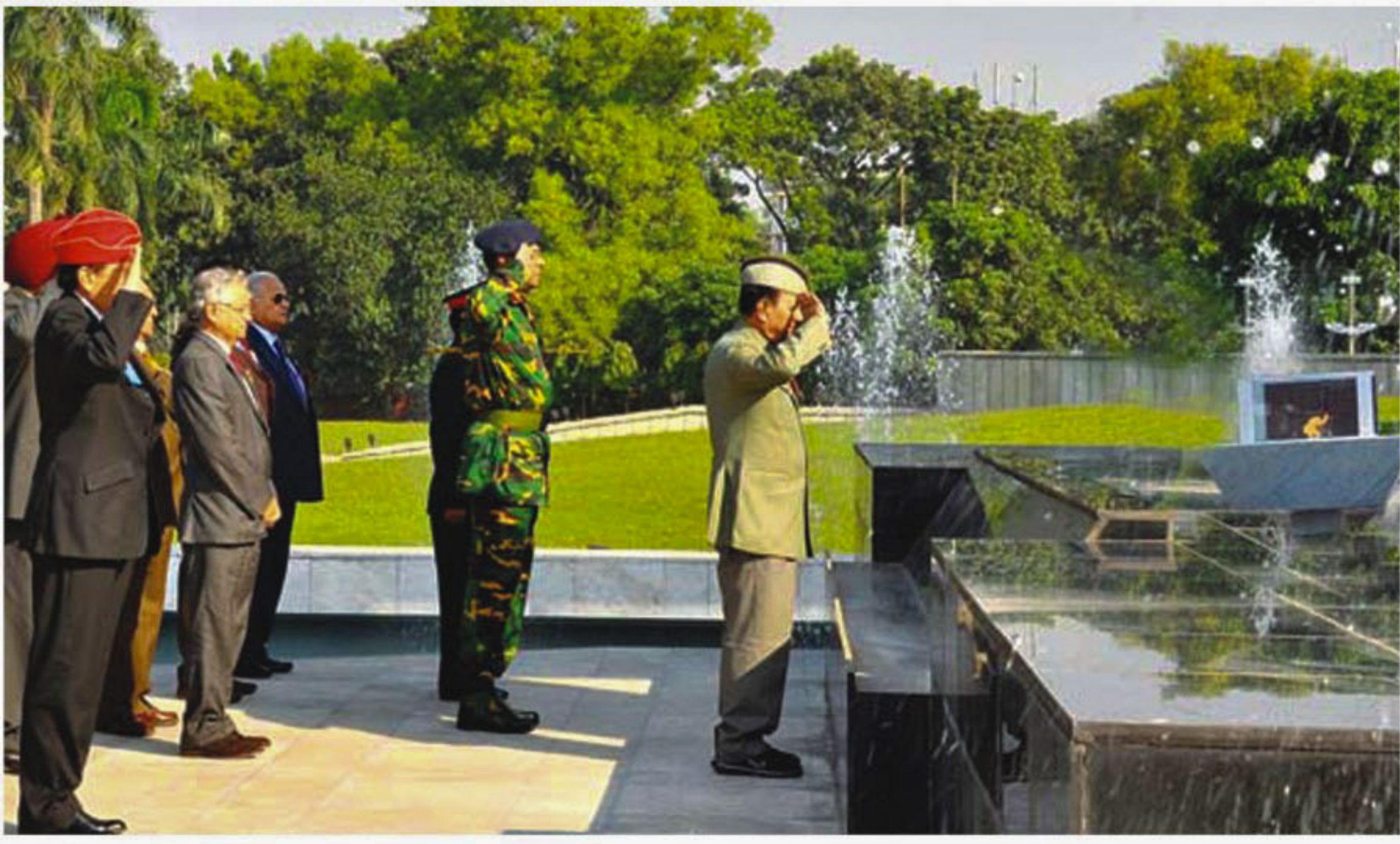
The conference, organised by the Brac Development Institute (BDI), highlighted different global, national and local situations through which Islam has emerged as a key element of political development around the world.

They said Islam was never been a religion of violence rather peace. But, it was distorted by some groups from different regions on earth to gain their political and other interests, they observed.

They said noted Islamic scholars should come forward to place the real essence of Islam among the people of the world.

Noted political experts, sociologists, anthropologists, journalists, experts in feminism, governance and other related areas from home and abroad attended the function.

Noted academician Professor Anisuzzaman, former adviser to a caretaker government Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, Brac University Professor Dr Piash Karim, Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Tania Ameer and Director of Brac Development Institute Syed Hashemi spoke at the event.



War veteran's delegation of War of Liberation in 1971 of the Indian Armed Forces led by Lt General (Retd) SPM Tripathi pay homage to the memory of the members of the armed forces martyred during the war at Shikha Anirban in Dhaka Cantonment yesterday. (Story on Page 5)

PHOTO: ISPR

BULLETS RECOVERY Police still in dark

A CORRESPONDENT, Sherpur

Law enforcers could not make any arrest till yesterday in Saturday's sensational recovery of 13,680 rounds of bullets from Bakakura village in Jhinaigati upazila of Sherpur.

A team of law enforcers led by Superintendent of Police Anisur Rahman of Sherpur raided the house of Wasir Uddin at about 7:00am on Saturday and found the bullets made for Chinese rifles.

Different law enforcement agencies were still trying to get information on where the bullets came from and the people responsible in this connection.



Sadat Salim elected Dhaka Club president for fourth term

METRO DESK

Sadat Hossain Salim, vice chairman of Rupayan Group, was elected president of Dhaka Club Limited for the fourth consecutive term at the yearly election of the club held on December 18.

It may be mentioned that he is the 4th president to serve four consecutive terms during the club's 99 years.

He polled 684 votes against 322 by his nearest rival Khandaker Mashuazzaman (Rommel), says a press release.

Sadat is also a renowned conservationist of the country and an expert on birds of Bangladesh, authoring a book on birds of Bangladesh.

In addition, life and permanent members of the club also elected a ten member executive committee.

New executive committee members are -- Md Ishtiaque Hussain Hidi, Bir Pratik, Nurul Islam Khan (Akkas Khan), Sayed Sheikhul Arefeen, Ashrafuzzaman Khan (Puton), Zahid Hassan, Ruhul Amin Babul, Gaus Uddin Khan, Shakil Kasem, Tulu Kalimullah and Shahjahan Chowdhury.

Govt making country unstable: Delwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Protesting the arrest of party leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday blamed the government for making the country's situation unstable by torturing the opposition leaders.

He urged leader, workers and supporters of nationalist forces to unite in ensuring the demise of the Awami League government.

"Quit power quickly, otherwise people will form the stage to oust you (govt) from power," he asked the government while addressing a protest rally at city's Muktangan.

He also expressed gratitude to the people of Chittagong region for making yesterday's hartal a success and demanded immediate release of SQ Chowdhury.

The rally was organised by Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) as part of its two-day programme, announced in protest of the arrest of SQ Chowdhury and torture on him in custody.

The law enforcers arrested opposition lawmaker SQ Chowdhury on Thursday from a Banani house.

The party will submit memorandum before the deputy commissioners and stage demonstration at district level today.

Delwar said SQ Chowdhury was brutally tortured in custody and government misused law enforcers to do it. "Such killing, arrest and torture on opposition leaders cannot continue in a democratic country. It will not bring anything good for Awami League."

MK Anwar, Mirza Abbas, Rafiqul Islam Mia and Ruhul Alam Chowdhury, among others, spoke with party Vice Chairman Selima Rahman in the chair.

Man held with huge foreign cigarettes at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Airport Armed Police Battalion (AAPB) arrested a person along with foreign cigarettes worth about Tk 12 lakh from Shahjalal International Airport in the city early hours of yesterday.

AAPB sources said Bangladesh citizen Mohammad Faruque, 46, holds a Pakistani passport, landed at the airport by an aircraft of Pakistan International Airlines at 2:30am.

When his movement seemed to be suspicious, police followed him and found that he reached the arrival terminal 2 of the airport evading duty.

Police challenged him and recovered the cigarettes from his possession. Faruque said his associate Mamun managed to flee.

He was later handed over to Airport Police Station. A case was filed.

Airport police said Faruque of Shariatpur district lived in Pakistan for long.

VIQARUNNISA SCHOOL ADMISSION Lottery for selected candidates Dec 21, 22

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lottery for the selected candidates aspiring to enrol in class I in Viqarunnisa Noon School and College will be held on December 21 and 22, says a press release.

The lottery would be held in two shifts at the school's main branch in Bailey Road.

On December 21, lottery of all quotas and Bashundhara morning and day shift would be held at 9:30am while lottery of Dhanmondi morning and day shifts will be held at 12:30 noon. Lottery of Azimpur morning and day shift will be held at 3:00pm on the same day.

On December 22, lottery of English version would be held at 9:30am while lottery of main branch's day shift would be held at 11:30am. Lottery of the morning shift of the main branch would be held at 3:00pm on the same day.

The result of lottery can be found at the school's websites -- www.vnsc.edu.bd and www.dhakabiz.com.

2 die in Khulna fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons were killed in a fire yesterday in a factory of Moushumi Fabrics at Majid Sarani under Sonadanga police station of Khulna city.

The deceased Zakir Hossain, 22, and Ibrahim, 20, hailed from Damudda upazila of Shariatpur district, were also the workers of the factory.

The fire reportedly originated from an electric short circuit at about 5:00pm and engulfed the factory. The blaze was doused after half an hour.

Bangladesh's climate negotiation contradictory Say speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The role of Bangladesh delegation in climate negotiation in Cancun was contradictory as they legitimised World Bank to manage US 100 billion dollars for the Global Green Fund, said speakers at a press conference yesterday.

They also felt that the Cancun agreement will worsen the on-going climate injustice, says a press release.

Equity and Justice Working Group Bangladesh (Equity BD) held the press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Chief moderator of Equity BD Rezaul Karim Chowdhury said though the government delegates categorically opposed any kind of role of World Bank prior to Cancun but they did not oppose it rather legitimised WB.

The Cancun agreement overlooked the IPCC fourth report, which has already mentioned about the dangerous consequences of keeping temperature more than 1.5 Celsius of 1990 level, he said.

Save Bushra

METRO DESK



Bushra Rahman Chowdhury Neela, a 2nd year honours student of biotechnology and genetic engineering

of Khulna University, is suffering from kidney cancer.

She is being treated under the supervision of Dr Waheed Jaman of urology department at Apollo Hospitals in the city.

Her father Md Hafizur Rahman of Dariapur Village in Sujanagar upazila of Pabna appeals to the benevolent to kindly help in curing her.

Donors can contact -- 01717713782 (Sumon Da) and donations can be made at Islami Bank, Kashinathpur Branch at Md Hafizur Rahman, current account #1408.

Actor Dipjol rearrested at jail gate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation ward councillor and actor Monwar Hossain Dipjol was rearrested at Dhaka Central Jail gate yesterday evening minutes into his release on bail in a police assault case.

Charges for arresting him again, however, could not be known immediately.

Prisons officials told The Daily Star that Dipjol walked out of the jail at about 5:30pm on bail in a case filed for assaulting a traffic police constable on November 16 in the city's Gabtoli area.

A team of the Detective Branch (DB) of police picked him up from near the jail gate, some DB officials confirmed.

Earlier in the day, Judge (vacation) Md Abdul Mazed of the Metropolitan Session Judge's Court granted Dipjol ad interim bail after his lawyer submitted a criminal appeal with the court against a bail rejection order of the lower court.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court earlier rejected his bail petition.

The film actor allegedly assaulted constable Altaf Uddin for protesting Dipjol's violation of traffic rules in the city's Gabtoli area.

Dipjol surrendered to police on November 28. He has already been awarded 45 years' imprisonment in absentia on different charges.

WEATHER TODAY

Mild cold wave may continue

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Mild cold wave is sweeping over the regions of Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Jessore, Chuadanga and Srirongal and it may continue.

Night temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:16pm today and rises at 6:37am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 29.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakundu and lowest 09.2 degrees at Srirongal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	25.6	14.5	65	66
Chittagong	26.2	15.3	65	62
Rajshahi	26.2	09.6	80	79
Rangpur	25.3	11.5	84	79
Khulna	25.5	12.4	78	71
Barisal	26.1	12.2	85	85
Sylhet	27.4	12.4	66	73
Cox's Bazar	28.0	17.2	76	72



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presides over a meeting of the council of ministers at Bangladesh Secretariat in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: PID