

Empower physically challenged people

Says Gowher Rizvi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister's International Affairs Adviser Dr Gowher Rizvi yesterday stressed the need for empowering physically challenged people in order to turn them into the country's asset.

Keeping physically challenged people out of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is a shortcoming in the way of their being attached to mainstream development, he said.

He was addressing the concluding session of a day-long programme at the Dhaka University (DU) senate building marking the seventh national convention of physically challenged people.

Action on Disability and Development (ADD) International, National Council of the physically challenged women and Jatiya Trinamul Protibondi Sangstha jointly organised the programme.

The government has to take more initiatives for the development of physically challenged people, said Rizvi, adding that the participation of these people should be ensured in all spheres of life.

"No dream of development will be possible without attaching them with the development activities," added Mustafizur Rahman, executive director of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

ADD International Country Director Mosharrif Hossain presided over the programme while NGO Affairs Bureau Director General Nurun Nabi Talukder and WaterAid Bangladesh country representative Dr Khairul Islam addressed it among others.

The inaugural session of the programme was addressed by Social Welfare Ministry Secretary Ranjit Kumar Biswas, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique and Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shaheen Anam, with National Council of the physically challenged women President Umme Kulsum Ranjona in the chair.

'Change assessment system at schools'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed the need for bringing about a change to the testing and assessment system of the schools as the current system encourages students to memorize more.

They also suggested arranging tuitions for students after school hours to reduce the dropout rate.

The seminar titled "Education at primary and secondary level: Insights from research" was jointly organised by Economic Research Group (ERG) and International Growth Centre (IGC) at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in the city.

The speakers said the country's primary and secondary education still lacked quality.

Presenting a research paper, Atonu Rabbani of Dhaka University (DU) suggested reassessing the testing materials and, if necessary, the associated textbooks to improve the quality of education.

Ummul Ruthbah of DU, while presenting another paper based on an NGO's education support programme, showed that the drop out rate can be lowered significantly with the support of after-hour tuitions to the students.

Prof Aminul Islam Chowdhury chaired the seminar while M Niaz Asadullah of Reading University, and ERG Research Director Sajjad Zohir also spoke.

BANGLA LANGUAGE

Committee formed to check distortion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has formed a committee to find ways to stop the distortion of the Bangla language.

Headed by Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman, the committee was formed yesterday by the education ministry as per the High Court's (HC) direction, says an official handout.

The HC, in a suo moto rule on February 17, also directed the radio and television channel authorities not to use distorted Bangla or foreign languages in Bangla broadcasts.

The committee members included Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury, director general of Bangla Academy, Prof Rafikul Islam, director general of Bangladesh Television, poet Syed Shamsul Huq, director general of Bangladesh Betar, poet Rafiq Azad, poet Nirmalendu Goon, Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam and Selina Hossain.

Joint Secretary (audit and law) of the education ministry will act as the member secretary of the committee.



The opposition BNP brings out a celebratory procession from in front of its Naya Paltan office yesterday, marking the occasion of the country's 41st Independence Day. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: STAR

12-day festival begins tomorrow

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Ctg

The grand inaugural ceremony of "Odommo Chattagram" festival, organised by The Daily Star, begins at MA Aziz Stadium in the port city at 4:00pm tomorrow (Friday).

The country's leading English newspaper, The Daily Star, is organising the twelve-day programme to focus on the rich culture, heritage, history and future economic prospects of Chittagong as well as branding it at home and abroad.

Eminent and distinguished personalities of the port city will attend the inaugural ceremony.

The festival, celebrating the indomitable spirit of Chittagong, will highlight all stories of courage and beauty of the port city and revitalise its potentials as a commercial hub locally and internationally.

The programmes will feature

photo and painting exhibitions, drama festival, presentation on history, musical evening, film festival, food festival, sampan race, science festival, children's festival, economic conference and seminars on business and economy, brands expo and youth festival.

The people of the city will get an opportunity to know of its roots and economic potentials by joining the gala event which will end on April 10.

As part of the festival, "Chitramoy Chattala" (a photography exhibition) will begin at Theatre Institute, Chittagong at 10:00am while "Chhabir Hat" (a painting exhibition) at Fine Arts Institute of Chittagong University at 11:00am tomorrow (Friday). Both the events

will continue till April 5.

To showcase the bright and rich heritage, culture and struggle of Chittagong, a seven-day exhibition titled "Chirayata Chattagram Pradarshani" will start at the gymnasium of MA Aziz Stadium on the opening day of the festival (Friday).

The drama festival will be held at two venues from March 31 to April 4. The drama festival will begin at District Shilpakala Academy on March 31. It will also begin at Theatre Institute, Chittagong on April 1.

A two-day youth festival will start at Shilpakala Academy on April 3 while a four-day film festival at Fulki auditorium on April 4.

A three-day food festival will begin at the gymnasium ground of MA Aziz Stadium on April 5.

On April 6, a daylong science

festival will be held at Fulki, an alternative educational institution, and a traditional sampan (boat) race on the river Karnaphuli.

On March 7, a daylong children's festival, a three-day musical evening and a four-day brand expo will start at Fulki, the city's DC Hill premises and the gymnasium respectively.

Three economic conferences-- titled "Chittagong economic direction", "Future Chittagong, future Bangladesh", "World class port, world class city"-- will be held at Hotel Agrabad on April 7, Mahbub Ali Hall of BGMEA Bhabhan on April 8 and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) conference room on April 9.

The concluding ceremony of the festival will be held at Chittagong Club on April 10.



Prof Aziz Khan passes away

CU CORRESPONDENT

Prof MA Aziz Khan, former vice-chancellor (VC) of Chittagong University (CU), passed away at Birdem Hospital in the capital due to old-age complications yesterday morning, says a press release.

He was 81. He left behind two sons, one daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

CU VC Prof Md Anwarul Azim Arif and Pro-VC Prof Mohammad Alauddin expressed deep shock at his death.

Prof Aziz served as CU VC from 1981 to 1985.

Rizia Begum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rizia Begum, mother of Mohsin Hossain, staff reporter of online news portal Barta24.net, passed away due to prolonged asthma at her residence in Pirojpur yesterday at the age of 72, says a press release.

She left behind her three sons, two daughters and a host of relatives and well-wisher to mourn her death.

She will be buried at her family graveyard at Ghosher Tikikata village in Pirojpur.

BNP acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, Dhaka Reporters' Unity President Shakhawat Hossain Badsha and General Secretary Sajjad Alam Khan Topu expressed deep shock at her death.

Prof Abdur Rahman Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Abdur Rahman Khan of village Algirchar at Nababganj upazila in Dhaka passed away at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University on March 26 at the age of 86, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his residence at 245/ka at South Paikpara at Mirpur in the city tomorrow.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the doa.



Newspapermen stage a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding immediate declaration of the eighth wage board, which is long overdue.

PHOTO: STAR

BDR CARNAGE

'No food, water' for accused in 6-hour proceedings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The proceedings of a court trying the accused of BDR carnage case were interrupted for some moments as the accused spoke out about their food problems yesterday.

"Sir, there is no food and water [during the proceedings, usually six hours]", they said in one voice after lunch break, while a witness was giving his deposition.

The accused do not get any food but flattened rice and molasses, insufficient in quantity, said Faruk Ahammad, a defense lawyer, on behalf of 800 accused, who were present at the court. Neither are they provided enough drinking water in this high temperature, he said.

"No container is supplied to eat the beaten rice with water", Faruk said, adding that it was difficult to eat such dry food in such hot weather.

Showing a packet of the rice flakes, which would roughly weigh 100 grams, another defense lawyer Shamim Sardar told the court that the food was provided for four persons.

"It's really a question for humanity", Judge Mohammad Zohurul Hoque said in response and assured that he would do whatever fell under his jurisdiction.

Five prosecution witnesses gave deposition and were cross-examined at the metropolitan sessions judge's court at the city's Bakshibazar yesterday.

The proceedings will resume on April 02. A total 74 people, including 57 army officers, were killed during the carnage at Pilkhana headquarters of BDR (now Border Guard Bangladesh) on February 25-26, 2009.

8TH WAGE BOARD

SSKOP ultimatum to govt

BSS, Dhaka

Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP), a platform of journalists, press workers and general employees of the newspaper industries, yesterday demanded that the government announce the 8th Wage Board by April 2.

Otherwise, they would observe a work stoppage from 10:00am to 4:00pm across the country on April 3 and stage a sit-in in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the city from 11:00am to 4:00pm.

The programme was announced at a rally in front of the Press Club with Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) President Ruhul Amin Gazi in the chair.

BFUJ President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Secretary Generals Abdul Jalil Bhuyian and Shawkat Mahmud, Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) Presidents Omar Faruque and Abdus Shahid, General Secretaries Shaban Mahmud and Baker Hossain, Press Workers Federation President Alamgir Hossain Khan and Secretary General Kamal Uddin and General Employees Federation Matiur Rahman Talukder and Secretary General Khairul Islam spoke at the rally.

The SSKOP leaders vowed to continue the movement until the wage board was announced.

"It is our legitimate right and we must achieve it in the month of our independence," they said.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 34th death anniversary of Principal Ibrahim Kha, says a press release.

On the occasion, different socio-cultural and educational institutions in Dhaka and Tangail chalked out programmes.

Syed Ahmed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the eighth death anniversary of Syed Ahmed, former cabinet secretary and alternative executive director of World Bank, says a press release.

Relatives and well-wishers have been requested to pray for the salvation of his departed soul.

Lt Col (Dr) NAM Jahangir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Tomorrow (Friday) is the 41st death anniversary of martyred Lt Col (Dr) NAM Jahangir, says a press release.

Doa mahfil will be held after Juma prayers at CMH Jame Mosque at Comilla cantonment and his ancestral residence at Pangsha upazila in Rajbari tomorrow.

Rabiul Hossain Kochi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the third death anniversary of Rabiul Hossain Kochi, former vice-chairman of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad Kendriya Command Council, says a press release.

On the occasion, recitation from the holy Quran and milad mahfil will be held at several mosques in Noakhali town.

Muktiyoddha Rabiul Hossain Kochi Memorial Foundation will organise a programme in memory of Kochi at Aziz Super Market in Dhaka at 4:00pm on April 12.

Farah

METRO DESK



Today is the 12th death anniversary of Farah (Farah), only daughter of Engineer Mamun Rashid, says a press release.

On the occasion, recitation from Holy Quran, doa mahfil and feeding the destitute will be organised after Zuhr prayers at Wapda orphanage in Motijheel of the city.

Rakib Sarder

nominated as Rotary dist secy

METRO DESK



Rotarian past president M Rakib Sarder Phf has been nominated as the district secretary for the Rotary Year 2013-14, says a press release.

The position was officially declared by District Governor Nominee Rtn Ghulam Mustafa at the Rotary District Conference 2012 at Bangabandhu International Convention Center on March 17.

Death Anniversary



Rotarian past president M Samiur Rahman Khan has been nominated as the district secretary for the Rotary Year 2013-14, says a press release.

The position was officially declared by District Governor Nominee Rtn Ghulam Mustafa at the Rotary District Conference 2012 at Bangabandhu International Convention Center on March 17.

Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rangpur and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Bogra, Tangail and Mymensingh in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Day and night temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:13pm today and rises at 05:53am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 39.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 19.5 degrees Celsius at Rangamati.

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	35.4	24.4	69	42
Chittagong	30.2	22.6	75	77
Rajshahi	39.5	21.6	68	52
Rangpur	33.2	20.7	78	65
Khulna	36.8	24.0	76	42
Barisal	35.5	23.8	83	57
Sylhet	34.7	24.5	74	50
Cox's Bazar	31.5	21.0	75	76