



PHOTO: STAR

Participants at a discussion, "Higher Education of Students with Disabilities: Problems and Prospects", organised by Bangla daily the Prothom Alo at its office in the capital in collaboration with the Centre for Disability in Development, Light for the World of the Netherlands, and Utsaho Trust.

Make educational instts disability-friendly

Urge university level special needs students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

University level students with physical disabilities, who have undergone many hurdles to come this far in life, yesterday urged the government to make the educational institutions disability-friendly to minimise their sufferings.

The government should ensure availability of disability-friendly educational tools at institutions of every level before it reserves quota for the students with disabilities, they told a roundtable at the Prothom Alo office.

The Bangla daily in collaboration with the Centre for Disability in Development (CDD), Light for the World of the Netherlands, and Utsaho Trust jointly organised the programme titled "Higher Education of Students with Disabilities: Problems and Prospects".

About 15 special needs students from different universities and colleges in and around the capital shared their stories at the roundtable, reflecting the problems and miseries they face every day at their educational institutions.

A visually impaired student at Dhaka University Jayanta Kumar Saha said, "The examination system is not disability-friendly. Before every exam, I have to find a writing aide. Often the writer refuses to come just before the exam."

He also said a few dormitories had ramps

for smooth movement for the physically challenged students.

Adding to Jayanta's remark, Rawnak Jahan Usha, a student of Eden Girls' College, who has got her legs paralysed, said she had passed the admission test but had to have her first admission cancelled as the college buildings had no wheelchair access.

"There are no wheelchair ramps and nobody cared to carry me to the second or third floor where most of the classes are held," she said.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said the university authorities wanted to address the problems of the special needs students but could not do much because of inadequate budget allocation.

Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, chairman of University Grant Commission (UGC), said he would pursue the government to raise allocation for special needs students at universities.

Prothom Alo Editor Matiuur Rahman, Friends of Liberation War Honour award winner Julian Francis, Jahangirnagar University VC Dr Anwar Hossain, Joint Secretary to Ministry of Social Welfare Md Hossain Mollah, Joint Secretary to Ministry of Education AS Mahmood, Additional Secretary to Ministry of Education SM

UNION PARISHAD Officials demand empowerment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Union Parishad (UP) chairmen and members yesterday made an eight-point demand including empowerment of the local government body, amendments to the UP Act 2009, and an increase in their remunerations.

They demanded that the minimum wage of the UP chairmen and members should be Tk 15,000 and Tk 8,000 respectively. The current salary of a chairman is Tk 1,450 and of a member Tk 750.

The local government representatives made the call at a grand rally organised by Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF) at the capital's Central Shaheed Minar. More than 4,000 UP chairmen and members, many of them women, attended the rally.

To press home the demands, BUPF would hold protest rallies in every upazila on October 1, in every district on October 15 and submit a memorandum with the Prime Minister's Office on November 20.

BANGLADESH-MYANMAR POROUS BORDER Suu Kyi wants lasting solution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Myanmar's pro-democracy and opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi has stressed the need for ensuring more vigilance and security along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border to prevent cross-border intrusion.

During a meeting with a special mission of International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) in Yangon on Tuesday, she also expressed concern about the situation in Rakhine State, especially the Rohingya crisis.

Abdul Matin Khasru MP, law affairs secretary of Awami League, was present in the meeting as a member of the ICAPP mission, said an AL press release.

During the meeting, Khasru informed her of Bangladesh's position of preventing Rohingyas of Myanmar from entering

Bangladesh. He also said, "They [Rohingyas] are neither recognised by Myanmar nor Bangladesh as their citizens and they are now stateless in the World of God".

Suu Kyi, also chairman of the National League for Democracy, said it was difficult to establish claims of both the countries about the identity of those alleged to be making cross-border movement.

However, she recognised that the process for establishment of the rule of law and human rights must start for bringing about lasting solution to the issue.

A former law minister, Khasru conveyed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's greetings to Suu Kyi and invited her on Hasina's behalf to visit Bangladesh.



PHOTO: HOLCIM

Employees of Holcim Cement (Bangladesh) Ltd donate blood at its Meghnaghat factory in Narayanganj on September 8. The Switzerland-based cement producing company organised the blood donation programme to celebrate its 12th year of presence in Bangladesh and 100 years of global presence. Company's Managing Director Rajnish Kapur and other high officials were present on the occasion.

GAZIPUR-4 POLLS Uncle accuses niece of flouting electoral code

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Afsar Uddin Ahmed Khan, independent candidate of September 30 Gazipur-4 constituency by-polls, lodged a complaint of violating electoral code of conduct against his niece Simeen Hussain Rimi, the Awami League-backed candidate.

In his written complaints submitted to the district returning officer yesterday, Afsar, a former state minister of the previous AL government, alleged that he is being obstructed from conducting electoral campaign due to the threat of criminals.

He also expressed doubt about fair elections, saying that no action was taken against Rimi for breaching electoral laws repeatedly.

Demanding adequate security, arrest of criminals and congenial election atmosphere, Afsar said he and his followers might face attack any time.

WAR CRIMES TRIAL Investigators glean crucial info from Mir Quashem Ali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

War crimes investigators yesterday said they gleaned "important information" from Mir Quashem Ali about the Jamaat leader's alleged involvement in crimes against humanity during 1971 and appointing lobbyists abroad for a campaign against his trial.

After a six-hour-long interrogation at a "safe house" in Dhanmondi, coordinator of the investigation agency of international crimes tribunals Abdul Hannan Khan said they would need more time to quiz Quashem.

He said they would ask the tribunal for more time to interrogate the arrested Jamaat central executive committee member.

Hannan said Quashem admitted that he was the president of Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, of Chittagong in 1971.

Prosecution documents of other cases say that Al-Badr was made up of members of Islami Chhatra Sangha. Al-Badr collaborated with the Pakistani occupation force in killing intellectuals and committing genocide during the war.

Hannan said as the chief of the Chittagong Islami Chhatra Sangha, Quashem had played a vital role in organising the Al-Badr in Chittagong and establishing a "torture camp" at Mohamaya Dalim Hotel.

Hannan said Quashem also admitted to being a student of Chittagong College during the Liberation War.

He said they would verify the information they gathered from him so far.

Nurul Islam, investigation officer of the case, told The Daily Star that they got "important information" about Quashem's alleged investment for appointing lobbyists abroad to campaign against his trial.

None of the investigators agreed to disclose more about what Quashem told them for the investigation's sake.

Taking approval from the International Crimes Tribunal-1, a team of investigation agency interrogated Quashem from 10:00am to 5:00pm with an hour's lunch recess.

Meanwhile, defence counsels of Mir Quashem alleged that the investigation agency did not inform them about quizzing their client even though the tribunal directed them to do so two days in advance.

Defence counsel Tajul Islam told The Daily Star that they would file a contempt of court petition with the tribunal in this regard.

Hannan said a physician, one of Quashem's sons, who is also a lawyer, was present at the "safe house" during the first half of the interrogation. He said they had informed the registrar of the tribunal on September 9 that they would quiz Quashem

Some NGOs not serving people Says Qazi Faruque

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Qazi Faruque Ahmed, founder of Proshika, a leading non-government organisation (NGO), yesterday accused some NGOs of doing business with people instead of serving them and some others of patronising militancy.

The incumbent Proshika chairman brought up the allegations at the first national convention of a recently formed NGO networking platform, Council for National Catalyst (CoNaC), at the capital's National Museum.

Over a thousand NGO activists attended the programme.

Around 800 NGOs and 21 NGO Networks, including Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh, Coalition of Local NGOs, Bangladesh, and Bangladesh Shishu Adikar Forum, have joined CoNaC, it claimed.

CoNaC has a central committee with Advocate Pradip Kumar Ghosh as president and Kazi Enayet Hossain as general secretary. The platform has 17 regional committees across the country.

Faruque said CoNaC would work for reinforcing

STATEMENT AGAINST MAHFUZUR HC puts injunction on journos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court imposed a four-month injunction on journalist leaders from making defamatory or prejudicial statements against ATN Bangla Chairman Mahfuzur Rahman over the murder of journalist couple Sagar-Runi.

The court passed the order on September 11 following an appeal filed by Mahfuzur seeking the injunction.

The injunction was issued on Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Ruhul Amin Gazi, Abdul Jalil Bhuyian, Omar Faruque, Shaban Mahmud, Shakhawat Hossain Badsha, Abdus Shahid, Muhammad Baker Hossain and Jatiya Press Club and Dhaka Reporters Unity leaders.

Barrister Khairul Alam Choudhury, a lawyer for Mahfuzur, said there was no lawyer representing the journalists before the court during the September 11 appeal hearing.

Journalists will hold a meeting in front of ATN Bangla's office in the capital at 11:00am today demanding arrest of Mahfuzur, for stating at a press briefing in London that he had evidence related to the murder, and also for trial of the murderers.

Leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, Dhaka Union of Journalists, Jatiya Press Club and Dhaka Reporters Unity, in a joint statement yesterday, urged all journalists to join the programme.

On February 11, Sagar Sarowar, a news editor at Maasranga, and his wife Meherun Rumi, a senior reporter for ATN Bangla, were murdered in their West Rajabazar residence in the capital.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the first death anniversary of journalist Mehedi Masud.

On the occasion, recitation from the holy Quran and doa mahfils will be held at Mohila Madrasa and Lilla Baording in Bagerhat, Al Jameatul Kaomi Madrasa in Madaripur and Baitul Mamur Jame Mosque in the capital's AGB Colony, said a press release.

He worked for Bangladesh Television, Brac Bank and cellphone company Nokia.

Income Tax Fair 1st Day



PHOTO: NSU

MA Kashem, member of BOT & past chairman of BOG of North South University (NSU); Dr Hafiz GA Siddiqi, vice chancellor; Prof Md Shahjahan, registrar; and Dr Kazi MA Salam, proctor attend the orientation ceremony of newly enrolled undergraduate students of the university on its campus in the capital yesterday. Prof ATM Nurul Amin, dean of SEAS; Dr A Hannan Chowdhury, dean of SOB; Dr Atiqur Rahman, dean of SASS; and Dr Donald James Gomes, dean of Life Sciences were also present among others.

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