

Creative question changes to stay

Says Nahid
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will not change its decision to reduce the Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) part at both SSC and HSC examinations by 10 academic marks despite protests from students, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said yesterday. "The decision will not change. There is no logic or reason to change the decision," he told a press briefing at his ministry after meeting with educationalists. The statement comes in the wake of students' protests over countering the reduction by increasing the marks in the creative question part. They reason that it would be difficult for them to answer the creative questions in the stipulated time. The minister said earlier there were 40 MCQs in the 100 marks exam and students used to get 40 minutes to answer the MCQs while 2.10 hours to answer six creative questions out of nine. Following the change, students will get 30 minutes for 30 MCQ questions and 2.30 hours to answer seven creative questions out of 11. Nahid observed that students would face no problem.

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY TODAY



A mentally-ill woman sits near a broken and uneven portion of a footpath, which is used for garbage dumping. She has been living here for almost a year and surviving by picking through the waste left by the nearby factories. Even though the garbage is regularly removed and taken care of, she remains naked and neglected. The picture was taken in EPZ area of Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: MINHAJ UDDIN

CCC budget Tk 2,225cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

With an aim to earn the maximum share of revenues from its internal sources, the authorities of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) yesterday announced a proposed budget of Tk 2,225.67 crore for FY 2016-17. CCC Mayor AJM Nasir Uddin announced the budget in the corporation's KB Abdus Sattar auditorium. Its chief executive officer Kazi Mohammad Shafiq Alam and others were present. The corporation expects to earn Tk 1,197.42 crore from its internal sources including holding tax and various properties. Last year it earned about Tk 329.10 crore against the target of Tk 621.68 crore from these sources. This year, CCC has set a Tk 550.89 crore holding tax collection target, whereas the last year's target was about Tk 125.27 crore and it could earn about Tk 83.6 crore. The corporation expects to get about Tk 1,028.25 crore as development aid and relief grants. Last year, it received only about Tk 263.56 crore as aid and grants against the target of Tk 1,011.1 crore. Last year, the mayor hoped for 80 percent implementation of the budget, but it was only 36.3 percent.

48 get Meena Media award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-eight journalists, creative writers, television and radio programme producers, photographers and videographers were honoured with the 12th Meena Media Awards-2016 by Unicef yesterday in the capital's Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel for their works focusing on children's issues. Both creative and journalistic works by age groups below and over 18 were awarded. In 13 categories, each winner was given Tk 50,000 while those

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Local govt reps involved in irregularities: Minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Marginalised people can not benefit from social safety net programmes due to irregularities and at times nepotism of local government representatives, said Primary and Mass Education Minister Mostafizur Rahman at a programme yesterday. He, however, said they were trying to overcome the "occasional" ill-practice. The programme was organised by World Vision in the capital's Cirdap auditorium to publicise a project, "Establishing Vulnerable Peoples' Rights and Access to Social Safety Net Programmes (EVPRA)". NGO representatives, journalists, people working for marginalised communities, European Union's (EU) representatives and officials from

other ministries were present. Quazi Sohel Rana, executive director, Development for Disadvantaged People, said most of the marginalised people do not know anything about the programmes and how to realise the allocated money.

SAFETY NET PROGRAMMES

Additional Secretary to the public administration ministry Abdullah said marginalised people were not aware of their rights, for which local government representatives were able to easily deceive and deprive them of the government facilities. He stressed the need for monitoring

to stop such illegal activities. Kalpana Tigga from Dinajpur, a representative of the Santal community, said once a union official told an elderly woman of her community that she had to buy the card for old age allowance although it was meant for free distribution. She urged the government to make it easier for target groups to receive allowances so that the actual marginalised communities become the beneficiaries. Beginning in January and funded by the EU, the four-year EVPRA project involves implementation of nine social safety net programmes, including old age allowance, vulnerable group feeding, food for work and primary education stipend. It targets 3 lakh marginalised people including Santals, elderly women, the challenged, and school-goers.

Dev not inclusive here

Observes visiting chief executive of ActionAid Int'l

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The economic growth and development of a country should be such that respect people's lives and livelihoods, said visiting chief executive of ActionAid International Adriano Campolina in a talk with this newspaper yesterday. "Growth is important but people are important as well," said Adriano referring to a decade-long process of lifting 30 million people from below the poverty line in Brazil. "We should have development, which is inclusive in nature -- fully taking the needs of the people into account," he mentioned, adding, "You can have development respecting the people's rights." It is not that investment and economic growth is opposed. The issue is how you can have a people-centred growth and how you can make sure that development starts with understanding the people's needs, he said. Adriano, who arrived on a week-long visit to Bangladesh, travelled to Lalua and Nilganj

of Kalapara upazila in Barisal, Tala of Satkhira and Keshobpur of Jessore and the Kalyanpur slum (Pora Bosti) to see the marginalised people's struggle for life and livelihood. In those areas, ActionAid Bangladesh conducts various programmes for poverty alleviation, women leadership, and local community's rights to water, livelihood and dignity. In the case of any new development initiative, due impact assessment should be carried out before entering an agreement, he said. Currently lots of evictions are taking place to accommodate a seaport, a naval base and a power plant in Kalapara of Patuakhali, displacing local farmers and fisher folks who do not think these development schemes would fetch them employment, mentioned the ActionAid top official. He added that the kind of development taking place in Bangladesh is not inclusive. It gives priority to building big housing projects, new ports and power plants without respecting the people's rights.

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PM stands by ailing journalist Shahriar Shahid

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday gave financial assistance of Tk 5 lakh for the treatment of Shahriar Shahid, a senior journalist of the national news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim said. Shahid, a special correspondent of BSS, is undergoing treatment in the capital's Apollo Hospital. He was admitted to the hospital late last month following kidney failure.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE Women's leadership significantly higher

MAHDI AL MUHTASIM

Twenty percent of Bangladeshi social enterprises are led by women, significantly higher than in mainstream business which is only five percent, a survey findings revealed. It also said women in social enterprises make up 41 percent of the full time equivalent workforce; more than double of their participation rate in the general workforce. The British Council, United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities, launched two new survey reports "The State of Social Enterprise in Bangladesh" and "Social Enterprise Policy Landscape in Bangladesh" yesterday in the capital. The study was led by Overseas Development Institute with support from BetterStories Limited, UnLtd and Social Enterprises UK. Bangladeshi social enterprises have cre-

ated an increasing number of jobs over the last two years. Many of which are part time and mostly occupied by women. The participation of women in part time jobs is 53 percent and 47 percent in full time jobs this year. But social enterprises leadership is dominated by men, around 80 percent. Bangladeshi social enterprises are young and so are their leaders. The survey indicates that 77 percent of them were registered between 2009 and 2016. Also, 69 percent are run by owners or directors who are under 35 and 91 percent under 45. Social enterprises are businesses which trade for a social purpose, re-invest surpluses into their social objective, and make themselves accountable for their actions, rather than maximising profits. Terming social enterprise as a growing and dynamic sector of the country's

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A bus skidded off the Moghbazar-Mouchak flyover near the capital's Ramna Police Station yesterday while overtaking another, leaving at least nine people critically injured. Police seized the vehicle but its driver managed to escape.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



From left, Zahid Khan, director of Parkway Hospitals, Dhaka; Dr Tan Yah Yuen, general surgeon, Mount Elizabeth Hospital, Singapore; Dr See Hui Ti, medical oncologist, Parkway Cancer Centre, Singapore; Umme Ahmed Shishir; and Gerard Chua, marketing manager, Parkway Hospitals Singapore; at a breast cancer awareness seminar titled "Celebrating Womanhood, Empowering Lives" organised by Mount Elizabeth Hospital and Parkway Cancer Centre, Singapore on Saturday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Proper care, attention can help them flourish

Speakers tell workshop on autistic children

BSS, Rangpur

Proper care, attention, education in congenial atmosphere and training can ensure normal growth of autistic and neurodevelopmentally disabled children to flourish their inherent talents. The opinion came at an upazila level daylong orientation workshop organised by National Academy for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities in Saidpur upazila parishad auditorium of Nilphamari yesterday. The Autistic Academy Establishment Project of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education extended cooperation in arranging the event. Government officials, union chairmen, teachers, NGO executives, guardians of children with special needs, and civil society members participated. Saidpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Abu Saleh Md Musa Jongi and Upazila

Secondary Education Officer (USEO) Shakerina Begum attended the workshop. "The autistic, neuro-developmentally disabled and physically challenged children have enormous latent talents, they equally deserve constitutional rights in getting all privileges and proper care can turn them into worthy citizens," said Dr Mahazur Alam, upazila health and family planning officer. He also stressed on creating awareness among pregnant mothers. Shakerina Begum put importance on ensuring inclusive education for autistic and neuro-developmentally disabled children in classrooms and asked the teachers for taking proper care and giving due attention for flourishing their talents. The UNO called upon all concerned to come forward with holistic approaches for flourishing inherent talent of autistic and neuro-developmentally disabled children.

HC verdict on 'special guerrilla FFs' stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed till October 30 a High Court verdict that had directed the government to recognise 2,367 members of the guerrilla force, who participated in the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971, as freedom fighters. Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice Hasan Foez Siddique passed the order following a petition filed by the government seeking a stay on the HC verdict. The chamber judge also sent the stay petition to the full bench of the apex court for its hearing on October 30. The HC on September 8 directed the government to recognise 2,367 members of

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