



Physically challenged, MENTALLY STRONG

Visually impaired person helps
several hundred challenged
people become self-reliant

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Since his birth, Likhon cannot move any of his limbs on his own. Born in a poor family, the physically challenged man is confined to wheelchair all the time and has to take his mother's help to meet his daily needs.

Still, he does not want to be considered a burden. In fact, his willpower has brought him a feat only a few can achieve overcoming hurdles like his.

Thanks to his indomitable spirit, Likhon, 25, is now a self-dependent man who, with the help of his mother, has been running a shop in Malithapara of Pabna's Ishwardi upazila for the last 10 years.

"God made me disabled but I don't want anyone's pity. It's true that I have no strength in my hands or legs but my brain works quite well," he said, adding that he was earning

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Sanwar Hossain



INT'L DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TODAY

Defying all the odds, these physically challenged people are now on the path to self-dependency. They are among the 629 people, motivated and trained by a local organisation in Pabna's Ishwardi upazila. They have vowed not to give up despite their disabilities as they want to work hard, earn money and live a happy life.

PHOTO:
STAR

ODOMMO Inclusivity for people with disabilities

ANUPOMA JOYEETA JOYEE

Can you tell the name of some places in our city where the persons with disabilities can go easily? Perhaps you will end up counting a few.

Be it restaurants, shopping malls, bus stops, or public buildings, you will find only a handful of places designed for the needs of the people with disabilities -- a failure which can be traced back to not only social ostracism but also lack of infrastructural support.

Although Bangladesh has made considerable progress in social indicators in recent decades, the country still lags behind when it comes to providing access to persons with disabilities in social setting.

Against the backdrop, Dhaka Hub of Global Shapers Community, a youth organisation committed to the development of Dhaka, launched a project to address this issue. Titled "Odommo", the goal of the project is to make Dhaka a more inclusive city.

Despite having been initiated only last year, Odommo has made considerable progress. It has three renowned establishments -- Bata, Bengal Foundation and North End Coffee Roasters -- on board, altering their infrastructure to ensure inclusivity of persons with disabilities.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Smart identity cards for all challenged people

BSS, Dhaka

All the challenged people will get smart identity cards by the end of next year.

A survey of the Department of Social Services has identified 15.1 lakh challenged people across the country. The department is also developing a database of those people.

Talking to BSS, secretary in charge M Zillur Rahman of the social welfare ministry said the government has planned to distribute smart cards among the challenged people on the basis of the database information.

If the smart cards cannot be distributed within the stipulated time, it must be completed by the first quarter of 2018, he added.

The secretary in charge said the social welfare department has started working on provisional identity cards for the challenged people.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Battle for life

Condition of 16 injured in Ashulia
factory fire still critical



SHAHEEN MOLLAH and JAMIL MAHMUD

Rasheda Begum has been attending her critically injured daughter at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital for the last 11 days.

Her daughter, Farzana Aktar, suffered 20 percent burns in a deadly fire that broke out at a gas light factory in Ashulia on November 22. Farzana took a job there only a month ago.

Whenever a doctor or a nurse is around, Rasheda asks them if her daughter's condition is improving. So worried she is that she cannot think of leaving her daughter unattended for a while.

"There are nurses and doctors who look after her. But as a mother how can I do nothing when she whimpers or writhes in pain. Besides, nurses are not available all the time," said Rasheda.

She said she had been sleeping for only 3-4 hours for the last few days, as she needs to feed her daughter, prepare medicines and clean her wounds.

Like Rasheda, anxious relatives of other burn victims of the incident are going through a tough time. Many of them are staying at the unit to attend their loved ones.

At least 26 female workers, mostly

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

BB CYBER HEIST RCBC ready to fight long legal battle

CNN PHILIPPINES, Manila

The Rizal Commercial Banking Corp (RCBC) is ready to fight a long, protracted legal battle, as it argues it is not responsible for the repayment of Bangladesh's stolen money.

"The bank is firm in its position that we will not compensate Bangladesh," RCBC External Counsel Thea Daep-Laurena told CNN Philippines on Wednesday.

She said RCBC is already preparing for the criminal and civil charges Bangladesh officials are planning to file, adding it was ready to "do everything possible to protect the bank."

According to Laurena, Bangladesh has no case against RCBC.

Under criminal law, officials would have to prove RCBC participated in the cyber heist. But RCBC did not steal the money

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

'Toothless'

Activists reject Myanmar's new
Rakhine probe body over 'ethnic
cleansing' as Annan visits
troubled areas

AFP, Yangon

A new body set up by Myanmar's government to investigate allegations of rights abuses against Rohingyas in Rakhine lacks credibility, activists said yesterday, as former UN chief Kofi Annan began a visit to the troubled state.

Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi has faced a growing international backlash for failing to probe claims the army is carrying out ethnic cleansing of the Muslim minority.

But rights groups rejected the new 13-member commission as toothless, noting it includes no Muslims and is led by Vice President Myint Swe, a retired army general formerly blacklisted by the United States.

A close ally of former junta leader Than Shwe, Myint Swe was head of special operations in Yangon when the military government ordered a bloody crackdown on the monk-led protests of the Saffron Revolution in 2007.

"We've got little faith in another homegrown commission, particularly if it's headed by a military man," said Matthew Smith, chief executive of Fortify Rights.

"This new commission won't be capable of conducting a credible human rights investigation, and it certainly lacks independence. The time for an independent international investigation is now."

Phil Robertson, deputy director of Human Rights Watch in Asia, said the new commission "doesn't look like it's independent or impartial".

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 8

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Dhaka move clear of chasing pack

SPORTS REPORTER

An all-round team performance helped the Dhaka Dynamites overcome a brilliant 74 from Tamim Iqbal and beat the Chittagong Vikings by six wickets at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. The win helped them seal the top spot of the league with one more game to go.

Batting first, the Vikings were restricted to 134 and in reply, Dhaka scampered home with 1.4 overs remaining.

Chasing 135, Dhaka were in early trouble when they lost their key opener Mehedi Maruf in the third over. He was trapped in front by Mohammad Nabi. That pressure was too much to take and they lost two more

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

HONOURING



Late
Fazlur Rahman Khan



Osama Bin Noor



Rafiq Azam



RISE HIGH
BANGLADESH

Top 3 Finalists



Team Unpredictable
University of Rajshahi



Brains of Castamere
IBA, University of Dhaka



Inspirebels
North South University

AMAZING BANGLADESHIS

GO FOR GLORY

Venue : Senamalancha
Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka-1206, Bangladesh