



Dressed in festive garb, eminent personalities take part in a rally on the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday, marking the 40th anniversary of Bishwo Shahitto Kendro.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

To nurture dreamers and visionaries

Bishwo Shahitto Kendro marks 40th anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Well-wishers of Bishwo Shahitto Kendro (BSK), including luminaries of society, flocked to join the 40th founding anniversary of the organisation that is relentlessly working for creating scope for millions to new thoughts and encouraging reading habits.

They said BSK is an eye-opening new literary movement, which is priceless contributing to society for creating habit of reading among countrymen when such habits are decreasing fast across the globe.

BSK celebrated the day with a vibrant rally, reminiscence by veterans, music, dance performances and photo exhibition at its Bangla Motor office.

Talking to The Daily Star, BSK founder Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed said that they will continue their efforts to create atmosphere for nurturing citizens who are dreamers and visionaries, adhere to high moral values and are enlightened and can give meaningful leadership in taking the country on the path of progress and prosperity.

worldwide, Bishwo Shahitto Kendro is fighting for creating the habit among students and others," said academic and writer Professor Muhammed Zafar Iqbal.

"This is large struggle and Abdullah Abu Sayeed is lone fighter of that struggle. We all should come forward. Teachers should encourage their students and guardians should encourage their children to form reading habit," he said.

Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon said BSK is an eye-opening institution for the nation.

Noted singer Mustafa Zaman Abbasi said BSK is literary movement for the country. "It will be source of inspiration for all Bangalees across the globe," he added.

The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam said, "I respect his thoughts on bringing change in the society, and I am proud to be close to him."

Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shaheen Anam also expressed her respect for Abdullah Abu Sayeed. "I believe that youths who were engaged in book reading [of Bishwo Shahitto Kendro] SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'We have no options left'

Secondary school teachers continue hunger strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Additional Class Teachers, a section of secondary school teachers -- who were recruited contractually under a project, and have been serving at the schools for three years without pay since the contract ended -- yesterday announced to continue their ongoing hunger strike until their demand for job regularisation is met.

They came up with the announcement on the second consecutive day of the hunger strike, held in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka. Under the banner of Bangladesh Additional Class Teachers' (ACT) Association, several SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Content, collaboration keys to development: speakers

Media enjoys golden time, says Shirin Sharmin at newly-formed Broadcast Journalist Centre's discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Producing quality content and authorities' collaboration with other stakeholders are some key areas where improvement is required for boosting country's private television channels, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

Besides, strengthening ties among private channel owners and government patronisation is needed to overcome challenges these channels are facing at present, they said.

Newly-formed Broadcast Journalist Centre (BJC) arranged the discussion on prospects and problems of the broadcast industry, as part of its first broadcast conference in TSC auditorium at Dhaka University.

Declaring its emergence through a daylong conference, BJC sees some 1,100 journalists from various broadcast mediums including private television channels as its members.

It will work for ensuring the members' welfare and building their capacities, said organisers.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury said the country has been enjoying a golden time in terms of free flow of information as the scopes and activities of mass media have broadened, reports BSS.

"Broadcast Journalist Centre Trustee Board has been formed to flourish massive activities of mass media.... which will play an important

role in advancing media," she said while addressing the conference as chief guest.

Addressing the discussion, Syed Ishtiaque Reza, editor-in-chief of Gazi Television, said journalism is considered the state's fourth pillar. However, it is facing various challenges. "[Private] television channels are even in a deeper crisis," he said.

While governments of neighbouring India and Pakistan came forward to save dying television channels, in Bangladesh, private channels were not institutionalised yet in over two decades of journey, Ishtiaque said.

Mozammel Haque Babu, senior vice president of Association of SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'Khaleda Zia is waiting for us'

Senior leaders hint at street movement to free BNP chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday hinted that it would take to the streets soon after revamping the party to ensure party Chairperson Khaleda Zia's release from jail.

"We have to turn around burying all sorts of organisational weaknesses. It is not possible to ensure release of Khaleda Zia only through placing demands. We have to release her through movement," said BNP standing committee member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain.

Addressing a protest rally at Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh, marking one year of Khaleda Zia's jail, Mosharraf said, "Khaleda Zia is the mother of democracy. To ensure her release, we have to be united and move forward with courage."

"Many said BNP leaders and activists are frustrated and demoralised but I am saying we are not frustrated but aggrieved and angered. Everybody knows that the government is not elected through peoples' vote. It would not be SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Stop coal-fired power plant in Barguna: TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing concern over setting up of a coal-based power plant at Nishanbaria union of Barguna, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) said the plant will pose risk to the ecology and livelihood of locals.

In a written statement, TIB urged the authorities to immediately stop installation of the power plant -- which has no clearance from Department of Environment, land acquisition, torture on land owner and harassment on locals.

Iso Tech Electrification Company Ltd and Power China are jointly setting up the power plant.

Executive Director of TIB Dr Iftekharuzzaman said though the court has put injunction over land acquisition following a case filed by victims, activities of the project have resumed with the help of administration and police.

Locals who filed cases for compensation are being implicated in false extortion cases, threatened and even being assaulted, says a press release.

Iftekharuzzaman said there is a legal binding of carrying out environmental impact assessment by a neutral, independent and renowned organisation in case of setting up such a facility but it has not been done. Moreover, without taking clearance certificate from Department of Environment, the power plant is being set up near Tengragiri Forest, which is known as the second Sundarbans, he said. SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Miller's day out with the little ones

MATHEWS CHIRAN

For children, yesterday's Shishu Prohor of this year's Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela became extra special as they were greeted by two special guests.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller and his wife Michelle Adelman visited the children's corner at Suhrawardy Udyan around noon.

This is the second time the US envoy visited the month-long fair this year. He visited the fair on the opening day.

The couple visited various book stalls and also spent time with children during the special hours dedicated to the little ones, arranged every Friday and Saturday for two hours from 11am.

At the children's corner, the ambassador



and his wife were welcomed by mascots of popular characters of Sisimpur (the Bangladeshi adaptation of Sesame Street).

Meanwhile, Halum, Iqri and Tuktuki performed skits and interacted with the children, much to their excitement.

The couple also enjoyed the puppet show, took pictures with children and the Sisimpur characters and reminisced about their childhood.

"My wife and I grew up watching Sesame Street. We loved watching characters like Elmo and Cookie Monster," said the ambassador. "It's great seeing these children growing up along with the characters and learning...." he added.

When this correspondent asked him if he SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller and his wife with a group of children during the Shishu Prohor at Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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