

Book on March 7 speech published in all six official languages of UN

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A book on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's historic March 7 speech -- published in UN's six official languages Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish -- was unveiled at Unesco headquarters on Friday.



Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to Unesco and Bangladesh embassy in Paris have published the book titled: "The Historic 7th March Speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: A World Documentary Heritage".

Ambassadors and permanent representatives of Australia, England, France, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Spain, Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Mauritania, Kuwait, Russia, China and Bangladesh to Unesco unveiled the book.

Unesco included the speech in the Memory of the World International

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Spring is increasingly showing its vibrant colours as the days go by. This tree, with its branches spreading out in all directions, at the capital's Ramna Park is ready to welcome in visitors with its recently sprouted crimson leaves.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Adolescents' healthcare in poor state at districts

Finds MJF study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite the government's emphasis on providing health services for adolescents, no adolescents from Patuakhali and Barguna received the services in 2019 and 2020, while no boys received the service in Bhola in this period.

Only 571 boys and 3,018 girls received services in the Barishal division in this period, although the statistics of boys receiving services in Barishal division is way higher than other divisions.

The data was presented yesterday by Naripokkho member Samia Afrin, at a webinar titled "The Current State of Adolescents Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights", organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) on the occasion of International Women's Day-2021.

Although the government in its adolescent health services operational plan included programmes to raise awareness on child marriage, adolescent motherhood, violence against women, menstrual hygiene management and nutrition, mental health and personal hygiene, people who need to be more aware such as parents, educational institutions, religious leaders, local and political leaders do not pay heed to these issues at all, the study found.

The current quality of healthcare services at community level is even worse, due to the absence of adequate service providers. In addition, adolescents also have no clear idea about the services and are not informed significantly.

A number of adolescents from different districts of the country also shared their problems regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights at the webinar.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Idle time may frustrate Rohingyas, lead to unwanted situations

Finds study on relocation to Bhasan Char

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ample idle time could frustrate Rohingyas in Bhasan Char, which could lead them to create unwanted situations, a Dhaka University (DU) teacher said yesterday, while disseminating findings of a research.

Associate Professor Touhidul Islam of DU's peace and conflict studies department said scope must be created for Rohingyas in the new shelter to involve themselves in income-generating activities.

The department and Central Foundation for International and Strategic Studies (CFISS) conducted the research titled "From Cox's Bazar to Bhasan Char: A Step Forward Towards Sustainable Livelihood Options for the Rohingyas".

The findings were disclosed during a seminar on "Relocation of the Rohingya Displaced People from Cox's Bazar

to Bhasan Char: Opportunities and Challenges" at DU's Nabab Nawab Ali Senate Bhaban.

Touhidul, a research team member, said healing Rohingyas people's psychological trauma is important, as they have been traumatised since facing persecution in their homeland.

Mentioning that relocation of Rohingyas to Bhasan Char is temporary, he said there must be a plan for Rohingyas to go back to their country. He stressed for bilateral processes to continue, and engagement of regional actors and international communities in the repatriation process.

The research was conducted both in Bhasan Char and camps of Cox's Bazar in two phases from November to December last year.

According to the report, shelter in Bhasan

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Historic March 7 today

Bss, Dhaka

Today is the historic March 7.

This year the observance of the day will be more significant as the nation is going to celebrate the golden jubilee of the country's independence on March 26 while "Mujib Year", the yearlong celebration of Bangabandhu's birth centenary is ongoing.

On this day in 1971, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his fiery speech called on the freedom-loving Bangalis to wage a decisive struggle against the Pakistani rulers.

"Ebarer sangram amader muktir sangram, ebarer sangram swadhinatar sangram [The struggle this time is a struggle for emancipation, the struggle this time is a struggle for independence]", Bangabandhu declared in a thunderous voice at a mammoth rally at the Racecourse Maidan (now Suhrawardy Udyan) that day.

"Turn every house into a fortress, resist the enemy with everything you have... Having mastered the lesson of sacrifice, we shall give more blood. God willing [Inshallah], we shall free the people of this land," Bangabandhu also said in his speech.

On the night of March 25, just 18 days after the 7th March speech, the Pakistani military launched genocide on innocent unarmed Bangalis, the most gruesome and shameful act the human history has ever seen.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



The harmoniums, made from imported reeds and Burmese Teak timbre, are attracting demand from across the country. Insiders said products worth around Tk 4 crore are being shipped to Dhaka, Khulna, and Sylhet per year.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Harmonium-making brings them success

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

In something of an unexpected turn in the region's history, local musical instrument production, especially of harmoniums, have found a home in two villages of Barishal's Baraipara upazila.

Banaripara, some 10-12km away from Barishal district, is now home to at least three new harmonium factories set up over the last two years.

Around 1,000 to 1,500 instruments worth around Tk 4 crore are being produced and sent from these factories to several parts of the country, including Dhaka, Khulna and Sylhet every year, this correspondent found after talking to factory owners and artisans.

As a result, employment in the two remote villages of Gava and Narekathi, and a number of surrounding villages, have increased.

Talking to this correspondent recently, Saidur Rahman, president of Barishal Chamber of Commerce and Industries, heralded the manufacturer's efforts, saying that such small-scale manufacturing systems play a vital role in the rural economy.

At Gava, Sujoy Mandal has set up a harmonium factory at a place adjacent to the primary school on the bank of the Narekathi canal. Artisan Sumon Mandal works at the factory. He told this correspondent that they supply at least 500 harmoniums in one calendar year. From Gava, the instruments reach the shores of Dhaka, Sylhet, and Khulna, to shelves of popular stores in Dhaka and Khulna.

Sumon Mistry, who works at Sujoy's factory, said each harmonium produced by them sells from Tk 12,000 to Tk 35,000. The factories make a profit of around 20 percent from a single harmonium.

Jiban Sarker owns the other factory in the village. His factory produces around the same number of harmoniums per year, he told this correspondent.

"Around 1,200 to 1,500 harmoniums, worth almost Tk 4 crore are produced and sold across the country from the two villages," he said.

Hasan Maqsood, cultural officer of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Barishal district unit, attributed the rising demand of musical instruments to the increased opportunity to practise music under various organisations, including educational institutions at the upazila level.

Babu Mistry, owner of a factory at Narekathi village, said at least 300 harmoniums are sold by them every year.

Artisans said the major material they use for the harmoniums is reed, imported from India, while Burmese teak timber is also used. These timbers are bought for Tk 5,500 to 6,000 per cubic foot of timber.

Factory owner Sujoy Mandal is one of the pioneers of making harmoniums in the region. As someone who's seen it grow from the start, he knows what they need to expand the scope of the craft.

He said he used to make harmoniums at a store in Dhaka. "Around two years back, I decided to come back to my village and start on my own. Soon, others joined in and got involved," he added.

"It would be great if we had some capital to work with. If we could receive Small and Medium Entrepreneur (SME) loans, it would work wonders for us," he said.

Jalish Mahamud, deputy general manager of BSCIC, said, "It's possible... If the harmonium makers want to have access to these loans, they can register as SMEs, after which the the loan procedure can be initiated."

Taqi's 8th death anniv observed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

The eighth death anniversary of Tanwir Muhammad Taqi was observed yesterday amid shock, grief and frustration, as the killers have still not been brought to justice.

The victim's family, and socio-cultural and political activists paid their respects at Taqi's grave in Narayanganj's Bandar upazila, and vowed to continue their movement until the killers are tried.

"We have come here to pay tribute. We vow to continue our movement until justice is ensured," said Bhabani Sangkar Roy, president of Narayanganj Sangkritik Jote.

Narayanganj City Corporation Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy and Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Narayanganj District Unit President Hafizul Islam, among others, paid tribute.

Taqi (17) went missing after leaving his home on Shaista Khan Road for Sudhijon Pathagar, a local library, around 4pm on March 6, 2013. He was a student of ABC International School.

On the morning of March 8, his body was found floating on Shitalakhya River.

Taqi's father Rafiur Rabbi filed a murder case with Narayanganj Kotwali Police Station the same day. He also submitted a complaint to the superintendent of police

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

GRAFT ALLEGATIONS AGAINST BEGUM ROKEYA UNIV VC 'Education minister had nothing to do with it'

UGC says probe impartial, without influence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

University Grants Commission in a statement yesterday said they have done an impartial investigation without anyone's influence while probing into alleged corruption of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) Vice Chancellor Prof Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah.

UGC said Kalimullah made some unexpected comments regarding the probe committee and Education Minister Dipu Moni from a press conference on March 4.

Such a comment was not expected from a VC, it added.

UGC said the education minister has not tried to influence the probe by any means. The minister has never made any recommendation to influence probe against any VC, the statement added.

Kalimullah on March 4 denied all findings of UGC's recent report on his reported irregularities, saying it is biased and fabricated, and the education minister patronised and insisted on it.

Hours after, the education ministry denounced his statement, terming it fabricated, baseless and

motivated.

At a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity, Kalimullah said, "I state without any hesitation that Education Minister Dipu Moni, for her personal animosity towards me, forced UGC to prepare the fabricated and biased report."

Kalimullah also claimed that he was a victim of local politics of Chandpur district.

"UGC member Muhammad Alamgir, who led the investigation team, is from Chandpur and served the minister's agenda by making me a scapegoat of corruption done by the previous VC," he said.

UGC had launched an investigation on 45 allegations against Kalimullah.

Recently, a probe body found irregularities surrounding construction of two 10-storey buildings and a mausoleum at the university. It recommended taking measures against those involved, including the VC.

In the press statement, the education minister said they have received the investigation report, on which a high-level meeting will be held soon at the ministry.

Five killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

Five people were killed and another was injured in road accidents yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Dhaka, a man was killed and another injured after a human hauler and an auto-rickshaw collided head-on in Kadamtali.

The deceased -- Mobarak Hossain (28), worker of a steel mill -- was a passenger of the auto-rickshaw, said police.

Kadamtali Police Station Sub-inspector Mahbul Haque said the collision took place around 9am, leaving Mobarak dead on the spot. His co-passenger Rabbi sustained injuries and took treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The body was sent to Sir Salimullah Medical College morgue for autopsy. Hailing from Debidwar in Cumilla, the deceased used to live in Shyampur.

Police seized the vehicles but the drivers fled after the accident.

Our Mymensingh correspondent adds, two persons including a journalist were killed as a CNG-run auto-rickshaw and a truck collided head-on on Mymensingh-Netrakona road at Gacchola in Tarakanda upazila.

The deceased -- Chandon Roy (55), Amader Somoy's Durgapur upazila correspondent; and Abul Kashem -- hailed from Durgapur, Netrakona.

The accident took place around 5:20pm while Chandon was returning home by the auto-rickshaw from a journalists' meeting in Mymensingh city, said Tarakanda Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Abul Khayer.

Kashem died at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said the OC.

Police seized the vehicles but the drivers managed to flee.

In another incident, a pick-up van hit an unknown vehicle from behind in Bhaluka upazila headquarters in Mymensingh around 6am, leaving the pickup driver and his helper dead.

Kawsar Sheikh (25) was the driver and Emran Mia (26) his helper. Both hailed from Netrakona. They died on the spot, said Moshir Rahman, in-charge of Bhoraduba Highway Police Station.



A truck lies overturned in a paddy field by the side of M'sing-Netrakona highway as fire service personnel rush to the spot. A journalist from Durgapur upazila was killed in a road accident at Mymensingh's Tarakanda upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

CMP sets up central washing plant

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Cig

Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) has set up a washing plant at the city's Dampara Police Lines, facilitating the laundry needs of its members.

With the technical support from Chattogram-based apparel company "Smart Group", the plant has been installed at a cost of Tk 18 lakh, said police officials.

CMP bore the finance -- the plant's price of Tk 10 lakh and the installation cost of Tk 8 lakh, said CMP Deputy Commissioner (North) Bijoy Basak.

The service for one set of clothes (a shirt and pants) will cost only Tk 1, said the official.

Police said they used to wash their uniforms themselves.

Asked when the service will start, the police official said, "At the end of this month [March] hopefully."

CMP itself will operate the washing plant, said Bijoy Basak.

Mujibur Rahman, director of Smart Group, told The Daily Star, "We will provide free technical assistance to CMP to maintain regular works of the plant."

Police sources said CMP has a total of 7,000 members; of them 1,875 live in seven dormitories at Dampara Police Lines.