

Only 34pc third graders can read

Says Unicef report
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Only 34 percent of third graders in Bangladesh have foundational reading skills, and only 18 percent have foundational numeracy skills, according to a new report of Unicef.

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are even worse off, the UN organisation said in its report released yesterday.

In Bangladesh, one of the countries featured in the report, children endured one of the longest school closures in the world due to Covid-19, missing almost 18 months of in-person education.

"Even before the pandemic, children in Bangladesh faced education hurdles. Children in Bangladesh need full access to flexible and remedial learning to help make up for the time lost," said Sheldon Yett, Unicef representative to Bangladesh.

School closures in Bangladesh, from March 2020 to September 2021, and again in February 2022, have disrupted education of around 37 million children. They have also exacerbated worrying gaps in basic literacy and numeracy skills which existed before the pandemic began, the report said.

Trader dies as truck hits rickshaw-van

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A chicken trader died after a truck hit a battery-run rickshaw-van in Dhaka's Paltan area early yesterday.

Deceased Sohag (26) used to live in Tilpapara area of Khilgaon.

The accident occurred near Rajuk building around 1:00am when Sohag was going to Khilgaon from Kaptan Bazar area on a van, said Borhan Uddin, a sub-inspector of Paltan Police Station.

The van driver, Abdur Rahim, who also suffered minor injuries, took Sohag to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctor declared him dead around 2:00am, the SI said.

The truck driver fled the scene soon after the accident.

The body was kept at DMC morgue for autopsy, the police official said.



Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) yesterday accorded reception to 11 Bangla and English dailies for continuing to publish their newspapers for at least 25 years. The newspapers are The Daily Sangbad, The Daily Ittefaq, The Daily Azadi, The Daily Purbanchal, The Daily Karatoa, The Daily Purbakone, The Daily Inqilab, The Daily Bhorer Kagoj, The Daily Janakantha, The Daily Star and The Daily Financial Express. Among others, Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury and Information Minister Hasan Mahmud were present at the event.

PHOTO: STAR

Misuse of law stifles press freedom

Say speakers; Noab honours 11 newspapers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's newspapers have made significant contribution to the Liberation War struggle, creating a nation as well as establishing democracy, said speakers yesterday.

The discussants also said there should be no hurdles to practicing independent journalism.

They were speaking at a programme to honour 11 Bangla and English dailies for hitting the stands for at least 25 years. Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) organised the event at the Dhaka Club.

At the programme, Noab accorded reception to The Daily Sangbad, The Daily Ittefaq, The Daily Azadi, The Daily Purbanchal, The Daily Karatoa, The Daily Purbakone, The Daily Inqilab, The Daily Bhorer Kagoj, The Daily Janakantha, The Daily Star and The Daily Financial Express.

Speaking as the chief guest, Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury said newspapers have played an important role in expansion and practice of the freedom of speech. Press is the fourth pillar of democracy and its watchdog, she said.

"However, we can see how false news, misinformation and propaganda are

flooding social media sites. Against this backdrop, ethical and responsible journalism is essential and it can bring positive change to society," she said.

Information Minister Hasan Mahmud said newspapers played a significant role in the Liberation War struggle. It also played an important role in making the country's democracy strong.

"Although print media is facing various challenges, I will keep its importance above all other media," the minister said.

The minister said media should focus on the country's development and positive changes. "No government can be 100

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Country needs more than 20,000 midwives

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was the start of a usual day at work for Zinkhee Sharma, a midwife at Bandarban's Ruma Upazila Health Complex.

As soon as she entered her workstation on July 31 last year, she was faced with a devastated man. He said he had left his expecting wife in the middle of her delivery on a boat in Sangu river ghat and rushed to the hospital, some 15 minutes away from the spot, to call for help.

"The mother had a three-hour journey by boat. The baby's head could be seen, but she was too tired to complete the process," recalls Zinkhee.

"It was a life-threatening situation for both of them. So my colleague Swamkim Bwon and I rushed to the boat and helped her complete the

delivery."

Zinkhee shared her experiences at a seminar organised by Directorate General of Nursing and Midwifery (DGNM), the British High Commission and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) at a city hotel yesterday.

The seminar was organised to reflect on the progress of midwifery in the country over the past decade.

"The country needs more than 20,000 midwives. The government has devised a plan to create 5,000 new midwifery posts and we hope to carry it out soon," said Siddika Akter, DGNM director general.

Around 2,557 midwives like Zinkhee are deployed in 407 upazila health complexes and perform 87 percent of all deliveries. Midwives

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Frame specific policy to appoint VCs Says UGC member Prof Muhammed Alamgir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

University Grants Commission member Prof Muhammed Alamgir yesterday recommended a specific and transparent guideline to appoint vice chancellors at universities.

Prof Alamgir -- while attending a training programme for UGC officials -- said currently there are no specific guidelines on the appointment of VCs, pro-VCs and treasurers of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Indo-Bangla ties vital for South Asia's stability

Shahriar Alam tells seminar

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Constructive Bangladesh-India ties could be a major stabilising factor for South Asia, said State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam, insisting on resolving the irritants and harnessing the potentials of the two countries.

He said this while speaking at a seminar titled "Bangladesh-India Relations: Confluence of Ideologies and Evolving Perspectives".

At the event organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) yesterday, he said India and Bangladesh have resolved major disputes regarding land and maritime boundary and progressed a lot in terms of trade and connectivity, but some irritants are still pending.

“It is the need of the hour to introspect the strengths, retrospect the mistakes, acknowledge the challenges and draw a roadmap to take this relationship to new heights

He said the death toll of Bangladeshis on the border has become a major stain on this bilateral engagement. Also, the thorny water-sharing issue of transboundary rivers -- 54 of them -- remains another cause of debate regarding the Bangladesh-India ties.

"As a downstream country, Bangladesh wants more water from the Teesta river. We would also like to have a framework agreement for optimal utilisation of waters from six rivers, namely Muhuri, Manu, Gumti, Khowai, Dudhkhumar, and Dharla," he said.

Shahriar Alam said India and Bangladesh are destined to grow together. The bilateral economic ties have huge untapped possibilities, with a trade potential of \$16.4 billion.

Referring to a World Bank report, he said seamless transport connectivity between India

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PRAYER
TIMING
MAR 31



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4:45	12:45	4:45	6:20	7:45
Jamaat	5:20	1:15	5:00	6:25	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

নোটিশ !

প্রিয় গ্রাহক,

আমাদের সেবার মান আরও সহজ, স্বচ্ছন্দময় ও নিরাপদ করার লক্ষ্যে ব্যাংকিং ব্যবস্থার উন্নয়ন কার্যক্রম চলছে। সিস্টেম উন্নয়ন ও রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ এর জন্য ০৯ এপ্রিল থেকে ০৬ এপ্রিল, ২০২২ পর্যন্ত ব্যাংকের সব ধরনের আর্থিক লেনদেন ও সেবা স্থগিত থাকবে (ক্রেডিট কার্ড ব্যতীত)। আপনারদের এই সাময়িক অসুবিধার জন্য আমরা আন্তরিকভাবে দুঃখিত।

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JAMUNA BANK

First ever International Dealer Conference of
RFL Plastic Limited in Turkey



আন্তর্জাতিক
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চলি একসাথে নতুন উদ্যমে



Prominent Dealers from home and abroad attended RFL Plastic Limited's first ever International Dealer Conference in Istanbul, Turkey on 24 March, 2022.

At the International Dealer Conference, RFL Group's Managing Director Mr. R N Paul remarked, "Having won the hearts of our countrymen, today RFL is a renowned global brand".

Director of RFL Plastics Ltd. Md. Moniruzzaman and Executive Director Md. Jahangir Alam were also present among other high officials of the company.