

Help build a better future thru scouting

Yunus tells young scouts

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday encouraged the young people engaged in scouting to help open doors for others, discover the world of opportunities, know people better with broader friendship, and contribute to positive changes.

"Scouting has opened a big door of opportunities for you. It is a big opportunity for you to open the door for others," he said while inaugurating the Bangladesh Scouts Cub Carnival at the Chief Adviser's Office.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Yunus said this is a great opportunity to discover the world and, more importantly, to discover things within the youngsters involved in scouting.

"Otherwise, there is no other opportunity to get to know you. You must



Professor Serajul Islam Choudhury at an event at Bangla Academy in Dhaka yesterday, on the occasion of his 90th birthday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

'Aggressive nationalism' threatening world peace

Says Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury at event marking his 90th birthday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The present-day world is witnessing a form of "aggressive nationalism" in various ways, said Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury yesterday.

"The Zionist activities of Israel, the way people are being killed, the way children are being killed in Palestine... all of these represent that aggressive nationalism," he said.

One of the country's foremost public intellectuals, Prof Serajul, made the remarks while speaking on "The Liberation War of 1971 and the Role of Nationalism" at an event marking his 90th birthday.

"Natun Diganta Paribar", a platform formed by his colleagues at the magazine Natun Diganta, where Prof Serajul serves as editor, organised the discussion at the Abdul Karim Shahityabisharad Auditorium of Bangla Academy in the capital.

In his speech, Prof Serajul addressed

issues related to the Liberation War, contemporary global affairs, and different socio-economic problems.

He said war comes in many forms, and the war fought by the Bangladeshis in 1971 was a "people's war".

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"Similarly, nationalism also takes different forms. It can be aggressive, or it can be a form of resistance," he said.

While Bangladesh experienced aggressive nationalism from the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971, the nationalism upheld by the people was one of resistance.

Prof Serajul noted that foreign powers like the US, China, and Russia (then Soviet Union), who played roles in Bangladesh's Liberation War, had their own "nationalistic perspectives".

"India's involvement was also driven by nationalistic interests. However, it included a humane approach, as India provided shelter to hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshi refugees," he said.

He pointed out that Pakistan's attempt to impose Urdu as the state language in 1948 was also driven by a nationalistic desire to "create a nation", despite significant differences in ethnicity and other areas between West and East Pakistan.

Prof Serajul said declaring amnesty for local collaborators of the Pakistani occupation forces, known as Razakars, and not preparing a list of them were "mistakes" by the post-war Awami League government.

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Freedom of expression vital for democracy

Speakers tell MJF event; 'Swadhinata' project launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Safeguarding freedom of expression is essential to upholding democratic values in the digital age, said speakers at an event yesterday.

They expressed concern over the growing threat of misinformation and emphasised the importance of digital literacy, inclusive participation, and civic responsibility.

They made the remarks during the launch of the EU-funded "Swadhinata - Freedom of Expression for Digital Democracy (FREEDOM)" project, which was held at a hotel in the capital.

Jointly implemented by Plan International Netherlands, Plan International Bangladesh, and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), the project aims to strengthen freedom of expression, improve information literacy, and promote online safety.

Speakers said the initiative will follow a cascading model to engage young people,

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Tarique invited to visit China

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

China National Congress Deputy Li Hongzhong has invited BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman to visit China.

He made the invitation during a bilateral meeting between BNP and Communist Party of China (CPC) held yesterday afternoon at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

The meeting began with CPC Politburo member Li Hongzhong, welcoming the BNP delegation, which was led by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Tarique, the eldest son of BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, has been living in London since his release from prison during the state of emergency in 2008.

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NAGAR BHABAN REOPENING Services resume on limited scale, protests continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After remaining shut for 40 consecutive days, the Dhaka South City Corporation headquarters, Nagar Bhaban, reopened yesterday, with the resumption of limited civic services amid ongoing protests.

From early morning yesterday, citizens began arriving in hope of availing essential services. By 9:00am, all gates of Nagar Bhaban were unlocked, except for the DSCC administrator's office and the engineering department, which remained padlocked.

Mansura Khatun, who came from Bashabo, said she had been unable to withdraw a grant for her father's medical treatment during the closure. "Today, I submitted the application again. The

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