

# Women worst victims of corruption

## Speakers tell TIB roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday called for united efforts of men and women to combat corruption, which is an obstacle to achieving social development, ensuring gender equality and establishing women's rights.

They said women are the worst victims of corruption as they also face social, cultural, political, religious and institutional discrimination.

They also called on women of all sections of society to be united and raise voice against all forms of discrimination as well as corruption in order to ensure their empowerment.

The Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) organised the roundtable on 'Corruption and women: Experiences in professional life and the way out' at the BIAM auditorium in the city to mark the International Women's Day.

Noted litterateur Selina Hossain presented a keynote paper at the

roundtable presided over by Dr Hamida Hossain.

Selina Hossain said women are marginalised in a male-dominated society and that is why they face more repression in a corruption-ridden society.

If corruption engulfs the process of women's empowerment, then not only women but also the entire society suffers a lot, she said.

She also said some women at the top level are also caught up in corruption.

Selina said the government has to take bold decision about women's empowerment and create environment for implementing the decisions.

Only then women can get the opportunity to work in a corruption-free environment and keep them away from corruption, she added.

Khushi Kabir, executive director of Nijera Kori, said women have to take part in politics more and more so that they can contribute to policy-making decisions for the welfare of women.

Fundamentalism, the lack of democracy and corruption are main obstacles to ensuring women's empowerment in the country, she said.

Angela Gomez, executive director of Banche Shekha, called on women to come forward along with men in every sector to combat corruption.

Executive Director of Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights Elna Khan, Team Leader of Manusher Jonno Shaheen Anam, Anannya Editor Tasmina Hossain, woman leader Maleka Begum, journalist Baby Moudud, Barrister Tania Amir, Dhaka University teacher Meghna Guha Thakurata, TIB Executive Director Shammim Akhtar also spoke at the roundtable.

## FEMALE MIGRATION

# '\$ 2 b more remittance possible a year'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will earn over two billion dollar additional remittance annually if the government promotes female migration, an expert said.

Quoting a recent study by Driшти Research Centre conducted on 1500 villages across the country, he said about 4.37 lakh Bangladeshi female migrants are working abroad.

The figure included all types of workers who migrated legally and who were trafficked or went abroad otherwise.

Abdul Alim, a member of Bangladesh Association International Recruiting Agency (BAIRA), was speaking while presenting a keynote paper titled 'Female Migration: The Bangladesh Perspective' at a view exchange meeting on 'Safe

Migration and Women Worker' at the National Press Club in the city.

Bangladesh Ovbashi Mohila Sramik Association (BOMSA) and Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees (WARBE) organised the meeting to mark the International Women's Day.

Alim expressed concern over violence on female workers abroad, most of them are victims of trafficking.

He suggested that 'pre-migration preparedness and post-migration management' should be taken into consideration before sending female workers.

Speaker at the meeting emphasised the ratification of 1990 UN Convention on the Migrant Workers and the specification of national policy of overseas employment for safe migration.

Presiding over the function,

Mahmuda Chowdhury underscored the need for proper training of women on manners and disciplines as well as on domestic chores before migration.

She criticised the corruption of recruiting agencies and called for taking steps in this regard.

Speaking as chief guest, Ashfaq Hamid, secretary to the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment, said the overseas employment policy would be tabled soon for specification before the cabinet.

WARBE Chairman Syed Saiful Haque, Nurul Islam Mollah of International Organisation for Migration and Sheikh Romana of BOMSA also spoke.

## Nine officials promoted to secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday promoted nine officials to the post of secretary.

The officials are Acting Secretaries Syed Md Zubayer, Abul Kalam Mohammad Samsuddin, Asfaq Hamid and ATM Ataur Rahman, DG of Land Record and Survey Md Abu Haidar Sarder, Acting Rector of BPATC Md Abdus Salam Khan, DG of Planning and Development Academy Syed Ataur Rahman, Secretary of Bangladesh Public Service Commission Abdul Majeed and Chief Insurance Controller Firoz Ahmed.

The government is likely to promote 24 joint secretaries to additional secretary next week.



## Mozammel, Gazi BFUJ president, secy general

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

M Mozammel Haque and Ruhul Amin Gazi were elected president and secretary general of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) on Sunday.

Other office-bearers are Vice Presidents: Abbasuddin Afsari, Shamsuddin Harun and Fakir Shaikat, Assistant Secretaries General: Nurul Amin Rokan, M Abdullah and Rezaul Karim Razu and Office Secretary: Obaidur Rahman Shaheen.

Executive committee members are Sheikh Didarul Alam, Mostafa Tareque Banna, Zahidul Karim Kanchi, Azmul Lutfah Khanam, Abu Yusuf, Asaduzzaman Asad and Kamar Farid.

Earlier, Md Shahjahan and Modabber Hossain were elected treasurer and publicity secretary unopposed respectively.

## ARREST OF 2 MILITANT KINGPINS HAILED UK offers to help deal with extremist threat

UNB, Dhaka

British Foreign Office Minister, Dr Kim Howells has welcomed the recent capture of two most wanted terrorist leaders and offered to work with Bangladesh government to deal with the terrorist threat.

"I was pleased to hear of the arrest by the authorities in Bangladesh of Siddiqi Islam alias Bangla Bhai on March 6. This follows the capture of Shaekh Abdul Rahman last week and large scale clampdown on extremists over recent months in Bangladesh," he said in a statement yesterday.

Howells said "This is excellent news for the people of Bangladesh, who will be relieved at these arrests. This is a significant advance in the counter-terrorism activities of the Government of Bangladesh and an important part of wider efforts to combat international terrorism. The Bangladeshi authorities are to be congratulated. "He said experience shows clearly that combating terror requires a sustained effort and support from the Bangladeshi people across the political spec-

trum.

"I encourage the Government of Bangladesh to continue its efforts to deal with the extremist threat without compromising respect for human rights and the rule of law. The UK stands ready to work with the Government of Bangladesh to achieve this," Howells said.

### Obituary

Rabeya Khatun, wife of late Abdul Khalek, passed away at Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) in the city on Monday night at the age of 72, says a press release.

Rabeya, also mother of Dr AKM Salek, left behind her five daughters and one son.

She had been suffering from diabetes for long time.

Her kulkhwani will be held at her house at 32, Sharat Chandra Chakrabarti Road at Mahut Tuli in the old city after Asr prayers tomorrow (Thursday).

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the kulkhwani.

## Boy burnt alive while 8 shops gutted in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

A boy was burnt alive and eight shops were gutted causing damage of property worth over Tk 30 lakh in a devastating fire at Satkania upazila in Chittagong district in the early hours of yesterday.

The dead was identified as Shahidul Islam Shafi, 13, son of Late Lal Mian of East Billa Para village of Keranihat.

Fire Service sources said the fire originated from electric short-circuit at a shop of a market at Keranihat at around 12:25am. It spread fast engulfing the adjoining shops and burnt the boy who got trapped inside a burning shop.

The rising blaze reduced eight shops to ashes. One motorbike was also completely damaged in the fire.

Three fire fighting units from Patiya, Bandarban and Chakaria stations extinguished the fire after a four-hour effort, sources said.

## Nasim Firdaus new envoy to Egypt

UNB, Dhaka

Nasim Firdaus, currently Ambassador of Bangladesh to Indonesia, has been appointed Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt.

A career diplomat of the 1979 BCS (Foreign Affairs), Ms Nasim Firdaus had her education in the University of Dhaka with Master in Science in Home Economics.

After joining the service, she obtained Master's degree in International and Comparative Law from the Vrije University, Belgium and in Public Administration from the Harvard University, USA.

During her diplomatic career, Nasim Firdaus has served in various capacities in Bangladesh missions in Islamabad, Washington, DC, Geneva, Kolkata and Brussels.

She is married and has one son.

## Anwarul takes oath as PSC member

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Justice JR Mudassar Hossain yesterday administered the oath of Anwarul Hoque as a member of Public Service Commission (PSC) at a simple ceremony.

Anwarul Hoque, a contract basis Chairman of Barisal Education Board, was appointed PSC member by President Iajuddin Ahmed recently.

ZN Tahmina Begum, chairman of PSC, members of PSC, and concerned secretaries were present on the occasion.



## Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parents are anxiously waiting beside a hospital bed in which their fifteen-year-old son Tasnim Rafi, a cadet, is lying unconscious for nearly one and a half months.

Rafi, a brilliant student and SSC examinee of Rangpur Cadet College, was diagnosed with acute demyelinated myelencephalitis (ADM) after he was admitted to Apollo Hospitals in Dhaka on January 25. According to doctors, it will take a long time for him to recover.

But the treatment is too expensive. He has been given a package injection worth Tk three lakh. And the hospital bills have already amounted to Tk eight lakh. Another huge amount of money is needed for his treatment.

Rafi's father Dr Abdul Latif Shah, chief scientific officer of BRRI, has appealed to the affluent section of society to extend a helping hand to save his son.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Abdul Latif Shah, SB Account No.-291, Sonali Bank, BRRI Branch, Gazipur.

### Gaziul Hasan gets extension

BSS, Dhaka

The government has extended the contract service of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Managing Director and Chief Editor Gaziul Hasan Khan for another year, an official notification said on Monday.

The extension was given in continuation of his earlier contract service in the same position that was effective from February 26, 2004.



Different socio-political and cultural organisations place wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday in observance of the Historic March 7.

## Tk 32 lakh money suit filed against BNP MP Mongu

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Union Parishad (UP) chairman from Barisal yesterday filed a money suit in a Dhaka court for realisation of Tk 32 lakh from BNP lawmaker Mosharraf Hossain Mongu, elected from Barisal-3 constituency.

The chairman, Mohammad Belal Hossain, filed the suit with the Second Joint District Judge's Court, Dhaka accusing the ruling party lawmaker of not paying back Tk 18 lakh he lent him four years ago.

After hearing, Judge Mohammad Abul Kashem issued a summons on Mongu asking him to appear before the court on April 9.

Earlier on January 17, Belal filed a cheating case in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka for embezzlement of Tk 18 lakh.

In his plaint, Belal mentioned that Mongu took Tk 18 lakh as loan from him for election and business purposes on different dates from July 13, 2001 to April 24, 2002.

On December 25 last year, Belal sent a letter to Mongu asking him to pay back the money. After receiving it, Mongu threatened him with life, the complainant said.

On January 3, Belal sent a general diary (GD) by post to Muladi Police Station and his lawyer sent a legal notice asking the lawmaker to pay the money back within seven days. After receiving it, Mongu threatened to kill him again, alleged Belal.

The total amount of the loan with interest now stands at Tk 32,08,320 that was not paid by the defendant, Belal said claiming the money from the lawmaker.

Advocate Mohammad Ayub Hossain moved the suit on behalf of the plaintiff.

## Many victims

FROM PAGE 16

Tofazzal sustained serious injuries to his left leg while working just in front of the Phoenix building that collapsed on February 25.

The doctors at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) had no option but to cut off the injured leg.

"I learn my living by manual work. If I don't have my leg, how will I work? Who is going to feed my 70-year-old mother in the village?" Tofazzal asks.

Uncertainty of means of living rather than physical sufferings concerns many other injured construction workers languishing at DMCH.

Mohammad Ali, a mason, had his vein severed as brick pieces fell on his head and shoulder.

Ali's condition has improved, but his shoulder may never heal, and in that case Ali will never be able to get back his normal life, doctors said.

As a mason Ali earned reasonably well - Tk 250 per day. But the Phoenix building collapse has left him crippled, perhaps forever.

"Who will maintain my family? Will my children's study stop? I see darkness all around me," Ali's wife Joynobunnesa wondered sitting beside her husband.

Rickshawpuller Abdus Samad, 30, was passing along the doomed building on the fateful day of February 25. As the building collapsed, Samad fell under a heap of loosened bricks and got fractures in his backbone and legs.

"My son Samad used to feed me. He has his wife and two children too, who will look after them? My son dreamt of buying a rickshaw van. How will he drive it now?" said Samad's aged mother Amena Khatun.

Dr AKM Mohiuddin Pintu, an assistant registrar at DMCH, who is attending these ill-fated people, said they are now out of danger but most of them will never be able to work normally.

Escaping death, they now apprehend an uncertain future.

# Historic March 7 observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation yesterday observed the historic March 7, the day when Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman called upon the Bangladeshes to wage a decisive struggle against the Pakistani military junta setting the tone for the War of Liberation in a befitting manner.

On this day in 1971, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib delivered his historic speech in a mammoth public rally at Suhrawardy Udyan (then Race Course Maidan) where people in thousands thronged to hear from Bangabandhu with anger boiling inside at repression and injustices to the then East Pakistan.

In a thunderous voice, Bangabandhu declared 'Ebarer Sangram Amader Muktir Sangram, Ebarer Sangram Swadhinatar Sangram' (this struggle is for our freedom, this struggle is for our independence), inspiring the people from all walks of life to prepare for the war that the Pakistani regime inflicted upon the unarmed Bangladeshes committing one of the worst genocide in history.

Being inspired by his speech, the Bangladeshes joined the war and achieved the independence defeating the Pakistani occupation forces. Credited with one of the worst genocides in the human history, Pakistan army began the war 18 days later.

Meanwhile, different political, cultural and social organisations including main opposition Awami League (AL) took up elaborate programmes to observe the day. The programmes included placing wreaths at Bangabandhu Memorial building, offering fataha and holding discussions.

Leaders of the AL and its front organisations, Muktiyoddha Oikya Parishad, Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad, central command council and Amra Muktiyoddhar Sontan placed wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu in the morning.

They also set loud speakers at the districts and upazilas to play the 7th March speech of Bangabandhu.

As part of the day's programmes to observe the historic day, the AL organised a discussion at the audi-

torium of Institutions of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) focusing the importance of Bangabandhu's 7th March speech.

Addressing the seminar, the AL leaders said the country's liberty would not have been attained if Bangabandhu had not delivered the 7th March speech.

AL senior leader Zillur Rahman, who presided over the discussion, said to uphold the dignity of the 7th March historic speech, they have to be united to liberate the people from this corrupt and terrorist government.

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil said Bangabandhu declared the liberation through the historic 7th March Speech, but its formal proclamation was done on March 26. If the speech is analysed it would be exposed that it had all directives for waging the Liberation War.

Termining the recent arrest of the country's most wanted terror Bangla Bhai a drama, he said the BNP-Jamaat government followed a new policy for Bangla Bhai.

Jalil said the government itself has to take all the responsibilities for the bloodshed during the last two years and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has to compensate for this, as she rejected the demands of the opposition to nab militants.

The government rather always blamed them for tarnishing the image of the country, HE added.

Dhaka University teacher Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique presented a keynote on the importance of historic 7 March speech.

Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon, AL leader Syeda Johra Jajuddin, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Tofael Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Motia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim, Dr AK Azad Chowdhury, Dr Borhan Uddin Khan Jahangir, JSD President Hassan Haque Inu, and Mozafzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya also spoke.

## Owners, builders evade arrest

FROM PAGE 16

Director of the proposed Phoenix Cancer Hospital Dr Jahangir Alam, Executive Director MA Hasan, Engineer Delwar Hossain, Manager Serajul Islam, and Finance Manager Sheikh Rejaul Karim Farouk. The finance manager was arrested from the site of the ill-fated building on the day of the collapse.

Within a week after filing, the case was transferred to DB for investigation. But so far the other accused have successfully eluded the police.

In both the collapse cases, Rajuk took little time in revealing that the structures were either completely or partially illegal, which means that the owners did not comply with the construction law during or prior to construction. The authorities immediately reacted with filing of cases, accusing the owners of the buildings of 'negligent homicide'.

In the case of Spectrum building just after its collapse the then Officer-in-charge of Savar Police Station Nazrul Islam filed a case against the owner of the building and Managing Director of Shahrir Group Mohammad Shahriar, and Director of the company Mohammad Hashem Fakir. Fifteen days after the case was filed, both the accused surrendered to the court and another twenty days later they were released on bail.

Later the case was handed over to DB, which mysteriously, till today has failed to submit any charge sheet. According to court sources, the dates for hearing the case have been deferred several times over the last ten months on the ground that DB is yet to submit its report.

Meanwhile, after the collapse of the Tejgaon Phoenix building investigators in Rajuk were trying to trace the engineers and architects who were overlooking the extensive modification works in the building just before it caved in. According to a source in Rajuk, the real culprits behind the collapse are the professionals who were entrusted with ensuring the safety of the building during the modification.

"The structural engineer-in-charge of the modification demolished two columns of the building, making the structure instantly vulnerable," said a member of the joint inquiry team formed by Rajuk, and the Ministry of Housing and Public Works.

"Unless we can mete out exemplary punishment to all responsible for the collapse, more buildings are sure to collapse soon," he said.

## Criminal killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

A notorious criminal was killed in a "shootout" between his accomplices and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Kaliganj upazila of Jhenidah yesterday.

The deceased, Abbas Uddin, 30, was the son of Babar Ali of Foyla in Kaliganj upazila.

Sources said a Rab team arrested Abbas at his house on last Friday. Following leads extracted during interrogation Rab members took Abbas to the village Chapali around 3:00am yesterday to recover hidden weapons, Rab claimed.

As the team reached a field near the village Abbas's accomplices opened fire on them forcing Rab to retaliate, Rab officials said.

As he attempted to flee from the Rab van Abbas was caught in the "crossfire" of the two battling parties, he died on the spot, they added.

Rab retrieved a double-barrel gun and three bullets from the spot of the hour-long firefight. Abbas was accused in six criminal cases including two murder cases, Rab official said.

## Journos continue protest at JU

JU CORRESPONDENT

The journalists of Jahangirnagar University (JU) staged a token sit-in in front of the administrative building yesterday demanding punishment to the criminals who made attempt on life of the Prothom Alo correspondent.

The sit-in organised by Jahangirnagar University Journalists Association (JUJA) began at noon for 15 minutes.

Later, they broke pen at the office of vice chancellor in protest against the incident.

## Robbery in city house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed robbers looted cash and gold ornaments worth Tk 7.9 lakh from a house at Indira Road in the city on Monday night.

Sources said the gang numbering eight pressed the doorbell of the house at 8:45pm. As the inmates opened the door, the robbers entered the house.

Confining all family members to a room at gunpoint, the robbers took away keys of almirahs and looted Tk 3 lakh in cash and 40 tolas of gold ornaments.

Halima Khatun, owner of the house, filed a case with Tejgaon Police Station in this connection yesterday.

Police could neither arrest anyone in this connection, nor recovered the booty until last evening.

## Swedish envoy meets Bhuiyan

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Newly appointed Swedish Ambassador in Bangladesh Britt F Hagstrom called on LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at his secretariat yesterday.

They discussed bilateral issues such as urban healthcare programme, rural infrastructure development programme and strengthening the local government system.

## Second Test

FROM PAGE 16

after it had staged the first two ODIs last month and the return of home boy Mushfiqur Rahim in action.

The game will start at 9:30am with STARSports and Bangladesh Television beaming live coverage.

Sri Lanka are leading the two-match series 1-0 after winning the first match by eight wickets at Chittagong but there were some positive outcomes for the Tigers including a century by Mohammad Ashraful which will inspire them to do better than the previous games.

Bangladesh made one change from the last Test with young Rahim coming in for Alok Kapali, who made 16 and 9 respectively at Chittagong, in the 12-man squad.

The 17-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman would play only his second Test after making a dream debut at Lord's in May 2005. Rahim, who has already proved himself as a cool customer during his assignment as captain of the Bangladesh Under-19 team, was included as a specialist batsman and is likely to bat at number six.

The only worry for the hosts was Enamul Haque, the left-arm spinner who left the ground yesterday in the middle of the training session due to light fever. The team management informed last night that Enamul, hero of Bangladesh's lone Test series victory against Zimbabwe, was still fit to play.

The think-tank was yet to announce the 12th man but it looks certain that middle-order batsman Rajin Saleh will do the job again.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature.

Highest temperature 34.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 16.5 degree Celsius at Dinajpur.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:05pm today and rises at 6:14am tomorrow.**

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.1	23.5	70	55
Chittagong	31.8	21.5	81	73
Rajshahi	34.6	19.5	77	61
Khulna	33.5	21.7	83	56
Barisal	33.0	21.5	100	77
Sylhet	33.0	21.0	73	54
Cox's Bazar	32.2	21.8	76	64