

LAND RIGHTS OF MARGINALISED

Political commitment a must to establish it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political commitment is a must to establish land rights of women, landless, indigenous and marginalised people, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They called for a social movement integrating people from all strata of life to ensure their land rights.

The seminar titled 'Political commitment and necessity of its implementation to ensure land rights of landless, women, indigenous and marginalised people' was organised by National Observance Parishad of Land Rights Day 2006 at LGED auditorium in the city. The day will be observed tomorrow.

The speakers said right to information is also important in ensuring land rights as most of the people have little knowledge in this regard.

They said the government will have to integrate all people includ-

ing the landless and marginalised into the whole process of land reforms.

Speaking as chief guest Prof Dr Sirajul Islam Chowdhury said the problem is political and it will have to be resolved politically.

He said a new elite class has emerged in the society and they are evicting indigenous people from their lands in the name of development.

Eminent economist Dr Atiur Rahman said lack of good governance, corruption and politicisation have crippled all sectors specially the administration forcing people to take to the streets.

He urged all to be united to launch a movement to ensure their rights.

Secretary of Bangladesh Adibashi Forum Sanjib Drong said land is life for the indigenous people.

"Land is like our mother and our

culture, history, knowledge, songs will be damaged if the ruling elite evicts us from our lands," he added.

Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, executive editor of the daily Sangbad, said right to information is a must to ensure the rights of the landless people.

Political will and farsightedness is also necessary in this regard, he added.

In a keynote paper Prof Dr Abul Barakat of Dhaka University portrayed all sorts of land problems and suggested some recommendations to solve them.

Ain-O-Salish Kendra Executive Director Advocate Sultana Kamal, former secretary M Mokammel Haque, Air Vice-marshal (retd) AK Khandaker, Khushi Kabir, Parishad Convenor Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of PPRC Samsul Huda and executive director of ALRD Abdul Kader also spoke.

Nat'l convention of women with disability today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first ever National Disabled Women's Convention will be held in the city today with a view to finding out ways to improve economic, social and political condition for women with disabilities.

Over 2,500 women and representatives of civil society, national and international organisations and rights activists will take part in the daylong convention at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city, with Communications Minister Nazmul Huda as the chief guest.

Organised by the Action on Disability and Development (ADD) and Jatiya Protibondhi Nari Parishad, the convention will focus on various issues such as participation of physically challenged people in the parliamentary elections, reforms of the 2004 national policy on women and participation of women with disability in decision-making process.

The National Disabled Women's Council will also be launched at the convention.

Nearly ten percent of the total population in the country are physically challenged. Among them, around 45 lakh are women who are most vulnerable and often fell victim to violence, the organisers said at a press conference yesterday.

The women with disability are the most marginalised as the discrimination they experience is compounded by negative attitudes to disability and gender, said Isaac Kute, chief executive of FADD.

"Women have a crucial role to play within the disability movement and within their community in this regard. The work of National Disabled Women's Council (NDWC) will help achieve great success in the struggle to achieve the rights of disabled women," he added.

Mosharrar Hossain, ADD country representative, Firoza Akhter Shima of Bikash Protibondhi Nari Shangathan and Habib of Jatiya Trinamul Protibondhi Shangstha also spoke.



Padmashri Madhavi Mudgal, right, and Arushi Mudgal perform Odissi dance at a function at Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the city yesterday. Shadhona, a centre for the advancement of South Asian music and dance, organised the event.

14 CHILDREN OF EX-DIG Court orders DNA test, formation of medical board

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued an order to form a medical board before conducting the DNA test to verify a former DIG's claim of being the father of 14 children.

The Metropolitan Magistrate's Court also ordered that arrangements be made to allow Alena Khan, executive director of BSEHR, to be present during the test.

On Wednesday, the court ordered the Badda police to make arrangements to conduct the DNA test of former DIG Anisur Rahman, his wife and 14 children, including the septuplets.

The court order to conduct the test came after the newly appointed investigation officer (IO) Anisur Rahman appealed to the court in this regard.

The police then approached the DNA laboratory at forensic medicine department of Dhaka Medical College to conduct the test.

On June 2, former IO of the case Sub-inspector Mozammel Huq Mamun appealed to the court to probe the matter in response to a GD filed by Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR).

Alena Khan told The Daily Star yesterday that despite all the legal proceedings and arrangements for the test, some quarters are trying to conduct it in her absence, raising suspicion among people.

Anowara Rahman, wife of the former DIG, told The Daily Star over phone that they know nothing about the court order and the DNA test as nobody informed them as of 8:30pm yesterday.

When contacted, the OC of Badda Police Station said the DNA test is likely to be conducted tomorrow and there is no chance of manipulating the test.

BNP MP's son confines sub-registrar to office for extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Son of a ruling party lawmaker confined a sub-registrar (SR) to his office in Bajitpur upazila in the district on Tuesday for toll.

"Though I was confined to my office for two hours, I could not file any case with Bajitpur Police Station in fear of BNP lawmaker Mujibur Rahman Manju," said Abdul Motalib.

He, however, informed the District Registrar of the incident. Sumon, son of the lawmaker, along with his gang demanded Tk 1000 in toll from Motalib who refused to pay, sources said.

At one point, Sumon confined the SR to his office from where he was rescued by deed writers.

DU examinations scheduled for June 11 postponed

UNB, Dhaka, June

All the course system examinations of Dhaka University (DU) scheduled for June 11 has been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances.

Fresh date of the postponed examinations will be announced soon, said a DU press release yesterday.



A high level Chinese banking delegation led by Dr Jiao Jinpu called on Professor Muhammad Yunus, founder and managing director of Grameen Bank, at his office in the city on Wednesday and discussed ways to introduce micro-credit programme in their country. The photo shows Dr Jiao Jinpu presenting a copy of biographical book on the Grameen Bank founder, translated into Chinese recently, to Prof Yunus.

I will never return to BNP: B Chy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said he and his party men will never return to the BNP as the present BNP has deviated from its founder Ziaur Rahman's ideology to a great extent.

"No, never. I will not go back to BNP as the present BNP is not the BNP of Ziaur Rahman. Now terrorist and corrupt people are leading the BNP here honest, patriotic and competent leaders have no place," he said.

"BNP is spreading propaganda that I will join the BNP again, as honest and patriotic leaders have started to express their discontent and threaten to resign from the party," Badruddoza said.

The former president was speaking at a discussion organised by Bikalpa Chhatra Dhara, student wing of BDB, at the party's Maghbar office in the city to form the model committee of Chhatra Dhara.

Badruddoza said the present BNP has now a few honest leaders who have no control over the party.

He called on all honest and patriotic leaders of BNP and other political parties to join the BDB in order to save the nation from the

clutches of BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

The nation now needs honest, patriotic and competent leaders to save the country from corruption, terrorism, poverty and sick politics, he added.

BDB is different from all traditional political parties as it always encourages progressive politics where dishonest and corrupt people have no place, Badruddoza said. He said Bikalpa Chhatra Dhara will have no thana and district-based committees, it will have only campus-based committees to allow only students to become its members.

He also called for regular election to student unions of different educational institutions.

BDB Secretary General Major (retd.) Abdul Mannan blamed the alliance government for the attack on journalists in Chittagong and Kushtia.

He also urged the countrymen to unite against the mistle of the BNP-led four-party alliance government.

Presided over by Bikalpa Chhatra Dhara Convenor Monwar Ali Rushu, the discussion was also addressed by BDB leaders Dr Nurul Amin Bepari, ATM Kamal, Dr Abu Mozaffar Ahmed and Major (retd.) MA Halim.

JP national council on June 10

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The national council of Jatiya Party (JP) will be held at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh auditorium in the city at 10:00am on June 10 with a view to strengthen democracy, ensure human rights, achieve economic emancipation and pursue political reforms, says a press release.

Anwar Hossain Manju, JP will preside over the council.

Five get Meena Media Award 2006

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three journalists and two school students received Meena Media Award 2006 at a function in the city yesterday.

The recipients are Rafiqul Islam Montu, staff reporter of daily Sangbad for his story on the hazardous life of child workers at Dublar Char, Zantu Chakma, video editor of Channel-S, for his film on the lives of children in Chittagong Hill Tracts and Shahiduzzaman Badal of Dhaka Photographic Institute for his film on gypsy children.

Two other recipients are Runki Sutradhar Jhumur, 15, of Vigarunnesa Noon School and College for her essay on enthusiasm that grips Bangladesh on the occasion of Bengali New Year and Sammer Moyeen, 17, of International School Dhaka for his video production on the deplorable condition that the child workers face in the country.

The award, introduced by Unicef in 2005, is aimed at promoting excellence in media reports and programmes about children.

This year the Meena Media Award was given in five categories of print and electronic media at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts. Unicef Representative in Bangladesh Louis-Georges Arsenault gave away Meena crest, certificate and a cheque for Tk 50,000 to each winner.

Addressing the function Arsenault said the award pays tribute to children and adults who have written stories and made films highlighting the lives of children.

Emphasising the role of media in safeguarding the rights of children, he said the media has a responsibility to accurately portray the rights of the children as well as highlight the occasions when those rights are not upheld.

Eminent writer Selina Hossain and Unicef Communication Officer Shamsuddin Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

GARMENT INDUSTRY

Proactive and productive role of trade unions underscored

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday stressed the need for proactive and productive role of trade unions to boost the growth of garment industry.

Garment workers should also press for the implementation of recent tripartite agreements with the government and factory owners in regard to their rights, they said.

The government and the civil society became aware of the condition of the workers following their movement over the last few weeks, they said at the roundtable organised by Bangladesh National

Council of Textile Garments and Leather Workers at the National Press Club in the city.

Over the years, the government as well as the garment owners have remained indifferent to the exploitation of workers in this sector, said Vice-President of the Council Shajahan Khan MP.

"But the spontaneous movement of the workers forced them to review their attitude toward the workers in the industry," he added.

If two square meals a day are not ensured in exchange of daylong labour, why the workers would bear the responsibility of ensuring security of the factories, he asked.

Dr Wajedul Islam Khan, general secretary of Samik Karmachari Oikya Parishad, said workers naturally want to avoid destructive movement in their workplaces for the sake of their livelihood.

He also said the real problem cannot be solved by propagating conspiracy theory.

Council President Mamunur Rashid Chowdhury, General Secretary Roy Romesh Chandra, General Secretary of Jatiya Samik Karmachari Federation Shafiqul Ahmed, General Secretary of Jatiya Karmachari Jote Kader Hawlader, Kamrul Anam, Badruddoza Nizam and Dilruba Chowdhury also spoke.



Dhaka City BNP, left, takes out a procession yesterday hailing the proposed budget for 2006-07 while City Awami League, right, stages a demonstration against the budget, terming it 'anti-people'.

DHAKA TODAY Seminar, Discussion, Programme, Hajj discussion, AGM

No electricity at Paikgachha during World Cup

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

There will be no electricity at Paikgachha upazila during the World Cup Tournament to utter disappointment of football lovers.

In a press release on Wednesday, General Manager of Khulna Palli Bidyut Samity Ashim Kumar Das requested upazila people to make an alternative arrangement to see the games.

He also advised the people to arrange generators for getting electricity.

The GM said some 60000 consumers in six upazilas of the district are now being supplied with one-sixth of their actual requirements.

So it might not be possible for the samity to ensure uninterrupted supply of electricity particularly at Paikgachha upazila, he added.

"I have spoken the truth sensing this problem in advance so that people can make an alternative arrangement to view World Cup," Ashim said.

Meanwhile, security forces have been deployed at Paikgachha Palli Bidyut Samity office to avoid any untoward incident.

Acting president authenticates budgets

UNB, Dhaka

Acting President Barrister Muhammad Jamiruddin Sircar yesterday authenticated the supplementary budget 2005-2006 and the proposed new budget for 2006-2007 fiscal year for placing in the Jatiya Sangsad.

The approval was given at the President's office at the Sangsad Bhaban "immediately after the cabinet approved the same," an official announcement said.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman later placed the new national budget and the supplementary budget in parliament.

Cabinet okays proposed budget

BSS, Dhaka

The cabinet yesterday approved the proposed budget for 2006-2007 and revised budget for 2005-2006 at a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in the city.

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman placed the budget for the cabinet nod ahead of presenting it at the Jatiya Sangsad.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia chaired the meeting.

Boishakhi director Bulu's bail rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected the bail petition of MNH Bulu, a director of private satellite television Boishakhi, in connection with an attempted murder case.

After hearing both the sides, Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza issued the order, though the defence lawyers appealed to the court to grant him bail on humanitarian ground as their client is sick.

Bulu fell sick on Tuesday when he was standing in the dock in a Dhaka court during hearing on his remand prayer in the same case. Family members alleged that he fell sick due to torture during remand period.

After his treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMU) he was shifted to the Dhaka Central Jail on Wednesday.

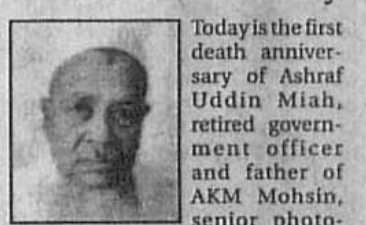
Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Motijheel Police Station Abdul Motalab was suspended on Wednesday apparently for torturing Bulu while on remand.

Obituary



his residence at the Nam flat at Mirpur in the city yesterday at the age of 54, says a press release. He left behind his wife, two sons and one daughter to mourn his death.

Death anniversary

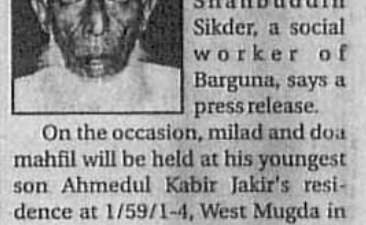


Today is the first death anniversary of Ashraf Uddin Miah, retired government officer and father of AKM Mohsin, senior photojournalist of the Daily Star, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his village home Kalma at Louhajang in Munshiganj after Juma prayers today.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the doa mahfil.

Shahbuddin Sikder



Today is the 18th death anniversary of Shahbuddin Sikder, a social worker of Barguna, says a press release.

On the occasion, milad and doa mahfil will be held at his youngest son Ahmedul Kabir Jakir's residence at 1/59/1-4, West Muga in the city after Juma prayers today.