

Proper education, delayed marriage can ensure women's empowerment

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Proper education and delayed marriage of adolescent girls can ensure the empowerment of women, speakers at a seminar said yesterday.

Early marriage, which is still common in rural areas, increases the risk of mortality among both the infants and women, adversely affecting the overall development of the country, they pointed out.

The Centre for Mass Education in Science (CMES), a voluntary organisation, in association with Manusher Jonno Foundation organised the daylong seminar on 'The role of adolescents and local support groups for the empowerment of adolescent girls' at the Russian Cultural Centre in the city.

Dr Yasmin Siddiqua, senior manager, client service, ACNeilsen Bangladesh Ltd, said early marriage for girls increases the risks of health problems and deprives the country of economic development.

On the other hand, delayed marriage might play an important

role in population control, she added.

Dr Yasmin called for incorporating life skills course for girls into the national curriculum and raising awareness both at family and community levels to mainstream rural women.

Hosneara Khondker, programme officer of Inter-Cooperation, suggested ensuring coordination among the NGOs, voluntary and private organisations to empower the adolescent girls.

Talking to reporters, Dr Muhammad Ibrahim, executive director of CMES, said the seminar is aimed at informing the support groups of the role and problems of adolescent girls in rural areas.

The girls from rural areas got an opportunity to have their say and the supporting section of the society became aware of the real condition of rural girls, he said.

Dr Ibrahim chaired the second session of the seminar on 'Economic self-reliance for adolescents and young women in rural areas.'

The first session on 'Advocacy

for the empowerment of adolescent girls and young women in rural area' was presided over by Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation.

Dr Ahmadullah Miah, director, research, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, presided over the third session on 'Advanced adolescents and change makers in social leadership'.

Adolescent girls and youths from Chittagong, Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Tangail and Barguna took part in the seminar.

An exhibition of mushroom products, honey, candle, soap, garments, compost, earthen products and folding tools produced by adolescent boys and girls was also held.

"CMES attempts to empower the adolescents and youths by providing education and imparting income generation skills under its basic and advanced school programmes," Ateshin, CMES senior programme organiser, told The Daily Star.



Children draw pictures at an art competition organised by the environment directorate at Shishu Academy in the city yesterday to mark the International Ozone Day.

Drafts of Sylhet, Barisal Metropolitan Police Acts approved

UNB, Dhaka

The Cabinet yesterday approved the drafts of Sylhet and Barisal Metropolitan Police Acts 2006 to ensure public safety and law and order.

The approval was given at a weekly meeting of the cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

The cabinet also approved the draft of the Special Facility Act 2006 for the correction and rehabilitation of the convicted women imprisoned in different jails.

Besides, a proposal for amendment to the National Sports Council Act 1974 to rename the Board of Control for Cricket in Bangladesh as Bangladesh Cricket Board to bring conformity in its name and objectives.

Cabinet members and state ministers concerned attended the meeting. The cabinet secretary and secretaries of the ministries concerned were also present.



Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury speaks at a press conference organised by National Unity Front in the city yesterday.

2 top leaders should sit together to resolve crisis

Says Badruddoza

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Unity Front leader Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said the two top leaders of the ruling party and the opposition should sit together to resolve the crisis over electoral reforms.

The crisis came to a head when the government has extended the age limit of justices, he said at a press conference in the city.

The Front leaders also accused Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of failing to curb corruption and terrorism and pushing the country towards anarchy.

The prime minister has violated her oath of office and failed to fulfil her commitment to the nation, they said.

"The prime minister is responsible for all the failures of her government and for this, she will have to give answer to the people," said AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, also president of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB).

Rejecting the PM's recent statement that 'if the opposition does not take part in the upcoming election, then others will join the fray', Badruddoza said, "Will the election

be acceptable to the people without the participation of the opposition?"

Jaiya Oikya Mancha leader Abdur Rouf read out a written statement at the press conference.

BDB Secretary General Major (retd.) Abdul Manna and Joint Secretary General Firoz M Hasan were also present.

Joy visits injured AL activists

UNB, Dhaka

Sajib Wazed Joy, son of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, yesterday visited the party leaders and activists undergoing treatment in Pan Pacific Hospital in the city.

Seven of those injured in sporadic clashes with police during the opposition siege programme of the Election Commission on Wednesday were admitted to the Pan Pacific Hospital.

Some party activists accompanied Joy to the hospital.

Strike observed at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

A student strike called by opposition student alliance Chhatra Sangram Parishad was observed peacefully at Dhaka University (DU) yesterday.

Very few students entered the campus on the day as no academic activities were held.

The Sangram Parishad led by main opposition Awami League's student front Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and seven other opposition student bodies called the strike protesting an appointment of a teacher at the Department of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology recently.

The student alliance consists of the BCL, Chhatra League (JSD), Jatiya Chhatra Dhara, Chhatra Oikya, Chhatra Moitri, Chhatra Kendra and Chhatra Samity.

They took out a procession and held a rally on the DU campus in support of the strike.

Meanwhile, ruling BNP's student front Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) also took out a procession and held a rally protesting the strike at educational institutions.

The alliance leaders on September 4 met Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz and requested him not to finalise the appointment of Shahnoor Hossain, who was involved in what they said illegal activities.

However, the university syndicate finalised the appointment on September 5 saying that there was no anomalies in appointment of Shahnoor.

Teachers, staffs threaten tougher agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Front for Teachers and Employees (NFTE) yesterday announced its fresh agitation programmes demanding immediate realisation of their eight-point charter of demands including unconditional salary hike.

If a government circular on the promised salary and house rent hike were not issued by September 14, NFTE would announce tougher programmes from its Bogra rally on September 16.

The NFTE will also demonstrate in Barisal on September 13 and hold a grand rally at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city on September 20.

Price Hike Countrywide protest on Sept 17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonomukti Andolon and five left parties yesterday announced a nationwide protest rally on September 17 after a joint meeting at the office of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) in the city.

The rally was announced demanding immediate stop of price hike, punitive measures against the government-led syndicates, implementation of the tripartite agreement for garment workers, realisation of the arrear salary in jute mills, proper investigation of police atrocity on mill workers and bringing the culprits to book, expulsion of Asia Energy from the country and application of six-point charter of demands in this connection and adopting a suitable energy policy.

Co-ordinator of Jatiyo Gonofront Tipu Biswas presided over the meeting where the leaders expressed solidarity with the workers in movement to save Khalishpur, Chittagong and Sirajganj industrial areas.