

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN '80pc incidents take place within family'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eighty percent of incidents of violence against women take place within the family, and the media is mostly responsible for aggravating the situation, speakers at a workshop observed yesterday.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) organised the workshop in the city with a view to creating a platform for journalists to raise awareness about the social menace.

"We are growing up in a culture of violence where women are the targets of violent abuse and the media through advertisements, movies and dramas often encourages such behaviour," said Prof Dr Geeti Ara Nasreen of Mass Communication and Journalism Department, Dhaka University.

In her speech, which was followed by a lively view exchange session, she cited examples from different films, dramas and advertisements where physical and verbal assault of women are being shown as norms.

Giving an example, she said that in an advertisement a young boy is seen braving all odds to reach a dancing girl. Portrayal of such acts might sow the seeds of violence in the minds of youths, she added.

Rabeya Raushan, a freelance consultant, regretted that the dailies are not properly highlighting the incidents of violence against women.

She said that even the family members are forcing girls aged as young as eight into prostitution in Rajshahi where hotel-based sex trade is rampant.

Prof Nusrat Amin of law department, Dhaka University, discussed the legal aspects of the draft law on domestic violence and its urgency in society.

She also called for updating the laws and plugging the loopholes to curb domestic violence.

People cannot be made sensitised to this problem unless the state recognises the issue by adopting a specific law in this regard, she observed.

Journalists along with judges, lawyers and civil society members should also play an active role in the remote areas of the country in sensitising the people, said Salma Ali, executive director of BNWLA.

Farida Yasmin, editor, women's page, the daily Ittefaq, Advocate Rehana Sultana, Advocate Fawzia Karim Firoze and Sadrul Hasan Mazumdar also spoke.



President and Chief Adviser to the Caretaker Government Iajuddin Ahmed addresses senior officers of the Armed Forces at Senakunja in the city yesterday.

Bus owner shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bus owner was shot dead by a gang of unidentified criminals at Jatrabari in the city yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Liakat Ali Khokan, 35, treasurer of Dhaka-Daudkandi Bus Owner's Association and general secretary of Daudkandi Thana Jubo Dal.

Witnesses said three assailants shot Liakat as he was coming out of his residence at Dakkhin Kajla in Nayanagar at about 9.30am, leaving him critically injured.

Liakat's brother-in-law rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at 10.30am where the attending doctors declared him dead.

Liakat was shot in his head, abdo-

men and hands, hospital sources said. Md Ripon, Liakat's brother in law, said Liakat came out of his house after receiving an anonymous call.

Anwar Hossain, a local extortionist, has been threatening Liakat for the last few months demanding extortion and issued a 15-day ultimatum to meet the demand, Ripon said. Liakat was scared due to his threat, he added.

Victim's younger brother Humayun Kabir said he might have been killed over an internal feud of transport owners.

Liakat's wife Mansura Akhter filed a murder case with Jatrabari Police Station in this regard.

Expats demand reforms in EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh International Expatriate Welfare Association yesterday demanded that the caretaker government (CG) reform the Election Commission (EC) as well as update the voter list to hold a free and fair election.

The speakers at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) also urged the caretaker government to create an atmosphere so that the expatriates could cast their votes in the next election.

They said around 60 lakh expatriate Bangladeshis can be voters within a very short time with the help of Bangladesh missions abroad through EC and can cast their votes in mis-

sions, consulates or different places selected by the missions.

The speakers also urged the CG to resolve the issue of exporting manpower to Malaysia through Bangladesh Overseas and Services Limited (BOESL) with guaranty as there is a potential job market there for Bangladeshis. Work permits of hundreds of labourers were cancelled in Malaysia due to faulty strategy of the immediate past government and conspiracy by a section of manpower agents, they added.

They also called upon the government to provide loan with five per cent interest to those who have got permission to go abroad so that they do not have to sell their land and property.

They urged the government not to take more than Tk 50,000 from or those who intended to go to Malaysia.

They demanded cancellation of licences of those recruiting agencies, which realise a lot of money from the people in the name of sending them abroad or sending people abroad through false documents.

They said if people go abroad through BOESL they will get compensation in case of deception or repression in the recipient country.

Association President Dr Mohammad Abdur Rahman, Secretary General Syed Nasir Uddin and Vice President Mohammad Shah Alam spoke at the press conference.



German Ambassador Frank Meyke calls on BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Hawa Bhaban office in the city yesterday, left, and US Ambassador Patricia A Butenis holds a meeting with Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at her Shudha Sadan residence in the city yesterday, right.