Women's rights activists seek state power

By Staff Correspondent

The crisis faced by the country's womenfolk will not be solved until women's rights activists come to state power. This was expressed by women's rights activists at a

convention on 'Women and Politics' Saturday We boastfully say that the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader in Parliament are women but that has no effect on the welfare of the women as the leaders are not very interested about it," two speakers at the convention said at the Na-

tional Museum auditorium. Another speaker said that women's participation in Bangladesh politics was very poor but that ironically women were leading its two major political parties.

"One had inherited her husband's charisma while the other her father's political fame," he added.

When a politician either a man or a women comes to power, his or her attitude changes radically and he or she does not do any good for the womenfolk, speakers said adding that campaigners for women's rights should reach the controlling positions in state power to change the fate of women.

The 3-day convention is organised by a research and study group, Women for Women' to mark its annual conference.

Four papers were read out at three sessions in the day while at least 20 speakers took part in the deliberations. The papers discussed the states of women in Bangladesh, their position in politics and the problems and prospects of women rights establishments.

Dr Emajuddin Ahmed and Dr Talukder Moniruzzaman of the Dhaka University Political Science department and Dr Rehman Sobhan, former adviser to the Acting President chaired the three sessions.

The papers were presented by Syeda Roushan Kadir, Director, Planning and Research, National Institute of Local Government, Dr Najma Chowdhury, Professor of DU Political Science department and President of Women for Women, Rashed Khan Menon MP, General Sccretary of the Workers Party and Meghna Guhathakurata, Asstt, Professor of the International Relations department, DU.

The principal speakers on the parers were Dr. Attur Rahman, Senior Research Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Dr Shamsul Islam Khan, Asstt Prof of the IR Department, DU, Dr Ahmed Kamal, Asstt Prof Department of History, DU and Ayesha Khanam, GS Bangladesh Mahila Parisad.

Chief Whip of Parliament Delwar Hossain, Begum Selina Rahman MP, Begum Farida Rahman MP, Matiya Chowdhury MP. Begum Ahsanullah MP took part in a round-table discussion on the occasion.

Politician Hazera Khatun, Dr. Shasana Hossain of Raishahi University History department Women's rights campaigner Rakhi Das Purakayasta, Dilara Ahmed Dilu, Kazi Sufia Akhter Aynunnahar, and Dr Khurshid Begum of Rajshahi University Hamida Banu of Chittagong University and researcher Rahim Khan also discussed on the topic "women and poli-

Dr Rehman Sobhan said that before ensuring the position of women in politics we had to first evolve a way to bring them into politics. He suggested a 400- seat

AJM clash From Page 1 Col 3

group took shelter at Moonlight Cinema Hall while the other group took refuge at Sonamia Market at around 3

A gunbattle started at around 6 am between the two groups and they exchanged several hundred rounds of gunshots which continued for

During the clashes, a shopkeeper, Dulal, was killed and his body was recovered from a ditch Saturday afternoon. He was reportedly an activist of

the Rehan group. According to police, one

Sukkur Alt sustained bullet in juries while the others could not be identified immediately

An uneasy calm prevailed throughout the day and people in the adjoining areas were

scared of fresh violence. Two separate cases were registered by the two groups

with the Siddhirgani Police

parliament in which 100 seats would be reserved for women who would be directly elected by people's vote. Those women would be independent candi-

The country's women would have two votes - one for electing 300 general candidates and another for electing a fe-

In Nepal, he said it was mandatory for political parties to nominate five per cent female candidates in any general election. Women's rights and power could be ensured in this way, he added.

Dr Emajuddin Ahmed said that there was a "structural constraint" in the politics of our country as only 12 per cent people, many of them belong to the elite class, had been dominating politics.

He also said that 27 of the 178 United Nations members countries had not yet provided voting rights to their women.

Dr Moniruzzaman also identified "structural constraint" as the main barriers for the women in our country.

Attur Rahman said that women were systematically re-

Male chauvinism at stake!

By Staff Correspondent Bad days are coming for the

men folk of the country as women rights campaigners demanded to fix a day when a husband will do all the household works normally done by his wife.

In the recently collapsed Soviet Union, March 8 is observed as the day to make the male head of family understand women's pangs involved in managing domestic chores, Hamida Banu, a women's rights activist, said Saturday.

She proposed to introduce the day in Bangladesh at a convention on Women and Politics being held at the auditorium of National Museum.

She also proposed that a wife should be given monthly remuneration in cash for her services to the family. Hamida Banu is attending

the three-day convention as

one of the 147 participants. The audience cheered her by banging files on the table for her two new proposals.

pressed since their childhood and remained cornered for

Farida Rahman said that sometimes women create problems for women interested in entering politics. The BNP had its own programme for the welfare of the women, she

Delwar Hossain said that the gap between men and women has started narrowing and that the situation would improve in future.

Matiya Chowdhury said that no religion barred women from taking part in politics but some 'religion traders' give sermons to people against women politics.

This group often changes its opinion on the issues and has extend unconditional support to a women leader. The commoners, however,

do not find anything wrong with women in politics, she Opposition Leader in Par

liament Sheikh Hasina will be the chief guest on the concluding session of the convention Sunday (today).

Rohingyas

From Page 1 Col 5

The refugees are coming despite Myanmar's promise to halt the exodus from Arakan under an agreement signed with Bangladesh last month.

In a bid to start the twicepostponed repatriation, Bangladesh and Myanmar officials are scheduled to meet again someday next week. The repatriation has not yet taken off because of procedural complexities and protests of the

Most refugees are unwilling to return home fearing persecution by Myanmar soldiers.

The refugees fleeing into Bangladesh accuse Myanmar military junta of massacres, rapes and conscription of

young men for forced labour. They insist that UNHCR should oversee their repatriation, a proposal Myanmar has

Editor: S. M. Ali Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Published by S. M. Ali on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Mottifheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at DHAKA.



Awami League president Sheikh Hasina in a jubilant mood at the biennial conference of Mahila Awami League in city yesterday. - Star photo

Hasina: terrorism

From Page 1 Col 7 ernment at large will have to take the responsibility of containing terrorism, nobody could be blamed for it, she said adding, had the government been sincere, the campus could be purged of terrorists within hours.

"Don't think our people are so foolish. They can't be bluffed. They understand well government's actual intention, Hasina said.

Criticising what she said partisan role of the government in dealing with the terrorists, Hasina said those who belonged to the ruling party were being released after arrest by police while the opposition leaders and workers being arrested on "false charges" and detained under the Special Powers Act.

Sheikh Hasina Saturday called upon women to present the nation with an honest and patriotic leadership to fight all wrongdoings and injustice.

"Woman is the race of mother...only they can bring up patriotic citizens as well as honest leadership for leading the country against all sociopolitical ills," she said.

liasina felt the urgency of women's education and proper utilisation of their merit in achieving self-reliance on the one hand and combatting all sorts of repression from their male counterparts.

No-Tobacco Day

From Page 1 Col 8

ADIIUNIK, an organisation for anti-smoking campaign. has chalked out a day-long programme which includes anti-smoking procession, ral lies, seminar, open discussion and distribution of posters and

pamphlets. To observe the no-tobacco day, Rotaract Club of Dhaka Buriganga (sponsored by Rotary Club of Dhaka Buriganga) will organise a rally today at 8-30 am from National Muscum

to Press Club. Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) and Health Education Bureau will organise jointly a discussion meeting at 11 am at Press Club Auditorium on this occasion.

Dhaka Ahsania Mission will organise a rally this morning at 9 am from 63 Central Road. The mission will also arrange a discussion meeting at its auditorium (House 8, Road 12, Dhanmondi) at 4-30 pm. Editorial on Page 4

Criticising the traditional outlook of the male in the male-dominated society, she said there had been conspiracy against women's education and

utilisation of their latent talent "You constitute half of the society. You will have to take responsibility and participate in national activities on an equal footing," she told the conference of her party's woman wing amidst cheers, adding "you must come out of the prison by foiling all conspiracies.

Mrs Ivy Rahman and Prof Khaleda Khanam were elected president and general secretary respectively of the Bangladesh Mahila Awami League at the biennial council meeting.

Mrs Mona Hossain was elected the treasurer in the 59-member executive committee of the Mahila Awami League. Besides, one member from each district will be coopted.

Chaired by Mahila Awami League president lvy Rahman, the inaugural session was also addressed by deputy leader of the opposition Abdus Samad Azad, party general secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, MP Dhaka city unit president Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Mahila League General Secretary Advocate Shahara Khatun and Nasibun Ahmed.

Downpour comes as a relief to city-dwellers The city experienced heavy

rains, accompanied by gust and squally wind yesterday, reports The city-dwellers welcomed the downpour that came

as a relief to them after a dry and sultry spell. The two-hour showers began at about 3.45 pm, the Met Office said. Forty- four mm

rainfall was recorded in the capital, the highest so far this The low-lying areas of the

city, including many avenues and streets, went under ankle to knee-deep water, causing inconvenience to the people. The Met Office said rain or

thundershowers, accompanied by temporary gusty to squally wind are likely to occur today at many places over Chittagong division and at one or two places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions.

From Page 1 Col 8

already completed a draft of a set of measure for such control. It will be circulated to all concerned ministries nex

These organisations will have to obtain licenses from the central bank for their functioning. The licenses will clearly indentify their fields of practice.

The draft, however, has not yet decided the ceiling of the amount of credits after crossing which the non-banking institutions would be brought under the control of the Bangladesh Bank.

However, it has been proposed that those organisations dealing with credits of over Taka one crore should be brought under the central bank's control. Some suggest the ceiling be extended to Taka five crore; according to Finance Ministry sources.

The law will also have provisions for punitive measures for those organisations that would indulge in malpractices. However, details were not available.

this month. The bank proposed the formation of com bank would delay the matter.

When contacted, the Chairman of the Association of Development Agencies Bangladesh (ADAB), Dr Khaja Shamsul Huda, said the new law would have a negative impact on NGO operations and development activities. He said the NGOs have large amount of loans to be realised from the rural poor and, therefore, should not be brought under the central bank's control.

From Page 1 Col 4 tors on duty declared him

In another road accident an unidentified pedestrian was run over by a private car near Azampur bus stand at around 3:30 pm yesterday. The victim died on the spot.

and took its driver Khalilur

Another pedestrian, Tajud din, 55, who was run over by a truck Friday night at Kadamtoli, succumbed to his injuries

BB may control

week for their comments

The Finance Ministry asked

the Bangladesh Bank to prepare the draft of the law early mittee on the draft but the Finance Ministry ultimately prepared the draft, feeling that it was urgent to do so and that the procedure of the central

Road mishaps

Dalia's autopsy report yet to reach police

By Staff Correspondent

Police are yet to unearth the mystery surrounding the death of noted drama artiste, Dalia Ferdous till Saturday.

Forensic Department of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) did not send the autopsy report till yesterday, Cantonment police said.

Meanwhile, the Investigating Officer of the unnatural death (UD) case of Dalia left for Chittagong to attend to another case Friday night and would return on Monday, Cantonment police said.

GDP growth

From Page 1 Col 4

and at a time when the developing countries were in need of capital inflow.

Referring to the reform measures introduced in different countries, the Vice-President said that the reforms of the present decade would raise the rate of economic growth in many countries. But he added 'official development assistance and commercial lending are likely to be con-

strained in coming days." The Vice-President further added that peace and order in the region would be sufficient in coming days to generate resources to use in social sectors like education and so on.

Underscoring the need for alleviating rural poverty. Thomson said that availability of credit was important in that direction.

Presenting the findings of the ADO, John M Dowling Jr Assistant Chief Economist of the Bank said that the industrial sector policy reforms introduced in Bangladesh provided for very lucrative incen tives for overseas investors and were expected to attract substantial amount of direct for eign investment.

The balance of payments was expected to improve during the next two years, workers' remittances would be higher and merchandise exports were expected to increase by 13 per cent during the next two financial years, he

Dowling, however, added that the debt service ratio would exceed 21 per cent in coming years, marginally higher than in 1991, as the increase in debt-service payments would outpace the increase in export earnings of Bangladesh. The ADO, referring to

prospects for growth in the country, says that unless the government makes a major effort to overcome the problems of education, health and so on. the possibilities of rapid and substantial improvements in human resource development that are crucial for achieving sustainable growth over the longer term will be very lim-

Former member of the Planning Commission Dr Shahadat Ullah, Professor Abdullah Faruk, S M Al-Hussainy, former chairman of the Public Service Commission, Subid Ali. President, Chamber of Industries, Dr Harun-ur-Rashid Secretary, Planning Division and Professor Muhammad Masum of Jahangirnagar University raised some questions about the lending operations of the Bank in Bangladesh.

In reply to a questioner the ADB officials said that Bangladesh had a rich experience in alleviating poverty. ADB is a newcomer in this field and would like to share the experiences of Bangladesh in this regard.

G H P B Van der Linden. chief of the Bangladesh Resident Office of the Bank and Truman Becker, Information Officer of the bank were also present during the briefing.

Incidentally, the Bank is celebrating the 25th year of its existence this year. Starting with 30 members back in 1966, the ADB today has 36 countries of the region as members. The members are represented by their governments while the Bank has a committee to formulate the policies. The present President of the Bank is Kimimasa Tarumizu of Japan, also the executive head. Of the total members . 28 are borrowing countries. There are 16 nonregional countries linked to the Bank that provide re-

sources. The Bank provides loan on a 6.5 per cent rate of lending, likely to change in coming

There was a time when South Korea was the biggest beneficiary of the services provided by the Bank. Today, the top four beneficiaries are indonesia, India, Pakistan and China. ADB sources told The Daily

Star that the Bank was speeding up its operation in Afghanistan, Mongolia, Vietnam and Cambodia and the rotating special topic of the ADO for 1993 would focus on transition from centrally planned economy to market economy.

The Midnight File

BCCI officer jailed

TAMPA, Fla, May 30: The most senior officer convicted thus far from the scandal-plagued Bank of Credit and Commerce International affair has been seritenced to three years and 10 months in prison. Nazir Chinoy, 59, former head of BCCI operations in French-speaking countries, had pleaded guilty in December to conspiracy and money-laundering charges that grew out of a federal undercover sting operation, reports AP.

Saudi embassy in Kabul ransacked again

KABUL, May 30: The Saudi Arabian embassy in Kabul was ransacked for the sixth time in the past four weeks, security officials said here today. The officials said the looters, whose identities were unknown, broke into the diplomatic mission late Friday night, chased away two guards and took blankets, mattresses and other inexpensive items not stolen in previous break-ins since April 28 when a Mujahideen government took power in Afghanistan, reports AFP.

Stranded Pakistanis demand repatriation by July next

The leader of stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh yesterday appealed to the two governments to work out modalities for their repatriation by next July when Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to visit Pakistan, reports UNB.

Nasim Khan told a press conference that Pakistan Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif had assured him in Islamabad last August of taking necessary steps to start the repatriation by the end of the current financial year.

"Nawaz Sharif committed the same to Begum Khaleda Zia at the OIC and the SAARC summits in Dakar and Colombo respectively," he added.

Begum Zia is likely to pay a state visit to Pakistan sometime in July.

Nasim, chief patron of the Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC), earnestly requested the Pakistani Prime Minister to start the repatriation process according to his assur-

Pakistanis stranded here

Agni fails in final stage

NEW DELHI, May 30: A surface-to-surface rocket, the showpiece of India's missile programme, failed in the final stage of a test flight that was earlier described as successful, news reports said Saturday, reports AP.

The medium range "Agni" missile was launched Friday from a military range in Chandipur in the eastern state of Orissa.

Agrı loan

From Page 1 Col 5 tural loans of up to Taka 5000 for the small farmers.

The donor agencies, includ ing the ADB, had earlier, according to newspaper reports. disapproved the government decision to waive the loans.

The main point of con tention, the Bank official said, was on how the government planned to compensate the banks - Krishi Bank and Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank for waiving the loans. The ADB would wait until this and other points were clarified by the government before releasing the loan, he added.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in a recent pre-budget meeting disclosed that waiving of agricultural loans of up to Taka 5000 would involve a total of about Taka 2,200 crore. He also admitted that due to differences over the waiver of the loans the ADB had withheld releasing funds.

The ADB is one of the largest donors in the agricultural credit sector. Both the banks involved in giving agricultural loans have stopped giving fresh loans due to

shortage of funds. Shantibahini

From Page 1 Col 4 indiscriminate fire killing three persons and injuring four others. They also fired on the

nearby police and BDR camps and in the face of counter fire they retreated. The dead were identified as Abdul Hoque (25), Panful Bibi (40) and Monwara Begum (30)

while the injured were Sona Meah (2), Moinul Meah (4). Salam Meah (25) and Jahírunessa (25). In a similar attack at Borajula para under Kaokali upazila of Rangamati district the tribal insurgents killed one

Mohsin (30) and injured his

wife spraying bullets on them

after setting fire to some

dwelling houses, official reports said. During the attack the insurgents also fired on the nearby camp of the security forces

Following the killings tension flared in the whole of Rangamati district and security forces began a massive hunt for the insurgents in the hill areas.

and fled into the jungles.

past 20 days.

Officials said, so far 28 persons have been killed by the Shantibahini in the CHT in the

cannot wait for years together for going back to their homeland, he said adding 'how long we shall remain dupe of tomorrow? Responding to a question,

the SPGRC leader said, the repatriation is not taking place due to the lack of political will of the two governments. The trust between Pakistan and the Mekka-based Rabita Al

Alam Islami formed in Islamabad in 1988 to procure funds for the repatriation of thousands of non-locals in Bangladesh. Late President Ziaul Haq headed the trust as its Chairman. After the death of General

Ziaul Haq Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif became the chairman of the trust and presided over its first meeting in Islamabad last November.

Mother earth

From Page 1 Col 4 that flow into the seas from land-based sources -topsoil, fertilizers, pesticides and all

- The coral reefs that fringe Asia, Australia and the Caribbean and provide a home to many of the world's fish species are already starting to - The world needs to

spend at least 125 billion dol-

manners of industrial wastes.

lars annually to protect natural resources and clean up pollution. The affluent North generates 10 times as much carbon dioxide from energy use as its counterparts in the impoverished South.

Meanwhile, a five-week preparatory meeting in New York City that ended last month produced 24 million pages of documents for consideration at the June 3-14

This report is compiled from an article published by Time magazine this week as a curtain-raiser on the Rio

Related story on Page 6 Gunshots

Jagannath Hall of the univer-Tension was prevailing at the three halls and the students residing in those halls were gripped with panic apprehending further clashes

between the two factions of

From Page 1 Col 7

tion is now staying at the

BCL (M-I). BCL (M-I) at a rally in front of the Vice-Chancellor's residence on Saturday demanded immediate arrest of the armed hoodlums staying at the Zahurul Hug Hall.

Speakers at the rally al-

leged that the government was

patronising the 'miscreants'

with a view to foiling the recent students' movement against communalism and communal politics. The rally was addressed by BCL President Mainul Hasan Chowdhury, General Secretary Igbalur Rahim, DU Unit President Khizir Hayat Lizue,

General Secretary Pankaj Nath

and city unit leaders Akhtar

Hossain, Manzurul Islam Asru and Quazi Mcfbahuddin. BSS adds: A meeting of the provosts, proctors and assistant proctors of the Dhaka University expressed deep concern yesterday at the deterioration of the situation at the university, following the feud between two factions of a students' organisation in two

halls of the university. The meeting, with Pro Vice-Chancellor Wakil Ahmed in the chair, apprehended that bloody clashes may erupt on the campus any time under this situation and urged the law-enforcing agencies to play a more active role in taking steps against those possessing illegal arms on the campus.

The meeting noted that the security of all in the campus area has been threatened due to the recent development on the campus and expressed deep concern at no change in the situation despite appeals made to the government and the concerned political par-

The meeting once again urged the concerned quarters to settle the matter politically since the problem was of political nature.

Offset Printing Dialogue Publications Ltd., 19 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 28/1, Toynbee Circular Road Dhaka-1000. Tel: PABX- 246023-4, 245061-2. Advertisement: 245063 & Ext. 20. Fax No. 88-02-863035. GPO Bex No. 3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR.

Zia had tremendous faith From Page 1 Col 7 At the BNP central office at

Dhanmondi in the city, the party flag remained at half mast and a black flag was hoisted To mark the day, BNP and its front organisations, and various socio-cultural bodies

organised discussions, milad

mahfils, blood donation pro-

grammes, and fed the destitute throughout the country. Addressing the meeting at the Institution of Engineers, Prof Badruddeza Chowdhury stressed the need for learning more about Shaheed Zia in order to be imbued with his

The more we learn about him (Zia), the more we can feel him; the more we can feel him, the more we will be inspired with his ideals of nation-building activities", he Prof Chowdhury said Zia in-

troduced the concept of

Bangladeshi nationalism with-

out which the country's

sovereignty and integrity

ideals.

would be jeopardised. Describing the late President as a 'man of vision', the Deputy Leader of the House said Zia had tremendous faith in the people and he firmly believed that the country could attain self-reliance in all respects.

The BNP leader said. "Shaheed Zia helped in identi fying that our vast wealth remained unused. Late Zia also taught the people how to alleviate the national problems, including poverty, by using our natural and human resources in the best possible way and thus become self-re-

Zia was a great statesman, Prof Chowdhury said adding that the administration must be freed from corruption and be dealt with strongly for its smooth functioning. Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali

in his speech narrated how Zia

formed his party with honest

politicians and presented the

nation the Bangladeshi nation-He underlined the need for courageous leadership and people-oriented programmes for successful implementation of BNP's ideology.

"Awami League had lost its

political philosophy as it had

The Speaker commented that no political party, including Awami League, had any political philosophy. It is BNP which has a political philosophy — Bangiadeshi nationalism.

given up socialist ideology," he However, he admitted that AL's contribution in '69 and

could not be denied. "Sheikh Mujib's brave leadership cannot be denied," he The Speaker emphasised

the need for outlining a na-

tional goal and to administer

the country on that basis for

achieving self-reliance. He said Shaheed Zia's programmes must be implemented without any change. Abdus Salam Talukdar called for taking an honest and sincere pledge to complete the works of Shaheed Zia for improving the lot of the de-

prived people.

tive suggestions.

ALWC meet From Page 1 Col 8 the meeting for their respec-

Although scheduled, the proposed amendments to the party manifesto did not come up for discussion at the meeting till 1:30 last night since the party leaders were still deliberating the situation arising out of Mantu's suspension from the party. A large number of party

leaders were in favour of expelling Mantu from the party and taking stern disciplinary action against presidium member Johra Tajuddin who attended the council session of the Mantu-led faction of the Dhaka District Unit of the party.

Uttara police seized the car Rahman under custody.