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Workshop

RANGAMATI, June 18: A three-day workshop on writing on 'women issues' begins here on Saturday at the conference room of Rangamati Hill District Local Government Council, reports BSS.

Senior journalists working for national and international media in Dhaka will conduct the workshop arranged by news network.

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PM tells editors of national dailies

All possible steps being taken to improve power situation

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government is taking up all possible steps to improve the power situation, but it is not possible to solve the problem overnight, reports UNB.

"Power situation is improving gradually ... We're trying our best to further improve the situation," she said while exchanging views with the editors of national dailies and news agencies at Ganabhaban in the evening.

The government has taken up every possible step to solve the power problem, she said and added that this problem was "created for lack of initiative by the previous government".

Hasina mentioned the government steps to repair power plants and to generate more power in the shortest possible time.

Replying to a question about her move to ease tension in the region created after the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan, she said Bangladesh believes in peace.

"We don't want any arms race in this region which is striving for development. No development is possible without peace."

Responding to queries about her latest trip to India, Hasina said talks with India was particularly confined to bilateral issues. "We also talked about the regional issues, but I don't want to make any comment before my trip to Pakistan," she added.

India has already declared that they will not conduct any more tests and they're also ready to talk with Pakistan, she said, adding that all bilateral problems can be solved through discussions.

About the reforms programme in the country, the Prime Minister said the government has taken steps to decentralise the administration and strengthen the local government system.

About privatisation, she said work in this regard is also progressing. The government is separating the excess lands of the state-owned enterprises to distribute those as industrial plots.

The government has administrative reforms commission and law commission and these are also working, she said.

"We've taken steps for the empowerment of women and adopted various policies for benefit of the people," she added.

Responding to a query about the delay in bidding for oil and gas, Hasina said the government is against doing anything hastily that might harm national interest.

"Also, what's the justification of issuing threat to launch movement to oust the government?" the Prime Minister asked.

"We will resign after our tenure expires and hand over power to the caretaker government for holding elections," she said.

Chairman of the editorial board of daily Ittefaq Barrister Moinul Hosein, BSS editor M Anisuzzaman, Sangbad editor Ahmedul Kabir, Financial Express chief editor Reazuddin Ahmed, UNB chief editor Enayetullah Khan, Bangla Bazar Patrika editor Mohammad Zakaria Khan, Dainik Probhat editor M R Akhtar Mukul, Janakantha editor Atikullah Khan Masud and Financial Express editor Moazzem Hossain took part in the discussion.

Muktakantha editor KG Mostafa, advisory editor of Janakantha Toab Khan, Ajker Kagaj editor Kazi Shahed Ahmed, chief editor of Dainik Probhat Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Al Amin editor Alhaj Moqbul Hossain, MP, acting editor of Ittefaq Rahat Khan and Khabar editor Mizanur Rahman Mizan were present.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman, Awami League presidium member Amir Hossain Amu, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed and State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed were also present.

BFUJ, DUJ to mark 'Journalists Repression Day' on June 21

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka-Union of Journalists (DUJ) will observe "Journalists Repression Day" on June 21 in a belitting manner, reports BSS.

The BFUJ and DUJ will jointly hold a rally and discussion at the National Press Club at 11 am on June 21 to mark the occasion.

On this day in 1992 the police at the instruction of the then government ransacked the Jatiya Press Club building, attacked journalists while on duty to cover the hartal programme of the opposition and injured more than one hundred journalists.

BFUJ president Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, secretary general Abul Kalam Azad and DUJ acting president Suva Rahman and general secretary Azizul Islam Bhuiyan requested all members of the community to attend the rally and discussion.

Rush of patients hampers normal treatment at NICVD

By Staff Correspondent

Patient overcrowding the National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD), is seriously hampering normal treatment.

"It is almost like a stampede situation here," said the hospital Director Professor MA Zaman while talking to Daily Star on Tuesday.

He said, "We have a bed capacity of 160 but instead we are compelled to accommodate more than 250 patients on an average. The situation deteriorated since past one year. Influx of patients is putting extra burden on us."

The hospital, considered by many as the only place for heart diseases treatment, can not refuse patients. Many insist on getting admission on arrival before even understanding the severity of the ailment. One can only be hospitalised if the ailment case is very severe. But many patients demand admission for ordinary treatment.

During a visit to various sections of the new and old building of the hospital yesterday, it was noticed that in addition to normal beds, patients were accommodated on 'extra' beds, trolleys and even on floors. Nurses and other staff of the hospital said they sometimes have to overdo work to fulfil patient-care.

Asked what sort of problems the doctors were facing, a doctor on the hospital lobby said, "In place of ten minutes on an average, we can hardly allow more than five minutes to see each patient during regular inspection."

He added, "The load of seeing extra patients is tremendously hampering treatment facility here. Patients complain of not paying proper attention to them but what can we do. We have to complete seeing all the admitted patients as per routine work by any means."

The crisis can only be overcome if the government strengthens the existing cardiovascular departments at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, IPGMR and Mitford Hospital.

Patients suffering from heart ailment across the country rush to NICVD for treatment. But had the hospitals, names of which are mentioned above, been properly equipped patients would not come and crowd at NICVD.

The NICVD authority said, "There are many instances when we have to accept referred patients from DMCH or Mitford hospital who need ordinary treatment. There should be an end to this sort of burden to relieve our stress."

Meanwhile, a new building, adjacent to NICVD premises, having a capacity of 400 beds would be ready for heart patients by June next year.

'1176 industries identified for degradation of environment'

Environment and Forest Minister Sayeda Sajeda Chowdhury yesterday told parliament that the Environment Department has identified 1176 industries in different sectors for degradation of environment and pollution of air, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Kazi Sekandar Ali (AL-Khulna) the Minister said 351 textile industries, 140 tannery industries, two paper mills, four fertilizer factories, 17 plastic factories, 86 chemical industries, 43 pharmaceuticals, three food industries, nine sugar mills, 39 engineering firms, one distilleries, one refinery and 24 other industries under Dhaka division are responsible for degradation of environment and pollution of air.

She said of the remaining 452 industries responsible for degradation of environment and pollution of air, 188 are in Chittagong, 203 in Khulna and 66 in Rajshahi Divisions.

UNB adds: The country's total forest area is about 17 per cent of which only eight per cent is covered with trees.

Disclosing this in Parliament Thursday, Forest and Environment Minister Begum Sajeda Chowdhury said to protect the country's environment, the government has put an embargo on cutting trees in the reserved and natural forest areas till the year 2000.

Responding to a question from M Sahab Uddin (AL) she said strict laws providing punishment to violators are already there to discourage deforestation.

The Forest Minister said a project has been taken up to increase the operational efficiency of the Forest Department by equipping security personnel with modern arms and river transport. This will enable them to successfully deal with the miscreants engaged in cutting trees.

'Rehabilitation of tribal refugees to be completed by Feb, '99'

RANGAMATI, June 18: The rehabilitation of the repatriated tribal refugees will be completed by February 1999 in accordance with the package of incentive committed by the government, reports BSS.

Talking to BSS, chairman of the Task Force on Tribal Refugees Rehabilitation Affairs, Dipankar Talukdar MP said here today that rehabilitation of those who had taken refuge internally due to insurgency will start soon after the rehabilitation of the repatriated refugees.

A meeting will be held at Khagrachhari on June 27 to monitor the rehabilitation process of the tribal refugees. Shakawat Hussain, Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong division is the member-secretary of the Task Force on Tribal Refugee Rehabilitation Affairs.

Clarification

From Page 1

Naser Ahmed was given the responsibility to collect loan application and submit all documents to the bank.

He said Naser Ahmed was the person through whom all communication and submission of documents to the bank had been done. Amin further said he had come to know about the submission of forged sales deed through newspapers.

He further added that since he was busy with personal matters after submission of project application, and since he realised at one stage that it was not possible for him to run the cold storage by commuting to Mirzapur from Dhaka, he had decided in consultation with other directors not to implement the project.

"Because of this decision, I had informed Sonali Bank in writing about our unwillingness to implement the project and demanded back the submitted documents," Amin said.

He said he had no bad intention in the said business and that SB had not issued any loan sanction letter for Lunic Cold Storage. He also said he had informed the bank about his unwillingness about the project much before any investigation about the project.

He said if any irregularities had occurred in submitting documents by Naser Ahmed, the responsibility to detect those lies with the bank.

Our Reply: The Daily Star report was based on a BB investigation report as mentioned in the story. The question is how can the bank agree in principle to provide loan to a company without checking the *bonafide* of the entrepreneurs and the proposed assets.

The Daily Star had carried Sajjad Amin's versions yesterday. However, the investigation report said, "As the matter of forgery was revealed before disbursement of the loan, the managing director of the project had demanded back all the documents submitted with the loan application."

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The British Council

Cyber Centre Competition

Competition to design a wall painting for the new Cyber Centre, British Council Library.

The British Council will be opening a new Cyber Centre in our Library in August, sponsored by British Airways. There will be 7 Internet terminals to allow members to browse the Internet, access information world-wide and send and receive emails from all over the world. The terminals will also allow access to a wide range of information, education and entertainment CD-ROMS.

We are looking for a Bangladeshi artist to design and execute a suitable wall painting in the new Centre. The painting should reflect the exciting world of modern international communications, showing how people all over the world can network together through modern technology.

We invite you to send your design ideas to the Director, the British Council, Fuller Road, Dhaka, **by 5 July**. We are looking for design ideas at this stage, not a fully completed project. A decision will be made by 8 July, and the winning artist will be invited to the British Council to discuss how to develop the ideas into a complete wall painting.

The winner will receive a fee of taka 25,000 to complete the work (all materials costs will be provided).

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international network for education, culture and development services. The Council is an independent non-profit making body. It employs over 6,000 people world-wide in 108 countries. Human resource development in developing and transitional countries is central to the Council's operations.

Designs should be sent to:
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Applications not exceeding 5 pages should be sent with CVs to:

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Only applicants who are short-listed for interview will receive an acknowledgement of receipt. Applications must be received by **Sunday 28th June.**

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