

Women lawyers urged to protect rights of underprivileged women

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called upon the country's women lawyers to come forward to exercise their power to protect the rights of underprivileged women of the society.

They were addressing the inaugural session of a seminar titled "The role of women lawyers in protecting the rights of underprivileged & disadvantaged groups" at the Second Women Lawyers Congress at Democracy Auditorium of Khan Foundation in the city.

Noted Lawyer Barrister Syed Istiaq Ahmed called upon the women lawyers to stand up and fight against all injustice and discrimination to establish justice and impartiality in the society.

He expressed optimism that female lawyers would do better in their profession day by day.

Canadian High Commissioner David Preston, who attended the function as guest of honour recommended appointment of women to higher levels in the judiciary, eliminating *fatwas* which victimise women, revision of legal definition of rape to make it more comprehensive and amendment of other laws to prevent discrimination against women.

The High Commissioner urged prevention of abuse by empowering the disadvantaged, particularly women, through

explaining their rights to them and helping them realise so.

Dr A Moeen Khan, MP, advisor of Khan Foundation in his presidential speech suggested removal of the bail system to reduce harassment before trial of any case.

"Bail system should remain in only two types of cases, in the case of murder and for rape and abuse on women," he said.

"We need the change the present system because many people face torture and harassment before the actual trial takes place," he added.

About 70 per cent of time of judiciary is spent on hearings relating to bail, he added.

Syeda Morjina Khatoun in her keynote paper identified different problems such as divorce, illiteracy and poverty as the main cause behind underprivileged and disadvantaged groups.

Time changed
The timing of the 5th solo painting exhibition by artist Gulshan Hossain, which began on Friday, has been changed due to today and tomorrow's hartal, says a press release.

During hartal days the exhibition will remain open from 6 pm to 9 pm. Otherwise the exhibition will remain open from 10 am to 8 pm daily till December 15.

Martyr's of the Liberation War

The brave people of greater Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Dec 4: People from all walks of life of greater Rajshahi district had forged solid unity during the Liberation War and waged a heroic struggle to wrest freedom from the clutches of barbaric Pakistan army, reports BSS.

During the armed struggle, thousands of people, men and women, of greater Rajshahi district and made supreme sacrifices for the liberation of their motherland.

The Liberation War against occupation Pakistan army actually began on March 23, 1971 in Rajshahi district when a Punjabi army soldier tried to disarm a Bangalee sepoy of the then East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) at Rohanpur which is now under Chapainawabganj district.

The EPR Sepoy disobeyed the Punjabi soldier and instantly opened fire at him. The very next day, a Punjabi army captain went to disarm the Bangalee EPR Sepoy at the camp. At this stage, the EPR Sepoy revolted the Pakistani army and a Bangalee EPR

Habibdar Akkas Ali opened fire at the captain and killed him on the spot. After the incident, a mini war between Bangalee law enforcing personnel and occupation forces began in the area which lasted for nearly two to three days.

Rajshahi district remained a

free area till April 13, 1971 despite Pak army crackdown at Dhaka and other parts of the country on March 25, 1971. Rajshahi Cantonment remained under the control of Bangalee Army Captain Gias and Captain Rashid till April 13. The local people including students, farmers, housewives and members of professional groups extended their support and cooperation to maintain control the cantonment.

The Pakistan Air Force bombed different parts of Rajshahi on April 8 and 9 to create panic among the people, hoping that the air bombings would destroy the strong morale of the Bangalees.

Freedom fighter Abdul Malek Chowdhury, a student leader, at that time, said that the occupation army entered Rajshahi with reinforcements from Dhaka on the night of April 13, 1971 and unleashed a reign of terror. On their way to Rajshahi from Natore, the notorious army burnt down thousands of houses. Along with their collaborators, they mercilessly killed lawyers, university teachers, politicians, journalists, students, businessmen and innocent people.

Some of the prominent intellectuals who were brutally killed by Pakistani army in

Rajshahi included Advocate Biren Sarkar, Advocate Nazmul Haque Sarkar, Advocate Aminuddin, Journalist Abu Sayeed, Abdus Sattar, treasurer of Rajshahi city Awami League, Prof Mir Abdul Quayyum of Psychology Department of

Rajshahi University, Prof. Habibur Rahman, Reader of Mathematics Department and Prof Sukhranjan Samadhar of Sangskritik Department, Suresh Pandey, Mawroz-ud-Dowla and Eliasuddin.

The Pak army and their collaborators killed these men at their own houses or at different concentration camps set at several places including Zoha Hall and Munnujan Hall of Rajshahi University, and Kunjumotir Bari and Rani Bazar areas. The victims of the brutal killings were dumped near the concentration camps and also at Babla Tala, on the bank of the river Padma.

skulls and bones were found at mass graves at Zoha Hall, Munnujan Hall and Babla Tala after the liberation of the country.

The Pakistan army also killed Mamun Mahmud, DIG, Police, Rajshahi Range, Shah Abdul Majid, Superintendent of Police, Rajshahi and Khalilur Rahman, Assistant Director, CID, Rajshahi Range.

Air chief returns

Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed returned home from Malaysia yesterday, reports BSS.

Air Vice Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed went to Malaysia to witness the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition '99.

Prize distribution ceremony today

The prize distribution and concluding ceremony of the 40th annual sports of Dhaka Residential Model College will be held at 2:30 pm tomorrow, says a press release.

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English Courses

The British Council Teaching Centre's Ramadan Intensive course (7 Dec-4 Jan) will start after hartal finishes.

Some places are still available in General English classes (except elementary level) and in IELTS preparation classes. Young Learner classes are full. Young Learners can register after Eid.

Late registration will take place on Tuesday 7th & Wed 8th December (subject to hartal) 12.00-3.00pm.

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Bangladesh Truck Drivers' Union and Bangladesh Truck Owners' Association jointly brought out a procession in the city yesterday to protest against the opposition alliance called hartal in the city today and tomorrow.

Nepalese Speaker calls on Hasina

Speaker of the Nepalese House of Representatives Taranath Ranabhat called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday, reports UNB.

Ranabhat conveyed the greetings of the Nepalese Prime Minister to the Bangladesh leader. He also praised Sheikh Hasina for taking initiatives in ensuring peace in the region.

Terming the establishment of Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace (AAPPP) Secretariat in Dhaka as a good beginning, the Speaker said peace is prerequisite for the development of all countries.

Reciprocating the sentiment, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said we are endeavouring for establishment of peace and democracy in the region for the welfare of our people.

Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Jawadul Karim was present.

Bangabandhu Agri University programmes for December 7

As part of nationwide programmes to celebrate the recognition of February 21 as International Mother Language Day by UNESCO, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University have chalked out elaborate programmes on December 7, reports UNB.

The programmes include holding of colourful rally from Joydevpur Rajbari to University campus, placing floral wreath at Shaheed Minar, staging cultural function and illuminating different buildings of the university, said a press release.

President, PM greet Thai King, PM

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday felicitated King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand on the occasion of his birthday, reports BSS.

In a message the President said, "The government and the people of Bangladesh join me in extending to your Majesty and through you to the government and the people of Thailand our warmest greetings and felicitations on the auspicious occasion of your majesty's happy birthday."

He expressed his firm belief that the existing bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two friendly countries would be developed further and strengthened for the mutual benefit of the two peoples.

The President wished good health and happiness of the King and continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Thailand.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also greeted Prime Minister of Thailand Chuan Leekpai on the occasion of the National Day of Thailand.

In a separate message Prime Minister said "On behalf of the government and the people of Bangladesh and also on my own behalf, I convey our warmest greetings and felicitations to you and through you to the government and the friendly people of Thailand on the occasion of the National Day of the Royal Kingdom of Thailand."

'6000 community clinics within year 2000'

THAKURGAON, Dec 4: A workshop on "awareness about family planning, reproductive health and gender issues" held recently at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner, Thakurgaon, reports BSS.

To facilitate the health service for all the people of the country six thousand community clinics will be constructed within the year 2000," it was disclosed by Akhtaruzzaman, Director, BCC Unit, Family Planning in the workshop.

The workshop was presided over by Abdul Baki, Deputy Commissioner, Thakurgaon.

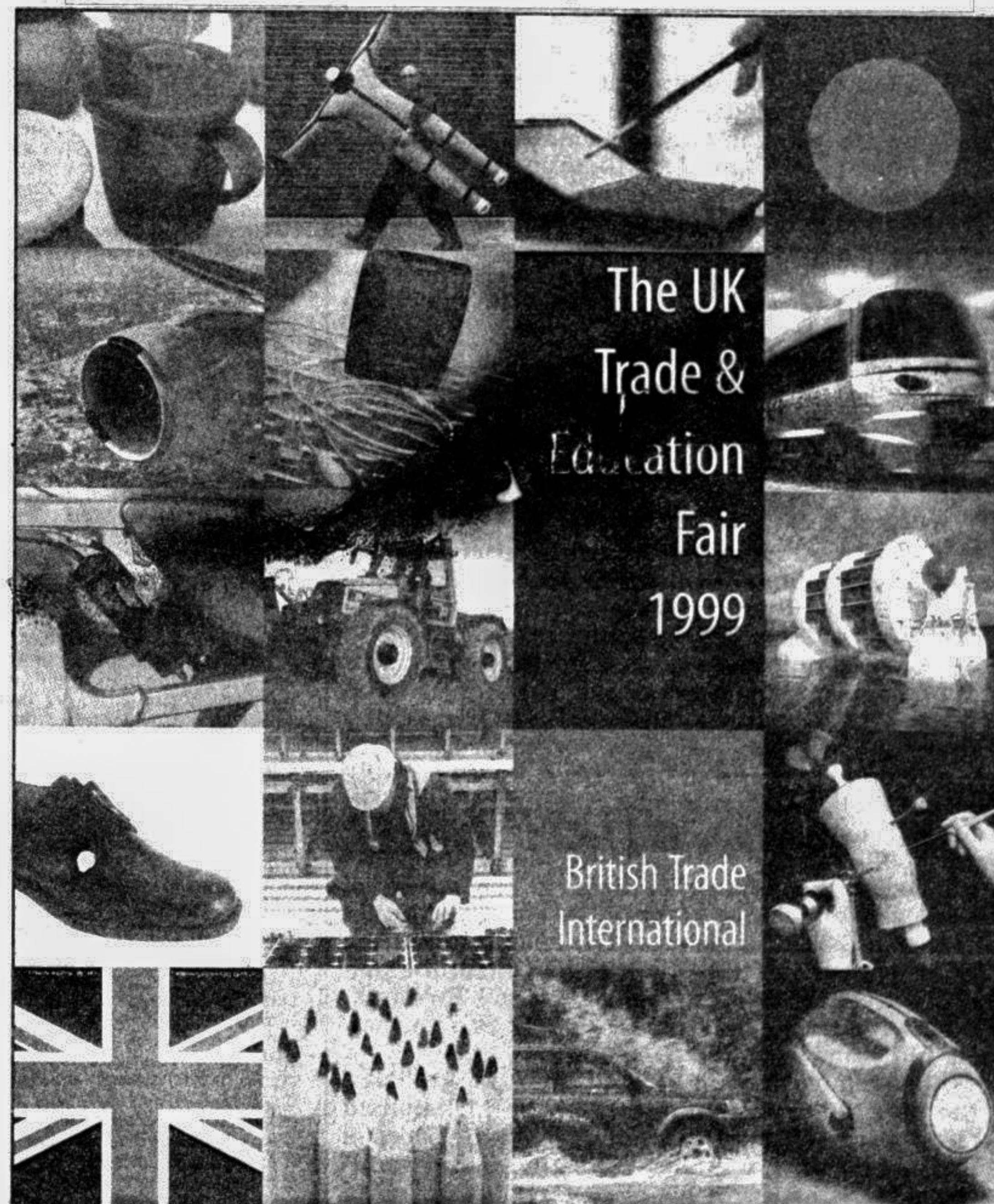
Chairmen of 51 Union Parishads of the district participated in the workshop. Akhtaruzzaman further said the iodine deficiency rate in the northern region of the country is higher than in other parts of the country. He advised the officials and employees of the Health Education Bureau to create awareness among the people about iodine deficiency and teach them means to overcome the gap of iodine deficiency.

Fatema Begum, Police Super, Thakurgaon, Shamsher Ali, Deputy Director, Momtaz Begum, and Babar Ali, Assistant Directors, BCC Unit and Amjad Hossain, General Secretary, District Committee of the Chairmen Samity spoke on the occasion.

QULKHWANI



Qulkhani of Mrs. Yasmin Rahman, late wife of Mr. Faizur Rahman, Managing Director of Asian Surveyors Limited, has been rescheduled to take place on December 7 following Magrib prayers instead of after Asr prayers as previously announced. Mrs. Rahman passed away last Friday at BIRDEM due to viral infection-related complications. Her Qulkhani will take place at the residence of Mr. Faizur Rahman's elder brother, former Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman (House 21, Road 47, Gulshan 2). Friends, relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend.



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Mr Cam McConnell, International Marketing Manager, Martin College, Sydney will be presenting a seminar, followed by individual counselling session, on Martin College on Tuesday 7 December 1999 from 4.30 to 7.30 pm at BRAC Centre Inn, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212.

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