



The Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees took out a procession in the city yesterday demanding ratification of the 'International convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families'.

'Ratify Int'l convention on migrant workers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees (WARBE) yesterday urged the government to ratify the international convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families - a UN Charter approved in 1990.

In a statement, WARBE Chairman Syed Saiful Haq Asif also urged the government to form a national committee on labour migration mitigating the prob-

lems being faced by the migrant workers.

He called for setting up of a migrant bank and formation of a migrant welfare centre providing the wage earners with travel-tax waiver and green channel facilities at the airports.

Quoting a statistics, Asif said over the last three decades 3.7 million Bangladeshis went abroad as migrant workers and remitted Tk83,000 crore to home.

Earlier, the WARBE brought out a colorful procession in the city as part of its programme to observe

the International Migrants Day marking the adoption of the charter on December 18.

Starting from the National Museum, the procession ended at the National Press Club.

It was organised in association with Bangladesh Women Migrant Association (BWMA), International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and US Solidarity Centre.

Migrant workers and their families, representatives from different trade union bodies, NGOs, Bangladesh Association of

International Recruiting Agencies and other donor agencies took part in the procession.

After the procession, a human chain was formed at Topkhana Road.

IOM Programme Officer Nurul Islam Molla, BWMA Chairperson Lily Jahan, ActionAid's Zahid Hasan and Executive Director of SHISHUK SM Morshed spoke on the occasion.

Representatives from Population Council and Naree Jibon Project were also present.

Awami League rejects PM's call

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil has rejected Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's call to work unitedly for welfare of the country.

The prime minister made the call to the opposition at a public meeting at Paltan Maidan on Wednesday.

Jalil in a statement yesterday termed the PM's call as a cheap political subterfuge, saying that unity cannot be forged with

someone "whose hands are tainted with the blood of innocent men, including women and children."

He said the prime minister's two-year rule was marked by "torture on opposition activists, rape of nearly 20,000 women and

children, kidnap, nepotism and politicisation that tarnished the country's image in international arena."

Jalil said working together with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia means "becoming an accomplice of crime against humanity, giving legality to rampant corruption and taking stand against human rights."

He mentioned that international human rights organisations, including Amnesty International and European Parliament, have identified Bangladesh as a country of human rights violations.

"Of course, the people of Bangladesh look for unity... this unity must be forged with democratic and pro-liberation forces against the corruption and misrule of Khaleda-Nizami," said Jalil.

'Money for Work programme won't ensure food security'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The conversion of the Food for Work programme into 'Money for Work' would hardly be able to create food security for the rural people, participants of a workshop said yesterday.

The Money for Work programme would play a very nominal role in ensuring food security as such practice would create inflation in the rural areas, leading to price hike of foodgrains, they said.

The Disaster Management and Relief Ministry organised the workshop on 'Transformation of Food for Work into Money for Work' at the Shishu Academy auditorium in the city.

Inaugurating the workshop, Minister for Disaster Management

and Relief Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yousuf said the 'Food for Work' has been playing a vital role in building a communication network in the rural areas.

"Although there are some allegations against it, but the success of the programme is very significant," he noted.

In his keynote paper, Mohammed Abdul Majed said the government's decision to give money instead of foodgrains would hamper distribution of foodgrains for the poor people in rural areas.

It might also create problems while implementing development projects due to bureaucratic tangles, he added.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony as special guest, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on disaster management

and relief Mohammad Shahjahan said it is not true that Food for Work does not produce any positive result in the country's development.

The prices of food would go up in rural areas if the programme is withdrawn, he said.

Secretary of the ministry BMM Mozharul Hoque said the government has decided to transform the programme into 'Money for Work' as some irregularities have been identified by the government.

It is premature to assess the success of the new system as the programme was introduced just two years ago on experimental basis, he added.

The secretary also said the government had allocated Tk 122 crore in the current fiscal for both the programmes.

One shot, chopped in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminals on Wednesday shot and chopped the nephew of Shahid Commissioner, a convict with death in Advocate Habibur Rahman Mondol murder case, at Ganderia.

A gang of eight attacked Akhter Hossain, 25, soon after he came out of his house at about 2:30pm.

Akhter suffered two bullet injuries in his back and stab injuries in forehead, ears, neck and chest. He is undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

"My son is innocent. My brother Shahid Commissioner's rivals tried to kill him," said Akhter's mother Dulari Begum.

No case was filed with Sutrapur Police Station till 8:30 last night.

Unfair treatment discourages women in journalism

Women journalists tell workshop

UNB, Dhaka

Recognition of their works and better wages are needed to encourage female journalists to stay in the profession, experts told a workshop on "Women in Bangladesh Media" here yesterday.

They said women's participation in journalism, including electronic and print media, marked a rise in last couple of years but most of them give up the profession for various problems.

A good number of women journalists shared their experiences in the workshop, organised by News Network and sponsored by News Network and sponsored by Diakonia, at CIRDAP auditorium.

Prof Dr Gitiara Nasreen of Dhaka University's Mass Communication and Journalism Department presented the keynote paper in the workshop.

Editor of News Network Shahiduzzaman, Nadim Quader of AFP and Shamsuddin Ahmad of UNICEF also spoke on the occasion.

The women journalists identified stereotyped attitudes, unfair treatment, harassment by male colleagues and job insecurity as the other reasons that prompt them to give up the profession. Only better wages and recognition of their works can succeed other problems, they felt.

Jannath Ara Keka of Manabzamin, Farida Yasmin of Daily Ittefaq, Novera Dipita of the Daily Star and Monsura Hossain took part in the open discussion. AP Bureau Chief Farid Hossain moderated the session.

In her keynote paper, Dr Gitiara Nasreen pointed out that despite

the rise in number of women journalists in last few years, only four per cent women sustain in the main stream of journalism.

Dr Gitiara Nasreen said socio-cultural factors play an important role in advancing or hindering women's access to journalism. "Discrimination against women works more subtly through the effects of sex-related beliefs and prejudices," she said.

The Swedish Ambassador, in his speech, laid emphasis on bringing gender balance in the media and said society at large would benefit from a better gender balance.

"In a perfect world men and women would of course be equally present in the media both as reporters, editors and as subjects in articles," he said.

President visits military hardware exhibition

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed visited the military hardware exhibition at the National Parade ground in the city yesterday.

The Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force jointly arranged the display in observance of the Victory Day.

Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Shah Iqbal Mujtaba, Chief of Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Fakhrul Azam and Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Major General AIM Mustafa Reza Noor received the president on his arrival, said an ISPR release.

President Iajuddin, also the supreme commander of the armed forces, went round different stalls and pavilions set up by the three services. He also witnessed the functioning of tanks, artillery guns and heavy infantry weapons and equipment in different stalls.

Certificate award ceremony of gunnery course

BSS, Chittagong

The certificate award ceremony of the Officers Gunnery Staff Course field-9 was held at Artillery Centre and School at Halishahar yesterday.

Chief of General Staff of Bangladesh Army Major General SM Ikramul Haque distributed certificates among the participants.

This year nine officers from Bangladesh and five officers from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Nigeria took part in the course.



PHOTO: STAR

The 11-Party alliance stages a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding an end to Iraq occupation by the US.