

## FNB for safeguarding activities of Proshika

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB), an apex body of the non-governmental organisations, yesterday called on all concerned to cooperate in safeguarding the development activities of the Proshika and protecting the interests of its employees.

The call came from a meeting of the FNB national executive board that discussed the recent developments concerning the Proshika on Wednesday.

"FNB believes that unlike political parties or leaders, there is no scope for NGOs or NGO leaders to launch a movement against any elected government," it said in a statement.

"Every NGO should have financial transparency and accountability," the statement added.

Speakers at the meeting said any legal process against any person or organisation must be done with full transparency, fairness and

objectivity.

The government recently brought sedition charge against Proshika chief Qazi Faruque Ahmed, who is now in jail, and six of his subordinates.

The case was lodged on Sunday with the chief metropolitan magistrate's (CMM) court of Dhaka accuses the officials of Proshika of plotting to overthrow the government.

Six other accused are Proshika Director Sahnawaz and deputy directors Sirajul Islam, Mahbub Alam, Fazlul Huq, Sirajul Huq and Abdur Rab.

Qazi Faruque was arrested on May 21 in connection with cases of fund embezzlement and fraud lodged with Pallabi police.

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) has also filed 15 cases against him and some of his colleagues recently. The Bac showed Qazi Faruque arrested in two more cases.

## Ban hazardous jobs for children

Speakers urge govt at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called on the government to safeguard the rights of the children in line with the Child Rights Convention of the United Nations.

They also suggested enacting laws allowing for some risk-free work for the children and banning hazardous jobs for them.

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) and Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) jointly organised the seminar, 'Child rights related laws and policy-making affairs issue', at the Cirdap auditorium in the city.

Justice AKM Sadeque was present as chief guest while Justice Noyemuddin Ahmed, vice-president of BLAST, presided over the seminar.

The Child Rights Convention says a child means every human being below the age of 18, but different laws in the country are not consistent with the convention, the speakers pointed out.

They said the government should play a more active role in ensuring birth registration for all to determine a child's age.

Justice Sadeque said every child, whatever their background, has to be granted equal rights as a child.

He said it is the responsibility of the state, family and the society to ensure the basic rights, including food, health and education, of the children.

Justice Sadeque also called for taking proper measures to stop trafficking in children and women.

Laws alone cannot help check it, he said, adding that regional cooperation is a must for curbing the menace.

S M Shawkar Ali, additional director, Women Affairs Directorate, said the government has a plan to set up a separate department for children.

Muhammad Aszar Ali, director of BSAF, and Fazlul Haq, executive director of BLAST, also spoke.

## AL observes hartal in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

An eight-hour hartal protesting Monday's bomb blast at an Awami League rally passed off peacefully in all four districts under Sylhet division yesterday.

The Awami League called the hartal as part of its three-day agitation programme to protest the bomb attack on a rally in Deraia that left one person killed.

Meanwhile, police arrested two persons, Anwar Hossain, 20, and Shamsul Haque, 40, from their shop selling firecrackers at Deraia bazaar for their alleged involvement in Monday's blast.

The two were produced before a magistrate's court yesterday afternoon, with a prayer for five-day remand.

On Wednesday, police interrogated two more people -- Abdul Bari, 60, and Salekul, a vegetable vendor, who were injured in the

blast -- after their release from Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

During the hartal hours, commercial establishments remained closed and bus and minibuses were off the roads.

However, rickshaws and other modes of vehicles plied in most of the areas in Sylhet and Moulvibazar.

Hartal was partially observed in Moulvibazar and Habiganj with lesser number of vehicles in the streets.

In Sylhet, the demonstrators held a brief rally in front of Modhuban market as police did not allow them to hold their scheduled rally in court point area.

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfuzzaman Babar, Information Secretary AMM Nasiruddin, Secretary to the Prime Minister's office Khandker Shahidul Islam, Cultural Affairs Secretary Modabber Hossain Chowdhury, Inspector General of Police Shahidul Haque, Censor Board Secretary Sarwar Alam, and high officials of different agencies

attended the meeting.

Shamsul Islam directed the film directors to play an effective role in stopping obscenity in the films when a delegation of Film Directors Association called on him.

Describing obscenity as a crime like drug abuse and terrorism, he said it should be stopped at any cost otherwise our future generation will be ruined.

The meeting discussed the entire gamut of obscenity particularly in dirty films, posters, videos, CDs, nude books and urged the social forces to help the government stop this public nuisance.

The meeting decided that an inter-ministerial committee will monitor obscenity in movies and find out effective ways to resist obscenity.

The meeting directed the Censor Board officials in the capital and the task forces headed by the deputy commissioner at the district level to strengthen their drive against dirty films and post-

ers.

Shamsul Islam directed the officials to enforce the laws strictly and suggested them to update the laws to face the new challenges thrown by obscene movies in society.

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