



Participants join hands at the launching ceremony of a platform styled as 'Zero tolerance for the violence against women' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. The UNFPA launched the platform to protest violence against women.

4,195 fell victim to rape in 4 years

Odhikar report says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 4,195 women and children fell victim to rape across the country in the last four years, according to a report by Odhikar, a human rights organisation.

Of them, 467 victims were killed after rape and 45 others committed suicide.

The Odhikar released the report yesterday on the eve of International Women's Day. It was prepared on the basis of newspaper reports.

The report also said 740 women were killed and 65 others committed suicide over dowry during the period. Two hundred and eighty-three women also suffered torture in dowry-related violence.

The incidents of domestic violence and killing of children for dowry have increased day by day, said another report.

The Mass-line Media Centre (MMC) prepared the report, with the

funds from Manusher Jonno.

A total of 205 children were killed in human rights violations and 52 of them died due to domestic violence last month, said the MMC report.

Also, 70 children fell victim to rape and sexual abuse, 51 were abducted and 17 others were trafficked during the period.

Although 375 incidents of violence against children took place, only 100 cases were registered, leading to 87 arrests, the report said.

In a statement yesterday, Secretary General of the Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) Sigma Huda expressed concern over the rise in repression of women and children and strongly condemned it.

She also demanded that the culprits responsible for violence against women be brought to book immediately to prevent such heinous acts.

Deshbandhu CR Das gold medal recipients



Mr. Abdur Rahman Biswas Social Service, Mr. Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP Municipal Service, Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed Economist, Mrs. Rokia Afzal Rahman Women Empowerment, Syed Abu Naser Bukhtear Ahmed Banking, Mr. Md. Shahid Alam Infrastructure Development, Mrs. Ferdousi Rahman Music, Prof. Dr. M. Akhteruzzaman Medical Science, Mr. S.M. Abdul Mannan Social Service, Qazi Abdul Alim Sports, Mr. M. Kazi Badruddoza Agricultural Research, Late Abdul Jabbar Khan Film Development

12 awarded Deshbandhu CR Das gold medal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deshbandhu CR Das Research Council has selected 12 distinguished personalities for its gold medal awards for 2002, 2003 and 2004.

The awardees have been selected for their outstanding contribution to various fields, says a press release.

The council announced the names of the winners at a special meeting recently, with its Chairman Lt. Col. (retd.) Hesusuddin Ahmed in the chair.

The awardees of 2004 are Abdur Rahman Biswas in social service, Sadek Hossain Khoka in municipal service, Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed in economics and Rokia Afzal Rahman in women empowerment.

The winners of 2003 are Syed Abu Naser Bukhtear Ahmed in banking, Md Shahid Alam in infrastructure development, Ferdousi Rahman in music and Dr M Akhteruzzaman in medical science.

And the awardees of 2002 are SM Abdul Mannan in social service, Qazi Abdul Alim in sports, M Kazi Badruddoza in agricultural research and late Abdul Jabbar Khan in film development.

The award giving ceremony will be held at Sonargaon Hotel in the city in May.

Housewife 'hits domestic help with curved knife'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife allegedly hit her 12-year-old domestic help with a boti, a curved knife, at her house at Karwan Bazar in the city yesterday.

The injured girl, Angura, is now undergoing treatment at the One-Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

Angura said her employer hit her as she forgot to do household chores as asked by her employer.

Angura, daughter of Muntaj Ali of Naoli under Kishoreganj district, has been working at Lily Begum's house for the last five months.

"Lily went out to bring back her daughter from school and returned at around 1:30pm. When she found that I didn't complete the household chores, she tried to hit me with the boti. I had my left hand cut when I parried the attack," Angura told the reporters.

She also said she faced torture whenever she failed to do her work.

However, Lily denied the allegations when she went to the hospital.

She told reporters that she came here to see the condition of Angura after a neighbour told her that Angura was beaten by a local woman during an altercation.

DHAKA TODAY

- Funfair**
In observance of the International Women's Day, Khan Foundation organises a funfair. Venue: Millennium University Campus, Momenbagh. Time: 10.00am.
- Poetry recitation**
In observance of the International Women's Day, the United Nations Association of Bangladesh organises a poetry recitation. Venue: Scout Bhawan, Kakrail. Time: 5.00pm.
- Gathering**
Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, in collaboration with UNFPA, organises a gathering of garment workers to mark the International Women's Day. Venue: Althee Community Centre, Rampura. Time: 11.00am.
- Seminar**
A seminar on 'The vital role of women in medical profession,' organised by ZH Sikder Women's Medical College and Hospital, will be held. Venue: College auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 1.00pm.
- Rotary seminar**
A seminar on women empowerment has been organised by the Rotary Club of Ramna to mark the International Women's Day. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5.30pm.
- Film show**
Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen two French films titled 'L'Anglaise et le Duc' (2001) by Eric Rohmer, and 'Au revoir les enfants' (1987) by Louis Malle. Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.00pm and 7.15pm.
- Workshop**
Save the Children, UK organises a workshop on 'Creating a child-sensitive PRSP in Bangladesh.' Venue: Hotel Riggs Inn, Gulshan. Time: 9.00am.
- BILS discussion**
Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies
- organises a discussion to mark the International Women's Day.** Venue: Mohanagar Natyamancha. Gulistan. Time: 9.30am.
- Street drama**
Bangladesh National Woman Lawyer's Association organises a street drama to mark the International Women's Day. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 2.00pm.
- Debate competition**
In observance of the International Women's Day, Democracywatch organises a friendly debate competition, discussion and cultural function. Venue: Democracywatch auditorium, Circuit House Road. Time: 9.00am.
- Photography exhibition**
Indhan organises a photography exhibition, poetry recitation and musical programme to mark the International Women's Day. Venue: Drik Gallery, House-58, Road-15A, Dhanmondi. Time: 6.30pm.
- Award of Honour**
Anannya, a fortnightly magazine for women, will present an award of honour to Begum Ayesha Zafar, a torchbearer of Begum Rokeya Sakhawati Hossain. Venue: Drik Gallery, House-58, Road-15A, Dhanmondi. Time: 6.00pm.
- Cultural function**
In observance of the International Women's Day, Samajik Protirodh Committee organises a rally and cultural function. Venue: Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University. Time: 3.00pm.

'Platform for men' launched to protest violence against women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) launched a 'platform for men' yesterday on the eve of the International Women's Day to protest violence against women.

Joining their hands together at the launching ceremony, six noted personalities, including Prof Anisuzzaman, film actor Illias Kanchan, President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kutubuddin Ahmed and Director General of the Islamic Foundation AZM Shamsul Alam, pledged that they will never overlook such violence or remain silent about it.

They also signed a declaration to work for prevention of violence.

The platform styled as 'Zero tolerance for the violence against women' will be used to raise a voice against the social menace.

The overall status of women in Bangladesh is low, characterised by a low literacy rate, fewer employment opportunities, widespread violence and a high maternal mortality rate along with little participation of women in politics, administration and decision-making process, said UNFPA Representative Suneeta Mukherjee.

She said about 14 percent of all maternal deaths in Bangladesh are attributed to violence against women, resulting from negligence of women.

Men and women are not each other's competitors. Rather, they complement each other, Suneeta said, adding that fathers, husbands and brothers must come forward to protect women.

The UNFPA took the pioneering initiative in forming a group of well-informed men to speak for women and raise awareness about gender equity and violence among policy-makers, programme managers, community leaders and primary audiences.

Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, Bir Bikram, former secretary, Dr Ubaidur Rob, country director, Population Council, Prof AKM Nurun Nabi, Dr Abu Jamil Faisal, country representative, Engenderhealth, Murteja Hossain Munshi, secretary, women and children affairs ministry, Akmal Hossain Azad, director general, Directorate of Family Planning, and Nurul Ameen, UNFPA assistant representative, attended the ceremony held at the National Press Club.

UN urged to ensure humanitarian aid in strife-torn regions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called on the United Nations (UN) to play a pivotal role in distributing humanitarian aid in strife-torn regions to save human lives.

It is also the responsibilities of the parties involved in the conflict to make sure that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

can provide humanitarian assistance to the victims, they said.

The Bangladesh Observer in cooperation with the ICRC and Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) organised the discussion on 'Challenges for humanitarian actions in modern day conflicts' at a city hotel.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed said the UN has to be strengthened and international rules have to be followed to avoid conflicts.

Justice KM Sobhan said conflicts and wars make the life of civilians vulnerable in today's world.

The ICRC has to be allowed to work freely for the mitigation of the suffering of the civilians whose lives are devastated by wars, Justice Sobhan said.

Mainul Hossain, chairman of the editorial board of the daily Ittefaq, said civilians are the worst victims of wars and the challenges lying before the ICRC are how to save human lives.

Criticising the role of the United States, Mainul said world leaders should think seriously about how to balance the world for the sake of human lives as only a few international laws cannot guarantee the security of people.

Independent Editor Mahbubul Alam, Jatiya Press Club President Reazuddin Ahmed, BDRCS Chairman Harun-al-Rashid, Regional Head of ICRC Vincent Nocod, former diplomat Abul Ahsan, Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof SMA Faiz, VC of North South University Dr Hafiz GA Siddique and Dr Mizanur Rahman also spoke.

Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, editor of The Bangladesh Observer, presided.

DU plans to build hall after the name of Khaleda

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Dhaka University authorities have taken an initiative to build a new hall for female students, which will be named after Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Although no formal decision has been taken, a sign reading 'Khaleda Zia Hall' has been hung at the designated site near the Curzon Hall.

It is learnt that the government has handed over 2.59 acres of land of Bangladesh Railway to the university authorities in this regard.

When contacted, Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof AFM Yousuf Haidar did not make any comment in this regard.

Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz was not available even after repeated attempts.

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK Suspect placed on remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

One more suspect, arrested in connection with the August 21 grenade attack case on Saturday, was placed on a five-day remand yesterday for interrogation.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arrested Mohammad Ayub Khan, 45, son of Emarat Khan of Srinagar in Munshiganj district from his present address at Konabari of Joydebpur in Gazipur district.

The CID produced Ayub before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka with a prayer for a seven-day remand.

In the remand prayer, the investigation officer (IO) mentioned that Ayub was arrested on the basis of different information. Moreover, he gave an important information that needs to find out the clue of the grenade attack. So he should be remanded.

After hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rouf Khan granted the remand.

Earlier, 12 people, including Saibal Saha Partha, were shown arrested in the case.

DMC Computer Club executives

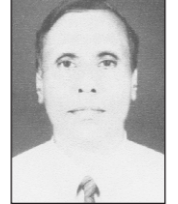
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nurul Islam Hasib and Samiul Islam Tapan were elected president and general secretary respectively of the Computer Club of Dhaka Medical College (DMC) yesterday, says a press release.

Swadhin Kumar Paul was elected vice-president, while Dr Md Saifullah, resident surgeon of DMCH, was nominated moderator.

A 27-member new executive committee was also formed in presence of the former executives.

Obituary

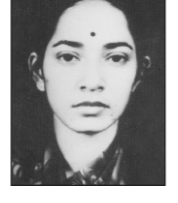


Md Shahjahan Khan, a freedom fighter of Kafrul, died of cardiac arrest on March 5 at the age of 65, says a press release.

He left behind his one son and two daughters to mourn his death.

He was buried at the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in the city.

Death anniversary



Today is the 10th death anniversary of Sheuli Karim (Lucky), wife of Nazmul Karim, Managing Director of Shenjuti Limited, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

1,296 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,296 people on various charges from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours till 6.00am yesterday.

During the period, they recovered nine firearms, two other weapons, 45 bullets and five bombs and filed nine cases against 10 people under the Arms Act, says a police headquarters press release.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia and Comilla till 6.00pm today.

Weather may remain nearly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country during the period.

Highest temperature 35.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and Chuadanga and lowest 17.4 degree Celsius at Syedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:05pm today and rises at 6:13am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.4	24.0	74	59
Chittagong	30.5	22.4	71	76
Rajshahi	35.5	20.7	72	46
Khulna	34.0	24.3	81	60
Barisal	33.0	24.0	92	82
Sylhet	30.2	20.5	76	70
Cox's Bazar	32.0	23.0	81	73



Leaders of Dhaka-based Bhuapur People's Welfare Association pose for photograph at its general meeting at the Bhaskar Novera Auditorium at the National Museum in the city yesterday.