

# Lack of recognition main cause of domestic violence

Say experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at an opinion-sharing meeting pointed out lack of recognition of domestic violence in national life as the main reason behind different forms of domestic abuse.

They also said victims of domestic violence tend to avoid legal actions against the offenders for lack of awareness as well.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) organised the meeting based on its research titled 'Domestic violence: In search of a legal framework' at the Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) auditorium in the city yesterday.

Presenting the findings of the research, Advocate Sadrul Hasan Majumdar, project coordinator of BNWLA, said the study reveals that interviewed people defined 'domestic violence' as any kind of physical, mental, verbal or economic violence within domestic

setting. They also identified marital rape, incest and sexual harassment in the family as domestic violence.

The study, assisted by Manusher Jonno, was conducted on 1800 people of nine different categories including victims, general people, police, lawyers, doctors and social workers from Comilla, Dhamrai, Barisal, Rajshahi, Kushtia and Madaripur at the union level.

The study says 68 per cent legal experts maintain that the patriarchal society is the main reason of domestic violence while 54 per cent of them consider poverty as the principle cause behind this kind of violence.

Speaking on the occasion, BNWLA Executive Director Advocate Salma Ali suggested that an easily enforceable law should be passed to resist domestic violence.

Advocate Elina Zubaidy, senior sector specialist, Human Rights and Legal Services, BRAC, also called for a new law saying 'Domestic violence should not be dealt

under 'Women and Children Repression Prevention Act' as a mindset has been formed that any kind of repression against women has to go under the law.'

However, Advocate Monwara Begum, judge of second special tribunal of Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, suggested that domestic violence could be dealt under the existing laws.

Advocate Rehana Sultana, member of BNWLA, said some reforms should be brought under the existing laws for domestic violence.

Barrister Sara Hossain emphasised that the accountability of the responsible people should be ensured rather than demanding formulation of new law or amendment of the existing laws.

Among others, members of BNWLA and human rights activists from different organisations also spoke on the occasion.

## 8 Buet students awarded gold medals

DU CORRESPONDENT

A total of eight students of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) were awarded gold medals for their outstanding academic performance yesterday.

Education Minister Dr M Osman Faruk gave away the medals to the winners at a ceremony at the central auditorium of the university.

The students of 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 sessions received the awards for achieving the highest CGPA in their departments.

They are Md Raquibul Hossain of department of civil engineering, BSC; Md Ashikur Rahman Joarder of architecture, B. Arch; Imon Chowdhury of architecture, B. Arch; Rajib Saha of chemical engineering, BSC; AKM Monjur Morshed of mechanical engineering, BSC; Ahsan-Ul-Alam of electrical and electronic engineering, BSC; Tasadduq Imam of computer science and engineering, MSC; and Md Moshiul Hoque of department of computer science and engineering, MSC.

Of them, Raquibul and Rajib received one more gold medal each for securing the highest CGPA in the faculty of civil engineering and the faculty of engineering respectively.

As Rajib and Tasadduq are now pursuing higher studies abroad, their relatives received the awards on behalf of them.

Expressing his delight at winning two gold medals, Raquibul said his parents have inspired him to achieve such outstanding results. He also expressed gratitude to his teachers.

Raquibul said he will go abroad for higher studies and later join the teaching profession.

Addressing the ceremony, Education Minister Dr Osman Faruk said vocational and technical education in the country should be given priority in order to meet the growing technological demands of the modern world.

The government has taken up initiatives to expand vocational and technical education in the country through setting up more engineering universities to this end, he added.

Buet Vice-chancellor Prof Dr Md Alee Murtaza presided over the ceremony while Prof AM Shafiqullah delivered a welcome speech. Deans of five faculties Prof Dr AS Kurni, Prof Dr Md Hossain Ali, Prof Dr SM Nazrul Islam, Prof Dr Mohammad Ali Choudhury and Prof Dr Md Shahidul Ameen were also present.

Japan will provide Tk 48.79 crore for the project for improvement of Digital Mapping System of Survey of Bangladesh.

These fuels also have adverse health effects including acute respiratory infection, chronic obstruc-



PHOTO: STAR  
Bangladesh Sarkari Karmachari Dabi Bastobayan Parishad takes out a protest procession from AG office at Segunbagicha in the city yesterday demanding 50 percent dearness allowance.

## INDOOR AIR POLLUTION

### 'Use more clean fuels to save lives'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing concern over the existing indoor air pollution (IAP) situation of the country, health and environment experts yesterday suggested use of more clean fuels and improved stoves for cooking to save lives from respiratory disorders and other related diseases.

IAP is the fourth leading risk factor contributing to the burden of disease in the country alongside other developing countries, they said adding that about 5 lakh people die premature and one million people become ill every year due to air pollution in the country.

They were speaking at a national seminar on 'Indoor Air Pollution, Health and Household Energy' jointly organised by World Health Organisation and Department of Public Health Engineering at IDB conference room in the city.

The major factor behind IAP is using biomass fuels like wood, dung and agricultural residues. The smoke from burning biomass fuels release 10 to 100 times more harmful particulate matter and noxious gases compared to clean fuels.

These fuels also have adverse health effects including acute respiratory infection, chronic obstruc-

tive pulmonary disease, low birth weight babies and various cancers associated with tuberculosis and blindness, said Dr Andrew F Trett, environmental health adviser of WHO.

"The most vulnerable people are women and young children who spend most of the time at home and in the kitchen," he said.

Dr Faruque Parvez of Columbia University in his study showed that there is 8 to 10 times more particulate matters in the air of Dhaka than that of New York.

He said on an average 77 per cent people of the country use biomass as fuels while more than 98 per cent of them use biomass in the rural areas posing a great health risk in the country.

Md Taufiqul Arif, national programme officer of WHO, said the stoves women use produce heavy smoke and release a number of

harmful pollutants, which combined with poor ventilation increases hazardous particles in the kitchens.

He identified better ventilation, replacement of traditional three-stone or shielded open-fire cooking with improved smokeless stoves and use of cleaner fuels as the most important interventions to reduce the risk factors.

Tusher MS Khan, executive engineer of DPHE Training Division, Habibur Rahman, Project Manager of Practical Action, Dr Mujibur Rahman, Assistant Professor of Community Medicine at NIPSOM, Tajul Islam, director of Directorate General and Health Services, Abdul Quader Chaudhury, additional engineer of DPHE, Mainul Huq of Development Policy Group, Dr Susan C Doi of Columbia University also spoke at the seminar.

PM seeks Japan's leading role in construction of Padma Bridge

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday hoped that Japan would take leading role in the construction of the Padma Bridge, recalling its massive contribution towards major infrastructure development in Bangladesh.

Expressing gratitude to Japan's investment and assistance in major development projects as a single largest developing partner of Bangladesh, she called for Japan's principal role when newly appointed Ambassador Masayuki Inoue made a courtesy call on the PM at her office.

Khaleda said her government would as well as Japan could invite World Bank and Asian Development Bank for their financial support in construction of the country's largest bridge over mighty river Padma.

She assured that Bangladesh would also provide funds and other support in this regard.

Japan has already conducted a technical feasibility study for construction of the Padma Bridge.

During the meeting, both sides emphasised high level exchange of visits between the two countries to further strengthen the present excellent relations and bilateral cooperation.

The Ambassador informed the prime minister that the Foreign Minister of Japan would visit Bangladesh next month.

Khaleda also hoped that Japan would increase trade, commerce and investment here and also relocate some of its industries, now in Japan and other countries, to Bangladesh availing the investment incentives, business-friendly atmosphere and advantage of cheap labour, which would benefit the two peoples.

## Bangladesh completes 3 Polio NIDs

### 96pc children under 5 vaccinated

Bangladesh has successfully completed three Polio National Immunization Days (NIDs) with 96 per cent of children under five being reached through the three rounds, says a press release.

The NIDs on April 16, May 13 and June 11 aim to reach 22 million children under the age of five in a bid to insulate them against the possible resurgence of poliovirus.

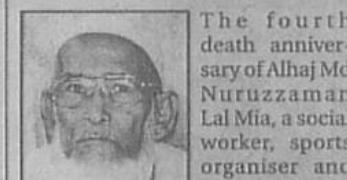
Each NID was followed by a four-day search to ensure that any child who could not make it to an immunization site could be vaccinated.

"This is the first large scale response by a country in line with the newly adopted resolution 1 of the 59th World Health Assembly and it demonstrates the commitment and capacity of Bangladesh and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to implement world class primary healthcare," said Dr Duangvadee Sungkhobol, World Health Organisation (WHO) Representative to Bangladesh.

The three NIDs were sparked by the confirmation in March this year that a nine-year-old girl from rural Bangladesh had contracted the disease. It is the first case in more than five years.

To combat the re-emergence of the disease, the government along with support from UNICEF, WHO, Rotary International and the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) organised the national polio eradication campaign within five weeks of official confirmation of the case.

## Death anniversary

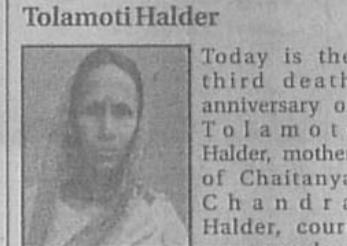


The fourth death anniversary of Alhaj Md Nuruzzaman Lal Mia, a social worker, sports organiser and patron of education, will be observed on June 25, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhawni and milad maifil will be held at his residence and foods will be distributed among the destitute today. Prayers will also be offered at his grave.

Alhaj Md Nuruzzaman Lal Mia Scholarship-2006 will be distributed at the Bhairoh Press Club at 10:00 am on June 25.

Tolamoti Halder



Today is the third death anniversary of Tolamoti Halder, mother of Chaitanya Chandra Halder, court correspondent of The Daily Star, says a press release.

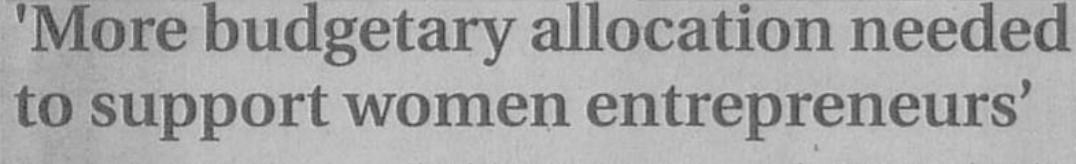
On the occasion, recitation from the Geeta, Kirtan, discussion and a prayer session will be held at her village home at Nayakandi Bajitpur under Rajori upazila in Madaripur district.

## 'More budgetary allocation needed to support women entrepreneurs'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gender-sensitive budget and more budgetary allocation for women are a must to encourage women entrepreneurs, speakers at a seminar said yesterday.

President of Nari Sangbadik Kendra Nasimun Ara Huq spoke at a seminar at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On her right is economist Dr Atiur Rahman and on her left is Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha Executive Director Rokeya Kabir.



Though the women issues were highlighted in the budget speech, the allocation for women is negligible, said economist Dr Atiur Rahman.

The allocation for women's development projects was 5.1 per cent in 2001, which is reduced to one per cent in 2006-07 fiscal, he added.

Nari Sangbadik Kendra, a centre for women journalists, Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) and the Institute of Environment and Development (IED) jointly organised the seminar titled 'Study on the role of national budget in developing entrepreneurship among women in Bangladesh' at the National Press Club in the city.

Dr Atiur said women are not benefiting much from the budget although they are making a significant contribution to society. A post-budget analysis should take place to evaluate the budgetary allocation for women, he added.

Though an increasing number of women are found self-employed in the area of micro-entrepreneurship, their number is very small in big firms, he said.

Former principal secretary SA Samad, Executive Director of IED Noman Ahmed Khan and Executive Director of BNPS Rokeya Kabir were also present.

A robber leader was killed in an 'encounter' between his gang and the police at Nazirhat in Anwara upazila early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mortaza Ali, 34, chief of notorious 'Mortaza Bahini,' who had been wanted in about 10 criminal cases.

After arresting him at Banshkhali on Monday night, police took Mortaza to Anwara Police Station for quizzing. Police said when they took him to Nazirhat char area to recover illegal arms and arrest his accomplices, the criminals opened fire on the law enforcement officers who had to retaliate.

"Mortaza died on the spot after being caught in the line of fire while he tried to escape," said a police source.

Police also seized a firearm and some ammunition from the place of occurrence.

MOVE TO SHIFT KALI MANDIR

## Protest today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Puja Uddyan Parishad will stage a rally in front of the National Museum today at 3:00pm protesting the move to shift Ramna Kali Mandir and Anandamoyee Ashram.

They will also submit a memorandum to the prime minister.

District committees of the Parishad will also submit memorandums to the deputy commissioners.

Obituary

Alema Yasmin, wife of Nurul Alam, passed away at Houston, Texas, USA on June 16, says a press release.

She left behind her husband, only son and a host of relatives in US and Bangladesh to mourn her death.

On the occasion, doa mahfil was held in Dhaka and Jessore on June 18.

reproductive sectors such as industry and garments, he added.

Empowerment of women will not be ensured unless they are engaged in productive sector.

President of Nari Sangbadik Kendra Nasimun Ara Huq moderated the seminar while Shahmaz Sumi of BNPS read out a study paper prepared by Pratima Pal Majumder.

The number of women entrepreneurs has increased three-fold in the last eight years, but lack of opportunities for education and training, non-availability of business-related information, various obstacles to getting loan and social prejudices hold them back, the study said.

It recommended initiating projects under development budget at productive sector, providing direct assistance to women entrepreneurs, provision of technical assistance programme in the national budget and providing tax holiday facilities to the organisations working to promote entrepreneurship among women.

Former principal secretary SA Samad, Executive Director of IED Noman Ahmed Khan and Executive Director of BNPS Rokeya Kabir were also present.

The number of women issues were highlighted in the budget speech, the allocation for women is negligible, said economist Dr Atiur Rahman.

The allocation for women's development projects was 5.1 per cent in 2001, which is reduced to one per cent in 2006-07 fiscal, he added.

Though an increasing number of women are found self-employed in the area of micro-entrepreneurship, their number is very small in big firms, he said.

Former principal secretary SA Samad, Executive Director of IED Noman Ahmed Khan and Executive Director of BNPS Rokeya Kabir were also present.

A robber leader was killed in an 'encounter' between his gang and the police at Nazirhat in Anwara upazila early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mortaza Ali, 34, chief of notorious 'Mortaza Bahini,' who had been wanted in about 10 criminal cases.

After arresting him at Banshkhali on Monday night, police took Mortaza to Anwara Police Station for quizzing. Police said when they took him to Nazirhat char area to recover illegal arms and arrest his accomplices, the criminals opened fire on the law enforcement officers who had to retaliate.

"Mortaza died on the spot after being caught in the line of fire while he tried to escape," said a police source.