



Textiles and Jute Adviser Geeti Ara Safiya Chowdhury visits a stall after inaugurating a month-long handicrafts exhibition at Manik Mia Avenue in the city yesterday.

HANDICRAFTS EXHIBITION BEGINS 'Train artisans to ensure quality products'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Textiles and Jute Adviser Geeti Ara Safiya Chowdhury yesterday underscored the need to train artisans of handicrafts in order to ensure quality products.

The craftspeople should be aware of the fact that nowadays shoppers look for quality handicrafts along with exceptional and innovative design.

She was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of 'Indigenous Handicrafts Exhibition' at Manik Mia Avenue in the city.

Inaugurating the month-long exhibition, the adviser urged the designers to be aware of colour and texture to preserve the glorious tradition of handloom industry.

Bangladesh Handloom Board organised the exhibition to mark the Independence and National Day, with the financial support of participating craftspeople.

In his welcome speech, Bangladesh Handloom Board Chairman Abdul Hakim Mandal said, "We organised the exhibition to pay tribute to the memory of the martyrs of our liberation war."

The chairman said around 36 per cent of domestic demand for clothes are met by the industry and around Tk 1000 crore value addition is accounted in the national economy every year.

The handloom industry involving the livelihood of around 15 lakh people is burdened with various problems, including lack of capital, improved technology and skilled workforce, he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Bangladesh National Handloom Samity President Md Hanif demanded implementation of the 'Benarasi Pali Project' in Mirpur soon to save the 'Benarasi' industry as the designers are gradually leaving this profession out of depression.

He also asked for developing

website on handloom industry for the worldwide exposure.

Presided over by Secretary of Textiles and Jute Ministry Abdur Rashid Sarker, the function was also addressed by Secretary of Liberation War Affairs Ministry Dr Abul Kashem Mahbubul Alam as special guest.

A total of 140 stalls of handloom clothes, jute and leather products and handicrafts featuring Benarasi Katan of Mirpur, Jamdani saree of Sonargaon, Lungi of Ruhitpur, indigenous clothes of Rangamati, Rajshahi Silk and shawl of Kumarkhali are available on the exhibition.

The exhibition will remain open from 9:00am to 7:00pm everyday.

Mahashweta Devi wins Saarc Literary Award

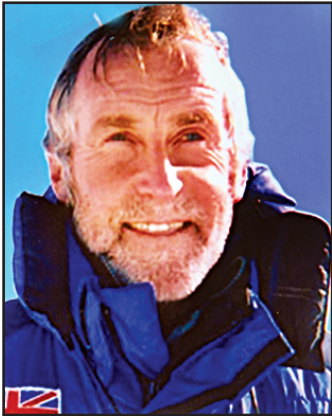
UNB, New Delhi

The Saarc Writers' Conference will confer the Saarc Literary Award upon noted Bengali writer and novelist Mahashweta Devi here on April 3.

Scholars and writers from all the Saarc countries will take part in the literary conference to be held on the sidelines of the 14th Saarc Summit.

Mahashweta Devi has written more than a hundred books that include classics like 'Hazar Churashir Maa'.

An abbreviated version of the event will also be held at the banquet to be hosted by Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh for the heads of state and government of the Saarc nations on April 3.



'SEEING IS BELIEVING' Blind adventurer Miles arrives tomorrow

Miles Hilton-Barber, a blind adventurer and aviator, will arrive in Dhaka tomorrow on a three-day goodwill visit to support the fund raising for Standard Chartered Bank's 'Seeing is Believing' programme, says a press release.

He will be accompanied by Storm Smith, a highly experienced microlight pilot and instructor.

The 'Seeing is Believing' programme aims to raise funds for sight restorations of 10 million blind people in the developing world by 2010. In Bangladesh, the funds collected will go towards cataract operations, training doctors, and building of facilities in partnership with Sightsavers International.

On March 7, Miles ventured out on his latest challenge 'Flight for Sight' to become the first blind aviator in history to fly halfway around the world and in doing so he aimed to raise at least one million pounds sterling towards the sight restorations programme.

Since losing his sight Miles has set numerous world records whilst undertaking extreme endurance events across the seven continents of the world, from Siberia to the Sahara desert, from Antarctica to Africa, from Himalayas to the Gobi desert, and from Alps to Death Valley.

ADD to observe Nat'l Disability Day Apr 4

UNB, Dhaka

UK-based international organisation Action on Disability and Development (ADD) will observe National Disability Day across the country on Wednesday.

To mark the day, a discussion titled 'Social Security and Human Rights Situation of Challenged Citizens in Bangladesh' will be held at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

Former adviser Rokia Afzal Rahman will attend the programme as chief guest and ADD Country Representative Mosharraf Hossain will preside over the programme.

ADD will organise a human chain from Dowel Chattar to Central Shahid Minar at about 4:00pm.

BSF abducts Bangladeshi

UNB, Sherpur

Indian Border Security Forces (BSF) abducted a Bangladeshi day labourer from Nokshi border in Jhenaigati upazila Friday morning.

BDR sources said BSF troops picked up A Razzaque, 40, of Deflai village, from no 1105 border pillar when he was collecting firewood at about 11:00am.

BDR sent a letter to BSF demanding return of the Bangladeshi man on Saturday morning but did not get any reply till last afternoon.

40 injured in Chandpur clash

UNB, Chandpur

At least 40 people were injured, eight seriously, in a clash at Balar char of Narsinghapur in sadar upazila here yesterday.

Sources said as hired men of an influential, Aziz Didar, went to harvest boro paddy on land, the supporters of Lokman group swooped on them with lethal weapons, triggering a fierce

clash in the morning.

"The clash lasted for about two hours. On information, police rushed in and brought the situation under control," says a report from the Char area.

Eight of the injured were rushed to sadar hospital.

Police reinforcements have been sent to fend off further outbreaks of violence.