

Enact special law to curb domestic violence

Experts tell BNWLA consultation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a consultation yesterday called for enacting special law to combat domestic violence.

They said there must be a strong legislative platform where women can seek justice against the crime.

The existing laws are not enough to deal with different forms of domestic violence, they added.

The national consultation titled 'Combating domestic violence: The way forward' was held at the Brac Centre Inn in the city.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) organised the consultation on the eve of the second phase of its programme 'Combating Domestic Violence' with the support of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF).

In her welcome speech, BNWLA Executive Director Advocate Salma Ali said like many countries of the world, women in Bangladesh also face violence at home, which is not possible to address within the

existing legal framework.

She suggested for such an act that will be able to change the attitude of the society towards domestic violence.

Presenting a keynote paper jointly, Sadrul Hasan Majumder, programme manager, and Advocate Fawzia Karim Firoj, acting president of BNWLA, underscored the need for community mobilisation to check domestic violence.

They said community counseling centres should be established in collaboration with the local governments in both urban and rural areas to address domestic violence.

MJF Director Rina Roy called for ensuring accountability at all levels along with the enactment of a legislative framework to combat domestic violence.

Rangita de Silva, senior adviser to International Programmes of Wellesley Centre for Women, USA said the definition of domestic violence is no longer confined to

physical violence, now the term incorporates mental, verbal and sexual torture of women.

She also suggested that the language of the law should be reader-friendly so that all can understand the law easily.

Ferdous Ara, member of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee, said special act should be enacted to eliminate violence against women at all levels.

She urged the authorities concerned to take strong stance against domestic violence like the ongoing anti-corruption drive.

She also called for taking initiatives to train up other stakeholders to combat domestic violence.

Nasrin Begum, joint secretary to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Maleka Begum, visiting professor of women studies department, and Prof Sadeka Halim of social science department at Dhaka University also spoke on the occasion.

BSF kidnaps Bangladeshi fisherman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) abducted a Bangladeshi fisherman from a border point in Kushtia yesterday.

He was identified as Bablu Biswas, 32, son of Rabban Biswas of Insannagar under Daulatpur upazila.

According to BDR 32 rifle battalion, a BSF team of 94-Katcahripa in Nadia district of West Bengal entered into Bangladesh territory and picked up Bablu when he was fishing in the river Padma near the main pillar no 153 at Thotapara border at about 9:15am.

BSF also seized his belongings including nets.

After the incident, BDR officials visited the spot and sent a letter to BSF protesting the incident and asking for a flag meeting.

BSF, however, did not give any reply to the letter as of filing this report at 4:35pm.

According to sources, BSF abducted at least 60 Bangladeshis from different border points in south-western region in last six months.

The abducted Bangladeshis included farmers, cattle traders, fishermen and innocent people.

Of the abducted, about 35 are still in different jails in India, and the rest were released after flag meetings between BDR and BSF.

EXTORTION CASE UP chairman arrested in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

A UP chairman was arrested from Borobaria Bazar in Chitalmari upazila in an extortion case Friday night.

Police said chairman of Borobaria Union Parishad Ohiduzzaman Panna, also Jubo League vice-president of Chitalmari upazila, demanded Tk 1 lakh in toll from UP member M Masud while he was implementing some development projects in the union. Later, Masud gave him Tk 20,000.

Masud filed a case against three people, including the UP chairman, on Thursday.

Land depression over W Bengal moves westward

UNB, Dhaka

The land depression over West Bengal and adjoining areas moved westward and was lying over Bihar and adjoining areas yesterday noon.

It was likely to move in a north-westerly direction further inland.

"Steep pressure gradient persists over north Bay and squally weather may continue over the ports," said a special bulletin of the Met Office.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted local cautionary signal number three.

All fishing boats and trawlers over the north Bay have been advised to remain in shelter until further notice.

Death anniversary



Today is the 14th death anniversary of AZ Syed Ahmed Chowdhury, a former politician and social worker, says a press release.

Syed Ahmed Chowdhury, also a life member of Feni Sports Association, had significant contribution to the fields of sports, education and culture.

He died on this day in 1993 at Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital in the city at the age of 79.

A doa and milad mahfil will be held at the residence of his son Selim Shamsul Huda Chowdhury, a cultural activist, at Dhanmondi in Dhaka after Maghrib prayers.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the milad.

Various programmes have also been arranged at Feni and Sonagazi to mark the day.



Today is the first death anniversary of Fariduddin Ahmed, former additional secretary of the Ministry of Information and member of National Press Club, says a press release.

He was killed in a rail accident near Kuril Bishwa Road in the city last year.

His relatives, friends and admirers are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Hayat Mamud speaks at a discussion on 'Ongoing political reforms and the role of the civil society' at the Liberation War Museum auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right are Dr Syed Anwar Hossain and Ziauddin Tareque Ali and on his left is Adv Tobarak Ali. Sammilito Samajik Andolon organised the event.

Caretaker govt urged to protect rights of people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a meeting yesterday urged the caretaker government to protect the rights of people.

They also stressed the need for maintaining link between the government and the civil society to carry out reforms in the society.

The view exchange meeting titled 'Political reforms: Role of the civil society' was organised by Sammilito Samajik Andolon, a citizen's platform, at the Liberation War Museum in the city.

In a keynote speech Ziauddin Tarik Ali, a trustee of the Liberation War Museum, said the ongoing drive is the retribution for corruption and abuse of power by the elected governments in the past.

He said major fundamental changes should be brought to political and social landscapes.

"But as it is a very lengthy process, so the government should determine some set of goals for immediate restructuring," he added.

Speaking as chief guest Prof Hayat Mamud called for concerted efforts to stop any further degradation of morality for the sake of a welfare society.

Pankaj Bhattacharya of Gonoforum expressed his satisfaction over the activities of the government and asked them to be more cautious in their drive against corruption.

He said some of the anti-corruption committees at district level are consisted of former government's henchmen.

So how far these committees will be successful in fighting corruption with these people in

chair?" he posed a question.

Major (Retd) Amin Ahmed Bir Bikram, however, observed that this government should carry on until the overall reform is achieved.

"The government should press ahead with its agenda for all-out reforms. The role of the army-backed government should be to bulldoze, we would form structures from the debris", he added.

He also criticised the role of the 'so-called' civil society.

Prof Shawkat Ara Hossain said if the citizens get annoyed with the unchecked price hike, the credibility of this government would be at stake.

She said the success the government has been dimmed due to constant price hike of essentials.

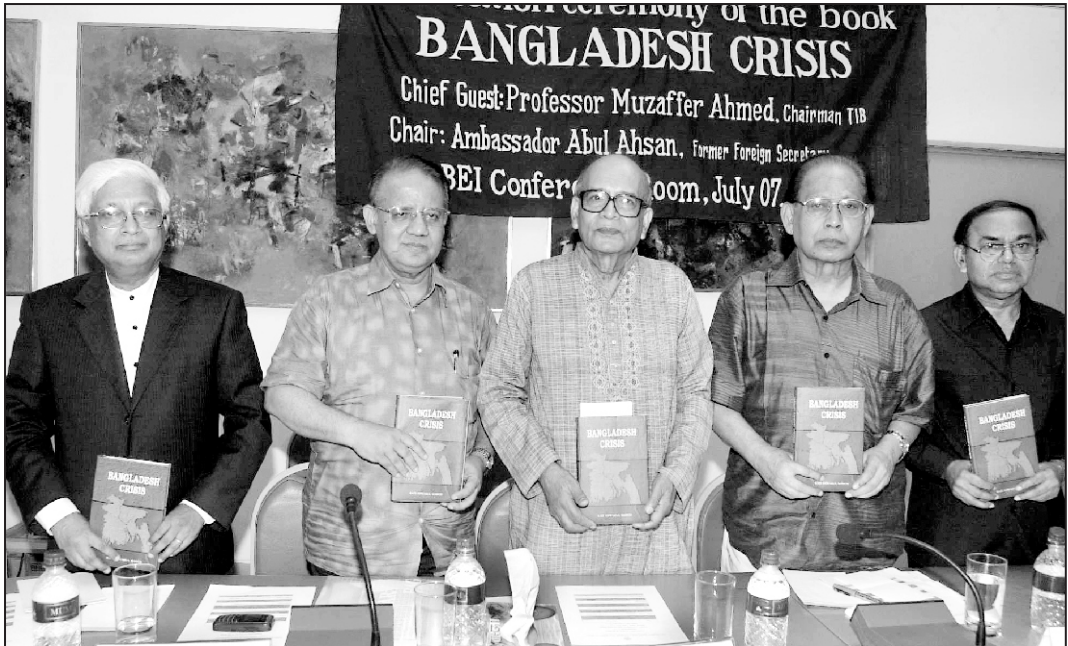


PHOTO: STAR

The publication ceremony of a book titled 'Bangladesh Crisis' by Ambassador Kazi Anwarul Masud was held at BEI conference room in the city yesterday. The photo shows (from left) Mostafa Faruque Mohammad, Ambassador Masud, Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, Ambassador Abul Ahsan and M Shafiullah holding copies of the book at the ceremony.

Iranian ship with cracked bottom brought back to Ctg port for repair

UNB, Bagerhat

An Iranian container ship MV Mir Damad, which was about to capsize with 17 crew members on July 1 after cracks developed on its lower deck, was brought back to Chittagong port on Friday for repair.

Nurul Kabir, assistant manager of BS agency which is the local agent of the ship, said the engine and generator of the ship were damaged as water penetrated into the engine room when the ship was sinking.

"After removing the water from the ship and repairing its engine, the vessel has been taken back to Chittagong port for repair," he added.

The ship sailed from Chittagong Port on June 28 for Chennai Port of India with 91 empty containers on board.

Water started to enter into the ship when it was off the Hiron Point at Mongla seaport on July 1.

After repairing the ship will sail for Chennai Port, sources added.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi division as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to very heavy rainfall is also likely at places over the country, Met Office said.

It also predicted that day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 34.2 degree Celsius was recorded today at Sylhet and Syedpur and the lowest of 24.4 degrees at Teknaf.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:17am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	31.3	26.7	82	76
Chittagong	31.2	25.8	83	82
Rajshahi	30.2	26.5	97	82
Khulna	27.3	26.0	93	97
Barisal	30.0	25.5	92	90
Sylhet	34.2	26.4	79	66
Cox's Bazar	31.6	25.0	88	96



PHOTO: STAR

Police in a drive check the papers of autorickshaws on the Dhaka University campus near Doel Chatter in the city yesterday.

Garment workers block highway in N'ganj

UNB, Narayanganj

Garment workers put up barricades on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Rupashi in Rugganj yesterday, demanding payment of salary arrears and overtime bills.

Witnesses said the workers of Shikder Apparels blocked the road as its management did not pay their salaries and overtime bills for the last two months.

During the hour-long blockade, the unruly workers also damaged a number of rickshaws.

However, they removed the barricades after the factory owner assured them of paying their salaries soon.

Heavy rainfalls cause sufferings to people in Khulna

UNB, Khulna

Heavy rainfalls under the influence of active monsoon for last few days caused untold sufferings to the people of this southern district.

Most of the city roads went under knee-deep water, forcing the dwellers to keep themselves inside the doors.

Most of the business establishments and educational institutions in the city remained closed.

The incessant rains damaged a large number of thatched houses and standing crops in the district.

Moreover, fishes were washed away from over 500 enclosures and ponds in nine upazilas.

Local Met Office recorded 108mm rainfalls in the district from 6:00am to 3:00pm yesterday.

5th unit of Ashuganj power plant resumes production

BSS, Brahmanbaria

The fifth unit of Ashuganj power plant, which remained out of order for the last one and a half years, resumed production on Friday.

Sources said the unit has started generating power after completion of the overhauling that began in December 25, 2005. The unit has already been supplying 50MW power to the national grid, which will gradually be increased to 150MW following the overhauling, they added.

Dhaka-Rajshahi direct rail link to resume soon

BSS, Rajshahi

Direct rail communication between Dhaka and Rajshahi will resume soon.

To this end, the inter-city 'Silk City' running between Rajshahi and Joydevpur was launched up to Dhaka Cantonment Railway Station from Rajshahi on a trial basis yesterday.

According to railway western zone officials, construction work on the dual-gauge line from Joydevpur to Cantonment Station has been completed successfully. Within a week, the direct rail communication is expected to resume on the route.

Meanwhile, an Indian train carrying a delegation will reach the Cantonment Station via Darshana Station in Kushtia tomorrow on a trial basis, the officials said.

The delegation is scheduled to meet with their Bangladeshi counterparts to discuss the matter relating to rail communication between Bangladesh and India.

Tk 10 lakh donated to AMCH

Habibur Rahman, former Director of Bangladesh Cricket Control Board and executive director of Pfizer Lab Bangladesh Limited, yesterday donated Tk 10 lakh to Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH), says a press release.

He handed over a cheque for the amount to President of Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) Kazi Rafiqul Alam at the Mission Bhaban at Dhanmondi in the city.

A two-bed cabin of the hospital will be named after his wife late Farida Yesmain, a former lawmaker.

Managing Director of Medi Aid Hospital Dr Abdul Jalil, Assistant Director of DAM Abdur Razzak and other officers of the mission were present on the occasion.

Kazi Rafiqul Alam expressed his gratitude to Habibur Rahman for his kind support.

So far, about Tk 51 crore has been received from organisations and individuals in donations, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Dr M Asaduzzaman speaks at a press briefing on 'Independent Civil Society Report on the Progress of MDGs in Bangladesh, 2007' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Rasheda K Chowdhury and on his left is Ahsan Uddin Ahmad.

Four killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Four people, including an Ansar official and a housewife, were killed

and 24 injured in separate road accidents in Pabna, Bogra and Rangpur in the last two days.

Our Correspondent in Pabna reports: Shajahan, 40, an assistant platoon commander (APC) of Ansar, was knocked down by an Ishwardi-bound motorcycle while he was crossing the road at Dashuria in the district at about 10:00pm on Friday.

Locals rushed him to Ishwardi Hospital but later he was shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on Friday midnight.

Ishwardi police arrested two people, including the driver of the motorcycle, in this connection. The arrestees were identified as Mostafa, son of Abu Bakar of village Radhanagar and Tarek, son of Aziz Pramanik of the same village in Pabna Sadar.

UNB adds: Two people were killed and 10 others injured as a

bus ploughed into a roadside shop at Erulia in Bogra Sadar on Bogra-Naogaon road yesterday.

The dead were identified as Ummeh Kulsum, 20, of Erulia village and bus helper Shaheen Miah, 29.

Police said the accident took place as the driver of the Bogra-bound bus from Santahar lost control.

Five critically injured passengers were rushed to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital.

BSS adds: A housewife was killed and 14 others were injured in a road accidents in Rangpur yesterday.

Police sources said fifteen people got injured in an accident when a Bogra-bound bus from Rangpur and a Rangpur-bound bus from Balua Masimpur collided head-on at Babu Khan Bus Stand on Rangpur-Bogra highway at around 1:20pm.

Kotwali police rushed to the spot and sent the injured passengers to Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH) where Sajeda Khatun, 50, wife of Khademul Islam of village Noyahat under Mithapukur upazila in Rangpur, died at 4:00pm.



PHOTO: STAR

Justice KM Sobhan speaks at a roundtable on 'Morality in society and the security of people' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury and on his left is Maj (retd) Abdul Mannan. Swadhinata and Nagorik Adhikar Forum organised the event.