

# 'Formulate policy to curb violence against children, women'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a view-exchanging meeting yesterday underscored the need for a separate policy to check violence against children and women.

They also laid emphasis on formulating a policy to motivate repressed women to seek legal

actions against the violence inflicted on them.

The meeting titled 'Violence against women and children' was jointly organised by Bangladesh Nari Sangbadik Kendra (BNSK) and United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) in the city.

Inaugurating the meeting, Kirsty Macdover, chief of communica-

tions of Unicef, said marriage at the age of 14 to 16 years is one kind of violence and existing laws must be implemented to stop it.

She also expressed her concern over another phenomenon-suicide committed by teenagers and women failing to protest the repression on them.

Kirsty reiterated the role of

media to create awareness in the society to eliminate violence against women and children.

Addressing the meeting Nasimun Ara Huq Minu, BNSK president, called on the journalists to report highlighting the success story of repressed women and children who have over come their social barriers.

She suggested for producing films on violence against women and children to create mass awareness in the society.

Presenting a paper titled 'Violence against women and children: Reality and challenges', Shabnaz Zaherin, child protection officer of Unicef, said discrepancies in the existing laws regarding the age of children often poses barrier to sue for legal actions against violence.

"In the existing women repression laws, for example, a person aged less than 16 years old is considered as child whereas the Penal Code 1860 defines a child who is under 14," she added.

Shabnaz pointed out that in most cases violence against women and children remains unreported making it difficult to get the actual statistics of violence against them in the society.

She called for formulating necessary policies to curb violence against children and women.

Referring to practice of child prostitution and pornography, Shabnaz asked for government's intervention through the amendment of existing laws to end sexual exploitation of children.

Arifa S Sharmin, communication officer of Unicef, moderated the meeting attended by women journalists from both print and electronic media.

## MIG-29 CASE SC orders status quo for 3 weeks

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday ordered maintaining status quo for three weeks on the stalled trial proceedings of the much-talked-about MiG-29 purchase scam case against detained former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and others.

Chamber judge of the apex court passed the order following applications filed on behalf of Hasina and the others, seeking stay on Thursday's High Court judgment that discharged the petitions for quashing the MiG-29 case.

Barrister Shafique Ahmed, counsel for Hasina, moved the identical applications, as all the accused preferred leave to appeal to overturn the High Court judgment.

Passing the interim order, the court asked the petitioners to file regular leave to appeal petitions in the meantime.

"The matter will come up again before the court on September 30," court source said.

Meanwhile, a division bench, supposed to hear the long-pending petitions for quashing three other corruption cases, including purchase of frigate, against Hasina and others yesterday could not fix the date for hearing, as Sunday's High Court orders de-listing the quashing petitions were yet to be received.



Thai Ambassador Suphat Chitranukroh addresses a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday on the occasion of Thai Shoppe Ramadan organised by Thai Trade Centre Dhaka.

PHOTO: STAR

BNSK President Nasimun Ara Huq Minu speaks at a meeting in the city yesterday. On her right are Unicef Communication Officer Arifa S Sharmin and Unicef Bangladesh Chief Communication Officer Kirsty Macdover and on her left is BNSK General Secretary Parvin Sultana Jhuma.