



Artists perform a dance number at the inaugural ceremony of the third national conference of women's organisations at Biam auditorium in the city yesterday. Naripakkho and Durbar Network jointly organised the conference.

Change attitude towards women

Speakers tell national confce of women's organisations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a conference yesterday called for changing negative attitude towards women rather than enacting laws for women's rights and empowerment.

They said movement for establishing women's right in the society does not mean hatred against man and splitting of family relationship.

The third national conference of women's organisations was held at Biam auditorium in the city. It was attended by around 700 representatives from 550

organisations under the banner of Naripakkho and Durbar Network.

"People at policy level think that the issue of women's rights is a secondary matter," said Khushi Kabir, a women's rights activist.

"When one or two women are at policy level, they also remain silent over women's rights issue to prove that they are equal to man," she added.

Mahin Sultan of Naripakkho called for discarding negative attitude and mentality towards woman.

"We had to fight and still we are

fighting to establish that women's rights are also human rights," she added.

Dr Naila, another women's rights activist, called for establishing a secular society.

Sara Zaker, a cultural personality, called for launching a television channel where only women's issue will be addressed.

After the inaugural session, several seminar and symposium on woman were held at the conference.

The biennial convention of Durbar Network will be held at the same venue today.

Burglars take away Tk 8 lakh gold ornaments from Ctg house

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Burglars stole gold ornaments worth around Tk 7.5 lakh from the house of a college teacher in the port city yesterday afternoon.

Sources said a gang of burglars entered the apartment of AKM Shamsuddin, a lecturer of chemistry at Chittagong City University College, on the top floor of a five-story building at Bagghona in Lalkhan Bazar at around 4:20pm after breaking the door lock open. Nobody was at home at that time.

The gang broke open a steel almirah and took away gold ornaments weighing about 50 tolas, Shamsuddin said.

"My wife left the house at around 4:00pm to bring our daughter from her school nearby. She returned home at 4:50pm only to find the main door open and the gold ornaments missing," he said.

He also said that most of the ornaments belong to his two sister-in-laws living in nearby area.

Khulshi police said they are investigating the matter.

Army undertakes rehab programme for Sidr survivors

BSS, Barisal

Bangladesh Army has taken up a programme named 'Ashar Alo' to rehabilitate the Sidr survivors in Jhalakathi at a cost of Tk 2 crore.

Source said at least 3,000 families of four upazilas of Jhalakathi district will be brought under this rehabilitation programme.

As part of the programme fishing boats will be provided to 500 fishermen, 54 power tillers to 540 farmers, 150 power pumps to 1,500 farmers and 100 sewing machines to 100 women and 100 cows to 100 families, source said.

Besides, some families will be provided with rickshaws, rickshaw-vans and grant for starting small shops.

The army will also set up mini-urea factory at Nalchity upazila and a 'Shitalpati Pali' at Daharshanker village under Rajapur upazila of the district. They will set up a sales centre for selling 'Shitalpati' at Jhalakathi.

Major Selim Hasan has distributed seven sewing machines to seven women of Nalchity upazila on Saturday. UNO Md Sekander Hayat Rizvi was present.

Besides, Major Syed Fazley Hossain distributed five power pumps to five groups of 25 farmers at Sadar upazila on Saturday.

Expat donates Tk 5 lakh to cancer hospital

BSS, Dhaka

Rehana Begum, a Bangladeshi expatriate living in the United Kingdom, donated Tk 5,00,000 to the Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital fund.

She handed over a cheque for the amount to the mission's President Kazi Rafiqul Alam yesterday for the hospital now under construction in the city's Uttara Model Town.

The hospital authorities will set up a bed after the name of Rehana's father Md Arshad Ali for this humanitarian donation, a mission's press release said.

Dhaka Ahsania Mission has urged all benevolent persons to come forward with their generous supports for timely completion of the construction of this hospital, where the poor and hapless people will get modern treatment facilities.



Artists render a song at a programme organised to mark the first death anniversary of noted journalist Wahidul Huq at Ati Bhawal High School at Keraniganj yesterday. Wahidul Huq Karmaparampara organised the programme.

900 children die of malnutrition a day: Expert

BSS, Dhaka

Around 900 children die of malnutrition in Bangladesh everyday mainly due to a poor dietary intake in the earliest months of their life, said eminent child specialist Prof Dr M Quddus-e-Khuda Talukder at a seminar in the city yesterday.

He also said that the consequences of insufficient nourishment continue into adulthood and are passed on to the next generations giving rise to a wide array of effects including Intrauterine Growth Restriction (IUGR).

Dr Talukder made the disclosure at the seminar on 'The Lancet's Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition' organised by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR'B) at its Sasakawa auditorium.

Dr Talukder called for revitalising the nutrition programme in Bangladesh through mobilising

required resources and making the best use of expertise in the health sector to reduce the child mortality and improving the child health in the country.

Director General of the Department of Health Prof Dr Md Abul Faiz was the chief guest at the seminar while Editor of Prothom Alo Matiur Rahman and Executive Director of National Nutrition Programme Biman Kumar Saha were present as special guests on the occasion.

The seminar was attended by health scientists, physicians, NGO officials and donor representatives, who also took part in the open discussion on health issues.

Dr Faiz referred to the government's relevant health programmes in reducing maternal and child mortality and said efforts should be further geared up to improve the mother and child health in the greater national interest.

Matiur Rahman called for increased media coverage to the

health issues taking into active consideration their importance in the country's socio-economic perspective.

Professor Robert E Black of the John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Dr Tahmeed Ahmed of ICDDR'B presented two keynote papers with emphasis on long-term educational and economic effects side by side with establishing evidence-based institutions to drastically reduce the consequences of malnutrition.

According to The Lancet, a world famous medical science magazine, more than 3.5 million mothers and under-5 children die unnecessarily each year globally due to the underlying cause of undernutrition.

Besides, it said, millions more are permanently disabled by the physical and mental effects because of poor diet, putting them into the state of irreversible physical and cognitive damage.

Dr Robert E Black said 90 per cent

of all malnourished children live in 36 developing countries including Bangladesh. "Over a third of the child's deaths and 11 per cent of the global disease burdens are resulted from maternal and child malnutrition," he said.

Dr Ahmed said maternal and child nutrition interventions could prevent a quarter of child deaths in poor communities. "Bangladesh ranks the 4th position in the list of children suffering from malnutrition," he said.

According to the keynote presenters, at least 13 million children are born annually with IUGR, 112 millions are underweight and 178 million under-5 children suffer from stunting.

"The high mortality and disease burden resulting from these nutrition-related factors make a compelling case for the urgent implementation of interventions to reduce or ameliorate their consequences," they said.



Family members of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria place a wreath at his grave at Banani Graveyard in the city yesterday marking his third death anniversary.

Four get death for killing man

UNB, Brahmanbaria

A Brahmanbaria court yesterday sentenced four people to death for killing a man in 2002.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Sadequul Islam Talukder handed down the verdict to Rabiul Awal Rabi, Imam Ali, Alamgir and Kabir Mia.

The court also acquitted 13 other accused as the allegations brought against them could not be proved.

According to the prosecution, the convicts stabbed Shamsul Haq Babul to death at Manikpur on July 17, 2002.

'Women's rights not reflected in PRSP'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the city yesterday said that there is no specific guideline in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) regarding women's empowerment.

Aroma Dutt, executive director of Prip Trust, also alleged at the press conference that women's rights and their dignity were not reflected in the PRSP.

She also said that Prip Trust and

Oxfam will jointly organise three national workshops in June to highlight the importance of the participation of women in the economic activities and politics.

She hoped that these workshops will help the government bring positive changes in the PRSP and therefore establish women's empowerment in PRSP.

Farhana Hafiz, programme officer, Oxfam, Shirin Banu, director, gender and governance, Prip Trust, were also present.



A nine-day exhibition of artworks by Qazi Munir began at the Gallery of Shilpakala Academy yesterday. The proceeds from the exhibition will be utilised for the treatment of the artist who has suffered a brain stroke recently.

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