

No anti-Quran section in Nat'l Women Dev Policy

Islamic scholars tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is no anti-Quran section in the Women Development Policy, but a vested political quarter is conspiring to snatch the rights of women in the name of religion, said the Islamic scholars at a roundtable yesterday.

They said the Holy Quran states equal rights for men and women and Islam does not create any discrimination between them.

The roundtable titled 'Women Development Policy from Islamic point of view' was organised by Sammilita Islami Jote at the National Press Club in the city on Tuesday.

In a keynote paper, Jote President Hafez Maulana Ziaul Hasan said though it is stated in the

Muslim law of inheritance that a sister will get half of her brother, but there is no restriction in the Quran in giving a sister equal share.

He said those who are opposing the rights of women in the name of Islam are not following Islam.

"What provisions of the Holy Quran were followed when the militant fundamentalists staged violence in and around Baitul Mukarram National Mosque on April 10 and 11," he asked.

Mohammad Sadek, a former official of the Islamic Foundation, said activities of some Islamic parties have turned Islam into a religion of terror.

Ayesha Khanam, president of Mahila Parishad, said Bangladesh would fall behind by 100 years if the recommendations of the review

committee are implemented.

Moinuddin Khan Badal, president of the executive committee of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Women leader Rokeya Kabir and Barrister Tania Amir also spoke.

Teachers and students of different Qawami Madrasas were present at the discussion.

Army chief to visit Bhabadah today

UNB, JESSORE

Army Chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed is coming here today to visit Bhabadah Beel, once a bane for the farmers for waterlogging and now a boon for them at army initiative.

The army chief is expected to reach Bhabadah College at noon to meet the army officials and then visit the Bhabadah sluice gate that changed the fate of the villagers.

After inaugurating the reaping of Boro paddy harvest at Monohorpur, Gen Moeen will exchange views with the affected farmers of the waterlogged area on the Technical College premises.

He will also observe the success of the army personnel in extracting stagnant water as well as the affected area.

"We are expecting that waterlogging problem in the Bhabadah area might be solved permanently with intervention by the army chief," enthusiastic people here said ahead of Moeen's tour.

Farmers at their own initiative made their crop lands suitable for Boro cultivation removing stagnant waters this year, as army troops played an important role in removing embankments from rivers and canals.

Replying to a query, he said if the state of emergency is not lifted ahead of the elections, emergency should be relaxed to the maximum extent for holding a free, fair and credible election.

"But all have to consider normal law and order situation, and for that we said about relaxation of the emergency in maximum level. We hope that it would be lifted," Anwar said, adding that a proper atmosphere should be created for giving people the chance to do election campaign.

Commenting on doubt in public mind about holding of the election at the scheduled time, the high commissioner said since he is an "optimist" he hopes that the election will be held as per the electoral roadmap.

"If people have any doubt about the election in time... their past experience is responsible for that. But, we are not observing any doubt about the holding of election according to the scheduled time," he said.

Anwar said the government would have to take initiatives to ease

Emergency to be lifted before polls

Hopes UK envoy

UNB, Dhaka

All doubts from public mind. "Declaration of election schedule can remove people's doubt over holding elections."

He said people believe that the election would be held in December or earlier, but the declaration of election schedule could make people confident about it.

"The caretaker government gave assurance several times of holding the election before the end of 2008 and we have no doubt about it."

Asked about government's pre-dialogue talks with political parties, the outgoing envoy said he is not the right person to make any comment on the issue. But he hoped that it would be lifted ahead of the elections.

"We want fruitful dialogue and through it political parties would come to a commitment and will move forward," Anwar added.

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CASE AGAINST HASINA

Hearing on govt appeal resumes

UNB, Dhaka

After a five-week adjournment, the hearing on a government appeal against the High Court judgment on detained former prime minister Sheikh Hasina in an extortion case filed by businessman Azam J Chowdhury resumed yesterday at the Supreme Court.

Barrister Rafique-ul-Huq, a counsel for Hasina, submitted his arguments that remained inconclusive.

However, the hearing resumes today.

On February 6, the High Court, upon a writ petition filed by Awami League President Hasina, had declared illegal the government's sanction placing the case against her for trial under the EPR and quashed the entire trial proceedings.

On February 26, the Appellate Division upon an application granted the government leave-to-appeal against the HC rulings, and fixed March 16 for hearing.

It also stayed the operation of the HC judgment and stalled the trial of the extortion case against Hasina under the EPR until the appeal is resolved.

On March 18, the apex court adjourned the hearing for five weeks after arguments by the government side.

DHAKA TODAY

BEI roundtable

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) organises a roundtable on 'Does Bangladesh need an upper house?'. BEI conference room. Time: 5:30pm.

Report launching

Unesco, Dhaka will launch the education for all global monitoring report. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Workshop

Small and Medium Enterprise Foundation organises a workshop on 'Technology development, acquisition and transfer for targeted SMEs'. Venue: Biam Foundation. Time: 10:00am.

Roundtable

Association for Law Research and Human Rights (ALERT) organises a roundtable on food security. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

Lecture

Department of Women and Gender Studies of Dhaka University organises a lecture on women in TV commercials. Venue: Centre for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences seminar room. Time: 11:00am.

ICT fair

A three-day inter school ICT fair will begin. Venue: Oxford International School, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:00pm.

'Re-fix minimum wage'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) yesterday demanded re-fixing the minimum wage for the workers considering the interests of both the workers and the owners.

The SKOP demanded this at a seminar on 'Announcement and implementation of minimum national wage consistent with the current prices of essentials is inevitable' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

The speakers at the seminar also demanded a rationing system and distributing rice, pulses and oil at a lower price under Open Market Sale for the workers.

They also demanded permanent dearness allowance for the workers and a system to re-fix the allowance every two years.

President of Bangladesh Economic Association Dr Qazi Khaliquzzaman, Executive Director of Centre for Policy Dialogue Dr Mostafizur Rahman and President of Bangladesh Federal Journalists' Union Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul spoke at the seminar presided over by SKOP leader Abdul Kader Howlader.

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Most of the high schools also have not got guidelines on how to set questions for examinations, evaluate the answer sheets and impart lessons in classes.

On introduced, the present class IX students would be the first batch to sit for the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations 2010 under SQ method.

The method is appreciated by academics, teachers, guardians and students, but they all slate the government's failure to take necessary preparations.

The education ministry is now confused over introducing the method due to lack of preparations and strong protests from teachers, students and guardians.

"The final decision of introducing the SQ method from this year in class IX or later or in class VI in phases will come after holding

Weather Today

Heat wave may continue

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

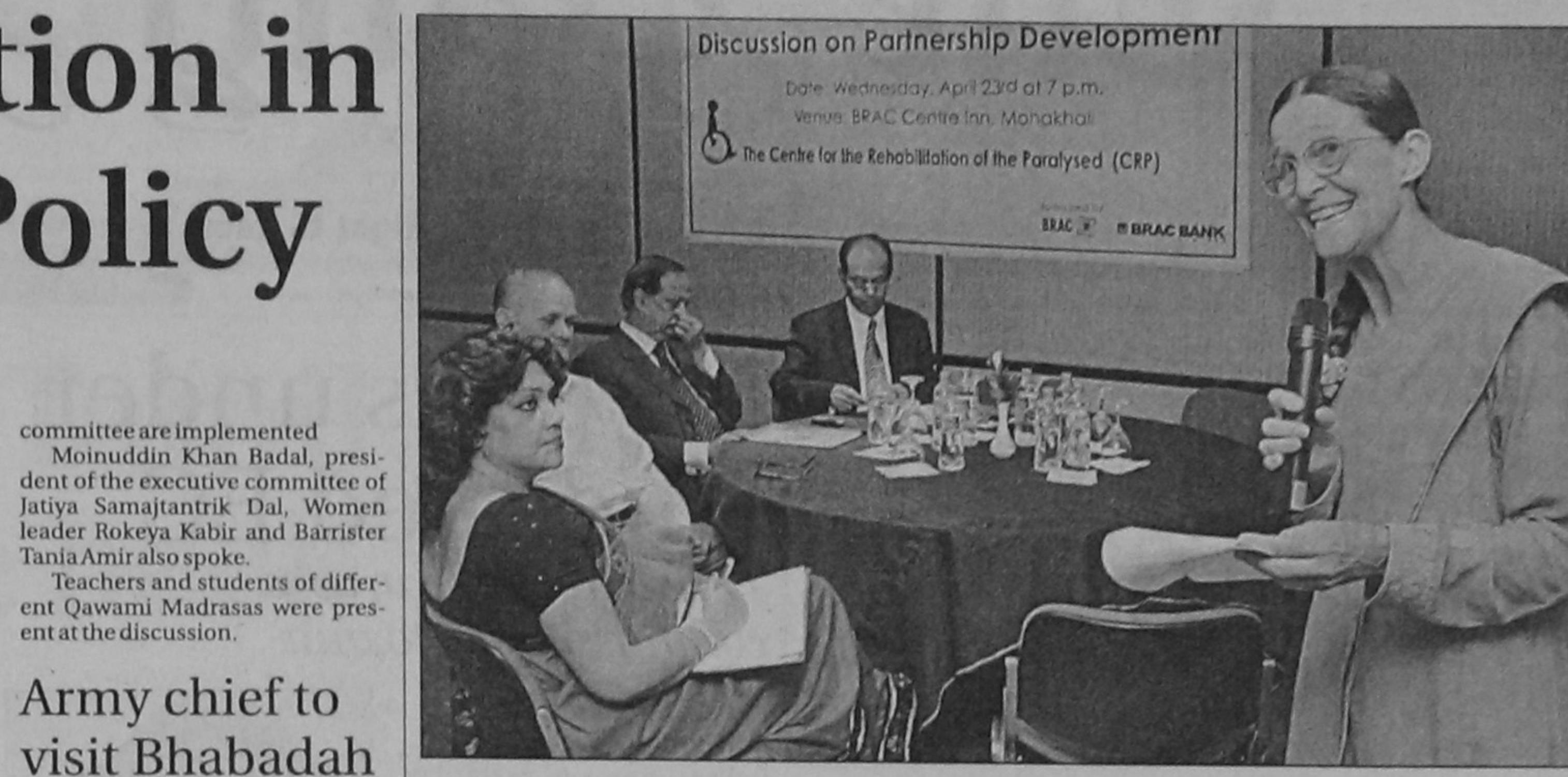
Mild to moderate heat wave that is sweeping over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Bogra and northern part of Chittagong division may continue, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country during the period.

Highest temperature 40.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishwardi and lowest 20.9 degrees Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:24pm today and rises at 5:29am tomorrow.

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	36.9	26.8	71	45
Chittagong	32.0	26.4	93	77
Rajshahi	38.5	25.6	77	55
Khulna	37.2	25.7	79	50
Barisal	36.0	25.5	79	65
Sylhet	36.1	25.1	60	60
Cox's Bazar	34.5	25.0	71	71



Discussion on Partnership Development
Date: Wednesday, April 23rd at 7 p.m.
Venue: BRAC Centre Inn, Monakhali
The Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP)

BRAC

BRAC BANK

Suggestions from parties to be placed at council of advisers
Govt to discuss
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The council of advisers will be presented a report containing suggestions made during informal talks with political parties.

"We're getting good suggestions during the pre-dialogue meetings. After finishing the informal meetings, we will submit a complete resolution in the form of a report before the chief adviser and the council of advisers," Hossain Zillur Rahman, the commerce and education adviser, told reporters yesterday.

The pre-dialogue talks are going on with a few more political parties yet to attend, the adviser said adding that the exact timeframe for the commencement of the proposed formal dialogues cannot be confirmed yet since the preparatory work still needs to be completed.

Zillur made the comments while talking to reporters at housing and public works ministry following a dialogue preparatory meeting with Communications Adviser Maj Gen (retd) Ghulam Quader and LGRD Adviser Anwarul Iqbal.

Asked whether the advisers involved in the pre-dialogue talks with political parties encountered any impediment during the talks, Zillur replied in the negative.

Responding to a query about the possibility of talks with members of civil society as well, the adviser, without elaborating, said they would hold discussions with all the stakeholders.

Yesterday's pre-scheduled informal talks with the BNP faction loyal to Khaleda Zia could not be held due to an unscheduled meeting of the council of advisers, Zillur said.

3 injured in fresh BCL factional clash

DU CORRESPONDENT

At least three activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) were injured yesterday in a clash between its two factions on the Dhaka University (DU) campus.

Sources said the activists of a BCL faction led by its International Affairs Secretary Sohel Rana Tipu swooped on the activists of another BCL faction while they were drafting a press release about a protest programme in front of the Institute of Fine Arts.

Mafijul Islam Dali, Aminur Rahman Jewel and Abdur Rahman Jibon were injured in the attack. They are activists of the BCL faction that expressed resentment over not getting the posts they expected in the BCL central committee.

A crude bomb went off and a shot was fired during the clash, sources added.

Earlier, a protest programme was held at the Institute of Fine Arts demanding punishment of those who assaulted BCL activists Soma and Soma on the university campus on Sunday.

At least eight people including three BCL activists were injured in the clash between two factions of BCL.

US envoy meets foreign secy

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador James Moriarty yesterday made a courtesy call on Foreign Secretary Touhid Hossain and discussed a broad range of bilateral issues between Dhaka and Washington.

After the nearly 40-minute meeting, the US Ambassador told reporters that he had a very nice discussion with the foreign secretary on entire range of bilateral issues, but would not go into details about the subjects discussed.

Later, the foreign secretary told reporters that they discussed issues including Bangladesh's GSP facilities in US market and Dhaka's desire to have access to MCA (Millennium Challenge Account) of the US president.

Touhid also sought Washington's support to Bangladesh's candidate Ambassador Dr Toufique Ali for the post of director general of the World Intellectual Property Organisation based in Geneva.

Death anniversary

Today is the 2nd death anniversary of Shamsur Jahan, former chairman of Khandakar and Sirajia, says a press release. His family members requested all to pray for salvation of the departed soul.