

INT'L WOMEN'S DAY TOMORROW

National minimum demands of working women placed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) yesterday announced a charter of national minimum demands of working women in formal and non-formal sectors on the eve of International Women's Day 2009 tomorrow.

Shirin Akhter, member secretary of the steering committee of Women Workers Development Project, placed a 30-point demand under nine different titles at a programme at Mohanagar Natya Mancha in the city.

Former adviser Sultana Kamal, ILO expert on skills development training Ross Alan Hatton, Jatiya Sramik League President Abdul Matin Master, National Worker's Federation President Abdul Bashar and Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad Coordinator Wajedul Islam Khan took part in the programme and expressed their solidarity with the

demands.

Besides the demand chart for working women, some written documents on their existing rights status were also presented at the programme.

The documents revealed that approximately 12.17 million-strong workers are females of the country which accounts for 24.44 percent of the total labour force.

It further said that 19.84 percent of the female workforce contribute to the formal sector, while the rest are in the non-formal sector.

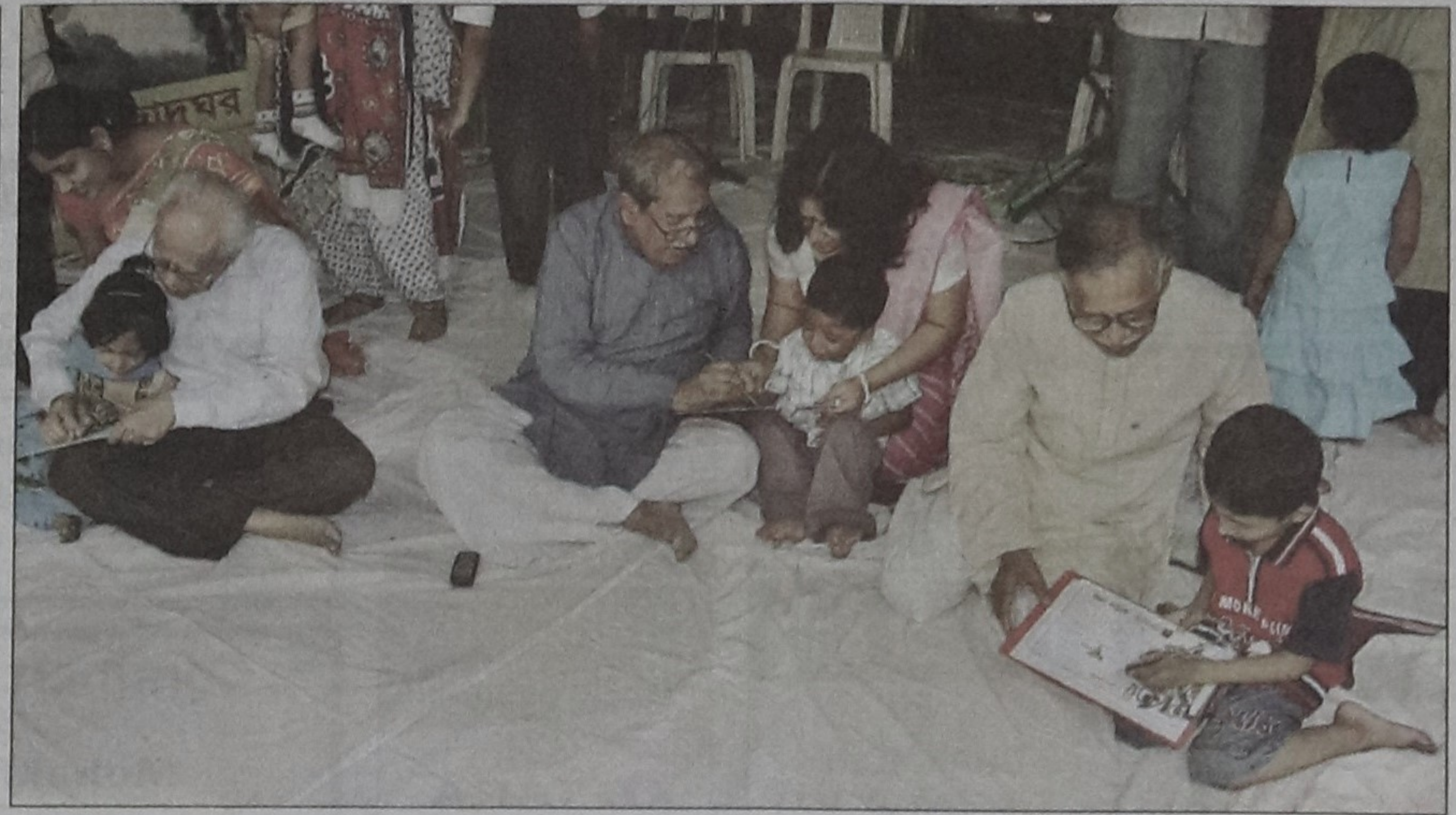
According to the workplaces of female workers, only 20 percent of the female workers are covered by the existing labour law and those who have been covered by the law do not get rights due to lack of its implementation properly.

However, considering the unpleasant circumstances and feelings, the necessity of addressing the priorities, BILS made promise to formulate the chart of com-

mon and minimum demands for working women in all sectors, including formal and non-formal, a year ago.

BILS Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan said the organisation formulated the demand chart through specification of inequalities and violations of laws against female workers in the sectors through a year-long reviewing process of rights status of the female workers both in formal and non-formal sectors.

Labour leaders said the common minimum demand chart would provide assurance of job and appointment, working hours, leisure and leaves, wages and social security, sound working environment, health care and safety at workplaces, security and respect for migrant female workers, protection against inequities, unpleasant behaviour and sufferings, freedom of association and collective bargaining and ensuring enlistment under the purview of labour law and legal protection.



Language movement veteran Ahmad Rafiq, Prof Anisuzzaman and Justice Golam Rabbani teach children how to write Bangla alphabets at the 'Hatey Khor' Festival at Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday.



Participants stand during the national anthem at the inaugural ceremony of a discussion marking the International Women's Day at Mahanagar Natyamancha in the city yesterday. Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies organised the event.

Japan Cultural Festival ends today

UNB, Dhaka

The four-day Japan Cultural Festival 2009 concludes on the Shilpakala Academy premises in the city today with an exquisite bonsai contest and exhibition.

Cultural Secretary M Sharful Alam will attend as the chief guest at the closing ceremony of the festival, being jointly organised by the Japanese Embassy and Shilpakala Academy.

However, the bonsai exhibition will jointly be organised by Bangladesh Bonsai Society and Japanese Embassy.

The exhibition will feature nearly 100 miniature version of trees including common Bangladeshi trees like Bakul, Tetul, Pakur, Hijal, Bougainvillea and Kamini.

'Use environment-friendly construction materials'

BSS, Dhaka

The three-day International Construction Industry exhibition ended in the city yesterday with a call to use quality and environment-friendly construction materials in all development activities.

Bangladesh Association of Construction Industry (BACI) organised the exhibition at Hotel Sheraton on the sidelines of the 37th Convention of International Federation of Asian and Western Pacific Contractors Association (IFAWPCA), which will be held today.

A total of 270 construction experts and entrepreneurs, including 220 foreigners from 17 countries are taking part in the convention.

A total of 23 leading local construction companies took part in the exhibition to showcase their activities and achievements in infrastructural development of Bangladesh to the foreign delegates, who are the key figures in the construction sector in their respective countries.

Beside the local companies, three reputed Indian construction companies also participated in the exhibition.

The organisations displayed different types of construction materials and designs of mod-

ern environment-friendly construction technology at 47 different pavilions and stalls during the exhibition, which was inaugurated by Commerce Minister Lt Col (ret'd) Faruq Khan.

On the occasion, BACI President Md Rafiqul Islam said the exhibition was a much-needed chance for Bangladeshi construction firms to inform the whole world about the potential of Bangladeshi construction industry and the quality it assures in construction materials, services and in human resources.

The fair will encourage the local construction and contracting firms to produce more high quality and environment-friendly products, he added.

On the other hand, the IFAWPCA convention will be held at Hotel Radisson today with a set of recommendations for the construction sector of IFAWPCA member countries focusing the convention's theme 'Construction for a Greener World'.

IFAWPCA represents the fraternity of builders in 16 countries -- Australia, Bangladesh, Thailand, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Maldives, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Constructors from Myanmar are attending the convention as observers.

PM to inaugurate Scout Health Education Camp

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the Scout's Health Education Camp throughout the country live on Television and Radio at her Jamuna office on March 9.

The PM will also attend a Tele/VDO conference with some scouts from Sylhet and Gopalganj.

To mark the health awareness programme among the local people, Bangladesh Scouts and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will jointly organise the Scouts Health Education Camp in all districts and upazilas from March 9-12.

Some 35,000 scouts will go through the extensive training programme in the four-day camp. Scouts will distribute health related posters and leaflets to all primary and secondary schools.

Besides, the national dailies will bring out special supplement to mark the Health Camp significance while a talk show will be telecast on BTN on March 8, said a press release.

7th int'l trade fair in Barisal begins

BSS, Barisal

The month-long '7th International Trade Fair-2009' began yesterday on the premises of Marine Workshop in Barisal.

Awami League leader Col (ret'd) Zahid Farooque Shamim inaugurated the fair.

A total of 80 stalls will show case different products in the fair.

2 Bangladeshi mountaineers to join Makalu expedition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Bangladeshi mountaineers will climb Makalu, the fifth highest peak in the world and one of the roughest mountains in the Himalayas, under Indo-Bangla Makalu Expedition-2009.

The two Bangladeshi mountaineers Sajal Khaled and Nishat Majumder will start their journey on March 16 from Delhi with a view to planting the Bangladeshi flag atop the 27,782 feet high Makalu across China-Nepal border.

Sculptor Ferdousi Priyabhashini and BMTC Chairman Enayet Ullah Khan handed over the national flag to the two Bangladeshi mountaineers.

The Makalu expedition is funded by the government of India and planned by Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, the oldest mountaineering training school of the sub-continent.

"This is the first time Bangladeshi and Indian mountaineers are going to the Makalu together," said Enam Ul Haque, founder of the Bangladesh Mountaineering and Trekking Club (BMTC), at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city.

He also said that the two Bangladeshi mountaineers had earlier also participated in a pre-expedition mountaineering drill in India.

"It will be an extraordinary opportunity for us to strengthen the ties between the two nations through mountaineering," hoped Nishat.

Sajal Khaled said only seven teams climbed the Makalu but 60 percent of the climbers did not come back due to the roughness of the mountain.

BDR mutiny a plot against country Says minister

BSS, Chittagong

Industries Minister Dilip Barua yesterday said the BDR mutiny was a deep-rooted conspiracy against the country as well as to threaten its sovereignty.

Inaugurating a two-day Unilever Community Health Care Service at Hamid Char of Kalurghat industrial area under Chandgaon Police Station, he said vested quarters were out to put the present government in trouble by creating unstable situation.

Dilip said the wisdom and prompt steps of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had helped resolve the crisis peacefully, adding that the vested quarters created obstruction through conspiracy against the government before completing its two months.

He said conspirators always hatched intrigues when the nation was poised to prosper under the leadership of Awami

League. But the peace-loving people had always forged a resistance against the evil design.

The minister further said there is no alternative to industrialisation for creating employment and improving the living standards of the people.

Dilip said the present government would like to establish a stable democratic society for the welfare of the nation.

Managing Committee of Hamid Char Primary School organised the function in collaboration with Unilever Bangladesh Limited, Chittagong Diabetic Association, Chittagong Ma-o-Shishu Hospital and Lions Eye Hospital.

Presided over by President of the committee Sekandar Mia, the function was addressed by AL leaders MA Salam and Ruhul Quddus Khan.

'Hatey khor' Festival held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

'Hatey Khor' Festival 2009 was held at the Liberation War Museum yesterday where a total of 80 children were taught their first alphabet by eminent personalities.

Hatey Khor Jatiya Parishad organised the programme marking the 2nd year of Hatey Khor Utsab to promote this traditional culture of teaching--the first writing ceremony for children--in urban social life.

The programme was inaugurated by ringing a bell, which is traditionally practised to start a school day.

Prof Anisuzzaman, language movement veteran Ahmad Rafiq, Justice Golam Rabbani and artist Hashem Khan taught the children how to write Bangla alphabets.

Jahidul Haq Dipu, convener of the Parishad, delivered the welcome address.

The children also rendered songs, danced and recited rhymes at a cultural programme.

One killed in road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

One person was killed and three others were injured when a speeding tractor rammmed a rickshaw van on Gaibandha-Sadullapur road at Tarabjaji village in Gaibandha yesterday.

The dead was identified as Momena Khatun, 30, a rickshaw passenger.

Woman suffers burns as tailor hits her with hot iron

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A female garment worker suffered severe burns to her head as the owner of a tailoring shop hit her with a hot iron at Savar yesterday.

The victim, Kulsum Begum, 25, a worker of Standard Group, is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

The tailor hit her with the hot iron during a quarrel between them over her dress, Kulsum said, lying in the hospital bed.

BFWE cancels its today's programme

Bangladesh Federation of Women Entrepreneurs (BFWE) programme on International Women's Day scheduled for today (March 7) has been cancelled.

The Daily Star Coming out tomorrow - Star Campus

Linking Young Minds Together

The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views. Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents. Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine Of the Students, By the Students and For the Students. Star Campus helps link young minds together.



Two Bangladeshi mountaineers Sajal Khaled and Nishat Majumder hold a flag at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. They will take part in the Indo-Bangla Makalu Expedition-2009.

Smugglers clash with police at Natore Railway Station

4 policemen among 25 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Some 25 people, including four policemen, were injured as a gang of smugglers clashed with the police at Natore Railway Station on Thursday night.

The police fired three blank shots to bring the situation under control after two bogies of an intercity train were vandalised during the clash, said the police and witnesses.

The clash erupted at around 11:30pm when the railway policemen prevented the smugglers from unloading banned Indian Phensidyl from Khulna-bound Simanta Express.

The unloading of smuggled goods is a common scene at the station, but the railway

policemen took the action as there were rumours that senior government officials were visiting the railway station, said the witnesses.

Angered by the sudden police action, the smugglers hurled stones at the police and beat up some of them.

More policemen then arrived at the scene and fired three blank shots to disperse the smugglers.

Assistant Sub-inspector Fazlul Karim and constables Yusuf, Malek and Nazim Uddin of Government Railway Police (GRP) were among the injured, said the police.

Natore Sadar police arrested Tarikul Islam, a suspected smuggler from the scene.

Sujan Barua, officer-in-charge of Ishwardi GRP, said two cases are filed in this connection.



Ali Aksad passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Comrade Ali Aksad, Language Movement veteran, journalist and a member of Communist Party of Bangladesh, passed away at city's Square Hospital yesterday morning.

One of the organisers of the War of Liberation in 1971, Comrade Aksad left behind his wife, one son, two daughters and a host of relatives, and admirers to mourn his death.

His body was kept at Birdem mortuary yesterday. The body will be taken to the CPB central office at 9:00am today and from there to the National Press Club premises at about 10:00am to enable his party colleagues and journalists to pay their last tribute.

Later, the body will be taken to the Central Shaheed Minar at about 11:00am and will be kept until 1:00pm for the people of all walks of life to pay their last respect to the leader of the Peace Movement.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Dhaka University Central Mosque after Zohr prayers today and the body be taken to his Mohammadpur residence.

He will be laid to rest at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has condoled the death of Ali Aksad.

In a condolence message, she recalled the left leader Ali Aksad's contribution to the liberation war and democratic movement in the country.

She prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.