

Take special programmes to rehabilitate street children

Ensure women's social security: PM

UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to arrange special programmes for rehabilitating hapless street children and ensuring social and economic security of women.

and build up their lives, they will be our country's asset," she said.
The prime minister, who is also in charge of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, was making opening remarks at a power point presentation at the ministry.
Hasina was informed about various programmes and projects initiated by the ministry for welfare of the children and women.

she said.
"Make sure that no child is used in risky work which may harm them physically," she added.
The prime minister also expressed concern over high dropout rates of the children from school and said such non-continuation of schooling must be stopped and the children must be kept in school.
She asked the ministry officials to draw up plans and programmes to work for the development of the children and women in line with the AL election manifesto.

Govt firm to ensure neutral probe into BDR carnage

Says commerce minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Commerce Minister Faruk Khan yesterday said the government is committed to ensuring an impartial and modern investigation to find out real culprits involved in the gory February 25 to 26 mutiny at the BDR headquarters.

four-day 'Made in Thailand Exhibition 2009' at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the city.
Earlier, the government appointed Faruk Khan to coordinate all the investigations into the bloody massacre.

under immediate consideration in this regard.

"It is important to ensure impartial, acceptable and modern investigation so that we can find out the real culprits and punish them," he added.
Faruk said, "The issue is related to our sovereignty as the BDR is used to work as a border security force, who also guards trafficking in the border areas. So, we will have to ensure an impartial justice."

Faruk said BDR personnel who returned to Pilkhana headquarters following the directive of the home ministry after the mutiny will get justice, adding: "Whoever involved in the bloody mutiny will be punished. But who were not involved will not be victimised."

"Initially, we will set up a cell where BDR men can meet their wives, children and parents but no friends will be allowed right now," the minister said.
Faruk also explained the government's stance on the matter, saying that the permission is given so that no confusion could be fumed over the issue.

Help build digital Bangladesh

PM tells Scouts

BSS, Dhaka
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called upon the Scouts to pursue their knowledge and perseverance and help build a modern and technology-based digital Bangladesh.

She made the call while opening a four-day country-wide health education camps of Bangladesh Scouts and Rovers through a video conference on Monday night.

The prime minister said the nation hopes that the Scouts would receive proper education and build a country where there would be no poverty, no hunger and no suffering of humanity.

Some 36,000 Rover Scouts are taking part in the four-day camps.
During the videoconference, Hasina talked to the Scouts and Rovers who are attending the health camps in Gopalganj.

She hoped that the number of scouts who are imbued with the spirit of serving the humanity would increase in the country and their movement would gain strength in the future.

The prime minister also said she was optimistic that the Scouts will also brighten the country's image both at home and abroad.

She pledged her government's continued support for the development of the Scouts. To ensure healthcare for all, a total of 18,000 community hospitals will be revived again, she said.
She also said steps would be taken to build a Scout Bhaban in Gopalganj.

Expatriate students in Canada for fair probe into BDR carnage

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladeshi students studying in Carleton and Ottawa universities in Canada have demanded exemplary punishment of perpetrators of the BDR headquarters carnage through transparent, neutral and fair investigations.

The demand came from a mourning meeting, in memory of those killed at the Pilkhana tragedy, held recently at Bell Theatre Auditorium of Carleton University in Ottawa, jointly organized by Bangladeshi students of Carleton and Ottawa universities and some Bangladeshi expatriates in Canada.
A memorandum signed by all the participants, was adopted in the meeting and sent to Bangladesh Foreign Ministry through Bangladesh High Commissioner in Ottawa, according to a message received here yesterday.

Intelligence reports said the couple had been carrying out such illicit activities for a long time, he added.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



stroke complications at Birdem hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 75, says a press release.
He left behind his two daughters, one son and a host of relatives to mourn his death.
His khalwani will be held at his residence at Rampura in the city tomorrow after Zohr prayers.



Amra Muktiyoddhar Santan (Children of freedom fighters) forms a human chain in front of a gate of the BDR headquarters yesterday demanding trial of the war criminals and killers of army officers.

Rein in party cadres on campuses

Khaleda asks govt

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia yesterday urged the government to rein in its party cadres in the educational institutions to restore academic atmosphere.

The BNP chairperson made the call when a delegation of pro-BNP teachers of Bangladesh Open University (BOU) met her at her Gulshan office last night.

The BNP chief said the educational institutions are grappled with the worst problem of violence since the present government has assumed power.

Khaleda alleged that the cadres of Awami League's student front started capturing educational institutions all over the country after the national election, unleashing a reign of terror and torturing general students on the campuses.

IRAD'S REMARKS ABOUT KHALEDA Show cause notice against Tanbir

Father, son declared 'unwanted' in Gazipur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Standing Committee has issued a show cause notice to its member Chowdhury Tanbir Ahmed Siddiky as his son made derogatory remarks about party chairperson Khaleda Zia and her senior party colleagues in his presence at a press conference on Monday.

The committee issued the notice on Tuesday asking Tanbir to explain within 72 hours why disciplinary action should not be taken against him.

Meanwhile, Gazipur BNP leaders yesterday demanded expulsion of Tanbir from the party. They also declared Tanbir and his son Chowdhury Irad Ahmed Siddiky 'unwanted' in the district.

On Tuesday night, the BNP standing committee took the decision of action against Tanbir in an urgent meeting at the chairperson's Gulshan office, with Khaleda in the chair. Tanbir was not present in the meeting.

Irada Ahmed Siddiky's objectionable remarks against Khaleda in the presence of Tanbir were in breach of party discipline," party spokesman Nazrul Islam Khan told reporters.

The remarks have angered the party adherents. So, the standing committee has issued

the show cause notice on Tanbir, he said, adding that the statements were not only motivated, but also defamatory.

At a press conference on Monday, Irad Ahmed Siddiky, a mayoral aspirant for Dhaka City Corporation, alleged that Khaleda demanded Tk 5 crore from him in exchange for party backing in the upcoming mayoral election.

His father Tanbir was present at the press briefing at his Gulshan home.

But on Tuesday, Tanbir termed his son's comments unfortunate and shocking.
"What Irad said about chairperson was his misperception. What he has said is not correct. I myself took him to madam (Khaleda)," he said at a press briefing at his office.

Protesting the remarks, Gazipur BNP leaders at a press conference yesterday demanded expulsion of Tanbir from the party.

Gazipur BNP president and former MP Hasanuddin Sarkar read out a written statement at the press conference held at the local party office.

Later, the leaders and activists took out a broom procession against Tanbir and his son.

Father dies as son hits him with stump

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mafizur Rahman Sinha, an assistant general manager of Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB), succumbed to his injuries at a city hospital yesterday, three days after his son hit him with a stump in his head.

Tornal Tahsin Ovi, a student of a private university, hit his father at their Banani residence at around 10:00pm on March 8 following a family feud, said Morshedur Rahman, nephew of Sinha, who was the AGM at Mirpur branch of the bank.

Sinha was immediately rushed to a local hospital and later shifted to LabAid Hospital where he died in the early hours of yesterday, Morshed said.

In another incident, the police recovered the body of an unidentified girl, aged about 22, from a canal near Basundhara Project under Badda police station on Tuesday morning.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

GATCO GRAFT CASE HC extends bail for Khaleda

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday extended bail for six months to former prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in the Gatco scam case.

A division bench comprising Justice Sheikh Rezwana Ali and Justice M Rais Uddin passed the order upon a petition of Khaleda Zia, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament.

On September 30 in 2007, she had secured interim bail from the High Court in connection with the Gatco graft case, following a writ petition that had challenged the legality of the case.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case with Tejaogaon Police Station against Khaleda, her younger son Arafat Rahman Koko and others amid a country-wide purge after the 1/11 changeover following a serious political crisis stemming from election issues.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of the Bangladesh Army, Rab and police led by Major Murad conducted the raid at the house of BDR sepoy Nahid and his cousin Alam Hossain alias Dipzol and recovered a pistol, four bullets, two gold bracelets, village of touchstone statue and one bottle phensidyl.

The arms, ornaments and statues were looted from Pilkhana during the BDR mutiny. The joint forces also arrested Dipzol and Nahid's father Afzal Hossain in this connection.

The sources said Nahid joined 23 Rifles Battalion, now stationed at Khulna, two years ago. He joined the BDR headquarters on deputation on February 25 and 26 and later fled.

After the mutiny, he surrendered to Naogaon 46 Rifle Battalion headquarters on March 1.

During interrogation, Dipzol said Nahid handed over the arms, ammunition and ornaments to him at his house on February 27.

Police arrested Nahid from Naogaon Rifle Battalion and handed over to the Armed Forces.

Shariatpur
A correspondent in Shariatpur adds: Joint forces in a drive at village Daser Jongal at Gosairhat in the district on Monday night seized gold ornaments looted from Pilkhana during the BDR massacre and arrested parents of a rebel BDR jawan and another person in this connection.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)-8 and Gosairhat police led by Captain Hasibuzzaman seized two tolas of gold ornaments from the house of Nargis Akter, a relative of BDR Sepoy Md Ali Sentu.

The joint team arrested Sentu's parents Md Shahid Bepari and Rokeya Begum and Nargis Akter's husband Kajol Mia in this connection.

On hearing the news, he went to the spot at about 11:00pm the same day and found his nephew (Nasir) dead. Later Motijheel police went there and prepared an inquest report on Nasir. He put signature on the inquest report that was prepared by police in his presence.

BDR CARNAGE Tk 7cr BAB support for victims' families

UNB, Dhaka

Eligible family members of the army officers killed in the Pilkhana carnage will get jobs in private banks apart from support for their education.

The assurance came when a 28-member delegation of Bankers' Association of Bangladesh (BAB), led by its President Nazrul Islam Mazumder, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Jamuna on Tuesday.

The bankers also handed over a cheque for Tk 7 crore to the prime minister.

The BAB delegation expressed deep shock at the death of talented and well-educated army officers in the BDR Headquarters carnage.

They also highly praised the PM for handling the crisis with wisdom and farsightedness.
The PM told the BAB delegation that the government would stand by the martyred army officers' families during their need in the future too.

She also asked the bankers to remain alert and take measures, if necessary, to protect the country's economy from the fallout of the global economic recession.

Finance Minister Abul Mal Abdul Muhit, Commerce Minister Col (retd) Faruk Khan, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were present on the occasion.

PM consoles Nazmul's family
Later, family members of computer engineer Nazmul Hossain, 30, one of the civilian victims of the Pilkhana carnage, met Hasina at her official residence.

The PM consoled and assured them of all necessary cooperation in the future.

Rebel BDR man, father, cousin arrested in Naogaon

BSS, Naogaon

The joint forces of Operation Rebel Hunt seized arms, ammunition and gold ornaments, looted by a BDR member during Pilkhana massacre, from his village Kirtipur in Naogaon yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of the Bangladesh Army, Rab and police led by Major Murad conducted the raid at the house of BDR sepoy Nahid and his cousin Alam Hossain alias Dipzol and recovered a pistol, four bullets, two gold bracelets, village of touchstone statue and one bottle phensidyl.

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BNP condemns attack on house of Sohrab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain has condemned the bomb attack on the house of Jatiyatabadi Muktiyoddha Dal Secretary and former lawmaker Principal Sohrab Uddin in Kushtia.

In a statement on Tuesday, Delwar Hossain said the attack was not an isolated incident. It was part of continuous attacks on BNP leaders and workers, launched by the 'Awami miscreants' after the last parliamentary elections, he added.

FNB concerned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB) yesterday expressed concern over speculative comments, statements and analysis about the elements behind the carnage at the BDR headquarters on February 25.

Such speculations may create confusion among the people and would hamper the process of unearthing the conspiracy, it said in a press release.

The people demand that the truth be revealed and made public and the culprits be given exemplary punishment, the federation said. "We believe that those who are conducting the investigations will, with their efficiency and neutrality, fulfil the demand of the people."

DHAKA TODAY

Workshop

Bangladesh Rural Development Board and JICA jointly organise a workshop on institutionalising rural development through 'link model'. Venue: NEC auditorium. Time: 5:30pm.

Science fair

The inaugural ceremony of the BCSIR science fair 2009 will be held. Venue: BCSIR meeting room. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Paediatrics Nephrology Society of Bangladesh organises a discussion marking the World Kidney Day. Venue: Bangladesh Institute of Child Health auditorium. Time: 12:00am.

Seminar

Department of Women Affairs organises a seminar on Men and women united to end violence against women and girls. Venue: Biam Foundation. Time: 10:00am.

Lecture

Ben-Ten-Tusscher, ambassador of the Netherlands, will deliver a lecture on 'Shifting strategies: Contemporary Dutch gender policies'. Venue: 5020 Arts building, Dhaka University. Time: 10:00am.

Protect human rights Speakers tell summit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Protecting human rights is a must to institutionalise democracy and media has to play a vital role in creating awareness about human rights, National Human Rights Commission Chairman Justice Amirul Kabir Chowdhury said at a summit yesterday.

The role of mass media is very important in protecting human rights though sometimes journalists have to face harassment in performing professional duties, he said.
Bangladesh Centre For Development Journalism and Communication (BCDJ) organised the summit titled 'Human rights and media' at the National Press Club.

Munira Khan, member of the National Human Rights Commission, said killing of the army officials at the BDR headquarters were serious violation of human rights. She also said death of any innocent BDR soldier will also be a violation of human right.

Media is the main weapon of the human rights commission and media has to aware the people about human rights, she added.
Suggesting media to publish or telecast more awareness programmes on human rights Ahmed Ziauddin, a human rights activist, said media always give importance to publish the news of violation of human rights instead of publishing or telecasting awareness programmes.

Subodh Raj Pyakural, chairman of Information Service Centre, Nepal, Masud Chowdhury, lecturer of Independent University, journalist Jahangir Alam Akash, AKM Shimanta and Amirul Karim Barlin, Babli Islam and Md Shahin Mian also spoke at the summit.

Subodh Raj Pyakural, chairman of Information Service Centre, Nepal, Masud Chowdhury, lecturer of Independent University, journalist Jahangir Alam Akash, AKM Shimanta and Amirul Karim Barlin, Babli Islam and Md Shahin Mian also spoke at the summit.

Later, customs officials unloaded their luggage and found the currencies, including dollar, Thai baht and Malaysian Ringgit, equivalent to Tk 1,10,34,000.

Intelligence sources said Stefan has allegedly been involved in foreign currency smuggling since 2007.

Immigration authorities said they got the information one month back and they were closely monitoring it.

Officer-in-Charge Khan Md Sirajul Islam, also the investigation officer, said, "The couple was smuggling out of the currencies as they have no legal papers in this connection."

Intelligence reports said the couple had been carrying out such illicit activities for a long time, he added.

MUTINY AT BDR HQ 'Launch all-party JS probe'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers' Party of Bangladesh has said an all-party parliamentary enquiry committee should be formed to find out all culprits, including those behind the February 25-26 mutiny at BDR headquarters.

Over Tk 1.10cr foreign currencies seized at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs officials at Zia International Airport (ZIA) seized foreign currencies worth over Tk 1.10 crore from a foreign couple early yesterday.

Identified as Stefan Tirkar, an Austrian citizen, and his Bangladeshi born British national wife Rokshana Tirkar were handed over to airport police who were placed on a two-day remand yesterday afternoon.

The couple was scheduled to fly to Malaysia by a flight of the Malaysian Airlines at around 1:50am with the currencies.

Customs sources said acting on a tip-off, immigration officials challenged them and after interrogation, Stefan Tirkar told the immigration police that he has a garment factory in Gulshan area.

Intelligence reports said the couple had been carrying out such illicit activities for a long time, he added.

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