

## A godsend for Kakon Bibi

UNB, Dhaka

To Kakon Bibi, it seemed to be a godsend as the hapless indigenous woman got over Tk 15 lakh, at long last, for her courageous role during the liberation war.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday handed over a cheque for the amount to freedom fighter Kakat Heinchita alias Kakon Bibi, now at her 60s, at a simple but emotion-charged ceremony at her office. The state-owned Janata Bank donated the money.

A member of the Khasia community, Kakon Bibi lost her husband and many others of her family during the liberation war.

She now only has a daughter and a son-in-law, a press report said.

Receiving the money, an emotional Kakon Bibi told the prime minister that it is only the PM who can help the freedom fighters so generously.

"Because, we fought in the liberation war under the leadership of your father, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," she said.

Hasina thanked the Janata Bank board of directors for their help to the freedom fighter hailed from the backwoods of Sunamganj district.

She also urged all government and private organisations to come forward for such humanitarian activities out of their social responsibility.

## Call for bicycle-friendly environment to reduce risks of health hazard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bicycle-friendly environment can reduce the risks of health hazard, said speakers at a press conference yesterday.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and WBB Trust organised the press conference at Bapa's office in the city where leaders of the organisations announced that they would hold a bicycle rally tomorrow with a view to raising public awareness about creating a bicycle-friendly environment in the city.

The rally, which will start from the Central Shaheed Minar at 10:00am, will end in front of the National Press Club.

Preventable diseases are on the rise while the environment is becoming more polluted due to excess dependency on motorised vehicles, said the speakers at the press conference.

Prof AR Khan said people have to wait on the road for hours after hours because of traffic congestion, which is wasting their time and money and creating mental pressure as well.

According to a research of Human Development Research Centre (HDRC), 76 percent of the city's transportation covers less than five kilometres while half of this covers less than two kilometres.

Underscoring the need for developing the public transport system, Kamrun Nahar Dana said private car is now one of the main causes of traffic congestion in the city.

## Camp for diabetic children begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to create awareness in the society regarding child diabetes and to motivate the children living with diabetes to manage and control it properly, a three-day camp for diabetic children began yesterday.

Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (Dab) organised the camp at the Brac Centre in Savar. Novo Nordisk and the World Diabetes Foundation assisted the programme.

Some 50 children living with diabetes and their parents joined the camp.

"It is designed in such a way where the children will have fun and at the same time they will learn," said A Rajan Kumar, managing director of Novo Nordisk Pharma (Pvt) Limited, at the discussion.

In Bangladesh, around 60 lakh people are suffering from diabetes and the number of the children suffering from this is around 3 lakh.

National Professor MR Khan inaugurated the camp.

Saifuddin Ahmed, secretary general, Prof Ziauddin Ahmed, director general of Birdem, and Prof Nazmun Nahar, additional director general of Birdem, spoke at the discussion.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina awards "Sword of Honour" to Battalion Senior Under Officer Md Shafur Rahman of 61st BMA Long Course, Midshipman Md Abdullah Al Momin of Midshipmen Batch 2008A and Flight Cadet Sergeant Md Saiful Monir of 60th Flight Cadet Course for all round best performance in their respective courses at Combined President's Parade at Bhatary, Chittagong yesterday. (Story on Page 3)

## 'ROAD TO RIGHTS'

# Call for inclusive education for children with disabilities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an awareness campaign yesterday called on all to stand by the children with disabilities and help ensure their rights.

They also called for inclusive education for them so that they can integrate into the mainstream of society.

The Disabled Research and Rehabilitation Association (DRRA) in collaboration with ActionAid Bangladesh and Liliane Fonds-Netherlands organised the four-day programme titled 'Road to Rights' that ended on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the city yesterday.

The campaign was aimed at raising awareness about the rights of children with disabilities who account for about three percent of the persons with disabilities.

During the campaign that began at Satkhira, the organisers collected signatures on a white canvas. The signatures will be submitted to the prime

minister.

Speaking at the closing session of the campaign, State Minister for Law Quamrul Islam said the government has already made a draft law to establish the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

The law will be finalised soon, he added.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, said the children with disabilities should get the opportunity to grow up and achieve their potential like other children in society.

She also emphasised the need for inclusive education for them in order to integrate them into the mainstream of society.

They do need special education, but they should be taught according to their particular needs, she added.

Wahida Banu, president of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF), Khandakar Zahurul Alam, president of National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD), Dr Golam Rahman, president of DRRA, and Kazi Rozi, convener, Disability Rights Watch Group, also spoke.

Earlier, the children with disabilities presented a cultural show.



Children with disabilities perform at a cultural programme at the closing session of an awareness campaign titled 'Road to Rights' on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the city yesterday.

## Autobiography of Rawshan Ara launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The publication ceremony of an autobiography entitled 'Smritir Bagane Shesh Bikeler Meye' by noted writer Prof Rawshan Ara Rahman was held at the Women's Voluntary Association (WVA) auditorium in the city yesterday.

Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman, former chief adviser to the caretaker government, was present as the chief guest while Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui presided over the ceremony.

Prof Anisuzzaman, Prothom Alo Editor Matirur Ara said, founder of the Bishwa Sahitya Kendra Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed and theatre personality Begum Mamtaz Hossain were present as special guests.

They praised the writer for her outstanding book and hoped that today's girls and women would learn a lot from this book.

Prof Zillur Rahman said the readers would know about the turbulent life of a woman through reading this autobiography.

Speaking on the occasion, author Prof Rawshan Ara said, "My endeavour was to express my thoughts on my challenging life experiences. My inspiration to write this autobiography came from family bonds and affection."

The University Book Publishers published the book.



(From left) Begum Mamtaz Hossain, Prof Anisuzzaman, Prof Rawshan Ara Rahman, Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman, Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed and Matirur Ara hold copies of a book titled 'Smritir Bagane Shesh Bikeler Meye' by Prof Rawshan Ara at its launching ceremony at WVA auditorium in the city yesterday.

## 'Ensure rights of street children'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a national consultation yesterday stressed on effective role of the city corporations in ensuring rights of the sexually exploited street children.

Speaker added that majority of the street children live in the urban areas. According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, there are about 3,89,893 street children in six divisional headquarters among which more than 75 percent live in Dhaka city.

The national consultation titled 'Role of local government to promote and ensure the rights of sexually exploited children including street children: Context of city corporation' was organised by National Alliance for Combating Sexual Exploitation of Children (NACSEC) at National Press Club in the city.

Chances of sexual exploitation are high among these children for lack of night shelters, family support and their inability to protect themselves. They are subjected to many other forms of violence, including physical, they pointed out.

Dr Kazi Maruful Islam, assistant professor of Development Studies at

Dhaka University, presented the keynote paper.

He pointed out that issues of children are absent in the proposed City Corporation Ordinance 2008, current Citizen Charters and in work plans of City Corporation standing committee. This largely excludes them from basic amenities, including primary education, health services and legal protection, which increase their vulnerability.

He suggested for establishment of night shelters by city corporations, ward-based committee involving community leaders to safeguard their rights and awareness-building programmes for the people.

Speaking as the chief guest Adv Md Rahmat Ali MP, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on LGRD and cooperatives ministry, said by strengthening the rural economy employment can be generated for their (children) parents, thus flow of children to the cities can be stopped.

AKM Mustaque Ali, convener of NACSEC and executive director of INCIDIN Bangladesh, Shamsul Huda, a panel mayor of Dhaka City Corporation and commissioner of Ward No. 29, Ishrat Zakia of Unicef, and Selina Ahmed from SCSD, among others, spoke.

## Remarks of SCBA president protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven pro-BNP and Jamaat lawyers in a joint statement yesterday protested the farewell address of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) president to the retiring judges of the Appellate Division on December 17.

The lawyers said the SCBA president saw it fit to make aspersions at one of the retiring judges.

"He commented adversely and with impunity on judicial orders passed by the honourable judge. He has used the occasion (and the publicity it offers) for furtherance of his personal cause," said the statement.

It said, "The Bar cannot and does not identify itself with such aspersions. The aspersions made were incorrect, impudent, unfortunate, and do not reflect the views of the Bar."

The lawyers said the SCBA president unjustifiably attacked the office, honour and dignity of a judge of the Supreme Court and consequently has encroached on the independence of the judiciary, which is protected by the constitution.

Signatories to the statement include TH Khan, Khondker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, Jamiruddin Sircar, Moudud Ahmed, Khandker Mahbub Hossain, AJ Mohammad Ali and Abdur Razzaq.

## Cuta election on Dec 31

BSS, Chittagong

The election of Chittagong University Teachers Association (CUTA) will be held on December 31.

Two panels -- Yellow panel backed by Awami League and left-leaning parties and White panel supported by BNP and Jamaat -- are in the race for 11 posts.

# BNP fills major posts with plunderers, bombers

Says AL general secy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam yesterday alleged that BNP through its council has given important party positions to those who were linked to the politics of plundering, corruption and bombings in the past.

"This force has reorganised to activate the politics of corruption and bombings. If Khaleda Zia comes to power again cashing on our mistakes, her Gulshan office will be turned into the second Hawa Bhaban," he said.

Ashraf, also LGRD and cooperatives minister, was addressing a discussion organised on the occasion of 16th founding anniversary of AL-backed physicians' organisation Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad (Swachip) at Biam auditorium in the city.

He said Lutfozzaman Babar and Dr AZM Zahid were key players of those who were indulged in the politics of corruption, killings and bombings centring Hawa Bhaban during the previous government rule.

Zahid, who caused damage to the health sector, has appeared again while newspapers reported that Babar retained his party membership.

These all are symptoms of reorganisation of those who were involved in the politics of corruption and bombings, he said, adding that all need to be watchful so that corrupts and war criminals could not come to power.

Steps have been taken to modernise Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University while a medical college and a nursing institute will also be built there, the AL leader observed.

Deputy Leader of the House Sajeda Chowdhury said like vote rigging and capture of polling booths, the physicians' organisation was also captured, prompting to the formation of Swachip.

Swachip President AFM Ruhul Haque, also health minister, said telemedicine project would be launched at eight places in the country soon, adding that river ambulance is being made to reach remote areas.

# Islami Andolon starts long march towards Tipaimukh Dam

UNB, Dhaka

Islami Andolon Bangladesh (IAB), led by its president Charmonai Peer said the people of Bangladesh are now united to protect their motherland from the Indian conspiracy and described the Tipaimukh Dam as a death trap for Bangladesh.

He alleged that the grand alliance government has given legitimacy to the controversial dam and sold out Bangladesh's interests to please Indians.

BNP Joint Secretary Amanullah Aman, who also joined the pre-long march rally, said Bangladesh faces all types of crises whenever Awami League forms the government.

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