

Call to ensure political empowerment of women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday stressed the need to make room for more women in parliament in order to ensure women's participation in decision-making.

Women parliamentarians need to form a caucus among themselves and work from inside to ensure women's equal participation in politics, they added.

The Bangladesh Alliance for Women Leadership (BDAWL) and the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) jointly organised the roundtable on 'Women leadership in Bangladesh: Aspirations, Achievements and Outlook on Future' at the BEI conference room in the city. Leading women alumnae from various

US organisations took part in the roundtable.

A 34-member delegation called 'Among Women' from the US is currently visiting Bangladesh to share their ideas on women's movement for a fair share in the policy making positions in all fields.

Nasim Firdaus, executive director of BDAWL, said that during the last parliament election women played a major role in deciding the fate of the country for the next five years. Although more than 50 percent voters were women during the last election, they did not make much progress in the leadership role, she pointed out.

She identified poverty and lack of confidence and opportunity in the political field as the main reasons.

Rokia Afzal Rahman, president of Bangladesh Federation of Women Entrepreneurs, stressed the need for women's economic emancipation and political empowerment.

She said that things are looking up in Bangladesh, with more women getting access to economic activities in recent times.

She pointed out that more than 80 percent of the workers in readymade garment sector are women who get the credit for fetching the largest chunk of export-oriented foreign currency.

BEI President Farooq Sobhan, Prof Dilara Chowdhury of Jahangirnagar University, cultural personality Sara Zaker, Nasreen Awal Mintoo, chairperson of Women Entrepreneurs Association of Bangladesh, also spoke.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presides over a cabinet meeting at secretariat in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Concerted efforts a must to combat human trafficking

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for concerted efforts by the government, non-government and international organisations to combat human trafficking.

It is a multi-dimensional issue, which needs to be addressed properly, they said.

The Centre for Women and Children Studies (CWCS) organised the seminar on 'Framing the Problems of Human Trafficking: Challenges and Way Forward' at the Biam Auditorium in the city.

Dr Robin Haarr, associate professor, Criminal Justice and Police Studies, College of Justice and Safety, Eastern Kentucky, presented the keynote paper.

She talked about the causes and dynamics of human trafficking, importance of awareness raising, rehabilita-

tion, protection and safe migration and multi-agency response.

"It is not the responsibility of one organisation to provide protection, rehabilitation and economic empowerment for trafficking victims. Rather, it requires collaboration between international and local NGOs, national and local governments, legal and victim advocates and private enterprises," she said.

Migration when it goes wrong is also trafficking, she said, adding that safe migration should be ensured.

Speaking as the chief guest, Additional Inspector General of Police NBK Tripura highlighted different programmes that have been taken involving the police force to combat human trafficking.

The police launched an anti-trafficking investigation unit within the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on June 17, 2008. It deals with the cases of human trafficking to ensure

effective investigations and interception of trafficking in human beings, he said.

Next to drugs and arms, human trafficking is considered the largest organised crime that has grave consequences for the safety, welfare and human rights of its victims, he said, adding that combating and preventing human trafficking requires holistic approach by all stakeholders and integrated actions on prosecution, prevention and protection.

The speakers said that the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act only deals with women and children trafficking. But men are also being trafficked that should be brought under strong legal coverage.

Harvey Senovitz, deputy director of American Centre, US Embassy, Dhaka, Prof Ishrat Shamim, president of Centre for Women and Children Studies, and representatives from NGOs and the police department attended the seminar.

Punishment to killers of Sunny demanded

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jubo Moitree yesterday demanded exemplary punishment to the killers of Rezwanaul Islam Chowdhury Sunny, a leader of Bangladesh Chhatra Moitree.

The demands came from a protest rally of Jubo Moitree, the youth front of Workers' Party of Bangladesh, at Muktangan in the city.

Jubo Moitree leaders at the rally claimed that the cadres of the ruling party's student body have been creating anarchy at the educational institutions across the country but the government has not yet taken any initiative to address the problem.

They demanded immediate arrest of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) cadres who were involved in the killing of Sunny and due compensation to his family.

They also demanded the government bear the treatment cost of the Chhatra Moitree leaders and workers who received injuries in the attack.

Jubo Moitree President Sadeque Hossain Khan Babu, General Secretary Mostafa Alamgir Ratan, Publicity Secretary Mahbulul Islam Sohel and Chhatra Moitree leader Bappa Ditta Basu also spoke.

Later, they brought out a protest procession that paraded different city streets.

Sunny, a leader of Rajshahi Polytechnic Institute unit of Chhatra Moitree, was killed in an attack by BCL men over establishing supremacy on the campus on January 7.



Bangladesh Diploma Unemployed Nurses Association stages a demonstration on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the city yesterday demanding recruitment of 5,000 nurses based on their batch, merit and seniority.

PHOTO: STAR

AL lawmaker Atiq gets bail in graft case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Awami League (AL) lawmaker Atiqur Rahman (Atiq) from Sherpur-1 constituency in a case filed for acquiring wealth of Tk 45.4 lakh illegally and concealing wealth statement of Tk 20 lakh to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Senior Circuit Judge's Court passed the order upon a bond of Tk 20,000 with two guarantors after Atiq along with his lawyers surrendered before the court and sought bail in the case.

After taking into cognizance the charges against the accused for trial, the court also fixed February 17 for hearing on charge framing against the accused and shifted the case to the Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka for its quick disposal.

During the hearing, Judge said if the ministers and lawmakers were honest, the country would have run properly.

During the hearing, defence lawyers told the court that their client was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass him while the prosecution opposed it saying that the sections of the case are non-bailable.

Earlier on December 15 last year, ACC Assistant Director Dewan Shafiuddin Ahmed, also the investigation officer (IO), submitted the charge sheet against Atiq to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka and showed 23 people as prosecution witnesses.

This was the first time the ACC pressed charges against a ruling party lawmaker since this government took over.

The IO also appealed to the court for issuance of arrest warrant against the lawmaker and an order to attach his properties, as he has been shown absconding in the case.

On May 27 in 2008, ACC Assistant Director Shamsul Alam filed the case against Atiq with Ramna Police Station.

Proshika stand-off on Staffs yet to enter headquarters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police continued to bar several hundred Proshika employees from entering its headquarters at Mirpur in the city for three consecutive days with the government high-ups silent on the stand-off that ensued on January 11.

Some 1,000 Proshika employees, including over 400 of the head office and the rest from various area development centres (ADCs), were waiting day and night outside Proshika Bhaban to enter the office.

"The stand-off is incurring huge financial and other losses to the organisation," Mahbulul Karim, chief executive officer (CEO) of Proshika, one of largest non-government development organisations in the country.

The situation of the employees, who are not being able to attend their office, is in contravention of a High Court (HC) order for a status quo.

A gang of about 20 to 25 hired goons of the NGO's ousted chairman Qazi Faruque Ahmed broke open the head office on Monday midnight and allegedly took its control.

Police drove the intruders out on Tuesday morning nearly 32 hours after they had intruded. Police took control of the office.

"We just do not understand why police do not hand over the office to us," said Karim.

Meanwhile, the NGO authorities wrote a letter to the deputy commissioner (DC) Mirpur zone of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ltufur Kabir yesterday asking for

handover of the office to them.

"But we have not received any reply yet," said the CEO, adding: "Hundreds of employees are waiting outside the office."

DC Lutfor told The Daily Star on Wednesday that "We are waiting for an order from the government high-ups."

Upon a revision petition filed by Qazi Faruque, the HC in its order in August last year said he could enter Proshika Bhaban alone to meet with the present chairman and CEO without holding any procession and rally there.

Proshika has a total of 620 upazila-based ADCs and sub-ADCs across the country with 13 offices in Dhaka.

The NGO authorities are preparing to file two cases in this connection -- one on charge of trespassing and the other on contempt charge.

12 vehicles sued for noise pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) filed cases against 12 vehicles in the city yesterday for contributing to making noise pollution.

The cases were filed during a drive conducted at Darussalam under Mirpur area and also realised Tk13,400 as fine.

It also measured the black smoke billowing out from the exhaust pipes of different

vehicles.

Director Dhaka division of DoE Jamshed Ahmad led the drive comprising executive magistrate Abul Bashar Mohammad Fakhruzzaman, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, BRTA, and Bangladesh Scout.

They also distributed leaflets and stickers among the passengers and drivers of different modes of transport to make them aware of sound pollution.

Dhaka College trainees clashed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police seized a revolver and a number of sharp weapons raiding seven dormitories of Dhaka College early yesterday.

They also picked up 13 students, as the students did not have identity cards.

However, they were freed few hours later as teachers identified the detainees as their students.

The raid was conducted after some students of the college

clashed with trainee teachers of nearby Teachers' Training College on Wednesday.

Police said they found one revolver, 11 long machetes, 52 iron pipes with sharp edges, 11 sticks and some iron rods from behind the hostels as the residents threw them out sensing the presence of police.

When contacted, principal of the college asked this correspondent to talk to Mohammad Anwar, a lecturer and one of the hostel supers.

Coming out Tomorrow

Star Insight

Watch out for a special issue of Star Insight coming your way this Saturday. Explore the classical melodies and rhythm of Bangladesh with 10 very gifted artistes.

Know Bangladesh Better

ZIA ORPHANAGE CASE Hearing on Jan 19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday fixed January 19 for hearing the petitions of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman seeking stay of the proceedings against them in Zia Orphanage Trust embezzlement case.

The bench of Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah and Justice Md Abdur Razzaque fixed the date for hearing following a prayer moved by petitioners' lawyer Barrister Mahbubuddin Khokon.

On January 13, Chief Justice Md Tafazzul Islam sent the petitions to this bench for hearing and disposing of the matters as another HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice Md Rais Uddin on January 6 had sent the petitions to the chief justice for a decision.

On January 10, a Dhaka court fixed January 27 as the date for the hearing on charge framing against Khaleda, Tarique and four others in connection with this case.

To meet your long cherished dream of home
Think Modhumoti Eco-City. Planned eco-city of Modhumoti Group

Modhumoti Eco-City 25% DISCOUNT UP TO 31ST JANUARY

Planned eco-city of modhumoti group
(In different Zillas & Upazillas of Bangladesh)

(Both Head & Site offices remain open on Friday, Saturday and others Govt. holidays. Site visit facility available everyday. Head office remains open from: 9am to 9pm.)

25/2 Green Road (Between Road no. 6 & 7), Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh Phone: 8624607-8, 8620455, 8620466, 9671044, 9671175, Mobile: 01711-402614, 01713-017368, 01819-411099, 01711-541689, 01711-385974, 01715-407345, 01711-312423, 01714-013566, 01713-048905, 01712-261284, 01714-005792, 01714-043369, 01159-824562, 01711-359309, 01556-332601, 01552-471740, 01552-449080, 01720-052633, 01818-985094, 01715-534530, 01815-691765, 01718-532454, 01712-922235, 01718-340302, Fax: 880-2-8629141, E-mail: info@modhumotigroup.com

Integrated housing comprising Row-House / Duplex (with land), Flat, Plot, Shopping Complex with modern eco-friendly civic amenities

MODHUMOTI GROUP
দেশ ও সমাজের উন্নয়নে

www.modhumotigroup.com