

Change law to save film industry

Recommends JS body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday recommended that the government amend the film censorship law to make it time befitting allowing expression of 'generosity' in the films for survival of the country's film industry.

In defence of its recommendation, the parliamentary standing committee on information ministry said the law should be amended in line with the changing time so that the country's films can compete with neighbouring as well as other foreign

films. "A decade ago, wearing shirt and pant by a female seemed indecent and inconsistent. But now this is very normal. So, the film sensor board should demonstrate such generosity so that our films can survive," said Obaidul Quader, chief of the parliamentary body, at a press briefing after the meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

But the filmmakers must give attention to the country's culture and heritage in making the films, he added. "But in the name of generosity, excessive scenes like kissing, indecency,

violence and vulgarity cannot be tolerated."

The main committee earlier formed a five-member subcommittee led by AL lawmaker Reza Ali to investigate irregularities and weakness in Film Development Corporation (FDC).

The subcommittee in its report submitted to the main committee made some recommendations to improve the current situation in FDC. The main committee endorsed the recommendations of the subcommittee.

It found that 39 films were made, but those were not submitted to the

film sensor board for their release on scrutiny.

The filmmakers and producers did not submit those to the board sensing that the films might not get permission for release as those contain vulgarity, it noted.

Members of the subcommittee watched four films of the 39 movies. They did not find much indecent scenes, but there were fierce fighting scenes, it added.

The report further said that some violent scenes should be removed from the films to get the sensor board's nod.



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Escap) Executive Secretary Dr Naeleen Heyzer pays a courtesy call on President Zillur Rahmaan at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia places wreaths at the grave of party founder and late president Ziaur Rahman at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city yesterday marking the 74th birth anniversary of the former president.

Vow to resist deals with India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP, the main opposition in the parliament, yesterday observed the 74th birth anniversary of its founder and late president Ziaur Rahman with due respect and solemnity.

Flanked by party leaders and workers, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia placed wreaths and offered Fataha at the grave of the slain president at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the morning.

Later, she joined a doa mahfil organised there by Jatiyatubadi Olama Dal and prayed for salvation of the departed soul of Ziaur Rahman as well as peace, progress and welfare of the country and its people.

The Leader of the Opposition then inaugurated a free medical camp arranged on the mazar premises by Dhaner Shish, a pro-BNP organisation, to provide the destitute with free treatment and medicines.

She also inaugurated a voluntary blood-donation programme of ZISAS.

Later, at a discussion organised by BNP at the Engineers' Institution auditorium in the afternoon, the party leaders vowed to resist the deals signed between Bangladesh and India during the prime minister's recent visit to the neighbouring country, saying that they would not allow the government to implement the joint communiqué.

They urged the party men to be united for a greater movement to protect the country's interest, independence and sovereignty with the ideology of late president Ziaur Rahman under the leadership of party chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Khaleda attended the discussion but did not speak. BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain said the government has started to attack the opposition leaders and workers, as it has been isolated from the people.

The BNP leader said Awami League had no role during the liberation war, rather it was Zia who proclaimed the independence.

Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said India got everything they wanted from Sheikh Hasina but Bangladesh did not get anything from the PM's visit.

Moudud Ahmed said the prime minister will get due reply for the deals she signed, as she did not discuss the issue with anyone.

"We will do everything necessary so that the government cannot implement the joint communiqué," he said.

Brig Gen (ret'd) Hannan Shah, Prof Dr Mahbubullah and Shawkat Mahmud also spoke at the discussion BNP Senior Vice Chairman TH Khan in the chair.

BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE Execution of verdict by first week of Feb Says state minister for home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Home Shamsul Haque Tuku yesterday said the verdict of Bangabandhu murder case would be executed within this month or in the first week of the next month.

He also said that the trial of war criminals would begin soon after the execution of the verdict in the Bangabandhu murder case.

The government has almost completed all the preparations for the trial, he added.

The state minister said this at a discussion organised by Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee on the occasion of its 18th founding anniversary at the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium in the

city.

The Nirmul Committee was founded in 1992 by Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam who spearheaded a campaign for the trial of war criminals at that time.

"The government has completed the trial of Bangabandhu killers and now conducting the trial of August 21 grenade attack case and 10-truck arms haul case. The government is also trying to foil all evil attempts to make the country a haven for militants," Tuku said at the discussion.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Kabir Chowdhury urged the government to arrest all the identified war criminals.

The war criminals are harmful to society and they can commit any crimes, putting

the security of the country at risk. So, they must be arrested, he said.

Prof Chowdhury also underscored the need to immediately start the trial of war criminals.

Justice Ghulam Rabbani said the people of the country have made it easy for the government to hold the trial by giving them a huge mandate through a ballot revolution. Now the government needs to show respect to the voters' wishes.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Promod Mankin and CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim also spoke.

Later, a documentary titled 'Jihader Pratikriti' made by journalist and writer Shahriar Kabir was screened.



Justice Ghulam Rabbani speaks at a discussion marking the 18th founding anniversary of Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee at the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium in the city yesterday.

Govt committed to trying war criminals: Minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is committed to complete the trial of the war criminals as soon as possible, Law Minister Shafiqe Ahmed yesterday told the Parliament that the government has passed a resolution on January 29, 2009 for quick trial of the war criminals.

In reply to a query of AL lawmaker Meher Afroz on the date for beginning the trial, the law minister said the renovation work of the old High Court building for setting up tribunals there will be completed within

February.

"As part of the trial, appointment of investigation agency and chief prosecutors and setting up tribunals are under process," he said.

"The government will file cases against war criminals on the basis of the reports of the investigation agency," the law ministry said replying to another query of AL lawmaker Kabirul Haq.

In an interview with The Daily Star on December 13 last, the law minister said, "I can tell you that the process of the trial of the war criminals

would start either by the end of January or in the beginning of February."

While replying to lawmakers' queries, the law minister said the government has planned to make all courts digitalised and increase the number of judges to ensure justice for the poor.

He said 209 assistant judges/judicial magistrates have already been appointed and they joined the offices on January 17.

"Appointment of another 100 assistant judges/judicial magistrates is under process," the law minister added.

Saraswati puja today

BSS, Dhaka

The Sri Sri Saraswati Puja will be observed across the country today with prayers and festivity at temples, educational institutions and homes of the country.

According to the Hindu mythology, the Puja of Sri Sri Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, will be observed in capital as well as in districts, upazilas and villages with great enthusiasm seeking better education.

The main puja in the capital will be held at the Dhakeshwari National Temple, Ram Krishna Mission, ISKON temple, Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University, Eden College, Badrunessa College, Mohammadpur Kendrio Biswabidyalay College and other educational institutions.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday greeted all members of the Hindu Community on the occasion of the Saraswati Puja.

In a message on the eve of the day, the Prime Minister said Devi Saraswati is the symbol of light of knowledge, justice and truth and creature of education, spiritual messages and melody.

She hoped that the members of the Hindu community would make further contribution to the national welfare by dedicating themselves with their pure knowledge and exercising its traditional Bengali culture.

Hasina wished happiness, peace and prosperity and all success of the puja programmes.

Left-leaning leaders pay respects to Jyoti Basu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Left-leaning political party leaders paid their last tributes to veteran communist and former chief minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu yesterday, say press releases.

A two-member team of Workers Party of Bangladesh led by party president Rashed Khan Menon and another three-member team of Communist Party of Bangladesh led by its President Manjurul Ahsan Khan are now in Kolkata to pay their respects.

They prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members of the Marxist stalwart.

Besides, Jatiya Mahila Sangstha and Mahila Muktioddha Sangsad expressed their deep shock at the death of the legendary leader of this part of the world.

Ensure basic rights of 10 lakh Bede people Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday called on the government to ensure basic rights of the 10 lakh people of Bede (gypsies) community of the country.

Bedes are deprived of many rights such as education and health facilities for their nomadic lifestyle, they added.

Supported by ActionAid Bangladesh, the roundtable was organised by Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee (GBUC) at the National Press Club in the city.

The speakers said about 98 percent Bedes live under the poverty line with 95 percent never attending formal education at schools.

For lack of awareness of

family planning, average size of a Bede family comprising at least 7.5 people is the highest rate in the entire world.

Though about 80 percent of the children in the country were brought under the immunisation programme, only 2 percent of Bede children were fortunate enough to be immunised.

These children are more prone to various diseases and tremendously malnourished.

These children have not been brought under the birth registration programme either, the speakers pointed out.

They said women are more vulnerable in Bede community and are facing harassment from the mainstream population regularly.

Suggestion to bring Bede community in the proposed health and education policy came up at the discussion.

The speakers also suggested generating employment according to their skills and protecting their knowledge of herbal medicine and their unique culture.

Talukdar Md Yunus MP, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on primary and mass education, AKM Maqsood, executive director of GBUC, Abu Naser Khan, chairman of Paribesh Bachao Andolon, Prof HKS Arefeen of Dhaka University, Ajmeer Hossain, deputy manager (Diversity and Citizenship Theme) of ActionAid, and Bede Sardar Soud Khan, spoke at the event.

Save Proshika from vested group NGO forum calls on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Trinamul NGO Forum, a platform of 100 local NGOs, yesterday called on the government to save Proshika, one of the largest non-government organisation of the country, from a vested group who are trying to throw out its founder Qazi Faruque.

They also declared a series of programmes, including collection of signatures from local NGOs from January 20-24, human chains across the country on January 25 and a rally in Dhaka on January 29,

to save the NGO.

Nazer Hossain, executive director of ISDE, on behalf of the forum said this at a press conference on 'Current situation and its resolution' at Dhaka Reporter's Unity in the city.

Representatives from CAP in Barisal, Grambangla Unnayan Committee, Karmakutir in Bhola, SSDP in Barguna, SCOPE, ACLAB, BPUS in Dinajpur, DISHARE in Gazipur, PMS in Sirajganj, Utsaho Foundation in Kushtia, EC-Bangladesh and DISA in Panchagarh were present at the programme.

The chaos in Proshika ensued last year as the governing body was formed without Qazi Faruque as its chairman.

Following 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 the present chairman and chief executive officer without holding any rally or procession.

On January 11, the ousted chairman hired some 20 to 25 men and broke open the head office at midnight to take control of the NGO.

SARA International School & College advertisement with curriculum details and contact information.

MIRPUR CERAMICS advertisement for pavilion at DTF 2010 with 10% discount and product list.