

11TH INT'L SHORT FILM FESTIVAL BEGINS

## Project negative impacts of terrorism, extremism: PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called on the filmmakers to project the negative impacts of terrorism, extremism and prejudices with an aim to create public awareness against these social menaces.

"A film would be the reflection of life along with entertaining people; it has to be employed as a tool for fighting all sorts of social menaces," she said while inaugurating the 11th International Short Film Festival at the National Museum in the city.

The theme of this year's eight-day festival is 'Mukto Chalachitra -- Mukto Prakash' (Free Film -- Free Expression).

Finance Minister AMA Muhith and Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad also addressed the event, which was presided over by President of the festival committee Hasnat Abdul Hye, also a writer.

Filmmaker Nasiruddin Yousuf, vice-president of the festival committee, read out the declaration of the festival while Director of the committee Rashed Chowdhury also spoke.

Describing films as a strong mass medium, the PM said films speak about the dreams and struggle of people along with providing them entertainment. Films also play an important role in creating social awareness and work as a medium for educating people.

"I think films are a social movement that play an important role in building a peaceful, harmonious and vibrant society."

Hasina said a good film could be a classic creation surpassing the shortcomings of differences of languages and boundaries as language and theme of films is universal.

She said as a medium of education, the actual history of the country, its heritage and cultural glory have to be projected

before the people through films.

In this context, the premier called on the filmmakers and producers to project actual history of the country's War of Liberation to the young generation through films.

Referring to the necessity of using digital technology in films, Hasina said technology could play an important role along with its aesthetic aspect in producing a good film.

Listing various programmes undertaken by her government for development of the country's film industry, the PM said the government is working to formulate a comprehensive film policy and build an infrastructure to this end.

Apart from this, she said her government has a plan to provide Tk 10 lakh as a grant for producing an hour-long art film every year.

A total of 160 short films from 30 countries, including hosts Bangladesh, will be screened during the festival.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurates the 11th International Short Film Festival at the National Museum auditorium at Shahbagh in the city yesterday by lighting a lamp.



Karmojibi Nari takes out a colourful procession from Muktagang in the city yesterday to mark the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day to be observed on March 8.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ON MARCH 8 Call to recognise women's contribution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations chalked out a number of programmes yesterday to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the International Women's Day on March 8 this year.

Karmojibi Nari (KN) organised a rally with the slogan 'Recognition and equal rights of women in a world free from discrimination, exploitation and violence' at Muktagang in the city.

The leaders of KN also took out a colourful procession that paraded through different city streets areas with a demand to recognise the contribution of women and their dignity in the workplaces.

KN President Shirin Akhter said the movement of the working women had started at a needle factory in 1857 to realise their demands got momentum in 1910.

Their movement forced the world to observe March 8 as the International Women's Day, but they have to fight for the same reason even after 100 years, she said, adding that the recent deaths of 13 women at Garib and Garib Sweater Factory in Gazipur proves that.

The KN leader demanded immediate arrest of the persons responsible for and punishment

to them.

Coordinator of the organisation Arifa Akter Banu demanded implementation of the National Women Development Policy, trial of war criminals, equal wage for male and female workers, maternity leave, safe workplace, one-third women representative at all levels, recognition to rural women workers and a complete labour law for agriculture workers.

At the same time, a parliamentary caucus on women should be formed to place the women issues in parliament and to enact laws, she demanded.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) also held the 'Nari Jagaran Jatra' (Awakening Journey of Women) for the second consecutive day at different northern districts.

As part of its year-long activities, the three-day journey began on March 3 from Dhaka to Tentulia.

Convener of the centenary observance committee of CPB Laxmi Chakravarti, joint conveners Monira Begum Anu, Rehana Mallik and members Lina Chakravarti, AN Rasheda Kuddus and Jolly Talukder also spoke.

## Draft policy focuses on rights of girls, indigenous children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Child Policy 2010 will focus on the rights of girl children, indigenous children and children with special needs.

A view exchange meeting on the draft National Child Policy 2010 was held at Biam Foundation in the city yesterday. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has prepared the draft.

Representatives from different organisations took part in the meeting arranged by the women and children affairs ministry.

State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Dr Shirin Sharmin Choudhury, Secretary Razia Begum, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanam, and Prof Dr Gitiara Nasreen were present at the programme.

The policy is being formulated with the objective to enact gender-sensitive and child rights-based law and take effective

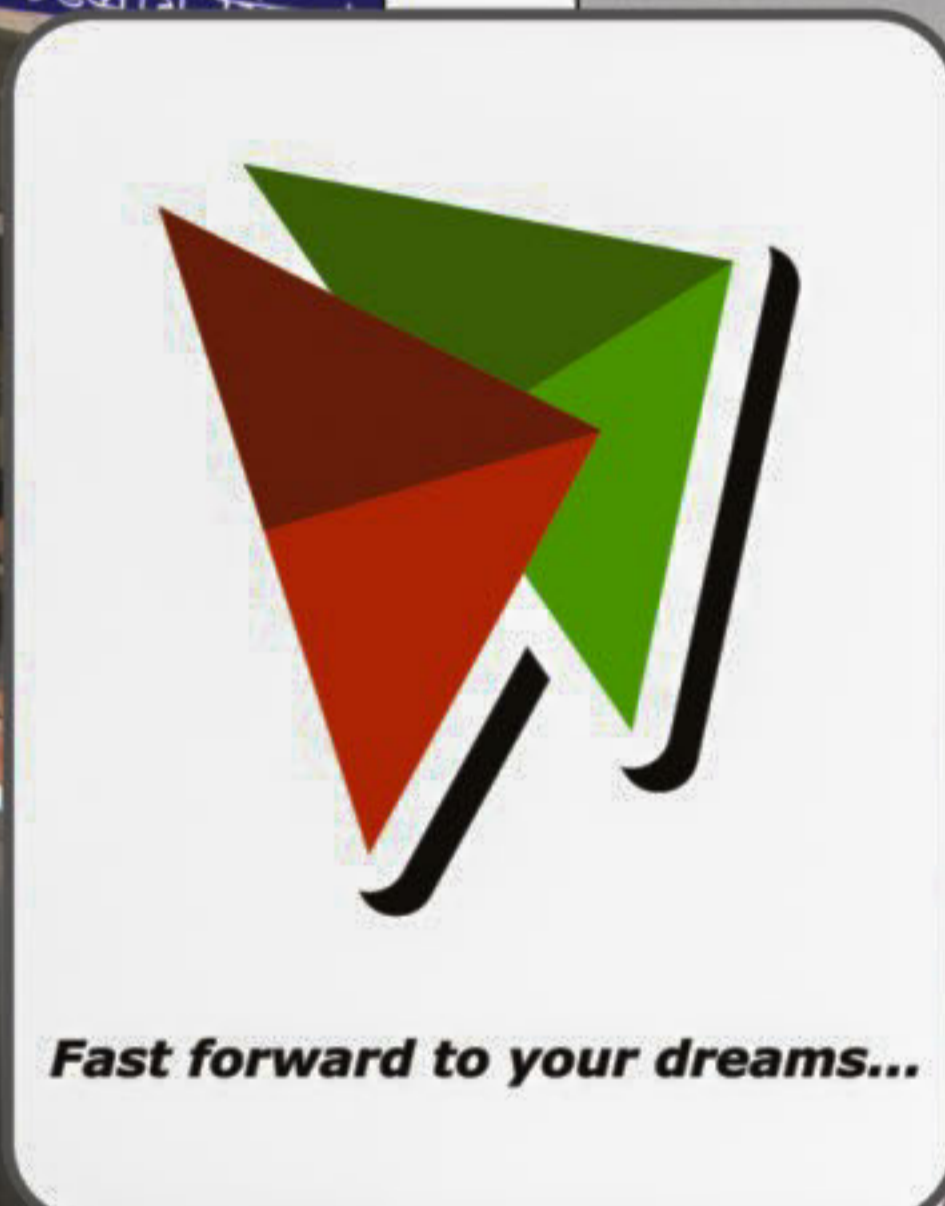
measure against child rights violation along with increasing efficiency of the government and non-government organisations to this end.

The policy would work as a strategy to eradicate repression and violence against children and eliminate discrimination against children.

The policy will serve the special needs of girl children and give recognition to their rights and establish gender equality. It will also serve the needs of all children irrespective of gender, profession, region, religion and ethnic identity.

The view exchange meeting was held to seek opinions of various groups with a view to formulating the policy in a broader manner and including all the issues concerning child rights.

A number of children also took part in the programme and voiced their expectations regarding the policy.



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