



Samajik Protirod Committee, a platform of 61 organisations, takes out a procession from the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday to mark International Women's Day.

## Work together to combat violence against women

Men, women urged on Int'l Women's Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights activists celebrated 100 years of International Women's Day yesterday with a call for men and women to work together to put an end to all forms of violence against women.

Different organisations marked the day with various colourful programmes, including rally, seminar, discussion, human chain and cultural programme.

The theme of the day was 'Equal rights, equal opportunities: Progress for all.'

Samajik Protirod Committee, a platform of 61 organisations, held a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar.

"Women are struggling to establish their rights. They are facing severe difficulties in achieving their goal. We hope they will succeed in their efforts," said State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury at the rally.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanam called on both men and women to work together to fight violence against women.

Executive Director of Manusher Jonno Foundation Shaheen Anam moderated the rally attended by former adviser to the caretaker government Sultana Kamal, President of parliamentary standing committee on Women and Children Affairs Ministry Meher Afroj Chumki, and women's rights activists Shirin Akhter, Rekha Chowdhury and

Aroma Dutt.

They placed a 25-point demand, including establishing women's rights and empowering them.

Local Government Engineering division organised a daylong seminar on 'Gender Institutionalisation in LGED' where LGRD and Cooperatives minister Syed Ashrafur Islam was present as the chief guest.

Campaign for Good Governance formed a human chain in front of the National Museum. The participants called for full implementation of the CEDAW and amendment to all discriminatory laws.

Teachers and students of women and gender studies department of Dhaka University (DU) took out a colourful procession on the campus. Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Siddique led the procession.

On the premises of DU's fine art faculty, hundreds of students of Vigarunnisa Noon School and College and Udayan High School took a vow not to tolerate violence against women.

As part of their two-day programme, Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) yesterday organised a photography exhibition, blood donation programme and also formed a human chain at the National Press Club.

The National Girl Child Advocacy Forum awarded three women for their significant contribution to their respec-

tive fields.

The awardees are Rowshan Ara Bachchu, a language movement veteran and academician, Ferdousi Majumder, a cultural activist and Munni Saha, a journalist.

It also organised a discussion and cultural programme at the Shishu Academy.

Hill Women's Federation, Bangladesh Institute of Human Rights (BIHR), Bangladesh Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims, Bangladesh National Council of Textile Garments and Leather Workers, Build Better Bangladesh, Bangladesh Nari Mukti Sangsad, Bangladesh Labour Welfare Foundation, Mukto Shishu O Nari Sramik Forum also organised different programmes.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA), Sammilita Nari Samaj, Bangladesh Apparels Workers Federation, Nari Unnayan Shakti (NUS), National Garments Workers Federation, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), The Samajtantrik Nari Forum, Agriculture University in Mymensingh, Department of Government and Politics of Jahangirnagar University also marked the day with different programmes.

Our Feni correspondent adds: The district office of the Women Affairs Directorate in association with different NGOs held a debate competition, rally, fair, discussion and cultural programme.

## Drive against encroachers in N'ganj today

320 unauthorised structures identified

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority and Narayanganj district administration will jointly carry out an eviction drive today along Shitalakhya, Balu and Buriganga rivers.

A total of 320 unauthorised structures have been identified on the rivers under the district's jurisdiction as per a Revisional Survey.

The administration has already served a notice to the encroachers about the eviction.

BIWTA Deputy Director (port) Alamgir Kabir said the drive will start from Uttar Ruposhi, Gondhobpur, and Laxmangaon under Rugponjupazila.

Deputy Commissioner of Narayanganj Shamsur Rahman said they are prepared for the drive.

Most of the encroachers have taken out lease on the rivers from BIWTA, he said.

The DC said, "We will continue the drive until all the structures are demolished."

Sources said a total of 1158 acres of

river area of the three rivers have been occupied by around 3010 illegal structures that has reduced the width of the rivers.

Following a High Court order on June 25 last year, Narayanganj district administration submitted a report on the status of river encroachment as per RS and Cadastral Survey records to the court in December.

The authorities carried out an eviction drive in June the same year for 11 days and demolished 134 illegal structures including makeshift ones on the rivers.

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## MIG-29 SCAM CASE HC verdict on Hasina's petition today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) will deliver its verdict today regarding a writ petition filed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina challenging the proceedings against her in the MiG-29 scam case filed during the BNP-led four-party alliance rule.

The HC bench of Justice A H M Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Borhan Uddin yesterday fixed the date after completion of the hearing on the petition.

Lawyers for the petitioner told the court that no element of offence was mentioned in the first information report (FIR) and the charge sheet of the case. So, this case cannot go ahead.

Barrister Rafique-Ul Huq assisted by a number of pro-Awami League lawyers argued for the prime minister.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) lawyer advocate MA Aziz Khan opposed the petition.

The now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station on December 11, 2001

## New UNHCR representative takes over

UNB, Dhaka

The newly appointed representative for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Craig Sanders assumed office yesterday.

Sanders joined the office after submitting his credentials to Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, said a press release.

"I am deeply honoured to take up this important assignment in Bangladesh, a country that has a rich and long-standing tradition of granting asylum and ensuring the protection of refugees," said Craig Sanders after presenting his credentials.

on charges of causing a loss of Tk 700 crore to the state exchequer through purchase of eight MiG-29 fighter planes.

Following the petition filed by Hasina, the HC on September 18, 2008, stayed the trial proceedings against her, and issued a rule on the government, the ACC and the trial court to explain why framing of charges against Hasina in her absence should not be declared illegal.

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