

Increase allocations in budget for women

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Budgetary support for women in every sector should be increased as Bangladesh is lagging behind in women development, speakers said at seminar yesterday.

They said the budget should give the women entrepreneurs more chances so that they can come up with new initiatives and have their rights in the wealth.

The speakers said steps should be taken under the national budget to ensure gender equality between men and women in education, and reduce maternal mortality rate, which are among the millennium development goals.

The seminar titled 'We Want National Budget to Achieve Millennium Development Goals for Women' was co-organised by Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha (BNPS) and Institute for Environment and Development (IED).

Dr Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to a caretaker government, said Bangladesh is lagging behind in women development but he hoped that the government would take initiatives in this regard in the next budget.

"Though it's said that achievements have been made in women development over the past ten years but I don't find much of the development. A lot of projects have been taken which were described as projects for women development but those actually did not bring any development to them."

The former finance adviser mentioned some problems in formulating and implementing the budget.

"One is that the parliament play very little role in the process of budget formulation," he said urging the government to ensure participation of the parliamentary standing committees and the lawmakers in the process.

"Another problem is the administra-

tion is centralised," he said, adding the budget cannot be implemented in such a centralised administrative structure.

Protima Pal Majumder, senior researcher at Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, presented the keynote paper at the seminar.

In her paper, the seminar women's incomes, possessions and capital should be exempted from paying the tax and the commercial organisations run by women should be kept out of the reach of VAT.

Dr Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury, state minister for women and children affairs, Meher Afroz Chumki, chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee for women and children affairs, spoke at the seminar as chief guest and special guest respectively.

Rokeya Kabir, executive director of the BNPS, presided over the seminar.



Students of Sher-e-Bangla Girls' College and Shaheed Nabi High School take out a procession at Hatkhola in the city yesterday to create awareness among people against stalking. PHOTO: STAR

'Launch social movement against stalking'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers and students of a school in the city brought out a procession to generate awareness among people against stalking.

The students of Sher-e-Bangla Girls' College in Sutrapur area were carrying placards in their hands with different slogans like 'Make social resistance against stalking' and 'we want stalking-free society'.

Development organisation Hitaishi-Bangladesh in cooperation with Step Towards Development organised the programme.

Sher-e-Bangla Girls' College Principal Monwar Hossain, Hitaishi-Bangladesh Executive Director MA Majid, Officer-in-Charge of Sutrapur Police Station Nazrul Islam, guardians of the students and civil society members also participated in the procession that paraded different streets in the area.

Addressing the students, Monwar termed stalking a social curse and stressed the need for freeing the society from it to ensure participation of girls and women in different activities.

Majid called upon all to launch social movement against stalking and emphasised forming resistance committees against sexual harassment at every educational institution and working place.

Nazrul said they have taken vigorous initiatives to resist stalking in the area. "I held a special meeting on the police station premises on Sunday in this regard."

He also said police arrested three boys on charge of stalking.

Behave more cordially with subordinates

President asks air chief

UNB, Dhaka

President and Supreme Commander of Armed Forces, Zillur Rahman yesterday asked the air chief and senior officers to behave more cordially with the subordinates with a view to bringing better performances in the service.

The president made the remarks when Air Chief of Staff Air Marshal S M Ziur Rahman

called on him at Bangabhaban.

During the meeting, the president suggested the air chief change the language for some commands at the armed forces to uphold the dignity and attitudes of the common soldiers.

Zillur said the government is committed to providing all out support for modernising and also increasing the skills of Bangladesh Air force as well as

the other forces.

The air chief told the president that there's a need of increasing the manpower of air force as the workload of the force has increased 60 to 70 percent. Over the past 18 years, there has been no increase in manpower in keeping with the increasing workload.

PAKNDUTEAM

Earlier, a visiting 21-member delegation of the Pakistan National Defence University (NDU) called on the president at Bangabhaban.

As part of the Overseas Study Tour in Saarc region, Pakistan NDU team led by Brigadier General Muhammad Tauqeer Ahmed is visiting Bangladesh from May 2 to 7.

The delegation consists of two faculty members and 19 course members: 12 from Pakistan, five from Nigeria, one from the UK and one from Oman.



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