

## 250 women enter law profession a yr



ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Over 250 women on an average are coming into the law profession in Bangladesh each year mainly getting attractions to handsome earnings and scope for providing legal support to the oppressed people in the society.

Leading women lawyers told The Daily Star that challenging and independent characteristics, scope to work for people legally and socially as well as good earnings in law profession are attracting women to this field.

Sources at the Bangladesh Bar Council, the highest body to give licences to the lawyers for practising law in courts, said over 250 women on an average are coming into the profession each year.

According to the sources, there are over 41,000 lawyers in Bangladesh. Of them, around

5,000 are female practising in different courts, including the Appellate Division and the High Court Division of the Supreme Court.

More than 400 women lawyers are practicing in the High Court and the Appellate Division but far less in the apex court, said sources at the Supreme Court Bar Association.

Rabia Bhuiyan, senior lawyer of the Supreme Court, told The Daily Star that she is honoured to be a lawyer. She is satisfied over her profession and pleased to come to the aid of the poor, helpless and oppressed people.

She said her father inspired her to become a lawyer when she was a student at school, explaining her pleasures and satisfactions over the law profession.

"Now I can talk to poor and illiterate people with an open mind. I can directly help them solve their problems by placing arguments in

the courts and give them advice," Rabia said.

Litigant people always look for a competent lawyer to deal with their legal problems. So there is a good scope to earn a handsome amount in this profession, she added.

Fawzia Karim Feroze, president of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) representing about 900 female lawyers, said she enjoys the challenging nature of this interesting and pleasant profession.

Most of the women lawyers are now working for the interest of the people particularly for the helpless and oppressed women and children, she said.

Advocate Fawzia said women who are working hard and have taken this profession as a challenge are doing well. She, however, said dealing with clients is a very challenging job for

women lawyers.

Former deputy attorney general Nahid Mahtab said, "Women lawyers find a charm in law profession since they can directly contribute to their family as well as the society by earning money."

Women are now conscious of the challenges and profits of the legal business and so, they choose to study law discipline.

When lawyers help establish human rights with the rule of law, it creates a direct impact on the society, she added.

Nahid Mahtab said women are becoming aware of their constitutional rights day by day.

"I chose law profession out of curiosity on the constitutional rights of women. My mother used to inspire me into knowing those rights when I was a student," she added.

## Bangladesh moves to earn jute patent

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh will apply for a patent on jute genome sequencing to World Intellectual Property Rights Organisation (WIPO) so that the country can earn and enjoy the right to the technology, a senior government official said yesterday.

"We will send our application for patent registration with the WIPO sometime this month," said Dr Mohammad Kamal Uddin, director general of Bangladesh Jute Research Institute.

The registration would help Bangladesh earn legal rights and enjoy them to get benefits from use of the technology anywhere in the world, said Dr Kamal.

Maqsudul Alam, team leader of the jute genome decoding project, said Bangladesh now can produce high quality jute varieties tolerant to unfavourable climate and get improved fibre.

Alam, a Bangladesh-born Hawaii scientist, said the golden fiber is expected to get its lost glory back in five years through full genome sequencing and multiply jute export.

According to him, more than 35 scientists and researchers of Bangladesh Jute Research Institute (BJRI), Dhaka University and DataSoft are involved in the jute genome sequencing project.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced the success of jute genome sequencing in the parliament in mid-June and promised for further assistance to the project.

## MRP for diplomats from next week likely

UNB, Dhaka

The process of issuing Machine Readable Passport (MRP) for Bangladesh diplomats serving at different missions abroad will start by next week, with the home ministry awaiting allocation of a space at the foreign ministry to set up equipment for the purpose.

The passport authority started issuing MRP from the first week of May this year to meet the deadline set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). However, Bangladesh diplomats working at 34 missions abroad are yet to be issued a single MRP for lack of necessary facilities in the foreign ministry.

Official sources said a meeting on reviewing annual development project (ADP) of home ministry elaborately discussed MRP issue yesterday.

The meeting, with Home Minister Sahara Khatun in the chair, has decided to request the foreign ministry to allocate a room to set up necessary equipment for issuing MRP for the Bangladesh diplomats abroad.

The meeting also reviewed the progress of 34 ADP projects under the home ministry in the first quarter of current fiscal (2010-11).

The home minister directed the departments concerned to issue work orders against every project immediately. The ministry is implementing 34 ADP projects at a cost of Tk 328 crore in the current fiscal year.

The meeting was told that 27 percent of the allocated money under the projects has already been released.

Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder and heads of various departments under the ministry attended the monthly ADP progress review meeting.

## INTERNATIONAL OZONE DAY TODAY

# Pledge to stop use of ozone depleting substances

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh along with other member states of the ozone protection regime would observe International Ozone Day today with renewed pledge to stop using Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) in the country.

This year, the International Day for the Preservation of Ozone Layer highlights the central role of good governance in pursuit of environmental goals. This includes successful environmental agreements requiring a broad framework, clear targets and a gradual approach to implementation.

As a signatory of Montreal Protocol, a global deal to phase out ODS, Bangladesh along with other developing countries can not import and use of any kind of ODS gases of chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) group after December 2009 except for essential uses.

Ministry of Environment and Forest and its technical arm Department of Environment (DOE) will observe the day with various programmes including rally,

discussion, competition for students and massive awareness campaign on ozone layer protection.

Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar and private television channels will broadcast special programmes and newspapers will publish special supplements and articles highlighting the significance of the day.

The theme of the day is "Ozone layer protection: governance and compliance" as declared by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in separate messages, urged all to be careful about protecting the ozone layer by reducing the use of ODS gases.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, in his message, expressed his happiness that the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer, which achieved universal ratification last year, is an excellent example of this process.

He pointed out that when the Montreal Protocol was signed in 1987, governments did not originally envision the phase out of any ozone depleting substance.

Yet, as a result of strong national and global compliance, parties to the protocol have cut production and consumption of these harmful chemicals by more than 98 percent, he added.

He added that as chemicals depleting the ozone are also greenhouse gases, the protocol is instrumental in the fight against climate change.

It has already averted greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to more than 135 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide and will continue to play an important role.

Marking the day, State Minister for Environment and Forest Hasan Mahmud is scheduled to lead a rally from TSC at Dhaka University at 7:30am. It will end at National Press Club where a seminar on the theme of the day will also be held at 9:00am.

## Screen modest films for congenial atmosphere

### PM asks film distributors

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the Bangladesh Film Distributors' Association to screen healthy films in cinema halls and ensure congenial atmosphere there.

She made the call when a delegation of the association led by its president Kazi Feroz Rashid called on the prime minister at her office here.

They discussed various problems of the association with the prime minister, said Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad after the meeting.

Highlighting the role of films, Hasina said as a mass medium they can play an important role in establishing the spirit of the country's War of Liberation as well as social values.

She asked the association leaders to ensure healthy environment in the halls and show digital and modern films to bring back viewers.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Capt (Retd) A B Tajul Islam and Information Secretary Dr Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury were present on the occasion.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday receives freedom fighter certificates conferred on five freedom fighters, including her two brothers Sheikh Kamal and Sheikh Jamal, who were killed on August 15, 1975. (Story on Page 1)

## AL presidium meet Sept 17

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Awami League will hold its presidium meeting on September 17 at Gono Bhaban, says a press release.

Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting at her official residence at 7:00pm.

All presidium members are requested to attend the meeting.

## Allow Khokon to go abroad

HC asks govt  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed the government to allow BNP lawmaker Barrister Mahbub Uddin Khokon to go abroad for professional purposes.

The members of law enforcement agency on Tuesday barred Khokon at Shahjalal International Airport from leaving the country for London.

A vacation HC bench of Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui and Justice JBM Hassan also issued a rule upon the government to explain within four weeks why its action barring Khokon from going abroad should not be declared illegal.

The court came up with the rule and order following a writ petition filed by Khokon challenging the legality of the government's action barring him from going abroad.

Barrister Rafique-ul Huq appeared for the petitioner, while Additional Attorney General MK Rahman represented the government.

## Denmark keen to increase support in energy sector

UNB, Dhaka

The Danish government is keen to increase its cooperation in development of Bangladesh's energy sector to help the government solve the present crisis of electricity.

The willingness was conveyed when newly appointed Danish Ambassador to Bangladesh Svend Olling presented his credentials to President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

Welcoming the new envoy, president said Bangladesh attaches great importance to its relations with Denmark and hoped that the bilateral relations between the two countries would be further strengthened in the future.

Zillur expressed his satisfaction over the Danish government's interest to extend more cooperation in developing the coun-

try's energy sector.

He urged the Danish government to import Bangladesh made ocean-going ships, jute, leather products and pharmaceuticals considering its world-class standard and competitive prices.

Zillur emphasised on exchanging high level visits between officials and businesspersons between the two countries for increasing bilateral trade and investment.

The new envoy conveyed the greetings of the Danish queen to the president.

Olling said he would try his best in reaching the trade and commerce ties between Denmark and Bangladesh to a new height during his tenure.

Secretary of the President's Office Safiul Alam, Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes and Press Secretary to the President A K M Nesar Uddin Bhuiyan were present.

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