

Newborn stolen from hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day-old newborn boy was stolen from Midford Hospital in the city yesterday.

The mother Salma Begum, 25, a resident of Dhupkhola in the city's Gendaria, told The Daily Star that she was admitted to the hospital's labour ward and gave birth on Saturday.

Salma said her mother Khodeza Begum took the baby for vaccination to the hospital's outdoor section around 1:00pm yesterday.

A burqa-clad (a garment covering the entire body) woman offered to hold the baby while Khodeza bought the ticket for vaccination. When Khodeza finished buying the ticket, she could not find the woman, said Salma.

Officer-in-Charge Md Salauddin Khan of Kotwali Police Station said the hospital authorities informed police and they are conducting an investigation.

Anti-women fanatics terrifying people

Says Sultana Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Former adviser to a caretaker government, Sultana Kamal, yesterday said fundamentalists are terrifying people to impose their opinion against the women development policy.

"Their (the fanatics) statements about the policy contain no logic, they are just frightening people using the Quran, guns, and sticks and talking about the hell." She also said, "There is nothing to care about them (fundamentalists). They are not courageous because they are doing injustice."

"They don't hold also the right to impose any Fatwa, as there is a constitution and a judicial system in Bangladesh".

Sultana, also a noted human rights activist, told a discussion at a city hotel.

The discussion on "Human rights condition and our roles" was organised by Human Rights Defenders Forum, Rajshahi chapter.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presiding over the weekly cabinet meeting at Bangladesh secretariat in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Indigenous women in CHT still deprived

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights of indigenous women in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) area are not established as the CHT peace accord was not properly implemented, speakers observed at a discussion yesterday.

They said a separate chapter should be included in National Women Development Policy for the empowerment and development of indigenous women and also demanded reserving seats in parliament for them.

The discussion on CHT peace accord and development of indigenous women in CHT was held at RC Majumder auditorium of Dhaka University organised by Hill Women's Federation.

Zobaeda Nasrin of anthropology department of Dhaka University said the issue of development of indigenous women is not included in the five year plan or the policy.

Forty years has passed since independence but attitude toward women, especially indigenous, has not change at all, she said.

Seperate chapter should be included in National Women Development Policy for the empowerment and development of indigenous women and also should have seats reserved for them in parliament

She said incidents of rape of indigenous women by army men and settler Bangalees are state-sponsored incidents, which cannot be compared to ones taking place in the plain lands of the country.

Shaktipada Tripura, organising secretary of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), said it would be hard to establish rights of indigenous women if country does not establish women's rights first.

Even though women have been heading governments in the country for a long time, it is very unfortunate that women's rights are till to be established, he said.

Bidhayak Chakma, a PCJSS member, said not only army men and settlers but also their own communities suppress indigenous women.

Chanchana Chakma, the federation's organising secretary, presented a keynote paper at the discussion, chaired by Srijoni Tripura, the federation's Dhaka City unit convenor.



Rockefeller Foundation president due in city today

BSS, Dhaka

President of Rockefeller Foundation, Dr Judith Rodin, arrives in the city today to see a number of health promotion activities in Bangladesh, funded by the US charity.

Dr Judith, who will pay a three-day visit, will meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, inaugurate a new Masters programme on public health and informatics at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), and observe health promotion activities in selected city slums.

Dr Mushatque R Chowdhury, associate director of Rockefeller Foundation, Asia office, said Dr Rodin will also inaugurate a health centre in the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B).

Take action against bigots

Duta urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) has urged the government to take action against those who are creating unrest and anarchy in the society opposing the National Women Development Policy 2011.

The urge was made at a meeting held at Dhaka University (DU) Club Bhaban on Saturday evening, with Duta president Dr Anwar Hossain in the chair.

DU teachers expressed worries that some religious fanatics are creating disorder in the country propagating false, confusing, and pointless information against the policy.

Protesting the conspiracies and misdeeds by the bigots, they also called upon people from all strata of society to resist the anti-women religious groups.

More support to Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leading economist Esther Duflo and Khan Academy founder Salman Khan have joined an international effort to stand by Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus.

They both joined the Friends of Grameen, an international platform formed to promote microcredit, social business and Grameen Bank, as the vice president of its executive committee.

Duflo, the Abdul Latif Jameel Professor of Poverty Alleviation and Development Economics in the Department of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, USA, said: "What is at stake is not one person, Prof Yunus, but his legacy to the global poverty alleviation policy."

She said microfinance is under political strain in several countries, and its very survival may be at stake. "For the sake of Grameen's eight million shareholders, but also of the more than 150 microfinance beneficiaries worldwide, Yunus must be overseeing a management transition at Grameen Bank without political interferences."

Bangladeshi-origin Salman Khan said, "As someone with deep Bangladeshi roots, I can see wherever I travel the damage created to

Bangladesh's image with what is going on with Grameen Bank and Prof Yunus."

"The current situation does not appear to be helpful to anyone. Grameen Bank and Prof Yunus are our best ambassadors and have inspired millions around the world. Bangladesh should use them to continue to bring more positive change to the country," said Khan, whose father is from Bangladesh.

Their comments came as the Supreme Court yesterday pushed back to today the hearing on the appeal filed by Prof Yunus challenging the central bank decision to relieve him of the post of managing director of Grameen. Support continues to mount for Yunus, who has been relieved of the post last month, both at home and abroad.

On Sunday, a solidarity rally in support of Prof Yunus and Grameen Bank was held in front of Jatiya Press Club in the city where papers with signatures of 37 lakh Grameen borrowers defending the Nobel laureate were put on display. Los Angeles Bangladeshi community formed a human chain in front of the Bangladesh Consulate on the first day of April demanding for justice.

The Khan Academy, a not-for-profit educational organization, works for providing a "high quality education."

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