

HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION Govt, NGOs must work together

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) need to work in an organised manner to combat human trafficking and prosecute traffickers, speakers said at a roundtable discussion in Chittagong yesterday.

To avert human trafficking, they urged government to reinforce safe migration acts and impose huge fines on the criminals.

They were addressing a discussion styled "Human Trafficking: Threat, Prevention and Survivor Protection" held at a local hotel in the city and jointly organised by Youth Power in Social Action (YPSA), and WINROCK International.

On the Human Trafficking (prevention and protection) Act-2012, they said the newly adopted law is still unknown to many, even law enforcers, especially higher officials, are not aware of it.

They said the law needs to be implemented and to do so inter-ministerial collaboration is required.

The traffickers mainly target children and pregnant women especially those in rural areas, they said.

They said although poverty is on decline the rate of human trafficking is on the rise indicating that poverty is not the only cause of the crime.

Research based studies should be carried out on this issue and a database of the criminals and victims should be kept, they said adding that the victims should be rehabilitate.

Dr Ridwanul Haque, associate professor of Law Department of Dhaka University, presented the keynote paper while Ranjit Kumar Biswas, secretary to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Sisir Dutta, executive director of Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts, spoke among others at the roundtable discussion funded by United States Agency for International Development.



PHOTO: STAR

Cultural activists, journalists, students and teachers form a human chain at Cheragi Pahar More in Chittagong city yesterday protesting the disrespect shown towards noted litterateur Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed by a section of ruling alliance lawmakers in the parliament on June 3.

Remarks against Abu Sayeed protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Teachers, students, cultural activists and other professionals yesterday formed a human chain at Cheragipahar Circle in Chittagong protesting recent criticising comments of lawmakers against noted litterateur Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed.

On June 3, a section of ruling alliance lawmakers in parliament slammed the noted academican, who is also a trustee member of the TTB, for his remarks about what constitutes corruption.

Speakers at the programme said Prof Abu Sayeed is a respected scholar and founder of the Biswa Sahitya Kendra (World Literature Centre). He has been striving to create enlightened people through the organisation in the country.

They said the lawmakers should apologise to the nationally honoured intellectual.



Kobita passes away

BSS, Dhaka

Zobeda Katun Kobita, a celebrated film actress of the 1970's, died of cardiac arrest in her residence at Rupnagar in Mirpur of the capital yesterday morning. She was 60.

She left behind her husband, two sons and one daughter, a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her death.

Kobita was one of the most famed actresses of post-independent Bangladesh who had to her credit lead female role in

Ward councillor assaulted by husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

A woman ward councillor was assaulted allegedly by her husband as she protested his second marriage at Horipur in Chapainawabganj town on Thursday.

The victim is Karima Akhtar Banu, 35, daughter of Abul Kashem of Chakbulaki village in Naogaon Sadar upazila. She is a ward councillor of Chapainawabganj Municipality.

She was admitted to Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital.

On Thursday afternoon, she had an altercation with her husband Ansar Ali over his second marriage, Banu told reporters at the hospital yesterday.

At one stage, Ali became furious and beat up Banu with bamboo sticks, injuring her severely, at their house in Horipur, she said.

Being informed, other councillors of Chapainawabganj Municipality rushed her to the hospital around 7:00pm on Thursday, she added.

Ali married Banu seven years ago. He got married again to Nazma, an employee of Chapainawabganj deputy commissioner's office, a year and a half ago without Banu's permission, said Banu.

Ali often tortured Banu whenever she protested his second marriage, she said.

Banu filed a case with Sadar Police Station under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act against Ali, who fled the scene immediately.

Wasfia to return home today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation waits eagerly to welcome home Wasfia Nazreen today.

She is returning to the country on the completion of her over two-month-long successful expedition that led her to become the second Bangladeshi woman to conquer the Mount Everest.

Wasfia is scheduled to arrive in the capital around 12:40pm today by a Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight.

"After many days I am going home. I am feeling very happy," Wasfia told The Daily Star over phone yesterday.

Family members, friends and members of the Bangladesh on Seven Summits campaign will greet Wasfia at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

Later, Wasfia will visit the city's Rayerbazar killing field to pay tribute to the martyred intellectuals, where she will also address a press conference, said Korvi Rakshand, spokesperson of the seven summits campaign.



Wasfia Nazreen

Wasfia set off on her Everest's mission on March 26, reaching the peak on May 26.

She launched her expedition to scale the highest peaks of the seven continents last July under the Bangladesh on Seven Summits campaign celebrating the country's 40 years of independence.

On October 2 last year, she became the first Bangladeshi woman to reach the highest peak of Africa, Uhuru peak of Mt Kilimanjaro, in Tanzania.

She reached the peak of Mount Aconcagua in Argentina last December 16. She came back 300 metres off the peak of Mount Elbrus in Russia on July 12 same year.

Musa Ibrahim is the first Bangladeshi to conquer Mount Everest on May 23, 2010 while Nishat Majumder is first Bangladeshi woman to achieve the feat on May 19.

Free healthcare for 400 freedom fighters

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Some 400 freedom fighters of Rangpur district yesterday were provided health cards, enabling them to access free healthcare services for life.

Rangpur Community Medical College Hospital (RCMCH) and Dr Mofiz Uddin Foundation (DMUF) will provide the service.

Rajshahi University (RU) Vice Chancellor Prof Dr M Abdus Sobhan launched the programme by distributing the cards at RCMCH in Rangpur town as the chief guest.

He also launched the "Life Care Tele-Medicine Centre" at RCMCH through a telemedicine conference with physicians of Fortis Malar Hospital in Chennai, India.

Speakers at the programme appreciated the initiative taken by RCMCH and DMUF and called upon private medical colleges and hospitals to take such steps to show due respect to the country's freedom fighters.

RCMCH Managing Director Nazmul Ahsan Sarker presided over the programme where RU Faculty of Medicine Dean Prof Dr Syed Golam Kibria, Registrar and College Inspector Prof Dr MA Bari and Proctor Prof Dr Chowdhury Md Zakaria were the special guests.

Rangpur Medical College Hospital Department of Surgery Head Prof Dr Abu Taleb and RCMCH Deputy Managing Director AA Al-Amin, Principal Prof Dr Afroza Bulbul Akhter and Vice Principal Prof Dr Wadud Mostafa were also present.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Fatema Khatun, mother of Ahmad Ullah, editor of the daily Shatabdir Kantho, passed away at around 9:30pm on Thursday due to old age complications. She was 85.

She left behind her nine sons, three daughters and a host of relatives to mourn her death.

She was buried in her family graveyard at Purabaria village in Pakundia upazila yesterday after Juma prayers following her namaz-e-janaza at a local school ground.

JS-JUDICIARY FACE-OFF

BNP blames govt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

BNP Standing Committee Member Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia yesterday said that it is because of how the government played its role that the parliament and High Court are now at loggerheads.

Such unrest is not a good sign for the country's democracy and overall politics, he added.

Rafiqul was addressing as chief guest at a view-exchange meeting organised by Chittagong city BNP held at Nasiman Bhaban in the city.

The meeting, however, ended in a short scuffle between supporters of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal President Kazi Belal and its General Secretary Mosharraf Hossain.

Earlier in the meeting, Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, city BNP president, said, "The government is trying to oppress our leaders and activists by filing false cases against us. Consequence of this will not be good."

BNP chairperson's Adviser Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin said, "With public support the government will be toppled. The public will not stand for the politics of hiding, killing, and terrorism."

He asked local leaders and activists to join BNP's rally in the capital on June 11.

Jafrul Alam Chowdhury, BNP leader and lawmaker, Rosy Kabir, former lawmaker, Abu Sufian, vice president of City BNP, also spoke among others.

KFC launches 3 new meals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

KFC, one of the world's most famous chicken restaurant chains, introduced three new meals marking World Oceans Day at KFC's outlet in Cox's Bazar, the longest beach of the world, yesterday.

The meals are -- KFC's signature crispy and juicy toasted twister with spicy hot wings and a small Pepsi, crunchy chicken strips with four new dips and fresh moist potato wedges.

Celebrities like Topu, Sharmin Lucky, Bonna Mirza and Akku Chowdhury, managing director and CEO of Transcom Foods Ltd, were present at the launching.



PHOTO: COURTESY

(From left) Singer Topu, Akku Chowdhury, managing director and CEO of Transcom Foods Ltd, actress Bonna Mirza, novelist Anisul Haque and actress Sharmin Lucky at the launching of KFC's three new meals at its Cox's Bazar outlet yesterday.

Philatelic auction begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-day philatelic auction began in the capital yesterday.

Marking its 225th auction, Philatelists' Association of Bangladesh (PAB) organised the programme at the conference room of General Post Office.

The auction will remain open from 10:30am to 6:00pm today.

A total of 31 PAB members have submitted some 1,600 commemorative stamps from home and abroad for the auction.

PAB Joint Secretary Lashkor Iftakher Hossain said they have around 300 members, who organise daylong auction on the second Friday of every month to sell their items at a fair price to the interested collectors.

Cops hold two blackmailers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested two members of a blackmailing racket from Tasfia Gate area in Chittagong city yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Jamshed, 26, and Shamim, 30.

Dolon Biswas, sub-inspector at Halishahar police station, said the arrestees were involved in cheating people by felling them into trap of spreading photographs through internet. Taking photographs of any of their trapped male individual with females in compromising situation, they used to blackmail.

According to the police, the racket trapped two businessmen Kamal and Delwar of Comilla who went to Chittagong for business purposes on Thursday.

With fare of Tk 400, the businessmen got into a microbus along with five other passengers in Nandankanon area to return to their home from Chittagong. The members of racket who were in disguise of passengers in the microbus established a relation of trust with the businessmen.

Then they took Kamal and Delwar to a house in Tasfia Gate area at Halishahar. One of the disguised passengers Aslam told them that it was the house of his sister named Smriti. Then, Smriti offered a cup of tea to the businessmen. As they were waiting for the tea, other passengers waiting in the microbus rushed to the house alleging that the trapped

businessmen were involved in unsocial activities with Smriti and her domestic help.

Then they forced both Kamal and Delwar to be undressed, and snapped some photographs in compromising situation with the house's domestic help. Showing those photographs Aslam demanded Tk 4 lakh from the businessmen, and threatened them of handing over to police, if the money is not paid.

After bargaining, they settled with Tk 1 lakh. Then Delwar called his brother-in-law over cell phone to bring the money. The relative of Delwar went to Chittagong, and informed the matter to Pahartali Police Station. The Pahartali police informed the matter to Halishahar Police Station as the incident took place under jurisdiction of the police station.

A team of two police men in plain clothes accompanied the victims' relative to the Tasfia Gate area to hand over the money to the racket. The police arrested the members of the racket by chancing them.

Later, the police rescued the victims, and arrested the domestic help from the house. But Smriti, Aslam and others managed to flee.

Following confession of the arrestees, the police raided at different places in Halishahar area, but they could not arrest them. The racket's other members were including Abdul Mannan, Suman, and Didar.

Filing of a case was under process when the report was being written at 9:00pm.



PHOTO: STAR

(From left) Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Executive Director Prof Mustafizur Rahman, Distinguished Fellow Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya and Senior Research Fellow Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem at a press briefing on the National Budget for the fiscal year 2012-13 organised by CPD at Brac Centre Inn in the capital yesterday.