

Resist communal forces

Women leaders tell memorial meeting on Sufia Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women leaders of Samajik Protirodh Committee, a platform of 67 development organisations, have vowed to resist communal forces to establish a non-communal state following the ideology of late poet Sufia Kamal.

They urged the country's women to come forward to foil the conspiracy against the ongoing war crimes trial.

The leaders made the call at a memorial meeting on poet Sufia Kamal, organised by the committee in the capital's Cirdap auditorium yesterday marking her 13th death anniversary.

Sufia Kamal never feared to the evil forces of their activities and never compromised with any injustices in the society; rather she raised her voices against all kinds of communalism and fanaticism, said Sultana Kamal, daughter of the poet.

"I strongly believe the people of Bangladesh do not support the people who use religion for their interests. The trial of the war criminals must be held because it was the demand of Sufia Kamal who strongly voiced against the collaborators of our Liberation War," she said.

Speaking as the chair, Sultana Kamal, also executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra, said the followers of Sufia Kamal must struggle to establish a non-communal society.

Shirin Akhter, standing committee member of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal; Farida Akhter, executive director of Nari Grontho Proboronta; Baby Moudud, a lawmaker; and Ayesha Khanom, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad also spoke.

GRAFT CASE AGAINST MOSHARRAF High Court quashes proceedings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday scrapped the proceedings of a corruption case against former Awami League public works minister Mosharraf Hossain.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) on November 22, 2007 filed the case with Double Mooring Police Station in Chittagong against Mosharraf and two others.

According to the case statement, the former minister sold 1.44 bighas of government land in Chittagong city's Agrabad commercial area at a nominal price of Tk 1.69 crore to the Hotel Golden Inn owners Rafiqul Anwar alias Sona Rafiq, former AL lawmaker, and his brother M Fakhrul Anwar on July 14, 2000.

Violating the tender conditions, the hotel owners resold the land to the owner of Hotel Salmer for Tk 4.61 crore, causing a Tk 2.92 crore loss to the exchequer.

The HC bench quashed the proceedings against Mosharraf, saying the charges against the accused were not specifically disclosed in the case.

1st Bangladesh Cricket League held in US

METRO DESK

The final match of the first ever Bangladesh Cricket League, a series organised by expatriate Bangladeshis in the United States, was recently held at Ben Lomond ground in Virginia.

The league was the first of its kind involving Bangladeshi nationals only, said a press release.

The games played on synthetic turf with a hard tennis ball, attracted teams from Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

The players comprised professionals and semi professionals who have played cricket before in some capacity or the other. The league also attracted a new generation who were born far away from the cricket loving nation their parents had immigrated from.

League games were played only on weekends, the release added.

Dulles Thunders, a team based in Virginia, became the winners of the first Bangladesh Cricket League. Prizes were given away by Economic Minister of Bangladesh Embassy in Washington DC Mohammad Wahid Hassan and Busra Farah Wahid, member of the first Bangladesh women's cricket team.

Committee members -- Mir Ali, MA Alam, Tanzir Ahmed, Sadat Khan, Shumon Rahman, Rifat Khan and Nizam Khan -- organised the event that brought together the Bangalee community in the Greater Washington Area.



State Minister for Science and Technology Yeafesh Osman, second from left, takes a look at a newly installed machine, which tests the qualities of different products, after a seminar held at BCSIR's Designated Reference Institute for Chemical Measurements (DRiCM), a reference laboratory.

PHOTO: STAR

Primary terminal exams begin today 29.69 lakh appear this year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The primary terminal examinations 2012 for class V students of general and madrasa education begin today with some 29.69 lakh examinees.

The examination will start at 11:00am in 6,364 centres across the country and another eight centres overseas. The number of examinees rose by around 3.17 lakh this year.

A total of 26,41,067 general and 3,28,326 madrasa students have registered to sit for the exams. The number of female examinees is higher than male ones this year, said Primary and Mass Education Minister Afsarul Ameen in a press briefing at the ministry yesterday.

Statistics of Directorate of Primary

Education (DPE) show that around 37.89 lakh students of different types of schools registered for enrolling class-I back in 2008 and of them 26.41 lakh have registered for this year's exams.

DPE Director General Shyamal Kanti Ghosh said around 32,590 students out of 60,753 students who flunked in the 2011 exams will be appearing at this year's examinations. Some 54,560 out of 1.31 lakh students who remained absent in last year are also taking the exams, he added.

The examinations will end on November 29.

Afsarul said of the total examinees, 5,179 are physically challenged, 3,826 are from English version schools, and 718 are appearing at the overseas centres.

Dhaka's population growth fastest among South Asian cities

Experts urge decentralisation of business facilities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The population of Dhaka city has been growing at a pace of almost four percent annually, the fastest among the South Asian cities, as all the major manufacturing industries are concentrating here, attracting hordes of migrants, speakers said at a workshop on urban policy yesterday.

In the last decade, 15 lakh people added to the Dhaka city population, they said. Currently the capital city's population stands at 1.5 crore.

All the business facilities are available only here, which causes mushrooming of the manufacturing industries in and around the capital, said Prof MA Taslim in his paper, "Industrial Growth and Location Dynamics".

While preparing the urban strat-

egy plans, the government should look into the matter and take steps to decentralise business facilities, he told the workshop, "Bangladesh Urban Dynamics: Recent Findings and Trend Analysis", organised by Power and Participation Research (PPRC) at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel.

In his keynote paper, Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of the PPRC, said despite the rapid growth of Dhaka city, the government was yet to make any urban development strategy. Now it is time to increase focus on urban policy for urbanisation in a holistic and integrated way, he said.

Environment Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud said the successive governments could not make any long term plans for Dhaka city. "Now is the time to make proper planning projecting the size of the growing

population."

Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, former adviser to a caretaker government, reasoned that Dhaka city had ranked as the least liveable city, as it was the only mega metropolitan city of a country with a poor economy.

Modern and proper plans have been designed for Dhaka city several times since the country's inception, said eminent urban expert Prof Nazrul Islam. "But here we have so many powerful authorities which create chaos while they implement any good plans."

Akhter Mahmud, a professor at Jahangirnagar University, said the government was going to construct the elevated express way spending nearly Tk 8,000 crore which would serve only eight percent of the private transport users in the capital.

RELATED STORY ON B1

DRiCM can help boost export Seminar told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Designated Reference Institute for Chemical Measurements (DRiCM), the country's lone reference laboratory, has created an opportunity for higher exports of different Bangladeshi products, which were earlier ignored by importers due to lack of reliable chemical measurements, speakers said at a seminar yesterday.

"We have been losing international market because we failed to present our products with proper laboratory test results to the importers," said Mala Khan, project director of DRiCM.

But now with DRiCM, it is possible for up to date laboratory test results, she added.

The seminar styled "Chemical Metrological Traceability: Role of DRiCM" was held in Dr Qudrat-i-Khuda auditorium of DRiCM.

Bangladesh's many export items including fish have been rejected by importers because test results of Bangladeshi laboratories did not meet the standard of importers' countries, said Mala, who gave the keynote speech.

Mala said the mission of DRiCM, which was inaugurated in June, is to establish and disseminate traceability in chemical measurements from Bangladeshi laboratories to the International System of Units at Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM) through delivering value including products.

ucts and services in chemical metrology.

"As we had no link with BIPM, the highest body of chemical metrology, we could not compare our lab results with BIPM," Mala said, adding that DRiCM received BIPM's membership on October 10, 2012.

State Minister for Science and Technology Yeafesh Osman, who was present as chief guest, said many people get ulcers as they worry about what they are eating.

Scientists can play an important role to relieve people's tension regarding food adulteration, he said.

Dr AI Mustafa, chairman of Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, said since its inauguration, DRiCM has been successfully providing services to various private and public laboratories, industries and other research organisations through technical training and sophisticated analytical instruments.

Emphasising the importance of proper maintenance, Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, said many laboratories had to shut down within a year of operation due to lack of proper maintenance.

Secretary to the Ministry of Science and Technology Rafiqul Islam, and Prof Dr Naiyyum Choudhury, Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at Brac University, among others, addressed the seminar.

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Road crashes kill three in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three persons were killed and another was injured in three separate road accidents in the capital yesterday.

Abdur Rahman, 28, a fourth class employee of Dhaka City Corporation, and an unidentified teenage girl were killed when a bus ran them over while they were crossing the road near Baitul Mukarram National Mosque's south gate around 7:30pm yesterday.

Paltan Police Station Assistant Sub-Inspector Kamruzzaman Liton said they seized the bus.

In Shyampur, a minibus hit Abdur Razzak, 35, a shop employee at Aloo Bazar in Old Dhaka, while he was standing beside the road in Dolaipar area around 11:00am, leaving him injured.

He was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he died at around 1:00pm.

The owner of the shop, Akkas Miah, told The Daily Star that the victim took a vehicle of the shop owner along with the driver to Dakkhin Keraniganj to get it repaired. While they were returning they parked the vehicle by the roadside. Later, they were standing by the side of the vehicle when the minibus hit Razzak.

Locals seized the minibus.

Meanwhile, Bijon Sarker, 75, adviser to Bangladesh Photographic Society, sustained serious injury when a motorcycle hit him while he was crossing a road at Bijoy Nagar in the capital yesterday.

Bijon was taken to the DMCH and, later, shifted him to the City Hospital at Mohammadpur.



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