

JS passes Child Bill 2013

UNB, Sangsad Bhaban

Parliament yesterday passed the Child Bill, 2013.

The bill has provisions of various punitive measures including maximum five years' jail or Tk 100,000 as fine for violence against children.

The existing law on children was enacted in 1974 while Bangladesh ratified the UN Child Rights Charter in 1990. The law defines "child" as up to 18 years of age.

Other punitive measures provided for in the law are maximum five years' jail or Tk 100,000 as fine for forcing children into begging and leading them to go astray, and maximum three years' jail or Tk 100,000 lakh as fine for supplying arms or drugs to children.

The bill also said that if any person forced a child to carry firearms or illegal or banned items that person will be treated as a criminal. The punishment for this offence will be not more than three years of imprisonment or Tk 100,000 fine or both.

It also mentioned that if any person engaged any child in acts of terrorism that person will be punished under the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2009.

Under the new law, Child Welfare Boards will be constituted both at national and local level and there will be child desks in every police station under the supervision of a sub-inspector.

Besides, separate child courts will be constituted in district and metropolitan areas.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks to the family members of three police personnel killed in Hefajat-e Islam violence, after handing over donation cheques to them at her office in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

Spot in museum for Binod Bihari sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a memorial meeting on anti-British colonialism revolutionary Binod Bihari Chowdhury yesterday recommended that a site within a museum be dedicated to him.

The last of the revolutionaries of the anti-British colonialism movement, Binod Bihari's last wish before he passed away on April 10 was to turn his Chittagong house into a centre for revolutionaries, they said.

Jonobigyan organised the meeting in the capital's Central Public Library.

Recalling Binod Bihari's contributions, Rana Dasgupta, a prosecutor at the International Crimes Tribunal, said a political idol like Binod Bihari was needed during this turnaround moment of the country's political scenario.

He was the kind of man who did not profit from his position of power in politics and termed the Shahbagh movement a revolutionary moment, said the speakers.

Belal Mohammad, poet and an organiser of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, also spoke at the event.

SC HEARING ON QUADER MOLLAH'S APPEAL PWs' statements not contradictory: AG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution witnesses' statements before the International Crimes Tribunal-2 regarding Abdul Quader Mollah's involvement in killing people of Alubdi village in 1971 were not contradictory, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told the Supreme Court yesterday.

He was placing arguments on the 13th day of hearing on convict Jamaat-e Islami leader Quader Mollah's appeal seeking acquittal in the case filed for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

The ICT-2 on February 5 jailed Mollah for life after finding him guilty of five wartime criminal offences.

On April 24, 1971 Pakistan occupation

forces and non-Bangalees led by Mollah attacked and killed 344 unarmed villagers, states one proven charge.

Mahbubey Alam yesterday cited from statements of prosecution witnesses Shafiuddin Mollah and Amir Hossain Mollah regarding the killing.

Both of them said the Pakistani army reached Alubdi village by a helicopter to kill the villagers and Quader Mollah took part in the killings, said Alam.

He said prosecution witnesses -- Shafiuddin, Amir Hossain and Abdul Majid Palowan -- saw Quader Mollah with a rifle in his hand directly taking part in the killings of Bangalees in the village.

The Appellate Division fixed today for continuing the hearing.

MACHINERY PURCHASE SC fines BGP for not paying due bill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday fined Bangladesh Government Press (BGP) Tk 2 lakh for not paying a bill of Tk 66.95 lakh to a private firm which supplied machinery to the BGP in 2005.

A four member-bench of the Appellate Division of SC headed by Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana also upheld a High Court verdict in this regard.

In February 2010, the HC directed the BGP authorities to pay the due money with 15 percent bank interest to the firm -- Messer's Friendship Business Corporation (MFBC) - in 60 days from June 6, 2010.

It also ordered the BGP authorities to pay Tk 10 lakh more to MFBC for delaying to pay the due bill for over five years, MFBC's lawyer SM Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star.

In 2005, MFBC Owner Akter Hossain had supplied some machineries worth of Tk 76.95 lakh to the BGP, he said.

Akter submitted a bill of Tk 76.95 lakh to the BGP in 2008. But the BGP paid only Tk 10 lakh, he added.

In March 2011, the government submitted the appeal to the SC seeking cancellation of the HC verdict.

After holding hearing, the apex court yesterday dismissed the government's appeal.

Deputy Attorney General Razik Al Jalil said it can be known after getting the written copy of SC order, when and how the BGP has to pay the money to MFBC.

Year-long campaign to stop child marriage launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A year-long campaign titled "Bride Not before 18" to stop child marriage in the country was launched by National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and World Vision Bangladesh (WVB) yesterday.

A signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the issue was exchanged between NHRC and WVB at the launching ceremony at a hotel in the capital.


It is estimated that 66 percent of girls in Bangladesh are married off before the age of 18 and 32 percent before the age of 15, the MoU stated.

The campaign will engage young people at advocacy level to stop child marriage and increase advocacy on child rights issues, said speakers.

Child marriage is not only a curse; it is also a crime and a violation of human rights, said Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain O Salish Kendra.

The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 is one of the weakest legislations of the country. It should be amended soon, said Kazi Reazul Hoque, a High Court judge and member of NHRC.

Child marriage is a big issue in many Asian and African countries. It is a cultural practice, so we scheduled the campaign in a way that can involve different communities, said WVB National Director Jan de Waal.



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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

The Local Governance Domain of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)/ Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh is developing a new project on the Integrated Water Resources Management, particularly for the Barind areas in the north-east of Bangladesh, in collaboration with relevant public partners.

In this regard, SDC invites Expression of Interest (EoI) from companies and NGOs interested in bidding for the project. Relevant documents are available – upon registration – on www.simap.ch (Confederation > Invitation to Tender, Notice no. 779373, Project ID- 99929).

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