

WAR CRIMES TRIALS

PM seeks women's help to execute verdicts

Confers Rokeya Padak on Jharna Dhara Chy, Hamida Banu

UNB, Dhaka

Reiterating her firm determination of completing the ongoing trial of the war criminals, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought cooperation of women in the country for implementing the verdicts of the trials.

She was speaking at a function of distributing Begum Rokeya Padak-2013 in the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital, marking Begum Rokeya Day.

Recalling the role of women in the war of liberation, Hasina said over two lakh women were raped by the Pakistani occupation forces and their local collaborators.

"The women also made tremendous contributions directly fighting in the war fields and helping the freedom fighters in different ways."

Criticising the opposition's role in "obstructing the trial," she wondered if those putting such barricade do really believe in the country's independence.

The prime minister requested the opposition to shun the politics of violence and destruction and instead engage in the politics of development.

"Today is the birthday of Begum Rokeya, but the opposition called hartal on this day. If she (Khaleda) shun this kind of politics we (Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda

Zia) could not be rebuked as 'two ladies', she said.

Recalling her telephone conversation with the opposition leader, Hasina said it is known to all in what way the opposition leader talked to her. "I never heard such kind of words."

She said though born and brought up in a conservative society of the 19th century, Begum Rokeya was the pioneer of women's education and emancipation.

About the empowerment of women, she said her government has created a unique example in the world as the prime minister, leader of the opposition and the Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad are all women.

Earlier, the prime minister handed over the Begum Rokeya medals to two erudite women-- Jharna Dhara Chowdhury and Professor Hamida Banu--for their outstanding contribution to the spread of female education, ensuring of human rights and immense work for the socio-economic development of rural people.

Jharna Dhara Chowdhury, born on 15 October, 1938 at Lakshmpur, has been devoting her life since her childhood for the cause of humanity, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent creed. She is the chairperson of Gandhi Memorial High School.

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Gono Sangeet Parishad holds a candlelight vigil at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday to pay tribute to anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela, who passed away on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

INCREASED PATIENTS, VISITORS AT DMCH BURN UNIT
Doctors struggling to prevent infections

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The increased influx of patients, victims of arson during the opposition's recent agitations, at Dhaka Medical College Hospital's burn unit has intensified the existing challenge doctors face in preventing infections.

Apart from the families and relatives, numerous VIPs and journalists are arriving in their hordes, inadvertently bringing in germs and increasing the chances of patients contracting an infection.

Although doctors and nurses request not to go near patients and shorten visit durations, visitors care little about rules.

"Such infections might cause the burn to take double the usual time to heal and absence of immediate measures can result in deaths," said Prof Samanta Lal Sen, chief

coordinator of the country's government-run burn units.

Symptoms of infections include high fever and worsening of the injury but it can be cured with powerful antibiotics administered at the first signs, he said.

Despite the recent influx, the number of patients is usually more than the unit can handle throughout the year while there is a shortage of doctors and nurses and an absence of class IV staff, like aya, sweepers and ward boys.

"There are only 100 beds while at present there are over 300 patients. This is limiting the treatment needed," he said.

"Beds should be spaced no less than six feet apart so that viruses cannot spread from one patient to the other. But we are forced to put beds more closely," he added.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with Begum Rokeya Padak-2013 recipients Jharna Dhara Chowdhury, on her right, and Prof Hamida Banu, on her left, at a ceremony marking Begum Rokeya Day in the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Khokon raped Hindu woman in Faridpur
Witness tells war crimes tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A prosecution witness yesterday told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 how fugitive BNP leader and war crimes accused MA Zahid Hossain Khokon raped a Hindu housewife at Chandhat village in Faridpur on May 27, 1971.

Khokon forced the woman into one Surendranath Dutta's house, said sexagenarian Rabindranath Dutta who witnessed the incident from a nearby bamboo bush.

When Khokon and his associates left the village, Rabindranath went to Surendranath's house where the victim was crying for help.

"I handed her a piece of cloth through the window," recalled the 10th prosecution witness. "I saw bite marks on her face and blood rolling down her leg."

Rabindranath said he heard from neigh-

bours that another girl who took shelter at the village was also raped on that day by Khokon and his associates.

The witness said Khokon and his men also looted and burnt several houses, including his, in that village the same day.

The 11th prosecution witness, Jogonath Dutta, corroborated all the incidents, saying Khokon and his associates looted 42 bhoris (about 490 grammes) of gold and 328 bhoris of silver, a radio and two watches from his aunt Suchitra Dutta's house.

Both the witnesses were later cross-examined by defence counsel Abdus Shukur Khan.

When the counsel suggested that the witnesses testified against Khokon as he was involved in BNP's politics, the two replied in the negative.

Earlier, Shukur submitted a list of 30

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Curtailing ACC's power to aggravate corruption in public offices

Discussion marking International Anti-Corruption Day-2013 told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new provision requiring Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to obtain government permission before filing corruption cases against government officials will aggravate the malpractice in public offices, observed speakers at a discussion yesterday.

Corrupt public officials had an instinctive fear about ACC but the new provision of the law passed on November 10 will now enable them to act with impunity, they said.

Almost all of the country's development partners expressed concern over this curtailing of ACC's power, they told the discussion ACC organised in the capital's Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy marking "International Anti-Corruption Day-2013".

ACC observed the day with the slogan "We together will build corruption free country-Bangladesh".

ACC Chairman Mohammad Badiuzzaman, as chief guest, said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had assured him

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10 December 2013
International Human Rights Day
Let's Ensure Rights of All Human Beings

We, the People, at every corner of the globe reiterate our PLEDGE
Every State must proclaim its commitment:
No Violation of Rights for any Human Being

But violation now is an everyday experience
Tens of millions of children & adolescents are deprived of the right to education
Fundamental rights are under stampede

We Vow for a Meaningful, Positive Change
We Demand Quality Education, Safe Environment
And Realization of Universal Human Rights

On this International Human Rights Day

Our DEMAND

To all political parties

- Any political program of any party must not jeopardize teaching-learning and examinations
- No hartal or blockade during the examination schedule
- No involvement of children/adolescents in political programs
- Any form of violence violates human rights; political parties must shun violence
- The State must ensure security and normalcy of life of all citizens and guarantee natural death
- All political parties should include education as a fundamental right in their election manifestos
- Take effective and immediate measures to enact the Right to Education Act.

On this International Human Rights Day
We, all citizens, irrespective of political affiliation and views

COMMIT to

Ensure Security, Health and Education for All

Protect the future of next generations

No Violence, BUT Tolerance in every respect
No Discrimination, BUT Equal Rights for All

THIS IS OUR PLEDGE

Courtesy



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