

**INT'L WOMEN'S DAY  
Documentary  
play 'Seven' to  
be performed  
tomorrow**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

UN Women, ActionAid Bangladesh and their partner organisations will perform the internationally acclaimed documentary play "Seven", marking International Women's Day, which is celebrated on March 8, in the capital's Chhayanaout auditorium.

The play features real-life stories of women rights activists from Russia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Afghanistan, Guatemala and Cambodia. Besides depicting the challenges and obstacles women face around the world, the play also portrays their strength and courage.

UN Women and ActionAid organised a press conference at the National Parliament Media Centre yesterday to announce the event.

Women ambassadors working in Dhaka, country representative of UN Women, and accomplished Bangladeshi women will deliver the performance, said ActionAid Country Director Farah Kabir.

At the press conference, Hanne Fugl Eskjaer, ambassador of Denmark; Merete Lundemo, ambassador of Norway; Rokia Afzal Rahman, Bangladesh Federation of Women Entrepreneurs' president; Wanja Campos da Nóbrega, ambassador of Brazil; Christine Hunter, country representative of UN Women Bangladesh, and Tove Eriksson, project manager of Seven on tour, read out excerpts from the play.

As violence against women and child marriage are still rampant in Bangladesh, the play on importance of protecting women's rights is pertinent, said Farah Kabir.

"Seven", written by Paula Cizmar, Catherine Filloux, Gail Kriegel, Carol K Mack, Ruth Margraff, Anna Deavere Smith, and Susan Yankowitz, has been performed in 32 countries and has been a catalyst for change, gender equality and women's rights.



**AGRICULTURE BLOCKADED**

Ripe tomatoes remain unharvested while cantaloupes, inset, pile up on the field as the ongoing blockade keeps farmers from transporting their produce to the market, in Daudkandi upazila of Comilla on Tuesday. PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

**ACC launches  
probes against  
3 engineers**

Summons 4 Titas officials  
UNB, Dhaka

The Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) has launched probes against three Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) engineers, including its executive engineer Abdur Razzaque, for allegedly accumulating wealth illegally.

ACC Deputy Director Hamidul Hasan has been appointed as inquiry officer to carry out the probes, an ACC official told the news agency yesterday.

The ACC received information that the officials illegally amassed money using their power and apart from it Razzaque built an eight-storey building and bought two cars using the money.

Meanwhile, ACC yesterday summoned four officials of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd, including its Managing Director Nowshad Islam, seeking their wealth statements.

The others are Deputy General Manger (Gazipur) Rafiqul Islam, Deputy Assistant Mofazzal Hossain and staff Nurul Haque Mollah.

**BRUR strikers attacked by locals**

Ensuing clash, police action injure 20

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

At least 20 people were injured when the hunger strikers, demanding removal of the vice chancellor of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR), clashed with local people who asked them to call off the protest and police who tried to contain the violence last evening.

Most of the wounded were protesters, and three of them suffered injuries from rubber bullets.

A section of teachers, students and staff has been staging a hunger strike on the campus since February 18 because VC Prof AKM Nurun Nabi has not met their demands of giving retrospective benefits to the teachers newly promoted to assistant professors, smooth operation of academic activities, and regularisation of the jobs of 152 employees.

The VC, however, says the decisions lie with the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the syndicate, not with him.

As the non-stop protest continues to disrupt academic activities, around 25 locals who were "concerned" at the prevailing situation, visited the demonstrators and asked them to end their strike, said witnesses and police.

Mostafizur Rahman Mostafa, former chairman of Rangpur sadar upazila and convener of Rangpur city unit of Jatiya Party, and Alauddin Miah, a former leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League and ex-vice president of Rangpur Carmichael College Students Council, were among those who visited the campus around 7:30pm.

However, soon the conversation turned into a clash between the

strikers and the locals.

The protesters said the locals started breaking the chairs, which set off the clash. Around 10 people were injured.

Afterwards, the protesters blocked the Rangpur-Kurigram highway in front of the campus and vandalised at least a dozen vehicles, said witnesses. To take the situation under control, police fired 30 rounds of rubber bullets and 10 tear gas shells, leaving 10 strikers wounded.

Of them, one teacher Md Shariful Islam, students Ujjal, Asif, Shahjahan, and Rubel, and local people Saiful, Mizan, Rahman, and Jewel were admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Md Abdul Qader Jilani, officer-in-charge of Rangpur Kotwali Police Station, said additional police were deployed on the campus to avert

further untoward incidents.

Dr RM Hafizur Rahman Selim, president of the BRUR Teachers Association, said the incident might have been orchestrated by the VC.

However, JP leader Mostafizur Rahman said nobody had instructed them to go there. "I went there, being driven by my consciousness," he told The Daily Star.

He added that the situation could not prevail for an indefinite period. The university was set up following a long-standing demand of the locals, he said.

The VC, Prof Nurun Nabi, said he had nothing to say about the allegations.

Sub-inspector Shafiqul Islam of the BRUR police camp said he did not know why the locals asked the protesters to stop their strike.

**4.52 lakh poor to get  
assistance, training**

PKSF project launched to develop their small businesses, create job opportunities

UNB, Dhaka

Financial assistance and training will be provided to 452,000 rural women and men in the country to develop small business and create employment opportunities under a project which was launched in the capital yesterday.

State Minister for Finance MA Mannan launched the project titled "Promoting Agricultural Commercialization and Enterprises" (PACE) to be implemented by Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), said a press release of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a donor to the project.

PKSF Chairman Kazi Kholikuzzaman said the PACE project will contribute towards reducing poverty significantly and boosting the Bangladesh economy.

The total cost of the PACE project is US\$92.9 million. IFAD will provide \$40 million as loan and PKSF and its partner organisations will contribute \$22.45 million and \$30.04 million respectively. Korea will also provide \$0.36 million as grant. IFAD Country Programme Officer Nicolas Syed also attended the event.

**Shamim  
Osman accuses  
Khaleda, Ivy of  
dishonouring  
national flag**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ruling Awami League lawmaker Shamim Osman yesterday demanded action against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia for what he said was using the national flag during a meeting with foreign diplomats on Tuesday.

"I'm requesting the authorities concerned to take action against her [Khaleda]. Exemplary punishment should be handed down so that no one can dishonour the national flag," he said taking floor on a point of order in parliament.

The lawmaker questioned if Khaleda enjoyed any warrant of precedence to use the national flag at the meeting. "There are specific provisions regarding the use of the national flag. She could not do this," he added.

He further said people through television footages and newspaper images had seen that Khaleda was in her seat and the national flag was hoisted behind her at that meeting.

He also raised an allegation of dishonouring the national flag against his political rival Selina Hayat Ivy, mayor of Narayanganj City Corporation.

"The national flag is being defamed. There is punitive provision as per law and rule of the country," he observed.

Earlier, independent lawmaker Rustum Ali Faraji opened the debate on the issue of national flag saying Ivy had used the national flag on her car in violation of the flag rules.

"According to the warrant of precedence, her [Ivy's] status is far below. It is violation of the flag rules," he told the House.



Ujjal, a first-year student at Begum Rokeya University Rangpur and one of the hunger strikers demanding the vice chancellor's removal, is being treated for rubber bullet wounds in Rangpur Medical College Hospital last night, following a clash with locals and police on the campus. Inset, another striker and fourth-year student Asif's nose was broken when police used batons to remove the protesters from the blocked Rangpur-Kurigram highway. PHOTO: STAR

**Children exploited**

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A 2005 survey showed that there were over seven lakh street children in the then six divisional cities. The survey forecasted that the number would reach 12 lakh by 2014.

The activities these children are involved in are not restricted to only throwing bombs as the kids are also used in political demonstrations like human chains, rallies and processions.

Regardless of the organising party, common young faces are always seen in different political programmes.

According to experts working in this field, most street children sleep on the streets, in parks, trains, buses, launch stations and under government buildings. Security guards and members of law enforcing agencies take advantage of their vulnerability.

Organisations working with street children say that 80 percent street children engage in criminal activities by the time they are seven years old.

A survey of such delinquent children

revealed that 16 percent of them were involved in hurling bombs, 44 percent in taking and selling drugs, 35 percent in picketing, 12 percent in hijacking, 11 percent in trafficking and 21 percent in other criminal activities.

"Children mainly engage in criminal activities for two reasons. First, they are being used by criminal gangs and second, they do not know the consequences of what they are doing. Broken and poor family environment are also responsible for it," said a Unicef expert.

Advocate Elina Khan, a human rights activist, stressed the importance of coordinated efforts of the government, non-government organisations and civil society in preventing use of children in violence for political gains.

She said political leaders should be more conscientious as they should understand that these children are the future of the country, adding that the apex court has issued a directive to this end.

**Sheikh Siraj Master**

FROM PAGE 4

Ahmed Ali was cross-examined before the proceeding was adjourned until today.

Earlier, one witness testified on the massacre.

Siraj and two other accused, Abdul Latif Talukder and Khan Akram Hossain, face seven charges of crimes against humanity and genocide committed in Bagerhat in 1971.

Meanwhile, a hearsay witness told the tribunal-2 that war crimes accused Forkan Mollik killed three people of his village Kakrabunia in Patuakhali and was involved in raping a woman at an army camp.

Rakhal Chandra Bhakto, the ninth witness, said he heard these from others.

Forkan with other Razakars and Pakistani troops arrived at the village on the fifth of Bangla month of Bhadra (August-September) in 1971, and looted and torched 13-14 Hindu houses, he said.

Rakhal and his family had hid behind a bush. The witness said that after the Razakars left, he came out of the bush and found the bodies of Elem Uddin, Sanad Kumar, and Hatem Ali.

He heard that Forkan shot dead all of them, while the Razakars raped a woman for three days before releasing her.

The defence began cross-examining Rakhal before the proceeding was adjourned till today.

Forkan faces five charges including murders in Patuakhali.

**JS body for expansion**

FROM PAGE 4

donors and NGOs in the programmes under the ministry and maintaining quality of fish and animal feeds.

It asked the department of fisheries to

take steps for catching and marketing fishes in the lake of the zoo.

Fisheries and Animal Resources Minister M Sayedul Haq and committee members were present at the meeting at JS Bhaban.



Police intercept a procession brought out by Progotishil Chhatra Jote in front of Shikkha Bhaban in the capital yesterday when it was headed towards the Ministry of Home Affairs demanding immediate punishment for those who killed secular writer Avijit Roy on the Dhaka University campus on February 26. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN