



A faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, and another of Dhaka Union of Journalists bring out a procession in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday with a host of demands including "reinstatement of the freedom of press; end to all forms of violence; reopening of media houses forcefully shut down; withdrawal of false cases against various media outlets and journalists; withdrawal of censorship; and release of the daily Amar Desh Acting Editor Mahmudur Rahman, ETV Chairman Abdus Salam, and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Adviser Mosaddek Ali".

PHOTO: STAR

Women's lib proponents should govern country

Says Sultana Kamal; Nari Pokkho, Biplobi Nari Sanghati protest on International Women's Day proposed act allowing parents to marry off daughters aged 16, courts to approve such marriages

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women's freedom was one of the core ideals of the country's Liberation War, so the forces holding those ideals should be in state power, said former caretaker government adviser Sultana Kamal yesterday.

Otherwise, progress made in this regard so far would be reversed, she told a rally of Shamajik Prokirodh Committee, a platform of NGOs, in observance of International Women's Day.

Meanwhile, Nari Pokkho, and Biplobi Nari Sanghati protested the proposed act allowing parents the prerogative to marry their daughters off at 16, and the courts to approve such marriages.

Quoting the historic March 7 speech by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Sultana Kamal said that although the part of this speech, "The struggle this time is for liberation, the struggle this time is for inde-

pendence", was most widely quoted, she would like to highlight for now where he had said, "stay prepared with whatever you have...Build fortresses in every household" because the current state of the country resembled that of the Liberation War era.

"Anti-liberation forces still hold much clout," opined the rights activist.

"If we want to see the dreams of the Liberation War come true, we must support the progressive political forces and resist the conservatives from going to power," Sultana Kamal said.

Addressing the Biplobi Nari Sanghati rally at Dhaka University, coordinator of the organisation Shyamoly Shill said the government was portraying Saudi Arabia's lifting of the ban on hiring Bangladeshi women as domestic helps positively.

"But due to numerous allegations of severe torture, different countries including

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British MPs for discussing Avijit killing in House

OUR CORRESPONDENT, London

A motion on the murder of writer and blogger Avijit Roy was submitted for discussion in the House of Commons by two British lawmakers on March 6.

"That this House condemns the murder of Bengali US citizen, free-thinker, writer and blogger Avijit Roy in Dhaka on 26 February 2015, believed to be carried out by an Islamist group which has claimed responsibility," says the Early Day Motion.

With Jim Fitzpatrick as primary sponsor and Sir Peter James Bottomley as sponsor, the motion "notes that the recent blockade and general strikes by BNP/Jamaat-e-Islami has led to several deaths from arson attacks and violence

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PHOTO: STAR

US Ambassador in Dhaka Marcia Bernicat hands over to four trustees of the Liberation War Museum, from left, Rabiul Hussain, Sarwar Ali, Akku Chowdhury, and Z Tariq Ali, the US State Department certified copy of one of the famous 1971 telegrams sent by then American Consul General Archer K Blood in erstwhile East Pakistan, who raised a dissenting voice against the prevailing US policy towards Bangladesh's War of Independence. The ceremony took place in the museum.

Violence must stop now

NHRC discussion told STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recent violence is a serious threat to human rights, and it must be stopped immediately, speakers told a roundtable of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) yesterday.

They, however, gave differing opinions on "shootouts" taking place in the midst of the violence.

At least 84 people have been killed in violence since the BNP-led 20-party alliances declared a nationwide blockade on January 5, while 41 others have died in "shootouts" during the period.

Addressing the discussion in the capital's Brac Centre, NHRC Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman said, "Let's convey the strong message to all who in guise of democratic movement are posing threat to the human rights of the citizens."

"You have to renounce violence and terrorism. Because there can't be democratic accommodation with the terrorists," he said.

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Women have to help themselves too for progress

Prof Nazma Begum tells The Daily Star

DU CORRESPONDENT

Women themselves have to fight for achieving success and they must not rely on others to set the stage for them, said Prof Nazma Begum, the first ever female chairman in the 94-year-long history of Dhaka University's economics department.

"All my life, I have followed this motto which has brought me this far. I always believed that I will have to help myself and nobody will do it for me," Prof Nazma shared.

Dr Nazma on March 5 took the charge of Dhaka University's one of the most reputed departments that was founded in 1921.

Talking to The Daily Star, Nazma said, "We have already noticed significant progresses in women's empowerment in the country. But there is still a long way to go and for that women have to fend for themselves."

In case of any defeat, women should not give up rather they should make more efforts for something better waiting on their ways, she added.

According to the findings of her research conducted about four years ago on working environment of women in the garment sector, Nazma said most of the garment owners are reluctant to create an environment conducive for female workers and the issue should be addressed as soon as possible.

Nazma joined the economics department as a lecturer in 1986.



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