

Deputy secy found dead at home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A deputy secretary of the labour and employment ministry was found dead at his residence at the government officers' quarter in the city's Bailey Road area on Wednesday night.

Police recovered the decomposed body of Abdul Quader Chowdhury (59) from a room in his flat in the evening, Monirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Ramna Police Station, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Neighbours suspected something was not right as a strong odour was coming from the house and informed police, said the OC. The room, from where police recovered the body, was locked from inside.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College (DMC) morgue for autopsy to determine the cause of death.

Officials from police and the ministry said Abdul Quader, hailing from Bhola, was living there alone. He might have died of illness several days back, they added.

Meanwhile, police recovered the body of a teenager, who remained missing for two days, from an empty plot in Khilgaon yesterday afternoon.

Alal Sikder (14), a battery-run auto-rickshaw driver, was found buried in Shekherjaiga area.

The body was sent to DMC morgue for autopsy, said Ruhul Amin, a sub-inspector of Khilgaon

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina shares a light moment with a freedom fighter at Gono Bhaban. The premier presented motorised wheelchairs to the injured war heroes yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Country can't progress without research: PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for conducting more research at potential sectors, for maximum use of resources to ensure overall development of the country.

"We must ensure maximum use of whatever resources we have through research. No advancement can take place without research," she said while distributing cheques among post-graduate students and researchers under Bangabandhu Fellowship, National Science and Technology (NST) Fellowship and grants for research.

The premier also stressed the need for bringing positive result from research, saying, "It is not enough to conduct research. We want to see the result of the researches to ensure standard of livelihoods of people."

The PM asked the researchers to find

out the most potential sectors and sites for research that would ensure country's development.

Minister for Science and Technology Yeafesh Osman presided over the function while chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Science and Technology Dr AFM Ruhul Haque spoke as a special guest on the occasion.

Mentioning that a country cannot progress ignoring scientific research, Hasina said Bangladesh's self-sufficiency in food, production of strawberry and high-yielding paddy were results of research.

The premier said her government has disbursed around Tk 155.46 crore among 519 students for MS, PhD, and post-doctoral studies from 2010-2011 to 2019-2020 fiscals under the "Bangabandhu Science and Technology Fellowship Trust."

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TILGARH ECO-PARK, SYLHET

Find cause of death of 33 animals: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to investigate and find out the reasons behind the deaths of 33 animals and birds at the wildlife conservation centre in Tilagarh Eco Park of Sylhet, as well as the persons liable.

Secretaries to the ministries of livestock and fisheries and environment, forest and climate change have been asked to conduct the inquiry also to find out whether there are any negligence and irregularities by the wildlife conservation centre in protecting and saving the lives of the animals.

The respondents were directed to submit a probe report before the HC in 30 days.

The court also ordered authorities concerned to form a separate special

unit with relevant veterinary staff at the conservation centre, for proper treatment of animals.

It also issued a rule asking the authorities concerned to explain within four weeks why their failure to protect the lives of animals should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman came up with the order and rule following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Manoj Kumar Bhowmick, seeking necessary orders.

Barrister Manoj submitted the petition yesterday, following a report published in The Daily Star on March 3 with the headline "Sylhet Wildlife Conservation

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Labelling women 'unskilled' a tactic to undermine them

Dr Selim Jahan tells IWD discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Men in society have created an illusion by terming women "unskilled" to establish their superiority over women, said a former economics professor at Dhaka University (DU) yesterday.

Dr Selim Jahan, also former director of the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report Office, said such misinterpretations create an inferiority complex in the minds of women, and that is why societies are not functioning optimally.

He said this while delivering a lecture on "Nari Maney Anari Noy" at Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium of Social Science Building of the university. Department of Women and Gender Studies of DU organised it on occasion of International Women's Day on March 8.

Selim said without ensuring women's empowerment and gender equality, the country cannot be developed.

"If a woman is constantly termed 'unskilled', at one stage she will start to believe her contributions are not enough, and she is inefficient and inexperienced; thus she will ultimately lose her confidence," he added.

He alleged that many men in the country still think "women's household chores are unproductive," though such activities have been contributing in a large extent in a family.

"Men involved in outdoor activities shamefully want to establish their supremacy, insulting women," he said.

He urged everyone to move away from such patriarchal notions.

"Men must understand that the repression of women will also hinder their own journey; women must awaken their own strength; it is also the responsibility of men to create that field by changing their attitude," he said.

Speaking as chief guest, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof

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RIFAT MURDER CASE

HC clears way for trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday cleared the way for a Barguna court to continue trial proceedings against Aysha Siddika Minni and nine other accused in the Rifat Sharif murder case.

The HC rejected a petition filed by Minni, wife of the victim, seeking transfer of the case to the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court from Barguna court.

The bench of Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice SM Mozibur Rahman passed the rejection order, considering that her petition was not moved properly.

Minni's lawyers decided not to move the petition as the HC bench was not satisfied with the grounds mentioned for the transfer, Advocate Makkia Fatima Islam, a lawyer for Minni, told The Daily Star.

She further said they are yet to take a decision on whether they will move the petition before another HC bench.

The lawyer also said Minni, who is now on bail, submitted the petition on February 9 to transfer

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Remnants of dreams come home in coffins

Two migrant workers' bodies arrive from Kuwait

JAMIL MAHMUD

He went to oil-rich Kuwait as a low-paid migrant worker about a decade ago to change his fortune, with dreams to return to the country to enjoy his sunset years. But like hundreds before him, Md Kalam's dreams remained unfulfilled.

The 42-year-old migrant worker died in the Gulf country on February 11 -- with the cause of death reported as "stroke".

"He was in good physical condition and had no previous illness," said Alam Khan, a relative of Kalam, who received the body at the cargo complex of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka (HSIA) yesterday noon.

Alam said the death came as shock to his family members back home in Champaknagar of Brahmanbaria's Bijoynagar upazilla.

Also yesterday, relatives of migrant worker Md Delwar (70), who died on February 23 in Kuwait due to illness, received his body at the HSIA cargo complex.

Both the bodies arrived in a cargo flight of Qatar Airways, said officials there.

Md Tazuddin, an on-duty officer at Prabashi Kalyan Desk's cargo wing set by the expatriates' welfare ministry, confirmed arrival of the bodies.

He said after scrutinising necessary papers, they paid Tk 35,000 in bank cheque as burial and transportation cost to the family of Delwar.

Kalam's family members could not show required papers immediately, and were

asked to receive the cheque later, he said.

Last year, the ministry's Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB) paid about Tk 12.8 crore as burial and transportation costs against 3,658 dead bodies, which arrived from different countries at three international airports.

The inflow, a little under 305 per month, of bodies of migrant workers remains a big concern and challenge for the government to ensure safe migration.

The average arrival of bodies of deceased migrants in the first two months of the year was more or less similar to what arrived last year, said a WEWB official.

The official could not say the official number immediately.

A large fraction of these bodies arrived from six Gulf countries -- Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman -- which house nearly 77 percent of over one crore Bangladeshi migrant workers since 1976.

Kalam's relative Alam said Kalam had been employed at a company in Kuwait. They could learn about his death a day later from other Bangladeshi migrant workers.

Kalam left behind an SSC-examinee daughter and wife, Alam said.

With his nominal income, Kalam had been bearing educational expenses of his daughter and taking care of his wife. Both of them will have to face dire uncertainty now, because Kalam was the family's lone breadwinner, Alam told this newspaper over phone.

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WARI SCHOOLGIRL MURDER

Trial completed in just two months

JNU CORRESPONDENT

The murder shook the country, triggering protests by students, teachers and parents.

On July 5 last year, the accused took Samia Afrin Saima to the roof of an eight-storey building in Wari, saying that he would show her the view and raped the six-year-old inside an empty flat. When she passed out, he strangled her with a rope.

The trial of the murder case started on January 8 and in an exemplary move, the court not only finished the trial in just two months, but also set March 9 for delivering the verdict.

The family also expressed their satisfaction in this regard. "We hope the culprit gets the highest punishment in the case," said the victim's father, Abdus Salam, who filed the case with Wari Police Station, a day after the incident, against the lone accused Harun Or Rashid.

Judge Kazi Abdul Hannan of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-1 fixed the date yesterday on completion of placing arguments from the prosecution and defence.

Harun was present at the dock at the time. After the hearing, the judge said, "It's possible to complete any judgment quickly if both the prosecution and defence help. With your help, it was possible to finish the trial in a short time."

The court started the trial through recording the complainant's testimony, said Special Public Prosecutor Abdul Bari.

It recorded the statements of 14 prosecution witnesses out of 17 in the case, he said.

The prosecution said they finished recording testimony within eight working days while the court heard the arguments from the prosecution and defence yesterday.

Harun was arrested from Cumilla on July 7 last year and police pressed charges against him on November 4.

The court framed the charges on January 2 this year and started the trial on January 8.



Post boxes are supposed to come in a set of three, but one has been missing from its base for a while at Press Club area. Authorities don't seem too bothered, as the practice of writing and sending letters is dwindling. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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