

## Keep canals clean or face action: Atiq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Atiqul Islam yesterday warned of legal action if they find any canal or waterbody unclean after October 20.

The mayor made the announcement while visiting the cleaning activities at Godakhali canal in South Bishal area in Mirpur, says a press release.

“Like the activities of saving people from Aedes mosquitoes during monsoon, we will also take necessary steps to protect city dwellers from culex mosquitoes. We will start combing operations after October 20 to find out whether any canal or waterbody is still unclean,” the mayor said.

He said they will impose fines against authorities concerned or individuals if they find any waterbody or canal unclean in DNCC areas as these are breeding grounds for culex mosquitoes.

The mayor urged everyone to come forward in helping the city corporation curb mosquito menace. “We are cleaning canals but it is not the duty of the city corporation as another government agency is responsible for this,” he said.

He also urged everyone not to encroach waterbodies or dump waste in them.

DNCC has taken an initiative to clean 16 canals and lakes under different government agencies and 510 cleaners are taking part in the activities every day.



Mayor Atiqul Islam inspecting cleaning activities at Godakhali canal in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## A ‘festival of violence’ against women: Fakhrul

*Demands exemplary punishment for rapists*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday alleged that a “festivity” of violence against women is going on across the country, “under the shelter of the government”.

“People of the country expressed their anger. A dreadful situation is prevailing in the country and the existence of the country is at stake. The incident of Begumganj has shaken not only the nation but the entire world,” said Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, secretary general of the party.

Addressing a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club to protest incidents of violence against women, Fakhrul said, “The Noakhali incident is not an isolated one. Violence against women have become a regular incident under the patronage of the illegal government.”

Je said the current government has lost all its rights to stay in the office. “A few days ago, Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader said they cannot avoid the responsibility of rape. They acknowledged that they are behind rape and repression on women.”

Saying none can sit idle seeing the incidents of violence against women, he urged all to get united and protest. The BNP leader announced that the party will form human chains across the country today in this regard.

BNP standing committee member Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain said it is published in media reports that the ruling party men are behind such heinous acts.

BNP standing committee member Goyeshawar Chandra Roy said students took to the streets protesting violence against women. “If you (government) fail to run the country, fail to protect women then step down immediately.” If judiciary and police work independently, it is very much possible to root out criminals, he said.

Hundreds of party members thronged the press club area to join the programme. They brought out placards and banners, demanding trials of rapists, resignation of the government and shouted various anti-government slogans.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

### 11th-grader takes over as div commissioner for 1hr

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Raimu Zaman, an 11th-grader of Barguna Government College, symbolically performed Barishal divisional commissioner's duties for an hour on Tuesday, and made recommendations to make the six districts of Barishal women-friendly and prevent violence against women.

Marking International Day of the Girl Child, the event was organised by Plan International, a non-government organisation working for women's empowerment. At the time, a roundtable was also held.

At the discussion, speakers highlighted the need to stop violence against women and prevent child marriage, where Raimu spoke about her dream.

In the afternoon, she took over the role from Barishal Divisional Commissioner Amitabh Sarkar at his office. Raimu was chosen for her exceptional oration skills and cultural activism.

During that time, she recited, “I am that girl. I am that woman. I can do everything with help, with a little encouragement; I can open new horizons.” She also put forward recommendations to build a women-friendly Barishal.

Nasreen Nahar, an official of Plan International, said that the event has been highlighted as a symbol of women's empowerment for the special day.

Amitabh announced that the commission will turn the teenager's dream into reality. He said women are being deprived in many ways, even though they are at the state's most important positions. “Not for an hour like this, today's girls will play a leading role in running the country in the future. But first, the family and society have to take responsibility - by creating a beautiful environment.”

## Four months in jail over ‘mistaken’ viscera report

*Man says he was framed of murdering wife; cop show-caused by court*

SUSHANTA GHOSH

The investigation officer (IO) of three cases filed against a man on charges of killing his wife allegedly changed the autopsy report, in collusion with his in-laws, to make it look like he poisoned her to death and then submitted the charge sheets to the court.

Accused Bashiruzzaman Raju of Jhalakathi made the allegation at a press conference at Barishal Reporters' Unity on Monday.

He said even though the original autopsy report mentioned the cause of death as low blood pressure, the submitted viscera report by the IO mentioned it as “insecticide poison”.

As a result, he had to spend four months in jail, said Raju, who is out on bail now.

IO Md Mahmudur Rahman, also sub-inspector of Kathalia Police Station, claimed that the different

viscera report was submitted “mistakenly”. He said it belonged to another victim who supposedly died of poisoning.

“I will appeal to the court to change the charge sheet and viscera report,” he told The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, the court (Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Tribunal-1) has already show-caused the IO over the issue, confirmed Pulak Chandra Ray, officer-in-charge of Kathalia Police Station.

“Although my wife, who was a heart patient, died due to illness on January 28 last year, her family members filed three cases against me, accusing me of her death,” said Raju at the press conference.

“I am a victim of police harassment and torture. I demand punishment for those responsible,” he said.

Raju (38) said he married Dulali Khatun (36) in 2012, before he went

to Qatar for work. He returned in 2017.

A day after his wife died, in January 2019, Bhandaria police detained and handed him over to Kathalia police based on the complaint from his in-laws, he said.

Three cases were filed against him with Kathalia Police Station, Jhalakati Senior Judicial Magistrate court and Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Tribunal-1.

SI Mahmudur Rahman was the IO in all the cases.

Asked about the matter, OC Pulak said he joined Kathalia Police Station in January this year while the incident took place last year. He is not fully aware of the incident. Regarding the issue with the viscera report, he said the court is looking into it.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not get in touch with Raju's in-laws for comments.

## India proposes \$6b oil refinery in Myanmar to counter Chinese clout

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

India has proposed building a petroleum refinery with \$6 billion in Myanmar in an effort to counter the influence of China, that has been heavily investing in energy sector of the country, Indian media reported.

The proposal was made on Monday during a rare two-day joint visit to Myanmar by Indian Army chief Manoj Mukund Naravane and Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla. They called on Myanmar State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and the chief of Myanmar Army Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

“This project would be a win-win arrangement for both countries... As of now, Indian Oil Corp has evinced interest in the project,” reported Livemint, quoting a source as saying. India's move to ensure that Myanmar does not get firmly set in China's orbit comes at a time when there are renewed efforts by Beijing to woo Myanmar amid rising rivalry between India and China following clashes between the two armies in Galwan Valley, that left at least 20 Indian soldiers dead.

During Chinese President Xi

Jinping's visit to Myanmar in January, the two countries signed a slew of pacts, including a concession and shareholder's agreement for Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone off the Bay of Bengal. With a deepwater port, it is the terminus of the 1,700-km China-Myanmar Economic Corridor, a major link in Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative, whose other end lies in China's Yunnan province.

Other agreements covered oil and gas pipelines, and road and rail projects from southern China through Myanmar to Kyaukphyu.

China now accounts for 70 percent of foreign investments in Myanmar's energy sector.

India and Myanmar also discussed progress in the ongoing Indian-assisted infrastructure projects. They agreed to work towards operationalisation of Sittwe Port in Rakhine in the first quarter of 2021.

Competition between India and China grows over influence in the natural resources-rich Myanmar, which is facing a genocide case at the top UN court, for its treatment of Rohingya.

Some 750,000 Rohingya fled a brutal military campaign in Rakhine State to Bangladesh in 2017.

Bangladesh, burdened with sheltering one million Rohingya, has been seeking assistance of India and China, the regional powers both having close relations with Myanmar.

The issue also came up during the Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) meeting between Bangladesh and India on September 29.

Rohingya repatriation has not been possible despite two attempts in the last three years. Rohingyas say conditions in Rakhine are not safe and there is no guarantee of citizenship and freedom of movement.

During the JCC meeting, Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said pockets of radicalisation may grow in Rohingya camps if repatriation does not take place at the earliest.

During the meeting with Suu Kyi, Shringla conveyed India's support for ensuring safe, sustainable and speedy return of displaced persons (Rohingya) to Rakhine from Bangladesh “based on the understanding between Bangladesh and Myanmar”, reports India Today, quoting sources.

China has also spoken of assistance in Rohingya repatriation, but it has yet to yield any concrete result.



PHOTO: RAJIB RAHMAN

**WORLD SIGHT DAY TODAY... German philanthropist Rosi Gollmann and Dr Rabiul Hossain together started work on blindness treatment in Chattogram in 1974, that has today blossomed into today's Chittagong Eye Infirmary and Training Complex. Every day, more than 1,000 outpatients are treated here, while around 60-70 operative patients get treatment at very cheap cost at the facility better known locally as Pahartoli Chokkhu Hospital.**



**The stairs leading up to this footbridge at the capital's Azimpur is regularly blocked by floating people in such a way that there is no space to pass through. As a result, pedestrians have no option but to not use it and just walk across the road, putting their lives at risk. This photo was taken recently.**

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## PENDING FOR 32 YEARS

### Finish Seema murder trial in 3 months: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the trial court concerned to finish in three months the trial proceedings of a 32-year-old murder case.

Seema Mohammadi (20) was reportedly stabbed dead by one Mohammad Ahmed at her residence in Dhaka on April 26, 1988 as she did not agree to marry him. The following day, Seema's mother Ijhar Mohammadi filed a murder case with the police station concerned.

The case has reportedly been pending with Jana Nirapatta Bighnokari Aporadh Daman Tribunal of Dhaka for 32 years.

The tribunal could not finish the trial proceedings as Dr Md Anwar Hossain, who conducted the autopsy, did not appear before it to give statement although the court has directed him for several times.

Dr Anwar is now working at a private medical university after he retired, according to a report published in daily Jugantor on October 6.

Following the news report, the HC yesterday ordered tribunal judge Chamon Begum Chowdhury to finish the trial even without the physician's statement in three months and to submit a compliance report.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman also asked the law ministry to take departmental actions against the tribunal judge if it does not comply with the order.

The bench came up with the suomuto order after lawyer Ishrat Hasan placed the newspaper report before the judges yesterday.

Ishrat told The Daily Star the accused is on the run after securing bail.

## Br Robi Purification passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brother Robi Purification, principal of the capital's St Joseph Higher Secondary School, passed away at a private hospital in Old Dhaka at 6:15pm on Tuesday.

He was 61 and left behind a host of relatives, students and admirers.

Brother Chandan Gomez, the school's vice-principal, told the newspaper that Br Robi was admitted to the hospital last month after he tested positive for Covid-19.

He was scheduled to be discharged from the hospital on Monday but was kept under treatment, since he had some complications.

Br Robi was buried in Wari yesterday afternoon, he said. Earlier, the body was kept at the school and taken to his village home in Gazipur's Kaliganj upazila.

Born in 1959 in Kaliganj, he was also director of drug rehabilitation centres Apon and Barakar. He was also headteacher of Bandura Holy Cross, and St Joseph High School in Nawabganj, Dhaka.

