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Vajpayee slams judiciary for inefficiency, corruption

NEW DELHI, Nov 26: Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee today lambasted the country's judicial system as inefficient and corrupt, saying it had rightly earned the "contempt" of the people, reports AFP.

"There is an all-pervasive perception that the law has become a shield of the unscrupulous," he said at a meeting to commemorate the silver jubilee of India's Supreme Court.

"The exasperating and increasingly expensive delays of the judicial system justify invite derision and contempt," he said, adding that there were some 20 million pending cases in courts countrywide.

"I will be remiss in my duty, as a people's representative, if I did not express today people's deep dissatisfaction over the pace of dispensation of justice in our country," the prime minister said.

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Poet Sufia Kamal's death mourned

She gave us the courage to fight autocracy, communalism: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called for continuing the fight for establishing democracy and a non-communal society defeating autocracy and communalism, reports UNB.

She made the call at a gathering of politicians, intellectuals, professionals cultural activists and people from different strata of society at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday to mourn the death of poet Begum Sufia Kamal.

"Sufia Kamal is no more amongst us, but she had given us the spirit and courage to continue the crusade against autocracy and communalism," she said addressing the condolence meeting.

The National Mourning

Committee organised the condolence meeting on poet Begum Sufia Kamal.

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury presided over the meeting where poets and representatives of different political and socio-cultural organisations and the youngest son of the poet, Sajed Kamal, also spoke paying homage to Sufia Kamal for her glorious role in all progressive, democratic and 'women-resurrection' movements in the country.

Poet Syed Shamsul Haq read out a condolence motion while actor Asaduzzaman Noor read the life sketch of the beloved poet who died on November 20 at the age of 89.

Announcing that the national library (Jatiya Granthagar) will be named after Begum Sufia Kamal, Hasina said: "The undaunted poet gave us the courage to fight against all evils. She has shown the womenfolk the way to groom themselves with courage and dignity."

She always marched forward breaking shackles of bigotry and darkness. She was the pioneer for the women to build up resistance against all sorts of repression and torture, the prime minister said.

"Following the paths of Sufia Kamal we will have to establish peace in the country, we'll have to march towards progress by institutionalising democracy," Hasina told her audience.

Recalling her personal relationship with the poet, she said: "I met her in 1970. She was a woman of great courage and conviction. She was a woman who stood for the oppressed and the underdog. She was a woman who was not afraid to speak the truth. She was a woman who was not afraid to stand up to the powerful. She was a woman who was not afraid to die for her beliefs. She was a woman who was not afraid to be hated. She was a woman who was not afraid to be alone. She was a woman who was not afraid to be different. She was a woman who was not afraid to be herself. She was a woman who was not afraid to be Sufia Kamal."

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with members of National Mourning Committee at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday. — Star photo

Death of truck driver: Case against Mirza Abbas, 90 others

By Staff Correspondent

BNP leader and former DCC mayor Mirza Abbas and his brother Mirza Khokon were accused along with over 90 others in the killing of truck driver during hartal hours on Thursday.

Nasir Mian, 30, was burnt alive inside his truck when a petrol bomb was hurled on the truck at Shahjahanpur at about 5 pm. His two helpers, Zakir and Babul, were also injured in the bomb attack.

Sub-inspector Nazrul Islam of the case accusing Mirza Abbas, his brother Mirza Khokon who is commissioner of ward number 34 of DCC, his cousins -- Mirza Rakib and Mirza Ahad, and 24 others. About 60 more unidentified people were also accused in the case.

Mirza Abbas, however, was not available for his comments last night. None was arrested till filing of this report last night.

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Post Coronary Unit of NICVD

Patients with serious heart problems stay on hospital floor

By Naimul Haq

About one third of the emergency patients have to stay on the floor in Post Coronary Care Unit at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) in the city.

"It is a serious problem but there has been no effort what so ever to find a solution," said a senior doctor seeking anonymity.

During a visit to NICVD recently, popularly known as Suhrawardy Hospital, Rezaul Haq Choudhury, a retired government official, was found lying on the floor in the PCC Unit with severe chest pain.

His son told this correspondent, "My father had to stay on the floor also when he was brought here about five months back."

Six other patients with serious heart problems were seen lying on the floor.

One of the patients, poor Jalal Bepari from Manikganj, was given a list of 11 fairly expensive drugs and advised to procure those. His wife, looking helpless, said, "We are unable to buy those medicines. My husband needs those or he will die."

Asked about this, a doctor said the hospital has no supply of the medicines for quite some time. "Patients, except a small number, have to manage their own drugs. We provide space, prescribe and administer the drugs," he added.

A nurse at the PCC Unit said, "This morning we had 14 patients on the floor. During the weekend, the situation gets worse as outdoor patient care services remain closed."

She went on, "We get about 40 serious heart patients a day against 26 beds. Managing patients becomes almost impossible in such a situation," she said.

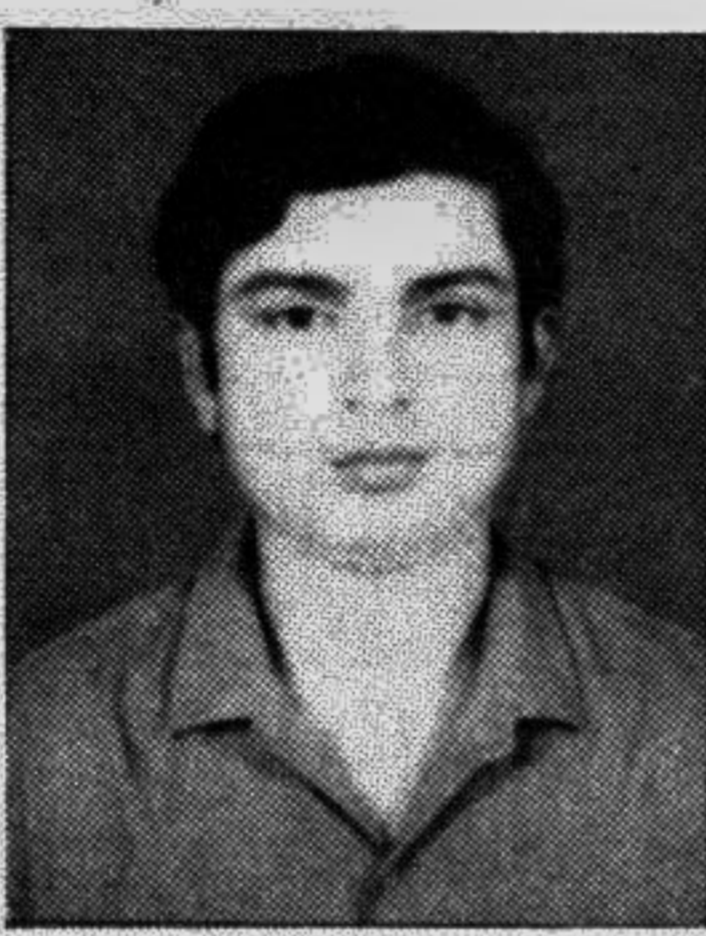
The doctors and nurses, however, did not want to be named.

The Coronary Care Unit (CCU) at the hospital, where more critical or dying patients are taken care of, also faces similar bed crisis.

Akika Akhtar, Sister in-Charge of CCU, said, "On an average, we get three patients. If no bed is available, which happens almost everyday, we have to keep patients on the floor."

Doctor Emdad, who was on duty at that time, said, "Since we discharge patients from this

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Dr Milon's death anniversary today

The ninth death anniversary of Shaheed Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon will be observed today to pay homage to the martyr for his supreme sacrifice for restoring democracy in the country, reports UNB.

Dr Milon, then the Joint Secretary General of BMA and a promising teacher of Dhaka Medical College, was gunned down in front of Dhaka University's TSC on November 27, 1990 while the way on the way to lead an anti-autocracy procession.

His martyrdom incensed the democracy movement into a street uprising leading to fall of the nine-year regime of General H M Ershad on December 6.

Different socio-cultural and political organisations have dawn up programmes to commemorate his death anniversary.

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Dumping of waste threatens aquatic life in Dhaleswari

By Shehab Ahmed back from Karnapara, Savar

A river 22-km north of the capital is polluted beyond all limits due to dumping of untreated waste from more than a dozen dyeing, textile and garment factories at Karnapara under Savar thana.

"It has been happening for at least 6/7 years but no one seems to care," said Karmakar, a local man.

Water of the river, an offshoot of the Dhaleswari, has become unfit for survival of aquatic life and irrigation purposes as the factories dispose their waste, mainly chemical dyes, directly into the river, he added.

To substantiate his contention, he showed some dead fish floating in a pool of wine coloured water, discharged through two underground pipes near Karnapara bridge.

The factory owners ignored the plight of local fishermen and farmers whose livelihood is threatened due to pollution of the river, some affected people said.

Oil distributors, tank lorry owners withdraw strike

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Nov 26: Rajshahi Division Oil Distributors and Tank Lorry Owners Association (RDODTLOA) has withdrawn its indefinite strike today.

RDODTLOA took the decision after the authorities assured them of fulfilling their demands.

All the oil distributors and tank lorry owners have resumed work.

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Opposition to observe 'protest day' on Monday

The four-party opposition alliance will observe 'protest day' across the country on November 29 condemning attacks and firings on processions of Jamaat-e-Islami and BNP and killing of an Islamic Chhatra Shibir leader during Thursday's hartal, reports UNB.

The programme was finalised at a meeting of the alliance's liaison committee held yesterday with Jamaat secretary general Matur Rahman Nizami in the chair, said a press release.

It said Ali Mostafa, a leader of Islamic Chhatra Shibir of Kaliganj in Sathkira district, died in an attack by Awami League terrorists during the hartal.

The press release said the ruling party terrorists opened fire on a procession of Jamaat in the capital on Thursday, injuring two Jamaat activists.

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Alleged mugger gunned down by police in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 26: One person was killed and another injured in a clash between police and alleged muggers at on Thursday at Altapole Lane under Khulna thana.

The dead has been identified as Hemayet, 35, an alleged mugger, while the injured is Naik Amir Hossain of the river traffic outpost of the Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP). He was admitted to 250-bed hospital with bullet injury in his right ankle. Patrol inspector Abdul Aziz escaped unhurt during the clash, witnesses said.

According to FIR lodged by Naik Amir, the two policeman came under attack by a group of alleged muggers while on a routine patrol. When Naik Amir chased the alleged muggers, they fired at him. He fell down.

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Followers of two peers clash in N'ganj: 20 hurt

By Staff Correspondent

At least 20 people were injured when followers of two peers (spiritual guides) clashed near Dewanbagh Darbar Sharif in Narayanganj Bandar thana area yesterday.

Seven of the injured were admitted to different hospitals at Narayanganj while four others were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), hospital sources said. They are Nazrul Islam, 18, Quayum, 35, Shah Jalal, 20, and Alam Saud, 22, the sources added.

Hospital sources quoting the injured said the clash between followers of peer of Charmonal and peer of Dewanbagh Darbar Sharif was the result of a long-drawn rivalry over a wide range of ideology.

According to police, local Imam Samity and followers of Peer of Charmonal organised a rally at Nazimuddin Bhuiyan

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