

BUET blames govt for failure to nab Sony's killers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) has blamed the government for its 'failure' to take proper action against those involved in the killing of a female student on the campus on June 8.

The BUET authorities demanded exemplary punishment to the killers of Sabequn Nahar Sony.

In a statement yesterday, the BUET authorities said that on June 3 they had informed the National Security Intelligence and the Detective Branch (DB) of police about the presence of some criminals on the campus.

"A tense situation had long been prevailing on the campus, centering an EUCSU (central students union of the university) souvenir. A meeting with the DB police was scheduled for June 8 in the afternoon to discuss the campus situation," the statement said.

The media and general students were blaming the BUET authorities for the incident 'ignoring their limitations', it added.

Expressing concern at the involvement of a few troublemakers in the crime, the BUET authorities said they did not get any opportunity to discuss the issue with the authorities concerned and take

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Contractor shot dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A contractor was shot dead by unidentified assailants at Jagannathpur, Basundhara in the city's Badda area last night.

The victim, Abu Taher, 30, an earth-filling contractor, was shot in front of his Ka/26 Jagannathpur residence at about 8:00 pm.

Hospital sources quoting the witnesses said a gang of about four reached the spot riding a yellow taxicab and called him out of his house and shot him point blank.

Fatally injured Taher was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead. The body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy. The reason behind the murder could not be known immediately.

The duty officer of Badda Police Station said last night that they were aware of the incident.

Jewellery shop looted at N' ganj: four cops closed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Robbers took away gold ornaments worth Tk eight lakh from a jewellery shop in Minabazar area in the town in the early hour of yesterday.

According to sources, a gang of ten robbers came to the market at about 4 am in a microbus and tied up the night guard of the shop.

The robbers broke the locks of Moon Jewellers, owned by Shahabuddin Ahmed, joint secretary of AL district unit, and looted 161 totals of gold.

Police superintendent of Narayanganj visited the market in the morning and closed four police men for negligence of duty.

They are SI Borhan and constables Osman Goni, Monir Hossain and Jalaluddin.

They were on patrol duty in the area during the incident. Police also picked up night guard Kalimuddin, 75, for interrogation.

A case was filed with Narayanganj thana in this connection.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
June 24	4-15	6-49 pm
June 25	5-12 am	

Prayer Timings		
June 24		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-53	6-57
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Visa advice vice in Saudi Arabia

Doctor and his gang run the show

RAFIQ HASAN

An expatriate Bangladeshi physician-turned recruiting agent allegedly controls the flourishing 'hundi' business and collection of 'visa advice' for Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia.

The Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agents (BAIRA) in a recent letter has urged the government to take action against the recruiter and his associates.

Stopping the 'illegal activities' of this gang would reduce migration cost for workers by at least 50 per cent, said BAIRA President MAH Salim.

An unskilled worker has to spend more than Tk 1.20 lakh for a job in Saudi Arabia with salary ranging between only Tk 5,000 and Tk 6,000 a month.

A substantial amount of this payment goes for buying visa advice with each one costing between 5,000 to 6,000 riyal equivalent to Tk 75,000 to Tk 90,000.

According to Bangladeshi expatriates living in Saudi Arabia, the doctor and his gang control 70 per cent of the visa advice market through their around 200 agents and sub-agents across Saudi Arabia.

Due to unhealthy competition among the agents, the price of visa advice has gone up to an exorbitantly high, the source said.

The Daily Star has obtained the name of the doctor but decided not to publish it for the sake of government investigation.

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Sony's killing Witness dearth slows down probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The lack of witnesses has slowed down the investigation into the killing of Sabequn Nahar Sony, a BUET student.

Police said they could not proceed the case, as eyewitnesses to the killing were not found because the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) where Sony was killed in crossfire was closed until July 3 following the incident.

Moreover, even 15 days after the killing, police could not arrest the main suspects Mukammel Hayat

Muki and his accomplices -- Sharif, Saiham and Nesar based on the BUET campus and Mushfiq Uddin Tagar and Masum Billah on the Dhaka University campus.

The Detective Branch (DB) of Police is investigating the killing.

Sony, a student of the Chemical Engineering Department, BUET, died on June 8 in crossfire during a shootout between two factions of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) over a tender-bidding on the BUET teachers' housing project.

Sources said Tagar and Masum led the Dhaka University-based gang, while Assistant Organising

Secretary of the JCD Central Committee (now suspended) Mukammel Hayat Muki led the BUET-based group in the shootout.

Although the police arrested Munna and Swapan and Mukul, accomplices of Tagar, the investigation is a slower pace.

The arrested persons had already given some information during interrogation and confessed to their involvement in the killing before the magistrate.

The DB police on their tip-offs arrested Babul, another associate of Tagar in Dhanmondi on Friday.

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PHOTO: STAR

BNP frontline leaders congratulate Tarique Rahman with a bouquet on his new appointment as joint secretary general of the BNP at the party central office in the city yesterday.

Drastic steps to cut power systems loss soon, says Mahmood

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is considering some drastic measures to reduce systems loss and revenue pilferage.

State Minister for Power Iqbal Hasan Mahmood yesterday said it is very difficult to stop power pilferage by snapping illegal connections.

"Now we are considering the installation of meters wherever illegal connections can be found, we will register the names of illegal users as consumers. We may also install meters at slums in the

metropolis", he added.

Hasan also said electricity bills outstanding for over five years would not be considered valid. "I have already directed the authorities concerned in this regard. From now on no one can snap a connection on the basis of such an old bill", he said.

The minister also disclosed the governments plan to lease out the responsibility of revenue collection from one of the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority's (DESA) zones on an experimental basis. "If this

project is successful, we will use it in other places as well," he said.

The minister was exchanging views with leaders of the country's business community at a meeting organised by the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

Talking about Independent Power Plants (IPPs) the state minister for power said, "This is like putting the cart before the horse. We are purchasing power at a higher rate while selling at a lower price."

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Job seekers clash with police at DMCH

UNB, Dhaka

Hundreds of job seekers clashed with the police during an interview for recruitment of Class IV employees in the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday after reports of underhand dealings in the selection process angered the prospective employees.

Candidates numbering about 4000 gathered at the DMCH to compete for 90 positions including cabin boy, MLSS, guard and gardener under master roll (no work no pay).

It was alleged that the interview board rejected all of them after merely asking them their names and addresses and that the actual selection had already been made behind the scene.

Candidates coming from different parts of the country became furious for the alleged irregularity in selection. Police present in the area tried to quell the angry job seekers leading to the clash that left ten people injured, including two policemen.

Flood status better, Surma flows above danger mark

STAR REPORT

Although the overall flood situation in the country was slowly improving, the river Surma at Sunamganj was flowing above danger level yesterday.

According to yesterday's flood forecast bulletin, although Surma's water level had dropped 16 cm from before, the river was still flowing seven centimeters above the danger level.

Most rivers in the Southeastern Hill basin as well as Padma recorded a rise but were flowing below the danger level.

The rivers in the Meghna basin however, registered both rise and fall.

The Kushiayara recorded an 11-cm rise at Amalshid and a 7-cm rise at Sheola.

On the other hand, the Brahmaputra-Jamuna marked further fall at upstream points.

Due to heavy monsoon rains this year, experts forecast a moderate

flood in the Brahmaputra basin in mid-July this year.

"The possibility of a moderate flood in the Brahmaputra basin in mid-July can not be ruled out because of the heavy rainfall," said Selim Bhuiyan, executive engineer of flood forecasting centre.

The Brahmaputra basin covers Rangpur, Gaibandha, Bogra part of Pabna, Tangail and Manikganj districts and adjacent areas of Dhaka district.

"But the flood should not be severe but rather moderate," he said, adding that adequate preparation must be taken however.

While talking to The Daily Star last night he said according to the trend of rainfall, the flood might occur in the latter part of July if heavy rainfall is recorded upstream.

Bhuiyan said the area often face flood when the flow of water through the Meghna basin is disrupted at Chandpur as the water in the Bay of Bengal surge during

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION, MR. MAYOR



PHOTO: STAR

Despite having 6,000 cleaners, over 200 lorries, a whole range of equipment and unspecified funds, the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has so far failed to keep the capital clean. The corporation's lack of sincerity and vision to serve taxpayers is reflected by the condition of city streets littered with rubbish at its most filthy and unhygienic. The picture shows the Bangsal Road, half-heaped with uncollected rubbish in concrete sewerage pipes -- supposedly to be laid underground. Thousands of strollers are exposed to various health hazards every day at the city's numerous sites similar to the one at Bangsal Road. According to an estimate, some 4,000 metric tons of rubbish is generated in the metropolis every day. Of this, the DCC collects about 30 per cent and dumps it at Matwail. The rest simply accumulates and rots on the streets. Most observers believe the DCC's failure is rooted in its approach to tackling the problem. It has never consulted experts on waste management. Instead, the Nagar Bhaban embarked on purchasing trucks, containers and other equipment without any comprehensive plan. The containers not only encroach upon roads and footpaths but also pose serious health hazards to city dwellers.

Non-grads put off Pak polls race

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf outraged opposition politicians yesterday by issuing an overnight order banning anyone without a university degree from standing in the upcoming general election.

Nawabzada Nasrullah, chairman of the 15-party Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD) said the new law, which will disqualify a large number of current politicians from standing, was a "violation of the basic human rights and norms of democracy".

"The October elections will not be fair, free and transparent if restrictions were imposed on politicians," he told AFP by telephone from the central city of Multan.

"It is only voters' right to reject a candidate," he said. Only candidates holding a bachelor degree from a recognised university will be allowed to stand in the general election scheduled for October, the overnight decree said.

"A person shall not be qualified to be elected or chosen as a member of parliament or a provincial assembly unless he is at least a graduate possessing a bachelor degree in any discipline," it said.

Pakistan has a literacy rate of just over 30 per cent and its politics traditionally have been dominated by feudal lords and business impresarios. Musharraf, meanwhile, is a graduate of Pakistan's prestigious Command and Staff College (CSC) in Quetta, Baluchistan, and studied at Britain's Royal College of Defence Studies before becoming army chief in 1998.

The new law is the country's first educational restriction on politicians and is opposed by several parties, some of whom have threatened to challenge it in court.

The Nation daily said more than 25 former MPs from the Pakistan Muslim

League (PML-Q) faction, which supports Musharraf, would not be able to contest the election.

A similar situation is faced by the Muslim League of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, who was ousted in bloodless coup by Musharraf in October 1999.

The PML-Q has decided to challenge the condition in the Supreme Court, the paper said.

Raza Rabbani, secretary general of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of exiled former premier Benazir Bhutto, described the new rule as a "pre-poll rigging to exclude candidates of the mainstream political parties from contesting elections."

He told The Dawn that the PPP was also considering filing a petition with the Supreme Court to reverse the new rule.

But the main fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami told AFP the party has enough educated candidates not to be affected by the new law.

"We have all types of people, educated as well as members of the rural community in our party," Jamaat spokesman SA Shamsi told AFP.

Millat Party secretary general Muhammad Ali Durrani said the rule-change would foster an educated leadership but would turn off voters.

