

Multi-storey jail to be proposed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The non-governmental Jail Inspection Board will submit a proposal to the government soon for construction of a 12-storey building for prisoners.

The decision was taken at a meeting at the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

With Dhaka District Magistrate Barrister Muhammad Hyder Ali in the chair, the meeting was attended by board member SAKhaleque MP, Salauddin Ahmed MP, former director general of Shilpakala Academy Mostafa Zaman Abbas and President of the Bangladesh Medicine Industry Association SM Shafiuzzaman Khokon, Additional District Magistrate Abdul Haq and members of other non-governmental organisations.

Before the meeting, the board members visited different wards and talked with prisoners and detainees. The prisoners told the visitors about the inhumane condition they were going through in jail.

Knowing that 11,173 prisoners are crammed in the jail, which

actually accommodates 2,600, the board proposed construction of more buildings.

The participants expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of wheat supplied to prisoners and asked the food ministry to improve its standard.

They also proposed setting-up of a 250-bed full-fledged hospital to provide healthcare to the prisoners.

Besides, they urged appointment of a female doctor and creation of the post of a psychiatrist. They also reviewed the state of free treatment for the prisoners with acid burns.

The board also discussed the issue of providing separate vans to female prisoners, legal aid to poor prisoners, expansion of the visitors' booth and setting-up of intercoms at the jail.

Mostafa Zaman Abbas proposed entertainment facilities and a well-planned scheme of work for the inmates.

Vocational training will be introduced soon for women prisoners, the meeting was told.

JU authorities agree to meet teachers' demands

JU CORRESPONDENT

The stalemate at Jahangirnagar University (JU) may end soon as the authorities have agreed to take steps to meet the demands of striking teachers.

JUTA began an indefinite strike on October 23 demanding election of a VC panel within one month and of Syndicate, Academic Council and Finance Committee by November 6, and deferral of Syndicate meeting and appointment of new teachers till the polls are completed.

Vice-chancellor Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmad at a meeting on Tuesday told the JUTA leaders that he would send a letter to the Chancellor within three days seeking his permission to hold VC panel election and that no teacher would be appointed before election of the teachers' bodies.

Reciprocating, the JUTA leaders also shifted their deadline from November 6 to November 18 for election of the Syndicate, Finance

Committee and Academic Council.

The assurances were put in black and white and signed by both the sides, sources said.

Pro-VC Prof M Imamuddin, Treasurer Prof ABM Enayet Hossen and 12 JUTA office bearers including its president Prof Amin Muhammad Ali and general secretary Shamsul Alam Selim attended the meeting.

The JUTA will discuss the authorities' assurances at a general meeting of teachers on November 3 for a decision, the sources said.

But talking to The Daily Star yesterday, many senior teachers were sceptical about the authorities' assurances.

They said there could be a respite to the on-going strike to give the authorities a scope to fulfil its assurances.

JUTA GS Shamsul Alam Selim declined to make any comment about its next course of action. "General teachers will decide what to do," he said.

Quake rocks Italy

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Reports said there could also be people trapped inside a vehicle in San Giuliano that was crushed when a nearby building fell apart from the force of the quake, which came after days of tremors on the island of Sicily near Mount Etna.

Thursday's earthquake rocked the eastern coastal region, damaging buildings in San Giuliano and nearby villages Bonifro, Larino, Santa Croce di Magliano and Colletorto.

It was followed by six aftershocks with a strength of around 3.2 between 1:00 and 2:00pm (1200 and 1300 GMT).

Enzo Boschi, president of Italy's national geophysics institute, said the tremor was the strongest ever to have struck the area.

Buildings in the historic centre of Campobasso collapsed as the quake rumbled through the region, and the interior ministry said helicopters and at least 200 rescue workers had been despatched.

"I could feel the earth literally moving under my feet," said Gianfranc Di Ruta, a bar owner in

Campobasso. "The lamps were swinging from the buildings. People were in shock."

Witnesses said the main tremor lasted five or six seconds.

The tremor was also felt in several other regions of southern Italy, especially Fogg and Bari provinces, Abruzzo, Campania and Basilicata, officials said.

In Campania, the quake brought back vivid memories of the major earthquake that hit the region in 1980, killing 2,735 people and injuring 8,800.

The government of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was holding a cabinet meeting to discuss emergency aid to quake-struck Sicily when news of the latest earthquake came in.

The government announced 15 million euros in aid for Sicily, after the eruption of Mount Etna on Sunday followed by a quake measuring 4.3 on Tuesday.

Etna appeared to have calmed on Thursday, but continued spouting ash into the air, covering the area.

Army: Hasina

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arrest of her party leaders Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim MP, Sabur Hossain Chowdhury and Mostafa Rashidi Suja, and deaths of 14 people in army custody.

She said the BNP-Jamaat government has created such a situation in the country that makes Bangladesh into a huge prison cell.

"After the October 1 election, it seems that they have won a battle to eliminate Awami League," she said.

She alleged that after the alliance government came to power, freedom of expression and the rights to conduct political activities have been denied. In last one year, she said, about 25,000 people have been killed, thousands were injured and numerous women were raped, adding that there is no security to public life.

The ex-PM deplored that the one-year-rule of the alliance regime stalled the economic growth and reduced the means of people's earning whereas expenditure has doubled.

"For massive corruption, the Danish government has withdrawn its grant from certain ministries in Bangladesh," she said, mentioning that Transparency International has marked Bangladesh as the number one corruption nation.

Hasina said the country is now in deep crisis and the expatriate Bangladeshis have an important role to play in this crucial juncture. She sought their support for the people

struggling to end the present misrule. Presided over by Belgium AL president Rezaul Karim Panna, the convention was also addressed by Kazi Zafarullah MP, Syed Ashrafal Islam MP, UK AL president Shahmuddin Khan, Italy AL president Mahatab Hossain, France AL president Nazimuddin, German AL president Anwarul Islam, Austria AL president Shaifur Rahman, Denmark AL general secretary MA Lingkon, Switzerland AL general secretary Tajul Islam and Sweden AL leader Mohammad Alamgir.

Hasina was scheduled to leave Brussels for London yesterday and is expected to return home Saturday morning.

Arrest of Bangladeshi
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An Indian High Commission official said he could not comment about Ataur Rahman at this point in time since the matter is under investigation by security authorities in India.

"Until the investigation is complete, no definite information can be given," he told UNB.

In reply to a question about consular access to the detained Bangladeshi citizen, he said: "There have been numerous reported cases of arrest of Indian nationals in Bangladesh in which Indian High Commission was not given the consular access."

Muggers take away Tk 50,000 from bus passenger

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Muggers in guise of passengers snatched away over fifty thousand taka from a passenger of a bus on Chittagong-Fatikchhari-Khagrachhari road at Baluchhara under Bayezid thana in the city here yesterday (Thursday) morning.

Army personnel in civil dress held nine of the muggers red-handed while the rest fled with the snatched money.

Sources and witnesses said, one Akber of Nazirhat under Fatikchhari thana fell victim to this mugging while coming to the city by bus for the wedding shopping of his cousin at around 9am.

Eight armed muggers in the guise of passengers boarded on the same Chittagong bound bus from Khagrachhari from Nazirhat stop while four other muggers of the same group on board a micro-bus followed them.

As the bus reached Baluchhara the armed muggers caught Akber by the throat and keeping all the passengers of the bus hostage at gun-point snatched away Tk. 50,200 from him.

After mugging the muggers tried to flee with the microbus that was following the bus.

But as the bus passengers raised a cry, army personnel in civil dress from the adjoining Chittagong cantonment held nine of the muggers red-handed.

But the rest four muggers managed to flee with the snatched money.

The arrested muggers were; Ibrahim, Shafiqul Islam, Saiful Islam, Md. Morshed, Abdus Salam alias Khokon, Md. Lokman, Tobarak, Sujon Nag and Md. Jahangir.

Two of the muggers that managed to flee with the snatched money were identified as Milon and Biplob. # AA Mahmud. 31/10/2002.document.

11 die

FROM PAGE 1
A mechanised vehicle popularly known as 'Bhatbati' hit a motorbike on Akkelpur-Gorbachara road in Akkelpur upazila yesterday killing a young man and his sister-in-law.

Police said Soikat, 22, and his sister-in-law Trishna, 12, died on the spot.

The accident occurred in the morning while the victims were returning home from their relative's house.

The driver of the vehicle managed to flee the scene.

A case was filed with the police. Two persons were killed in two separate road accidents in Rajshahi and Naogaon yesterday, according to BSS.

Police said one Ramzan Ali, 35, son of Mohsin Ali of Zotebattala village under Godagari upazila of the district, died on the spot when a Rajshahi-bound truck knocked him down at Kamarpara at about 5:30 pm.

In another accident, Aminul, 26, died on the spot when a truck overturned and fell into a roadside ditch at Mainker Bazar in Naogaon town.

One million cases

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Ambassador in Dhaka Mary Ann Peters, World Bank Country Director Frederick T Temple and former adviser to caretaker government Syed Ishiaq Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

Law Secretary Afzal Hossain Ahmed gave the address of welcome in the opening session of the daylong workshop.

Unlike other speakers, Nazmul Huda was a bit critical of the ARD and talked tough against judges for delay in disposal of cases. Why now action against judges if justice is delayed due to judges? he said.

Huda also proposed that more courts should be set up giving those specific responsibilities so that the process of trial is not hampered.

Former Chief Justice Mostafa Kamal presented the keynote paper on "Introducing ADR in Bangladesh".

In his paper, he made a seven-point suggestion for introduction of ARD.

US concern

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Boucher said "we have seen credible reports of physical abuse and allegations of torture. Reportedly, at least 12 people detained by the army have died in custody."

He said the army has arrested members of several political parties, including the ruling party. Several senior leaders of the opposition Awami League are also under arrest.

"We are concerned about these reports of abuses, and are monitoring the situation closely," Boucher said.

Ambassador Peters, he said, "conveyed our strong view" to the Foreign Minister on October 24.

"She said the army needed to act in accordance with human rights norms and the deployment should not be used to harass the government's political opponents."

Boucher referred to the government instructions to the military to respect the rights of those detained and the army's assurance that it would investigate the abuse allegations and prevent human rights violation as well as death in custody.

"So, we will continue to watch very, very closely whether that occurs," the US spokesman said.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia addresses members of the Army Medical Corps (AMC) on the occasion of its annual conference at the Rajshahi Cantonment yesterday.

Army recovers AK-47, M-16

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Our Khulna correspondent reports that army raided the Gagan Babu residence of former state minister Talukder Abdul Khaleque.

Khaleque, also the general secretary of the Khulna city Awami League, was not home during the raid. The residence of Khaleque's younger brother Abdul Jalil was also raided.

The army, meanwhile, arrested a leader of the outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), Abdul Malek and recovered a cut-rifle.

Malek, according to police, is believed to have given shelter to top criminal and Khulna City Corporation (KCC) ward commissioner Asaduzzaman Litu in his Nirala Sangha.

The troops also arrested Mostafizur Rahman, general secretary of the Mongla Bandar Sramik Sangha.

Rahman, according to police, is accused in four criminal cases. Jahangir Hossain Kudu, 40, younger brother of a former whip of the Jatiya Party, was arrested also.

Meanwhile, 134 people were arrested and 39 firearms recovered during the army drive across the country over the last 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday.

Among the arrested 25 were listed criminals and 109 were non-listed but suspected. The troops also seized 157 rounds of ammunition.

In the capital, among the three arrested from the Secretariat gate were two Bagerhat workers of the JCD. Milan and Abul Kalam came to Dhaka to attend the wedding of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) lawmaker Selim Habib's daughter.

Our Magura correspondent reports that three people including a listed criminal were arrested from Parla area. They were produced before the court and later sent to prison.

Our Barisal correspondent reports that seven people including a notorious criminal were arrested and five firearms recovered from different parts of the district.

So far, 18 listed criminals have been rounded up from till yesterday since Operation Clean Heart began on October 17.

Our Kushtia correspondent said army arrested a notorious criminal of the southwestern region. Ashrafur Islam alias Mandar is the ringleader of 'Mandar Bahini' and an accused in as many as 50 murder cases in Kushtia, Meherpur and Chuadanga.

Earlier, he was a leader of the Jasad

Gono Bahini.

Our Bogra correspondent said army handed over expelled Jatiya Party leader Feroz Khan to police yesterday after interrogation.

Feroz was arrested on Tuesday from his Bogra New Market residence. Police said that Feroz was later produced before the court and the court ordered him to be sent to jail.

Talking to newsmen at a local hospital, Feroz claimed he had been tortured by the troops and that they had damaged his hands and legs.

He alleged he had also been given electric shocks as the army asked for information on illegal firearms.

Our Lalmonirhat correspondent said army arrested 12 criminals including a Juba Dal leader from different parts of the town.

Our Tangail correspondent reports that 10 people were arrested and three firearms seized from different parts of the town. Army raided the houses of Azad Siddiqui and Murad Siddiqui, brothers of Abdul Kader Siddiqui MP, and recovered a revolver. They were not home during the raid.

Meanwhile in Faridpur, army arrested three people, including a pourasabha chairman, and recovered two firearms yesterday.

Graft case Charges framed against ex-PSC chief, 7 others

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Special Court for Dhaka Division yesterday framed charges against former PSC Chairman Prof Mostafa Chowdhury and seven others in a graft case.

The seven others are former PSC Member Mohammad Forhad Hossain Khan, former PSC Controller of Examinations Kabirul Alam Khan, former PSC Director Sharfuddin Ahmed Khan, former Chairman of Muktioddha Central Command Council Principal Abdul Ahad Chowdhury, Gopalganj district freedom fighters' commander

Badruddoza Badar, thana commander Mahtab Ali and executive engineer (probationer) of Bangladesh Railway Tarun Kanti Bala. The accused pleaded not guilty and demanded justice before the court.

Judge Mohammad Azizul Haq

fixed November 26 for trial of the case.

In the case filed with Kafrul thana in the city, it was alleged that Prof Mostafa Chowdhury, Forhad Hossain Khan, Kabirul Alam Khan and Sharfuddin Ahmed Khan were involved in illegally allowing Tarun Kanti Bala to participate in the 20th BCS examination under the freedom fighters' children quota. Producing fake documents, Tarun had submitted papers showing him as a freedom fighter although he was only about five during the Liberation War (his date of

birth is 20-10-1966).

The four accused also helped Tarun get the post of executive engineer (probationer) in Bangladesh Railway, the FIR said.

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) Inspector SMM Akhter Hamid Bhuiyan filed the case against Prof Mostafa Chowdhury and four others on December 11 last year.

The investigation officer (IO) of the case submitted a charge sheet against Mostafa Chowdhury and seven others on April 9. The IO included the names of Ahad Chowdhury and two others in the charge sheet as he found charges against them during investigation into the matter.

In the charge sheet, 25 people were shown as prosecution witnesses.

Two die of food poisoning

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two members of a family died and two others fell sick on ingesting poisonous food at the Bongram village of Panshadanga union in the district on Wednesday.

The deceased two were identified as Rustam Ali, 50, and Amjad Hossain, 32, while the critically injured were Tojuddin and Rezaul Hossain. Tojuddin and Rezaul were admitted to the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) and the Chatmohor Upazila Health Centre respectively.

Local and police sources said that on Wednesday noon Tojuddin, a trader, and four other male members of his family fell ill after having lunch. They were rushed to the Chatmohor Upazila Health Centre where two of them died.

At evening Tojuddin was shifted to the RMCH.

Locals suspected that the incident occurred as a result of something poisonous in the rice.

An unnatural death case was filed with the Chatmohor Police Station in this regard.

... denies assault of old woman

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quarters are active to create misunderstanding between army and police, which is not desirable to any body", it said and hoped that after publication of the 'real information' the 'confusion' will disappear.

Verbatim of the release:
"The real story is that members of the army at the camp in Sabujbagh thana at around 11.30am came to know from informers that some criminals are staying in nearby West Madertek area. Instantly members of the army went to the Patwari building at Madertek crossing and arrested two criminals from a restaurant there. Moreover, the army came to know that a woman named Minara controls the criminals in the locality. Based on the information, the army went to the building owned by Minara and found an old woman there and asked her about Minara."

"The old woman expressed her ignorance. At that time the members of army saw Minara coming down from the second floor of the building to the first floor. When the members of the army wanted to know about the criminals from Minara, an exchange of words ensued."

"The members of the army took Minara Begum to the local army camp to know the whole story and make the issue clear. At that time the army came to know that Minara Begum is the wife of sub-inspector (SI) Kabirul Islam of Dhanmondi thana. After a while the mother-in-law of the police officer

came to the camp.

"When the higher authorities came to know about this, the wife of the police officer was taken to her house without delay. At that time an unknown man took the mother-in-law of the police officer to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and forced the on-duty doctor to admit her at the emergency department.

"But as there were no mark of injury on her body and she was not in a condition that needed admission to hospital, the on-duty doctor refused to admit her.

"In this situation, again there was attempt to admit her in ward no 33 at DMCH. But this attempt also failed. "It is necessary to mention here that the members of the army did not misbehave with the mother-in-law of the

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one year since his retirement.

On September 4 last year, the caretaker government had decided that former presidents and caretaker government chiefs would get SSF services for one year and former prime ministers and leaders of the opposition would that for three months.

Asked about such discrimination as regards SSF services, Badruddoza commented, "You can raise such questions, but I am now free to move around."

police officer or any other person and did not beat up any body at that time. The issue was settled as high officials of police and army took prompt initiative."

ISPR

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"As the chief of the team did not know Kalachand, he inquired about his identity. Knowing that Kalachand is a constable, the chief of the team asked him why he arrived there in a lungi."

"At the time, Kalachand went back to the police camp and returned in trousers and a shirt. The moment Kalachand came back, he slumped on the floor. Constable Wajed called two other constables and took Kalachand inside the camp."

"Wajed said Kalachand was over 50 years and suffering from high blood-pressure. As he did not take medicine, he fell sick. The army team then went back to the camp."

"Kalachand was admitted to the thana health complex and later shifted to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH). On request by the police authorities, Tripura was taken to the Combined Military Hospital in Chittagong.

"As Kalachand needed neurosurgery, he was shifted to the CMCH the next day. After surgery, he died on the night of October 29."

Kamal Majumder's son

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mobile phone trader at the UAE Maitree Market in the city's Banani area, was shot dead on May 24, 2000.

In its judgement, the court said it found Jewel, Zobayer, Shafiqul Alam, Joy Hasib and Saikat guilty under sections 302 and 34 of the Bangladesh Penal Code (BPC) for killing businessman Shipu and for criminal liability for this and sentenced them to life term (30 years).

The court also found them guilty under sections 326 and 34 of the BPC for causing 'grievous hurt' to the victim and for criminal liability and gave them another 10 years' rigorous imprisonment each.

Besides, the five were fined Tk 1 lakh each. In default, they will have to suffer another two years' rigorous imprisonment.

Sagar was found guilty under Section 201 of the BPC for abetting in the murder and was jailed for three years.

The judgement said punishment of the three absconders will be effective from the date of their surrender or arrest.

The judge took his seat exactly at noon. Shortly before that, three of the six accused -- Joy Hasib, Saikat and Sagar now in custody at the Dhaka Central Jail -- were produced

in the court. The Judge then read out important portions of the judgement for 20 minutes and pronounced the verdict as pin drop silence prevailed in the court.

Security in and around the court were stepped up.

Shipu's brother Istiaque Ahmed, who is complainant of the case, was present in the courtroom. Relatives, friends and many others crowded the court and its premises to hear the verdict.

The convicts remained calm on hearing the verdict, but their relatives broke down in tears.

Later, they were taken to jail custody under tight security.

Asked about the verdict, Advocate Syed Shamim Ahsan Habib, chief defence counsel for Joy Hasib, Sagar and Saikat, declined to make any comment. But he said he would file an appeal with the High Court against the verdict.

Following the murder, the victim's brother had filed a murder case with the Gulshan Police Station on May 25, 2000, accusing three persons including Jewel. The investigation officer (IO) of the case submitted charge sheet against Jewel and five on October 2 that year, showing 30 people as prosecution witnesses.

The court framed charges against the accused on October 23

last year and the trial began on January 28 this year.

The prosecution and the defence sides completed arguments in the case on October 23.

Earlier, the court had recorded statements of 23 out of 30 prosecution witnesses.

When contacted, the metropolitan public prosecutor said he was satisfied at the Judgement.

Advocate Mahubul Ahmed represented the three absconders.

Shipu's wife

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expected death sentence for all of the accused

But the court gave minor punishment, especially in case of convict Sagar considering his age, he said. Sagar is a born criminal and killed many people before murdering his brother, Istiaque claimed.

He added they would take the verdict to the higher court as "Sagar will also kill me" after serving his sentence.

Five people including a son of former Awami League lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder were sentenced each to 40 years in jail, while another to three years' rigorous imprisonment respectively by the Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, in the Shipu murder case.</