



Barrister Mainul Hossain, president of the BSP and the editorial board of the daily Ittefaq, fourth from left, speaks at a meeting on "Crisis in newspaper industry: What is the way out?" at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right are Noab President and The Independent Editor Mahbubul Alam, The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam and Manabzamin Editor Motiur Rahman Chowdhury and on his left are Inqilab Editor MM Bahauddin, National Press Club President and the News Today Editor Reazuddin Ahmed and the daily Samakal Editor Golam Sarwar. Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) and Bangladesh Sangbadpatra Parishad (BSP) organised the meeting. (Story on Page 1)

## Hasina protests attack on Bogra AL workers

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday protested Saturday's attack by 'armed BNP cadres' on AL workers in Bogra and filing of cases against them, including AL central Organising Secretary Abdul Mannan.

Hasina said the BNP-Jamaat alliance government has chosen the path of attacks, terrorism and suing cases against AL activists and leaders as they became nervous about people-power.

"People will give a befitting response to such crime and misdeed," she said.

She said cases were filed against scores of AL leaders and workers instead of taking action against the attackers.

## DIRECT ELECTION TO RESERVED SEATS

# Women leaders to appeal against HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women leaders will file an appeal petition against the recent High Court verdict clearing way for election to the reserved women seats in the parliament, said the leaders of Sammilita Nari Samaj in a protest rally yesterday.

"We are ready to file the petition as soon as the appellate division takes it," said Farida Akhtar of Ubiniq at a rally organised by Nari Samaj, an alliance of 17 women and rights bodies at the city's Muktangan.

"We call upon the main opposition Awami League not to accept disgraceful call for nomination to the reserved seats," she said. "We will deny any party or individual that may go for nomination to the reserved seats."

Despite making pledges for direct election to the women seats in its election manifesto, the ruling BNP has deceived the country's women community by going for selection of women through nomination, Farida said.

This arrangement will facilitate selection of wives and sisters of the

ministers and partisan women to the reserved seats, she said. Nomination is neither representing the women community nor respectable for them, said Nari Samaj leader Humayra Sultana.

The Nari Samaj will launch regular agitation programmes once the nomination process begins, said its other leaders.

Rokeya Rafiq Baby, Sultana Akhtar, Shima Das Shimu, Beauty Khondker, and Selina Malik Lipi, among others, spoke at the rally.

# Postal high-ups embezzle Tk 7 cr

## Probe report says

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The postal department high-ups including the director general (DG) have embezzled Tk 7 crore, according to a probe by a high-level investigation committee.

The committee has already submitted its enquiry report to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The report says several postal officials and employees in their statements to the committee mentioned the incumbent and former DGs, SM Abdus Salam and Mujibur Rahman, are involved in almost every embezzlement incident in Dhaka region.

It further says Salam used to show excessive office expenses while serving in Northern Circle, Rajshahi and the Postal Academy as a principal.

During his stay at those offices, he in connivance with other officials embezzled Tk 7 crore showing the sum as official expenditure, the report adds.

It says Salam had worked as the postmaster general (PMG) at General Post Office (GPO) in Dhaka, and office expenditure doubled during his tenure.

Moreover, GPO employees and workers used to give him Tk 30,000 to Tk 40,000 per month without a bill or voucher.

Besides, a section of officials used to misappropriate money by using fake bill vouchers and grant papers, sharing the sum with the high-ups.

The probe report names Salam and 88 officials and employees, who were involved in embezzlement through fake grant papers.

It reveals that Mansur Samad Chowdhury, a postal operator of the north unit of the department, embezzled about Tk 6.77 crore in 10 years by using fake bill vouchers and grant papers.

Though he was arrested and sent

to jail, he had obtained bail from a court and went into hiding.

Three officials including the personal assistant of the DG have been arrested on charge of misappropriating about Tk 18.9 lakh. They are Senior Accountant Krishna Kumar Dasgupta, PA Amir Hossain and Cashier Abul Kalam.

Dhaka GPO Postal Operator Masud Chowdhury was arrested for embezzling about Tk 3.12 crore and jailed for 10-year rigorous imprisonment. He was also fined Tk 14 lakh and would serve one more year in prison if he failed to pay the fine.

It was learnt that there were massive irregularities in appointing

employees when Salam, an official of the 1973 batch, was the Rajshahi PMG.

He was made an OSD (officer on special duty) in 2000 as allegations of corruption against him were proved.

However, he has managed to sustain the current post for his good ties with an influential quarter in the government.

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## Rape marks 46pc rise in May

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 87 women fell victim to rape incidents in May showing an increase of 46 percent over the month of April.

Besides, 24 women were killed after violation last month, said a news analysis of Mass-line Media Centre (MMC) yesterday.

The analysis, based on stories published in 12 national dailies, said on an average nearly eight women were killed everyday, while 20 others fell victim to repression.

At divisional level, the rape incident was the highest in Rajshahi.

Incident of child repression remains unchanged with 315 children killed in May while the number was 307 in April.

There was no improvement in the cases of rape, abduction, child throwing and discrimination to girl child.

Some positive signs have been marked in child suicide, trafficking and health-related issues.

The news analysis showed less arrest, while filing of cases marked an increase.

## AL programmes to observe historic June 7

UNB, Dhaka

Opposition Awami League will observe the historic June 7 marking the six-point Day.

On the occasion, national and party flags will be hoisted at all Awami League offices across the country at 5:30am and wreaths will be placed at the portrait of Bangabandhu at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in the city at 8:00am.

The party will also arrange a discussion meeting at the Engineers Institute at 3:00pm.

## Moudud's remark condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Sammilita Ainjibi Somonoy Parishad in a joint statement yesterday condemned the call of Law Minister Barrister Moudud Ahmed to declare few eminent lawyers unwanted.

"Moudud's call to declare Bangladesh Bar Council Vice Chairman Barrister Rakanuddin Mahmud, Supreme Court Bar Association President Mahbubey Alam and Secretary Enayetur Rahim unwanted is nothing but an insult to the judiciary," the statement said.

In the statement, Convenor of Sammilita Ainjibi Somonoy Parishad Barrister M Amir-Ul-Islam, Joint Convenor Barrister Shafigue Ahmed, Advocate Shahara Khatun, Advocate ZI Khan Panna, Advocate Laekuzzaman Mollah and Member Secretary Advocate Subroto Chowdhury said the remark was aimed at capturing the autonomous organisation.

The remarks of the law minister and Speaker of the parliament are just ways to fade out the role of justice, judicial system and lawyers. It will also enhance chaos in judicial system.

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