

Help rehabilitate Sidr victims permanently

CA urges Rotary International

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday urged Rotary International to help rehabilitate permanently the Sidr victims of the country.

The request came when Rotary International President Wilfred J Wilkinson called on the chief adviser at his office in the city and apprised him of the activities undertaken by the Rotary Clubs, said a press statement.

Rotary dispatched 1024 tents and portable water purification plants for people affected by Sidr last year.

It also contributed over \$22 million for polio eradication programme in Bangladesh.

The Rotary International chief also called on President Iajuddin

Ahmed, said the press statement provided by the Rotary at a press conference at Hotel Sheraton in the capital.

The president appreciated Rotary's humanitarian activities, relief programmes and development programmes in health and education sectors.

"We have talked about Bangladesh's development, economic and other issues including energy crisis," Wilkinson told journalists.

Asked if Rotary has any programme to intervene global policies that affect the poor people, Wilkinson said, "We do not do anything that may make us controversial."

There are Rotarians who are parliamentarians and representing at the United Nations and contrib-

uting to formulate its policies as individuals, but as an organisation it does not have any political stance, he added.

Wilkinson, who came to Bangladesh on May 17, visited different projects of Rotary Clubs in Bangladesh and left for Mauritius last night.

Rotary International is a voluntary organisation of business and professional leaders.

There are around 1.2 million Rotarians belonging to 33000 Rotary Clubs in more than 200 countries.

There are around 4000 Rotarians of 155 Rotary clubs in the country.

Rafiq Ahmed Siddique, district governor Bangladesh, and other Rotarians AKM Shamsul Huda, Hamidullah, Shamsuddin and Selim Reza were present at the press conference.

SUPREME JUDICIAL COMMISSION Hearing on govt leave to appeal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) is likely to hear today the government's leave to appeal against High Court (HC) order staying operation of the Supreme Judicial Commission.

Dr Shahdeen Malik, a lawyer concerned, yesterday said the case has been enlisted as third item for hearing in today's cause list of the Appellate Division.

The president promulgated an ordinance titled 'Supreme Judicial Commission Ordinance 2008' in March this year for constituting the commission as part of government measures to do away with the politicisation of the appointment of SC and HC judges.

Advocate Idrisur Rahman, a SC lawyer, on April 28 filed a writ petition with the HC challenging the validity of the ordinance.

An HC bench comprising Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Farid Ahmed stayed for three months the functioning of the commission.

It also issued a rule on the government and the SC registrar to explain within three weeks why the ordinance shall not be declared unconstitutional.

The government filed an application with the SC for staying the HC order on May 12 last.

The same day, Chamber Judge of the SC Justice MA Matin referred the matter for full bench hearing by the apex court, and asked the government to file a regular leave to appeal petition with it by May 15.



Devotees offer prayers at Kamalapur Buddhist Monastery in the city on the occasion of Buddha Purnima yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Anti-terrorism Ordinance 2008 protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers' Party of Bangladesh and Gonoratrik Bam Morcha (Democratic Left Front) yesterday condemned the Anti-terrorism Ordinance 2008 approved by the Council of Advisers on Sunday.

Workers' Party General Secretary Saiful Haque at a meeting with the party members of Razabazar area in the city yesterday said that any demonstration and democratic movement of the people, including the working class people, can be termed as terrorist activities and they can be punished under this ordinance.

He urged the government to immediately withdraw all undemocratic sections of the ordinance.

The meeting was presided over by Kamrul Islam.

Gonoratrik Bam Morcha leaders in a statement condemned the Anti-terrorism Ordinance and termed it a continuation of the Fascism of the past.

Morcha leaders Zunayed Saki, Khalequzzaman, Saiful Haque and Tipu Bishwas urged the people to wage a movement against the ordinance.

Invite workers' leaders to dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday called on the government to include labourers' representatives in the proposed dialogue.

"The government should invite the labourers' representatives to the formal talks and hold dialogues with them," Badruddoza said at a meeting with the leaders of garment workers at the party office in the city.

He also called on the government to allow trade union activities.

"As the state of emergency has now been relaxed to allow indoor politics across the country, the workers should also be allowed to carry out trade union activities," he said.

The BDB chief also stressed the need for a free, fair and meaningful election for the sake of democracy. The people will get benefit in the future if honest people come into politics, he added.

President hosts reception for Buddhists

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed and his wife Dr Anwara Begum yesterday hosted a reception for the members of the Buddhist community at Bangabhaban on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

Ambassadors and high commissioners of Japan, Thailand, Myanmar, Bhutan and Sri Lanka attended the reception.

Various professionals, religious leaders and members of the Buddhist community, including president of Buddhist Federation Dr Sukomal Barua and vice-president of Buddhist Welfare trust AK Mong were also present.

Iajuddin and Anwara welcomed the guests, exchanged pleasantries with them and wished them a happy and prosperous future.



PHOTO: STAR

Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam addresses a seminar titled 'Privatisation of SoEs in Bangladesh: Challenges and Opportunities' at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday. On his right are Mahubul Alam, Farooq Sobhan and Mohammed Abu Solaiman Chowdhury. (Story on Page 16)

2.5 lakh get infected with hepatitis a year

Experts tell World Hepatitis Day meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 2.5 lakh people get infected with hepatitis viruses a year in the country, experts at a discussion said yesterday.

Hepatitis, a serious disease which affects the liver, is 100 times more infectious than HIV, they said.

Liver Foundation of Bangladesh organised the discussion at the National Museum auditorium in the city to mark the World Hepatitis Day.

Sixty-four countries of the world are observing the day with a campaign titled 'Am I number 12?' to raise awareness about the disease. This is to highlight the fact that one in every 12 people suffers from hepatitis B or C worldwide. Globally, the number of hepatitis B patients is 35 crore while 15

crore people are suffering from hepatitis C.

No survey was conducted so far to find out the exact number of hepatitis patients in the country. Of the registered patients of the Liver Foundation, 95 percent is infected with hepatitis, said its Director General Prof Mohammad Ali.

The virus is transmitted through the use of contaminated blood and needles and physical proximity with the infected persons, the experts said, adding that patients with chronic hepatitis can ultimately develop liver cirrhosis and liver cancer.

Prof Mohammad Ali suggested that the government should include hepatitis vaccination programme for newborn babies in the EPI (Extended programme on immunisation) to combat the

disease.

Speaking as the chief guest, founder general secretary of National Heart Foundation Brig Gen (ret) Abdul Malek urged the Liver foundation to launch awareness programme through public-private partnership programme.

Later, he inaugurated a free hepatitis vaccination programme for the children.

Director general of Health Department Prof Md Abul Fayed, President of Bangladesh Diabetic Society Prof AK Azad Khan, BRAC University Vice Chancellor Prof Zamirul Reza Chowdhury, Director General of Social Welfare Department Dr Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury and Chairman of the Liver Foundation Prof SN Samad Chowdhury and Vice Chairman AQM Mohsin also spoke.

Meghna-Gomati Bridge to remain closed for 16 hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Meghna-Gomati Bridge on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Daudkandi will remain closed to traffic from 6:00pm today to 10:00am tomorrow for concrete work for the bridge, said an official handout.

The repair work for the bridge began on May 15.

LALBAGH MUGGING Tk 1.3 lakh recovered, 5 arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members yesterday recovered Tk 1.3 lakh mugged money and arrested five people in connection with the snatching of Tk 24.50 lakh at Lalbagh in the city on May 6.

The arrestees are part of the six-member motorbike gang that snatched the money after stabbing two employees of Bakir Enterprise while they were going to a bank to deposit the money.

The arrestees are identified as Mohammad Atahar, 31, Abdur Rahim Saint, 27, Shahidul Islam, 26, Mohammad Hasanuzzaman, 29, and Uttam Kumar Ghosh, 52.

Rab-10 officials said they arrested the miscreants from the playground of Nabakumar Institute at Bakhshibazar yesterday afternoon and recovered Tk 30,000, a revolver, two machetes and two motorbikes from their possession.

Following the confession of Atahar, Rab conducted another raid at his Keraniganj residence and recovered Tk 1 lakh more.

Rab also said the arrestees had admitted that the recovered money is a chunk of the mugged money.

Contractor murdered in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified criminals stabbed a contractor to death at Kamalapur in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

The victim was identified as Kamruzzaman Chowdhury alias Nayan, 35, of North Shahjahanpur.

Police found stabbed Nayan near Kamalapur Railway Station and rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Nayan's brother Fakhruzzaman Chowdhury said Nayan went out of his residence on Sunday afternoon.

As they found his cellphone unreachable after 12:00am, they went to Motijheel Police Station.

Motijheel police told them to go to DMCH where they came to know about his death, Fakhruzzaman said.

He also said they could not ascertain the cause of the death and the killers.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Ezaz Shafi, who is also the investigation officer of the case, suspects Nayan might have been killed by muggers as his cellphone and cash were missing.

None was arrested in this connection, he added.

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PHOTO: STAR

Brig Gen (ret) Abdul Malek speaks at a discussion at the National Museum in the city yesterday. On his left are Prof Mohammad Ali, Prof Hosne Ara Tahmina, Dr Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury and Prof Zamirul Reza Chowdhury.

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