

Campaign against corruption in govt offices soon

Says ACC chief

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury yesterday called upon the government officials to refrain themselves from corruption and help uproot the seed of graft from everyone's mind.

He added that the ACC will launch a special campaign within the next one month where people giving information about corruption of government officials will be rewarded.

He was addressing a view exchange meeting on corruption with the government officials at Dinaipur Loko Bhaban auditorium.

The ACC chief also said that the ACC with the help of the caretaker government would do everything to eliminate corruption from the society.

Deputy Commissioner of Dinaipur Md Nabiul Haque Mollah was also present at the meeting.

The ACC chairman said the

previous governments raised the pay scale twice but that didn't help eliminate corruption. Because, people look for opportunities when there is a difference between what they get and what they want.

"But is there any limit to how much people want?" He questioned.

He observed that people are being corrupt not only because

they need money, rather it has become a habit.

Mashhud underscored the need for widespread campaigning across the country to make people realise that corruption is a social illness.

Besides, people have to attain the courage to resist corruption.

Ever since the anti-graft drive began, corrupt people had been

under pressure. Some of the suspects have been sued but they are now getting bail and the suffering of mass people remains the same. So, anti-graft slogans will have to be raised from mosques, madrasas, schools and colleges, he added.

He also warned the government officials saying that the government has a firm determination to free the country from corruption.

"We don't want to bear the bad reputation of corruption," he added.

Following the meeting, the ACC chief visited Dinaipur Govt College and administered its students and teachers an oath to refrain themselves from corruption.

Later, he handed over crests and certificates to the winners of an essay writing competition on corruption at the college auditorium.

Sources in Dinaipur said Mashhud will visit Birganj in Dinaipur, Boda in Panchagarh and Pachibibi in Joypurhat today.



Winners of an essay writing competition on corruption pose for photograph with Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury at Dinaipur Govt College yesterday.

Abdullah Al Mamun's condition still critical

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The condition of Abdullah Al Mamun, a noted actor, playwright and director, is said to be critical, and he has been provided with artificial life support at the Square Hospital in the city.

Mamun was admitted to the hospital on July 10 with acute coronary syndrome along with diabetes, hypertension, kidney and liver complexities.

"But he could not be provided with coronary treatment as he had a bypass surgery before and was diagnosed with subdural haematoma (bleeding in the brain) soon after admitting to the hospital. So he underwent an operation in his brain and has been kept in intensive care unit (ICU) with artificial life support since July 13," said Dr Mirza Nazimuddin.

Though his blood pressure is normal now and the CT Scan of brain shows no further bleeding in the brain, his condition is still critical, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Body found in city lake

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered a body of an unidentified youth aged about 25 from a lake at Kawla near Zia International Airport in the city yesterday.

On information from locals, police rushed to the spot and recovered the body at around 6:00pm. The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police suspects that someone might strangle the youth to death and dumped the body into the lake.

DCC, JICA hold workshop for city cleaners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) in association with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) organised a workshop for its cleaners on Sunday to raise awareness about personal and environmental cleanliness among them.

About four hundred cleaners of four wards of DCC participated at the workshop at the Mahanagar Natyamancha.

DCC officials at the workshop apprised the city cleaners of the ways to prevent injuries and diseases that can attack them through their work. They also showed the cleaners the use of different safety gears like gloves, uniform, boot and mask and told them the necessity of using those.

Chief Conservancy Officer of DCC Commander Maksudur Rahman Chowdhury said city governors plan and work for a city in other countries but in Bangladesh there are many government bodies for different kinds of city works. But lack of coordination among them results in trouble.

Nioki Hara, chief adviser of the JICA team of experts, said their team is in Dhaka to develop the city's cleanliness and developing the efficiency of the cleaners is the purpose of the pilot project.

Dr Sanjida, additional officer of conservancy department, Mohammad Shah Alam, Abdul Motalieb and Aminur Rahman Bishwas also spoke.

Tarique to be treated in US after release

ANA reports from New York

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Preparation for the treatment of Tarique Rahman, elder son of former prime minister Khaleda Zia and BNP's senior joint secretary general, has been taken at a hospital in New York as he is likely to be freed from treatment under parole.

Leaders of the US unit of BNP have taken the preparation after being assured that Tarique will fly to Germany or New York following his release for treatment, reports New York-based American News Agency (ANA).

On condition of not to be named, a joint secretary of BNP told the news agency that apart from treatment New York will be the best place for Tarique to stay for indefinite period in the midst of BNP leaders and activists there.

He said Dr Zobaida Rahman, wife of Tarique, has also expressed the same sentiment.

The BNP leader alleged that two joints of Tarique's backbone were broken following torture in remand, and this had been done so that he could not stand erect normally in future.

Quoting information from Dhaka the leader said the BNP chairperson is now a bit flexible for the treatment of her two sons and the BNP would join the talks with the caretaker government and participate in the election.

The sources however told the news agency that Khaleda would not go abroad like Sheikh Hasina.

The government has agreed to release Tarique like Koko on condition that Khaleda would not be involved in politics and spend the rest of her life at cantonment residence.

The sources said the jail life of Khaleda might come to an end after the release of Tarique.

Meanwhile, the US unit of BNP has formed a human chain in New York demanding the release of Khaleda, and sending of Tarique abroad for better treatment within 72 hours.

President of the US unit of BNP and Chief Coordinator of international affairs of central unit of BNP Abdul Latif Sarker, International Affairs Secretary of central unit of BNP Gias Ahmed, and acting General Secretary of the US BNP

Mostofa Kamal Pasha Babul addressed the human chain.

The US BNP will hold another human chain in bigger scale if Khaleda and Tarique are not freed within 72 hours, the news agency added.

JCD men beat up 4 students at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of Jatityatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists yesterday beat up four students at the Institute of Education and Research (IER) building of Dhaka University (DU).

Mizanur Rahman Reza, a second-year student of IER, was rushed to the university medical centre with serious injuries in his face, legs, head and back. Later, he was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital after his condition deteriorated.

Witnesses said around 15 JCD activists, most of them are residents of Surya Sen Hall, led by Russel, a third year student of history department, Kawser, a second year student of IER, Rajon, a second year student of philosophy department and Rokon, swooped on Mizan, Joy, Arif and Bunti with rods, hockey sticks, cricket stumps and wood sticks on the IER premises at around 2:30pm.

Joy, Arif and Bunti were released from university medical centre after first aid.

Sources said the incident occurred over a trifling matter between Mizan and Noufel, younger brother of Russel, at IER.

Sources at the Surya Sen Hall said these JCD activists loyal to Karim Sarker, hall unit general secretary, harassed general students at the hall on different occasions.

On March 23, they beat up 10 Bangladesh Chhatra League activists at the hall compound. On July 10, they harassed a number of first and second year students of the hall for not attending at their organisational meeting at the hall guest room. Last week, Rokon beat up a student at the hall reading room over a trifling matter.

They were involved in the beating of Jasim Uddin, DU correspondent of daily Jangonir.

6-yr-old boy rescued 18 days after abduction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch (DB) of Police yesterday rescued a six-year-old boy from Noakhali 18 days after he was abducted from Badda in the city and arrested four from Dhaka and Noakhali in this connection.

The arrestees were identified as Billal, Amin Ullah, Mamun and Rowshan Ara.

Police said Billal and some other unidentified criminals kidnapped Sabir from Mollapara slum at Badda on July 2.

Since then, Billal had been demanding Tk 5 lakh as ransom for Sabir's release.

Sabir's father Shahjahan agreed to provide Billal with the money and they selected Sayedabad Janapath Crossing for handing over the ransom on July 18.

As Billal reached the spot a team of DB police arrested him.

During interrogation, Billal informed that Sabir was kept at West Char Uria of Sudharam in Noakhali under the custody of one Amin Ullah.

Later, DB police and Sudharam police launched a joint raid and rescued Sabir and arrested Amin Ullah, Mamun and Rowshan Ara.

BCL threatens strike at DU for indefinite period

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of Awami League, yesterday said it would call strike at Dhaka University (DU) if the authorities do not take effective steps immediately to release detained BCL General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Rotan.

In a memorandum to Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz, the BCL leaders said they would go for tougher agitation programmes, including students' strike on the campus for indefinite period, if the university authorities do not take effective steps in this regard.

Talking to The Daily Star, DU unit President Sheikh Sohel Rana Tipu said the university authorities did not take any effective initiative for his release although Rotan is a regular student.

He said Prof Faiz has assured them of talking with the government high-ups on the issue.

Rotan, a student of Health Economics Institute of DU, was arrested on the university campus by the joint forces on January 16 in 2007.

The BCL leaders and activists laid siege to the vice-chancellor's office for an hour at noon to press home their demands.

BCL President Mahmud Hasan Ripon, acting General Secretary Syed Abul Kalam, Joint Secretary Tarek Al Mamun and DU unit General Secretary Sajjad Sagib Badsha were present at the meeting with VC.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh and International Studies Association Bangladesh jointly organise a seminar on 'Nepal from monarchy to democracy'. Venue: Asiatic Society auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Workshop

Bangladesh Nari Sangbadik Kendra organises a three-day workshop on techniques of feature writing. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

Human chain

Dhaka Metropolitan Unit Command of Bangladesh Mukti Juddha Sangsad will form a human chain protesting assault on a freedom fighter. Venue: Moghbazar to Banglamotor. Time: 4:00pm.



Admission seekers and their guardians wait outside the Notre Dame College in the city yesterday as the college starts taking interview of interested candidates.

3 killed, 5 hurt in wall collapses in Sirajganj, Comilla

METRO DESK

At least three people were killed and five others injured in wall collapses in Sirajganj and Comilla yesterday.

Two people including a housewife died and a girl was seriously injured following a wall collapse caused by incessant rains that paralysed the normal life in Sirajganj district.

The dead are Shefali Khatun, 35, wife of Saiful Islam of Railgate area, and Shukur Ali, 60, of Binsara village under Tarash upazila.

According to police and local witnesses, Shefali and her daughter Bonyia Khatun, 15, sustained serious injuries when a damaged pucca wall collapsed on them at 9:00am.

Bonyia was taken to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital in critical condition, while Shefali died on the way.

In another incident, Shukur Ali died at his house, when an earthen wall collapsed on him during torrential rain at 10:00am.

Meanwhile, incessant rains paralysed the life of town dwellers. Attendance at different government and non-government offices was very thin.

Due to rain and onrush of water from the upstream, the river Jamuna has marked further rise.

Erosion has also taken a serious turn along its western bank in five upazilas Kazipur, Sirajganj Sadar, Belkuchi, Chowhali and Shahzadpur.

Over 50 houses in these upazilas were devoured during the last three days.

Water Development Board sources said a large part of the town protection embankment at Mati Saheberghat has been eroded due

to strong current of the river.

They are taking measures to stop the erosion by dumping sand bags along with brickbats.

Officials of agricultural extension department said a vast tract of croplands has been damaged due to rain.

As a result, prices at kitchen market will rise further, they apprehended.

A UNB report from Comilla adds: A man was killed and four others were injured in a wall collapse at Gayam Bagicha in the town.

Witnesses said a roadside dilapidated wall collapsed on the pedestrians at about 10:00am injuring the five people including a child.

Of the injured, Momtaz Hossain Khandaker, 55, of Old Chowdhurypara, died on the way to hospital.

Border talks begin in Kolkata today

FROM PAGE 1

"Killings of BDR personnel and unarmed Bangladeshis civilians by BSF and Indian nationals at the borders will be on the top of the agenda," said a senior BDR official.

Intrusion by BSF and Indian nationals into Bangladesh territory by violating the international border, combating cross-border drug trafficking, arrest of Bangladeshis by BSF and its denial to take back Indian nationals on completion of imprisonment in Bangladesh jails are expected to be discussed at the talk.

"Construction of bunkers and renovation of proposed roads by BSF within 150 metres of the no man's land without the consent of Bangladesh will also be on the agenda," said a BDR news release.

Meanwhile, tension at the border was heightened a few notches after BSF brutally killed yet another Bangladeshis at Sadipur border under Benapole early yesterday.

Our Benapole correspondent reported quoting local residents that BSF men bayoneted to death an unidentified young Bangladeshis man early yesterday and left the body in a bordering field.

Being informed, Benapole port police recovered the body and sent it to Jessore Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Officer-in-Charge Omar Sharif of the police station said there were numerous marks of torture on the body.

Local villagers said BSF also put out an alert at the border and issued an order to shoot at sight at night, causing panic among the villagers.

Tension has been mounting between the border security forces of the two neighbours after a group of BSF guards had intruded into Bangladesh territory and shot dead two BDR jawans at Chapainawganj border after being challenged by the latter early Friday.

The next afternoon, BSF again gunned down two Bangladeshis cattle traders without any provocation at Chougacha-Jessore border and took the bodies away.

BDR DDG Brig Gen MA Bari will lead a 12-member delegation to the meet, which includes the commanders of Rajshahi, Khulna, Dinaipur, Kushtia and Rangpur sectors.

Inspector General of BSF's North Bengal Frontier SCV Murali will lead his 16-member team.

Our Dinaipur correspondent reported that security was stepped up at Thakurgaon frontier yesterday. BDR announced the heightened alert through loudspeakers there asking local people to refrain from

going near the no man's land.

Commanding Officer of the 20th Battalion of BDR Lt Col S Shahid visited different frontiers alerting his forces.

Terming the killings 'unacceptable', Foreign Secretary Tuhid Hossain, on his return from New Delhi, said he raised with his Indian counterpart the killings of 73 Bangladeshis by BSF this year.

"I told them that India is our friend, and killing of such a large number of civilians is unacceptable," he told reporters at the foreign ministry after returning for a bilateral talk with his counterpart. He said the Indian side recognised Dhaka's concern and a mechanism will be worked out at the next home secretary level meeting scheduled for August in a bid to put a stop to such killings at the border.

Terming the killing of two BDR personnel in Chapainawganj unwarranted, Tuhid said the foreign ministry lodged a strong protest with the Indian government against the incident.

The killing of two BDR jawans coincided with the recent foreign-secretary level talk in Delhi where both sides promised to cooperate in combating cross-border terrorism.

Bureaucracy reform bid

FROM PAGE 1

government asks for those. We are waiting for the government to make further move in this regard," an official of the ministry told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

Besides suggesting performance-based postings and promotion, the draft has proposed formation of a "civil service authority" to act as the guardian of the public servants with an aim to cut political influence on the administration.

Sources said the reforms committee also directed the ministries concerned to instil dynamism in administrative work and ensure postings of the right persons in the right places.

"We have enough reports and recommendations on reforms in the civil administration but we are lagging behind regarding implementation," Food Adviser AMM Shawkat Ali, a member of the committee, told The Daily Star.

Emphasising structural reforms in civil service, he said the Public Administration Reforms Committee (PARC) of 2000 came up with a set of good recommendations but to no avail.

The cabinet committee on administrative reforms and good governance was formed in July last year and reconstituted on February 12 this year after resignation of four advisers in January.

Its present members are AMM Shawkat Ali, Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam, Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman and Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury.

Talking to The Daily Star, several bureaucrats expressed frustration over the performance of the committee.

"We cannot be optimistic about

effective reforms in the administration as the army-backed caretaker government will be in office for a few more months," a secretary said.

According to sources, 22 bodies have so far been formed to streamline the bureaucracy but very few of their recommendations have been implemented.

"Nothing has actually happened so far in this regard," said the food adviser.

The constitution says the public administration would be run as per a law passed in parliament but no such law has been enacted since the country's independence although consecutive governments have introduced rules for political gain.

The human resources management committee of the establishment ministry formed a subcommittee at the end of last year for drafting a civil service ordinance and policies for promotion, transfer, career planning and strengthening field administration. The subcommittee submitted the five drafts in early December.

To stop political influence on the public servants, it suggested forming a five-member Civil Service Authority.

"The process for appointing members of the Civil Service Authority will be like that of the judges. The members will have 25-year job experience and be free from all political linkages," a source close to the subcommittee said.

The Civil Service Authority will also listen to the grievances of government employees who at present go to the Prime Minister's Office, which creates scopes for political influence on the administration.

The draft suggests that the government will seek opinion of the Civil Service Authority before bringing

any change to any policy. "It will ensure a check and balance in the administration," said sources.

The annual confidential report should focus more on performance, the subcommittee said, suggesting postings and promotion on merit-based performance.

"Disregard for merit and performance over the years has disheartened many government servants," a joint secretary said seeking anonymity.

The subcommittee suggested a provision for voluntary retirement after completion of 15 years in job instead of the present 25 years.

Besides, the subcommittee suggested removing the provision of forced retirement. "The government can award any other punishment instead of forced retirement—there are several other ways to deal with it," the joint secretary said.

The subcommittee also recommended providing legal support to public servants if one has to face legal proceedings for any action done in good faith while discharging government duties.

The career planning policy suggests need-based training throughout a government employee's career. However, the drafts lie idle as the human resources management committee did not hold any meeting since it submitted the drafts, said sources.

The bureaucracy has been destroyed over the years damaging the morale of honest officials, a retired secretary said. "We cannot afford to be oblivious of the sliding morale and lack of commitment of government servants anymore. Well composed policies should come immediately to rein it and ensure quality civil service," he headed.

Writ against giving transit to India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed yesterday with the High Court (HC) to direct the government to refrain from giving transit facilities to India.

Mahmudur Rahman, former chairman of board of investment, filed the writ as a public interest litigation (PIL) stating that as per the provisions of the Constitution, the caretaker government has no jurisdiction to take such a policy decision like giving transit facilities to any country.

"Discussions were held on the transit issue in Delhi between Bangladesh and India recently. This is a policy decision. The caretaker government cannot discuss on such issues," the petition said.

After a brief hearing on the petition, the HC bench headed by Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana returned the petition to its counsels, as the HC bench earlier rejected a similar petition.

Counsel for the petitioner, Barrister Abdur Razzak then took back the petition.

He said they would move the petition to another HC bench today.

PSC submits report on civil service quota

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Public Service Commission (PSC) yesterday submitted recommendations on quota system for civil service recruitments to the caretaker government, a government handout said yesterday.

The commission prepared the recommendations based on the World Bank report on 'Quota system for civil service recruitment in Bangladesh' and views of different seminars held in Dhaka and other cities.

PSC Member Suraiya Begum said the recommendation report was submitted to the establishment ministry and it will be forwarded to the chief adviser very soon. However, she denied to explain on the report.

The issue of 'quota system' came forward following media reports, and demonstrations of students.

The World Bank report suggested for 50 percent quota for both cadre and non-cadre posts in civil service recruitments.

Prospective BCS candidates staged demonstrations across the country few months ago demanding cancellation of all sorts of quota in BCS examination.

Currently 30 percent quota is slated for freedom fighters or their offspring, 10 percent for women, 10 percent for districts, and 5 percent for indigenous people and only 45 percent is merit quota.

Poet Kaikobad's 57th anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

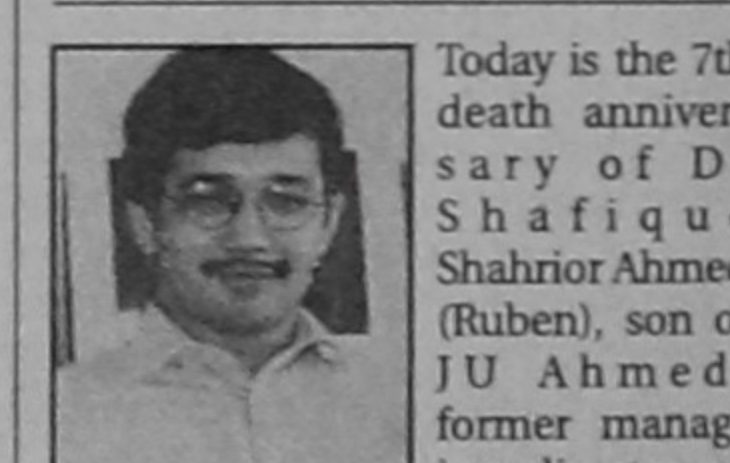
Today is 57th death anniversary of Mohakobi Kaikobad.

He died of bronchopneumonia at Dhaka Medical College Hospital in 1951 at the age of 94.

Kaikobad's literary inspiration derived from his desire to make the backward Muslims aware of their rich tradition and heritage and thereby help restore their glory.

Dr Shafique Shahrior

METRO DESK



Today is the 7th death anniversary of Dr Shafique Shahrior Ahmed (Ruben), son of JU Ahmed, former managing director of BC