

Initiate trial of war criminals in special tribunal

Law minister urged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Citizens' Commission on Trial of War Criminals yesterday called for initiating the trial by forming a special tribunal as per International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973.

They made the call during a meeting with Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Shafique Ahmed in the city.

The commission leaders said the law enacted in 1973 is of international standard and Bangladesh does not need to seek help from the United Nations or any other international organisation.

They also added that International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973 is secured by article 47 (Ga), and going against this act is not only going against the trial of war

criminals but also going against the Constitution.

The commission also placed before the law minister a 10-point recommendation on the method of constituting the tribunal and its judges, lawyers and investigation teams including the management of its office.

The recommendations also included appointment of three judges equivalent to the status of a Supreme Court judge, appointment of prosecutors, setting up of a war crime inquiry and investigation authority headed by an incumbent or former additional police commissioner or a person of same status, setting up of a library for preservation of documents regarding war crime, and appointment of staffs for the tribunal.

The commission also submitted a

sample of an information collection form which would be used to collect information about crimes committed by a war criminal.

The law minister told the leaders of the Citizens' Commission that the government would form a special tribunal soon as per the proposal adopted in parliament for the trial of war criminals.

Led by the Commission Chairman Justice Mohammad Golam Rabbani, the members of the delegation included Prof Kabir Chowdhury, former secretary Waliur Rahman, Prof Ajay Roy, Prof Mahfuza Khanam, Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury, Ferdousi Priobhashini, Shahriar Kabir, Prof Muntasir Mamun and Barrister Tania Ameer, member-secretary of the commission.

BANDARBAN ROAD CRASH

Death of parents leaves Dipa shell-shocked

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR and DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Cig

Struck dumb with shock and trauma, Dipa, who was injured in a road accident in Bandarban on Thursday, stares with a vacant look as relatives thronged her Sholokbarah residence in the port city yesterday morning to offer their deepest sympathies.

Dipa was brought home yesterday from Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) to have a last glimpse of her father Siddique Hossain Chowdhury and mother Dilwara Begum before they were sent out for burial at their village home at Bengura under Boalkhali upazila.

Her parents died in the same road accident when they along with their 13-year-old son Fahad Hossain Ritu and nephew Rabul Hossain Sujan were accompanying Reshma Sultana Dipa, a 1st year student of Economics department at Chittagong Government College, to a picnic in Bandarban.

"Failing to find out Papri at all possible places, I went to the spot and got into the ditch climbing down the hilly slopes to search for my vivacious daughter. But she was nowhere to be found," he said.

The shell-shocked father said, "I went to Bandarban hospital again to see the four bodies lying at the morgue but my daughter's name did not match the list of the dead."

"And finally I got my daughter lying dead in the morgue," Ratan said with tears rolling down his cheek while talking to the correspondents after arriving on the college premises with his daughter's body at 1:15pm.

Undergoing treatment at CMCH, the students, who were on-board the bus that fell into a hilly ditch transforming their fun, merrymaking and dreams into pains and nightmares, shared their horrible experiences with The Daily

Finding no name of Papri, a



PHOTO: STAR

Reshma Sultana Dipa, who lost her parents in a Bandarban road accident on Thursday, lies in a hospital bed at CMCH yesterday.

Two critically injured classmates Ershad and Sunny were brought by a microbus to the CMCH at around 10:00pm on Thursday.

Lying on the floor of CMCH Casualty Ward, Ershad said, "Ours was the last bus among the five to leave Bandarban city after we said our Maghrib prayers. We then started out journey but the inevitable happened only around five minutes later. While climbing up the hilly road, the bus stopped for a while and started rolling back dangerously."

"I heard the driver screaming at his helper to put a log beneath the wheels and stop the bus. But it could not be stopped from falling down," said Ershad before he was punctuated by the doctors declaring his friend Sunny dead.

Ershad could not finish his spine-chilling story as he watched the ward boys taking away the body of his friend who was receiving treatment lying just beside him only moments before.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of the National Child Award Competition 2009 pose with artist Mostafa Monwar, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni and Rokeya Sultana at Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium in the city yesterday.

Help children explore their potentials

Dipu Moni tells Nat'l Child Award ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday said as the children of today would lead the country to its ultimate success, they should be nurtured to be the perfect leaders in near future.

Speaking as the chief guest, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said children should be brought up with many opportunities to explore their full potential with all the qualities and originality they have.

She was speaking at the prize giving ceremony of National Child Award Competition 2009 organised by Bangladesh Shishu Academy at its auditorium in

the city. The government has also taken a number of initiatives to establish child rights, eliminate child labour and ensure security of for them," said the minister.

She said as the government has set Vision 2021 to take the country to an ultimate goal and these children would be the grown-ups by the time to lead the country, adding, "It is our duty to create the perfect environment for the children to be the responsible citizens."

Shishu Academy Chairman Mustafa Monwar said today's children would not be confined to geographical borders, rather they would be the

global citizens, adding, "It is none but we should provide the children with all their rights."

"The children should be encouraged to develop their thoughts and ideas as something really great would come out from them in the coming days," he added.

Women and Children Affairs Secretary Shaoly Suman and Shishu Academy Director Rokeya Sultana also spoke at the programme.

The chief guest handed the prizes over to the winners who came from across the country after facing a number of hurdles.

Fire at godown, gas pipeline catches fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A fire broke out in the godown of a plastic garment accessories factory in the city's Teigaon industrial area and a gas pipeline caught fire on the ground floor of a 10-storey building at Dhanmondi yesterday.

However, no casualties were reported.

An electrical short-circuit sparked off the fire at the godown of Sonik Allied Industries, an accessories factory, at Begunbari, at around 7:00pm.

A large quantity of plastic items were burnt in the fire. Firefighters brought the blaze under control after 20 minutes' effort.

Meanwhile, a gas pipeline leaked and caught fire as construction materials were piled on it on the ground floor of a building near Shankar bus stoppage at Dhanmondi at around 4:40pm.

Fire brigade sources said they put out the fire at around 5:25pm. There was no report of damage from the fire.

10 idols damaged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

A group of miscreants destroyed 10 idols at four temples at Shibchar upazila in Madaripur early yesterday.

Locals caught Habibur Rahman, 27, son of Abdul Motalib of Charpukuria village in Faridpur, and handed him over to the police.

But his accomplices managed to escape.

Sources said a group of four to five miscreants attacked four temples -- Siddhirtala Sri Sri Durga Mandir, Kali Mandir, Shitala Mandir and Monsa Mandir -- and destroyed 10 idols of Durga, Saraswati, Ganesh, Kartik and Laxmi.

Habibur said he is a Dakhil student of Charkamar Dakhil Madrasa.

Officer-in-charge of Shibchar Police Station Md Mahub said Habibur's behaviour was abnormal.



WaterAid UK chair and CEO arrive today

METRO DESK

Chairman of WaterAid UK Jeremy Pelczer and its CEO Barbara Frost will arrive in Dhaka today on a five-day visit to see the WaterAid's programme in the country, says a press release.

Representatives of WaterAid Australia and Sweden will accompany them.

WaterAid Bangladesh has now been implementing the largest ever project 'Advancing Sustainable Environment Health (ASEH)' covering 307 unions in 41 upazilas of 19 districts and more than 700 slums in three cities to ensure adequate access to safe water, environmental sanitation and hygiene promotion for more than 60 lakh poor people.

DFID and WaterAid UK have provided financial support for the project.

During their stay in Bangladesh, the team will visit some projects in several districts, which are being implemented in collaboration with the partner NGOs of WaterAid Bangladesh.



PHOTO: STAR

The top 12 child singers perform at the grand finale of a music competition titled 'Meridian-Channel Khude Gaanraj' at the Women's Sports Complex at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

84TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF ABDUL MATIN

Call to ensure proper dignity of Bangla language

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Language Movement veteran Abdul Matin was accorded a mass reception at a programme in the city yesterday on the occasion of his 84th birth anniversary.

A number of socio-political and cultural organisations paid homage to Matin through giving wreaths at the programme organised by Bhasha Sainik Matin Ganasangbardhana Nagorik Committee at Sufia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum.

The committee handed an honorary crest, a cheque for Tk one lakh, gift and his portrait over to the veteran.

Speakers at the reception said there are some personalities in the society who remain as an inspiration and ideal to its people and Matin is one of them.

Apart from his commendable contribution to the Language Movement, Matin dedicated his life for the oppressed of the country, they added.

Thanking the organisers for the reception, Matin said, "We should uphold the dignity and significance of Bangla language for which we struggled in 1952."

He said Bangla could not be promoted and the countrymen also failed to give proper respect to its language for



PHOTO: STAR

Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kari, journalist Kamal Lohani and poet Asad Chowdhury hand over a crest to Language Movement veteran Abdul Matin, 2nd from left, at a reception accorded to him at the National Museum auditorium in the city yesterday.

which many golden sons of the soil shed their blood.

"Why couldn't we make a standard development of our language in the last 57 years, though we were able to establish Bangla as our state language," he questioned, adding, "We have to ensure due dignity to our language."

With regret, he said, "Freedom fighters along with the common people liberated the country, but we don't not give due credit to the Liberation War."

The language warrior said the people have to save the country's dignity and eliminate all sorts of discrimination from the society.

Urging the government to implement the pledges it made during the elections, Matin said, "Activities of the government will determine whether the progressive people will be with them or not."

Kamal Lohani, convener of the committee, said paying respect to such personality, who sacrificed his many valuable things for language and oppressed people, is also a matter of honour and pride.

"People like Matin is our inspiration," he said, adding, "It is high time to work unitedly for making a bright future for the country."

Poet Rafiq Azad and Khushi Kabir also spoke.

BCL leader harasses DU teacher

DU CORRESPONDENT

A leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) harassed a teacher on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

Khairul Hasan Jewel, organising secretary of BCL central committee, allegedly prevented Associate Professor Dr Mohammad Ilias of microbiology department from getting in his car at around 7:30pm at the gate of Fazul Haq Muslim Hall.

Dr Ilias, also a house tutor of the hall, said Jewel also threatened that he (Jewel) can tie him (Prof Ilias) to a tree any time.

"My dream has shattered. I have been teaching at Dhaka University for 12 years. I have become a teacher by dint of my merit. When my students threaten me, there is nothing left," Dr Ilias told The Daily Star last night.

He said Jewel stopped his car at hall gate when he was returning to the hall from outside at around 7:30pm. The BCL leader asked him about the source of money used to renovate a hair salon in the hall.

"I told him that the hall provost provided the fund, but he was talking arrogantly on the issue. When I was getting in my car, he pushed the car door against me," Dr Ilias said.

Denying the allegations, Jewel said he wanted to talk to Dr Ilias about some allegations of irregularities made against him (Dr Ilias) by the hall students.

Restrictions on vehicles on DU campus

DU CORRESPONDENT

Vehicles without the sticker of Dhaka University would not be allowed to enter the university campus from 9:00am to 9:00pm today on the occasion of Valentine's Day.

Students of the university would organise various programmes on the campus to mark the day, says a press release.

Dinajpur farmers block road for water

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Thousands of farmers yesterday blocked Dinajpur-Rangpur highway for three hours demanding water for irrigation at Bekipur at Chirbandar in the district.

Later, law enforcers brought the situation under control with the help of the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO).

The farmers of the upazila had been suffering from acute water crisis since the very onset of the IRRI-Boro season due to dry river and shortage of power supply.

On information, UNO Anarkoli Mahub along with police rushed to the spot and assured them of adequate water supply for irrigation.

At about 2:00pm the agitating farmers withdrew the barricades.

Six killed in road accidents

OC, a mother and her son among the victims

UNB, Dhaka

Six people, including the Officer-in-Charge of Fulbaria police station in Mymensingh district and a mother and her son, were killed in separate road accidents in Narayanganj and Gopalganj yesterday.

Of the six victims, three were killed in a road accident at Kanchpur in Sonargaon upazila in Narayanganj.

Police and witnesses said a Dhaka-bound truck from Chittagong rammed into a rickshaw from behind, killing its passengers Monwar Begum, 45, and her son Biplob, 8, and the rickshaw puller Ainul Haq, 32,

on the spot.

The accident occurred at about 8:30am when Monwar along with his son was returning to their slum at Kanchpur Balamat from local market.

Police recovered the bodies and sent them to general hospital for autopsy.

The truck driver managed to flee.

Three others, including the Officer-in-Charge of Fulbaria police station, were killed and four others injured in Gopalganj Sadar upazila when a microbus fell into a roadside ditch near Chandradigolia madrasa on Dhaka-Khulna highway.

The victims are OC Tarapad Sikdar, 47, who was going to Tungipara to perform his duty, his sister-in-law Momota Dutta, 25, and Rajib, 12, a student of Chandradigolia madrasa.

Rajib was standing in front of the madrasa when the accident took place.

The police said the microbus skidded off the road and fell into the ditch at about 1:30pm as its driver lost control over the steering.

Police recovered the bodies and sent them to Sadar hospital morgue. They also seized the vehicle, but its driver managed to escape.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Today is the 25th death anniversary of Md Asaf-ud-Dowla Reza, a renowned journalist, says a press release.

A former news and executive editor of the daily Ittefaq, he also gained reputation as a radio and television broadcaster.

Bangladesh Television will air a special programme in his memory this evening.

His family will hold a doa mahfil at House # 14, Road # 7, Block # C, Bansri, Rampura after Asr prayers.

A milad mahfil and discussion will also be held at Motijheel Colony Night School.

Discussions will also be held at Shibganj Press Club, Sirajganj Press Club and Sherpur Press Club.



Temperature may fall

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Night temperature may fall by 1-2 degrees over the country.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 29.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Cox's Bazar and the lowest of 12.5 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:53pm today and rises at 6:32am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	28.5	18.8	58	39
Chittagong	28.4	17.0	72	69
Rajshahi	26.9	14.0	78	--
Khulna	28.2	17.5	71	64
Barisal	28.4	16.5	83	74
Sylhet	29.5	15.8	68	60
Cox's Bazar	29.8	17.2	60	65

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

JICA organises a dissemination seminar on improving public service through TQM. Venue: Sheraton Hotel. Time: 11:30am.

Art exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of two-week long art exhibition of Kalidas Kamakar will be held. Venue: Bengal Shilpalay. Time: 12:00noon.

Website launch

The Bangladesh Monitor will launch the website: www.dhaka-city.com.bd for foreign tourists in Bangladesh. Venue: Sheraton Hotel. Time: 4:30pm.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of the book 'Paribarner Arhanitya' by Mamun Rashid will be held. Venue: Sheraton Hotel. Time: 3:30pm.

Discussion

Amra Kuri and Sangsaptak jointly organise a discussion and cultural programme marking the birth anniversary of Pollokobi Jashim Uddin. Venue: Shishu Academy auditorium. Time: 5:30pm.