

End custodial torture

Asian HR Commission urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) yesterday urged the Jatiya Sangsad to prove its commitment that they want to end the practice of custodial torture and the culture of impunity.

Requesting the parliamentarians to legislate the draft bill in order to open the doors of the judiciary for the victims of torture, it said the victims should have easy access to the complaint mechanism and protection from threats and intimidation.

In a statement, the Hong Kong-based regional human rights organisation said Bangladesh's constitution says no person shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment, but the

reality is very different.

"There is little support for the people they are supposed to be protecting. The law enforcement agencies and the security forces care little for the ordinary people of Bangladesh," said the statement.

It added that the personnel, who serve in the police, armed forces and the paramilitary forces stand face to face before the people treating the commoners as criminals in general and subject them to torture in the name of maintaining law and order in the country.

AHRC said torture results in physical and psychological wounds to the individual victims, the families and society as a whole and there is no available remedy from any institution.

"The police, who fabricate each and everything for their

own benefit and defence, show an ordinary person, who has been a victim of torture in custody, as a criminal. There is no mechanism to control the practice of the police in the fabrication of documents and statements," it added.

A draft bill urging the need for punishing torture and custodial death as a crime has been in place since March 5. The bill was registered by lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury of the ruling political party as a Private Member's Bill as the government did not clarify its position regarding the issue, it said.

AHRC also urged the civil society, including the media and the rights groups of Bangladesh, to initiate movements against the practice of custodial torture and impunity.

Dipu Moni opposes money-whitening

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday told the House that there is no scope for district-wise budget under the present system of government.

Participating in the budget discussion on the fifth day, she also urged the finance minister to bring an end to the culture of whitening black money.

Some ruling Awami League lawmakers urged Finance Minister AMA Muhith to take budgetary measures to materialise the party's electoral pledges.

They also called on him to raise the tax rate to 25-30 percent from the proposed 10 percent for whitening undisclosed money.

AL lawmakers Molla Jalaluddin, Faridunnahar Laili, Zafar Iqbal Siddiqui, Dharendra Chandra Devnath, Nurul Islam Sujan, among others, took part in the budget discussion.

Three held with car, pistol

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-1) recovered a private car, a pistol with four rounds of bullets and arrested three criminals, including a listed criminal, from the city's Mohakhali area yesterday.

Ringleader Shahin alias Major Shahin, 32, who was accused in 16 cases, including four murder cases, was arrested along with his accomplices Shahadat Hossain alias Japani, 42, and Abu Hanif, 38.

Rab sources said Major Shahin and his two accomplices tried to flee the spot, leaving his private car abandoned in front of Rafi hotel at Mohakhali around 2:00pm when a Rab team challenged them and intercepted their car. Rab personnel chased them and caught them from the spot.

Woman missing from police safe custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman went missing from police safe custody at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday where she was undergoing treatment.

Four police members -- Nayek Nawsher Ali and constables Kabir Ali, Mousumi and Rahima of Rajarbagh Police Lines -- were suspended on charges of negligence in duty in this connection.

Identified as Jannatul Sharmin, 20, was taken to police safe custody when she was stated as a victim in the statement of a case, which was filed with Pallabi Police Station under women and children repression prevention act in October, 2008.

DMCH sources said as she was suffering from breast cancer, she on June 19 was admitted to DMCH.

Police sources said as she was kept at safe custody, she was not handcuffed rather two policewomen stayed inside the ward while two policemen stayed at the entrance of the ward by turn.

AL OBSERVES 60TH FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY

Vow to implement charter for change

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Reiterating its pledges to implement the charter for change and to build a digital Bangladesh under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the ruling Awami League observed its 60th founding anniversary amid festivity yesterday, six months after the party swept a landslide victory in the December 29 national elections.

Since its inception on June 23, 1949, the AL has led all democratic movements of the then East Pakistan starting from the Language Movement of 1952 to Liberation War in 1971 under the able leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

On the occasion, AL chief Hasina accompanied by her party leaders placed wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi around 7:00am.

She also launched a two-day founding anniversary programme by hoisting the national flag and releasing pigeons.

In the afternoon, AL took out a colourful procession from Shikha Chirantan at Suhrawardy Udyan. Thousands of enthusiastic party leaders, workers and supporters attended the procession with colourful banners, festoons, placards and band party.

Several hundred trucks decorated with different party slogans, including charter for change and digital Bangladesh, carried party workers, creating huge traffic jam in most of the streets in the city much to the



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina places wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in the city yesterday on the occasion of the 60th founding anniversary of Awami League.

sufferings of the dwellers.

Addressing a brief rally in front of Institution of Engineers Bangladesh, senior AL leaders called on the party leaders and workers to work towards implementing AL's charter for change and building Hasina's vision for a digital Bangladesh.

"On this founding anniversary day, we will have to take an oath to build a digital Bangladesh," said AL president member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury.

Presidium member Amir Hossain Amu said, "We will have to build a golden Bangladesh that Bangabandhu dreamt of, by building a digital Bangladesh under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina."

Chaired by Dhaka city AL acting president MA Aziz, the rally was also addressed by AL Joint General Secretary Syed

Ashrafur Islam, Tofail Ahmed, Abdur Razzak, Suranjit Sengupta, Matia Chowdhury, Mukul Bose, Abdul Mannan, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, Abdur Rahman and Sahara Khatun.

In the evening, Awami League organised a cultural function at Paltan Maidan. Party chief Hasina and General Secretary Abdul Jalil gave separate messages on the occasion, greeting party leaders, workers, supporters and well-wishers.

An AL delegation led by party presidium member Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim placed wreaths at the grave of Bangabandhu at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

AL will organise a discussion today at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre where Hasina will speak as the chief guest.

Nasaka to halt Rohingya infiltration

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Myanmar border force Nasaka yesterday said it would stop infiltration of Rohingyas into Bangladesh.

The border force also assured that around 27,000 Rohingya refugees from two camps at Teknaf and Ukhaia in Cox's Bazar be taken back through discussions.

The Nasaka officials said this at a sector commander-level flag meeting between BDR and Nasaka members at Hotel Sea Palace in the beach town in the morning.

Sources said BDR officials expressed concern over the large-scale infiltration of Rohingyas crossing the Naaf river and also discussed different problems faced by Bangladesh due to the presence of the refugees.

During the four-hour meeting, Nasaka officials said they were constructing embankment and barbed wire fences on the Myanmar side of the Naaf at the directive of high officials.

The Myanmar border force said the aim of the fences is to prevent smuggling, which would not create any problem for Bangladesh. They assured the BDR officials that they would stop Rohingya infiltration.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) Chittagong Sector Commander Col Didarul Alam Chowdhury led the 22-member Bangladesh team in the meeting, while Nasaka Mongdu Sector Commander Col U Aung Gue led the 15-member Myanmar delegation.

Kazi Faruk asked to surrender to trial court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed former chairman of Proshika Kazi Faruk Ahmed to surrender before the trial court within eight weeks in connection with a case filed against him on charges of misappropriation of money.

The HC bench of Justice MA Wahhab Miah and Justice Marziul Huq also asked the law enforcers not to harass or arrest Kazi Faruk during this period.

The court passed the order upon a petition filed by Kazi Faruk.

Sources said an employee of Proshika has filed the case with a court in Dhaka.

HC dismisses election petition of AL candidate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday dismissed an election petition filed by Zahid Faruque, a defeated candidate of Awami League for Barisal-5 for December 29 elections, challenging the candidature of Mujibur Rahman Sarwar, who was declared elected by the Election Commission (EC).

After a hearing on the petition, the HC bench of Justice Shahidul Islam delivered the verdict declaring the election results valid.

Sarwar's lawyer Barrister Mahbubuddin Khokon told The Daily Star that the HC dismissed the petition of Zahid on the ground that he (Zahid) has no right to file such petition, since Sarwar did not violate any rule of the Representation of Peoples Order (RPO) 1972 while contesting the election.

Zahid filed the petition with the HC seeking cancellation of the candidature of Sarwar and the election results, saying that Sarwar violated the rules of RPO by contesting the parliamentary election.

Advocate Qamrul Islam Siddiqui appeared for the petitioner.

Matin Chaudury's anniversary of death today

METRO DESK

Today is the 28th death anniversary of Dr Abdul Matin Chaudury, founder chairman of Bangabandhu Parishad, Bose Professor and former vice chancellor of Dhaka University, says a press release.

On the occasion, quarkhwi will be held at Dhaka University Mosque, at his village home and his Banani residence. Foods will be distributed among the destitute.

Dr Matin Chaudury was awarded the Swadhinota Dibash Padak-1997 posthumously for his contribution to the field of education.

420 Wasa pumps to get dual power connection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC) decided to give dual connection to the 420 water pumps of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) under their area to keep supply of water normal.

The decision was taken at a meeting between DPDC and Wasa at Wasa Bhaban yesterday.

DPDC already has given dual electricity connections in eight pumps of Wasa in Dhanmondi and Mohammadpur, says an official of Wasa.

DPDC will give dual connections to water pump at Bhuter Gali today and at Green Road tomorrow, he said.

The Wasa currently has 520 water pumps in the city, half of which become affected due to load shedding, said the official.

Wasa Managing Director Md Shahjahan Ali Molla chaired the meeting.

Call for digital preservation for dev of library

METRO DESK

Speakers at a seminar on Sunday said digital preservation is a principal consideration in digital library development in the wider Asian region, says a press release.

It is based on the part of experience with digital library development and is also part of a study of the literature on digital preservation, they added.

The speakers said this at the seminar on 'Issues in digital preservation in Asian digital libraries' was organised by East West University (EWU) Library at its main campus in the city.

EWU Vice Chancellor (acting) Prof Muniruddin Ahmed inaugurated the seminar where two professors of School of Information Management at Victoria University Wellington in New Zealand -- Prof GE Gorman and Dr Daniel G Dorner -- took part as the resource persons.

The speakers said there appear to be a lack of synergy between what 'should be' or 'might be' and what 'is' in terms of attention paid to digital preservation as an integral component in digital library development in most parts of Asia.

The seminar outlined the principal issues faced by digital preservationists, including access, use, content, selection and systems. It included discussion of social equity in terms of access and use, and significance as a key criterion in selection for digital preservation.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brig Gen (Retd) Md Zillur Rahman, a freedom fighter and an adviser to the newly formed Jatiya Muktioddha Council, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Joypr Hospital in India on Monday at the age of 57, says a press release.

Gen (Retd) Zillur Rahman will be laid to rest with state honour at Banani Army graveyard after his namaz-e-janaza at Dhaka Cantonment Central Jame Masjid after Zohr prayers today.

UZ parishad yet to start functioning properly

Civil service cadres tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although more than six months have passed since the upazila election was held, the upazila parishad in the country are yet to start functioning properly, said civil service cadres at a seminar yesterday.

They pointed out that the upazila chairmen are being restrained from carrying out their responsibilities while the vice-chairmen are sitting idle on their desks without any clear responsibilities or authority.

They were speaking at a seminar held at the Biam auditorium in the city in observance of the International Public Service Day 2009 organised by the Dhaka District Administration.

They identified the conflict between the lawmakers and the upazila chairmen as a major obstacle to strengthening the local government system, adding that local administration such as police or municipality authorities are also some of the weak links in the system.

Speaking as the chief guest, HT Imam, adviser to the prime minister, stressed the need for empowering the local government with clear and appropriate authority, accountability and responsiveness to strengthen the overall system.

General people need to understand that the civil service is not only an administration. They need to be aware

that the whole sector is dedicated to serve the general people, he said.

Establishment Secretary Iqbal Masud said a common problem among the general people is that they feel intimidated by different government administrations especially the police.

It is the responsibility of the civil service cadres to bridge this communication gap. They need to build a relationship with the general people by letting them know that the civil service administration is there to serve their needs, he said.

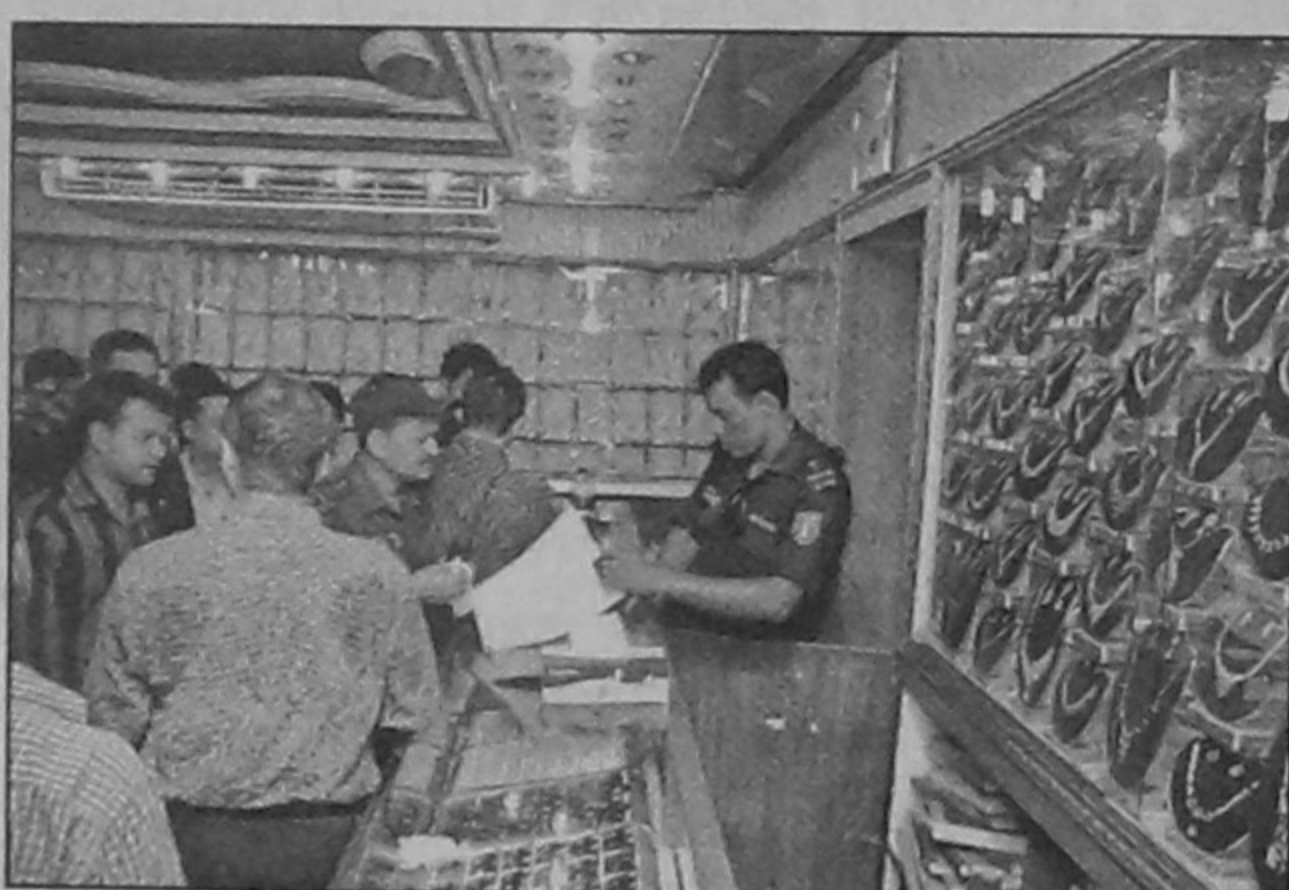
Dhaka District Commissioner Khandokar Shawkat Hossain chaired the seminar while UNDP Country Director Stefan Priesner and media personality Abed Khan also spoke.

Time for depositing Hajj money extended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The deadline for depositing money for performing Hajj under both government and non-government management has been extended till July 15.

The previous deadline was July 2, says a government handout.



Rapid Action Battalion members visit the DCC Market outlet of Amin Jewellers in the city's Gulshan area yesterday after robbers made a failed attempt to loot gold ornaments in broad daylight. (Story on page 16)

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Mild heat wave is sweeping over the regions of Tangail, Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Khulna, Satkhira and Jessore and it may continue, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 7:50pm today and rises at 6:13am tomorrow.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 38.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi and Jessore and the lowest of 24.0 degrees at Rangpur and Sayerdur.

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	35.4	29.3	72	66
Chittagong	33.5	26.4	74	77
Rajshahi	38.0	28.8	74	59
Khulna	36.0	28.9	78	71
Barisal	35.0	28.5	77	77
Sylhet	33.3	25.1	99	71
Cox's Bazar	34.6	27.0	77	81

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

Bangladesh Polytechnic Teachers' Association organises a seminar on importance of technical education in implementing Digital Bangladesh vision. Venue: Textile College auditorium, Tejgaon. Time: 11:00am.

Roundtable

Nagorik Forum organises a roundtable on Tipaimukh dam and its consequences. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

Seminar

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) organises a seminar on 'Budget 2009-10: Perspective local industry'. Venue: DCCI auditorium. Time: 11:30am.

Discussion

Economic Reporters Forum organises a post-budget discussion. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

Kabori's motorcade under attack in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

The motorcade of Awami League (AL) lawmaker Sarah Begum Kabori, which was heading towards Dhaka on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the party, came under attack at Chasara and the miscreants ransacked 10 to 12 vehicles.

The criminals destroyed the gate at Chasara rail crossing to foil the procession.

Pointing to former AL lawmaker Shamim Osman, Kabori said the cadres of a certain family made the attack.

Shamim said the transport owners and workers were behind the incident, while transport owners said the supporters of Kabori ransacked the cars.

A huge number of leaders and workers of Awami League and its front organisations gathered at the AL office at Panchaboti around 11:00am on the occasion. At around 2:00pm, about 30 buses, 15 trucks and microbuses came to Narayanganj Central Shaheed Minar.

When the motorcade was taking a turn in front of Chasara Shaheed Minar, the vehicles were obstructed by the bar at the rail gate. Then the vehicles were attacked and ransacked.

The AL leaders and workers chased the attackers and fled away. A number of passengers of the buses were injured.

'Family support a must for recovery of drug addicts'

METRO DESK

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said family cooperation as well as strong support is a must for the recovery of drug addicts, says a press release.

Improvement of relationship among other members of a family, fellow feelings and sympathy are indispensable for preventing relapse of recovered addicts, they added.

Pubali Bank Ltd Chairman Hafiz Ahmed Majumder MP said this as the chief guest at the discussion organised by Ahsania Mission Drug Addiction Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre to mark its 5th founding anniversary at the Dhanmondi Mission Bhaban auditorium in the city.

The programme included a discussion, a touchy session of recovered drug addicts and one of their guardians where they expressed their feelings vividly as well as a cultural function participated by the recovered drug addicts.

Lauding various activities of Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), the lawmaker said if the initiative is honest and noble, it is not at all difficult for its materialisation.

Editor of The Bangladesh Observer Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury called on all to build a greater social movement to eradicate the menace of drugs once for all.

He urged the government to create more opportunities of jobs and extending other

facilities for youths so that they do not go astray for lack of proper opportunities.

Iqbal assured the government of giving uninterrupted cooperation of media in creating awareness of the bad effects of drugs among the countrymen.

DAM President Kazi Rafiqul Alam said efforts are on to build drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation centres in every divisional city in the country.

Two bombs recovered from DU hall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered two bombs in abandon condition from Sergeant Zahurul Haque Hall premises of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday.

Police and witnesses said a gardener noticed the bombs first while he was cleaning bushes at the flip side of the extension building of the hall at around 11:00am.

On information, police rushed to the spot and recovered the bombs at around 12:00pm wrapped with black and red tape.

Police said both the cock-tails are out-of-date and there is no possibility to be exploded.