

## SWINE FLU Govt confirms 1 more death 61 new cases in 7 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday confirmed one more swine flu death while 61 new cases were found in last seven days raising the number of patients to 372 in the country.

Mushtuq Husain, chief scientific officer of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), confirmed the death following a routine surveillance report.

The patient was a 24-year-old young lady who was suffering from blood cancer and receiving treatment at the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

Her condition deteriorated after getting infected with

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## E-tendering by June next year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will introduce e-tendering by June next year to avert tender manipulation and criminal activities centring it.

Planning Minister air vice marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker told the House yesterday, responding to a ruling Awami League lawmaker's concern over deteriorating law and order centring tender manipulation.

He said initially, work to introduce the electronic

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A 10-kilometre stretch in Teknaf beach of Cox's Bazar has turned barren as around 30,000 Jhau trees have been felled by a section of influential locals in last seven days. PHOTO: STAR

# 30,000 trees wiped out in seven days

Greed of influentials, forest men leaves Teknaf beach barren

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

At least 30,000 Jhau (tamarisk) trees have been felled by a section of local influential people in Teknaf beach of Cox's Bazar in last seven days while the forest department remained a silent spectator of the mindless tree felling.

As a result of felling the Jhau trees, a total of 10 kilometres beach stretching

from Shahparir Dwip to Baharchhara of the upazila has become denuded land, increasing the risk during the time of any natural disaster like cyclone and tidal surge in the areas.

Sources said influential people are now trying to grab the treeless land as the department concerned is not taking any action. Allegations are there that some local forest workers have been taking

benefits in exchange of cooperation in felling Jhau trees and grabbing lands.

On information, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), police and BDR in joint raids yesterday recovered about 7,500 felled Jhau trees from different nearby villages of the beach and arrested a man in this connection.

Coastal Forest Department sources

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## Law secy says sorry

Takes responsibility of judge retirement controversy  
JS body decides not to press the issue further

SHAKHAWAT LITON and RASHIDUL HASAN

Law Secretary Kazi Habibur Awal apologised to a parliamentary committee yesterday for his role in sending two district judges into retirement without following due legal procedure. He promised that such incident will not occur in the future.

"Since I am the secretary [of the law ministry], I am taking all responsibility for whatever happened—right or wrong. Forgive me and forget if there was anything wrong," Awal was quoted by a lawmaker as telling a meeting of the parliamentary body.

At the meeting held in camera, the parliamentary standing committee on law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry was convinced by the law secretary's confession and decided not to proceed further with the issue, members of the committee said.

The meeting also decided not to ask prime minister's adviser HT Imam and Establishment Secretary Iqbal Mahmud to appear before the

committee to explain their roles in the incident

The parliamentary body on August 27 decided to investigate the roles of the three in sending judges Shajahan Hossain Saju and Abdul Gafur into retirement without consultation with the Supreme Court.

The two judges eventually got back their jobs.

"We do not want to discuss the issue further as the law secretary took all responsibility for irregularities and unconstitutional actions in sending the two judges into retirement," Suranjit Sengupta, chief of the parliamentary body, said at a short briefing after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Asked if any action will be taken against the law secretary, Suranjit said, "We do not want to put him in another dock since he took all responsibility."

Talking to The Daily Star over telephone, former law minister and committee member Abdul Matin Khasru said the matter has been

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## TRYING ELECTORAL OFFENCES Bill seeks executive magistrates' power

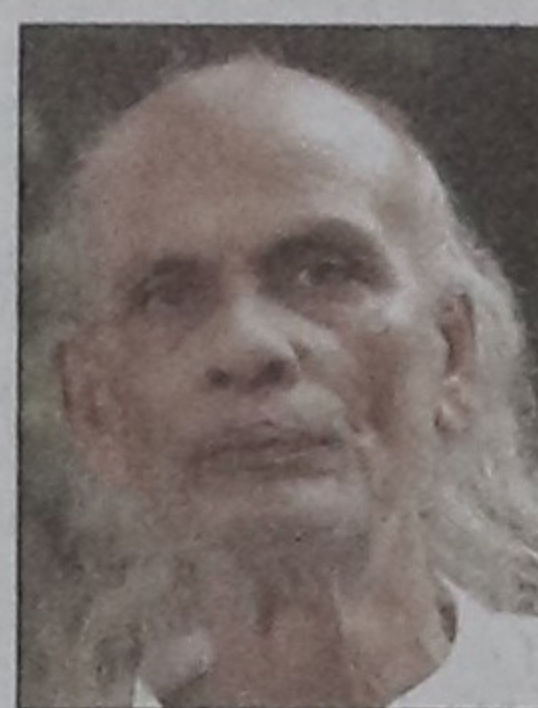
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bill seeking ratification of the mobile court ordinance was placed in parliament yesterday for continuation of the authority of executive magistrates to take cognizance of offences and hold trial of those including electoral offences.

But empowering the executive magistrates to hold trials of electoral offences runs counter to a Supreme Court (SC) opinion. Now it depends on the House whether it would uphold the SC's opinion or approve the proposal for empowering the executive magistrates to hold trial of electoral offences.

On getting the bill placed by Home Minister Sahara Khatun, the House however sent it to the parliamentary standing committee on home affairs ministry for scrutiny of the provisions proposed in the bill.

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## Baul Samrat laid to rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Baul Samrat Shah Abdul Karim was laid to eternal rest beside the grave of his wife Aftabunnesa Sarola in their village

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বিসমিল্লাহির রাহমানির রাহিম



আজ আমাদের  
যাত্রা শুরু

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