

Move to bring changes to constitution delayed

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government is not taking any initiative at this moment to amend the constitution, since a case regarding the fifth amendment to the constitution awaits final disposal in the Supreme Court.

Last month, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed and LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam said that the government would move within a very short time to bring major changes to the constitution to restore the spirit of the liberation war.

The law ministry had also drafted a letter last month asking the Law Commission to scrutinise the constitution and to determine what areas of the constitution should be amended. But the ministry has recently decided to delay sending the letter to the commission, sources said.

According to the sources, the Awami League-led grand alliance government

still considers amending the constitution to revive some major features of the 1972 constitution, but it will take necessary steps to this end after the receiving the decision of the apex court on the fifth amendment case.

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed told The Daily Star recently that the government is not taking any move right now to amend or update the constitution, as the fifth amendment case is pending with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

"We are now waiting for the SC verdict on the fifth amendment case. I think hearing of this case will be held after the disposal of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman murder case," he added.

Earlier on September 27, the law minister told the media that if the original constitution of 1972 revives following the nullification of the fifth amendment, the four fundamental state principles -- democracy, nationalism, secularism and

socialism -- would be restored concomitantly.

He also made it clear that the repeal of the fifth amendment does not mean restoration of the fourth amendment regarding the provision of 'one-party rule', as it was revoked through referendum.

On August 29, 2005, the High Court declared 'illegal' the fifth amendment to the constitution, adopted in parliament, meaning the regimes of Khandker Mushtaque Ahmed, Abu Sadaat Mohammad Sayem and Maj Gen Ziaur Rahman since August 15, 1975 till April 9, 1979 were unlawful.

In the verdict, the High Court had observed that martial law as a whole is 'illegal and unconstitutional' and all the actions, laws, and rules made under martial law are 'illegal'.

Two appeals against the HC verdict are pending with SC for hearing.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina exchanges greetings with a hajj pilgrim during her visit to the hajj camp at Ashkona in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Drive against unfit vessels on Shitalakkhya

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Inland Water Transport Safety and Navigation Mobile Court conducted a drive against unfit vessels on the river Shitalakkhya yesterday.

District administration with the assistance of BIWTA and river traffic police conducted the drive.

The court seized 20 sand-laden vessels known as 'bulk-heads' without fitness during the daylong drive.

The court also fined sand-laden bulkhead named MV Saba Sami Tk 5,000 for not having a fitness certificate.

Magistrate and Nejarat Deputy Collector (NDC) Md Zahirul Islam led the drive.

He said these illegal river vessels are causing frequent accidents on the river routes.

The seized bulkheads were handed over to the river traffic police.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, chairman of Grameen Healthcare Trust, and Vice President of Emory University Dr Gary Hauk, sign an MoU in the city yesterday to set up a learning centre in Bangladesh to provide the healthcare professionals with world-class training.

Grameen Healthcare teams up with US university

METRO DESK

Grameen Healthcare and Emory University of the USA have signed an MoU to set up a learning centre to train healthcare professionals in Bangladesh.

The centre will organise diploma or degree education programmes in Dhaka for physicians, nurses and healthcare administrators and will serve as a centre for strategic planning and research.

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, chairman of Grameen Healthcare Trust, and Dr Gary Hauk, vice president of Atlanta-based Emory, signed the deal.

Emory and Grameen will work together to work on development, translation and adaptation of relevant teaching material, according to a statement released yesterday.

Hauk is leading a 10-member delegation from Emory. Other important delegations from several North American universities, international medical institutes, pharmaceutical companies and hospitals will be visiting Grameen in Dhaka until October 23.

Grameen is working with these partners to build up the existing Grameen Kalyan rural clinics network into an affordable primary health care services system within the reach of even the poorest, according to the statement.

Grameen Healthcare has organised a series of high-level meetings in Dhaka this week in preparation for the launch of the major Grameen Healthcare initiative.

Besides Emory, representatives from McGill and Duke Universities, Pfizer, General Electric Healthcare Systems, Mayo Clinic, Sabin Vaccine Institute and Johnson & Johnson are among those attending the meetings.

At the apex level, Grameen Healthcare will set up a world class University of Health Sciences and Technology and a series of nursing colleges.

Information technology will play a key catalytic role in Grameen's integrated healthcare system for which it partnered General Electric Healthcare Systems and Intel Corporation in the design of such a system.

Engineer shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of criminals shot and injured an engineer in Farmgate area in the city yesterday.

The victim identified as Fazle Rabbi Morshed, executive engineer of Family Planning department, sustained bullet injuries to his hips, said Officer-in-Charge of Tejgaon Police Station Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman.

The injured is undergoing

treatment at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

The criminals opened fire on Rabbi around 9:30am in front of Imperial Rest House near the police station while he was getting into his private car on the way to his office at Motijheel, the OC said.

As police with the help of locals chased the criminals, they fired on police, forcing them to fire back that left one of the criminals injured.

After the gunfight, police found the criminal, identified as Rakib, 21, lying on the spot

while his accomplice fled the scene.

He was admitted to Pangu Hospital, police said.

Police recovered a pistol and eight cartridges from the spot.

Rakib told police in preliminary interrogation that someone named Joy hired them for Tk 12,000 to shoot Rabbi dead, said ASM Mahtab Uddin, assistant commissioner of Tejgaon zone of DMP.

Police raided different areas in the capital to arrest Joy and the other goon, he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Sramik Sanghati Federation takes out a procession at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding payment of salary arrears and other benefits of the workers of Dignity Garments Ltd, Dignity Apex Wear Ltd and Adonis Garments.

Govt to step up coopeartion with US: FM

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said the government stands ready to intensify Bangladesh-US cooperation in all areas, including trade and commerce, energy, and socio-economic development.

She spelled out Dhaka's position when US Assistant Trade Representative for South Asia and Central Asia Michael J Delany called on her at the foreign ministry.

During the meeting, the foreign minister said Bangladesh would like to go ahead and the main focus of the country had shifted from aid dependence to expansion of trade as the engine of growth and development.

They discussed Bangladesh-US trade volume as about 26 percent of the country's export is destined for the USA. During 2008-

2009, Bangladesh exported products worth \$4052 million, which is 12.85 percent (\$461.44 million) higher than the previous year.

Bangladesh maintains a positive trade balance with the USA. During 2008-2009, Bangladesh imported products worth \$457.82 million from USA, thus resulting in a trade surplus of \$3594.18 million.

The foreign minister thanked the US government for extending GSP facilities to Bangladesh garments and shrimps for greater access to the US markets.

She also mentioned Bangladesh's increased market access to the US as an LDC through extension of duty and quota free access.

The Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) issue was also discussed at the meeting.

Looking for impressionists

Our HR has decided the requirements, but we will decide the recruitments. So feel free to drop by and challenge us if you feel you deserve the post despite the lack of credentials. However, for whatever post you are applying for, if you don't have loads of common sense, an incurable sense of humor, an insatiable hunger for adventure, movies, books and loads of love for your parents, siblings, country and the opposite sex, then we suggest that you refrain from applying or dropping by, because we are not exactly looking for logs or dead people.

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Operation Manager

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