



## Monica Yunus honoured

METRO DESK

Monica Yunus, a noted soprano at Metropolitan Opera of New York and elder daughter of Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, has been awarded the Doha 21st Century Leaders Award from Qatar, says a press release.

The award is granted to individuals who, whilst being leaders in their own fields, have also made a serious commitment and significant impact on their chosen cause.

The award is given to individuals, who have used their influence to raise awareness, their celebrated status to raise funds, and the respect and prominence which they have gained from successes in their chosen profession, to make positive policy changes to progress either environmental or humanitarian concerns.

Monica has been chosen in the category of Outstanding Humanitarian. From early on in her opera career, Monica has championed the theme of 'Everyone has something to offer' which in turn empowers people of all backgrounds to be in a position to make a difference.

Other recipients of the Doha 2009 21st Century Leaders Award are Sir Bob Geldof, KBE, Sir Kingsley, CBE for Outstanding Humanitarian; Josh Hartnett, Danny Boyle and Christian Colson for Outstanding Humanitarian, Serena and Venus Williams for Outstanding Humanitarian and Sir Richard Branson for Outstanding Leadership.

The Award Ceremony will take place on October 30 in Doha and will be attended by members of the Al-Thani royal family who have also invited Monica to attend the Reach Out to Asia Royal Gala Dinner on October 31.

Guests include Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Sheikhha Mozah bint Nasser Al Missned, Heir Apparent Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and his wife Sheikhha Jawaher bint Hamad bin Soham Al-Thani, Sheikhha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad Al-Thani and Prime Minister of Qatar Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani.

## Scout confce begins in Kuala Lumpur

UNB, Dhaka

The five-day 23rd Asia Pacific Regional Scout Conference began in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, yesterday.

A 34-member high-level delegation of Bangladesh Scouts is now in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to attend the conference.

Power Secretary and Chief National Commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad is leading the delegation.

Other members include Communications Secretary Mohammad Mozammel Haque Khan, Habibul Alam, Prof Sayedur Rahman, Prof Dr Nizamuddin Ahmed, Prof Rafiqul Islam Khan, AKM Istiaque Hossain, Mesbahuddin Bhuyan and Nazrul Islam.

The delegation will also participate in different forums, workshops and seminars.

Bangladesh Scouts will contest with Thailand and Indonesia in the conference for holding the 24th APR conference in Bangladesh in 2012.

This year, the conference is being held with the participation of 23 Asia Pacific countries for development and expansion of scouting.

# Save Mirpur green square: Paba

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Paribesh Bachao Andolon (Paba) along with the local residents around Mirpur stadium organised a rally yesterday protesting a fresh attempt to construct a market on the remaining green patch in the area.

The residents called on the government to protect the green space, locally known as Sabuj Chatter (green square) to help children grow properly.

In 2007, Sabuj Chatter at Block H of Mirpur Section-2 was allotted by National Housing Authority to construct a market.

The attempt was foiled after a storm of protests from the local residents and environmentalists. The High Court

later ordered an injunction on the construction of the market after the residents filed a writ petition.

The residents at the rally alleged that fresh attempts are being made to settle the case.

Paba Chairman Abu Naser Khan said, "Open spaces of the city are protected by law. But still there are efforts to create more establishments which are turning the city into a concrete jungle. Even the government and the policymakers are not aware of the needs of parks and open spaces."

"Children don't have places for recreational activities in the city which is hindering their natural growth. We should protect the last remaining greenery, because

it also helps relieve pollution," he added.

Md Yakub Ali, president of Mirpur Ward Seven Green Space and Children's Park Implementation Committee, said, "Our children play here and the elders stroll in the morning. This small piece of greenery is very precious to us. We want to protect this open space at any cost."

Sabuj Chatter covers only 550 yards by 30 yards of land and also houses around 50 types of herbal as well as medicinal plants, he informed.

Paba General Secretary Kamal Pasha Chowdhury and member of the implementation committee Murshed Ali also spoke.

Folk singer Kuddus Boyati performed at the programme.



Vehicles came to a grinding halt on Naya Paltan road in the city yesterday as Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal stages a demonstration in front of the central office of BNP, causing suffering to passengers as well as pedestrians. (Story on page 2)

PHOTO: STAR

## CASE AGAINST TARIQUE, MAMUN Court asks ACC to submit probe report by Nov 30

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to submit by November 30 the probe report in a money-laundering case against senior joint secretary general of BNP Tarique Rahman and his business partner Glasuddin Al Mamun.

Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rahim passed the order after accepting the first information report (FIR) of the case.

ACC Assistant Director Mohammad Ibrahim filed the case with Dhaka Cantonment Police Station against them on charges of laundering Tk 20.41 crore to Singapore during the period between 2003 and 2007.

Upon a bail from the Supreme Court, Tarique, elder son of BNP Chairperson Khaleida Zia, is now staying in London for treatment. There are a total of 14 criminal cases against him.

In the case, the ACC said Mamun took the money from Khadiza Islam, proprietor of Nirman Constructions at Birmani, assuring her of awarding the work contract for a proposed 80MW power plant at Tongi.

"The money was deposited with Mamun's account at the Citibank NA in Singapore during the period from 2003 to 2007," said the ACC, adding that Tarique was also the beneficiary of the money and both of them had debit cards of that bank account.

"Tarique withdrew \$55,000 and Mamun \$79,000 from this account using the debit cards. So, Tarique was also implicated in the case," the ACC added.

Later, Mamun confessed to converting the money into Bangladeshi currency, which was recovered and deposited with the Sonali Bank, Cantonment branch, during the caretaker government, according to the case statement.

Mamun, an accused in 12 extortion cases, was sentenced to a total of 23 years' imprisonment in separate cases filed against him for possessing firearms and ammunition, for not submitting his wealth statement, and for amassing huge wealth through illegal means.



PHOTO: STAR

Council for Reopening of Adamjee Jute Mills takes out a procession from Adamjee Bhaban at Motijheel in the city yesterday demanding steps to reopen the mill immediately.

## Textbooks to reach all students by Jan 1

Says Naheed

UNB, Dhaka

Despite challenges, the government is pledge-bound to reach textbooks to all students before January 1.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Naheed said this yesterday referring to the recent fire in the warehouse of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB).

Inaugurating the newly-constructed building of Technical Education Department at Agargaon in the city as the chief guest, the education minister said the government has undertaken initiatives for printing 19 crore textbooks for free distribution to check dropping out of students at the

primary and secondary levels.

State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Jahangir Kabir Nanak was present at the function as the special guest.

The education minister said the next generation that would get time-befitting technical education would be the main driving force of the national economy.

"The government is taking steps to reorganise the technical education to ensure modern and quality technical education," he said.

Mentioning that the government wants to upgrade higher education to the world standard, he said only meritorious students should come forward to take higher education.

"The labour-intensive technical education can advance our national progress and prosperity in this country of huge population," Naheed said.

The education minister said curriculum of technical and vocational education is being formulated to meet the demand of employers, industrial entrepreneurs and foreign labour market.

With Director General of Technical Education Department Dr Nitai Chandra Sutradhar, the function was addressed, among others, by Education Secretary Syed Ataur Rahman and Director of the department Prof Mustafizur Rahman.

## Investigate irregularities in BSS, restructure BTV

Parliamentary body asks ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs recommended the ministry to take necessary steps including restructuring of BTV to modernise its programmes like the news.

The committee yesterday expressed disappointment over the news standard of Bangladesh Television (BTV).

The committee also formed a two-member sub-committee headed by lawmaker Shahriar Alam to investigate alleged irregularities in appointments at Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) since 1990.

"There has been no improvement in BTV news

quality, not even after the new government assumed power," Obaidul Quader, chairman of the standing committee, told reporters after a meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"The news of BTV remains the same as it was during earlier governments' tenure, there has been no change," a disappointed Obaidul Quader, a ruling Awami League lawmaker, said.

"The news items of BTV are nothing but government advertisements, this perception has to change. News is like commodities, they have to be sold like the other private television channels do," he added.

The people in villages only watch BTV news, which has terrestrial facility, Quader

observed. He, however, said other programmes of the state-run sole terrestrial television channel have improved slightly.

On the formation of the sub-committee, the standing committee chief said there are allegations of irregularities in appointments at the BSS during the previous government's rule. "We formed the two-member sub-committee to investigate the matter and to make recommendations," he said.

The committee also asked high officials of the information ministry to resolve the legal issue centring the BSS Bhaban at the city's Paltan area.

On alleged corruption, irregularities and mismanagement in Bangladesh Film

Development Corporation (BFDC), Obaidul Quader said, the five-member parliamentary sub-committee will submit its probe report and recommendations to the standing committee by November 30.

The parliamentary body on information ministry on August 12 formed the five-member sub-committee headed by AL lawmaker Reza Ali to investigate alleged widespread irregularities, corruption and mismanagement in BFDC.

The four other members of the committee are Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Faroque and AL lawmakers Sarah Begum Kabari, Shahin Monowara Haq and Sukumar Ranjan Ghosh.

## Square, Apollo stop VAT collection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's two largest private hospitals -- Square Hospitals Limited and Apollo Hospitals Dhaka -- have stopped collecting value added tax (VAT) from patients following a High Court (HC) verdict.

Yusuf Siddique, head of finance at Square Hospitals, told The Daily Star, "After receiving the HC verdict, we stopped collecting VAT from patients with effect from Monday."

"We sent a letter to National Board of Revenue (NBR), informing them that as per the HC verdict, we stopped collecting VAT," he added.

The official said, "As the NBR officials frequently visit the hospital and want to know about VAT collection, we informed them of the HC verdict and we should follow it."

The hospital authorities sent another letter to advocate Manzill Murshed, who filed the case upon public interest litigation.

Manzill said, "We will take legal action against those hospitals which are still charging VAT for health services."

A notice was served on the two hospitals asking them to stop collecting VAT from patients within the 24 hours on Sunday.

Earlier on July 14, the HC declared illegal the imposition of VAT on citizens for providing health services to patients.

It also declared illegal and unconstitutional the provisions of VAT Act 1991 for realising VAT from patients for making any prescriptions or doing pathological tests for treatments.

NBR Chairman Nasiruddin Ahmed on Sunday said NBR would file an appeal with the Supreme Court against the HC verdict.

## China to increase aid in dev sectors

Envoy tells food minister

UNB, Dhaka

The Chinese government would increase its assistance for different development sectors, including agriculture and communication infrastructure, of Bangladesh.

Chinese Ambassador to Dhaka Zhang Xianyi made the remarks during a meeting with Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzaque while he was hand-

ing over a cheque for Tk 10 lakh for helping Aila-hit people at the ministry yesterday.

The minister thanked China for its assistance, saying that China is providing assistance for different development programmes of the country.

Razzaque sought cooperation from China for increasing the production of paddy.

The envoy recalled the

historic ties between the two countries, hoping that the existing friendly relations between them would further consolidate in future.

Joint Secretary of Food and Disaster Management Ministry M Abdul Wajed, Director General of Disaster Management Bureau Farhad Uddin, Political Councillor of Chinese Embassy Wang Yu and Political Attaché Ge Mingdong were present.

কম্বোবাজারে সাফকবলায়

**৪নাথ টাকায় ৫ STAR হোটেলের মানিকানা**

আর ২ দিন বাকী

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