

2 divisions

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appointed for the two divisions. A number of judicial officials said some of the crucial jurisdiction of the former law and justice wing were curtailed and the newly created legislative and parliamentary affairs division will deal with them from now on.

Before the ministry was divided an additional secretary headed the drafting wing and the post for the law secretary used to have been kept reserved for the judicial officials who worked on deputation in the law ministry.

But now an official from the former drafting wing will be appointed secretary to the division instead of a judicial official.

Due to the formation of two divisions the laws need to be amended to pave the ways for appointing two secretaries for the two divisions.

The government officials said after the formation of the division, the legislative and parliamentary affairs division will deal with the drafting and vetting of laws and scrutinising international agreements, translation of laws, legal functions related to Election Commission, law reform, formulation of copyrights laws, legal functions of the law commission, human rights commission, ombudsman and

parliamentary affairs, shifting of offices and promotions, appointments and transfers of the officials.

On the other hand, the law and justice division will deal with administrative functions, recruitment and transfers of the registrars, appointment of kasis, notary public, court fee, judicial service functions, appointment of the government law officers, supervision of the courts, tribunals and legal opinions.

Meanwhile, Law Minister Shaque Ahmed yesterday told The Daily Star that the law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry will now gain momentum in running its functions following the creation of two separate divisions.

"The ministry will become vibrant and speedy and can function smoothly, as the long-standing misunderstanding and conflict between its judicial and executive officials will be removed now," he said.

He said the judicial and executive officials would discharge their respective duties under the divisions.

The government will appoint two secretaries to the divisions of the ministry after amending the recruitments rules, he added.

Home minister

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project for five years, but we, under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, have undertaken the project to make machine readable passports and machine-readable visas (MRV) as major steps towards building Digital Bangladesh."

Sahara said this while visiting the city's Agargaon Passport Office.

Steps have been taken to computerise the country's all passport offices in phases as part of modernising the passport department.

"Besides, initiatives have been taken to erect building for each zone passport office to ensure easier availability of passports to the common people," she said.

Sahara said the use of Bangladeshi passports by unwanted and unexpected persons as well as their movements should be controlled effectively as it is a challenge to state security.

She urged the authorities concerned to remain alert so that the Rohingyas or members of militant outfits cannot carry out any militant activities using Bangladeshi passports and visas.

The MRP and MRV would be introduced in all missions at home and abroad.

The home minister also hoped that the passport officials would be able to play an important role in increasing the revenue through properly implementing the MRP and MRV in 19 passport offices, all immigration check posts and Bangladesh missions abroad through creating necessary posts.

Director General of the Department of Immigration and Passport Md Abdul Mabud and Director of MRP and MRV Projects Brig Gen Refaat Ullah also addressed the function.

Tk 14 lakh looted from office, shop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminals looted around Tk 14 lakh in two separate incidents in the capital in the early hours yesterday.

A group of seven robbers entered the office of Jane Group in Banani around 2:30am and took away Tk 9.5 lakh in cash, important documents and other valuables.

The robbers also beat up and injured Ashraf, Rokonuzzaman, Abu Syed and Monir of the office to create panic. The injured were rushed to a local hospital.

Sources said the cash was drawn from a bank to pay salaries of over 300 employees of Jane Group.

Gulshan police suspect a few employees are involved in the robbery.

In another incident, burglars looted around Tk 4.09 lakh in cash from a motor parts shop in TB Gate in Mohakhali.

Mahmudur Rahman, owner of the shop, said he closed the shop around 11:30pm on Wednesday and found in the morning the money and some goods were gone.

Clock goes

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meeting PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said the clock would be put back by an hour from 12:00 midnight to 11:00pm on December 31.

Azad said, with the introduction of DST since June 19, around 200-megawatt electricity was saved.

The meeting finally approved President Zillur Rahman's draft speech to be delivered on the first day at the first parliamentary session next year, after reviewing its pros and cons and decided to include in it all the successes of the government, he said.

Sources said the speech has been finalised keeping the slogan "Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu".

The meeting approved the proposal placed by the liberation war affairs ministry for raising freedom fighters' allowance to Tk 2,000 each per month from Tk 1,500, it said.

The meeting also asked the ministry to include 25 thousand more freedom fighters in the government list. Currently 1,25,000 freedom fighters are getting government's monthly allowance of Tk 1,500 each.

The cabinet also gave final approval to different bills including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre Bill 2009, Bangladesh National Scientific and Technical Documentation Centre Bill 2009, National Science and Technology Museum Bill 2009, National Institute of Biotechnology Bill 2009 and Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authorities Bill 2009.

Bangladeshi

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reminder to us of God's love for us and inspire us to spread peace and goodwill to all."

The girls have amazed medics with their recovery from surgery, with Trishna crawling on her own for the first time on Monday.

Although the girls were given only a 25 percent chance of both surviving the difficult separation surgery without brain damage, both have a shown remarkable resilience.

Doctors believe they have come through the operation without serious neurological damage.

Height limit

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ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury told reporters after a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"We have requested the civil aviation ministry to consider the matter and relax the height limit for buildings around the Tejgaon Old Airport," said Fazle Karim, also an Awami League lawmaker.

Agricultural land is decreasing day by day as more buildings are constructed on them. There will be no agricultural land left in the country, if the present trend continues, the committee chief said.

"We have to maximise the use of land by allowing upward extension of the existing buildings," he added.

The committee also asked the authorities concerned to handover flats by March 26 next year allocated to the families of freedom fighters at Lalmatia, Mohammadpur and Mirpur in the city.

The parliamentary body formed a three-member sub-committee headed by Enamul Haque to scrutinise the Real Estate Development and Management Bill-2009.

Hasina flies

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relations in the changed political perspectives both in Dhaka and Delhi.

Several accords are likely to be signed during the visit to allow transportation of India's Over Dimensional Consignments for installing a power plant in Tripura.

Strengthen Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute to remove hassle of certification of Bangladeshi export goods and facilitating Bangladesh-Nepal and Bangladesh-Bhutan transit through India.

As Bangladesh focuses on the sharing of the Teesta River waters during the visit, the water resources secretary-level talks will be held here on January 3 to do the spade work.

Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes said that, if possible, the minister-level Joint Rivers Commission meeting would be arranged before the PM's visit in a bid to reach an agreement on the sharing of the Teesta flows.

Dipu Moni, who just returned from Mauritius, said apart from a few involved in criminal activities, all the Bangladeshi male and female workers will continue with their jobs mainly in apparel sector of the island-state.

There are 12,000 workers, including 6,000 female, now employed in Mauritius. Earlier, the Mauritius government had decided to deport 6,000 male workers for breaking laws of the land by some of the males.

At the recently held Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Port of Spain, the Mauritius prime minister had assured the Bangladesh premier of reconsidering their decision.

During Dipu Moni's urgent diplomatic mission, the authorities of Mauritius conveyed their decision of not deporting the 6,000 workers.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed during her visit with an understanding that from how on, Bangladeshi workers will be sent to Mauritius through discussions

Criminals fire

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stabbed in the left shoulder.

The victims at DMCH said a gang of three armed criminals entered the shed around 6:00am, shot at and stabbed them and left the scene threatening Akbar Ali to halt construction work.

Saddam said, "The criminals shot point blank at me and Kabir as we tried to resist them demanding the keys of a welding machine locked with a pillar."

Sub-inspector Mohammad Moniruzzaman of Kafrul police station quoting Akbar Ali said Akbar did not receive any threat earlier from any extortionist.

Misceants at Mirpur and Kafrul areas generally create panic by shooting to realise extortion, police said.

Students to get books

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government for the first time is going to distribute textbooks to the students free of cost.

Till December 23, about 6,70,42,157 or 89.73 percent out of 7,47,07,222 secondary-level books to be distributed have been sent to districts, highly placed sources in the NCTB said.

Around 96 percent or 1,66,57,467 ibtdai books have been sent to districts, they added.

The number of primary-level books to be printed is 7,80,10,907 and around 94 percent of them have already been printed.

However, over 67 percent books have been sent to the districts, said the NCTB officials.

Talking to The Daily Star, Prof Akhtaruzzaman, head of the advisory committee for printing and distribution of school textbooks of 2010 academic year, said 90 percent of textbooks for secondary and ibtdai classes had been sent to the districts and the rest will be sent by December 25.

He added although the process of delivering dakhil and primary level-books has slowed down a bit, 90 percent of them would reach the districts by December 25. The rest will be sent in time.

The NCTB officials said the delivery of primary-level books was slowed down as tenders were not invited on

between the two governments to avoid forgery with passports and other deceptions by dishonest recruiting agents.

In reply to a question, the foreign minister said Bangladesh's Honorary Consul has been removed following several complaints and a new one will be appointed soon.

The foreign secretary told the reporters that Bangladesh ambassador to Iraq will fly to Baghdad on December 29 as the Bangladesh mission will be reopened in the green zone of the Iraqi capital.

On the outcome of the much-orchestrated Copenhagen climate conference, Dipu Moni, who attended the conference along with the PM, said what Bangladesh sought to tackle the climate change have been incorporated in the accord.

She said Bangladesh, as a most vulnerable country was the focal point at the global conference.

World leaders recognised the country's needs of financial assistance and technology transfer to deal with adaptation and mitigation and they also praised Dhaka strategy and action plan on climate change, she added.

Admission tests

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School, Mohammadpur Government High School and New Government Girls' High School.

Huge crowd of the applicants and their parents and guardians were seen in front of the schools.

Admission tests for schools in Group-B will be held tomorrow.

Motijheel Government Boys' High School, Narinda Government High School, Government Muslim High School, Banglabazar Government Girls' High School, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Government Boys' High School, Government Bigyan College High School, Dhanmondi Government Girls' High School and Dhanmondi Kamrunessa Government Girls' High School are in Group-B.

Admission tests for Group-C will be held on December 27.

Group-C comprises Dhanmondi Government Boys' High School, Armanitola Government High School, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Government Girls' High School, Tikatuli Kamrunessa Government Girls' High School, Tejgaon Government Girls' High School, Dhaka Collegiate School, Gonobhaban Government High School and Tejgaon Government High School.

As many as 57,816 applicants are taking part in the admission tests in 24 government schools for a total of 8,400 seats, said sources in Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE).

The results of the admission tests will be published on December 31 and put up in the notice boards in the respective schools.

Keraniganj

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Ministry Abdul Haque, who is also the project director, told The Daily Star on Friday.

He said the project was to be completed in June 2010.

In response to one of the petitioners, the HC issued an injunction against filling of any part of the acquired land in 2008, halting the work for several months.

"Besides fighting the legal battle, we carry our works to complete land filling," the project director said adding about 85 percent of acquired land has been filled up so far. "We need more time to finish the task spending about Tk 60 to Tk 65 crore as the land is very low-lying."

As the project cost doubled, it requires Ecne approval again. "The proposal is now in the Planning Commission and is expected to be placed in the pre-Ecne meeting soon," said the project director, who hoped once the proposal is approved, it would take them four years to start shifting prisoners from the Dhaka Central Jail.

As per the project, there will be two units in the same compound of the Keraniganj jail each having the capacity of 4,000 inmates. There will also be a smaller unit accommodating 200 female prisoners.

"It will be a comprehensive jail and there will also be a 200-bed fully-fledged hospital," said the project director.

He said a master plan for the project has been finalised. "It will be the largest jail in the country."

As part of the plan to move the Dhaka Central Jail, the prisoners under trial will be sent to Keraniganj while convicts and women serving term to the prisons in Kashimpur and Gazipur. About 10,000 prisoners are kept in the country's largest jail against the capacity of 2,700.

The move, however, will take time and the prisoners would continue to suffer in the jam-packed jails across the country. Nearly 90,000 prisoners are staying in the country's 67 prisons, which have accommodation for only 27,500.

Law ministry

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including the secretary reserved for judicial officials.

That HC decision too was upheld by the apex court.

The HC in its judgment observed that traditionally the judicial officials have held most of the law ministry posts including that of the secretary. And to give this practice a formal recognition a recruitment policy was adopted in 2001.

Citing the government's rules of business, the HC said since the functions of the law ministry are specialised, judicial officials are needed to discharge those properly in the public interest.

Bangladesh Judicial Service (posting, promotion, grant of leave and discipline) Rules 2007 too say judicial officials can be appointed to the reserved posts in the law ministry in consultation with the SC.

After Awal was appointed law secretary, judicial cadres in the ministry grew cornered.

That judicial officials hold only two of the six joint secretary posts shows their worries are not unfounded, said ministry sources.

Shahidul Haque, an official from the drafting wing, was promoted to additional secretary last year.

On the other hand, the decision taken seven months ago to promote Anwarul Haque, a judicial official, to additional secretary has yet to be implemented, added the sources.

"Currently, only 40 percent of the first class officers are from the judicial cadre," a senior law ministry official told The Daily Star yesterday, wishing anonymity.

A sense of uncertainty grew among the judicial officials in last three years as more and more admin cadres were appointed and promoted as first class officers at the justice wing, said members of the judicial service association.

Against this backdrop, leaders of the judicial service association, comprised of around 1,400 judicial officials, are trying to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to apprise her of the legal provisions on recruitment at the law ministry.

The association leaders believe the prime minister was not rightly briefed about the legal provision. And that might be the reason she told parliament in March that the secretary's post is not reserved for judicial officials.

Following the SC verdict on Thursday, Law Minister Shaque Ahmed said the government would take necessary steps on receipt of a certified copy of the verdict.

Climate discontent

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"The science says that we've got to significantly reduce emissions over the next 40 years. There's nothing in the Copenhagen agreement that ensures that that happens," he acknowledged.

But Obama added: "What I said was essentially that rather than see a complete collapse in Copenhagen... at least we kind of held ground and there wasn't too much backsliding from where we were."

Sweden, which holds the EU's rotating presidency, this week called the summit a "disaster" and declared both China and the United States, the world's two biggest polluters, responsible for the result.

Exposing the stark divide between rich and developing nations, Britain and China have traded verbal blows over who was to blame for the Copenhagen outcome.

Brazil has blasted Obama, while India has congratulated itself for emerging from the summit without any constraints on its booming growth.

Yvo de Boer, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, said "all this finger-pointing and recrimination" could cloud fresh attempts next year for sealing a post-2012 pact on tackling global warming.

"We need to work together constructively, whereas countries are in the media blaming each other for what happened -- the same countries that are going to have to be back at the negotiating table next year with an open willingness to work together," he told AFP.

"It's bad for the atmosphere, it's bad for the relationship among people that ultimately have a common goal to move this forward."

In frenzied backroom haggling on Friday, leaders of some two dozen countries put together a "Copenhagen Accord" that strived to save the gruelling 12-day UN marathon from collapse.

A total of 30 billion dollars was pledged from 2010-2012 to help poor countries in the firing line of climate change, and rich nations sketched a target of providing 100 billion dollars annually by 2020.

The deal set the aim of limiting warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), but did not set binding targets to reduce the emissions of gases that scientists say are heating up the world's atmosphere to dangerous levels.

Obama, who travelled to the summit in its final days to push for a comprehensive

BNP blames

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"Copenhagen (conference) brought a big opportunity for Bangladesh as it could lead the vulnerable and least developed countries by raising the demand for cuts in carbon emission mandatory. But the Bangladesh delegation showed complete failure," said Moyeen Khan, member of the BNP standing committee.

Moyeen read out a statement containing the party reaction to the conference at a press conference held at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office in the capital.

"The prime minister failed to raise at the summit the issue of regional discrimination regarding environment. Farrakha barrage is a threat to the existence of the country, and the proposed Tipaimukh dam will be another death trap. But she was totally silent on these vital issues at the global summit," said the statement.

The climate conference has failed to reflect the aspirations of the vulnerable and least developed countries like Bangladesh, BNP said. "But surprisingly only the prime minister of Bangladesh has termed it a success, which is unfortunate."

Moyeen said they (BNP) had hoped the government would consult them before the summit.

Replying to questions, the BNP leader said they will raise these issues in parliament when it becomes "effective".

The aspirations centring Copenhagen summit have been dashed. All hoped that justice would be ensured as regards climate but it was not done, Moyeen said.

He urged all concerned to make relentless efforts to reach a legally binding agreement to cut carbon emission at the Mexico summit next year.

Nazrul Islam Khan, another member of the BNP standing committee, said Dhaka could not play its due role at the Copenhagen summit since it gave attention only to adaptation fund.

Senior Joint Secretary General of the party Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and chairperson's adviser Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury were also present at the press conference.

agreement, said the limited agreement was hard to win, and came after talks nearly broke down entirely.

"The prime minister of India was heading to the airport and the Chinese representatives were essentially skipping negotiations," he said.

"Everybody's screaming," but eventually, "cooler heads prevailed."

In her annual Christmas broadcast, Queen Elizabeth II was to urge the 54 Commonwealth nations to keep taking the lead on global issues such as the environment.

"It is important to keep discussing issues that concern us all -- there can be no more valuable role for our family of nations," Britain's monarch and the head of the Commonwealth will say, according to extracts released Thursday.

De Boer said that going forward, it might be useful for a principal group of countries to propose a climate deal. But time was needed to have it debated and endorsed in a process "that is inclusive, representative and transparent".

Fake Phensidyl

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different kinds of powder, several hundred empty bottles, fake labels of phensidyl, corks and other materials.

Maj Muhammud Redowanul Islam of Rab-3 said on information they first arrested Kamal, a microbus driver of a rent-a-car centre, with about 150 bottles of Phensidyl in his possession on Thursday morning.

Following the lead extracted from Kamal Rab personnel then discovered the factory, he said.

Redowanul said two persons -- Jamal and Masud -- manufacture Phensidyl and they are mainly responsible for this illicit business.

Maj Redwanul said Moni had been running the illegal business along with the others for several years in the area and wholesale customers from across the country collect Phensidyl from the factory.

Talking to The Daily Star, detained Moni Akhter said he had three nephews Jamal, Masud and Morshed mainly run the business and her house was being used for this purpose.

Jamal and Masud aged around 30 years are not the chemists and have no expertise in manufacturing Phensidyl but they had been doing so for several years risking the lives of the addicts, said Rab officials.

Driver Kamal said he used to carry Phensidyl from Comilla in his microbus for Tk 5,000 for each trip.

Contacted, Rab Director General Hassan Mahmood Khandaker told The Daily Star, "As Rab members have been very sincere in their drive against drug peddlers the prices of Phensidyl have gone up."

Teesta

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Little headway has so far been made in this regard although Bangladesh and India have been discussing these issues for years.

Sources in the water resources ministry say Bangladesh is going to propose equal sharing of the Teesta waters.

The sources add Dhaka would propose equal share of 80 percent of the Teesta waters, preserving the rest 20 percent as its natural flow.

Earlier, New Delhi had insisted on sharing the waters at a ratio of 39 percent and 36 percent for India and Bangladesh respectively.

The Indian side proposed keeping only 10 percent of the Teesta waters for its natural flow and sharing 15 percent in proportion to the command areas in Indian and Bangladesh territories, sources say.

During lean period, Bangladesh requires at least 3,000 cusec of waters per day for irrigation under the Teesta Irrigation Project in northern region, officials sources say.

Dhaka also wants to discuss riverbank protection of the bordering Mahananda, Punarbhaba, Korotoa, Feni, Isamoti, Kalindi, Raymangal, Hariabhang, Ashalong, Atrai, Muhuri, Surma and Kushiara rivers.

Every year Bangladesh loses its land as rivers are slowly eroding inside Bangladesh territory. Bangladesh and India are supposed to demark the border in the middle flow of the bordering rivers, according to the Radcliffe mapping.

Dhaka wants to resolve at least the Teesta water sharing issue before Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to Delhi early January.

Dhaka sought a date from Delhi to hold minister-level Joint River Commission meeting before the premier's visit to arrive at a mandate from the two PM's summit.

Delwar's son

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In the case statement, it is stated that Dablu with his cohorts made the attempt to take the shops at the mall in Paribagh in his possession on December 21 but failed.

Besides, the statement said Dablu is an extortionist in Shabbagh, Paribagh and Hatirpula areas.

The complainant said that Dablu booked the shops on October 3, 1998 and deposited Tk 2 lakh as security money against the shops.

As the shops remained closed, Manu issued a notice on June 5, 2005 asking Dablu to run the shops within 35 days. It was also said in the notice that the contract of the shops' ownership would be cancelled if Dablu fails to run the shops within the

time frame.

Upon receiving the notice, Dablu on June 16, 2005 requested Manu to cancel the contract.

Sources said Dablu and his brother Khandaker Akhter Hamid Paban were earlier sued for their attempts to take possession of shops illegally.

After the hearing of the case, Executive Magistrate Md Lokman Ahmed recorded the statement, took the charges into cognisance and directed officer-in-charge of Shabbagh Police Station to maintain law and order in the area till the next hearing on