

## WAR CRIMINALS

## Probe to begin in March: Minister

BSS, Dhaka

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said formal investigation against war criminals would begin by March.

"All infrastructure of special tribunals and the investigation process would be completed by next month," he told reporters at his office at the Secretariat in the city after a meeting with Michael Kozak, senior adviser to the US State Department.

The law minister said all rooms of the old High Court building would be vacated by February 7 to build infrastructure of special tribunals for holding the trial of war criminals.

All these formalities, including seating arrangement for judges, lawyers, prosecutors, investigators, journalists, observers and office accommodation of

others, would be completed by February, he said, adding that the law ministry, public works department, and other ministries and departments have already been engaged for this purpose.

After the completion of all preparations, special tribunals would be set up, prosecutors and investigators would be appointed and finally the investigation into the crimes against humanity would begin within March, the law minister said.

Replying to a question, Shafique Ahmed said the investigation is part of the process of trial.

He also said the government will take initiatives to bring back war criminals staying abroad after the investigation into the matter.

The trial of war criminals was one of the main electoral pledges of this government.

## Elderly woman stabbed to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An elderly woman was stabbed to death at her residence at Pallabi in the city on Sunday night.

Unknown criminals stabbed Momtaz Begum, 65, in the throat around 9:00pm, leaving her critically injured.

Family members rushed her to a local hospital where

she died several hours later.

Her relatives said unidentified criminals stabbed her and made off with her gold necklace and earrings. But her family members did not say anything about the murder.

The police, however, suspect that the woman might have been killed over a land dispute as she was owner of a piece of land.



Hectic last-minute preparations are going on at Bangla Academy compound ahead of the Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2010. The photo was taken yesterday.

## Preparation afoot for Ekushey Book Fair

DU CORRESPONDENT

Preparation for the month-long Amar Ekushey Boi Mela 2010 is going on in full swing on the Bangla Academy premises to welcome tens of thousands of book lovers at the book fair venue from February 1.

"Our preparation is at the final stage. The academy compound is almost ready and the rest of the work would be finished shortly," said Murshid Anwar, deputy director of the academy.

Commemorating the historic Language Movement of February 1952, Bangla Academy organises the book fair at its premises every year. Thousands of book lovers from across the country through the fair venue throughout the month to buy books.

He said the book fair steering committee yesterday decided to allocate spaces to 423 organisations and publishing houses to set up their stalls on the academy premises. The number can be raised further.

The lottery for distributing spaces among publishing houses and organisations will be held in the afternoon today, he added.

The participating houses and organisations will get four days to set up and decorate their stalls.

Murshid said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the fair at 3:00pm at the premise on February 1.

Like the previous years, book lovers and visitors will get 25 percent concession on the price of per book brought out by

different publishing house and organisations and get 30 percent concessions on books of Bangla Academy.

This year, different spots at the venue will be named after noted writers and persons. There will be corners in the names of poet Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam, liberation war and children.

The deputy director said list of new books and other information of the fair will be uploaded in the internet regularly and two newspapers on book fair will be published daily.

Seminars will be held regularly on the theme 'History of the Language Movement in 1952'.

Murshid said tight security would be ensured at the fair venue and its adjoining roads likewise.

## DISTORTION OF HISTORY

## HC directive to stop publishing two textbooks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities concerned to stop publishing and circulating two textbooks under Bangladesh Open University programme as they contain distorted information on the Liberation War history.

The books--Sociology 2nd paper and Civics 2nd paper--are on the curriculum for the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) programme under the university.

The court also issued a rule upon the government and the related authorities to show cause within a week why the books should not be confiscated and their publications should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice A H M Shamsuddin Chowdhury and Justice Borhanuddin passed the order upon a writ petition filed as public interest litigation by

Supreme Court lawyers Altaf Uddin Ahmed and Mahmud Hossain.

The petitioners stated in the petition that Sociology 2nd paper and Civics 2nd paper of HSC under the Bangladesh Open University programme described late president Ziaur Rahman as the proclaimer of the independence, although the HC last year in a verdict ruled that it was Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who declared the independence of the republic.

The books also read that Ziaur Rahman is the greatest son of the country and nation, although the HC termed Bangabandhu the greatest Bangalee of thousand years.

The writ petition stated that the books suppress the historical facts and incorporate false and fabricated information on the declaration of independence.

Advocate Belal Husain Joy appeared for the petitioner.

## Ashrafur made Cirdap chairman

UNB, Dhaka

Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam was elected chairperson of Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific

(Cirdap).

Ashrafur was elected chairperson while Rural Development Minister of Iran Dr J Khaleghari vice-chairperson in the second five-day Cirdap ministerial conference at a city hotel yesterday.

## Hannan Shah threatens movement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member Brig Gen (retd) Hannan Shah yesterday threatened the government to wage a tough movement against it if it imitates any move to establish one-party rule in the country in line with BAKSAL.

"Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formed BAKSAL in 1975 to blow up other political parties. In the present time, Awami League is going through the same way and wants to establish its one-sided supremacy everywhere by destroying opposition parties. So, we along with our co-minded political parties will take to street to resist them," he said.

Hannan was speaking as a special guest at a roundtable on 'National unity to protect freedom, democracy and constitution' organised by Bangladesh Labour Party at the National Press Club in the city marking 'Bakshal Day'.

The AL government assumed power through placing some false promises behind the people who have understood their tricks. So, the December 29 election is not accountable to the people any more, he said.

About the prime minister's India visit, he said she (PM) had sold out the country's interests to India.

"In January 11, when she signed the deals, BSF had killed one Bangladeshi on the border the same day. But during her talks, our prime minister said nothing about continuous killings of Bangladeshi men by BSE."

Labour Party Chairman Shamsul Huda Mamun presided over the seminar.

## Attack on Sanjeeb Drong condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday strongly condemned the attack on Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples' Forum, said a press release.

In a statement, Parishad president Ayesha Khanam and general secretary Maleka Banu said the attack has created an obstacle to ensuring rights of the minorities and establishing peace.

They also demanded proper investigation into the incident and exemplary punishment to the attackers.

On Friday, a gang of miscreants attacked Sanjeeb Drong at Rannikhong in Netrokona while he was returning from Birishiri area. He sustained injuries in his hands.



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## Memorial meeting on Jyoti Basu Feb 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A memorial meeting on former chief minister of West Bengal and veteran Communist leader Jyoti Basu will be held at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city on February 4.

To this end, a civic committee comprising 201 members was formed yesterday with Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman as its convener and lawmaker Rashed Khan Memon and Mujahidul Islam Selim as joint coordinators, said a press release.

The committee members include Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Industries Minister Dilip Barua, LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, lawmakers Hasanul Haque Inu and Fazle Hasan Badsha, Ajoy Roy and Nasiruddin Yousuf Bachchu.

The committee was formed at a meeting at Shaheed Asad auditorium, with Kamal Lohani in the chair.

Justice Golam Rabbani, Rashed Khan Memon, Fazle Hasan Badsha, Ajoy Roy, Mahbul Alam Hanif and Mujahidul Islam Selim spoke at the meeting.

## BCL demands withdrawal of case

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of ruling Awami League, yesterday demanded immediate withdrawal of the case filed against 14 leaders and workers of the organisation.

The BCL leaders made the demand at a protest rally at the feet of Aparajeyo Bangla on Dhaka University (DU) campus.

Earlier, BCL leaders and activists brought out a protest procession that paraded different streets on the campus.

M Quamruzzaman, law affairs secretary of BNP's student body Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), filed the case against 14 BCL men on Friday with Shahbagh Police Station on charges of attacking JCD President Sultan Salauddin Tuku and other JCD men at DU on February 18.

BCL leaders termed the case 'false' and 'politically motivated'.

They blamed JCD for engaging in a gun battle on DU campus on January 18 and said BCL men will not tolerate movement of armed cadres on the campus again.

They also demanded punishment to the JCD men who took part in the gun-battle and threatened to forge a tough movement if their demands go unheeded.