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Controversial 2 left out of oath

CJ decides to swear in 15 HC judges; state minister for law declines to comment; bar chief says image of judiciary brightens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim has decided not to administer oaths of two newly appointed High Court judges against the backdrop of protest from a section of Supreme Court Bar Association leaders including its president and secretary.

But he will administer oaths of 15 other newly appointed HC judges at 10:00am today at the Judges' Lounge of the Supreme Court,

Additional Registrar Atowar Rahman told The Daily Star last evening.

Atowar said the chief justice would not administer oaths to Ruhul Quddus Babu and Md Khasruzzaman, but he could not specify the reason for the decision.

President Zillur Rahman appointed 17 new judges to the HC on April 11 for two years. The newly elected pro-BNP-Jamaat leaders of the SCBA have been strongly protesting

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No law as yet for recruitment

JS body preparing draft for SC judge appointment

SHAKHAWAT LITON

A parliamentary sub-committee is going to recommend enacting a law, setting criteria, qualities and qualifications for appointment of the Supreme Court judges to do away with the politicisation of the appointment process.

Formed by the parliamentary standing committee on law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry, the five-member sub-committee has almost completed drafting the law.

Despite its necessity, no move was made in over last 38 years to enact the law.

"We are getting prepared to place the draft at the next meeting of the original committee. On discussion, the main committee will send the draft to the law ministry to take necessary

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Bangladesh moves up economic liberty index

States Heritage Foundation-Wall Street Journal report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has made significant strides in the Index of Economic Freedom world rankings, making its economy the 137th freest in the world.

In the ranking, the country's overall score was 51.1, which is 3.6 points higher than that of the last year, according to the report jointly prepared by USA-based think tank Heritage Foundation and the Wall Street Journal.

In the Asia-Pacific region Bangladesh has been ranked 29th out of 41 countries.

"The gains reflect Bangladesh's improvements in trade freedom and investment freedom," according to the report.

In the index, the country for the first time graduated itself from the 'Repressed' category to the category of 'Mostly Unfree' countries.

Praising the country's performance in last five years, the report said, "Bangladesh has enjoyed impressive economic growth of around 6 percent per year over the past five years driven mainly by its limited but growing services and industrial sectors."

It, however, said, "Structural and institutional weaknesses remain serious impediments to sustaining such high economic growth rates."

It said Bangladesh's economy remains overly dependent on agriculture, which accounts for almost 20 percent of GDP and employs more than half of the labour force.

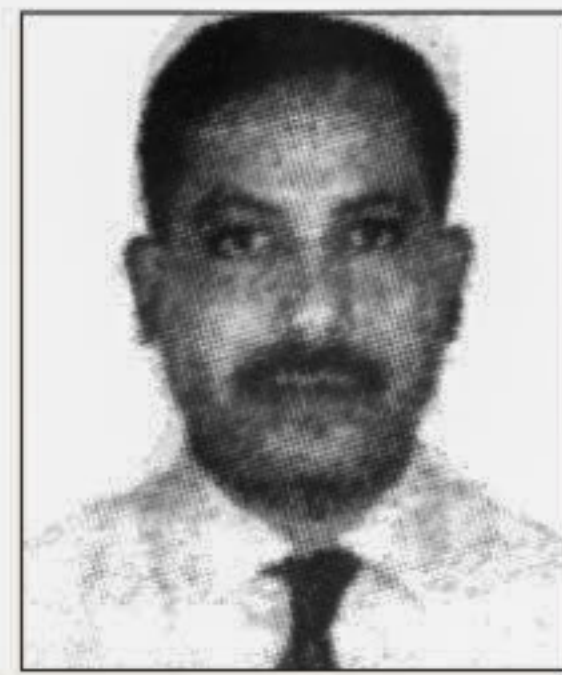
It also said the heavily politicised weak regulatory regime of the country often tends to crowd out private investment while corruption, coupled with onerous bureaucracy, is still

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Khasruzzaman, left, kicks the door of Chief Justice's Office on November 30, 2006. Below, Ruhul Quddus Babu, a murder accused. The two have been appointed High Court judges on April 11.

FILE PHOTO



Chalna site for coal-fired plant

Concludes Indo-Bangla technical team after study

BSS, Dhaka

The joint technical team of Bangladesh and India selected Chalna, near Khulna port, an ideal site to install the proposed 1,310 mega watt coal fired power plant in joint venture between the two countries.

As per agreement of first steering committee for cooperation in power sector, the joint committee comprising with the officials of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and National Thermal Power Company (NTPC) visited Khulna last week and selected the site for the proposed plant.

"We will install the power plant at Chalna. However, it will be a two-unit power plant on equal equity basis", ASM Alamgir Kabir, chairman of BPDB, told BSS yesterday.

According to the official sources, the NTPC team has

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Reckless buses kill two

STAR REPORT

A woman and a seven-year-old child were killed in two road accidents in Dhaka and Narayanganj yesterday.

The woman was killed as a bus hit a motorbike in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital at about 10:00pm.

The victim, Samiya Sumi, 18, wife of cloth trader Taufiq Ahmed of Old Dhaka, was on her way back home at Nazimuddin Road on the motorbike with her husband.

Taufiq said a bus of Midway Paribahan rammed into his motorbike from behind leaving his wife fatally injured.

She was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital

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Bhola BY-POLLS EC seeks help of rivals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP candidate for Bhola-3 by-election again blamed the deterioration in law and order on the ruling party men and demanded army deployment while Awami League candidate termed the attack on opponents a "drama".

Election Commissioner Sahul Hossain said steps have been taken to ensure a free and fair election, but cooperation of the candidates is also needed.

They made the remarks at a meeting of Law and Order Committee of Lalmoan upazila under Bhola-3 constituency at the upazila auditorium yesterday.

During the meeting, both AL candidate Nurunnabi Chowdhury Shawon and BNP candidate Maj (retd) Hafiz made accusations against each other.

Hafiz mentioned a recent attack on his workers including former lawmaker Nazimuddin Alam, and said AL men are doing so to create panic among voters to keep them from going to the polling centres.

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Bhola result no worry for BNP

It plans to launch anti-govt movements from there

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The main opposition BNP high command plans to bank on whatever result comes out of the Bhola-3 by-poll to wage a wave of anti-government agitations.

Policymakers say if the main opposition candidate bags victory in the April 24 poll, it will prove the government is losing popularity for its "failure" to run the country properly. On the other hand, in case of his defeat they would reject the result and portray it as a "rigged" election.

According to a number of BNP senior leaders, Chairperson Khaleida Zia is expected to announce agitation programmes from a grand rally in the capital on May 19 based on the by-election result.

Senior Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday told The Daily Star nothing will go unchallenged if the by-poll is not held properly.

"Of course it will turn into a major political issue and I believe that will lead to a mass movement if the people's verdict does not reflect in the election result."

Despite having a strong demand within the party to boycott the poll, Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain has already announced BNP will not stay away from participation.

Echoing the same, Mirza Alamgir said, "We'll contest the election. People witness how the ruling party creates panic in the constituency to grab a parliamentary seat and they will give an appropriate reply to that."

Party leaders say they think Bhola-3 by-poll will turn into a serious political issue like the Magura by-election that was held during the BNP rule. The then opposition Awami League

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3 carjackers held, Tk 1cr parts seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion recovered stolen car-parts worth Tk 1 crore and caught three thieves from Purbo Jurain in Kadamtali Friday night.

The Rab said the recovery was the outcome of a four-month long investigation by its team who contacted the thieves as buyers of parts recently stolen from a car.

The arrestees are Mohammad Siddiqur Rahman, 40, of Gandaria,

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War heroes to get free medicare

BSS, Meherpur

The freedom fighter's (FF) would get totally free treatment in the government hospitals, said Health Minister AFM Ruhul Huq yesterday.

Country's freedom fighters are our pride, he said adding that clear notification will be made to appraise what medical facilities will they enjoy.

He was addressing a discussion in Meherpur on historic Mujibnagar Day, an official release said.

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Clarification, our reply

In a clarification to a photo caption news headlined "Sinking carbon-sinks" carried in our April 12 issue, Bandarban Divisional Forest Officer RSM Munirul Islam pointed out that all forest goods carried through the river Sangu are not illegal.

According to him, the photo was over-displayed. He said the Sangu is an easy route and the main one for transporting forest resources procured by both government agencies and private entrepreneurs.

Munirul claimed that the

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