



Employees of ATN Bangla forms a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding exemplary punishment to the killers of Sahfiqul Islam Mithu, a senior cameraman of the TV channel.

Anti-poaching law soon to protect endangered wildlife

BSS, Dhaka
The government plans to enact tougher anti-poaching laws to protect its endangered wildlife including the Royal Bengal Tiger with officials saying they drafted a legislation suggesting the highest life imprisonment for repeated offenders.
"We've drafted the wildlife conservation law suggesting the highest life imprisonment for those who repeatedly poach animals," Tapan Kumar Dey, wildlife conservator of Bangladesh Forest Department, told BSS.
Wildlife Conservation Act, 1974 has provisions of maximum two years of imprisonment for a poacher or smuggler alongside a penalty amounting to Tk 2,000.
The forest official said they drafted the new law in line with a directive from the cabinet as a previous amendment proposal was sent back with instructions for formulating the act afresh.
Dey however said the draft law would be applicable for endangered wild animals listed under schedule-1 of the wildlife inventory of the government that included

elephants, deer Sambar, barking and hog deer, reptiles like python, king cobra and sweet and salt water crocodiles, several bird species like king vulture, the Royal Bengal Tiger and dolphins.
"We are trying to toughen the anti-poaching law alongside launching a motivational campaign especially at the Sundarbans (mangrove forest) and (south-eastern) Chittagong Hill Tracts highlighting the importance of wildlife conservation," Chief Forest Conservator Abdul Moteleb said.
Asked if increased trends of poaching prompted them to toughen the law, the forest officials, however, answered in the negative while Dey said, "There are poachers who care a fig to the existing lenient law and kill the animals for commercial gains."
According to an International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) study more than 13 species have become extinct in Bangladesh over the past 40 years, and over 100 species are now considered endangered or critically endangered.
Forest officials said the Royal Bengal Tigers, which were found all across the

country five decades ago, were now confined alone to the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest.
"According to the last tiger survey in 2004, the tiger population in the Sundarbans was 423 while the indications show their population could now range between 400 and 450" despite poaching by smugglers and beatings by villagers nearby the Sundarbans, Dey said.
The last comprehensive study on the elephant population in Bangladesh several years ago found that there were around 800 elephants, including 350 wild ones, while officials now feared their number could now be as high as 400, including 100 migratory pachyderms, and a similar number of captive elephants.
Forest officials said that around 20 people each year are killed in incidents involving wild elephants.
Experts said the country's human population tripled during the five decades when forest areas shrank to just 10 percent of landmass, resulting in more frequent clashes between people and animals.

DEFAMATION CASE Hearing on Tuku's petition adjourned till June 14

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday for the second time adjourned till June 14 the hearing on a petition seeking attachment of former army chief General Moeen U Ahmed's properties in a Tk 100 crore defamation case.
Former state minister for energy Iqbal Hassan Mahmood Tuku filed the petition.
Judge SM Saiful Islam of the Third Joint District Judge's Court passed the order following a time petition submitted by Moeen's lawyers seeking adjournment of the hearing.

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK PROBE CID given 3 more months

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday got three more months to submit the probe report in one of the two August 21 grenade attack cases.
Judge Fozila Begum of the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court in Dhaka handed down the order upon a petition by the CID.
Thus, the CID was given a total of 11 months in four phases to complete the investigation into the case.
Special Police Super of CID Abdul Kahar Akand, also the investigation officer of the case, on Sunday filed the petition with the court seeking four more months to complete the investigation.
Kahar said former state minister for home

Lutfuzzaman Babar, Islamic Democratic Party (IDP) leader Moulana Sheikh Abdus Salam, Laker-e-Taiba member Abdul Majid Butt and Dhaka City Corporation Ward Councillor Ariful Islam Arif were also shown arrested in the case.
Earlier, they gave important information about collecting and supplying the grenades for attack on the Awami League rally at Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004, which left 23 people including Ivy Rahman dead and scores injured.
Moreover, of the arrestees, Majid Butt and Abdus Salam made confessions before magistrates about their involvement in the attack, he said.
So, he sought more time to arrest the culprits involved with supplying grenades, the IO said.

'Punish killers of Mithu'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Employees of ATN Bangla yesterday demanded exemplary punishment to the killers of Sahfiqul Islam Mithu, a senior cameraman of the channel, says a press release.
The demand came from a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city.
The speakers at the human chain urged the government to investigate into the incident and ensure security of the newsmen.
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in a statement yesterday condemned the killing of Mithu and demanded punitive action against the killers.
She termed the killing 'mysterious' and 'unprecedented'.
She also prayed for salvation of the departed soul and expressed her sympathy to the bereaved family members.
Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad also expressed deep shock at his death.
He conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.
Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) President Shah Alamgir and General Secretary Abu Zafar Surya also expressed grave concern over the incident.
They demanded proper investigation into the killing and exemplary punishment to the culprits responsible.

Case against Quader dropped

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday withdrew a tax evasion case filed against Awami League presidium member Obaidul Quader in August 2007.
Judge Jesmin Anwar of the Special Judge's Court-4, Dhaka, passed the order upon a petition submitted by a public prosecutor on April 11.
The court also acquitted Quader of the case filed for evading Tk 6.36 lakh income tax on his income of Tk 1.07 crore for the years from 1997-1998 to 2006-2007.
The AL leader was present during yesterday's hearing of the case.

Call to formulate urban health policy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With over 3,00,000 new migrants coming to Dhaka city a year, the city dwellers find it difficult having access to proper healthcare services due to lack of government's planning and initiative, experts at a discussion said on Sunday.
The dramatic growth of the population in Dhaka has led to a number of problems, including inadequate access to water and sanitation, increasing risks of violence and crimes and environmental degradation, they said and called for formulating an urban health policy.
The Eminence organised the discussion titled 'Rapid urbanisation and urban health: Are we ready to take the challenge?' at Spectra Convention Centre.
The discussion was part of an initiative of Bangladesh Urban Health Network to reduce health hazards in urban areas and to ensure health rights of the people.
The experts said the health-related risks of urban children are much higher than the rural children due to various problems and environmental hazards in urban areas.
They also criticising the health ministry for not taking the total responsibility of health services in urban areas.
Dr Shamim Haider Talukder, chief executive officer of Eminence, and Dr M Kabir of Jahangirnagar University presented papers on current urban health situation in the country.
Dr AM Zakir Hussain, senior consultant and team leader of project preparation cell of the health ministry, chaired the session while Dr Ahmed Al Kabir of RTM International, Dr Dhiraj Kumar Nath of ADB, Dr Selina Amin of Plan Bangladesh, Dr Abu Jamil Faisal of Engender Health and Prof Barkat-e-Khuda also spoke.

Call centre village to be set up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will establish a call centre village to create more employment opportunities in the country.
"BTRC has already prepared a project in this regard," an official of the Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) said at a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on post and telecommunications ministry.
The 13th meeting of the committee was held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban on Sunday, with committee chairman Hasanul Huq Inu in the chair, said an official handout.
The meeting was told that the BTRC has issued 426 licences for establishing call centres. Of them, 70 call centres are in operation and have some 6,000 employees.
This service will also be launched in 600 more post offices by June. Under such arrangement, the recipients will receive the money sent to them within two minutes.
Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission Chairman Maj Gen (retd.) Zia Ahmed presented a paper in the meeting.

Bulgaria urged to import more Bangladeshi products

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman has urged Bulgaria to import more Bangladeshi products and also recruit skilled and semi-skilled manpower from the country with a view to further increasing bilateral cooperation between the two countries.
The President made the call when newly appointed Delhi-based Bulgarian Ambassador to Bangladesh Borislav Kostov presented his credentials to him at Bangabhaban yesterday.
During the meeting, Zillur said the Bulgarian businessman could import world standard Bangladeshi products like readymade garments, leather and jute goods, ceramic and pharmaceuticals considering their very competitive prices.
He also said the Bulgarian entrepreneurs might come forward for individual or joint investments in the fields of RMG, textile, energy, petro-

leum, leather, ceramic, pharmaceuticals and agro-processing in Bangladesh.
The president mentioned that Bangladesh and Bulgaria have enormous possibilities for expanding their ties in trade, commerce and cultural sectors but the volume of trade between the two countries does not reflect the true potential.
Saying that Bulgaria was one of the countries who recognised Bangladesh immediately after its independence, Zillur said Bangladeshis are grateful to Bulgaria in this regard.
He also congratulated Bulgarian leadership for their efforts in ascending to the European Union as a full-fledged member state.
The new envoy appreciated the achievement of Bangladesh for maintaining a 'high' 5-6 percent of GDP growth rate over the years amid ongoing global economic crisis.
He also appreciated Bangladesh for playing the leading role in raising its voice against the adverse effects of climate change worldwide.
Kostov emphasised increasing high level political, business and cultural visits between the two countries for further increasing the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Bulgaria.
The envoy sought President's cooperation in discharging his new responsibilities and assured the president that he would do this to his level best to bring the trade and commerce relations between the two countries to new heights.
Secretary to the President's office M Saiful Alam, Press Secretary AKM Nesar Uddin Bhuiyan and Additional Secretary to the Foreign Affairs Ministry Mostafa Kamal were present during the meeting.
Earlier, the Ambassador was given a guard of honour by a contingent of the President's Guard Regiment.

'Stop secret killings'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ain o Salih Kendra, a human rights organisation, expressed deep concern over the rise in incidents of secret killings and abductions in the country.
There are also allegations that criminals posing as members of police and Rapid Action Battalion have picked up people from home and road, it said in a statement yesterday.
Such incidents are in no way acceptable in a democratic country and it must be stopped, it added.

'Dhaka 2nd most vulnerable city to earthquake'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least five million people of Dhaka should be rehabilitated outside the city, as it is the second most vulnerable city to earthquake in the world, Director General of Fire Service and Civil Defence Abu Nayeem Mohammad Shahidullah said on Sunday.
He made the remark while answering to questions from journalists during a two-day workshop at the Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium.
European Commission Humanitarian Aid, Fire Service and Civil Defence, Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) and DRU jointly organised the workshop to improve the reporting skills of journalists regarding disaster issues.
The fire service DG cited a similar decision of the Iranian government to this end.
DRU Vice President Azmol Haque Helal presided over the workshop while Director of Fire Service (training) Maj MM Matusir Rahman, DRU's training and research secretary Motahar Hossain, and IRW Programme Officer Syed Shahnewaj also spoke.

Book on Dr Wazed

DU CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) has published a book in fond memories of late eminent nuclear scientist Dr MA Wazed Mia, also the husband of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.
President of the editorial council of the book was AL leader Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury while the two members were - LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam and AL leader Nuh-ul-Alam Lenin.
Essays, poems and pictures on life and works of Dr Wazed have been included in the book.
Members of the editorial council handed over a copy of the book to the prime minister at Gono Bhaban in the city on Sunday, says a press release.

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EWU orientation programme held

METRO DESK

The undergraduate orientation programme of the newly admitted students for summer semester 2010 of East West University was held at the university auditorium on Sunday.
Jalaluddin Ahmed, president of the board of directors of the university, was the chief guest while Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Mohammed Sharif presided over the programme, says a press release.
Jalaluddin in his speech highlighted about various facilities provided by the university. He urged the students to be attentive and regular from the very beginning of their course. Ahmed also mentioned about the future plans of the university.
Registrar Colonel Shah Murtoza Ali (Retd), and Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Muniruddin Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

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Renowned Gynaecologist Dr. Ritu Prashant Agrawal is now in Apollo Hospitals Dhaka

Dr. Ritu Prashant Agrawal graduated from Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, Varanasi, India in 1990 and completed MD in Obstetrics & Gynaecology from the same institute in 1994. She served in Tata Memorial Hospital, Bombay Hospital & PGIMS and National Institute of Laparoscopy & Endoscopic Surgery in Mumbai, India. Other than routine Obstetrics & Gynaecology works, Dr. Ritu Agrawal has wide experience in laparoscopic surgery for infertility and gynaecology. She has extensive training and hands on expertise in obstetrical and gynaecological sonography (including TVS and fetal monitoring) and IUI techniques. She has fellowship in infertility and ART from Kolkata and in endoscopic surgery from Kochin, India. In addition to Clinical Obstetrics & Gynaecology, she also has vast experience in undergraduate and post-graduate teaching.

Before joining Apollo Hospitals Dhaka, she was working as Consultant - Obstetrics & Gynaecology at Sarvoday Hospital, Ghatkopar, Mumbai, India.

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