

# Massive irregularities in canal excavation

## Water minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen yesterday in parliament alleged that massive irregularities took place in food for work programme to excavate small rivers and canals in different parts of the country.

"In the last fiscal, 80,000 tonnes of rice were allocated under food for work programme. I don't know how much work was actually done. But irregularities took place in most of the cases, resulting in low quality of work," the minister told the House at questions.

He said the rice was allocated to union

parishad chairman to carry out the food for work program. "I don't know how they distributed the allocated rice," Ramesh said.

The minister said his ministry would not go further for such excavations under food for work programme due to irregularities.

He told excavators that the government is collecting excavators to be sent to different parts of the country to dredge small rivers and canals on the basis of their recommendations.

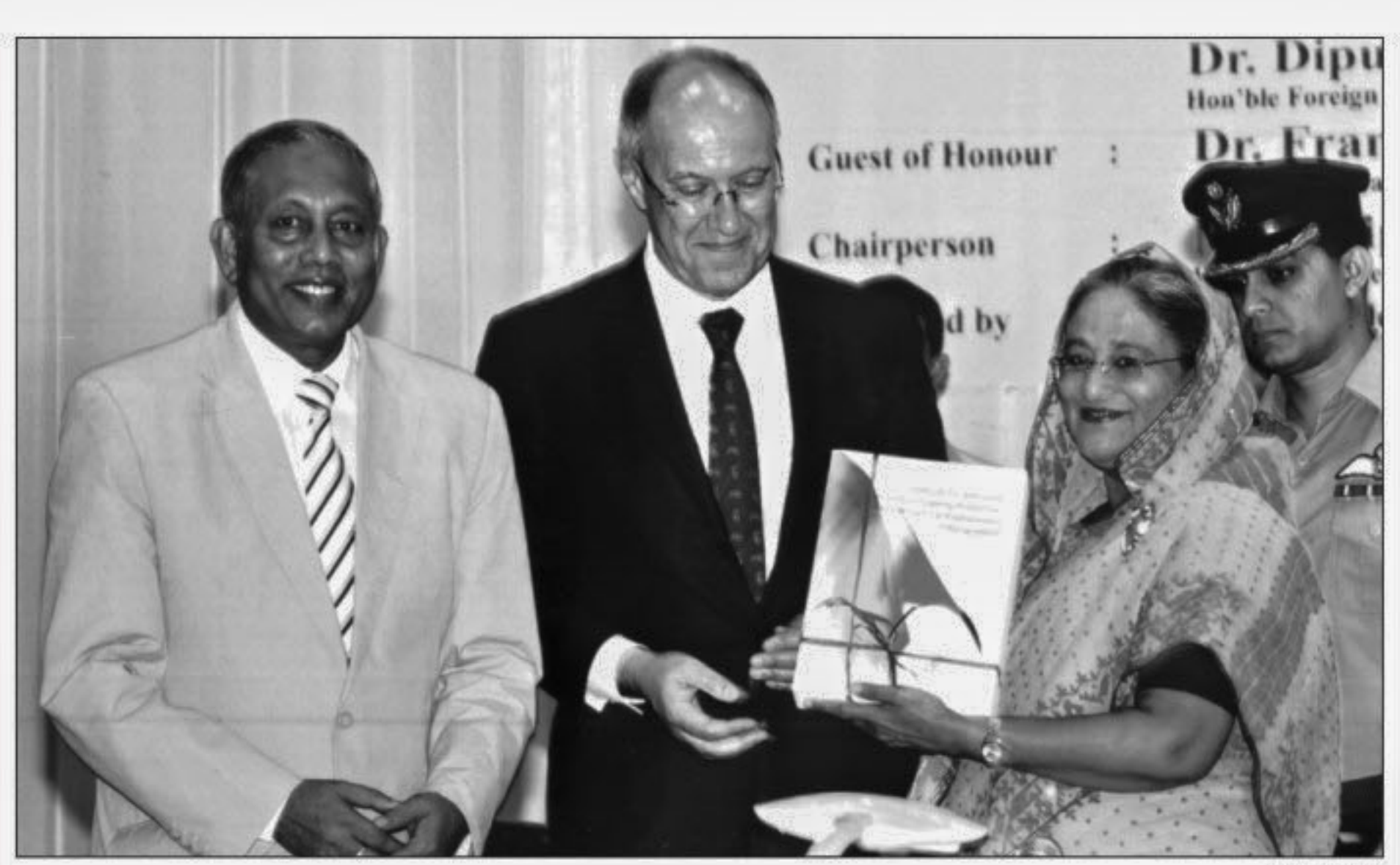
Ruling Awami League lawmaker KM Khalid, when questioning the minister, said the minister's reply was not acceptable.

"You are the minister of the ministry. If you say that you don't know about the progress of the work, then it is not acceptable," Khalid said.

The minister however did not comment on Khalid's remarks.

Meanwhile, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdul Latif Biswas said the government has moved to prepare a list of fishermen to provide them with identity cards.

He said the fishermen would be given different incentives including Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) cards when fishing is banned in rivers during fish breeding season.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receives a survey report on Cultural Heritage of Bangladesh from the Director General of World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) Dr Francis Gurry at the inaugural ceremony of the two-day 'Regional Forum on Intellectual Property for the Policy Makers of the LDCs of Asia and the Pacific Region' at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday while Industries Minister Dilip Barua looks on. (Story on Page-16)

# Four killed in Gazipur road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people were killed in separate road accidents at Joydevpur in Gazipur last night.

Of the deceased, two were identified as Anwara Begum, 32, and Mohammad Sohag, 28 while identity of two others aged about 30 could not be known immediately.

Three people were killed on the spot at Naojan area of Gazipur Sadar, when a passenger bus collided head-on with a human hauler on Dhaka-Tangail highway at 9:15pm, Abdur Rashid, officer-in-charge of Joydevpur Police Station told this correspondent.

Meanwhile, an unidentified man was killed when a Rangpur-bound bus ran over him on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Chandra at 8:00pm.

# BNP wants 2 more JS body chairs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has again demanded the ruling party give them two more chairs of the parliamentary standing committees.

Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Faroque sent a letter to the speaker on Sunday reiterating his party's demand.

Currently, BNP lawmakers are holding chairs of two parliamentary standing committee-one on the ministry of fisheries and

livestock and other is environment and forest ministry.

Opposition lawmakers led by BNP have been boycotting the current session of the parliament. But they are attending the meetings of the parliamentary bodies.

"We had raised the same demand earlier. We raised it again as the prime minister reportedly said that different parliamentary standing committees will be reconstituted," the opposition chief whip told The Daily Star yesterday.

He claimed that the prime minister

earlier assured the opposition of giving four chairs of the standing committees.

"We reminded the ruling party about their pledge to this end," he said.

The opposition chief whip said he has yet to receive any response to that letter.

Meanwhile, the parliamentary standing committee on social welfare ministry was reconstituted yesterday incorporating Awami League lawmaker Nurunnabi Chowdhury, who was elected to Bholra-3 by-polls last April.

# CLIMATE TALKS Dhaka to take firm stance

## Says Hasan Mahmud

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for Environment and Forests Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday urged members of Bangladesh delegation in the UNFCCC climate talks to take strong position for Copenhagen Accord as well as properly articulate the vulnerability of the country.

Dr Hasan said this at a meeting at his office with the members of delegation taking part in the next round of climate negotiation beginning in Bonn, Germany from August 2 to 6, 2010.

The meeting was held to give political guidance to the delegation as the negotiation entered a new phase before Cancun climate conference in November this year.

As many as 120 countries have expressed their association with the Copenhagen Accord, many countries, particularly India and China, also major emitters, are out to frustrate the process saying the accord was made up developing countries without consensus among parties.

"We support Copenhagen Accord as it contains many of

our demands and recognised the urgent needs of the developing countries which are mostly exposed to climate change," Dr Hasan said.

Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Environment and Forests Gias Uddin, Secretary Dr Mihir Kanti Majumder, Dr Atiq Rahman, Prof Ainun Nishat and other members of the delegation were present at the meeting.

The state minister said as a member of the Least Developed Countries (LDC) we have to make our best effort to raise our demands. But we have to find new option to differentiate our vulnerability from other developing countries for our survival.

In this context, the state minister mentioned about BASIC countries (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) position in the negotiation, with quantified emission over 35 percent, but apparently opposing the most vulnerable countries (MVC) issue.

He directed the members to take an initiative to mobilise the (MVC) as recognised in the

Copenhagen Accord, but opposed by some states in the G-77 group.

"If they can create a separate platform named BASIC for their sustainable development, why we can not forge unity under 'MVC' for our existence," he posed the question.

Dr Hasan urged the delegation to raise their voice in different forum for release of the first track finance committed by the developed countries for adaptation.

He said Bangladesh support continuation of the Kyoto Protocol (KP). But the country also supports bringing all major emitters in the same cage to reduce total emission as science demands.

"With active participation of all big emitters, many of them remain out of the obligation under KP you can not reduce global warming," the minister added.

Dr Hasan also urged for strengthening bilateral process for adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer because of very slow progress of the multi-lateral process to help the developing countries to cope with climate adversities.

# SC upholds HC bail to Mahmudur in two cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday upheld two High Court orders granting bail to detained Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of the daily Amar Desh, in two criminal cases.

Chamber Judge of the SC's Appellate Division Justice SK Sinha did not pass any order on two government petitions seeking stay on the HC orders.

Mahmudur's lawyer Barrister Abdur Razzaq told The Daily Star that the chamber judge refused to pass any order on the government petitions against the HC orders of bail to his client, and it means that the chamber judge upheld the HC orders.

The HC on July 12 granted ad-interim bail to Mahmudur in the two cases filed with Uttara and Biman Bandar police stations for having link with banned Hizb-ut-Tahrir and conspiracy against the state.

The government recently filed two separate petitions with the SC to stay the HC order.

Additional Attorney General MK Rahman appeared for the government.



US Ambassador James F Moriarty calls on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleida Zia at her Gulshan office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

# TTI to support CPD, Institute of Governance Studies of Brac University

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Think Tank Initiative (TTI) has recently selected 16 independent policy research institutions in South Asia for providing institutional capacity building support, said a press release.

Two local research firms, Centre for Policy Dialogue and Institute of Governance Studies of Brac University, were selected into the final list.

The main purpose of the initiative is to support local think tanks of South Asia, Latin America and East and West Africa to produce high quality research towards better policies and ultimately equitable societies.

Therefore, the firms can now attract, retain and build local talent and develop independent research programmes.

They can also invest in outreach programmes to ensure that research results are used in policy debates.

Following a detailed review process, TTI selected 16 think tanks from over 150 proposals from five countries-Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

International Development Research Centre, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation launched the TTI in 2008.

# Murder case filed against govt official

UNB, Dhaka

A case was filed against a deputy secretary (DS) of the Forest and Environment Ministry with Paltan Police Station yesterday on charge of killing a domestic help.

Nurul Islam, father of victim Nurjahan, filed the murder case accusing DS Sulaiman Mandol of the killing.

Victim's family members alleged that Sulaiman and his accomplices kept Nurjahan's body at a student dormitory run by Sulaiman himself in a village in Rangpur five days ago, claiming that she died from diarrhoea.

Being suspicious local people requested the authorities to do postmortem of the body and the autopsy report mentioned marks of torture on Nurjahan's body.

# FFs' ELECTION HC rule on govt to explain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within four weeks why formation of present election commission of Muktijoddha Sangsad Command Council (MSCC) and holding its elections under this commission should not be declared illegal.

Elections to central and district units of MSCC were held on June 26 this year.

An HC bench of Justice Mamnoon Rahman and Justice Syeda Afsar Jahan yesterday issued the rule following a writ petition filed by Md Ebadullah, a freedom fighter from Rajshahi.

The petitioner stated that as per provisions of the MSCC constitution, the councillors of the MSCC would elect its chief adviser at a meeting after its elections are held.

But Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has become chief

adviser of MSCC without following the provisions of its constitution and she had illegally directed the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs to constitute election commission for MSCC, the petitioner said, adding that, therefore, formation of its election commission is illegal.

On December 29, 2009, the ministry formed a five-member election commission headed by the cabinet secretary.

The ministry constituted the commission on orders of the prime minister.

Earlier on June 24, another HC bench of Justice Moeenul Islam Chowdhury and Justice AKM Abdul Hakim summarily rejected a similar writ petition that challenged the formation of a commission for conducting the MSCC elections.

Malek Hossain Peer, a freedom fighter of Sunamganj and a candidate in the district unit election of MSCC, had filed that petition.

# Wife murderer gets life-term

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A court here yesterday sentenced a person to life-term imprisonment for killing his wife at Sitakunda upazila in the district last year.

Judge of Chittagong Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal Shafiqul Karim also fined him Tk 2 lakh and on default to suffer seven years more in jail.

Chandan, 32, is the son of Nani Gopal Nath of Middle Mohadevpur under the upazila.

According to the case statement, Chandan married Sukla Dutta, daughter of Anil Dutta of North Guzara under Raozan upazila, on March 05, 2007. Since then Chandan used to torture Shukla over family disputes.

On June 01, 2009 Chandan strangled Shukla and passed the murder for suicide, said Public Prosecutor Ayub Khan.

Following the incident, victim's brother Aushik Dutta filed a case with the Sitakunda police station accusing Chandan, his mother Swapna Kar and brother Nandan Kar.

Charge sheet of the case was submitted on July 27 last year and charge was framed on February 01 this year. The case was transferred to the Speedy Trial Tribunal on May 13.

After hearing 18 witnesses, the court yesterday pronounced the verdict. However Swapna and Nandan were acquitted of the charge, he added.



Pro-BNP ward councillors led by Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka stage a token hunger strike at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday demanding that the government find out ward councillor Chowdhury Alam immediately. (Story on Page-1)

# DHAKA TODAY

- Seminar**  
Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) will organise a seminar titled "Intellectual property and development: Relevance for Bangladesh". Venue: 4/C Eskaton Garden Road, BEA auditorium, Time: 11:30am.
- Seminar**  
Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (Bids) will organise a seminar titled "Transformation of the role of land mortgages and its implications in rural Bangladesh during 1990s". Venue: Conference room, Bids, Time: 11:00am.
- Lecture**  
The University of Dhaka (DU) will organise a lecture on "IP Education". Venue: Senate Bhaban, DU, Time: 4:00pm.
- Discussion**  
Bangladesh Samajik Sanskritik Sangstha will hold a discussion titled "Role of youth towards a drug free society". Venue: Conference lounge, National Press Club, Time: 4:00pm.
- Human chain**  
Samajtantrik Chhatra Front will organise a human chain demanding for resumption of classes in Buet. Venue: Buet Shaheed Minar, Time: 12:00pm.
- Memorial meeting**  
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) will hold a memorial meeting to mark the first death anniversary of its former president Hena Das. Venue: BMP central office, Time: 4:00pm.
- Convocation**  
University of Liberal Arts will hold its first convocation. Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, Time: 10:00am.
- Open discussion**  
Deshpremik Jonogoner Mancha will hold an open discussion and present a position paper titled "Learn from BDR revolt". Venue: Goto Sangskriti Kendra, Time: 3:00pm.
- Book launching**  
Agricultural Reporters Forum will launch a book. Venue: Conference lounge, National Press Club, Time: 11:00am.
- Discussion**  
Dr Shahidullah Gyanpeeth Bidyalaya will hold a discussion to mark the 125th birth anniversary of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah. Venue: National Public Library, Time: 4:00pm.
- Cultural function**  
Sorok will organise a cultural function to mark their first anniversary. Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Time: 5:00pm.
- Freshers' reception**  
Samajtantrik Chhatra Front will organise a reception for the freshers of Eden College. Venue: Eden College auditorium, Time: 10:00am.

# 3 get Water Journalism Fellowship

DU CORRESPONDENT

Three reporters received Water Journalism Fellowship 2009 yesterday for their reports on river water pollution.

The reporters are - staff reporter of RTV Nafiza Daula, senior reporter of The New Nation Syful Islam and staff reporter of Dainik Amar Desh Alaaddin Arif.

Former adviser to a caretaker government Dr Akbar Ali Khan distributed certificates and cheques for the fellowship among the winners at a ceremony at the National Press Club.

Nafiza won the award for series report on pollution of rivers around the capital while Syful and Arif awarded for their reports on sharing of water in the inter-boarder rivers and river erosion respectively.

The Water Journalism Fellowship committee in Dhaka gives the fellowship to journalists with the support of US-based welfare institution Touching Souls International.

Organisers said the objective of giving the award is to encourage investigative reports on water journalism and raising awareness among the people.

Under the fellowship, each awardee received cheque for Tk30,000, said the organisers.

Chief adviser of the Touching Souls International Sayed Tipu Sultan, Convener of Water Fellowship Committee Mostafa Kamal Majumder were present on the occasion.

# Govt working to enforce copyright act

Info minister says

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister Abu Kalam Azad said yesterday the government is working relentlessly for enforcing the copyright act.

The minister was talking to Director General of World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Dr Francis Gury during a call on at the cultural affairs ministry.

They also exchanged views on matters of bilateral interests, said an official release.

Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs Hedayat Ullah Al Mamun and other officials were present.

# Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Shirin Akter, wife of Md Ibrahim, president of Chittagong Newspaper Agents Samity, passed away at a local clinic in the port city yesterday at the age of 55.

She left behind her husband, three sons, five daughters and a host of relatives.

Her was laid to eternal rest at her village graveyard at Kadalpur under Raozan upazila in the district after her second namaz-e-janaza after Zohr prayers.

Her first namaz-e-janaza was held at the city's Rahmatganj at 9:00am.

Bangladesh Sangbadpata Agent Samity President Md Ishaq, Sangbadpata Hawks Samity President Md Obaidul Haq Majumder and General Secretary Delwar Hossain conduced the death and prayed for salvation of the departed soul. They also conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

## WEATHER TODAY

# Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate wind or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over all the seven divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places over Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:47pm today and rises at 5:23am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 36.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 25.5 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.5	28.7	79	73
Chittagong	31.3	26.3	80	78
Rajshahi	36.0	27.6	83	76
Khulna	34.5	27.8	83	73
Barisal	31.7	27.4	77	87
Sylhet	27.7	25.5	97	93
Cox's Bazar	31.7	26.8	89	83

# Fix Tk 5,000 as minimum wage for garment workers

Left parties urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonotantik Bam Morcha, an alliance of left-leaning political parties, yesterday warned the government of tougher movement if Tk 5,000 wasn't set as minimum wage for garment workers by July 28.

The warning came from a meeting held at the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) office in the city.

The meeting also demanded elimination of 'non-democratic' provisions from the Labour Act, 2006 and withdrawal of 'false cases' filed against the workers during the recent unrest in garment sector.

The alliance leaders urged the government to stop harassing workers and release those arrested during the unrest.

They decided to stage a rally at the capital's Muktangan on July 28 and announce tougher programmes if their demands were not met.