

# President urges CJ for quick disposal of pending cases

BSS, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged the new Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque to take necessary steps for quick disposal of pending cases in both the Supreme Court and the lower courts to ease sufferings of the people.

The president said this when the chief justice called on him at Bangabhaban in the city.

The chief justice informed the president that presently about 3.5 lakh cases are pending with the Supreme Court and nearly 10 lakh cases with the subordinate courts.

Justice Haque assured Zillur that he would take necessary steps for quick disposal of the cases. "I am fully committed to ensuring rule of law across the country," he added.

He sought president's cooperation in increasing logistic supports and space at the court and record rooms and supporting offices of the Supreme Court as well as facilities to the judges and supporting staffs.

Zillur assured him of full cooperation in this regard and expressed the hope that under the able leadership of the new chief justice dynamism in the judiciary would continue.

Secretary to the President's office M Safiul Alam, Military Secretary Major General Abul Kalam M Humayun Kabir and Press Secretary AKM Nesar Uddin Bhuiyan were present during the meeting.

# DESERTIFICATION Talks begin in Nepal

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

An expert-level meeting of 12 least developed countries (LDCs) began in Kathmandu, Nepal, yesterday aiming to formulate an action plan to stop desertification.

The Ministry of Environment of Nepal and the Secretariat of the Convention Against Desertification are jointly organizing the 18th meeting on the issue scheduled for four days.

Thakur Sharma, environment minister of Nepal, inaugurated the meeting where Austria, Bangladesh, Benin, Canada, Liberia, the Maldives, the Netherlands, Nepal, Uganda and Solomon Island are taking part, official sources said yesterday.

The main objective of the expert group is to suggest LDCs to prepare and implement strategies concerning Nation's Programmes of Action (NAPAs) regarding the issue.

# Khaleda wants 'dead body' to create issue: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia is in dire need for dead body to create issue for protecting her corrupt sons and ex-ministers convicted at home and abroad.

"She is now desperate to save her sons and former ministers. For that she needs dead body to create an issue. And that's why she is engaged in killing," Hasina said at a function marking the founding anniversary of Jatiya Sramik League at Gono Bhaban.

The premier said two sons of Khaleda and her former ministers were found guilty of corruption at home and abroad. In support of her contention she mentioned about the US Federal Court that convicted one

son of Khaleda on charge of money laundering.

Referring Monday's train accident in Sirajganj where at least five persons were killed near the rally of Khaleda, Hasina questioned why the BNP had announced the rally just beside the rail line.

The opposition leader on her way to Sirajganj had waited at Jamuna Resort till the accident happened, she said. After the accident, unruly BNP men torched the train and killed the guard of the train, she added.

The PM said none could think about innocent passengers of the train, locomotive driver and guard. It was the old fashion of the opposition leader and her party's attitude to get dead bodies, even from her own party to create issue, she added.

Referring to recent gunfight at Juba Dal meeting in Comilla, Hasina said some people wearing masks came to the meeting and created anarchy. "Who are they, why did they wear masks? Are they from your (BNP) own party?" she questioned her arch political rival.

About the killing of the upazila chairman in Natore, she said how the opposition leader will make it credible that the Natore killing was not an outburst of intra-party conflict of BNP.

The PM said she and her party do politics for the welfare of the people and the country. She said the government is aware of the well and woes of the people. "It is our prime duty to work for the welfare of the people," she said.

The opposition leader is so greedy that even her sons are not important to

her, she said. "How a mother could stay without seeing her sons for more than three years, is this possible for a normal mother?"

The PM said Khaleda is well off to buy air ticket, but she did not have correct affection towards her ailing sons.

"A mother, who doesn't have affection for her own sons, how is it possible for such a mother to have correct attitude for the people?" she questioned.

The PM urged the opposition leader not to take any revenge on the people. "You had failed to serve the nation and its people, that's why the people did not cast their votes for you. Don't be angry with the people, and stop taking revenge on them. Let us do our duty for the people," Hasina advised her political rival.



New Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque calls on President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

# Tk 2,041cr projects get Ecneec approval

UNB, Dhaka

The road upgrading project under the one billion dollar Indian line of credit to link Akhaura land port with Dhaka-Chittagong and Dhaka-Sylhet highways got the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) nod yesterday at a cost of Tk 233 crore.

The upgrading of Sarail-Brahmanbaria-Sultanpur-Chinair-Akhaura-Sonarbari road was one of the nine projects approved at the Ecneec meeting amounting Tk 2,041 crore.

With Ecneec Chairperson and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, the approval was given at its meeting at the NEC conference room.

"Of the total project cost of Tk 2,041 crore, Tk 1,369 crore will come from government funds, while Tk 672 crore as project assistance," said Planning Minister AK Khandker while briefing reporters after the meeting. Planning Division Secretary M Habibullah Majumder was present.

Khandker said although the road project will be implemented under the Indian credit, it would serve only the purpose of the country. "This is an important project as this road will link Sylhet and Chittagong highways."

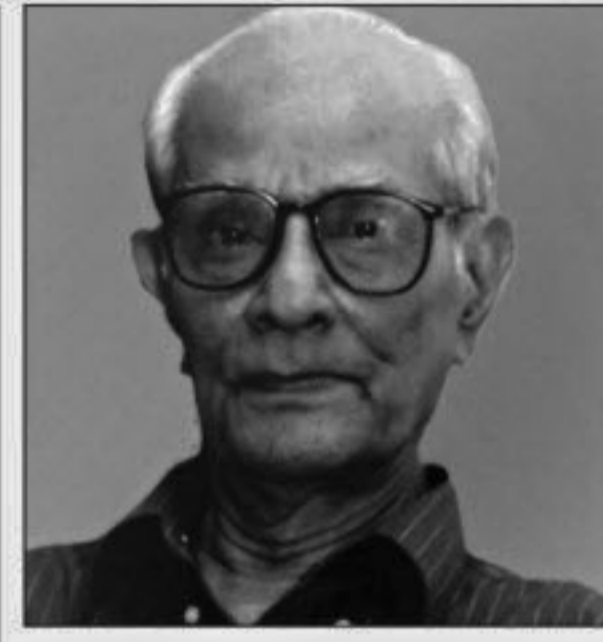
Ecneec meeting sources said Hasina has directed the Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid to launch an e-library at the University of Dhaka.

The sources said she has also directed the Machine Tools Factory to work on creating solar panels aiming to conduct irrigation activities in future through solar panels.

The upgrading of Sarail-Brahmanbaria-Sultanpur-Chinair-Akhaura-Sonarbari road project will be completed by June 2013.

The other eight projects approved in the meeting are development of irrigation areas in greater Dhaka District (2nd Phase) Project involving Tk 99 crore, Rural Infrastructure Development Project for Marketing Agricultural Produce (Tk 300 crore), Sirajganj Hard Point Rehabilitation and Strengthening Project (Tk 66 crore), Destitute Women Development Programme (VGDUP, Revised - Tk 177 crore), completing the unfinished works of the old youth training centres (Tk 104 crore), upgrading the post graduate colleges at the district headquarters to improve the standard of education (Tk 655 crore) and establishment of upazila ICT training and resource centre for education (Tk 373 crore).

Planning Minister AK Khandker, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen, Commerce Minister Faruk Khan, Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid and advisers to the prime minister attended the meeting.



# Obaidul Huq's anniversary of death today

METRO DESK

Today is the 3rd death anniversary of eminent journalist, litterateur and filmmaker Obaidul Huq.

A pioneer in journalism profession for more than 50 years late Obaidul Huq obtained his Masters degree in Philosophy from Dhaka University in 1934 and completed law course in 1936.

Obaidul Huq resigned from the Bengal Civil Service in 1941 and obtained membership of Calcutta Bengal Film Industry in the same year. During the Second World War, he made a full-length feature film "Dukhke Jader Jibon Gora" on the background of Bengal famine of 1943.

After partition in 1947, he came to Bangladesh from Calcutta and joined the Editorial Board of Bangladesh Observer in 1951. He was the editor of Bangladesh Observer from 1972 to 1984.

Huq was convener of Bangladesh Press Institute Formation Committee and later he was chairman of the institute.

He was chairman, Nazrul Institute, Bangladesh Film Censor Board Appeal Committee, Editors Council, founder chairman, Bangladesh Film Journalist Association and chairman, Dainik Bangla-Bangladesh Times Trust Board.

In recognition of his contributions to journalism, Obaidul Huq was awarded Ekushey Padak, Unicef Gold Medal, Mercantile Bank Gold Medal and many others.

He wrote three novels, one biography, poetry books, television dramas and belles-lettres. He died on October 13, 2007.

# Mohammed Ibrahim

METRO DESK

The 44th death anniversary of Justice Mohammed Ibrahim will be observed today.

On this occasion, a milad mahfil will be held in the morning and foods will be distributed among the destitute. Floral wreaths will also be placed at the Azimpur Graveyard in the city.

# Mukundalal Sarker

BSS, Dhaka

Today is the 31st death anniversary of Mukundalal Sarker, a leader of anti-British movement and a war veteran of 1971.

Mukundalal was born in 1909 at Dharmarayer Bari Village under Muktedpur Police Station in Gopalganj. He was very close to Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazlul Huq, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

On the occasion, prayers will be offered at the Dharmnodi residence (Apt. Rajonigandha, B-2, House - 80, Road- 9/A, Dhanmondi, Shankar, Dhaka) of his youngest son Ajit Kumar Sarker, Chief Reporter of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) and a discussion will be held at Dharmarayer Bari village on October 16.

# Writ against coal-fired power plant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed with the High Court yesterday, seeking direction upon the government to stop setting up any coal-fired power plant at Anwara in Chittagong to save environment.

Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) filed the writ petition as a public interest litigation challenging the government decision to acquire 645 acres of land at Anwara upazila for the power plant.

During the hearing, petitioner's counsel Muzamil Murshid said the Chittagong Port, Shah Amanat International Airport, Air force base and the people and environment of the area will face serious pollution unless the project is cancelled.

An HC bench comprising of Justice Abdul Awal and Justice FRM Nazmul Ahsan heard the petition and fixed Wednesday for passing order on it.

# Dhaka elected Int'l Telecom Union council member

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh was elected a council member of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for a four-year term by a big margin of votes on Tuesday.

ITU is the apex body of global telecommunication sector and a UN agency which regulates information and communication technology.

Officials said Bangladesh bagged 123 votes and achieved the 6th position among the 13 seats reserved for Asia-Australia region in the election held in Mexico.

# Free breast cancer treatment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Cancer Institute on Sunday launched a 21-day long programme to treat breast cancer patients free of cost on the eve of the world breast cancer month.

The institute has arranged free clinical tests and counseling on breast cancer. There will be facilities for diagnosis and treatment of cancer, said a press release.

# Fit Saarc Convention to fight trafficking

## Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The term 'trafficking' should be redefined in the upcoming Saarc Convention to address and combat all forms of this exploitative practice effectively in the region, said speakers at a workshop yesterday.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Convention which was signed eight years ago confined the definition of trafficking to women and children traded for sexual exploitation. However, since then the traffickers have widened

their scope and are preying on people seeking jobs and education irrespective of gender, said the participants.

While some countries have already framed laws to combat the issue, the regional convention is still lagging behind and should either be amended or an additional protocol should be adopted.

The speakers also suggested initiation of a comprehensive data collection mechanism on trafficking offences, offenders and victims across the region.

Over 30 representatives of civil

society and officials of the home and foreign ministries of Saarc countries attended the workshop organised by International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in collaboration with Asian Development Bank at hotel in the capital.

"Exploitation has moved beyond trafficking of women for sexual purposes and men are also being trafficked for purposes of labour," said Yunusur Rahman, additional secretary of home ministry of Bangladesh.

"The time has come to reflect on the effectiveness of the convention,

and review its implementation status by the Saarc member states," he said.

As domestic legal frameworks surpass the provisions of Saarc Convention, it may risk losing its relevance as an effective counter trafficking tool, Rahman said.

IOM Regional Representative for South Asia, Rabab Fatima, said they reviewed the Saarc Convention and found it setting weaker standards, especially on fundamental issues such as legal definition and narrow scope of implementation, compared to other contemporary anti-

trafficking instruments.

The recommendations of the review included strengthening rights-based assistance and protection measures for the trafficking victims and creating effective treaty monitoring mechanism, she said.

Fatima emphasized on the importance of strengthening regional ties for mutual legal assistance, extradition and prosecution and care and repatriation of the victims.

The workshop was a sequel to the regional meeting of the home ministers held in Islamabad on June this year.

# Two stabbed to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man hacked his brother's wife to death yesterday morning in the city's Kusumbagh under Sabujbagh while another man died early yesterday after being stabbed by a woman at Mothertek under the same police station.

In Kusumbagh, Rabeya Khatun, 24, wife of Mostafizur Rahman, died after her husband's younger brother Mohammad Shaheen stabbed her indiscriminately at about 10:00am following a family feud.

Shaheen also stabbed his brother Mostafizur injuring him severely, as he

was trying to shield his wife. He is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Mohammad Asaduzzaman, officer-in-charge of Sabujbagh Police Station said Shaheen who was frustrated at being unemployed hacked his sister-in-law and brother with a kitchen machete killing Rabeya on the spot. He fled the scene after the incident, said the OC.

Meanwhile, Selim Miah, 23, of city's Mothertek died after Mitu, 25, wife of Monir Hossain a pharmaceutical shop owner stabbed him in the chest with a knife.

Selim died at the Chest Disease

Hospital at Mohakhali at around 1:00am on Tuesday

Mitu also received some deep stab-wounds as Selim snatched the knife and stabbed her with it, said the OC.

According to the police, Selim forcefully gained entry to Mitu's house with ill intentions on Monday night in her husband's absence. To defend herself Mitu grabbed a kitchen knife and stabbed Selim. Selim also retaliated and hacked her with the same knife.

Police has arrested Mitu who is in critical conditions and currently undergoing treatment at DMCH, said OC Asaduzzaman.

# CASES AGAINST DELWAR

## HC stays proceedings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed for three months the proceedings of three criminal cases against BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

The cases were filed in Bogra, Chittagong, Sirajganj on charge of threatening Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

An HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice M Enayetur Rahim passed the orders after hearing three petitions filed by Delwar for quashing the proceedings of the cases.

The same bench also stayed for three months the proceedings against Shawkat Mahmud, president of Jatiya Press Club and adviser to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, in three cases filed in Dhaka, Tangail and Khulna on charge of threatening Sheikh Hasina.

# T O D A Y

- Conference**  
The inaugural ceremony of 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on lung health will be held. Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre Time: 7:30pm
- Seminar**  
Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association will hold a seminar on Human Rights: Perspective Bangladesh Venue: Sonargaon Hotel Time: 4:30pm
- Ceremony**  
The signing ceremony of Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Social Services and Sightsavers will be held. Venue: Shamaj Sheba Bhaban, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Time: 10:30am
- Meeting**  
Dhaka Reporters Unity will organise a view exchange meeting on World Sight Day Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity Time: 4:00pm
- Roundtable**  
Paribesh Bachao Andolon will hold a roundtable on shipbreaking and deaths Venue: Jatiya Press Club Time: 11:00am
- Ceremony**  
A signing ceremony of two loan agreements between the government and ADB will be held. Venue: Economic Relations Department, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Time: 12:00pm

# 10-TRUCK ARMS HAUL

## HC stays Ctg court order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed for two weeks a Chittagong court order that directed the jail authorities to produce detained lutfuzzaman Babar, former BNP state minister for home, to that court today (October 13) in connection with ten-truck arms haul case.

An HC bench of Justice Abdul Awal and Justice FRM Nazmul Ahsan passed the order following a petition filed by Babar, now in Banga-bandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSSMU) hospital for treatment.

He filed the petition with the HC on October 7 stating that he is very much sick and his life will fall in danger if he is shifted from the hospital.

Babar's lawyer Advocate Shah Monjurul Hoque yesterday told The Daily Star that his client would not be produced in the Chittagong court on Wednesday following the HC order.