

## Rupganj incident condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several socio-political organisations yesterday condemned the incident of firing by the army men and law enforcers on the villagers who were protesting against forced land purchase for the army housing scheme at Rupganj in Narayanganj.

Bangladesh Krishak Federation, Legal Aid and Jatiya Mukti Council in separate statements urged the government to stop the forced land purchase in Rupganj and return the lands to the owners.

Protesting the forced land purchase and the government indifferent to rehabilitation of the villagers, they termed all the incidents a threat to democracy and violation of the human rights.

They also demanded the government to probe the incident and punish the people responsible for it.

## Buddha's statue to be installed on Feb 23 next yr

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will be the chief guest at the installation ceremony of a statue of Lord Buddha at the city's Kamalapur Buddhist Monastery on February 23 next year.

The prime minister was invited to be the chief guest of the function when a delegation of Bouddha-Krishti Prachar Sangha led by its President Shuddhananda Mahathero met her at her office yesterday.

Hasina has given her consent to be the chief guest of the ceremony, said Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad.

The government of Thailand will make and install the statue of Lord Buddha at the Kamalapur Monastery. Buddhist scholars and monks from various countries will attend the function.

Prime Minister's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister Nazrul Islam Khan, Dr Pranab Barua and Pramath Barua were, among others, present.

UNB also adds: A delegation of Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the morning.

The delegation included Parishad's President CR Datta, General Secretary Rana Das Gupta, Cyril Sikder and Barrister Biplob Barua. During the meeting, the delegation apprised the prime minister about their various problems.

Hasina gave a patient hearing to the delegation and assured them of taking proper steps in this regard.

The delegation thanked the prime minister for various development programmes of the government for expediting socio-economic prosperity of the people.

Prime Minister's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman and Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were present.



RECKLESS DRIVING: The pedestrians try to rescue the injured passengers as a Sayedabad-bound bus runs over a rickshaw in front of Malibagh Bazar in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## 62,000 volunteers being trained to help quake victims

Says minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is training 62,000 volunteers to come to the aid of the people right after an earthquake, said Food and Disaster Management Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque yesterday.

Addressing a workshop held at BGMEA auditorium in the city, the minister, as the chief guest, said the ministry has already purchased equipment worth Tk 70 crore to help save lives and reduce damages due to earthquakes.

Government is putting emphasis on preparedness and protection to reduce damages caused by earthquakes, said Razzaque at the workshop titled "Increasing awareness among the officials and employees of garment industries on earthquake and fire incident."

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Population Services and Training Centre (PSTC) jointly organised the workshop with ActionAid Bangladesh and European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office, says a press release.

A huge number of garment workers are at risk from earthquakes as Bangladesh is second in the earthquake risk index list of the United Nations, said speakers at the workshop.

President of BGMEA Abdus Salam Morshedhi presided over the workshop while Director General of Fire Service and Civil Defence Abu Nayeem Md Shahidullah, Acting Country Director of ActionAid Asgar Ali Sabri, Director General of Disaster Management Bureau Ahsan Zakir and Executive Director of PSTC Milon Bikas Pal were present as special guests.

## MIZANUR'S DEATH

# Punishment to stalkers demanded

DU CORRESPONDENT

Members of civil society yesterday demanded immediate trial and punishment to the stalkers who allegedly killed Natore College teacher Mizanur Rashid.

They also demanded the government to formulate and implement a law to root out stalking.

The demands came at a human chain programme in front of Aparajeyo Bangla at Dhaka University, jointly organised by Women and Gender Studies Students Forum, Urban Development and Rural Welfare Society and Future Bangladesh Foundation.

DU teachers Prof Tania Haque, Helal Hossain Dhali, Fatema Roushon Jahan, Shafiqul Haque from Urban Development and Shaikh Intiaz from Future Bangladesh were present.

In a press release, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association expressed profound shock at Mizanur's death.

They also demanded the government to arrest the stalkers immediately and ensure exemplary punishment.

## Namaz-e-janaza

Our correspondent from Natore adds: The first namaz-e-janaza of Mizanur will be held at Lokmanpur College field and the second at Chak Lakhsmipur under Charghat upazila in Rajshahi district at 8:00am and 10:30am respectively today.

After fighting for life for 12 days, Mizanur died at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital early yesterday.

On October 12, two local youths attacked Mizanur, a chemistry teacher of Lokmanpur College in Bagatipara upazila, for protesting stalking of college girls. They ran a motorcycle into him, leaving him critically injured.

He was declared clinically dead on October 21. Since then, he had been on a life-support machine.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Abdus Salam of Bagatipara Police Station said they are conducting raids in different places to arrest Razon, the second accused in the case.

The OC also said a prayer would be made to court today seeking a seven-day remand to quiz Asif, the main accused.

## TAX ON PVT VARSITIES HC asks govt to explain, stays NBR notice to NSU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within two weeks why its decision to impose 15 percent tax on the incomes of private universities, medical and dental colleges and engineering universities should not be declared illegal.

An HC bench also stayed for two months a notice issued by the National Board of Revenue (NBR) asking North South University (NSU) to pay 15 percent tax in advance on its annual income.

The bench of Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam and SM Emdadul Hoque came up with the rule and order following a writ petition jointly filed by the NSU, and Golam Jalil, guardian of a student of this university, challenging the government decision.

Secretary to the ministry of finance, and NBR chairman and its deputy commissioner (tax) have been made respondents to the rule and order.

The finance ministry on July 5 this year issued a gazette notification imposing 15 percent tax on annual incomes of all the private universities, medical and dental colleges and engineering universities.

The deputy commissioner (tax) on September 2 this year issued the notice to the NSU authorities to pay 15 percent tax in advance on its annual income for 2011-2012. This notice was also challenged in the writ petition.

Barrister M Shakhawat Hossain appeared for the petitioners.

# No need for new law to ban religion-based politics: Law Minister

UNB, Dhaka

Law Minister Barrister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said no new law is needed to ban religion-based politics, after the reprint of the Constitution in the light of the verdict of the Supreme Court on the 5th Amendment.

Talking to reporters after his meeting with European Union Ambassador Stefan Frowein, the law minister said the Election Commission (EC) would scrutinise the constitution or manifesto of any religion-based political party to see if they contradict the reprinted Constitution.

The EC may give time to any registered religion-based party to amend its constitution or manifesto if it is inconsistent with the reprinted Constitution or the EC may cancel its registration, Shafique said.

The law minister disagreed with some newspaper reports that the prime minister at a recent cabinet meeting had stated that religion-based party will not be abolished. Rather, Shafique said the prime minister mentioned that the EC will take the decision.

After the reprint of the Constitution, he said the special committee formed by parliament will examine whether any amendment will be needed to add to or subtract any matter from the Constitution.

About his meeting with Frowein, the law minister said the trial of war criminals, among other issues, came up for discussion, saying that Frowein personally supports the trial. However, the ambassador suggested transparency and maintenance of international standard in the trial process.



Bangladesh College-University Teachers Association stages a demonstration in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding punishment to the killers of Natore college teacher Mizanur Rashid.

PHOTO: STAR

## Bhairab district on the cards

BSS, Bhairab

President Zillur Rahman yesterday said formation of Bhairab upazila as the 65th district of the country is now under process. "Cabinet has already given nod to the issue and other formalities of turning Bhairab into a district is now under process," he said while speaking at a civic rally at Haji Asmat Ali College premises here.

This is the third visit of Zillur in his election constituency, Bhairab-Kuliarchar, after assuming office of the president in 2009.

The president said he discussed the matter with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina following the long cherished demand of the inhabitants of Bhairab for turning the upazila into a district. "After hearing my proposal, the prime minister said Bhairab would be transformed into a district," said Zillur.

Later, the government asked the cabinet division to look after the matter, the president said.

Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen, State Minister for Liberation War Tajul Islam, State Minister for Water Resources Mahbubur Rahman Talukdar, local lawmaker and son of the president Nazmul Hasan and Kuliarchar upazila Awami League President Abul Hossain Liton also spoke on the occasion.

The meeting was presided over by M Saydullah Mia, president of Bhairab Chamber of Commerce and Industries and of Bhairab Awami League.

The president expressed his happiness, saying he was going to inaugurate the construction work of town protection dam from the erosion of river Meghna. "It was my long cherished dream to construct Bhairab town protection dam," he added.

Zillur said steps have been taken for setting up a Bhairab tourism centre, installation of Bhairab-Kuliarchar gas lines, building of BISIC industrial city and reconstruction of four dilapidated bridges of Bhairab.

## Human rights violated as justice delayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman yesterday said human rights are being violated due to long delay in disposal of cases.

Cases should be disposed of quickly so that litigants can get justice in short time, he told reporters after a meeting with Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque at his Supreme Court office yesterday afternoon.

The NHRC chairman said the chief justice had already taken steps for quick disposal of cases.

He also urged the chief justice to take steps

for quick disposal of death reference cases pending at the High Court Division, as a big number of accused with capital punishment by trial courts are suffering in prisons due to delay in disposal of the cases.

More than 540 death reference cases are now pending with the HC, apex court sources said.

Replying to a question, Prof Mizanur said the NHRC does not support any extra-judicial killing.

He added that death sentences should be awarded to the criminals through fair trials of cases so that no innocent person can be victimised.



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