

NEWS IN *brief*

Two shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A trader and his friend were wounded as criminals opened fire on them in his shop in Uttar Badda area in the city last night.

The injured are --owner of the Vai Vai Rice Agency is Nahidul Islam Nahid, 28, and his friend Nazmul Hasan, 25.

Nahid was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital while Nazmul was undergoing treatment at a local hospital.

Nahid said criminals came to his rice shop at about 8:30pm and one of them opened fire on them. They received bullet wounds in their legs.

Nahid claimed that a few days ago, miscreants demanded ransom to him over phone.

On information, Badda police said a police team went to the spot but they could not know details of the incident till filing of this report at 11:00pm.

Worker, boy die in fall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of an unidentified boy from an under construction six-story building at the city's Shahidnagar in Motijheel yesterday morning.

Motijheel police suspect that the boy, around 14-year old, was climbing up the scaffolding by the wall of the building for stealing and accidentally fell down to death.

OC Tofazzal Hossain told The Daily Star that Helal, security guard of the under construction building, owned by BNP central leader Mirza Abbas, told police that around 4:00am he heard a sound of something climbing up the scaffolding.

Helal blew whistle from inside the room. A while later he heard the sound of something falling.

Coming out of the building he found the boy dead.

Helal informed police of the matter. Police later sent the body to Dhaka Medical College (DMC) morgue for autopsy.

Meanwhile, construction worker, Farhad Mistri, was working on the roof of a under construction six story building near Hajaribagh Baitus Salam jame mosque at around 6:00pm.

Suddenly, he fell down from its roof. Shahid Miah and other workers took him to DMC Hospital where on duty doctors announced him dead.



This barking deer was rescued by Chittagong University (CU) authority yesterday after it got stuck in a collapsible gate of Chittagong University Shah Amanat Hall.

PHOTO: STAR

ECOLOGICALLY CRITICAL AREA
Protect Jhilonja Mouza in Cox's Bazar

HC asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to take necessary steps to protect the natural characteristics of Jhilonja Mouza, an ecologically critical area in Cox's Bazar from encroachment.

Delivering a verdict on a writ petition, the court also asked the authorities concerned to take steps so that soil of the mouza cannot be cut and structures cannot be built there.

The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore came up with the verdict after holding hearing on the writ petition filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela).

Bela filed the petition as a public interest litigation in November 2006 seeking necessary directives on the government to protect Jhilonja Mouza, which was declared as ecologically critical area on April 19, 1999, from encroachment.

The HC on November 29, 2006, had issued a rule upon the government to explain why it should not be directed take necessary steps to protect the area.

The government did not make any reply to the rule.

Advocate Iqbal Kabir Lytton appeared for Bela, while Deputy Attorney General ABM Altaf Hossain represented the government.

Tribal people not indigenous

Says Law Minister Shafique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indigenous people of the country will be recognised in the constitution as tribal people but not indigenous, Law Minister barrister Shafique Ahmed said yesterday.

"Under the fundamental principle of state policy in the constitution, these people will be recognised as ethnic minority or tribal people," the minister said at a seminar last morning.

Meanwhile, representatives of indigenous people and rights activists expressed their surprise over the law minister's comment. They said the state has no right to impose any identity to anyone.

The minister made the comment in the seminar titled "National seminar on ILO convention 169 and human rights of indigenous peoples in Bangladesh," jointly organised by Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF), International Labour Organization (ILO), National Human Rights

Commission (NHRC) in association with embassy of Denmark at LGED building.

Quoting 1 (b) of article 1 of ILO Convention No 169, the minister in his speech as chief guest suggested there are no indigenous people in the country.

1 (b) of the article cites, "peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonisation or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions."

The minister said that these people have never been displaced or subjected to any colonial invasion; rather, they have been living happily with Bangalee people. "So, they are not indigenous people as mentioned in the ILO convention," he added.

He said these people rather match with part 1 (a) of the article 1 of the convention, which reads, "tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or

necessarily lead to any conclusion that there are no indigenous people in the country."

She also mentioned that the minister's comment also runs against the one of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who recently said that there are no indigenous people in the country but only Santals.

Representatives of indigenous people and rights activists expressed their surprise over the law minister's comment

partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations;"

Rights activist Sultana differed with the minister's comments. Contacted over the telephone she said, "According to the convention descendants of the people who used to call them indigenous before colonial invasion are also indigenous people. It does not

Earlier on May 26 first secretary of the Bangladesh Mission in New York Iqbal Ahmed at a United Nations special session also said that Bangladesh does not have any indigenous population.

Meanwhile, the indigenous community is hurt and disappointed with the minister's comment, said Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of BIPE, told The

Daily Star.

"No state can impose any identity on any people or community. This is a violation of human rights," he said, adding, the convention itself says "Self-identification is considered as a fundamental criterion for the identification of indigenous and tribal peoples."

"We don't understand why government and the state machinery all of a sudden have started making these kinds of comments, when Awami League itself used the word 'indigenous' in their election pledge," he grumbled.

NHRC Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman said, "True democracy demands self identity and equal rights ensured to everyone. This is inclusive democracy. No matter where they come from, their habits or how they are dressed-up."

Deputy Head of mission of Embassy of Denmark Jan Moller Hansen and ILO Country Director Andre Bogui attended the seminar among others.

Savar MP, others cleared of extortion charges

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday did not take into cognizance the extortion charges against Awami League lawmaker of Savar, Murad Jong, his mother, brother, eight police personnel and 27 others.

After scrutinising the documents placed by complainant, Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Shahjahan Kabir passed the order finding no evidence of extortion charges against them.

The court found allegations of extortion and ransacking house of complainant against six supporters of Murad, took into cognizance the charges and issued arrest warrants against them.

The accused are Ahd Ali, Lal Miah, Rob Miah, Monir Hossain, Amir Hossain and Moniruzzaman.

The court directed officer-in-charge of Savar police station to submit report of execution of arrest warrants against the accused by June 25.

AKM Azad, a stamp vendor of Baktarpur under Savar Police Station, on Tuesday filed the case against Murad Jong and 43 others with the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

The eight policemen are officers-in-charge AKM Nasirullah and Mahbubur Rahman, four sub-inspectors, an assistant sub-inspector and a constable of the police station.

The other accused are Murad Jong, his mother Lutfunnessa Jong, brother Lagon Jong, and his supporters.

Azad in his case statement said a group of supporters of Murad Jong demanded Tk 20 lakh from him as extortion.

Being refused, Murad's men ransacked his house on February 8, 2010.

Police also denied giving Azad security when he sought legal help, the case statement added.

US support needed to solve Rohingya issue Says food minister

UNB, Dhaka

Food and Disaster Management Minister Dr Abdur Razzaque yesterday sought US support to permanent solution to the Rohingya issue, which has put burden on Bangladesh's resources.

"It's (Rohingya issue) now turned into an international problem. It has a political perspective too. An international-level proactive role could help bring permanent solution to the issue," Razzaque told reporters at his ministry after meeting with US Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration Eric Schwartz.

US Deputy Under-Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration Kelly Clements and US Ambassador to Bangladesh James F Moriarty were present at the meeting.

EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE

Enforce bldg code to cut loss

Experts tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Proper enforcement of Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) could prevent half the loss of life and properties during an earthquake, particularly in the capital, said relevant experts at a workshop yesterday.

Practicing BNBC in building construction with basic safety precautions in foundation design and construction would prevent many buildings from collapsing, said Mohammad Abu Sadeque, director of Disaster Management Bureau (DMB), in his presentation at the workshop.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and DMB jointly organised the training workshop on "Reduction of earthquake

risk" for city ward councillors and DCC officials at Nagar Bhaban in the city.

The haphazard and rundown network of electric wiring and gas supply may bring about colossal disaster in the event of an earthquake in a city like Dhaka, he said.

It is estimated that around 60,000 to 90,000 people may die from building collapse in the capital in the event of an earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale if triggered by Modhupur geological fault line, he said.

Of the total 3.26 lakh buildings in the capital, 72,000 structures, built without any supervision of an architect or engineer, are likely to collapse in the event of such a jolt, he said.

According to Sadeque, non-

compliance with the building code claimed the lives of three lakh people in Haiti during a recent earthquake measuring 7 on the Richter scale.

But a quake measuring 8 on the Richter scale in Chile around the same time claimed only 500 lives with much lesser destruction simply because they adopted the building code, he said.

Pre-earthquake preparedness is crucial in reducing the disaster risk, said Abul Kalam Azad, chief executive officer of DCC.

A total of 25 ward councillors, representatives of Armed Forces Division and Bangladesh National Cadet Corps and Sirajul Islam, chief town planner of DCC, attended the workshop.

Roy Ramesh elected ILO body member

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Jatiya Sramik League General Secretary Roy Ramesh Chandra has been elected substitute member of the governing body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

He was elected at an ILO conference in Geneva on Monday, says a press release.

In a statement, Sramik League President Abdul Matin Master said Roy Ramesh has earned pride for the country.

DU chief engr among 4 suspended for bribe

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University (DU) authorities have suspended two engineers and taken punitive action against two other officials for taking bribe from a contractor to award him its construction work.

The DU syndicate, the highest decision making body, at a meeting on Monday suspended Chief Engineer Amir Hossain and Assistant Engineer Anisur Rahman as an enquiry committee found the allegation against them.

The syndicate also halted pension of Golam Mostafa, retired executive engineer, and deferred two increments of Shamsul Alam, an assistant director (accounts) of the university's engineering department on charge of the bribery incident.

The syndicate also asked to ensure that

Yeakuzzaman, contractor of Golden Jalalabad Consortium, who gave the bribe to the officials, cannot get construction works of the university in future, said sources of DU administration.

The syndicate also has asked the authorities to investigate whether a case can be filed against Yeakuzzaman.

Sources said contractor Yeakuzzam managed to get the construction work amounting Tk 2.20 crore by submitting fake documents of bank security money with the help of the four engineers who took bribe from him in exchange of it.

Later, Yeakuzzaman made a written allegation to the university authorities after the documents submitted by him was proved to be fake. An enquiry committee headed by DU Pro VC Prof Harun-or-Rashid was formed on the basis of the allegation.

Quader offers BNP dialogue on CG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Urging main opposition BNP for discussion on the much-talked about caretaker government system, ruling Awami League (AL) Presidium Member Obaidul Quader yesterday said his party wants to hold dialogue on the issue with an open mind.

He said lawful solution on the issue has been settled after the Supreme Court verdict and now a political consensus is necessary in this regard.

The AL leader made the remark at a discussion at Dhaka Reporters Unity marking the Six-point day. A pro-AL organisation organised the event.

Quader, also the chairman of parliamentary standing committee on information ministry, said the BNP wants to push the politics to an uncertain situation by showing firm negative stance on the discussion of caretaker government issue.

The AL leader warned party lawmakers that they would not get party nominations if they don't control themselves from "unlawful activities." He also urged them as well as who are holding important portfolios in the government and the party to work much than speaking.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Dhaka divisions in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Mild heat wave is sweeping over the regions of Jessore and Chuadanga and it may continue.
Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:45pm today and rises at 5:10am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 37.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 23.7 degrees Celsius at Dinajpur.

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	32.6	27.3	79	74
Chittagong	31.8	24.8	83	79
Rajshahi	34.5	25.3	80	73
Rangpur	33.4	25.0	77	81
Khulna	34.8	27.5	77	69
Barisal	31.0	26.0	87	87

DHAKA TODAY

Discussion
Garbo Bangladesh will hold a discussion; Venue: Hotel La Vinci; Time: 6:00pm.

Human chain
Karmojibi Nari will organise a human chain; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Exhibition
Patua Quamrul Hassan Art School will hold an exhibition; Venue: Faculty of