



A man was dragged to death by a private car on Wednesday while jaywalking in the same manner as these people were doing yesterday to cross the road through gaps in the fenced road divider on Kazi Nazrul Islam road in the city. Authorities concerned, indifferent to the problem, are yet to close the gaps.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Tk 811 CRORE RISE IN BUDGET No steps for reforms in police deptt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhit placed a traditional budget for police department yesterday, not mentioning any step for its reform or ensuring transparency and accountability though rights bodies and civil societies made repeated appeals in this regard.

The proposed budget allocation for the home ministry is Tk 7,720 crore, an increase of Tk 811 crore from last year's Tk 6,909 crore.

Contrary to crime statistics of police headquarters, Muhith, in his budget speech, claimed that the last two years of the government saw a remarkable improvement in the law and order situation.

The statistics say a total of 162,898 criminal incidents including murder, robbery, and kidnapping took place in 2010, which is 5,790 more than in 2009 and 4,919 more than in 2008.

Muhith also said the government would recruit 36,000 more police personnel and procure vehicles and modern telecommunication and security equipment to strengthen police activities.

Law and order experts opined that to ensure accountability, transparency and check culture of impunity among police, national budget should have adequate allocation for scientific or hard evidence based investigation.

Former adviser to a caretaker government ASM Shahjahan, also a former inspector general of police, said, "The government should emphasise on improving operational condition of police before increasing their numbers or setting up more police stations."

He added that lack of scientific and forensic equipment force investigators to opt for torturing arrestees to realise confessional statements, violating human rights.

## Nazrul's land to be recovered to set up memorial

Mamata tells Khilkhil  
PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

The West Bengal government will clear the encroachment from a plot of land given to poet Kazi Nazrul Islam for setting up his memorial.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's assurance on this came in response to a request from the poet's grand daughter Khilkhil Kazi who called on her yesterday at the secretariat in Kolkata.

Khilkhil said the land, in the city's Kestopur area, was given to her grandfather in 1969 by the then United Front government. The land is now illegally occupied.

"We have the documents relating to the land. The occupants are willing to vacate it. We requested the chief minister to see that the land is freed and a Nazrul Centre is set up there. The chief minister has said steps will be taken after examination of the documents," she said.

Nazrul Islam, born in Churulia in West Bengal's Burdwan district, is the national poet of Bangladesh where he went on invitation of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

During her meeting with Banerjee, Khilkhil requested her intervention in taking over the apartment on KIT Road from where her grandfather Kazi Nazrul Islam had left for Dhaka.

She said the chief Minister assured her of considering her request to include the descendants of the poet's two sons, Kazi Aniruddha and Kazi Sabyasachi, in the managing committee of the Nazrul Centre being planned by the government as a tribute to Nazrul Islam on his 112th birth anniversary.

## Sketch fair election formula thru' consensus: US envoy

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Outgoing US Ambassador James F Moriarty yesterday said top political parties through consensus can sketch out a system guaranteeing free and fair general elections if the caretaker government system is removed.

Elections can be free and fair without a caretaker government but a neutral system should be put in place, he said in talks with Diplomatic Correspondents' Association, Bangladesh (DCAB) at the Jatiya Press Club.

Moriarty talked about strengthening the Election Commission so it can ensure that the next general elections

are held in a free and fair manner, as that happens in India.

Asked if he foresees another military intervention like that of 1/11, he said, "The military understands that the political and the elected representatives of the people have to lead the country."

Mentioning some incidents including the student unrest at Dhaka University during the last caretaker government rule, he said those incidents remind the army personnel that people of Bangladesh demand democracy.

He outright rejected the view that former US ambassador Patricia A

Butenis Butanes had supported the military-backed caretaker government and said the US had had nothing to do with the 1/11 episode.

Asked whether the US still remains "deeply troubled" over the issue of Prof Muhammad Yunus, the ambassador said what the US wants is that nothing is done, which may affect effectiveness and integrity of Grameen Bank.

Prof Yunus commanded great admiration for what the bank has done in poverty alleviation. Apart from Nobel Peace Prize, he was given prestigious awards internationally including the highest awards by the US president and the US Congress.

On the US training to the Rapid Action Battalion that is being accused of human rights violation by international rights watchdogs, Moriarty said the US has given human rights training so the Rab can play an effective role in maintaining law and order.

Since there are allegations against Rab members of killing people, he said the government should thoroughly and effectively investigate every incident of the killings and make it public with credible explanation.

DCAB President Raheed Ejaz chaired the interaction while its Acting General Secretary Bashir Ahmed made welcome address.



This 420-kilogramme Koi-Koral, caught in the Bay, was being sold at Kazirdewri Bazar in the port city of Chittagong yesterday at Tk 600 per kilogramme.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

## Italian envoy meets PM

UNB, Dhaka

Italian Ambassador in Dhaka Giorgio Guglielmino paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

The prime minister and the Italian ambassador discussed matters including issues of bilateral, regional and international development.

They also talked about the welfare of Bangladeshi expatriates living in various cities of Italy, said PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad.

The ambassador handed over a special work of art by renowned living Italian artist Mimmo Paladino to the prime minister on the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore.

## MEGHNA RIVER GRABBING

# Shipbuilder fined Tk 25 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday fined a shipbuilding company Tk 24.99 lakh for grabbing and earth filling in the Meghna River and setting up a shipbuilding factory on the bank of the river without any legal consent.

DoE also asked the shipbuilding company, Maritimus Limited, to evict all equipments that used for grabbing and pay the fine by June 12, says a press

release.

The chairman, managing director and deputy managing director of Maritimus were summoned to DoE for hearing.

DoE Director General Monwar Islam on Wednesday visited the spot following a report on the Meghna River grabbing published in a national daily.

The team seized two dredgers, 37 pipes and over 5 lakh bamboos that were using to grab the river. The equipments later handed over to the local police.

## ACC okays RTI policy

To disseminate info every month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) from now on will disseminate information on its activities once in every month under the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

"The Anti-Corruption Commission has approved a policy to disseminate information. In light of the policy, the commission would brief media about its activities in the second week of every month," said ACC Director General (admin and establishment) Farrukh Ahmad at a press briefing yesterday.

"Free flow of information ensures transparency and accountability. That's why the ACC has finalised the policy under RTI," Farrukh added.

The briefing was held at the ACC headquarters in the capital.

In the first five months of this year, the ACC has selected 278 allegations for investigation out of 3176 filed with the commission.

During the same period last year, the commission accepted 106 allegations out of 3052 filed for investigation, the DG said.

The commission also approved filing of 108 cases accusing 179 people on charges of amassing wealth beyond known sources of income, non-submission of wealth statement and money laundering in the first five months of this year. Of the accused, 136 were government officials, he said.

A total of 71 notices have been issued during the period asking individuals to submit their wealth statement.

As part of corruption prevention effort, the ACC has formed "Sotota Shangha" in 4,985 educational institutions and distributed anti-corruption books to 2.5 lakh mosques countrywide to read those before Khutba, the DG added.

## Cut election expense by two-thirds: CPB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday suggested cutting down maximum expenditure during parliamentary election campaigns by two-third to five lakh while keeping the deposit money of Tk 10,000 unchanged.

They made the recommendations at a dialogue with Election Commission (EC) at its secretariat in the city as part of its ongoing dialogue to be held with 38 registered political parties till July 14.

CPB Secretary General Mujahidul Islam Selim led a nine-member CPB delegation there.

CPB, however, did not opine on introduction of electronic voting machine (EVM) for the next general elections, saying it needs more time to think over.

CPB leaders suggested not to appoint any person accused of war crimes or communalism as the chief election commissioner (CEC) and other commissioners.

## REPATRIATION OF REFUGEES Talks with Myanmar to continue

Says Dipu Moni

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said Bangladesh would continue bilateral dialogues with Myanmar for repatriation of Myanmar refugees.

She said this when the US Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Migration and Refugees Eric Schwartz called on her at the foreign ministry in the city, says a press release.

During the discussion, the foreign minister said Bangladesh will remain engaged with the United States on humanitarian issues particularly refugees and migration.

She also reiterated the government's commitment to continue to look after the socio-economic well being of the Myanmar refugees that Bangladesh is hosting since 1992 to the best of its abilities.

Bangladesh is strictly upholding the principles of international laws even though it is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, she added.

The assistant secretary of state praised the Bangladesh government for hosting a large number of Myanmar refugees despite many challenges.

The foreign minister also discussed with the assistant secretary of state about various aspects of the welfare of the Myanmar refugees, particularly voluntary repatriation on humanitarian grounds.

Schwartz assured the foreign minister of the US government's continued support to Bangladesh in dealing with the Myanmar refugees.

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