

Worker dies in septic tank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A construction worker died while cleaning an underground septic tank at Aga Sadek Road in the capital's Bangshal yesterday.

Fire brigade personnel rescued unconscious Mir Hossain, 30, and took him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where doctors declared him dead.

Hossain's co-worker Hridoy Miah told reporters at DMCH that around noon yesterday the victim and six others were working inside the under-construction septic tank.

The victim's nephew Monir Hossain went inside the septic tank and started feeling sick. Mir Hossain went in to help him and lifted his nephew out of the tank, but he himself could not get out.

Two co-workers went inside the tank in a bid to rescue Mir Hossain but got out quickly, leaving the victim behind, as they also started feeling sick.

Fire brigade was informed and they took out Mir Hossain from inside the tank.

Ruhul Amin, fire brigade divers team station officer, told The Daily Star that there was about two feet deep water inside the 12 feet by 20 feet septic tank.

As the small opening of the tank was closed for a few days, Ruhul Amin suspected that toxic gas formed inside which caused the death of Mir Hossain and made the others sick.

ASF gets French award

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF), an NGO, has been awarded the prestigious 2011 Human Rights Prize of the French government.

French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Alain Juppé presented the prize styled "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" at a gorgeous ceremony at Quai d'Orsay in Paris on December 10, said a press release of the French embassy in Dhaka yesterday.

On behalf of the ASF, Fazilatun Nessa, a survivor of acid attack and the treasurer of the trustee board of the ASF, received the award from the French Minister while Executive Director of ASF Monira Rahman was also present during the prize-giving ceremony.

40 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

Expectations yet to be fulfilled

Speakers tell Prothom Alo roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers have lamented at a roundtable that the expectations for which the country was liberated in 1971 have not been fulfilled in 40 years due to political conflicts, military interventions, and patronisation of militancy and anti-liberation forces in politics.

They, however, said Bangladesh has achieved a lot in agricultural production, education, and economy.

The daily Prothom Alo yesterday organised the roundtable titled "40 years of independence: Expectations and Achievements" at its office in the city.

"Our economic sector has been developed a lot with significant increase in per capita income, which was thought impossible after independence," said Dr Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to a caretaker government.

He said bad people are driving out good people from politics and that's why the democracy has not been meaningful in the country as yet.

Matiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo, said there are achievements in many sectors in 40 years of independence but difference between rich and poor, political conflicts and corruption have increased, and democratic process has been



Speakers are at a roundtable on 40 years of independence: expectations and achievements organised by the Prothom Alo at its office in the city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

frequently interrupted.

Lt Gen (retd) Harun-ur-Rashid, secretary general of Sector Commanders' Forum, said, "With patronisation of militancy and rehabilitation of the defeated forces of 1971 in politics and government, the nation has derailed from the spirit of liberation war."

BNP Vice Chairman Maj (Retd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmed said politicians neither uphold the spirit of democracy nor believe it. "They (politicians) only love to speak about democracy before the public to gain their supports," he added.

"People are kept hostage by the political parties, and law enforcers are being used as political tools," he claimed.

Sammilita Sangskritik Jote President Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanam, former ambassadors KM Shihab Uddin and SS Chakma, Maj Gen (retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim, Bir Bikram and Prof Farida Banu also spoke at the discussion moderated by Abdul Quayum, joint editor of the daily.

3 ex-CID bosses, Huji leader appeal for discharge

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Three former Criminal Investigation Department (CID) officials and a Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji) leader yesterday appealed to a Dhaka court to discharge them from the August 21 grenade attack case.

The petitioners are former assistant superintendents of police Munshi Atiqur Rahman and Abdur Rashid, former special police super Ruhul Amin, who also investigated the grenade attack case and Huji leader Shawkat Osman alias Sheikh Farid.

According to the prosecution, during the BNP-led four-party alliance rule, the then CID investigators tried to mislead the probe to save the real culprits.

They falsely implicated one Joj Miah and forced him to give a confessional statement to a magistrate implicating other top listed criminals.

The accused submitted the discharge petitions before the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 when it resumed the hearing on charge framing against 52 accused including BNP Senior Vice-chairman Tarique Rahman.

Earlier on the day, the counsel for former director general of National Security Intelligence Maj Gen (retd) Rezaqul Haider Chowdhury completed his argument on a discharge petition.

With this, a total of 21 accused including Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar and Lt Commander (retd) Saiful Islam Duke have so far appealed to the court to be discharged from the cases.

Twenty-four people including Awami League (AL) leader Ivy Rahman were killed and around 200 others injured in the grisly grenade attack on an AL rally at Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004.

Judge Shahed Nuruddin fixed December 19 for the next hearing.

Narsingdi poura mayor by-polls Jan 19

UNB, Narsingdi

By-election to mayor of Narsingdi pourasava will be held on January 19.

The Election Commission yesterday announced the by-election schedule yesterday.

The last date for submitting nomination papers is December 22, scrutiny on December 27 and withdrawal of candidature January 4.

The post of mayor fell vacant at the death of Lokman Hossain, also an Awami League leader, who was shot dead by unknown assailants on November 1 in the Narsingdi Awami League office.



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