

Exhume body of Meghna

HC asks Gazipur DC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the deputy commissioner of Gazipur to exhume the body of Nusrat Jahan Meghna, a student of Uttara University, for further post-mortem at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Responding to a writ petition, the court directed the DMCH director to form a three-member committee to conduct the post-mortem on Meghna and to submit the report to it as early as possible.

Phulbanu, Meghna's mother, on January 17 filed the writ petition claiming that her daughter was tortured and murdered at her husband's house on January 5.

There were injury marks on her body but her in-laws said that she committed suicide, Phulbanu said.

The doctors also gave a false post-mortem report of Meghna, she said seeking directives from the HC to exhume Meghna's body for further examination.

After hearing the petition, the HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim directed Phulbanu to give Tk 20,000 to the District Commission for exhuming her daughter's body.

The court also fixed January 30 for further hearing on the writ petition, said Manzill Murshid, counsel for the petitioner.

Md Habibullah, civil surgeon of Gazipur and Dr Md Liakat Ali of Gazipur Hospital appeared before the HC yesterday as per its Tuesday's summons.

The doctors told the court that they conducted the post-mortem properly and found that Meghna committed suicide.



Bus drivers take advantage of the under-construction state of Gulistan-Jatrabari flyover to keep their vehicles parked between the supporting pillars in Kaptan Bazar area of the city, obstructing a free flow of traffic. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Pro-AL panel wins SUSTTA election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Awami League-backed panel has won in the majority of the posts in the election of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology Teachers Association (SUSTTA) held Tuesday.

Election Commissioner Prof Syed Shamsul Alam announced the results yesterday.

Among 11 posts, including six members, the pro-AL panel won in eight posts while pro-BNP panel got victory in three posts.

Prof Dr Kabir Hossain from AL-backed panel was elected president and Prof Dr Mozammel Haque from BNP-backed panel was elected general secretary.

The other winners from pro-AL panel are Sebak Kumar Shaha (assistant general secretary), Prof Dr Niaz Ahmed (treasurer). The members-elect from the panel are Prof SM Saiful Islam, Nurul Hossain, Niloy Chandra Sarker, Omar Faruque, and Zafrina Ahmed Liza. From pro-BNP-Jamaat panel, Prof Dr Ahmed Kabir Chowdhury was elected vice-president and Prof Dr Sajedul Karim a member.

Climate fund run with transparency

Hasan Mahmud tells seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) maintains better transparency and vibrancy than any other trust funds of the country in the past, claimed Environment Minister Hasan Mahmud.

It is a Tk 21 billion fund (BCCTF) created by the government to face the growing challenges of climate change and is used by both the government and non-government entities.

"The ministries concerned oversee implementation of the projects financed by the fund (BCCTF). The climate change unit of the environment ministry also supervises them. So, there is a double-checking [system]," said Hasan Mahmud.

The minister was addressing as chief guest a seminar titled "Climate change, food security and health: proactive role of Bangladesh in climate negotiations."

Eminence, Health Foundation and Development Studies department of Dhaka University organised the event in Cirdap auditorium of the capital yesterday.

The minister said many are interested in

BCCTF; but they must know the process of its management, which engages at least ten ministers, a few secretaries and civil society members. Everyone is accountable here, he noted.

"Actually, a big problem here is everybody wants to work on climate change... some having knowledge on it, some with partial and some without knowing anything at all," said Dr Hasan Mahmud.

Academics, a member of the parliament, government and NGO officials, journalists and students participated in the seminar. Many of them said health and nutrition are not given adequate importance in the whole climate change dealings.

Dr Liakat Ali, climate change adaptation specialist at the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme, Concern Worldwide's project officer Palash Kanti Halder, Eminence senior adviser Prof Dr Shah Monir Hossain, Dr Iqbal Kabir, coordinator of the climate change cell at the health ministry, Economist Dr Quzi Kholiqzaman Ahmed, journalist Saiful Islam, Dr Murad Hasan, MP, and health secretary Humayun Kabir also spoke.

Withdrawal from grand alliance to be on time, says Ershad

PANKAJ KARMAKAR, from Nilphamari

Strongly criticising the Awami League-led grand-alliance government, Jatiya Party (JP) Chairman HM Ershad yesterday said he would announce his withdrawal from the alliance on time before the next general elections.

"We joined the alliance with a lot of hope. But we got nothing and you (people) were given violence and repression," he said.

Ershad was addressing a rally at Teesta barrage helipad grounds in Nilphamari on the concluding day of JP's long march towards Teesta barrage launched on Tuesday.

Responding to demands by some party leaders for the withdrawal announcement, he said, "I am a soldier. So, I know the best time for attack. Please wait and I will announce it on time."

JP is determined to win back the six constituencies of Rangpur it lost in the last parliamentary polls for joining the grand alliance, said Ershad.

On the Teesta water sharing deal with India, he urged the countrymen to

raise the scale of demonstrations so that the government signs the deal and secures the just share of water from the Teesta river.

Farmers of the country's northern region are passing their days in hardship due to the lack of water as Bangladesh's part of Teesta river has turned into a desert, he added.

"After the barrage's construction in 1990, a number of governments came to power in the last 22 years. But all of them failed to sign the Teesta deal as they did not pay much heed to the prime problem of the northern region."

"The Teesta deal will surely be signed if Jatiya Party is voted to power," he said.

Both the AL and BNP are adamant in coming to power to establish a regime of terrorism, extortion, politicisation and corruption everywhere instead of protecting national interest, he said.

"People do not want to see the game of magical chair for assuming state power between those two parties. Now they want to see a change in power and we are the only ones who will be able to bring the change," said Ershad.

Reiterating his previous stance to contest individually in the next general polls, he said, "There is no power in the world to shift me from this decision."

On enclave dwellers, Ershad demanded immediate implementation of the protocol signed during the Indian prime minister's last visit to Bangladesh and bring an end to their problems.

Before concluding his speech, Ershad sought votes in JP's favour. "Just give me another chance to change your fate and establish a corruption-free and prosperous Bangladesh."

JP Presidium Members Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Rawshan Ershad, Barrister Anisul Islam Mahmud and Secretary General Ruhul Amin Hawlader also addressed the rally.

Ershad began journeying towards Teesta barrage around 11:45am from Rangpur Zila School yesterday. On the way, hundreds of party leaders and activists lined the road, greeting Ershad.

On Tuesday, he addressed around 20 street rallies while moving from Dhaka to Rangpur.

Obituary

METRO DESK



MA Rahman, former director of Duncan Brothers, passed away due to cancer at Square Hospital in the city on January 16 at the age of 65, says a press release.

Rahman left behind his wife, four sons, and a host of relatives, friends, and colleagues to mourn his death.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at his residence in Gulshan-2 tomorrow (Friday).

Relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme and pray for his departed soul.



A procession of National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports faces a police barricade at Purana Palitan in the city yesterday while demanding for, among others, cancellation of oil-based rental power plants and repairs of state-owned power plants. PHOTO: STAR

'Shut down rental power plants'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday demanded shutting down of rental and quick rental power plants and reopening of the closed national power plants to meet the country's power demands.

Launching of quick rental and rental power plants are adding some 3,000 megawatt (MW) power to the national grid at the expense of some Tk 20,000 crore, Prof Anu Mohammad noted.

If the national power plants were repaired and renewed and the gas wells reactivated, people would get some 2,100 MW power at Tk 1,000 crore expenditure, he added.

"We are ready to deal with load-shedding due to the shortage but not agreed to give huge amount of money to capitalists," said Engr Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, convener of National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power, and Ports.

The committee organised the protest rally pressing the government seven-point demand in front of Jatiya Press Club in the city.

3,400 Phensidyl bottles seized, 9 arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday arrested nine alleged drug peddlers on the dam of Yuriganga river in the city's Deepnagar area and seized 3,400 bottles of Phensidyl, a private car and a microbus from their possession.

The detainees were Ariful Islam, 28, Shaiful Islam, 30, Arif Hossain Shahin, 27, Hasan Miah, 24, Imtiaz Hossain, 28, Nazmul Hasan Opu, 24, Ruhul Amin, 26, Alamgir Hossain, 21, and Mizanur Rahman, 31.

DB Senior Assistant Commissioner Mashiur Rahman, who led the arrest, said the detainees had been running the illicit business for last several years and the seized vehicles were used to carry Phensidyl from the bordering areas to Dhaka.

Stickers of different ministries and other government offices were pasted on the vehicles to dodge the eyes of law enforcers, he said.

Meanwhile, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel arrested three alleged car lifters from the city's Rampura area Tuesday night and seized a private car, which was reportedly mugged from Lalmatia on January 12.

The detainees were Mohammad Nurunnobi, 35, Mohammad Hanif, 50, and Mohammad Liton, 26.

Anowar Kamal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Anowar Kamal, a veteran labour leader and secretary of North Bengal Sugar Mill's Workers Union, passed away due to cardiac arrest in Rajshahi Medical College Hospital on Tuesday night, says a press release.

He was 52. Kamal left behind his wife, one daughter, a host of relatives, and well-wishers to mourn his death.

He was buried at Gopalpur municipality graveyard following a namaz-e-janaza at Gopalpur High School premises after Zohr prayers yesterday.

Leaders of North Bengal Sugar Mill's Workers Union and Natore district unit Awami League and Workers Party of Bangladesh expressed their deep shock and sympathy at his death. Anowar Kamal had been elected secretary of North Bengal Sugar Mill's Workers Union for three terms.

Qulkhwani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Qul Khalek, a veteran and language movement leader, will be held at his residence at Parbatipur today, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the qulkhwani.

Khalek died on Monday in a city hospital at the age of 74.

He was buried at Gulpara Paura Gurusthan at his village home in Parbatipur.

Khalek left behind his five sons and three daughters.

Dyeing factory shut for polluting Shitalakkhya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday closed down a dyeing factory in Narayanganj for good and also fined it Tk 14 lakh for running illegally and polluting the Shitalakkhya river.

The DoE also directed the Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) to stop all construction activities on Baburail Canal, which is connected to the River Shitalakkhya, said a press release.

The factory, 'Madina Dyeing and Printing' has been operating illegally for the last eight years. Its authorities failed to produce any legal documents including environment certificate, registration of investment board and trade license.

DoE Director (enforcement) Mohammad Munir Chowdhury in a drive yesterday found that the factory has dumped around 44,000 cubic meters of toxic wastes into the river so far.

Owner of the factory, Faruk Chowdhury said that he had no idea about the environment act or effluent treatment plant (ETP).

DoE also ordered the authorities concerned to sever the factory's power and gas connections.

Meanwhile, the DoE director sent a notice to the secretary of NCC to immediately halt all construction activities on Baburail Canal.

A joint team of DoE and Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) went to the spot and found around 14 acres of the canal filled up for NCC's commercial purpose.

The construction led to a loss of aqua-life and obstructed the water flow. DoE asked the authority concerned of NCC to appear at its director (enforcement) at 12:00pm today and explain its actions.

'5,000 born with clubfoot deformity a yr'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dr Justin Lee yesterday visited Walk For Life clinic at National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR) to see operation of Walk For Life's clubfoot clinics in government hospitals in the country, says a press release.

Every year an estimated 5,000 children are born with a clubfoot deformity (a condition where the feet are turned inside at birth) in Bangladesh. Left untreated, the condition turns to lifelong disability, said the release.

Being a supporter of the clubfoot programme in Bangladesh, the Australian High Commission had funded treatment of 250 children last year, says the press release.



Australian High Commissioner in Dhaka Dr Justin Lee in company with others while visiting Walk For Life clinic at National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR) in the city yesterday. PHOTO: COURTESY