

# NEWS IN brief

## HC order on 2 missing Shibir men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday asked the government to explain in three weeks why it should not be directed to produce two Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) leaders, who were detained from Savar area on February 4, before the court to prove that they were not detained illegally.

The HC bench of Justice Abdul Awal and Justice Md Akram Hossain Chowdhury passed the orders in response to two separate writ petitions challenging the detention filed by relatives of the ICS leaders on February 12.

According to the petitions, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel, in plain cloths, detained ICS leaders Al Mukaddas and Md Waliullah on February 4 night at Nabinagar in Savar while the duo were going to Kushtia Islami University by a Hanif Enterprise bus. However, Rab said they have not detained the two.

## Body of girl recovered from Turag

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered the decomposed body of a girl from the river Turag.

The body, aged around 22, was found floating in the river. It was dumped into the river around 20 days ago, suspected Ziaul Karim, officer-in-charge of Turag Police Station.

He said locals recovered the body around 12:00pm when it got stuck with a pillar of Chandalvog Bridge.

## 'Raise awareness about child cancer'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Marking the International Childhood Cancer Day, Ashic Foundation, an organisation helping children with cancer, yesterday raised awareness and motivation among the children on fighting the disease.

The foundation, since May 20, 1994, has been making the lives of young cancer patients easier through its 'Shelter', a 20-bed centre, accommodating the patients as well as their families.

It also provides terminal patient care, patient sponsorships and play centres at several hospitals.



Dhaka Sub-Editors Council forms a human chain before Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday demanding the arrest of and exemplary punishment to the murderers of the journalist couple, Sagar Sarowar and his wife Meherun Runi.

PHOTO: STAR

## BOI MELA

# Part time work offers knowledge, allowance

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

"Can I interest you in any book, sir?" piped up an inviting voice at the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela yesterday.

Walking into the Bangla Academy premises in the city, this correspondent was greeted by a book salesman in his mid-twenties poking his head out of the rows of books on display inside a stall.

Picking up a conversation, the enthusiastic salesman, Shaharul Islam, reveals that he is a student of Dhaka University and has experience working in the fair, of five consecutive years to be precise.

"I actually like working with books. That is why I am here," said the student of information science and library management department at the stall of Dibya Prokash.

"I can go through whichever book I want, a wonderful way to enrich my general knowledge. It helps me academically as well," he said, adding that he has a friend working with him.

Shaharul is not the only student working there. Most stalls had college and university-going students working as salespersons, aiming to get their hands on books and earning some money in the process.

A saleswoman, Madhuri Rani Das, a student of Government Kabi Nazrul College, said she usually works part time in such events to help herself financially.

She assures you that her academic activities are not hampered as the fair starts at 3:00pm, past her college hours, during weekdays and at 11:00am on weekends, when her college is closed.

A salesman of Agami Prokashoni, Sharif Ahmed, a DU student, said, "I am here to gain some experience in the profession and come up close with eminent writers. Plus, I can use the money I earn here to buy books."

The owner of Ittadi Grantho Prokash, Johirul Abedin Jewel, says his publication house chooses students as its salespersons as they are more enthusiastic and efficient in convincing people to buy books.

"Booksellers should be educated to inform buyers about books and student are the right people for this task," he said.

Such a huge number of students working in different bookstalls is a good sign, says Murshiduddin Anwar, deputy director of Bangla Academy. "They are with books. Besides, they

are also earning some money."

Yesterday saw the arrival of 103 new books at the fair but with fewer visitors than on previous days. A discussion and cultural programme were held in the evening.

### Shishu Prohor today

Only children and their guardians would have access to the fair between 11:00am and 3:00pm today and tomorrow, the Bangla Academy authorities announced yesterday.

This exclusive four-hour period for children, termed Shishu Prohor (children's hour), will be repeated on February 23 and 24.

The aim is to encourage guardians into bringing their children to the fair and acquainting them with books and the habit of reading, said the deputy director.

## Jamuna Denim fined Tk 52.6 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday fined Jamuna Denim, a sister concern of Jamuna Group, Tk 52.6 lakh for dumping untreated toxic wastes into the river Turag.

A DoE team paid a surprise visit to the dyeing factory at Konabari of Gazipur last Tuesday and found the factory discharging untreated liquid wastes into the river, in spite of having an effluent treatment plant (ETP).

The factory kept the ETP inactive and continued polluting the river intentionally to lower production costs, DoE sources said.

The team tested the toxic waste and detected that oxygen level was only 0.67 mg per litre while the minimum oxygen level in water should range between 4.5 and 4.8 mg per litre.

Since its inception in 2006, the factory has discharged over 1,50,000 cubic metres of toxic industrial wastes.

The DoE served a show cause notice to the managing director of the factory following which he appeared for the hearing.

Director of DoE (enforcement and monitoring) Munir Chowdhury then fined the factory and warned to shut down the factory, if the company does not comply with the Bangladesh Environment Protection Act and activate the ETP.

The company got its environment clearance certificate in 2010 which expired 10 months ago, DoE sources said.

The government announced the river Turag an Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) since November, 2009.

## RHD ON SC LAND

# HC summons 3 ministry officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tension runs high at Roads and Highways Department (RHD) as the High Court summoned three communications ministry officials today for failing to hand over Supreme Court's land, currently housing RHD, as per its earlier directive.

Communications Secretary MAN Siddique, Chief Engineer Aminur Rahman Laskar and Superintendent Engineer (admin and evaluation) Faridul Alam are scheduled to appear by 10:30am and explain why contempt charges should not be brought against them.

A division bench comprising Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim passed the order on Tuesday after hearing a contempt of court petition filed by SC lawyer Asaduzzaman Siddiqui.

On July 28, 2011, following a writ petition by advocate Manzill Murshid, the HC passed an order asking RHD to hand over the 7.9-acre land in 15 days.

Established 30 years ago, RHD built several structures on the premises, also called Sarak Bhaban, including its offices, a library and a 323-seat auditorium.

The ministry covers 21,000 kilometres of roads and highways and several hundred bridges through RHD.

With 1,500 fulltime employees and tonnes of official documents, RHD officials are struggling to shift office.

## '30 lakh Adivasis speak mother tongues'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 30 lakh people of 75 indigenous communities in Bangladesh speak their mother languages. Of the 38 languages they use, five have their own alphabets

other than Bangla, a recent survey reveals.

Research and Development Collective, a non-government organisation, disclosed the survey report at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

## HURRIED PASSAGE OF BILLS

# Criticise absentee MPs not House, says Speaker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Abdul Hamid yesterday criticised those who speak against hurried passage of bills in parliament.

"It will be fair if they learn about the parliamentary practice before saying something in talk shows [in televisions] or writing in newspapers," the Speaker said in the parliament yesterday.

He said amendment proposals submitted by MPs on a bill determine the time for passage of a bill. "The Speaker has no alternative but to begin the procedure for passage of the bill hurriedly if MPs, who submit amendment proposals, remain absent," he said.

Therefore, those who write in newspapers or speak in talk shows should not criticise the Speaker or the parliament if a bill is

passed hurriedly, rather they should criticise the MPs, who remain absent despite submitting amendment proposals, he added.

The Speaker made these remarks during passage of the human trafficking prevention and curbing bill. None of the 14 opposition MPs, who submitted amendment proposals on the bill, was present at that time.

Alongside this bill, the mutual assistance to curb criminal activities bill was also passed by the House yesterday.

The Speaker said, "It took 12 minutes to pass the two bills and, of it, I alone spoke for four minutes."

The parliament on November 29 last year passed a bill in four minutes splitting the Dhaka City Corporation into two. The hurried passage of the bill drew much criticism.

## Kazi Aref's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 13th death anniversary of Shaheed Kazi Aref Ahmed, one of the key organisers of the Liberation War and founder of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), says a press release.

On the occasion, Shaheed Kazi Aref Foundation will place wreaths at the grave of Kazi Aref in the city's Mirpur martyred intellectuals' graveyard.

Besides, a discussion will be held at the Jatiya Press Club at 3:30pm.

An armed gang killed Aref, then president of JSD, along with four local leaders while he was speaking at a rally at Kalidaspur village in Daultapur, Kushtia, on February 16, 1999.

## FAILING TO RECORD CASE

# HC summons two Comilla cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court, over a newspaper report yesterday, summoned the officer-in-charge and a sub-inspector of Meghna Police Station in Comilla on February 23 for not recording a case over a housewife's murder.

The daily Prothom Alo yesterday reported that housewife Soma Aktar, 20, from Narayanganj, was tortured to death over dowry on February 5 by her in-laws at Chalibhanga village of Meghna upazila in Comilla.

Local arbitrators at a recent meeting in a Narayanganj village fined the in-laws Tk 5 lakh. Meanwhile, police did not record any case after hearing the incident, says the report.

The court also issued a rule upon the deputy commissioner and superintendent of police of Narayanganj to explain in three weeks why they should not be directed to take action against the arbitrators.

Supreme Court lawyer Sheikh Ali Ahmed Khokon placed the newspaper report before the HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim for necessary order.

## Nurul Momen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 22nd death anniversary of Natyaguru Nurul Momen, pioneer of theatre and satire in the country, says a press release.

On the occasion, different socio-cultural organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe.

In addition, Aurnoy Mohona International Foundation and Natyaguru Nurul Momen Centre have sketched programmes in Dhaka, Jessore, and Faridpur.

The programmes include a milad mahfil and a discussion on the life and works of Nurul Momen.

Eminent cultural personalities and intellectuals will take part in the discussion. Friends, relatives, admirers, and well-wishers are requested to attend the programmes.

Nurul Momen was an essayist, translator, director, broadcaster, orator, actor and educationist as well. His acclaimed single-character play "Nemesis" is considered to be of world class.

## Mamata 'biggest villain' in Indo-Bangla ties

Says Times of India

BSS, Dhaka

The Times of India dubbed Indian Paschimanga Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as 'the biggest villain' in the relation between Bangladesh and India and warned the Indian government to rectify policies before time is over.

"Unless immediately rectified, a watershed moment in India-Bangladesh relations would be wasted," read the article of the Indian daily yesterday.

The article said Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's trip to Dhaka last September was meant to elevate the India-Bangladesh relations to new heights, but five months on, New Delhi has failed to deliver on big-ticket issues and risks, losing most of the goodwill it had previously garnered.

Mamata embarrassed the Indian PM by refusing to accompany him on his Dhaka visit to protest the Teesta river water-sharing agreement.

By this abrupt decision, she not only put the Indian PM in an awkward situation but also left the government of his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina red-faced.

The waters of the Teesta are a vital source of sustenance for north Bengal and Bangladesh.

Even if Mamata wasn't satisfied with the proposed water-sharing formula, there was room for further negotiations.

Mamata has now reportedly expressed reservations over the operationalisation of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement, signed in Dhaka during the Dhaka meet, the article added.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Light rain likely

**UNB, Dhaka**

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country. There is a chance of light rain at one or two places over Rangpur division in 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

**The sun sets in the capital at 5:54pm today and rises at 6:31am tomorrow.**

Country's highest temperature 33.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 12.5 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

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	29.5	17.7	52	51
Chittagong	32.0	15.0	58	58
Rajshahi	30.2	16.5	83	58
Rangpur	26.3	14.6	75	67
Khulna	30.3	17.0	65	66
Barisal	30.9	15.5	73	69
Sylhet	29.6	15.0	55	51
Cox's Bazar	32.8	17.3	42	41

## DHAKA TODAY

### Symposium

United Nations Association of Bangladesh will organise a symposium. Venue: Scout Bhaban, Kakrail; Time: 5:00pm.

### Discussion

Odhikar will organise a discussion. Venue: Brac Centre Inn, Mahakhali; Time: 9:30am.

### Discussion

War Crimes Facts Finding Committee will organise a discussion. Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:30am.

### Seminar

WARBE Development Foundation will organise a seminar. Venue: CIRDP Auditorium; Time: 10:30am.

### Rally

Bangladesh Youth Forum will organise a rally. Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

### Plastic Fair

Bangladesh Plastic Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association will organise a plastic fair. Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre; Time: 12 noon.

## Domestic help found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenage domestic help was mysteriously killed at an apartment in the city's Sabujbagh area yesterday.

The deceased, Halima Akhter, 14, hailed from Ghatail in Tangail. She joined her current work 12 days back.

Sabujbagh police recovered the body from the top floor of a six-storied building of her employer at Ahmedbagh in Sabujbagh around 3:00pm.

Employer MA Zaman, a private service holder, and his wife Anjuman Ara Begum, a banker, and their two children were out of house when the incident occurred, said the employer's family members and police sources.

When the two children returned from school, they found their flat locked from inside, said family members.

Later, when the door was opened using duplicate keys, the body was found lying in the master bedroom and two almiras were found broken, they added.

Anjuman suspected that miscreants killed their domestic help and took away valuables from the almiras, though she could not ascertain which things were robbed.

Abdus Salam, a security guard of the building, said one of the two persons, who had reconnected the cable line on Tuesday, visited the flat yesterday but left within a short time.

Abdul Quayum, officer-in-charge of Sabujbagh Police Station, said they picked up the building security guard and five persons of the cable line provider for interrogation on the matter.

Though the person who went to the flat on the incident day was not picked up, he added.