

Missing contractor found dead in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of a contractor was found at Kamalapur Rail Station in the capital yesterday afternoon after 50 days of his missing.

Nurul Amin, 55, was a contractor of several organisations, including Dhaka Wasa and owner of Faria Engineers Ltd.

On information, Kamalapur railway police (GRP) recovered the body from inside the station platform around 4:30pm. The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for an autopsy.

Sub-inspector (SI) Sujan Kanti Barua of Kamalapur GRP told The Daily Star no mark of injuries was found on the body.

Nurul's younger brother Saiful Amin Bhuiyan said he went missing from in front of Wasa Bhaban at Karwan Bazar on March 5.

He said Nurul had a dispute with one person over getting a contract. He suspects that some rival might have fed him something to drive him insane.

Amin lived at Shiddhirganj in Narayanganj. Nurul used to supply motors to Dhaka Wasa.



(Clockwise from top left) A passenger jumps off through window to save himself as picketers vandalise the bus at the capital's Farmgate. Police and pro-BNP lawyers scuffle at Dhaka CMM's court premises. Police charge baton on BNP men in front of the party's office at Nur Ahmed Sarak in Chittagong city. Police arrest BNP vice-chairperson Selima Rahman at the capital's Mohakhali. BNP lawmakers bring out a procession in support of yesterday's hartal. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: STAR



Newborn stolen from DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A newborn baby was stolen from a ward of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday afternoon, 20 minutes after his birth.

Twenty-two-year-old Shilpy Begum of Meer Hajirbagh at the capital's Jatrabari gave birth to the baby at around 6:00pm.

Pick-up van driver Anwar Hossain, father of the newborn baby, told The Daily Star that his mother-in-law went out of the labour ward carrying the baby after his birth.

Anwar said his mother-in-law rushed to his wife keeping the baby to an unknown woman who told that the child's mother condition was critical. After three minutes, his mother-in-law came back and found the woman was gone.

Hearing the hue and cry of his mother-in-law, the security guards searched for the woman and the baby, but did not find them.

A general diary was lodged with Shahbagh Police Station in this regard, he said.

8 brick kiln owners fined Tk 25 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) has fined Tk 25 lakh to the owners of eight brickfields at Gurudaspur in Natore for burning woods illegally and damaging farmland.

DoE also directed the owners of the brickfields to stop their activities and upgrade its technology within three months.

Director (enforcement) of DoE Mohammad Munir Chowdhury summoned the owners of the brickfields in Dhaka yesterday and fined the owners, says a press release.

DoE also halted under-construction works of two brickfields as these did not have DoE permission.

ACCREDITATION COUNCIL FOR PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES Draft rules approved in principle

Pvt universities assoc demand such council for public universities

WASIM BIN HABIB

The government yesterday approved in principle draft rules of Accreditation Council for Private Universities of Bangladesh (ACPUB) to ensure quality and standard of education of private universities.

The education ministry approved the draft rules at its meeting chaired by Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid.

Section 38 of The Private University Act, 2010 stipulates formation of national and independent accreditation council to ensure quality and standard of higher education. After the law came into effect, the education ministry asked the University Grants Commission (UGC) to formulate rules and outlines of the council and sent it to the ministry.

According to the draft rules, the ACPUB would motivate private universities to undertake self-assessment and critical review of their academic programmes.

The council would urge the private universities to seek evaluation of their academic programmes through peer review teams to be formed by ACPUB. The result of the peer review team will be made public so that students, guardians, and employers can know about the status of different universities, said the draft rules.

The ACPUB would consist of a general council, an executive committee, several programme committees for each broad discipline or area of the

study, and the peer review teams.

The general council would consist of 21 members, including a chairperson. The chairperson, having a high academic and administrative calibre, would be nominated by the chancellor for a period of two years, it said.

The executive committee would consist of a chairperson and eight members of the general council. The executive committee would be responsible for appointing peer review teams.

The draft said that each approved private university will have to get membership of ACPUB within three months from the rules coming into force by filling in the application form and paying fees for membership as determined by the council.

It also said the new private universities will have to get the council's membership within six months of receiving permission from the government.

Each university must submit a filled-in self-assessment questionnaire prescribed by ACPUB within six months of becoming members of the council, it said.

The peer review teams would visit institutions, verify and review information provided in the questionnaire to make recommendations to the executive committee.

If any university appears to fail to comply with the condition of the council it may be graded as "unsatisfactory" and will be allowed a specific timeframe to make up deficiencies identified by the peer review team.

About funding of the council, the draft rules said the government would allocate an initial endowment fund of Tk 50 crore for the accreditation council.

The education ministry received opinions on the draft rules from different ministries and organisations after sending it to 19 ministries, individuals and organisations, including Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB).

Prof M Alimullah Miyan, general secretary of APUB, in his opinion said there should be an Accreditation Council for both public and private universities.

The information, communication and technology ministry in its opinion said an amendment can be brought to the rules so that standard of both private and public universities can be measured. They suggested that the name of the council should be "Accreditation Council for Universities of Bangladesh."

"The accreditation council is only for the private universities. Establishing an accreditation council for private universities was mentioned in the National Education Policy 2010," Education Secretary Dr Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

He said the ministry would finalise the draft rules after consultation with the stakeholders concerned including the representatives of private universities and educationists as soon as possible.

Newly-wed girl kills herself

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A newly-wed teenage girl allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from a ceiling fan at Bhasantek slum in the capital Sunday night.

Deceased Tania Akhter, 15, was a garments worker at Vision Apparels Ltd in Mirpur. Police arrested Tania's husband Jibon Rana, 22, driver of a human hauler, and his father Jalal Sikder.

Daughter of a poor fisherman, Tania fell in love with Rana and they got married on Pahela Baishakh, the Bangla New Year, Halima Begum, sister-in-law of the deceased, told The Daily Star.

As her in-laws did not give consent to the marriage, they unleashed their grudge on the bride from the very next day of the wedding,

Halima claimed.

Her husband and his family also used to restrict her from visiting her parents and abuse her both physically and verbally, she said.

"I saw horrible blade cuts in her arms when Tania came over and borrowed Tk 100 from me last Friday," said Halima.

Police recovered the body from her house around 11:30pm on Sunday and sent it to Dhaka Medical College morgue for an autopsy. The morgue authorities cleared the case as suicide.

Tania's family alleged that Rana's family might have killed her and hung the body to the ceiling fan to make it appear as a case of suicide.

Bhasantek Police registered an unnatural death case in this connection.



MARITIME BOUNDARY 'Verdict to help extract more mineral resources'

UNB, Dhaka

Speakers at a seminar yesterday said the "historic victory" in the legal fight with Myanmar on the maritime boundary will help the country extract more mineral resources.

The seminar was organised by University Swadhinata Shikshak Parishad (teachers' council) at the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) auditorium at Dhaka University.

Prime minister's adviser Dr Alauddin Ahmed said the government will move ahead to "explore and extract the mineral resources from our maritime territory." He urged all to work together to make use of the maritime boundary victory.

Additional Foreign Secretary Rear Admiral (ret'd) M Khursid Alam gave a presentation on the verdict handed down by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

The present government first took the initiative to "conduct a seismic survey in our maritime boundary and this survey played a major role in gaining the victory over Myanmar on equitable basis," he said.

Agriculturist and Awami League leader Bahauddin Nasim, Prof Nazrul Islam, Dr Sharif Enamul Haque and Pretribongla Chairman Dr Hussain Monsur addressed the seminar, chaired by Prof AKM Saidul Haque Chowdhury.

Proceedings against Sayedee adjourned until today as key defence absent

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday 'reluctantly' adjourned case proceedings against Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee until today as the key defence were absent due to countrywide shutdown.

The tribunal -- the first of two courts formed to deal with crimes committed during the Liberation War -- fixed the new date following an adjournment petition by the accused.

Deposition of last prosecution witness Mohammad Helal Uddin, also the investigation officer, was scheduled for recording yesterday.

Sayedee, who is among four Jamaat and one BNP leaders facing charges of crimes against humanity committed during the War at this tribunal, was produced before the court yesterday. Sayedee is facing 20 charges of crimes against humanity.

The tribunal headed by Justice Md Nizamul Huq started proceedings around

11:15am with two members as the third member AKM Zaheer Ahmed could not come due to the shutdown.

Although the prosecution was present for the proceedings the defence were absent except for two junior colleagues of the key counsels.

As the court was about to begin, Sayedee, who was at the dock, appealed for adjournment as his counsels were not present.

"I do not understand law. None of my lawyers is present here. Who will hear and say on my behalf?" said Sayedee.

"The tribunal will work as your lawyers today. We will keep it in mind that your lawyers are absent. But your lawyers should have been present," replied the tribunal chairman.

Abu Bakar Siddique, a junior colleague of Tanvir Ahmed Al Amin, one of Sayedee's counsels, appealed that the proceedings be at least adjourned until 2:00pm.

As he assured that the key defence counsels would arrive at 2:00pm, the tribunal adjourned the proceedings until 1:30pm.

Earlier, Muhammad Tarikul Islam, another junior member of the defence, had addressed the court in inappropriate clothing complaining that the law enforcers had misbehaved with him and Sayedee's son as they tried to talk to the accused on the ground floor of the court.

The tribunal said it was aware of the matter and reminded him that it was inappropriate to talk to Sayedee without the court's permission.

When the tribunal resumed at 1:30pm, Hasanul Banna Shohag, a junior colleague of Mizanul Islam, who is a counsel of Sayedee, told the tribunal two of the three key defence counsels were out of the city.

Despite several attempts, the other counsels could not come to the court because of the shutdown, Shohag said.

"The accused would be prejudiced if the proceeding goes on in absence of the defence counsels," he added.

Hearing this, Sayedee was up in the dock once again and appealed to say something to

the tribunal.

"I have submitted a handwritten adjournment petition before the tribunal as my counsels could not come. Kindly adjourn the court proceeding for today," he said.

"We will adjourn the proceeding if any law point comes before the tribunal," said Justice Nizamul Huq.

"With due respect to your words, I appeal for adjournment as my senior counsels are not present," Sayedee said in response.

"But the tribunal wanted to get some work done today," said the chairman.

At this stage, Prosecutor Syed Haider Ali took to the podium and said it would be better if the accused had faith on the tribunal's assurance.

"I have complete faith in [tribunal] chairman and fully utilise your time tomorrow," said Sayedee. "Some work has been done today. Besides, I have never requested anything from the tribunal before."

The court then passed an order adjourning the court proceedings at 1:45pm.