

NEWS IN *brief*

Cancellation of addl secy's posting as PIO demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Civil Service Information Association (BCSIA) yesterday demanded cancelling the posting of an additional secretary as Principal Information Officer (PIO), saying the posting is illegal. The post of PIO is the highest post in the information cadre as per the BCS Recruitment Rules 1981 (information-general) and the post is reserved for the information cadre, the association leaders observed in an emergency meeting at the Press Information Department.

There are competent and eligible officials in the information cadre and posting someone from outside the cadre has created dissatisfaction among them, said a press release.

On Monday, Additional Secretary Aminul Islam was given the post of PIA.

5,000 children born with clubfeet every year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday said approximately 5,000 children are born with clubfeet every year in the country.

They presented The Glencoe Foundation's success in treating over 5000 children in Bangladesh with clubfeet (a condition where feet is turned inside at birth) over the last three years.

They were speaking at a seminar styled 'Successful Clubfoot Management to Prevent Disability in Bangladesh' organised by Glencoe Foundation and the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) at the conference room of DGHS in the capital.

Under the project Walk for Life, the organisation has a network of 41 clinics so that no child has to travel more than 60km for treatment, speakers said.

Prof Khondaker Md Shefayetullah, director general of DGHS, was present among others.

IT training for ministry officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Shahara Khatun yesterday inaugurated a modern digital training lab set up at the home ministry to provide IT education and training to the ministry officials.

Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and Korea Telecom Corporation (KT) set up the lab at a cost of US \$42,700 from the social contribution fund of the Korean government, said a press release.

KOICA volunteers will train the ministry officials at the lab.



Newly appointed Saarc Secretary General Ahmed Saleem pays a courtesy visit to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her office yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Saarc catalyst for regional cooperation: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh attaches top priority to regional cooperation in South Asia and considers Saarc as a catalyst for regional cooperation aimed at mutual benefits of the people of the region.

She said this when newly-appointed Secretary General of Saarc Ahmed Saleem met her at the Prime Minister's Office.

Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Abul Kalam Azad briefed reporters after the meeting.

He said Sheikh Hasina mentioned that Bangladesh has been playing a constructive role in Saarc and remained actively engaged in its process.

She said Saarc activities should be

focused, time-bound, and result-oriented to meet people's expectations and its objectives as cherished in the charter of the organisation.

Hasina underscored the need for necessary measures to maintain Saarc as the most relevant entity for meaningful cooperation in South Asia.

The prime minister expressed her satisfaction as democratic governments are in power in all the Saarc member countries and firmly committed to democratic norms and the rule of law.

Ambassador at-Large M Ziauddin, Principal Secretary to the PM Sheikh Wahid Uz Zaman and PMO Secretary Molla Waheeduzzaman were present during the meeting.

Increase allocation for local govt

Speakers tell views exchange meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a views exchange meeting yesterday demanded increase of budgetary allocation for local government institutions by 50 percent.

The meeting titled "Proposed national budget and local government," was organised by Governance Advocacy Forum at the Cirdap Auditorium in the capital, said a press release.

The government kept Tk 1927.02 crore in the proposed budget for the local government institutions, it added.

The forum Coordinator Mohshin Ali, who presented the keynote speech, said the allocations for the institutions have been less than 1 percent in the last several years especially during the regime of the present government.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on LGRD and Cooperatives Ministry Chairman Advocate Rahmatullah, attending the event as the chief guest, said the allocation is necessary for real development.

PM thanked for 8th wage board for press

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Sangbadik Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) yesterday expressed satisfaction and thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for publishing a gazette on the formation of the eighth wage board for journalists and press employees.

In an emergency meeting, the leaders also hoped that the wage board would declare a new pay scale to fulfill the expectations of journalists and press workers in due time, says a press release from SSKOP.

Bangladesh Federal Journalist Union President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury presided over the meeting where president of another faction of the union, Ruhul Amin Gazi, and secretary generals Abdul Jalil Bhuyian and Shawkat Mahmud and Dhaka Union of Journalist presidents Omar Faruque and Abdus Shahid and general secretaries Shaban Mahmud and Baker Hossain were present.

Press Sramik Federation President Mohammad Alamgir Hossain Khan and Secretary General Mohammad Kamal Uddin and Sangbadipatra Karmachari Federation President Matiur Rahman Talukder and Secretary General Mohammad Khairul Islam were also present.

German envoy praises Bangladesh's progress

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Outgoing German Ambassador Holger Michael has appreciated the progress Bangladesh has been making in various socio-economic areas including women empowerment, health, education, trade and commerce.

He said this when he paid a farewell call on Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at her office yesterday.

While congratulating the German ambassador on his successful tour of Bangladesh, Dipu Moni expressed her satisfaction at the active engagement between Bangladesh and Germany, which has been growing in a number of areas in recent years.

The foreign minister termed Germany a trusted friend and a dependable development partner of Bangladesh and mentioned intensified associations between the two governments, civil societies, universities and business communities and high official visits between the two countries, among others.

Ambassador Michael thanked the foreign minister for the support of the foreign ministry and her government.

GRENADATE ATTACK CASE SC upholds Duke's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court (HC) order that granted bail to Saiful Islam Duke, nephew of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, in August 21 grenade attack case.

A five-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice SK Sinha passed the order after dismissing an appeal filed by the government against a HC bail order.

Duke was arrested on August 26, 2010 in connection with a grenade attack case in 2004.

In response to a bail petition, the HC granted him bail on May 4, 2011 in this case. But he could not get released as the Appellate Division stayed the HC order following a government's leave-to-appeal petition against the HC order.

The Appellate Division granted the leave-to-appeal petition and ordered for continuing the stay order on July 21 last year. That stay order was nullified by yesterday's SC order granting the bail.

Duke was allegedly involved in planning the grenade attack on an Awami League rally on August 21, 2004 that left 24 people including Awami League leader Ivy Rahman dead and dozens others injured.

Secy sued for demanding bribe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed July 10 for passing an order on a corruption case against Housing and Public Works Secretary Khandaker Shawkat Hossain.

One Nahim Habibuzzaman filed a corruption case against Shawkat Hossain with the district and sessions court on May 10 under anti-corruption law.

In the case, he said the secretary demanded bribe of Tk 10 crore for issuing a circular for releasing an abundant property.



Vehicles stuck in a traffic jam as far as the eyes can see on Topkhana Road in the capital yesterday due to blocking of a portion of the road in front of Jatiya Press Club by an Auto-rickshaw Sramik Union rally.

PHOTO: STAR

Journos again demand Mahfuzur's quizzing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of different journalists' organisations yesterday again demanded that investigators interrogate Mahfuzur Rahman, chairman of ATN Bangla, as he had made derogatory remarks about the murdered journalist couple Sagar-Runi.

They made the demand during a human chain programme before the Jatiya Press Club organised to protest the killing of journalist Jamal Uddin in Jessore and press home the demand for interrogating the ATN Bangla chief. Jamal Uddin, a journalist of Jessore-based newspaper Gramer Kagoj, was hacked to death at Sharsha upazila allegedly for reporting on a local drug-smuggling syndicate.

ATN Bangla chief Mahfuzur Rahman in London recently said, "Sagar and Runi were victims of an extra-marital affair." He also claimed that he had footage relating to the motive of the murders.

Meanwhile, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, yesterday declared that another human chain would be formed at the Jatiya Press Club on Sunday to press home their demand.

They would also bring out a rally which would head towards the Prime Minister's Office and submit a memorandum to the

prime minister demanding the arrest and trial of the killers of all journalists and a guarantee for journalists' security.

The leaders also demanded that Mahfuzur Rahman show the evidence to prove his allegations against Sagar and Runi.

The president of another faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, Ruhul Amin Gazi, said the journalists had become victims in their own homes and the criminals and the law enforcement agencies were torturing the journalists outside their homes and this could not be tolerated.

He said Mahfuzur Rahman must be arrested as he claimed that he had "footage" on the motive of the double murder.

Sagar Sarwar, news editor of the private TV station Maasranga, and his wife Meherun Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were murdered in their flat in the capital's West Rajabazar on February 11.

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuyian, Dhaka Union of Journalists presidents Abdus Shahid and Omar Faruque, general secretaries Muhammad Baker Hossain and Shaban Mahmud, Dhaka Reporters Unity President Shakhawat Hossain and General Secretary Sazzad Alam Khan Topu also spoke at the human chain.

COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN MYANMAR EU sympathises with victims

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Deploring the violence in the Rakhine state of Myanmar, the European Union expressed solidarity with the families of the victims.

"The EU is following the situation of those fleeing inter-communal violence in Rakhine state, Myanmar, and its spill over into Cox's Bazar district, Bangladesh," said Ambassador and Head of the EU Delegation to Bangladesh William Hanna.

Talking to reporters after a meeting with Foreign Ministry Director General (UN) Saida Muna Tasneem yesterday, Hanna said, "The EU encourages the authorities of both countries to ensure the safety of civilian and to work with the international community on letting the victims of the ongoing violence access humanitarian assistance."

Three other envoys, British High Commissioner Robert Gibson, Danish Ambassador Svend Olling and Swedish Ambassador Anneli Lindahl Kenny, were also present at the meeting.

Foreign ministry officials said the EU envoys agreed that Bangladesh was facing a complicated situation over the Rohingya issue.

They said the Bangladesh side explained its position not to allow Rohingyas into Bangladesh as it had no physical space available for their accommodation.

The European envoys were very supportive to Bangladesh and informed that the EU was trying its level best to engage with the Myanmar government to address the refugee problem.

The foreign ministry categorically stated that Bangladesh was not doing anything inhumane to the Rohingyas.

DHAKA TODAY

Discussion
Campaign for Right to Food & Social Security will organise a discussion; Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity; Time: 10:30am.

Seminar
Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum will hold a seminar; Venue: Biam Foundation, 63, New Eskaton; Time: 9:30am.

Cultural programme
Bangladesh Academy of Fine Arts will organise a cultural programme; Venue: Bangladesh National Museum; Time: 7:00pm.

Memorial lecture
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will organise a memorial lecture; Venue: Biam Auditorium, 63, New Eskaton; Time: 4:00pm.

Workshop
PRIP Trust will hold a workshop; Venue: IPD Conference Room, Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion
Brac University will organise a discussion; Venue: its Mohakhali campus; Time: 6:30pm.

Views exchange meeting
Research and Development Collective will organise a views exchange meeting; Venue: Bangladesh National Museum; Time: 11:00am.

Sports competition
National Forum of Organizations

WEATHER TODAY

Change in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Khulna, Dhaka, Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions, Met Office said.

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:49pm and rises tomorrow at 5:12am.

Country's highest temperature 37 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.5 degrees at Dinajpur.

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	33.0	26.4	71	69
Chittagong	33.2	26.0	83	87
Rajshahi	37.0	26.5	79	67
Rangpur	33.8	25.5	84	72
Khulna	36.2	27.2	75	74
Barisal	32.6	27.2	81	84
Sylhet	33.4	25.5	97	69
Cox's Bazar	31.8	25.5	75	87