

CASE INFORMATION

Supreme Court goes digital

BSS, Dhaka

As part of its ongoing modernisation process, the Supreme Court (SC) started using digital displays to make public the latest information of cases.

Lawyers, justice-seekers and all concerned can get the latest information about the cases in different SC benches from five digital displays.

The SC bar association building has two digital displays while the office of the chief justice, the attorney general's office and the SC annex building have one each.

Supreme Court Bar Association Secretary Advocate Mamtaz Uddin Mehedi told the news agency that the government is implementing different programmes to bring the apex court fully under information technology as a part of its steps to enrich the country in modern technologies.

The setting up of the digital displays is a remarkable step among those, he added.

All concerned would get necessary information about the hearing and disposal of cases as per the cause list in different SC benches, he said.

The SCBA secretary said besides getting advance information about hearing of cases, anyone will be able know about his/her desired case being heard and the respective bench of the court which is hearing it from the digital displays.

This will save time and end hassles for the litigants and all others, said Mamtaz.

Supreme Court Computer System Analyst Kazi Parvez Anowar said the setting up of five digital displays in the apex court is an epoch-making incident.

He said the SC website has also been enriched as there are brief descriptions of all the cases along with other information on the website.

The daily cause lists of cases in different benches are also available on the website. Now the lawyers and others concerned can see those in advance staying at home, he added.



The shops on the footpath opposite the capital's New Market, which are usually crowded with buyers, are still to re-open after the Eid vacation. The photo was taken on Friday.

PHOTO: STAR

NORTHERN REGION
Rural women contribute to cutting poverty

BSS, Rangpur

The rural women have been contributing laudably to alleviating poverty for attaining self-reliance through income-generations in the northern region to change the overall rural socio-economic scenario in recent years.

Head of Women's Rights of RDRS Bangladesh Monjusree Saha said the distressed women are now engaged in various income-generating activities after winning over poverty and driving away munga (a seasonal famine-like situation).

"The womenfolk has achieved laudable economic success with empowerment through sewing handloom garments, cottage industries, business, animal husbandry, poultry, homestead gardening, farming fruits, vegetables and other agri-activities," she added.

District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer of Rangpur Mokhesur Rahman said hundreds of distressed rural women have achieved self-reliance from social safety-net programmes.

Chilmari upazila Chairman Shawkat Ali Sarker, Bir Bikram, and Taramon Bibi, Bir Pratik, said many rural women lived amid miseries following abject poverty and their children could not go to schools in the past.

Talking to the news agency, successful rural women Bulbuli Begum, Morsheda, Sabina Yasmin and Kamola Rani said they attained economic self-reliance through hard endeavours. And currently, there is no incident of starving anywhere in their villages.

With feeling of satisfaction in their faces, the successful women said their children are now going to schools with better living though the days were miserable even few years ago before winning against poverty, hunger and illiteracy.

Death Anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Today is the 24th death anniversary of Advocate Chittoronjon Das, former president of Chittagong Bar Association.

To observe the occasion, family members of Das will organise a commemorative programme at his residence in Khalompoti village in Chittagong.

Eight killed, 26 hurt in road crashes

Roads blocked in Rangpur, Mymensingh

METRO DESK

Eight people, including three of a family, were killed and twenty-six others injured in separate road accidents in Rangpur, Chittagong, Mymensingh, Sirajganj and Brahmanbaria on Friday and yesterday.

Our Rangpur correspondent reports, three members of a family died as a bus hit a motorbike carrying them on Rangpur-Pirgachha road at Deuti village in Pirgachha upazila yesterday afternoon.

The deceased are Uzzal Mian, 38, his wife Jharna Begum, 30, and their son Pritam, 8, of Nijpara village in the upazila.

Police said the speeding bus hit Uzzal's motorcycle in the area from behind, killing them instantly. Agitating locals put up barricades

on the road for one hour.

In Chittagong, bus helper Abdul Haque, 22, son of Abdul Monaf, of Bhola, was killed as the bus, after losing control, ploughed through the road divider in Chhoto Kumira bypass area of Sitakunda upazila on Friday night.

In Mymensingh, bicyclist Aminul Islam, 18, son of late Mustafa of village Gaorangopalpur, died after a bus crushed him on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road at Boroitola in Gouripur upazila yesterday morning.

Protesting the incident, angry locals torched the bus and vandalised two other buses.

They also put up barricades on the road disrupting traffic for half-an-hour.

Meanwhile, motorcyclist Hafiz

Uddin was killed as a human hauler collided head-on with the motorcycle on Gouripur-Rampur road at Achintapur in Gouripur at about 12:30pm yesterday.

In Sirajganj, Abu Horaira, 25, of Muktagachha in Mymensingh district, died as a motorbike carrying him overturned on west approach road of Bangabandhu Bridge at Konabari yesterday noon.

Meanwhile, a coach from Dhaka collided head-on with another coach at Sahebganj in Raiganj upazila yesterday early morning, injuring 26 people.

In Brahmanbaria, motorbike rider Mithun Chandra Sarkar, 22, was killed as a bus rammed his bike on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Kamawra village in Ashuganj upazila yesterday.

LIBERATION WAR

Recognition of women's contribution demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should honour and give due recognition to women who contributed to the Liberation War in 1971, said speakers at a workshop yesterday.

They also demanded constructing a memorial complex and a monument as a testimony to women's role during the war and their endurance in the face of repression.

They were addressing a daylong workshop styled "Violence on Woman and Reconstruction of Values: Perspective 1971" jointly organised by War Crimes Facts Finding Committee and Research Initiatives and Development at the Brac Centre Inn in the capital.

Noted litterateur Selina Hossain said women sacrificed a lot during the liberation war and fought in an equal level with men, but they have not been honoured and recognised by the state.

"This is the failure of the state and the

governments that were in power in the last 41 years. The society could not accept the women who were repressed during the war due to decaying of values," she said.

She placed three-point demands--the government to recognise women freedom fighters and repressed women through a national convention on December 16, ensuring social security to them and making an archive documenting women's contribution and sacrifice.

"We request the prime minister to apologise, on behalf of the nation, to these women for the injustice they had to endure since liberation," she said.

War Crimes Facts Finding Committee Convenor Dr MA Hasan stressed the need for concerted efforts from all sections to rehabilitate these women.

Noted academician Mansur Musa, poet Kazi Rozi, spoke at the function among others.



A broken footpath, repair work of which was suspended on the occasion of Eid, still remains unrepaired after the holidays, posing danger to pedestrians. The photo was taken near Mirpur Police Station in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Coastal belt witnesses rapid salinity intrusion

Reveals BADC study

BSS, Dhaka

Coastal parts of the country witnessed rapid salinity intrusion within one year, according to a recent study of Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC).

"Salinity concentration in groundwater in Barguna, Pirojpur, Bagerhat, Satkhira and Khulna districts has increased two deci siemens (DS) per metre in one year," BADC Agriculture, Water and Environmental Engineer Dr Md Eftekharul Alam told the news agency.

Salinity concentration in the southern districts was 12 DS per metre in 2011 while 14 DS per metre in 2012, he said adding, "Increase of two DS per metre salinity concentration within one year is alarming to our ecology."

Eftekhar said BADC conducted the study in southern region to assess the state of invisible underground saline water intrusion.

Under the study, 182 salinity observation wells were installed in the coastal region and data of those wells showed increase of two DS metre salinity concentration at 110 feet depth in the region, he added.

The study revealed that saline water is advancing towards the north at two district depths at about 110 feet and 650 feet from the ground level.

Eight percent irrigation water and ninety-eight percent drinking water are collected from underground source and it is abstracted without proper planning, Eftekhar added.

He said abnormal increase of salinity concentration in the groundwater of southern region exposed serious threat to ecosystem and biodiversity that will destabilise the food security

of the country.

He said if groundwater is polluted by saline water intrusion, it will destabilise the food security and ecosystem and biodiversity of about 12 percent southern area of the country where about 60 million people live.

Country's groundwater is now in unbalanced condition due to more abstraction than its total annual recharge, Eftekhar said adding groundwater levels in different parts of the country are going down below the mean sea level due to excessive and unplanned use of groundwater.

BADC sources said in some areas it is about 174 feet and thus most of the suction mode irrigation pump cannot lift water in dry season. Besides, this vacuum is being filled in by saline sea from the Bay of Bengal through underground aquifers, they added.

Concentration of salinity in the groundwater of southern part is found maximum at a depth of 110 feet from ground level, they said adding maximum salt concentration at a depth of 110 feet is probably due to less discharge in the international rivers and excessive withdrawal of groundwater by tubewells.

Eftekhar said groundwater is being used for irrigation largely in an unplanned manner, which contribute to misuse of water keeping a huge negative impact on ecology and agriculture.

Nearly 13 lakh tubewells mostly shallow are being used for irrigation through groundwater in crop production, he said adding the number of tubewells is excess than requirement as eight lakh tubewells are enough to meet demand of water for irrigation.

Dr Eftekhar said the excessive number and short distance installation of

tubewells as well as other machinated equipment for lifting water pushed down the water table rapidly.

Prof Umme Kulsum Navera of Department of Water Resources Engineering of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) said the unplanned shrimp cultivation requiring saline waters in the coastline deteriorated the state of environment in the region.

Salinity intrusion is engulfing the coastal region rapidly due to less discharge of rivers in coastal region, Navera said adding flow of the river Gorai should be increased to keep water levels of other rivers normal, which will help resist influx of saline water from Bay of Bengal.

Groundwater level in almost all parts of the country is declining fast from mean sea level due to its overuse and less discharge of rivers, Eftekhar said adding rapid decline in aquifer level is inviting saline water which increases concentration of salinity in groundwater.

The water and environment experts feared that the country will witness a catastrophe, if declining of groundwater level continues.

Many countries already reduced dependency of groundwater for both drinking and irrigation purposes, said Navera supplementing Eftekhar.

"We should ensure availability of surface water through canal digging programme and capital dredging in all major rivers aiming to reduce dependency of groundwater," Eftekhar said adding preserving rainwater and increasing irrigation efficiency would also cut dependency on groundwater.