

SHAHBAGH INTERSECTION DSCC to build foot overbridge or underpass

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) yesterday began taking necessary measures to build either a foot overbridge or an underpass at Shahbagh intersection in the capital to ensure safety of people crossing the roads there.

A team comprised of Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, DSCC Administrator Mohammad Zillar Rahman and Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Benazir Ahmed yesterday visited the venue and asked DSCC Chief Engineer Jahangir Alam to make designs of a foot overbridge or an underpass.

"We will choose a suitable structure (foot overbridge or underpass) keeping pace with the total system to ensure safety of the people," the DSCC administrator told The Daily Star.

The decision to build the underpass or foot overbridge came on Sunday following strong agitation by DU students after a fellow student died in a road accident at the intersection on August 28.

The DU students blockaded the Shahbagh intersection twice on Tuesday night and Sunday creating huge tailback on the city streets. They also vandalised over 60 cars and demanded, among others, construction of a foot overbridge at the spot.

The DU and DSCC authorities placated the agitating students by assuring them of building an foot overbridge or underpass within the next 15 days.

During the visit, Prof Arefin Siddique urged the DSCC officials to remove all illegal billboards and construct several speed breakers adjacent to university's Teachers Students Centre (TSC) and Dowel Chatter.



PHOTO: STAR

A manhole missing its lid on Dhaka University campus poses risks of accident for vehicles plying the road. The photo was taken yesterday.

CG system abolished without talks

Says Dr Akbar Ali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government (CG) system was introduced without any prior discussion and was abolished in the same manner, said Dr Akbar Ali Khan, a former adviser to a caretaker government, yesterday.

"It is unfortunate for the nation that the bill for the caretaker government system was passed in the parliament in the dark of the night and without any discussion," he said at a parliamentary styled debate.

The debate, "Fair poll possible under the interim government", was held in a private TV channel studio with Stamford University placing arguments as the government and Dhaka University as the opposition.

"I hope constructive debates like the one performed here will be held in the real parliament," he said, adding, "The Supreme Court verdict should be taken into account that the next two elections can be held under caretaker governments."

Cabinet okays 2nd amendment to ICT act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday endorsed the draft of the International Crimes (Tribunals) (Second Amendment) Act-2012 aiming to speed up the 1971 war crimes trial.

According to the proposed amendments, the time for filing an appeal against verdicts of the International Crimes Tribunals by the defence was reduced to 30 days from the existing 60 days.

It would also include a provision to ensure that the defence gets a certified copy of the verdict free of cost on the day of its delivery, Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan told journalists after a cabinet meeting.

The cabinet also approved the draft of the Vested Property Return (Second Amendment) Act-2012, aiming to turn the existing ordinance into a law.

It also endorsed a proposal to establish a "Small, Micro and Cottage Industry Foundation" to run the four completed poverty alleviation projects of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation.

The cabinet also approved the draft of Waqf (Property Handover and Development) Special Regulations Act-2012 incorporating some provisions to speed up the handover.

Thunderbolt kills two

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two fishermen were killed in Chittagong as thunderbolt struck them while they were fishing in the Bay of Bengal on Sunday.

The deceased were Porimal Das, 25, and Badal Das, 20, hailed from Mirsarai and Halishahar respectively.

Four fishermen aboard a boat were fishing in the sea around 9:00pm on Sunday when a thunder bolt struck them, leaving Porimal spot dead.

Tarun Das, 45, of South Halishahar, and Badal were seriously injured in the incident and rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital around 10:30pm where doctors declared Badal dead.

HINDU, MUSLIM MARRIAGE LAWS Govt urged to ensure women's equal rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday urged the government to take effective measures for ensuring women's equal rights in Muslim and Hindu marriage laws.

There are two laws--Muslim Personal Laws based on Shariah Laws and Hindu Personal Laws--which contradict in some areas the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), they said.

The government should remove these contradictions by withdrawing its reservations on two articles of CEDAW for the convention's full implementation, the added.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organised the discussion at the capital's Jatiya Press Club to observe International CEDAW Day yesterday.

Meanwhile, women's rights activists at a human chain yesterday said religious fundamentalism or constitutional limitations could not hinder the commendable act of withdraw-

ing the reservations because the two articles gave women equal rights to marriage.

Although Bangladesh ratified the CEDAW in 1984, it has kept reservations on Article 2 and Article 16 (1) (C) fearing that these articles would contradict the prevalent marriage laws.

Law Commission Chairman (acting) Prof Shah Alam said the government overemphasised that ratifying those articles would hurt Muslim sentiments. Their ratification will not contradict Shariah Laws, especially the Qur'an and Hadith, he added.

Ayesha Khanom, president of Mahila Parishad, said if women could not enjoy human rights at an individual level, they would not have them at national level.

A total of 42 gender rights groups formed the human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club. The organisations include Karmojibi Nari, ActionAid, Manusher Jonno Foundation, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, and Ain O Salish Kendra.

BNP will join JS if CG system restored

Says chief whip

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition BNP will return to the parliament only if the government places a bill to restore non-party caretaker government (CG) system in the constitution, said Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farroque yesterday.

He was addressing a discussion at the Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

Farroque alleged that the government made the parliament ineffective. They do not even acknowledge our notices, he said, adding, "So we will not attend the 14th session."

The 14th session of the parliament is set to begin today.

Lawmakers of the BNP-led opposition alliance last attended the parliament session in March this year after a gap of 83 consecutive days.

The opposition party is now moving to compel the government to restore the neutral government system, which was scrapped from the constitution in June last year, to oversee the next national elections.

Khaleda Zia, the leader of the opposition in parliament, declared that they will not allow any election in the country if it is not held under a non-party caretaker government.



Union Parishad secretaries demand regularisation of their jobs and upgradation of status to second class officer at a sit-in before Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

UP secretaries want job regularisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Union Parishad (UP) secretaries yesterday reiterated their demands to regularise the jobs of 4,545 of them and upgrade their status to second class officer, saying such measures have remained unimplemented for 38 years.

The respective ministries pay 75 percent of their remuneration while the rest comes from the upazila parishad's income, which is irregular for poor earnings and is almost never realised, they claimed.

"The Bangabandhu government in 1974 declared to gradually regularise our jobs, but the later governments paid no attention, including the incumbent Awami League-led government," said Bangladesh Union Parishad Secretary Samity President Md Sohelur Rahman.

The secretaries were addressing a sit-in in the samity organised before the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

On January 5, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina directed the local government to hold public examinations to regularise the secretaries' jobs and to take steps to upgrade their status, said the samity General Secretary Asaduzzaman Asad.

"The direction has not been implemented for unknown reasons," he said.

On July 2, the secretaries dispatched a memorandum to the Prime Minister's Office stating their demands and arranged human chains before press clubs in 64 district headquarters.

The samity leaders declared to hold a fast-unto-death programme on Central Shahid Minar premises from November 18 if their demands were not realised.

Emergency unit at BSMMU medicine dept soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) is going to introduce an emergency department under its Department of Medicine soon.

The university Vice-Chancellor Pran Gopal Dutta announced this while inaugurating the new Departments of Rheumatology and Endocrinology at BSMMU yesterday, said a press release.

The inauguration programme was held at the medicine department of BSMMU.

Prof ABM Abdullah of the medicine department said rheumatology and endocrinology under the medicine department have been developed into two separate departments aiming for better treatment of patients.

Dipu Moni leaves for US, China

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday left the country on a week-long visit to meet maritime experts and state department officials in the United States of America and attend an international fair in China.

During her visit to the US, Dipu Moni will hold meeting with the Bangladesh government appointed lawyers, who will conduct the legal battle against India at the international court in The Hague on maritime boundary dispute in the Bay of Bengal, said official sources.

She will also hold talks with Acting Secretary of State William J Burns and Assistant US Trade Representative for South Asia Michael Delaney tomorrow.

The foreign minister will then fly to China tomorrow night to attend the 16th China International Fair for Investment and Trade (CIFIT) to be held at Xiamen in Fujian.

She will also meet the provincial leaders of Fujian province on Saturday.

She is expected to return Dhaka on September 10.



SAGAR-RUNI MURDER Int'l level DNA profiling possible in Bangladesh Claims NFDPL chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The chief of National Forensic DNA Profiling Laboratory (NFDPL) has refuted claims that DNA profiling of murdered journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi was not possible in the country.

The NFDPL chief, Prof Sharif Akhteruzzaman, said they read about the claims from recent newspaper reports.

He told a press conference at Nuclear Medicine Building of Dhaka Medical College yesterday.

Rab Media Wing Director Commander M Sohail, after a press conference at Rab headquarters yesterday, said a High Court order stated that samples from the murder could be sent abroad for DNA profiling if deemed necessary.

NFDPL, established with the ministry's assistance, was of international standard considering its technical capability, equipment and trained manpower, said Prof Sharif.

Established in 2006, NFDPL conducted DNA tests on 6,481 evidences of 1,832 cases till date and its reports, including the identification of the army officers in the Palkhana massacre, were lauded, he said.

On the detection of a person's DNA profile from Runi's T-shirt, Prof Sharif said it could be one of the many people who arrived on the crime scene after the murder and touched the bodies.

Sagar, news editor of Maasranga television, and Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed in their West Rajabazar apartment in the capital on February 11, 2012.

