

Journalists at risk: Inu

BSS, Dhaka

Mentioning the murder of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu yesterday said journalists are working by putting their lives at risk. "It's a shame for democracy and it is the responsibility of the government to remove the risk," he said. Ensuring the safety and security of the journalists is the responsibility of the government as they have been facing threats in doing their duties, he added.

He was addressing a function marking the second death anniversary of former general secretary of Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) Pathik Saha at DRU. With DRU President Shahed Chowdhury in the chair, DRU General Secretary Elias Khan, Dainik Inqilab City Editor Zakaria Kajol, and elder brother of Pathik Saha Sri Prolay Saha also spoke.

Drug addict spends Tk 50-500 a day

Discussion told
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On an average, a drug addict in the country spends between Tk 50 and Tk 500 on drugs per day and the majority of them commit different types of crimes to earn the money, speaker said at a discussion yesterday. "In most cases it is difficult to manage Tk 200 or 300 for those who earn less than ten thousand per month. So, the person becomes involved in crimes and encourages fellow addicts to join," said Prof Dr Arup Ratan Chowdhury, founder president of MANAS and Member of National Drug Control Board. The discussion was organised by MANAS at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.



Shorbodoliya Garments Sramik Oikya stages a demonstration with black flags before Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday demanding safety at workplaces. The demonstration comes against the backdrop of a fire in Smart Export Garment Ltd in the capital's Mohammadpur on Saturday which killed at least seven female workers.

PHOTO: STAR

Explain policy for pvt medical college fees
HC asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked the government to explain in three weeks why it should not be directed to formulate a policy for making the admission and tuition fees at private medical colleges consistent with those at public medical colleges.

The HC bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Zafar Ahmed came up with the rule following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer AKM Foyez.

The lawyer filed the petition yesterday saying that public medical college authorities take 10,000 as admission fee from each student while authorities of private medical colleges collect Tk 13 to 15 lakh as the admission and tuition fees from each student.

He submitted the petition as a public interest litigation following a report published on the daily Prothom Alo on December 22 last year under the headline "Admission at Private Medical Colleges: Business of Tk 650 crore".

Foyez prayed to the court to direct the authorities concerned of government to formulate a policy for fixing the admission and tuition fees at private medical college consistent with those at public medical colleges. Deputy Attorney General Mokhlesur Rahman told The Daily Star.

Secretaries to cabinet and ministries of education and health, and director general of directorate of health services have been made respondents to the rule.

JS body to investigate 'graft' in power sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday formed a sub-committee to investigate alleged widespread corruption in power and energy sector during the present government.

Headed by ruling Awami League lawmaker M Ishrafil Alam, the three-member sub-committee was asked to submit its report as soon as possible before the parliamentary standing committee on the power and energy ministry.

The two other members of the panel are AL lawmaker Fazle Noor Taposh and State Minister for Industries Omar Faruk Chowdhury.

In the meeting, Shubid Ali Bhuiyan, chief of the parliamentary watchdog, raised the issue of widespread anomalies occurring in the power and energy sectors, said the meeting sources.

In this regard, Shubid showed recent reports published in at least 10 newspapers covering corruption committed by lawmakers in power sector, the sources said after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan.

He also reacted when State Minister for Power and Energy Muhammad Enamul

Huq tried to defend him regarding corruption allegations of his ministry.

"Don't take these allegations personally. We are not talking about any individual, we are speaking about corruption allegations in the ministry as a whole," the sources quoted Shubid Ali as saying.

"You [the state minister] may not involve in corruption, maybe officials of lower ranks are engaged. But we want to identify all these corruptions through investigation of the committee," said the committee chief.

In the meeting, Shubid also mentioned his personal experience of giving bribe to officials concerned while getting electricity connection in his residence.

Abdul Matin Khasru, Mohammad Israfil Alam and Omar Faruk Chowdhury, all of whom are the committee's members, also attended the meeting held with Shubid in the chair, reports UNB.

They also discussed the closed and under-repair power plants in the meeting where the immediate and commercial launch of the under-construction power plants, especially the big ones, was suggested.

SAGAR-RUNI MURDER
Rab clueless as DNA doesn't match suspects'

KAILASH SARKAR

Rab has become utterly clueless after the DNA profiles examined in two US laboratories did not match those of the initial suspects in journalist couple Sagar-Runi murder case.

Lt Col Ziaul Ahsan, director of the Intelligence Wing of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), said they would now have to find a new lead and that they were yet to determine the identity and number of killer(s), and the motive.

"The laboratories found DNA profiles of six to seven persons from the evidence collected from the crime scene, victims' bodies and their clothes.

"Later biometric samples of 13 people, including six suspects of Dr Nitai murder, were sent to the labs but none matched the profiles," he said.

Earlier, Rab claimed that the killers of Dr Narayan Chandra Dutta Nitai, who was killed in his Mohakhali house on August 23, 2012, had killed the couple.

Sagar Sarowar, news editor of Maasranga television, and Meherun Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed in the small hours of February 11 last year at their flat in the capital's West Razabazar.

Now 11 months into the killing, the investigators, frustrated as the victims' families, relatives and colleagues, are still looking for a prospective lead, although the home minister on October 8 last year claimed to have identified seven suspects.

"It is true that the labs found DNA profiles of seven persons. But it does not necessarily mean that those will be of the killer(s). They might have been of those who rushed to the spot and contaminated the crime scene," said Ziaul.

He said it was scientifically proven that the suspects in Dr Nitai killing were not involved in the double murder.

On their next step, Ziaul said, "We are now thinking of sending biometric samples of other suspects to the US labs for DNA test." He declined to elaborate further.

Rab was given the charge of investigating the case on April 18, 2012, after it vented frustration over the Detective Branch of Police's failure in identifying the killer(s).

Afterwards, Rab sent a knife, a kitchen knife, the victims' bloodstained clothes and their hair to two US labs.

They had also shown six alleged killers of Dr Nitai arrested in the double murder case and rounded up Tanvir Rahman, a schoolteacher and Runi's friend, in this connection.

Besides, Humayun alias Enamul, security guard of the building where Sagar and Runi used to live with their only son, was made the prime suspect as he has been absconding. The home ministry announced a bounty of Tk 10 lakh on him.

Earlier, detectives detained some thieves and two security guards of the building in connection with the murder. But they were let go after their DNA profiles did not match the ones collected from the crime scene.



Multimedia class in 15,000 schools by March

BSS, Dhaka

Works to set up technology-based multimedia classrooms, with modern teaching methods, in the 15,000 secondary and higher secondary schools of the country will be complete by upcoming March, said officials concerned.

The government has targeted to set up 20,500 multimedia classrooms in the secondary and higher secondary schools across the country, aiming to stop students from memorising whatever they are taught, they added.

"The government has already set up 4,000 multimedia classrooms and equipment, including laptops and multimedia projectors, have been sent to another 7,000 educational institutions for launching multimedia classes," Abul Kalam Azad, director of the government-run Information and Communication Technology Education project, told the news agency on Saturday.

He said 12,000 teachers have already been trained up while user-friendly digital contents for teachers to use in classrooms have been developed with the technical assistance of Access to Information (A2I) Programme of the Prime Minister's Office.

The multimedia classrooms are being set up in the educational institutions following the model innovated by Access to Information (A2I) Programme of the Prime Minister's Office.

National Project Director of A2I Programme Md Nazrul Islam Khan said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on May 20, 2012 launched 1,000 multimedia classrooms for secondary and primary schools in support of the education ministry's initiative to set up 20,500 multimedia classrooms by the end of 2013.

He said Tk 1,23,900 is required to set up a multimedia classroom in a school as per the model innovated by the A2I Programme.

"By setting up a multimedia classroom at the cost of Tk 1 lakh we have saved a substantial amount of money.

"Earlier, before the introduction of the model innovated by the A2I Programme, a huge amount of money was required to set up a multimedia classroom in a school," said Nazrul Islam Khan.

He said it would be an exceptional experience for the students as learning from digital contents stimulates the enjoyment of learning and engages them in ways that encourages and feeds their thirst for knowledge.

Nazrul Islam Khan said the training provided to teachers increased their skill and facilitated the use of their creativity in preparing and delivering lessons.



Passengers demonstrate on Chittagong Railway Station yesterday demanding resumption of services of Paharika, an intercity train plying on Sylhet-Chittagong route. Chittagong University students had blocked the train from leaving the station after allegedly being cheated by railway staff in Sylhet.

PHOTO: STAR

SCHOLARSHIP IN BRUNEI
Applications sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brunei government has sought applications from foreign students, including Bangladeshis, for its scholarship programme in Brunei Darussalam for the 2013-14 academic session.

The recipients of the scholarship will be provided with the opportunity to study at University of Brunei Darussalam, University Islam Sultan, and Institute Technology Brunei for graduation and post graduation courses, says a press release of Bangladesh embassy of Brunei yesterday.

The scholarship benefits include exemption from paying tuition fees and other appropriate compulsory fees for the courses.

Interested students can apply for different subjects, including mechanical, electrical, computer networking and security, bio-medical science, English, Islamic banking and finance, and law.

The Bangladeshis applicants have to submit their applications to the education ministry by February 3.

Details on www.moedu.gov.bd or <http://www.mofat.gov.bn/index.php/bd-scholarship-2013-2014>.

Daily Star Books

Introduces Home Delivery Service.

From now on you can get any Daily Star Books title delivered at your home. Pay only when you receive your copy.

To place order, visit: www.thedailystar.net/books

The second print of Kuldip Nayar's autobiography Beyond the Lines is in the market now. Nayar's autobiography brings out the most significant political events of the Indian subcontinent, including the liberation war of Bangladesh. Grab your copy through our cash-on-delivery service or visit your nearby book store.



Expanding Horizons

Upcoming titles from
Daily Star Books

Vikram Seth's
From Heaven Lake

Khushwant Singh's
Malicious Gossip

Shashi Tharoor's
Riot