



Workers carrying out restoration work on an ancient boat, which surfaced on the Kuakata beach in July last year. *Inset*, the boat sits at a safe height after being lifted from its grave.

FILE PHOTO



## PRESERVING ANCIENT BOAT AT KUAKATA Army, navy get involved

MORSHED ALI KHAN

A joint team of Bangladesh army and navy is now at Kuakata to chalk out a strategy to shift the ancient boat to a pre-designated site for preservation.

The ancient wooden boat, believed to be a small ocean going ship similar to a "schooner", surfaced on the Kuakata beach in July last year. The fast moving and elegant schooners were widely used by the Western traders in the 17th century. Schooner was a two-sailed ship well known for its elegance and speed.

Following the surfacing of the 72 feet long and 23 feet wide "schooner", the Ministry of Cultural Affairs appointed a committee in November last year involving the Department of Archaeology to conduct a salvage operation.

The technical committee, headed by Yves Marre, a French born Bangladeshi expert on traditional boats, excavated the site and painstakingly lifted the boat to a safe height from its grave.

Meanwhile, in order to preserve the boat at a museum in Kuakata, the Local Government Engineering Department in February this year allocated a plot near Kuakata under its Masterplan programme.

The army team will now conduct a reconnaissance mission and soon formally inform its office about a strategy on how to shift the heavy ship to the designated site, said Maj Abdul Bari of the Engineers Battalion.

Once preserved, the ancient boat is expected to attract thousands of tourists, adding a new prospect to Kuakata's tourism.

## Hold next polls under a neutral govt: MK Anwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member MK Anwar yesterday urged the government to hold the next general polls under a non-party neutral government.

Addressing a rally of Shikhhak Karmachari Oikya Jote in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club, Anwar said the public wants the caretaker government system to be reinstated.

The rally was organised with the demand for release of Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of Bangla daily Amar Desh, and reopening the newspaper's printing press.

"Resistance is building in every house in the country and you [prime minister] will not only be ousted from power but also face trial in people's court," said Anwar.

He said the whole nation is facing severe political crisis and the only person who is living in peace is Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He criticised the arrest of Mahmudur Rahman and sealing off the newspaper's printing press.

Former pro-vice-chancellor of Dhaka University AFM Yousuf Haidar, among others, addressed the rally.

## Bangladesh made progress in HR but challenges remain

*Says mock UN Universal Periodic Review*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although Bangladesh has taken important steps to implement the recommendations made as part of the United Nations Universal Periodic Review on human rights in 2009, the country still needs to overcome some challenges in human rights issues, dignitaries said yesterday.

The country, however, has made considerable progress in ensuring safety of women and children. It has also made new legislations to combat domestic violence and human trafficking, they observed.

They said these while speaking at the mock Universal Periodic Review (UPR), a practice session for reviewing the human rights records of all the UN members.

The National Human Rights

Commission organised the programme at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in the capital ahead of Bangladesh's second cycle of UPR by the UN Human Rights Council to be held in Geneva on April 29 this year.

UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Bangladesh Neil Walker urged the government of Bangladesh to take necessary steps to strengthen human rights watchdog bodies of the country.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said a record number of policies have been formulated to protect human rights.

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman urged all stakeholders, including the government, to work together to ensure the protection of human rights.



Krishibid M A Samad

*"The roots below the earth claim no rewards for making the branches fruitful"*  
-Rabindranath Tagore

*He left behind a family of six children, sixteen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. Our father passed away on the morning of 14th April 2013. A lifetime of nine decades is impressive in itself. Within it he put in government service retiring as Director of Agriculture (Jute Production), devotion to his beloved Mathbaria, his own nursery of plants, and more. Even in his final years, all his thoughts revolved around greening Bangladesh and shedding light upon his birthplace. A strong believer in his faith, he always managed to see the good in people.*

-The grieving family

*Please join us for his Qulkhani on Wednesday 17th of April after Asr prayers at Azad Masjid, Gulshan 2*

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