

Teachers, students, bloggers and media persons covering their mouths with black cloths form a human chain in front of the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday, demanding release of the arrested bloggers.

PHOTO:  
PALASH KHAN



## JUDGES' SALARY HIKE SC fixes Apr 25 for order on govt petition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday fixed April 25 for passing an order on a petition filed by the government regarding raising salaries of lower court judges.

A 10-member Appellate Division bench headed by Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain fixed the date after hearing the petition.

The government on April 16 submitted the petition seeking time from the apex court to implement its order for hiking salaries of lower court judges.

However, the government, in the petition, said it was planning to formulate a law in this regard.

On March 14, the SC had directed the government to increase the pay scale of the judicial officials by 30 percent, instead of the 20 percent proposed by the government, by April 15.

It passed the order during the hearing on the Masdar Hossain Case, popularly known as the judiciary separation case.

The Appellate Division yesterday heard arguments from six senior lawyers on whether the government can pass a bill in parliament for enacting a law on raising salary of the lower court judges although this court had already passed an order for doing so.

## Mahmudur Rahman's release demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists from different media houses, professionals and political leaders attended a demonstration before the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday demanding release of Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of Amar Desh.

They also demanded reopening the newspaper's printing press, which police have kept locked since April 11, withdrawing cases filed against the newspaper's acting chairman and the daily Sangram editor, and release of 19 workers of the press.

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists organised the demonstration where Ruhul Amin Gazi, president of a faction of BFUJ, declared to stage a four-hour hunger strike from 10:00am on Thursday at the same venue.

A Hefajat-e Islam delegation, reading out a letter from Hefajat Ameer Shah Ahmad Shafi, said Hefajat would be forced to announce tougher programmes against the government if the demands were not met.

Mahmudur was arrested on April 11 in three cases, including one over sedition charges for publishing Skype conversations between Justice Md Nizamul Huq, former chairman of International Crimes Tribunal-1, and Ahmed Ziauddin, an expatriate Bangladeshi legal expert.

## CHALLENGING MAGISTRATE'S ACTION HC rejects Huji leader's petition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday rejected a petition filed by Huji leader Mufti Abdul Hannan challenging the legality of a magistrate's action in recording his confessional statement involving Tarique Rahman in connection with the August 21 grenade attack.

The rejection came as per the HC bench's consideration that the petition was not placed before it.

On February 3, AHM Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan, the then additional chief metropolitan magistrate, told a Dhaka court that Hannan in his confessional statement named some intelligence and political bigwigs, including Khaleda Zia's son Tarique, as the attack's masterminds.

Habibur had recorded Hannan's confessional statement in 2011. Judge Shahed Nuruddin of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 of Dhaka recorded Habibur's statement.

Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji) leader Hannan filed the petition with the HC in February this year for expunging Habibur's February 3 statement.

## BANGLADESH-SRI LANKA TALKS Maritime connectivity gets prominence

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Enhanced maritime connectivity between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka figured prominently in talks between the two countries' foreign secretaries in Colombo yesterday.

Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Md Shahidul Haque reached Sri Lanka on Sunday for a three-day official visit to attend the second Foreign Office Consultation (FOC), which began yesterday. The first FOC was held in Dhaka in January 2011.

Based on a protocol signed in April 2003, which provides an institutional framework to review the full range of Bangladesh-Sri Lanka bilateral relations, the Bangladesh foreign secretary held discussions with his counterpart Karunarathne Amunugama at the Ministry of External Affairs yesterday.

During his visit, the Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh will call on Minister of External Affairs Prof GL Peiris, Minister of Economic Development Basil Rajapaksa and Minister of Industry and Commerce Rishad

Bathiyutheen.

The discussions are expected to review the entire range of Sri Lanka's relations with Bangladesh with a focus on exploring new avenues of cooperation and expanding existing economic relations.

Sources in Colombo told The Daily Star that Sri Lanka is eager to enhance maritime connectivity with Bangladesh.

They said both the countries are eager to place greater emphasis on enhanced maritime connectivity between ports in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, with special focus on a regular feeder service including the possibility of coastal shipping.

The agenda for the discussion include the entire range of bilateral relations and an assessment of the progress made in implementing decisions taken during the visit of President Mahinda Rajapaksa to Bangladesh in 2011, at the 4th Joint Economic Commission in 2012 and during the visit of External Affairs Minister GL Peiris to Dhaka in February this year.

## Climate adaptation policy demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five non-government organisations yesterday demanded that the government adopt an effective policy to face the challenges of climate change and ensure transparency and accountability in the adaptation process.

The organisations also demanded direct and immediate handover of the global climate fund payable to Bangladesh.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa), Bangladesh Water Integrity Network, Climate Finance Governance Network, and Green Voice raised the demands at a human chain in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club to mark World Earth Day.

According to the global climate risk index 2012, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Honduras are the most vulnerable countries to the changing climate in the next 20 years, said Zakir Hossain Khan, a programme coordinator of TIB.

In addition, he said, the climate vulnerable monitor report 2011 identified Bangladesh as the "hotspot" of climate risks and apprehended that every year an additional 6 lakh people would be affected in climate change-related cyclones over the next 30 years.

In the 10-point demand, the organisations also called for adopting the second phase of the Kyoto protocol to reduce global temperatures and set up an international migration centre of the United Nations in Bangladesh for climate victims who would lose homes and jobs.

The other demands include increased forestation in the coastal belt, environment friendly and proper development plans and strategies, and skilled disaster management.

## Wasfia Nazreen plans to conquer Mount McKinley

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi mountaineer Wasfia Nazreen will leave for North America on Thursday to conquer Mount McKinley, popularly known as Denali.

Denali is the highest mountain in North America. Her expedition to the 6,194 metre high summit will be her sixth expedition in her ongoing mission to climb the seven highest mountains in the seven continents.

"I anticipate that the expedition will not be an easy one as only 18 percent of the mountaineers make it to the summit," she said at a press conference, organised by and held at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC) in the capital yesterday.

"Mountaineers call Denali a killer summit," she said.

Wasfia had already conquered Mount Elbrus in Europe, Mount Vinson in Antarctica, Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa, Mount Aconcagua in South America and Mount Everest in Asia.

Wasfia, the second Bangladeshi woman to climb Mount Everest, set off for Mount Elbrus on March 16 and suffered from snow blindness while she was on the peak.

Her expedition was entirely funded by her friends and family members, she said.

## BCL leader arrested with pistol

RU CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested a pro-Awami League Bangladesh Chhatra League leader of Rajshahi University (RU) unit with a firearm in Panchabati area of the city on Sunday night.

The arrested Sudipto Salam, joint secretary of BCL RU unit, is a masters student of management department.

Ziaur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Boalia Police Station, said police held Salam in the area around 8:30pm on charge of possessing a pistol.



Bangladeshi mountaineer Wasfia Nazreen addresses a press conference at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture in the capital's Dhanmondi yesterday. On her right is Alexander P Demin, director of the centre.

PHOTO:  
PALASH KHAN



A group of people, under the banner of "Bangladeshi Agricultural Workers in Greece" form a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday, protesting the gunfire on a strawberry farm in the south-western Greek town of Manolada on April 17 injuring at least 32 Bangladeshi workers.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

## CHALLENGING ARTICLE 70 CJ urged to form HC bench to dispose of writ petition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The chief justice has been urged to constitute a larger bench of the High Court for disposing of a writ petition that challenged the Article 70 of the constitution.

The article bars the lawmakers from casting vote in the parliament against their own parties' decisions.

Advocate Eunus Alo Akond, the writ petitioner, submitted an application to Chief Justice Muzammel Hossain's office yesterday to form the bench.

On April 9, he filed the petition arguing that the president is not elected democratically, as the article bars the lawmakers from casting vote.

**SOUTHEAST UNIVERSITY**

# 3rd Convocation Postponed

Graduating students of 2008, 2009 & 2010 of the Southeast University are hereby informed that due to unavoidable circumstances the 3rd Convocation-2013 of this university which was scheduled to be held on 18 May 2013 has been postponed.

The revised date will be notified later on in the national dailies and University Website.

**REGISTRAR**

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