

Childless, they're parents to many

Couple provides free education for poor kids

HOSSAIN SERAI, Magura

A childless couple from Bogura village accepted their barren fate and decided to help educate for free the deprived children of the village.

Secondary school teacher Nawsher Alam and his wife Mahmuda Alam run the school of over 100 students enrolled through playgroup to grade five. The school was established on 44 decimals of land in 1998 from their inherited 55 bighas.

A tin-shed bamboo structure accommodates six classes of Bogura Adarsha Shishu Bikash Kindergarten School.

Volunteers from the area teach the students for a meagre honorarium paid from the couple's own resources. "We are not able to pay good salaries to this dedicated team of teachers. They work very sincerely for an honorarium of around only Tk 1,000 per month," said Nawsher.

Inspired by the couple's initiative, Kazi Asaduzzaman volunteered to become the headmaster of the school. Kazi used to be

an assistant teacher at the Fulbari Secondary School.

"We are volunteers because we want to contribute to building the nation. The couple's sacrifice is an inspiration for us in this sphere", said mathematics teacher Mokhtar Hossain.

Mosammat Sharifa Begum, guardian of a student, said the school had brought hope to the village. "Before the school was set up, we had to appoint private tutors for kids at the pre-primary level," she added.

"The school has opened windows for people of low income groups in the area," said Abu Kashem Titob, the chairman of the Hajipur union parishad.

Nawsher has fulfilled his childhood dream. As he explained, "I set up the school to make education available to and keep it within the reach of the poor."

Mahmuda expressed great satisfaction and said, "Although God has not given us any child of our own, we are proud parents of more than a hundred children learning at our school."



The founder couple and some students at Bogura Adarsha Shishu Bikash KG School in Magura, where students study for free up to class-V. Inset, the couple set up the school as they were not blessed with children of their own.

PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka asks Delhi to explain its tender

FROM PAGE 1

government, any individual or organisation to set up an inland container port in Narayanganj.

According to sources, Kumudini Welfare Trust of Bengal Ltd, Bangladesh, owns around 46 acres of land close to the Shitalakkhya river in Narayanganj and has shown interest in setting up an inland container port jointly with a suitable foreign company.

They offered companies around the world, including the Container Corporation of India Ltd (Concor), the job of preparing a detailed

study, which includes traffic study, financial appraisal and a detailed report.

Swapan Saha, chief operative executive of Kumudini, said, "We offered it to various private companies of Europe and also of India, who have the expertise and financial ability to set up a joint venture container terminal on the land, and teams from Denmark, the Netherlands and India visited the site and showed interest."

Asked about the tender notice on the Indian external affairs ministry website, Swapan said Kumudini had

no relations with the Indian government.

"We offered it to the Indian private company Concor [Container Corporation of India Ltd], not the government. This is absolutely Concor's matter with its external affairs ministry," he added.

He said his company would examine all feasibility studies and then pick a good partner for setting up the container terminal. "We are expecting several companies from different countries for the feasibility study job," he said.

An official of the High

Commission of India in Dhaka told The Daily Star that the Development Partnership Administration of the Ministry of External Affairs had posted the bid invitation on the website to facilitate the inaction of the authorities concerned for its miserable state.

Being a public limited company and due to the rules it has to follow, Concor cannot go for such feasibility study without the support of the Indian commerce and external affairs ministries. That was why the tender was published on the website, reasoned the official.

Only 10ft left to be grabbed

FROM PAGE 16

"Only 30 years ago, large boats could easily pass through this canal. But now, even water can't flow through it properly," said local resident Mohammed Osman Goni. He blamed the inaction of the authorities concerned for its miserable state.

More than 1.5 lakh people of Agrabad CDA residential area, Chhotopul, Abidarpara, Gulbag and Daiarpara suffer from flash floods during heavy downpours in the rainy season, said Md Sikander, councillor of ward-27 of Chittagong

City Corporation (CCC).

A resident of Agrabad CDA area, Sirajul Islam said the narrow canal overflows its banks during downpours as it cannot hold enough water, which ultimately causes flash floods in the area.

According to Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act, 1995, filling in or changing the landscape of any water body mentioned in the government records is a punishable offence.

As per Bangladesh Survey, Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) is the owner of Old Maheshkhali.

Contacted, CPA Secretary Syed Farhad Uddin said illegal occupants have grabbed the canal due to lack of proper maintenance work by the CCC, which is responsible for the job.

Admitting the inaction of the CCC, its Superintendent Engineer Rafiqul Islam said, "We had evicted the encroachers during the tenure of last caretaker government. But they have made a comeback."

He could not confirm any eviction drive by the corporation in near future to recover the occupied land of the canal.

CONTEMPT BY 3 JAMAAT LEADERS

Defence seeks adjournment again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Apparently annoyed at repeated adjournment petitions by the defence, the International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday observed that the lawyers were tactically delaying hearing on the contempt of court proceedings against three Jamaat-e-Islami leaders.

On April 21, the tribunal initiated the contempt proceedings against the Jamaat leaders -- acting secretary general Rafiqul Islam Khan, central executive council member Hamidur Rahman Azad, MP, and Dhaka city unit assistant secretary general Selim Uddin -- for making "provocative

and derogatory remarks" about the court.

Selim Uddin has been arrested following a warrant of arrest issued by the tribunal, while Rafiqul Islam and Hamidur Rahman have been on the run.

The tribunal was set to hear the proceedings yesterday, but the defence came up with an adjournment petition, the third time filed so far.

Defence counsel SM Shahjahan Kabir prayed for a seven-day adjournment as lawyer Tajul Islam, who was supposed to make submission on the proceedings, was abroad.

Justice Obaidul Hassan, chairman of the three-member tribunal,

reminded that the defence had earlier told them Tajul would return home on Tuesday. "There should be consistency between your [the defence's] activities and information," he said.

The defence counsel said Tajul had already set off for Bangladesh.

The tribunal eventually adjourned the proceedings until June 2.

On the absconding Jamaat leaders, the tribunal yesterday said Rafiqul Islam had been addressing rallies which came to their notice through newspaper reports.

"Can't the police catch him?" said Justice Hassan.

Loan rules relaxed

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account (SMA). The provisioning requirement will be 2 percent for housing, professional and investment banks (merchant banks and brokerage house).

The latest amendment said the time limit for the first rescheduling of a classified loan would now be 36 months since the repayment of the last instalment instead of 24 months. The time limit has been reset at 24 and 12 months for second and third rescheduling respectively.

Asked whether the latest decisions were a u-turn from BB's tight stance or it was an election benefit,

Chowdhury said the adjustment had been made to save the economy.

"We did not take a u-turn. We have kept all other conditions intact, including the down payment requirement for rescheduling at 15 percent," he said.

On the formation of Tk 900 crore fund for the capital market, he said the amount would be transferred to the government accounts from BB accounts.

"This will be a budgetary allocation. The government will manage and operate the fund," Chowdhury said.

According to the central bank, the fund will be pro-

vided to the merchant banks under a refinancing scheme in three phases, Tk 300 crore each time. The merchant banks, which incurred losses for waiving interest rates to small investors in the stockmarket, will get loans from this low-cost fund.

Earlier, the deputy governor had given the press briefing a pen picture of the overall economy. He said economic indicators, such as export, import, remittance and foreign exchange reserve had been performing quite well despite the recent political turmoil and unrest.

Victim's brother

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Matin said that soon after the building had caught fire, Rehana told him over the phone that she along with some other workers were trapped on the third floor.

He also quoted her as saying that the garment authority had closed the collapsible gates so that the workers could not get out of the factory.

Later, he searched throughout the building but did not find his sister -- dead or alive, Matin said.

He went to Ashulia Police Station to file a case but police refused to register it. So, he resorted to file the case with the court, demanding

justice, Matin said.

Taking the charges into cognisance against the accused, Senior Judicial Magistrate Taibul Hassan directed the officer-in-charge (investigation) of the police station to submit a report by July 18 after carrying out an investigation in this regard.

Meantime, the High Court on May 19, following a writ petition, instructed the police to arrest Delwar Hossain and produce him before it today to explain his stance on the fire incident.

It asked the government to issue red alerts at all the land ports and airports so that Delwar cannot flee the country.

Hindu temple

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Prodip Kumar, chief of the temple committee, blamed some unidentified criminals for vandalising the idols.

Md Siddikur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Kishoreganj, and Md Anwar Hossain Khan, superintendent of police of the district, visited the spot.

They assured the local Hindus that the hunt was on to nab the fanatics.

Criminals have vandalised and torched more than 28 temples, 175 houses and dozens of shops of Hindus across the country since Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee was sentenced to death in a war crimes case on February 28.

Zia's death

FROM PAGE 16

To observe the day, the main opposition BNP and its associated bodies have chalked out a 10-day programme including discussions, blood donation and free medical treatment.

General Ziaur Rahman, Bangladesh's first military ruler, rose to power on 7 November 1975 following the coup of mid-August and the counter-coup of November 3. In April 1977, he took over as president from Justice ASM Sayem, who had been installed in office by General Khaled Musharraf on November 6, 1975 but was kept on by the new military leadership.

Zia organised presidential elections in June 1978 in which he defeated General MAG Osmany, the candidate of the combined opposition. In the same year, he founded the BNP. On his watch, general elections in early 1979 gave his new party a majority in parlia-

ment. Zia was assassinated in 1981 in an abortive coup at the Chittagong Circuit House.

The BNP yesterday asked all its units to observe the day with due respect and solemnity.

The party flag will be hoisted at half-mast at its Nayapaltan central office in the capital and at all party offices across the country.

Leaders and activists of the party, including BNP Chairperson and Zia's widow Khaleda Zia, will offer Fateha and place wreaths at Zia's grave in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar early in the morning.

Later in the day, she will attend a milad mahfil and inaugurate a blood donation programme at the party's central office premises.

Pro-BNP doctors will provide free medicine and medical treatment in front of the party office in the morning.

Bomb kills cop

REUTERS, PANJSHIR

Taliban suicide bombers, some dressed as police, killed a policeman in a rare attack on a governor's compound in Afghanistan's fiercely anti-Taliban Panjshir valley yesterday, a stark indication of their broadening reach.

The attack was the first of its kind in the Panjshir since October 2011. The Panjshir was an important rallying area for anti-Taliban forces that toppled the Islamist group's government in late 2001.

Two bail

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leader upon a bond of Tk 10,000 with two guarantors. He gave the order considering the "health condition" of the accused.

Asked about the disposal of the bail petitions with such alacrity, the public prosecutor in the cases could not give any satisfactory answer.

The Hefajat leader had earlier made a confessional statement before a magistrate in the case of killing Sub-Inspector of Police Md Shahjahan on May 5 at Shapla Chattar in the capital.

Babunagari was shifted to Birdem hospital from Dhaka Central Jail for treatment. He underwent an operation on his leg and is now doing fine, hospital sources said.

Contacted, the superintendent of the central jail, Md Farman Ali, said, "Police guard for Babunagari at the hospital was withdrawn around 3:30pm."

Earlier, during the hearing of Babunagari's bail petitions, his counsel told the court that the Hefajat leader had been inhumanely tortured while on remand and he fell sick. And he is now fighting for his life at the hospital.

The prosecution did not oppose the bail petitions.

Apart from the case over the killing of the police officer, the two other cases were filed on charges of vandalism, torching and damaging public property, vehicles and attacking police.

Babunagari is the prime accused in 16 cases related to the May 5 mayhem. He was arrested on May 6 and the next day was placed on a 13-day remand in the murder case. Then he was remanded for 22 days in the three cases.

The Hefajat leader in his May 21 judicial confession said the Hefajat's May 5 Dhaka siege programme was designed to oust the Awami League-led alliance government.

BNP LEADERS

Police arrested Salahuddin at the Gulshan residence of BNP Vice-Chairman Morshed Khan on April 9.

He was released from jail in four cases filed against him for vandalism and assaulting police.

But the Detective Branch of police arrested him again at the jail gate on May 16. In the case he is a co-accused with Bulu.

The lawmaker was arrested on May 15 after he came out of the BNP's Nayapaltan central office in the capital.



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