

# NEWSIN brief

## Youth 'kills' grandfather in Feni

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

A youth allegedly beat his grandfather to death over land dispute at Masterpara village in Sadar upazila of Feni yesterday.

The victim was Abdus Sattar, 75, of the village. Locals said Noor Nabi, 25, son of Abdur Rashid, beat his grandfather Sattar, and fled the scene. Later, Sattar died on his way to hospital. Feni Model police said they would take necessary steps regarding the incident.

## Seminar on rural economy held at Ewu

CITY DESK

The Department of Economics of East West University (EWU) organised a seminar on "Structure and Transformation of Rural Economy in Bangladesh" on its campus in the capital Wednesday, said a press release.

With East West University Founding Vice Chancellor Prof Mohammed Farashuddin in the chair, Bangladesh Bar Council former vice chairman Barrister M Amir-ul Islam and East West University Vice Chancellor Prof Ahmed Shafee were also present at the event.

## 1,400kg of mushrooms gutted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

About 1,400kg of mushrooms kept in a silo of Kazi Mushroom Farm were gutted in a fire at Saijara in Magura municipality area early yesterday.

The reason behind the fire could not be known.

Farm owner Kazi Ibrahim said he purchased the mushrooms from local growers for exporting those to middle-eastern countries.

Fire fighters from Magura station rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze within one hour.

## 3 held with pistol during arbitration

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Villagers handed over three youths to police as they allegedly showed a firearm during arbitration at Bhakuli village in Singair upazila of Manikganj yesterday afternoon.

They were arrested with a pistol and two rounds of bullets in their possession.

The three – Uzzal Hossain, 25, Sajib Hossain, 20, and Moktar Ali, 28 – are cousins.

They showed the pistol to the arbitrators to protest an altercation during the arbitration, said Singair police.

## Amend vested property lists

Roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The lists of vested properties issued through gazette notifications must be amended, alongside the Vested Property Return (Amendment) Act, 2013, as those contain inconsistencies, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

An investigation is required to reveal whether the inconsistencies were an intentional ploy of unscrupulous land officials, they said.

The roundtable on the act's implementation was organised by nine rights organisations including Ain O Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, Arpito Shompotti Ain Protirodh Andolon (ASAPA) and Nijera Kori in the capital's Cirdap auditorium.

There are many mistakes in the names of owners or inheritors. In some cases, lands of Muslims were included as vested properties, said Nijera Kori Coordinator Khushi Kabir.

Many lands owned by minorities at present were also included, said ASAPA General Secretary Advocate Subrata Chowdhury.

The government will discuss with experts and take necessary steps if any further amendment is required, said Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu.

## Death anniversary

CITY DESK



Today is the eighth death anniversary of Prof Md Shafiqul Islam, former department head of Govt Victoria College in Comilla.

## LEGALITY OF ASHIYAN CITY PROJECT

## CJ forms 3-member HC bench

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain has formed a three-member High Court bench to decide the legality of activities of Ashiyan City housing project.

The activities of Ashiyan City, which had a conditional and partial approval from the housing ministry to develop land in the capital's Holan and Ashkona areas, are now remaining halted following an earlier HC order.

On Thursday, the chief justice constituted the larger bench of the HC led by Justice Syed ABM Mahmudul Huq for disposing of a writ petition through holding its final hearing. Two other judges of the bench are Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice ABM Altaf Hossain, Supreme Court sources said.

In December last year, some eminent rights activists filed the writ petition with the HC saying that Ashiyan City authorities had been filling and constructing structures on around 230 acres of land even though the company had Rajuk permission for development on only 43 acres.

The CJ's decision came after some rights activists submitted an application to him (CJ) on May 29 this year, apprehending that they will not get justice from the two-judge

HC bench led by Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque in the case.

Now, the three-member bench will fix a date for hearing the matter, SC sources said.

Earlier, the HC bench of Justice Hoque and Justice ABM Altaf Hossain was holding final hearing on the petition in line with a SC order.

In the application submitted by Chief Executive of Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (Bela) Syeda Rizwana Hasan on behalf of the petitioners, they prayed to the CJ that he pass an order transferring the writ petition from the HC bench led by Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque to another bench for disposal.

On June 4, the HC bench led by Justice Hoque adjourned the hearing of the writ petition.

Earlier on January 2, following the same writ petition, the HC ordered Rajuk to stop the activities of Ashiyan City, and its site clearance certificate, issued by the Department of Environment, and the renewal of the certificate.

It also issued a rule upon the authorities concerned of the government and Ashiyan City to explain as to why the issuance of the environmental certificate and its renewal should not be declared illegal.

## 'MAGURCHHARA DAY' OBSERVED

## Foreign oil, gas exploration firms lack efficiency: Prof Anu

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Foreign oil and gas exploration companies lack efficiency and are destroying Magurchhara, said National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports Member Secretary Prof Anu Muhammad.

The power, energy and mineral resources ministry is acting as a "foreign agent". "Now our Bay of Bengal has been handed over to them (the exploration companies). Both the Awami League and BNP speak in the same tone," he told a citizens' meeting. The committee's Moulvibazar unit organised the meeting in Moulvibazar Town Club on Thursday on the eve of the 16th "Magurchhara Day".

On June 14, 1997, a massive explosion and a subsequent massive blaze tore apart the Magurchhara gas field in Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila while US energy company Occidental was drilling a well there.

Reports of two committees formed during the then Awami League government estimated the damage to forest resources Tk 9,858 crore, 29 tea gardens Tk 46.07 crore, the railway Tk 21 crore, Jalalabad Gas Company Tk 43 lakh and the electricity department Tk 4.35 crore.

Indigenous Khasia people lost betel leaf plantations worth Tk 18 lakh while about 96 acres of Lawachhara Reserve Forest was completely burnt. The inferno also destroyed a teak grove raised between 1944 and 1950, bamboo shacks created between 1993 and 1995, and a strip of plantation established in 1994. Though Occidental was widely blamed for the devastation, compensation still remains a far reach. Afterwards, operations of the gas field changed hands twice, to Unocal and then to Chevron.

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