

We apologise

We apologise to our readers for publishing two photos with erroneous captions in the last one week.

The photo, top right, of an under-construction bridge at Shuklalhat on Dhaka-Chittagong highway was published in our August 22 issue with the caption saying the photo was taken six months back and the "construction work has not progressed much there".

Upon receiving a rejoinder from the communications ministry on August 22, we investigated and found that overall work of the four-lane Dhaka-Chittagong highway project was very slow, but construction of this particular bridge was completed and the communications minister inaugurated it on July 26. We stand corrected by running a photo, left, that shows the present status of the bridge.

Yesterday, we published a photo of a classroom at Jahangirnagar University, bottom right, saying students hang around in the classroom as "yet another class was suspended." Actually, the photo was taken when the students were coming out after attending one of a handful of classes held that day.

In both cases, we had journalistic lapses. We are taking actions against the persons responsible for the misleading photos and captions.



JU back to normalcy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Academic and administrative activities resumed at Jahangirnagar University yesterday after a four-day strike by a section of teachers holding the vice-chancellor in confinement.

The agitating teachers under the banner of Sadharon Sikkhak Forum Saturday night suspended their movement for 15 days after the education minister assured them of forming a committee to probe the allegations against the VC.

JU VC Prof Anwar Hossain, whom they had confined to his office demanding his resignation, was freed. He discharged his regular duties yesterday.

The university got back its usual environment with teachers, students and staff returning to its campus. Regular classes and examinations were held.

"It's really good to see normalcy restored on the campus. We don't want disruption to our studies anymore and also don't want to face session jam due to teachers' politics," said Nure-alam, a third year student of the physics department.

The agitating teachers also joined work. "We hope that the temporary solution that came up in the meeting [with the education minister] will be a permanent one," said Amir Hossain, dean of the social science faculty.

The crisis at JU began on April 6 when Chhatra League's JU general secretary Rajib Ahmed Rassel assaulted a teacher.

Following the incident, teachers met the VC and demanded punishment to the leader of BCL, a student body associated with the ruling Awami League. The VC assured them of expelling Rajib from the university.

Enraged by VC's inaction, teachers launched a movement on April 14 under the banner of the JU Teachers' Association.

But they had to stop the agitation following a High Court ruling on July 24, in which the court ordered the JU authorities to ensure uninterrupted academic activities on the campus.

Six days later, JU teachers resumed the movement under the banner of Sadharon Sikkhak Forum.

On August 21, the agitating teachers confined the VC to his office.

To defuse the crisis, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid sat with the teachers Saturday evening and assured them of taking necessary steps on the matter in line with a probe report to be submitted in 15 days.

The protesters also accused the VC of being complicit in anomalies in the admission process and teachers' appointments, ruining the campus environment by taking up unnecessary projects, and misusing university funds.

As many as 34 days' classes had been suspended and administrative activities halted for 43 consecutive days, thanks to the protest. Besides, the annual senate meeting, several syndicate meetings and an academic council meeting could not be held.

West moves

FROM PAGE 16

"There is very little doubt at this point that a chemical weapon was used by the Syrian regime against civilians in this incident," based on the reported number of victims and their symptoms, as well as US and other foreign intelligence, one official in Washington told AFP.

Moscow bluntly warned the West that military action against the Syrian regime would be a "tragic mistake".

Iran also issued a strident warning yesterday.

"If the United States crosses this red line, there will be harsh consequences for the White House," armed forces deputy chief of staff Massoud Jazayeri said, without elaborating.

Syria's foreign ministry said that visiting UN disarmament envoy Angela Kane, tasked by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to establish the terms of an inquiry, struck an accord Sunday with the Syrian government for a probe.

The United Nations said in a statement the investigation would begin as early as today.

Syria's opposition says more than 1,300 people died when regime forces unleashed chemical weapons against rebel-held towns east and southwest of Damascus on August 21, while Doctors Without Borders said 355 people had died of "neurotoxic" symptoms.

Damascus has strongly denied it carried out an attack using chemical arms, instead blaming the rebels.

US officials said President Barack Obama, who held crisis talks Saturday with top aides, would make an "informed decision" about how to respond to an "indiscriminate" chemical weapons attack.

Washington had noted that Syria had offered to let UN inspectors view the site of the alleged attack, but suggested it was too little, too late, one official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"If the Syrian government had nothing to hide and wanted to prove to the world that it had not used chemical weapons in this incident, it would have ceased its attacks on the area and granted immediate access to the UN five days ago," he said.

US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel said earlier the US military was "prepared to exercise whatever option" against Syria but intelligence was still being evaluated.

On a visit to Malaysia, Hagel said the US defence department had prepared "options for all contingencies" at Obama's request.

French President Francois Hollande said evidence indicated the regime was to blame for the chemical attacks, while Israel demanded action against its Arab neighbour.

If confirmed, it would be the deadliest use of chemical agents since late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein gassed Iranian troops and Kurdish rebels in the 1980s.

More than 100,000 people have been killed in Syria since an uprising against Assad's rule flared in March 2011, the UN says.

Oishee denied bail

Petition for shifting her case to juvenile court also rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected bail to Oishee Rahman, who had confessed before it to her involvement in the killing of her parents -- Special Branch police inspector Mahfuzur Rahman and Swapna Rahman.

It also turned down three other petitions filed by Oishee's lawyer on Saturday seeking permission to visit the crime scene and medical treatment of the accused, and asking the court to send the case to a juvenile court.

Metropolitan Magistrate Anwar

Sadat passed the ruling, in which he stated that the court should not grant bail to the accused in the primary stage of the investigation and more so after she had made the confessional statements.

Regarding the petition asking the court to send the case to a juvenile court, the court order says the issue will be settled after it is decided whether she is a minor.

The defence lawyers will be allowed to visit the crime scene only after the submission of the police report and Oishee will be provided with treatment according to the jail

code, if necessary, the court said.

Oishee surrendered at Paltan Police Station in the capital 22 hours after the decomposing bodies of her parents were recovered from their Chamelibagh residence on August 16.

After taking her into custody, detectives arrested her friend Mizanur Rahman Rony and her house help Khadiza Khatun Sumi.

Oishee and Sumi were sent to the National Juvenile Development Centre in Tongi, Gazipur, after they made their confessional statements under the section-164 on Saturday.

ACC to sue BTCL MD, 21 others

FROM PAGE 16

BTCL officials were in league with the Ericsson officials in erasing incoming international call records between June 2009 and December 2012, at Mohakhali exchange in

the capital, said the investigator.

Earlier, the ACC also found that the BTCL's international calls had drastically dropped to around 2.50 crore minutes a day from over 5.50 crore

minutes a day in early 2009 as the calls were bypassing proper channels.

An ACC investigator said around 70 percent of international call records had been erased from the call details recorder at

the BTCL offices in Moghbazar and Mohakhali since 2009.

Some records were without trace, which helped carriers to gobble up the money they owed BTCL.

Ashraf hid in his village

FROM PAGE 16

Jamaat-e-Islami, and had taken part in the 1970 election campaign.

During his 24-minute testimony, the 60-year-old school teacher said Ashrafuzzaman, son of Azhar Khan of Chhoto Bhatara village in Maksudpur in Gopalganj, was acquainted with him.

In 1970, Ashrafuzzaman was an active worker of the Islami Chhatra Sangha at Dhaka University and had taken part in electioneering for Pakistan Democratic Party candidate Abdus Salam Khan in Maksudpur, he added.

The Democratic Party had stood against the Liberation War and was banned immediately after liberation.

Firoz said when they had learned about Ashrafuzzaman's alleged involvement in the killings of intellectuals, they attempted to catch him but

failed.

A few days later a police officer from Dhaka had gone to Maksudpur in search of Ashrafuzzaman. From the police Firoz had learned that Ashrafuzzaman was an accused in two murder cases filed with Ramna and Mirpur police in the capital, said the witness.

From Lutfar Rahman Khan, Ashrafuzzaman's cousin, Firoz had learned that Daily Purbadesh had published a report on the involvement of the accused in the killings of intellectuals, along with his photo.

The witness added he had later learned from Ashrafuzzaman's family members that he went to the US through India and Pakistan.

Tribunal-appointed defence counsel Abdus Shukur Khan completed cross-examination of the witness and claimed Ashrafuzzaman was in his

village home during the entire Liberation War and was not involved in any anti-liberation activities.

Firoz rejected his claim saying, "That is not true."

The tribunal led by Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah with Justice Md Shahinur Islam adjourned proceedings until tomorrow. Tribunal Chairman Justice Obaidul Hassan was on leave yesterday.

Mueen Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman, now abroad, are facing 11 charges for their alleged involvement in the killings of 18 intellectuals in the last week of the nine-month-long war.

Earlier, Shariatullah Bangali, a freedom fighter and resident of Chowdhury Mueen Uddin's union in Feni, testified that they had attempted to catch Mueen

Uddin for his alleged involvement in the intellectuals' killings but failed.

Shibir's key man

FROM PAGE 16

Tuhin. They are our men infiltrated into BCL and they helped us flee from the campus after the attack."

His claim of infiltration was supported by the RMP commissioner, who said: "We got some names of BCL men from him. We have grounds to believe his statement."

BCL's RU unit President Mizanur Rahman Rana, however, dismissed the claim.

"All are just to save the real culprits. There is no Shibir infiltration into BCL," he told The Daily Star, when contacted.

In the press conference, Masum said he joined Shibir in 2007 while he was studying at Rajshahi Polytechnic Institute. Now he studies at Prime

University in Dhaka.

Police say he faces 15 cases in Rajshahi and three cases in Dhaka. One case in Dhaka involves the murder of a taxi driver, Faruk Hossain, in 2011.

On July 22 that year, detectives had arrested and brought him to Dhaka but his party had managed to secure his release within a few days.

Police were again looking for him since November last year when Shibir men attacked police forces and unleashed widespread violence in Rajshahi centring on the verdict against Jamaat leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee in a war crimes case.

During the November-December violence, he hurled cocktails at police officer Mokbul Hossain, beat up sub-inspector

Jahangir Hossain and a constable and snatched firearms from law enforcers, police said.

Meanwhile, Rajshahi city unit Shibir publicity secretary Asaduzzaman in an email described Masum's arrest as an "organised drama by the police" to damage Shibir's reputation.

In the email sent to some reporters, Asaduzzaman said Rajshahi Jamaat president and general secretary protested Masum's statement that Shibir and BCL men were involved in the attack on Tuhin.

He added Masum had never been Shibir's assistant publicity secretary and that he was expelled from the organisation in 2010 for violating party discipline.

Powered by AL

FROM PAGE 1

power, most of which will go out of operation within this year and the next year, creating a void.

This should not pose as a problem since these rental projects were taken up for the interim period till the implementation of large power projects.

But execution of such large schemes is not that much assuring. Many big power projects supposed to come into operation next year and in 2015, have so far made zero progress.

The government has taken initiatives to add another 11,497 MW power between 2013 and 2018 to stay close to the increased power demand.

PROJECTS UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

As per the PDB progress report, almost three dozen power projects having 6,981 MW capacity are now under implementation, half of which are in private sector.

The government expects to

add another 1,329 MW power within this December, with one-third of that coming from more rental power projects.

Saturday's inauguration of the gas-fired 412 MW Haripur combined cycle plant built by Marubeni is the biggest power project under this government.

A 150 MW plant in Khulna will also come into operation this month. By December, the existing Sirajganj 150 MW plant will be upgraded to generate another 75 MW.

Summit Power would be able to begin partial generation of power at its 335 MW Meghnaghat gas or fuel-based power plant in November from this year.

Besides, six rental power companies which missed their deadlines in the past are also supposed to add 472 MW power between this month and December. Some of these rental companies are owned by AL men and have missed their deadlines by up to two years.

Bibiyan phase two and three 450 MW power projects being implemented by Summit and Marubeni respectively would come into operation next year and 2015.

Summit's other project -- 450 MW Bibiyana phase one -- is in the process of cancellation.

Local Orion group was awarded two large coal-based power projects in Khulna and Chittagong with a total production capacity of 630 MW in the middle of last year. But the company later sought the government's permission to merge the two projects at one place -- Khulna -- for the sake of easy coal transportation and project's cost effectiveness. The government has recently approved the merger, and Orion is purchasing land for this project that aims to start operation in 2017.

Orion is also purchasing land for another 522 MW coal-based power project in Mawa that would also come

into operation in 2017.

Like Orion, Indian company Lanco is seeking government approval for controversially relocating its 225 MW project from Bhola to Sirajganj. The project was originally aimed at utilising the Bhola gas field which is not connected to the national grid. It would be delayed by at least a year because of shifting of the site.

PROJECTS UNDER TENDER PROCESS

Besides, the government is awarding contracts or processing tenders of five public sector power projects (production capacity totalling 1,305 MW) and 14 private powers (total production capacity 2,669 MW). Among these, there are two 600 MW coal-fired projects.

In addition, seven other public sector projects, including the 1,320 MW Rampal coal-fired one, are making progress. These will add yet another 3,435 MW power.

Where's final report?

FROM PAGE 1

to the finance ministry on Friday. However, nobody could say when and who submitted the report to the minister.

On Thursday, Hossain, a member of the government-sponsored committee, told The Daily Star that he would submit his part of the report by Sunday, even if the full report was not compiled by then.

The lawyer's aides in Dhaka yesterday said he flew out of the country on Thursday night.

"I believe the commission has authorised Ajmalul Hossain [to submit the report]. As far as I know this is the commission's report," said Muhith.

Asked about the contents of the report, he said: "The report contains mostly legal issues."

A finance ministry official said the minister yesterday asked officials of the banking division to contact the other two members of the commission to claim ownership of the report.

There was confusion as Commission Chairman Mamun Ur Rashid has been out of the country for the past few weeks, said the official.

Apparently, the commission members had earlier agreed to complete the report separately, with Hossain being assigned to write the part on legal issues and Moslehuddin Ahmed, a chartered accountant, another part on accounting.

Sources said Ahmed had long completed his part and sent it over to the chairman. Finance ministry officials, however, could not contact the former bureaucrat as he is out of the country.

Asked whether the confusion, which occurred due to the chairman being away, has embarrassed the government, Muhith said: "If [Hossain] was authorised to turn in the report on behalf of the commission, it is all right -- there is nothing to be embarrassed."

Mamun Ur Rashid, Moslehuddin Ahmed and Ajmalul Hossain could not be reached for comments. Nobody could say when the chairman would return.

Drafted in May last year to review the Grameen Bank's governing structure and its relations to the independent associated companies founded by Prof Muhammad Yunus, the commission was due to submit its report on July 20.

Though the report was not complete by then, the commission still had to

vacate its premises by that date. There have been claims that the absence of an office space has complicated matters further, as the members had to work on important issues separately.

The commission was originally scheduled to submit the final report in September 2012, but it found it "impossible" to do so in just three months.

Besides, the long absence of a commission member and the resignation of another hampered the activities of the government-sponsored body.

The deadline, subsequently, was extended four times, and it was finally set on July 20. In February this year, the commission submitted an interim report, which created a wave of protests at home and abroad.