

SABITA CHAKMA'S KILLING
Arrest of killers demanded
DU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Hill Tracks Students Association and Hill Women Federation yesterday demanded immediate arrest of the killers of the indigenous woman Sabita Chakma.

They made the demand at a rally at the base of Aparajeya Bangla of Dhaka University.

The protesters suspect that four Bangladeshi labourers, who were digging for sand near the place where Sabita was mowing grass, raped and killed the woman in Kamalchhara of Khagrachhara sadar upazila. Sabita's sandal, sweater, scythe and a sack of grass lay scattered on the scene.

The indigenous students and women's rights' activists said violence against indigenous women was rising gradually in the district due to the culture of impunity.

The body of Sabita was recovered from a bush in

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JUBO LEAGUE MAN KILLING
Six fellows sent to jail in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chittagong court yesterday sent to jail six Jabo League men accused in a case over the murder of a fellow activist, Humayun Kabir Murad, who was hacked in Chittagong city's Ambagan on October 29, 2013.

Khokan Chandra Tanti, Ali Hossain, Md Ziaul alias Sohag, Md Masum, Md Suman and Md Saiful surrendered yesterday as per directives of a High Court bail granted on January 27.

Apart from them, five others are also accused in the case filed with Khulshi Police Station the day after the murder.

Of them, Afasruddin Riyad, Jahedul Islam Roni and Rahul Das Hridoy are in jail while Tajul Islam and Md Sohel are absconding.

FAILING TO PRODUCE WITNESSES IN 10 YEARS
HC asks PP, addl PP to explain on March 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked the Dhaka public prosecutor (PP) and an additional PP to explain why their office failed to produce witnesses of a murder case in 10 years past the charge framing.

It also asked the PP, Abdullah Abu, and additional PP, Dewan Mohiuddin, of the Fifth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka to appear on March 4 to give the explanations.

As per the Code of Criminal Procedure, the PP is supposed to produce witnesses and their depositions are supposed to be recorded in 360 days following the charge framing, said the HC bench on hearing a petition.

The petition was filed by Dotto Babu alias Touhid, with the HC on February 2 appealing to clear him of the charges.

He is one of the five the Dhaka court framed charges against on May 3, 2003, Assistant Attorney General Gazi Md Mamun-Ur Rashid told The Daily Star.

Initially, there were eight accused in the charge sheet police submitted on October 25, 1999 in the case one Saidul filed with Motijheel Police Station on May 30, 1999, the day his brother Shamim Sobhan was hacked to death in the capital's Motijheel.

VIOLATING RAJUK'S PLOT ALLOTMENT RULES
ACC launches probe against expatriates' welfare secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has launched a probe against Khondaker Showkat Hossain, former secretary to the Ministry of Housing and Public Works, for taking allotment of three Rajdhani Unnayan Kartirpakkha (Rajuk) plots violating Rajuk rules.

Khondaker, now secretary to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, took the plots for himself and his wife and mother between 2000 and 2005 in the capital's Purbachal and Uttara projects, said a top ACC official.

According to Rajuk rules, a husband and his wife cannot own separate plots in the projects, said the official. The plots were offered to the public and under around 12 categories of quotas at subsidised prices.

ACC Deputy Director Jatan Kumar Roy was appointed early February to probe the allegation, he said, adding, "We wrote to the Rajuk authorities to provide all necessary documents regarding the plots."

Khondaker told The Daily Star yesterday that he took allotment of the Uttara plot in 2000 and his wife Aysha Begum the Purbachal plot in 2005 "maintaining conditions in the Rajuk advertisement issued for the concern plots."

Regarding his mother's plot, he said, "I am no longer

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Murky puddles cover the whole of the Suhrawardy Udyan section of Amar Ekushey Granthamela 2014 yesterday, causing sufferings to the visitors. The photo was taken around 5:00pm.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



DHAKA STREETS RAVAGED BY LITTLE DRIZZLE

The condition of the roads in the capital has become dismal following two days of drizzle. Here are some snaps of those taken yesterday. 1) The street in front of Sir Salimullah Medical College Mitford Hospital in Babubazar covered with thick sludge of slippery mud. 2) An elderly man has no choice but to step into a pothole full of muddy water on the road before Ispahani Girls' School and College in Moghbazar. 3) A rickshaw-puller struggles to maintain control over his vehicle on mud-covered slippery Dilu Road in New Eskaton. 4) A crater on the road in front of Mouchak market is filled with water, posing dangers to drivers and pedestrians.

PHOTO: STAR



Puddles, rainwater pestle Suhrawardy Udyan sellers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although the spring sun started shining bright from the morning, book stalls at the Suhrawardy Udyan portion of Amar Ekushey Granthamela 2014 yesterday were trying to recover from the aftermath of the continuous drizzle since Saturday evening.

The brick path from the entrance ended at the security arch some feet away. The Daily Star, on a visit around 3:30pm, found visitors desperately trying to make their way across the maze of numerous murky puddles to reach the stalls.

Moreover, most stalls in the middle rows were found dealing with water seeping through the tarpaulin and particle board roof of the Bangla Academy provided.

For this, nearly half of the books on

display in Student Ways stall had to be shifted elsewhere. "Bangla Academy should have provided staff to drain out the water on the roof," said Miron Mitra, a salesperson there.

Shams Shuvro, owner of Pathak Shamabesh, was supervising workers sweeping the stall's wet floor. "Instead of

helping, the academy officials announced yesterday (Sunday) that we have to take care of this problem ourselves," he said.

He said he had to even bring electricians to fix the wiring to avoid short circuits. Salespersons in many stalls also complained that they could not switch on lights on Sunday evening in fear of a short circuit.

Yesterday, 58 new books arrived while publication ceremonies of 10 were held in the fair in the capital.



CRACKDOWN AGAINST ILLEGALS

57 more Bangladeshis detained in Malaysia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Malaysian law enforcers detained 57 more Bangladeshis between Thursday and Sunday under an ongoing nationwide crackdown against illegal foreign workers.

With this, at least 508 Bangladeshis have so far been held since the beginning of the crackdown on January 21 in order to streamline the country's labour market, according to the Malaysian media.

Malaysian English daily The Star yesterday reported that the immigration department with law enforcers conducted raids and arrested at least 4,640 illegal immigrants and 48 employers.

Of them, 1,800 are Indonesians, 642 Myanmar nationals, 502 Filipinos, 288 Nepalese, 239 Indian nationals, 209 Pakistanis and the remaining 452 are from various countries, said Malaysian Immigration Director Datuk Aloyah Mamat.

The foreigners have been detained for various offences, including overstaying, not possessing identification documents and visiting with fake travel documents, Mamat said.

Contacted, Mantu Kumar Biswas, labour counsellor of Bangladesh high commission in Kuala Lumpur, said they had information that around 457 Bangladeshis were picked up till yesterday.

"Now, there is no information of the massive raid against

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13 students selected for second round

CITY DESK

A total of 13 students from three Dhaka schools were selected for the second divisional round as the first round of The Daily Star Spelling Bee's third season, hosted by champs21.com and powered by Horlicks.

Of the students, three are from The City School, four from Saint Jude's International School and six from YWCA Higher Secondary Girls' School.

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5 new trustees join BFF's Saturday meeting

CITY DESK

Five new trustees of Bangladesh Freedom Foundation (BFF) attended its meeting at the organisation's office in the capital's Mohammadpur on Saturday.

The meeting was chaired by Syed Manzur Elahi, former adviser to a caretaker government and chairman of the BFF trustee board, says a press release.

The five new trustees are Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury, former adviser to a caretaker government; Mohammad Kaykobad, professor of Buet; Firdous Azim, professor of Brac University; Dr Ananya Raihan, executive director of d.net; and Dr Rezaur Rahman, former chief scientific officer of Atomic

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Connectivity to dominate Saarc ministers' talks

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Strengthening relations with observers, granting the observer status to Russia and Turkey, and regional connectivity will prominently figure in the Saarc foreign ministers' meeting in the Maldives Thursday.

In its 35th meeting, the Council of Ministers will also talk about the next secretary general from Nepal, cultural ties with China and South Korea, and ways to streamline, rationalise, and restructure different mechanism of the eight-member regional body.

In the run-up to the ministerial meeting, the Saarc Programming Committee, comprising directors general of the Saarc wings of Foreign Ministries began its meeting in Male, capital of the Maldives, yesterday, while the Saarc Standing Committee, made up of the foreign secretaries, will meet on Tuesday-Wednesday. The Programming Committee discussed issues of cooperation, and financial and administrative matters of Saarc. Delegations from all member states—Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka—joined the gathering.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam will lead the Bangladesh delegation at the ministerial meeting, which will be attended by foreign ministers of all eight members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) and where Nepal is expected to propose a tentative date of November for the next Saarc Summit.

Currently, Saarc has nine observers—Australia, China, European Union, Iran, Japan, Korea, Mauritius, Myanmar, and the USA, said officials.

Proposals on enhancing connectivity between Saarc countries, including launching of a ferry service between India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and a trial run of a container train between Nepal, India and Bangladesh are on the agenda.

This will be the highest-level regional meeting since the last Saarc Summit took place in the Maldives in November 2011.

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

South Asians should unite, pressurise govt

Seminar told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The peoples of South Asia should unite and force their governments to take action to reduce the effect of climate change, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They said there is a regional body called South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (Saarc) and it can be utilised as an effective platform for tackling climate change if the governments of the states reach a consensus about reducing their "carbon footprints".

The seminar titled "Climate Change in South Asian Countries: Opportunities and Challenges for Regional Cooperation" was organised by EquityBD, and Oxfam at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

"We must understand that we are the citizens of South Asia. We should rise in solidarity and pressurise the governments to make Saarc an effective platform," said BNP Standing Committee Member Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman.

Former environment and forest minister Dr Hasan Mahmud and Dr Sarba Raj Khadka of People's SAARC, a South Asian civil society alliance based in Nepal, among others, spoke.