

NEWS IN brief

Scraping of riverbank leases sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some environmental and rights organisation yesterday demanded cancellation of the leases of the banks of the rivers across the country particularly around the capital for protecting the water bodies from grabbing.

The demand was placed at a press conference at the National Committee to Protect Shipping, Roads and Railways office in the capital, said a statement.

The organisations include the committee, the Green Club of Bangladesh, Citizens Rights Movement, and Buriganga Bachao Andolon.

Shabbir new envoy to South Africa

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to appoint Shabbir Ahmad Chowdhury, currently serving as high commissioner to Mauritius, as the next Bangladeshi high commissioner to South Africa.

Shabbir belongs to the ninth batch of BCS (foreign affairs) cadre, said a foreign ministry press release.

In his diplomatic career, Shabbir served in Bangladesh Missions in Beijing, Brussels, London and New York in different capacities.

He graduated from Buet in Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Later, he obtained a diploma from the International Institute of Public Administration, Paris.

SCBA election on March 15-16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The annual election of the Supreme Court Bar Association for its 14 executive posts including president and secretary will be held on March 15 and 16.

A notification was issued in this regard yesterday. SCBA superintendent Nimesh Chandra Das told The Daily Star.

A total of 4,362 lawyers have registered as voters.

Submission of nomination papers started yesterday, of which last date is February 25 and the deadline for withdrawal of candidatures is March 1, Nimseh said.

Dr Michael Chowen visits Jibon Tari Floating Hospital

CITY DESK

Dr Michael Chowen CBE and Maureen Chowen visited IMPACT's Jibon Tari Floating Hospital on Monday.

Dr Chowen and his family are a long-term supporter of IMPACT Foundation, Bangladesh for its work in prevention and cure of preventable disabilities in Bangladesh.

Michael Chowen has been awarded a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) for his commendable services to charity.

The floating hospital is now located on the bank of the river Shitalakhya in Narayanganj, said a press release.

Namaz-e-janaza

CITY DESK

The namaz-e-janaza of Syed Sidratul Amin, son of Syed Ruhul Amin and Shafinaz Amin, will be held today after the Asr prayers in Azad Mosque of Gulshan, Dhaka.

His qulhwani will be held on Friday after the Asr prayers in Baridhara Park Road Mosque on Road-9, Baridhara, Dhaka, says a press release.

Death anniversary

CITY DESK

Today is the 3rd death anniversary of Chaiti Roy, a student of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College.

Chaiti was the eldest daughter of Shipra Roy and Rabindranath Roy, a public relation officer of the primary and mass education ministry.

She died in 2012 and was a student of class-nine.

The parents requested all to pray for their daughter's departed soul.

Muhith clueless about

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businesses and investors make decisions.

Former caretaker government adviser Akbar Ali Khan finds nothing wrong in migration in today's globalised world. "But," he said, "the issue is why the upper class is migrating."

Senior economist Dr AB Mirza Azizul Islam said the government should keep politics aside while formulating economic policies.

Salehuddin Ahmed, another economist, said regulatory bodies should not mix their works with politics. "Otherwise, institutions, which need to be regulated, will not function properly."

Agamee Prakashani published the book, priced at Tk 300.

29 ex-MPs urge

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deny the political crisis; they were conducting petrol bomb attacks, sabotage, and anarchy by using state machineries, but shifting the blame onto the BNP-led 20-party alliance.

Besides, the government has imposed censorship on the presentation of news by issuing unwritten press advices as in the regime of military ruler HM Ershad, they claimed.

DHAKA TODAY

Discussion

Bhorer Khagoj and other will organise a discussion on river management.

Venue: National Press Club, Time: 10:00am.

Workshop

Research Initiative Bangladesh and other will organise a workshop on "Right

Information act". Venue: Hotel Six Seasons, Gulshan-2, Time: 10:00am.



Farmers of Tangail taking home a good yield of mustard this year, thanks to favourable weather. But they are not sure whether they will be able to sell their produce in the market, amid the non-stop transport blockade. The crop has been cultivated on 39,001 hectares of land across 12 upazilas. The photo was taken in the sadar upazila.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

HC bench refuses to hear bail petition of Jannati

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



A High Court bench yesterday refused to hold the final hearing on a bail petition of young entrepreneur Jannati Hossain detained over the death of her business partner Mostamsir Ashraf.

The bench also dropped the petition from its hearing list.

It did not mention the reason for the refusal but advised the petitioner to go to another bench for hearing. Assistant Attorney General Mohammad Ali Zinnah told The Daily Star.

On July 11 last year, Jannati crashed Mostamsir's car into a parked police van near Mohakhali flyover. Mostamsir, who was beside her, was gravely injured and died on the way to hospital, police said. Tejgaon police sued her for reckless driving.

Mostamsir was the son of Khan Mohammad Abdul Mannan, a former district court judge and now serving as the inspector general of registration (of land).

Ten days after the accident, Mostamsir's family lodged a murder case against Jannati, her husband, her father and her two brothers, accusing her of killing Mostamsir in a planned way to take over the business.

Of the 15 people named as prosecution witnesses, four are high-flying government officials.

Her lawyer said he would move the petition before another bench soon.

Jannati and Mostamsir launched Echo Sparks, a music cafe and gaming zone, in Uttara in December last year.

WAR CRIMES TRIAL Another implicates Hasan in killing of 8 Netrakona Hindus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Corroborating the 16th prosecution witness, another told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday that Syed Md Hasan Ali shot dead his three paternal uncles and his men killed five other family members following his order on September 27, 1971.

Nani Gopal Ghosh, the 17th prosecution witness from Paikura village in Kendua upazila of Netrakona, said the eight were shot dead in Makrul Beel in Tarail of Kishoreganj when they were fleeing the country on the day during the Liberation War.

Hasan and his men also looted gold ornaments and cash from his aunts who were somehow saved by a local Union Parishad chairman, said 71-year-old Gopal as he had heard

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FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE Workshop urges greater coordination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh, which is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries, needs to have a greater coordination and an effective approach to address its increasing environmental challenges, speakers said at a workshop yesterday.

The workshop on the Country Investment Plan (CIP) for Environment, Forestry and Climate Change Sectors was held at a hotel in the capital.

Under a project titled "Strengthening the Environment, Forestry and Climate Change Capacities" of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, and its agencies, the CIP is being developed to coordinate among all environment protection programmes in Bangladesh. The CIP will be prepared by the end of this year.

Addressing as chief guest, Dr Kamal Uddin Ahmed, secretary to the ministry, said only developing the CIP was not enough rather there was a lot more to do for translating the policies into practices in order to get tangible results. But the CIP can help address the possible problems in this regard, he added.

Nurul Karim, additional secretary (environment) to the ministry; Mike Robson, representative of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN; Janina Jaruzelski, mission director of USAID; Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, the project director, and Dr Prabhu Budhathoki, chief technical adviser to the project, also spoke.

The ministry with assistance from FAO and USAID is implementing the project.



The winner of the Cutest Couple Photo Contest 2015, Sakib Md Talha and Adrita Aman Mridha; first runner-up, Rashed M Chowdhury and Tanjila Pew; and second runner-up, Shadab Alam and Afrina Khan, in Hotel Ascott Palace Dhaka on Valentine's Day. Ascott Hotels hosted the contest. Madurapochana Ittarong, ambassador of the Royal Thai Embassy to Bangladesh, and GM Mosharrif Hossain, managing director of Ascott Hotels Dhaka, were also present.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Halt housing

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managing director of Al Muslim Builders, said the Amin Mohammad City authorities now cannot build any structure or sell plots under the project and not even advertise for those.

According to National Survey Organisation, Amin Mohammad City has 30.911 acres of land inside the project. But the housing company, showing details of 30 acres of land which belong to Al Muslim Builders, claimed that they have 11.566 acres of land near the highway and got the EIA certificate from the Department of Environment on July 8 for the project.

As per Section 7 (1) of Private Housing Project Land Development Rules, an entrepreneur has to own at least 70 percent of land under his/her housing project but Amin Mohammad City has only 32.66 percent, he added.

Al Muslim Builders was also directed to maintain status quo.

No need to rush

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security of domestic helps, Mosharraf said the workers would be allowed to use cellphones there so that they could contact their families and people concerned.

Prof Tasneem Siddique, founding chairperson of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), welcomed the move.

She told The Daily Star, "The government needs to set up shelter houses at all manpower receiving countries including Saudi Arabia so that any victim can find immediate protection."

"As neither our labour wing officials nor the employing countries' police can respond to the victims instantly, the government needs to introduce a system in Bangladesh to monitor this issue," she said, also calling for payment of the female workers through banks.

On February 10, Riyadh signed an agreement with Dhaka to hire 10,000 skilled Bangladeshi house maids in March.

Meanwhile, the Saudi government plans to offer a new general amnesty in March for illegal foreign workers to rectify their visa status, reported the Saudi Gazette.

Officials at the Bangladesh mission in Riyadh, however, said only 20,000 or 25,000 Bangladeshi workers might be working there illegally now.

Novels outsell other fictions

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TSC at Dhaka University urging the academy to reopen the stall.

However, Anwar Murshid, Bangla Academy public relation officer, said they have not received any memorandum in this regard.

Rodela Prokashani could not be reached for comments.

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