

# HC questions land grabbing charge against Moudud

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of a lower court order that accepted charges against former BNP minister Moudud Ahmed in a land case.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case on December 17, 2013 against Moudud and his brother Monjur Ahmed on charges of grabbing government land worth over Tk 300 crore in the capital's Gulshan.

On September 14 last year, a Dhaka court accepted the charges against the two.

After hearing a revision petition, which was filed by Moudud last November, the HC yesterday issued a rule upon the ACC and the government to explain in two weeks why the lower court order should not be declared illegal and fixed May 21 for next hearing.

Defending himself, Moudud yesterday told the HC that the case filed against him was "fabricated" and was filed for harassing him politically.

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan opposed the petition.



Polluted with Chittagong city's sewage, the Fisherybazar canal flows into the Karnaphuli river, not in picture, spreading the toxicity even further. The photo was taken in Firingibazar area recently.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

# SC hearing on war criminal Mojaheed's appeal against death penalty continues

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Defence lawyer for convicted war criminal Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed yesterday placed before the Supreme Court the statements of three prosecution witnesses about the charge of torturing and killing freedom fighters in 1971.

The charge was brought against the Jamaat-e-Islam leader for torturing and killing several freedom fighters in the old MP Hostel in Nakhhalpara, Dhaka, on August 30, 1971.

The International Crimes Tribunal-2 sentenced Mojaheed to life imprisonment in connection with this charge.

Yesterday, Mojaheed's lawyer read out the statements of the prosecution witnesses before the Appellate Division during its second day's hearing on Mojaheed's appeal filed on August 11, 2013, challenging all his sentences including death penalty.

The SC fixed today for resuming the hearing.

# Obituary

CITY DESK



Sadat Quddus, eldest son of Abdul Quddus and late Munira Quddus, presently of Rajshahi House, died of cancer yesterday, said a press release.

He is survived by his father, a brother, his wife and two sons. His namaz-e-janaza was held on Rajshahi House premises yesterday.

He will be buried today at his family graveyard in Zinjira after his last namaz-e-janaza at 10:00am at Zinjira Eidgah.

# POTATO, MAIZE, POULTRY FARMING Women's contribution remains invisible

Researcher tells seminar of Karmojibi Nari, OSHE Foundation, and Manusher Jonno Foundation

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The labour of female workers is not recognised in three important areas -- potato and maize cultivation and poultry rearing -- although their contribution in those sectors is more than 80 percent, a researcher said yesterday.

"Women's contribution is not recognised in those sectors as those are considered invisible," Pratima Paul-Majumdar, president of Karmojibi Nari, told a seminar on protecting the rights of workers in informal sectors at Jatiya Press Club.

Karmojibi Nari, OSHE Foundation, and Manusher Jonno Foundation in

collaboration with the labour and employment ministry organised the seminar.

Majumdar said a lot of workers, who are employed in areas like agriculture, transportation, and construction, could not be given legal supports, as these were not considered formal sectors.

She also said over the last five years, the number of male workers in agriculture fell significantly, while the share of female workers in that sector increased by 17 percent.

Kalu Biswas, vice-president of Bangladesh Khetmajur Samity, an association of farmworkers, called for a state mechanism to ensure fair

prices for the farmers' produce.

A farmer spends Tk 900 for producing one maund of paddy, but he is selling the same quantity at Tk 400, he said.

Shamsuzzaman Selim, president of Bangladesh Khetmajur Samity, said a separate law was needed for the workers of informal sectors so that they could avail financial assistances when needed.

Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, assistant executive director of the Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies, said the workers of informal sectors could not be given support, as the sectors were

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# AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK CASE Sole intention was to kill Hasina

Hasan Mahmud states in deposition as prosecution witness

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

An Awami League (AL) leader yesterday told a Dhaka court that the August 21 grenade attack in 2004 was solely aimed at killing party president, Sheikh Hasina, the then opposition leader, and other top leaders.

In his deposition as a prosecution witness, Dr Hasan Mahmud, former environment and forests minister, said several grenades had exploded in that afternoon while he was listening to Hasina addressing their rally at Bangabandhu Avenue protesting the then BNP government's "terrorism".

It left 24 people including Ivy Rahman, wife of late President Zillur Rahman, dead and scores injured.

"I found myself drenched in blood and I could not move. I lost consciousness. When I woke up, some of my party men took me to the ground floor of our party office. I tried commu-

nicating with my wife but failed.

"Later I was taken to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University for treatment on a minibus but no doctor was there," said Hasan.

He was treated for five days at Zainul Haque Sikder Women's Medical College Hospital and then shifted to Belgium for two weeks where doctors removed most of the hundreds of splinters, he said.

There are still over 40 splinters lodged in his body, added Hasan.

He said an unexploded grenade was found inside Dhaka Central Jail the day after the attack and that he had later come to know that Arges grenades, which only army personnel use during wars, had been used in the attack.

Judge Shahed Nuruddin of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 recorded the statement and fixed today for the next hearing while defence lawyers cross-examined Hasan.

# Slain Avijit's father doubts AQIS video

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Ajoy Roy yesterday expressed doubts over a video that depicts the Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) claiming responsibility for the murder of his son blogger Avijit Roy.

"I do not know how much genuine the video is. Police were also not sure about its authenticity," he told The Daily Star over the phone, adding that the video might have been circulated to mislead police vigilance.

The media yesterday reported the AQIS leader Asim Umar as saying that AQIS carried out the attacks on Avijit and "other blasphemers" in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Prof Ajoy also said it does not matter who claimed responsibility. "Police's job is to find the attackers. Under whose umbrella the killers worked should come later," he said, adding that two to three persons were involved in the attack.

The Bangladesh-born US citizen was hacked to death on the Dhaka University campus on February 26 while returning from Amar Ekushey Granthamela-2015 with his wife Rafida Ahmed Banya, who was left badly injured.

# HC defers Mirza Abbas' bail hearings to May 24

Time petition verdict today

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Hearing prayers of senior BNP leader Mirza Abbas' lawyers seeking time, a High Court bench yesterday again deferred to May 24 hearings of his bail petitions in two criminal cases while another fixed today to pass an order on one prayer in a corruption case.

Hearing of Abbas' anticipatory bail petitions had been deferred multiple times, the last one on April 27, by the HC bench of Justice Md Moinul Islam Chowdhury and Justice JBM Hassan in the corruption case filed by Anti-Corruption Commission.

Earlier, hearing of the bail petitions in the two criminal cases was assigned to the HC bench of Justice Md Ruhul Quddus by the chief justice after an HC bench gave a split verdict.

The cases were filed on vandalism and vehicle arson attack charges.

Nitai Roy Chowdhury, who moved the prayers, reasoned that Abbas' filing lawyer AM Mahub Uddin Khokon and senior lawyer Khandaker Mahub Hossain, who would place arguments in the two criminal cases, were currently busy for the Bangladesh Bar Council polls, scheduled for May 20. Deputy Attorney General Bapurullah opposed the time plea.

Abbas' wife Afroza Abbas conducted campaigns while the BNP-blessed candidate of the Dhaka South City Corporation election stayed aloof apparently to avoid arrest with Dhaka police issuing stern warnings for "fugitive" accused in criminal cases to stay away from the polls.



Loaded trucks from India remain stuck at Sonamasjid land port in Chapainawabganj, as the strike of truck owners and workers continues for the second day yesterday in protest of alleged extortion and harassment by the port's Sramik Samannay Committee and middlemen.

# Hormone therapy can cure breast cancer

Seminar told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is possible to cure breast cancer through hormone therapy and regular checkups which help detect the cancer at its early stage, said speakers at a seminar.

In Bangladesh, survival is only 23 percent due to delay in detection of cancer at its early stage, complexity in taking treatment and lack of proper breast cancer screening programmes, they said.

Oncologist Dr Tasnim Ara said though hormone therapy is a bit new and costly in Bangladesh, it does not have the side effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

Twelve percent of women remain at a risk of getting breast cancer in their lifetime. In developed countries like the US, one out of eight women gets breast cancer, they added.

Munshi Afzal Hossain and Selima Khatun Foundation and Edward M Kennedy Centre Dhaka jointly organised the seminar near the end of last month.

Advocate Sultana Kamal and National Professor Dr Shahla Khatun, among others, spoke.

# Section of FFs demands CU VC's removal

Accuses him of being a fake FF, nepotism, patronising Jamaat-Shibir

CU CORRESPONDENT

Accusing the Chittagong University (CU) vice-chancellor of being a fake freedom fighter, nepotism in teacher and staff appointments and patronising Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir, some freedom fighters under the banner Muktiyoddha Odhikar Songrokkhon Parishad, Chittagong city unit yesterday demanded that he be removed.

Its convener, Mohammad Idris, also president of District (South) Sector Commanders' Forum, read out a written statement at Chittagong Press Club around 11:00am, saying Prof Anwarul Azim Arif has been enjoying facilities meant for freedom fighters while 300 of the some 400 people he appointed were Jamaat-Shibir activists.

Seeking Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's intervention, the parishad issued a 15-day ultimatum, threatening a "hunger strike to death" otherwise. CU sociology department's Prof Gazi Saleh Uddin, Suvash Chowdhury, Anjon Chowdhury and Prof Muztafizar Rahman were present.

Denying the allegation, Prof Anwarul said Idris had initiated a slander campaign after seeking and then being denied a job at CU for being ineligible.

# Microcredit brings self reliance to destitute

BSS, Rangpur

The cooperative microcredit loan facilities have made dozens of families, affected by river bank erosion, at Purbo Kochua-1 Asrayan Prokalpo in Rangpur self-reliant through various income generation activities.

Apart from becoming self-reliant after 100 percent loan payments, the 90 rehabilitated homeless families in nine barracks there under Nohali union of Gangachara upazila have made own assets through proper utilisation of the microcredit loans.

Talking to the news agency, the rehabilitated inhabitants said they got back new life and address with ensured livelihoods following the microcredit loan facilities under the government's comprehensive social safety net programmes.

After getting training, input and support from local government departments, they are being provided with interest-free revolving microcredit loans at only 8 percent service charge rate from the Upazila Cooperative Office for income generating activities.

"We are making good profits to raise our capitals through small-scale business, animal husbandry, poultry rearing, tree plantation, vegetables and fruit farming," said rehabilitated Nazrul Mian, 58, Bulbuli Begum, 43, and Tobiya Khatun, 53.

Rehabilitated couple Alef Uddin, 55, and Feroza Khatun, 45, said they became homeless 13 years back along with many others as the Teesta devoured everything they had in nearby village Purbo Kochua Fakirpara.

They narrated the miserably days they passed for years amid uncertainty with son Sirajul, 23, and daughter Arjuna Khatun, 21, on the lands of others and flood control embankments.