

JS Speaker declares Latif's seat vacant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury yesterday declared the seat of Tangail-4 constituency vacant as sacked minister Abdul Latif Siddique had tendered his resignation.

The parliamentary seat fell vacant on Tuesday afternoon when Latif tendered his resignation letter to the Speaker in the Parliament and she accepted it.

On that day, Latif, said he was a pure Muslim, Bangalee, and an Awami League man. He was removed from the cabinet and Awami League in last October amid waves of criticism following his comments on hajj, Tabligh Jamaat and Sajeeb Wazed Joy -- prime minister's adviser on ICT, in the US last year.

AG concerned over incident of securing bail thru false documents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General (AG) Mahububey Alam yesterday expressed grave concern at a reported incident of getting bail of an accused from the High Court through submitting false documents.

According a report published in the daily Prothom Alo, accused Lucky Aktar alias Mukta obtained bail from an HC bench, claiming herself as an accused in a narcotic case on July 9.

She, however, is an accused in a gold smuggling case. Later on the bench identified false documents and cancelled her bail, the report said.

Yesterday, while talking to reporters at his office, the attorney general said a section of fraud and dishonest lawyers place false information to the court for securing orders in favour of them.

He suggested that a specific bench of the HC should be constituted for hearing such allegations against the lawyers and for their trial and punishment.

The Bangladesh Bar Council, licensing and regulatory body of lawyers, has received many of such allegations, but huge time is needed for their disposals, Mahububey Alam added.



From left, Rashedul Hasan Shelly, general secretary of Greater Mymensingh Cultural Forum; journalist Molla Jalal; Shafiqur Rahman, president of Jatiya Press Club; Rahat Khan, editor and journalist; Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, the prime minister's information affairs adviser; journalist Amanullah Kabir; and Mostafa Zabbar, president of Greater Mymensingh Cultural Forum, at a memorial discussion on Abul Mansur Ahmad on the occasion of the 117th birthday of the eminent litterateur, journalist and politician of the sub-continent, at Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Abul Mansur Ahmad's writings universal

Fans remember him on 117th birthday, saying a versatile personality, he packed politics, journalism, literature together

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abul Mansur Ahmad was a rare personality who amalgamated politics, journalism and literature in his writings with a perfect blend of satire and wit to represent social reality and political history, said speakers yesterday.

His writings are universal and perfect for imbuing the new generation with human values, speakers said at a programme organised by Abul Mansur Ahmad Janmobarshiki Udjapon Parishad at Jatiya Press Club marking his 117th birth anniversary.

Addressing as the chief guest, Prime Minister's Media Adviser Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury said his each and every work was done for the welfare of the society. "And it is high time we followed his life and works," he added.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said his father, Abul Mansur, never compromised when it was about dignity.

Journalist Rahat Khan, who presided over the programme, said Abul Mansur was a versatile person.

Cultural personality M Hamid said many discussions were held only on the crisis of value but Mansur showed the way to building them.

President of Jatiya Press Club Md Shafiqur Rahman, journalist Amanullah Kabir, and IT expert Mostafa Zabbar spoke among others.

A successful politician, Abul Mansur Ahmad was the provincial education minister in the United Front cabinet under Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq in 1954 and the central commerce and industries minister in the Awami League government of the then prime minister Hossain Shaheed Suhrawardy in 1957. He was known for his strong stand on matters of interest to East Bengal.

Abul Mansur Ahmad's publications include great satires like Aina, Asmani Purdah, Gulliver Safar Nama, and Food Conference. His works also include important writings on social and political history of Bengal. He has two autobiographical writings -- Atma Katha (About Myself), and Amar Dekha Rajinir Panchash Bachhar (50 years of politics as I have seen it).

Abul Mansur Ahmad always propagated secularism in a manner unparalleled in the forties, fifties and sixties. His contribution towards opposition movement in the early days of Pakistan was extremely significant.

He wrote about the language issue from the early forties and contributed to the Language Movement as the editor of the Ittehad. He was the author of Ekush Dafa, the election manifesto of Jukta Front (a grand coalition of the three giants of politics back then, Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq, Moulana Bhashani, and Shaheed Suhrawardy) in the 1954 election, in which the Muslim League was routed as a political party. The 21-point programme (Ekush Dafa) was the first comprehensive articulation of the political, economic and cultural demands of the Bangalees of the then eastern part of Pakistan.

Uniform family law must

FROM PAGE 3
Hindus and Buddhists by Hindu law and Christians by Christian law.

Prof Mizanur Rahman, chairman of National Human Rights Commission; and Ayesha Khanam, president of BMP, among others, spoke.

The women's rights organisation also presented 13 recommendations to the government, including enactment of a uniform family code for all citizens of the country.

MURDER OF AVIJIT

Three suspects denied bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected bail of three alleged members of banned militant outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team and sent them to jail after completion of their three-day remand in blogger and writer Avijit Roy killing case.

The suspected militants are Towhidur Rahman, a Bangladeshi-born British citizen and information technology expert, Sadek Ali and Aminul Mollick.

In yesterday's report, the investigation officer said he gathered important information about the killing and they need to be confined until the investigation completes.

Earlier on August 19, another Dhaka court placed them on a seven-day remand.

Avijit was hacked to death on the Dhaka University campus in February.

Rapid Action Battalion arrested them in the capital's Nilkhet and Dhanmondi on August 17 and 18.

Road crash kills two

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two passengers of a CNG-run auto-rickshaw were killed and its driver injured after a bus hit the three-wheeler in the capital's Kakrail area early yesterday.

Rubel Sheikh, 28, a tanker driver by profession, and his helper Mohammad Asif, 25, both inhabitants of Adamjee area in Narayanganj, were declared dead on arrival at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. CNG driver Firoz was receiving treatment at the hospital.

Police seized the bus from the spot but its driver and his deputy fled the scene.

Owners, drivers want larger increase

FROM PAGE 3
high and gas price has been increased recently, we demand that the government readjust fare in accordance with reality," Hanif Khokon, general secretary, Dhaka Auto-Rickshaw Sramik Union, told The Daily Star.

Similarly, Dhaka City CNG

Rainwater harvest can meet clean water need

The Daily Star-WaterAid roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday emphasised the need for rain water harvest as a way of meeting the need for clean water. They also suggested faecal sludge and menstrual hygiene management to prevent deaths by poor sanitation and hygiene facilities.

They were addressing the roundtable on "Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in 7th Five Year Plan" organised by WaterAid Bangladesh and The Daily Star at the latter's office in the capital.

Dr Tahmeed Ahmed, senior scientist and director of the Centre for Nutrition and Food Security of icddr,b, said almost 50 percent of children under the age of five suffer from fever, diarrhoea and pneumonia caused by poor hygiene facilities.

Lack of WASH facilities has made one-third of children stunted and less meritorious than they would have been, he said.

Referring to a research of icddr,b, Dr Tahmeed said a mother used to feed her child with a spoon without cleaning it properly, exposing the child to life threatening bacteria.

Prof Dr Shamsul Alam, senior secretary and member of the GED of Planning Commission, advised people not to leave everything upon the government



Participants at a roundtable "Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in the 7th Five Year Plan" organised by WaterAid Bangladesh and The Daily Star in The Daily Star Centre of the capital yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

and take initiatives to ensure better hygiene and sanitation.

Liakat Ali, director of Programme, Policy and Advocacy of WaterAid, said although the problem of defecating in the open has reduced significantly, human waste is now channelled to water bodies creating severe water pollution.

Policy and Advocacy Specialist of WaterAid Robaiya Nusrat gave a keynote presentation in which she said more than 70 percent of WASH allocation is for urban settlements, whereas remote areas receive less than one percent allocation in WASH budget.

Shamim Ahmed, head of the Policy and Advocacy of WaterAid, moderated the roundtable where Shah Md Anwar Kamal, executive director of Unnayan Shahojogy Team; and Syed Shahnoor Wahid, special supplements editor of The Daily Star, among others, spoke.

meeting to be held next week where Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader will be present, said sources.

As per government rule, a costing committee headed by the BRTA chairman formulates a draft proposal for transport fare hike. The committee includes representatives of officials of the ministry and transport owners and workers. But no representative of passengers is kept in the committee.

After drafting a proposal, the committee sends it to the ministry for final approval, said BRTA officials. Fare of CNG-run auto-rickshaws was last increased in 2010.

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