

# CJ's remark rattles govt's foundation

## Says BNP leader Mahbubur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior BNP leader Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman yesterday lauded the recent remark of Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha on signing and writing judgements after retirement, saying it shook the government's foundation like an earthquake.

"We welcome the Chief Justice's comment as he spoke the truth with courage," he told a discussion organised by pro-BNP platform Zia Nagorik Forum in the capital's Jatiya Press Club marking BNP founder Ziaur Rahman's birthday.

In a message on January 19 marking the first anniversary of his taking office as the 21st chief justice, Surendra Kumar Sinha said some judges make unusual delays in writing verdicts while others continue to write it even long after their retirement, which goes against the law and the constitution.

BNP brought this up several times afterwards, saying it proved illegal the judgement revoking the 13th constitutional amendment, which had instated the caretaker government system, along with the 15th constitutional amendment, which annulled the system.

The party reasoned that the then Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque wrote and signed the judgement 16 months after going on retirement and the 15th amendment was based on the judgement.

Mahbub, a BNP standing committee member, also claimed that the government, coming to power through the 10th parliamentary polls and 15th constitutional amendment, has also turned illegal and void.

Mahbub said there has been a conspiracy for a long time to split BNP but no one would be able to do so if its workers follow the ideals of Ziaur Rahman.



In the biting cold of yesterday's windy night and amidst the blurring brightness of flashing neon advertisement lights of the capital, two homeless persons in Kawran Bazar make their bed on a cold street and fall into a deep slumber wrapped up in jute sacks and plastic sheets.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# Closure of Narundi station protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Movement of all trains on Jamalpur-Mymensingh route were stopped for four hours as agitated locals put logs on tracks at Narundi station protesting closure of all activities of the station yesterday.

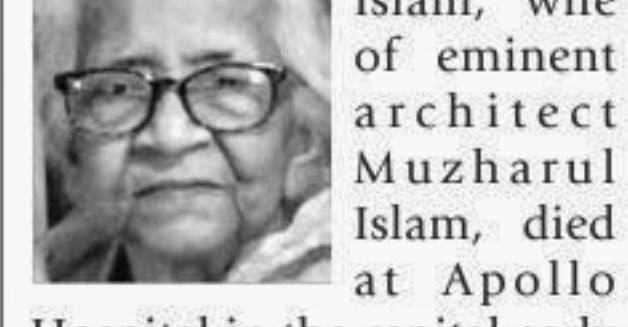
Railway authorities closed all activities due to lack of manpower on Thursday, said Mohammad Tarek, station master of Jamalpur rail station.

Protesting the decision, thousands gathered in the station area at 2:00 pm.

After an assurance to reactivate the station by the administration, locals withdrew blockades and train movement became normal, said Abdus Salam, sadar upazila nirbahi officer.

# Obituary

CITY DESK



Hosne Ara Islam, wife of eminent architect Muzharul Islam, died at Apollo Hospital in the capital early yesterday, aged 87, says a press release.

She left behind two sons and a daughter.

Her namaz-e-janaza was held following Juma prayers at Gulshan Azad mosque.

A doa mahfil for her departed soul will be held on Friday, January 29, after Maghrib prayers at her Gulshan residence.

# 5,316 more win BSK reading awards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 5,316 secondary school students of 80 Chittagong schools won awards yesterday in the Bishwa Sahitya Kendra's (BSK) book reading contest held in 2015.

Supported by Grameenphone Ltd and Chittagong City Corporation (CCC), BSK organised the programme on the premises of Chittagong Municipal Model High School and College in the city.

At the event, CCC Mayor AJM Nasir Uddin urged the students to give emphasis on other educational activities alongside the academic ones.

"Books beautify the heart of a man, enrich the life. And a man with an enriched heart can build an enriched nation," said BSK president Abdullah Abu Sayeed. He urged the students to read more books. Some 6,471 students won such awards in Dhaka on January 15.

# 2 Khulna rivers drying fast

UNB, Khulna

The existence of the Kobadak and Shiba rivers in Paikgachha upazila of Khulna is in perilous state as they are drying up fast.

The banks of the Shiba have shrunk into a canal along a five km area from Shibbati Bridge up to Haria Chaumuhuni.

Sources at Water Development Board (WDB) linked this rapid drying of the rivers to fall in their water flow upstream and construction of two bridges over the rivers.

Sadar upazila is encircled by the Kobadak and Shiba on its three sides. The Kobadak runs along the south-western side while the Shiba flows on the south-eastern side.

development of trade and commerce of the region.

But in the last one year, both rivers have dried up almost completely. It is even possible to cross both the rivers on foot even during tide.

Locals fear if waters of the two rivers cannot flow, entire Paikgachha would have to face severe water logging. Silt accumulation has filled the rivers to such an extent that this excessive siltation would block the drainage system during monsoon, creating a crisis.

"It is natural for silt to get deposited, but use of excessive pillars for bridge is the main cause of silt deposition," said Pijush Krishna Kundu, executive engineer, WDB, Khulna.

Pijush also said lack of water flow of the two rivers impedes moving away of the silt.

# 3 Sirajganj cops closed over arrestee's escape

UNB, Sirajganj

Constables Ganesh Dash, Enamul Haque and Rabiul Islam of Shahjadpur Police Station were closed to the district police lines on Thursday night for negligence of duty over the escape of an arrestee.

On Wednesday, 11-member team, conducted a drive at Kojihuri village in the upazila and arrested Bhutto Sheikh, accused in a theft case, said Rezaul Haque, officer-in-charge of Shahjadpur Police Station.

Bhutto escaped from the custody of the three constables when eight others members of the team went to arrest another.



Paribesh Bachao Andolon, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Tarupallab form a human chain before the Star Gate of Ramna Park in the capital yesterday, protesting the cutting of rare and uncommon trees like Kanakchanpa, Mamia, Agor, Kyashia Grandis, Sultanchanpa, Dulichanpa, Neelmonilota and many others.

# Household piped gas

FROM PAGE 3 providing any new gas connection to household consumers under a policy decision, while the drive is being intensified to replace the existing 2.8 million household gas consumers with LPG.

State Minister for Power and Energy Nasrul Hamid said the energy division will soon announce a concrete policy on LPG pricing and marketing for making its use popular.

Officials, however, said the replacement of piped gas by LPG is a very complicated issue as it involves a huge task. Before moving to LPG, the bottled-gas has to be popularised by rationalising the price of piped gas and that of LPG.

The energy division has formed three committees to resolve different issues in this regard.

One of the committees will formulate policy on safety issue while another will work on pricing and subsidy. The third committee will work on evolving strategy to implement this project through private sector, the officials added.

# Dhaka reiterates condemnation

FROM PAGE 3 states including Bahrain, Yemen and Syria and Somalia and its continued support for terrorism.

The delegation of Iran led by its Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi attended the OIC meeting but his country "declared its rejection of the communiqué", stating that it dissociates itself from it.

The Lebanese delegation also "distances itself" from the communiqué, the statement added.

Iran sacked a senior security official over his failure to stop the attack on Riyadh's embassy, while Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on

Wednesday said the attack was against Islam.

But Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir charged at Thursday's meeting that Iran respects neither Islam nor the charter of the OIC.

At the start of Thursday's meeting, OIC Secretary General Iyad Madani called for "building bridges of understanding and restoring mutual trust" through dialogues.

The 12-point statement expressed full support for the efforts of the KSA and all member states to combat terrorism.

The Saudi missions came under attacks after the KSA executed a Shia cleric as he was convicted of terrorism offences.

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# Marriage before 18 must

FROM PAGE 3 the welfare of women for the last 45 years, its President Ayesha Khanam said the meeting aims at finding the organisation's weaknesses and a new strategy to eliminate gender inequality and violence against women and establish secularism.

Calling for the recognition of women's contributions at households, Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, recommended that women with different professions unite and raise voice against discrimination in their respective fields.

Both Ayesha and Mahfuz inaugurated the programme hoisting the BMP and national flags respectively.

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