

### Journo leader Altaf Mahmud laid to rest

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Patuakhali

Veteran journalist Altaf Mahmud was buried at his family graveyard in Golkhali village under Galachipa upazila in Patuakhali yesterday.

He was laid to rest after his second namaz-e-janaza, held at his village house where thousands of people attended.

Earlier, a namaz-e-janaza was held at Eidgah field in Galachipa town.

Mahmud died on Sunday at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital while undergoing treatment for neurological complications. He was 62.

He was the president of a faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and executive editor of Bangla daily Dainik Destiny.



The master roll (temporary) employees of Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited (BTCL) stage a sit-in in front of the capital's BTCL bhaban in Ramna area yesterday, demanding regularisation of their jobs. They said they have been living meagrely since, even after working for 17 years, they have not been made permanent.

PHOTO:  
BANGLAR CHOKH

## Heartbreaking reunion

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Last time Munni's parents saw her, she was only nine-years old.

After five long years they finally got to see their daughter, who was 14 by now, as a corpse in the Dhaka Medical College morgue.

Munni, a domestic help, was found dead in her employer's house in the capital's Banasree on Sunday morning around 10:00am.

Her body bore several marks of old and fresh burn injuries.

Rofiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Rampura Police Station, told The Daily Star that she might have been tortured to death.

The parents- Anwar Hossain, 50, a rickshaw-puller and Nazia Begum, 42, a domestic help of Subarnachar in Noakhali, sent their child to Dhaka with the help of a local to work as a domestic help in Najmun Nahar Hasna's house, hoping she would get three square-meals per-day and earn money to send back home.

Hasna was arrested after Nazia filed a murder case yesterday with Rampura police station. Police produced Hasna in court, seeking seven days remand but the court granted two, said the OC.

Munni started working for Hasna, 34, wife of Abu Yusuf, an expatriate, who lived in a rented house in Rampura with her two school-going children, one of them almost same age as Munni.

"She was allowed to speak to us once or twice a month, whenever we called, under Hasna's strict supervisions," said Munni's mother, Nazia, adding, "that number used to stay switched off most of the times."

"During the last one year, she repeatedly told us that she did not want to work there anymore and on January 16 she desperately told her elder sister that it had become unbearable to work," Nazia said.

The family had never been to Dhaka before. Hasna never gave her address. Munni's employers hailed from Chatkhil upazila, of the same district. Anwar often begged Hasna to let them know whenever she visited her village so that the family could see their daughter.

But everything changed on Sunday.

They received a call from the OC and heard the news of their daughter's death. Shocked, they came to the capital with the help of a neighbour. They went to the Rampura police station around 1:30am and police took them to DMC morgue in the morning, Anwar said.

Morgue sources said there were burn injuries on her body apart from old injury marks.

Denying allegation, Hasna's sister-in-law Sahana, told this correspondent that Munni sustained burn injuries from the kitchen stove, over a week ago, and added, she was being

## GRAFT CASE SC clears way for Noman's trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday rejected a leave-to-appeal petition against a High Court verdict that cleared way for a lower court to run trial against BNP leader Abdullah Al Noman in an 18-year-old corruption case.

A four-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha rejected the appeal filed by the BNP vice-chairman on March 27, 2013 challenging the HC verdict.

The then Bureau of Anti Corruption Commission (now defunct) filed the case on August 19, 1998 against Noman for not submitting his wealth statement before it.

A Dhaka court framed charges against Noman in the case on February 2, 2009. Then Noman filed a petition with the HC challenging the charge framing order, ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star.

He said earlier on January 24, 2013 the HC rejected his petition challenging the HC verdict.

Khurshid said now there is no legal bar to resume the trial proceedings against the BNP leader following the SC order.

MUNICIPAL POLLS CODE

## HC questions legality of bar on campaigns by lawmakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of the electoral code of conduct that restricts lawmakers from campaigning for the party's mayoral candidates in municipal polls.

The court issued a rule upon the government to explain by four weeks why the code should not be declared unconstitutional.

The HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice AKM Shahidul Huq came up with the rule after a Supreme Court lawyer,

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TAX EVASION CASE

## SC scraps Millat's conviction due to double jeopardy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court verdict that scrapped six years' imprisonment of former BNP lawmaker M Rashiduzzaman Millat in a tax evasion case as he had been jailed earlier in another case for the same charges.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha dismissed an appeal filed by the government challenging the HC judgment.

Millat's lawyer Bodruddoza Badal said a Dhaka court on November 28, 2007 jailed his client in the case filed by the National Board of Revenue on October 7, 2007 on charge of evading taxes amounting Tk 1 crore for concealing his wealth information. Following an appeal filed by Millat, the HC on August 17, 2010 acquitted him of the charges. He said the apex court upheld the acquittal as his client cannot be punished twice for the same charges. Earlier, a lower court had sentenced Millat to eight years' imprisonment in

## Tarana Halim sues man for 'forging her signature'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Posts and Telecommunication Division Tarana Halim yesterday sued General Secretary of Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote Arun Rana Sarkar for allegedly forging her signature and using her identity to collect money from different organisations and misappropriate the funds.

Joydeb Nandi, assistant personal secretary of the state minister, filed the case with Shahbagh Police Station on behalf of Tarana, who is president of the cultural organisation.

Rana had been forging her signature for quite a while and collecting money from different organisations and persons in the name of advertisements, Nandi told The Daily Star by phone.

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## Moulvibazar Adivasis set to lose

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However, after the start of the LBA implementation last year, the two countries launched surveys to demarcate land for the exchange and India would get the 300 acres accordingly.

Indigenous people, rights activists, politicians and environmentalists demanded that the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) investigate the matter and submit a report to the government.

They raised the demand through a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Meanwhile, the ongoing survey to demarcate land for the exchange should be halted and a national committee with representatives from government and non-government agencies should visit the disputed land in Pallathal, they urged.

"Khasi and Garo people want to stay in their own land. They do not know about the agreement. Neither are they aware that their cultivable land would go under Indian possession," said Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum.

He said though the LBA spoke of thorough consultation with the affected people before planning the agreement, officials of neither country did talk to the Khasi of Pallathal.

Deputy Commissioner of Moulvibazar Kamrul Hasan told The Daily Star that he was not aware of the problem. "This is a settled issue between two countries," he said.

Lucas Bahadur, however, said the DC, upazila nirbahi officer, upazila chairman and local parliament member were informed of the plight of the Khasi through a letter on November 15, 2015. The Daily Star could not independently verify whether the letter was sent to them.

Senior politician Pankaj Bhattacharya urged the government to either provide compensation or find the Khasi an alternative

## Gates Foundation pledges \$120m

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must act now," she said.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the National Population and Family Planning Board of Indonesia (BKKBN) organised the event styled "Global Commitments, Local Actions."

Around 3,000 leaders, United Nations officials, academics, including those from Bangladesh, and non-government organisations are attending the five-day conference.

"Family planning is about women's right and their capacity to take decisions about their health and well-being contributing to the objectives of FP2020," said Dr Babatunde Osotimehin, UN under-secretary-general and United Nations Population Fund executive director.

"It is a most significant investment to promote human capital development, combat poverty and harness a demographic dividend, thus contributing to equitable and sustainable economic development within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals," he said.

Indonesia's President Jokowi Widodo insisted that stigma and discrimination against women seeking family planning services must end, and that family planning education must become a priority in Indonesia, having the world's fourth largest population of over 250 million.

## Cabinet approves draft policy

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UN-ESCAP's agreement titled "Inter-Governmental Agreement on Dry Ports". The secretary said it would be possible with this ratification to link Bangladesh with the Asian Highway Network and the Trans Asia Railway Network.

## Kaizen from Japan brings innovation

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said Japan has been supporting Bangladesh for achieving its vision and people will get a lot of benefit from Kaizen.

Jica Bangladesh Chief Representative

Mikio Hataeda termed the government officials "unsung heroes".

AKM Abdul Awal Mazumder, rector of BPATC said, "It is our responsibility to give quality service to the public."

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