

Two die in Narayanganj falling into fuel tank

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Two employees of a filling station in Sonargaon upazila of Narayanganj died after they fell into a tank of furnace oil yesterday.

Victim Masum, 30, fell into the tank while measuring the amount of oil there, and Abdul Hannan, 35, died after he jumped into the tank to rescue Masum.

Officer-in-Charge of Sonargaon Police Station Monjur Kader said the duo, inhaling toxic gas inside the tank, died instantly.

Md Abdullah, a member of the fire-fighting team which conducted the rescue operation, said the tank, about 9-feet deep, was full of slippery, thick and pitch-black oil, adding that they pulled the dead bodies out from the tank three hours after the duo fell there.

The owner of the filling station could not be contacted despite several attempts.



The Surma river slowly eroding Mirergaon and Khalpar in Sylhet sadar upazila. Around 2,000 people, mostly from fishing families, live in the two villages. The residents said in the last few years, 50/60 houses were devoured, and that they requested the high authorities for preventive action, but to no avail. The photo was taken at Mirergaon Friday.

High Court to hear challenge against state religion on March 27

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday fixed March 27 for hearing a writ petition that had challenged 28 years ago the legality of the constitutional provision giving "Islam" the status of state religion.

A special bench of Justice Naima Haider, Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque, and Justice Md Ashrafal Kamal also withdrew an earlier order of the HC that had requested 12 senior lawyers as amici curiae (friends of court) to place their opinions on the issue before it.

Petitioners' lawyer Jaglul Haider Afric told The Daily Star that the HC passed the order saying it would hear opinions from fewer amici curiae on this matter.

Following the writ petition, the HC on June 11, 2011 issued a rule upon the government to explain why the part of the eighth amendment to the constitution that had made "Islam" state religion should not be declared illegal. It also invited 12 amici curiae to hear their opinions.

The amici curiae were Dr Kamal Hossain, TH Khan, Mahmudul Islam, M Amir-Ul Islam, Rafique-ul Huq, Dr M Zahir, Rokanuddin Mahmud, Ajmalul Hossain, Fida M Kamal, Yusuf Hossain Humayun, AFM Mejbahuddin and Abdul Matin Khasru. Later on, Dr M Zahir and Mahmudul Islam died.

The government did not respond to the June 11 rule.

On June 30, 2011, the parliament passed a bill on the constitution's 15th amendment retaining Islam's status as state religion. The amendment, however, restored "secularism" as one of the four fundamental principles of the state which had been omitted by a martial law regime after the 1975 bloody changeover.

Following an application filed by the writ petitioners, the HC in December 2011 issued a supplementary rule

Impunity perpetuating killing of children

Alleges National Human Rights Commission Chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The frequent incidents of torture and killing of children have been taking place across the country due to the prevailing culture of impunity, said National Human Rights Commission Chairman Mizanur Rahman yesterday.

Frustrated over the frequent killing of children, Mizanur said, "Many think that with their wealth or other influences, they are above the law. Even they think that the law does not apply to them. As a result, they target children, who cannot protect themselves, to fulfil their vengeance."

He asked law enforcers to take legal action against the torturers and killers of children.

The NHRC chairman was talking to

journalists after visiting Kazi Jamal Hossain in his Mirpur residence. Jamal fled to India without informing his family members following a threat issued allegedly by his siblings over a dispute over properties and returned to his home on February 22, the victim told journalists.

Some influential persons are active to deprive Jamal of getting justice, which actually is a violation of human rights, said the NHRC boss.

He also asked law enforcers to act properly to protect Jamal, a retired government employee.

Family members of Jamal lodged a general diary with Shah Ali Police Station, said Yasin Arafat, his only son.

KARNAPHULI WATER SUPPLY PROJECT PHASE-2 Ctg Wasa signs deal for Package-1 with Japan-Korea joint venture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWASA) yesterday signed a contract with Kolon-Kubota JV (joint venture) for implementing package-1 of Karnaphuli Water Supply Project (KWSP) Phase-2, divided into 5 packages.

AKM Fazlullah, CWASA managing director and Jung Chang Dou, project manager of KWSP-Phase-2, signed the contract at a programme at a hotel in Chittagong.

Kolon-Kubota JV, a joint venture of South Korean Kolon Global Corporation and Japanese Kubota Construction, will complete the Tk 478 crore package-1 in 36 months,

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| Daily demand | 500m litres |
| Current supply | 210m litres |
| Total budget for Phase-2 | Tk 4,491.15 crore |
| Supply will increase by | 143 mld |
| Package-1 of this phase to be finished in | 3 years |
| Cost of this package | Tk 478 crore |

which includes water intake facility with 150 mld (million litres per day) pumping capacity, a water treatment

plant with 143 mld production capacity both at Rangunia upazila, and a water reservoir with 24,800 cubic metre capacity and a 2,400 cubic metre capacity elevated water tank in the city's Nasirabad and Halishahar areas, said Quazi Yeakub Sirajuddowla, project director of KWSP Phase-2.

The total value of the project is Tk 4,491.15 crore, of which Japan International Co-operation Agency (Jica) is funding Tk 3,623.28 crore, the government Tk 844.80 crore and CWASA Tk 23.07 crore from its own funds.

Around 600km transmission and distribution pipeline would be constructed across the city including replacing the age-old pipelines, to be

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Free parking spaces in one month or face action

Dhaka city mayors tell building owners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday called upon the building owners for freeing all the basement car park spaces from any illegal occupancy within the next one month.

"Otherwise, the authorities would be compelled to go for due legal actions to reclaim the designated parking spaces to resolve the city's horrendous traffic congestion," Annisul Huq told a discussion with the owners of illegal commercial enterprises in residential areas.

DNCC organised the discussion at Gulshan Club along with the housing and public works minister, Dhaka south mayor, Rajdhani Unnyan

In two Dhaka city corporations, over 6,000 residential properties are being used illegally for commercial purposes. But 2,200 court injunctions and 5,204 cases bar Rajuk action.

Kartripakkha (Rajuk) chairman, and Gulshan Society president.

With 4,694 illegal commercial businesses, out of a total of 5,341, being run at residential buildings and properties in north Dhaka city corporation area, the residential life is turning unbearable, said Annis. There are

over 6,000 residential properties with such illegal commercialisation together in south and north city corporation areas, he said.

Dhaka south's Mayor Mohammad Sayeed Khokon said residential areas were becoming unliveable with horrendous traffic congestion and environment pollution due to illegal commercial activities.

The housing and public works minister, Mosharraf Hossain, said he was going to take the issue to the highest authority as to how to sort out this problem.

"Features of residential areas have been ruined with reckless commercialisation and turned unliveable taking the full advantage of Rajuk's gross

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As part of the campaign to recover parking spaces from illegal occupancy, the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) demolishes a structure at Farmgate yesterday. Similar demolition drives were carried out in Gulshan, Dhanmondi and some other areas before as unregulated parking is a major cause of the traffic chaos in Dhaka city.



A hijra (hermaphrodite) bullies a young man for money at the intersection near Chandrima Udyan in the capital yesterday. In the last few weeks, the city dwellers have been frequently encountering them, and the way they approach commuters has reached a level that could be called harassment. But the other side of the story is the hijras are one of the most neglected and deprived sections of the society, and they have very few options to ensure the day's meals. Currently, the government gives a paltry monthly allowance of Tk 500 to a hijra, only aged 50 or above.

PHOTO: MD KAWSAR

Rab 'rescues 4 girls from trafficking'

Arrests 8 'traffickers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday claimed to have arrested eight members of a human trafficking gang and rescued four teenage girls supposed to be trafficked into neighbouring countries.

The arrests and rescues were made in separate drives in Dhaka, Gazipur and Jessore since Friday following an investigation of a trafficking incident in Sirajganj in September last year, said Mufti Mahmud Khan, Rab's legal and media wing director, at a press briefing at Rab headquarters in the capital.

"In the last five to seven years, the gang had trafficked around 500 people, mostly female, to different countries," he said.

"The two kingpins of the gang, Salman and Taher, are still at large. Rab is trying to arrest them," he added.

The rescued are Sohagi, Shirin, Sharmin and Riya. Rab recovered 12 passports, 11 fake visas of Middle East countries, 51 fake air tickets, and 53 fake appointment letters of foreign jobs from the arrestees.

While describing their operations, Mufti Mahmud said

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TREE MAN

Physicians hope to perform 2nd surgery in two weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nine-member medical board, formed for treatment of tree man Abul Bajandar, in a meeting yesterday decided to perform another surgery in his left hand once it is satisfied with the improvement of his right hand in which doctors on February 20 conducted a three-hour-long surgery and removed its warts.

The physicians hoped that the second surgery would be

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শিক্ষা আমার অধিকার
উপবৃত্তি বাড়াবে শিক্ষার হার

তথ্য জানতে বা অভিযোগ জানাতে
যোগাযোগ করুন স্কুল বা শিক্ষা অফিসে

মানুষের জন্য
manusher jonno
promoting human rights and good governance

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