

A Dhaka court yesterday accepted charges against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and 79 leaders and activists of the BNP-led 20-party alliance in three arson cases filed in January and February last year. The court also issued arrest warrants against 71 activists of the alliance, including former BNP lawmaker Syeda Asifa Ashrafi Papiya, showing them to be fugitives. The others facing an arrest warrant include Maruf Kamal Khan, Sutan Salauddin Tuku, Habibunnabi Khan Soheli, Saiful Alam Nirob and Azizul Bari Helal. Nine other accused, including Khaleda, are now out on bail in the cases. Judge Kamrul Hossain Molla of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order after scrutinising the charges and documents. The court also ordered the officer-in-charge of Darussalam Police Station to submit reports by October 18 on execution of the arrest warrants. Police in May and June this year pressed charges against Khaleda and over 80 leaders and activists of the alliance for arson on buses during its three-month-long non-stop movement last year. Later on August 10, Khaleda got bail in nine arson cases after surrendering before two separate Dhaka courts. Khaleda, accused in over 25 cases including ones over corruption, was not present at court yesterday as she went to Saudi Arabia for performing hajj. Amanullah Aman, now on bail, also went to perform hajj.



Digging for repairment has rendered the road near the Medical Mor in the capital's Bakshi Bazar almost unusable because it leaves barely any space for vehicles. It was not just one day or two that the commuters and pedestrians had to endure, the road has been left in this state for two weeks. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Govt thinking of law to seize war criminals' wealth: Anisul

Amidst growing demand for confiscation of convicted war criminals' wealth, Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the government was mulling over formulating a new law. "People are demanding for taking steps about the properties...We are mulling taking steps following legal procedures...We will do it (begin the process) as early as possible," he told a press briefing at his Bangladesh Secretariat office in the capital yesterday. The demand, including distributing the confiscated wealth among families which fell victim during the 1971 Liberation War, has long been made by freedom fighters, martyrs' families and pro-liberation organisations, including Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmla Committee. Two war crimes tribunals have so far

delivered 26 judgements convicting 50 people, including 28 who were sentenced to death. Anisul said steps regarding the properties can be taken by amending International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973 or by formulating a new law. Properties cannot be taken back through amendments in cases where it has already passed on to heirs following execution of war criminals, as per Muslim law, and so will require enactment of a new act, he said. He said the government was amending the act so that organisations, including Jamaat-e-Islami, can be tried over crimes committed during the Liberation War. The lack of clear-cut provisions for punishment is considered a major obstacle to trying such organisations. The amendment is now at cabinet division for approval, Anisul said,

adding, "I have been telling this same thing for a long time...But do not be impatient. It will be done." Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan on Sunday told the parliamentary standing committee on the ministry that they were taking steps to ban Islami Chhatra Shibir "for anti-state, militant activities". In this regard, Anisul said, "I am holding discussions with the home minister over the matter on what needs to be done to ban their activities." On Supreme Court's letter to him for relocating International Crimes Tribunal from the Old High Court Building within October 31, he said, "A decision will be taken as per people's wish." If there is a difference between what the letter says and people's expectations, then "I will personally request the chief justice to establish people's expectations", he added.

'Qadri will live on thru his poetry'
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shahid Qadri was a poet of the youths and the citizens who will live among the people through his poetry, a meeting was held yesterday. Bangla Academy, Sammilita Sangskritik Jote, and Jatiya Kabita Parishad organised the memorial meeting in Dhaka's Bangla Academy, where a memorial book, "Obhibadon (Greetings) Shahid Qadri", on his life and work published by the academy, was also launched. Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman, culturist Ramendu Majumdar and Bangla Academy DG Shamsuzzaman Khan, among others, spoke.

Mahmudur might get released
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The High Court yesterday granted Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of Bangla daily Amar Desh, bail in a case filed for his alleged attempt to abduct and murder Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, clearing the way for his release from jail, court sources said. Mahmudur, in detention since April 2013, was shown arrested in several cases and got bail in all of them.

DSCC councillor suspended
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Local Government Division has suspended a ward councillor of Dhaka South City Corporation for "misconduct" and "misuse of power". The suspension order of Kazi Habibur Rahman Habu (Ward-5) will be effective immediately, according to a circular of Tuesday. On September 1, when a mobile court conducted a drive in Sayedabad to evict an illegal truck stand, Habibur incited the drivers and workers to block it, read the circular.

Woman hacked to death in capital
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Unidentified assailants hacked a woman to death and took away valuables from her apartment after they entered the building pretending to rent one at the capital's Dakkhin Khan last evening. The victim was Wahida Akter, 45, whose expatriate husband Sohrab Hossain lives in Qatar, said police. She was rushed to a local hospital and later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment, where the doctors declared her dead around 10:30pm, said the hospital sources.

5cr books sent to upazilas: Nahid
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Around five crore of 36.22 crore copies of textbooks for the schoolchildren for the next academic year have already been sent to upazila offices, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said yesterday. "...the rest will be sent to the respective educational institutes within the timeframe," he said after a meeting at National Curriculum and Textbook Board in the capital's Motijheel area. As many as 36,22,34,000 copies of textbooks will be distributed among 4.26 crore students free of cost, the minister said.

Ammonia tank blast: 2 made OSD
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Two officials of the di-ammonium phosphate factory in Chittagong, where an ammonia tank exploded on August 22, were made officers on special duty (OSDs) yesterday. Deputy Chief Engineer (electrical) Dilip Kumar Barua and General Manager (technical and maintenance service) Md Nokibul Islam were attached to the managing director's office, said an official. The two were held responsible for the blast in investigation.

WAR CRIMES TRIAL Charges filed against 8 of Mymensingh, Jamalpur

The prosecution yesterday pressed eight specific charges against eight men from Mymensingh and Jamalpur for allegedly committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971. Prosecutor Abul Kalam told The Daily Star that he submitted the formal charges, statements of witnesses and other documents to International Crimes Tribunal-1 through its registrar office in the afternoon. Registrar Shahidul Alam Jhinuk said they sent the formal charges and other documents to the tribunal. The case's proceedings will continue on September 18. The accused are Rezaul Hauque alias Akkas Moulvi, 65, and Badaruzzaman alias Chand Kazi, 65, of Muktagachha upazila in Mymensingh and ABM Yunus Ali, 65, his brother AKM Yusuf Ali alias Yusuf Alam, 60, Omar Faruk alias Omar Ali, 70, Nasiruddin alias Kalu, 64, AKM Belayet Hossain, 64, and Ismaili Hossain, 65, of Jamalpur sadar upazila. Rezaul, Yunus, Yusuf and Omar Faruk are

now in jail while the rest on the run. The tribunal's investigation agency on May 4 said to have found evidence against the eight men. It handed over the case documents to the prosecution the following day. According to the agency, Badruzzaman was a local Razakar commander while the others were involved with Al-Badr Bahini. The crimes include torture and killing of three people of Malatipur Pathalia village on May 13; killing of five cobblers from Chechua Kurigram on June 27 and killing class-VIII student Ahmmad Ali of Subarnakhila village on August 5 for chanting Joy Bangla slogan. The others are over killing of seven people of Kejaikanda Konagaon on August 5; brutal torture of two freedom fighters and their disappearance on November 12 and torture of one Abdul Latif, a freedom fighter's brother, and torching of his house on November 12. The remaining incidents are the killing of Azizur Rahman on November 20 for assisting freedom fighters; and killing of doctor Anil Kumar Singha on November 26.

Ministers need

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disqualifications of a lawmaker but this issue of the ministers did not fall under the purview of article 66 even after they were punished. In an oblique reference to a recent comment of a High Court judge that his ministry was "not paying enough attention" to Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha's call for establishing a separate secretariat for the judiciary, Anisul said it was actually beyond his ministry's authority and that a new law needed to be enacted. He said the present government was committed to ensuring independence of the judiciary while his ministry would do everything possible to do so. He said different steps have been taken to reduce the backlog of cases in courts. Law Secretary ASSM Zahirul Haque Dulal was also present.

STAR WEEKEND

in other news...

This week our spotlight is a satirical take on the changing trends of Eid-ul-Adha, and how it continues to be a favourite holiday for many. We also have an important article on an initiative taken by PDF that helps the physically disabled find employment. Don't forget to grab your copy of the Star Weekend, tomorrow, Friday!

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