

### Govt considering giving gallantry awards to civilians

Mozammel tells JS  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is weighing whether to give the Liberation War gallantry awards to civilian freedom fighters, including political leaders and activists, who were deprived in 1972. Liberation War Minister AKM Mozammel Huq told parliament yesterday. He made the remark when Awami League lawmaker Shubid Ali Bhuiyan asked the minister why he [Shubid Ali] was not given a gallantry award despite his heroic role in the war. Huq said the 1971 war was a political war rather than a military one, but political leaders and workers who played valiant roles in the war were not given the gallantry awards.

The gallantry awards were given in 1972 by a committee headed by the then army chief General MAG Osmani, he said, adding that as army personnel were on that committee, mostly the military men were awarded.

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Ignoring risks of accidents, a contractor transports an around 50-foot concrete electricity pole, precariously placed between a Nosimon, an improvised three-wheeler, and a pushcart on the Keraniganj-Dohar road. The contractor resorted to the hazardous process because Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board, which hired him, did not have a vehicle suited for the job. The photo was taken at Godarbagh Konakhola, Keraniganj on Tuesday around noon.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

### BNP leader's son sued over threatening PM

STAR REPORT

Four cases were filed yesterday against Chowdhury Irad Ahmed Siddiki, son of former BNP standing committee member Chowdhury Tanbir Ahmed Siddiki, allegedly for threatening Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Facebook recently.

In Sylhet, Azadur Rahman Azad, ward-20 councillor of Sylhet City Corporation, filed a case with Kotwali Police Station.

Also the education secretary of Sylhet metro unit Awami League, Azad alleged the case was filed as Irad threatened to kill the PM on a recent Facebook status, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

In Thakurgaon, lawyer Indranath Roy filed a case with Thakurgaon Police Station, reports our Thakurgaon correspondent. The post also defamed Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, alleged Indranath, a local AL leader.

Officer-in-Charge Moshirur Rahman of Thakurgaon Police Station said they will investigate the matter and take necessary steps.

In Gazipur, Advocate Shahjahan of Gazipur Lawyers Association filed a case with the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Shahidul Islam, who later ordered the OC of Joydebpur Police Station to file the case and take necessary steps, reports our Gazipur correspondent.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Baki Billah, president of Jamalpur district unit AL, filed a case accusing Irad with Jamalpur Sadar Cognizance court.

Billah brought allegation that Irad posted a status on Facebook on Sunday night which he discovered on Wednesday, reports our Jamalpur correspondent.

The court was yet to take it into cognizance as of filing this report last evening.

## Create the world you want to live in

Prof Yunus urges youths at Ottawa summit

CITY DESK

The young people should get to work now to create the world that they would like to live in, Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus has told the One Young World Summit in Ottawa. He also called for creating a new civilisation because "this current greed based civilisation would not last much longer". The Grameen Bank founder made the call while delivering a keynote address at the summit Wednesday at Parliament Hill, a Yunus Centre press release said yesterday. Yunus's speech followed that of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan at the opening of the summit, which brings together 1,300 young leaders from more than 196 countries.

Prime Minister Trudeau earlier had a separate discussion with Prof Yunus on youth issues and later tweeted about his meeting with Prof Yunus stating, "Muhammad Yunus has dedicated his life to fighting poverty. @OneYoungWorld delegates are lucky to learn from him this week in Ottawa".

Prof Yunus urged the young delegates to not accept the world that is handed to them rather build the world of their own dreams. He said he dreamt of a world where there was zero poverty, zero unemployment and zero net carbon emissions. He said he saw three mega powers to achieve this -- the power of youth, the power of technology, and the power of social business.

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## Building code enforcement vital for saving lives: Experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Immediate enforcement of the Bangladesh national building code (BNBC) is crucial for preventing building-related disasters and ensuring safety of life, said leading experts at a workshop in the capital yesterday.

Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury, a noted civil engineering educator and vice-chancellor of the University of Asia Pacific, called upon the housing and public works ministry to get the updated BNBC approved for enforcement as soon as possible.

Prof Md Zoynul Abedin of civil engineering department of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, said BNBC needs

immediate implementation.

The National Alliance for Risk Reduction and Response Initiatives (NARRI), and Housing and Building Research Institute (HBRI) jointly organised the workshop on challenges and strategy of building code implementation at a hotel.

HBRI Director Mohammad Abu Sadeque said, "As a standard, good practice, the BNBC should be at the centre of building construction permit process."

Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharrar Hossain, present as the chief guest, said he would take measures to get the updated BNBC approved within this year.

On when the government would put the mechanism in place for

enforcement of the code, he, however, repeatedly evaded the question.

Abiding by the existing BNBC, formulated in 1993, was made legally mandatory in 2006 through amendments to the building construction act.

Besides, the High Court 2010 ordered for instituting a building authority and designating existing relevant authorities within a year for enforcement of the code.

Secretary to the housing and public works ministry Md Shahid Ullah Khandaker, chairing the workshop, said it was very sad that the building code has not yet been enforced although complying with it was made legally mandatory.

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Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau discusses youth issues with Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus before the opening of the One Young World Summit at Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Wednesday.

PHOTO: YUNUS CENTRE

### 'EMBEZZLING Tk 7.37 CR' ACC holds ex-DG of Coast Guard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission arrested former director general of Bangladesh Coast Guard Commodore Shafiq Ur Rahman in Dhaka yesterday, in a case filed for his alleged involvement in misappropriating Tk 7.37 crore, said ACC deputy director SM Rafiqul Islam.

According to the case statement, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief allocated about 11,100 tonnes of wheat to coastguards under the rural infrastructure development programme in 1996-97 and 1997-98 fiscals.

The wheat was not meant for sale but on emergency basis there was a provision to sell 25 percent of the wheat at government-fixed price.

But the officials concerned sold it at Tk 5 per kg although the government rate was Tk 11.64.

In this way, Shafiq and others misappropriated Tk 7,37,04,000.

The case was filed on August 2, 1998.

## Universities need courses on intelligence studies

Launch of a book told

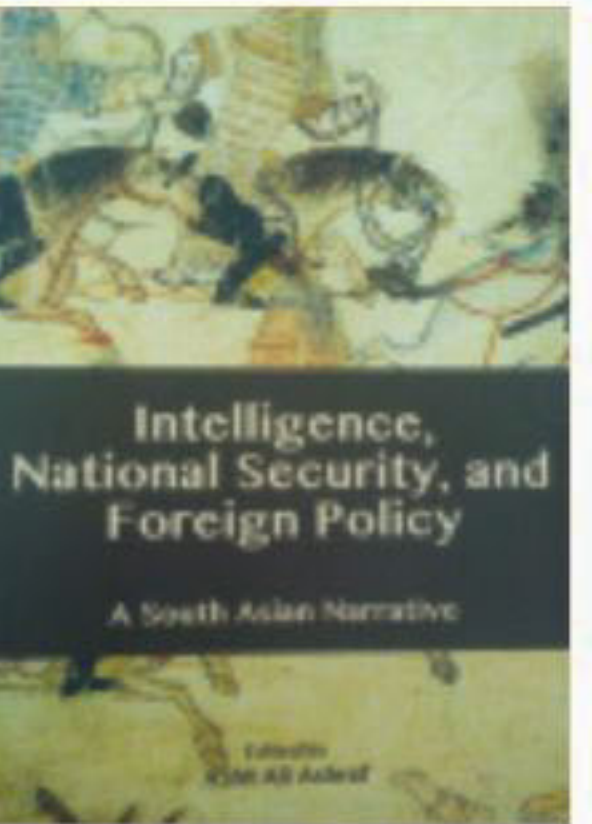
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers yesterday underscored the need for opening academic courses on intelligence and security issues in all universities of the country.

"The study of intelligence in civilian hands and universities is now a dire necessity because we've so much access to intelligence materials. The whole world of information revolution has made it necessary for us to offer alternate views on national security, to offer feedbacks on the question of diverse areas of intelligence," said Mohammad Shahiduzzaman, professor of international relations at Dhaka University.

The professor was addressing the launching ceremony of a book titled "Intelligence, National Security and Foreign Policy: A South Asian Narrative" at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban of DU, jointly organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) and DU's Department of International Relations.

Editor of the book, Dr ASM Ali Ashraf, associate professor of international relations at DU, said that although the linkage between intelligence, national security and foreign policy was widely debated in the western academia, there was hardly any



public discussion of intelligence in South Asia.

The book addresses the prevailing knowledge gap by presenting a South Asian narrative, he said, and it would turn into an intelligence requirement for strategic decision makers in analysing complex issues of aviation, maritime and regional security cooperation.

The 397 page book contains 23 chapters written by 23 authors of six countries on various aspects of intelligence and security in Bangladesh and South Asian regions.

Underscoring the need for intelligence studies, Prof Shahiduzzaman said, "Intelligence studies will now become a part of competition between the government and the civilian intellectual discourse and we will be more capable of interacting freely and frankly."

Editor of Strategic Affairs of The Daily Star Brig Gen (ret'd) Shahedul Anam Khan suggested bringing intelligence agencies under one umbrella and exercising oversight at all levels while maintaining secrecy for best output.

He also urged the government to assess the capacity of intelligence organisations and find loopholes in the system by evaluating the incidents of the last 20 years.

The book is priced at Tk 750.

### AL ready to welcome PM back today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



The ruling Awami League will accord a grand reception to party President

and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today on her return from the USA.

At a Mirpur programme, AL General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam yesterday said she would be greeted only with flowers. Hasina is scheduled to land at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport about 5:20pm.

AL planned to gather people carrying national flags and placards on both the sides of the road from the airport to Gono Bhaban to welcome her back home and congratulate her for winning "Planet 50-50 Champion" and the "Agent of Change" awards for leadership in running the state. Hasina joined the 71st UN General Assembly in the USA and 5th Global Fund Replenishment Conference in Canada.

## Medical expenses way too high

Experts tell discussion, suggest ensuring low-cost, quality healthcare for all

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health experts and activists fear rising cost of treatment, mostly for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), will impoverish more people in the coming days unless authorities can ensure low-cost and quality healthcare.

"The way NCDs are rising, it is enough to make people from poor to poorer," said Prof Dr Rashid-E-Mahub, chairman of the National Committee on Health Rights Movement.

The out-of-pocket health expenses in the country stand at 63 percent, according to the National Health Accounts 2012.

A 2010 icddr research says around 64 lakh people in the country get poorer every year due to high medical costs.

The findings go in line with a World Health Organization study that says deaths from NCDs soared by seven percent in 2012 from the 2008 figure of 59 percent.

Of the 8.86 lakh deaths in 2012, 17 percent were caused by cardiovascular diseases, 10pc by cancers, 11pc by chronic respiratory diseases, three percent by diabetes, 18pc by other NCDs and nine percent by injuries, it said.

Dr Rashid-E-Mahub, also former president of Bangladesh Medical Association, said the patients often

suffer for long period, which increases their healthcare cost.

The major factors of the rising cost include specialised doctors' fees, drug price and expensive treatment cost at private hospitals, he said at a discussion titled "Low-cost Healthcare: Context and Prospects".

Progressive Doctors Union (PDU) organised it at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

The state has to take a proactive policy to address the issue, he suggested and called for the doctors' associations to unite for improving the country's healthcare.

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Guests hold the copies of "150 Years of Humanitarian Action in 71 Photos" of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in a hotel in Dhaka yesterday. Prime Minister's Political Affairs Adviser HT Imam was, among others, present at the publication ceremony. The books are based on 71 photos of two exhibitions ICRC held in Dhaka and Chittagong in 2014, highlighting its humanitarian operations in 1971 conflict, post-conflict contexts and current challenges.

PHOTO: STAR