

Unipay2u

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down the sentence.
The court also fined them around Tk 2,702 crore and directed them to pay the fine in favour of the state within 180 days, in default legal actions will be taken against them.

Around Tk 420 crore seized from the convicts' accounts and all properties of unipay2u were also confiscated in favour of the state. The punishment for the convicts, now in jail, became effective from yesterday and for the fugitives from the day of their arrest or surrender, the judge added in his judgement.

Earlier, the prosecution and defence completed arguments and the court recorded statements of 23 prosecution witnesses including the case's complainant.

On January 25, 2011, Taufiqul Islam, an assistant director of Anti-Corruption Commission, filed the case with Shahbagh Police Station against the officials of unipay2u, a so-called multilevel marketing company, for amassing money by cheating people.

In the case, it was alleged that the accused lured people into investing in gold, promising higher profit against the purchase. After getting registration from the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies & Firms on November 22, 2009, the accused started collecting money from people, which stands at around Tk 1,351 crore. They deposited the money in three banks.

Of the money, the accused withdrew over Tk 270 crore and transferred some in their personal accounts on different dates.

They also sold land in the company's name, which is tantamount to the offence of laundering money, according to the charge sheet. After an investigation, ACC on June 22, 2011 pressed charges against the six, which was framed on July 6, 2015.

Hasina among

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Rohingya[s] who fled persecution in Myanmar, Hasina welcomed them and allowed them to remain in her country," the journal wrote in its 10th annual special edition titled Winter 2019.

Hasina made the list under the "Defense and Security" category.

Referring to the background of the list, the Foreign Policy said they had selected the leading global thinkers cautiously considering their stake in shaping the world mind. "In a year of worldwide economic crisis and dangerous wars, of radical innovation and newfound realpolitik, street revolution and blunt rhetoric, we could think of no better way to make sense of it than through the big ideas of those who shape our understanding of the world."

Last year, Sheikh Hasina was ranked 26th in Forbe's list of the world's 100 most powerful women. Foreign Policy is an award-winning and well-established magazine which was started around 40 years ago.

Man caught

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of Patuakhali Police Station. Hearing her scream, locals rescued the woman and caught Alom red-handed. At that time, a team of Rab-8 was passing by who rescued the victim and detained Alom from the spot, he added.

Later, Rab handed over Alom to police and sent the woman to Patuakhali General Hospital, the OC said.

The victim's mother filed a case with the police station against Alom around 7:00pm, he further said, adding that police would take necessary steps in this connection.

SI booked

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the valuables were kept. At one point, he found Tk 85,000 and gold jewellery and put those in his pockets.

"The SI abused, slapped that knocked me down when I refused to give him my husband's motorcycle key," she wrote, adding that she eventually gave him the key and the officer took the motorcycle and left.

After the case was filed, Senior Judge Hadiuzzaman ordered the superintendent of police in Meherpur to investigate the allegations and submit the report before the court within three days.

SP Mostafizur Rahman formed a probe committee headed by Additional SP Zahidul Islam.

Contacted, SI Zia said the allegations were false and that there were no legal papers of the motorcycle he took.



Mangled remains of the three-wheeler. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Chittagong take top spot

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Chris Jonker scored a quick 36 as they added 71 runs in the last five overs. In reply, Chittagong were struggling on 30 for three but Mushfiqur and Najibullah Zadrán added 41 runs for the fourth wicket to start the rebuilding process.

Najibullah was dismissed for 23, but Mushfiqur remained firm at the other end and reached his fifty off 39 balls and crucially, added an unbeaten 88-run fifth-wicket stand with Mosaddek Hossain that took them across the finish line.

Player-of-the-match Mushfiqur was unbeaten on 64 off 46 balls, which was studded with two sixes and six fours, while Mosaddek was not out on 43 off 26 balls with four fours and two sixes.

In the day's second match, Khulna Titans got their second win of the tournament by beating Sylhet Sixers by 21 runs.

Chasing 171 to win, Sylhet were in a spot of bother on 56 for four before Nicholas Pooran and Mohammad Nawaz added 81 runs for the fifth wicket

to bring the side back into the game.

Pooran, however, was dismissed on 28 off 21 balls but Nawaz kept hopes alive for Sylhet as he brought up his fifty off 32 balls. But the left-hander was eventually dismissed for 54 and since his departure Sylhet eventually ended the chase on 149 for seven after 20 overs -- their sixth defeat in eight games. Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam picked up three wickets for Khulna.

Earlier, Khulna made a flying start with openers Brendon Taylor and Junaid Siddique adding 73 runs for the opening wicket. Junaid was dismissed for 33 off 23 balls while Taylor top-scored with 48 off 31 balls.

Since their departures, Khulna lost their way in the middle and it was David Wiese's 25-ball 38 at the end that helped the side post a challenging total of 170 for nine.

Leg-spinner Alok Kapali picked up four wickets while Mohammad Nawaz and Taskin Ahmed took two scalps each for Sylhet.

'Kinpins' safe

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Though Bodi remains free, three of his brothers have surrendered. They are Abdul Amin, Md Shafiq and Faisal Rahman. Sources said they recently returned home from Dubai to surrender.

One of Bodi's nephew, Shahedur Rahman Nipu, has also taken shelter in the "safe home".

Bodi's name appeared as a patron of the illegal drug trade in intelligence reports of five agencies, but he never faced any action.

The agencies also listed several of his relatives and associates, including his brothers Abdul Shukkur and Mujibur Rahman, stepbrothers Abdul Amin and Faisal, in-law Shahed Kamal and cousin Kamrul Hasan Russell.

Bodi failed to get the AL nomination for the December 30 polls after his name again topped the list of yaba traders just months before the election. Instead, the party picked Bodi's wife to run from Ukhia-Teknaf, the gateway of smuggling the crazy drug into Bangladesh, mainly from Myanmar.

Taking office for a third straight term, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called for continuing the anti-drug drive. She also spoke of giving a chance to return to normal life to those who would surrender.

HOW IT BEGAN
Inspired by the recent surrender of some pirates in Moheshkhali, the local administration initiated the surrender process, and the "yaba godfathers" started coming to the "safe home" in mid-January, police sources said.

Earlier in November, a private television journalist approached police, saying some suspected drug dealers wanted to surrender, police said.

The local police communicated with the Police Headquarters about the proposal. The PHQ then discussed the legal issues and alerted the top

authorities about the development.

The surrender process began after getting the go-ahead from the authorities, police said.

In the first week of January, police held a meeting with Bodi on the matter. When the ruling party lawmaker lent support to the initiative, more and more "yaba dealers" showed interest to surrender, police sources said.

After the meeting, Bodi started visiting the homes of yaba dealers and talking with their family members about the surrender for their own safety, police and locals said.

Contacted yesterday, the lawmaker said he was always against yaba and any other drugs. But some quarters had his name listed for their personal benefit.

"Now, when I started working against narcotics again, some people are trying to present it in a different way," he claimed.

He alleged a vested group was still working against his initiative to stop yaba trade.

"I am requesting all the drug traders, including my family members who are involved in drug trade, to surrender," he said, adding, "Everyone is equal before the law."

Police said dozens more suspected yaba dealers would surrender in the middle of next month.

ABM Masud Hossain, police superintendent in Cox's Bazar, said the drug traders wanted a chance from the government, and it agreed to offer them the opportunity under some conditions.

Asked about the wealth the Yaba dealers amassed through the illegal business, a top police official said after the surrender, they would write to the Anti-Corruption Commission and the National Board of Revenue (NBR) to look into their wealth.

The ACC and the NBR will take steps in line with their investigation, the official said, asking not to be named.

Risha murder

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court's attention to the 2013 act. It wrote to the chief justice, requesting him to clear the confusion over the punishment of Obaidul, if found guilty, by the Shishu Court.

The 2013 act gave the sole authority to Shishu tribunals to hold the trial of cases linked to "children in conflict with the law" or "children in contact with the law". Underage victims and witnesses are considered "in contact with the law".

The 2013 act did not specify what punishment an adult accused, if convicted, should begin, as in the case of Risha.

The act was amended and according to a November 14 gazette issued, the Shishu Court would only deal with cases in which a child is "in conflict with the law".

Following the amendment, there is now no confusion; Shishu Court should not conduct the trial of Risha's murder since the court has the jurisdiction to try only those cases that have children "in conflict with the law" (accused), said lawyer Ataulhul Nurul Kabir, from Amrai Pari, an alliance to end violence against women.

And the adult accused should be tried under the relevant law depending on the crime he or she allegedly committed, he said.

Fahmida Akhter Rinky, who represents Risha's parents in the case, told The Daily Star over the phone on January 16 that the case was waiting to be sent to a relevant court from the Shishu Court.

The gazette on the amendments says all cases that are under trial or being prepared for trial with charges brought against children should be transferred to Shishu Court within 90 working days from the enforcement of the Children's [Amendment] Act, 2018. If not possible, the timeframe might be extended for another 45 working days.

There should be no separate Shishu tribunal. Instead, the Women and Children Repression Prevention tribunals will act as Shishu tribunals while overseeing trial of a case under the Children's Act.

If a district did not have any such court, the District and Session Judge's Court would play the role of the tribunal.

In instances when children and adults have committed a crime together, police reports or probe reports should be prepared separately for children and for adults.

Courts should hold the trial of the children "in conflict with the law" under the Children's Act and adults should be tried under the relevant law by any court with the jurisdiction.

Tragedy

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The reason of the attack on Antor, who owns a CNG-run auto-rickshaw garage, was not immediately known. He was admitted to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital.

The OC said police, on information, went to the spot of the accident and sent the bodies to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The truck was seized but the driver and his helper fled, he added.

HARASSMENT OF GIRL

Stalker beats up her father for filing case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A man was beaten up allegedly by a stalker and his family members in Boardghar Bazar area of Jamalpur Sadar yesterday for protesting harassment of his 17-year-old daughter.

The incident happened when he was returning home after filing a complaint with local police against the stalker.

The accused stalker is Sabbir, 22, of the same village.

Sabbir was stalking the girl for last few months. On Tuesday morning, the victim's mother scolded him and complained to his parents, said Fazle Masud, sub-inspector of Jamaplur Sadar Police Station.

But the stalker assaulted the college student near her college gate the next day, the SI added.

After the girl was assaulted, her father filed a case with the police station against Sabbir and some unnamed youths, the police official said.

Sabbir, his cousin and his uncle attacked the girl's father for filing a complaint with police, said SI Masud, adding that a general diary was lodged against Sabbir's cousin and uncle.

The injured father was taken to Jamalpur General Hospital.

"We are conducting drives to arrest the key accused Sabbir," said the SI, who is also the investigation officer of the case.

No public

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According to the public procurement act, if a government procurement authority wants to buy goods or services directly, it must have an approval from the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs.

The finance minister said if the Open Tender Method (OTM) is followed, scope would be created for competition among all and the government would be able to have an idea about whether it is going to pay a proper price for a product or service.

Kamal said the project proposal of the water resources ministry was sent to the Planning Commission which recommended the authorities follow the OTM. But the procurement authority thought that the work consisting of various small packages could not be done in a coordinated way using this method and it would take more time, he added.

The meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs was followed by another one of the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase.

The meeting approved the proposal for selection of project management consultancy services for Construction of Single Line Dual Gauge Railway Track from Dohazari to Cox's Bazar via Ramu to Ghumdhum near Myanmar.

It consented to appoint the consultant at a cost of Tk 38.51 cr.

Kamal said the project is scheduled to be completed in 2022. The implementation of the project was delayed due to acquisition of land, he said, adding that the problem was over.

The minister said once the project is implemented, people will be able to travel from Dhaka to Cox's Bazar by train.

Don't bother

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accountability sets a terrible precedent," said association president Olivier Knox.

Knox called the briefings a way to "highlight that no one in a healthy republic is above being questioned."

Trump complains frequently about what he says is unfair coverage of his presidency. The dispute gets personal, with Trump and his aides occasionally insulting or reprimanding their most disliked journalists in public.

After Trump clashed angrily with CNN reporter Jim Acosta at a press conference in November, the White House briefly withdrew his credentials, before a court ordered them reinstated.

While the regular, formal briefings that were once a presidential staple have petered out, Sanders often meets with reporters in more impromptu settings. Trump also takes questions frequently, making him unusually accessible.

However, the occasions in the Oval Office or before boarding the Marine One helicopter tend to be hurried and less open to follow-up questions than a real press conference.

UN expert visits Bhashan Char today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Yanghee Lee visits Bhashan Char today.

Lee, now on an official visit to Bangladesh, is visiting the island with the approval of the Bangladesh govern-

ment, said a UIN press release yesterday.

The government has been developing the island since late 2017 for relocating Rohingya refugees there.

She will hold a news conference tomorrow at 5:00pm in the capital's Le Meridien Hotel to talk about her visit in Thailand and Bangladesh.

WAR IN SYRIA

Kurd-led forces overrun last IS-held village

AFP, Beirut

Kurdish-led fighters overran the last village held by the Islamic State group in Syria yesterday, confining its once vast cross-border "caliphate" to two small hamlets, a war monitor said.

It is the culmination of a broad offensive launched by the Syrian Democratic Forces last September with US-led coalition support in which they have reduced the jihadists' last enclave on the north bank of the Euphrates valley near the Iraqi border to a tiny rump.

The capture of the village of Baghouz leaves the few remaining diehard IS fighters holed up in scattered homesteads among the irrigated fields and orchards on the north bank of the Euphrates Valley.

"Search operations are continuing in Baghouz to find any IS fighters who are still hiding," the head of the

Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.

"The SDF will now have to push on into the farmland around Baghouz."

"Around 4,900 people, mostly women and children but including 470 IS fighters, have fled the jihadists' fast dwindling enclave since Monday, Abdel Rahman said late on Tuesday.

Of those 3,500 surrendered to the advancing SDF on Tuesday alone.

They were evacuated on dozens of trucks chartered by the SDF.

The fall of Baghouz follows the SDF's capture of the enclave's sole town of Hajin and the villages of Al-Shaafa and Sousa in recent weeks.

The new wave of departures means that nearly 27,000 people have left former IS areas since early December, including almost 1,800 jihadists who have surrendered, the Observatory said.

Priyanka enters Indian politics

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the Congress said. Uttar Pradesh sends the largest number of members to the Lok Sabha.

Her appointment is being seen as a move aimed at boosting the morale of party workers in a state where Congress influence and organisational base has been waning steadily over the years and where the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party announced a poll tie-up last week.

A mother of two children, Priyanka Gandhi will assist her brother Rahul in the state. Her joining active politics heralds the entry of another Nehru-Gandhi family scion. It remains to be seen if she will contest from Rae Bareilly parliamentary constituency represented by her mother Sonia Gandhi.

This sets at rest speculation over Priyanka's entry into active politics and the party and her mother Sonia Gandhi had said that she would take the plunge at a time of her choice.

"Congress president has appointed Smt Priyanka Gandhi Vadra as AICC

general secretary for Uttar Pradesh East. She will be taking charge with effect from first week of February 2019," a statement from senior Congress leader and Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot said.

Rahul Gandhi also appointed senior party leader Jyotiraditya Scindia as party general secretary for Uttar Pradesh West. Priyanka and Scindia replace Ghulam Nabi Azad, who has been appointed general secretary for Haryana state where the party is divided into factions.

Priyanka was earlier actively involved in key decision-making in the Congress along with Sonia and Rahul including in the selection of new chief ministers for Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh states recently after the party's victory in assembly elections.

Priyanka is married to Robert Vadra who is embroiled in a land row in Haryana and Rajasthan and is facing probes by the Enforcement Directorate.

Tara Mia gets bail

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The HC also asked the 45-year-old man to surrender before the lower court concerned in Sunamganj after his bail term expires.

A beggar hailing from Jamalganj upazila in Sunamganj district, Tara expressed his gratitude and joy upon hearing the news of his bail.

"I had been living away from my house since the case was filed and police implicated me... I will now visit my family, my kids," he told The Daily Star at the HC premises.

"I had an operation on my stomach a year ago. Living here [on the road] for the past few days, I had fallen ill. If I had not gotten bail, then I would have suffered a lot."

Tara demanded steps from the authorities concerned to discharge him from the case and relieve him from his sufferings.

He arrived in Dhaka a week ago with the help of his brother and co-accused, Shamsu Miah, and appeared before the HC for his hearing in the case yesterday.

He, however, could not afford a lawyer. Afterwards, the lawyer of some of his

co-accused, Mohammad Abidul Haque, moved for him.

During the hearing, Abidul brought a copy of the report published in this newspaper to the court and said that a man in his condition could never attack the police, adding Tara was falsely implicated in the case.

"The High Court took the argument into cognisance and granted bail to Tara Mia," he told The Daily Star after the hearing.

Though Tara said he was not involved in politics, he was made one of the 52 accused in a case filed for attacking policemen with machetes, hockey sticks and iron rods in Sunamganj's Mallikpur Bazar area around 4:40pm on December 28.

According to the case statement, the accused gathered unlawfully in the area and brought out a procession in support of the "sheaf of paddy".

They blocked the road and attacked police, leaving at least five policemen, including the complainant, injured.

Like the previous days, several hundred people thronged the HC premises yesterday waiting for their bail hearing.

Biswa Ijtema

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known for humble behaviour and preaching for peace -- over the nomination of Indian Islamic scholar Maulana Saad Kandhalvi as the ameer.

On December 1 last year, an elderly man was killed and over 200 others were injured in a fierce fight between the two factions over the timing of this year's Ijtema in Tongi.

The government postponed the Ijtema after the two factions announced separate schedules for the congregation.

The Ijtema's first phase was scheduled to be held from January 11 to 13 and the second one from January 18 to 20.

Maulana Saad was supposed to administer the Akheri Munajat (concluding prayers) of the last year's Ijtema as he did in the previous past three years. But he had to return home

without doing so in the face of stern opposition from a faction of Tablighi Jamaat men, mostly students and teachers of Qawmi madrasas of Bangladesh.

The protesters claimed that Saad made "controversial comments about the Quran and Sunnah" in India.

Responding to a query from a journalist, Asaduzzaman said a decision was made that Maulana Saad would not join the Ijtema this time.

Asked about how many phases of the Ijtema will be held this year, the minister said the issue would also be decided in today's meeting.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Religious Affairs Sheikh Md Abdullah said the Ijtema would be held once in a year. "The clashes which took place across the country are not acceptable at all."