

# Top court judges must get state minister's protocol

HC says, fines ex-judge for failure to provide HC judge with protocol

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday fined a former district and sessions judge Tk 5,000 for not providing an HC judge with protocol in 2003.

The court said the judges of Supreme Court's Appellate and High Court divisions must get the protocol the state ministers get.

It also ordered Md Firoz Alam, the then district and sessions judge in Feni, to deposit the fine with the government treasury within 15 days for committing contempt of court by not giving protocol to then HC justice Syed Amirul Islam in October that year.

Judge Firoz will have to serve in jail for seven days if he fails to pay the fine within the stipulated time after receiving the verdict copy, the court said.

It also issued four directives for ensuring and providing proper protocol to the visiting SC judges and also ordered the SC registrar general and the law secretary to issue a circular to this effect for all district and sessions

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# A political

FROM PAGE 1  
"I don't know why they are losing the chance," she said.

The prime minister claimed that much before the parliamentary election, the country's people had decided to vote for "Boat", the electoral symbol of her party Awami League. They finally did vote for it as they reaped the benefits of development in the last 10 years of AL ruling, she said.

Talking about pre-election dialogues, Hasina said she had invited all political parties to talks and sat with them in a good atmosphere.

During the discussions, she said, she had urged all to participate in the polls. "We wanted to build our country together."

The PM reiterated that she would stay in her village home to spend her retirement as the greenery of villages always attracts her.

"I was born and raised in a village, frolicking and smearing mud on myself, jumping in ponds and climbing trees," she said adding that although she left her village at one stage, her attraction for it never ended.

Hasina said she loved the open environment of villages, instead of the brick-rocked urban life.

Replying to another question, the prime minister placed a list of 97 heads of states and governments as well as important world leaders and organisations who have greeted her for being re-elected PM. Jatiya Party lawmaker Fakhru Imam raised the question on behalf of JP MP Rustum Ali Faraji (Pirojpur-3) in his absence.

Replying to a query from AL MP Mamunur Rashid Kiron (Noakhali-3), Hasina said the government would take legal steps against those who would try to destroy peace and the image of the country through propaganda.

If there is any attempt to foil the existing communal harmony, the government will deal with it with an iron hand, she warned.

Responding to a starred question from AL MP Aslam Hossain Saudagar (Kurigram-1), Hasina said the process of conducting feasibility studies was underway for the construction of subways or underground metros to ease the capital's traffic congestion.

She added a feasibility study had been already completed over the construction of a 39.24km elevated expressway from Baliapur of Savar to Nangalbandha of Narayanganj via Nimtoli, Keraniganj, Fatulla and Bandar areas.

Besides, she mentioned, a project proposal was at the Planning Commission for conducting feasibility study for the construction of a tunnel under the Jamuna River with the government's own finance.

**PRY CURRICULUM TO BE REVISED**  
Hasina yesterday also told parliament that the government had taken a decision for revising the primary education curriculum by 2019-20.

"The decision has been made for introducing fresh educational activities in primary schools," she said replying to a question from Awami League MP Mohammad Shahiduzzaman (Meherpur-2).

The prime minister said the curriculum from pre-primary level to Class-V would be modified within 2019-20. Textbooks, to be printed in line with new curriculum, would be handed to students the next year.



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

A bulldozer wrecking a building on the bank of the Buriganga river in Jhauban area of Kamrangirchar in Dhaka yesterday morning. The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority knocked down 124 structures yesterday as part of its ongoing drive against encroachers. Story on page 5.

# 500 agents now take full control

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Asked why police couldn't learn about these agents earlier, the official said they recently found out that some of the law enforcers, who worked in Teknaf one or two years ago, were aware of these agents, but didn't take any action or include their names in the list of yaba dealers.

In the last five months, more than a hundred police officials, who had been posted in Teknaf and Ukhia, were either attached to the Cox's Bazar Police Lines or transferred elsewhere for their alleged links with yaba dealers.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, ABM Masud Hossain, superintendent of police in Cox's Bazar, said they recently got information on new yaba smugglers, who were not on any list of yaba dealers.

"We are now verifying the names ... we will take action once the verification is over," he said.

Sources said the district police recently obtained information on some beneficiaries of the yaba trade, who got hefty amounts from godfathers for helping them run the business.

Asked about this, police officials declined to comment.

Meanwhile, the district police have completed all preparations for the much-talked-about surrender of yaba godfathers and dealers.

The surrender will take place at 10:00am on February 16 at Teknaf Pilot School playground.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan and Inspector General of Police Mohammad Javed Patwary will be present there, said SP Masud.

"We are expecting that around 100 yaba godfathers and dealers will surrender to police on that day," he added.

Interestingly, former lawmaker Abdur Rahman Bodi, who played a big role in persuading yaba godfathers and dealers to surrender, was asked not to attend the programme. His wife, lawmaker Shahin Akhter will be present as a guest, said sources.

Eighty yaba godfathers and dealers, who have been kept at a police safe house at Cox's Bazar District Police Lines, will surrender at the programme. They include 30 godfathers who are on the list of yaba traders prepared by the home ministry.

Five family members of Bodi are among them. They are his brothers Abdul Amin, Md Shafiq and Faisal Rahman, and nephews Shahed

Rahman Nipu and Shahed Kamal.

Police have already drawn up a list that includes these 80 yaba godfathers and dealers. Some more names will be added in the next two days, said police sources.

These yaba traders will surrender on condition that no new cases will be filed against them, the sources added.

"We assured them that they will not face any new case. But they have to fight legal battles in the cases filed against them in the past," a high-up of the district police told this newspaper.

"Once they came out of jail, they will work with law enforcers to stop the trade, and provide information on other traders and smugglers ... They have agreed to do so," said the official, seeking anonymity.

# Dangerous defiance of kiln law

FROM PAGE 1  
Al Amin, a professor at the Institute of Forestry and Environmental Science, said the impact of these brick kilns operating within the periphery of city areas can be devastating.

Mentioning that the authorities concerned should take steps to ensure installation of environment-friendly kilns as these were necessary for a country's development, he cautioned against the current practice.

"The population density [in city corporations] is higher compared to rural areas. Brick kilns in cities mean more people will be affected by the high level of air pollution," he told this paper.

The kiln at Uttar Mohra point, "Akhter Bricks", was shut down by the DoE a few years ago before resuming operation.

In this regard, Director of Department of Environment (DoE) in Chattogram Azadur Rahman Mollik said they had shut down Akhter Bricks a few years back and had finalised charges to submit in court.

"I didn't know that they resumed operations. We will take action soon," he told this correspondent.

He then reiterated his commitment to taking stern actions against the kilns if they did not comply with the relevant act.

Elsewhere in South Pahartoli, at least three brick kilns are operating within the periphery of the city corporation.

Around 35,000 people live in the area, under the smog that clings to the very air around them.

Azizul Islam Siddiqi, civil surgeon of Chattogram, told The Daily Star that the smoke emitted by the kilns contains

particles that include carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, which are seriously injurious to public health.

People exposed to it over a certain period risk developing lung cancer, skin diseases and respiratory illnesses.

Pregnant women and the children they carry are also at higher risk if they live around such kilns, he added.

Khondokar Tahajjut, assistant director of Chattogram DoE, told The Daily Star that they had issued notices recently to the brick kilns being operated within the city corporation's periphery and would take action against them after a hearing.

But such hearings can go towards favouring brick kiln owners. This is also something that brick kiln owners have taken advantage of.

Travelling further towards North Kattoli, a reserved forest, two more

brick kilns -- KML Brick Suppliers-1 and KML Brick Industries-2 -- can be seen emitting the dark plumes of poison.

Around 334 acres of North Kattoli along the Bay of Bengal was declared a reserve forest in 1998.

Divisional Forest Officer SM Golam Mowla said at least six cases had been filed against KML unit 1 and 2.

"But they simply show up in court and secure a stay order, thus preventing further action against them."

He added that his department had written to the Department of Environment (DoE) Chattogram at least five times in this regard.

DoE director Azadur said, "KML was fined several times. But whenever we take action, they secure court orders..."

Additionally, around six more kilns are located within the city corporation

# PM flies to Germany today

To join security conference, then visit UAE

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves this morning for a three-day visit to Munich, Germany, where she will join other world leaders in a security conference. Afterwards, she will pay a bilateral visit to the UAE on her way back home.

This will be her first foreign trip in her latest term in office and government officials are hopeful that it would enhance Bangladesh's global image abroad.

While briefing reporters at his office, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said Hasina carried a big example of development "in her pocket" and the international community would want to know about it when she attends the Munich Security Conference.

Responding to questions, he said Bangladesh had given shelter to a large number of Rohingya refugees on humanitarian grounds and it could now ask other countries to do the same.

"At this stage, we think we've taken enough people [Rohingyas]. Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, so we can ask others to help," Momen

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# 3 killed, 10 hurt as bus rams human haulier

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed and 10 others injured in an accident between a bus and a human hauler in Lemua Bridge area of Feni's Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead are Abdus Sobhan, 67, a freedom fighter of Chhanua village in the upazila, his granddaughter Saika, 5, and their neighbour Rehana Akhter, 30, reported a correspondent from Feni.

According to police, the accident took place as a bus of Unique Paribahan rammed a human haulier from behind around 3:45pm. Losing control, the human hauler overturned and fell into a roadside ditch, leaving

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# Brick kilns top polluter

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The UN health body estimates 37,000 Bangladeshis die due to air pollution every year, the average age of the victims being just 38 years.

**BRICK KILNS TOP CULPRIT**  
The study found air quality of these cities plummets between November and April when brick kilns operate and when there are a lot of particles in the air.

The DoE installed equipment at 11 places in the eight cities to collect daily data to prepare the Air Quality Index (AQI), which gave a score between zero and 500, zero being the best.

The equipment collected various data, including airborne particles, Sulfur Dioxide, Carbon Monoxide, and Nitrogen Oxides, all of which are harmful for health.

The AQI of 0-50 was categorised as good, 51-100 as moderate, 101-150 cautionary, 151-200 unhealthy, 201-300 very unhealthy, and 301-500 severely unhealthy.

In 2018, Narayanganj had 105 days with its AQI over 301 (severely unhealthy). Dhaka had such air on 83 days, Gazipur 72 days, Rajshahi 45 days, Khulna 39 days, Chattogram 13 days, Barisal 9 days, and Sylhet 8 days, the survey report said.

On January 20 this year, Narayanganj scored 475, Gazipur 400, Dhaka 382, Chittagong 361, Rajshahi 356, and Barisal 335.

Ziaul Haque, DoE director for air quality management, said that in 2017-18 fiscal year, half the air pollution in Dhaka was caused by brick kilns while construction work contrib-

AIR QUALITY OF EIGHT CITIES IN 2018								
	Dhaka	Gazipur	Narayanganj	Chattogram	Sylhet	Khulna	Rajshahi	Barisal
Good	25	77	77	89	109	92	18	127
Moderate	83	59	96	43	77	61	108	87
Caution	56	53	35	32	80	26	74	37
Unhealthy	67	50	48	61	62	43	69	55
Very Unhealthy	47	31	32	64	29	14	49	45
Extremely Unhealthy	83	72	105	13	8	39	45	9
Total days surveyed	361	342	355	302	365	275	363	360

SOURCE: DoE

uted around 25 percent and vehicle emission 10-12 percent.

The case is roughly the same in other cities, he added.

There are 7,707 brick kilns in the country, including 366 in Barisal division, 1,529 in Chattogram, 256 in Sylhet, 2,295 in Dhaka, 873 in Khulna and 1,176 in Rajshahi division, according to the latest DoE data.

DoE permission is mandatory for brick kilns. But 2015 data show at least 1,957 of them did not have it. There were 6,895 brick kilns in the country at the time.

Ziaul claimed that they were taking measures to stop the rapid sprouting and growth of brick kilns in the country.

"If we can use alternatives to bricks or use modern technology to manufacture bricks, the pollution level would fall," he said, adding that they were working to formulate a revised code to

phase out kilns that use age-old methods to bake the bricks.

The government is now promoting modern technology for brick kilns like Hybrid Hoffman and Tunnel technology.

Hybrid Hoffman Kiln (HHK) technology was developed and is widely used in China. The HHK combines use of green bricks produced by mixing powdered fuel with clay; and utilisation of waste heat by transferring the heat to an adjacent tunnel.

Tunnel kiln is a continuous moving ware kiln in which the clay products to be fired are passed on cars through a long horizontal tunnel. The firing of products occurs at the central part of the tunnel. The tunnel kiln is considered to be the most advanced brick making technology. The main advantages of tunnel kiln technology lie in its ability to fire a wide variety of clay products.

Making bricks using these methods requires less coal or wood, hence less pollution.

For example, a conventional brick kiln requires 20 tonnes of coal to make 1,00,000 bricks, way more than 13-14 tonnes needed to make equal number of bricks using modern technology.

**HEALTH IMPACT**

According to a World Health Organisation (WHO) report released in May last year, around 7 million people die globally every year from exposure to fine particles in polluted air that penetrate deep into the lungs and cardiovascular system. It causes diseases including stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases and respiratory infections, including pneumonia.

Outdoor air pollution alone caused some 4.2 million deaths in 2016 while air pollution indoors, from cooking with polluting fuels and technologies, caused an estimated 3.8 million deaths during the same period.

More than 90 percent of the deaths were in low- and middle-income countries, mainly in Asia and Africa, said the WHO report.

"The WHO recognised that air pollution is a critical risk factor for non-communicable diseases, causing an estimated one-quarter (24 percent) of all adult deaths from heart disease, 25 percent from stroke, 43 percent from chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, and 29 percent from lung cancer," it read.

Md Kamruzzaman, assistant professor of department respiratory medi-

cine at Dhaka Shishu Hospital, said the number of patients of asthma, bronchiolitis, respiratory tract infections, and common cold increases during dry season.

He said children with asthma or allergy issues were the main victims of dust particles in the air.

On average, the hospital treats about 100 outdoor patients every day. Most of them come with respiratory problems, he said.

Fatematuz Zohura, a fourth grader at a school in Savar, was taken to Shishu Hospital on January 16 following a severe asthma attack. She had to stay in the National Institute of Diseases of the Chest and Hospital (NIDCH) for three days in August last year as well.

Masud Rana, of Nabisco area in Dhaka, has also been struggling with asthma for a month.

"We recommend these patients to avoid dust and use mask as it is not a curable disease," Kamruzzaman said.

Dewan Azmal Hossain, assistant professor of respiratory medicine at NIDCH, said exposure to dust and other particles in the air could cause sinusitis and lead to severe asthma attacks. Chronic exposure to dust could turn into a serious case of tuberculosis, he said.

They get almost double the patients with respiratory problems during the dry season, he added.

Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sayeed Khokon said they started a programme late last month to spray water on streets to reduce dust.