

# Living in uncertainty

## Over half of 2,700 Rajshahi City Corporation employees not regularised

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Despite an excruciating neck pain, Shamsul Haque went to work at Rajshahi City Corporation on January 26.

The 56-year-old resident of Daspukur area had valid reasons. Though he had been working at the mosquito control department for the last 26 years, he was yet to be regularised.

The father of three had been working on verbal appointment on the basis of daily wages. For him, to miss a day's work meant not getting paid.

"That kept him worried most of the times. He tried his best not to miss a day," said his wife Kohinoor Begum.

On the day, soon after reaching office, Shamsul collapsed. His colleagues took him to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. Doctors said he suffered a stroke.



Shamsul Haque being carried to the office of Rajshahi City Corporation by his son.

PHOTO: STAR

The right part of his body has become paralysed, read his medical report.

Ultimately, what Shamsul feared the most happened -- he

was unable to continue working, though he had four more years left till retirement.

He was released from the hospital a week later, but misfortune

pursued.

Unable to continue further treatment, he started seeing a homeopathy doctor in his area. That also required money and the only savings he had was the 20 days' salary for the month of January, which he was yet to collect.

Since he was not a regularised employee at the city corporation, he would not receive any retirement money or pension even after working there for over two decades.

Shamsul is not the only one who is suffering this fate, more than half of total 2,700 employees of the city corporation are serving on daily wage basis for at least 15 years, according to city corporation officials.

Most of them are leading an uncertain life and likely to complete their services without being regularised, they added.

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# CU Chhatra Union places six-point demand for Cucusu election

CU CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong University (CU) unit of Bangladesh Chhatra Union yesterday announced a series of programmes demanding CU Central Students' Union (Cucusu) election immediately.

CU Chhatra Union President Drishon Pradip Chakma made the announcement at a press conference held at Cucusu Bhaban around 2pm where they placed a six-point demand.

They will conduct class campaigns and collect signatures from students from February 27 to March 13, and bring out a protest procession on March 6 while a "Protibadi Kobita Path-er Ashor" will be held on March 12 to press home their demands.

They will submit a memorandum to the vice chancellor on March 18 with the same demands.

Their six-point demand include: organising a dialogue with all active student organisations, forming a committee to amend the constitution for Cucusu election, preparing voter list for the election, withdrawing the ban on political and cultural activities from the university, and announcing election schedule immediately.

CU unit Chhatra Union General Secretary Gourachad Thakur and Organising Secretary Mahabuba Jahan Rumi were also present at the press conference.

# Ctg teenager found dead at home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A teenager was found dead at his house in Chattogram city yesterday.

The family noticed that Abrar Mahmud, 13, was hanging from a clothe stand in bathroom at their Panchlaish residence.

He was declared dead at Chittagong Medical College Hospital, said Assistant Sub-inspector Alauddin Talukdar of CMCH police outpost.

Sub-inspector Md Enamul of Panchlaish Police Station said reason behind the death can be ascertained after investigation.

The teenager's family declined to make any comment over the issue immediately, said the SI.

Abrar was a class 7 student of Bakalia Government High School, said ASI Alauddin.

His father Md Nur Nabi is a Dubai expatriate, he added.

# M'singh schoolgirl goes missing

## Family alleges she was abducted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

An eighth-grader of Mymensingh has been missing since Sunday, claimed her family.

Alleging that she was abducted by a youth, the girl's father filed a case, accusing six persons including the youth and his parents, with Gafargaon Police Station yesterday, said Officer-in-Charge Abdul Ahad Khan.

According to the case statement, the youth, an SSC examinee, along with his friends abducted her while she was going to her friend's house in the area.

The group forced her into a CNG-run auto-rickshaw and drove away, added the statement.

The girl's father alleged that the youth had been stalking her for a long time on her way home from school, said the OC.

"We are investigating into the allegations," said the police officer. "We are also conducting drives to trace the girl," he added.

Meanwhile, police have detained mother of the youth for interrogation, he said.

She was later shown arrested in the case, said the OC.

After interrogation, the arrestee was produced before a Mymensingh court yesterday, said Sub-inspector Ahsan Habib of the police station, investigation officer of the case.

No further details were known immediately.

# CHAWKBAZAR FIRE EU extends condolence

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The European Union Delegation in Bangladesh has expressed their heartfelt condolences for all those affected by the fire which occurred in Old Dhaka's Chawkbazar area last Wednesday (February 20).

"Our thoughts are with the government and the people of Bangladesh as well as the bereaved families and friends of the victims during such a difficult time," said Konstantinos Vardakis, Chargé d'Affaires (diplomatic representative) of EU Delegation to Bangladesh.

The EU Delegation wishes speedy recovery of those injured in the incident, the statement added.

The devastating fire at Chawkbazar has claimed at least 69 lives.

# BARAPUKURIA GRAFT CASE Hearing on charge framing against Khaleda, 15 others on March 13

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka Court yesterday directed jail authorities to produce BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia before it on March 13 for hearing on the charge framing in connection with Barapukuria coalmine graft case.

Judge ASM Ruhul Imran of Special Judge's Court-2 of Dhaka passed the order, following a petition submitted by Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Public Prosecutor Mosharraf Hossain Kajol.

Fifteen other accused in the case have been asked to appear before the court on March 13 for the hearing, said Advocate Ziauddin Zia, a lawyer for Khaleda.

Meanwhile yesterday, ACC lawyer Kajol also submitted a copy of the HC order that vacated the stay on trial proceedings against Barrister Aminul Haque, an accused in the case.

The HC bench of Justice Md

Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice KM Hafizul Alam also rejected another petition filed by Barrister Aminul seeking cancellation of the proceedings against him and directed the lower court concerned to finish the trial proceedings within six months.

"Following the HC order, there is no bar on the court to continue the proceedings against the accused," said ACC lawyer Mosharraf Hossain Kajol.

Five accused in the case including former minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain were present while Barrister Aminul and eight others remained absent.

On February 2008, ACC filed the case against 16 people including Khaleda and ten of her former cabinet colleagues of taking Tk 159 crore in kickbacks on the Barapukuria coalmine deal awarded to the highest bidder. ACC pressed charges against them on October 5, 2008.

# Dispose of 10yr old pending criminal cases in 6 months

## HC directs lower courts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed all district and sessions judges across the country to finish the trial of all criminal cases pending with their courts for ten years or more, within the next six months.

The court also directed them to submit lists of the pending cases, through the Supreme Court registrar general, within next 30 days to the SC committee formed to monitor the subordinate courts.

The bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman passed the order while hearing a petition filed by one Shariful seeking bail in a robbery case.

The order came after the judges found that the robbery case against Shariful was filed with Raipura Police Station in Narsingdi on February 27, 2007 and the proceedings have not finished after 12 years, said Assistant Attorney General Yusuf Mahmud Morshed.

The bench granted six months bail to Shariful in the case, he added.

# Road crashes kill two

STAR REPORT

Two people were killed in road accidents in two districts yesterday, according to reports from our correspondent and a news agency.

Our correspondent from Mymensingh reports, a boy was killed as a truck ran him over on Gafargaon-Pukhuria road in Pukhuria village of Gafargaon upazila.

Abdul Ahad, 8, son of Jewel Mia from the village, was a second-grader of Pukhuria Government Primary School, said police.

Police seized the truck but its driver Tanjil Mia fled the scene. A case was filed in connection with the accident.

UNB from Rajshahi adds, an elderly man died as a bus rammed his bicycle on Rajshahi-Chapainawabganj highway in Godagari municipal area.

Lokman, 50, was declared dead at a Godagari hospital.

# NHRC helpless due to bureaucracy

## Dhaka University teacher Saber Ahmed Chowdhury says at solo lecture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) should work on sensitive issues such as extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances, said a Dhaka University teacher yesterday.

Associate Prof Saber Ahmed Chowdhury, who teaches peace and conflict studies at DU, was delivering a solo lecture on "Bangladesh National Human Rights Commission: Its Effectiveness as a Democracy-protecting Institution".

Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation arranged the lecture at DU's RC Majumdar auditorium as part of a series of lectures on unpublished PhD thesis.

"If democratic institutions

cannot function properly, it will create obstacles for overall democratic practice in the long run," Saber said during his hour-long lecture.

He alleged that lack of coordination among commission members and officials also raised questions about its sincerity to ensure people's rights. Although the commission has passed over a decade of journey, it is yet to be a trustworthy institution to the countrymen, he further alleged.

Due to the existing law, the commission is helpless to the government's bureaucratic system. It can play the role of a supervisor but it is not empowered to resolve an issue.

Whether anyone will get

remedy over rights violation, at times, depends on the will of the institution in question, he added.

Institutional development of the commission is a prerequisite to institutionalise the country's culture of human rights activism, he said. He stressed the need for incorporating people's participation in the process and political will.

Chairing the programme, eminent jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik said reports published by the commission could be discussed at the national parliament, which would help strengthening its role.

Director General of Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation Prof Ahrar Ahmad welcomed the audience.



This long whiskered catfish (locally known as bagha airh), weighing around 300kg, was caught from the river Kushiara in Fenchuganj area of Sylhet on Monday. When the 5ft long fish was brought to the city's Lalbazar, onlookers gathered to catch a glimpse yesterday. A customer offered Tk 1.5 lakh for the big fish, but the seller preferred to sell it at Tk 2,000 per kg.

# Ctg UP member stabbed to death over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A union parishad (UP) member died at Chattogram Medical College Hospital yesterday, a day after he was stabbed by one of his co-villagers in the district.

Emran Chowdhury, 45, from Gorduyara, was a UP member of Ward-9 in Hathazari upazila, said police.

There has been a dispute over a piece of land between Emran and a man living in the same village, said Belal Uddin Jahangir, officer-in-charge (OC) of Hathazari Police Station.

On Monday, they had an altercation over the dispute, the OC quoted witnesses as saying.

At one stage, the man stabbed him with a sharp weapon at Ichhapur Bazar, said the police officer.

The same day, the UP member was taken to CMCH, he said.

The alleged attacker has been on the run since the incident, said OC Belal Uddin.

No case was filed till filing of this report yesterday afternoon.

# Advanced Trauma Life Support Course begins in Bangladesh

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS) with the support of the American College of Surgeons has developed the Advanced Trauma Life Support Course (ATLS) in the country for the first time.

"The ATLS is an extremely important course for adequate trauma care. In most developed countries this is a mandatory course for doctors," said Abdul Jalil Chowdhury, professor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and secretary of BCPS, at a press briefing at BCPS in Dhaka's Mohakhali area.

BSMMU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Kanak Kanti Barua, representatives from BCPS and foreign delegates were present, among others.

"The course provides knowledge and techniques that are comprehensive and easily adaptive, which fits the needs of trauma patients. The course of the American College of Surgeons has been

introduced here under a tripartite agreement between American College of Surgeons, BCPS and the Society of Surgeons of Bangladesh," added Prof Chowdhury.

Speakers at the briefing said ATLS is presently being practiced in 83 countries including India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, China and Indonesia. Bangladesh is the 84th country to bear the flag and become an ATLS member.

Twelve faculties from the USA, Australia, India, Hong Kong, Malaysia and five faculties from Bangladesh are providing training to 16 senior doctors, who are expected to be the future trainers, from yesterday.

The foreign delegates expressed their hope that Bangladesh will successfully conduct the training in future, which would bring the patients from trauma and provide new lives.

"Trauma management is essentially



Dhaka University Associate Prof Saber Ahmed Chowdhury delivers a lecture, arranged by Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation, at Dhaka University yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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