



A car catches fire on the Farmgate-Khamarbari intersection in the capital yesterday afternoon, apparently from an engine misfire. The driver and passengers of the vehicle -- which was being used for a ridesharing service -- managed to get out safely, before fire fighters doused the flame.

PHOTO: FAHD MANNAN

## MPO INCLUSION Non-govt college teachers call work abstention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Non-government teachers in colleges under the National University (NU) are going to observe work abstention from today, until their inclusion into the "Monthly Payment Order (MPO)" system is announced.

The teachers' platform -- Bangladesh Besarki College Honors-Masters Shikhhak Shamity -- made the announcement at a human chain in the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Over 200 teachers from different districts of the country formed the human chain.

Saiful Islam, general secretary of the association, said the education ministry did not include them in the "Manpower Structure and MPO Policy-2018", though they had given several memorandums to the ministry in this regard.

"We have been living an inhuman life since the establishment of National University in 1992, so we will continue countrywide work abstention until our demand is met," he said.

Saiful claimed the NU is approving honours and masters courses at many new colleges every year,

without taking any initiative to include them in the MPO.

"Whenever we talk to the authorities of NU and the education ministry, they say nothing can be done without the direction of PM," he alleged.

Saiful urged the PM to meet their one-point demand considering this "helpless condition" of the teachers.

The body's Organising Secretary Sukomal Sen said about 3,500 teachers of 203 non-government colleges are now depending on students' tuition fees to get a paltry salary.

"It is true that students' education would be hampered due to our work abstention, but we will continue it so that the government pays heed to the one-point demand," he said.

Nekabbor Hossain, president of the association, said "The government had introduced 1.35 lakh new teacher posts in the amended Manpower Structure and MPO Policy in 2018, but is yet to include us there."

He urged the PM to take prompt initiatives so that they could get rid of the "cursed life".

## ABUSE OF POWER HC sentences Rajuk stenographer to 11 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a rare move, the High Court yesterday convicted and sentenced a former stenographer of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakha (Rajuk) to 11 years' imprisonment, around two years after he was acquitted by a lower court in a corruption case.

The HC also ordered the former stenographer, Md Shafullah, to surrender before the lower court within 15 days.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice KM Hafizul Alam came up with the judgement after holding hearing on an appeal filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) challenging the lower court verdict.

The HC also scrapped the verdict delivered by the Special Judges Court-7 of Dhaka that acquitted Shafullah of graft charges on November 21, 2017.

According to the case filed by ACC with Motijheel Police Station on October 10, 2013, Shafullah abused his power and damaged documents on planning and records for

constructing multi-storey buildings.

Deputy Attorney General AKM Alimuddin Manik told The Daily Star that the allegations against Shafullah have been proven before the HC.

He said the HC sentenced Shafullah to 11 years' imprisonment in three sections of Bangladesh Penal Code and the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1997.

Shafullah was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in two sections of Bangladesh Penal Code each and seven years' imprisonment in the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1997, and the sentences will be enforced concurrently; therefore, he will serve seven years in jail, he said.

DAG Manik said that Shafullah will have to serve jail term if the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court does not stay the HC verdict.

He also said this is a rare verdict, as the HC sentenced an accused who was acquitted by the trial court in a corruption case.

Barrister AKM Fakhrul Islam appeared for Shafullah.



With Ramadan just a few months away, these rotten dates, seized by a mobile court of Rapid Action Battalion, were found in a cold storage in Old Dhaka's Soarighat area yesterday. Around 3,000 maunds of the iftar staple were confiscated during the drive, led by Executive Magistrate Sarwoor Alam.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



After around a month of festivities surrounding literature, workers dismantle stalls, the day after Ekushey book fair ended. Book lovers will have to wait a year until the fair returns. The photo was taken yesterday from Bangla Academy premises.

## One-minute 'blackout' to mark Genocide Day

UNB, Dhaka

For the third successive year, the government has decided to observe a one-minute "blackout" on the night of March 25, marking Genocide Day.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal came up with the information after a meeting at the conference room of the ministry in presence of top officials of law enforcement agencies on observing Genocide Day on March 25 and Independence Day on March 26.

The "blackout" programme will be observed for one minute from 9pm on March 25, he said.

Everyone will switch their lights off. The information about the programme will be disseminated through media. Additional security measures will also be taken on the occasion, said the minister.

However, establishments of emergency services will remain out of the purview of the programme.

## FORGERY TO SELL SIBLINGS' LAND Woman sentenced to 13 years' jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a woman to 13 years' rigorous imprisonment in a case filed for selling 6 decimals of land that belonged to her brothers and sister, by making forged documents in 2012.

Judge Dr Shaikh Golam Mahbub of the Special Judge Court-6 of Dhaka handed the sentence in presence of the convict, Syeda Shahana Lucy.

The court also fined her Tk 75 lakh, in default of which she will get three more years in jail.

The court acquitted four others including a retired sub-registrar as the charges brought against them were not proved.

According to the prosecution, Lucy made some forged documents in the name of her deceased mother Amena Khatun, in absence of her three expatriate siblings, in 2012.

Later, she sold the land to a Bangladeshi expatriate living in US, Syed Selim Ahmed, at Tk 1.5 crore, showing her elder sister Syeda Shahriar Begum as the seller, on December 17 of 2012.

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# 'Khaleda not getting proper treatment'

Says Mirza Fakhrul after meeting BNP chief at court

JNU CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday expressed concerns over the health of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, and said doctors are not providing proper treatment to her.

"Khaleda Zia told me she is not well. We are very concerned about her health. Her blood tests have not been conducted yet. She is diabetic, but has not received any treatment for it," he said while talking to reporters in front of Old Dhaka Central jail, after meeting with Khaleda during the hearing on charge-framing in connection with the Niko graft case.

Around 12:30pm, the BNP chief appeared at the court of Judge Sheikh Hafizur Rahman, inside Old Dhaka Central Jail.

Upon her arrival, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Public Prosecutor Mosharraf Hossain Kajol inquired about her health condition, to which Khaleda replied "I am not well," reports bangla daily Prothom Alo.

Apart from Mirza Fakhrul, Khaleda also spoke to party leaders Zainul Abedin, Mir

Nasir and Khandaker Mahbub Hossain.

Fakhrul sat beside her till the end of the hearing at 1:35pm.

In response to a reporter's question afterwards, Fakhrul said they did not discuss any political issues in the meeting, and mentioned that Khaleda is concerned about her bail.

During the hearing, Khaleda dismissed the allegation that she missed the hearing on charge-framing in Niko graft case on February 20 as she "overslept".

She said, "I was ready to appear before the court. However, authorities did not produce me to it, and said I skipped the hearing for my sleep."

On February 20, jail authorities said Khaleda Zia could not be produced before the court as she "did not wake up from sleep".

At the hearing, BNP standing committee member Moudud Ahmed, an accused in the case, argued that all accused should be released from the case.

"There is nothing in the case about me -- no documents or witnesses. I gave my opinions when I was in the charge of the

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