

**Suprobhat Paribahan must pay Tk 10 lakh to Abrar's family**  
*SC upholds HC order*  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that directed Suprobhat Paribahan to pay Tk 10 lakh to the family of Abrar Ahmed Chowdhury, who was killed in a road crash on March 19.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain passed the order after dismissing a petition filed by Suprobhat Paribahan seeking stay on the HC order.

There is no merit in the stay petition of Suprobhat Paribahan, the apex court said in the order.

Writ petitioner Barrister Ruhul Quddus Kazal told The Daily Star that Suprobhat Paribahan must pay Tk 10 lakh to Abrar's family immediately, following the SC order.

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**A biker rides through the busy Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday -- with three little girls without helmets almost squashed on the pillion seat, precariously holding schoolbags. With the road wet from rain and the rider's peripheral vision limited by a neck-brace, these four are just a slip away from traffic tragedy.**

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

**'...or else Bangladesh will become a state of rapists'**

**Activists demand justice for rampant violence against women**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women's rights activists yesterday expressed deep concerns and indignation over the recent incidents of violence against women, including rape and murder attempts, that have taken place in different parts of the country.

Citing a number of such incidents -- including a madrasah student who was set on fire in Feni, and the gang-rape in Noakhali, they said violence against women is on the rise, and the pattern is getting more gruesome day by day.

Ayesha Khanam, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, urged the government as well as the citizens to put up a firm resistance against gender violence, particularly rape and sexual abuse. "If the culprits are not brought under trial and handed exemplary punishment quickly, the country will turn into a state of rapists," she said.

She made the call at a press conference organised by Samajik Protirodh Committee, a platform of 66 rights and non-government organisations, at Sofia Kamal Bhaban in the capital.

Ayesha, an eminent women's rights activist, said violence against women is a crime against humanity which should be prevented immediately. Otherwise, it will continue to rise.

About the Feni incident that took place on April 6, she said it is unfortunate that women were involved in setting the madrasa girl on fire.

"The principal of the madrasa [who is the alleged mastermind of the crime] is not only an abuser; he is also a murderer," she added.

Rokeya Kabir, executive director of Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha, demanded that the government immediately pass the proposed act on preventing sexual harassment at workplace and educational institutions.

**Akhaura-Sylhet rail track to become dual gauge**

*Ecneec okays Tk 16,104cr project*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to convert Akhaura-Sylhet rail track from metre to dual gauge at a cost of Tk 16,104.45 crore in a bid to improve connection with the north-east region.

China will finance 66.16 percent of the project to convert 225km metre gauge lines to 239km dual gauge between June 2019 and June 2025.

Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) yesterday approved the project at its meeting in the planning ministry with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Under the project, Bangladesh Railway will construct 239.14km rail

tracks, 49 major (5,945-metre) and 237 minor (1,725-metre) bridges, install signal systems at 22 stations and acquire 200 acres of land, among others.

It would cost Tk 67 crore per kilometre, which, according to media reports, is much higher than the cost of similar rail projects.

Asked, Planning Minister MA Mannan yesterday said he is not in a position to ascertain the project cost; rather it is engineers and planners who will set the cost.

"If they [engineers and planners] fixed Tk 100 as the project cost, how can I fix it at Tk 60?" he said.

The minister said he has information that there are similar projects which are much costlier than this one.

According to project documents, average speed of train in this section is around 50km per hour. Once the project is implemented, the average speed in broad gauge will be 120km per hour and 100km per hour in metre gauge.

The project will enable the track to start operation of national, regional and international freight and broad gauge container services.

Including this one, Ecneec approved total seven projects costing Tk 18,191 crore. It approved a project involving Tk 920 crore to acquire 1,000 acres of land in Chattogram's Mirsarai for Indian investors. The Mirsarai economic zone will be developed with funds from a

**DMP introduces digital multi-level car parking**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A multi-level car parking space was inaugurated at the Dhaka Metropolitan Police's (DMP) Central Command and Control Centre building yesterday.

At this eight-storey parking facility, a total of 34 cars can be parked where only six cars could be accommodated before, according to a press release.

This is an experimental project. After analysing the pros and cons of the system, more such facilities will be built in the future, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Mohammad Javed Patwary

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The eight-storey parking facility can accommodate 34 cars.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

**PHOTO OF THE DAY**

FIROZ AHMED



School students in their bright jerseys enjoy a friendly football match at Abahani playground, but Wasimul, 13, can only watch them from afar while selling peanuts. He lives in a Rayer Bazar slum with his parents and two brothers.

**DHAKA TODAY**

**DISCUSSION**

Declaration of Independence, Bangabandhu and Bangladesh  
**Venue:** Jatiya Press Club  
**Time:** 4pm

**FESTIVAL**

Baishakhi Drama Festival  
**Venue:** Jagannath Univeristy  
**Time:** 10am

**CONCERT**

Song for Peace by Joler Gaan  
**Venue:** United International University  
**Time:** 3:30pm

**DIALOGUE**

ILO Convention: Women's Contribution in the Workplace  
**Venue:** World Literature Center  
**Time:** 3pm

**ART EXHIBITION**

Rhythm of Life 2 by Farzana Islam Milky  
**Venue:** Alliance Francaise de Dhaka  
**Time:** 3pm

**SEMINAR**

Smart Grid: The Pathway to Digital Power System for Bangladesh  
**Organiser:** Electrical Engineering Division, IEB  
**Venue:** Institution of Engineers, Ramna  
**Time:** 5pm

**DISCUSSION**

Journey from Darkness to Light The discussion will be on Bangabandhu's presidency.  
**Venue:** Freedom Fighter Museum, Agargaon  
**Time:** 4pm

**ART EXHIBITION**

Tumi Robe Nirobe  
**Venue:** Abinta Gallery of Fine Arts, AJ Heights  
**Time:** 10am



**RANA PLAZA TRAGEDY Finish Rana's trial in six months: HC**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday rejected a petition seeking bail for Sohel Rana, owner of Rana Plaza which collapsed and caused death of at least 1,135 people in April 2013, in a corruption case filed on charges of irregularities in constructing the building.

The HC also directed the trial court concerned to finish the trial proceedings of the case in six months.

The bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice KM Hafizul Alam came up with the directive after hearing a bail petition filed by Rana's wife Nurun Nahar Mitu.

Sohel Rana cannot be released from jail following the HC order, Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik told The Daily Star.

Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan appeared for the ACC while Advocate Mohammad Sajjad Ali Chowdhury argued for Sohel Rana.

**Govt keen on South Korean companies for dev projects**

*Housing and public works secretary says*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday invited South Korean construction companies and investors to come forward and be part of its "smart city" development and township projects.

Speaking at a workshop as chief guest at the InterContinental Dhaka, additional secretary to housing and public works ministry, Akhter Hossain, said they will welcome South Korean construction companies and investors for their smart city development and township projects, where Korean technology and expertise are needed.

Mentioning South Korea as a good friend of Bangladesh, he said the East Asian country's contribution to Bangladesh's readymade garment industry has been noteworthy.

Heerim Architects & Planners, in cooper-

ation with the Korea Trade Promotion Agency (KOTRA), organised the event, titled "Bangladesh CM (Construction Management) Workshop".

Akhter said housing and public works ministry has been working at the forefront to implement the sustainable development goals by 2030 to ensure access to safe and affordable housing and basic services for all.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wants to ensure affordable housing for all and has a vision to make Bangladesh a middle income country by 2021 and a developed country by 2041, he said.

In this regard, ministry of housing and public works has initiated massive development projects and programmes in order to solve the housing problems of homeless,

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