DHAKA

Judicial committee formed over lawyer's death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday formed a judicial committee, led by the chief judicial magistrate of Panchagarh, to inquire into the death of Advocate Palash Kumar Roy.

Palash, 38, a lawyer of Dhaka Bar Association, who was in Panchagarh jail in connection with a defamation case, allegedly set himself on fire on April 26 at the prison hospital. He died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital's burn unit on April 30.

Yesterday, in response to a writ petition, the High Court said the Panchagarh chief judicial magistrate and another judicial magistrate of the same district will conduct the probe. The deputy commissioner, superintendent of police and jail superintendent of Panchagarh will assist the committee.

The court asked the committee to submit the

report before it in 30 days, writ petitioner Barrister

Syed Sayedul Haque Suman told The Daily Star. The HC bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif and Justice Razik-Al-Jalil passed the order. The court also issued a rule asking authorities concerned of the government to explain in four weeks why their failure to give protection to

illegal. Deputy Attorney General Mokhlesur Rahman

China is analysing if any country is in a "debt

trap" due to loans for mega infrastructure projects

under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Chinese

Ambassador to Bangladesh Zhang Zuo said

"China is analysing the debt crisis," Zhang Zuo

said at a press conference organised at The Westin

to inform on the Second Belt and Road Forum for

International Cooperation held in China on April

development model as the country moves

forward with the BRI initiative, an ambitious

China has pledged a green and sustainable

Belt and Road Initiative

Palash inside the jail should not be declared

represented the state.

Mushfiqur Rahman, jailer of Panchagarh, told reporters yesterday that Palash tried to die by suicide on April 26 morning by setting himself on fire with a lighter, reports our Thakurgaon correspondent.

He was admitted to Panchagarh Hospital and later shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital. As his condition worsened, he was brought to DMCH the same night.

Jailer Mushfigur said Palash was in jail from March 26 in a defamation case filed over making derogatory remarks against the prime minister on March 25. He was staying in the jail's hospital as he had been suffering from arthritis and could not move properly, he added.

Mentionable, Palash was supposed to be brought to Dhaka on April 26 for appearing before Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Court on April 28, in a money misappropriation case filed against him by a chemical company.

According to the jailer and locals, Palash and his family members started a hunger strike in front of Panchagarh Deputy Commissioner's office on March 25, demanding withdrawal of said case, filed over misappropriating Tk 31

Later they formed a human chain on SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

infrastructure and investment strategy initiated

trade and investment links between China and

some 65 countries. It aims to connect China

to central, south and south-east Asia, the Gulf

has been the subject of controversy in the West,

particularly Washington, which views it as merely

a means to widen Chinese influence abroad

and "trap countries into debt" through "non-

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Bangladesh is a partner in this initiative. BRI

The initiative aims to strengthen infrastructure,

by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013.

countries, Europe and North Africa.

transparent" projects.

across the capital. HELEMUL ALAM

Good news for Dhanmondi residents.

The government is planning to change all overhead power distribution lines to underground ones to reduce risk of electrocution, a move that would beautify the area.

Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC) will set up 105km underground lines under a government-to-government (G2G) project.

The project, worth around Tk 20,500 crore, will start next fiscal year, said project director Ekramul Hoque. Construction firm TBEA China has already been selected for the work, he added.

Out of the total cost, Exim Bank of China will provide Tk 12,000 crore for the project while Tk 7,000 crore will come from the government and Tk 1,200 from DPDC's own fund, Ekramul said.

Underground cables essentially consist of a conductor, an insulating system, a wire screen and a sheath. At the core is an electric conductor -- in case of extra-high-voltage

copper.

Wires of various utility services tangled along electrical transmission cables is an all-too-familiar sight

Untangling the wires

Govt mulls underground power distribution lines in Dhanmondi

Such cables have several advantages compared to overhead ones. They have less voltage drops and chances of developing faults and have low maintenance costs, according to DPDC officials.

Under the G2G project, twenty-six 33/11 KV grid substations and fourteen 132/33/11 KV substations will be set up while upgradation work of eight 132/33 and four 33/11 substations will be completed.

Besides, construction work of a 29-circuitkm (132 KV) underground distribution line is also going on at Tongi, Banani, Aftab Nagar and Uttara (3rd phase), scheduled to it. be finished by June 20.

"We will bring all overhead lines of Dhaka underground gradually," said Ekramul. Architect Iqbal Habib, joint secretary

of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon, said this initiative will help save trees in Dhanmondi.

If overhead lines are shifted underground, it will reduce risk of electrocution, which

(EHV) lines -- which is usually made of often occurs due to the transformers. Also, environment of a residential area like

STAR FILE PHOTO

The Daily Star | 3

Habib said in 1998, Dhaka City Corporation had set up all utility lines underneath a footpath through service duct on Dhanmondi-32.

Also known as a utility tunnel or

Dhanmondi will improve due to the move,

said the urban expert.

corridor, a service duct is a passage built underground to carry utility lines such as electricity, steam, water supply pipes, and sewer pipes. Communications utilities like fibre optics, cable television, and telephone cables are also sometimes carried through

Habib said there had been no digging work on Dhanmondi-32 since 1999, though service providers did their works thrice within the time. They just removed the footpath slab, dug up mud and did their maintenance work, he added.

If such method is implemented throughout the city, risks of fire and explosion from haphazard utility lines will reduce significantly, Habib said.

Current trends divergent from Tagore's philosophy

China analysing if any country in

"debt trap": Ambassador Zuo

Prof Anisuzzaman says at Rabindra Puroshkar-2019

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

yesterday.

25-27 this year.

On the occasion of 158th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore, three noted personalities were awarded Puroshkar-2019 Rabindra yesterday for their contribution to upholding the Nobel laureate poet's legacy in the country.

The recipients of the award are: Tagore researchers Prof Shafiuddin Ahmed, Prof Begum Akhter Kamal and Rabindra Sangeet artiste Iqbal Ahmed.

Bangla Academy, which has been conferring the award for a decade now, honoured them at a ceremony at the academy's Abdul Karim Shahityabisharad Auditorium. As part of the award, the honourees

received Tk 50,000 each as prize money along with crests and certificates. Expressing his gratitude for the

recognition, Iqbal Ahmed, a freedom fighter, said he was captured and taken to a Pakistan army camp where he was brutally tortured during the Liberation War.

The reason was inciting people "with revolutionary and nationalistic songs", as cited by the Pakistani army,



National Professor Anisuzzaman confers the Rabindra Award-2019 to Iqbal Ahmed at Bangla Academy. PHOTO: STAR

Igbal said.

"I don't know whether I really did that. If I truly did, I feel it was my greatest achievement," he added.

Talking about the poet's ideas on nationalism, Bangla Academy President and National Professor Anisuzzaman said Rabindranath

Tagore brought to the fore the aggressive aspect of nationalism and criticised it.

Tagore's philosophy was accepting the whole world as a global citizen, said Prof Anisuzzaman, while chairing the event.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

FANI-AFFECTED FARMERS Activists demand

compensation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Farmers' rights activists at a human chain yesterday demanded that the government immediately provide adequate compensation to the farmers affected by cyclone Fani.

Claiming that the actual damage of the cyclone was worse, particularly for agriculture, they also demanded the authorities update the list of loss and damage through consulting local public representatives like union and upazila chairpersons.

Krishak and Khetmajur Sangram Parishad, a coalition of nine organisations working for the rights of farmers and farm labourers, organised the human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka.

On May 4, Fani hit Bangladesh's coastal and south-western parts after SEE PAGE 4 COL 6 Easing Eid Commute

Advance train tickets to be sold at four locations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway (BR) would begin advance ticket sale from May 22 to ensure hassle-free journey of Eid-ul-Fitr holidaymakers. For the first time, BR would sell the

tickets at four different locations in the capital -- instead of only Kamalapur Railway Station -- to ease the ticket-buying process and prevent excruciatingly long queues, Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan said.

Meanwhile, railway will launch a new train service with only three stoppages on the Dhaka-Panchagarh route prior to the upcoming Eid.

BR will also launch a direct train on Dhaka-Benapole route after Eid, the minister told this newspaper at his office yesterday.

Trains are a popular mode of transport for homebound people ahead of Eid, as traffic congestion on the highways and overpriced bus tickets make journey by road difficult. Many spend sleepless nights at Kamalapur Railway Station to get their hands on advance train tickets.

Against the backdrop, the authorities decided to sell advance tickets for different routes from several locations in Dhaka, the minister said.

Advance tickets for inter-city trains for

TICKET SELLING POINTS DESTINATIONS Dhaka University playground Rangpur Rajshahi, Khulna Phulbaria Mymensingh, Kamalapur Railway Station Chattogram Sylhet, Kishoreganj Airport Railway Station

travelling on May 31 and June 1, 2, 3, 4 would be sold on May 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 respectively, he said.

The dates have been set considering that Eid would be celebrated on June 5, he added.

Advance tickets for six trains that connect Dhaka to Rangpur division would be sold at Dhaka University playground while tickets for six other trains to Rajshahi and Khulna divisions would be sold at Phulbaria.

Tickets for 12 trains to Mymensingh and Chattogram divisions would be sold at Kamalapur Railway Station while tickets for seven trains to Sylhet and Kishoreganj would be sold at Airport Railway Station.

NEW TRAIN TO PANCHAGARH

The railways minister said they have completed all preparations to launch the new train between Dhaka and Panchagarh before May 22.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

HEALTH HACK

Ramadan do's and don'ts: Fasting and staying healthy.

1. Drink lots of water evenly throughout the night. Drinking a litre of water at sehri will make you feel bloated.

2. Try to stay in the shade. Sweating profusely while fasting will dehydrate you way before iftar.

3. Eat in moderation. So many complain about indigestion and feeling heavy after eating too much during iftar.

4. Do not sleep immediately after iftar or sehri. The body needs some time to process the food.

DHAKA TODAY

ART EXHIBITION Dawn of Black Venue: Edge Gallery, Gulshan

Time: 10am

TALK Quarterly Review of Bangladesh Economy Organiser: SANEM Venue: Brac Centre Inn

Time: 10:30am DANCE WORKSHOP

Bachata at The Junction Dhaka

Venue: House 66, Road 8, Block C, Niketon

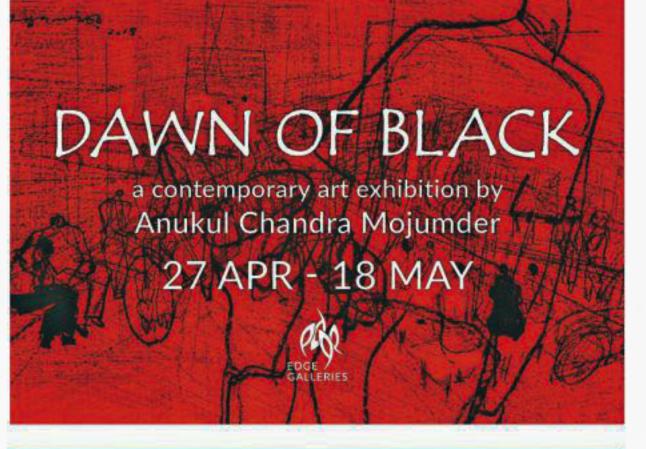
ART EXHIBITION Bodyspace Mindscape by Wakilui

Time: 8pm

Rahman Venue: Dwip Gallery, Lalmatia Time: 3pm

ART EXHIBITION Borjo Namta

Venue: Kala Kendra, Mohammadpur Time: 4:30pm



Subir Nandi's final journey

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

It was a morose day, with the unbearable heat beating down on everyone at the Central Shaheed Minar. Despite that, thousands of people from all walks of life wanted to catch a glimpse of him, their favourite artiste Subir Nandi, one last time.

His body arrived there at 11:05am in the morning from Dhakeshwari Temple. Amidst the flowers and wreaths, the image of a distraught Fakir Alamgir having a breakdown while attempting to console Subir Nandi's widow and daughter, summed up the entire situation: the country has not only lost one of its musical gems, but also one of the humblest and most beloved figures in the entertainment industry.

"We are eternally grateful to all who have shown so much love to my father over the years," said his daughter, Falguni Nandi, "I request you to pray for his departed soul."

After the befitting national tribute, the artiste's body was taken to Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC), as stars bid their final goodbyes to the singer credited with more than 2,500 songs including Amar E Duti Chokh, Ek je Chhilo Sonar Konna, Bhalobashi Shokaley and more. The final journey continued onwards to Channel i premises. Afsana Mimi, Anima Roy, Faridur Reza Sagar and even Shykh Seraj, who seemed calm and composed, became emotional during the heartfelt tribute.

The penultimate destination for the artiste was Ram Krishna Mission, where prayers and good wishes for his departed soul were made amidst a sea of saffron. The scenes were moving, if not heartbreaking, as realisation of Subir Nandi never singing with his majestic voice again dawned upon us. He was finally taken to Sree Sree Bordeshwari cremation ground in Sabujbag.



Subir Nandi's body reaches the Sabujbag Kali Mandir cremation ground, where his last rites were performed. PHOTO: COLLECTED