

DRIVE TO FREE UP FOOTPATHS

DNCC knocks down offices of AL associate bodies in Uttara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) officials yesterday found and demolished two offices of the ruling party's associate organisation, that were encroaching footpaths in Uttara.

The offices of Uttara-Purba Paschim Thana Swachhasebak League and Jubo League units were constructed temporarily, according to leaders of the respective organisations.

During an eviction drive to free the footpath from illegal encroachment launched yesterday, DNCC also demolished more than 300 other illegal structures, including tea stalls and parts of restaurants extending on the footpath.

The drive started at around 11:30am from Sonargaon Road and continued through different parts of Uttara, including Garib-e-Nawaz Avenue, Rabindra Sarani and the rear side of Mascot Plaza till 3pm.

Mostafa Sardar, assistant publicity affairs secretary of Uttara-Purba Paschim Thana Swachhasebak League, said, "It has been seven to eight years that the office has been here; since we didn't have permanent office, we used it as our meeting place after office hours."

A day before the drive, DNCC officials announced the eviction drive on loudspeakers. While most of the footpaths in Uttara were free from hawkers yesterday morning, some stalls were left closed on the footpath.

On the first day of the drive, DNCC's Executive Magistrate Sajid



A DNCC excavator ploughs through a part of a restaurant that was extending on to the footpath near Garib-e-Nawaz area in Uttara. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Anwar said, "We announced in the area about the drive a day earlier, so that illegal structures or stalls are removed. Those who didn't remove theirs, were demolished."

One person was jailed for three months on charge of non-cooperation with DNCC, while another was sentenced by the mobile court to seven days' jail for establishing illegal structure on footpath. Two buildings were also fined a total of Tk 3 lakh.

DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam, present during the drive, told journalists, "There are many who are occupying

streets illegally and doing business. Some of them are building political offices... Due to this, pedestrians are bound to walk off the footpath."

Warning the footpath grabbers, he said, "There will be no business on footpath and no political offices."

DNCC has identified 102 footpaths that are illegally occupied.

Monitoring cells -- consisting of six members including councillors and officer-in-charge of the respective police stations -- have been formed at different wards to carry out drives to reclaim these.

Establish democratic control over defence forces: M Sakhawat

The security expert urges govt to develop civil-military relationship

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted security analyst Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain yesterday urged the government to establish democratic control over defence forces to develop relationship between the military and civilians.

In doing so, he proposed formation of an independent defence ministry headed by a public representative instead of the prime minister, reconstruction of the parliamentary standing committee on the ministry, and implementation of the national defence policy.

He also stressed on ensuring independence of the military within the sphere, and checking political and bureaucratic interference in their functions and duties.

Sakhawat, also a former election commissioner, made the proposals while delivering a lecture on civil-military relationship, organised by Asiatic Society of Bangladesh at its office in the capital.

Unlike other countries around the world, civilian control over the military is yet to be established in Bangladesh, which is necessary, Sakhawat said.

"It is high time that we establish civilian control as enshrined in the constitution," he said, mentioning previous military regime.

He also suggested to improve coordination among the defence forces to increase their efficiency.

About defence education, he urged the authorities concerned to introduce subjects on military history and strategy at public universities.

"We need more experts, who are civilians, for military strategy," he added.

Asked whether the proposals are implementable in the current context, the security expert replied in the positive.

"It is all about political intention. If they [the government] have the intent, the proposals can easily be implemented," said Sakhawat Hossain.

National University Vice-chancellor Prof Harun-or-Rashid and Asiatic Society Secretary Abdur Rahim also spoke at the programme.

Asiatic Society organised the lecture in memory of Shaheed Colonel Jamil Ahmed, who sacrificed his life while trying to protect Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975.

2005 SERIES BOMB BLAST

5 JMB men handed 12 years' imprisonment

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A special tribunal in Dhaka yesterday sentenced five JMB members to 12 years' rigorous imprisonment in connection with a blast in Dhaka's Khilkhet area as part of the series bomb blast in 63 districts of the country on August 17, 2005.

Judge Md Al Mamun of Special Tribunal-2 of Dhaka handed down the sentence in presence of three convicts -- Abdullah Al Sohail, Abdur Rahman Masud, Nurul Islam alias Uzzal.

Two other convicts -- Habibur Rahman Habib and Md Musa alias Mostafizur Rahman -- are absconding.

The tribunal also fined them Tk 30,000 each, in default of which they will have to serve six more months in jail.

The tribunal ordered that the punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender.

The banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) on August 17, 2005 simultaneously blasted bombs in 63 districts of the country.

Around 500 bombs went off at 300 locations in the 63 districts. The bombs exploded within half an hour. JMB claimed responsibility for the blasts.

The blast in Dhaka's Khilkhet area took place near an over-bridge in front of Rajuk Market around 11am that day. A case was filed after the blast the same day in this connection.

The charge sheet of the case was submitted on November 20, 2005. The tribunal framed charges against the accused on June 12 of 2006.

After cross-examining 19 prosecution witnesses, the tribunal handed down the sentence.

Tamara Abed new BracU trustee chairperson

CITY DESK

Tamara Hasan Abed, member of the board of trustees of Brac University and managing director of Brac Enterprises, has been elected the new chairperson of the board with effect from July 25, 2019. She succeeds Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, the founding chairperson of Brac University, said a press release.

Tamara Abed has been serving as a member of the board since January 2011 and a member of the syndicate since March 2011. She has also been the chair of the board finance committee since December 2016.

Sir Fazle founded Brac University in 2001 with the aim of nurturing leaders of the future through high-quality tertiary education and research.

"At the age of 83, I feel the time is now right for me and others who joined the board of trustees with me, to make way for a new generation of leadership," he said.

"The present board comprises individuals with leadership experience in governance, enterprises, research, development, technology, art and culture," Sir Fazle added.

Tamara Abed brings extensive experience in investment banking, entrepreneurship and social enterprises, with a career spanning over two decades, said the press release. As the managing director of Brac Enterprises, she heads 13 social enterprises including Aarong, Brac Dairy, and Brac Seed and Agro Enterprise.

She has an MBA in finance from Columbia University, USA. She completed her BSc in economics at London School of Economics.

"I am honoured to be elected chairperson of the board," said Tamara Abed. "It's a privilege to serve this remarkable university alongside our distinguished trustees to support the vice chancellor, leadership team, faculty, administration, students, and alumni. The board of trustees is committed to supporting Brac University's vital mission to advance learning and development of future leaders."

WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS Apt skills training could reduce abuse overseas, experts say

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Proper skills training of female migrant workers can be a way to reduce their abuse in the hands of employers, speakers said at a views-exchange meeting yesterday.

Besides, before departing the country, migrant workers should have adequate knowledge of the type of jobs they are going to be recruited in and other professional responsibilities, they said.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad arranged the meeting at its premises in the capital's Segunbagicha, against the backdrop of reported incidents of rights violation of women migrant workers in Middle Eastern countries.

Some 5,000 complaints of harassment, deception, physical abuse and rape have been filed by female migrant workers returning from Saudi Arabia alone in the past three years, said Rekha Chowdhury, acting secretary of BMP.

These complaints were filed with Bangladesh embassy in Saudi Arabia; Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry; Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training; Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies; Wage Earners' Welfare Board and different non-government organisations, she said, reading out a written statement.

The country also received 311 bodies of women migrant workers over the past three and a half years, most of whom were working in Saudi Arabia, she added.

Referring to a recent survey, migration expert Prof Tasneem Siddiqui said some 30 percent of women migrant workers were either divorced or separated from their spouses.

They went overseas in desperation while their average financial condition and educational status were also lower than those of garment workers, she said, adding that pre-departure training for such migrant workers could ensure their safety abroad.

Lily Jahan, chairman of Bangladeshi Obhobashi Mohila Samik Association, said women migrant workers often face abuse abroad because of lack of information.

Safe migration for them is possible if they can learn "the truth" about their jobs before departure, she said.

Rownaq Jahan, secretary, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry, said they have been working to ensure safe migration through developing both work and language skills of migrant workers.

BMET Director Nurul Islam said they have a one-month training facility but many women migrant workers do not want to avail such opportunity.

Ayesha Khanam, president of BMP, and Nadim Rahman, programme officer, migration and local government, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, among others, spoke at the event.

Minni meets lawyer in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ayesha Siddika Minni, an accused of the case filed over the murder of her husband Rifat Sharif in Barguna, met her lawyer Advocate ZI Khan Panna in the capital yesterday morning.

Minni and her father Mozammel Hossain Kishor went to the lawyer's chamber at the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in Dhaka, where some other lawyers were also present.

However, Minni did not talk to the media, as the High Court (HC) while granting her bail on August 29 gave conditions that she cannot talk to the media and she will remain in her father's custody.

Advocate Panna told reporters that Minni came to Dhaka from Barguna to take legal advice about the case and also to see doctors.

The lawyer claimed police has submitted a fabricated charge-sheet in the Rifat Sharif murder case implicating Minni, with a view to exempting the original accused from the case.

"The charge sheet placed by the police in Rifat murder is an edition of Judge Miah and Jaha Alam stories," he said.

The "confessional statement" of Minni is also a fable, he added.

Minni has already applied to a Barguna court seeking withdrawal of the confessional statement, Advocate Panna added.

Rifat Sharif, 25, an internet service provider, was hacked to death in broad daylight in Barguna town on June 26.

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Chhatra Dal, BCL face off at Madhur Canteen



Activists of BNP's student wing brought out a procession on DU campus yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

DU CORRESPONDENT

Slogans and counter slogans sparked an aggressive face-off between activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday, as JCD activists went to Dhaka University campus for the first time with their newly-elected leadership.

Accompanied by over 200 JCD activists, Fazlur Rahman Khokon and Iqbal Hossain Shyamol -- elected president and general secretary on September 18 -- entered Madhur Canteen at around 11am.

Hundreds of BCL activists -- led by its central unit acting general secretary Lekhak Bhattacharjee and DU unit president Sonjit Chandra Das -- were also present at the canteen at that time.

Lekhak exchanged greetings with leaders of the pro-BNP student organisation.

JCD activists then started shouting slogans in support of Khaleda Zia and BCL men shouted counter slogans against the incarcerated BNP chairperson.

BCL activists were also seen taking position at different areas of the campus.

After staying at Madhur Canteen for an hour, the JCD men left the venue alleging that political coexistence is yet to be ensured on DU campus.

"We came to Madhur Canteen for the first

time after taking charge. We expected decorous behaviour from them [BCL] but they shouted inciting slogans. We would like to say coexistence is yet to be ensured," JCD general secretary Iqbal Hossain Shyamol told reporters.

Asked about the allegation, BCL acting general secretary Lekhak Bhattacharjee said, "The allegation is baseless. We only asked them not to shout 'zindabaad' slogans when they came to meet us."

Later, the JCD men brought out a procession on campus, demanding release of BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia from jail.

Wielding a banner, they paraded the streets on DU campus and met the Vice-chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman, seeking his cooperation.

After the meeting, Chhatra Dal president Fazlur Rahman Khokon said, "We met the VC and asked for the authorities' cooperation to carry out our political activities. He assured us of cooperation."

BCL vice-president Al Nahian Khan Joy and joint general secretary Lekhak Bhattacharjee were given the charges of president and general secretary on September 14 after Rezwanaul Haque Chowdhury Shovon and Golam Rabbani were removed from the respective posts.

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal held polls for electing its president and general secretary after 27 years, in line with a court injunction regarding its council.

DHAKA TODAY

FESTIVAL
BUP Film Fest
Organiser: BUP Film Club
Venue: Bangladesh University of Professionals
Time: 9am

TRAINING
Rules and Procedures for Import, Export and Customs
Organiser: BFTI
Venue: TCB Bhaban, Karwan Bazar
Time: 9:30am

PROTEST
Demanding rehabilitation of hawkers
Organiser: Bangladesh Hawkers Union
Venue: Bahadur Shah Park

Johnson Road
Time: 11am

WORKSHOP
Manufacturing and marketing of Jute products
Organiser: Opener Career Solution
Venue: Probal Tower, Mohammadpur
Time: 9:30am

FAIR
Small and Cottage Industries Fair
Venue: Anarkali Convention Centre,
Time: 10am

ACADEMIC SESSION
Undergrad Basic Group Advising
Venue: Education USA Bangladesh,
Time: 3pm

DENGUE OUTBREAK

430 new dengue patients admitted to hospitals yesterday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday found Aedes mosquito larvae in 17 houses after visiting 9,868 houses.

Mobile courts of DNCC also found favourable places for Aedes breeding at 5,737 houses during the drive, said an official of the DNCC.

They destroyed the larvae and breeding sources during the drive, he said.

Meanwhile, 430 new dengue patients were admitted to hospitals and clinics across the country in 24 hours till 8am yesterday. Of them, 298 are outside Dhaka.

With them, a total of 84,827 dengue patients were admitted to hospitals across the country this year.

Currently, 2,099 dengue patients are undergoing treatment in hospitals across the country, of whom 1,224 are outside Dhaka.

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