

# 'It will give govt officials indemnity'

## CPB, ASK say about provision of Public Service Act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communist Party of Bangladesh yesterday condemned the government for enacting the Public Service Act-2018.

In a statement, the left-leaning party said a provision of the law, which states government permission will be needed to arrest government officials and employees accused in criminal cases or corruption cases before court accepts charge-sheet against them, will give public servants one kind of "indemnity".

Signed by CPB presidium member Abdullah Kafi Ratan, it said the provision is contradictory to the constitution, will cause a rise in corruption, and delay necessary steps against government officials even after their misdeeds are visible.

Party chairman Mujahidul Islam Selim and general secretary Md Shah Alam in the statement also urged the government to reconsider the law and cancel the provision.

Meanwhile, Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday also demanded that the government bring required changes in the Public Service Act-2018, after reviewing the same provision. "If such provision comes into effect, then chance of misuse of power will increase and scope for establishing rule of law will shrink," ASK said in a statement.

The country's constitution guarantees equal rights for each citizen, which this provision contradicts, it adds.

ASK said news reports are often published on allegations against government officials and employees, as well as law enforcers, of involvement in unlawful activities.

Amid this, such scope incorporated in the law may look like an attempt to give public servants immunity, it said.

ASK said the law -- which comes into effect on October 1, was passed overlooking concerns from civil society.

# 'Neo-JMB' member confesses involvement

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Farid Uddin Rumi, one of members of the "Neo-JMB" cell, yesterday confessed to a magistrate that he and four others were involved in carrying out attacks on police in the capital in the last five months.

He told the magistrate that they believe in Shariah-based law and that police are barriers to implementation of the law, adding that they carried out the attacks on police for the reasons.

"I was motivated by my brother Rafiqul Islam, and a Neo-JMB leader," said Rumi in his confessional statement before a magistrate.

Metropolitan Magistrate Ashek Imam recorded his confessional statement at his chamber after Moklesur Rahman, a sub-inspector of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime

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Vendors of used materials were evicted from a footpath beside Jashim Uddin Avenue in Uttara-3 yesterday. A mobile court of Dhaka North City Corporation led by Executive Magistrate Sajid Anwar conducted the drive to clear the pavement.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

# 'Our rivers and women are the most tortured'

Says Syed Abul Maksud at River Day event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Nodi Bachao Andolon yesterday submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioners of all 64 districts across the country, with a 17-point demand to protect rivers from encroachers.

The platform of campaigners for river conservation also formed human chains in different districts, including in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital, on the occasion of International River Day.

They sought implementation of the High Court verdict against grabbing of rivers and demanded that all 42,423 establishments, which were identified by the National River Conservation Commission, be evicted.

They also demanded that the government bring encroachers to book.

"Women and rivers are the most tortured in Bangladesh, and those who are responsible for encroaching rivers need to be punished," said noted columnist Syed Abul Maksud at the human chain, speaking as chief guest.

He further said some industrialists, under the shelter of a section of ruling party men, are involved in river encroachment, which is why the government needs to be involved with the process of eviction.

Mihir Biswas, vice-president of Bangladesh Nodi Bachao Andolon, said after recovering rivers from encroachers, the land will have to be "returned to the rivers"; authorities should not use the land for other purposes.

He also demanded to ensure transparency in projects which will be taken to save rivers.

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# ANTI-AFFILIATION DEMO AT DU Admission circular issued for 7 colleges

DU CORRESPONDENT

Some students of Dhaka University once again took to the streets yesterday, demanding the authorities cancel the affiliation of seven colleges of the capital with the university.

Around 50 students formed a human chain at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture of DU to press home their demands.

"We became frustrated as the authorities did not take any steps to cancel the affiliation despite their assurance. We will continue our protest until the university administration provides a solution to the crisis," said Shakil Ahmed, spokesperson of the platform formed over the protest.

In the wake of protest, the DU authorities on July 24 formed an 11-member committee with Pro-Vice Chancellor (administration)

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# ONE YEAR OF DIGITAL SECURITY ACT

# Most victims still not reporting cyber crimes: survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Though a year has gone by since the Digital Security Act was passed in the parliament, 80 percent of cyber crime victims do not report the cases to law enforcement agencies, according to a recent survey conducted by Cyber Crime Awareness Foundation.

The report also shows that cyber crimes like threatening phone calls are made despite the government verifying SIM cards through biometric registration system.

A press conference was organised by the foundation yesterday at Dhaka Reporters Unity to share the findings of

the survey -- conducted on 134 victims of cyber crimes.

The much-debated Digital Security Act was passed in September last year. But the report said, 63 percent of the cyber crime victims do not know how to seek help.

Of those who sought legal help under the law, 73.1 percent did not get satisfactory results as per their expectations, according to the report.

Responding to why they do not file complaints, some 19 percent of the victims said they think they would be harassed instead of getting justice, 23 percent wanted to keep the incidents secret, while 22 percent did not know how to

seek legal help. Some of the victims were also apprehensive of filing cases, as the offenders were influential, the report added.

Women are most vulnerable to cyber crimes; 68 percent of the victims were women, according to the survey.

The survey found that 11 types of cyber crimes are prevalent in Bangladesh are being committed in 11 phases. Of them, four types are somewhat new.

These are: phone-call threats, violation of copyright law, fraudulence over selling products online and deception in online jobs.

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# With 60 percent burns, she battles for life

College student sets herself on fire after stepping out of police station

ANWAR ALI

A college student set herself on fire near Shah Makhdum Police Station Complex in Rajshahi city on Saturday, moments after she stepped out of the police station.

With about 60 percent burns, Liza Rahman, 18, a second-year student of Rajshahi Government Women's College, is battling for her life at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). She was taken to the hospital by a team of Shah Makhdum police the same day.

According to Golam Ruhul Kuddus, spokesperson of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, Liza went to the police station at 11:30am on the day, asking them to help protect her marriage.

They sent her to the Victim Support Centre inside the complex in this regard, but she left the building without filing any complaint at 12:30pm and set herself on fire, he said.

Police and locals took her to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) right away, he added.

Dr Afroza Nazneen of RMCH burn unit told

reporters that her condition was critical. So, in the afternoon, a three-member police team led by Sub-inspector Jewel Rana took her to Dhaka and admitted her at the DMCH burn unit.

Partha Shankar Pal, resident surgeon of the burn unit, told The Daily Star that the girl sustained around 60 percent burns and severe inhalation injuries.

"She is being treated at the High Dependency Unit since last [Saturday] night. We are thinking of shifting her to Intensive Care Unit (ICU)," Partha told The Daily Star yesterday.

An eyewitness told this correspondent that after Liza came out of the police station, she bought kerosene from a local store and poured it on her body. SM Masud Parvez, officer-in-charge of Shah Makhdum Police Station, said they were yet to find out from where she got kerosene.

Liza was raised in Gobindaganj of Gaibandha by a step-mother. Her father is in prison now, in a drug peddling case, said Ruhul Kuddus.

In January this year, Liza married one

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# 'Will make list of wealth accumulated by BNP leaders'

Quader says in response to BNP's demand for listing AL leaders' properties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday echoed the home minister's remark, made on Saturday, over Dhaka South Jubo League President Ismail Hossain Chowdhury Samrat and asked people to wait and find out whether Samrat was arrested.

"The home minister is the authority to comment on the matter. Trust his comment," Quader said when journalists asked him the question.

"Please wait and see. You will know soon," Quader, also road transport and bridges minister, said this while visiting an underpass being built near Shaheed Ramiz Uddin School and College on Airport Road.

Asked about BNP's demand to make a complete list of properties of Awami League leaders, Quader said the same would be done for BNP leaders. "Whitepaper would be published on how much wealth they accumulated when they were in power," he

added.

Speculations are running high over the whereabouts of Samrat, the alleged kingpin of "casino business" in the capital.

Sources in the law enforcement agencies said he is under the watch of law enforcers who are just waiting for green signal from high-ups to arrest him, while a newspaper reported that the Jubo League leader had been arrested.

Since the arrest of Dhaka South Jubo League Organising Secretary Khaled Mahmud Bhuiyan (later expelled) for his alleged links with running a gambling den on September 18, Samrat had reportedly dug himself in at his office in Kakrail with several hundred of his followers.

During the anti-gambling drive at casinos and bars, and homes of suspects, Rab arrested top construction businessman GK Shamim, Krishak League executive committee member and Kalabagan Kirra Chakra president Shafiqul Alam Firoz and Mohammedan Sporting Club director in-

charge M Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan on Saturday asked the media to wait, evading giving any specific information on Samrat. "You will see... very soon," the minister said while responding to a query of journalists on whether Samrat was arrested.

Meanwhile, the home minister yesterday said the ongoing drive is not only against casinos but also against all corrupt businessmen and lawbreakers.

"We have to establish good governance under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Towards that goal, the wrongdoers -- irrespective of political and social background -- would be brought to book," he said, reported UNB.

The minister came up with the remarks while talking to reporters after attending a programme at Ansar VDP Academy in Shafipur.

Referring to the ongoing drive, the minister said legal action is being taken against those involved in illegal business.

# Heart diseases cause one in four deaths in Bangladesh

Cardiac specialists say at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Smoking once or a 100 times a day poses similar risks for the heart, cardiac specialists said at a discussion yesterday, referring to studies.

They also stressed on daily physical activity and maintaining a balanced diet -- avoiding fast food -- to stay safe from heart diseases.

Labaid Cardiac Hospital organised the event, in association with State University of Bangladesh (SUB), at a conference centre in Dhaka.

Prof Baren Chakraborty, senior consultant cardiologist at Labaid, presented a keynote paper at the programme where he highlighted the latest trends in heart diseases, and the hospital's curative facilities and preventive measures.

"Heart diseases are currently causing one in every four deaths in Bangladesh. However, reasons behind 90 percent of deaths from heart-related issues are not known," said Prof Chakraborty, referring to studies.

Mentioning that there is no early symptom, he said 30 percent of deaths

due to heart diseases could be prevented through changing dietary habits.

Dr APM Sohrabuzzaman, another senior consultant cardiologist at Labaid, also stressed on avoiding smoking and junk food that contain cholesterol.

"Fried foods should be eaten less... Heart diseases could be reduced by 90 percent through maintaining diverse diet and physical activity," he said.

Speaking as chief guest, Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, chairman of Bishwo Shahitto Kendro said, "For those who smoke, it's difficult to give it up. However, we need a social movement to address this issue."

"Consuming fast food has turned into a matter of not only enjoyment but also pride," he said, adding that consumption of fast food should be controlled in the country.

Prof Amjad Hossain, head of the department of orthopaedic surgery at Labaid Specialized Hospital, and Prof Nawzia Yasmin, head of the department of public health at SUB, also spoke at the programme.

Earlier, doctors and staff of Labaid, and teachers and students of SUB participated in an awareness procession in Dhanmondi.

# Village courts disposed of 78pc cases in two years

Speakers tell consultation meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 78 percent of the cases lodged with village courts of 27 districts were disposed of in last two years, officials said yesterday.

Discussions also said marginalised groups in Bangladesh are getting justice from village courts within a short time and low cost, which is ensuring their access to justice.

Sarder M Asaduzzaman, national project coordinator of UNDP's Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh, said 1,33,664 cases were lodged with village courts at 1,080 union parishads between July 2017 and August 2019.

"Of them, 78 percent cases were resolved within the same period of time," he said while making a presentation at a consultation meeting on role of media to raise mass awareness on village courts, organised by the project and Local Government Division.

He also said village courts are giving their decisions in six weeks, and 94 percent of the decisions were implemented. A total of Tk 104.37 crore were realised as compensation in line with courts' decisions.

Some 29 percent of justice seekers were women, he added. "Police, UNO and NGOs say prevalence of crime is low in the areas where village courts are functional," he said.

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Zakariya Ahad  
Chairman



Mezanur Rahman  
Vice-Chairman



The Board of Directors of Progressive Life Insurance Company Limited in its 155th Meeting held on 12th September, 2019 has unanimously elected Mr. Zakariya Ahad as the Chairman and Mr. Mezanur Rahman as the Vice Chairman. Our heartiest Congratulations to the newly elected honorable Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Our prayers and good wishes will always be with them.



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