

HOLEY ARTISAN CASE

Govt for prompt disposal of the appeals: minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will take an initiative for early hearing and disposal of the death reference and appeals of sensational Holey Artisan Bakery Attack case before the High Court.

“As the paper book of Holey Artisan Bakery attack has been prepared, the government will take necessary steps for its quick hearing,” Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said, “I will now talk to the attorney general’s office and ask it to move an application before the High Court for starting hearing on the death reference and appeals of the case”.

The paper book of Holey Artisan Bakery attack case reached the HC from the Bangladesh Government Press on Sunday.

The paper book, which includes trial proceedings, statements, evidence, orders, verdict and other relevant documents, is necessary for the HC to hear and dispose of a death reference or an appeal.

According to the Code of Criminal Procedure, if a lower court orders death penalty, the verdict is examined by the HC for confirmation of the punishment.

On July 1, 2016, five militants, armed

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



WHERE ARE YOUR MASKS?? This small group of people were seen taking a leisurely boat ride on the Turag river yesterday, enjoying the open air presumably after months of restrictions. However, the absence of any face covering is a worrisome testament to the levels of awareness among people about the omnipresent risk of Covid-19 infection. The photo was taken from Birulia Bridge.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Crime spikes in capital as normalcy returns post Covid-19 closure

SHARIFUL ISLAM

The capital, that saw a sharp decline in crime incidents during two-month lockdown has once again started to see a spike in crimes.

Incidents like killing, robbery, repression on women and children and burglary are on the rise since the lockdown was withdrawn on May 30.

Recently, two people were killed and throat-slit body of another man was recovered in a single day.

In Pallabi, an auto-rickshaw driver Md Firoz was beheaded in broad day light while residential developer Abul Khayer was killed at Bashundhara on August 7.

The same day Kamrangirchar police recovered throat-slit body of Rabiul Islam from a manhole. He was killed days ago.

Crime data of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) showed such crimes have marked a sharp rise in June comparing to that of the months of April and May. The trend continued in July and August.

According to the data, 19 cases were filed for killing in June, 15 cases for robbery, 49 for rape, 136 for repression on women and children and 137 for burglary and stealing with different police stations.

The number of such cases were almost the same in January, February and March when an average 19.6 cases were filed for murder, 17.6 for robbery, 44 for rape, 140 for repression on women and children while 183 were lodged for burglary and stealing, the data showed.

The cases, however, dropped sharply in April and May when the country was under lockdown. Authorities imposed the nationwide lockdown on March 26 in the wake of coronavirus and extended it until May 30 with several extensions.

In that two months, on an average 10.5 cases were filed for murder, eight for robbery, 13.5 for rape, 44 for repression on women and children and 58.5 for burglary and stealing.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

BIISS WEBINAR

Bangabandhu’s exceptional leadership recalled

UNB, Dhaka

Speakers at a webinar yesterday highlighted the charismatic leadership of Bangabandhu that led the war-torn nation to emancipation.

They focused on the courageous actions and visionary thoughts of Bangabandhu throughout his life and how he became the inspiration for people across the globe in the context of a post-colonial world.

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) organised the webinar on “Leadership of Bangabandhu and Its Relevance to the Contemporary World.”

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen spoke at the webinar as chief guest.

Maj Gen Md Emdad Ul Bari, director general of BISS, moderated the webinar and delivered the welcome address while Ambassador M Fazlul Karim, chairman of

BISS, delivered the introductory speech.

Bangabandhu had exceptional leadership skills that elevated him as the undisputed leader of general people, the speakers said.

He helped Bangladesh enter into the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement and travelled to the USA, UK and other European nations to obtain humanitarian and developmental assistance for the devastated nation by war, they observed.

With profound respect, speakers also acknowledged the bravery and commitment of Bangabandhu that made him the founding Father of the Nation.

HT Imam, advisor to the Prime Minister on political affairs, was special guest and spoke on “Political Vision of Bangabandhu”.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

JS SESSION ROOM

Display portrait of Bangabandhu: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to preserve and display the portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the parliament session room in Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Secretary to Jatiya Sangsad secretariat has been asked to comply with the directive and to submit a compliance report to this court in a month.

A virtual HC bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice SM Kuddus Zaman passed the order after hearing a writ petition through video conferencing.

Advocate Subir Nandi Das, a Supreme Court lawyer, on August 12 filed the petition with the HC seeking its directive on the government to preserve and display the portrait of Bangabandhu at the parliament-session room.

In the petition, he said there is an obligation for the respondents to preserve and display the portrait of Bangabandhu at the courtroom, parliament session room and other office rooms concerned as per Article 4 (A) of the constitution.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

BARISHAL SHILPAKALA ACADEMY

Still unfinished, two years after inauguration



PHOTO: STAR

The divisional Shilpakala Academy has remained “almost completed” for months.

SUSHANTA GHOSH

Despite being in the works for five years, the construction of Barishal’s divisional and district Shilpakala Academy has not been completed. This is drawing dissatisfaction from the area’s cultural activists as this delay is hampering the area’s progress in the arts.

The derelict, Pakistan-era structure of the divisional Shilpakala Academy at the city’s Band Road had dilapidated beyond use. The area in front of the building had been inundated, with fish, snakes and frogs growing in number.

After repeated demands from citizens of Barishal, the construction project of a new building for district and divisional Shilpakala Academy was approved in 2015 at a cost of Tk 19.86 crore at the same site. Construction began in December of the same year, inaugurated by then Cultural Minister Asaduzzaman Noor.

Although the building was supposed to be fully operational for use by June 2017, the work period has been extended multiple times. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister inaugurated the building on February 6, 2018.

Yet the work has not been completed and the pace remains slow. On December 26 last year, State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid inspected the site and handed over the work to the contractor on February 28, Shilpakala Academy officials said.

“Terracotta installation, and walls of the open stage; LED curtains of stage; washrooms; installation of fans and air conditioners, furniture placement, installation of elevators, CCTV, thai glass, and arrangement of meeting rooms has been completed. But the building hasn’t been painted,” said Cultural Officer Hasan Maksud, saying the contractor had yet to complete some of the work.

Deputy Commissioner SM Ajair Rahman said the contractor did not finish the work within the given time frame although they were “asked to complete the little bit of work left.”

The project, which includes an auditorium with 500 seats, an open stage, an art gallery later required an increased budget of around Tk 23 core, said project Director Mainur Rahim.

The project director said if the additional work of furnishing is approved along with the added cost, the work can be completed within three months.

Kajal Ghosh, president of Barisal Shangkritik Sangathan Samonnoy Parishad, said, “All events of Mujib Year were supposed to be held at the Shilpakala premises, but the events were postponed due to the pandemic. If postponement didn’t happen, there would be a serious problem with the venue for Mujib Borsho programmes.”

Oliver Guda, Executive Engineer at Barishal’s Public Works Department,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

112 Bangladeshis stuck in Vietnam return home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A hundred and twelve Bangladeshis, who had been stranded in Vietnam, finally returned home yesterday.

A charter flight of US-Bangla Airlines carrying the passengers, including 107 Bangladeshi migrants, landed at Dhaka airport around 4pm.

The other passengers were five Bangladeshi nationals who were stuck in the country due to the coronavirus lockdown, and a Vietnamese, said a press release signed by Bangladesh Ambassador to Vietnam Samina Naz.

Md Raihan Uddin, a migrant worker from Cumilla, said they landed at the airport around 4pm. Raihan, who went to Vietnam in January this year, told The Daily Star around 5:30pm that law enforcers were collecting information about them.

Earlier, many of the 107 Bangladeshi migrants who faced exploitation in Vietnam traveled from Ho Chi Min City to Vietnam’s capital Hanoi since early July

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

2 ‘Neo JMB’ men held

Counterterrorism officials say they’re members of ‘sleeper cell’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Counterterrorism officials claimed to have arrested two members of a Neo JMB “sleeper cell” during a raid in the capital’s Sadarghat area on Monday evening.

The arrestees are: Saffat Islam alias Abdullah alias William alias Al Arsalan alias Mehemed Chagri Beg (18) and Yasir Arafat alias Shanto (20).

“They are active members of the military wing of Neo JMB... Seven to eight Neo JMB operatives including the duo formed the sleeper cell,” said Saiful Islam, deputy commission of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

The law enforcers also seized two mobile phones, a knife, and some hand-written notebooks containing instructions regarding their plan of action, the official said.

Saffat left his Elephant Road residence and Arafat has Keraniganj residence on August 4 to join the cell. They were trying to recruit new members and give them military training.

They planned on killing influential politicians and atheists, and tried to collect weapons and bombs as per their plans.

According to CTTC officials, the “sleeper cell” maintained at least four units -- spy, sniper, cyber security and manufacturing. They said the cell members communicated through social media platforms and encrypted apps.

A case was filed against them with Kotwali Police Station.

Jute traders begin sit-in at BJMC

Demand payment of their dues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jute traders from all over the country started a three-day sit-in in front of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) yesterday, demanding payment of their dues.

On the first day, the protesters chanted slogans like “Why is BJMC silent?” “Where is our money? Speak up BJMC,” and “We demand the prime minister’s intervention”.

With these slogans written on banners and posters, hundreds of jute traders, many of whom wearing funeral robe, took position in front of the BJMC office in Dhaka’s Motijheel commercial area.

“We have been asking for our dues for years. We went to the mills’ authorities. We staged demonstrations in districts. But, we didn’t get any response from the corporation. All of a sudden, all the mills were closed without paying our bills. In this way, we have been forced to come to Dhaka and start this programme,” said Md Siam Hossain, executive member, Bangladesh Jute Traders’ Association (BJTA).

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Contempt of court rule issued against health secy, DG of DGHS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a contempt of court rule against the health secretary and director general of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) for not complying with its judgment to ensure emergency medical services for road crash victims.

In the rule, the court ordered Health Secretary Md Abdul Mannan and DG of DGHS Prof Dr. Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam to show cause in two weeks as to why contempt of court proceedings should not be brought against them for failing to comply with its judgment on emergency medical services for road crash victims and those who assist them.

A virtual HC bench of Justice Mamnoon Rahman and Justice Khizir Hayat came up with the order after hearing a contempt of court petition file by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) through video conferencing.

BLAST in the petition said the HC two years back had directed the health ministry to modify and publish in the official gazette the guidelines on emergency

medical services for road crash victims and those assisting them.

Despite repeated reminders and notices, no action has been taken to date. In the meantime, those sustaining severe injuries in road crashes continue to face major challenges in securing emergency healthcare, particularly during the pandemic it said

During hearing, Barrister Rashna Imam, lawyer for BLAST, told the court that “as a direct result of the failure of the ministry of health to comply with the judgment dated 18.8.2018 over the past two years, road crash victims in need emergency medical services are still being refused treatment by hospitals with total impunity.”

“Even during the pandemic, tragic and wholly avoidable deaths and permanent injuries resulting from not getting critical medical care continued for road accident victims,” she argued.

Advocate Rezaul Karim and Advocate Sharmin Akhter assisted Barrister Rashna Imam while Deputy Attorney General Jahangir Alam represented the state during the hearing.



Defying strict orders from government authorities to not gather students at educational institutions and carry out all activities online, ninth-graders of Kapasgola City Corporation Women’s School and College were called to the classroom yesterday, to fill out registration forms for SSC exams. Asked about it, Biplob Ganguly, an official of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, said this is in violation of their notices sent to schools as well as advertisements published in newspapers.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Two of a family electrocuted in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig

A mother and her 12-year-old daughter died from electrocution in Lohagara upazila of Chattogram yesterday morning.

The deceased were identified as Rasheda Begum (37), wife of Badshah Miah hailing from Pekua in Cox’s Bazar, and her daughter Moina Akter, said police.

Moina was electrocuted when she came in contact with an electric wire hanging within short distance from the ground at a field at Adhunagar village, said Sub-Inspector Dulal Baroi of Lohagara Police Station.

Rasheda tried to save her and got electrocuted herself, said the SI.

On information, police rushed to the spot and recovered the bodies around 9:30am, he said, adding that they are investigating the incident.