

E-procurement vital to reduce corruption

Says law minister
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the e-procurement system is very much important in reducing corruption in the government's procurement issues and to purchase accurate items at a reasonable price.

People's participation will be increased and transparency will be ensured if the e-procurement system is properly implemented in all sectors including the judiciary, he said.

The minister made the remark while speaking as the chief guest at a meeting organised on the occasion of inaugurating a three-week training programme for the judicial officers (lower court judges) on e-procurement in the capital.

The Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) organised the meeting at its office auditorium where 33 judicial officers will receive the training.

The minister said there is a scope for corruption in the procurement issues through the analogue system.

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Just one wrong step and that passerby would fall into the hole dug for installing underground cables. This project by DPDC at Sat Masjid Road has been under the works for a month. With no proper barricades, pedestrians and vehicles are at risk when commuting through this road.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Demos to save anti-British revolutionary's house in full force

Eminent citizens, organisations in Ctg demand proper steps to protect site

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Eminent citizens and different sociocultural and students' organisations in Chattogram city have been organising demonstrations, demanding the government take steps to protect a historic structure, a part of which was demolished by a group of people.

Around 2pm on Monday, Rana Dasgupta, a prosecutor of International Crimes Tribunal, came to know that a group was demolishing the structure that was once the house of Anti-British revolutionary Jatindra Mohan Sengupta, at port city's Rahamatganj.

He rushed to the spot along with members of different sociocultural organisations, but a part of the structure was already demolished by that time. Rana and his companions asked the group on what grounds were they demolishing the structure, and they replied that they owned the property and had a court order, said eyewitnesses.

Rana, also general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, then sat down in front of the bulldozer, said the witnesses.

On information, a magistrate from Chattogram District Administration came to the spot and stopped the demolition work.

After being informed of the matter, different sociocultural and

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Fair election system sent to museum: BNP

UNB, Dhaka

The government has sent free and fair election system to the museum by holding "unilateral" polls, alleged BNP senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday. "Candidates who can buy the 'boat' (AL's election symbol) symbol at a higher price, get a sure chance to make fortune. Getting a boat symbol means getting elected under the current election system," he said.

The BNP leader said, "Awami League has now turned into a vote-rigging league by sending the free and fair election system of Bangladesh to the museum."

He made the remarks at a press conference at BNP's Nayapaltan central office on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of the 10th parliamentary election day, which he termed a "stigmatised day".

As part of its countrywide programmes, BNP hoisted black flags at its offices while party leaders and activists wore black badges as a protest against the election.

Rizvi alleged that the government has deprived people of their right to vote by holding a "unilateral" election without the participation of voters on January 5, 2014. "People's right to exercise their franchise freely has been destroyed..." he observed.

He alleged that Awami League has indulged in vote robbery in every election over the last one decade.

In fact, Rizvi said the Election Commission and AL had defeated people, the owner of the country, through their misdeeds centring the election.

Rizvi that the last three national elections were held implementing a deep-rooted conspiracy of both local and international actors.

'Awami League barely in politics anymore'

Says GM Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"Awami League is barely in the political field anymore, they are running the country through the power of administration," said Jatiya Party Chairman and Deputy Leader of the Opposition GM Quader yesterday.

He made the remarks at a views-exchange programme with Comilla district and city Jatiya Party leaders at the party chairman's Banani office.

Saying that the people of the country are eagerly waiting for the Covid-19 vaccine, GM Quader said if the vaccine isn't available from India on time, the government should find alternative manufacturers. He called upon the government to ensure free vaccination for people at any cost.

He also said the government should take immediate and effective steps to save people from Covid-19.

On the topic of the country's current political scenario, GM Quader said AL's power is centred around the administration now.

Meanwhile, BNP's chairperson managed to get out of jail under conditions, he said. "Tarique Rahman lacks public acceptance. It is difficult for BNP to survive in politics."

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DEATH OF LAKINGME CHAKMA

Take prompt action against culprits: Nari Pragati Sangha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Immediate action must be taken against those involved in Lakingme Chakma's death, said speakers at a press conference yesterday.

The girl's parents finally received her body on Sunday and buried her in Ramu of Cox's Bazar 25 days after her mysterious death.

Fourteen-year-old Lakingme was abducted from her Shilkhali Chakma Para home on January 5 last year. Later, she was kept at nearby villages until January 8. On January 9, she was taken to Shahpori island in Teknaf, where she was detained at Kala Monu's home for the next two days, found a 10-member investigation team of rights activists, indigenous community leaders, journalists and teachers.

On December 28 and 29, 2020, the team went to the houses of Lakingme and Ataulah whom she was married to after abduction, and met Cox's Bazar SP, public prosecutor and Rab commander. Based on their findings, the team organised the press conference at Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha (BNPS) in the capital's Mohammadpur.

"On January 11, Lakingme was taken to Cumilla by Ataulah and later on she was converted and married to him at a registrar's office. If OC Pradeep Kumar Das [now accused of killing Major Sinha] of Teknaf Police Station would have recorded the case of Lakingme's mother Lala Aung Chakma, she could have been rescued," said keynote speaker Prof Farha Tanjim Titil of Kushtia Islamic University, on behalf of the team.

According to her, although Lala managed to file a case with Cox's Bazar Women and Children Repression Tribunal on January 27, the PBI negligently investigated the case. And after 11 months and six days, Lakingme's body was found in a Cox's Bazar hospital morgue.

"Since it was proved that Lakingme was only 14 years old when she was abducted and she was forcibly converted and married, which means she was raped, the family must get justice and the accused must be held accountable for this..."

"Besides, the law enforcers must investigate whether she killed herself or was murdered because

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BCL man among 2 held for swindling

They took Tk 2 lakh from woman in name of deputy edu minister for bail of her husband

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police on Monday night arrested two people, including a Chhatra League activist, on charge of taking Tk 2 lakh from a woman using the name of Deputy Education Minister Mahibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel.

They took the money by promising to ensure bail for her husband, who was arrested in a drug case last year.

The arrestees are Shihab Uddin Siddiqui alias Rihan Sihab (26), of Chattogram's Fatikhkhari upazila and Solaiman (41) of Cumilla's Muradnagar area, said police.

Among them, Shihab is a BCL activist while Solaiman is a marketing and sales manager at a hotel in port city, said police.

They were arrested hours after Taslima, a senior officer of a private bank, filed a case with Kotwali Police Station, accusing the duo.

Sub-inspector Mominul Haque of the police station said Rab arrested Taslima's husband Iftiaz Saeed Sardar from Kamalapur area of Dhaka on November 18 with drugs.

He is now in jail. Iftiaz, Shihab and

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CHT IN 2020

16 Jumma women, children subjected to violence: PCJSS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) issued a statement yesterday -- rounding up last year's human rights situation in the Chattogram Hill Tracts, and alleging gross violations like land-grabbing, communal strife and violence against women, as well as increasing Bengali settlements.

In 2020, 16 Jumma women and children were subjected to violence by Bengali settlers, said the statement. "Among them, incidents of the gang-rape of a Tripura widow (25) by six 'outsider' settlers in Lama in August and another gang-rape of a mentally-challenged Chakma woman and looting of her house by nine settlers in Khagrachhari Sadar area in September were the most tragic and brutal incidents," PCJSS alleged.

The statement also detailed out a list of ethnic conflicts in the region between indigenous people and settlers, including attacks, arson of Buddhist temple and rubber plants, and land-grabbing by influential individuals, ruling party-backed administrators and tourism companies.

In addition, work to build a dam at Sijokchara of Sajek in the interest of tourism business has been intensified, the statement said. "Construction of the dam at Sajek will also damage 500 acres of land of around 250 Jumma families, the forests and biodiversity of the area," said PCJSS.

The organisation alleged an ongoing "criminalisation of individuals and organisations that demand implementation of the CHT Accord, labelling them as 'terrorists', 'extortionists', 'armed miscreants'."

Three extrajudicial killings were also claimed in the statement, which decried the home minister's announcement to re-establish security camps that were withdrawn after the signing of the CHT Peace Accord.



Whenever traffic halts for a few minutes, this man goes from one vehicle to another to sell the vibrant towels on his shoulder at the capital's Bijoy Sarani intersection. He buys each one for Tk 60-65 and sells them for a hundred, managing to make 20-25 sales daily. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Urea fertilisers brought from Khulna are being sorted by port staffers, to be sent to different places all across Barishal. This photo was taken yesterday from Barishal city's Band Road area.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Man held for 'killing wife, 5-month-old daughter' in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A man was arrested from Gabtoli bus stand in Dhaka early yesterday on charges of killing his wife and five-month-old daughter in Rajshahi's Puthia upazila on Monday.

The arrestee -- Firoz Mandal (35) -- allegedly killed his wife Poly Begum (23) and daughter Fariha sometime between 10:30pm and 11:30pm while he was trying to take away his wife's gold jewellery, said Rezaul Islam, officer-in-charge of Puthia Police Station.

On information, police recovered the bodies from their house in Fakirpara area of Gopalhati and sent to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital for autopsies.

Citing family members and neighbours, the OC said Firoz was an addict.

The OC said after learning that Firoz fled to Dhaka on a bus, they informed Darussalam police, who arrested him around 5am.

He has been kept at Darussalam Police Station in the capital. A police team has been sent to Dhaka to bring him to Rajshahi, the OC added,

TWO BOGURA SCHOOLS

SC stays HC order to halt removal of Zia's name

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday stayed for eight weeks the High Court orders that halted the education ministry's decision to remove the name of late president Ziaur Rahman from the titles of two high schools in Bogura.

The schools are Shahid Ziaur Rahman Girls' High School and Gabtali Shahid Zia High School.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division Justice Md Nuruzzaman passed the stay orders following two separate petitions filed by the state seeking a stay on the HC orders, Deputy Attorney General Tushar Kanti Roy told The Daily Star.

He said Ziaur Rahman's name will not be mentioned in the two Bogura schools following the Appellate Division orders.

Citing the state's petitions, he said the government has brought changes to the names of 480 schools across the country in line with its policy decision and therefore, the HC cannot interfere in the issue.

The education ministry on April 19 last year issued an order changing the name of Shahid Ziaur Rahman Girls High School to Sukhanpukur Bondor Girls High School and Gabtali Shahid Zia High School to Gabtali Purba Para High School.

On December 28, the HC bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Md Khairul Alam stayed the education ministry's decision for six months.

The HC bench also issued two separate rules asking the authorities concerned of the government to explain in four weeks why they should not be ordered to reinstate the name of Ziaur Rahman to the schools' titles.

The bench came up with the orders and rules following two separate writ petitions filed by the presidents of the schools' management committees challenging the legality of the education ministry's decision.