

Cabinet clears patent bill 2021

It will make the century-old patent law more time-befitting

UNB, Dhaka

The Cabinet yesterday approved the draft of "Bangladesh Patent Bill, 2021", aiming to make the century-old patent law a more time-befitting one.

The approval came from the weekly Cabinet meeting held at the Bangladesh Secretariat. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chaired the meeting virtually from her residence Gono Bhaban.

A registrar office will be there to issue or cancel patents of any single inventor or joint inventors of any technological innovation under the proposed law, said Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam while briefing reporters after the meeting.

"The owners will be given the patent of any innovation for 20 years after receiving application, and then it will become public [property]," he said, adding that the industries ministry placed the draft of the bill at the Cabinet meeting.

The cases, particularly general rights and compensation-related issues under the draft law will be treated as civil affairs and be tried by civil courts. But cheating and similar offences will be dealt with under

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PHOTO: RAJIB RAHMAN

The stage at Laldighi Maidan is a homage to Bangabandhu's six-point demand movement, and the rally-ground in front of it is turning greener as workers plant grass all over the park, inset.

History and nature blend at transformed Laldighi Maidan

ARUN BIKASH DEV, Chattogram

The renovation work of historic Laldighi Maidan is going on in full swing with 95 percent of the work already completed.

The renovation project is themed after the historic movements of the country including anti-British movement, language movement, six-point movement, mass uprising of 1969 and the Liberation War of 1971, said sources in the project.

The Education Engineering Department (EED) has been implementing the Tk four crore project that began in February last year.

Although the ground is known as Laldighi Maidan, it is officially the field of Government Muslim High School, Chattogram.

Meanwhile, city dwellers expressed their satisfaction as the government has initiated the project to renovate the historic ground, which was left as a rent-a-car stand for years.

"Laldighi Maidan is a historic ground. Many rallies during the freedom struggle of the country were held in this ground," said 70-year-old local Abdul Hamid. "The ground bears the memory of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who addressed rallies here."

The ground was as good as abandoned earlier and there was some crime in the area as well, said another local Dipak Nandi. "Now that a boundary has been built surrounding it, it will be safer," he said.

On the spot yesterday, it was seen that some workers were busy planting grass on the field.

To commemorate the declaration of six-point demand by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a stage named "Choy Dofa Moncho" has been built on the grounds.

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Let Khaleda go abroad for treatment: BNP

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday demanded immediate withdrawal of the government's ban on its ailing chairperson Khaleda Zia from going abroad for the sake of ensuring her rights to receiving advance medical treatment as per her choice.

"As far as we know, she (Khaleda Zia) is very ill. She needs advance treatment which is not possible here. Even, it was not possible at the hospital (BSMMU) where she had stayed for a long time," said BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan.

He said, "She may have to go abroad for treatment, but there's a government ban on it. We demand that this restriction be lifted and Khaleda Zia's basic rights to receive medical treatment be ensured allowing her to go wherever and whenever she wants to." Nazrul made the demand at a press conference arranged by the party at its chairperson's Gulshan office to convey the outcome of BNP standing committee's meeting held on Saturday.

Amid the coronavirus outbreak, the

government freed Khaleda Zia from jail for six months through an executive order suspending her sentences on March 25, nearly 25 months after she had been convicted and sent to jail in graft cases.

On August 27, the government extended her release for six more months on two conditions -- she would take treatment at home and would not go abroad during the time.

BNP leaders on various occasions said though their party chief was released, she has been kept under "house arrest as no one, except her close relatives, can now meet her".

Nazrul said the ban imposed by the government on their chairperson's movement is "inhumane and unreasonable".

"There are instances that even jailed political leaders went abroad for treatment. But Khaleda Zia has been restricted from doing so. We think this inhumane and illogical ban needs to be lifted so that she can decide when and where she wants to

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Necessary medical equipment at public hospitals sought

SC lawyer files petition with HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking its directive on the government to arrange necessary number of medical equipment at public hospitals to accurately diagnose diseases and provide proper treatment to patients.

Lawyer Md JR Khan Robin submitted the petition as a public interest litigation, also requesting the HC to order the authorities concerned of the government to take necessary steps to repair the inactive equipment of the hospitals.

In the petition, he prayed to the HC to issue a rule asking the authorities to explain why their failure to take necessary steps to this effect should not be declared illegal. Secretaries to the ministries of health and home, director general of directorate of health services and director of central medical stores depot have been made respondents to the required rule.

In the petition, JR Khan said the state is responsible to ensure people's right to health and life under the constitution.

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Indian Air Force chief in town

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Indian Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a three-day visit to Bangladesh.



On invitation from Air Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat -- the chief of air staff, Bangladesh Air Force, Bhadauria will pay courtesy calls on the air force and army chiefs of Bangladesh and meet other senior officials of the BAF.

The visit comes ahead of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's planned visit to Bangladesh on

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Four get life term in Khulna murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Khulna court yesterday sentenced four people to life term imprisonment in a case filed over the murder of Asmaul Morol alias Jibon in 2007.

Judge Md Zia Haider of Divisional Special Judge Court convicted the four and also fined them Tk 10,000 each, in default of which they will have to serve three more months in jail.

The four convicts are -- Shubhongkor Roy, Sudhamoy Bala alias Sudhabrindo Bala, Amit Biswas and Diponkor Roy.

All the convicts, residents of Banda Ulloor Danga in Khulna's Dumuria upazila, were present on the dock when the verdict was delivered.

Jibon (28) of Bagdari Noakathi in Dumuria upazila was a rental motorbike driver.

The accused called Jibon over mobile phone and hired his motorbike for going to Rangpur on October 19, 2007 and since then, Jibon was missing.

The next day, police recovered his body with stab injuries at Khoriar Wabda.

The victim's brother filed a case against 12 people in this regard.

SI Lashkar Ziadul Haque of Dumuria Police Station and investigation officer of the case filed the charge sheet accusing them on August 6, 2008.

The court acquitted eight people.

3 including cop killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least three people were killed and six injured in road accidents in two districts yesterday, report our correspondent and an agency.

In Chattogram, two people were killed and six injured in a head-on collision between a bus and truck on Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway in Lohagara upazila.

The deceased were identified as Rina Akter (18) from Cox's Bazar's Chakaria upazila and Senu Ara Begum (29) from Ramu upazila of Cox's Bazar.

The accident occurred around 8:30am, when the Chattogram-bound Marsa Paribahan bus collided with a stone-laden truck, said Inspector Abdur Rauf of Dohazari Highway Police Station.

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LALDIARCHAR EVICTION DRIVE

Thousands at risk of losing homes

Chattogram Port Authority plans to establish container terminal

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) has decided to evict around 14,000 people from Laldiarchar of Potenga in the port city in line with a High Court order that asked it to free the area of illegal occupiers within a few weeks.

CPA published a circular on a local newspaper on February 17, asking dwellers of Laldiarchar to leave the area, sparking anger and apprehension of becoming homeless among the people living there. They said they were rehabilitated in the area in 1972 when the then government decided to build an Air Force base in Patenga.

Power and gas services have been snapped in the area since Thursday.

The High Court last year in December asked CPA in cooperation with Chattogram district administration, Chattogram Development authority,

Police Commissioner of Chattogram Metropolitan Police to free Laldiarchar of people who made their way into the illegal occupiers list in 2015.

The islanders staged a human chain programme, urging the government not to knock down their homestead without rehabilitation.

Alamgir Hossen, convener of Eviction Resistance Committee at Laldiarchar, told The Daily Star that the land was given to them by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as part of a rehabilitation initiative after the then government decided to expand Johurul Haque Air Force base in Chattogram.

"Now they call us illegal occupiers. If we are illegal why did the government set up primary school and embankment project to protect the island?" he questioned.

Alamgir said CPA took 20 acres of land, evicting hundreds of families of Laldiarchar

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With winter in the rearview, the rites of spring are well underway across the capital. Like always, the season of rebirth has brought with it some recurring friends, including this pair of freshly bloomed orchids.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



Factory owner Joshim has been devastated after Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority recently demolished his factory on Buriganga riverbank. Although authorities gave notice to occupiers to remove their possessions, many did not do so, or weren't aware of the directive. As a result, many lost their valuable materials, as they were destroyed during the eviction. Now with his broken machineries, Joshim is racking his brain over how he can continue his business. This picture was taken from the capital's Postagola.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

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BEATEN TO DEATH BY WORKERS

No arrest yet in bank official murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

On Saturday afternoon, Agrani Bank's Hariপুর Gas Field Branch's officer Moudud Ahmed hired a CNG-run auto-rickshaw from Hariপুর area of Sylhet's Jaintiapur upazila to go to Bandarabazar in the city.

Upon reaching there around 7:45pm, he locked into an altercation with the driver over fare. He was then beaten badly by the driver and his transport worker associates, said witnesses.

Moudud (35) died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital that night, hour after he was taken there by locals.

His brother filed a case with Kotwali Police Station on Sunday. But two days after the murder, police are yet to arrest any accused.

Moudud, hailed from Mymensingh's Gouripur upazila, used to work as an officer (cash) at the bank and lived in a rented house at Hariপুর.

BARAPUKURIA GRAFT CASE AGAINST KHALEDA

Hearing on charge framing Mar 22

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday set March 22 for the hearing on charge framing against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and six others in the Barapukuria coalmine graft case.

Judge (in charge) Md Nazrul Islam of the Special Judge's Court-2 of Dhaka passed the order after a petition was filed with the court on behalf of Khaleda, seeking an adjournment of the hearing. Advocate Masud Ahmed Talukder, one of her lawyers, told The Daily Star.

In the petition, Masud said Khaleda, who is now out of jail following an executive order of the government, is unwell and cannot leave her residence due to Covid-19 pandemic. So, the hearing should be adjourned.

During the hearing, two other accused including BNP leader Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, now on bail, were present in the court while three others, including Mozammel Hossain, were absent.

Another accused Md Sirajul Islam has been absconding.

On February 26, 2008, ACC filed the case with Shahbagh Police Station, accusing 16 people including Khaleda and 10 of her former cabinet colleagues of taking Tk 159 crore in kickbacks on the Barapukuria coalmine deal awarded to the highest bidder.

The ACC pressed charges against Khaleda and 15 others in the graft case on October 5, 2008.

Seven accused including former ministers M Saifur Rahman and Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan died during the trial, while Jamaat leaders Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid and Motiur Rahman Nizami were executed on charges of committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War. So, the nine were dropped from the trial.