

Ensure judicial probe into death of Mushtaq: ASK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leading rights body Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday called for ensuring an urgent judicial inquiry into the death of writer Mushtaq Ahmed in state custody.

The organisation also urged the government to identify those responsible for the mental torture that Mushtaq Ahmed had to go through and bring them under the relevant law, mentioned a press release signed by ASK executive director Golam Manoar Kamal.

ASK also urged the government to form a judicial inquiry committee to investigate the allegations of torture against cartoonist Kishore and make the results public.

It also demanded amending the Digital Security Act on an urgent basis after consulting all stakeholders, and not arresting anyone under this law until it is amended, the release mentioned.

According to the release, ASK strongly believes that the rights of Mushtaq Ahmed and Kishore Kabir were violated seriously in the whole process. It is the responsibility of the government to inform the truth to people by ensuring a fair and impartial investigation, it further reads.



A SPLASH OF PURPLE... A pick-up van carries a Bougainvillea plant, among other assorted shrubberies, through Satmasjid Road in the capital. The area has seen a boom in nurseries in recent times, presumably as many city residents have picked up gardening as a hobby during the early days of the pandemic. The photo was taken on Tuesday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

34pc workers yet to reach pre-pandemic income: Sanem report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Approximately 34.2 percent of at least 1,468 workers are yet to see their income recover since it fell amid the pandemic last year, according to a survey report of South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem).

Of the workers, 27.8 percent saw their income recover between January and February, after it fell between March and December last year, the report said.

Income of the rest 38 percent of workers surveyed was not affected by the pandemic, it said.

According to the report, the lowest dip in a worker's income was 84 percent between December, 2019 and December, 2020, with the average lowest monthly earning reported at Tk 1,611. Workers' average income was Tk 11,041 in December, 2019 and Tk 8,508 in December last year, the report said.

Sanem disclosed findings of the survey "Impact of Covid-19 on Labour Market and Migration" during a webinar yesterday.

The 1,468 workers are about 51.6 percent of 2,845 non-migrant individuals Sanem surveyed via telephonic interview between January 2 and February 20 this year.

Of the total non-migrants, 41.5 percent or at least 1,180 are self-employed, while the rest 6.9 percent are unemployed.

Besides, the survey included 230 internal and 273 international migrants.

The report said of the self-employed non-migrants, 37.3 percent are yet to see their income recover, 43.2 percent now have their usual income, while income of the rest 19.5 percent was not affected by the pandemic.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Want to know which actions tarnish image of the country: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday demanded that a new election commission be constituted with competent persons.

"The incumbent election commission is worse than loyal servant," Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, secretary general of the party, said.

Addressing a rally at Taltola in the capital's Khilgaon organised by the party demanding cancellation of the city corporation elections, the BNP leader demanded that the incumbent election commission step down immediately.

"The new commission should be formed with the competent persons."

Expressing anger that the government barred the party to organise rallies in divisional headquarters, Fakhrul said, "Why such fear? Why were people denied of casting vote? We know if people were allowed to vote then you (government) would not come to power."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Repeal the black law

Left-leaning student orgs slam Digital Security Act at DU rally

DU CORRESPONDENT

Leaders and activists of left-leaning organisations yesterday protested the Digital Security Act (DSA) in front of Raju Memorial Sculpture at Dhaka University, demanding withdrawal of a case lodged on February 27 against their activists on charge of clashing with police at Shahbagh.

Protesters placed three demands, including immediate release of those arrested under DSA, scrapping the act, judicial inquiry into Mushtaq's death and withdrawing the case against the activists.

Earlier, protesters brought out a procession from Teacher Student Centre (TSC), which marched to Shahbagh and then to Raju Memorial Sculpture.

"This government is afraid of voices of people. It's afraid of students and intellectuals. For this, writer Mushtaq died in custody, and journalist Kajol and cartoonist Kishore had to be kept in jail and tortured," said student leader Tamzid Haider, who got bail recently in the case over the clash.

"We do not want DSA to be amended; we want this 'black law' to be repealed immediately. If you [the government] think by amending this law, you can turn a knife into a rose...you will never be able to do that," said Al Kadere Joy, coordinator of Progressive Students Alliance.

Earlier in a day, Bangladesh Chhatra Moitri brought out a procession, going from Shahbagh to Raju Memorial. They also demanded DSA be repealed.

Inspector tortured youth inside narcotics office

Primary investigation confirms after video of five-month old incident surfaces

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

A young man was tortured at Barishal Divisional Narcotics Control Office (BDNCO) about five months ago, investigators have confirmed after primary probe.

A video of the incident was leaked to a private media channel last Tuesday.

"After the video was released, we found truth in the allegation that Inspector Abdul Malek Hawlader tortured Maruf Sikder (20) at his office room on the ground floor of the divisional office on September 22 last year. The victim had complained about the matter," said Paritosh Kumar Kundu, Additional Director of BDNCO and head of the investigation team.

He said preparations are underway to take disciplinary action including a departmental case against the accused inspector.

"We found that the young man was tortured and so departmental action will be taken against the inspector. It happened five

months ago, maybe someone close to Malek recorded it. We are not investigating who recorded it, but the truth has been found," said Parikosh Kumar.

"Charges for yaba possession against Maruf is ongoing, however. He is out on bail after 19 days in jail," he added.

Maruf Sikder is a resident of ward-1, BSCIC road in Barishal city. He said Malek had picked him at 6:30pm on September 22 near BSCIC Shahabuddin Bakery.

"I was taken to the office. I was handcuffed and then beaten. To get a confessional statement, they dropped five yaba tablets in my pocket," alleges Maruf.

"My son doesn't know anything. He was caught and beaten. We have faith in the almighty for my son's fate now," said Anwara Sikder, the victim's mother.

This correspondent found the victim and his family at the Divisional Narcotics Control Office yesterday afternoon.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

ACC to strive for reducing probe delay: new chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission will continue striving to reduce delay in investigation, said new ACC Chairman Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah.

"With the help of everyone -- including farmers and the media -- we want to curb corruption according to public expectation," he said.

Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah and Md Jahurul Haque yesterday assumed office as chairman and commissioner of the anti-graft watchdog respectively. Abdullah was senior secretary to the agriculture ministry and Jahurul chairman of BTRC.

The ACC chairman said they will take initiatives to find out a way to implement ministry's recommendations.

Replying to a question, Abdullah said they will look into the reason behind the delay in investigation into the BASIC Bank loan scam cases.

On money laundering, Jahurul Haque said the High Court sought a list of money launderers. "We'll submit it before the court and take action accordingly," he said.

He said a huge amount of money is being laundered from Bangladesh. "The commission in future will remain active to stop laundering," he said, adding, "Such activeness will be visible within two to four months."

Bangladesh seeks Finnish investment

Two foreign ministers hold virtual talks

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen has urged Finland to explore investment opportunities in high-tech parks and special economic zones in Bangladesh.

The minister also urged Finland and other EU member states to work towards early and voluntary repatriation of the Rohingya with safety and dignity.

He made the request during a virtual meeting with his Finnish counterpart Pekka Haavisto on Tuesday.

The two ministers discussed the possibility of initiating work on a bilateral agreement on double taxation.

Dr Momen also said Bangladesh and Finland should observe the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the two country's diplomatic relations in 2022 in a befitting manner, through high-level political visits, investment dialogues, and cultural exchanges.

The Finnish Foreign Minister appreciated Bangladesh's humanitarian gesture towards the forcibly displaced Rohingya from Myanmar. He assured to remain engaged with the situation leveraging Finland's engagement in certain mediation efforts in Myanmar.

The two ministers also agreed to enhance cooperation on climate change issues, including through the Coalition of Finance Ministers on Climate Change that Finland co-chairs.

The two ministers agreed to work on cultural exchange and knowledge partnership for fostering human connectivity.

Bangladesh's non-resident Ambassador to Finland Md Nazmul Islam also joined the meeting.

CRIMINAL CASES

Witnesses to receive court dates via SMS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Witnesses of criminal cases can now digitally know the dates of their appearance before the courts concerned.

Mobile operator Teletalk will inform witnesses through SMS the dates of their appearance in courts, along with current system of issuing summons orders, in order to ensure their presence.

An agreement took place to this effect between law ministry's law and justice division and Teletalk Bangladesh Limited yesterday under the directive from Law Minister Anisul Huq.

The agreement was signed between law and justice division's joint secretary AHM Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan and Teletalk Bangladesh Limited's General Manager Provas Chandra Roy at the ministry, where law and justice division secretary Md Golam Sarwar and other officials concerned were present.

Law ministry's public relations officer Md Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star an initiative has been taken to implement the agreement through a pilot programme primarily in Cumilla and Narsingdi districts, and the programme will run in all the districts across the country in phases.

He said programme will be launched on March 18 on the occasion of the 100th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.



Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Atiqul Islam tagged along with mosquito control workers, as seven wards were sprayed with insecticide as part of DNCC's new initiative to tackle the mosquito menace, which started yesterday. The mayor observed and directed the operation by going to Tikka Para, Mohammadia Housing Society and Ramchandrapur canal areas.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Suffering from oral or mouth ulcer?

Oral or mouth ulcers are generally painful lesions that are related to various conditions developing within the oral cavity. Many oral ulcers are associated with systemic diseases. One of the most common oral ulcers is aphthous ulcer, and the other is cold sore, which is caused by herpes simplex virus. When the ulcer is intensely painful, patient often confuse it as toothache.

CAUSE OF ORAL ULCER?

Aphthous ulcers can occur in the oral cavity due to stress, hormonal changes, menstrual problems, food allergies, gastrointestinal disease, vitamin B12, iron or folic acid deficiency. Side effects of certain medications, bacterial, viral or fungal infections, defective immune systems, chemotherapy and HIV infection greatly reduce the immune system which can lead to oral ulceration. Oral ulcers can develop from trauma eg. If any part of the tooth is sharp. Some chronic diseases such as oral lichen

planus, autoimmune diseases and oral cancer can also lead to oral ulcer.

TREATMENT

If you are experiencing an oral ulcer, consult with an oral medicine specialist to find out the cause of ulcer and provide treatment accordingly. Adequate sleep, stress relief and healthy lifestyle are important. For patient's allergic to specific foods, dietary changes may be required. Smoking, betel nut chewing, alcohol drinking over long period of time can lead to oral cancer. If an oral ulcer persists for more than 3 weeks, patient should immediately consult with a dental surgeon. In some cases, biopsy and blood tests may be needed to diagnose the disease. If an ulcer develops from sharp teeth, the teeth should be trimmed as soon as possible. Considering the overall physical condition of the patient, proper history, diagnostic test and thorough clinical examination are required to provide appropriate treatment of mouth ulcer.

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