

## CHECK-UP OF KISHORE Medical board formed at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) authorities yesterday formed a three-member medical board for check-up of cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore.

"We got a letter from the court to form a medical board yesterday [Monday]. As per the directions of the letter, we formed the medical board," DMCH director Brig Gen Nazmul Haque told The Daily Star yesterday afternoon.

The board members are: Prof Sheikh Nurul Fatah Rumi of ENT department, Fakhru Amin of Orthopedic department and Prof Hafiz Sardar of Medicine department.

Earlier in the day, Kishore was taken to DMCH for medical check-up as per the High Court's March 14 order, said Kishore's elder brother writer Ahsan Kabir.

On March 14, the HC also asked the director of DMCH to form a three-member medical board to examine the torture that Kishore suffered in custody from May 2 to May 4 last year.

On March 10, Kishore filed a case under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act-2013, seeking redress.

He did not mention the name of any law enforcement agency or officials, instead choosing to file charges against a group of unidentified people. The judge also took the case into cognizance and recorded his statement that day.

Kishore, who was prosecuted under the controversial Digital Security Act, languished in jail for around 10 months. He got out on bail on March 4.

After his release, he revealed to the media how he was brutally tortured before he was shown arrested on paper in the case.



Workers are putting in last bits of work to construct the vibrant stalls and pavilions of this year's Amar Ekushey Book Fair, which will welcome avid readers from tomorrow for nearly a month. The fair, a signature event of Dhaka, was pushed back by a month and a half due to the Covid-19 outbreak. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



## Gearing up for the Ekushey book fair

Suhrawardy Udyan abuzz with activities; pandemic precautions also in place

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Suhrawardy Udyan is brimming with energy.

The Ekushey Boimela begins tomorrow, and publishers are busy setting up stalls and pavilions throughout the park. Soon its greenery will be replaced by thousands of visitors and a copious amount of books.

This year's Boimela is set to start from March 18, running all the way till April 14. As time is of the essence, construction is going on in full swing.

Visiting the Boimela premises yesterday, this correspondent could hear little beyond the incessant sound of hammering and the buzzing noise of chainsaws. Those who are done building their stalls are now busy with painting.

Publishers are regular faces at the ground -- to monitor and supervise the construction. They spoke to this correspondent about the thought that went behind stall and pavilion designs. Known for their design artistry, Boimela is home to lots of shapes and colours during its runtime.

Among the popular publications, Anannya has already finished erecting theirs. They are now focusing on painting. True to form, Katha Prakash is at it with their innovative pavilion designs, while Anya Prakash is creating intrigue with theirs.

As inauguration looms, publisher of Biswa Sahitya Bhaban Tofajjal Hossain said, "We're trying to wow our visitors with our stall designs. We're working hard for it."

The Boimela will be home to 522 entities this year, with 32 of them leasing pavilions. Bangla Academy will also have its own pavilion. Like every year, the fair will have little mag corner this time too.

There will also be four shades this year, mostly due to the forecast of rain and storm for the month.

Till afternoon on Fridays and Saturdays, the fair will continue to be specially organised for children.

The book fair is also known for its patriotic fervour, and this year will be no different. There will also be a special focus on Mujib Borsho and golden jubilee of the independence. Both themes will grace everything in the fair, from publications to aesthetics.

To mark the 50th year of the Independence, this year's fair will showcase these five decades with distinct presentations, said organisers.

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## Tension mounts over CCC panel mayor race

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Tension is mounting among the councillors of Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) over the elections to panel mayors, scheduled to be held tomorrow.

This time around, many councillors are showing interest in becoming panel mayors, according to sources. They are mostly divided into two groups -- councillors who are known as followers of late CCC mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury and those who are followers of former CCC mayor AJM Nasir Uddin.

As per rules, two councillors from general seats and a female councillor from reserved seats would be elected panel mayors by the votes of 55 councillors. Panel mayors are usually elected between the first and third general meetings of the council.

Meanwhile, city corporation sources said the new mayor, Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, has no direct involvement in this election, whereas the previous mayors used to be directly or indirectly involved with the panel mayor elections.

The correspondent talked to a number of CCC councillors who, wishing anonymity, admitted the polarisation.

"In the last polls in 2015, the mayor played a vital role in the panel mayor elections...All the three elected panel mayors were his followers," said a councillor. "But the situation has changed this time, as the number of elected councillors who are followers of Mohiuddin Chowdhury is more than that of the previous mayor."

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## Dr Yunus exempted from court appearance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday exempted Grameen Telecom Chairman and Nobel laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus and its Managing Director Md Ashraful Hasan from personal appearance before the court in connection with a contempt of court rule.

Dr Yunus and Md Ashraful virtually appeared before the HC bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Kamrul Islam Mollah at 11am yesterday in compliance with its February 18 order.

The bench set April 22 for holding hearing on the rule.

During yesterday's hearing, Rokanuddin Mahmud and Mustafizur Rahman Khan -- lawyers for Dr Yunus and Md Ashraful -- told the court that their clients did not violate any court order.

The petitioners, who filed the contempt of court petition, were not terminated from their service and they have been working

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আমন্ত্রিত অতিথিবৃন্দের আগমন ও আসন গ্রহণ	মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর আগমন	গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের মহামান্য রষ্ট্রপতির আগমন	মালদ্বীপের মহামান্য রষ্ট্রপতির আগমন	শিশু শিল্পীদের সমবেত কণ্ঠে জাতীয় সংগীত পরিবেশনা	শত শিশু শিল্পীর সংগীত পরিবেশনা	অতিথিদের মঞ্চে আহ্বান	পবিত্র ধর্মগ্রন্থসমূহ থেকে পাঠ	মুজিব চিরন্তন থিমের ওপর টাইটেল এনিমেশন ভিডিও	থিম সং এর মিউজিক ভিডিও পরিবেশনা	ফ্লাই পাস্টের রেকর্ডকৃত ভিডিও	স্বাগত সম্বোধন: অধ্যাপক রফিকুল ইসলাম	সম্মানিত অতিথির ধারণকৃত বক্তব্য: চীনের মহামান্য রষ্ট্রপতি জি জিনপিং-এর ধারণকৃত ভিডিও বার্তা	মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে চীনের রষ্ট্রদূত কর্তৃক উপহারস্বরূপ বঙ্গবন্ধুর আবক্ষ ভাস্কর্য প্রদানের ভিডিও	সম্মানিত অতিথির ধারণকৃত বক্তব্য: কানাডার মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী জাস্টিন ট্রুডো-এর ধারণকৃত ভিডিও বার্তা	সম্মানিত অতিথির ধারণকৃত বক্তব্য: জাপানের মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী ইউশিহিরে সুগা	সম্মানিত অতিথির বক্তব্য: মালদ্বীপের মহামান্য রষ্ট্রপতি ইব্রাহীম মোহাম্মদ সলিহ	প্রধান অতিথির বক্তব্য: গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের মহামান্য রষ্ট্রপতি জনাব মো: আবদুল হামিদ	অতিথিবৃন্দকে মুজিব চিরন্তন শ্রদ্ধাস্মারক প্রদান	সভাপতির বক্তব্য: গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা আলোচনা পর্ব সমাপ্তি	



Police, equipped in riot gear, set up barricade to prevent the group of demonstrators -- seeking abolishment of Digital Security Act and justice for Mushtaq Ahmed and Kishore -- from reaching the secretariat yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## DSA formulated to muzzle free speech

Speakers tell rally in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders and activists of progressive students' organisations have called upon the government to abolish the Digital Security Act (DSA), saying that it is being used to muzzle people's freedom of expression.

They also sought justice for the death of writer Mushtaq Ahmed and torture of cartoonist Ahmed Kishore in custody.

Under the banner of Progressive Students' Organisations, students, teachers and writers yesterday held a protest rally in front of the secretariat where speakers made the demands.

Quoting a report by human rights organisation Odhikar, Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan, professor of International Relations Department of Dhaka University, said about 195 persons have been victims of extrajudicial killing each year between 2010 and 2020.

DSA was enacted to save people responsible for the extrajudicial killings, he opined, adding that the act is formulated to muzzle people's freedom of expression.

Researcher and activist Maha Mirza said, "We fought for the liberation of the country for our freedom of expression and security. But after the 50 years of liberation, we are holding protest rally for our freedom of expression."

"We're being made accused of sedition for criticising the government... Taking the advantages of the act, is being

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## Journalist AZM Anas no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AZM Anas, economic editor of The Financial Express, has passed away yesterday. He was 45 at the time.

He died of cardiac arrest around 8am at his residence at the capital's Dhanmondi area, according to The Financial Express.

A contributing writer of Nikkei, one of the largest financial newspapers in the world, Anas was an award-winning business and development journalist.

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