

Manage cases more efficiently

President tells judiciary

BSS, Dhaka

President Abdul Hamid urged all concerned in the judiciary to bring efficiency in case management by using all facilities of information technology (IT).

He said this while virtually addressing the "Bangladesh Supreme Court Day-2021" discussion at the SC premises yesterday. "Carry out court proceedings digitally in all courts countrywide... It will bring revolutionary changes in the judiciary," the president said.

"Since the Supreme Court is a court of record, it is necessary to take initiatives to digitise all its documents and make arrangements to digitally preserve them and all other activities, from filing of cases to pronouncement of verdicts," he added.

He also said an online case list has already been introduced in the SC, and its online bail confirmation system is also working effectively.

Terming the judicial process as a very tough one, the president urged judges to work harder to reduce

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As visitors poured into the historic Lalbagh Fort in Old Dhaka over the weekend, they had to endure this stretch of the Lalbagh Kella Road marred by DSCC's works. Locals said the spot has been like this for the last 20-25 days, with no signs of improving any time soon. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Country needs 'Expatriates Day'

Says foreign minister at Int'l Migrants Day event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said he wants December 30 to be declared as "Expatriates' Day", which will be celebrated in the country every year.

"With this, we can involve expatriates in the country's development more," he said, mentioning that expatriates usually come home around this time of the year.

Momen said his ministry already approached the prime minister with the matter and urged the expatriates' welfare ministry to take steps in this regard.

The minister was addressing the national programme marking International Migrants Day, which was organised by the expatriates' welfare ministry at the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Center.

International Migrants Day is observed annually on December 18 across the globe, following a United Nations General Assembly proclamation in 2000.

At the event, the expatriates' welfare ministry awarded 57 non-resident Bangladeshis with "CIP (NRB)-2019" awards in three categories -- "industrial investment" (one person), "remitting foreign currency" (47 persons), and "importing goods from Bangladesh" (nine persons) -- for their outstanding contributions during fiscal 2017-2018.

Besides, some children of migrant workers received educational scholarships during the programme.

Addressing the event as chief guest, Momen said they have launched two IT-based applications -- Databash and myGov-- to enhance the quality of services for expatriates.

The apps enable expatriates to get required services regarding passport renewal and attestation of different documents using their cell phones, he said.

He added that the government wants to strengthen its efforts, so that expatriate Bangladeshis can get their national identity (NID) cards while staying abroad.

Such projects have already been launched in the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates, but the pandemic

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Now that's a harmonium!

Even after 111 years, melody-maker Jatin and Co still stands tall



Jatin and Co's speciality with harmoniums can be attributed to two factors -- the unique way they design the reed of their harmoniums and their veteran artisans, one of whom has worked there for more than 50 years.

PHOTO: STAR

DIPAN NANDY

Shakhari Bazar's Jatin and Co wasn't always where it is today. We're talking about 111 years ago, from its early days at Old Dhaka's Ampotti and Patuatuli. It's only recently that the legendary music instrument shop came to its current home.

But regardless of where it is, Jatin and Co has been the quintessential place for musicians and musical instrument enthusiasts. Even after all these years, you can't speak of local harmoniums without mentioning Jatin and Co. This ultimately comes down to how they design the reed of their harmoniums, both owners and customers said.

Founded in 1910 by Keraniganj's Jatindra Mohon Mandal, the business was taken over by his son Sunil Kumar Mandal after Jatindra's death in 1970. Now, it's run by Jatindra's grandson --



Surjeet Mandal.

But before we start talking about Jatin and Co, a few words need to be said about Jatindra Mohon. According to Muntasir Mamun's "Dhaka: Smriti Bijarita Nagari", Jatindra, the exceptional violin player was born in 1880. Fittingly, he was friends with popular figures such as Charon Kobi Mukundo Das, while he played violin

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STUDENT POLITICS IN BUET

Majority against holding student union polls

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Organisational student and teacher politics was banned at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), after common students protested following the killing of Abrar Fahad by members of Chhatra League in 2019.

Twenty among 25 convicts in the Abrar murder case have recently been sentenced to death, while the others have been sentenced to life imprisonment.

Two years after the murder, majority of the university's students still remain in favour of the ban.

The polls for Engineering University Central Students' Union (EUCSU) at BUET have not been held for 20 years. In contrast, Dhaka University Central Students' Union elections were held in 2019, after 28 years, in the face of students' demands.

EUCSU is a structural platform, where students elect a representative panel led by a president, vice-president and general secretary through casting direct votes. This presents a chance for students to democratically elect their representatives, who will communicate with the administration on their behalf.

However, most students at BUET are not in favour of holding EUCSU elections in the current climate.

This correspondent recently contacted at least 10 class representatives from different batches of several departments, and

Buet's student union polls not held for 20yrs

Most students not in favour of holding elections

They fear possible violence due to organisational politics

Some, however, reiterated importance of the union

The trend shows that people seldom want to run elections on their own and eventually come under the banner of different political organisations. The concern is that student politics will erupt again with EUCSU polls.

PROF MIZANUR RAHMAN

Buet's student welfare office director

many other students of BUET. The majority of them said they don't want student union elections at the moment.

On condition of anonymity, they said they do not want EUCSU to be relaunched at this time, because of the looming fear of violence the university witnessed when student politics prevailed.

"We don't want any form of political influence at the university, especially after Abrar's murder," they said.

HOW IS BUET DOING WITHOUT POLITICS AND EUCSU?

Majority of students say they don't feel the need to talk about their rights and demands through a political body.

"We are now united regarding our rights and are hopeful that this unity will resist any injustice," they said.

Asked how they resolve issues with the administration, the group

of class representatives told this correspondent that they now discuss the issues among themselves first, and then contact the administration based on consensus.

They said they hope to continue this practice in the future.

Asked about the possibility of holding EUCSU polls, Prof Mizanur Rahman, Buet's student welfare office director, said, "If the students demand it, we will consider it."

However, he too expressed his concerns regarding the polls.

"The trend shows that people seldom want to run elections on their own and eventually come under the banner of different political organisations," said Prof Mizanur.

"The concern is that student politics will erupt again with EUCSU polls," he added.

THE OTHER END OF THE SPECTRUM

Some students, though small in

number, have pointed out the importance of holding EUCSU polls. According to them, the prevailing culture of "playing the seniority card" when it comes to representing students in front of the administration is not a democratic one.

If EUCSU is relaunched, the elected leadership will talk about student rights, creating a recognised medium for common students to negotiate their demands with the administration.

Requesting anonymity, this group of students also said without an elected student body, there is no way to keep the teachers' arbitrariness in check.

Asked about the possibility of EUCSU encouraging organisational politics on campus again, the students in favour of the polls said the university administration has the authority to bar candidates from joining any established political party. This way, the candidates will be from the common students, and not much chance will remain for organisational politics to prevail.

Asked about the necessity of EUCSU elections, former BUET professor and educationist Dr M Kaykobad said, "I think student union elections are necessary to develop leadership and the spirit to protest against any injustice among students."

"Practicing democratic values, tolerance and dissent in educational institutions is a must," he added.

Financial stability will cut violence against women

Planning minister tells online event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although women across the world are subjected to different forms of violence, the prevalence of violence is higher in countries like Bangladesh, where women are largely financially insolvent, Planning Minister MA Mannan told an online event yesterday.

"If they [women] can be financially stable, the rate of violence will gradually decrease," he said, adding that the current government has been working on developing women leaders in rural areas and initiating projects that benefit women.

He made the comments at the "Seventh National Conference-2021" of Bikoshito Nari Network, a platform of nationwide women leaders, formed with the help of international organisation The Hunger Project.

Badiul Alam Majumder, global vice-president and country director of The Hunger Project, said from January to August this year, a total of 813 girls were raped and 127 girls faced attempts to rape.

"The major reason for this violence is our deep-rooted patriarchal mindset, which needs to be uprooted through continuous efforts," he said.

Rasheda K Chowdhury, executive director of Ganashakkoarata Obhijan and former advisor to the caretaker government, said according to the Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum published last March, Bangladesh ranked 65th out of 165 countries.

"Bangladeshi women have progressed a lot over the years, but to empower them, two things are necessary: engaging them in decision-making positions and decreasing violence against them. We have a lot more to

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The extended weekend over the last three days, starting with Victory Day and ending yesterday, brought thousands of travel lovers to Cox's Bazar beach. Though the tourists were there for quite a while, some of their enjoyment fizzled out due to overcrowding at the beach. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Two jewellery shops looted in capital

Owners say over 5.83kg gold ornaments stolen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Masked miscreants burgled two jewellery shops at Karnaphuli Garden City Shopping Complex in the capital's Kakrail and reportedly looted over 5.83 kg of gold ornaments, diamond jewellery and cash early yesterday.

The shops are Mohona Jewellers and Jewel Avenue Jewellers, located on the building's third floor.

Looters took away all gold and diamond ornaments kept at the shops, shop owners said.

Police could not yet confirm the quantity of looted gold, diamond and cash. However, shop owners primarily estimated that over 5.83 kg of gold ornaments might have been looted.

Zakir Hossain, secretary of Karnaphuli Garden City Shop Owners Co-operative Society Ltd, said CCTV footage shows two people in masks sneaking into the complex around 3:30am

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