

DHAKA

Military, admin
should work
together

Army chief tells DC conference

UNB, Dhaka

Chief of Army Staff General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed has urged the military and civilian administrations to work together in the national goal of building "Sonar Bangla."

The army chief said the assistance of the civilian administration is an important factor in facilitating the Bangladesh Army to carry out its responsibilities.

He was speaking to reporters after addressing the first session on the third day of the Deputy Commissioners' Conference yesterday morning.

"We have discussed the areas. We all agree that there is no alternative to working together. At present we have a very good relationship. We want to go further by capitalising on it," he added.

Asked about proposals from the DCs in this regard, General Shafiuddin said there was no such proposal specifically.

"But we have discussed the areas in which we have the potential to enhance our civil-military relations," the army chief added.

Regarding the issues emphasised in the conference, he said, "Environment is very important for me to do any work together."



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These girders are supposed to be used for a mega project. But for the last year and a half, they've been left lying there on Airport Road. Their presence chokes the critical road, which is a gateway for inter-district vehicles, and leads to chronic traffic jams in the area. This photo was taken near the airport yesterday. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

It's them, not us!

BNP alleges AL hired lobbyists
abroad with public money

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday demanded a proper investigation, alleging that Awami League, not them, spent public money to hire lobbyists abroad.

"Ministers' claimed that they did not hire any lobbyist. The state minister for foreign affairs said a PR firm was given some tasks, but the evidence says something otherwise," said Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, party's standing committee member.

He gave the party's formal reaction to the government's allegation of BNP recruiting lobbyists abroad to campaign against Bangladesh at a press conference at BNP chairperson's Gulshan office.

Mosharrar said State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam claimed that they never appointed any lobbyist but engaged a company purely on the media front in 2015. "But the evidence doesn't support it."

Why should the government or a government party hire a lobbyist there? Despite having an embassy, it is unethical to hire a lobbyist spending public money.

On behalf of US chapter AL, he claimed that a lobbyist firm, Alcalde and Fay was hired in the US on November 29, 2004. The BNP leader further alleged that the firm was paid \$12.5 lakh in total (\$30,000 each month) between 2005 and 2007.

Mosharrar said it is necessary to present a report before people on how much public money has been spent to engage lobbyists.

The BNP leader also presented some documents on the agreement with two US firms, Alcalde and Fay, and Friedlander. He said Awami League has been working with another lobbyist firm, BGR, on a regular basis for many years.

"Friedlander, another lobbyist firm, was hired in September last year for a fee of \$40,000 for a month to arrange a high-level meeting and exchange visits between the two countries [US and Bangladesh]. If you go

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PRAYER
TIMING
JAN 21

	Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5-30	12-30	4-15	5-43	7-15
Jamaat	6-05	1-15	4-30	5-47	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

RECRUITMENT
GRAFTACC sues
Jiban Bima
officials

UNB, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a graft case against managing director of Jiban Bima Corporation Zahurul Haque and its assistant general manager Mahbubul Alam.

ACC assistant director Mohammad Nure Alam Siddiqui filed the case. ACC secretary Mohammad Mahbub Hossain said the commission found evidence of corruption regarding question papers of a recruitment test of Jiban Bima.

The investigation team will further look into the matter.

ACC on September 15 launched the probe against Zahurul.



The Bangabandhu Chatter in the capital's Khamarbari area had turned into a mishmash of shrubs, bushes and garbage due to the lack of maintenance. But since last month, the spot has been given a new face, after Dhaka North City Corporation started working to beautify it. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Farewell, Qazida

Qazi Anwar Husain laid to rest



People gather outside Qazi Anwar Husain's residence and Seba Prakashani's office at the capital's Segunbagicha to bid farewell to the beloved writer. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In contrast to his extroverted, charismatic literary creation "Masud Rana", Qazi Anwar Husain was a man of solitude. Yesterday, his farewell towards the eternity happened similarly — in a quiet and unpretentious manner.

In the afternoon, Anwar, who breathed his last on Wednesday, was laid to eternal rest at Banani graveyard in the capital.

As per his wish, he was buried at the very grave where his mother Sazeda Khatun was buried.

Earlier, his namaz-e-janaza was held at the Segunbagicha Jame Mosque after Zuhr prayers.

With his departure, a glorious chapter of the country's thriller literature comes to an end.

Anwar played a unique role in "creating readers" in the country, said Niaz Morshed, whose book was published by Anwar's publishing house Seba Prakashani, after paying homage to the author-publisher at Segunbagicha.

Niaz said while Humayun Ahmed gets special

mention whenever the topic of creating readers comes up, but Anwar successfully played the same role before Humayun, albeit much more silently and without acknowledgment.

On Wednesday, Anwar died at the capital's Birdem General Hospital after suffering a stroke and a heart attack simultaneously while on life support. He was 86.

His body was then kept in a freezer van of Quantum Foundation in Kakrail.

From there, the body was taken to his Segunbagicha residence around 10:00am yesterday. His famed Seba Prakashani is also located at the residence. The publishing house started its journey in Bangladesh from the 1960s.

Almost symbolically, the final episode of his journey also started from there yesterday.

After his body was taken to Seba Prakashani premises, family members, relatives, well-wishers, locals and readers gathered to pay their homage to the writer one last time.

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Dhaka-Sharjah
Biman flight
from Jan 25

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time, Biman Bangladesh Airlines will operate direct flights on the Dhaka-Sharjah-Dhaka route from January 25.



Initially, Biman will operate four flights per week, the national carrier said in a press release yesterday.

Passengers have to be present at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at least eight hours before scheduled departure time to complete all activities in line with travel advisory.

PROPOSED EC ACT

It will fail to fulfil
constitutional
commitment: TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday said the proposed Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioner Appointment Act, 2022 will fail to fulfil constitutional commitment and people's expectation.

As reasons, TIB said some "average criteria" were set in the draft law to determine eligibility and ineligibility for the appointments of the CEC and ECs.

Apart from this, there's an "unacceptable" absence of any provision to determine their skills, experience, impartiality, transparency and acceptability, said TIB in a statement. While the government's sudden move to formulate the law is positive, there's a due process to enact such an important and sensitive law, said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

Referring to media reports, Iftekharuzzaman said that most recommendations made by civil society and stakeholders were not considered in the draft law.

Citing the draft law, he said three provisions have been incorporated in the proposed law to determine the eligibility of the CEC and ECs.

However, there is no specific directive in those provisions regarding the CEC and ECs' honesty, righteousness, impartiality, objectivity, courage and acceptability, he added. Also, there is no provision for inclusion of female members in the commission.

Mohammadpur-
based gang busted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab has detained nine members of a Mohammadpur-based gang "Lou Thela" on Wednesday, over their alleged involvement in mugging, extortion, drug peddling and more.

They were arrested from Nabainagar Housing area after their involvement in a vandalism incident in the area on Sunday, said Lt Col Abu Nayeem Md Talat, commanding officer of Rab 2.

The arrestees are — gang leader Babu alias Dasher Babu (26), Forkan (22), Palash (23), Suman (22), Sagar (23), Rajan (23), Nazim (24), Shakil (20), and Milon (21). Various local weapons were recovered from them.

Rab said Babu came to Dhaka from Narail in 2000 with his mother, initially working menial jobs. In 2014, he got involved with teen gang "Vaibba Lo King". He later separated from the group and formed his own group "Lou Thela" in 2017. There are six cases filed against Babu.