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Says Indian singer Madhubanti Bagchi



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Farmers fear losses due to heavy rain

EC SEARCH COMMITTEE

Short time, tough task

Justice Obaidul Hassan at the helm of the panel under EC law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid has formed a six-member search committee, led by Justice Obaidul Hassan, in line with the new law on forming the Election Commission.

The search committee has six working days to recommend names to the president for the appointments of the chief election commissioner and other commissioners as the tenure of the current EC, headed by CEC KM Nurul Huda, expires on February 14.

Justice Hassan, a Supreme Court judge, was a member of the previous search committee constituted in 2017.

The other members are Justice SM Kuddus Zaman, a High Court judge, Comptroller and Auditor General Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury, Public Service Commission Chairman Md Sohorab Hossain, former election commissioner Sohul Hussain, and psychiatrist and writer Anwara Syed Haq, according to a gazette issued yesterday.

The committee will perform its duties in accordance with the "Appointments of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners Act-2022", the gazette said, adding that the Cabinet Division would provide all necessary assistance to it.

The gazette came nine days after parliament passed the law amid protests from opposition lawmakers.

Talking to The Daily Star, four members of the committee, including its head, said they would work sincerely to find out the right people for the EC appointments.

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A long tailback at the Jatrabari entrance to the capital while the flyover remains almost empty. Travellers complain that bus drivers would rather wait in traffic than pay the toll to use the flyover.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

UNDER OC PRADEEP

Teknaf shook with 'crossfire' horror

Sinha murder verdict brings up tales of torture

ZYMA ISLAM

Several victims of the suspended officer-in-charge of Teknaf police station Pradeep Kumar Das gave testimonies against him during the murder trial of Major (ret'd.) Sinha Rashed Mohammad Khan.

The prosecution observed that according to the investigation report by the administration, OC Pradeep killed 204 people in crossfires -- and none got justice. The Daily Star has a copy of the 288-page-verdict.

When the prosecution argued that if OC Pradeep had not been arrested for the murder of Sinha, more crossfires would have taken place, the court observed in response that this claim is valid, substantiated and carries weight.

Many women like Senowara Begum would lose their husbands to "crossfire" as she lost hers, a CNG driver.

On December 3, 2019, her husband, a CNG driver, came from Chattogram to Cox's Bazar at 9 am and called her to tell

her that he is in front of Cox's Bazar masjid market. His neighbour Shah Alam was with him, he said.

Shah Alam used to be an informer of OC Pradeep, Senowara told the court.

He told her that he needed to submit a document after which he would come home. An hour went by but she was unable to reach her husband.

She then called Shah Alam, who told her that OC Pradeep's men have taken her husband away to the Teknaf police station.

She went to Teknaf police station but they did not let her inside. She sat outside the station from 2 pm to 10 pm. Shah Alam had confirmed that her husband was inside, according to the verdict.

The next day she went to the station again and tried to file a general diary. But the police did not let her in.

Then Shah Alam told her that he knows where her husband is and asked her to go home. Still, she stood outside the Teknaf police station until 10 pm that day too.

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ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

Govt doubling down on stance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said the country's law enforcement agencies are not involved in enforced disappearances.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said many people listed by UN organisations as 'missing' have actually drowned in the Mediterranean.

None of the ministers, however, elaborated on these remarks.

"Whenever anyone goes missing, they return after a few days. The person may go into hiding for different reasons," Asaduzzaman said after visiting a Saraswati Puja mandap at Rajdhani High School in the capital.

"These incidents are branded as 'enforced disappearances'. We have not yet received information about a couple of 'self-hiding' incidents. We think we can bring them to the fore soon."

The top ministers made these statements at a time when the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances will hold in hybrid format its 126th session from February 7-11 to examine more than 300 cases of disappearances in 24 countries.

Five independent experts will hold meetings with victims' relatives, state representatives, civil society groups and other stakeholders to exchange information on individual cases, structural issues and challenges related to enforced disappearances, according to a UN Human Rights Council statement.

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SEARCH COMMITTEE IN 2012

Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain
Justice Md Nuruzzaman
AT Ahmedul Huq Choudhury
Ataul Hakeem

CEC Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad

SEARCH COMMITTEE IN 2017

Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain
Justice Obaidul Hassan
Muhammed Sadique
Masud Ahmed
Prof Syed Manzoarul Islam
Shireen Akhter

CEC KM Nurul Huda

SEARCH COMMITTEE IN 2022

Justice Obaidul Hassan
Justice SM Kuddus Zaman
Md Sohorab Hossain
Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury
Muhammad Sohul Hussain
Anwara Syed Haq

19th Death Anniversary



Late Shah Rafiqul Islam (Titu)
Death: 6th February, 2003

This day in 2003, we lost our beloved & honorable Director **Late Shah Rafiqul Islam (Titu)**. We mourn his pre-mature death. With our distressed heart, we pray to Almighty Allah for his eternal peace. May Allah bless him. Ameen.

All Employees

ABUL KHAIR GROUP

In 2003, on this very day, you left us at the will of Almighty Allah the Beneficent. Your pre-matured departure has made us and many of your relations overwhelmed with grief. It is straining that you are not in this mundane world with us. But we are feeling your existence by remembering the tender-aged days of your life.

We pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of his departed soul and request all friends, relatives, well-wishers to pray for him from the core of heart.

May Allah the Beneficent bless you with the eternal bliss of paradise. Ameen.

Bereaved members of the family