

2 SIs sued over Wazir's death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A case was filed with Sunamganj District and Sessions Judge's Court yesterday over the alleged custodial torture of Wazir Mia, who died of injuries on February 21.

Wazir's brother Dalim Mia lodged the case against sub-inspectors Debashish Sutradhar and Ala Uddin, said Public Prosecutor Khairul Kabir Rumen.

"Judge Waheduzzaman Sikder set March 2 for a hearing," he said, adding that the judge would decide whether the case would be accepted or not.

The accused detained Wazir in the early hours of February 21 and tortured him inside Shantiganj Police Station. He died of his injuries 10 days later, his family claimed.

SI Debashish was transferred to Derai Police Station on Wednesday. Later, he was withdrawn and attached to the district police lines.

The family also claimed the torture was plotted by Debashish over Wazir's feud with a UP member, who is a relative of the SI.

A day after Wazir's death, two probe committees were formed. Both the committees are yet to submit reports.



Children take a break from work at a factory in the capital's Shyampur. Working three hours a day, they make about Tk 2,500 each a week. A large number of children from low income families are employed in hazardous activities, including production of aluminum utensils. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Adapt now, or suffer later

Major UN climate report urges world; 15m people in Bangladesh could lose their homes

REUTERS

Climate change is upon us and humanity is far from ready, the United Nations climate panel warned in a major report yesterday.

Noting that nearly half the world's population was already vulnerable to increasingly dangerous climate impacts, the report calls for drastic action on a huge scale: A third to a half of the planet needs to be conserved and protected to ensure future food and freshwater supplies. Coastal cities need plans to keep people safe from storms and rising seas. And more.

"Adaptation saves lives," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said with the report's release. "As climate impacts worsen – and they will – scaling up investments will be essential for survival... Delay means death."

The report is the latest in a series by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) detailing the latest global consensus on climate science. This report, however, focuses on how nature and societies are being affected and what they can do to adapt.

On nearly all counts, the report makes clear that climate change is impacting the world far faster than scientists had anticipated. Meanwhile, countries have failed to rein in planet-warming carbon emissions, which continue to rise.

Bangladesh, a world leader in adapting to climate change impacts, could lose more than a tenth of its land to sea level rise in two decades, potentially forcing 15 million of its 165 million people to find new homes in an already crowded nation, said the flagship report.

Can't employ under 14 at work

Cabinet approves ratifying ILO Convention-138



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved ratifying an ILO convention that prohibits employing children under 14 in any work.

Convention 138 of the International Labour Organisation states that the minimum age for employment is 15, said Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam.

But considering the socio-economic condition of a country, the age limit could be reduced to 14, he told reporters at the secretariat.

The ratification proposal was approved at the cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who joined it virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

"Children cannot be involved in activities that can lead to accidents or deaths.... They cannot be treated as adults," said the cabinet secretary.

Those who employ children under 14 will be punished as per the labour law.

Drafts of Bangabandhu Public University Naogaon Act, 2022, and Thakurgaon University Act, 2022, were also approved in principle at the meeting.

With these two new institutes, the number of public universities will be 52, Anwarul said. The country now has 108 private universities.

The meeting endorsed the draft of BIMSTEC Certificate ahead of the 5th BIMSTEC Conference to be held on March 30 in Sri Lanka, he said.

Monitor war

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"Friendship to all and malice to none" and that it cannot be forced to choose any position.

After the war began, foreign ministry issued a formal statement expressing deep concern over the escalating violence in Ukraine. It also said dialogue was the only way to peace.

Tens of thousands evacuated from floods in Australia

AFP, Brisbane

Tens of thousands of Australians were ordered to flee their homes yesterday, as torrential rain sent floodwaters to record levels, leaving residents stranded on the rooftops of their homes.

Eight people have died, and the country's weather bureau has warned further severe thunderstorms and intense rainfall will cause "life-threatening flash flooding" across a swathe of the central Pacific coastal region.

In the country town of Lismore, resident Danika Hardiman woke yesterday morning to find mud-brown floodwaters had reached the balcony of her second-floor apartment.

She and her partner managed to climb up to the roof, where they were spotted by passing kayakers, who flagged down a makeshift rescue boat.

Mute witness to 1971 massacres

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There, he was tortured for the next several days. Then he was taken to the killing field around the water tank area and executed.

During a programme last year, Sekandar Hayat Khan, a retired principal of Government MM Ali College and also president of the Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, told local journalists that Pakistani soldiers killed people and dumped their bodies in the low-lying areas next to a water tank at the northern end of the district headquarters. The corpses became food for crows, foxes and vultures.

He said aside from Nityananda and Salahuddin, Pakistani forces killed and dumped the bodies of Abdus Sattar, a history professor of Kumudini College; Biresh Majumder, a teacher of Bindubasini High School and his son Pritesh Majumder; Herambanath Roy, an assistant headmaster at Jannabi High School, and Pranodh Chandra, a medicine trader of Paradisepara; Shushil Kumar Saha of Shibpur, Bolihari Das, Promod Pal and Shanti Saha and many other unknown freedom fighters and freedom-

seeking people.

"I was at war at that time. There was no opportunity to enter Tangail town. The Pakistani military with the help of their local collaborators captured freedom fighters and also local intellectuals and other freedom-seeking people from different areas in the district and outside and carried out the massacre in a secluded place near the district headquarters water tank behind the circuit house," said Bir Protik Fazlul Haque, a brave freedom fighter of Kaderia Bahini of 1971 led by legendary

freedom fighter Abdul Kader Siddique.

"The place turned into a killing field. It is very difficult to say how many people they have killed there," he said.

Ataul Gani, deputy commissioner in Tangail, said the district administration has already preserved the spot and constructed a memorial plaque there. The district administration is also constructing a Liberation War Museum with funding from Walton Group to preserve the history for future generations, he added.

CEC promises

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He said the commission cannot make any decision on using Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) now. "I can't decide now what will happen with EVMs. We will discuss. I will discuss the pros and cons of EVMs. I myself don't understand EVMs very well. The decision can be made later."

On Saturday, President Abdul Hamid appointed Awal, former senior secretary to the defence ministry, as the CEC.

The president made four others – former district and sessions judge Rashida Sultana, Brig Gen (ret) Md Ahsan Habib Khan, former EC secretary Md Alamgir, and former energy and mineral resources division senior secretary Anisur Rahman – election commissioners.

The tenure of the KM Nurul Huda-led EC expired on February 14.

Dhaka's air again world's most polluted

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka has again topped the list of cities with the worst air quality in the world.

The capital's Air Quality Index (AQI) score was recorded at 242 at 9:00am yesterday.

Kazakhstan's Nur Sultan and Pakistan's Lahore occupied the next two spots, with AQI scores of 187.

An AQI between 201 and 300 is said to be "poor", while a reading of 301 to 400 is considered "hazardous", posing serious health risks to residents.

AQI is an index for reporting daily air quality.

Lawyer sued under DSA for 'insulting' PM

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Dhaka court lawyer has been sued under the Digital Security Act in Rangpur's Badarganj for a Facebook post that allegedly insulted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her family members.

Waliu Rahman Dolan, of Badarganj upazila, practices at District and Sessions Judge's Court in Dhaka.

Faruk Hossain Madhu, councillor of Badarganj municipality, filed the case with Badarganj Police Station on Sunday night.

Habibur Rahman, OC of the police station, said the lawyer made a Facebook post over the rush of people buying goods from OMS sale outlets. In the post, he urged the PM, her family members to purchase the products after standing in queues, the OC claimed.

The Daily Star could not independently verify the post.

Crash kills 2 in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Two passengers of a CNG-run auto-rickshaw were killed when a truck hit the vehicle on Cumilla-Sylhet highway in the district's Akhaura upazila yesterday morning.

The three-wheeler carrying four passengers was going to Brahmanbaria, said Bimal Karmakar, in-charge of Akhaura's Dharkhar police outpost.

Two of the passengers died on the spot and two others were injured, the police official added.

The deceased are: Awal Mia, 50, and Fayez Mia, 45, of Maheshpur village in Nabinagar upazila.

College student killed after 'rape'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

The body of a female college student was recovered from a cropland in Noakhali's Companiganj yesterday morning.

Shahidul Islam, superintendent of Noakhali police, suspected that victim Shanaz Parveen, 26, resident of Kabirhat upazila, was killed after rape. Shanaz also used to work part-time as a nurse at a private clinic in Basurhat.

She left the clinic around 8:00pm on Sunday but did not return home, said her family members.

Politicians worst

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in the media these days," he commented.

Andaleev said it is ultimately a police officer who will decide whether the spirit of the Liberation War was hurt, and as a result people will land in jail.

Maj Gen (ret) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim, chairman of Bangladesh Kallyan Party, said only the issue of writer Mushtaq Ahmed was in discussions because he lost his life "to the system".

He said the spotlight must shift to the others who are in prison and in similar danger.

Ahmed Hossain, organising secretary of the ruling Awami League, countered the criticisms of the law, saying "freedom of expression has limits".

"Are the police trying to stop this programme? Doesn't it prove that there is freedom of expression in this country?" he asked.

CGS chairperson Manjur Ahmed Chowdhury presided over the discussion.

Nepal parliament approves US grant amid protests

REUTERS, Kathmandu

Nepal's parliament approved a US infrastructure grant of \$500 million which critics say undermines the Himalayan nation's sovereignty as protesters opposed to the proposed funds clashed with police, officials and witnesses said late on Sunday.

Parliament Speaker Agni Sapkota said the aid agreement was approved by a majority vote of the Nepali lawmakers.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), a US government aid agency, agreed in 2017 to provide the aid in a grant to fund an electricity transmission line and road improvement project.