

‘Embarrassing’

Says Dipu Moni over allegations against AL lawmaker of assaulting teacher

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said she and her deputy are embarrassed over the assault on a college principal allegedly by an Awami League lawmaker.

“It is very embarrassing. If the allegations are true, it will be even more embarrassing for us,” she said at a press briefing yesterday at the secretariat.

She made the remarks when asked about the assault on Rajabari Degree College Principal Salim Reza, allegedly by lawmaker Omar Faruk Chowdhury from the Rajshahi-1 constituency. She was accompanied by Deputy Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury at the briefing.

“We don’t have the authority to take action against a parliament member. But we may go to the parliament speaker if needed after getting the probe report of the incident,” she said.

Salim was allegedly assaulted by Omar Faruk Chowdhury at the latter’s chamber on July 7.

On July 13, a three-member probe body – headed by National University (NU) Registrar Molla Mahfuz Al-Hossain – was formed to investigate the matter.

Salim termed the assault a “planned” one before the probe committee, said sources.

On July 14, Omar Faruk Chowdhury termed the allegations false.

Yesterday, at the press briefing, the education minister’s attention was also drawn to the recent attacks on teachers by students.

“Teachers are paid the highest respect everywhere in the world. We too want to give them due respect,” she said.

“However, taking measures on criminal offences are beyond our jurisdiction,” she added.



A little girl, almost scared to death, signals a bus to slow down while clenching onto her brother’s hand as she crosses the road in Shahbagh area. Despite the presence a foot bridge nearby, her parents (not in picture) took a risky decision of crossing the road this way, endangering all of their lives. This photo was taken recently. This photo was taken in Shahbagh recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Two die of dengue, 53 hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two dengue patients died while 53 were admitted to different hospitals across the country yesterday.

With two deaths at Cox’s Bazar, the total number of dengue death this year rose to three, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

With the 53 new cases, 18 from outside Dhaka, the total number of dengue patients rose to 1,723.

Among the patients, 222 are still undergoing treatment.

A total of 1,498 patients have been released from hospitals.

Meanwhile, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) yesterday opened a control room to supervise combing operations and mobile court drives against Aedes mosquitoes.

DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh inaugurated the centre at Nagar Bhaban.

“We will monitor all the mosquito control activities from here,” he said.

EASING TAILBACK PMO forms 4-member committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) yesterday formed a four-member committee for finding ways to ease tailback at the toll plazas of Padma Bridge, Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway and Hanif flyover.

The committee – led by Farid Ahmad, chief executive officer of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) – was asked to provide recommendations to solve the issue.

Additional chief engineer (Dhaka zone) of Roads and Highways Department (RHD), chief engineers of Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) and DSCC would be members of the committee.

The development came at a meeting the PMO convened yesterday at its office with officials from Road Transport and Highways Division, Bridges Division, RHD, BBA, DSCC and flyover operator Orion Group, said participants.

The entrance to Jatrabari has been witnessing regular traffic

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Stop illegal entry of Rohingyas in Bangladesh

Dhaka urges Delhi at BGB-BSF meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has requested Delhi to stop the illegal entry of Myanmar nationals into Bangladesh from India.

This issue was raised at the director general-level conference between Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Border Security Force (BSF) of India, which began in Dhaka yesterday.

The development comes following intelligence reports that Rohingyas living in India are sneaking into the country with the help of brokers.

Some of them were detained by law enforcers and sent to the transitional camps in Cox’s Bazar.

Though there is no official record of the numbers of Rohingyas entering so far, this

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PRAYER
TIMING

JULY 18

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-15	12-45	5-00	6-54	8-15
JAMAAAT 4-50	1-15	5-15	6-58	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

The slow death of DHALESHWARI

1.60 lakh cubic metres of waste dumped in the river in 3yrs, says JS body citing DoE data

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday placed grave statistics before a parliamentary body on the state of Dhaleshwari river, saying aquatic life and biodiversity of the river are being destroyed due to unbridled pollution caused by the Savar Tannery Industrial Estate.

DoE at a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on environment, forest and climate change ministry, said the minimum level of oxygen of Dhaleshwari River should remain 200mg/per litre. But the oxygen level in this river’s water is two to three times less than the permissible limit.

The meeting was held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with ruling Awami League MP Saber Hossain Chowdhury in the chair.

Saber said not only the oxygen level but also the amount of



FILE PHOTO

Liquid waste from Savar Tannery Industrial Estate being discharged in the Dhaleshwari river.

metal chromium in Dhaleshwari river is much higher than the permissible level.

Citing DoE’s July statistics, Saber, a lawmaker from Dhaka-9 (Khilgaon-Shajahanpur), said the permissible level of metal in the water is 2mg/per litre. But the amount of chromium in Dhaleshwari is 5 to 7 mg/per litre.

“Due to this unbridled pollution by Savar Tannery Industrial Estate, fisheries and biodiversity of Dhaleshwari are being destroyed. If river pollution continues at the current level, Dhaleshwari’s fate will be the same as the Buriganga,” warned Saber.

The parliamentary watchdog, in its meeting, allowed three to six months’ time for the industries ministry for taking measures to bring all the industrial units in the tannery industry under a

central effluent treatment plant.

“We have asked the environment ministry to take measures to sever electricity connection to the respective industry units upon their failure to act on the directives.”

Saber also mentioned that to recover Dhaleshwari from its current plight, they issued five recommendations to the industries ministry, none of which has been implemented.

“They make the same excuses every time, massive employment and earning of foreign currencies are involved with the tannery industry and a shutdown will have a negative impact. No attention has been paid to the negative impact the industry has had on the environment and public health,” said Saber.

Earlier on November 29, 2021, the parliamentary body

said the tannery estate has been running without any environmental clearance for 10 years and has been causing severe environmental pollution.

The JS watchdog earlier in its several meetings recommended the shutdown of the tannery estate immediately.

According to DoE statistics, the estate has the capacity to treat around 25,000 cubic metres of liquid waste every day. However, the tanners generate around 40,000 cubic metres of liquid waste per day, implying 15,000 cubic metres of liquid waste are dumped into the Dhaleshwari without any treatment.

The estate does not have any facility to treat solid waste, including heavy metals and chromium.

In the last three years, the estate has dumped around 1.60 lakh cubic metres of waste into the river, suggest DoE statistics.

In 2003, the government took the initiative to build the BSCIC Tannery Industrial Estate on 200 acres in Hemayetpur. All the tanneries were moved from the capital’s Hazaribagh to prevent environmental pollution and protect the Buriganga.

There are around 160 tanneries in the leather industrial park in Hemayetpur.

The JS body yesterday also expressed concern over the government’s handing over a part of Jungle Khuniya Palong Reserved Forest in Cox’s Bazar to the Bangladesh Football Federation for building a residential training facility after de-reserving the 20-acre land.

Participate in polls: CEC Talks with political parties start

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday urged political parties not to leave the election race, and if needed fight fire with fire to stay in the competition.

He also said all political parties have a responsibility to stop violence during polls.

The CEC made the remarks during the opening day of talks with registered political parties as part of a series of dialogues with a cross-section of people, seeking recommendations on how to hold free and fair elections.

The EC invited four political parties on the first day of the talks. However, Bangladesh Muslim League (BML) did not join the talks yesterday.

Awal, while holding talks with Nationalist Democratic Movement (NDM) in the morning, said, “If all political parties don’t cooperate with us, we will fail. This needs to be a concerted effort.

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Awami League wants competitive elections: Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said AL does not want uncontested elections, it wants competitive ones instead with participation of all political parties.

“The Awami League never wants to score goals on an empty field. We want all political parties to join elections,” he told reporters after joining a views-exchange meeting with the staff of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) at its head office.

Quader said the Election Commission started holding dialogues with the registered political parties from yesterday, which will continue till July 31.

A 10-member delegation of the ruling Awami League will join the dialogue on July 31, he said.

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No EC can hold credible polls with AL in power Says Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said joining talks with the current Election Commission is pointless as no commission can hold a credible election if Awami League stays in power.

Talking to reporters at BNP Chairperson’s Gulshan office, Fakhrul said after boycotting the 2014 polls, they took part in the 2018 election based on the prime minister’s promises to hold an acceptable election.

“But it was seen that the ballots were stuffed the night before the voting day. Considering these things, how do you (journalists) expect BNP to participate in a dialogue with the Election Commission? What will the EC do? They have no power to do anything,” he said.

Fakhrul said people do not want to see any election under the EC or the current government.

“If there is no change in the government and if an impartial government does not come, there

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

With Eid holidays still hovering over the city, business has been going slow for boatmen. Taking advantage of the situation, they dock their boats in a lotus shaped arrangement and spend a lazy afternoon. This photo was taken in Kamrangirchar area’s Madrasa ghat.