



The rain did not come early enough for the little ones to skip school and cozy up at home for the day. After school ended, this one was seen homebound with her parent, covered in a raincoat. The photo was taken around noon yesterday in Asad Gate area. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING

US recognises Tariqul Islam

DIPLomatic CORRESPONDENT

The US government has recognised Bangladesh's Tariqul Islam, an advocate for victims of human trafficking whose work has helped increase Bangladesh government's capacity to investigate and prosecute traffickers.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken honoured him and five others from around the world as 2022 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report Heroes in a ceremony hosted by US Department of State in Washington DC on Tuesday.

Tariqul has led anti-trafficking organisations that have facilitated assistance to more than 2,000 victims. He has worked diligently with the victims to either provide or connect them to the services they need in many

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5 held for kidney trade on social media: Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab claimed to have arrested five members of a gang on charge of buying and selling kidneys using social media.

They were arrested from Dhaka's Bhatara, Banasree and Mirpur areas, said Lt Col Abdullah Al Momen, commanding officer of Rab-1.

The arrestees are: Shahidul Islam Mithu (49), "ringleader" of the gang; Mizanur Rahman (44); Al Mamun Mehedi (27); Saimun (28); and Rasel Hossain (24).

Briefing reporters at the Rab media centre, the CO said the gang has 15 to 20 members who carried out kidney trade in three groups.

One group used to communicate with patients – via pages on social media – and another sought out people from disadvantaged backgrounds as donors.

The third group had

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PRAYER TIMING
JULY 21
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-15 12-45 5-00 6-54 8-15
JAMAAT 4-50 1-15 5-15 6-58 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

A small victory for a solo protest

Shohoz fined for irregularity after Mohiuddin Roni's complaint, 2-week-long protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Directorate of National Consumers Rights Protection (DNCRP) has fined e-ticketing platform Shohoz Tk 2 lakh for negligence in selling train e-tickets, more than a month after a complaint was filed by Dhaka University student Mohiuddin Howladar Roni.

The fine was imposed yesterday at a hearing – under the Consumer Rights Protection Act-2009 – on the complaint filed by Mohiuddin, DNCRP Director General AHM Shafiquzzaman said at a press briefing at his office. "Shohoz's negligence has been proved in the hearing. Shohoz has to pay the fine within the next five working days," he said.

The company has also been directed to submit a report on how they operate the e-ticketing system as DNCRP wants to review the whole e-ticketing process with support from technical experts. Mohiuddin will get 25 percent (Tk 50,000) of the amount.

Mohiuddin, a senior-year student of theatre and performance studies at Dhaka University, has been protesting alone in Kamalapur station against the irregularities in the railway for nearly two weeks now. He started his solo protest on July 7 after the authorities' inaction for three weeks since the filing of his complaint on June 14.

According to Mohiuddin's account, he made a payment on June 13 on shohoz.com to purchase four tickets of Silk City Express for travelling from Dhaka to Rajshahi. Although the amount was deducted from his bKash account, neither did he get a notification receipt nor the e-tickets afterwards.

The company has the provision to challenge the verdict in the next five working days, said Shafiquzzaman. Lawyer Mirza Ragib Hasnat, who is representing Shohoz, said they will challenge the verdict. Ragib claimed the complainant failed to produce enough evidence in support of his complaint.

Talking to reporters at the briefing, Mohiuddin



expressed his satisfaction with the verdict. "It was one of my six demands, I will continue my protest for the other five," he said. His other demands include the end of mismanagement in selling train tickets, stern action against irregularities, the end of black market purchases and ensuring the purchase of an equal number of tickets both online and offline.

Meanwhile, the High Court yesterday asked Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik and ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan to inquire about Mohiuddin's protest and inform what steps have been taken about the issue. Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Khizir Hayat delivered the order following a photo of Mohiuddin and a caption about his movement published on The Daily Star.

DAG Amin Uddin Manik said he will talk to the ministry and inform the HC bench on the steps taken.

Meanwhile, train operation from Dhaka to other destinations was disrupted for three hours yesterday as students demonstrated at the airport rail station for not getting tickets. According to a BR official, the students withdrew their demonstration after rail authorities decided to run the Rajshahi-bound Silk City Express on July 24 to facilitate Rajshahi University admission test candidates.

10-TRUCK ARMS HAUL CASE

Final justice still in legal limbo

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Final justice is still out of sight for the sensational 10-truck arms haul case, even though its death reference and appeals were registered with the High Court eight years back for hearing and disposal.

Even now, four separate benches of the court are dealing with matters of 2016.

The long delay took place as an HC bench refused to deal with the matters, and another assigned bench was reconstituted by the then chief justice, Supreme Court sources said.

However, Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique recently took an initiative to dispose of this case along with the death reference and appeals filed by 12 convicts with the HC bench of Justice Shahidul Karim and Justice Fatema Najib.

Yesterday, the bench fixed October 18 to start hearing of the death reference and appeals.

Deputy Attorney General Bashir Ahmed – who presents state's arguments before the HC bench, led by Shahidul Karim – told The Daily Star that a long period might be needed for final disposal, as many lawyers will place arguments before the court.

He could not say specifically how much time will be needed.

A huge quantity of arms and ammunition, reportedly meant for Indian separatist organisation Ulla, was captured at the Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd jetty in Chattogram on April 2, 2004, when it was being loaded onto 10 trucks.

A smuggling case and an arms case were filed with Karnaphuli Police Station the following day.

On January 30, 2014, Chittagong Metropolitan Special Tribunal-1 handed down death penalty to 14 people, including former minister and Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami and former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar of BNP, for smuggling 10 truckloads of firearms.

The 14 convicts also received life imprisonment in another case filed for possessing illegal firearms.

Twelve of the convicts filed separate appeals with the HC in 2014.

Nizami was executed on May 11, 2016, after the SC upheld his death penalty for committing crimes against humanity during the country's Liberation War.

Contacted, Attorney General AM Amin Uddin said he has requested the chief justice to send the death reference and appeals of the arms haul and August 21

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Biman officials illegally recruited cadet pilots: ACC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman's former CEO and managing director Abul Munim Mosaddique Ahmed and three others were involved in illegal recruitment of cadet pilots, according to investigators.

Misusing their powers, they had recruited 28 pilot cadets, including a nephew of Mosaddique, who failed tests.

ACC filed a case against Mosaddique, former flight operations director Farhat Hasan Jamil, principal of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Training Centre Partha Kumar Pandit and manager (recruitment) Fakhru Hossain Chowdhury on November 25, 2019.

ACC Secretary Mahbub Hossain yesterday said the commission approved the report.

ACC Assistant Director Saiful Islam, who investigated the case, told The Daily Star that he will soon submit the charge-sheet before court.

Biman officials gave "grace marks" and then manipulated viva exams to give the jobs to the failed cadets, the probe report said.

Biman published two circulars on September 18, 2018 and September 19, 2018 to recruit pilots for short- to medium-range Boeing 737s and Bombardier Dash-8s.

Population control a must

Speakers tell dialogue on making Dhaka liveable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Controlling Dhaka's population density is a must to make it liveable as too many people work as obstacles to ensuring civic facilities, said speakers at a dialogue yesterday.

City Development Journalists Forum, Bangladesh (CDJFB) organised the dialogue on "Challenges and way forward in planning to develop the capital", held at Jatiya Press Club.

"In Dhaka, 40,000 people on average live in a square kilometre of area. It is very difficult to provide necessary utilities for residents," said Dr Akter Mahmud, former president of Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), who presented keynote papers at the event.

Addressing the dialogue as chief guest, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh said, "If population density is not controlled, it will not be possible to save and modernise Dhaka."

The mayor said they have already taken initiatives to build a playground, secondary transfer station, kitchen market and community centre in every DSCC ward.

Md Ashraf Islam, DAP project director, stressed the need to protect all Dhaka ponds and create more footpaths for pedestrians who make up over 40 percent of the city's daily trips.

BIP president Fazle Reza Sumon said as Rajuk is not taking strict measures to control development, many buildings are being constructed ignoring regulations.

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'Such acts will empower land grabbers'

Speakers urge govt to cancel forestland's allotment for training centre in Cox's Bazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Green activists, rights organisations and civil society members yesterday urged the government to cancel the allotment of a forestland for Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) in Cox's Bazar Khuniyapalong reserve forest.

They made the urge in a press conference held at Jatiya Press Club.

The government has removed the reserve status for 20 acres of forestland in Khuniyapalong forest in Cox's Bazar's Ramu, which is home to 50 Asian elephants categorised critically endangered by IUCN.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), said the reserve forest was allotted to the BFF technical centre disregarding reservations of the Forests Department.

"We would accept it had there not been any land for the technical centre. Opening a recreation centre in the name of training academies in Cox's Bazar's forestland has gone to the level of addiction," she said.

Rights activist Khushi Kabir said the allotment must be cancelled to prove that government cares about the future of the next generation.

"Allotting forestland for such purposes violates the law and constitution and sends a wrong message to the



Marking 101 years of Dhaka University, fine arts students of the institution painted this mural on the outer wall of TSC. It depicts the glorious movements of the country and the spirit of resistance. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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