

Khaleda's appeals remain unheard

BNP chairperson's lawyers reluctant to take initiative due to political situation

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's appeals against her convictions in two corruption cases -- centring Zia Orphanage Trust and Zia Charitable Trust -- have remained undisposed for years, as her lawyers have not taken any steps for hearings.

Hearings are supposed to take place at the Appellate Division and High Court.

Khaleda was sentenced to five years' imprisonment by a special court in Dhaka on February 8, 2017, in the orphanage trust graft case.

On October 30, 2018, the HC enhanced her punishment to 10 years after dismissing her appeal in the case.

The former prime minister was convicted by another special court in Dhaka in the charitable trust corruption case on October 29, 2018. She was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

Her lawyers reportedly have no plans at this moment to take initiative in this regard, considering the prevailing political climate. But they know very well that she cannot contest in elections if her convictions are not scrapped by the apex court.

"There are two ways: the courts

[Appellate Division and High Court] can fix [hearing] dates on their own or lawyers can request the courts for hearings. Lawyers collectively need to take a decision for hearings. I alone cannot do that. The party members and lawyers will have to hold a meeting on this issue," Advocate Khandker Mahbub Hossain, a veteran lawyer and adviser to BNP chairperson, told The Daily Star.

Lawyer AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, joint secretary general of BNP, told this correspondent that when the appeals will appear in the courts' hearing lists, maintaining serial, they will place arguments on behalf of the BNP chairperson.

"We have submitted the appeals to the Appellate and High Court divisions, as we did not get justice from the courts that have convicted her [Khaleda] in two cases. We will think about moving the appeals when the Awami League-led government will not remain in power," he said, adding that the election period is yet to come.

Meanwhile, Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that Khaleda could not participate in the last parliamentary

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The trees guarding Jashore-Benapole road have a history that goes back a hundred years. It is said that Zamindar Kali Prasad Poddar built the road for his mother, who wanted to go for a "Ganga Snan", a holy ritual of Hindu devotees, with the support of Governor Auckland in 1845. The trees that were planted to provide momentary relief and shadow for the passengers have been doing well till this day. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Customers demand refund from Alesha Mart

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alesha Mart Customers Association (AMCA) yesterday demanded the government take necessary steps to refund the money paid to purchase motorbikes from the e-commerce company as soon as possible.

AMCA President Abdullah Al Mamun, at a press conference held at Dhaka Reporters Unity, requested the government to form a committee comprising the commerce ministry and other stakeholders to get Alesha Mart to refund their money.

The association urged the government to confiscate the properties of the company's chair and put an embargo on him and his family members from leaving the country if necessary.

"We are drawing special attention of the prime minister, ministry of commerce, stakeholders and the media in this regard. We will announce a tougher programme if our demands are not met," he said.

Alesha Mart started a campaign in May-June 2021 to sell motorbikes at a 35 percent discount and received orders from around 46,000 customers within one month.

In August, they launched another campaign with a 33 percent discount on motorcycle sales.

"Around 7,000 clients placed orders worth Tk 300 crore to the e-commerce company under the two offers," said Abdullah.

However, they failed to meet the huge demand and deliver the products. According to Abdullah, the Alesha Mart chairman assured customers of a refund on at least 34 occasions through Facebook Live.

The customers were supposed to start receiving refunds from the first week of July this year. However, they have not received any of the money so far, said Abdullah.

Of the 300 crore, only 42 crore have so far been refunded. However, the amount is still stuck in the gateway, Abdullah added.

The validity of most of the cheques worth the

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No rides in a children's park?

Khulna's Golakmoni is an utterly disappointing place for kids to have fun

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Golakmoni Shishu Park, one of Khulna city's entertainment centres, hardly lives up to its name. Although it's called a "Shishu Park", there are no facilities for children to play. However, this park, established on 64 decimals of land in 1984 at the heart of Khulna city, could've served as a great entertainment hub for children as well as residents of the city.

If that wasn't bad enough, some installations, including political party offices and small shops, have been erected in the park.

Visiting the park last week, this correspondent saw that there's not a single ride for children in the park. Some concrete benches have been erected, all occupied by pharmacy representatives, as Khulna diabetic hospital is situated just opposite of the park.

Goats were grazing in front of the concrete theatre stage on the western side of the park. A family adjacent to the northern side piled their belongings including cooking logs, sticks and furniture there. Much of the iron fence has been broken or stolen.

Nine-year-old Sammriddhi Swasty Das went to the park along with her parents on Friday. But after entering the park she was frustrated for not getting any kind of rides.

"It's an open space, nothing else. Why are there no rides or swings for us to play?" she said.

"I didn't find any kids even after



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

staying here for half an hour. I think very few children come here to play," she added.

Her father Tapon Kumar Das said that Hadis Park situated near Golakmoni is quite popular, as many people gather there. But the Golakmoni park is the only park that was supposed to be dedicated to children's recreation.

"Can you imagine that KCC only has seven parks for 1.7 million people?" he asked.

Without getting proper playgrounds, children are instead getting addicted to using digital devices, which is extremely detrimental for their physical well-being, he said further.

Upon clearance of city corporation authority, party offices of Awami League and Jubo League, a water pump ,theatre stage and urban primary healthcare centre have been set up inside the park, said Nuruzzaman Talukder, KCC's state officer.

Imam Hassan Choudhury Moina, local councillor of ward 23, said, "I wrote formal letters to KCC mayor for the park's improvement and modernisation, where nowadays drug abusers gather, making it a bad environment for city dwellers, especially children."

"We don't have enough money to repair it," he added.

"Besides, sand, brick chips, stones, rods and other construction materials are kept across the park while local residents build their house," he

alleged.

According to KCC's estate department, the city has eight parks -- Hadis Park on Lower Jashore Road, Golakmoni Shishu Park on Sir Iqbal Road, Jatisangha Shishu Park on Khan Jahan Ali Road, Nirala Residential Area Park at Nirala, Sonadanga Residential Park and Sonadanga Solar Energy Park at Sonadanga, Wonderland Shishu Park at Khalishpur and Linier Park at Gallamari.

Khulna city mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque said, "I'm very aware of the park. KCC has already announced a yearly budget where allocations for parks would be enough for modernisation and ride facilities."

He added that they had a plan to make the park perfect for children and for that, steps would be taken soon.

Roni protests at Rajshahi Rail Station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Mohiuddin Roni, who recently withheld his protests against irregularities in railway operations in Dhaka, staged a demonstration on same the grounds at Rajshahi Railway Station yesterday.

Roni placed a six-point demand and the railway officials cooperated. Ashim Kumar Talukder, general manager of west zone railway, expressed his solidarity with Roni's demands.

"I agree with the demands he [Roni] brought forward," said Ashim.

Roni, along with some students of Rajshahi University, distributed leaflets on the demands

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Crisis forces outages for extra hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Residents across Rajshahi division have been witnessing extra hours of power cuts than the announced hours due to shortages in power generations.

Officials from different power generation and distribution units in Rajshahi revealed the information during a views-exchange meeting yesterday.

Rajshahi Deputy Commissioner Abdul Jalil presided over the meeting held at Rajshahi Circuit House. Other than officials from different power offices, police, intelligence officials and journalists were present in the meeting.

Senior power officials mentioned a 10 to 12 percent shortfall of electricity from the daily demand of Rajshahi.

Almost every power supply unit of the division has been witnessing a power shortage of over 25 percent per day and have been enforcing load shedding for six to seven hours, said field officials of Northern Electricity Supply Company (Nesco) Limited and Palli Bidyut Samiti.

The DC said it would have been better if there were separate transmission lines of electricity for general, commercial and industrial consumers to keep industrial production uninterrupted.

Power officials mentioned the supply units were asked for uninterrupted supply to the industrial consumers.

However, as there was no separate channel, they are experiencing more frequent power cuts as well.

Important installations like cantonments were being kept under the uninterrupted power supply, said the officials.

DC Abdul Jalil emphasised austerity measures while moderating the meeting. He said mobile courts will ensure the closure of commercial institutes within 8:00pm to save power.

Law enforcement members asked all officials to be patient and deal with the service seekers cordially as they are the ones in the inconvenience.

On the other hand, they have asked consumers to ask for law enforcers' help in any situation and keep the atmosphere peaceful.

The DC expressed hope that the crisis would be over by the end of this year.

Nesco Executive Director Ghulam Ahmed and Chief Engineer Abdur Rashid were present in the meeting among others.

2 held with 1kg meth, 20,000 yaba pills

STAR REPORT

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) claimed to have detained two drug traffickers yesterday and seized one kilo of crystal meth as well as 20,000 yaba pills in Cpx's Bazar's Teknaf.

The arrestees are Md Riaz Uddin (20) and Saddam Hossain (19) of Teknaf's Hnila union.

Besides, 15 kg of nets and a boat were also seized during the drive, Lt Col Sheikh Khalid Mohammad Iltekhar, said commanding officer of BGB Battalion 2.

All the seized goods are worth Tk 5.91 crore.

Tipped off, a BGB patrol team carried out the operation on the bank of Naf River in Hnila Project. After a while, when two men crossed the zero line from Myanmar with a wooden boat, the patrol team intercepted them, said the BGB CO.

The team then chased the alleged smugglers and finally detained them as they tried to escape by jumping into the river from the boat, he added.

According to their confessions, 1.063 kg of crystal meth and 20,000 yaba pills were seized from the boat, added the BGB official.

A case has been filed against the duo.

PRAYER
TIMING

JULY 30

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:20	12:45	5:00	6:50	8:15
JAMAAT 4:55	1:15	5:15	6:55	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

The recent floods in Sylhet have washed away many fisheries. However, due to the abundance of water in almost all the waterbodies post-flood, many fishers-by-hobby were seen catching fish in Fenchuganj's Poroirchok area. Their patience bore fruit as well, as many of them were seen in all smiles after catching a good number of fish.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR