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The ordeal to get land documents

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Farhana Nasrin applied for a copy of a khatiyan (land-record document) for a piece of land owned by her through the government's online portal on May 8 last year, hoping to get a hassle-free service.

However, her hope faded as it turned into a never-ending wait.

"I was happy thinking I would not have to go to the local land office. I praised the government initiative as well. But when a month passed after my application, I realised that there was no hope of getting it," she said.

Nasrin applied for the khatiyan to be sent home through the courier service.

An applicant is supposed to get a khatiyan and mouza map within 10 days of applying. In the applicant's dashboard at epocha.gov.bd, it is seen that Nasrin was supposed to get her document on May 18, 2022.

However, her application was still on the waiting list.

An applicant has to pay Tk 50 for a certified land record document and another Tk 40 to receive it through courier service. Farhana paid Tk 90 in total to get the document, also known as porcha, for her land in Narayanganj.

"I contacted their helpline. They advised me to go to the local office for a solution. I asked them if I have to go to the local office then what is the point of an online application? They could not answer my question. I asked for a refund but they told me it is not possible," she said.

According to the land ministry, Dhaka is the lowest service providing district in Dhaka division, followed

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Even though Buriganga Bridge-1 was opened almost 20 years ago, the authorities have just recently taken the initiative to set up a divider throughout the stretch of the bridge to regulate congestions as well as prevent accidents. This photo was taken in Postogola area recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



ARAV KHAN
ARMS CASE
Statements of
witnesses, IO
recorded

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday completed recording the statements of all prosecution witnesses, including the investigation officer of an arms case filed against Rabiu Islam alias Arav Khan.

Judge Murshid Ahmad of Dhaka's Special Tribunal 14 recorded the statement of Investigation Officer Sheikh Hasan Muhammad Mostafa Sarwar, a sub-inspector of the Detective Branch of police, before it concluded recording statements of the witnesses.

The judge then fixed April 13 for arguments in the case. Earlier, the tribunal recorded statements of nine other witnesses, including the complainant of the case.

According to the case statement, Arav Khan went to his father-in-law Sekendar Ali's residence in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

MAWA-BHANGA BR likely to go for trial run April 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway is likely to go for a trial run of a special train on the newly-constructed Mawa-Bhanga section crossing through the Padma Bridge next week.

Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan is likely to inaugurate the trial on April 4, railway sources said.

Talking to The Daily Star on Monday, Project Director Afzal Hossain said installation of rail track on the entire Mawa-Bhanga section, including the Padma Bridge, is over, except for only the 41-metre part.

A special sleeper has to be installed in this part, he said, adding that the contractor has already brought the sleeper, and it is expected that the installation works would be completed within a day or two.

"The works will be completed within this week. Hopefully, we will be able to carry out the trial run next week," he said.

BR is implementing a project to build a 169-km rail line from Dhaka to Jashore through the Padma Bridge at a cost of around Tk 39,247 crore.

The railway authorities are planning to open the Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga section by August this year, while the deadline for the entire project is June 2024.

Once opened, the distance from Dhaka to Jashore would decrease by 200 km and the travel time would halve.

PRAYER TIMING MARCH 29

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4:45 12:45 4:45 6:20 7:45

JAMAT 5:20 1:15 5:00 6:25 8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN MARCH SEHRI IFTAR

6 29 6:17

7 30 4:36 6:17

8 31 4:35 6:18

MY DHAKA



KHUSHIR BAZAR

Where everything is affordable

RBR

Underprivileged people are crowding the "Khushir Bazar" shop at Mohammadpur's Beribadh, where they can buy clothes, shoes, frocks, household commodities, and furniture for nominal prices starting from Tk 10. It is retail therapy at its affordable best, giving the disadvantaged a right of choice. They can choose and buy according to their needs, and it is not charity as they are making a purchase.

"The Khushir Bazar is a perfect place to do our shopping. We come here often to buy what we need. I'm here to do early Eid shopping, and with only Tk 500, I bought a panjabi, trousers, and three-piece salwar kameez for my family," says Nargis, a vegetable vendor.

Khushir Bazar is a shopping outlet of "10 Takay Khush", a project of Switch Bangladesh Foundation, a non-profit organisation founded in 2011. The foundation was established by seven enthusiastic friends from Dhaka University, Buet, and Dhaka Medical College.

Switch Bangladesh Foundation's mission is to ensure quality education for vulnerable, marginalised children and improve the socio-economic condition of their parents. Their target groups are mostly day labourers, landless and homeless people, and housemaids with an income of less than Tk 200 per day.

Their area of operation is the Mohammadpur Gabtali Beribadh slum -- a backward area where activities of non-government organisations (NGO) or government charities are absent. The foundation caters to 20,000 families with its subsidised project.

To run this project, the volunteers donate anything between Tk 100 to 1,000 and the rest is managed from sales.



Muinul Ahsan Faysal, a founder and general secretary of Switch Bangladesh Foundation, explains, "During Covid-19, while visiting different slum areas in Mohammadpur, we found out that disadvantaged women and children there only had a few pieces of clothing. They lacked household commodities like pillows, mattresses, etc. Our volunteers came up with the idea of collecting used clothes, toys, utensils, glassware, and

The carrying cost of things like furniture and heaps of clothes takes up a lot of money. It is costly to bring the clothes, and wash, clean, iron, and package them.

"To give them peace of mind we initiated this payment process," says Faysal. "We do all these so that the buyers, who are slum dwellers, don't feel like they took it for free. It helps them cope with the recent price hike."

Sultana fell sick on way to police station: Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab yesterday claimed that Sultana Jasmine, who died in custody on March 24, had initially fallen ill while being taken to a police station on March 22.

After detaining Sultana, a union-level land employee in Naogaon, members of the force were busy printing documents from her phone at a nearby shop for around an hour and a half, on the way to the station, it said.

It conducted primary interrogation and evidence gathering in presence of the complainant and witnesses.

When Sultana felt sick on the way, Rab members took her to Naogaon Sadar Hospital, Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's legal and media wing, told reporters.

He was answering questions about why it took so long for Rab members to take her to hospital.

Rab officials detained Sultana around 11:30am and admitted her to the hospital

around 1:15pm.

Moin said Sultana had gotten out of the vehicle and walked into the hospital.

Her relatives and colleagues were then informed about her illness, and she was provided treatment at the hospital under their supervision, the Rab official said.

Moin further said hospital authorities in the evening suspected that the 38 year-old woman might have suffered a stroke and transferred her to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

Sultana was shifted to the RMCH's ICU after the doctor found signs of stroke in a CT scan, said the official.

She died while undergoing treatment at the hospital.

Moin said an inquiry cell of the Rab Headquarters was tasked to investigate whether there was any negligence on Rab members' part as the woman fell ill while in the force's custody.

Departmental action will be taken if anyone is found guilty in the investigation,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

UNCOVERING FACE IN EXAM DU Bangla dept's move stayed for 6 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed for six months the move by Dhaka University's Bangla department asking its students to keep their faces, including ears, uncovered during exams and presentations.

The court also issued a rule asking authorities concerned to explain in four weeks why the department's decision should not be declared illegal.

The bench of Justice KM Kamrul Kader and Justice Mohammad Ali issued the order and rule following a writ petition filed by three students of the department challenging the legality of the decision.

They submitted the petition through lawyer Md Faizullah Faiz on February 19, saying that the decision is contradictory to their religious beliefs and independence and therefore is liable to be declared illegal.

Faiz said the department on December 11 last year issued a notice asking students to keep faces, including their ears, uncovered during exams and presentations.

'Prepare budget to increase women's access to IT' Demands Bangladesh Mahila Parishad at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday demanded a gender-specific budget for the country's information technology sector to achieve equality between women and men.

They made the demand in a discussion titled "National Budget: Women's Access to Information Technology and Preparation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution" in the capital's Shegunbagicha.

Gender budgeting is a strategy to achieve equality by focusing on how public resources are collected and spent.

The organisation demanded evaluating allocations and increasing the participation of women in the country's ICT sector. They also requested that ICT be made more accessible for people with disabilities to provide them with more opportunities.

State Minister of Planning Shamsul Alam, during his speech as chief guest, said the current government is actively promoting women's political and economic empowerment and has made significant progress in this field over the past 15 years.

He also suggested that the government establish a task force to hasten growth and ensure equality. However, he acknowledged that the given budget may not always be fully implemented due to various social and political contexts.

Gender budgeting was introduced to four ministries in 2009 and has since expanded to include 44 ministries. Currently, the results-based evaluation of the budget is conducted through 81 indicators.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3