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SULTANA'S DEATH

They must act to protect rights, liberty of people

Says HC on law enforcers, orders withdrawal of Rab members involved in detaining her

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ordering the formation of a committee to probe the detention of Sultana Jasmine by Rab, the High Court yesterday said law enforcers must act to protect the people's fundamental rights and personal liberty.

The constitution, which is the supreme law of the country, has guaranteed "right to protection of law"; "protection of right to life and personal liberty"; and "safeguards as to arrest and detention", said the bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Muhammad Mahbub Ul Islam.

These fundamental rights of the citizens cannot be breached in any manner, it said.

The bench made the observations during the hearing on a writ petition that challenged the legality of Rab picking up Sultana of Naogaon when she was not accused in any case.



SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



Bangladesh batting stalwart Mushfiqur Rahim celebrates his 10th Test hundred as Liton Das applauds during the second day of the one-off Test against Ireland in Mirpur yesterday. Bangladesh pushed Ireland to a corner by the end of the day, leaving the visitors at 27 for four, after taking a 155-run first-innings lead.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ATIA MAHAL RAID

All 3 accused acquitted in case under anti-terror act

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Sylhet tribunal yesterday acquitted all three accused in a case filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act after an anti-militant operation in Atia Mahal of Dakshin Surma upazila six years ago.

The three are Jahurul Haque alias Jasim, his wife Argina alias Razia and Md Hasan.

Anti-terrorism Special Tribunal Judge Muhammad Nurul Amin Biplob delivered the verdict, said Muminur Rahman, special public prosecutor of the court.

Muminur said the court completed hearing arguments on March 14. Twenty-one witnesses out of 33 testified before the court, he said.

On March 23, 2017, police launched an anti-

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Biman pilot dodges probe, 'leaves country'

RASHIDUL HASAN

Sadia Ahmed, a first officer of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, who was suspended for forging her educational certificate, reportedly left the country without appearing before a Biman probe body.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) has asked Biman to suspend her "privilege of the licence" so that she cannot fly any commercial aircraft at home or abroad.

"The CAAB is yet to revoke her licence as we will have to follow some legal procedure and investigation," a top official of the regulatory authority told The Daily Star.

Wishing anonymity, the official also said that following a report by The Daily Star on March 1 about irregularities in hiring pilots, CAAB asked the national flag carrier to investigate Sadia and submit a report to it.

Sadia had submitted a forged educational certificate that said she was a student of science group during her Higher Secondary Certificate exams.

Data retrieved from the Dhaka education board shows that she was a student of humanities, and she passed with second division from Shaheed Anwar Girls' College with Bangla, English, civics, psychology, and home economics.

The CAAB rulebook mandates that all commercial pilots must have an educational qualification of HSC



Sadia Ahmed

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

PONDS IN DHAKA CITY

Crucial in tackling fire incidents, yet not protected

HELEMUL ALAM

In every fire incident, water bodies, especially ponds, can play an important role in putting out the flames. And yet there is no proper initiative to protect ponds in Dhaka.

Experts say ponds not only play a vital role in dousing flames but also enhance the beauty of their surroundings, create a healthy atmosphere and ease waterlogging.

Tuesday's fire at Bangabazar proved the importance of ponds again as firefighters fought the blaze with water from a pond at Dhaka University's Shahidullah Hall when they were facing scarcity of water.

A total of 3,464 ponds has been marked on the recently published Detailed Area Plan 2022 of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) in its 1,528sqkm jurisdiction.

Of them, 1,188 are in Gazipur region; 1,002 in Narayanganj region; 609 in Kaliganj and Rugganj regions; 277 in Keraniganj region; 205 in central Dhaka region; and 183 in Savar region.

Rajuk Chairman Anisur Rahman Miah told The Daily Star that the

water bodies conservation act-2000 stipulates that even the privately owned ponds cannot be filled and that's why the Rajuk was taking initiatives in this regard.

Anisur said they would also request different organisations to protect their ponds.

Some 65 ponds were marked on the map of the undivided Dhaka city corporation based on a survey carried out between 2003 and 2011. The ponds were located in 28 out of 90 wards.

This correspondent visited all the 65 locations of the ponds in 2017, but found many of those were already filled. Some more were filled later in the name of urbanisation.

According to the Playground, Open Spaces, Gardens, and Water Bodies Conservation Act 2000, no one can fill water bodies or stop the natural flow of water.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) last year filled a large water body to the east of the Hajj Camp in the capital's Ashkona for a housing project for its officials and employees.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

US is our biggest friend

Says Momen

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said the United States is Bangladesh's biggest friend, one of the biggest investors, and export destinations.

Momen is set to leave for the US tomorrow where he is scheduled to meet US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Washington on April 10.

"America is the only country who provided 100 million vaccines for free during the Covid-19 pandemic. They even supported us the most after the Rohingya influx. Other countries have helped us as well. But I'll express gratitude when I meet him," Momen said while addressing the media after a comic book unveiling in the capital.

He said he would visit the US this time as the



SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Webb telescope discovers oldest galaxies ever observed

AFP, Paris

The James Webb Space Telescope has discovered the four most distant galaxies ever observed, one of which formed just 320 million years after the Big Bang when the universe was still in its infancy, new research said on Tuesday.

The Webb telescope has unleashed a torrent of scientific discovery since becoming operational last year, peering farther than ever before into the universe's distant reaches — which also means it is looking back in time.

By the time light from the most distant galaxies reaches Earth, it has been stretched by the expansion of the universe and shifted to the infrared region of the light spectrum.

The Webb telescope's NIRC2 instrument has an unprecedented ability to detect this infrared light, allowing it to quickly spot a range of never-before-seen galaxies — some of which could reshape

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



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PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

A portion of a recently constructed embankment has washed away into the Dhaki river in Gunari village at Sutarkhali union of Khulna's Dacope upazila. If river erosion continues like this, the embankment, built by the WDB between 2016 and the end of 2022 at the cost of Tk 220 crore, at least 60,000 people of the upazila's Sutarkhali and Kamarkhola unions will be heavily affected. The photo was taken recently.