

100 TREES felled at JU without permission



SHEIKH TAJUL ISLAM TAJ

Nearly a hundred trees were felled on Jahangirnagar University campus, sparking protest among students.

The Institute of Business Administration cut down the trees near Mir Mosharraf Hossain Hall early yesterday and removed those from the spot, alleged JU Deputy Registrar (Estate) Abdur Rahman Babul.

"No one took any permission from us for felling trees. We came to know this in the morning. We heard this was done by IBA, and later informed the administration," he said.

The university authorities in 2018 allocated IBA 20 bighas of land to construct three academic buildings there. The IBA-JU authorities said the company which is constructing the buildings cut down the trees.

"We don't need permission to cut trees. We don't even need to ask... The construction company cut the trees," said KM Zahidul Islam, director of IBA-JU.

A group of JU students yesterday brought out a rally and besieged the administrative building, before planting new trees at the place.

JU Proctor ASM Firoz-ul-Hasan said IBA authorities asked him several times for felling the trees, but he did not comply with it. The Daily Star could not get in touch with the construction company for comments.

Measures taken

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to the investors, Hasina said, adding that the government has plans to give special incentives to the production of import substitute products.

She mentioned that the industrial projects registered with BIDA enjoy import duty exemptions and incentives.

Plans are also being framed to attract investment in the blue-economy sector, the premier added.

A total 40 new locomotives, equipped with Auxiliary Power Unit (APU), will be added to the Bangladesh Railways for the first time in Bangladesh in a bid to reduce usage of fuel and maintenance cost, she said in reply to a query.

11.66 lakh women

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data of the government and UNHCR, a total 9,34,719 Rohingyas are living in 33 camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf upazilas of Cox's Bazar district, while 30,748 are living in Bhasan Char of Noakhali, he said. Also, 26,165 Rohingyas are waiting for verification process, the minister also said.

Therefore, a total of 9.91 lakh Rohingya refugees are living in Bangladesh at present, he added.

Dinajpur Mayor

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The SC also ordered Jahangir to surrender before the concerned lower court of Dinajpur in a week in connection with the contempt of court petition filed against him.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division of SC headed by Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan delivered the verdict. Earlier, Jahangir commented on a YouTube channel about Justice M Enayetur Rahim, a senior judge of the Appellate Division, centring a judgement in a case against BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia.

After that, four lawyers—Mohammad Harun-Or-Rashid, Mahfuzur Rahman Roman, Md Moniruzzaman Rana and Shafique Raihan Shawon—submitted the petition.

We want

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we get at least 20 passengers, otherwise we have to incur losses.

Besides, there are risks of getting attacked," manager of a bus company said.

"Some of our leaders and local ruling party leaders assured us that they will work to get compensation for us. But we are not assured by their words, we want assurance from top brass of the government," he said, seeking anonymity.

A top workers' leader said they want assurance from the prime minister about three issues—protection for operating buses, compensation for both the owners, in case vehicles get damaged and for workers, in case they sustain injuries or die.

In yesterday's meeting with the home minister, Shajahan Khan, also a ruling party lawmaker, Federation's secretary general Osman Ali, Owners' Association's president and secretary general Mashur Rahman Ranga and Khandaker Enayet Ullah respectively, Abu Raihan, general secretary of Bangladesh Bus Truck Owners Association and two top police officials were present.

"Yes, we had a meeting with the home minister. As per the decision of the meeting, the minister will come to our Gabtoli Terminal on Friday and give an announcement on behalf of the prime minister," Abu Raihan said.

Oman suspends visa for Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Oman has suspended the issuance of visas across all categories for Bangladeshis from Tuesday until

further notice, reported The Times of Oman yesterday, quoting Royal Oman Police (ROP), the Gulf country's immigration authority.

Besides, ROP confirmed the suspension of "visa conversions" for expatriates arriving in Oman on tourist and visit visas, the report says. Previously, expatriates entering the country on visit visas could convert their status to employment visas. However, they will now be required to leave the country and return on a work visa, it says.

In a statement, ROP said, "The ROP, within its review of the policies for obtaining some types of visas, announces the suspension of the conversion of all types of tourist and visit visas to work visas for all nationalities coming to the Sultanate of Oman, as well as the issuance of all types of new visas for Bangladeshi citizens, effective Tuesday (October 31, 2023) till further notice."

Wishing anonymity, multiple officials at the Bangladesh Embassy in Muscat yesterday said they got to know about the issue from Oman media, and the Gulf country's authority had yet to officially inform the Bangladesh

mission about it.

Usually, labour-receiving countries in the Gulf impose such visa restrictions on the source countries when the number of labourers from a particular country exceeds the expected level, said an official at the Bangladesh mission.

This could be a reason for suspending new visas for Bangladeshis, the official said.

Oman hosts more than 7,00,000 Bangladeshi migrant workers, including undocumented ones, making them the top migrant workers community there, the official said.

The mission is expected to hold a meeting with Oman's foreign ministry today to learn details about the visa suspension.

Another official said the mission is expected to hold a meeting with Oman's foreign ministry today to learn details about the visa suspension.

According to Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training data, Oman has recruited 18.33 lakh or 11.91 percent of the total Bangladeshi workers migrating abroad from 1976 till June this year.

This made Oman a top destination for Bangladeshi migrant workers.

In the first six months of this year, 76,679 workers have migrated to Oman for employment.

WB approves \$210m for early childhood dev

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank has approved US \$210 million for a project to improve early childhood development in Bangladesh, according to a press release.

The Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) project aims at providing cash transfers and counseling services to improve nutrition—directly benefitting 1.7 million pregnant women and mothers of children under the age of four, in vulnerable households.

Abdoulaye Seck, country director of World Bank Bangladesh and Bhutan, said, "Under current education and health systems, a child born today in

Bangladesh would only be 46 percent as productive as they could potentially be."

"Ensuring adequate nutrition prenatally in the first 1,000 days of life and responsive caregiving throughout childhood help maximise a child's development," he added.

Aneeka Rahman, senior social protection economist and team leader of the project, said, "Supporting children from the earliest stages can greatly boost Bangladesh's economic and demographic potential. Investing early in a child's life, especially during their crucial developmental years, can lead to significant benefits for the entire nation."

The project is financed by WB's International Development Association that provides concessional financing and has a 30-year term with five-year grace period.

Be vocal against attack

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justice, judges' complex and hospital which never happened in the country before, he said.

Journalists, editors and media can mould public opinion. People are unaware of their (BNP) brutality even after the attack on 30 on-duty journalists, he said.

"It's the responsibility of the media to inform people about BNP's mayhem. Newspapers need to publish reports on how journalists were attacked."

The daily Bhorer Kagoj editor Shyamol Datta, Kaler Kantho editor Shahed Mohammad Ali, the Daily Sun chief editor Enamul Haque Chowdhury, the daily Pratidin Bangladesh editor Mustafiz Shafi, the daily Dosh Rupantar acting editor Mostafa Mamun, the daily Kalbela editor Santosh Sharma and Amader Natun Somoy editor

Nasima Khan Manti, among others, were present.

5-day remand

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false identity, reports UNB. A DB team arrested him in a case filed with Paltan Police Station on Tuesday.

On Monday, Mian Zahidul Islam Arefy, who claimed to be an "adviser to the US president," at the DB office said, "Sarwardi brought me to the BNP party office to discuss their programme. They requested me to deliver a speech." Arefy was detained at Dhaka airport on Sunday and is now being interrogated.

Wrongdoers

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"Because of this fear, they also attacked our journalist friends. We will take legal action against the individuals involved in each incident," he added.

Asked about the arrest of a person who claimed to be an adviser to US President Joe Biden, the IGP said, "We are verifying the information."

Will take steps to bring them back

Says home minister on undocumented Bangladeshis living in UK

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said steps will be taken to sign standard operating procedures (SOPs) soon to bring back undocumented Bangladeshis living in the UK.

The minister was talking to reporters after a meeting with the British High Commissioner in Dhaka at his Secretariat office.

"Some undocumented Bangladeshis are in Britain. We have SOPs with Europe, and an SOP was signed to bring back those living there illegally. We talked about signing an SOP with the UK as well," he added.

Asked if BNP's Acting Chairperson Tarique Rahman could be brought back to the country from the UK through SOPs, he said, "We will try our best."

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