

'DEFAMING CA' Jhalakathi UP staffer Suspended

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Pirojpur

A staffer of Jhalakathi Sadar upazila parishad was suspended yesterday for posting derogatory remarks against Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus on the Facebook page of a Bangla newspaper on Sunday.

SM Maniruzzaman is a computer operator and an assistant of upazila parishad chairman, said Jhalakathi DC Ashrafur Rahman.

Maniruzzaman allegedly made a derogatory comment against the chief adviser in the comment section of Prothom Alo's Facebook page where it published Yunus's interview, said the DC.

Asstt commissioner suspended

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interim government has no constitutional basis.

"The countdown has begun for you, sir," she wrote, addressing the chief adviser.

Meanwhile, senior assistant secretary Saidur Rahman, who lost his job two years ago for posting a poem on Facebook mocking Hasina, has got back his job.

On June 13, 2022, the public administration ministry issued a notice dismissing him from service.

Saidur is known in literary circles by his pen name, "Poet Rahman Henry".

In an order issued on October 3, it was stated that the period between his dismissal and reinstatement will be counted as active service.

He is entitled to receive back pay, promotions, and other benefits as per the regulations.

Saidur joined the BCS (administrative cadre) in 1995. After his dismissal, a section of poets protested the decision. Following the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, many writers and poets called for his reinstatement.

It will be formed

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said media freedom is non-negotiable for the interim government.

Shafiqul called for greater activism among journalists to drive reform in the sector.

"Traditional activism has failed because journalist leaders have accepted government plots in areas like Bardiha, Purbachal, and Uttara. They've secured licenses for underground newspapers and exploited journalists for their own benefit," he said.

He urged field-level journalists to speak out against these practices.

Faruk Wasif, director general of the Bangladesh Press Institute, said despite being a part of the "fourth estate" of the country, journalists have long been overlooked.

He proposed that media owners should be restricted

to holding only one media license, adding, "We must put an end to the flow of black money into the media."

He also highlighted the low wages of journalists, saying, "Some say journalists are often paid less than garment workers. But it's because garment workers speak out against injustices, they take to the streets -- they continue to bleed even today."

"But while journalists constantly call for higher wages, what have they and their leaders actually done to address this?" he asked.

In her keynote speech, Jimi Amir, convenor of the Media Support Network, outlined seven challenges confronting the profession and proposed several solutions for the reform commission to consider in order to enhance professionalism in the sector.

Ensure safe, inclusive

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educational curriculum," she said.

Dr Sayed Rubayet, country director at IPAS Bangladesh, stressed that ensuring workplace safety requires robust protocols and a serious focus on safety policies.

"If half the population continues to endure daily humiliation, we risk becoming a paralysed society, and we are already witnessing the consequences," he stated.

He criticised the government's failure to enforce the 2009 High Court guidelines, noting, "The guidelines on workplace safety have not been effectively enforced in government offices. This inaction violates the court's orders and remains largely unaddressed."

He underscored the need to intervene in the education system, as family and societal norms often normalise gender-based violence (GBV).

He also noted that comprehensive sexuality education has not been adequately implemented in schools, leading to its perception as a taboo subject.

Shafquat Haider, chairman of the Council for Communications & IT, highlighted challenges faced by teenage and lactating mothers.

In factories, these mothers often experience harassment, lack sufficient time to care for their children, and are sometimes forced to work night shifts, he said.

At home, teenagers face pressure to have children before they are ready, which constitutes violence, he added.

Tahsinah Ahmed, executive director of BYLC, emphasised that harassment begins at home and continues as individuals

move toward the workplace.

She highlighted the psychosocial pressure women face across all socio-economic backgrounds.

MA Akher, director of the Department of Youth Development, pointed out that women comprise half of the population, yet many are excluded from government youth development projects because they are married off before 18.

"It's essential for government projects to be accountable to ensure they genuinely help the intended beneficiaries," he said.

Joya Shikdar, executive director of Somporker Noya Setu, highlighted the neglect of sexual and reproductive health and rights for transgender and intersex communities, ignoring their unique adolescent challenges.

She questioned the government's commitment to inclusivity and criticised the lack of sensitisation regarding these employees in workplaces, which leads to harassment.

The speakers also emphasised the media's crucial role in creating harassment-free work environments by promoting good practices and raising awareness about the impacts of workplace harassment.

Abdur Rahim, director of Educo Bangladesh; Dina Alsana, co-founder and COO of Vertical Innovations; Md Adnan Hossain, executive director of It's Humanity Foundation; Hamid Ibne Habib, assistant manager at BYLC; Tasfiyah Jalil, senior coordinator at Brac University; and Nazra Sabet, senior director and CEO at Friendship Colour of Chars, were among the speakers at the event, which was moderated by Tanjim Ferdous, in charge of NGO and Foreign Missions at The Daily Star.

Project gets approval, deadline

FROM PAGE 3
decommission the British-era single-lane rail and road bridge there.

A feasibility study, financed by South Korea, was conducted in December 2015 that recommended building a two-lane road and single-line rail bridge.

A DPP for the new bridge with an estimated cost of Tk 1,163.27 crore was placed before an Ecnec meeting in August 2018, which decided that it would build a dedicated rail bridge with double lines. The DPP was not approved at that time.

In 2019, another feasibility study was launched, but it was suspended as well. In the meantime, BR continued to go back and forth over the design.

Another Korea-funded study was launched in 2021, and it preliminarily recommended a double-decker bridge with a double-lane road on top and a dual-gauge double-

line rail line on the bottom.

But the Prime Minister's Office in August 2022 directed that the bridge be single-decker with a double line dual-gauge rail line and double-lane road, sources said.

Finally, the Ecnec, with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in the chair, approved the project.

The rail authority will now float a tender to hire contractors and consultants and is expected to start physical work in 2026, and the works will take four years, said a BR official.

South Korea will provide Tk 7,125 crore as loan for the project.

THREE OTHER PROJECTS APPROVED

Ecnec yesterday also approved the second revision of Matarbari Port Development Project.

After the revision, the project cost rose to Tk 24,381.40 crore, Tk 6,604.24 crore more than the original estimate, and

the deadline has been set for December 2029.

Chittagong Port Authority and Roads and Highways Department are jointly implementing the project.

The second revision of SASEC-2 Road Connectivity Project was also approved.

After the revision, the project cost was set at Tk 19,056.61 crore, Tk 7,157.6 crore more than the original estimate, and the deadline has been set for December 2026.

RHD is implementing the project to turn the 190km road from Elenga of Tangail to Rangpur into a four-lane highway with service lanes.

Ecnec also approved a project titled Resilient Urban and Territorial Development Project. The Local Government Engineering Department will implement the Tk 5,901.22 crore project, with the deadline being June 2030.

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the younger brother of Abrar Fahad, said, "When my brother posted [a Facebook status critical of India], I told him that the Chhatra League would attack him for writing such things. But he replied that someone had to speak up."

Faiyaj noted that Abrar believed, as a second-year student, he faced comparatively less risk in speaking out than a fresher would.

Additionally, Faiyaj said Fahad trusted his roommates to support him if anything went wrong.

"Later, it turned out that the main culprit was his roommate, who had tagged him as affiliated with Shibir. My question is: how can anyone advocate for forgiveness for an organisation that produces such brutal killers?" Faiyaj asked.

They killed my son for speaking

Abrar's father Barkat Ullah said, "My son was murdered after enduring torture for five hours on this day. My son was targeted and killed by Chhatra League miscreants for speaking out against injustice."

He called for the maximum punishment for those involved and urged the authorities to ensure that no one else has to sacrifice their life like his son did.

Hasnat Abdullah, a coordinator of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, said a clear decision must be made regarding those who have perpetrated violence on universities for the past 16 years.

He emphasised the need to bring those responsible for oppression to justice.

Mahmudur Rahman said the mass uprising has presented the nation with an opportunity to overcome Indian hegemony.

He said the youth who toppled Sheikh Hasina would get his full support if they unite against ongoing Indian aggression.

Nasiruddin Patwari, convenor of Jatiya Nagorik Committee, coordinator Sarjis Alam, and Akhter Hossain also spoke at the event among others.

Besides, a new memorial was also inaugurated yesterday by BUET's Vice-Chancellor Professor ABM Badruzzaman.

Additionally, a prayer session was held at the BUET Central Mosque in Abrar's memory. A rally titled "Nirapod Bangladesh Chai" also took place at Shahbagh.

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Travel ban

FROM PAGE 3
Laundering) Noor-e-Alam submitted an application in this regard.

Yesterday, the same judge also issued travel bans on former Awami League minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury and his wife Rukhmila Zaman; Chowdhury Nafeez Sarafat, former chairman of Padma Bank; and Mahmud Mostofa Jilani, senior assistant vice-president of Premier Bank, in connection with corruption allegations.

The judge also sent copies of the orders to the special superintendent of police (immigration) of the Special Branch for the next course of action.

PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 8

Faz Zohr Asr Magrib Esha
AZAN 4:45 12:45 4:45 5:53 7:30
JAMAAT 5:20 1:15 4:30 5:56 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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