

AUG 21 ATTACK
HC launches
fresh hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday started a fresh hearing on the death references and appeals of the August 21 grenade attack cases.

The cases were filed following grenade attacks on an Awami League rally at Bangabandhu Avenue in Dhaka that claimed 24 lives and left about 300 injured.

Then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina, who later ran the country for 15 years as prime minister and was forced to resign and flee on August 5 this year following a mass uprising, narrowly escaped the attack on August 21, 2004.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice Syed Enayet Hossain began the hearing with Deputy Attorney General Md Jasim Sarker and Assistant Attorney General Laboni Akter reading out from the paper books, which contain all the details -- trial proceedings, statements, evidence, verdicts and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Liquid waste from a factory pours out of this pipe and into the Buriganga. Considered the lifeline of the capital, the river continues to suffer due to encroachment and waste dumping. The photo was taken in the Shyampur area recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

DENGUE OUTBREAK
DMCH providing
treatment to critical
patients only

HELEMUL ALAM

Kamrul Hasan, 42, a resident of Narayanganj, is undergoing treatment at the dengue ward of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Kamrul, who was admitted to the hospital in critical condition, got treatment at the ICU for five days and was later shifted to the ward.

"I was having breathing problems even," he said.

Although Kamrul is now in better health, he said he does not know when the doctor will release him, as he is not feeling totally well yet.

Mohamamad Shanto, a resident of Rupganj who has been undergoing treatment at the DMCH for the last four days, said he was admitted to the hospital with abdominal pain, body pain, nausea, loose motion, and fever.

"Now I am doing a bit better," said Shanto on Tuesday.

Amid the ongoing pressure of dengue patients, DMCH has started admitting only critical patients from this week to reduce pressure on the hospital, said doctors and nurses.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), a total of seven patients died while 1,243 others were hospitalised in the 24 hours till yesterday.

With this, the death toll has reached 297 this year, and the number of total infected has reached 61,817.

Among the deaths and cases, the highest 57 patients died in DMCH, while a total of 2,401 patients were treated in the hospital till yesterday.

Currently, 114 dengue patients are undergoing treatment in the hospital.

"We are now admitting only the critical patients and referring the rest to the Dhaka North City Corporation Covid-19 hospital from this week," said Sharmin Akter Sweetey, honorary medical officer of the DMCH dengue ward.

She said the DNCC Covid-19 hospital is now dedicated to treating dengue, so they are referring the comparatively stable patients there.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



17,264 firearm
licences issued
during AL regime

Says PHQ official; home ministry to
return firearms to civilians after
analysing applications

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

In the last 15 years, during the tenure of the Awami League (AL) government, a total of 17,264 firearms licences were issued.

Many of these firearms were seen used by the AL party leaders against unarmed students and people during the anti-discrimination movement in July and August.

A high official at the Police Headquarters (PHQ) told this to The Daily Star last night.

After the interim government was formed on August 8, following the ouster of Sheikh Hasina on August 5, a notification was issued from the home ministry to suspend licences of firearms issued to civilians between January 6, 2009, and August 5, 2024, during the AL regime.

The government then asked the civilians to deposit the firearms by September 3, but only 13,349 firearms were deposited, according to PHQ sources.

The government on September 4 started a joint drive conducted by the

armed forces, border guards, coast guards, police, Rab, and Ansar to recover the 3,915 remaining firearms.

Meanwhile, the ministry on Monday formed a committee to return the firearms to civilians, which were deposited last September.

The committee, chaired by the District Magistrate, includes two members and a member secretary.

The district superintendent of police (SP) and a deputy director of National Security Intelligence (NSI) will act as members of the committee, while the additional district magistrate will be the member secretary, said the notification signed by Israt

Jahan, deputy secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs' Public Security Division. Based on a notification from the Public Security Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs dated August 25, the committee will verify and decide on applications for the return of firearms acquired for personal security that have been

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Many of these firearms were seen used by the AL party leaders against unarmed students and people during the anti-discrimination movement in July and August.

Don't let UN
open office
in Dhaka

Hefazat tells govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hefazat-e-Islam Bangladesh yesterday urged the government to retract its decision to permit the establishment of a United Nations Human Rights Commission (OHCHR) office in Dhaka.

In a statement, Mohibullah Babunagari, ameer of Hefazat-e-Islam, and its Secretary General Sazedur Rahman said countless human rights violations took place under the fascist rule of Sheikh Hasina, including enforced disappearances, murders, and notably the massacre at Shapla Chattar on May 5, 2013.

Despite ample evidence, the UN Human Rights Commission failed to take any significant action against Hasina's government.

Instead, in November last year, the UN appointed Hasina's daughter Saima Wazed, who had corruption allegations against her, as WHO regional director, ignoring protests. Therefore, the country's people do not want an office of such an "irresponsible" human rights organisation in Dhaka, they said in the statement.

As per the statement, the rights of LGBTQ, or homosexual individuals, are prioritised in the United Nations' human

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Dhaka committed
to labour reforms

Chief adviser tells US
Chargé d'affaires

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said Bangladesh is committed to carrying out "sweeping labour reforms", a key prerequisite of the US government for investment, trade facilities, and development funding.

He made the comment when the US Chargé d'affaires Helen LaFave paid him a farewell visit at his office in the capital's Tejgaon.

Over the past several years, labour reforms was a prioritised issue during bilateral meetings between Dhaka and Washington.

During the visit, LaFave and Prof Yunus spoke about judicial reforms, South Asian electricity connectivity, counterterrorism, efforts to bring back tens of billions of dollars stolen from Bangladesh during the previous government's tenure, and reforms in civil bureaucracy.

LaFave said the US was already supporting Bangladesh with advice and other forms of assistance to help recover the money and bring it back to Bangladesh.

She said repatriating stolen money is difficult but doable. "We'll definitely make it happen," the chief adviser told her.

The US Chargé d'affaires handed over a letter from Secretary of State Antony Blinken to him.

During the meeting, the acting US envoy told Prof Yunus that the US was expediting the resettlement of the Rohingyas from Bangladeshi camps to the North American nation.

SEDITION CASE

Trial against Tarique
Rahman scrapped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday scrapped the trial proceedings of a sedition case against BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, ETV chairman Abdus Salam and its former journalists Mahathir Farooki Khan and Kanak Sarwar.

The HC bench of Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice Syed Enayet Hossain delivered the verdict after hearing a petition filed by Abdus Salam.

The case was filed with Tejgaon Police Station against them on charges of broadcasting a "false, fabricated, and provocative" speech given by BNP leader Tarique on January 5, 2015.

Meanwhile, the HC bench yesterday quashed a nother violence case against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, following a petition filed by her in 2017.

The case was filed with Darus Salam Police Station during a political movement against Hasina-led government in 2015.

200 women, girls
faced violence in
October: BMP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 200 girls and women suffered various forms of violence in October of this year, according to Bangladesh Mahila Parishad's monthly media monitoring report.

The report titled, "Statistics of Violence against Women and Girl Child: October 2024", was based on reports published in 13 daily newspapers.

The statistics shows 44 women, including 30 girls, were raped, while 9 women, including 7 girls, narrowly escaped attempts of rape.

Eight victims, including two girls, fell prey to gang rape. One girl also lost her life after an incident of rape.

Additionally, nine women, including seven girls, faced sexual assault, while four women and girls encountered sexual harassment.

HELD IN AUSTRALIA
Bangladesh to
repatriate 97
nationals

DIPLOMATIC
CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will soon repatriate 97 Bangladeshis detained in Australia for attempting to enter the pacific country without visa, Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said yesterday.

"The irregular migrants detained in Australia are sheltered at an Australian island," he told the media after a meeting with Australian Home Minister Tony Burke at the Bangladesh Secretariat.

The Australian minister, who is leading a delegation to Bangladesh, yesterday called on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain and Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury.

The two countries also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen maritime security and safety.

According to a home

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Dhaka's waste
disposal still not
up to the mark

Rizwana tells dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan yesterday highlighted Dhaka's waste management did not improve even after 53 years of independence.

Speaking at an event, titled "Youth Leading Climate and Local Action for Cities," held at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka on the occasion of World Cities Day 2024, Rizwana called for a renewed focus on urban management.

"Our current systems are still not up to the mark. We need a concerted effort from all stakeholders, particularly our youth, to bring about meaningful change," she said.

Chaired by Chandan Z. Gomez, senior director of World Vision Bangladesh, the event encouraged youth participation in urban sustainability initiatives.

Rizwana also stressed the need for more recreational spaces for children, connecting this to the broader issue of urban planning.

"Building liveable cities goes beyond just waste management; it encompasses the well-being of our future generations," she added.

The dialogue aimed to inspire young leaders to take active roles in improving Dhaka's sustainability, with the adviser expressing confidence that youth, supported by government initiatives, can drive the necessary transformations.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



A farmer ploughs his land early in the morning in preparation for planting winter vegetables like radish, turnip and spinach. While his son helps him pull the plough, his granddaughter sits on it and enjoys the ride. The photo was taken in the Kamalganj area of Moulvibazar yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR