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Lawyer sues Hasina, Joy over attempted murder

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy and 91 others were sued yesterday on charges of making an attempt to kill a female lawyer during the mass uprising on August 4 last year.

Nupur Akhter, a lawyer of Dhaka Bar Association, filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Saitur Rahman.

After the hearing, the magistrate recorded the statement of the complainant and asked the officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station to register the complaint as a first information report (FIR), said a staffer of the court.

Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, former law minister Anisul Huq, former South

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A man hops over the rail lines despite an oncoming train just 15-20 feet away from him. Even worse, three children sit on the front of the train. A slight misstep or mistiming could lead to an accident. The photo was taken in the Mohakhali Rail Gate area yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

**Polls by this year vital**  
BNP tells EU envoy; discusses election roadmap, reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Holding national elections within this year is imperative since a country cannot run itself under an undemocratic governance for long, said BNP yesterday.

The party conveyed this message to European Union (EU) Ambassador to Bangladesh Michael Miller when he visited the BNP chairperson's office in Dhaka's Gulshan around 3:30pm.

The party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, standing committee members Moyeen Khan and Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, and the chairperson's foreign affairs advisory committee member Shama Obaid were present at the meeting.

Afterwards, Khasru briefed journalists highlighting BNP's stance on the importance of restoring democracy through the elections.

He said, "A country cannot run under an undemocratic process for long. Undemocratic governments lack political weight, mobilisation capacity, and public engagement. They don't receive feedback from the people. That is why we emphasised the urgency of transitioning to a democratic process as soon as possible."

The discussions also touched on the election roadmap, reforms, and state of the economy.

On reforms, Khasru said, "Reforms that achieve

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**TK 57.13CR GRAFT**  
Court orders to confiscate ex-MP Henry's properties

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the authorities concerned to confiscate and freeze all movable and immovable properties of Jannat Ara Talukder Henry, a former Awami League lawmaker from the Sirajganj 2 constituency, in a case filed over amassing Tk 57.13 crore illegally.

Judge Md Zaki Hossain of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after Asif Al-Mahmud, an assistant director of the ACC, submitted an application in this regard, according to an ACC official present in court.

ACC Public Prosecutor Md Rezaul Karim Reza submitted the application.

The ACC official said these properties should be frozen and confiscated to ensure a fair investigation.

On January 6, Henry was shown arrested in a case filed on December 25, 2024.

**Take steps in 7 days to stop air pollution**  
HC directs govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing serious concern over the current levels of air pollution in Dhaka, the High Court yesterday directed the government to take effective measures in seven days to stop air pollution in the capital.

It also ordered the authorities concerned to implement the nine directives issued by this court in February 2020 to stop Dhaka's air pollution and to submit a compliance report before this court by January 23.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Debasish Roy Chowdhury delivered the order during hearing of a petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) in 2019.

Following the same petition, the HC in February, 2020, issued nine directives on the authorities concerned to keep this pollution in check.

The directives are: covering goods in trucks and other vehicles transporting soil/sand/waste in Dhaka; covering soil/sand/cement/stones/construction materials in areas under construction; sprinkling water on the roads by the city corporation; ensuring compliance with tender conditions for road/culvert carpeting/pit works; seizing vehicles emitting black smoke; determining the time limit for movement of vehicles as per the Road Transport Act and stopping the movement of such vehicles after the expiry of the time limit; closing illegal brick kilns; closing all tyre factories operating without environmental licences; taking steps by the city corporation to ensure that daily waste bags are filled in markets/shops and their removal.

## SEEKING POLICE SERVICES

**38pc faced harassment, 31pc paid bribes: study**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty percent of 2,040 university-level students who participated in a recent survey reported paying bribes or facing harassment while seeking police services, while only 10.5 percent experienced smooth service.

The study, conducted by Dhaka University's Department of Development Studies found that 37.9 percent of respondents faced harassment, 9 percent relied on government officials' recommendations, 31.2 percent used bribes, gifts, or political influence, and 11.2 percent reported never receiving any service.

Respondents alleged that police often avoid accepting complaints against powerful political leaders or government officials.

Conducted by the Centre on Budget and Policy Research Group on Governance and Public Policy,



### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Independent commission
- 2 Keep force free from political interference
- 3 Conduct ethics training
- 4 Set up public complaint centres
- 5 Publish complaint, probe progress weekly

the study employed a mixed-method approach, including 20 focus group discussions with 250 participants from nine institutions.

Of the total 2,040 respondents, 1,038 were students from public universities, 395 from private universities, 508 from colleges affiliated with the National University or other public universities, and 99 from Fazil and Kamil madrasas.

Among the respondents, 35.7 percent were aged 22-23, 30.2 percent were 20-21, 22 percent were 24-25, 5.1 percent were 25 or older, and 7 percent were under 19.

The findings, presented yesterday at the Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium of Dhaka University, were shared by Professor Kazi Maruf Islam at a seminar titled "Building a People-Friendly, Accountable and Professional Policing System in Bangladesh 2.0:

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**1,184 suspected muggers held in 103 days: DMP**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday announced that they have arrested 1,184 suspected muggers across the capital in the past 103 days as part of preventive measures to curb crimes.

Mohammad Nasirul Islam, DMP's joint commissioner (DB-South), shared this information during a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre.

In response to a query about the rising incidents of mugging in the capital, Nasirul said several measures have already been implemented to address the issue.

Checkpoints have been set up by the Detective Branch (DB) and local police across various locations in the city, and their numbers have been increased. Alongside regular patrols, intelligence surveillance has also been intensified, he said.

He mentioned that ongoing operations are being conducted to dismantle mugging rings by analysing the criminal database and identifying their networks.

The DB and local police are conducting operations in crime-prone areas with the help of informants, he added.

Sharing arrest statistics, the DB official said 98 suspected muggers were arrested in October, 148 in November, and 564 in December from different parts of the capital. In the first 11 days of January, 374 individuals were apprehended.

Nasirul expressed hope that bringing offenders to justice and ensuring they remain in prison after legal proceedings will help reduce the number of muggers and alleviate the problem over time.

**'Now is the time to pursue stories without fear'**  
Shafiqul says country seeing unprecedented media freedom

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is experiencing "unprecedented media freedom" as it transitions to democracy, said Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam yesterday.

Speaking at the launch of the "Development Media Forum" by Oxfam at a city hotel, he said, "We haven't used security agencies, administrative orders, or repressive laws to muzzle people's voices over the last five months."

Encouraging journalists to ask tough questions, Shafiqul said, "You can criticise me, the panel of advisers, and the chief adviser. You have that freedom."

Highlighting the role of the media, he said, "For democracy to be institutionalised, media freedom is crucial. Now is the time for journalists to pursue any stories without fear."

Shafiqul criticised unchecked development projects, both public and private, for harming the environment and marginalised communities.

"Powerful lobby groups harm nature in the name of job creation. Is it development?" he asked.

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People try to salvage whatever they can after a fire broke out at a garage near the truck stand in Dhaka's Tejgaon area yesterday around 8:00am. Six trucks and several shops in the area were gutted due to the blaze, which was eventually doused around 9:00am. Authorities are investigating the matter and the cause of the fire could not be known immediately.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS