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SINHA MURDER
HC starts
hearing death
reference,
appeals today
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court is set to start hearing today the death reference and appeals filed by the convicts in the Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan murder case.

The HC bench of Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman and Justice Md Sagir Hossain will begin the hearing, said Deputy Attorney General Shamima Sultana Dipti.

On January 31, 2022, Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Ismail sentenced Teknaf Police Station's suspended officer-in-charge Pradeep Kumar Das and its suspended sub-inspector Liaquat Ali to death and six others to life term imprisonment in the case.

The six are dismissed SI Nandadulal Rakkhit, constables Sagar Deb

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Speakers at a roundtable on “Childhood Nutrition in Bangladesh”, jointly organised by The Daily Star and icddr,b at the capital's The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

10 hurt as Dhaka
and City college
students clash

DU CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 students were injured in a clash between Dhaka College and Dhaka City College yesterday, which broke out around noon and continued until 3:00pm with a brief pause.

Injured students from both institutions received primary treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Mohammad Faruk, in-charge of the DMCH police outpost.

Tension had been simmering since around 11:00am and quickly escalated into a chase and counter-chase by midday. As the violence intensified, traffic on both sides of the road came to a standstill.

According to eyewitnesses, students of City College initially gathered under the footbridge near the Science Laboratory intersection, while Dhaka College students assembled in front of the nearby Teachers' Training College.

Clashes reignited around 2:00pm when students returned to the streets at the intersection. Police charged batons to push City College students back onto their campus. Officers were also deployed in front of the college gate and under the footbridge to block Dhaka College students from advancing.

After nearly 10 minutes of confrontation, the situation temporarily calmed.

However, a fresh bout of violence erupted at around 2:45pm. Police responded by charging batons and firing tear gas shells and sound

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POLYTECHNIC
INSTITUTES
Students
postpone
protests
Govt forms
committee to
address demands
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The students of polytechnic institutes postponed their protests yesterday following the formation of an eight-member committee by the government to prepare an implementation roadmap for their six-point demand.

At a press conference, the student leaders said the decision was made as a gesture of goodwill towards the authorities.

However, in a statement, they warned that if their demands are not met or if the process is delayed, they will be compelled to intensify their protests.

The government committee includes representatives from the Technical and Madrasah Education Division (TMED), the Directorate of Technical Education, the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB), the Institution of Diploma Engineers Bangladesh (IDEB), and student leaders.

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MOTHER AND CHILD NUTRITION
Some progress, but
challenges remain
Say experts at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although Bangladesh has made progress in regard to mother and child nutrition, the country still has a long way to go to achieve the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, nutrition and public health experts said yesterday.

They highlighted the need to reduce stunting, wasting, anaemia, low birth weight and childhood overweight, and to increase rates of exclusive breastfeeding. To achieve this, they recommended increasing budgetary allocations, ensuring proper fund utilisation, raising awareness on the necessity of breastfeeding, and involving more youths in nutrition programmes.

The observations came at a roundtable titled “Childhood Nutrition in Bangladesh”, jointly organised by The Daily Star and icddr,b at the Daily Star Centre yesterday.

In his keynote presentation, Dr Tahmeed Ahmed, executive director of icddr,b, said while SDG 2 relates specifically to nutrition, six of its targets are particularly

crucial for women and children in low- and middle-income countries. These are: stunting, anaemia, low birth weight, childhood

- Increase budget, manpower for nutrition programmes
- Improve fund utilisation, accountability
- Deploy more community health workers at grassroots
- Promote exclusive breastfeeding
- Provide antenatal care, nutrition counselling to pregnant women

overweight, breastfeeding, and wasting.

“The rate of exclusive breastfeeding in Bangladesh is now hovering around 55 percent,” he said. “This means nearly half the infants under six months are deprived of perhaps the best intervention available to them --

breast milk. Even in this particular target, Bangladesh has a lot to do.”

Regarding stunting, he said there has been considerable improvement -- from 41 percent in 2011 to 21 percent in 2022.

“But 21 percent still means one in five children you see are stunted. It seems unlikely at this stage that Bangladesh will be able to achieve the SDG target for stunting under the age of five years,” he added.

Although the rate of wasting declined from 16 percent in 2011 to 11 percent in 2022, recent data shows it could now be as high as 18 percent. “The WHO emergency cutoff is 15 percent,” he warned.

Dr Ahmed also stressed the importance of increasing the health and nutrition budget.

He recommended deploying effective grassroots-level community health workers, focusing on adolescent girls' nutrition, promoting dietary diversity, forming mothers' clubs for discussions on breastfeeding and complementary feeding, and addressing maternal depression.

Mehedi Hasan, assistant director of the Institute of Public

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Appeal
hearing
of Azharul
deferred
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday deferred to May 6 the hearing of an appeal filed by Jamaat-e-Islami leader ATM Azharul Islam challenging his death penalty for crimes against humanity during the country's Liberation War in 1971.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed said that the full bench of this court will deal with the matter on May 6.

A full bench of the Appellate Division comprising all the seven judges including the chief justice will hold hearing of the appeal of Azharul on May 6 considering the importance and height of the case, his lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir told reporters at the SC premises.

Several Jamaat-e-Islami leaders and activists including its Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar were present in the court during the proceedings yesterday.

RANA PLAZA TRAGEDY
Ensure justice,
compensation
for the victims
Demands BLAST
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the 12th anniversary of the Rana Plaza tragedy approaches, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) has urged the government and judiciary to immediately resolve the long-delayed legal proceedings, ensure fair compensation for victims, and memorialise the lives lost in one of the deadliest industrial disasters.

In a press statement yesterday, BLAST outlined 10 specific demands aimed at addressing the ongoing injustices faced by the survivors and families of the 1,138 workers who died and the nearly 1,800 who were injured when the building collapsed on April 24, 2013.

The organisation called for the swift disposal of all pending cases in both labour and criminal courts. Despite the gravity of the disaster, cases filed under the Bangladesh Labour Act, Building Construction Act, and Penal Code remain unresolved more than a decade later, it said.

BLAST pointed out that most of the accused are out on bail, while victims' families continue to wait for justice.

It also called for the formation of a multi-stakeholder monitoring team, comprising lawyers, journalists, and trade union representatives, to track the progress of these cases and ensure transparency.

One of BLAST's most urgent demands is a reform of the current compensation structure, which provides only Tk 2 lakh for deceased workers and Tk 2.5 lakh for the injured.

It also called for the publication of annual workplace safety inspection reports and full implementation of the National Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

Set up dengue
units at hospitals
DNCC administrator tells event
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DNCC Administrator Mohammad Ezaz has called for the establishment of dedicated dengue units in public and private hospitals.

“Free dengue testing has been arranged at all DNCC urban health and maternity centres,” he said.

He made the remarks yesterday during a discussion held at the DNCC Nagar Bhaban in Gulshan-2, aimed at combating the potential dengue outbreak during the upcoming monsoon.

The meeting involved representatives of government and private hospitals and clinics under the DNCC's jurisdiction, alongside public health experts.

Speaking to journalists, the DNCC administrator said, “This year, rain began before the summer heat, increasing the risk of a rise

in dengue cases. We will try to collectively tackle the situation that follows the rainfall.”

“Aedes mosquito larvae breed inside homes, but our workers can't enter private residences due to safety concerns. So, public awareness is crucial. We'll launch a volunteer-led campaign next week. After a week, if larvae are still found, fines will be imposed,” he said.

“While administrative leadership may change, field-level workers often remain the same. We provide training, but third-party contractors are profit-driven. In the past, some formed large syndicates. To avoid this, we plan to involve Bangladesh Machine Tools Factory, a Bangladesh Army subsidiary, in mosquito control,” he also said.

“Currently, field workers are billed at Tk 17,000–18,000 each,

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Around 32 Kuet students observed a hunger strike for the second consecutive day yesterday, demanding the resignation of the university vice-chancellor. Prolonged exposure to the heat without food has left many students physically weakened. The photo was taken in front of the university's Student Welfare Centre.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Kuet students
continue
hunger strike
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 32 students of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet) yesterday observed their hunger strike for the second consecutive day, demanding the resignation of Vice-Chancellor Prof Mohammad Masud.

Meanwhile, a group of protesting students broke into Rokeya Hall of the university around 6:30pm yesterday. Around 20–25 female students broke the lock and entered the hall.

One of the students on hunger strike fell ill and is receiving medical treatment, according to the protesters.

The in-charge of the media cell for the protesting students' group, requesting anonymity, confirmed the matter to The Daily Star.

He said, “If doctors say so, we will shift him to Khulna Medical College Hospital or another facility for his advanced care.”

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