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GOVT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Fill vacant headmaster posts: Yunus

STAR REPORT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has directed that vacant headmaster positions in government primary schools be filled quickly.



It must be completed urgently by coordinating with the Public Service Commission and issuing circulars, Yunus instructed during a meeting at the state guest house Jamuna on Monday, according to a statement issued yesterday by the CA's press wing.

At the meeting, Bidhan Ranjan Roy Podder, adviser to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, said, "We are conducting assessments and ranking the schools, and taking special initiatives for schools lagging behind. Currently, the position of headmaster is vacant at 32,000 primary schools... Prompt measures are being taken in this regard."

Yunus also said, "Priority must be given to recruiting qualified individuals... Those who are experienced should be given priority. At the same time, young candidates should also be given opportunities to become headmasters."



Students from various schools and colleges in Kishoreganj paint graffiti to mark the anniversary of the July uprising. The initiative is part of a government programme. The photo was taken at the Katiadi Upazila Parishad premises yesterday.

PHOTO: TAFSILUL AZIZ

15TH AMENDMENT

Appeal to be filed seeking its full annulment

Says Badiul Alam Majumder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Badiul Alam Majumder, the petitioner in a writ concerning the restoration of the caretaker government system, yesterday said they would file an appeal seeking the full annulment of the 15th amendment to the Constitution.

He also demanded the scrapping of the 2011 Supreme Court verdict led by then Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque on the 13th amendment, which was used by parliament to abolish the non-partisan caretaker government system.

Badiul Alam and the legal team shared the updates at a press conference held at the Foreign Service Academy. A recent judgement has scrapped parts of the 15th amendment following their petition filed in August last year.

Sharif Bhuiyan, the lead of the lawyers' team in the writ, said the caretaker system was abolished through two actions -- by the court verdict and by the 15th amendment passed in parliament.

"As the High Court has now declared the parliamentary annulment of the caretaker government system unconstitutional, the system has been

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Tk 65,000 in salary, Tk 5cr in properties

ACC probes former police officer over alleged illegal wealth

DIPAN NANDY

On paper, the basic salary of an officer-in-charge (OC) of a police station in Bangladesh is Tk 22,000 under the ninth national pay scale.

With other allowances, the monthly income of an inspector-ranked OC usually totals around Tk 60,000 to Tk 65,000 -- adding up to no more than Tk 8 lakh annually.

Despite this limited income, Ekram Ali Mia, former OC Dhanmondi Police Station, has managed to acquire multiple high-value properties in the capital, including one flat in his name and two others in his wife's.

All three flats are located in the upscale Dhanmondi area and were purchased between 2018 and 2024. Ekram served as the OC of Hazaribagh Police Station in 2018 and then held the post at Dhanmondi from July 2020 to June 2023.

But the story doesn't end there. His wife, Kaniz

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Built to assist, left to rot

Escalators on four Dhaka footbridges mostly non-functional, frustrating pedestrians

DIPAN NANDY

Sanjay Gomez was crossing the road via the Farmgate footbridge with his daughter when he told her, "Put on your mask." Asked why, he replied, "This footbridge had an escalator installed. Now it looks more like a garbage bin."

The footbridge, constructed at a cost of nearly Tk 20 crore, was inaugurated on October 15, 2023. Within a week, the escalator was cordoned off with bamboo fencing, without any public announcement. Since then, people have been dumping waste on the escalator. Some use the non-functional structure to cross the road.

The same scenario is seen at three other footbridges -- Banani Sainik Club, Airport Bus Stand, and Pragati Sarani.

The four footbridges equipped with escalators under Dhaka North City Corporation -- the only ones in the city -- now have their escalators mostly out of service.

Md Rasheduzzaman, a regular user of the Farmgate footbridge, said, "I suffer from knee pain, and the escalator was a big help. Suddenly it stopped working.



If it broke down, that should have been communicated. And if it broke within a week, that means there was a construction flaw."

Many pedestrians now cross the busy roads beneath the footbridges, risking their lives.

Mahmuda Khatun, a resident of Indira Road, said, "When people get used to a service and it is suddenly taken away, it's

not just an inconvenience; it erodes trust." Bangladesh's first escalator-equipped footbridge was introduced in 2014 near Banani Sainik Club. Despite having escalators on both sides, one side remains almost always out of service. The functioning side is limited to specific hours, making it unreliable for most users.

Aroshi Binte Kamal, a school student, said, "There's a big rush during school hours. You can go up on one side, but the down escalator is usually shut. Often there's even a lock hanging on it."

At the Airport Bus Stand, the footbridge escalators installed in 2017 have remained completely out of order for nearly four years. Parts of the machinery lie broken,

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SC clears path for 15 lakh to get grade benefits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday released the full text of its verdict that cleared the way for the government and autonomous employees, who got the facilities of a time scale or a selection grade before 2015, to achieve the benefits of two higher grades in their services.

Following the apex court judgement, about 15 lakh officers and employees are now entitled to receive relevant financial benefits, Barrister Md Salahuddin Dolon, principal counsel for the writ petitioners, told The Daily Star.

He also said the authorities concerned of the government and autonomous organisations can now implement the SC verdict.

Earlier on April 30 this year, the Appellate Division of the SC delivered the verdict after disposing of four separate appeals and eight leave-to-appeal petitions filed by the state challenging that High Court judgement on this issue.

In the 18 pages' full text of judgment released yesterday, the apex court bench headed by Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam modified two HC judgments regarding this issue.

"Accordingly, the operating part of the impugned judgments and orders dated January 4, 2017 and December 4, 2017 respectively passed by

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Sayed Hossain Chowdhury passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Sayed Hossain Chowdhury, chairman of HRC Group, passed away at a hospital in Dhaka on Tuesday.

His personal secretary Md Sohel confirmed the news.

Chowdhury is survived by his wife, two sons, a daughter, and a host of well-wishers.

Chowdhury was the eldest son of Hedaet Hossain Chowdhury, the founder chairman of Karnaphuli Group, renowned educationist, language activist, and social worker.

He was also the elder brother of Saber Hossain Chowdhury, the managing director of Karnaphuli Group and Chairman of Desh TV.

Sayed Hossain Chowdhury made significant contributions to the development of Bangladesh's tea industry.



Man held over rape of 9-yr-old girl in Mohakhali

STAR REPORT

A man was arrested yesterday in connection with the rape of a nine-year-old girl in Dhaka's Mohakhali area on Monday night.

Banani police arrested Al Amin, 21, from the Mohakhali TV gate area around 7:50pm after examining CCTV footage, according to a DMP press release signed by Deputy Commissioner (media) Talebur Rahman.

Earlier, the victim's mother filed a case with Banani Police Station against an unidentified man.

The arrestee confessed to his involvement during the primary interrogation, it added.

Around 10:30pm on Monday, locals noticed the girl crying and bleeding near the National Institute of Cancer Research & Hospital and informed police, who took her to a hospital.

Quoting the survivor, OC Rasel Sarwar said a man forcibly took her to a secluded spot behind the hospital and raped her.

She was admitted to a hospital in the capital for examination, police said.

An official of the hospital said, "Several tests, including forensic examinations, were conducted today. Preliminary results suggest evidence of rape."

Satyajit Ray's ancestral home being demolished

New M'singh Shishu Academy building to replace it



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The ancestral home of eminent litterateur Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury -- formerly used as the Mymensingh Shishu Academy -- is being demolished to make way for a new semi-concrete structure.

Upendrakishore was the father of celebrated poet Sukumar Ray and grandfather of legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray.

The century-old house, located on Harikishore Ray Chowdhury Road in Mymensingh, is tied to the legacy of the

illustrious Ray family, whose contributions to Bangla literature and arts are considered foundational. Harikishore Ray Chowdhury himself was an ancestor of Upendrakishore, Sukumar, and Satyajit.

Asked about the demolition, Md Mehedi Zaman, Mymensingh's district children affairs officer, said the decision to demolish the house was made by a committee led by the district's Deputy Commissioner Mofidul Alam. It also includes him and officials from the Public Works Department.

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BNP pledges to support govt on US tariff challenges

UNB, Dhaka

Senior BNP leader Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday said that his party will offer coordinated cooperation to the government on US tariff and security issues, to help address the tariffs imposed by the US.

Chowdhury made the remarks during a briefing to journalists at a hotel in Banani, following an exchange of views with business leaders concerning the US tariffs.

The BNP standing committee member emphasised that the livelihoods of 15-16 lakh people are linked to exports to the US market, so the tariff issue is a serious matter for Bangladesh.

Khosru said business leaders fear that the recent US tariff impositions will severely impact Bangladesh's trade.

Therefore, the BNP is prepared to cooperate with the government in the ongoing tariff discussions with the US, aiming to achieve a pragmatic solution for Bangladesh.

In response to a question, Amir Khosru pointed out that India and Vietnam are Bangladesh's direct competitors in the international garment export market.

If Bangladesh fails to reach a solution regarding the tariffs, these competitor countries will gain a significant advantage in exporting to the US.

He warned that Bangladesh cannot afford to bear the risk of millions of job losses, the closure of industrial factories, and thousands of backward linkage industries due to unresolved tariff issues. BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan, BKMEA President Mohammad Hatem, former President of FBCCI AK Azad, Chairman of Apex Tannery Ltd Syed Nasim Monzur, Chairman of Bangladesh Chamber of Industries Anwar-ul-Alam Chowdhury Parvez, Chairman of Prank RFL Group Ahsan Khan Chowdhury, among others joined the meeting.