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Hadi's family to get Tk 1cr more from govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to provide an additional Tk 1 crore to the family of slain Inqilab Mancha spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi as livelihood support, Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed said yesterday.

Earlier, the government had allocated Tk 1 crore for purchasing a flat in Dhaka for Hadi's family.

The finance adviser disclosed the decision while speaking to journalists after chairing a meeting of the Advisers Council Committee on

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BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman offers prayers at the shrine of Hazrat Shah Paran (RA) in Sylhet yesterday, as he visits the city to formally launch the party's campaign for the 13th National Parliamentary Election.

PHOTO: BNP MEDIA CELL

Simeen Rahman, others exempted in one case, bailed in another

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transcom Group Chairman Shahnaz Rahman, Chief Executive Officer Simeen Rahman, and three other top officials were exempted yesterday from a case filed by the CEO's sister.

In a separate case, five individuals, including Shahnaz and Simeen, were granted bail by a Dhaka court.

In the first case, filed over allegations of fraud through forged signatures, Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Sefatullah relieved Shahnaz, Simeen and three others after accepting a final report, according to a sub-inspector working at the court.

The three others are Zeraif Ayaat Hossain, son of Simeen Rahman; and Transcom Group directors Md Kamrul Hassan and Fokhruzzaman Bhuiyan.

The case was filed on February 22, 2024, by Simeen's younger sister Shahzreh Huq at Gulshan Police Station against the five. Investigation officer Md Tariqul Islam, an inspector at the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI), recently submitted the final report to the court.

The report said that Simeen is the complainant's sister and Shahnaz is her mother. The complainant had alleged that the signatures of herself, her father Latifur Rahman and her brother Arshad Waliur Rahman were forged on a deed of settlement arising from a family dispute.

During his lifetime, Latifur, founder chairman of Transcom Group, executed the deed of settlement concerning the distribution of his shares and matters related to company management.

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Shared trauma, mutual respect shape race for Dhaka-14

SADI MUHAMMAD ALOK and SHARIF M SHAFIQUE

As the sun set, a tea stall on the slope of Rainkhola near Mirpur Zoo buzzed with speculation. A group of young men debated whether the upcoming national election would affect personal relationships in the neighbourhood.

At the same time, across the city at the July Uprising Memorial Museum in Gono Bhaban, the two main contenders for the Dhaka-14 seat -- BNP's Sanjida Islam Tulee and Jamaat-e-Islami's Mir Ahmad BinQuasem Arman -- stood side by side.

Invited by the interim government, they stood before a replica of the former fascist regime's secret torture cell -- "Gumghor".

One screen showed a documentary on Arman's year-long enforced disappearance, while nearby was displayed a dress once owned by Tulee's brother, Sajedul Islam Sumon, a BNP leader who was also a victim of enforced disappearance.



MIR AHMAD BINQUASEM ARMAN
Jamaat candidate

Despite being from another party, Barrister Arman is like a brother to me. When we stood before the torture cell at the July Museum, there was no rivalry -- only humanity.



SANJIDA ISLAM TULEE
BNP candidate

In that shared moment of trauma, electoral rivalry faded. Both broke down in tears, united by personal loss rather than divided by politics.

That spirit of mutual respect has also reached the streets of Mirpur-1

in the Dhaka-14 constituency.

The third major contender, Syed Abu Bakar Siddique Shaju -- an independent candidate and son of late BNP leader S A Khaleque -- began his street march at Mirpur New Market by expressing respect for his rivals' sacrifices.

Dhaka-14 is a diverse constituency, home to the Shah Ali Mazar, Gabtoli Bus Terminal, the National Zoo, and Mirpur Stadium.

Its electorate includes middle-class residents, labourers, and a large number of vocal young voters. Issues such as teen gangs, drug abuse, and public security dominate tea-stall conversations.

"Young voters are very observant this time," said Bappi, a tea-seller at Rainkhola. "There is sympathy for both BNP and Jamaat candidates. We hope for a peaceful environment without clashes."

A female voter from Mirpur-6, speaking anonymously, echoed the call for stability. "We see reports of attacks over opinions and faiths across the country. This must stop.

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China's influence, polls in focus as new US envoy sets out Bangladesh agenda

Brent Christensen says the US will not back any political side

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Brent Christensen has said he is concerned about the broader Chinese influence in South Asia and committed to clearly articulating the risks of involvement with China should Bangladesh choose to go down that path.

Speaking at his first media interaction at the EMK Centre in Dhaka since joining the US Embassy on January 12, Christensen also said that the US will not take sides in Bangladesh's elections but aims to work with the elected government on trade, economy, security and counter-terrorism.

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Barrister Arman recounts 8-year confinement in Aynaghar at ICT-1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An enforced disappearance victim yesterday told the International Crimes Tribunal that a guard at his secret detention centre informed him his body weight had been measured days after his abduction so that a concrete slab of the same weight could be prepared to dump his body after killing him, ensuring it would never be recovered.

Testifying as the first prosecution witness in a crimes against humanity case, Mir Ahmed

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Form law to make primary healthcare constitutional obligation: experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health experts and campaigners yesterday urged the immediate formulation of a law making primary healthcare (PHC) a constitutional obligation aimed at achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

They also called for refocusing and strengthening PHC as the foundation of the country's health system and for better coordination between rural and urban healthcare services, which currently operate in a fragmented manner.

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Hefazat chief praises Islami Andolan for cutting ties with Jamaat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hefazat-e-Islam Amir Mohibullah Babunagari has congratulated Islami Andolan Bangladesh Ameer Mufti Syed Muhammad Rezaul Karim for withdrawing from their political association with Jamaat-e-Islami ahead of the upcoming election.

In a statement sent to the media on Tuesday, Babunagari said Islami Andolan's decision to distance itself from Jamaat -- which he described as "Maududi-inspired ideology" -- was a timely and courageous move aimed at safeguarding "Sunni beliefs".

He said since the July uprising, Hefazat-e-Islam has been working for broader unity among Islamic forces under the

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'Ensure justice, accountability, democratic rights'

Gonotrantik Odhikar Committee unveils 'Peoples' Manifesto' for next elected govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Gonotrantik Odhikar Committee yesterday presented a set of 25 recommendations for the next elected government, calling upon it to ensure justice, accountability, peace, security, and democratic rights of the people, and public ownership of the July uprising, the Liberation War, and all past uprisings.

The committee unveiled the recommendations at an event titled "Manifesto for Peoples' Peace, Comfort, Security, and Democratic Rights" at the National Press Club in Dhaka.

The manifesto was read by Akram Khan, Mahtab Uddin Ahmed, and Sushmita S Preetha.

The manifesto's demands to the next elected government include: publishing final lists of all those killed and injured during the July uprising, from both sides, within three months; ensuring compensation within six months to families of all the deceased and critically injured in the uprising; preventing harassment of affected families; state guarantee of safety to all July Uprising participants; banning the use of the uprising for personal gain, corruption, or political influence;

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PHOTO: COURTESY

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) held its 26th convocation at the International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka yesterday. Education Adviser Prof CR Abrar conferred certificates on graduates, while acclaimed photographer, journalist and human rights activist Dr Shahidul Alam delivered the convocation speech. University Grants Commission Chairman Prof SMA Faiz attended as the guest of honour.