

## Five martyred of a family recalled

CITY DESK

The 49th martyrdom anniversary of Engineer Fazlur Rahman and four of his family members was observed yesterday, said a press release.

On this day in 1971, Fazlur Rahman, his wife Hosne Akhter, and three sons Mostafizur Rahman Moznu, a college student, Hasinur Rahman Hiron, a school student, and Azizur Rahman Babu, also a school student, were killed at their railway government residence in Sayedpur under Nilphamari by the Pakistani occupation forces and their collaborators for their involvement in the Liberation War.

The extent of the brutality was such that Hosne Akhter, an NGO trainer, was buried alive after being killed by bayonet charging. Only her son Saidur Rahman and two daughters Dilruba Khatun and late Camellia Rahman managed to escape the atrocities.

Saidur Rahman later went on to become founder president of Projonmo '71 (Children of the Martyrs of Liberation War) and is a Senior News Presenter of Channel I.

On that very same day, the Pakistan army went on an indiscriminate offensive and killed many innocent Bangladeshis in Sayedpur, before and after the fatal incident involving the family.

To mark the day, a Qurankhwani and feeding of destitutes was arranged by members of the family, while prayers were offered seeking salvation of the departed souls.

## Testing machine

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pathology as the department deals with around 500 patients daily.

Talking to The Daily Star, Prof Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general of DGHS, expressed astonishment as to how a hospital without virology or microbiology departments can have such a machine.

"Only trained virologists or microbiologists can handle it due to critical procedures and bio-hazard," she said, adding that she did not even know RMCH had one of such machine.

"I'll have to check documents," she said. According to microbiologists at Rajshahi Medical College, at least 2,500 square feet of space, divided into four specially-designed rooms, is required for installing a PCR machine.

They said they exchanged several letters with the RMCH authorities in 2018 as they wanted to use the machine for students' research activities and testing diseases.

"They [hospital authorities] were totally apathetic [about letting us use the machine] and replied to all our letters in the negative," said a microbiologist at RMC.

Prof Sabera Gulnaha, head of the virology department at RMC, acknowledged the information.

"The hospital authorities last week sent a letter, asking us to use their machine when we have engaged all our manpower in using the new one," she said.

RMCH Deputy Director Saiful Ferdous said he was unaware why RMC's request to use it was denied for such a long time.

Despite repeated attempts, the RMCH director did not answer this correspondent's phone calls and text messages.

Meanwhile, the medical college installed the PCR machine at its coronavirus

laboratory. Prof Gulnaha, in-charge of the lab, said the number of samples was low initially, which started to increase recently.

They ran at least 481 tests till April 12 with more than 150 samples pending. The laboratory has 40 staff members including 18 microbiologists and biochemists and 12 technicians.

Although the PCR machine is capable of doing 96 tests in every six hours, they are unable to run it more than once a day for lack of manpower, she said.

"Those who perform the tests, wearing personal protective equipment for six hours at a stretch, become exhausted from working extra hours. Working here requires specific attention to details all the time," she added.

"There is a chance that the pressure may increase in the coming days," she said, adding that the machine at RMCH would have helped a lot had it been set up beforehand.

Asked, the RMCH deputy director said they are trying to run the machine with the help of experts from DGHS soon. "We've identified a spot for installing the machine at the hospital's high dependency unit," he said.

There are around 28 PCR machines (18 in Dhaka and 10 in different parts of the country) dedicated for testing Covid-19, according to DGHS.

In addition to that, the government will set up a coronavirus testing laboratory at Bogura in Rajshahi division soon, which will help ease the pressure on the lab at RMC.

Mentionable, rights activists have been requesting the authorities concerned to set up coronavirus testing laboratories at each district.

## Extraction kits

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head of coronavirus control and prevention committee in the division, said BITID authorities informed him about it.

"I have informed the Director General of Directorate General of Health Services about the matter," he said, adding, "He assured me of taking immediate step."

Covid-19 testing began at BITID on March 25, with some 100 tests being performed every day -- a bottleneck created mainly due to shortage of skilled manpower, according to sources. Until yesterday, 27 people were diagnosed with the virus, with three deaths.

## A life of

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added. "Sohel, who hailed from Noakhali, used to plan the robberies while his friend Titu [from Sylhet] drove the pick-up."

Being leaders, Titu and Sohel took 80 percent cut of the looted goods, said ADC Sahadat, who led the drive to arrest the five. They had two pick-ups, which they also stole -- one from Mirpur and another from Ashulia -- a few years back, said the DB official.

"We got names of around 14 persons from Sohel. He said they never use all members while conducting a robbery. They used to alternate among them as well as the pick-ups," said ADC Sahadat. "We are now carrying out drives to arrest others," he added.

The DB official said both Sohel and Titu had been involved in crimes since childhood and were wanted in multiple cases.

"We would be able to inform clearly about the number of cases against them after analysing documents. Sohel was last arrested in a car robbery case by DB police four years back," he added.

## Low-key celebrations for N Korea's founder in face of virus

AFP, SEOUL

North Korea marked the anniversary of the birth of its founder Kim Il Sung in subdued fashion yesterday, with mask-wearing citizens placing flowers before his statue in Pyongyang as the country imposes strict anti-coronavirus measures.

The grandfather of the current leader Kim Jong Un was born 108 years ago and April 15 is the most important date in the North's annual political calendar, where it is known as the Day of the Sun.

But Pyongyang has imposed tight restrictions against the pandemic that has swept the world since emerging in neighbouring China, closing its borders and for a time quarantining thousands of its own citizens as well as hundreds of foreigners, and insists that it has not seen a single case.

Pyongyang residents arrived at Mansu hill, where giant bronze statues of Kim and his son and successor Kim Jong Il gaze out over the capital, to lay flowers at their base.

But they came in much smaller groups than the sometimes hundreds-strong detachments of workers or soldiers seen on previous occasions.

"The great president Kim Il Sung will be with us forever," read a floral frieze in front of the effigies.

At times the festivities can be held on a grand scale, including military parades in 2012 and 2017, when the nuclear-armed North shows off its arsenal to the world.

## Many hotels clueless

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nurses, and other healthcare professionals, who are involved in treating coronavirus patients at dedicated Covid-19 hospitals, at 20 hotels, including Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel, in the capital.

A letter, signed by M Aminul Islam, director (Hospital and Clinic) of DGHS, was sent to the authorities concerned on Sunday to take necessary steps in this regard.

The authorities of Hotel Shalimar International said they suspended their operations on March 26, and no staff was in the hotel now.

"I learnt it [use of the hotel as accommodation for doctors and nurses] from the media. Nobody discussed anything with us, and we don't know what to do," MJ Rahman Jahid, general manager of the hotel, told The Daily Star.

Pan Pacific Lake View Hotel and Resort said they did not know anything and they just came to know from this correspondent.

"Our hotel remains closed since March. No one from the government or any other organisation talked about the issue," said its Director Rafi Hasan.

Hotel Renaissance was found closed. There was a hotline number.

Contacted, an executive received the phone and said, "The hotel is closed since the shutdown started. As the hotline number is forwarded to my number, I received. Thank you."

An official whose hotel has been recommended for this purpose said a health ministry official wanted to know about the accommodation capacity and other details a few days ago.

"But we were not informed of providing accommodation to doctors. How would we ensure safety of our hotel staffers will be a big concern?"

DGHS Director Aminul said, "We just proposed the hotels' names. The health ministry will review the whole thing and take decision. It is not final."

Asked whether they are communicating with the hotels' authorities, he said, "I don't know. The ministry can say."

Sirajul Islam, additional secretary (hospital) of health ministry, said, "Those hotels were not requisitioned yet."

Asked if they are talking to the hotels' authorities, he said, "Certainly, the DGHS discussed the issue with them."

But when pointed out that the DGHS said the ministry would talk, he said, "Another officer has been assigned the task recently."

But he could not name the officer.

Wishing not to be named, a doctor said the DGHS told them that no hotels were available for them.

"From media reports, people came to know that four-star and five-star hotels have been allotted for us."

According to the DGHS letter, Dhaka Regency Hotel and Resort has been proposed for doctors and nurses of Kurmitola General Hospital.

Doctors and nurses of Sheikh Russel Gastroenterology Institute and Hospital can stay in Hotel Abakash, Hotel Zakaria, Hotel Renaissance, Dhaka Regency Hotel and Resort, Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden, Pan Pacific Sonargaon, Pacific Lake View Hotel and Resort, and Le Méridien Dhaka.

Maple Leaf and Milina hotels in Uttara have been proposed for doctors and nurses of Kuwait Maitree Hospital, and Grand Prince, Shyamoli, and Dreamland hotels for doctors and nurses of Maternal and Child Healthcare Training Institute in Mirpur.

Mohanagar General Hospital's doctors and nurses can get accommodation at Hotel Razmoni Ishakha, FARS Hotel and Hotel 71, while Hotel Sagarika, Hotel Grand Circle Inn, and Hotel Shalimar have been recommended for doctors and nurses of Railway General Hospital in Kamalapur.

## Indo-Bangla friendship

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fair is being held at Calcutta. Bangabandhu further says that the friendship between Bangladesh and India is based on gigantic sacrifice. He welcomed the initiative of Indo-Bangla Friendship Fair and hopes that it will further strengthen the bond between the two neighbours.

### NO HORSE-RACING IN BANGLADESH

Bangabandhu today says horse-racing and drinking do not bring any welfare for acountry and therefore these social evils would not exist in Bangladesh. Bangabandhu assures the workers of these two sectors that they would be absorbed in mills, factories and parks.

### DELHI-PINDI OFFICIAL LEVEL TALK IN OFFING

Preliminary arrangements are reportedly underway for high-level official talks between Pakistan and India prior to the Indira-Bhutto Summit. Indira Gandhi firmly believes that a permanent peace settlement is possible in the subcontinent if any foreign power does not interfere. The high-level conference in New Delhi of Indian envoys in Asia also discussed the question of collective security arrangement in the Asian region. It is hoped in the conference that with the restoration of democratic government in Pakistan, Islamabad might change its attitude and come to a peace settlement, recognising the Bangladesh reality.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad today informs that the Indian government is keeping the Bangladesh government updated on a regular basis about the initiative. The Indian authority assures Bangladesh that there will be no discussion on Bangladesh unless and until Pakistan recognises Bangladesh, adds the foreign minister.

### USD 10 CRORE NEEDED BEFORE MONSOON

A high-level advisory committee of the UN recommended on April 15, 1972 that 10 crore dollars was needed to complete some reconstruction works before the monsoon sets in. In a press conference in New Delhi, Austrian Ambassador Erna Seiler, also leader of the advisory committee, said that the committee recommended that the UN should continue its aid for the next few years. The committee had prepared detailed reports on relief and resettlement activities and economic reconstruction efforts in Bangladesh. These reports would be handed over to Bangabandhu next week, informed Seiler.

### NEW REHABILITATION PLAN FOR WAR-AFFECTED WOMEN

The government has undertaken a five-year rehabilitation plan for the war-affected women and children. The government will allocate Tk 22.25 crore for the implementation of this project. Under this plan a rehabilitation centre will be established in each Mahakuma. Under this plan, adequate treatment facilities will be provided to Birangonas.

SOURCES: April 16 & 17, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Itfaq

## Five die after showing

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died of respiratory problems at Tungipara Upazila Health Complex on Tuesday night. Jashim Uddin, Tungipara upazila health and family planning officer said the woman had been suffering from respiratory problems and her family had admitted her to the complex shortly before she died. He added that her samples were sent to Dhaka to be tested.

AFM Nasim, officer in-charge of Tungipara Police Station said the woman's family members have been sent to home quarantine.

In Chapainawabganj, a 60-year-old rickshaw-puller died with Coronavirus-like symptoms at Bishawa Road intersection of the town yesterday.

Chapainawabganj Civil Surgeon Jahid Nazrul Chowdhury said his samples have been collected and sent to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital for testing.

In Patuakhali, a 40-year-old man died of fever and respiratory disease at his father-in-law's house at Mohasraddhi village under Baufal upazila on early hours of Tuesday. Baufal upazila health official confirmed the matter, adding that the samples of the deceased and those who came into contact with him have been collected and sent for testing.

Our correspondents from Faridpur, Bandarban, Chapainawabganj and Patuakhali contributed to this report.

## Homegrown test kit

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government today assured us of providing a special electric line to ensure that there is no electric problem at all," said Dr Zafullah Chowdhury, founder and trustee of Gonoshasthaya Kendra yesterday.

Once the Directorate General of Drug Administration approves the testing kits, Gonoshasthaya Kendra can go for mass production, he said.

A team of Gonoshasthaya-RNA Biotech, a sister concern of Gonoshasthaya Kendra, has developed the kit called Rapid Dot Blot, which can detect coronavirus infection in 15 minutes. The team, led by Bijon Kumar Sil, included Nihad Adnan, Raed Jamiruddin and Firoz Ahmed.

Bijon was among the researchers who had developed a kit to diagnose SARS coronavirus in 2003. Rapid Dot Blot is patented under his name.

## UAE warns

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aware of any such thing.

He said the Middle Eastern countries, including the UAE, regularly detain some migrants for their undocumented status and then deport them.

"Now, with all the flights suspending their operations, the number of such migrants has gone up. Therefore, they want them to return home," he told The Daily Star without giving the number of such migrants.

### ANNOUNCE MEASURES TO PROTECT MIGRANT WORKERS: AMNESTY INT'L TO LEBANON

Amnesty International (AI), meanwhile, has called for Lebanon to announce a set of immediate measures to protect migrant domestic workers, including Bangladeshis, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In a release Tuesday, the human rights watchdog said authorities must ensure that migrant domestic workers are protected from exploitative working conditions during lockdown, and that all domestic workers -- including the undocumented -- have access to healthcare during the pandemic.

An estimated 250,000 migrant domestic workers remain trapped under the country's kafala system, putting their rights and lives at risk during the outbreak, Amnesty further said.

Of an estimated 1.6 lakh Bangladeshi migrant workers including around 30,000 undocumented in Lebanon, more than half are women domestic workers.

AI's Middle East and North Africa Regional Director Heba Morayef said, "While staying at home will help prevent the spread of Covid-19, it increases the risk of exploitation and other forms of abuse suffered by live-in migrant domestic workers at the hands of their employers."

"Exploitative working conditions, the threat of violence, and living under lockdown can also have a devastating impact on the mental health of domestic workers, many of whom are far removed from their own homes and families," she added.

Lebanon must ensure that human rights are at the centre of all prevention, containment and treatment efforts during the Covid-19 pandemic, AI said.

## Cases hit 2m amid chaos

FROM PAGE 12

the coronavirus".

Trump charged that the outbreak could have been contained "with very little death" if the WHO had accurately assessed the situation in China, where the disease broke out late last year.

Leaders around the globe fired back at the US president, who had initially downplayed the dangers of a virus that has now killed more people in the United States than any other country on the planet.

Beijing warned that the move would "undermine the international cooperation" at a "critical moment" in the pandemic.

Trump also earned a rebuke from UN chief Antonio Guterres as well as entrepreneur Bill Gates who tweeted that cutting funding was "as dangerous as it sounds".

The European Union's foreign policy chief was similarly disapproving. And African Union chief Moussa Faki Mahamat condemned Trump's decision as "deeply regrettable".

Trump's controversial attack came the world is facing down a looming economic catastrophe, which the International Monetary Fund has said could see \$9 trillion wiped from the global economy in the worst downturn since the 1930s Great Depression.

Underlining the point, Europe's powerhouse Germany has been in recession since March, the government said yesterday.

The virus-hit Chinese economy, second only to the US, probably contracted for the first time in around three decades in the first quarter, according to an AFP poll of economists.

Meanwhile finance ministers from the G20 -- the world's richest countries -- held virtual talks Wednesday about a possible debt moratorium for poor states struggling to weather the costs of the pandemic.

With tentative hope the pandemic could be past its peak in some European hotspots, countries are gradually lifting restrictions -- to mixed reception.

Children started returning to nurseries, kindergartens and primary schools in parts of Denmark, where other measures, such as the closing of borders, bars, restaurants

remained in place.

Finland's Prime Minister Sanna Marin also lifted a travel ban in the Helsinki region even as she urged residents to continue avoiding movement.

Italy, the first European country to enter a full lockdown, is allowing bookshops, laundrettes, stationers and children's clothing retailers to reopen.

And Spain, which saw another dip in its daily death toll, has permitted work to start some factories and construction sites, though most people remain under strict stay-at-home measures.

Yet warnings abound that a real return to normal is still a long way off.

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said the confinement was working but that "nothing will be the same until a vaccine is found".

Germany was also expected to extend its coronavirus restrictions to May 3, regional government sources said yesterday.

Harvard scientists, meanwhile, have warned it is unlikely that one-time lockdowns will do the job, predicting that repeated periods of social distancing could be needed into 2022 to avoid overwhelming hospitals.

Elsewhere, governments are struggling to enforce lockdowns in impoverished regions where shutdowns are spreading hunger among the poorest.

As the virus appeared to be on the retreat in some parts of richer Europe, it is slowly taking hold in Africa, which has seen 15,000 cases and 800 deaths continent-wide -- with fears over growing hunger and possible social unrest.

A similar crisis is emerging in Ecuador in Latin America, where hunger trumps fear of the virus for residents in rundown areas of the badly affected city of Guayaquil.

"The police come with a whip to send people running, but how do you say to a poor person 'Stay home' if you don't have enough to eat?" said Carlos Valencia, a 35-year-old teacher.

The city's mayor has warned that overstretched medical facilities mean many are dying without the chance to be tested -- a reality that could be hiding the true extent of the carnage in many poorer places.

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**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Bangladesh Railway

Office of the Assistant Executive Engineer/I.C  
Saidpur, Nilphamari

No. Notice/AEN/IC/04/2019-20 Date: 13/04/2020

**Invitation for Tender**

e-Tender is invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocurement.gov.bd>) by Assistant Executive Engineer/Incharge, Bangladesh Railway, Saidpur for the procurement of:

| Sl No. | Tender ID | Name of work   | Tender documents publication date & time | Tender closing date & time |
|--------|-----------|--|--|----------------------------|
| 1.     | 405373    | In SSAE/Works/SDP Section Repairs and provide Porch and saluting dais at VIP rest house at officer colony.                           | 15-Apr-2020<br>10:00                     | 30-Apr-2020<br>11:00       |
| 2.     | 452864    | Repairs to Paint shop & GOH shop roof leakage and other ancillary works at Saidpur Workshop.   | 15-Apr-2020<br>10:00                     | 30-Apr-2020<br>11:00       |
| 3.     | 452883    | Repairs in Drain short ballasting section Cleaning Section Traverser & C & W shop including other ancillary works at Workshop.       | 15-Apr-2020<br>10:00                     | 30-Apr-2020<br>11:00       |
| 4.     | 453061    | Repairs to Foundry shop casting section Mould section including grille to protect unauthorized entrance at Saidpur Workshop.         | 15-Apr-2020<br>10:00                     | 30-Apr-2020<br>11:00       |
| 5.     | 453139    | Thorough repairs to Bunglow No. T 14 at Shahebpura & Bunglow No. E/01 at officers colony including other ancillary works in Saidpur. | 16-Apr-2020<br>10:00                     | 03-May-2020<br>11:00       |

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocurement.gov.bd>). Further information and guidelines are available in this National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk [helpdesk@eprocurement.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocurement.gov.bd).

**Md. Ahasan Uddin**  
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GD-741