

Faridpur BCL

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arrested on June 7 for their alleged involvement in attacking the house of Subal Chandra in the town's Goalchamat area on May 16.

During primary probe, police came to know that the two had laundered around Tk 2,000 crore abroad.

Later on June 26, the CID filed a case against the two under the money laundering act with Kafrul Police Station in the capital.

Road crash

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six riders of the CNG-run auto-rickshaw injured.

Locals rushed them to Tangail General Hospital where on duty doctors declared Sheuli Begum dead. Al Amin and his parents later succumbed to their injuries while taking to Dhaka for better treatment.

Al Amin's brother Nazrul Islam said his brother, along with others, was going to Tangail town to take their mother Saleha Begum to a doctor.

Police said they seized the passenger bus but its driver and helpers managed to flee.

'It's time

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"On day one" of his own presidency, Biden said, he would implement a national Covid-19 plan and mandate mask wearing.

Biden is on his third White House bid after failing to win the nomination in 1988 and 2008.

But after months of relentless mockery from Trump and other Republicans who claim Biden is senile, the veteran politician's speech was markedly fluent and always full of passion.

Democrats hope the strong performance, as well as the vice presidential nomination of Kamala Harris -- the first black woman ever to make it onto the White House ticket of a major party -- will deflate those attacks.

Biden leads in almost every national opinion poll and also in the crucial swing states.

But Trump is fighting hard in what is shaping up to be an election of unprecedented ferocity and division.

Speaking to Fox News's Sean Hannity as the Democratic convention was in full swing, Trump repeated his claim that increased mail-in voting -- which Democrats say is needed due to coronavirus fears -- will lead to fraud.

"They're trying to steal the election," said Trump, who has pointedly refused to confirm that he will accept the result if he loses.

Earlier, Trump also tried to overshadow Biden's thunder with a visit just outside his challenger's birthplace in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Biden is "your worst nightmare," Trump told the crowd in an extraordinarily dark speech in Old Forge.

He falsely claimed that Biden had abandoned the blue collar town -- he in fact moved out with his family when he was a child -- and warned that Democrats would usher in an era of "violent mobs" and "blood-stained sidewalks."

Trump's shock win in 2016 over Hillary Clinton was partly helped by divisions within the Democrats. This time, the party is doing everything to emphasise unity, with many of Biden's primary rivals appearing in a friendly joint video call during the convention.

One by one, guests ranging from comedian Julia Louis-Dreyfus to Democratic heavy hitters came out to rip Trump, while praising Biden's ability to connect with people who are suffering at a time when the country is going through twin health and economic crises.



(From L) Jill Biden, husband former vice-president and Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden, Senator from California and Democratic vice presidential nominee Kamala Harris and her husband Douglas Emhoff greet supporters outside the Chase Center in Wilmington, Delaware, at the conclusion of the Democratic National Convention, held virtually amid the novel coronavirus pandemic, on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

Stand beside newspaper industry

FROM PAGE 1
publishing have had to adopt cost-cutting techniques in order to keep up by reducing the number of pages, volume of printing, coloured pages, as well as cutting down on other administrative expenses.

In this age of digital globalisation, the newspaper industry suffered gravely and the pandemic just made it all the more severe. Newspaper sales dropped by two third and revenue even more. Due to the overall decline in sales, it has become difficult for the newspapers to pay the salaries of their employees. While some are paying half of the actual amount, others are struggling to do that as well. Despite all the efforts to reduce costs, survival has become extremely challenging. Due to such instability, the printing and distribution of all newspapers in Chattogram was in a hiatus for a good while.

Noah held multiple meetings with the information minister regarding the situation during the ongoing pandemic where several proposals were put forward by the newspapers to tackle the crisis. However, the outcome has not been fruitful. Many other sectors have received government support at various levels. We are hopeful that the government will take special initiatives to address our problems too.

It is to be noted that amidst the crisis, newspaper owners, editors, journalists, agents and hawkers are in discussion amongst themselves to help ease the burden. They have made various demands to the government. Noah has always tried to raise awareness about the crucial state of the newspaper industry so that the government would pay heed during the allocation of budget and formulation of policies.

Like last year, this year too, prior to the budget formulation, Noah voiced out its concerns regarding tax, value added tax, etc. to the National Board of Revenue, Ministry of Finance

and Ministry of Information, but in vain. In order to overcome the crisis, members of Noah have met with Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud and Private Industry and Investment Adviser to the Prime Minister Salman F Rahman. They considered the issues with urgency and assured to take the required initiatives.

Ahead of the proposed national budget for 2020-21, a five-point written proposal was submitted to Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal where it was emphasised that without government support, it would be nearly impossible to survive the current crisis, but there was no positive outcome. However, the Ministry of Information has recently taken steps to pay some arrears.

In 2014, under the labour law, the newspaper industry was declared a service industry. Noah demanded that due to the dire state of the industry, the corporate tax on newspapers be reduced from 35 percent to 10 percent. At the same time, there was also a demand to omit the 15 percent value added tax (VAT) on the import of newsprint. The other demands included reduction of the Tax at Source (TDS) on advertising revenue from four percent to two percent, and reduction of the advance tax (AIT) on raw materials to zero percent instead of five percent. As a service industry, the newspapers are void of any special benefits and have to pay corporate tax of 35 percent, whereas despite being a for-profit sector, the RMG industry's corporate tax stands at 10 to 12 percent. In this year's budget, corporate tax has been reduced by 2.5 percent for all industries. In that case, it was necessary to reduce it to at least 10-15 percent for the newspaper industry.

According to the Income Tax Ordinance, TDS (Tax Deducted at source) should be four percent on newspaper advertisement income and AIT five percent on raw materials

at source—a total of 9 percent. Most newspapers barely have a dividend of nine percent of the total income. Therefore, Noah is demanding that TDS be reduced to two percent and AIT to zero. Under the Value Added Tax and Supplementary Duty Act, newspapers fall under the list of services that are exempt from VAT, yet it has to pay 15 percent VAT. Apart from that, this service industry's raw material is newsprint, which amounts to more than half of the total cost. Noah demanded that VAT-free benefits be imposed on newsprint imports or a maximum of five percent be charged as VAT.

During the current crisis, almost every sector has benefited from incentives and concessions being provided by the government, save the newspapers and mass media. Such a high amount of VAT should not be imposed on newsprint. In order for this industry to thrive, it is extremely necessary to eliminate, or at least reduce the corporate taxes, AIT and TDS. On the other hand, the government announced the initiative to grant the 9th Wage Board for the newspaper industry. At a time when newspapers were already going through extremely difficult moments, such an announcement will only worsen its woes. It was not feasible in any manner and thus it was not acceptable. Multiple writs are still pending with the High Court in this regard.

The previous Wage Board too was unrealistic and only a handful of organisations were able to grant it. Even in the past, neither was there any special assistance or grant from the government, nor any significant amenities. Given that we are in the age of digital media in today's competitive market, newspapers are unable to take the initiative to increase their revenues.

As the owners' opinions are never taken into account, the Wage Board remains limited to salaries and

allowances only, which is having a grave impact on the industry. Newspapers have been forced to cut back on essential expenditures as they were unable to cope with the impractical financial pressure. There is a possibility that the industry will not be able to implement the new Wage Board or might award it partially, and that will push it to the verge of closure.

The survival of the newspaper industry is a matter of grave concern. In these dire times, we feel that government intervention—stimulus package, incentives, bank loans on easy terms—are all crucial to save this industry. At the same time, we are appealing to the government to take immediate steps to pay the large sums of advertisement bills which are long due.

We urge the government to resolve the complications related to duties, VAT, etc. In these difficult times, we also urge all readers, journalists, advertisers, agents and hawkers to take a stand. Your collective cooperation is essential for the survival of the newspaper industry. We appeal to all concerned, including the government, to come forward to protect our withering newspaper industry.

Saudi sacks officials over corruption at tourism projects

AFP, Riyadh

Senior Saudi security commanders were among a string of officials sacked over graft allegations at tourism projects, state media said yesterday, in the government's latest anti-corruption purge.

The sacked officials include the governors of the Red Sea coastal cities of Umluj and Al-Wajh, the head of border security and other local commanders as well as officials from the interior ministry, the Saudi Press Agency said, citing a royal order.

UP member

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Saidpur and urged him to replace Ataur with an eligible beneficiary.

Contacted, Ataur admitted all this and said because of "his old age", he is eligible to get the allowance. He is 65.

He further said since there is no guarantee that he will be re-elected in the next polls, he included his name in the "elderly allowance recipients" list to get lifelong benefit.

Asked about this, Md Mosharaf Hossain, deputy director of District Social Welfare Department, said in no way the UP member could be a recipient of the allowance as he is getting remuneration from the government.

"We have issued show cause notice to our activist in Kamarpukur union and we are going to cancel the controversial name from the list," he added.

Saidpur UNO Md Nasim told this correspondent that necessary action would be taken against those found responsible for this "irregularity".

Majority favours

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according to a health bulletin issued today by his personal physician.

MASS MOVEMENT IF NO CONSTITUTION BY OCTOBER 10

The National Awami Party (Bhashani) Chief Maulana Bhashani today threatens to launch a country-wide mass movement if the government fails to give the nation a constitution by October 10 this year. He also demands that the constitution should provide for the proportionate representation of workers and peasants.

DISTRIBUTION ANOMALIES CAUSE PRICE HIKE

The system of distribution of essential items imported through the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh is alleged to be full of anomalies and irregularities. It has caused resentment among general people and trading circles. It is alleged that non-trader permit holders sell permits at a price 200 percent higher than others. The result is that prices are being immediately pushed up in the market.

SOURCES: August 23, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Rape victim

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multiple times, according to victim's family and locals.

The victim's father alleged that the rapist and his family members attacked them in their house and forcibly took the girl away after beating him and his mother yesterday evening.

"Sohel Rana also threatened to forcibly marry my daughter," the victim's father said.

However, the victim's father alleged that the police were not sincere about finding his daughter.

Sohel Rana was earlier arrested in the rape case filed by the victim's family and is currently on bail, police said.

The charge sheet of the case was submitted before the court, police said.

Vast areas

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Normally, water in this area rises 40-50cm above the danger level. But it rose by a maximum of 114cm this time, said Md Hasanuzzaman, executive engineer of Bhola's Water Development Board (WDB).

Besides, cracks have developed in different embankments in Patuakhali and Barguna, said the WDB officials concerned.

They also stressed the need to extend the heights of the embankments at risk.

The people of these districts are having to spend days amid crises of food and drinking water.

Alamgir Hossain, a fisherman of Bhola's Mopura upazila, on Thursday said he had to remain standing in the house with his child with water reaching up to his chest.

On Wednesday, two children died due to high tide in Mehendiganj of Barishal district. They are Farhan, 5, and Asfia, 6, confirmed Pijush Chandra Dey, Mehendiganj UNO.

Low-lying areas including Palashpur, Alekanda, Band Road and Amanatganj and most of the 19 slums in Barishal city were flooded.

Meanwhile in Chattogram, Toktarpool area of the city's Bakolia has been inundated for the last two weeks.

In Sirajganj, the flood situation has remained unchanged as the water of the Jamuna is flowing 8cm below the danger level.

"Water of Jamuna was rising for the last four to five days. But it has remained steady today [Friday]. We expect the floodwater to recede soon," said KM Rafikul Islam, sub-divisional engineer of the district WDB.

In Manikganj, the Jamuna's water level was slowly decreasing and flowing 31cm below the danger level, said local WDB officials.

(Our correspondents from Barishal, Chattogram, Pabna and Manikganj contributed to the story.)

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Court asks for docs of case against former

FROM PAGE 12
Amzad Hossain, general registration officer of the court.

The court has also directed the investigating officer of the case to appear before it with the case diary on September 9.

"Steps are being taken to send a copy of the court order to the police station in this regard," he added.

Azizur Rahman Dulu, a lawyer for journalist Ariful Islam, said that Ariful filed the plea under Article 21 of the Police

Regulations 1943.

The plea hearing was held in presence of veteran lawyer Enamul Haque Chowdhury Chand and lawyer Mizanur Rahman.

Other lawyers of the district bar also assisted in the matter, said Ariful's lawyer.

On March 14, a mobile court of Kurigram district administration, led by three assistant commissioners, convicted and sentenced Ariful, the Kurigram correspondent of Bangla Tribune and Dhaka Tribune, to one-year imprisonment after he was arrested from his

home on charges of possessing narcotics.

Earlier the same night, Ariful and his family members were about to go to sleep when some Ansar members, accompanied by assistant commissioners Nazim Uddin, Rintu Bikash Chakma and Rahatul Islam, stormed into their home and tortured Ariful.

Later around 1:30am on March 14, Ariful was sent to jail.

The action against Ariful was conducted allegedly at the direction of the then DC Sultana Pervin.

Scientists build methanol-powered

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making it "one of the lightest and smallest autonomous robots ever created," its inventor Xiufeng Yang told AFP.

"We wanted to create a robot that has a weight and size comparable to real insects," added Yang, who was lead author of a paper describing the work in Science Robotics on Wednesday.

The problem is that most robots need motors that are themselves bulky and require electricity, which in turn makes batteries necessary.

The smallest batteries available weigh 10-20 times more than a tiger beetle, a 50 milligram insect the team used as their reference point.

To overcome this, Yang and his colleagues engineered an artificial muscle system based on liquid fuel -- in this case methanol, which stores about 10 times more energy than a battery of the same mass.

The "muscles" are made from nickel-titanium alloy wires -- also known as Nitinol -- which contracts in length when heated, unlike most metals that expand.

The wire was coated in a platinum powder that acts as a catalyst for the combustion of methanol

vapor.

As the vapor from RoBeetle's fuel tank burns on the platinum powder, the wire contracts, and an array of microvalves shut to stop more combustion.

The wire then cools and expands, which once more opens the valves, and the process repeats itself until all the fuel is spent.

The expanding and contracting artificial muscles are connected to the RoBeetle's front legs through a transmission mechanism, which allows it to crawl.

The team tested their robot on a variety of flat and inclined surfaces made from materials that were both smooth, like glass, and rough, like mattress pads.

RoBeetle could carry a load of up to 2.6 times its own weight on its back and run for two hours on a full tank, said Yang.

By contrast, "the smallest battery-powered crawling robot weighs one gram and operates about 12 minutes."

In the future, microbots may be used for a variety of applications like infrastructure inspection or search-and-rescue missions after natural disasters. They might also assist in tasks like artificial pollination or environmental monitoring.

Office Relocation Notice

Reckitt Benckiser (Bangladesh) Ltd.

Location of corporate office and share department of Reckitt Benckiser (Bangladesh) Limited will be changed according to the details below with effect from 23rd August, 2020.

Old Address:

Plot-2 (B), Block-SE (C), Road-138, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212

New Address:

The Glass House, 9th and 10th Floor, Plot-2, Block-SE (B), 38 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212