

## 6-point demand brainchild of Bangabandhu alone: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the historic six-point demand was solely the brainchild of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and nobody else was involved in formulating this crucial political programme that led the to the county's independence.

"Many people want to say many things regarding the six-point demand ... some say it was done following suggestions from that person, some others say it was formulated with the advice from those persons. But I know for sure, it was his [Bangabandhu] brainchild," she said.

The PM was addressing a programme marking the distribution of awards among the winners of a quiz competition, organised on the occasion of the Six-point Demand Day (June 7).

Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Birth Centenary Celebration National Implementation Committee organised the event at the capital's International Mother Language Institute. The premier joined the programme virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

Hasina said Bangabandhu was arrested in 1958 and released on December 17, 1969. At that time, politics was banned. Bangabandhu could not go outside Dhaka, and he joined Alfa Insurance Company.

She mentioned that Tajuddin Ahmad was also under arrest at that time. After release, he went to Fatulla of Narayanganj to join his job. Bangabandhu himself went to Narayanganj, brought Tajuddin back to Dhaka and gave him a job at the insurance company.

The premier, who was studying at Dhaka University then, said the Father of the Nation had appointed Mohammad Hanif as his PA at Alfa

Insurance Company.

"Bangabandhu used to think, write down those and gave those write-ups to Hanif for typing out. Here only Hanif knew about this [six-point demand] as he typed out that ... nobody else would know about it."

Hasina said the six-point demand came from thoughts of Bangabandhu after the 1965 India-Pakistan war that lasted for three weeks and the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was totally left defenseless.

She also said after the arrest of Bangabandhu and other front-ranking Awami League leaders due to the announcement of the six-point demand, Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib had played a great role in publicising and advancing the movement over these demands.

The PM said the August-15, 1975, massacre had stopped Bangladesh's advancement.

Talking about the August-15 brutal killings of Bangabandhu and his family members, Hasina said the defeated force had emerged in the country through those killings and they tried to diminish its victory.

"I think there's no scope for that now ... history takes its own course ... Nobody can erase that and that is established today."

The PM said the government wanted to advance the country following the path shown by the Father of the Nation. State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak also spoke on the occasion.

A documentary on Bangabandhu and the six-point demand was also screened at the programme.

Some 100 competitors received certificates, signed by the PM, and prize money for securing various positions in the quiz competition under different categories.



**Paiksha Majhail Government Primary School in Tangail lies in ruins after being ravaged by the Jamuna. Many school buildings in the district have suffered a similar fate due to river erosion and ongoing floods. The photo was taken recently.**

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

## 'We want Messi to stay'

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he has been with for 20 seasons, since he was 13 years old.

"Messi has not informed us that he was not going to show up to training," Planes said during the official unveiling of Portuguese striker Joao Trincão. "But all exchanges will remain between the two parties and out of respect we will not communicate on what is said because we are putting all our efforts in this dialogue."

Planes took over his post from Eric Abidal, who was sacked a day after manager Quique Setien was released following the humiliating 8-2 Champions League quarter-final defeat by Bayern Munich, which left

Barca without a trophy for the first time since 2007.

Messi, Planes insisted, in the first official club reaction to the Argentinian's want-away demand, was "important news".

"But what we think, and we've said it many times, is that we see Messi as a Barca player."

Planes added: "Barca has rebuilt itself several times in its history, and it has always come back more powerful. Our idea is to do it once again, around the best player in the world. You have to have enormous respect for what Messi is and for his history."

When pressed about the clause that would allow Messi to leave the Nou

Camp for no fee at all despite his contract featuring a 700-million-euro buyout clause, Planes said: "We're not thinking about any clause in his contract. Messi's marriage to Barca has brought a lot to both, a lot of joy to the supporters and, internally, we are working to convince Messi to find the best solution for Barca and for Messi."

Planes stressed that there was "not an argument between Messi and Barca -- neither deserves it".

"We are working to make Barca a winner. There is no division within the club over Leo. Anyone who knows football wants him to stay here to win again. He's a winner."

## Padma bridge

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"The tenure of the consultant -- Korea Expressway Corporation and Associates -- is going to expire this August [this month]. So, we have given approval for 34 months' extension [from September 2020 to June 2023] at the cost of Tk 348.1 crore," the minister said.

In November 2014, the government signed a four-year deal with the joint venture firm for supervising the construction of the bridge and river training at a cost of Tk 383.15 crore.

Asked if the cost for extending the consultancy service would increase the cost for the bridge, the finance minister said, "No. The [consultancy] cost would be adjusted in the total project cost."

Replying to another question on whether the project deadline would be extended, he said yes and added that they had a plan to complete the project within 2021 but Covid-19 turned everything upside down.

### PROGRESS HALTED

When work of most development projects was suspended due to the pandemic, Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project work continued.

But it suffered due to lack of workers -- Chinese and local -- and poor supply of construction materials since January, said officials involved with the project.

The project authority was able to bring back pace after Chinese nationals returned to work in May following the end of the two-month shutdown. But strong currents in the Padma started causing problems, they said.

No span could not be installed after June 10, when the 31st span was installed, due to strong currents, officials said.

Besides, at least 192 railway stingers and 220 roadway decks, supposed to be used for construction of the bridge, went into the Padma on July 31 due to erosion at a yard.

Although the erosion would not affect the bridge, which was nearly 2km off the bridge site, it might cause some delay as the stingers would have to be imported from Luxembourg, they added.

As of December last year, the overall progress of the project was 76.5 percent. It reached 81 percent in the last seven months, project documents say.

The progress of the main bridge and river training was 85.5 percent and 66 percent in December. Until July, it was 89.25 percent and 74 percent, the documents claim.

Contacted, Belayet Hossain, secretary of bridges division, said, "Deadline of the Padma bridge project would be extended. We are considering to extend it for one more year."

Asked whether the project cost would increase, he said, "We don't think the project cost would increase if we adjust cost of different sectors [of the project]."

Prof Khan Mahmud Amanat of civil engineering department of Buet said escalation of project cost mostly depends on the contract with the contractors.

"As the contractors didn't seek review of the contract cost so far, that's why the project authority can say that the project cost will not increase," he said. "If contractors seek review of the contract cost due to the time extension, then the issue of the rise in project cost will arise. It can't be said right now," he told this correspondent yesterday.

The original cost -- Tk 10,161 crore -- for the bridge was estimated in 2007 on the basis of a feasibility study. After several revisions, the cost rose to Tk 30,193 crore.

The World Bank withdrew its \$1.2 billion loan in 2012 over allegations of corruption conspiracies, which the government refutes.

Bangladesh then moved to build the bridge with its own funds.

Meanwhile, the purchase committee also approved five more proposals involving Tk 447 crore.

Two of the proposals are for procuring furniture and home appliance for residential facilities at the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant Project while the other three are for contracts for publishing textbooks to be distributed among students for free.

## Liaquat, two other cops sued

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The accused are: suspended SI Liaquat, Nazrul, sub-inspector of Satkania Police Station, former SI Hannan, SM Sahabuddin, Bishnupad Palit, Kajol Kanti Baidya and Ziaur Rahman.

Sahabuddin, Bishnupad, Kajol and Ziaur Rahman are the business rivals of the plaintiff, said Jewel.

Jasim Uddin, 55, is the son of late Nekbar Ali Sikdar of Patenga area in the city.

According to the case statement, Jasim filed a case after a burglary took place at his office in June 2014.

SI Liaquat, who became the investigation officer of the case, initially took Tk 50,000 from Jasim during the investigation, the statement reads.

On June 14, 2014, Liaquat asked Jasim to come over at Laldighi DB office and requested him to "compromise" the case.

As he refused to do so, Liaquat demanded Tk 5 lakh from him and tortured him inside the police station, the statement reads.

Later, Liaquat took him Patenga Police Station and threatened him to "kill him in a crossfire," Jasim claimed in the case statement.

Later, Jasim gave Liaquat Tk 2 lakh and was taken to Sadarghat Police Station where he was shown arrested in an extortion case, it said.

Jasim was sent to jail in the case and he got bail after 19 days, the statement says.

### COMPLAINT AGAINST PRADEEP

A complaint has been filed with a court in Cox's Bazar against 23 people, including former officer-in-charge (OC)

of Teknaf Police Station Pradeep Kumar Das, over killing a man in the name of "gunfight".

Nurul Hossain, 45, brother of the deceased, filed the complaint yesterday.

After a hearing over the complaint, the court directed the incumbent OC of Teknaf Police Station to submit detailed report of the cases that were filed by police following the "gunfight" incident.

Judge of the Cox's Bazar Senior Judicial Magistrate Court-3 Mohammad Helal Uddin came up with the directive yesterday.

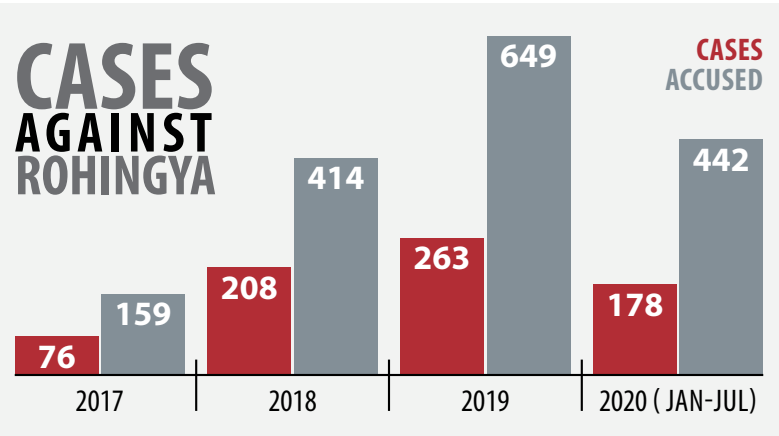
Of the accused, 16 are policemen. Of them, some are still working at Teknaf Police Station, while some others have been transferred.

In his complaint, Nurul said his brother Mahmudul Haque was a Saudi expatriate. After returning to Bangladesh in 2019, police demanded Tk 10 lakh from him as extortion.

As he did not pay the money, police on March 28, 2019 picked up Mahmudul. Later, the victim's family members paid Tk 5 lakhs to police. But police killed Mahmudul on March 31, 2019 in the name of "gunfight", the complaint read.

Contacted, Nurul said, "My brother was not accused in any case. He was killed in a planned way in the name of a gunfight. Following the killing, police kept threatening our family members."

"We did not dare to file any complaint due to the insecurity of our lives. Now, the opportunity has come. That is why, we have filed complaints now," he added.



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officially recognised as refugees by the Bangladesh government -- meaning they have no legal rights in the country and that's why filing a case can be daunting.

"They hold internal meetings led by majhis [Rohingya leaders assigned to help maintain order in the camps] and just perform the burial [of the victim]," he told The Daily Star last week.

Shalish-style informal justice mechanisms led by majhis take place in many cases and do not reach the police or even the camp in-charge.

On August 21, a Rohingya "criminal group" suddenly came out from the hills and started firing at Unchiphrang camp 22. As law enforcers started gathering in the camp, the "criminal group" again went into hiding after firing 15 to 20 rounds, according to sources.

During the firing, two Rohingyas men -- Block C residents Shukur, 20, and Nur Hossain, 45 -- suffered bullet injuries and needed treatment.

However, no case has yet been registered with the police.

On Tuesday, police arrested six Rohingyas men in possession of arms following a raid at a refugee camp in Teknaf. The arrestees are Nur Hossain, Mohammad Alam, Abdur Rahman, Abu Sadek, Md Amin and Jafor Alam -- all living in Wykong Puthibonia Rohingya Refugee Camp.

Two pistols, seven bullets and machetes were recovered from their possession, said Anwar Hossain, camp-in-charge of APBn.

"Some unruly Rohingyas men were trying to establish supremacy in the Rohingyas camp by creating chaos," he said, adding that they fired blanks to create panic.

A case was, however, filed in this connection.

Due to crime incidents such as these, locals living in Teknaf and Ukhia -- where the camps are located -- have expressed concerns over their safety.

Jahangir Kabir Chowdhury, chairman of Rajapalong union parishad, told The Daily Star on Thursday, "We are in fear as they [Rohingyas] are organised and they are gradually spreading to various parts of the district."

"We often find thousands of Rohingyas moving outside the camps. If they attack us, then who will protect us from them?"

The government does not permit Rohingyas to move freely outside the camps -- though this has been unevenly enforced over the years, restrictions have tightened recently.

ABM Masud Hossain,

superintendent of police of Cox's Bazar, told The Daily Star that they have two special battalions (APBn-14 and APBn-16) to oversee law and order in the camps.

"We only investigate the cases filed with police stations. Still, we are on alert and take action whenever any specific information reaches us," he added.

### MAJOR CRIMES

Police and local sources said crimes inside the refugee camps mainly take place over sexual harassment cases, including rape and that related to extramarital affairs, narcotics smuggling, and hundi.

A high ranking police official who works inside the camps said many Rohingyas living in other countries send money to their families in Bangladesh.

"But they mainly send money through hundi as they have no direct account service. The receiver sometimes does not pay the full amount to the family after receiving the money," he said.

For this reason, cheated family members often hire local criminal groups to abduct the person and take them away in the hilly areas and hold them there until they give up the rest of the money, said the official.

According to the police database, nine abduction cases were registered against 39 Rohingyas in 2018, six cases against 40 Rohingyas in 2019, and one against three Rohingyas so far this year.

Besides, some members of the Rohingyas community often get locked in clashes -- sometimes fatal -- over narcotics smuggling, claimed several police sources.

The police database shows 22 narcotics cases filed in 2017, which jumped to 95 cases in 2018, 152 cases in 2019, and 136 cases in the first seven months of this year.

Lt Col Ali Haidar Azad Ahmed, commanding officer of 34 Border Guard Bangladesh Battalion, told The Daily Star on Friday, "Total control of the yaba trade has gone into the hands of the Rohingyas. They now have investors and carriers inside the camps."

"They have their syndicate members on the other side of the border [Myanmar]. Through the syndicates, they smuggle yaba inside the camps."

According to the database, around 67 Rohingyas were killed in gunfights with law enforcers in the last two years for their alleged involvement in narcotics smuggling and robbery.

From January 1 to August 20 this year, the 34 BGB battalion has recovered around 14.20 lakh yaba tablets and detained some 21

## Daily deaths from Covid go up again

54 die in a day; cases cross 300,000-mark

MOUDDUD AHMED SUJAN

The death from Covid-19 jumped yesterday after a month, according to the health directorate data.

The directorate reported that 54 people breathed their last in 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday.

The number of confirmed cases also passed the 3-lakh mark.

Yesterday's death toll is the third highest daily death since the government reported the first casualty in the country on March 18.

Earlier, July 26 saw the same number of deaths, while July 5 and 7 saw the second highest deaths -- 55.

The highest 64 deaths were reported on June 30, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

The number of deaths from the highly infectious virus rose to 4,082 -- around 1.35 percent of all confirmed cases.

With 2,519 more people testing positive for Covid-19, the confirmed cases reached 3,02,147, which is 20.34 percent of all people tested since January 21.

Some 15,070 samples were tested in the 24 hours.

According to a DGHS press release, the positivity rate was 16.72 percent yesterday, a significant reduction in more than a month.

Experts say it indicates that the transmission may be decreasing in hotspot cities.

The majority of the tests are being done in Dhaka, Narayanganj, and Chattogram cities, and the positivity rate is now low there. So, it can be said the transmission is slowing down there, said Prof Ridwanur Rahman, an infectious disease specialist, told The Daily Star yesterday.

## IO closed

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impartial investigation into the incident, said Zayedul Alam, superintendent of Narayanganj police.

Family members of murder and gang-rape accused said SI Shamim intimidated three accused in the case of making confessional statement before the court. The incident surfaced as the girl was found alive after 51 days since she went missing.

Zahed Parvez, additional superintendent of police (Detective Branch), was made the head of the fact-finding committee.

Talking to The Daily Star, Zahed Parved said that Additional Superintendent Of Police (Crime) KM Mossaraf Hossain would submit the probe report against SI Shamim.

He also said that they visited the crime scene and also talked to the family members of the victim.

"We will talk to every one for the sake of a proper investigation. But it will take time," said Zahed Parvez.

Meanwhile, Abdul Hia, the new IO of the case, said that he got all the documents related to the case and was not in a position to say any further details.

A team of police rescued the teenage girl who was said to have been murdered alive on Monday, 51 days after she went missing from Kushiya area of the upazila and brought her to Narayanganj Sadar Model Police Station.

## JKG's SABRINA

## Errant officials to face action for issuing her two NIDs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission will take action if any of its officials is found involved in handing two National Identity cards to JKG Health Care's Dr Sabrina Arif Chowdhury, who is now in jail on charge of issuing fake Covid-19 certificates.

"Action will be taken against the officials and other staffers if found involved in issuing the two NIDs," EC Senior Secretary Md Alamgir said yesterday, while replying to reporters' questions.

The Anti-Corruption Commission has been looking into illegal assets of Sabrina and her husband JKG Chief Executive Officer Ariful Chowdhury.

During the investigation, ACC officials found that Sabrina had two NIDs, said sources at the anti-graft watchdog.

The ACC, on July 13, had begun the enquiry against Sabrina and her husband.

On August 19, ACC Deputy Director Selina Akhter Moni in a letter requested the EC to inform her whether anyone could have two NIDs.

The EC secretary said they received the ACC's letter. "The NID wing of the EC looks after the matter. We've asked them to send them a reply by today," he said.

"If the matter of dual NIDs turns out to be true and if any EC official is found involved, we'll take action," he said.

Sources said Sabrina got two NIDs for two different areas. She gave different particulars in the two NIDs.

In one NID, she said her date of birth is December 2, 1978, while it is December 2, 1983, in the other. She also used different names as her spouse.

On August 20, a Dhaka court framed charges against eight people, including Sabrina and Arif, in a case filed over issuing fake Covid-19 certificates.

The trial of the case is scheduled to begin today.