

Govt can't protect our mothers, sisters from rape: BNP

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior leader Nazrul Islam Khan yesterday alleged that people are getting scared of politics due to “wrongdoings” and “spiting venom” by the government in the name of politics.

“Foul play, dirty behaviour and spiting venom in the name of politics only frighten people about politics. The government is doing this to mislead people,” he said.

Nazrul made the remarks while speaking at a human chain formed by Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal in front of BNP’s Nayapaltan central office protesting a “false propaganda” against party founder Ziaur Rahman.

He said the ruling party top leaders have long been conducting a “false” campaign and spreading “lies” against Zia and his family members, but people do not believe them. “So, there’s no point of making such evil efforts to malign Zia and his family.”

Nazrul, a BNP standing committee member, voiced deep concern over the growing incidents of rape and violence against women.

Referring to the statistics of Ain o Salish SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Within three wewks after it was last dug for underground electrical and water works, Sylhet's Chowhatta-Zindabazar road is being dug into again. City corporation sources said contractors for previous projects did not dig it properly, and the new round of digging is a rectification of their faulty delivery. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASR

HOUSEHOLD WORK  
Millennial men not holding up their end

NILIMA JAHAN

When 32-year-old Shabib Rahman (not his real name) got married in 2015, it came as a relief for him. From cleaning his room to arranging daily meals, everyday things he had to do for his six years of living alone in Dhaka he was now relieved of.

Shabib never really enjoyed this household work, holding the stereotypical idea that these are “women’s work”.

This is not an anomaly. When this correspondent interviewed 50 men, all millennials aged between 18-34, she found out that this is in fact the predominant male attitude towards household work or unpaid care work.

The interviews were held through social media and over telephone, to explore the experience of men’s participation in unpaid care and domestic work.

No fewer than 48 of the 50 millennial men said they feel that men should do a fair share of household chores.

However, when asked how many hours they spent doing it, half of them reported spending less than an hour in household and care work, while the other half said they spend around one to three hours in domestic chores.

When asked how frequently they cook, more than two-thirds of the respondents said they usually don’t cook, while seven participants said they sometimes cook on weekends. When it comes to washing clothes, only one-third say they do it, that too only on weekends.

The responses were similar when it came to childcare and taking care of the elderly.

Some of the participants are not foreign to this kind of work. As students, former students, service holders, and current and former migrant workers, they have habituated with this kind of work at some point of their lives.

However, it was found that they do not pay these work any attention SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Three-way collision in Cumilla kills 2

Youth dies as bus hit him in capital's Elephant Road

STAR REPORT

Two people were killed died and at least five others were injured in a three-way bus, truck, and microbus collision at Korpai of Chandina on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway yesterday morning.

The accident occurred as a Feni-bound Star Line bus hit a HiAce microbus from the rear. The micro bus then collided with a truck from behind. The force of the collision killed two microbus passengers on the spot, reports our Cumilla correspondent.

Safayet Hossain, officer-in-charge of Mainamati Crossing Highway Police Station, said, “Highway police and a team of fire brigade rescued the injured passengers and recovered the bodies and sent them to Cumilla Medical College hospital.”

The identities of the deceased could not be confirmed till the filing of this report.

According to locals, the microbus was so badly damaged that fire brigade personnel had to use cutting machines to open its door and rescue the passengers, who remained stuck inside.

When the rescue operation was being carried out, vehicular movement on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway remained restricted.

Meanwhile, a youth was killed after a bus hit him in Dhaka’s New Elephant Road area early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Delwar Hossain (30), a restaurant employee, hailing from Chandpur.

A speeding bus hit him while he was crossing the road near Bata Signal point, on his way to his work, around 6am. Critically injured, he was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, said Rashedul Islam, a sub-inspector of New Market Police Station.

Police are trying to identify the bus that fled after the accident, he said.

The body was sent to morgue for autopsy.

CORRUPTION IN HEALTH SECTOR

Jubo Maitree demands removal of health minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Activists of Bangladesh Jubo Maitree yesterday formed a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club to press home their nine-point demand, including removal of the health minister.

Speakers at the programme said corruption was going hand in hand with Covid-19 and a tyranny of syndicates has become visible in all sectors of the country. If the reins of corruption and syndicates are not pulled now, danger is imminent.

They also said rape, violence against women have become a daily occurrence and culture of teen gangs have emerged in society. These need to be stopped immediately, otherwise social unrest will intensify and the consequences will be terrible, they added.

Leaders of the youth wing of left-leaning Workers Party of Bangladesh said the health minister cannot deny his responsibility for the corruption in health sector and he should be removed from his post for his failure.

Other demands of the group include increasing number of coronavirus testing and ensuring free-of-cost vaccine for all, introducing unemployment allowance and rationing for those who became jobless during the pandemic, bringing all those involved with the corruption in health sector under trial, caution money and interest-free loan for young farmers and small entrepreneurs, and reducing call rates, and data charge of mobile operators and prices of android phones to half.

RAPE CHARGES AGAINST RAJSHAHI PRIEST

Settlement was attempted ‘to prevent scandal’

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Before Pradeep Gregory, a priest in Rajshahi, was arrested on rape charges, religious and community leaders tried to settle the matter in an arbitration, promising to take responsibility of the girl and her family members in exchange for their silence.

Pradeep was arrested around 11:45pm on September 29 from Rajshahi Catholic Diocese in Umorepur area of the city on charges of confining a 15-year-old indigenous girl to a church for three days and raping her, said Additional Superintendent of Police ATM Mynul Islam of Rab-5.

After the incident came to light, leaders of the Rajshahi diocese attempted an out-of-court settlement even though another such attempt by them had gone very wrong 10 years ago.

In February 2011, Serafina Mardi, a gang-rape victim, set herself on fire, protesting the settlement forced on her by community leaders and a catholic church in Godagari upazila. At that time, the church’s priest was also arrested.

In the recent incident, the Tanore girl’s brother filed a case with Tanore Police Station on September 29, accusing Gregory for raping his sister by confining her to his residence inside the church in the upazila.

Rapid Action Battalion arrested the priest the same night.

The girl’s brother told The Daily Star that priests from Rajshahi diocese went to the

church to sit in an arbitration on September 28 after locals discovered the girl at the priest’s residence inside the church.

The seventh-grader had been missing for three days. The church authorities also refused to return the girl, her brother alleged.

Leaders of indigenous Mahle community were also present in the arbitration, he said, adding that they promised to take their responsibility if they kept mum.

Cases of rape and repression on children and women are non-compoundable and mandatory to be settled in court by laws of the land, Samina Begum, coordinator of Rajshahi chapter of BLAST, an NGO often dealing with such cases, said.

“Settling rape cases outside court is an offence. Those responsible or involved in such activities can be treated as abettors,” she said.

The girl’s brother also mentioned about the arbitration in his first information report (FIR) filed with Tanore Police Station, said Additional SP Mahmudul Hasan.

“We are investigating the case. Police will take legal action if anyone is found involved in abetting the perpetrator,” he added.

Talking to The Daily Star, Rajshahi Diocese Bishop Gervas Rozario admitted he sent three senior priests -- Paul Gomes, William Murmu and Emanuel Rozario -- to the Tanore church to look into the matter.

He said they were unaware of the non-compoundable crime of rape at that time.

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Nine Mizdah attack survivors among 164 Libya returnees: IOM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nine survivors of the gruesome Mizdah attack in May were among 164 Bangladeshis who were repatriated in a chartered flight from war-torn Libya this week, International Organisation for Migration said yesterday.

Also on the flight were over 100 other vulnerable migrants, including 39 with medical conditions, IOM said in a statement.

The flight carrying a total of 164 Bangladeshis landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Wednesday.

The UN migration agency’s medical escorts travelled with the migrants and upon arrival, health teams were on site to coordinate healthcare for migrants who will undergo quarantine at government facilities.

Eligible migrants will receive reintegration support once they have completed their government-mandated quarantine period. Follow-up care is particularly important for migrants that experienced physical and psychological trauma while stranded in Libya, IOM said.

In May this year, 30 migrants including 26 from Bangladesh were shot and killed in a smuggling warehouse in Mizdah, near the city of Gharyan, southwest of Tripoli.

The deadly attack also left 11 migrants critically injured, who IOM and partners have supported in subsequent months.

Giorgi Gigauri, chief of mission of IOM Bangladesh, said Covid-19 has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of migrant workers across the world and that they were working to overcome movement and other

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Cloud kitchen: a recipe for growth in food business?

MANNAN MASHHUR ZARIEF, Lifestyle Desk

When the coronavirus pandemic hit Bangladesh early in March, most industries got up and on their toes. Fearing bankruptcy, they scratched their heads and looked for a way out. This was no different for the restaurateurs of Dhaka. However, despite the disastrous setbacks of the pandemic’s early days, their business remains one of the most thriving sectors in the city.

One of the keys to this has been the switch to an online-focus in doing business. With social distancing making dine-in options unsuitable, restaurateurs have moved towards more financially viable options to help sell their dishes. Of them, many business strategies have shown promise, but none more so than the concept of cloud kitchens. This not only offers hope, but as the last few months have shown, it’s also a recipe for growth!

THE BRIGHTER SIDE OF THE BUSINESS

Cloud kitchen, focused on food delivery rather than dine-in services, is nothing new as a concept, but its popularity has been unprecedented since the coronavirus unsettled the conventional food industry.

Compared to brick-and-mortar restaurants, virtual kitchens are much cheaper to set up. While starting a restaurant in Dhaka can be a million-taka affair, the prospect of setting up a virtual kitchen remains within five figures. There is no need to go for prime locations, and no need for extravagant interior decor. Promotion is done through social



Focused on food delivery rather than dine-in services, cloud kitchens have seen a steep rise in popularity since the coronavirus pandemic confined everyone into their homes and turned the conventional food industry on its head.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

media, word of mouth, and reviews in various food related groups are enough for most businesses to sustain.

The operating costs involve only that of hiring a chef and perhaps, a helping hand.

Tanzia Zaman (34) is a full time teacher. But in between taking online classes, she now focuses on running her new business, 137 Dessert Club. Focusing solely on baked food, she operates from the comfort of her home kitchen.

“Although this has been a dream for a while, my teaching commitments never allowed me to venture out. The pandemic provided me an opportunity, and I decided to start a few months ago. So far, the prospects seem promising,” said Zaman.

She is not alone in this. Many like her have recently rolled out their “ghost kitchens”, a viable business idea, given the current circumstances.

“Mezban On The Go” is a pet project of Natasha Chowdhury, and like many others, she too, relies on

social media for taking orders.

“We have a Facebook page and whoever wants to order can do so through messenger. There is also a hotline number.” she told The Daily Star.

“We take 1-2 days to deliver, depending on the item and the quantity of order. Since we have just started the business, demands are not too high, but it seems things will pick up soon.”

While most other virtual kitchens offer a wide range of foods, Chowdhury has decided to keep the menu small in order to focus on quality.

“We cook our mejbani beef in an authentic style. We use wood to make fire, and cook in a traditional mejbani pot. In the whole process, we ensure that strict hygiene standards are maintained,” she said.

“We strongly believe that our virtual kitchen will be a success, and hopefully, we will start corporate catering as soon as we can,” she

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