



Fishers cast nets of various kinds in the Buriganga near Keraniganj's Balur Char area, reeling in fish of different sizes. Until a few years ago, the river was devoid of fishes, owing to heavy pollution from the tanneries situated in the capital's Hazaribagh. Since the tanneries were moved, the water seems to have cleared up a great deal and fishing has become viable in this part of the river. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



DEATH 'IN POLICE CUSTODY'

Rayhan's family demands judicial probe; 111 injury marks found in autopsy

STAR REPORT

Family members of Rayhan Ahmed -- who died after being taken into police custody in Sylhet on October 11 -- yesterday demanded judicial probe into the incident, while a second post-mortem of the body reportedly found 111 injuries inflicted hours before his death.

Rayhan's mother Salma Begum placed a five-point demand in a press conference in the city where other family members, concerned citizens from all walks of life were present.

The demands are: formation of a judicial probe committee to investigate the matter, arrest of all involved police personnel, IGP's direct order to arrest prime suspect SI Akber Hossain Bhuiyan, Sylhet Metropolitan Police Commissioner's statement on the matter, and compensation from the prime minister.

Rayhan's mother also stated that if the suspected policemen are not arrested by 72 hours, they will call in strike and protests, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

111 INJURY MARKS ON HIS BODY: AUTOPSY REPORT

Meanwhile, a second autopsy conducted on Rayhan found 111 injury marks, according to a report submitted to Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) on Saturday, reports UNB.

His stomach was empty, he had severe internal bleeding because of excessive physical torture, and two of his nails were pulled off, according to the report.

Rayhan was tortured between two and four hours before his death. About two litres of blood was found underneath his skin, said Dr Mohammad Shamsul Islam, head of forensic department at Sylhet MGR Osmani Medical College.

Shamsul Alam was also made head of a three-member medical board to carry out a second autopsy after exhuming Rayhan's body on Thursday, after a case was filed in this regard under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act by Rayhan's wife Tahmina Akther Tanni against several unknown people with Kotwali Police Station.

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Performing arts lessons also see online shift

REHENUMA RAYSA, TOGGLE

Just like traditional education's pivot online, performing arts classes too have taken a similar virtual route in the wake of the Covid-19. To adapt to the necessities of the time, lessons are being conducted via videoconferencing platforms such as Zoom, Skype or Meet, where learners continue to sharpen their dancing, music, and acting chops.

However, for all the benefits it provides, problems are aplenty too, ranging from psychological stress to technological failures.

Famed music trainer Ustad Sanjib Dey told this writer although there are certain benefits of the traditional classes, he has developed a positive perspective on this "new normal".

For him, considering the reality of the virus, shifting to online learning seemed to be the best option out there. Moreover, guardians and students have been immensely supportive of this, which made the transition a smooth one for him and his students.

Hridvika Paul, a student of Dhaka University, said she is thoroughly enjoying the new method, other than the network interruptions that come along with remote learning. She said almost everyone attending performing arts classes online are going through issues of flaky network connection, technological glitches, and power outages.

Moumita Haque Shenjutee, another student of Dhaka University and an enlisted artist of Bangladesh Television, said of her experience of attending online classes, "I feel like a lot has changed when it comes to learning classical music in the past five months. Even though I no longer need to waste 2/3 hours on the road to go to the teacher's place, I am finding this whole



PHOTO: STAR

online learning process to be quite emotionally draining."

"Classical music is called a "Guru-Mukhi Bidya". Earlier, we used to listen to the teacher's lessons and sing it back individually, on which we were given advice or one-on-one feedback. That's harder to do now, and there's little room for impromptu improvisation, which is another important part of learning classical music," Moumita said.

Nonetheless, in this current situation with the coronavirus pandemic, it is crucial that teachers can at least keep the lessons consistent through virtual means. Teachers, as well as students, are trying to make use of what is already available to them or whatever they have access to in the hope of keeping visual and performance arts classes going.

Besides, beyond all the features of traditional learning, the shift to online classes has opened up a new horizon for performing arts training: the internet outreach is making it possible for people living in different parts of the country to attend classes remotely, something that would be impossible in the past with in-person lessons.

No bar on sponsored TV news, headlines

SC stays HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday cleared way for the television channels to broadcast sponsored TV news and headlines.

The Appellate Division of the SC stayed a HC verdict that declared the sponsoring of TV news and headlines illegal and barred the broadcast of news and headlines sponsored by different organisations.

A four-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain came up with the stay order after holding a brief hearing on four separate leave to appeal petitions challenging the HC verdict.

Bangladesh Telecommunication and Regulatory Commission (BTRC), private television channels -- Channel 24, Deepto TV and Channel-i -- submitted the petitions with the SC challenging the HC verdict.

Khandaker Reza-E Raquib, the lawyer for BTRC, told The Daily Star the apex court stayed the HC verdict till disposal of the petitions.

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DURGA PUJA AMID PANDEMIC

'No mask, no entry' at port city mandaps

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

With less than a week left to go for Durga Puja, idol artisans are putting the finishing touches to their figures of Goddess Durga and her sons and daughters -- Kartik, Ganesh, Sharashwati and Laxmi.

Everything else is a little different this year though. As devotees in Chattogram get ready to celebrate the biggest religious festival of Bengali Hindus, they must keep in mind the health guidelines required for Covid-19 pandemic.

Puja udjapan (celebration) committee leaders of the port city said devotees must follow health guidelines before entering every mandap (puja venue). The five-day festival will start on October 22.

This year, Durga Puja will be celebrated

in 2,167 mandaps across port city and 15 upazilas of the district, said Shyamal Kumar Palit, president of Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad, Chattogram district unit.

"We have strictly instructed all mandap committees to ensure health guidelines during the festival," he told The Daily Star, adding, "No devotee will be allowed to enter the mandaps without a facemask."

"Besides, volunteers will be there spray disinfectants at the entrance, while hand sanitiser and soap will be available for the devotees as well."

Contacted, Advocate Chandan Talukder, president of the Puja Udjapan Parishad's city unit, said "We are emphasising on health safety at every mandap. No more

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The waste mountains of Gazipur

City corporation cannot seem to find a landfill site for 8 years, continues to dump garbage beside Dhaka-Tangail highway

ABU BAKAR SIDDIQUE AKAND, Gazipur

In proper garbage management, waste should be disposed of in a protected landfill area first to minimise pollution of surface and ground water, soil and air. Later, those have to be gradually recycled, reused and incinerated.

Unfortunately, in a city like Gazipur, the authorities do not follow any of the required steps. All they do is pile all sorts of garbage in open space beside Dhaka-Tangail highway, turning the spot at Baimail into a cluster of waste mountains.

Alarmingly, Gazipur City Corporation has been dumping waste this way for the last eight years.

In the process, the only excuse the authorities make is that they have no landfill, although they are entrusted with arranging so. Whenever asked, they come up with the same reply, "We are looking for a piece of land."

According to the city corporation, as many as 2,500 tonnes of waste, including medical waste, are produced in the city daily and all are dumped there. Around 90 trucks and 65 vans are engaged in the process, said Ranju, a driver.

Due to this unabated waste dumping, the resident of the area are the worst sufferers.

"We have appealed to the city authorities repeatedly to come up with an alternative, but to no avail,"

said Anjali Das from Baimail.

Jui Akhter, another resident of the area, said they have to keep their doors and windows shut throughout the day to get rid of the putrid smell.

Noni Mohon Sarkar, a local, echoed them. Monir Hossain, president of Bangladesh Nadi Paribrajak Dal, said "looking for land" is a lame excuse by the city corporation. "City dwellers won't tolerate it. The unsorted waste must be removed to protect people and environment."

Failure to arrange a landfill for waste disposal also became a problem for the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) as waste continues to spill on to

the highway, hampering traffic movement. Moreover, when it rains the road becomes dangerously slippery due to the garbage.

RHD and the city corporation have long been exchanging letters over the matter. RHD Executive Engineer Muhammad Saifuddin said, "We have sent letters to the city corporation authorities multiple times in this regard. Each time, they replied that they would resolve the issue soon."

He said actions will be taken in this regard soon.

Asked, Gazipur city waste management officer Sohrab Hossain said they are trying to set up a dumping station somewhere else.

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'EC deceived people with subservient role'

BNP says about two by-polls

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday alleged that the Election Commission has "deceived people once again with its inactive and subservient role" during Saturday's by-polls to Dhaka-5 and Naogaon-6 constituencies.

"Awami League cadres snatched votes with the help of law enforcers in the by-polls by indulging in vote robbery, casting fake votes and driving out agents of the candidates of opposition parties the way they did during the 2018 national election," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Speaking at a press conference at BNP chairperson's Gulshan office, he said, "The Election Commission played the role of a silent spectator. Returning officers didn't accept the complaints of candidates. Around 162 complaints were given only in Dhaka, but the chief election commissioner lied without any hesitation by saying that they didn't receive any complaint."

He alleged that a reign of terror was established in the election areas by ruling party men to prevent voters from going to polling stations. "The government has deceived people once again with the tactic of vote robbery to implement its blueprint for the establishment of a one-party rule."

Fakhrul also said the government is indulging in unprecedented corruption by snatching people's rights using the state machinery.

He said the EC has been used as a government weapon to restore one-party rule by depriving people of their voting rights.

The voting in the by-polls to the Dhaka-5 and Naogaon-6 was held on Saturday amid various election "irregularities" and low-presence of voters.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



A tailoring shop owner hurriedly packs up products and equipment in his shop into a pickup van, with threads from a sewing machine pulling from behind, in Chattogram city's Sher Shah Colony road. Chattogram City Corporation in a drive yesterday evicted a large number of businesses it says was illegally encroaching space, without any warning. Many shop owners had to quickly pack up their things and leave the shops before they were demolished.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

DHAKA WASA MD HC rejects writ petition challenging reappointment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday rejected a writ petition that challenged legality of the process for reappointing Taqsem A Khan as managing director (MD) of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa).

The HC bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Md Khairul Alam rejected the petition, due to it not being moved properly.

Deputy Attorney General Noor-us Sadik represented the state during the hearing. Engineer Khandker Monjur Morshed, former additional chief engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board, submitted the petition to the HC on September 24.

In it, he prayed to the HC to stay the proposal for extending Taqsem's tenure by three more years.

Taqsem has been Dhaka Wasa MD for the last 11 years. He was appointed for five consecutive terms of varying lengths, with his latest term expiring on October 14.

