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"We are losing lives on the roads every day. I start every morning with news of road accidents, and when I see them, I feel guilty, and I burn in an invisible fire." MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND BRIDGES OBABDUL QUADER

"We're not entering a dark winter. We're entering the final turn and approaching the light at the end of the tunnel." US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP AMID RECORD COVID CASES IN US

"He's given up. He quit on you, on your family, on America. He just wants us to grow numb and resigned to the horrors." JOE BIDEN ON DONALD TRUMP AMID RECORD COVID CASES IN US

PROCURING COVID VACCINES

Dhaka scrambles to secure funds

Seeks \$500m from World Bank, approaches other donors to meet its target of \$1.65b-\$2b to ensure vaccines for all

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government is aggressively seeking financial assistance from development partners to procure Covid-19 vaccine as soon as it hits markets.

The finance ministry is asking for more than \$1.5 billion from the partners to procure and distribute the vaccines.

The ministry estimates that Bangladesh might need between \$1.65 billion and \$2 billion to vaccinate the country's 165 million people.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal on Thursday sought \$500 million assistance from the World Bank, to purchase, store, transport and distribute the vaccines.

The minister made the demand at a virtual meeting with World Bank Vice President for the South Asia Region Hartwig Schafer.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings 2020.

Officials said the Economic Relations Division (ERD) sent a letter to the WB

saying that a vaccine was expected to be available by the end of this year and a major initiative has been initiated to import the vaccines.

World Bank Country Director for Bangladesh and Bhutan Mercy Tembon told The Daily Star that the World Bank Group was committed to providing additional financing so that low- and middle-income countries could access the vaccines necessary to alter the course of the pandemic.

The World Bank Management has asked the Executive Board to approve additional financing of \$12 billion to help low- and middle-income countries purchase and distribute Covid-19 vaccines.

"We shall allocate resources to support Bangladesh's plan to obtain vaccines for its population and prepare a strategic plan for vaccination," she assured.

There is competition among countries for the coronavirus vaccines.

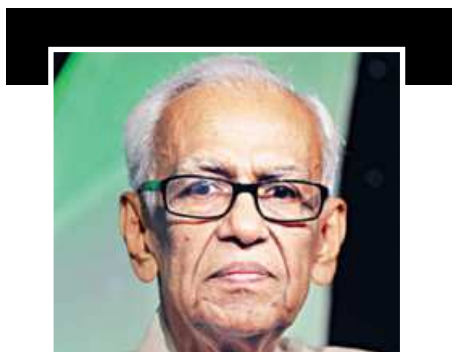
The government earlier this month requested for \$500 million from Japan for

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This wreckage of a vehicle carries about 15 people between Narayanganj's Pagla and the capital's Shyampur from dawn to dusk. It does not even have a license plate to pretend that it's roadworthy. At stake are people's lives on the road while the authorities turn a blind eye to the gross violation of rules. The photo was taken at Munshikhola yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



BARRISTER RAFIQUE-UL HUQ 1935-2020

The passing of a legal doyen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a country where political divisions go deep down, he was one of the very few personalities from any profession who was trusted by all sides of the political spectrum. It speaks volumes of his wisdom, sagacity, impartiality and sense of fairness that political archrivals sought his legal counsel in situations of crisis.

He did not belong to any political party, but he had the unique honour of representing in court all the prominent political leaders in the country, including the present and former prime ministers Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia.

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AKBARNAMA

The tale of a corrupt cop

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

How crooked can a cop get?

This was answered to some extent when former Teknaf OC Pradeep Kumar Das landed in jail over the murder of Major (ret'd) Sinha and reports on his misdeeds surfaced.

Now Akbar Hossain Bhuiyan, former in-charge of Bandarbaraz Police Outpost in Sylhet city, suspended and absconding following the custodial death of Rayhan Ahmed on October 11, is another case in point.

Hailing from Bogoir village of Ashuganj upazila in Brahmanbaria, Akbar joined as a constable in 2007, and in 2014, was promoted to sub-inspector.

Being posted to Bandarbaraz on November 6 last year, he walked in the footsteps of previous corrupt in-charges and other policemen in these small outposts, but took it even further.

Victims are now talking. Several street hawkers and shop owners of Bandarbaraz and Zindabazar areas, the main commercial zone of the city, alleged that they had to pay the "collectors" from the outpost to avoid false cases.

Not only in the streets, his corrupt reign extended to private homes.

On April 15 last year, Akbar raided Abdul Alim Mukta's house in the Barutkhana area and demanded Tk 40,000.

Being denied, the SI filed a drug case against Mukta showing a seizure of 21 yaba tablets, his brother alleged to the media.

Another victim is Jinat Lisa of the Khadimpara area, who called 999 on April 17 this year as her husband was being attacked during an altercation with several locals.

Akbar, arriving at the spot, took the side of the locals, alleged Jinat. One of the attackers - a woman - kicked Jinat, then five weeks pregnant, in the stomach in front of the SI, she said.

Akbar then detained her husband, filing a case against the couple after failing to get the Tk 10,000 he demanded from them, she said.

The couple got bail but Jinat had a miscarriage a week later.

Meanwhile, Akbar has also been accused of falsifying the investigation

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Intellectually-challenged child raped in Noakhali

Suspended Jubo League leader sued in rape case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

An intellectually-challenged child was raped allegedly by her neighbour on Wednesday while a suspended Jubo League leader, who was arrested for raping a housewife, was sued in another rape case in Noakhali.

Police said the nine-year-old girl was staying alone at her home in Sahapur union of Chatkhil upazila on October 21.

Other members of her family ventured out for work. Taking the chance, Miraz Hossain, who lived nearby, took the girl to a betel nut garden around 3:00pm and raped her.

After returning home, she shared the incident with her family members.

Yesterday, the mother filed a case with police.

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In view of the virtual absence of all opposition political activities due to Covid-19, we have decided to run a series of interviews of political party leaders who are not in the AL-led ruling alliance. The interviews will highlight their assessment of the overall situation of the country, discuss their own party's activities and the plans they have for the future. We hope our readers will find the interviews informative and helpful in moving towards the future. We are running the interview of GM Quader, chairman of Jatiya Party, today to be followed by Communist Party of Bangladesh Secretary General Md Shah Alam. -Editor

Moving backwards in terms of good governance

Says JP Chairman GM Quader

GOLAM MORTOZA

Jatiya Party (JP) founder and late president Hussain Muhammad Ershad has been regarded a dictator, though he never admitted it, till his death. Even the current leadership of the party does not acknowledge it. Now, his younger brother Golam Mohammed Quader has been made party chairman.

JP has been in the parliament since 2008 as an Awami League (AL)-led grand alliance partner. It is now acting as the opposition party in the current parliament, though it participated in the 2018 national elections as a part of the AL-led alliance.

Jatiya Party chief GM Quader, also deputy leader of the opposition in parliament, has recently talked to The Daily Star over different contemporary issues, including the current political and democratic situation, article 70 of the constitution and his party's political stance.

The following is an excerpt of the interview taken by The Daily Star.

The Daily Star (DS): There has been a lot of confusion

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Rohingya teen killed in landmine explosion

SANJOY KUMAR BARRUA

A Rohingya teenage boy was killed in a landmine explosion on the Myanmar side of the border along Bandarban on Friday afternoon, said police.

The dead is Mohammad Jaber, 13, of Kutupalong Lambashia Rohingya camp, said Alamgir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Naikhyangchhari Police Station.

Jaber died near pillar number 40 at Ghumdung in Bandarban's Naikhyangchhari upazila when he was returning along with a few others from Myanmar to Kutupalong camp on Friday afternoon, said the OC.

"We suspect that Jaber fell victim to a landmine explosion inside Myanmar as he bore signs of being a victim of landmine explosions," the OC said.

Bangladesh officials have accused Myanmar security forces of planting mines along border areas to prevent the refugees from returning to their villages.

Seeking anonymity, a BGB official said, "Myanmar security forces regularly install mines along Ghumdung area that Rohingyas regularly use."

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"Death by torture in custody at Bandarbaraz Police Outpost," reads the funeral plaque of Rayhan Ahmed who died on October 11 at the age of 33. He was buried at a graveyard in Akhailia area in Sylhet city on October 15 after a second autopsy. Akbar Hossain Bhuiyan, who was the in-charge of the outpost in Sylhet city, remains traceless.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASTIR

Brac, WB join hands to improve road safety

Aims at halving fatalities by 2030

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank joined hands with Brac to implement a programme to halve fatalities on roads by 2030.

They made the announcement at a virtual meeting yesterday morning, while signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at an event titled "Road Safety Collaboration: Reducing Road Fatalities 50 percent by 2030".

The project will carry out campaigns on road safety, implement programmes to improve safety of women and children in public transport, and develop skills of drivers, said Dandan Chen, acting country director of the WB in Bangladesh.

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WE MOURN. AB Bank family is deeply saddened at the passing away of former Attorney General of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and a noted philanthropist, Barrister Rafiq-Ul Huq. We gratefully acknowledge his active involvement and immense contribution during the formation of AB Bank, the first private sector bank in Bangladesh. May his soul rest in peace. AB Bank logo.