

## Let new generation know of jail killing

Says Obaidul Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the mystery of jail killing on November 3, 1975 should be unearthed to let the new generation know the truth.

Quader, also road transport and bridges minister, was talking to reporters after paying homage to Bangabandhu by placing wreath at his portrait in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, marking Jail Killing Day.

He said August 15 carnage and November 3 jail killing are sewed in a single thread as four national leaders were killed in continuation of the assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The two heinous carnages were carried out in revenge of the defeat in 1971 Liberation War, he said, adding that Bangabandhu was assassinated to make the country void of guardian while jail killing was perpetrated to make the nation leaderless.

Quader said, "From November 3 to November 7 in 1975, why General Khaled Mosharraf, Colonel Huda, Colonel Haider and many army officers and jawans

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Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan pays homage at the memorial of three national leaders in the capital, marking Jail Killing Day.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Power plant equipment bought at 12-fold price

ACC sues six including five engineers

MAHBUUR RAHMAN KHAN

Powertech International, a supplier of power plant equipment itself prepared required specification for motors and quoted twelve times higher rate for the Shikalbaha Power Plant, yet the procurement department of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) awarded the tender to them, the Anti-Corruption Commission has found.

Five engineers and owner of Powertech International were involved in the whole process and they in collaboration with each other misappropriated Tk 2.59 crore from procurement of motors, according to the anti-graft watchdog.

The overpriced motors that were bought to meet emergency need are now lying unused at the state-run 150-megawatt peaking power plant at Shikalbaha in Patiya.

ACC's Assistant Director Mamunur Rashid yesterday filed a case with its Integrated District Office Chattogram-2 against engineer Bhuban Bijoy Dutta, Additional Chief Engineer and manager of 150-megawatt peaking power plant at Shikalbaha in Patiya; AHM Kamal, Chief Engineer (Distribution) of Northern Electricity Supply Company; Tofazzel Hossain, acting Additional Engineer and project director of Gulshan Unit-4 Repowering Project; Abu Yusuf, Additional Chief Engineer (on PRL); and Mizanur Rahman, additional director (budget) of Chattogram Power Plant and proprietor of Powertech International Abdul Alim.

This newspaper has obtained a copy of the FIR.

According to the case statement, Sinohydro Corporation, Siemens and Parker Hannifin Global were primary contractors of Shikalbaha Power Plant. Of them Siemens and Parker Hannifin are involved in motor manufacturing.

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## TACKLING NARCOTICS SMUGGLING

### DNC proposes round-the-clock dog squad check at Dhaka airport

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

With an aim to stop narcotics smuggling, Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) wants to have round-the-clock presence of their dog squad at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

As the airport has been used largely by transnational syndicates and there have been major seizure of narcotics shipments in recent times, an expert narcotics team with dog squad would be helpful to detect the consignments, according to DNC officials.

Kusum Dewan, director (operations and intelligence) of DNC told The Daily Star that they have already proposed to the ministry for approval of dog squad teams in Dhaka airport.

"This would be an 18-member unit, and six DNC officials with sniffing dogs will be on duty at the airport on eight-hour shifts. These squad would work closely with Aviation Security, which is now mainly providing security inside the airport," he explained.

"After the deployment of a dog squad at the airport, we want deployment at all other ports by phases," he said, adding if an expert team

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## 'No one questioned a Nawab family heir'

Muslim League leader says fraudster joined party in 2018

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The man who pretended to be the grandson of Nawab Salimullah Khan, joined Muslim League in 2018. As proof of identity, he submitted his passport and national identity (NID) card, in which his name was Nawab Khawaja Ali Hasan Askari.

As Muslim League was founded by Salimullah Khan, no one objected to his joining, Hazi Abdul Khayer, secretary general of Muslim League, told The Daily Star yesterday.

In reply to a query about giving nomination to Hasan for a by-election and not verifying his identity, Abdul Khayer said they did not scrutinise further after Hasan submitted his NID card.

"We did not even hesitate to give him nomination for the last Dhaka-10 by-election, as a member of the royal family showed interest to contest in the polls," he explained.

Muslim League has been registered with Election Commission (EC) since 2008.

Towhidul Islam, additional deputy commissioner (ADC) of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit, however, said they would write to the EC, seeking information about the political party and investigate how Hasan got a chance to take part in the election.

"We suspect that some members of the political party might have been involved with Hasan. We are analysing activities of some of their activists," he said.

Meanwhile, two more cases were filed against Hasan and his wife Merina Akter in Dhaka and Chuadanga yesterday. The complaints stated that Hasan took Tk 17 lakh and Tk 14 lakh on different instances, promising to provide jobs.

"We are coordinating with local police regarding the two latest cases," ADC Towhidul said.

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## UNIVERSITY ADMISSION TESTS

### UGC expert body bins software idea

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An expert committee formed by the University Grants Commission yesterday opined that it will not be wise to arrange online university admission test using a software, developed by a university VC.

In meeting at UGC, they said there is lack of capacity in holding university admission test online. If the exams were conducted online using the software, it would create more confusion, and evaluation might not be correct due to lack of network and technical reasons, they said.

Prof Munaz Ahmed Noor, vice-chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Digital University, developed the software, said a UGC statement.

While making a presentation at the meeting, Munaz said with the software, universities will be able to hold their internal exams.

"At this moment, the software is not in suitable for holding admission tests," he said.

The eight-member expert committee included Dhaka University's computer science and engineering

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Three children -- the littlest one on a tricycle, another on a bike with training wheels, and the eldest at the back, who has by now mastered the two-wheeler -- are roaming the streets surrounding their home in full freedom. For many, cycling around areas, passing by neighbours and shops and scraping their legs after falling over innumerable times is a rite of passage at such an age. This photo was taken from Barishal city's Sagardi area.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## Auto-pass will make students' future uncertain

GM Quader for school reopening

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday said the auto-pass in the education system would make the future of students uncertain.

He called upon the government to conduct exams of students in line with the conventional education system.

GM Quader, also deputy leader of the opposition, said this while exchanging views with Bangladesh Sikkhok Samity [Bangladesh Teachers Association] and Primary Assistant Teacher Recruitment Panel Chai-2018 (demand for formation of panel to recruit assistant teachers at primary education) at the Jatiya Party chairman's Banani office.

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## A look at legal protection against custodial torture

LAW DESK

News of the death of one Rayhan Ahmed (33) allegedly due to police torture at an outpost in Sylhet broke last month, with medical evidence later affirming that he was assaulted in custody and died of his injuries.

The case has once again brought the issues of custodial torture and death to the forefront.

Torturing a person while in police custody by law enforcing agencies is defined as a crime under the existing legal framework of our country. The relevant law in this regard is the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act 2013.

Under Section 2(7) of the Act, "custodial death" means death of any person in the custody of any government officials. The section further provides that custodial deaths include deaths during interrogation, regardless of whether the person under interrogation, is a witness of a case or not.

"Law Enforcement Agencies", under Section 2(4) of the said Act, means disciplined forces such as police, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), Border

Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Customs, Immigration, Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Special Branch, intelligence agencies, Ansar, VDP, Coast Guard and any other state agency engaged in the enforcement and implementation of law in the country.

The law envisages that a person can complain an incident of torture to the Sessions Judge's court or a police officer not less than the rank of Police Superintendent. The law also creates a scope for the complainants to petition to the court for judicial investigation instead of police investigation, for reasons of ensuring impartiality and neutrality in rendering effective investigation.

Another concern for families of victims of custodial torture and/or death, like that of Rayhan, is one of protection. Section 11 of the 2013 Act provides mechanisms to protect the complainant, under which he/she can file a petition before the Sessions Judge's court for protection from the accused. On receipt of the petition, the Court, after giving 7 days' notice to the defendants, shall

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## MOHAMMADPUR BLAST

### Two more victims die

UNB, Dhaka

Two more victims, injured in an explosion at a scrapped goods shop in Mohammadpur last week, succumbed to their injuries at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery yesterday.

With the deaths of Saiful Islam, and Amir Hossain (45), the death toll from the blast rose to three.

Another victim, Abdul Alim, is undergoing treatment at the hospital, said resident physician Dr Partha Sangkar Pal.

Earlier on Saturday, Faruk, a shop employee injured in the incident, died at a city hospital.

Seven people, including shop owner Abdul Alim (50), suffered burns in the explosion in the shop near Chand Uddyan Bhanga Mosque of Mohammadpur on October 27.

## COVID-19 SURVIVORS

### Antibody research begins in port city

ARUN BIKASH DEV, Ctg

Health researchers in Chattogram have initiated a project to analyse antibodies of the district's residents who had tested positive for Covid-19.

The research, entitled "Seroprevalence of SARS-2 Covid-19 antibody among RT-PCR positive patients in port city of Bangladesh: A Cross-sectional Study" started last week, with the aim of knowing how long antibodies prevail in bodies of Covid-19 survivors, said researchers.

Two consultants from Chattogram General Hospital, a deputy civil surgeon of Chattogram, a research assistant from icddr, and three post-graduate students, will conduct the research for six months, said sources.

Dr Abdur Rob, a senior consultant of medicine at the hospital and the study's principal investigator, told this newspaper they will select 1,700 Covid-19 survivors from a range of age groups, to test their antibodies.

Apart from antibody, the researchers will investigate other vital factors that will also help in treating patients, he said.

The selection would be random among

patients who tested positive since April, he said. "We will see how long antibodies persist in children, young people and the elderly," Dr Rob said.

"We'll investigate people of which social and economic classes are mostly affected," he said. "Are Covid-19 survivors being affected by new diseases? If so, what is the percentage of such patients? We will also investigate these."

When asked how would they conduct research when the government is yet to approve antibody testing, Dr Rob said such testing in general has not been approved, but the government has no issue when it is used for research purposes and plasma therapy.

Testing kits from South Korea would be used for this research, he added.

Dr Hamidullah Mehedi, a junior consultant of medicine at Chattogram General Hospital and co-investigator of the study, said this research is essential and will play a significant role in formulating a guideline for Covid-19 treatment.

Contacted, Chattogram Civil Surgeon Dr Sheikh Fazle Rabbi echoed Dr Hamidullah regarding the project's importance.



The historic Amtala, where Language Movement activists had gathered to protest the then Pakistan government, is now surrounded by vendors of all kinds. With spaces encroached by carts and covered with litter, one would find it hard to believe that such a location holds so much significance.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN