

New Principal Staff Officer adorned with Lt Gen rank badge

BSS, Dhaka

Newly-appointed Principal Staff Officer (PSO) of the Armed Forces Division Waqar-uz-Zaman was adorned with the rank badge of lieutenant general at a function in presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban yesterday afternoon.

“Navy Chief Admiral Mohammad Shaheen Iqbal and Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat adorned the new PSO with the rank badge of lieutenant general,” PM’s Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told the news agency.

At the badge-adorning ceremony, the prime minister wished the new PSO’s success in discharging duties and assured him of extending all sorts of cooperation to this end, said the press secretary.

PM’s Security Affairs Adviser Maj Gen (retd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique and Military Secretary Maj Gen Naquib Ahmed Chowdhury were present on the occasion.

On behalf of Army Chief General Aziz Ahmed, Army Quarter Master General Lt Gen Md Shamsul Haque was also present at the event.



New Market has always been a heavily crowded hub of activity, and the pandemic could not put a dent on this legacy. While most people have face masks on, social distancing has gone out the window as people crowded the footpaths and shops in and around New Market last Saturday afternoon.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

A good initiative stumbles at start

No progress yet from committee to limit sand extraction to save rivers from erosion

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

In a bid to save the country’s rivers from erosion, the government has taken an initiative of limiting the amount of sand extraction. However, the initiative seems to have stumbled at the very beginning.

To make the effort smoother, a committee chaired by Land Secretary Md Muksoodur Rahman Patwary was formed this year.

“Several ministries and government departments are involved with rivers. The aim of the committee was to gather knowledge from all these ministries and departments to address indiscriminate sand extraction,” Muksoodur told The Daily Star yesterday.

However, no meeting has been held yet in this regard.

When asked, the land secretary said some ministries failed to finalise representatives while some did send names.

Replying to a question, he said many ministries are linked with the issue of sand extraction. “Their suggestions are needed to formulate rules effectively. We want to work in a coordinated way,” he said.

The land secretary, however, could not say when the committee was formed. “We are trying to come up with a solution in this regard,” he added.

According to experts, dredging on waterways is required to ensure navigability while sand collection is also necessary for infrastructural development. However, unplanned sand extraction has been posing threat to biodiversity and causing river erosion in different parts of the country, they said.

Specific instruction and mapping should be in place to determine from which part of the river sand can be extracted from, experts recommended.

Meanwhile, the issue of sand extraction came to the fore yesterday at the cabinet meeting at secretariat during a discussion over the Delta Plan.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who joined the meeting

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Covid-19 threatening global progress in fight against malaria: WHO

UNB, Dhaka

UN World Health Organization (WHO) has urged nations and health partners to step up the fight against malaria, with better targeting of interventions, new tools and increased funding.

Gaps in life-saving interventions are undermining efforts to curb malaria, amid fears that the coronavirus pandemic could set back the fight against the disease even further, according to the World Malaria Report, released on Monday, the situation is particularly concerning in high-burden countries in Africa, reports UN News.

“It is time for leaders across Africa -- and the world -- to rise once again to the challenge of malaria, just as they did when they laid the foundation for the progress made since the beginning of this century,” said WHO Director-General Tedros

Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

“Through joint action, and a commitment to leaving no one behind, we can achieve our shared vision of a world free of malaria,” he said.

Though preventable and curable, malaria continues to claim hundreds of thousands of lives each year. According to WHO, nearly half of the world’s population is at risk of the disease and most cases and deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa.

Malaria is transmitted through the bites of female Anopheles mosquitoes, and controlling the vector -- such as by using mosquito nets and indoor residual spraying -- can help prevent and reduce transmission of the disease.

“A PLATEAU IN PROGRESS”

The WHO report found that in 2019, the

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MURDER OF WOMAN IN CAPITAL Husband, stepson among six arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested six people including the husband and step-son of a woman who was stabbed and burnt to death in her flat in Dhaka’s Kafrul area on Sunday.

The arrestees are the husband Shajahan Sikder (50), his son SM Ashikur Rahman Nahid (27), Nahid’s wife Jakia Sultana Airin (22), her father Askek Ullah (50) and mother Rokeya Begum (40), and Sakib (20).

Among them, Nahid was arrested from Uttarkhan area while the rest were held from Kafrul, Selimuzzaman, officer-in-charge of Kafrul Police Station, told The Daily Star.

A murder case was filed with Kafrul Police Station, accusing seven people, including the six arrestees.

On Sunday, police recovered the body of Shima Begum (31). Law enforcers said the woman used to live with her husband in a room, while her step-son and his wife stayed in another room on the sixth-floor of an under-construction 10-storey building.

Police suspect that she was stabbed and later burned to death. Morgue sources said most of her body was burnt, and there were several stab marks on her throat, neck and back.



How to stay well in winter

Cold weather can make some health problems worse and even lead to serious complications, especially if you are 65 or older, or if you have a long-term health condition. Here are some tips to help boost your health and reduce your risk of getting sick this winter.

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. This includes people aged 65 and older, babies and children under the age of 5, people on a low income, people who have a long-term health condition, people with a disability, pregnant women and people who have a mental health condition.

AVOID CLOSE CONTACT

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

STAY HOME WHEN YOU ARE SICK

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others.

COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Flu and other serious respiratory illnesses, like respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), whooping cough, and COVID-19, are spread by cough, sneezing, or unclean hands.

CLEAN YOUR HANDS

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE OR MOUTH

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

PRACTICE OTHER GOOD HEALTH HABITS

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

STAYING HEALTHY

According to experts, 80 per cent of the body’s immune system is in the gut. As a result, following a healthy diet and exercising regularly can limit your chances of catching the flu.

Vitamin D is what most of us lack when it comes to winter, so it is worth topping up on that if you can. Vitamin C is important for immunity too; if you have a good diet that is full of nutrients, fruit and vegetables, then you probably would not need supplements. If your diet is lacking in nutrients, it can be a good idea to look at increasing your vitamin C intake through a daily supplement.

It is important that we aren’t exercising too much, as this can actually lower people’s immunity by triggering stress chemicals, like cortisol. After a marathon, for example, a 1990 study showed 13 per cent of finishers developed an upper respiratory infection, compared with only 2 per cent of runners who trained for the marathon but did not run it.

KEEP YOUR HOME WARM

Follow these tips to keep you and your family warm and well at home:

- keep your bedroom warm by keeping the bedroom window closed
- use a hot water bottle or electric blanket to keep warm in bed – but do not use both at the same time
- have at least 1 hot meal a day – eating regularly helps keep you warm
- have hot drinks regularly
- draw curtains at dusk and keep doors closed to block out draughts

GET A FLU VACCINE

Flu can lead to serious illnesses, such as pneumonia and bronchitis, and even death in vulnerable people. You are more at risk if you are older, have a long-term condition, or are pregnant. Make sure you get your flu vaccine if you are 65 and over, you have a long-term health condition, or you are pregnant.

Ask for the flu vaccine at your local health care centre or hospital. If you are 65 or over, you are also eligible for the pneumococcal vaccine, which will help protect you from pneumonia.

GET ADVICE IF YOU FEEL UNWELL

If you are 65 or over, or in one of the other at-risk groups, see a doctor or visit a health care centre as soon as you feel unwell, even if it is just a cough or a cold. The sooner you get advice, the sooner you are likely to get better.

‘Bangabandhu Lecture Series’ to begin today

UNB, Dhaka

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will begin its “Bangabandhu Lecture Series” today, marking the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Former Finance Minister AMA Muhith will deliver a keynote speech at the inaugural lecture at Foreign Service Academy, on the first day of the month of victory.

Prime Minister’s International Affairs Adviser Dr Gowher Rizvi will attend as a special discussant.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen will connect with the event virtually from his residence.

The lecture series will continue till the end of Mujib Borsho and celebrating 50 years of the country’s independence, the ministry said.

At least one lecture will be delivered each month, and the series will be held at Bangladesh missions abroad as well.

Ensure transparency in int’l dev assistance

NGOs, civil society orgs demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A forum of Non-Government Organisations (NGO) and Civil Society Organisations (CSO) yesterday urged transparency and best uses of all international humanitarian and development assistance, in a virtual press conference.

The leaders of BDCSO process -- a forum of around 700 NGOs and CSOs -- also urged international agencies to avoid luxurious expenses in this regard. Leaders also presented a 22-point declaration which was approved earlier in the organisations’ annual conference held in October.

The leaders also urged all international agencies to devolve the responsibility of implementation of the projects to local NGOs and CSOs, by limiting their role to monitoring and technical assistance only.

National coordinator of BDCSO Process Rezaul Karim Chowdhury moderated the virtual press conference, where executive director of COAST Trust Mustafa Kamal Akhanda and divisional leaders of the coalition shared different demands of the declaration.

“All international agencies should use Bangla language in the country; should ensure full transparency of their

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FAKE N-95 MASKS

HC questions bail of JMI chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of a lower court order that granted bail to JMI Hospital Requisite Manufacturing Ltd’s Chairman Abdur Razzak in connection with a case filed over supplying fake N95 masks for the use of healthcare professionals.

The HC issued a rule asking the state to explain why the lower court order should not be cancelled and fixed December 13 for hearing on the rule.

The bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Ahmed Sohel came up with the rule following a revision petition filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission challenging the lower court order.

Lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan appeared for ACC while Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik represented the state and lawyers MK Rahman and SM Shahjahan argued for Razzak.

On October 15, a Dhaka court granted bail to Razzak in the case.

The ACC on September 29 arrested

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Monipuri children dressed up in traditional, festive attire yesterday to celebrate Maharas Leela, the largest religious festival in the community. This colourful celebration that incorporates indigenous dance and music is taking place at Adampur and Madhabpur areas in the district of Moulvibazar.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA