

Wahida Khanom passes away

CITY DESK

Wahida Khanom Chowdhury, mother of Md Abdul Halim Chowdhury, managing director and CEO of Pubali Bank Ltd, passed away in Dhaka yesterday, says a press release.



The Board of Directors of the bank and all levels of executives, officers and employees have expressed deep shock at the death.

Buet interested

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There would be three exams under the cluster -- one each for students of science, humanities and commerce groups -- based on HSC syllabus. "It was also discussed that these tests will be held when the intensity of Covid-19 reduces," the VC said.

Till last year, 32 of the 39 public universities held separate admission tests, as seven agricultural universities held a "uniform admission test.

UGC has long been suggesting modifying the existing admission process, saying it is too expensive and coaching-oriented.

Mostly ineffective

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while the Barishal Chief Judicial magistrate Court received only one this January," said Prof Taslima.

From unofficial sources, the study found that there were mostly one or two petitions filed in other districts, except where local NGOs played an active role -- such as in Jashore, Sylhet and Dinajpur.

Besides, both victims and lawyers generally prefer more straightforward penal sections. In terms of execution of the protection orders, survivors believe it is difficult to monitor and if they go to the court again with this issue, they are not welcomed, said Prof Taslima.

Another important factor is since the number of shelters for women is insufficient and there is a lack of livelihood options, many survivors are forced to return to the perpetrators.

Recent studies on domestic violence also found that although women mostly prefer to go to union parishad members or chairmen to seek remedy, they had to face victim-blaming, or were sent back to their perpetrators after an unlawful mediation by local administration, without ensuring proper remedies.

Although under the DVPP Act, survivors are supposed to come to local enforcement officers (of the Department of Women Affairs) first, organisations working on preventing violence against women and girls found these officers unavailable for immediate support, and even if they were available, they were unclear about their responsibilities, Sara Hossain said.

She suggested providing training to field workers to provide basic information to the victim about the law, as well as psychosocial counselling to victims.

ActionAid Country Director Farah Kabir said, "We often do advocacy about absence of law and that certain issues would be resolved if there was a relevant law. The law to prevent domestic violence was formulated 10 years ago, so it was important to see what the condition was after it was implementation."

Special Police Super of Criminal Investigation Department Rumana Akhtar, noted researcher Meghna Guhathakurta and journalist Shahnaz Munni spoke at the event, broadcast on Facebook by Bangla daily Prothom Alo.

Mixed use

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will make Rajuk's approval system weaker.

Adil said the draft also mentions that by giving a certain amount of penalty, anyone can turn a residential plot into commercial plot in a planned residential area, which will reduce the livability of Dhaka city.

This mixed use will have to be in a limited scale, and will have to be balanced with the residential area's character, he said. Adil -- who read out the keynote paper -- said in the draft, flood flow zone has been mentioned as an overlay zone, and they mentioned its land use as agriculture zone.

He demanded to keep it as a flood flow zone like earlier, saying otherwise it will conflict with Wetland Conservation Act, 2000. "We will have to project our flood flow zones, and no terminology will be acceptable which will be conflicting with the Wetland Conservation Act, 2000," said BIP president Prof Akter Mahmud.

He also demanded to mark all water bodies and canals in DAP, and making a separate map on all ponds in Dhaka city.

About protection of farmland, Adil said the draft DAP has given permission of turning agriculture land as single habitation, and at one point given conditional permission for eco-resort, agriculture-based industry, and single ownership-based home. This single or multiple-habitation permission is conflicting with planned urbanisation, said Adil.

BIP proposed enlisting 2,200 structures that the court has declared protection for as heritage sites in the DAP.

The number of heritage buildings of Dhaka is steadily declining, as businesses and other entities continue to encroach and demolish the structures, they said.

Prof Akter also demanded upgradation of Rajuk and increasing its capacity so that it can do its main work -- development control -- properly.

Pandemic paused their education

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Classes have remained suspended in these schools since March 17. The closure has been extended until December 19.

"We cannot offer online classes as we need to adopt individual teaching techniques for each student. Each student has a different set of needs," said SWID Director Nurul Islam said.

He said they usually give some basic training to parents so that they can impart lessons to their children at home.

Nurul Islam estimates that there are around 45,000 students at non-government special schools and some 2,000 at government ones.

Special schools assess the needs of a student and prepare a separate teaching process for them. In mainstream schools, the students with special needs attend classes with other students.

REMOTE LEARNING NOT FOR THEM

The government first launched teaching through TV and then introduced classes over radio for primary school students and asked educational institutions to begin online classes.

But online classes are not accessible to those with learning disabilities and visual or hearing impairment.

"In schools, the students with disabilities usually face problems like lack of ramps, proper classroom environment, and unavailability of trained teachers. But they are facing a different set of challenges now," said KM Enamul Hoque, deputy director of Campaign for Popular Education.

TV and online education, developed as a temporary solution, do not focus on children with special needs, he added.

Many of these children are at risk of dropping out, he said.

Jahangir Alam, coordinator and thematic expert of Disability and Inclusive Development at the Centre for Disability in Development, said teachers impart lessons on TV and online classes using various graphs, pictures or video presentations.

But visually impaired students or those short of hearing cannot benefit from such classes, he said, adding that the students might be forgetting what they had learnt previously.

Sign language interpreters and subtitles must be added to the TV classes. He said.

'WE ARE WORKING ON THE ISSUE'

The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education is trying to make remote learning friendly for students who need special attention, said its Director General Prof Syed Md Golam Faruk.

"We will try to include sign language interpreters in TV education by next January," he told The Daily Star.

According to the Directorate of Primary Education, the number of students with disabilities last year was 1,24,056 at primary schools and madrasas. Some 69,046 of them were girls. At least 37,186 were physically handicapped, 13,901 had poor eyesight and 6,083 were short of hearing.

In secondary schools, there were 65,985 students with disabilities. Of them, 23,975 were girls, 22,561 were physically handicapped, 15,455 were visually impaired and 5,261 were short of hearing.

"It is true that we have not been able to bring all students under the coverage of online and TV education. But we are working on the issue," she said.

S'pore allows sale of lab-grown meat

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But so-called clean or cultured meat, which is grown from animal muscle cells in a lab, is still at a nascent stage given high production costs.

Singapore, a city state of 5.7 million, currently only produces about 10% of its food but has set out ambitious plans to raise that over the next decade by supporting high-tech farming and new means of food production.

Josh Tetrick said the San Francisco-based firm was also talking to US regulators but that Singapore was a "good bit" ahead of the United States.

"I would imagine what will happen is the US, Western Europe and others will see what Singapore has been able to do, the rigours of the framework that they put together. And I would imagine that they will try to use it as a template to put their own framework together," he said in an interview.

The Singapore Food Agency said it had reviewed data relating to process, manufacturing control and safety testing before granting approval.

Eat Just said it will manufacture the product in Singapore, where it also plans to start making a mung bean-based egg substitute it has been selling commercially in the United States.

Bangladesh will work

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He refers to five lakh Bangalees kept interned in Pakistan and her role in debarring Bangladesh from entry into the United Nations.

BANGABANDHU OFFERS PRAYERS AT MASS GRAVE

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today offers prayers at the mass grave by the riverside in Jhalakati where skeletons of hundreds of people killed by the Pakistani army have been accumulated. The prime minister asks local leaders to send the skeletons of the dead heroes to the National Museum now under construction at Savar near Dhaka.

The prime minister is expected to return to Dhaka tomorrow morning after completing his four-day official tour of coastal areas.

NAP(B) DEMANDS INTERIM GOVT BEFORE POLLS

The conference of National Awami Party (Bhashani) today demands the dissolution of the present government three months before the forthcoming elections and formation of an all-party interim government to conduct a free and fair election in the country.

SOURCES: December 4, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq

More than 2,500 die in US

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The virus has killed at least 1,489,816 people since the outbreak emerged in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP yesterday.

England yesterday exited a month-long lockdown but most of the country remained under restrictions as a new regional system for cutting coronavirus infection rates kicked in.

The four-week lockdown, which began in November, was imposed to stop surging rates of infection, ease pressure on health services, and to allow families to gather for Christmas.

But a tough three-tier system of restrictions will now be in place that has been criticised as doing little to reinstate cherished freedoms and help the virus-battered economy.

Arrest warrant issued

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was issued by the court after Police Bureau of Investigation filed a report on October 29, 2020 with the court detailing the "crime".

The report details that Dewan was doing a "Pala Gaan" session with fellow artiste Shah Alam Sarkar, where the topic being debated was "Living Beings versus The Greatest".

The event was held on February 1, 2020 at a private residence in Kalihati upazila in Tangail.

Pala Gaan is a form of folk music where an extempore musical battle takes place between two bauls.

"Upon investigating videos of Rita's songs, we have found evidence of the crime. The words she chose to debate the issue hurt the religious sentiments of the audience," said PBI Inspector Sheikh Md Mizanur Rahman, adding that she had committed a crime under section 28 of the Digital Security Act.

Section 28 (1) of the Digital Security Act states that "if any person or group intentionally or knowingly with the aim of hurting religious sentiments or values or with the intention to provoke, publish or broadcast anything by means of any website or any electronic format which hurts religious sentiments or values, then such activity will be considered an offence".

"The complainant [Advocate Imrul Hasan] was at home when he came across the video, and was extremely angry and hurt," says the report, "And upon finding no way out, the complainant went to Kadamtali Police Station to file the case."

Dewan's lawyer Abdullah Al Noman slammed the issuance of the warrant. "The court could have summoned her to appear in front of it, she is not escaping anywhere," he said.

Novelist Swakrito Noman, known for authoring fiction and non-fiction books on cultural history, and who has been vocal about the prosecution of Dewan and other artists on social media, criticised the move to arrest the baul singer.

Noman, who authored "Chhotoder Purbobongo Geetkar Golpo", said, "Pala gaan takes an issue and debates the negatives and positive sides of the matter. It does not mean they believe in what they are saying -- they are only performing. At the end of the musical performance both actors come to an agreement. Rita's words cannot be taken out of context," he said.

"Pala gaan" has a rich history of critically questioning everything and having philosophical discussions about religion, Noman said.

Several historians and artistes were contacted for comment on the issue, but they declined to say anything due to fear of reprisal.

Following the filing of the case, Rita released a video apologising for hurting religious sentiments and explaining her standpoint.

China probe lands

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is successful, China will be only the third country to have retrieved samples from the Moon, following the United States and the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s.

This is the first such attempt since the Soviet Union's Luna 24 mission in 1976.

The spacecraft was launched from the country's southern Hainan province last week and entered lunar orbit on Saturday after a 112-hour journey.

The spacecraft plans to collect two kilograms (4.5 pounds) of material in a previously unexplored area known as Oceanus Procellarum -- or "Ocean of Storms" -- a vast lava plain, according to the science journal Nature.

Legal action if rallies held

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stipulates that an organisation has to obtain prior permission from the DMP commissioner for staging such programmes using sound equipment, it added.

On November 13, a rally was held at Dhupkhola ground in Gandaria under the banner of "Touhidi Janata Oikya Parishad" to oppose the installation of a sculpture of Bangabandhu on the occasion of Mujib Borsho.

On the same day, Mamunul Haque, joint secretary general of Hefajat-e-Islam, publicly opposed the installation of Bangabandhu's sculpture at the BMA Auditorium in the capital.

At a recent rally in Chattogram, Hefajat chief Junaid Babunagari also threatened to pull down and destroy all the sculptures no matter which party puts those up.

7 Myanmar

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Bangladesh. They seized the yaba tablets stashed in two containers on the boat, the official added.

Hamidul said the Myanmar nationals had been smuggling yaba tablets by sea for a long time. He, however, didn't disclose the names of the detainees.

The detainees, yaba tablets, and the boat were handed to Taknaf Model Police Station.

2020 one

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temperature in 2020 is set to be about 1.2 C above the pre-industrial level," said Taalas.

"There is at least a one in five chance of it temporarily exceeding 1.5 C by 2024."

The WMO said 2020 seemed on course to be the second-hottest year ever -- but the difference between the top three is small and the picture could change once this year's data sets are complete.

The years from 2015 to 2020 are therefore individually "likely to be the six warmest on record", the report said.

Temperature averages across the last five years, and across the last 10 year period, "are also the warmest on record", it added.

In 2020, "we saw new extreme temperatures on land, sea and especially in the Arctic," said Taalas.

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**The Fleming Fund**  
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**Request/Invitation for Expression of Interest  
From Construction Firms for Infrastructure Works**

DAI Global, LLC has been engaged with the Fleming Fund country grant project in Bangladesh, to strengthen the National Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and Antimicrobial Use (AMU) surveillance system in an integrated way with the One Health approach in the Human Health, Animal Health and Aqua-culture sectors in Bangladesh.

In coordination with relevant govt. authorities and partnership with icddr,b, CVASU and LSTM, the project is planning to carryout refurbishment/ renovation of three AMR referral laboratories and nine sentinel laboratories throughout Bangladesh. Assessments of these labs indicate that minor to moderate in most sites and extensive refurbishments in couple of sites will be required. The potential and/or successful construction firm that will be contracted, will: a) Carry out the renovation works under a unit price contract through a competitive bidding process; and b) Warranty the works for a period of at least one year from successful handover of the same.

DAI invites eligible construction firms to submit prequalification applications expressing their interest. Upon evaluation of the applications and physical verification of past works done by the construction firms, DAI will prequalify construction firms for submission of the bids (detailed technical and cost proposals) for the said renovation works anticipated to begin in late January or early February 2021.**Submission Deadline** for responding to this Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) is **20<sup>th</sup> December 2020**. Interested construction firms are invited to collect the detail REOI document at the earliest by requesting to the email address **BGD\_FF\_Procurement\_In@ dai.com**. OR alternatively, the REOI document is available on **www.bdjobs.com** Tender/EOI section.



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**Notice for IPO Lottery Conduction Program**

The management of **ROBI AXIATA LIMITED** expresses its profound gratitude to the esteemed investors for successful completion of subscription of the IPO of the company. Robi takes great pleasure to announce that the application for shares has been oversubscribed by **5.74** times against Public Offering of BDT 3,877,424,000 out of total issue size of BDT 5,237,933,340 (out of total issue BDT 1,360,509,340 from employees of Robi under Employee Share Purchase Plan). The management of Robi also gratefully acknowledges the co-operation and services rendered by Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC), Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), Bangladesh Bank, Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms, Dhaka Stock Exchange Limited (DSE), Chittagong Stock Exchange Limited (CSE), Central Depository Bangladesh Limited (CDBL), underwriters, banker to the issue and issue manager. As per press release dated 16 July, 2020 of Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission, the IPO lottery conduction program of Robi for allotment of shares will be held on **digital platform on Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 10:30 A.M.** Robi cordially invites all the esteemed investors to log in to **robilottery.com** to watch the live lottery program and to participate in the seed collection for conducting the lottery as well.

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