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Remembered FOREVER

Preserved and restored, Barishal Wapda killing ground of Liberation War set to be inaugurated for public today

SUSHANTA GHOSH

The horror and the deaths had turned it into hell on earth in 1971.

The Wapda compound in Barishal city, infamous in the area as a torture centre and a mass killing ground of the Pakistan occupation forces, saw 25 to 30 Bangalees brutally killed every morning.

Shafiur Rahman Jamal's father was one of them.

A resident of Kalish Chandra area of what is now Barishal city, Jamal himself and his older brother Kamal had been captured in lieu of their father Mojibur Rahman Kanchan.

Kanchan, a cultural worker and veteran freedom fighter, had escaped the house shortly before members of the Pakistan army came to their house looking for him. So, they picked up the two brothers and sent them to Wapda camp.

"The Pakistan military then announced that if Kanchan Miah surrendered, his two children would be released. At last, my father surrendered himself at Wapda on the day of Eid and we two brothers were released," Jamal told this newspaper.

"But my father was shot dead and killed there."

The Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) compound has witnessed multiple such gruesome acts of torture, killing, and rape during the Liberation War.

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This Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) compound in Barishal city was the centre of operations for the Pakistan Army and a mass killing ground during the Liberation War. Two torture cells and two bunkers have been restored and will be opened to the public today, the very day the city was liberated from the Pakistan occupation forces in 1971.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Biden names health team to tackle Covid crisis

AFP, Washington

President-elect Joe Biden yesterday named the team tasked with turning around the United States' floundering efforts to quell the Covid-19 pandemic, nominating Xavier Becerra as his secretary of health.

When Biden takes office on January 20, his health team will be immediately responsible for rolling out a historic immunization drive -- set to launch later this month in a bid to gain control of a pandemic that has killed 280,000 people in the country.

Along with California attorney general Becerra, Biden named Vivek Murthy as surgeon general -- a role he previously held under Barack Obama -- and Harvard infectious disease expert Rochelle Walensky as director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"This trusted and accomplished team of leaders will bring the

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Bangladesh Bank approves new bank

Experts worry as country now has 61 banks; raise questions over conflict of interest

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

Bangladesh Bank yesterday approved one more commercial bank, taking the total number of banks in the country to 61.

The name of the new lender is Citizen Bank. It is the third private bank to get BB approval over the last two years, populating the already-crowded banking landscape. Community Bank Bangladesh and Bengal Commercial Bank are the other two.

Experts say the decision to approve the new bank would create more pressure on the banking sector, given the size of the country's economy.

Talking to The Daily Star, two analysts said the central bank's latest decision has also brought to the fore the question of conflict of interest.

The chairman of Citizen Bank, Toufika Aftab, is the wife of AKM Aftab ul Islam, a director of Bangladesh Bank Board.

"Such an example is not justified on ethical grounds as the central bank directors are those who are mainly responsible for issuing licence to a new bank," said Khondker Ibrahim Khaled, a former BB deputy governor.

He, however, said there was no legal complications in this regard.

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Lok Sabha debate on Bangladesh and POWs



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman addressing a group of workers from Tejgaon Industrial Area in front of the Gono Bhaban on December 8, 1972.

December 8, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

SWARAN EXPLAINS UN RESOLUTION

Indian External Affairs Minister Swaran Singh says today that unless Pakistan recognises Bangladesh and unless Bangladesh is admitted to the United Nations, the release of the Pakistani prisoners of war would continue to be difficult. The external affairs minister says this in his reply to the debate in the Lok Sabha on the Bangladesh situation. Some members comment that India should not have accepted the simultaneous adoption of two resolutions on Bangladesh's admission and release of POWs.

In response, Swaran Singh explains that Pakistan had moved amendments to the resolution of admission of Bangladesh making her admission conditional to release of prisoners of war but the adoption of the Argentine resolution prevented Pakistan

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ILLEGAL GAS LINES Titas sues 533 for attacking its officials on drive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A case was filed yesterday against 533 people over attacking Titas Gas officials during a drive against illegal gas connections in Narayanganj's Araihaazar upazila.

Mezba-ur Rahman, engineering manager of Sonargaon zone distribution office of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd, filed the case with Araihaazar Police Station against 33 named accused and around 500 unnamed ones.

Shawkat Hossain, inspector (investigation) of the police station, said the case was filed against the accused on charges of providing gas connections illegally, obstructing police duties, and carrying out the attack during the drive in Jhaugora Uttarpara area of the upazila on Sunday.

He said nine people were detained on Sunday following the attack.

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Giant vertical farm opens in Denmark



AFP, Taastrup

A purple glow illuminates stacked boxes where lettuce, herbs and kale will soon be sprouting at one of Europe's biggest "vertical farms" which has just opened in a warehouse in an industrial zone in Copenhagen.

Fourteen layers of racks soar from floor to ceiling in this massive, 7,000-square-metre (75,350-square-foot) hangar used by Danish start-up Nordic Harvest.

The produce grown here will be harvested 15 times a year, despite never seeing soil or daylight. It is lit up around the clock by 20,000 specialised LED lightbulbs.

In this futuristic farm, little robots deliver trays of seeds from aisle to aisle.

The large aluminium boxes are mostly empty for now, but lettuce and other leafy greens will soon be growing.

Some 200 tonnes of produce are due to be harvested in the first quarter of 2021, and almost

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Akram Ahmed Bir Uttam passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Valiant freedom fighter Captain Akram Ahmed Bir Uttam died at Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka yesterday morning.

He was 74.

Captain Akram, who was working as a senior consultant and flight operations inspector at the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, had played a

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PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 8

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:15	12:45	3:45	5:19	7:00
JAMAAT 5:50	1:15	4:00	5:22	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Nuke scientist killed by 'AI' machine gun

Iran says satellite-controlled weapon fired 13 rounds

AFP, Tehran

A satellite-controlled machine gun with "artificial intelligence" was used in last week's assassination of a top nuclear scientist in Iran, the deputy commander of the Revolutionary Guards told local media on Sunday night.

Mohsen Fakhrizadeh was driving on a highway outside Iran's capital Tehran with a security detail of 11 Guards on November 27, when the machine gun "zoomed in" on his face and fired 13 rounds, said rear-admiral Ali Fadavi.

The machine gun was mounted on a Nissan pickup and "focused only on martyr Fakhrizadeh's face in a way that his wife,

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Sinks installed for washing hands at the capital's Karwan Bazar on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue appear to have been not used for quite a while. There was no water supply or soap there when this photo was taken yesterday. Coronavirus infections and deaths caused by the pathogen are on the rise.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

ASTRAZENECA'S COVID VACCINE

India's Serum Institute seeks urgent approval

AGENCIES

Serum Institute of India, the world's largest producer of vaccines by volume and India's main hope of large-scale supplies, said yesterday it had lodged the first formal application for emergency use approval for AstraZeneca Plc's Covid-19 vaccine.

The UK pharmaceutical giant is chasing rivals Pfizer Inc and Moderna Inc with a vaccine that has less stringent storage requirements and is expected to be easier to distribute and faster to scale up in

production than others.

But it is also facing queries from scientists over its trial data, which showed a 1.5 dose regimen delivered more than 90% efficacy and a full two-dose regimen just 62%, both administered over two stages.

Astra said two weeks ago that it could launch an additional trial to evaluate the lower dose regimen, but Serum Institute has said it would continue to test only the two full doses as it would delay trials.

Serum Institute, seeking to deliver

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WE MOURN

We, the members of ONE Bank Family, deeply mourn the loss of our beloved colleague Ashraful Haq Amin, Executive Vice President, CFO & Head of Finance Division of ONE Bank Limited. He passed away due to Brain Hemorrhage in the early hours of 7th December, 2020.

Ashraful Haq Amin was a good natured, warm hearted personality. He had an ever smiling face. His attachment to our Bank commands regards.

We will always deeply miss him. May his departed soul rest in peace. May Almighty grant him the highest place in heaven.

Ashraful Haq Amin
14 November 1975 – 07 December 2020

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