

Body cameras

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In many countries, video footage acts as evidence to investigate an incident. The death of George Floyd at Minneapolis in the US that sparked "Black Lives Matter/I Can't Breathe" movement is a glaring example.

Two body-worn camera videos from the day Floyd was killed by police were publicly released by a Minneapolis court, after a coalition of media companies intervened and argued for their unrestrained release.

Prof Omar Faruk of Department of Criminology and Police Science at Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University said usage of body cameras will take law-enforcement agencies one-step ahead in modernising the force and ensuring transparency.

"But our police force should keep in mind that these devices are introduced to modernise the service. If they are misused and applied to stage incidents, the consequences will be bad," he said.

He also said transparency will be ensured if all police check-posts are brought under coverage of body cameras and CCTV.

When used, body cameras would record law enforcers' interactions with people, or gather video evidence at crime scenes.

There are many allegations that police take advantage of people in the name of searching at check-posts, like demanding money after putting yaba pills or other drugs in their pockets, and confiscating valuables from their possession but not recording them properly in the seizure list.

Crime analysts say the use of such information technology will also help prevent such irregularities.

At least 196 people have been victims of extrajudicial killings and custodial deaths this year. It was 388 in 2019, according to data compiled by Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) from media reports.

Prominent rights activist Nur Khan said CCTV, body cameras and other possible technical facilities may help in identifying police involvement with

crimes and criminals' actions.

He, however, said the effectiveness of those devices depends on enforcement.

"Say for example, the CCTV footage of Teknaf Police Station before and after the Sinha killing was missing, as police claimed there was a technical glitch," he said.

About incidents like "gunfights", Nur Khan said, "If the state wants, only then will such incidents stop. Body cameras may help to some extent, but it cannot be reduced to zero if the state does not want so. The incidents of 'gunfights' came down significantly in the last few months," he noted.

Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed, at the inauguration of tactical belts on December 15, said many officers of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) have been using body cameras for the last few years, but the initiative have not yet been expanded.

Although the cameras are quite expensive, and it will be impossible to give them to all officers in the next year, the devices will be gradually distributed, he said.

The traffic department and check-posts will be prioritised in this regard, he added.

Asked, Walid Hossain, deputy commissioner (media) of DMP, told The Daily Star that DMP will soon start using body cameras at every check-post, subject to the home ministry's approval.

"It's now being operated at some check-posts and traffic points," he added.

"We have applied to procure 200 high-quality body-worn cameras for officers to use at check-posts," the DMP official said, adding that earlier, GoPros and body-worn cameras were mostly used by the traffic department since December 2014.

Talking to The Daily Star, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said the initiative is still at discussion level.

"We do it in some places on trial basis. But there is no decision yet to implement it across the country," he said.

SC stays

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the run, Mohammad Shishir Manir, a defence lawyer for Khaleque and Bahadur, told this newspaper on December 7.

The HC appointed Shahnaz Haque as a state defence lawyer for Shukkur as he is absconding.

He said the HC bench acquitted the three as it was proved that Khaleque and Bahadur were tortured and forced to give the confessional statements. Their statements were recorded at the same time in the magistrate's room violating relevant provisions of law, he said, adding that there were inconsistencies in the confessional statements.

Shishir Manir said there is no other evidence and documents in the case to prove the allegations against the three who were sentenced to death. The lawyer said he prayed to the HC to order the government to conduct further investigation in order to find out the real kidnappers and killers.

The HC may issue necessary directives to this effect in the full text of its verdict, he added.

Md Hridoy, a nursery student and son of Nurul Haque from Uttar Nurichara in Cox's Bazar, was abducted while he was returning home from school on July 4, 2013. The kidnappers then phoned Hridoy's elder brother Md Yousuf, demanding Tk 3 lakh for his release.

The following day, police recovered Hridoy's body from Kalatali Road area. Later, Victim's father filed a murder a case with Cox's Bazar Model Police Station.

HC grants

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with their two children -- aged three and a half years and two and a half years -- at the home of Washima's mother Momena Begum in Old Dhaka.

Momena Begum had filed a case with the Metropolitan Magistrate Court in Dhaka on December 2 against Tofail and Washima on charge of threatening and attempting to beat her (Momena).

Metropolitan Magistrate of Dhaka Mamunur Rashid then issued an arrest warrant against Tofail and Washima in the case.

Bangshal police arrested Tofail and Washima on December 18 and produced them to the magistrate the same day. The magistrate then sent them to jail rejecting their bail petition.

On December 22, the magistrate had again rejected their bail petition in the case, following which their children started crying profusely at the court premises, he said.

The children are now with their neighbours, Shishir Manir said.

Work to establish

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emotion-choked voice that they came forward to strengthen the Liberation War when many had not expected that independence would be achieved soon. Recalling that independence was achieved at the cost of much blood, the prime minister says, "When I was imprisoned, you stood by the freedom fighters."

Revealing a hitherto undisclosed chapter of the struggle, Bangabandhu says during the last days of non-cooperation movement he asked Dr Nurullah of Dhaka Engineering University to produce a radio transmitter which he would use for giving his last call to the people. The transmitter was produced. The prime minister also says on that fateful night of March 25, 1971, he had no other way but to pass on his last message to Chittagang.

SOURCES: December 25, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Farmers fear crop loss

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it will be difficult for us to protect the seedlings," said Shahidul Islam, another farmer of Panditpara village of the same upazila.

"We have to spray different types of pesticides and antifungal medicines to protect the plants during fog and cold," said Ahsanur Rahman of Chhoto Balia villager of the same upazila.

"It will increase our production cost. We don't know how we will meet our additional expenses," he told The Daily Star.

Contacted, Aftab Ahmed, deputy director of the Department of Agricultural Extension in Thakurgaon, said they are giving advices and assistance to farmers for protecting their crops.

Meanwhile, yesterday's lowest temperature in the country was recorded at 8.3 degrees Celsius at Tentulia in Panchagarh, says the Met Office.

"Mild cold wave is sweeping over the regions of Sreemangal, Tentulia, Rajarhat and Chuadanga," read a weather bulletin.

"It may continue," said the bulletin of Bangladesh Meteorological Department.

"Night and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country," it added.

The Met office forecast for 24 hours was released at 6:00pm yesterday.

"Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country. Moderate to thick fog may occur at places over the river basins of the country and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during midnight to morning," it added.

The bulletin forecast that the weather may see little change in the next 72 hours.

[Our Thakurgaon correspondent contributed to this report]

Allegation

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He said, "Those who filed cases against Hefajat leaders lost earth beneath their feet. They ruined the fame, glory and honour of Ahmes Shafi when he was alive through their mundane greed."

The top leader of Hefajat urged the government to withdraw the case. Unless, he said, they would undertake tougher programmes.

100 Bangladeshis

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Their flight was cancelled and the workers were sent back to Dhaka from Abu Dhabi.

Returning to Dhaka, many workers were seen crying helplessly.

Among the expatriate workers, Sabina Akhter and Taslima Akhter, hailing from Cumilla, said they spent Tk 2.5 lakh each to go to Saudi Arabia.

They said they had not informed their families about their return and now they could not return to their homes.

Later, Brac arranged food and accommodation for them at its safe home.

Contacted, Fakhru Islam, assistant director of Probashi Kalyan Desk at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, told The Daily Star that they have information that around 79 Bangladeshi workers were sent back to Dhaka Monday night.

"We don't have complete information about the migrant workers who were sent back from different airports on their way to Saudi Arabia as the airlines concerned didn't report to us. We are trying to collect information," added Fakhru.

On Monday, Saudi Arabia suspended all international flights for a week amid reports of the appearance of a new mutated strain of the novel coronavirus in the UK. The suspension casts uncertainty on the return of Bangladeshi expatriate workers to their workplaces in the Gulf country.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines also suspended its all flights to and from Jeddah, Riyadh, and Dammam for a week from Monday due to the suspension imposed by the Saudi authorities.

Pornography spreads amid futile govt ban

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war against pornography soon after he was appointed to this position in January 2018.

"We have been facing a lot of challenges to tackle pornography. We have blocked 22,000 major porn sites but every day new sites are being launched," he told this correspondent in October this year.

"Pornographic and semi-pornographic contents are being spread also on social media. Again, people are accessing the blocked sites using VPN. We don't have sufficient manpower to monitor the consumption and technological capacity to stop this menace."

"However," he added, "we are working on using artificial intelligence and designing new software to track and identify porn users and producers."

PORN POPULARITY RISING

Using Google Trends, which analyses the popularity of top search queries in Google Search in a particular region or country, The Daily Star explored popularity of a collection of search terms that are used in Google to visit porn sites by Bangladeshi users. These terms are "Sex Video", "Porn", "XXX Video", "Bangla Sex Video", etc.

The time period of the analysis was fixed from February 2017 to October 31, 2020 as blocking of porn sites started from January 2017.

The reason behind choosing Google Trends is that Google estimates locations of the users even when they browse internet in incognito mode (hiding identity) or using a virtual private network (VPN).

Google Trends measures search interest in a scale of 0 to 100. The value of 100 means the search term is most popular, 50 means the term is half as popular and 0 means there is no sufficient data about the term.

The analysis showed these porn related terms are some of the most searched phrases on Google by Bangladeshis.

For instance, the term "Bangla Sex Video" has been consistently valued more than 70 since 2017. It has hit the peak popularity value of 100 several times and mostly remained over the value of 90. Throughout September this year, the popularity value of this term was above 75.

For the terms "Sex Video", "Porn" and "XXX

Video", Google Trends show similar results. All these search items reached the peak popularity value several times in the last three years and most of the times remained above 75.

Google Trends also revealed popularity percentage of other related terms that Bangladeshi users used while searching for the above mentioned terms. And, these data are even more alarming.

For instance, those who searched for "Sex Video" and "Bangla Sex Video" also searched for the terms "Porn Video", "New Bangla Sex Video", "New Sex Video" and "New Bangla Sex" whose popularity value are 100, 100, 99 and 97 respectively.

Popularity of web porn among Bangladeshi users can be better understood when these search items are compared with other popular search items. Within the same time period (2017-October, 2020), "Sex Video" had the popularity value 50, "Cricketer" 22, "Bangla Song" 10, and "Hindi Movie" 7.

One interesting part of the analysis is popularity of these pornographic search terms dropped sharply (even up to below 50) during May-June in 2017, 2018, and 2019 and April-May in 2020 which were in and around the holy month of Ramadan.

Ahmad Musaffa Chowdhury, a software architect and director of Corpovisuals, a technology and communication agency, said Google estimates its users' locations even when they browse internet using VPN.

"For instance, if you log in to your Google account and watch some videos on YouTube, you may still see similar content suggestions next time you go to the website while connected to a VPN."

He added, "It is quite understandable that Google uses these data for itself and a part of these data are shared through Google Trends. So it is quite possible to estimate search interest reliably by analysing Google Trends data."

Prof AKM Ashkur Rahman, department of computer science and engineering at Buet, said, "Google can track users depending on their search behaviour. Many third party VPN applications also share information with Google as these applications are often used as add-ons to the web browser or run in operating systems designed by Google."

IMPORTING FAKE SEWING MACHINES 2 Chinese nationals held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police on Tuesday arrested two Chinese nationals from the capital for allegedly importing fake sewing machines to the country.

A total of 585 pieces of machine with Singer and 1,100 pieces with Butterfly logos were recovered from two warehouses in Turag area. Their estimated market value is Tk 70 lakh, Additional DIG Omar Farooq told reporters at a press conference held at the CID office yesterday.

The arrestees are -- Hao Xiaoping alias Bob Hao (41), and Su Yin (35).

Rab arrests

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The Rab official said after initial testing, the seized items were found to be cocaine. The street value of it is around Tk 60 crore, he said.

During primary interrogation, the arrestees admitted they are members of an international drug trafficking gang, Maj Shahrier said. Rab officials said the arrestees collected the cocaine from a neighbouring country and were waiting for an opportune time to ship to Singapore.

Prioritise hiring

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of Chattogram Railway Station and recovering of illegally occupied railways lands in Natore were discussed.

The meeting also recommended transport of passengers in compliance with health rules.

The meeting discussed the implementation progress of ongoing projects of Bangladesh Railway and the reasons for increase of expenditure and time.

The committee emphasised on strengthening procurement management, including appointment of skilled project directors, so as not to increase time and cost of projects.

The meeting also discussed the progress of the proposed projects of Bangladesh Railway.

WAY TO CONTROL?

The Cyber Crime Investigation Division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police is tasked with patrolling, preventing, detecting and investigating cybercrime in Dhaka city.

AFM Al Kibria, deputy commissioner of the division, said, "We are patrolling the cyberspace constantly. But pornography in these days is spreading so fast through social media and other new sites that it is extremely difficult for us to stop it effectively."

"However, if someone notifies us about any crime related to it, we are able to track the offender down immediately and request Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission [BTRC] to block the content or the website."

In fact, BTRC sees no solution except blocking more websites to stop the porn menace.

Md Jahurul Haque, chairman of BTRC said, "We have discussed with the global tech giants several times to block adult contents. But they don't always comply with our request because their definition of adult or obscene content is different from us."

"Therefore, I don't see any alternative to blocking more websites and even social media sites if necessary. Blocking foreign social media sites and developing similar sites of our own, according to our own ethical values, like China did, is probably the only solution. However, if we block the social media, journalists and youths will get agitated. It's like a double edged sword."

Prof AKM Ashkur Rahman, department of computer science and engineering at Buet, has been researching on wireless and sensor networks and artificial intelligence for decades.

He said, "At first, we need to collect data on the pattern of porn consumption such as preferred time, age group of users, etc. Then, using artificial intelligence it is possible to detect which networks are being mostly used for consuming video content at a particular time. In this way, the agencies will get some useful information which may pave the way for effective measures to stop pornography."

"However," he added, "we need more research and innovation in this field. If the government engages our researchers and invest on it, we shall be able to find a way to control its spread effectively."

Scientists achieve quantum

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fidelity. This network was built with off-the-shelf equipment, which would be compatible with existing internet infrastructure.

Qubits work by replacing traditional bits - the '1's' and '0's' used to encode digital information - with quantum bits, or qubits.

These are able to function as both a '1' and a '0' at the same time by existing in a state of superposition, meaning each new qubit added to the computer increases its power exponentially rather than linearly.

Quantum teleportation, therefore, is a transfer of quantum states from one location to the other. This transfer was done using quantum entanglement, where two particles are linked in such a way that information shared with one is shared with the other at exactly the same time.

This is because the particles exist in states of probabilities, where their exact position, momentum, and spin is not determined until the particle has been measured.

US under

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"The whole California ICU capacity has been going down. We are all struggling," said Dr Imran Mohammed of Sutter Roseville Medical Center, north of Sacramento on Tuesday. "We really don't want to see more than this. We will be challenged to see further ICU patients and we will have no place eventually."

Many US states and cities have imposed lockdowns and business closures to try to get a handle on a wave of illness driven by last month's Thanksgiving gatherings.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said on Tuesday that the altered coronavirus had not yet been detected in the United States.

AGM 2020
St. Joseph Old Boys' Foundation (SJOB)
The Executive Committee of St. Joseph Old Boys' Foundation (SJOB) requests you to join the Annual General Meeting of 2020 to be held at School premises on Friday, January 08, 2021

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Venue: St. Joseph Higher Secondary School
97 Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur, Dhaka
Date: January 08, 2021 (Friday)
Time: 4:00 PM onwards

Death Anniversary of Rukhsana Samad

Today is the 1st Death Anniversary of Late Rukhsana Samad, wife of Mr. Towhid Samad, Chairman, Bangladesh General Insurance Company Ltd. (BGIC). She died on December 24, 2019.

We are praying to the Almighty Allah for her eternal peace and to grant her Jannatul Ferdous. Ameen!

BGIC Family
Rukhsana Samad
1951-2019

BGIC
বাংলাদেশ জেনারেল ইনসিওরেন্স কোং লিমিটেড
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তারিখঃ ০৮/০৯/১৪২২ বঙ্গাব্দ
২৩/১২/২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

শুক্র মৌসুমে ঢাকাসহ সারাদেশে বায়ু দূষণের মাত্রা অত্যধিক বেড়ে যায়, যা মানব স্বাস্থ্যের জন্য অত্যন্ত ক্ষতিকর। বিশেষ করে নভেম্বর থেকে মার্চ পর্যন্ত সময়ে স্বল্প বৃষ্টিপাত ও শুষ্ক আবহাওয়া বিরাজমান থাকে। এসময় যানবাহন, ইটভাটা, অসতর্ক নির্মাণ ও উন্নয়ন কার্যক্রমের পাশাপাশি বায়ু, মাটি, পাথর, ইট ও বর্জ্য উন্মুক্তভাবে পরিবহনের মাধ্যমে বায়ুদূষণ সৃষ্টি হয়। ঢাকা শহরের এসকল উৎস হতে সৃষ্ট বায়ুদূষণ নিয়ন্ত্রণে মহানগর হাইকোর্ট বিভাগ কর্তৃক সুনির্দিষ্ট নির্দেশনা সম্বলিত আদেশ জারি করা হয়েছে।

এ পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে, ঢাকা শহরের বায়ুদূষণ নিয়ন্ত্রণে সর্বসাধারণ এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট দপ্তর/সংস্থা/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে নিম্নোক্ত কার্যক্রম বাস্তবায়ন করার জন্য বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ করা হলোঃ

- ১) ঢাকা শহরে বায়ু, মাটি, পাথর, ইট ও বর্জ্য পরিবহনকারী খোলা (উন্মুক্ত) ট্রাক বা যানবাহন চলাচল বন্ধ করা;
- ২) নির্মাণ কাজের সময় ধূলাবালি নিয়ন্ত্রণে পানি ছিটানো, নির্মাণ সামগ্রী ঢেকে পরিবহন ও মজুদ করা, যত্রতত্র ফেলে না রাখা এবং প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে ধূলিদূষণ নিয়ন্ত্রণে উপযুক্ত বেটনীর ব্যবহার নিশ্চিত করা;
- ৩) রাস্তায় বিভিন্ন সার্ভিস ফ্যাসিলিটিস (যেমনঃ পানি, গ্যাস, বিদ্যুৎ ইত্যাদি) স্থাপন বা মেরামতে বার্ষিক পরিকল্পনা প্রণয়ন করে বাস্তবায়ন করা যাতে একই রাস্তা বারবার খোঁড়াখুড়ি করতে না হয়। সার্ভিস ফ্যাসিলিটিস স্থাপন বা মেরামত শেষে ধূলাবালি নিয়ন্ত্রণে দ্রুততম সময়ের মধ্যে রাস্তা কার্পেটিং করে পরিচ্ছন্ন পরিবেশ সৃষ্টি করা;
- ৪) উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পের কারণে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত রাস্তা দীর্ঘদিন ফেলে না রেখে দ্রুত মেরামত করা;
- ৫) রাস্তার অনাবৃত/ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত/ভাঙ্গা অংশ, ফুটপাথ, সড়ক বিভাজন (Divider) এবং সড়কদ্বীপ দ্রুত মেরামত করা;
- ৬) রাস্তার পার্শ্ববর্তী ড্রেন বা নর্দমা হতে ময়লা/বর্জ্য উত্তোলন করে রাস্তার পাশে ফেলে না রেখে দ্রুত নির্দিষ্ট স্থানে নিয়ে যাওয়া;
- ৭) রাস্তায় জমে থাকা ধূলা-বালি নিয়মিতভাবে ভেঙে ফেলা সুইপিং ট্রাকের মাধ্যমে সরিয়ে নেয়া;
- ৮) রাস্তার পার্শ্ববর্তী ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত এবং অনাবৃত স্থানসমূহ কর্কিট ব্রক অথবা ঘাস লাগিয়ে আবৃত করা;
- ৯) বিভিন্ন মার্কেট, ব্যবসা প্রতিষ্ঠান ও দোকান-পাটের ধূলা-বালি ও ময়লা-আবর্জনা বাতু দিয়ে সড়কের ফেলার কার্যক্রম বন্ধ করা এবং প্রতিদিনের ময়লা-আবর্জনা নিজস্ব ব্যবস্থাপনায় সংরক্ষণ করে দোকান বা মার্কেট বন্ধ করার সময় তা সিটি কর্পোরেশনের নির্ধারিত জায়গায় ফেলা;
- ১০) উন্মুক্ত স্থানে আবর্জনা ফেলে না রাখা এবং বর্জ্য পোড়ানো বন্ধ করা;
- ১১) সরকার কর্তৃক ঘোষিত আনফিট যানবাহনসহ মানমাত্রার উপরে কালো ধোঁয়া সৃষ্টিকারী সকল যানবাহন রাস্তায় চলাচল বন্ধ করা;
- ১২) অবৈধ টায়ার পোড়ানো ও ব্যাটারী রিসাইক্লিং কারখানা বন্ধ রাখা;
- ১৩) সকল অবৈধ ইটভাটার কার্যক্রম বন্ধ রাখা।

মহাপরিচালক
পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর

জিডি-২০৫৫

আসুন বায়ুদূষণ রোধ করি, সুস্থ ও সুন্দর ভবিষ্যৎ গড়ি