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Culprits left unpunished

35 cases of launch disasters pending with Marine Court

TAWFIQUE ALI

Each time a launch capsizes claiming lots of lives, a probe committee would be formed and in some instances, a case would be filed, but the probe findings would ultimately be shelved and the perpetrators would go scot-free.

This has become a common occurrence in the country and there has been no solace or rightful compensation for the family members of thousands of people killed in launch disasters in the country over the last two decades.

Hundreds of probe committees had been formed during this period and only a few cases were lodged with the country's lone Marine Court, said a court official requesting anonymity.

Some 35 launch accident cases are now pending with the court which is ill-equipped in absence of marine experts (assessors). The experts assist the judge in trying a case, he added.

A lawyer at the court, Md Jahangir Hossain said after an inquiry into a launch accident, the authorities concerned require the approval of the director general of Department of Shipping for filing a case with the Marine Court.

"It depends on the government's willingness whether a case would be

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Labony Akhter shedding tears on her uncle Shahidul Islam's shoulder at Mawa ferry terminal yesterday. She lost three members of her family -- her sister Rozina Akhter, aunt Ayesha Akhter, and cousin Sara Islam -- when Pinak-6 went down. The uncle in the picture had managed to swim ashore.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BNP to finalise agitation programme next week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is going to separately sit with her party's policymakers and the chiefs of 20-party alliance next week to finalise the next course of action to force the government hold a fresh election under non-party administration.

Both the meetings were set to take place at Khaleda's political office in Gulshan on Sunday and Monday at 8:00pm, Maruf Kamal Khan, press secretary of the BNP chief, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The last meeting of BNP's national standing committee was held on May 10.

Sunday's standing committee meeting is deemed to be significant from different aspects, especially on preparing next course of action about fresh anti-government movement likely to start from mid-August.

Khaleda issued threats at different Iftar parties during Ramadan that the opposition would wage a vigorous movement after the Eid-ul-Fitr.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Form broadcast commission immediately

TV channel owners ask govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Association of Television Channel Owners (ATCO) yesterday demanded the immediate formation of an independent broadcast commission to implement the National Broadcast Policy-2014 for the electronic media.

An organisation comprising the country's private television stations, it also urged the government not to implement the policy until the commission is formed with qualified people.

ATCO leaders put forward their demands upon discussing the policy at a meeting at its Kakrail office in the capital.

"We fear misuse of the policy if the information ministry implements it before the formation of the commission," said Shykh Siraj, director of Channel i and general secretary of ATCO, while briefing reporters on the discussion.

Electronic media people have been demanding a fair policy to run the industry smoothly, he said, adding that a broadcast commission should be formed to regulate television and radio channels.

"The broadcast media has come a long way in the last two decades. We want it to flourish further for the sake of democracy."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

5 Bangladeshis killed in Libya

13 expats killed so far in conflict between govt, rebel forces

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least five Bangladeshis were killed as they were caught up in clashes between Libyan government forces and rebels in Tripoli on Tuesday and yesterday.

Three Bangladeshis were killed in a clash near Tripoli airport yesterday, said Ahsan Kibria Siddique, first secretary of the Bangladesh mission in Tripoli.

They were killed in a missile attack on a tiles factory where they worked. The factory was close to the airport.

The dead were identified as Moshir Rahman, son of Rafiqul Islam of Gopalganj, Sheikh Mohammad Milon, son of Ali Sheikh of Madaripur, and Murad, son of Sarwar Mollah of Madaripur.

Their bodies were at Tripoli Medical Centre mortuary, said Kibria.

On Tuesday, two Bangladeshi migrant workers died and another was injured as they were caught up in

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Drug admin official couldn't care less

The one who sued toxic medicine makers keeps off court for over two years

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and EMRAN HOSSAIN

He is the man who filed the cases. He is the one who accused three drug companies of making adulterated drugs that allegedly killed scores of children.

Then again, he is the same man who later changed his statement in court and mysteriously defied at least a dozen court orders to appear before it to testify.

Abul Khair Chowdhury is a government official now serving as an assistant director of the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA). Intriguingly, police failed to get hold of him despite summon and arrest orders in the last two years.

Dhaka Drug Court awaits his appearance before it today to testify in two cases Khair filed in 1992 against BCI Bangladesh for producing toxic



Abul Khair Chy

paracetamol syrup that allegedly killed 76 children.

However, the chances of his appearance remain slim as police have again failed to arrest and produce him before the court. Since April 24, 2013, this is the eighth time that the court has ordered Motijheel police to arrest Khair, as he did not respond to the court summons since July 3, 2012.

Khair filed the cases against BCI Bangladesh on December 3, 1992. From then on, he has been showing dubious indifference to the matter.

Court records show that Khair, then a drug superintendent, never appeared before the court with the evidence, even though the court asked him to do so five times in 1994. This subsequently led to the stay of the case proceedings.

Though the stay was lifted on

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Saudi men barred from marrying Bangladeshis

IANS, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia has banned its male citizens from marrying women from four countries - Pakistan, Bangladesh, Chad and Myanmar, a police officer said.

The announcement comes as a part of Saudi Arabia's efforts to prohibit Saudi men from marrying expatriates, a subject widely debated in the Gulf nation.

There is an estimated 500,000 women from the four countries, residing in Saudi Arabia.

Makkah Police Director Assaf Al-Qurashi said additional formalities have been placed before issuing the permission for marriage with foreigners, Dawnonline reported citing a local daily yesterday.

Tougher regulations have been introduced for such marriages, that includes, obtaining consent from the authorities and submitting marriage applications through official channels, the report said.

Applicants should be over 25 and attach identification documents signed by the local district mayor as well as all other identity papers, including a copy of his family card.

"If the applicant is already married, he should attach a report from a hospital proving that his wife is either disabled, suffering from a chronic disease

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GAZA KILLINGS Ershad expects govt to be more vocal

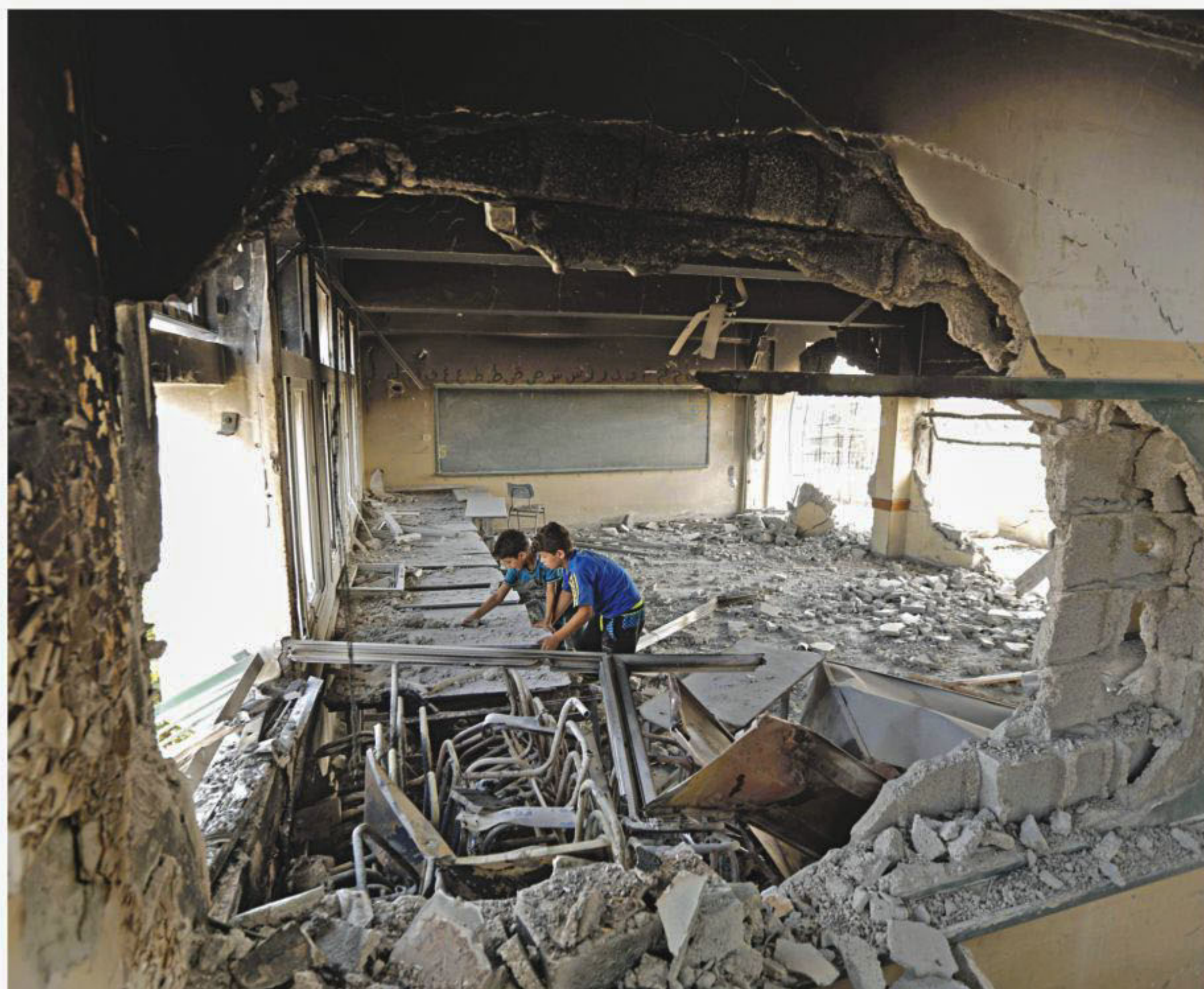
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Protesting the killing of innocent people in Gaza by Israeli forces, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday urged the government to take to the streets and demonstrate against Israeli aggression.

"More protests through issuing statements against the killing are not enough. I urge the government to take to the streets like us against the barbaric killing of Palestinians by the Israeli military," said Ershad, who is also a special envoy to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, while addressing a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club organised by the JP to protest the killing of Gaza people.

Over 1,800 Gazans, many of them children and women, died in the Israeli offensive in Gaza in the last 29 days.

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Palestinian children stand at the heavily damaged Sobhi Abu Karsh school in Gaza City's al-Shejaea neighbourhood on Tuesday as a 72-hour humanitarian truce went into effect after a month of fighting between Hamas and Israeli forces.

PHOTO: AFP

Govt to set criteria to identify real freedom fighters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In an apparent move to check collection of freedom fighter certificates on forged information, the government has decided to define freedom fighters 43 years after the country's independence.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mojammel Haque stated this to journalists after a meeting of the National Freedom Fighters Council at its Moghbazar office in the capital yesterday.

A sub-committee headed by former state minister for primary and mass education Motaheer Hossain has been formed to do the job, he added.

The government, said Mojammel, had been facing problems in identifying the war heroes as there is no definition of freedom fighters. Once it is defined with some conditions, it will be easier to identify the real freedom fighters.

Chaired by the minister, the meeting, the first during the tenure of the present government, also decided to update the National Freedom Fighters Council Act, 2002. It formed a committee headed by former chief whip Abdus Shahid to update the law.

It decided to turn the freedom fighters council into a directorate under the liberation war affairs ministry and to relocate its office from its present premises.

The meeting asked the authorities concerned to send back over one lakh applications for freedom fighter certificates to the upazila level for further scrutiny. Anyone can

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The Daily Star

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ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with BNP leader Rizvi Ahmed that the government has formulated the National Broadcast Policy to stifle the media?

Yes (85%)

No (15%)

TOTAL VOTES: 268

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think it was justified for BNP terming the national broadcast policy a black law?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING August 7

	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	4-20	4-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-47	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation