



Youth makes a difference

His school of hope stops 668 child marriages in Kurigram

HASAN JAHIID TUSHER

Ramkhana is a union in the remote northern district of Kurigram.

Just five years ago, nothing much happened there beyond the mundane. Teenage boys were prone to drugs and girls more likely to be married off well before reaching their marriageable age.

And most people chose to stand idly by.

But Kumar Bishwajit Barman decided to go against the grain. He was the first to feel and make others feel that there are other ways of living a meaningful life.

It was in September 2010. Then 18, Bishwajit sat with his like-minded friends and set up "Ashar Allo Pathshala" with the vision to stop child marriage and drug addiction, to provide teenagers with free education and make them aware of the ills of early marriage and drug abuse.

What Bishwajit has achieved in five years is no less than a silent social



Kumar Bishwajit

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Appellate Division hamstrung by judge shortage

5 of 11 posts vacant; case backlog rises

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Appellate Division has been facing a shortage of judges as five out of 11 have retired since 2013 but no new appointment has yet been made.

The government has no plan to immediately fill the vacant posts by promoting judges from the High Court, Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star on September 29. Pending cases at the Appellate Division are increasing day by day though.

The minister declined to speak further on the issue.

Earlier on June 26, Anisul Huq, however, said a few judges would be appointed to the Appellate Division in a few weeks and that his ministry would request the chief justice to recommend HC judges for promotion.

The president appoints HC judges and promotes them to the Appellate Division following recommendations of the chief justice.

Contacted, SC Registrar General Syed Aminul Islam said he did not know if Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha had any plan to take steps for promoting judges to the Appellate Division to fill up the vacant posts.

The backlog of pending

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People slip through a gap in the barbed-wire fence on the central reservation on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue and jaywalk to cross the street at Karwan Bazar yesterday, dodging vehicles at speed. There is an underpass and a footbridge nearby. PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Road safe if laws enforced

Speakers tell The Daily Star roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Enforcement of traffic laws, improvement of roads, and stopping the irregularities in issuing driving licenses and fitness certificates could reduce deaths and injuries on roads, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

They also suggested that more coordinated efforts by all government bodies concerned were needed in the execution of steps taken to improve road safety.

The speakers urged transport owners to stop paying their drivers based on the number of trips they make and instead appoint them as regular employees since the trip-based payment encourages drivers to drive fast and, in cases, recklessly.

The Daily Star organised the discussion titled "How to Make Our Roads Safer" at The Daily Star Centre.

BRTA's Director (technical) Col AR Mohammad Parvez Mazumder emphasised the need for addressing three issues -- improvement of roads, quality vehicles, and building awareness

among pedestrians and drivers -- to reduce the number of road accidents.

Faruk Talukder Sohel, managing director of Shohagh Paribahan (Pvt) Ltd, thinks jaywalking pedestrians were the major reasons for road accidents. Design and engineering faults in roads and their occupation by temporary markets, vendors and industrial units also play significant roles in causing accident, he said.

He said the BRTA issued licenses to around 15 lakh drivers when there are 22 lakh registered vehicles. This makes it clear that around 7 lakh vehicles were being driven by drivers without licenses.

Talukder stressed the need for developing a partnership between the BRTA and private bodies to train drivers and issue licenses to them.

Mirajul Moin Joy, international affairs secretary of Nirapad Sarak Chai Andolon, demanded the formation of National Road Safety Authority to strictly implement the laws, and coordination of different ministries for

improving road safety.

Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of Bangladesh Passengers' Welfare Association, alleged that corruption in the process of issuing fitness certificates and driving licenses at the BRTA was a problem.

Those who have sufficient skills to drive do not get licenses while those who cannot drive manage to get licenses, he claimed.

In addition to the 7 lakh driver shortages, he said around 10 lakh Nosimon-Kariman ply the roads of the country without any registration and with unlicensed drivers.

Another representative of the association, Mohiduddin Ahmed demanded the inclusion of road-safety issue in school textbooks and wide publicity of media to and people safety.

desha Sarak Paribahan Sramikw Federation Organising Secretary

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Terror threat 'real, credible'

US Embassy in Dhaka alerts Americans in updated message

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Amid concerns following the killing of an Italian aid worker and a Japanese citizen, the US Embassy in Dhaka yesterday updated its security message for American citizens in Bangladesh saying terrorist threat remains "real and credible".

"As advised in previous security messages for US citizens, reliable information suggests that a terrorist attack could occur against westerners in Bangladesh, including attacks against large gatherings of westerners at international hotels," says the message.

"Security agencies in Bangladesh have taken

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'JMB organiser' arrested

Confesses role in Ctg mugging bid to collect fund for terror outfit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong detectives have detained a suspected organiser of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) over the killing of three people in a blast during a mugging attempt last month.

The arrestee, Md Minhazul Islam alias Sajil alias Sajib, 24, was among the militants who tried to mug the manager of a private firm in Sadarghat of the port city on September 23 to collect fund for the organisation.

They hurled a grenade during the operation and the explosion killed manager Satya Gopal and JMB men Robiul and Rafiq, police say.

Acting on a tip off early Friday, Detective Branch personnel from

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SPICES UP YOUR FAMILY TEA TIME
MOZHLY matamati
FOORTI fatafati



NOW MADE IN BANGLADESH