

# AL men behind recent killings

Alleges Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

None of those involved in the recent killings was arrested as they belonged to the ruling party, claimed BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Currently, no one is safe in the country, she said at her Gulshan office last night while exchanging greetings with a delegation of the Buddhist community on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

Yesterday was Buddha Purnima, the biggest religious festival of the Buddhists.

Khaleda claimed that the country was on the verge of collapse because of the killings, forced disappearances, abductions, money laundering and reserve heist by the "government".

On the ongoing Union Parishad

polls, the BNP chief said the elections proved that free and fair polls are impossible under the present government.

"Is there any atmosphere for elections in the country? Can we even call them elections what has happened in the name of polls recently?"

Without naming any party, Khaleda expressed her doubt over its role in the 1971 Liberation War.

"They didn't even dare declare the Liberation War. It was Ziaur Rahman who proclaimed it."

Khaleda also expressed her condolence to the families of the victims who lost their lives in Cyclone Roanu yesterday.

She called upon her party leaders and activists to stand beside the affected people.

## 2 foreigners

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in Nagarkanda upazila on Dhaka-Barisal highway around 4:30pm yesterday. They entered the room of Md Kamaruzzaman, manager of the petrol pump, snatched away Tk 62,500 threatening him and left, said police and the owner of the filling station.

The manager then followed the vehicles on a motorcycle and found them parked in front of United Filling Station. With the help of local people, he held the Iranians around 5:30pm but the two others managed to flee in one of the two cars.

Sub-inspector Miraj Hossain of

Faridpur Kotwali Police Station said police on information arrested them.

The Iranians were then handed over to Nagarkanda police since the robbery took place in an area under Nagarkanda Police Station.

Confirming the incident, SI Sukanta Dutta of Nagarkanda PS said police recovered Tk 15,000 from the arrestees.

Jamal Meer who owns Tofazuddin Filling Station filed a case with Nagarkanda PS against the Iranians and two other unknown persons.

The arrestees were produced before the district chief judicial magistrate who sent them to jail.

## Islamic State

FROM PAGE 1

Islamic State will come to India to liberate Muslims and avenge the violence perpetrated against them in 2002 in the western state of Gujarat as well as Kashmir and the destruction of a mosque by Hindu zealots in 1992.

"We will come back, with the sword, to free you, to avenge Babri mosque, Gujarat, Kashmir," the fighter says. More than 1,000 people were killed in Gujarat. Most of them were Muslims, attacked by Hindu

mobs in retaliation for the burning of Hindus in a train.

Modi was the chief minister of Gujarat at the time and faced allegations that he did not do enough to stop the bloodshed. But a Supreme Court-ordered investigation has said there was no case against him.

India has suffered from Islamist attacks. In 2008 a militant group based in Pakistan launched a rampage through the city of Mumbai that killed 166 people and traumatised the country.



The entire south lane of the Zahir Raihan Road in the capital is left like this unusable state.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## NO ANSWER Hello from Zahir Raihan Road

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

It's a road, but you can't see it. All you see is sewerage water and human waste overflowing it and household and commercial garbage piled up here and there and everywhere. There's no way to pass this 500 meter or so stretch without holding your nose. Hello from the south lane of Zahir Raihan Road, one of the capital's busiest!

After the construction of Mayor Hanif Flyover, the road, adjacent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, was divided into three sections with ramps. This has damaged the road's drainage system, ultimately bringing the southernmost section of the road in its current condition.

Whenever contacted, the authorities say they will begin the repair work in a month or two. In July, The Daily Star drew the attention of Munshi Abul Hashem, executive engineer (Zone-3) of Dhaka South City

Corporation, to the problem. He then assured that the problem would be solved soon.

Al-Amin, an employee at a roadside workshop, said the problem started with the instal-

"A few days ago, two women fell from a rickshaw in that water. Later, they washed themselves from a nearby public toilet," he said.

But the public toilet, operated by the DSCC, itself has no drainage system. "They [the authorities] drain human waste to the streets," Baten added.

Baten is right, as this correspondent later found. However, Sabbir Hossain, who is in charge of the public toilet, denied it.

Asked about the poor state of the road, he said, "I have been hearing for the last one year that the road would be repaired soon. But nothing has happened."

Munshi Abul Hashem said a Tk 250-crore project had been taken up to repair different roads of five zones under the DSCC. "It's taking time because we've to go through a lot of procedures."



lation of the ramps.

Manager of Agrani Currier Service Abdul Baten said sewerage water often submerged the roads and the footpaths.

A lot goes on around us. In this new news project, we started running feature contents based on personal experience. We also invite our readers to send similar write-ups for publishing, subject to editing and verification. Please send your pieces and also comments and feedback to reporting@thedailystar.net.

## Huge rush to get registered

FROM PAGE 1

outside the mission building.

In March, Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak declared that the programme was to enable illegal foreign workers to get valid work permits as well as to have their number in the country for security purpose.

The Malaysian authorities asked the undocumented foreign workers to submit their updated documents to become legal workers.

However, the undocumented foreigners, who are carrying student or tourist or professional visas, would not be eligible for the programme, said the

mission officials.

They think that a large number of Bangladeshis especially who have entered Malaysia by sea or on student or tourist visas might face deportation.

Asked about their future, an official said they would not have any other option but to return home.

However, over two lakh undocumented Bangladeshi migrants in Malaysia might be regularised through the process, he added.

The move to legalise them means that the workers will now get better pay, enjoy more rights and can travel home on vacations.

There are over four lakh legal

Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia who sent \$112.08 million in remittance to the country last year, according to the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training.

Some migrants alleged that they were not getting the expected services from the mission mainly due to shortage of staff.

"I have been approaching the high commission for more than two months for my passport. But I have not got it yet," Mohammad Ismail, who works in Penang, told The Daily Star over the phone recently.

Bangladesh has already sent some officials to Malaysia to deal with the

influx of the migrants, said MSK Shaheen, first secretary (consular) at the mission.

"We are doing our best to serve the people. We are also sending mobile teams outside Kuala Lumpur at the weekends to help the people," he said.

He also claimed that the people, who have got registered one or two months ago, are now receiving their passports.

"We need at least one month to provide passport to an applicant as it is processed in Dhaka," Shaheen mentioned.

Asked about the issue, Brig Gen

Masud Rezwana, director general of the Department of Immigration and Passports, declined to comment.

On February 17, Malaysia decided not to hire any fresh foreign workers, including Bangladeshis. The country also suspended a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed with Bangladesh on February 18 over recruitment of workers from Bangladesh.

On May 12, two Malaysian ministers said their government is planning to lift the ban on recruitment of foreign workers. However, a decision is yet to be made.

Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai

told Malaysian journalists that his country was lifting the freeze on hiring foreign workers for four sectors -- manufacturing, construction, plantation and furniture -- which were facing a major shortage of workers.

"In view of the acute shortage, we have to lift the suspension to allow these sectors to bring in foreign workers," the minister said, reported Malaysian English daily The Star Online.

Without putting any definite time frame on the resumption of recruitment, he added that the Malaysian cabinet was looking to improve the system for hiring foreign workers.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority suspended operations of water vessels across the country due to bad weather.

In Chittagong, 100 medical teams with 5,000 health workers and a large number of volunteers of Red Crescent had been kept ready. The district administration monitored the situation round the clock.

The Chittagong port authority stopped loading and unloading of bulk cargoes at the outer anchorage of the port and operations of lighter vessels due to rough sea.

Shah Amanat International Airport had all flight operations suspended yesterday. The Mongla port authorities asked all types of water vessels to move to safety before Cyclone Roanu lashed the coastal areas.

Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar and private television and radio stations will air special programmes.

The daily newspapers will publish special articles highlighting the significance of the night.

## Gastric?

FROM PAGE 1

produced. The current relies on acidity in the saliva which is related to stomach acidity. By measuring the current we can better understand what's going on in the stomach."

Between 2008 and 2010, Siddhartha tested 388 healthy volunteers and 622 patients with acidity-related stomach conditions, publishing the results in the Bangladesh Journal of Medical Physics in 2011.

While healthy volunteers produced values of between 22 and 31 in the current test, those with chronic stomach complaints realised results of between 14 and 50.

"Based on the test results I have prescribed medicines," Siddhartha says, "and they worked."

In 2014 his gastrometer was granted a patent from the Department of Patents, Designs and Trademarks in the industry ministry, but it is yet to receive attention from the authorities who could promote the technology.

For Siddhartha, his invention is the result of both a childhood dream to study medicine and personal tragedy.

Unfortunately when Siddhartha, the son of a simple farmer, graduated with a Higher School Certificate from the science stream in 1995 he found his marks were not outstanding; and he switched to the humanities stream for his Bachelor of Arts,

completed at Magura Government Degree College three years later. But his thirst for medical study was not done.

He enrolled in a six-month course in Jessore, followed by a two-year medical diploma in Kolkata, completed in 2005. Yet he was not satisfied.

In the meantime he married and became father to a baby boy in 2007. Tragically, the baby died within three months due to digestive problems including gas. Siddhartha and his wife were devastated. Yet he turned tragedy into strength and decided to dedicate his efforts to finding better treatment options for gastric conditions, which crucially includes, of course, better diagnosis.

"I've always instinctively liked to probe matters deeply," Siddhartha says, "since I was young. When I was in Class VIII, I focused on how to turn magnetic power into fuel. Since my son's death, treating gastric ailments has been my focus."

It was such determination that led to the electric gastrometer.

"What Siddhartha has done is amazing," says biomedical physics and technology expert Professor K Siddique-e Rabbani of Dhaka University. "I have seen the instrument and observed that it is scientifically sound. Of course it will need rigorous testing to make it more sophisticated."

"To achieve what Siddhartha has without higher academic background is truly laudable," the professor adds.

Indeed once the gastrometer had passed its initial tests, Siddhartha consulted his local Member of Parliament who is also a physician, Professor MS Akbar, who directed him to health research institute, the ICDDR,B in Dhaka, which led in turn to Professor Rabbani.

It was Professor Rabbani who helped Siddhartha publish his article and subsequently file for a patent. "I wish I could do more for him," says the professor, "As Siddhartha is not our student it's been difficult to include him in our projects and naturally the university has its own priorities. But I hope the relevant authorities can help him further develop his invention."

"The gastrometer can help with diagnosis of stomach conditions, their treatment and also prevention," says an always-enthusiastic Siddhartha. "People can even test their own acidity and plan meals accordingly. I hope to find a company willing to manufacture the gastrometer because I want my countrymen to benefit from my invention." Given the low cost and ease of the test it's not unthinkable that gastric patients in developed countries might eventually benefit from Siddhartha's ingenuity as well.

## Could've been worse if not for swift actions

FROM PAGE 1

Noakhali, Laxmipur and Feni. More than 5 lakh were moved to 3,554 cyclone shelters well before the cyclone made landfall.

The disaster management ministry, fire brigade and meteorological department worked together to keep the impact of Roanu to a minimum, Shah Kamal, secretary to the ministry, told The Daily Star.

"We have experiences from Cyclone Komen [that struck Bangladesh in July last year] and successfully used those to face Roanu," he said.

Government officials of the coastal districts were asked to be ready to join rescue campaigns, maintain communications with deputy commissioners and make people aware of the storm, Kamal said.

The Islamic Foundation and other religious organisations have drawn

"Due to our massive preparation, we could reduce casualties," he said, referring to those in India and Sri Lanka.

The ministry arranged for announcement of the cyclone updates through loudspeakers in coastal districts so that people along with their belongings could move to safety.

It also asked deputy commissioners to take steps to shift people to cyclone shelters and keep relief materials at the ready.

The disaster management department opened makeshift control rooms at district and upazila levels.

The authorities repeatedly alerted fishing boats and trawlers to the advancing cyclone and asked them to stay in shelter until further notice.

up many programmes, including discussions, hamd, naat, milad, zikr and doa on the occasion of Shab-e-Barat.

Islamic Foundation will organise nightlong programmes at Baitul Mukarram national mosque.

Tomorrow will be a public holiday for the Shab-e-Barat.

Meanwhile, President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday greeted all Muslims

of Bangladesh and across the world on the occasion of holy Shab-e-Barat.

In separate messages, they prayed for peace, progress and prosperity of the nation as well as of the Muslim Ummah.

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## Teacher beaten for 'harassing' student

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Locals beat up a teacher and handed him over to the police after he allegedly harassed a girl of class-IX at a school in Narayanganj yesterday.

The accused, Ibrahim Khalil, 50, teaches science at Tajek Pradhan Kindergarten and High School in Gognagar area of Narayanganj Sadar upazila.

He, however, rejected the allegation and said he was being "framed" by the family of the girl as they were holding a grudge.

Ibrahim Khalil "groped" the girl inside an empty classroom of the school around 11:30am, said Shafiqul Islam, sub-inspector of Narayanganj Model Police Station, quoting locals.

No other student went to the class yesterday because of the rain, he said.

As the girl screamed for help, guardians who were waiting outside along with locals rushed to the scene and rescued her, he said.

Later, the teacher was beaten up and kept confined to a room. He was handed over to the police after they went to the school on information.

The parent's of the girl also filed a case, added the SI.

Angered by the incident, transport

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## Neighbour kills street performer in Gazipur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was stabbed to death by one of his neighbours when the two were locked in a brawl in Gazipur's Kapasia last night over performing in a play, police said.

The dead is Faruk Hossain, 42, who worked at a non-government organisation (NGO) and took part in awareness raising acts on streets.

Abu Bakar Siddique, officer-in-charge of Kapasia Police Station, said the incident happened in Bottola area around 8:00pm.

One of Faruk's neighbours, 19, had long been asking him for work. Last night they had a fight over the matter and at one stage, the youth stabbed the victim repeatedly with a knife and fled, said the police official, quoting a witness.

Faruk was rushed to Kapasia Upazila Health Complex where duty doctors declared him dead.

He had stab wounds in several parts of his body, including in the abdomen, said the OC. Police were carrying out raids to arrest the youth.

## Shab-e-Barat tonight

FROM PAGE 1

sacred nights and believe that on this night Allah decides the fate of all human beings for the next year.

Devotees will visit graves of their beloved ones and pray for the peace of their souls. Many will distribute food and sweets among neighbours and the poor. Many will fast tomorrow.

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up many programmes, including discussions, hamd, naat, milad, zikr and doa on the occasion of Shab-e-Barat.

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