

Shahnaz wins

FROM PAGE 1

Her first entrepreneurial venture was in 1999 when she began oneNest, an e-commerce company that connected rural artisans across the world to an online global marketplace.

After growing and selling oneNest, she continued her pursuit of sustainable growth and equitable markets by founding IIX and creating not only the world's first social stock exchange but also a global ecosystem and various innovative financial structures and capital-raising platforms to support the growth of impact investing.

Under Durreen's leadership, IIX continues to be a pioneering force and leader in the impact investing space that pushes the boundaries of innovation when it comes to involving players from the private, public, and philanthropic sectors in solving today's most pressing issues.

Durreen on the IIX website says, "If we are going to achieve an equitable and peaceful society, it is imperative for us to have a financial system that is inclusive and works for all. Thus, crazy as it may have been, I committed myself eight years ago to revolutionising capital markets to promote equal and sustainable growth worldwide."

"It was a 'quixotic dream' equivalent to boiling the ocean of financial change. Well, that quixotic dream is a reality now and that ocean is lukewarm, so we are definitely getting there!"

The 2017 Oslo Business for Peace Award honours exceptional individuals who are able to ethically create economic value while generating value for society.

Recipients are selected by a committee of Nobel prize winners and past award recipients including Sir Richard Branson of Virgin (2014), Ratan Tata of Tata Group (2010), Mo Ibrahim of Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2009), and Paul Polman of Unilever (2015).

This year, the four honorees including Durreen, will be presented at an award ceremony on May 16 in Oslo City Hall, the same location as that of the Nobel peace prize ceremony.

The Bangladeshi awardee on the IIX website said, "Impact Investing has been growing rapidly in recent years and I am honored to be recognised as an innovator at the forefront of this movement."

"I view this award as a celebration of both the progress we have made to date as well as an encouragement to continue to dedicate myself and IIX to this mission and impact 100 million lives by 2020 by changing finance and financing change for social and environmental good."

Earlier, Durreen was accorded Joseph Wharton Award for Social Impact in 2015.

In a career spanning over two decades, she has built a track record as a successful academic, banker, media executive and social entrepreneur. She began her professional career as an investment banker at Morgan Stanley in New York, followed by stints at Grameen Bank in Dhaka, World Bank in Washington and Merrill Lynch in Hong Kong.

She also founded the Programme for Social Innovation and Change at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore.

Stand against

FROM PAGE 2

doing this so that the children get modern education."

Describing Islam as a religion of peace, she said, "Islam never permits killing of innocent people and suicide attempt."

The PM said those who have taken the wrong path of militancy and terrorism were maligning Islam.

Giving a brief description of development activities in Faridpur and other parts of the country, she sought people's support in the next general election to be held in 2019.

"The election will be held in 2019. In that election, we want your votes in favour of 'Boat' for the continuation of the development activities," she said. "Boat" is the electoral symbol of her party Awami League.

She mentioned that the government was providing various types of allowances to the poor, elderly people, and distressed women under various social safety net programmes.

"As a result, over 5 crore people have graduated to the middle-income group from low-income group."

The PM said stipend money was being sent to mobile phone accounts of 1.30 crore mothers as "the government wanted to see smile on their faces".

Hasina expressed her firm resolve again to turn Bangladesh into a middle-income digital nation by 2021 and a prosperous and developed one in South Asia by 2041.

Earlier, the PM inaugurated and laid foundation stones of 31 development projects.

AL presidium member and Deputy Leader of the House Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, AL advisory council member and Commerce Minister Toifal Ahmed, AL General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader and LGRD Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, among others, also spoke.



Raudha Athif, far left, a Maldivian model who appeared on the October 2016 cover of Vogue India, was found dead in her dorm room of a medical college in Rajshahi yesterday.

Maldives model

FROM PAGE 1

"We primarily suspect it is a suicide case. However, we can't come to any conclusion until we get the autopsy report," said the OC, after police examined Athif's dorm.

Apart from the neck, there was no other injury marks on the body, which was sent to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy, he added.

Asked, Mahmuda Begum, superintendent of the female hostel, however, said Athif "always looked happy" and "it is hard to believe she would commit suicide".

"I was in my chamber. Suddenly, I heard screams of my students. Rushing to the second floor of this six-storey building, I saw some of the students trying to break the door of Athif's room."

Some of the students, including foreign students, told Mahmuda that Athif's room was locked from the inside. Sensing trouble, the students broke into the room.

Daughter of Mohamed Athif and Aminath Muharrimath of M. Layender in the Maldives, Athif had been living in the hostel, designated mainly for foreign students, near the college campus since last year, Mahmuda said, adding that she last saw Athif on Tuesday afternoon and they exchanged smile.

This correspondent tried to talk to

Athif's classmates but could not.

With her aqua blue eyes, Athif became an internet sensation in her country in 2014.

After experimenting with her pictures on social media sites two years ago, Athif hit gold with her "Maldivian Girl With Aqua Blue Eyes" shoot. Shot by Maldivian photographer Sotti for a project, the stunning image of her emerging from a gorgeous blue sea went viral, eventually helping her land on the cover of Vogue India in October last year.

"Modelling is a hobby rather than a career for me, since I'm studying to become a doctor," she told Vogue.

Bangladesh's Jannatul Ferdoush Peya was also featured on the cover in that magazine edition titled "Celebrating beauty in diversity".

Athif scored GPA-5 in her secondary school certificate examination in Hiriyu School in the Maldives under the UK's Pearson Edexcel and achieved her higher secondary certificate from Villa International High School, Maldives under UK's Cambridge.

In her early age, she wanted to be an environmentalist. Her first campaign was at age 14. "It was a small environmental campaign for our national television network, encouraging people to ban plastic bags in favour of eco-friendly alternatives," she had told the Vogue.

Rab arrests

FROM PAGE 2

The three were arrested and a sharp weapon was seized from their possession based on information from five militant suspects arrested on March 20. On information gleaned from Misbah, Rab later arrested Faisal in Dohar.

The Rab official said Misbah had contact with Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury, the alleged Gulshan café attack mastermind, who was killed in a police raid in Narayanganj last year.

All the arrestees have been involved in militancy for about one and a half years. They know how to use internet and mobile apps specialising in encrypted messages such as Threema and Telegram. They used to spread their ideology via Facebook and other social media, Rab said.

The Rab-10 CO claimed that Faisal's mother knew about her son's involvement in militancy. However, talking to The Daily Star, Faisal's mother Fahmida Akter claimed her son was innocent.

"Faisal has been practising religion since childhood, but I did not see anything suspicious ... He might be a victim of conspiracy," she said, adding, "I am happy to know that my son is still alive."

"At around 12:15pm on Sunday, my son along with his three friends left our home with trousers and a towel, saying that they will swim in the Dhaleshwari river. Before going to the river, he told me to cook what he wanted to eat after his return," Fahmida said yesterday.

From the river, they went to Rohitpur Bazar near their village in an auto-rickshaw. Faisal's friends returned home, but Faisal went missing since then, she said, quoting the three friends.

The next day, Fahmida filed a general diary with Keraniganj Police Station.

During yesterday's briefing, Rab official Jahangir said Misbah gave them some IDs of different apps which were used by Tamim.

"He told us that he had communicated with Tamim several times and gone to Dhaka once to meet him, but he could not do that as he [Tamim] was busy with organisational activities," he said.

THE ARRESTEES

According to Rab, Misbah, alongside studying at a madrasa, used to work as a technician in a mobile servicing shop.

Motivated by a so-called "big brother", he joined the militant group in 2015. Working under cover of a technician, he used to make improvised explosive devices, Rab claimed.

Mahfuz was inspired into joining the outfit by his brother Misbah. Mahfuz took arms training and made explosives and supplied those to their accomplices.

Misbah also inspired Faisal into joining the outfit in 2016. Faisal received arms training in mid-2016 in Chittagong.

Taibur joined JMB around one and a half years ago, Rab said.

Fathers of all four arrestees are now in Saudi Arabia.

Lailatul Meraj

FROM PAGE 16

chaired the meeting at the Islamic Foundation at Baitul Mukarram in the evening.

Mizan-ul-Alam, joint secretary (press) of the information ministry and Saiful Islam, joint secretary of the Cabinet Division, were present, among others.

Garbage

FROM PAGE 2

overflowing. Overflowing garbage skips were seen mainly in Sadar Road, Police Line, Amanatganj, Kawnia, College Avenue, and Bhatikhana areas.

Pedestrians, children going to school and office-goers had to tread carefully in certain places. The stench was overwhelming.

Rebeka Sultana, a homemaker, said she suffers during her trips to school to drop off and bring back her son. There were piles of uncollected garbage on the streets, she said.

Badol Shil, a staff of the BCC, said he has been suffering from a liver disease for the last six months but his treatment had been seriously hampered because he was not paid his arrears salaries.

"Our family is under tremendous financial constraints due to the non-payment of the salaries," said Badol, adding that he had taken a lot of money from relatives as loans.

Britain in EU

FROM PAGE 16

letter formally notifying him of Britain's intention to leave.

But French President Francois Hollande warned that Brexit "will be painful for the British".

The EU is determined to preserve its unity and has said that any Brexit deal must not encourage other countries to follow Britain out of the door.

The six-page letter, signed by May and delivered in person by British ambassador Tim Barrow in Brussels, struck a conciliatory tone and called for a "deep and special partnership" with Brussels.

May emphasised in particular the importance of security ties, warning that failure to reach an agreement would mean "cooperation in the fight against crime and terrorism would be weakened".

She confirmed her intention to seek a new relationship and a new trade deal in the next two years, and said a no deal scenario was "not the outcome that either side should seek".

The letter sets the stage for months of protracted and difficult negotiations -- not just on trade, but also over outstanding bills and immigration.

German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel acknowledged that the talks would "certainly not be easy for both sides".

While the EU scrambles to contain the fallout from Britain's departure after four decades of membership, May is also battling to keep her deeply divided nation together.

The June vote for Brexit was only won by a narrow 52-48 margin, and many Britons still oppose leaving, while Scotland's nationalist government is now calling for a fresh referendum on independence.

"As we face the opportunities ahead of us on this momentous journey, our shared values, interests and ambitions can -- and must -- bring us together," May told MPs.

EU presses

FROM PAGE 16

Replying to a query on Bangladesh's security challenges, he said freedom of the media, a free civil society, and freedom of speech and expression must be ensured so that institutions, NGOs, government organisations, students and other players in the society can bring up these issues in debates and discussions.

He pointed out that the EU and other partners of the Sustainability Compact would review the progress Bangladesh made in the RMG sector in terms of ensuring workplace safety and labour rights.

In response to a question, Pierre Mayaudon, EU ambassador in Dhaka, said he didn't know what would happen if Bangladesh's progress is not found satisfactory in the review meetings of the Sustainability Compact and the ILO.

Following the Rana Plaza disaster in April 2013, Bangladesh signed the Sustainability Compact with the EU in September that year, committing itself to responsible business behaviour and improvement of workplace safety and labour rights.

Lietz noted that the EU is currently examining the whole issue of fairness in garment supply chains across the globe. "The Accord and Alliance are encouraging examples of what can be achieved when companies, government and workers pool efforts to improve standards."

During the visit, the delegation led by Lietz met the prime minister, the Speaker of parliament, the commerce minister, the labour minister, leaders of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and labour unions, representatives of brands and retailers, and also ILO officials.

Lietz said, "We felt a readiness and goodwill from all parties to engage on this issue and are hopeful this will translate into concrete progress before the May review of Sustainability Compact in Dhaka and the Geneva ILO Conference in mid-June."

"As members of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, our engagement with Bangladesh, as with other countries, is guided by our core values where respect for human rights and labour rights, in particular freedom of association and collective bargaining, ranks high."

"That is why the full implementation of the Sustainability Compact is so important in our view," he added. Norbert Neuser, another member of the EU parliament, said, "Bangladesh has done a very good job. You have a big chance to be a great nation. Really, Bangladesh made a good progress, especially in the garment sector. A lot of investments are coming from the EU enterprises."

Bangladesh raked in \$18.68 billion from its exports to the EU in fiscal 2015-16, which was 54.57 percent of the total receipts for the year. Of the \$18.68 billion, \$17.15 billion came from apparel shipments. The EU currently accounts for more than 62 percent of Bangladesh's garment export receipts in a year.

Moosa

FROM PAGE 16

The investigation agency usually carries out a preliminary investigation once it receives allegation against a war crimes suspect. If the investigators find evidence against the suspect, the agency registers a formal complaint against them to begin a formal investigation.

In Moosa's case, the agency is now at the preliminary stage.

An online news portal has recently run a report that the investigation agency was reluctant to carry out an investigation against Moosa although "witnesses of Moosa's crimes" were ready to give testimony against him.

In the report, some of the "witnesses" alleged that the agency did not proceed with the probe as Moosa is a relative of an influential leader of the ruling party.

Asked about the matter, Sanaul said political, social or economic identity of a person could never bar the agency from taking a case or necessary legal action against them.

He added those who had raised the question were the prosecution witnesses of other cases and investigators would be directed to take necessary action after talking with them.

He, however, did not specifically say when the preliminary investigation started and when it would be completed. The agency did not give any details about Moosa too.

Earlier in 2001, Bangla daily Janakantha ran a series of reports headlined "Sei Razakar" on alleged war criminals. Several parts of those reports have already been used as prosecution evidence in different war crimes cases.

The Janakantha on March 24, 2001 ran a report on Moosa under the headline "Faridpurer 'Nula Moosai' Ekhon Dhakar Rahoshye Chera Dhanyadhya Beboshay Prince Moosa bin Shamsher" (Nula Moosa of Faridpur now Dhaka's mysterious rich businessman Prince Moosa bin Shamsher).

Solar hope for Manpura

FROM PAGE 1

the national grid will not be possible in the next five to seven years," he said.

The 373-sq km island sits in the northern Bay of Bengal in the estuary of the Meghna river.

The island, 80km from Bhola district town, has a population of 1,25,000 with fishing being the main source of their livelihood, according to the upazila administration website.

The plan to power Manpura with green energy came after the initial success of a 177 kilowatt peak (kWp) solar mini-grid set up there in November 2015. There is a growing interest among residents in getting electricity from the mini-grid as solar offers 24-hour power supply.

Currently, Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) provides electricity through generators at Manpura Sadar for six hours a day. It serves only 730 customers out of 17,280 households and commercial clients in the island, said Zobair.

As the island sits in the sea, connecting it with the national grid is challenging. "It is also not commercially viable," Zobair said, adding that the overall demand for electricity would be 4MW in the island.

Earlier, the local office of West Zone Power Distribution Company Ltd under the BPDB made an estimate that nearly Tk 400 crore would be required to connect the island with the national grid through submarine cable, said Abdus Salam, resident engineer at Manpura Electric Supply.

Zobair said Manpura is a suitable place for harnessing solar and wind energy. "We want to go for both."

The government wants to establish a total of six solar mini-grids through private entrepreneurs to generate more than 2MW of electricity. Of those, a solar power plant with 1MW capacity will be set up and each of the rest will have a capacity of 250kWp.

The electricity generation capacity of the existing mini-grid will be increased to 250kWp from 177kWp, said Enamul Karim Pavel, head of renewable energy at Infrastructure Development Company Ltd (IDCOL), which bankrolls renewable energy projects in Bangladesh.

Some Tk 90 crore will be required to set up these solar mini-grids in Manpura, he said, adding that the IDCOL would finance those projects.

However, the total demand for electricity in the island cannot be met through establishing the six mini-grids. Currently, the peak demand for electricity there is 3-3.5MW, according to Enamul.

"There are some areas where providing connections is difficult and we plan to install solar home systems in those remote areas," he said.

The SREDA's initiative comes at a time when the government aims to meet 10 percent of the country's total electricity requirement through renewable energy by 2021. Currently, renewable sources, mainly solar, accounts for nearly three percent of the total electricity generation capacity of 15,500 MW.

Salina Chowdhury, chairman of Manpura upazila, said people of the island want electricity 24 hours a day. "But electricity prices should be low so that they can afford it."

Residents have to pay Tk 30 per unit of solar electricity, which is much higher than the BPDB tariff, she added.

According to the report, Moosa, a man from Faridpur, was a close aide of Pakistani Major Akram Koreshi and was involved in several crimes including killings during the Liberation War.

Contacted, Mosharraf Hossain, an office executive of Moosa's business company, told The Daily Star at 3:40pm yesterday that Moosa would soon give his official reply and sought this correspondent's email address to that end.

However, at 9:20 last night Mosharraf said they would not be able to give the statement that night.

EVIDENCE AGAINST 9

The investigation agency yesterday said to have found evidence against nine men from Mymensingh and Jamalpur over their alleged involvement in crimes committed during the Liberation War.

The accused were "involved" in eight incidents of crimes where at least 101 people were killed, 10 to 13 people were injured, a woman was raped and 110 to 112 houses were torched in Muktagachha and Mymensingh Sadar, Sanaul Huq said.

Of the nine, six are now behind bars.

The arrestees are Abdus Salam, 75, Suruj Ali Fakir, 62, Joyen Uddin Faruki alias Joynal Abedin, 60, Abdur Rahim alias Abdur Rahim Master, 67, Jalal Uddin, 59, and Rustam Ali, 70. Sanaul said the tribunal had already issued an arrest warrant against the rest three.

Of the nine, Abdus Salam was allegedly involved with Al-Badr force, while the rest were alleged Razakar men, he added.

Ruhul Amin, investigation officer of the case, handed over the probe report and other documents to the Chief Prosecutor Officer of the tribunal. Prosecutor Abul Kalam said they would scrutinise the documents and, if found satisfactory, would press charges against the nine.

"Despite the high tariff, people there get electricity from the solar mini-grid. But it is tough for many to pay such a high tariff," Salina told The Daily Star over phone.

DM Majibor Rahman, managing director of Solar Electro Bangladesh Ltd, which has set up the solar mini-grid in Manpura, said electricity bills from the solar mini-grid will reduce if the residents use energy-saving appliances.

"But the cost goes up for those who use conventional fans," he said, adding that the tariff is much higher for industrial users as well.

Majibor said sometimes people do not want a connection from the solar mini-grid, fearing high electricity bills.

"In such a situation, we encourage them to use energy efficient appliances to keep the cost down," he said. Prior to the establishment of the solar mini-grid there, people took connections through private generators by paying Tk 300 per unit.

"We see a lot of development in Manpura because of solar electricity," said Majibor of Solar Electro, which has already given pre-paid connections to 426 customers, including 11 workshops and a sawmill, there.

We have already received 50 new applications for connections, he added.

Majibor urged the government to provide incentives and zero-duty import of energy saving appliances so that the cost of solar electricity goes down at the consumer level.

He can move

FROM PAGE 16

He is the first quadriplegic in the world to have arm and hand movement restored by the system. The breakthrough, reported in The Lancet, offers hope of a treatment for millions of other paralysed people.

It works through bypassing the damage to the spinal cord, which stops instructions from the brain reaching the muscles. Instead of trying to repair this damage, using surgery and stem cell medicine, the technique reconnects the brain directly to the muscles using microchips and computer processors.

A tiny chip in the motor cortex -- the part of the brain responsible for arm movements -- records the patient's thoughts.

These are sent to a computer processor and translated, and then sent to a series of electrodes implanted in the muscles of the shoulder, biceps, and arms. Kochevar had to learn to use the brain recording system, using his thoughts to direct a virtual arm on a screen.

Once he had learned that, a computer was connected to the electrodes in his arm, stimulating unused muscles for eight hours a week over four months, to bring them back to life.

Eventually the two systems were connected, and Kochevar was able to control the fingers, thumbs, wrists, elbow and shoulder in his right arm. After two years of testing, he is now able to complete complex tasks, the team from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland announced.

Researcher Dr Bob Kirsch said: "He's really breaking ground for the spinal cord injury community. This is a major step toward restoring some independence."