

Give the youths a voice

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inequalities among people. In protest against that system, he even changed his last name "Sharma" to "Satyarthi" (seeker of truth).

Though he was educated as an electrical engineer, he left his engineering career and initiated a movement against those inequalities, and child rights were his main area of work.

Born and brought up in Vidisha in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, Kailash, 63, founded the Bachpan Bachao Andolan (Save the Childhood Movement) in 1980. He has acted to protect the rights of more than 83,000 children from 144 countries. His activism led to framing of new laws and policies at national and global levels.

He won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize along with Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan. Two years later, Kailash began a global campaign "100 Million for 100 Million". It was launched in Bangladesh on April 2 this year.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star on April 4 when he was in Dhaka to attend the IPU conference, he said that while working for the last three and a half decades, he realised that the conventional ways of work were not impacting people much amid changed socio-economic, technological and political spheres.

So, the idea of this campaign is something different. The idea is bridging the youths.

"Not so many children at any given period in the history have faced the violence they are facing today," he said.

About 230 million children are now living in conflict-hit countries, while half a billion children are affected either by armed conflict or natural disaster.

Besides, at least 100 million young people are victims of different sorts of violence -- slavery, trafficking, drug and sexual abuses, radicalism and so on. They are deprived of good education,

health and care.

On the other hand, better off young people always have a hunger to serve the humanity and bring smiles to others' faces. However, the present political, economic, social and cultural establishments are failing to provide them with meaningful purpose of life, he said.

"The young people feel that they are alienated, left out, their voices not respected or even listened. This is making them frustrated and sometimes intolerant and eventually violent. It is growing globally among the youths."

He said taking advantage of this situation, fundamentalist forces were brainwashing the youth's minds and radicalising them through the social media.

"So, the generation is getting divided. The left out children are growing in this direction and the children who are better off are going in another direction. That creates social tension and conflicts," Kailash said.

Here comes the idea of "100 Million for 100 Million".

"My idea was -- let us try to build the bridges between these two diversely growing constituencies of youth," he said.

Globally, about three billion people are below the age of 25, and 1.9 billion people are below the age of 18. Out of those 3 billion people, at least 100 million are prepared to do something for others, according to the Nobel laureate.

"Let us give them a voice, confidence. This is the purpose behind it," Kailash said.

Asked how he could achieve the goal, Kailash said first of all, young people should know about their rights, their responsibilities and issues being faced by children. They should be encouraged to form youth groups in school, college or universities and communities.

"For this we are using the social media, we started a dedicated website and developing mobile apps so that young people could be involved in learning what they can do."

The youths can do certain things physically. For example, he said, in free time they can go to the neighbourhoods, where children are facing violence. They can raise voice against bullying, children's sexual violence and drug trafficking.

They can also keep an eye on the government policies as in many countries laws are not child-friendly, while government spending is low for education and child protection.

On the other hand, rich countries are also creating problems for children, saying that illegal immigrants would be deported. The life of children of those "illegal immigrants" would be at stake, in that case, Kailash said.

"The young people must raise the voice that this is wrong. That could be done through petitions online," he said. Youths can also do voluntary work for the children in need -- collecting money or books, shoes, clothes and then distributing those to the people in need.

"So, we are creating that platform for the youths," Kailash said. Through this, all sections of the society would recognise the power of youths, listen to them and incorporate their decisions in policy-making.

He said many of the NGOs work on street children or indigenous children.

"We will encourage the better off young people to visit those deprived groups and be friends with them. Social media could also work on it in some places. We can use latest technologies, cheap mobile phones, to connect these two constituencies."

"This is going to be a game changer in the human history," he said with glittering eyes.

Sangsad sees some positive changes

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The TIB study said average quorum crisis was gradually decreasing when 8th, 9th and 10th parliaments were compared.

According to the study, parliament experienced an average 28 minutes of quorum crisis on each working day of the seven sessions (7th to 13th). The average quorum crisis was 33 minutes during the same sessions of 9th parliament and 39 minutes during the same sessions of 8th parliament.

A total of 48 hours and 26 minutes was wasted due to quorum crisis in the seven sessions, which is 12 percent of the total time of these sessions.

Referring to the estimated cost of conducting the sessions, the study said an average of more than Tk 1.62 lakh is needed per minute to conduct sessions. On the basis of this estimate, Tk 47.20 crore was wasted due to quorum crisis in the seven sessions.

Drawing a comparison between the same seven sessions of 10th and 9th parliaments, the study showed the average attendance of lawmakers was 67 percent in 10th parliament, up from 63 percent in 9th.

The attendance of the leader of the

House is 84 percent in current parliament, which was 76 percent in previous parliament.

The attendance of the opposition leader is 83 percent in 10th parliament, which was only two percent in 9th parliament.

The main opposition staged walk-outs four times in the seven session of this parliament.

A total of 66 government bills were passed in the House and an average of 31 minutes was spent to pass a bill following its placement in parliament.

On average 25 minutes was spent to pass a bill in 9th parliament, down from 39 minutes in 8th parliament, it noted.

Each sitting lasted for an average of 3 hours and 22 minutes in current parliament. It was 3 hours and seven minutes in 9th parliament and 3 hours and nine minutes in 8th parliament.

To make the parliament more effective, TIB made an 11-point recommendation, including formulation of a law on the code of conduct of MPs and strong role of Speaker to run the House in line with rules of procedure of parliament.

According to the study, MPs used unparliamentary language 2,101 times aimed at their out-of-parliament oppo-

nents, and 433 times at their rivals in parliament.

They used such language spending 15 percent of the total time of the sessions, which is violation of the section 270 (VI) of the Rules of Procedure of parliament, it said.

In most cases, the Speaker played a silent role when MPs used such language, the study added.

Contacted, Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury said she always warns MPs whenever they use indecent language. "And if needed, I expunge those from the parliamentary proceedings."

On the role of the main opposition, TIB Chairperson Sultana Kamal said, "We still cannot say that this parliament has been more effective. Had the parliament been more effective, the voice of the opposition would have been considered more importantly."

About the activities of parliamentary standing committees, the study said 47 committees had a total of 337 meetings during the seven sessions, and three committees did not hold any meeting at all.

According to rules of procedure, every committee shall hold at least one meeting every month.

Muhith slams bureaucrats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith last night said different ministries "unfairly" closed five to six factories in Sylhet that were good to continue operations.

"Sometimes, bureaucrats take bizarre decisions which hurt the country's interest," the minister said after a pre-budget discussion with the parliamentary standing committee on different ministries at state guest-house Padma in the capital.

The government would take action against them, he said.

Muhith said Water Development Board officials recommended a bizarre project in an area where there were no rivers or canals. The officials did not even notice that there were no rivers or canals there.

Talking about the discussion, Muhith told journalists that almost all the participants talked about providing monthly payment order (MPO) to at least three educational institutions in their areas as the election was coming up soon.

Quoting one of the participants, the minister said it was interesting that those who paid the highest tax were not eligible to get CIP status due to law. He said the ministry would look into it in the future.

The minister also talked about the importance of decentralising the hospitals, adding that the number of required doctor was less than required.

Establishing costal management department and strengthening rural economy were also discussed at the meeting.

Jubo League man dies in Hatiya clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Ashrafuddin, a member of Jubo League, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday from bullet wounds to the chest sustained during a clash between two groups of Awami League (AL) in Noakhali's Hatiya on March 30.

Ashrafuddin was also a physical training teacher of Hatiya Degree College and the younger brother of AL's Hatiya unit General Secretary and Charking union parishad Chairman Mohiuddin Ahmed.

His burial will be at a family graveyard following a namaz-e-janaza in Hatiya today, said family sources.

At least 10 people were injured in the clash between the two AL groups at Afazia Bazar in Char Ishwar union, said Hatiya Police Station Officer in Charge Abdul Majid.

Ashrafuddin was flown to Dhaka on a helicopter the following day. Another person who was hit by bullets has recovered.

Turkish cabin

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The airline took to Twitter on Friday to announce the arrival. "It's a girl" the statement read. "Welcome on board Princess!"

The mother -- who was 28-weeks pregnant -- had earlier complained of birthing pains while the plane cruised between the Guinean capital Conakry and Ougadougou in Burkina Faso, according to the airline.

The airline added the cabin crew then rushed to help deliver the baby, who was named Kadjiu.

Pictures showed crew gathered around the mother, Nafi Diaby, as she lay across a row of seats.

The airline said that on arrival in the Burkina Faso capital, the pair were taken to hospital. Both mother and daughter were in good health, the airline said.

According to its website Turkish Airlines allows expectant mothers to fly up to their 28th week of pregnancy without a doctor's report. After 28-weeks pregnant women must have a letter from their doctor to say they are fit to fly.

Six people killed as building collapses in Poland

AFP, Warsaw

Six people, including two children, were killed when a two-storey apartment building collapsed in western Poland on Saturday, possibly due to a gas explosion, officials said.

Four others were injured and rescued from the rubble, in the town of Swiebodzice, before being rushed to hospital. "There are strong indications that no one else is stuck under the rubble," Interior Minister Mariusz Blaszczak told reporters.

A gas explosion may have caused the two-storey building to collapse, according to Daniel Mucha, a spokesman for the regional Lower Silesia firefighters.

Give utility services

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of industries ministry. The money would be distributed among workers for their rehabilitation.

The authorities concerned were asked to ensure tannery wastes were not dumped into the Dhaleshwari river in Savar and to take legal actions in case of any violation of the directives.

The order came a day after the Department of Environment (DoE) disconnected utility services, including gas, power and water, to the tanneries in Hazaribagh.

According to yesterday's order, tanners will have to seek utility services for their land, properties and structures in Hazaribagh after relocating their factories.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha issued the directives following two petitions filed by tanners.

The petitions filed with the SC, sought a stay on a High Court order that asked 154 tanners to pay Tk 30.85 crore to the government. The petitioners also sought review of the HC order directing each tannery owner to pay Tk 10,000 every day as compensation for damaging and polluting the environment.

During yesterday's hearing of the petitions, the chief justice said authorities should be careful not to let the

Dhaleshwari be damaged and polluted after tanneries are relocated.

Tannery owners' lawyers Syed Amirul Islam and Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh told the SC that DoE's drive on Saturday left Hazaribagh tanneries without utilities.

They also prayed for relieving their clients from paying compensations as their business was hurt.

Deputy Attorney General Kazi Zinat Hoque told The Daily Star that her office received a report of the DoE on its Saturday's drive. The report would be submitted to the High Court today, she added.

Following a petition filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, the HC on March ordered the director general of DoE to sever utility connections to the tanneries and submit a report to the court by April 10.

Following a petition moved by lawyer Manzill Murshid on behalf of Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, the HC on March 2 directed 154 tannery owners to deposit Tk 30.85 crore to the state fund in two weeks and warned of serious consequences unless the sum was paid.

In July last year, the Appellate Division ruled that every tannery must pay Tk 10,000 a day for damaging and polluting the environment and also ordered owners to relocate to the Tannery Industrial Estate in Savar.

HC stays trial

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petitions with the HC seeking a stay on the trial proceedings against her in two arson cases through her lawyers challenging the lower court orders that accepted the charges.

In the petitions, she said her name was not included in the first information report (FIR) of the cases as she was confined during the incident.

Police filed the cases with Darussalam Police Station on February 10 and 20 in 2015, on the charge of setting fire to vehicles during the anti-government movement.

Police submitted charge sheets of the cases on May 12 and 14 last year to the trial court implicating Khaleda along with other accused.

SEDITION CASE AGAINST KHALEDA

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain dropped a petition filed by the government seeking a stay on the HC order after Deputy Attorney General Shaikh AKM Moniruzzaman Kabir prayed for making the stay peti-

tion of its hearing list.

DAG Moniruzzaman told The Daily Star that he made the prayer as the government will move a leave to appeal petition before the Appellate Division after receiving the full text of the HC order.

The HC order will remain in force following the SC chamber judge's order until its further order, he added.

Following a petition filed by Khaleda, the HC on March 29 stayed the trial proceedings of a sedition case filed against her for six months and also issued a rule upon the government and the complainant of the case to explain in four weeks why the trial court's order to accept charges should not be scrapped.

According to the case, complainant SC lawyer Montaz Uddin Ahmed Mehedi alleged that Khaleda Zia on December 21, 2015, at a programme organised by Jatiyata badi Muktijoddha Dal marking the 45th Victory Day said, "There are controversies over how many were martyred in the Liberation War."

Mufti Hannan

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The minister, however, did not give any details about the time and place of the executions of Hannan, the condemned chief of banned militant outfit Harkat-ul Jihad-al Islam (HuJI) and his two accomplices, while replying queries from journalists at his Secretariat office.

Mufti Hannan and his associate Sharif Shahedul Bipul have been kept at Kashimpur High Security Prison, Gazipur while Delwar Hossain alias Ripon, the other accomplice, at Sylhet Central Jail.

The militants filed mercy petitions on March 27 to the President seeking clemency after the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court rejected their petition to review of their death penalty in a case filed for carrying out grenade attack on the then UK Ambassador Anwar Chowdhury at Shahjalal Shrine in Sylhet in 2004.

Meanwhile, the jail authorities said they were yet to receive any order to execute the death penalties.

The grenade attack was launched at Shahjalal Shrine on May 21, in which

three people, assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) of Police Kamal Uddin and Constable Rubel Ahmed, were killed and 40 others, including the then British envoy Anwar Chowdhury suffered splinter injuries.

Earlier on December 7 last year, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court upheld the death penalty of the trio. It also upheld the High Court order that sentenced life in prison to Mohibullah and Abu Zandal as they did not file any petition against the verdict.

The death-row convicts filed petitions seeking review of their death penalties after the Supreme Court released the full verdict in the case. The Supreme Court on March 19 rejected their petition for which their death penalties were upheld at the final verdict.

On December 23, 2008, the Sylhet Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal sentenced Mufti Hannan, Bipul and Ripon to death and Muhibullah alias Muhibur Rahman alias Ovi and Mufti Main Uddin alias Abu Zandal to life in prison in the 2004 grenade attack case on the UK envoy.

Sudan, Saudi Arabia boost ties with joint air force drill

AFP, Meroe

President Omar al-Bashir said a joint Saudi-Sudanese air force drill that ended yesterday had boosted relations between the countries, two years after Khartoum broke ties with Iran.

For years, Khartoum's Islamist regime maintained close relations with Riyadh's arch-rivals in Tehran.

But as sectarian divisions in the region escalated with the conflict in Syria, Khartoum allied with Riyadh.

In 2015 it said it would take part in a Saudi-led military intervention in nearby Yemen against Iran-backed rebels.

"The air force drill showed that relations between Sudan and Saudi Arabia are progressing," Bashir said during a ceremony at the Meroe air base, 350 kilometres (220 miles) north of Khartoum, to mark the end of 12-day drill.

Officials said the first ever joint Saudi-Sudanese air exercise was intended to boost the two air forces' operational capacities and promote

cooperation.

Sudan took part in the exercise with more than two dozen fighter planes including MiG-29s and Sukhoi jets, defence officials said.

Saudi Arabia sent F-15 fighter jets and Eurofighter Typhoons.

Bashir said the Sudanese military was playing a "key role" in improving Khartoum's ties with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries.

"As Sudanese security is connected with that of countries across the region, we are building military and security cooperation with our neighbouring countries," said Bashir, who wore a military uniform for the ceremony.

Analysts say warmer ties between Riyadh and Khartoum serve both countries.

Sudan is keen to ease its international isolation and Saudi Arabia is looking for avenues for investment to reduce its dependence on oil.

Saudi fighter pilots are set to stage an air show in Khartoum from April 10 to 12.

UD case stays

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Station about her committing "suicide by hanging" and police recorded the information as an unnatural death case.

Contacted, OC Zillur Rahman of the police station said, "We have taken all the legal procedures properly while filing the unnatural death case. I don't know why it has not been registered yet."

"As per law, executive magistrates are informed about unnatural death cases that occur in safe custody. In cases of suicides, police usually inform them later after completing all legal procedures."

The Detective Branch of police, which is investigating the case, submitted a petition to the court yesterday for sending Raudha's laptop and mobile phone to the CID's IT forensic laboratory in Dhaka for a report on its content.

The petition along with the case will be produced before the court today.

Meanwhile, Raudha's father is likely to file a murder case over the death of his daughter. "We are waiting for our lawyer to reach Rajshahi from Dhaka," said her father Mohamed Athif, a physician by profession.

Khaleda

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present government was not elected by peoples vote. That's why they are planning how to stay in power again. That's why they have signed an agreement with India."

While talking about the Liberation War, Khaleda said, "We had gone to war not to become subservient to any other country."

"We will not be imprisoned by anyone," she added.

Probe jaino torture

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Home secretary, IGP, deputy IGP of Dhaka range, superintendent of Madaripur police, upazila nirbahi officer of Kalkini and officer-in-charge of Kalkini Police Station have been made respondents to the rule. Deputy Attorney General Tapas Kumar Biswas told The Daily Star.

The HC bench of Justice Quazi Rezaul Haque and Justice Mohammad Ullah came up with the rule after a report was published by Bangla daily Kaler Kantho yesterday.

The court also fixed May 14 for passing a further order on this issue.

According to the Kaler Kantho report, Shahidul was tortured on Friday when he went to Enayetnagar union to cover the union parishad election campaign.

Our Faridpur correspondent added that Shahidul was beaten up after being tied to a tree by the supporters of a chairman candidate of Purbo Enayetnagar union parishad polls, scheduled for April 16.

Rafikul Islam, general secretary of Kalkini Press Club, alleged that when Shahidul was taking photos of those

who were violating the electoral code of conduct, supporters of Badal Talukdar, Awami League chairman candidate, tied him to a tree and beat him up.

On information, Kalkini police rescued him and detained two supporters of Badal, including his brother Sarwar Talukdar.

Kripa Sindu Balla, officer-in-charge of Kalkini Police Station, said Delwar Talukdar, another brother of Badal, filed a case against Shahidul in connection with demanding Tk 1 lakh toll from Sarwar.

Shahidul was arrested in the case and he was later produced before a Madaripur court which sent him to jail, he said.

The police official added that they also arrested Sarwar and Najmul Khan as Shahidul filed a case against them for torturing him. The court also sent the two to jail.

Badal could not be reached over the phone.

Journalists of Madaripur Press Club yesterday formed a human chain in front of deputy commissioner's office, protesting the torture on Shahidul and demanded his release.

German army probes soldiers over 'Heil Hitler'

REUTERS, Berlin

The Germany military's counter-intelligence agency is looking into 275 suspected right-wing extremists in its ranks, including a soldier heard saying "Heil Hitler", the Defence Ministry has told parliament in a letter seen by Reuters yesterday.

About 143 of the cases were reported last year and 53 this year, the ministry wrote in its 15-page answer,

detailing incidents of soldiers performing Nazi salutes or uttering racist remarks against servicemen with migrant backgrounds.

Public displays of Nazi symbols and salutes are illegal in Germany, where most people are repulsed by any degree of sympathy to the dictatorship responsible for the Holocaust.

The letter noted the lax manner in which some of the most serious cases have been dealt with.