

MOST POPULOUS COUNTRY India to overtake China by 2024

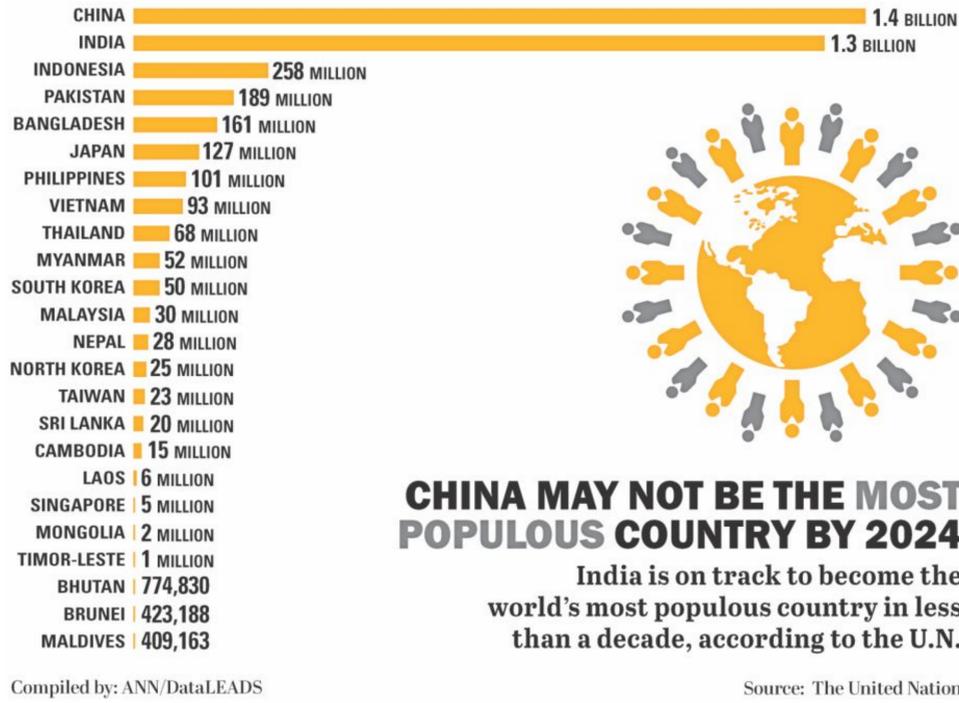
ANN, New Delhi

Even though China's size is approximately thrice of India, India's population could surpass that of China around 2024, two years later than previously estimated, according to a new UN forecast.

Currently China with 1.41 billion population and India with 1.34 billion remain the two most populous countries, comprising 19 and 18 percent of the total global population, according to the UN report. And in about seven years, or around 2024, the population of India is expected to surpass that of China.

According to the UN estimates after 2024 India's population is projected to continue growing for several decades to around 1.5 billion in 2030 and approaching 1.66 billion in 2050, while the population of China is projected to remain stable until the 2030s, after which it may report a

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CHINA MAY NOT BE THE MOST POPULOUS COUNTRY BY 2024

India is on track to become the world's most populous country in less than a decade, according to the U.N.

Source: The United Nation

College girl 'gang raped' in Madaripur

A CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

Kajla area.

The boy, who works in a restaurant, was handed over to Motihar Police Station, said DB Inspector Rashidul Islam.

The boy's family and the victim's family share a house.

The victim was in Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Incidents of rape and sexual harassment have been making headlines almost regularly of late.

Between January and June, 319 incidents of rape were reported by the media, according to rights body Ain Salish Kendra.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad put the figure at 429.

In addition, 104 incidents of gang rape and 80 incidents of sexual harassment were reported during the same period.

According to Manusher Jonno Foundation, 229 children have been

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Eighth grader 'kills herself'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

An eighth grader of Bharateswari Homes allegedly killed herself in the school at Mirzapur upazila of Tangail yesterday afternoon.

Deceased Sumi Akter, 13, was the daughter of Shahid Shikder of Chitishwari in the upazila.

Police said dining hall staffers of the school saw Sumi hanging from a pipe of a toilet around 4:30pm and informed the teachers of the matter.

She was rushed to the Kumudini Hospital where doctors declared her dead, they said.

Mohammad Main Uddin, officer-in-charge of Mirzapur Police Station, said, "Her father met her on parents' day at the school on Friday and the girl had asked him to take her home and get her admitted to another school."

Sumi had been a student at Bharateswari Homes since 2015. "Her classmates and seniors told me that she was depressed and used to become angry over little things," he said.

"Even though the incident seems like a suicide, we will send the body to Tangail General Hospital on Sunday for an autopsy," he said.

Devils within

FROM PAGE 1

The sale of Yaba, a mix of methamphetamine and caffeine, usually consumed in pill form, is so high that the report estimates 38,000 pills are sold every day in DMP's six crime divisions -- Uttara, Gulshan, Ramna, Tejgaon, Mirpur and Motijheel.

Policemen engaged in intelligence gathering could not estimate the quantity of the pills sold in Wari and Lalbagh -- two other divisions where Yaba trade continues.

The DNC statistics show the number of seized Yaba rose 22 times in the last five years, suggesting how rapidly its use and trade are surging in Bangladesh. In 2011, it was around 13.60 lakh pills.

In 2016, police, Rab, DNC, BGB and other agencies seized around 2.94 crore pills, according to the Annual drug report of DNC.

Yaba consumption per year in Bangladesh is guesstimated to be 29.45 crore pills worth around Tk 7,363 core, almost twice the cost of Jamuna bridge construction. Average price of pill is Tk 250 each, which means over eight lakh pills are consumed every day.

"The seized volume represents only eight to 10 percent of the total quantity smuggled into the country, mostly from Myanmar," Nazrul Islam Shikder, additional director (intelligence) of DNC, told The Daily Star.

Most of the Yaba pills are made in labs in the lawless border regions of Myanmar and then smuggled into Bangladesh. In recent years, different gangs started producing the pills on a small scale inside the country after smuggling in the ingredients, according to national anti-drugs officials.

Asked about the use of Bangladesh as a route for smuggling, Nazrul Islam Shikder said rackets used the country for smuggling the pills mainly to the Middle East. "We also seized two consignments of Yaba from the airport; they were being sent to Dubai by courier service."

A high official of an intelligence agency, requesting anonymity, said they have often shared with Myanmar the list of Yaba factories, mainly run by some rival groups backed by government forces.

An addict consumes up to 10-12 pills a day subject to how addicted the person is to Yaba, also known as crazy drug, Nazi speed and Baba. There are many who take only one pill a day, said a doctor who treats Yaba addicts.

The reason behind the soaring popularity of Yaba is the users also get involved in selling it as in multi-level marketing.

"One of the factors behind the rapid spread of Yaba use is that many users at one stage get involved in the business," Mukul Jyoti Chakma, deputy director (Dhaka metro) of DNC, told The Daily Star recently.

THE POLICE LIST

According to the DMP, the godfathers include 16 ward councillors, 15 of them from the ruling Awami League and one from the BNP.

Three presidents and a secretary of AL ward committees and a secretary of thana committee are involved with the racket.

Police named two presidents and six secretaries of thana-level Jubo League and two Chhatra League secretaries of thana committees.

Three Swechchhasebak League presidents and one secretary of ward committees, two presidents of thana committees and a city unit president of Yaba trade continues.

Besides, a thana-level president of Bastuhara League and a ward-level secretary of Tanti League have figured on the list.

Two sub-inspectors -- one from a city police station and one from Narcotics Control Department (DNC) -- and some patrol police team members are also on the list of godfathers.

The DMP also compiled names and details of around 1,100 dealers and retailers of the drug.

The list was submitted to the Police Headquarters which forwarded it to the home ministry, said a reliable source.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of it.

Visiting different drug spots, this correspondent learnt that many known Yaba dealers and retailers were not named in the list while some lower-tier police and DNC officials who allegedly take bribes from Yaba dealers are also left out.

A top official at the Police Headquarters said not all the listed political godfathers are directly involved in the illegal trade. Their names came up as the dealers and retailers of Yaba, heroin and Phensedyl run the business with their support.

In January, the headquarters prepared a list of 20,000 drug peddlers from across the country.

AL lawmaker Abdur Rahman Bodi, allegedly the godfather of Yaba smuggling, has been named in a list of Yaba smugglers prepared by the home ministry. His three brothers, brother-in-laws and some other relatives have also been listed for their involvement in Yaba smuggling.

Deputy Commissioner of a DMP crime division said in his area, he could not contain drug peddling at what has been an infamous drug spot for decades. "I found some officials of Special Branch linked with the traders," he said.

"They [the officials] have long been serving at the same place. Then I requested the authorities to transfer them and the situation started improving," he told The Daily Star, wishing anonymity.

A Police Headquarters source said departmental inquiry is underway against 139 policemen from the ranks of inspector down to constables while actions have already been taken against 13 for their links with drug traders and taking bribe.

Asked how the smuggling, trade and use can be tackled, former inspector general of police Nur Mohammad said one effective way can be regular crackdowns with the help of local political leaders across the country. Local leaders know very well who are involved in drug smuggling and trading.

"Besides, the public awareness campaign which is already in place should go on vigorously," he added.

Parents cry at the very mention

FROM PAGE 1

siblings, he was his parents' favourite and always kept in touch with them.

But his life was cut short by the savagery of some Bangladesh Chhatra League cadres.

It was a cold winter morning on December 9, 2012. A countrywide blockade sponsored by a BNP-led opposition alliance was in place.

While Bishwajit was walking to his shop at Shankhari Bazar, a group of lawyers were marching towards Bahadur Shah Park in support of the blockade.

A group of BCL activists of Jagannath University attacked the procession and beat up some lawyers, witnesses said at the time. In a few minutes, an explosion was heard nearby and the BCL men started chasing pedestrians.

Bishwajit, who was there at the time, ran for his life and hurried to the second floor of a nearby building. The BCL men hunted him down as he tried

the day he died.

Two days later, the then home minister MK Alamgir said Bishwajit was a BCL activist.

The Daily Star and some other media outlets identified some of the young men who attacked the victim as BCL activists of JnU. But the ruling Awami League and BCL denied the fact.

As BCL central committee leaders started claiming that the murderers were not their men, MK Alamgir echoed their views.

Even the Prime Minister's the then press secretary Abul Kalam Azad alleged that BNP and Jamaat-Shibir killed people and shifted the blame on the ruling Awami League and its associated bodies.

"None of the alleged killers of Bishwajit is a Chhatra League activist," he had said.

But on December 23, 2012, three of the accused confessed to the murder and said they were BCL activists.

the accused in order to uphold justice," the judge said.

FUMING OVER THE FUGITIVES

Bishwajit's elder brother Uttam Das, who is a tailor in Dhaka, said the family hopes the High Court would uphold the trial court verdict.

"We have nothing more to seek now. We have been demanding execution of the murderers for the last five years and that is all we want... Why is it taking so long?" he asked.

Uttam expressed anger over the fugitives, saying, "We heard that some of them have already left the country while several others are roaming around freely. Only eight were arrested right after the killing. No one was arrested later. Is it impossible for the government to arrest at least some of them if it really wants to do so?"

"My parents are grieving every day. Sometimes they come to Dhaka but don't want to stay here for long."

A bust of Bishwajit in front of the village home was built a month after

Illegal

FROM PAGE 1

can "remodel" their human hauliers, Daud added.

This phenomenon began around five years ago in the capital and most of the human hauliers based on the Tata 407 had been converted into minibuses.

At Mirpur-14 intersection, drivers and helpers of these converted minibuses were seen inviting passengers to the vehicles. To cram in 30 sitting-passengers, the seats are made very tiny and uncomfortable.

Once these vehicles get full, the helpers start pushing standing passengers towards the back of the vehicle and try their best to accommodate as many as possible.

Its heyday for unscrupulous transport operators as they now carry 40 passengers instead of 15 in one go.

"Ignoring all these, we've become used to travelling on these vehicles ...," said passenger Aminul Islam, a resident of Kafur area.

Seeking anonymity, one of the owners of "Champion-Fast Ten" told The Daily Star that they face various problems in running their service of about 50 vehicles, including frequent maintenance work and obstruction by police.

BRTA Assistant Director Nasir Uddin said, in two phases, once in 2002 and then again in 2010, a total of 116 human hauliers got permits for this route.

The vehicles were registered as human haulier and authorised to carry up to 15 passengers, he said. He acknowledged receiving complains about overloading.

Pallabi Traffic Zone Assistant Commissioner Saika Pasha told The Daily Star that a drive against such unauthorised vehicles goes on regularly but sometimes those are interrupted due to manpower crisis.

Some six vehicles had been impounded, she said.

Parents cry at the very mention

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Bishwajit's parents Ananta Das and Kalpana Rani Das in front of a memorial built at their home in Bhojeshwar of Shariatpur yesterday. Images and news cuttings are seen pasted under Bishwajit's bust.

PHOTO: STAR

to take shelter in a dental clinic.

For about five minutes, they beat and hacked him indiscriminately, dragging him down to the streets. Some of them continued pounding on him as he tried to escape.

Bishwajit did manage to break free and cross the road, but collapsed.

Some onlookers then put him on a rickshaw that took him to Mitford Hospital in about 10 minutes. He gasped for air in the hospital for 15-17 minutes and then died.

The killing, much of which was filmed by reporters at the scene, shook the nation to its core as the clips and pictures appeared in the news. A political blame game started in no time.

POLITICAL BLAME GAME

Although Bishwajit's family said he was not associated with any political party, the then BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakrul Islam Alamgir claimed Bishwajit was their activist on

"A HEINOUS AND DEPLORABLE KILLING"

The trial of the case began on July 2013.

On December 18, 2013, Judge ABM Nizamul Haque of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 sentenced eight BCL activists to death and 13 others to life in prison.

Of the eight, two are on the run while the rest are behind bars. Only two of those given life sentences are in jail now.

"It was a heinous and deplorable killing," the judge said, while delivering the verdict.

He also observed that footage of the murder that had been broadcast on national and international media shocked all. The brutality of the offence had tarnished the country's image before the entire world.

"Considering the gravity of the offence, the tribunal decided to hand down the maximum punishment to

his killing. The family recently renovated it and put a shed on it.

"Every time I see the bust, his memories come back. I can't express the pain in words," said Ananta.

THE CONVICTS

The condemned convicts are Rafiqul Islam Shakil, Mahfuzur Rahman Nahid, Emdadul Haque Emdad, GM Rasheduzzaman Shaon, Md Saiful Islam, Qayum Mia Tipu, Rajon Talukdar and Noor-e-Alam Limon.

Of them, Rajon and Limon are on the run.

The 13 sentenced to life in prison are AHM Kibria, Saiful Islam Saiful, Golam Mustafa, Alauddin, Obaidul Quader Tahsin, Imran Hossain, Khandaker Md Yunus Ali, Tarique Bin Zohur, Azizur Rahman, Al Amin Sheikh, Monirul Haque Pavel, Mosharraf Hossain and Kamrul Hasan.

Of them, only Kibria and Mustafa are in jail.

Wisdom finally dawns on all

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Registrar Md Mahi Uddin and senior officer at the office of co-curricular activities Javed Rasel--who allegedly accompanied the registrar during the "assault" on lecturer Farhaan Uddin Ahmed-- resigned from their posts, says a press release.

The university authorities also cancelled their earlier decision of Farhaan' termination. The incident led to the "assault" on August 30 and the subsequent protests.

The release also said the probe committee formed following the incident is continuing their investigation.

It added that the committee has also started investigating the allegation of assault on female students by security guards during the protest on Tuesday.

The decisions came two days after university proctor Samia Huq convinced six students to end their hunger strike unto death eight hours after

they began, assuring them of taking the necessary steps.

"We are taking the university's decisions positively. We are now demanding exemplary actions against the registrar through a proper probe by the investigation committee," said Kamrun Nahar Dana, a student involved in the protests.

She, however, urged the university authorities to reschedule the exams planned to start today as the students

could not attend to their studies during the movement.

Another student, preferring anonymity, said "We joined the movement for justice. As we got it, we will now engage in our studies."

The impasse at the privately run university started on Sunday after news of assault on the teacher and his termination spread through campus, forcing authorities to suspend classes and some exams.

As part of their movement, the

protestors also announced boycotting their exams starting today.

Farhaan, who joined the university as a lecturer on July last year on a contract for a year, filed a complaint with Banani Police Station, accusing the three officials, including the registrar, of assaulting him.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, he said, "The university authorities issued a letter extending my contract till August 31 instead of regularising my job."

Expressing grievance at the decision, he wrote an application to the authorities.

The teacher alleged that he was asked to appear before the office on Sunday and was given a termination letter instead.

"As I refused, the registrar pulled on my ID card with such force that my panjabi's pocket was torn. I was pushed down so violently that I still have bruises all over my arms and even on my chest," Farhaan said.