

# No uniformity of questions at HSC exam hall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

HSC examinees yesterday got different questions during the MCQ exams at a centre in the capital.

The questions were supposed to be the same as per the directive of the education board.

The incident happened at Mirza Abbas Mohila Degree College, which is the exam centre for students of four colleges, including Viqarunnisa Noon School and College and Notre Dame College.

Guardians of the candidates said teachers of the centre distributed different sets of question papers among the students.

Contacted, Lutfunessa, principal of Mirza Abbas Mohila Degree College, admitted that the incident happened during the MCQ exams.

"We received a text from the education board to open a bundle of particular set of question paper. As we did not have the set, we had to distribute different sets of question papers," she said while explaining the reason for distributing different sets of question papers.

"We informed Tapan Kumar Sarker, controller of examinations at Dhaka Education Board, of the matter. He assured us that this will not create any problem as they have answer to all the questions," she said. The Daily Star could not contact Tapan.

## PM to begin

FROM PAGE 20

taking part in the exercise.

Military from 23 countries began the joint drill on March 18, aiming to improve coordination between the participating countries, including the USA, the UK, the UAE, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Egypt, Jordan, Sudan, Mauritania, Malaysia, Pakistan, Chad, Djibouti, Niger, Comoros, Afghanistan, Oman, Guyana, Turkey, and Burkina Faso.

Hasina will depart for London on April 16 to join the CHOGM in London and return to Dhaka on April 23.

Responding to a question about joining of Bangladesh Army in Saudi-led military drill, Foreign Minister Ali said Bangladesh had taken part in the exercise to enhance its capability in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

Bangladesh has not signed any written agreement with Saudi-led 41-nation Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition as joining the alliance is optional, he said.

"We are with the alliance, but we will not go beyond our policies and frameworks. Bangladesh will stand by Saudi Arabia and send troops there if its sovereignty and security of the two holy mosques are threatened," he said, adding, "We are not in the alliance for any war against anyone."

Apart from joining the CHOGM in London on April 17-20, Hasina will hold bilateral meetings with her counterparts from important countries, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi when they will discuss bilateral issues.

During the meetings, the PM will also raise the issue of ongoing Rohingya crisis and stress the importance of the refugee repatriation.

## 'Terminal' case

FROM PAGE 20

allowed back into Malaysia -- leaving him stuck in the terminal's transit lounge.

"I feel lonely, weak, unwanted and rejected. No one is accepting me," he said in a YouTube post.

"I do not know what to do. I contacted almost all the human rights organisations. They came back to me and they said they are unable to help. "They do not have a solution. I do not have a solution."

Kontar added that he was unable to return to Syria as he was wanted by authorities for having refused to serve in the military.

A civil war has been raging in Syria for the past seven years, leaving more than 350,000 people dead.

His case is reminiscent of the 2004 film "The Terminal," in which Tom Hanks plays a man who finds himself stuck in a New York airport after his government collapses, rendering his papers useless.

Reports said Kontar had been working in the United Arab Emirates but was deported to Malaysia in January 2017.

However he overstayed a three-month tourist visa and is now black-listed, so cannot re-enter the country. He reportedly flew to Cambodia but was refused entry before being sent back to Kuala Lumpur airport on March 7.

He has been stuck in the budget terminal ever since, surviving on donated airline meals and washing in the airport toilets.

A spokeswoman for the United Nations refugee agency said the body was "aware of this case and have reached out to the individual and the authorities".

Immigration authorities declined to comment.

# HC settles 4yr legal battle over burial

*Lipa, who was born Hindu but converted to Islam, must be buried in Islamic tradition, the court says*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lipa Rani Roy, of Domar Upazila in Niphamari, left Hinduism, converted to Islam and married her lover Humayun Farid Laju of the same upazila in October 2013.

After conversion, Lipa took a Muslim name -- Hosne Ara Islam Liaju.

However, in the face of social and family pressure after their marriage, the couple killed themselves on different dates in 2014.

Hosne Ara's body was kept in a Rangpur mortuary all these years due to legal tangles over her burial.

Yesterday, the High Court settled the matter, ordering the authorities to bury her in line with Islamic rituals.

The HC asked the Nilphamari executive magistrate to take action in this regard and also ensure the presence of her family during the burial.

The HC bench of Justice Miftah Uddin Choudhury passed the order after hearing a petition by Zahurul Islam, her father-in-law.

Deputy Attorney General Shaikh AKM Moniruzzaman Kabir told The Daily Star that the girl's father Akshay

Kumar Roy filed a case with a Nilphamari court against Humayun in 2013 on charges of kidnapping his daughter.

In the case, Akshay claimed that his daughter was not adult and she was mentally imbalanced.

But the court dismissed the case upon hearing Hosne Ara and Humayun.

Akshay later appealed the verdict in another Nilphamari court, which sent Hosne Ara to Rajshahi Safe Home for examining her mental and physical condition.

On January 15, 2014, Humayun took poison and died.

The next day, Akshay took his daughter to his home.

In March that year, Hosne Ara killed herself by taking poison.

Following the autopsy, her body was kept in the Rangpur mortuary following a court order.

In 2014, a Nilphamari court ordered the authorities the hand over the body to her parents for her last rites in Hindu tradition.

Her father-in-law challenged the verdict with the HC, which overturned the Nilphamari court verdict.

# Azerbaijan strongman Aliyev wins fourth term

AFP, Baku

Azerbaijan strongman Ilham Aliyev secured a fourth consecutive term with 86 percent of the vote in a snap election boycotted by the main opposition parties, final results showed yesterday.

Aliyev's crushing win in Wednesday's poll was widely seen as a foregone conclusion with the down-trodden opposition unable to mount a serious challenge to his authoritarian rule boosted by the steady influx of petrodollars into his government's coffers.

Aliyev, who has been in power for 15 years, addressed the nation on Wednesday evening, thanking Azerbaijanis for "support and trust".

"Citizens of Azerbaijan have voted for security and progress," he said in a televised address.

The Central Election Commission put the turnout at 74.5 percent.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was the first foreign leader to congratulate Aliyev. Russian President Vladimir Putin also hailed his "decisive victory," the Kremlin said.

ive victory," the Kremlin said.

In a letter to the president-elect, Putin "praised Ilham Aliyev's efforts aimed at strengthening friendly, good-neighbourly relations between Moscow and Baku."

The main opposition parties in the tightly controlled Caucasus nation boycotted the vote, calling the elections a sham and accusing the authorities of electoral fraud.

They also condemned Aliyev's surprise -- and unexplained -- decision to hold the election six months ahead of schedule, saying it was aimed at shortening the campaign period and hampering efforts to stop vote-rigging.

"All previous elections in Azerbaijan were falsified and held with blatant violations of the electoral law. These elections will be no exception," the executive secretary of the opposition Republican Alternative Movement, Natig Jafarli, said ahead of the vote.

But authorities rejected the criticism, insisting the vote was free and fair.

# HC bans 2-finger test

FROM PAGE 1

rape victims, the court ruled while delivering the verdict on a writ petition.

It also ordered the authorities concerned of the government to take necessary steps so that the "Protocol for Healthcare Providers" is strictly followed during examinations of rape victims.

The health ministry has prepared the guidelines in September 2017, upon receiving opinions from experts, keeping in mind the development of women's physical and mental health, Deputy Attorney General ASM Nazmul Haque told The Daily Star.

The HC directed the government to issue a circular and hold meetings and seminars so that lower court judges, investigation officers, doctors, nurses and lawyers learn the protocol.

A bench of Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore and Justice AKM Shahidul Huq came up with the verdict in response to a writ petition filed by six rights organisations and two doctors in October, 2013, challenging the legality of the two-finger test.

The petitioners are Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP), BRAC, Manusher Jonno Foundation and Naripokkho, along with Dr Ruchira Tabassum Naved and Dr Mobarak Hossain Khan.

In the petition, they said the test had no evidential value or scientific merit.

It is humiliating, degrading, and a violation of women and girls' fundamental rights to equality and dignity. Many women reportedly refuse to undergo the test due to its invasive and humiliating nature, and are thus denied justice, as stated in the petition.

Advocate Sharmin Aktar appeared for the writ petition.

Earlier on October 10, 2013, the court questioned the legality and authenticity of the test. It also issued a rule asking the government to explain why the test should not be declared illegal.

An expert committee was also formed upon instructions from the court to formulate guidelines as to how to support rape victims during examination

and treatment.

The ministry submitted the draft guidelines with expert opinions suggesting that the test is "unscientific" and "horrendous" suggesting that the test be abolished.

During a hearing on the rule, the HC bench recorded opinions of at least five forensic experts from different hospitals in 2016, of all whom opined that the two-finger test was unethical, unscientific and unnecessary.

**TWO-FINGER TEST: VIOLATION OF PRIVACY**

While conducting the test, a medical officer uses their index and middle fingers to check if the hymen of the victim is intact or torn, the laxity of her vagina, and if there are signs of injuries on the vaginal wall.

To prove her complaint before the case is ready for trial, a victim had to go through the test, however indecent it may sound.

First, it violates her right to privacy. Second, medical experts worldwide, including in Bangladesh, say this test is unreliable. In their views, if the victim is married, middle-aged, or has conceived multiple times, then how could this test help find any evidence?

"Undoubtedly, the two-finger test and its interpretations violate the right of rape survivors to privacy, physical and mental integrity, and dignity. Thus, this test, even if the report is affirmative, cannot ipso facto, gives rise to presumption of consent," said the Indian Supreme Court in a landmark order in May 2013.

In the order, the court asked all hospitals to set up separate rooms for forensic and medical examinations. Eight months after the SC order, the Indian government banned the two-finger test.

The test also contradicts the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights 1966 and the UN Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power 1985. Under the two legal instruments, rape survivors are entitled to legal recourse that does not re-traumatise them or violate their physical or mental integrity and dignity.

## Shipping dept

FROM PAGE 20

as the "first instalment". The ACC team members arrived in the scene and arrested Nazmul along with the money, Wadud said.

The Daily Star could not verify the claim independently.

On July 18, 2017, ACC arrested former chief engineer AKM Fakhurul Islam while he was taking bribe from Bengal Marine and Engineering Services.

A month later, he was suspended and Nazmul was appointed to the post.

ACC last evening filed a case against Nazmul with Ramna Model Police Station, said Wadud.

**OFFICIALS FACE WRATH OF ACC BOSS**

ACC Chairman Iqbal Mahmood yesterday criticised officials for their failure in arresting some accused in graft cases.

"How do they [graft accused] roam around disregarding the law? Each accused of the graft case must be brought to justice law," he said.

Iqbal was addressing an ACC meeting.

"ACC, in the last two years, has arrested over 600 persons. But there are many accused who are still moving freely without surrendering before the court," he said.

## No discussion

FROM PAGE 20

Shampadak Parishad, a platform of editors of national dailies, and rights activists, over incorporating the contents of the controversial section 57 of the ICT Act and some strict provisions in it.

Before sending the bill to the parliamentary body for scrutiny, ICT Minister Mustafa Jabbar assured the House that it would be possible to include any section in the proposed bill for protection of journalists or exclude any section that goes against people's interest.

The committee has been given four weeks to submit its report to the House.

Talking to this newspaper on Tuesday, Imran Ahmed, chief of the parliamentary standing committee, said they have no plan to sit with journalists or other stakeholders.

"The ministry concerned prepared the bill following consultations with different stakeholders and vetting by the law ministry. The cabinet in a meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also approved the draft act. Therefore, we don't need to sit with stakeholders for further talks."

The standing committee has "no jurisdiction" to hold meetings with journalists or other people concerned to take suggestions, he added.

However, section 213 of the Rules of Procedure of parliament says, "A committee shall have the power to regulate its own procedure. A committee may obtain cooperation and advice from any expert in its respective field, if deemed necessary."

ICT Minister Mustafa Jabbar opposed Imran Ahmed's views on inviting stakeholders for talks. "They [standing committee members] can sit with anyone they deem necessary to take opinion or to discuss the proposed bill."

Journalists have been demanding the government finalise the proposed law following discussions with stakeholders. They feared freedom of the press and freedom of expression would be gagged if the proposed bill was passed. They specially mentioned section 32 of the bill in this regard.

According to section 32, a person may face up to 14 years in jail or Tk 25 lakh in fine or both on charges of computer spying or digital spying if he or she illegally enters the offices of government, semi-government, autonomous or statutory bodies and collect or preserve or send any top secret or secret documents through a computer, digital device, computer network, digital network or any electronic form and help others to do so.

The offender will face punishments of up to life imprisonment or a fine of Tk 1 crore or both for committing the crime for a second time.

The government on several occasions said section 57 of the ICT Act would be revoked. The section deals with defamation, hurting the religious sentiment, causing deterioration in law and order and instigating actions against any person or organisation through publishing or transmitting any material in websites or in electronic form. Such offences are punishable with maximum 14 years' imprisonment.

The proposed Digital Security Bill splits the offences into four sections (21, 25, 28 and 29) with punishments ranging from three to 10 years' jail.

Senior Jatiya Party lawmaker Kazi Firoz Rashid, also a member of the parliamentary standing committee, said he would insist that the JS watchdog sits with stakeholders.

"The standing committee is not like a post office that it will just deliver documents to the recipients without proper scrutiny. If the committee does not accept my proposal, I will write a note of dissent," he added.

PROTEST TIMELINE	
<b>FROM PAGE 1</b> stay near the fine arts faculty. Around 700 female students of Kuwait-Moitree Hall break the main gate of the dorm to join the demonstrations.	<b>10:00:</b> The spinoff faction of demonstrators leave TSC.
<b>1:30am:</b> Police lob teargas at protesters in Shahbagh area while the VC's house is vandalised by hundreds of people.	<b>TUESDAY</b> <b>10:30am:</b> Bangladesh Shadharan Chhatra Adhikar Sangrakkhan Parishad ask all to refrain from agitation.
<b>1:45am:</b> AL lawmaker Jahangir Kabir Nanak at Shahbagh says AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader is to sit with the protesters around 11:00am Monday.	<b>11:30am:</b> The other faction continues demonstration at the Raju Memorial Sculpture.
<b>2:30am:</b> The VC comes out of the residence while Chhatra League activists gather there. Nanak visits the VC's house. The prime minister telephones the VC.	<b>5:30pm:</b> The factions reunite and declare nationwide road blockade and boycott of classes in colleges and universities. They demand apology from Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury.
<b>2:50am:</b> Protestor take position at the TSC. Chhatra League men take position in front of the VC's residence.	<b>6:00pm:</b> Protestors start demonstrating in TSC area and burn Matia's effigy.
<b>3:00am:</b> Protestors and Chhatra League men chase each other. Chhatra League men fire several shots at protesters.	<b>WEDNESDAY</b> <b>12:30am:</b> Students allege that three protesters are being tortured in Sufia Kamal Hall by Chhatra League hall unit president Iffat Jahan Isha.
<b>3:30am:</b> Female students get stranded inside the TSC while male protestors take position inside Curzon Hall.	<b>1:00am:</b> The news of torture spread on social media including a rumour that Iffat had cut the tendons of student Morsheda. Students of the dorm storm Iffat's room and beat up the Chhatra League leader.
<b>4:00am:</b> Police fire teargas at protesters near Curzon Hall.	<b>1:45am:</b> DU Proctor AKM Golam Rabbani enters Sufia Kamal Hall amid slogans from protestors that his steps are an eyewash.
<b>4:40am:</b> Additional law enforcers arrive.	<b>2:05am:</b> Chhatra League padlock the collapsible gates of different halls so that protestors cannot go outside.
<b>5:00am:</b> Chhatra League men from different dorms go towards Doyel Chattar while police continue to fire teargas.	<b>2:25am:</b> Chhatra League expels Iffat.
<b>6:00am:</b> Stranded female students return to their dorms.	<b>2:35am:</b> Morsheda, who was tortured by Iffat, is released from Sarkari Karmachari Hospital and taken to DU Medical centre.
<b>6:10am:</b> Protestors chase away Chhatra League men.	<b>2:46am:</b> Morsheda leaves the medical centre but declines to comment.
<b>7:30am:</b> Police fire teargas and rubber bullets inside Shahidullah Hall and disperse the protestors.	<b>2:55am:</b> Around 1,200 protestors from Bijoy Ekattur Hall break the padlock at the dormitory's main gate and march towards Sufia Kamal Hall.
<b>10:00am:</b> Protestors in a press conference demand immediate release of the detained. Dhaka University Teachers' Association condemns attack on VC's home.	<b>3:30am:</b> DU suspends Iffat.
<b>11:00am:</b> The agitators bring out a procession from the central library and march campus streets.	<b>4:22am:</b> About 5,000 protestors start marching away from Sufia Kamal Hall chanting slogans demanding arrest of Iffat.
<b>2:00pm:</b> The demonstrators try to bring out another procession but police fire teargas at them.	<b>10:00am:</b> Agitators start their protest for the fourth consecutive day.
<b>2:30pm:</b> Protesters gather at the Raju Memorial Sculpture and barricade access to the TSC area. They chase away Chhatra League men who try to get to TSC area from Shahbagh.	<b>10:30am:</b> Duta expresses solidarity with the protestors.
<b>3:00pm:</b> The agitators announce that a 20-member delegation is to sit with government representatives.	<b>12:30pm:</b> Chhatra League leaders quoting the prime minister say that there would be no quota in government jobs.
<b>4:00pm:</b> Led by platform's convener Hasan Al Mamun and Faruk Hasan, the delegation go to the Secretariat.	<b>5:00pm:</b> The prime minister in parliament speaks of scrapping the quota system and asks students to return to classes.
<b>7:00pm:</b> Obaidul Quader after the meeting says the agitators agreed to suspend their movement until May 7.	<b>6:00pm:</b> Protestors take time to ponder.
<b>8:00pm:</b> Convener of the platform postpones the demonstrations.	<b>6:30pm:</b> Chhatra League brings out a victory procession and congratulates the prime minister.
<b>9:30pm:</b> Bipasha Chowdhury, coordinator of a newly formed committee of the agitating students, announces that the strikes are to continue in all universities and colleges.	<b>THURSDAY</b> <b>11:00am:</b> Protestors call off their demonstrations.
	<b>11:30am:</b> Protestors bring out a victory procession.

PREPARED BY DU CORRESPONDENT

## Attack

FROM PAGE 20

which rescue workers said killed more than 40 people.

Trump on Wednesday slammed Russia for its military alliance with Assad, saying it should not "be partners with a Gas Killing Animal who kills his people and enjoys it."

US officials have refused to rule out direct military engagement with Russia, with the White House saying that "all options are on the table."

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Wednesday the Pentagon was ready to provide options for a Syria strike but that the US and its allies were still "assessing the intelligence" on the suspected chemical attack.

A special hotline for the US and Russian militaries to communicate about operations in Syria is active and being used by both sides, Moscow said yesterday.

Moscow called on the West to "seriously consider" the consequences of threats against Syria.

"We call upon... members of the international community to seriously consider the possible consequences of such accusations, threats and especially action (against Syria)," Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

Assad yesterday warned that threats of Western military action "will only contribute to further destabilization in the region."

Russia has warned the United States against carrying out a "military intervention on fabricated pretexts," and has accused the White Helmets civil defense organization in Syria of staging a fake chemical weapons attack in Douma.

The Russian army declared early Thursday that the Syrian state flag was flying in Douma, where the alleged chemical attack took place.

Moscow said this a "significant event in the history of Syria," meaning that the whole of Eastern Ghouta had come under government forces' control.

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday said he had met with ambassadors from the five permanent members including Russia and the United States, and "stressed the need to avoid the situation spiralling out of control."

At the UN Security Council, Moscow and Washington have so far vetoed each other's motions to set up an international investigation into chemical weapons use.