

Negligence by doctors cannot be accepted

Says PM

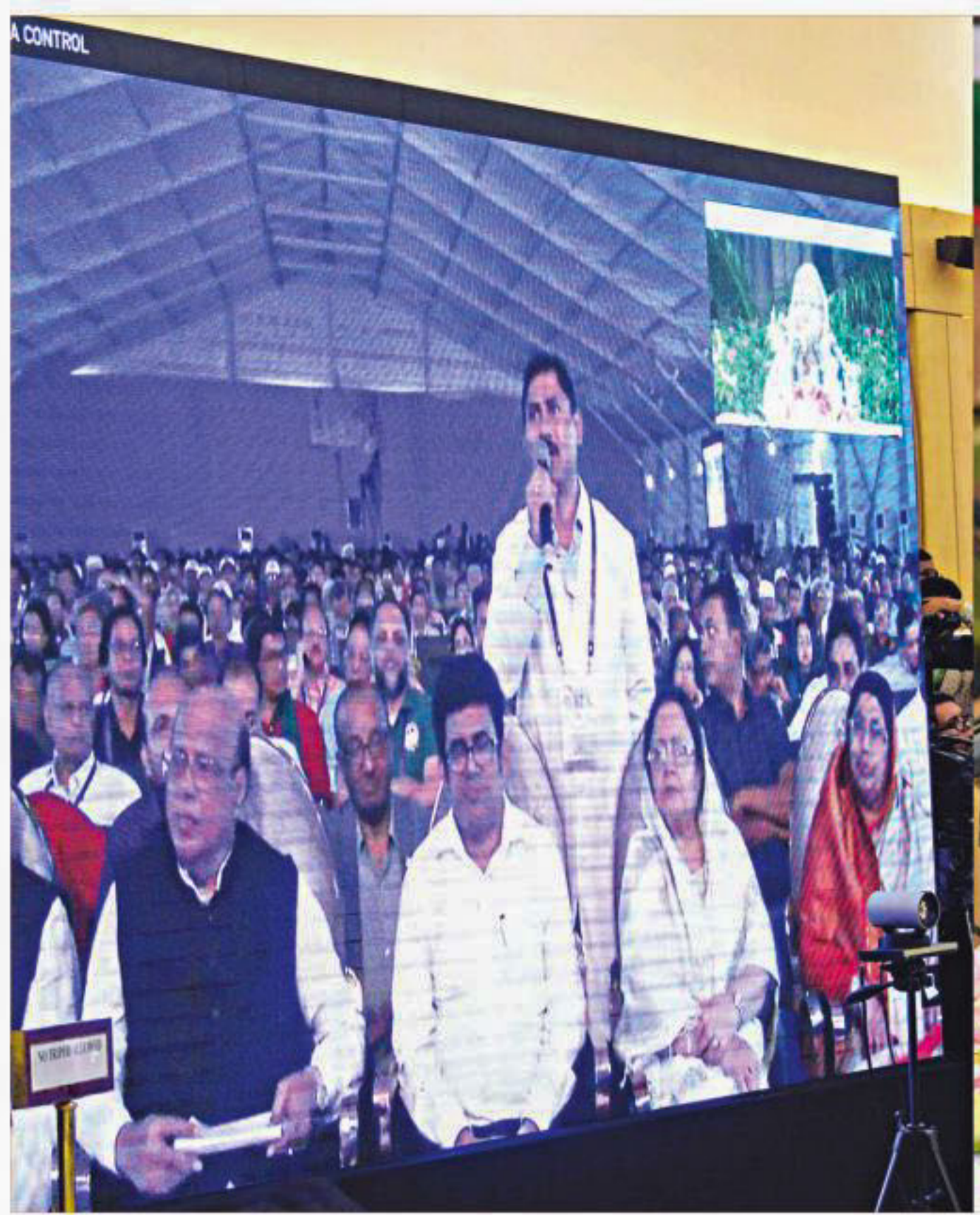
UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sharply criticised the physicians who are not available in their workplaces at the upazila level, saying that negligence towards patients is unacceptable.

"We're appointing doctors and nurses as required, but it's regrettable that our doctors don't stay in upazilas, where it's supposed to have 10 doctors in one upazila hospital ... only one doctor is found in some areas," she said.

The PM said this while inaugurating the golden jubilee celebration programme of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College in Barishal through

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks while inaugurating the golden jubilee programme of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College in Barishal through videoconference from the Gono Bhaban yesterday.



PHOTO: PTD

Cumilla BCL man beaten to death

UNB, Cumilla

A local leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League was beaten to death by miscreants in Sarshadi Dighi area of Feni yesterday after being abducting from the district.

The deceased was identified as Sazzad Hossain Shakil, 25, joint secretary of Alkara union unit of BCL and son of Saleh Ahmed alias Badhu Miah of Kulsar village in Chouddagram upazila.

Golam Faruque Helal, organising secretary of upazila Awami League, said a group of miscreants intercepted a bus at Padua on Dhaka-Chattogram highway in the morning while Shakil was going to the district town by it to appear before a court in a case.

The hoodlums dragged the BCL leader out of the bus and took him to Feni in a microbus and beat him mercilessly with iron rods and hammers, leaving him critically injured.

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CEC moves to heal rift

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had sent "unofficial notes" to the EC secretariat expressing their disappointment at its functions.

The four election commissioners are Rafiqul Islam, Mahbub Talukder, Kabita Khanam and Sahadat Hossain Chowdhury.

EC sources said distance between the CEC and the commissioners widened over holding of the 9th meeting of the Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia in Dhaka on September 5 as the election commissioners' opinion about the event was not sought.

None of the four election commissioners took part in a training workshop of EC officials in the capital's Nirbachon Bhaban on September 22 as they were "not informed" about the programme. The CEC was present at the event.

Besides, opinions of the four election commissioners regarding the important workshop ahead of the upcoming general election were not taken. The next parliamentary polls are likely to be held in late December.

Some election commissioners alleged that the CEC and the EC secre-

tary took some important decisions and carried out some activities avoiding them.

The commissioners also sent "unofficial notes" to the EC secretariat pointing that some EC rules were being violated in running the EC's activities.

"All decisions of the Election Commission should be taken on the basis of majority opinion. In many cases this rule was not followed," an official of the EC secretariat quoted an "unofficial note" as saying.

In the "unofficial notes", the commissioners said as per rules, they were supposed to know about all the EC decisions. But the commission took several decisions after receiving the CEC's approval and they were not aware of those.

The election commissioners also asked EC Secretary Helaluddin Ahmed to produce all important files of the commission before them. They also wanted to know about the EC's election preparations, different activities of its secretariat and its various projects, sources said.

Talking to The Daily Star on condition of anonymity, an election commissioner yesterday said he didn't

know anything about the EC's proposal to buy electronic voting machines (EVMs) worth Tk 3,800 crore.

Another commissioner said he was in the dark about the field level visits of election officials ahead of the upcoming national election and several other election-related issues.

"Journalists often question us about different activities of the election preparation, EVM project and visits of election commissioners. But I cannot answer them [journalists] as I am in dark about those issues."

He said he asked the EC secretariat to inform him about the commission's functions.

The present election commissioners, led by the CEC, had taken office in February last year.

Sources at the EC said Election Commissioner Mahbub Talukder in July last year first sent an "unofficial note" regarding a reshuffle in the EC secretariat.

On August 30 this year, he wrote a note of dissent on the EC's proposal to seek amendment to the Representation of the People Order for using EVMs in parliamentary polls.

Two weeks needed

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of infection if she has one... If the results of some medical tests are found favourable and we get their [patient's] consent, we will be able to start her treatment after two weeks."

Atiqul visited Khaleda on Sunday night.

Replying to a query from a journalist, Prof Jalil said it was possible to provide "best treatment" of her illness in the country.

He further said they decided to suggest some tests to assess Khaleda's overall condition to know whether certain medicines can be administered to her.

The physician, however, said the present treatment would continue.

The board members reiterated that it was not the right time for them to say how long the BNP chief would need to stay in the hospital.

Khaleda was moved to the BSMMU from Dhaka's old central jail on Saturday in line with a High Court order.

She was sentenced to five years in jail on February 8 in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case. She landed

in prison the same day.

On Thursday, the HC asked the authorities to set up a five-member medical board, including Prof Abdul Jalil and Associate Prof Badrunnesa Ahmed, a physiatrist of BSMMU.

The board cannot have any current or former members and supporters of Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad, a pro-Awami League doctors' platform, or from Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB), a pro-BNP physicians' platform, the court ruled.

The three other members of the medical board are Prof Sajal Krishna Banerjee of cardiology, Prof Nokul Kumar Dutta, of orthopedic surgery, and Syed Atiqul Haq, of rheumatology. Of them, Prof Saja was replaced by Associate Prof Tanjima Parvin of the same department on Sunday.

Khaleda, 73, has been suffering from problems in the knees and other ailments for long, according to government doctors who treated her since she landed in jail. Her personal doctors who met her in the prison said she suffered a "mild stroke" on June 5.

Freedom forever

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to spend his last moments with his family.

The HC had declared Ali not guilty six months ago, but it took half a year for the order to get typed up and make the journey from Dhaka to Khulna.

"Obaid's condition had been critical for the last few months," said Dr Subrata Kumar Mondal, registrar of KMCH, who had treated Ali in the final four years of his life. "All he wanted was to get some time with his family before he died," he added.

Ali was charged with the murder of two police constables in 2003.

On February 3 of that year, constables Fazlul Haque, Abdul Motaleb and Abdul Ahad were cycling back home when they were attacked by people with knives. Fazlul and Abdul were killed in the incident, while Ahad escaped with injuries.

The next day, habildar Ruhul Amin filed a case with Satkhira Sadar Police Station.

Three years later, a Khulna speedy tribunal sentenced Ali to death. Within seven days of this sentencing, Ali filed an appeal with the HC -- but that took six years to resolve.

The result in the end was positive: Ali was pronounced innocent. However, the Supreme Court upheld the HC's decision six years later.

Ali's son Sheikh Ashiqur Rahman Shaon had been running around trying to obtain the papers from the court. "I met with the Chief Justice last September 5 hoping to get a copy of the order. Before that, I had met with the chairman of the National Human Rights Commission," he said.

"Because the order copy did not reach the prison authorities in time, my father had to spend six extra months in jail. Unfortunately, those were his last days."

Ali's wife Ambia Khatun claimed that her husband's health could have improved if he had been given better medical care outside of prison.

"I want justice for my husband's death. I want compensation. My two daughters, son and I have spent the last 13 years without him as a guardian. When we finally had a chance to be together, that too was snatched away," she said.

Jakir Hossain, one of the other accused in the case was released yesterday, informed Osman Gani, the public prosecutor of Satkhira Judge Court.

Ex-Interpol

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engaged in a sweeping crackdown on official corruption. On Sunday, Interpol, the France-based global police coordination body, said that Meng had resigned as its president.

"The investigation against Meng Hongwei taking bribes and suspected violations of law is very timely, absolutely correct and rather wise," China's Ministry of Public Security said in a statement on its website.

"The investigation of Meng Hongwei fully shows there is no privilege and no exception in front of the law, and anyone who violates the law must be severely punished," it added.

Officials should never be allowed to "negotiate terms or haggle" over positions within the party, the ministry said, referring to China's ruling Communist Party.

French media on Sunday broadcast video of Meng's wife Grace speaking to a small group of journalists at a hotel in Lyon, her back to a TV camera in order to hide her appearance and her voice trembling.

"This is a matter for the international community. It concerns the people of my motherland," she said.

She showed journalists a text message on her mobile phone with an image of a knife, sent by her husband as a way of showing her that he felt he was in danger, French media reported.

POLICE PROTECTION

Meng, 64, became president of the global police cooperation agency in late 2016 amid a broader effort by China to secure leadership posts in international organisations. His appointment prompted concern at the time from rights groups that Beijing might try to leverage his position to pursue dissidents abroad.

"Meng's sudden disappearance ... has clearly undermined China's own efforts and has lent credence to those who said previously that China was not ready to take on such important international leadership roles," said Paul Haenle, Director at the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center in Beijing.

France's Interior Ministry said on Friday that Meng's family had not heard from him since September 25, and French authorities said his wife was under police protection in Lyon, where Interpol is headquartered, after receiving threats.

Presidents of Interpol are seconded from their national administrations and remain in their home post while representing the international policing body.

Businesses suffer for truck strike

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caused by reckless driving.

One of the key demands made by the council was that truck owners and drivers would not accept death penalty as drivers "don't drive to kill people".

Other demands include unconditional release of all staffers arrested in connection with crashes, issuing proper driver's licence to all drivers of heavy vehicles and allowing drivers to drive trucks with light vehicles' driving licence until they are issued the one for heavy vehicles; ending police harassment and setting up truck terminals and stands at suitable locations with necessary facilities.

BUSINESSES SUFFER

Apart from the strike, there have also been allegations of some transport workers preventing free movement of vehicles on roads and truckers charging higher than usual fares.

Faruque Hassan, the VP of BGMEA, alleged that when they used company vehicles to transport products, some transport workers intercepted those.

"Two of my company vehicles came under attack at Cherag Ali in

Tongi yesterday," he added.

"We are worried. Our production has been hampered and we are failing to send our consignment," he said, adding that they have already raised their concern with the road transport and bridges minister.

Meanwhile, cashing in on the work abstention, truckers are charging more than the usual fares, several whole sellers of Karwan Bazar, largest kitchen market in Dhaka city claimed.

Babul Miah, proprietor of Bikrampur Bhandar, said he hired a truck at Tk 17,000 to carry potatoes from Rajshahi. The cost was Tk 1,500 higher than the usual fare.

"At first, the truck drivers refused to carry goods citing the 'strike but later agreed at a higher fare," he said.

Another vegetable trader, Md Masud, said he usually hired a pick-up van at Tk 2,200 to carry goods from Gazipur but yesterday he had to hire the same pick-up van at Tk 3,000.

The cost of food and vegetable may rise to reflect the rising cost, the traders at Karwan Bazar added.

WORKS ABSTENTION ON

Visiting the truck stands at Tejgaon, Aminbazar and Mohammadpur Beribadh, this correspondent saw trucks parked there with many drivers and helpers sitting idle.

"We have 1,987 members and more than 200 new drivers are waiting to get membership. All of us are observing work abstention. So, no truck has left from here," Manik Miah, treasurer of Aminbazar Branch of Bangladesh Inter-district Truck Drivers Union, said.

Mokbul said their work abstention would continue until their demands are met.

Although, the work abstention was announced for Dhaka division, truck owners and workers from other districts including Bogura, Naogaon, Rajshahi, Feni and Rangpur did not operate their vehicles in solidarity, he added.

Mokbul said the president of BGMEA had already talked with them as trucks were an integral part of the garments industry's supply chain. "We are ready to talk with the government," he added.

US duo win Nobel prize in economics

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It said time was running out to avert disaster, noting that our planet's surface has already warmed one degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit).

Romer told the Swedish academy in a live phone interview at the prize announcement that he was confident the world could reduce greenhouse gas emissions and still improve standards of living in the future.

"We can absolutely make substantial progress to protecting the environment, and without giving up the chance for sustained growth," he said.

"One of the problems with the current situation is that many people think that dealing with protecting the environment will be so costly and so hard that they will ignore the problem and deny it exists," he said.

"I hope the prize will help people see humans are capable of amazing accomplishments when we try to do something."

'SUSTAINABLE GROWTH'

The jury said that while Nordhaus and Romer "do not deliver conclusive answers ... their findings have brought us considerably closer to answering the question of how we can achieve sus-

tained and sustainable global economic growth."

Nordhaus, 77, was specifically honoured for "integrating climate change into long-run macroeconomic analysis."

His "integrated assessment model" was created in the 1990s and combines theories and empirical results from physics, chemistry and economics.

It is now widely "used to simulate how the economy and climate co-evolve."

It is used to examine the consequences of climate policy interventions, for example carbon taxes.

Nordhaus's research shows that the most efficient remedy for problems caused by greenhouse gas emissions is a global scheme of carbon taxes uniformly imposed on all countries.

Countries refusing to take part in the scheme could be subjected to customs tariffs.

The 62-year-old Romer meanwhile won the prize for "integrating technological innovations into long-run macroeconomic analysis."

Complementing Nordhaus' research, Romer laid the foundation for "endogenous growth theory", which explains how ideas are different to

other goods and require specific conditions to thrive.

His research demonstrated how economic forces govern the willingness of companies to produce new ideas and innovations.

"They [the laureates] show and they have taught us how the economic situation is dependent on technological development, environmental changes, so they integrate economics with major issues facing mankind," Goran K Hansson, secretary general of the Royal Swedish academy for sciences, told AFP.

Romer resigned from the World Bank in January 2018 after raising questions about how the institution was ranking countries.

DECEMBER 10 CEREMONY

Both Nordhaus and Romer have been tipped as frontrunners for the Nobel Prize in recent years.

The pair will share the nine million Swedish kronor (about \$1.01 million or 860,000-euro) prize.

Last year, the honour went to US economist Richard Thaler, a co-founder of the so-called "nudge" theory.

That theory demonstrates how

people can be persuaded to make decisions that leave them healthier and happier.

Unlike the other Nobel prizes which were created in Swedish inventor and philanthropist Alfred Nobel's will and first awarded in 1901, the economics prize was started by the Swedish central bank in 1968 to mark its tricentenary. It was first awarded in 1969.

The prize, which also consists of a diploma and a gold medal, will be presented at a formal ceremony in Stockholm on December 10.

The economics prize wraps up the 2018 Nobel awards season, notable this year for the lack of a literature prize.

That award was postponed by a year for the first time in 70 years over a rape scandal that came to light as part of the #MeToo movement.

The awards for medicine, physics and chemistry were announced last week as was the most highly-anticipated Nobel, the peace prize.

It went to Yazidi women's campaigner Nadia Murad and Congolese doctor Denis Mukwege for their work in fighting sexual violence in conflicts around the world.

Suu Kyi

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westernmost state where the minority dwelled.

"We are not hiding this fact from our friends," she said.

In the speech ahead of the summit in Tokyo, Suu Kyi said she was aware that peace and stability in her country were necessary for attracting foreign investment.

"We understand that peace, reconciliation, harmony, stability, rule of law, human rights -- all these have to be taken into consideration when we are looking for more investment, for greater economic opportunities," she said.

"We wish to be very open and transparent to our friends," she said. "If you have concerns, if you have worries, please discuss this openly with us."

A brutal military campaign that started last year drove more than 700,000 Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar into neighbouring Bangladesh, where they now live in cramped refugee camps -- fearful of returning despite a repatriation deal.

Suu Kyi's supporters say her hands are tied by a still powerful military, which controls a quarter of parliament's seats and three ministries.

She will hold a meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe today.