

ROHINGYA RETURN BJP, Congress assure Dhaka of cooperation

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

India's ruling BJP and main opposition Congress party have assured Bangladesh of India's cooperation for early repatriation of the Rohingya refugees who fled Myanmar's brutal military crackdown in August 2017 and are now living in Cox's Bazar refugee camps.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former prime minister Manmohan Singh gave the assurance when visiting Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen called on both of them separately in New Delhi yesterday.

While thanking Modi for India's humanitarian assistance to Rohingyas, Momen requested India's support for the early repatriation of

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Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen calls on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his residence in New Delhi yesterday morning. Momen is on a three-day official visit to India.

COURTESY: PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU, INDIA

Four more ex-ministers made chiefs of House bodies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four more former ministers, who were dropped from Sheikh Hasina's new cabinet, have been made chiefs of the same number of parliamentary standing committees last night.

With Leader of the House Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's approval, Chief Whip Noor-E-Alam Chowdhury proposed the names of the committees and the members in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

The Jatiya Sangsad, with Deputy Speaker M Fazley Rabbi Mia in the chair, unanimously adopted the proposal by voice votes.

Former information minister Hasanul Haq Inu was made chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the information ministry. The other members of the committee are Golam Mohammad Kader, Kazi Keramat Ali, Begum Simin Hossen Rimi, Shafiqur Rahman, Saimun Sarwar Kamol, Akbar Hossen Pathan Faruque and Ibadul Karim.

Former housing and public works minister Mosharraf Hossen was made chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of

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Madrasa teacher 'confesses to raping minor girl'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A madrasa teacher yesterday confessed before a Rajshahi court that he raped a minor girl in Charchhat upazila of the district, said police.

The accused, Shahjahan Gazi, 60, is an Arabic teacher of Fatehpur Furqania Madrasa and imam of Sarkarpa Mosque.

Abdullah Al Amin Bhuiyan, judicial magistrate of Rajshahi's cognisance court, recorded the confessional statement as per the law.

Police arrested Shahjahan from his relative's house in Govindapur village of the upazila and placed him before court in the afternoon.

According to police, in the confessional statement Shahjahan said, "I teach people good things but I wrongfully committed the sin and

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Thirteen out of 39 buses run without fitness certificates

Finds govt survey; report placed at HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An inquiry committee, formed following a High Court order, has found that 33 percent buses had no fitness certificate that run on the roads, said a survey report conducted on 39 buses.

The 15-member committee, led by Road Transport and Highway Division Additional Secretary Rawshan Ara Begum, found the result after conducting the survey in Dhaka's Banani and on three highways -- Dhaka-Tangail, Dhaka-Chittogram, Dhaka-Mawa, -- between November 20 and December 11 last year.

The committee, however, said the result "does not reflect ground reality" of the country, citing several limitations. The committee also recommended engaging a research organisation for carrying out a scientific survey on the vehicles to get the "real picture".

A BRTA lawyer yesterday placed the survey result before the HC in which

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A BPL to cherish

FORM PAGE 1

served up only two. Dhaka's mystery off-spinner Aliss Al Islam became the first bowler to bag a hattrick on T20 debut while Comilla pacer Wahab Riaz and Dhaka's Andre Russell also took three in three.

The Chattogram phase had the most excitement, with the highest and second-highest totals in the history of the BPL -- Rangpur Riders' 239 for four against Chittagong Vikings and Comilla's 237 for five against Khulna

Titans -- being registered in the port city. However, although a huge buzz was created by the fact that Rangpur's AB de Villiers, Sylhet Sixers' David Warner and Comilla's Steve Smith would be playing their maiden BPL, fans would have been disappointed to not have seen more of the Australian duo after both Smith and Warner were forced into early departures owing to injuries.

On the other hand, de Villiers did his part to heighten the standard of the tournament as he strung together an

unbeaten 184-run third-wicket partnership with Englishman Alex Hales -- the highest for the wicket in BPL history -- during their encounter with Dhaka. To add to the fans' dismay, Hales also had to leave early from the tournament after suffering an injury against Rajshahi Kings.

On a grander scale, the fans have witnessed a month packed with action and they will be hoping for a perfect end with some fireworks in today's final.

Bees have brains

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Chimpanzees, parrots and pigeons are just some of the creatures that have demonstrated the capacity to add and subtract.

In the new study, a team led by Dr Scarlett Howard, first taught their bees to recognise colours as symbols for either addition or subtraction. Specifically, blue meant "more" and yellow meant "less".

Next, their bees were trained to enter Y-shaped mazes in which they had to make a choice between two sets of

shapes.

In each case, if they made the correct choice they were rewarded with a sugar water treat, whereas the wrong choice would yield a bitter-tasting quinine liquid.

At the entrance to the maze, the bees were met with between one and five shapes, coloured either blue or yellow.

Next they flew into a chamber where they could fly towards either the original number of shapes, plus or minus one, or the incorrect number of shapes.

If they first encountered blue they had

to add, and if yellow they had to subtract.

Over the course of 100 trials, the researchers trained 14 bees to choose the correct option around 75 percent of the time, the scientists wrote as they published their findings in the journal *Science Advances*.

Dr Howard compared the experiments to humans first learning to link mathematical symbols with concepts.

"We learn as children that a plus symbol means you need to add two or more quantities, while a minus symbol means you subtract," she said.

1 year jail after 2 decades

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months in jail.

Three other accused -- Polychem's manager ASM Golam Qader, and pharmacists Mahbubul Alam and Delwar Hossain -- were acquitted in the case as the allegations against them were not proved, according to the verdict.

All the accused except for Qader were present at the court.

Soon after the verdict, Rob secured ad-interim bail from the same court, saying he would appeal against the conviction.

Expressing dissatisfaction over the verdict, Public Prosecutor Mohammad Nadim Miah told reporters that they would appeal to the High Court, challenging the acquittal of Polychem's three officials and the lenient punishment of Rob.

He said the prosecution was able to prove the allegations against all the accused and sought the maximum punishment for the accused.

"But the court punished only one of them. Those who were responsible for quality control and manufacture of the drug were acquitted," Nadim said.

In its judgment, the court said it has been proved that paracetamol syrup, manufactured by Polychem, contained industrial toxic chemical diethylene glycol.

"M/S Polychem Laboratories Limited director cannot avoid responsibility for manufacturing the adulterated and sub-standard drug. The court thinks he should get appropriate punishment."

Use of toxic industrial chemical in paracetamol syrup is a heinous offence, it mentioned.

"Dishonest businesspeople produce adulterated and sub-standard medicine for excessive profits ... It is like playing games with people's lives. This is a heinous crime."

The judge further said the case had gone on for 26 years, and the company's managing director Harun-ur Rashid died during the trial while Rob spent a month and 14 days in jail.

"Rob is now 65. He faced harassment as he had to appear before the

court for so many years. Abdur Rob has been given a lenient sentence, considering his age, physical condition and detention," he said.

On July 22, 2014, the same court had awarded three officials of Adflame Pharmaceuticals 10 years' rigorous imprisonment for manufacturing adulterated drug that killed 76 children in 1990.

It also fined the three convicts Tk 2 lakh each. The convicts are Adflame director Helena Pasha, and manager Mizanur Rahman -- both aged around 70 -- and production officer Nigendra Nath Bala.

Later on August 17, 2015, the court handed down 20 years' imprisonment to three directors and three employees of pharmaceutical company BCI (Ban-

- Case filed --19 December, 1992
- Charge framing, case stayed -- December 1994
- Case resumed -- 2011

gladesh) Ltd and fined them Tk 4 lakh each in two cases for producing and marketing toxic paracetamol syrup.

The drug administration filed the cases in 1992 for using poisonous diethylene glycol in two batches of its paracetamol syrup that killed at least 76 children.

Trial proceedings against the companies were stayed in 1994 following a HC order.

The proceedings resumed in 2011 after an investigative report by The Daily Star in November 2009 revealed corruption by government agencies to save the accused.

From June to August in 2009, at least 28 children died of renal failure after they took paracetamol syrup and suspension allegedly manufactured by Rid Pharma. The case is pending with the HC.

According to a survey by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, 2,700 children died due to renal failure after taking toxic syrup from 1982 to 1992.

banning of coaching students by enacting law.

Delivering verdict on the five petitions, the court yesterday said the "modern government" could make any policy, issue circulars and frame rules when it is necessary for the state, and it is the government's constitutional rights.

Three petitions were filed by several government college teachers in 2012 and 2018, challenging the legality of the policy.

Meanwhile, Farhana Khanam, a teacher of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College, filed a writ last year, challenging the Anti-Corruption Commission's allegation against her of running coaching business.

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that the commission was yet to decide whether it would move any appeal before the Supreme Court's Appellate Division, challenging any part of the HC verdict.

Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam, barrister Tania Amir and advocate Nasir Uddin appeared for the writ petitioners.

VIGILANT AGAINST GRAFT

In its verdict, the HC said huge corruption is taking place at some government institutions, including banks, customs houses, ports and land offices, and the ACC should be more vigilant in this regard.

A teacher will have to take at least 12 remedial classes on each subject every month and a maximum of 40 students can attend those.

No teacher will be allowed to have

direct or indirect involvement with any coaching centre operating commercially.

With three monitoring committees, the policy kept the provision for stringent punishment for violators, including cancellation of MPO.

Although the government policy is in effect, it is largely ignored by a section of teachers, who continue coaching and tutoring students privately.

Contacted, Ziaul Kabir Dulu, president of Obhibabok Oikya Forum, a platform of guardians, demanded

Rahman Fantu said Selim actively collected a list of fake farmers who claimed to be land owners in the Rooppur nuclear power plant area to illegally get rehabilitation worth Tk 28 crore.

This could be a reason for his murder, he added.

No case was lodged in this connection as of 8:30pm yesterday.

Bahauddin Faruki, officer-in-charge of Ishwardi Police Station, said they were investigating the incident and would take necessary actions as soon as possible.

War heroes

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11:00am and demonstrated there for almost one and a half hours.

Talking to journalists, Selim's wife Dilara Begum yesterday said her husband had no personal enmity with anybody and might have been killed for his rebellious attitude.

Jahangir Alam, former commander of Pakshey Mukti Joddha Shangsd, said it could not be accepted that a freedom fighter was killed in front of his home like that.

Besides, freedom fighter Fazlur