

Doctors mull

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Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) gave an update of the treatment to the media, based on the briefing of the medical board. Nasar accompanied the minister to Singapore.

He said the minister was taken to the hospital around 11:00pm (local time) on Monday and a medical board was constituted on an emergency basis.

Apart from Dr Philip, there are cardiothoracic surgeon Dr Sivathasan Cumaraswamy, infectious disease specialist Dr Asok Kurup, urologist Dr Ho Siew Hong and intensive care medicine specialist Sim Kah Ming in the medical board.

Nasar said the board extensively examined Quader, sat yesterday morning and gave their feedback.

"They're thinking of conducting a bypass surgery after controlling the kidney problems and infections in a few days."

The minister's condition was now stable. The medical board appreciated the initial management of the situation in Bangladesh, Nasar added.

The board will brief on the treatment at 12:30pm (local time) today.

Quader's wife Isratunnesa Quader and Bangladesh High Commissioner to Singapore Mostafizur Rahman were present at the briefing, among others.

Quader was flown to Singapore on Monday for better treatment as per advice of renowned Indian cardiologist Dr Devi Shetty.

He was admitted to the BSMMU on Sunday morning following breathing complications.

Later, doctors conducted an angiogram and found three blockages in his coronary arteries.

Pak halts

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Addressing a gathering of global experts at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue in Delhi, Lanba said the Pulwama attack was perpetrated by extremists that were "aided by a state" that seeks to destabilise India.

PAK DRONE DOWNED
Unverified reports in Indian media Monday said that a Pakistani military drone which strayed over the border had been shot down.

An Indian Sukhoi-30 fighter downed the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) with an air-to-air missile near Bikaner in the northern Indian state of Rajasthan not far from the Pakistani border, the reports citing unnamed sources said.

It was the second attempt by Pakistan to send a drone inside India in the last six days after one was shot down on February 27, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported.

There was no official comment from either side.

In recent days the nuclear-armed Asian countries have come closer to conflict than in years, after a suicide bombing in Indian-administered Kashmir killed 40 Indian paramilitaries.

A militant group based in Pakistan claimed responsibility for the February 14 blast, and 12 days later Indian jets bombed what New Delhi called a terrorist training camp deep inside Pakistan.

Pakistan has denied any damage or casualties, and independent reporting has shown that the strikes hit a heavily forested area with little in the way of infrastructure nearby. Residents have said just one person was injured.

The next day Pakistani aircraft entered Indian airspace and the two nations' jets engaged in aerial dogfights, with at least one Indian aircraft shot down and its pilot captured by Pakistan.

The pilot was handed back to India last Friday in what Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan called a "peace gesture".

BARTER TRADE RESUMES

India and Pakistan resumed barter trade at a border crossing in Kashmir yesterday, an Indian official said, but tension in the contested region continued with a general strike and more fighting between Indian security forces and separatists.

Trade across the border, known as the Line of Control (LoC), was part-suspended after repeated mortar and small arms fire at Uri, a border town where the exchange of goods takes place, reported Reuters.

But yesterday the route re-opened after firing in the region eased, said Riyaz Ahmad Malik, an official in the Indian-controlled part of Kashmir. Thirty-five trucks left for Chakothi on the Pakistani side of the border with a similar number moving in the opposite direction, he said.

Trade across the LoC operates on a barter system, where no money is exchanged.

TOLL RISES

Two militants of the separatist Hizbul Mujahideen were killed in a gun battle with Indian troops in South Kashmir's Pulwama district yesterday. Both militants were locals, said Tahir Saleem Khan, a police official.

Since the Pulwama attack, 15 militants have been killed in six separate gun battles in Kashmir.

Twelve Indian security personnel were killed during the operations, while two civilians also lost their lives.

Cross-border shelling between India and Pakistan has killed four civilians, with 18 injured including seven Indian troops.

Indian police have arrested more than 300 leaders and activists belonging to JeI, alleging it has links with the militants. The group denies this.

Shops and businesses were closed in many areas of Srinagar, and traffic was thin on the roads. Police and paramilitary troops were heavily deployed in sensitive areas of the city and other major towns.

Songs of freedom

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Meanwhile, the growing thirst for freedom needed to be quenched. At least 321 prisoners broke open the central jail to escape around 11:00 in the morning.

During the escape, seven were shot while 30 were also injured.

Pakistan President Yahya Khan during a radio broadcast in the afternoon called for the National Assembly meeting on March 25. He hoped it would dissuade Bangabandhu from declaring independence, something that deeply troubled Yahya.

He said as long as Pakistan military was under his command and he was the president, he would make sure the solidarity of Pakistan remained unchallenged.

In protest of such announcement, people in Dhaka and Narayanganj came out of their homes to take part in spontaneous and organic processions.

In Rawalpindi, Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Zulfikar Ali Bhutto welcomed Yahya's announcement. At a press conference, he said his party was interested in outlining a structure of the government ahead of the National Committee meeting.

Elsewhere in another development, Muslim League leader Air Marshal Malik Nur Khan said that it was the legal right of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to be able to rule the country.

In an interview in Lahore, he recommended that all barriers to the handover of power be overcome immediately.

He also expressed sorrow over the accusation made by Yahya regarding Bangabandhu, as it further deteriorated the condition of the country.

Meanwhile, after the retirement of Yaqub Khan two days ago, Yahya had appointed General Tikka Khan, known as the notorious "Butcher of Baluchistan", to take over as governor of East Pakistan.

He arrived in Dhaka the day before, and was ready to take the oath on this day, when Chief Justice BA Siddiky refused to swear him in, once again proving that Bangabandhu was pulling the strings.

That very evening, Bangabandhu was at an emergency meeting of his party's working committee, to mull over the president's new date for the National Assembly meeting.

But a more important decision hung over their heads - whether or not the declaration of independence would be made the next day.

The pressure was tremendous, and kept mounting.

Not only were there powerful student groups insisting on the announcement, but they were joined by a wave of citizens who wanted to be known forever as Bangalees.

The meeting for such intense and vital decisions ended up taking the whole night. But it was still unclear about what was to take place. That is until Bangabandhu himself made the decision -- to speak out publicly about this issue the next day, March 7, 1971, on the Race Course ground.

The greatest speech in Bangladeshi history was about to be made.

[Source: Liberation War Museum website]

BJMC fund crunch

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suggest it is providing lip service only.

The BJMC sought Tk 450 crore from the government to purchase raw jute until December last year but received only around Tk 80 crore.

On top of this, the corporation already owes raw jute traders Tk 420 crore.

Experts fear that the sector will suffer for the delay in procuring raw jute and farmers will also lose interest in growing it.

Production has been slashed by a fourth at Platinum Jubille Jute Mills in Khulna that employs about 3,000 workers.

"Our production is being hampered due to an acute crisis of raw jute. Our daily production has dropped to nine to 10 tonnes now from 40 tonnes," SM Mueenuddin Karim, acting general manager of the factory, told The Daily Star recently.

Owing to declining demand in the global market, the factories have also seen their inventory rising.

Platinum has unsold finished jute goods worth Tk 75 crore, accumulated over the last couple of years, in its warehouses.

The mill owes jute growers around Tk 35 crore as well, said Mueenuddin.

Nasir Mollah, Compliance Bargaining Agent (CBA) leader at Platinum, said the mill would have to shut down if this continued. It would jeopardise the livelihoods of workers and farmers, he added.

"Some workers who work as 'bodli' [temporary workers] have already left the mill area in search of other jobs," said Nasir.

According to farmers and traders, the peak jute season began in late July, as supplies are down by now and prices are going up.

"Usually, we purchase raw jute between July and October. But this time, we did not get the money to buy it... If we had the money in time, we could have purchased raw jute at Tk 1500-1600 per maund," AKM Tareque, secretary of BJMC, told The Daily Star recently.

The government has fixed the price of jute at Tk 2,000 a maund at mill gates, but the price of raw jute has

increased to Tk 2100-2200 a maund.

Even if the BJMC gets the money now, it may face a shortage of raw jute as private jute mills, spinning mills, and exporters have already bought most of the good quality raw jute from the market.

The average production of BJMC-owned jute mills came down to 206.33 tonnes a day against a capacity of 600 tonnes, mainly due to the shortage of raw jute.

Govt assures

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for ensuring proper treatment of the BNP chief. "We believe that the home minister will keep his word."

A six-member BNP delegation, led by Fakhrul, held the meeting with Asaduzzaman from 2:30pm to 3:05pm. The other members of the team were BNP standing committee members Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain, Mirza Abbas, Nazrul Islam Khan, Abdul Moyeen Khan and Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury.

Later in the evening, the minister said the BNP chairperson would soon be taken to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) for medical checkup and tests.

"The jail authorities have been implementing decisions of the medical board, formed as per High Court directives," he told reporters regarding the meeting, reports BSS.

Asaduzzaman said the government had been providing proper treatment, checkup and other healthcare facilities to Khaleda.

Replying to a query, the minister said, "I will talk to the IG [prisons] about the medical board's suggestions and ask him to send her to the BSMMU soon for checkup and tests."

Khaleda has been in jail since February 8 last year when a special court convicted her of graft in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case.

Meanwhile, the BNP will form a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club from 11:00am to noon today, demanding unconditional release of Khaleda, and seeking proper treatment of her.

The challenges

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"But on the first day of my university life, I heard about a procession brought out protesting the death of a fresher student Hafizur Rahman," he added.

"Subsequently, I came to learn that nearly 40 students of university's first year were living in a room for four. Even the specially challenged people were not spared. In a room at Hazi Muhammad Muhsin hall, with an accommodation for four students, I along with at least 15 physically challenged students used to live in," he said.

"After seeing all these, I joined the Samajtantrik Chhatra Front and took part in every logical protest of the Campus, including those demanding holding of the Ducus polls," Amjad said.

He pledged to wipe out the seat crisis in different dormitories and ensure residential facilities for all the students, if elected.

"I want to work for all, not only for the physically challenged students," he added.

Like him, Joshiah Sangma, another physically challenged student of the university is also contesting polls for a member post. He is running from the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) panel. He was born with an inherited disorder that compelled him to confine to a wheelchair from the age of eight.

"Whenever I go the Ducus building, I need to take help of others to get there. Only a physically challenged person will understand the problems and hurdles we face every day," said Joshiah.

He said he would work for all the students but pledged to fulfil the needs of students with physical disabilities.

Besides studying Master's at the Sanskrit department, Joshiah is also connected with different extra-curricular activities. He is the vocalist of a campus-based band named "Khyapa" and the vice-president of Physically-Challenged Development Foundation, DU unit.

The story of Abul Hossain, nominated by BCL for the post of social service affairs secretary at Hazi Muhammad Muhsin hall, is quite similar.

He said the representation of physically challenged people was absent in recent years, and as such, they had not been able to reach the "appropriate authorities" with their demands.

"If I get elected, I will press the authorities to establish a special reading room for the blind students and ensure all the basic needs of the students," said Abul, a Master's student of political science department who lost his vision after having a Typhoid attack at the age of 10.

Another physically challenged contender Naim Mollah also pledged to work to resolve all the crisis a fresher has to face.

"Since first year, I witnessed how a student is repressed in the 'Gono Room' and his dreams get shattered because of that," said Naim, a member contender for Kabi Jashim Uddin hall union from BCL's panel.

"I think I will be able to represent the students and voice their demands on behalf of them. I do not want to make any promises which will only be limited with words," he said.

Naim, a second year student of Pali and Buddhist Studies department of the university, face difficulties while walking because of his curved right foot.

ACC washes

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make five banks party to the HC's suo moto rule so that the court could hear from them about the Jaha Alam issue.

The five banks are Bangladesh Bank, Sonali Bank, Brac Bank, City Bank and UCBL Bank, he added.

The lawyer said the HC bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice KM Kamrul Kader is scheduled to hear the issue today.

Police arrested Alam in 2016.

On January 28 this year, the HC summoned the ACC officials concerned to appear before it on February 4 to give their explanations over the case.

The court passed the order on a suo moto move after Bangla daily Prothom Alo on that day published a report headlined "Wrong accused in jail in 33 cases: Sir, I am Jaha Alam, not Salek."

Supreme Court lawyer Amit Das Gupta placed the news report before the HC for necessary orders in this regard.

The court also issued a rule asking the authorities to explain why Alam should not be acquitted of the cases in which he was not an accused.

After the media reported that Alam was wrongly accused, the ACC launched an investigation.

The anti-graft body found Alam's claim to be true.

EU to continue

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huge and widespread.

After assuming power in 1996, the PM said the Awami League government opened everything to the private sector for the speedy development of the country.

The PM invited EU investors to invest in Bangladesh, including joint venture projects.

Assam border

FROM PAGE 2
control system that will receive data from all surveillance devices in real time.

While stage-II of CIBMS project envisages rollout of 153kms in four patches along India-Bangladesh and India-Pakistan border, the stage-III involves rollout of 1,802kms in 67 patches along India-Bangladesh and India-Pakistan border, the statement said.

Stage-II & III of electronic surveillance along the border will target primarily eight types of topography: riverine, delta and estuary areas, waterlogged and swampy areas, creek areas, plain areas vulnerable to heavy fog, thickly-populated areas on the border, hilly areas, tropical jungle areas and deserts, it added.

Schoolgirl murdered

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As she did not return, the family members began a search for her. After failing to trace her, the victim's father filed a complaint with Jashore Kotwali Model Police Station.

Later on Monday around 9:45pm, the body was found in a sack in a ditch behind the house of their neighbour.

The girl's mother alleged that her daughter was abducted by some local teenagers and killed after being raped.

Samir Kumar Sarkar, officer-in-charge (investigation) of the Jashore police station, said the evidence of rape was found during initial investigation.

The victim's father had already filed a case in this connection.

He also said after the body was found from their neighbours' house, they went into hiding.

They might be involved with the incident and police was trying to arrest them.

Meanwhile, several hundred local people staged demonstration and blockaded the Jashore-Jhenaidah highway demanding punishment of the rapist.

Elsewhere in Dhaka's Ashulia, a housewife was allegedly gang-raped by a group of miscreants at Gaoilbari area in Savar on Monday night.

Police yesterday arrested five people for their alleged involvement with the incident.

Quoting the girl's and her family members, police said the 19-year old had been looking for job for a while.

On Monday evening, she went to visit some acquaintances to discuss about a prospective job.

On her way back home around 8:30pm, six to seven people forcibly took her to an abandoned place and gang raped her. The criminals fled the scene afterwards, leaving the housewife there around midnight.

The victim then lodged a complaint with police, on the basis of which five people were arrested.

Philippine defence chief calls for US pact review

AFP, Manila

The decades-old defence treaty between the United States and the Philippines needs to be revamped, or risks dragging Manila into a war with China, the Filipino defence chief said yesterday.

Defence Secretary Delfin Lorenzana made the comments four days after US Secretary Mike Pompeo said Washington would intervene in case of an armed attack on Philippine forces or vessels in the disputed South China Sea.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI)

'Implementation of Cox's Bazar WASH Programme following Community Approaches to Total Sanitation (CATS), Sanitation Marketing and Promotion of Water Safety Plans under GoB-UNICEF Project'

UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office intends to identify suitable Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and/or private sector organizations to establish an institutional contract to 'Implement Cox's Bazar WASH Programme following Community Approaches to Total Sanitation (CATS), Sanitation Marketing and Promotion of Water Safety Plans under GoB-UNICEF Project'. UNICEF and its major implementing partner Department of Public Engineering (DPHE) will work with the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and/or private sector organizations in all aspects of programme planning, implementation, determining implementation strategies, capacity building, monitoring, reporting, and documentation. The selected agency will invest their knowledge, time, or technical expertise and mobilize field level staff to ensure timely delivering key outputs including the development of local government capacity to ensure operation and maintenance of investments and will be paid for results achieved against targets.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Interested reputed Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and/or private sector organizations must have strong development & humanitarian background, relevant experiences, geographical & contextual knowledge, and presence to implement the planned interventions. Accordingly they are requested to download the (i) selection criteria and (ii) summary of EOI packages along with geographical coverage and key results to be achieved available at following web link: http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/supply_4914.htm or please write to UNICEF at "supplybangladesh@unicef.org" to get a copy of the selection criteria and summary of Expression of Interest (EOI) packages and geographical coverage along with key results (Annex 1 and 2 as listed below) in order to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) for evaluation:

Annex-1: Selection Criteria to select the CSO, and/or private sector organizations

Annex-2: Summary of EOI packages, geographical coverage and key results to be achieved by WASH Facilitating Agency

Annex-3: Proposal Evaluation Criteria for Selection of CSO, and or private sector organizations

The completed Annex 1 should be submitted along with the document as specified in Annex 1. The agency must not have a prior record of inappropriate conduct in ethical, social or environmental issues (corporate responsibility).

To receive any clarification please send the list of queries to "supplybangladesh@unicef.org" by 12 March 2019.

DEADLINE AND THE PROCEDURE TO SUBMIT THE EOI

Duly completed Annex 1 (prepared following the Annex 2 and the evaluation criteria provided in Annex 3) and other relevant documents should be sealed in an envelope marked with the title 'Eoi to establish institutional contract to 'Implement Cox's Bazar WASH Programme following Community Approaches to Total Sanitation (CATS), Sanitation Marketing and promotion of Water Safety Plans under GoB-UNICEF Project'. One Agency can participate for single package/lot, multiple packages/lots or all packages/lots based on their organizational strength, expertise, long geographical presence, capacity, and experience. Agencies can show their expressions of interest independently or in a partnership with other organizations (CSOs/private organizations) for a single package/lot or multiple packages/lots following a consortium approach. The minimum criteria to submit REOI is that the agency should have minimum 10 years' experience in the WASH sector and annual minimum turnover should be US\$ 1,000,000. Kindly put marking on the package addressing the Chief, Supply & Procurement Section, UNICEF Bangladesh. The EOI should be submitted to the Reception Desk of UNICEF Office at the 4th floor of BSL Office Complex, 1 Minto Road, Dhaka by 3:00 pm on Wednesday, 20 March 2019.

PLEASE NOTE FOLLOWING POINTS

1. This EOI does not constitute a solicitation, we do not require any detail technical proposal and financial bid or offer at this stage. Only short-listed agencies will be requested to submit detail technical proposal and budget for final selection. We merely seek your expression of interest in compliance with the requirements stated above which is the initial stage of any potential future contract.

2. The EOI must be signed by the authorized signatory of the agency. Submitted EOIs shall be considered as the property of the advertiser and not returnable.

3. This advertisement and responses thereto, does not bind UNICEF to enter into any form of contractual agreement with CSOs/agencies submitting EOI.

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