

# নিরাপদ পানিঃওয়াসার দাবি ও জনগণের অভিজ্ঞতা গণশুনানি

তারিখ: ৭মে ২০১৯ মঙ্গলবার স্থান: আব্দুল মান্নান হাট, জাতীয় প্রেসক্লাব সময়: সকাল ১১টা, ওয়াসার দাবি পানি আলোচনা



Mizanur Rahman, convener of Movement for Safe Wasa Water, a platform of people living in the capital's Jurain, Shyampur and Kadamtali areas, speaking at a mass hearing titled "Safe Water: Wasa's Claim and People's Experience" at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Poor quality

FROM PAGE 16 Yesterday, Movement for Safe Wasa Water came up with the programme, where no Wasa official was present. At the mass hearing, members of the platform showcased 22 bottles of water which they claimed to have collected from different households of Jurain, Shyampur and Kadamtali areas. Two of the bottles had blackish water while the rest contained water that was yellowish. The platform demanded punishment of Wasa officials responsible for supplying such water. It also demanded compensation from

Wasa, saying the water was responsible for causing various diseases. Convener of the movement Mizanur Rahman, who was among those who had gone to the Wasa building with the sherbet, placed a five-point demand, including ensuring safe water for all city dwellers immediately, compensating those who suffered from water-borne diseases, giving city dwellers refunds for providing them with dirty water and the resignation of Wasa's MD if he fails to discharge his duty. Mizan said, "We'll not give in to any fear. We'll continue our movement for safe water till our last breaths."

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) leader Ruhin Hossain Prince said Wasa could not provide people with safe water, but it kept "increasing water prices". Eminent economist Prof Anu Muhammad said people at every household people were suffering from illnesses due to polluted air and water. He also blamed the government for being nonchalant about the issue. Despite repeated attempts, the Wasa MD could not be contacted for comments yesterday. In a recent survey, Transparency International Bangladesh, said that about 91 percent of Wasa clients

have to boil water before drinking, although it was already supposed to be safe for drinking. On an average, this second layer of purification at the individual level costs natural gas worth Tk 332 crore every month. However, Taqsem binned the TIB survey report. On April 20, Taqsem boasted that Wasa water "is 100 percent pure" while also admitting that sometimes he too boils the water at his home. "I fail to understand why people would burn gas to boil supply water that is 100 percent pure and safe," he said at a press conference.

## Biman ticket sale

FROM PAGE 16 it manually, Mohibul said, adding that a syndicate would block the tickets and sell it at a higher price to passengers through some travel agents. As a result, many tickets remained unsold causing losses for Biman. "We stopped manual ticketing..." he added. Though Biman would fly with many empty seats until March, by the first of April, all tickets for the London flight had been sold online, said a senior executive of the ministry. If the online ticketing system is sustained, Biman will see a profit at the end of the year, he added. Last year, Biman made a loss of Tk 201 crore but in the first four months of this year it made a profit of above Tk 200 crore, according to the operator. The recent ministry investigation uncovered massive corruption in ticket selling, which involved Biman's then managing director AM

Mosaddique Ahmed. Following the ministry's findings, the board of Biman removed Ahmed in April. Director (Flight Operations) Captain Farhad Hossain was appointed as the acting MD and CEO of Biman. While Biman's profit has increased, it comes at a time when the aviation industry has experienced a number of changes with ticket prices and demand going up. Fly Dubai and Etihad -- two airlines plying the middle-eastern route -- both halted operations in Bangladesh, Abdus Salam Aref, secretary general of the Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh said. Jet Airways, which served Dhaka, apparently went out of business too. As this is the prime Umrah season, the number of middle-east bound passengers has increased but fewer flight options are available, he said, adding that these have increased ticket prices and demand.

## Schools with zero pass

FROM PAGE 16 unsatisfactory results do not have qualified teachers and proper infrastructure," said Professor Abul Kalam Azad, chairman of Rajshahi Education Board. "There are some institutions from which only a handful of students took the exam and they all failed," he said, adding that this had increased the number of educational institutions with zero pass rates. Board officials said they would start identifying the poor performing institutions from this year and chalk out plans to improve their performances. According to a director of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, authorities used to serve show cause notices to the institutions having zero passes till date. On some occasions, they cancelled academic recognition and withheld monthly pay orders (MPOs) of these institutions, he added. "But I cannot remember whether any institution's MPO facilities were cancelled over poor performance in the last two years" he also said. Education Minister Dipu Moni

YEAR	ZERO PASS RATE	LESS THAN 50% PASS RATE
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS, MADRASAS		
2019	107	2061
2018	109	3355
2017	93	3001
2016	53	857
2015	47	947

said, "We want to take special measures so that all schools irrespective of their locations can have better performances." Chief of Inter-Education Board Coordination Subcommittee Ziaul Haque said from this year, they would identify the institutions that have less than 40 percent pass rates. "We will also try to find out the number of teachers and students of these institutions" said Ziaul, also chairman of Dhaka education board. "After that we will finalise a plan on how the performance of these educational institutions can be improved," he said, adding that "We do not want any schools to fall behind."

## One death

FROM PAGE 1 Sujan Mia several times on the phone. The bus reached Katiadi around 8:00pm where 16 of the 19 passengers got down. Two others got down at Ujanchar, said Shafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Katiadi Police Station, quoting family members. From that point on, she was the only passenger as the bus headed towards Pirijpur, from where her home is some 10 minutes' rickshaw ride, police and family members said. Meanwhile, her family was waiting for her. She had called Sujan upon reaching Katiadi, saying she would reach Pirijpur shortly. When more than an hour passed, the family members called her but found her phone switched off. Anxious, they then rushed to the Pirijpur bus station, but learned that no SwarnalataParibahan bus reached the station around that time. Later around 11:00pm, they received a call from the KatiadiUpazila Health Complex and the caller said

that Tania died. Hospital sources said two people took her there around 10:45pm. One of them identified himself as Al Amin, from Kapasiaupazila of Gazipur. Resident Medical Officer TajninaToiyyab told The Daily Star that Tania had died before she was taken to the hospital. During examination, she found Tania's lips, lower part of her left eye and some other parts of her body swollen. There were scratch marks on both her hands. Contacted, SwarnalataParibahan's supervisor Md Pavel said he came to know about the incident from a colleague at Katiadi counter. Pavel said when he called the driver and his assistant to learn what had happened, both of them denied raping or killing the woman. During interrogation, the driver and the helper admitted Tania was alone in the bus at the time. But she suddenly jumped out of the vehicle

at GojariaJamtoli, and sustained injuries, said Masrukur Rahman Khaleed, superintendent of police in Kishoreganj. The two also claimed to have taken the woman first to a pharmacy and then to a nearby hospital as she was bleeding badly from her nose, he said. Later, they took her to the Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared her dead, said the SP, quoting the suspects. However, the SP did not rule out the possibility of murder and rape. "We are investigating the incident seriously. We will come to know what happened once we get the au-topsy report," he added. The victim's father filed a murder and rape case last night. Protesting Tania's death, locals yesterday staged demonstrations in the area and vandalised several buses of SwarnalataParibahan. [Our Mymensingh and Kishoreganj correspondents contributed to the story.]

## Hoard hard

FROM PAGE 16 to continue." Reuters editor-in-chief Stephen Adler said: "We are enormously pleased that Myanmar has released our courageous reporters". "Since their arrests 511 days ago, they have become symbols of the importance of press freedom around the world. We welcome their return." They were freed in an amnesty that included more than 6,000 prisoners. A government spokesman told reporters that family members had sent letters to Suu Kyi and the president Win Myint. "Leaders took into consideration the long-term interest of (the) country," Zaw Htay said. Lord Ara Darzi, a British advisor and confidant of Suu Kyi, said it was "fitting" the pair were released a few days after World Press Freedom Day. "The lesson is simple: dialogue works even in the most difficult of circumstances," he told media in Yangon. US Vice President Mike Pence, who had previously condemned the Reuters journalists' jailing, said the release was "great news". "Freedom of religion & freedom of the press are essential to a strong democracy," he tweeted. The journalists waved and smiled broadly as they walked out of the jail. The two men were convicted on charges of violating the official secrets act and sentenced to seven years each. At the time of their arrest, they had been reporting on a September 2017 massacre of 10 Rohingya Muslims in conflict-hit Rakhine state, where the Myanmar army forced some 740,000 of the stateless minority to flee over the border to Bangladesh. The case prompted an outcry around the world and crushed what was left of Suu Kyi's legacy as a rights defender. "WE ARE VERY HAPPY" Reuters has said the two were imprisoned in retaliation for their expose. The army jailed seven soldiers for the massacre in a rare response to allegations of atrocities. Military spokesman Zaw Min Tun said it had no comment on the release except that the case was "undertaken in line with the law". While inside, the duo missed numerous family milestones, including the birth of Wa Lone's daughter. Their families were overjoyed with the news. "We are very happy," Chit Su Win, who is married to Kyaw Soe Oo, told AFP. A reunion photo of both couples celebrating, smiling and holding each of their daughters was widely shared on Twitter. During their imprisonment, the journalists were showered with numerous awards and honours in response to their work. Last month, they won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize. Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were also on the cover of TIME magazine as

## Myanmar frees

part of its person of the year coverage featuring journalists targeted for their reporting. The case against them became a byword for the war against press freedom and prompted an international campaign that attracted the support of prominent rights lawyer Amal Clooney, who said yesterday it had been an "honour to represent" her clients. Rights groups and legal experts say the prosecution's case was riddled with irregularities. A whistle-blowing police officer testified during their trial that his superior had ordered his team to trap the reporters in a sting -- testimony the judge chose to ignore. The now-former officer Moe Yan Naing told AFP he was "delighted" the families were back together, and expressed interest in meeting the journalists if they wanted to. Media advocates, the UN, and rights organisations praised the release but slammed the original arrest and conviction. "We congratulate Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo on walking free from unjust imprisonment and applaud they have now been reunited with their families," said Phil Robertson, Human Rights Watch deputy Asia director, adding they should have never been arrested in the first place.

3 killed FROM PAGE 16 tablets were seized from the spot, the officer said. Similar account came from Rab in Munshiganj. The incident took place in the sadar upazila where Sujan Mia, who, according to Rab, was on the list of "most wanted criminals" prepared by the home ministry, died after being shot. The 36-year-old man had been a top drug trader, said Enayet Mannan, superintendent of police at Rab-11. In this scene too, the Rab personnel recovered yaba tablets, firearm and ammunition, reports our Munshiganj correspondent. A "top criminal" of Lalmonirhat got killed in a gunfight in Gangachhara upazila of Rangpur, said local police. The deceased Shahidul Islam Sumon, 34, was charged with rape and extortion in nine cases, said Saifur Rahman, additional superintendent of police (circle-a), Rangpur. "Sumon and his cohorts were roaming around East Ichali village during the early hours of Tuesday. A police team went there to net Sumon, who got shot while trying to flee. His cohorts managed to flee on motorcycles. "Sumon died while being taken to the Rangpur Medical College Hospital. His body was sent to the morgue for autopsy," said SP Saifur. Police seized a firearm and 22 yaba pills from the spot.

## Sri Lanka

FROM PAGE 16 predecessor over his failure to act on warnings about the attacks, said public life was slowly returning to normal. CHURCH OPENS The St Anthony's church also partially opened yesterday for prayers amid tight security even as the military and police guarded the historic place of worship dating back to 1740. Police set up steel barricades outside and frisked people entering to pray before a statue of Saint Anthony. Church authorities said they will allow devotees for a 12-hour period until the church was fully restored. Sri Lanka's navy is leading efforts to rebuild the church which is

venerated not only by Catholics but also by many people of other faiths who believe in the miraculous powers of Saint Anthony. The government reopened public schools on Monday, but attendance dropped to below 10 percent in many places with parents still fearing attacks. "We have strengthened security for all schools," the police chief said. "We are also conducting a programme to create awareness about safety and security in all schools." Wickramaratne did not say how many people were in custody over the bombings, but police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekera said Monday that 73 people, including nine women, were being held. The bombings were blamed on a

local group, the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NTJ), but the Islamic State group has also claimed responsibility. Police said religious tensions have eased at Negombo, a town north of Colombo that suffered the highest death toll in the Easter Sunday attacks. A bomb at St Sebastian's church in the town killed more than 100 worshippers. Dozens of Muslim-owned businesses, homes and vehicles in Negombo were damaged in clashes on Sunday night. The Roman Catholic Church appealed for calm and urged Christians not to carry out revenge attacks against Muslims. Police said two arrests were made and more suspects had been identified through CCTV footage.

## Mahathir

FROM PAGE 2 country. Late last year, Malaysia suspended the labour recruitment from Bangladesh following allegations of malpractices in the recruitment. Malaysia, a powerful member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), has been supporting Bangladesh for a sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis. Officials said the two countries would focus on stronger cooperation and the Rohingya crisis during the visit of Mahathir. Last year, Mahathir became the Prime Minister of Malaysia at the age of 93, stunning the world. Mahathir, who held the office from 1981 to 2003, is known as the founder of modern Malaysia for his visionary leadership and economic development.

## Erdogan welcomes controversial re-run of Istanbul vote

AFP, Istanbul Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday welcomed an order to re-run the recent Istanbul election, a move the opposition has branded an attack on democracy. His Ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) lost the mayorship of Turkey's biggest city by a narrow margin and has refused to accept defeat. "We sincerely believe there was organised corruption and irregularities," Erdogan told party members in parliament yesterday, saying the re-run was the "best step" for the country.

On Monday, Turkey's top election body annulled the results of the March 31 mayoral vote, which was won by Ekrem Imamoglu of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP). The party's leader described the seven members of the election board as "gang members" under Erdogan's control. "Those who take their power from the palace will be brought to account before history one day. We take our power from the people," CHP leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu said in a televised speech. The loss of Istanbul, the country's economic hub, was a shocking defeat

for Erdogan's ruling party. The Islamic-conservative AKP and its predecessors have ruled the city for 25 years, and it was especially sensitive for Erdogan who grew up in the metropolis and rose to power after himself serving as mayor. Imamoglu, a softly-spoken former district mayor, gave a rousing speech to thousands of supporters in Istanbul late Monday, vowing they would emerge even stronger after the re-run on June 23. "Maybe you are upset but never lose your hope," he said, while thousands more took to the streets of the chic Kadikoy district to protest against the election board.