

Those responsible

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The minister also announced that the government would provide Tk 10,000 as financial aid for the injured victims in the accident. Besides, the family members of the dead would receive Tk 100,000.

After the announcement, the minister visited two injured victims at a local hospital and handed over Tk 10,000 to each of them.

He also handed over Tk 100,000 to the family members of late Fahmida Yasmin, of Sylhet's Dakshin Surma upazila, who died in the accident.

Then the minister went to Kulaura Health Complex to visit other victims of the accident.

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Shahab Uddin accompanied the railway minister during the visit.

"Many wildlife are also suffering as the rail tracks go through forests. We will construct bar-riades beside the rail tracks to protect wildlife," Shahab said.

Both the ministers reached Sylhet Railway Station yesterday morning via Upaban Express, the same train that suffered the accident, and returned to Dhaka via Parabat Express.

Meanwhile, two probe committees that were formed to investigate the accident of Upaban Express got an extra day to complete their investigation.

The four-member committee led by Mizanur Rahman, chief mechanical engineer of Bangladesh Railways (east zone), was supposed to complete investigation yesterday, Rail Secretary Mofazzal Hossain said.

"However, they were provided with an extra day [to complete the investigation]," Mofazzal Hossain told The Daily Star, adding that the members of the probe committee were busy yesterday as the rail minister visited the accident spot.

The second probe committee led by Mainul Islam, divisional transport officer of Bangladesh Railways (Dhaka division), also failed to submit its report yesterday.

Female AL

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pmiscreants attacked her from behind and hacked her indiscriminately. The criminals fled the scene leaving Beauty's dead body on the spot, said the OC.

At around 6:30am, locals saw the body lying on the ground.

On information, police rushed there and recovered the body. Injury marks of sharp weapons were found in her head and hands. Two machetes were also recovered from the spot, he said.

The body was sent of Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy.

Police detained a woman, who used to accompany Beauty during morning walks, for interrogation, said police.

Meanwhile, Golam Dastagir Gazi visited the area hours after the incident and told journalists that the criminals, who killed Hasan Muhuri, had been giving death threat to Beauty for long.

The same criminals, who killed Hasan, killed Beauty, he said.

One lakh more

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of the draft NRC are in the additional list. So are their descendants, as applicable," a state government spokesperson said.

The other categories of people in the additional list are those found to be ineligible while appearing as witnesses in hearings held for disposal of claims and objections, and during the process of verification carried out by the local registrars of citizens registration.

According to the office of the NRC Coordinator, the additional list was prepared under the provisions contained in Clause 5 of the Schedule of The Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003.

"The additional draft exclusion list will not contain the results of claimants and objectees appearing for hearings held for disposal of claims and objections February 15 to June 26. The results of those hearings will be published only in the final NRC to be published on July 31," an officer handling the NRC exercise said on the condition of anonymity.

Officials said hard copies of the additional list would be available at the NRC Seva Kendras and offices of the Deputy Commissioner, Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil), and circle officer for public viewing during office hours. Particulars of this list could also be viewed online at www.nrcassam.nic.in.

"Those excluded will also be informed individually through letters to be delivered at their residential addresses along with the reason for exclusion. Each letter will mention the venue of claim submission and hearing. Such persons will have the opportunity to file their claims to be settled through a hearing by a disposing officer," the officer said.

The submission of claim and its disposal through a hearing would take place together. The hearing would start from July 5. All such claims would be disposed of thereafter and the results would be declared in the final NRC, the officer said.



Since there is no room on it, logs are being tied to the sides of the boat heading towards a local market in Atghar area of Pirojpur's Nesarabad. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Mueller to testify in open session

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between Trump's 2016 election campaign and government-linked Russians, as well as evidence that the president tried on several occasions to stymie the investigation.

The Democrats have been split on whether to launch impeachment proceedings against the Republican president but -- fearing that much of the country is unaware of the Mueller report's contents -- have been asking major figures in the probe to testify in public on its findings.

But the president has asserted executive privilege to bar current and former aides from cooperating with several congressional investigations into his conduct.

Making his only public statement about the high-stakes probe on May 29, Mueller said longstanding Justice Department guidelines prevented him from charging Trump, despite

at least 10 possible acts of criminal obstruction by the president.

But not indicting Trump was not equivalent to clearing him, Mueller said, suggesting Congress has both the constitutional powers and the responsibility to pursue the case.

Mueller's testimony comes with both parties focused squarely on next year's presidential election.

While many of the candidates for the 2020 Democratic nomination support impeachment, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has argued that it would be a risky move without an "ironclad" case and bipartisan support.

If the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives were to vote on formal impeachment charges, the Republican-held Senate would decide whether to convict, which requires an unlikely two-thirds majority.

Pro-impeachment House Democrats -- more than 70 in a caucus

of 235 have announced their support so far -- hope nevertheless that Mueller's testimony will strengthen public backing for removing Trump.

"Americans have demanded to hear directly from the special counsel so they can understand what he and his team examined, uncovered, and determined about Russia's attack on our democracy, the Trump campaign's acceptance and use of that help, and President Trump and his associates' obstruction of the investigation into that attack," Schiff said in a statement jointly issued with House Judiciary Committee chairman Jerry Nadler.

Mueller spent nearly two years investigating Russian election interference and possible involvement by Trump and his inner circle.

His 448-page report concluded that there wasn't sufficient proof of a criminal conspiracy but found that

Trump's campaign welcomed and expected to benefit electorally from information stolen and released through Russian efforts.

His investigation led to charges against 34 individuals including six Trump associates and 25 Russians, many of them members of Russia's GRU military intelligence agency.

Mueller did not speak publicly during his investigation, and at the May news conference said he considered his report the only testimony he needed to give on his work.

Mark Meadows, a conservative Republican and staunch Trump defender, said the Democrats' subpoena of Mueller was confirmation that they wanted "to drag it out."

"This isn't a fact finding mission. It's an attempt at a PR operation. Nothing more," Meadows said on Twitter.

Ershad

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slightly better now. He has been put on sedatives at the ICU," GM Quader, acting chief of JP, told this paper at 9:15pm yesterday.

Since formation of the current parliament following the December 30 national election, Ershad, who is the current leader of the opposition, could attend the maiden session only once.

He could not attend any of the subsequent sessions due to various physical ailments.

The five-time MP flew to Singapore's National University Hospital for medical treatment on January 20 and returned to the country on February 4. Since then he had been visiting CMH regularly for health check-ups, said Shunil.

He was last seen at a public gathering in May when he attended an iftar mahfil arranged by his brother GM Quader at hotel The Westin in Dhaka.

Quader has sought blessings for Ershad's quick recovery in a JP statement.

Another 20

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(BMET) posted at the airport.

With this, the total number of returnees from that group of migrants stands at 52. At least 17 returned home on June 21 and 15 others on June 25.

Those who returned on June 25 afternoon, however, were still at the airport's immigration.

Bangladesh government, in cooperation with IOM, is working to repatriate them. Most of them are from Madaripur, Shariatpur, Brahmanbaria, Sylhet and Moulvibazar.

Twelve other migrants are staying at a shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Tunis, capital of Tunisia.

On June 18, Bangladesh Ambassador to Libya Sheikh Sekander Ali had travelled to Tunisia and journeyed to the stranded migrant boat, which had 75 migrants, including the 64 Bangladeshis, to convince them to return home.

Earlier, the Bangladeshis while stranded at the sea refused to return home or even to Tunisia, but wanted to go to Europe.

Since the civil war began in Libya after the fall of the country's leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, the North African country has become a major route of human trafficking or smuggling to Europe.

Oli eyes new alliance to 'free Khaleda'

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today. The announcement about the new alliance is likely to come from there, they said.

Political figures from different parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami, Kalyan Party, Jatiya Ganatantrik Party, NPP and Khelafat Majlish, are expected to attend the press conference, said an LDP leader, wishing not to be named.

Several BNP insiders said Oli wanted to come to limelight by announcing new programmes at a time when many of the partners in the 20-party were frustrated at the BNP for participating in the last parliamentary election as well as the party's intimacy with Jatiya Oikyafront, another political alliance formed before the polls.

Some of them said Oli would float another alliance under his leadership taking along parties like Jamaat, which are visibly upset with the BNP's leadership role in the 20-party.

"Oli is a very senior leader. As many grassroots leaders are aggrieved at the BNP top brass, he wants to take the opportunity to bring the limelight on him," a senior BNP leader said, wishing not to be named.

Some of the aggrieved alliance leaders said the BNP leadership has

"failed in every sphere", including in securing Khaleda's release and even announcing any programmes protesting the December 30 election in which the Jatiya Oikyafront suffered a debacle.

BNP and its partners alleged massive rigging in the polls.

Talking to The Daily Star, LDP Senior Joint Secretary General Shahadat Hossain Selim said, "Oli Ahmed has a very good relation with Zia family. That is why he wants to hit the street to release Khaleda Zia from jail."

"BNP leadership has utterly failed to wage any movement, both on the legal side and on the streets, to free Khaleda. Oli wants to do something at this part of his life," he said.

Formation of a new political alliance came up for discussion recently after several alliance leaders did not extend their support to the BNP candidate in the recent Bogura-6 by-polls and Jamaat's absence in the latest 20-party meeting.

The BNP candidate later won the polls.

Besides, at a programme in May, Oli also said he was willing to take the responsibility of strengthening the 20-party alliance to free Khaleda from jail and to resolve the current

"political crisis" in the country.

Oli said there was no scope for sitting idle. "We have also taken an initiative [to strengthen the 20-party]. I would like to tell BNP leaders that either you lead us or let us take the lead."

"It's not possible for Khaleda to give us directives by staying behind bars. Tarique Rahman also cannot play an active role as he is in London."

He also said he had no objection if the movement was launched under the leadership of capable and acceptable BNP leaders.

Contacted yesterday, Oli did not clarify whether he would be floating any alliance.

He said they were with the 20-party alliance in past and remain so in future.

Asked whether any of his move could split the BNP, Oli said, "I am not a member of the BNP. So how would I split it? We will hold a press conference tomorrow [today] to announce some fresh programmes for making the [20-party] alliance more effective."

He, however, strongly opposed the BNP's decision of sending its MPs-elect to parliament, saying the move "legitimised" the current government.

Talking to The Daily Star, several alliance leaders said their roles in the

alliance were properly evaluated by the BNP leadership. They had difference of opinion on several issues in the past. At one point, Jatiya Party left the alliance after the BNP joined parliament without consulting its partners, they said.

Besides, after Khaleda Zia was jailed on February 8 last year, Oli started skipping alliance meeting headed by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

At a press conference on February 10, Oli called for Khaleda's release.

Oli joined the meetings as the coordinator of the alliance in the later days after the BNP decided to join last year's parliament polls, said alliance sources.

On October 26 in 2006, Oli and 13 other BNP lawmakers left the party and floated the LDP. The move came just a day before the BNP-led four-party alliance would complete its tenure in the government.

At that time, Oli blamed the BNP leadership for corruption and misrule.

Later, the LDP sided with the Awami League, but contested the 2008 general election separately and won a parliamentary seat. On April 18, 2012, Oli joined the then BNP-led alliance.

56 lakes found

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ice sheet -- the melting of which plays an important role in climate change -- is in places more than 3km thick.

The lakes form when meltwater generated from a number of sources, including the Earth's geothermal heat, becomes trapped due to variations in the ice's thickness or in depressions.

They were discovered by scientists at the Universities of Lancaster, Sheffield and Stanford, who analysed more than 500,000km of airborne radio echo sounding data, which provided images of the ice sheet's bed.

Scientists said the lakes' discovery would help them understand where meltwater occurs and how it drains, which influences how the ice sheet responds to rising global temperatures.

"Researchers have a good understanding of Antarctic subglacial lakes, which can fill and drain and cause overlying ice to flow quicker. However, until now little was known about subglacial lake distribution and behaviour beneath the Greenland ice sheet," said lead author Jade Bowling of Lancaster University.

"This study has for the first time allowed us to start to build up a picture of where lakes form under the Greenland ice sheet. This is important for determining their influence on the wider subglacial hydrological system and ice-flow dynamics, and improving our understanding of the ice sheet's basal thermal state."

The majority of lakes were relatively stable, but risk filling up with more meltwater and draining into the sea as the climate warms.

Researchers observed seeing two lakes closer to the edge of the ice sheet draining and being refilled by meltwater.

Dr Stephen J Livingstone, senior lecturer in physical geography at the University of Sheffield, said: "The lakes we have identified tend to cluster in eastern Greenland where the bed is rough and can therefore readily trap and store meltwater and in northern Greenland, where we suggest the lakes indicate a patchwork of frozen and thawed bed conditions."

"These lakes could provide important targets for direct exploration to look for evidence of extreme life and to sample the sediments deposited in the lake that preserve a record of environmental change."

The study, titled Distribution and dynamics of Greenland subglacial lakes, is published in Nature Communications this week.

Cocaine production hit new record in 2017: UN report

AFP, Vienna

Global cocaine production reached an all-time high in 2017, breaking the previous year's record by 25 percent, the UN drugs and crime agency said yesterday in its annual report, as production soars in post-conflict Colombia.

New remote fields and criminal gangs boosted production in the world's top supplier, despite efforts to steer rural communities away from coca cultivation following a peace deal with FARC rebels.

"Of course it's bad news every time. It's bad news for the producing countries... What is happening in Colombia is worrisome," said Angela Me, chief of research of the Vienna-based United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The report said the jump in production "was mainly driven by increases in cocaine manufacture in Colombia, which produced an

estimated 70 per cent of the world's cocaine".

In the decade to 2017, there was a 50 percent increase in manufacture, reaching a record 1,976 tons two years ago, according to the report, which bases its figures on national monitoring systems.

Over the same 10-year period, the amount of cocaine seized worldwide rose by 74 percent.

In 2017, authorities across the globe intercepted a record quantity of the drug: in all 1,275 tons were seized, up 13 percent year-on-year.

"This suggests that law enforcement efforts have become more effective and that strengthened international cooperation may be helping to increase interception rates," the report said.

Almost 90 percent of seizures were in the Americas, with Colombia alone intercepting 38 percent of the global total in 2017.

ACC seeks travel ban

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country, as it primarily found the bribery allegations against him to be true.

In a letter to the additional inspector general of police (special branch), ACC Director Sheikh Md Fanallah said, "It has been learnt from a credible source that he [Basir] and his family are trying to leave the country. For the sake of proper enquiry, it is necessary to bar him from travelling abroad."

The letter said the allegation of bribery and money laundering against Basir had been primarily found to be true during enquiry, adding that it was necessary to record Basir's statement in this regard.

Basir had been carrying out an enquiry against the suspended deputy inspector general of Police Mizanur Rahman for amassing wealth illegally.

Mizan then alleged that Basir had taken Tk 40 lakh from him to ensure that he would be cleared of the allegation.

When the matter surfaced in the media, the ACC suspended Basir and initiated enquiry over the matter.

As a part of the investigation, ACC summoned both Basir and Mizan on July 1 for quizzing.

Meanwhile, Home Minister

Asaduzzaman Khan said Mizan would be arrested if there was an arrest warrant for him.

"If DIG Mizan wants to surrender to law enforcers, he can do so," the home minister told journalists after attending a programme at the Krishibid Institution Bangladesh (KIB) in Dhaka's Farmgate.

On Tuesday, the home ministry suspended Mizanur Rahman after getting the president's approval to do so.

During the suspension period, Mizan will be attached to the Police Headquarters and will receive a subsistence grant, said a home ministry circular.

ACC on Monday filed a case accusing Mizan of amassing illegal wealth of about Tk 3.28 crore and concealing information about wealth worth Tk 3.07 crore.

His wife, brother and nephew are also made accused in the case for abetting the DIG.

Mizan came under the scanner in January last year when he was accused of forcibly marrying and torturing a woman. He was soon withdrawn from Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

ACC began the probe in May last year.