



Two fishermen double-check the weight of fishing nets, as a trader loads them up on a scale. Sale of second-hand fishing nets is a common practice in Chattogram's Fishery Ghat, where used nets are sold for Tk 4,500 to Tk 5,500 per maund, depending on their condition.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAHMAN

US will continue to push for voluntary, safe return of Rohingyas

Says Ambassador Earl R Miller

UNB, Kurigram

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller yesterday said his country will continue to put pressure on Myanmar to create conditions on the ground for the "voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable" return of all Rohingyas to Myanmar's Rakhine State.

"The pressure should be squarely on Myanmar," he said conveying US' position -- which is to see a voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of all Rohingyas to Myanmar.

The US envoy made the remarks while visiting Natarkandi High School at Astamir Char area of Chilmari upazila in Kurigram.

Ambassador Miller said Bangladesh has opened its heart and border to over a million people who have been persecuted, and highly appreciated Bangladesh's generosity in sheltering the Rohingya refugees.

He said the US is one of the leading countries which provided humanitarian assistance of US\$ 542 million -- both for Rohingyas and the host community in Cox's Bazar.

Bangladesh is now hosting over 1.1 million Rohingyas, most of whom entered the country since August 25, 2017, escaping a military crackdown in their homeland in Rakhine State.

Despite all the preparations, no Rohingya turned up on Thursday to avail of the "voluntary" repatriation offer given to them to go back to their place of origin in Rakhine State of Myanmar -- prompting the authorities to suspend the repatriation process for the day.

Bangladesh and Myanmar signed a repatriation agreement on November 23, 2017, but there has been little progress in

that regard.

On July 29, Bangladesh handed a fresh list of 25,000 Rohingyas from around 6,000 families to Myanmar for verification before their repatriation to Rakhine State.

With the latest list, Bangladesh has so far handed over the names of around 55,000 Rohingyas to the Myanmar authorities, and around 8,000 of the have been verified.

However, Myanmar has only cleared 3,450 Rohingyas for beginning the repatriation.

On January 16, 2018, Bangladesh and Myanmar inked a document on "Physical Arrangement", which was supposed to facilitate the return of Rohingyas to their homeland.

The "Physical Arrangement" stipulates that the repatriation will be completed preferably within two years from the date.

The first batch of Rohingyas was scheduled to return on November 15 last year but it was halted amid the unwillingness of Rohingyas to go back for lack of a congenial environment in Rakhine.

During yesterday's visit, the US envoy also declared of donating \$100,000 to flood affected people.

He inaugurated a programme of Care Bangladesh of distributing cash among 5,000 people of 200 families under assistance programme for flood-hit people in the district.

Kurigram Deputy Commissioner Sultana Parvin, Superintendent of Police Mohibul Islam Khan, USAID Bangladesh Mission Director Derrick S Brown, Care Bangladesh Country Director Zia Chowdhury, Upazila Chairman Shawkat Ali, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shah Md Shamsuzzoha, were present, among others.

CUCSU POLLS

Review committee makes no progress in five months

MD ABBAS, CU

Five months have passed since a review committee was formed to prepare a policy for Chittagong University Central Students Union (Cucusu), but there has been no progress.

After 29 years, former CU Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Iftekhar Uddin Chowdhury on March 20 declared to organise Cucusu polls.

On March 21, the university authority formed a five-member committee headed by Science Faculty Dean Prof Mohammad Shafiu Alam to prepare a policy after analysing different public universities' policies regarding student unions. The committee was asked to complete this task as soon as possible.

Leaders of different student organisations were happy to hear that announcement, but now they have expressed their dissatisfaction over the lack of progress.

Terming the committee unsuccessful, CU unit Chhatra Union President Drishon Pradip Chakma demanded that the review committee be cancelled immediately. He urged

the authorities to organise Cucusu polls with the existing policy, adding that otherwise they will announce a tougher movement in association with general students.

"Cucusu related activities were stopped due to the review committee," said Iqbal Tipu, general secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League's (BCL) CU unit.

"It seems that the university administration does not want the Cucusu polls," he said, "If they did, they wouldn't delay it in the name of a review committee."

CU unit Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) General Secretary Shahidul Islam claimed the review committee was just an "eye-wash."

As the students were staging demonstration for Cucusu polls, the university authority formed a so-called review committee to stop their movement, he said.

Demanding cancellation of the current review committee, Shahidul said the university needs to form a new, functional committee with experts and demanded Cucusu polls immediately.

Head of the review committee, Prof Mohammad Shafiu Alam, switched off his mobile phone after this correspondent asked about the committee's report.

Prof Amir Mohammad Nasrullah, a member of the review committee said the committee members held three meetings and collected the policies of Dhaka University, Rajshahi University and Jahangirnagar University's student unions.

"It was decided unanimously that we will place a draft policy after analysing those policies," he said, adding that they could not sit further as the head of the committee did not fix another date.

Contacted, CU acting VC Prof Shireen Akhter said the matter is out of her purview, as she has just been performing routine duty as acting VC.

Cucusu polls were last held in 1990, where an all-party students' panel had defeated Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami.

But within a few months of the poll, CU authority postponed all activities of Cucusu due to the murder of Chhatra Oikya leader Farukuzzaman.

Ivy Rahman will remain an idol to women

Says Speaker

UNB, Dhaka

Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad, Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, yesterday said former Mahila Awami League president Ivy Rahman worked for the welfare and emancipation of women throughout her life.

She said this at a discussion marking the 15th death anniversary of Ivy Rahman, wife of late President Zillur Rahman.

The discussion was organised at Ivy Rahman auditorium of Bangladesh Mahila Samity in Dhaka.

Dr Shirin said Ivy also worked throughout her life for promoting women in politics. "Alongside joining various movements, she undertook constructive work to help women move forward," she said, adding that Ivy will remain an idol to women.

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US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller visited Natarkandi High School in Kurigram yesterday.

PHOTO: UNB

GM Quader for forming ministry or commission for minorities

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday laid emphasis on constituting a ministry or a commission for protecting the interests of minority communities in the country.

"Either a minority ministry or a commission can be formed in the country to protect their interests. It will also help them move forward," he said.

The Jatiya Party chief came up with the remarks while speaking at a discussion -- marking the occasion of Janmashtami -- arranged by Sri Krishna Seba Sangha at Jatiya Press Club.

He said their party will always stand by the minority communities as they have done in the past, and play an effective role both in parliament and on the streets in realising their justified demands.

Quader said there should not be any conflict and division among communities of different religions, as the goal of all religions is to build a society based on justice and fairness.

He said only five percent people intend to abuse religion and create anarchy in society for their personal gains, but they are not accepted by the society.

The Jatiya Party chief said religious harmony will remain intact in Bangladesh as major parties here believe in communal harmony.

Quader recalled that their party's late chairman and his elder brother HM Ershad took various steps during his rule in the interest of the Hindu community.

He said Ershad announced a public holiday on the occasion of Janmashtami and formed a Hindu Kalyan Trust to secure their rights and interests.

Black Bengal goat's genome decoded

CU CORRESPONDENT

A group of researchers of Chattogram have successfully decoded the full genome sequence of Black Bengal goat (Capra Hircus), considered one of the top goat breeds native to this region and known for its meat, milk and leather, opening up a new horizon in genetic research of Bangladesh.

Researchers have spotted three shortcomings in the Black Bengal goat's genetic coding, and are now trying to develop a new advanced breed, overcoming those.

The outcome of the research was published in the Springer Nature's renowned science journal "BMC Research Notes" as well as in Taylor and Francis Group's "Mitochondrial DNA Part B".

National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), a US-based journal, also recognised the outcome.

Researchers from Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (CVASU), Chittagong University, Asian University for Women (AUW), University of Science and Technology Chattgram (USTC) and Premier University Chattogram, along with technical support from Southern Cross University of Australia have decoded the genome.

CVASU's Veterinary Department Prof AMAM Zonaid Siddiki led the research.

Earlier, Prof Bajlur Rahman Molla of Bangladesh Agriculture University successfully conducted a research on Black Bengal goat.

According to the study, the total length of Black Bengal goat genome assembly is about 3.4 gigabase pair (Gb). The researchers decoded 26,000 genes from 29 pairs of chromosomes, which have been saved in the NCBI database.

According to data from Department of Livestock Services, Bangladesh ranks fourth in producing goats in the world, while it ranks fifth in producing goat meat.

"The country has 25 million goats, 95 percent of which

are Black Bengal," it said.

Researchers said 10 percent of the Black Bengal goat kids die of cold or fever, due to a virus named PPR infection. In the course of the research, they have unveiled the details of why and how the kids of Black Bengal get infected.

"This is a great accomplishment for the country's goat research," Prof Zonaid told The Daily Star over telephone



yesterday afternoon.

"It will help to improve the quality of meat, the power of prevention of diseases and its production," he said, adding, "If we can develop an advance breed of goat, eliminating their weaknesses, local goat production will increase greatly which will also help to eradicate country's poverty."

He informed that agriculture ministry has already shown interest to finance new research in the field.

Earlier, Bangladeshi scientists had successfully decoded genome sequence of jute, buffalo and Hilsa fish.

RANGPUR-3 BY-ELECTION

Raushan left out of JP parliamentary board

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party's senior co-chairperson Raushan Ershad was not included in the eight-member JP parliamentary board to nominate the party's candidate in Rangpur-3 by-election.

JP chairman GM Quader and secretary general Moshir Rahman Ranga have been made convener and member-secretary of the parliamentary board, according to a JP press release.

The parliamentary seat fell vacant following JP chairman HM Ershad's demise on July 14.

Party insiders said exclusion of Raushan in the JP parliamentary board is another clear sign of growing division among the top leadership of the party.

Other members of the parliamentary board are: lawmakers Kazi Feroz Rashid, Golam Kibria Tipu, Shamim Haider Patwari and Lt Gen (retd) Masud Uddin Chowdhury; Sheikh Sirajul Islam; and Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury.

Nomination forms will be distributed from the party chief's Banani office from today.

According to party insiders, the six nomination aspirants are: Ershad's son Shad Ershad, his youngest brother Hussain Mohammad Morshed, nephew Asif Shahriar, JP's Rangpur district unit president Fakaruzzaman Jahangir, its acting general secretary Abdur Razzak, and Rangpur city unit general secretary SM Yeashir.

The Rangpur-3 constituency (Sadar upazila) is considered the stronghold of JP, the main opposition in the parliament. Ershad won all elections he took part in from this seat, following the end of his military rule in 1990.



United Hospital Limited in the capital's Gulshan observed its 13th anniversary yesterday. Its CEO Mohammad Faizur Rahman inaugurated a free health check-up booth at the hospital lobby in presence of its consultants, nurses and management staff. Special lunch was also arranged for the doctors, nurses and staff members.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

ANTI-MOSQUITO DRIVE

Mobile court jails one in Dhanmondi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday sent an official of a construction company to jail after Aedes mosquito larvae were found at an under-construction building in Dhaka's Dhanmondi area.

The official was identified as Palash, a supervisor of Nagar Homes Ltd, said a press release issued by the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC).

The mobile court led by DSCC's Executive Magistrate Mizanur Rahman launched a drive at the construction site in Dhanmondi-12 yesterday morning and found Aedes mosquito larvae there during inspection.

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