



The Daily Star



REGD. No. DA 781 | Vol. XXIX No. 237 | ASHWIN 2, 1426 BS | **Your Right to Know** | MUHARRAM 17, 1441 HJRI | 20 PAGES PLUS LIFESTYLE PRICE: Tk 12.00

"In Bangladesh, we are busy looking after loan defaulters, bank looters and money launderers. We are not looking after farmers, who have been counting losses."
 AWAMI LEAGUE LAWMAKER ISRAFIL ALAM AT A ROUNDTABLE AT THE DAILY STAR CENTRE IN THE CAPITAL (PAGE 3)

"Corruption has eaten up every sector and institution due to absence of the government's accountability."
 BNP SECRETARY GENERAL MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR REFERRING TO REMOVAL OF TWO TOP BCL LEADERS (PAGE 3)

"Yes, there is a good chance of a deal, yes I can see the shape of it, everybody can see roughly what could be done."
 UK PM BORIS JOHNSON AFTER TALKS WITH THE EU PRESIDENT ON BREXIT DEAL (PAGE 8)

JU CONTROVERSY

VC, family in a tight spot

Two BCL men admit receiving Tk 25 lakh from Tk 1 crore 'Eid Salami', call for checking phone records

MUNTAKIM SAAD and MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

The Jahangirnagar University vice-chancellor and two of her family members appear to be in a fix with a JU BCL faction publicly claiming it had received Tk 25 lakh as per a settlement reached at an August 9 meeting at the VC's residence.

An audio leak that went viral following the ouster of central BCL president and secretary also indicates that an exchange of money involving the VC's family and JU BCL top brass took place.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, the faction leaders said the JU BCL was given "Eid Salami" after the meeting.

Saddam Hossain, joint secretary of JU BCL, and Niamul Hassan Taj, a vice-president, who lead the faction, also talked to other media outlets, making similar claims.

According to them, the meeting decided that they would get Tk 25 lakh while JU BCL President Jewel Rana and General Secretary SM Abu Sufian Chanchal Tk 50 lakh and Tk 25 lakh respectively.

VC Farzana Islam has all along denied these allegations, including involvement of her family members in any such dealing.

Talking to our JU correspondent yesterday, Saddam said they phoned the VC around 4:30pm on August 9, saying they wanted to talk to her.

"The VC mam said: okay, you may come. I will also call Jewel and Chanchal. I said, okay mam, no problem," Saddam said, adding that he and Taj went to her residence around 6:00pm.

VC's husband Akhter Hossain and son Pratik Tajdik Hossain were also present there, he said. "Jewel and Chanchal came after about an hour."

"In the meantime," he added, "her husband and son were saying: 'Why did you contact the central BCL? What has central BCL done for the campus?'"

"They were trying to say that interference from the central BCL here is not good."

They were against any sort of dealings with the central BCL regarding the ongoing mega project and wanted to "get the job



Carrying a heap of jute, a farmer arrives at a temporary market in Uthhuli area of Manikganj's Shivalaya upazila. Jute growers in Manikganj have had a good yield this year and they are selling per maund of the fibre for Tk 1,800-2,000 at 10 such markets in the district. Traders buy jute from them and supply it to several mills in other districts. The photo was taken on Sunday.

Shovon quits DU senate

Rabbani apologises to PM, BCL members for controversial activities

REZWANUL HAQUE CHOWDHURY

Rezwanul Haque Chowdhury Shovon yesterday resigned from Dhaka University senate citing personal problems amid demands for his removal from the policymaking body.

BCL Office Secretary Ahsan Habib and Ducusu member Rafiqul Islam Sabuj submitted the resignation letter to the vice-chancellor on behalf of Shovon around 4:00pm.

The move comes two days after Shovon and Golam Rabbani were removed from the posts of president and general secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League, following allegations of extortion.

"Due to my personal problems, it is not possible for me to perform the duty now... I intend to resign from the post," reads the senate member's letter.

DU Vice Chancellor Professor Akhtaruzzaman said he had received the letter and would take steps as per rules.

9 prison doctors for 90,000 inmates

Nurses, pharmacists taking care of prisoners as no doctors in 60 jails; 132 posts of doctors vacant; on average 23 inmates die a month

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Over 23 inmates are dying every month, amid a shortage of doctors, nurses, and ambulances, and poor medical facilities in 68 prisons of the country.

There are nine doctors for 90,638 inmates, one for every 10,000 inmates. This does not appear too bad but the fact is 60 of the prisons have no doctors at all.

Instead of doctors, those prisons only have nurses or pharmacists taking care of inmates.

Sources in the prison department claimed that half the inmates suffer from diseases like tuberculosis, diabetes, and kidney and liver issues. They require continuous treatment.

At least 188 inmates died of illness in the eight months of this year. Last year, 316 prisoners died, an average of 26 deaths a month, said Amirul Islam, assistant inspector general of the prisons department.

For years the jail authorities have been asking the home ministry to fill the 141 vacant doctor's

posts in prisons but almost nothing fruitful has happened. Just two months ago, they asked for doctors again.

Due to the lack of doctors and medical facilities in prisons, sick and seriously ill inmates are often taken to hospitals at the eleventh hour.

"In majority cases, we do not get the scope for doing anything as inmates are brought in at the last stage," Abul Kalam Azad, assistant director of MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, told The Daily Star.

Sources said there are only 15 ambulances for prisoners in the 68 prisons but they could not say how many of them actually worked.

The poor medical care available in prisons is evident when a few cases are looked into.

Former Bangladesh Bank staffer SM Giasuddin Mridha, 70, started complaining of severe chest pains in Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj around 11:00am on September 6.

Probe purchase of 'faulty' buses

Quader directs BRTC chairman; defects found in some of 600 buses bought from India for Tk 475cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday directed the BRTC chairman to investigate the purchase of "faulty" buses from India.

"There must have been experts among those involved in bringing buses [from India]. They [Indian companies] supplied us vehicles full of defects," he said.

"I am directing the [BRTC] chairman to launch a proper investigation to find out whether anyone [of our officials] accepted the defects willingly or there were any tricks."

Quader, also the general secretary of the ruling Awami League, made the comment while replying to reporters' queries following a views-exchange meeting with BRTC officials at its office in the capital.

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) Chairman Ehsan-E-Elahi, who took charge of the state-run corporation this month, was present.

Earlier this year, the government brought 600 buses and 500 trucks from Indian companies with loans from the Indian government. All of the vehicles have already arrived in Bangladesh.

Rangpur 3 By-Polls AL pulls out of race for JP

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Awami League candidate in Rangpur-3 by-election quit the race yesterday following directives of party high-ups and is now backing the Jatiya Party candidate, Erhsad's son Saad Erhsad.

Rezaul Karim Razu submitted his withdrawal letter to Rangpur's Regional Election Officer Shahtab Uddin around 4:30pm yesterday, said the election official.

Talking to the reporters, Razu, also the general secretary of Rangpur city AL, said he had just followed the decision of the party central leaders.

AL sources said Razu's decision had disheartened the local party men.

The seat fell vacant after the death of HM Erhsad on July 14.

The election is scheduled to be held on October 5.

ROHINGYAS IN MYANMAR

6 lakh face 'serious risk of genocide'

Say UN investigators

AGENCIES

Rohingya Muslims remaining in Myanmar still face a "serious risk of genocide", UN investigators said yesterday, warning the repatriation of a million already driven from the country by the army remains "impossible".

The fact-finding mission to Myanmar, set up by the Human Rights Council, last year branded the army operations in 2017 as "genocide" and called for the prosecution of top generals, including army chief Min Aung Hlaing.

Some 740,000 Rohingya fled burning villages, bringing accounts of murder, rape and torture over the border to sprawling refugee camps in Bangladesh, where survivors of previous waves of persecution already languished.

But in a damning report, the United Nations team said the 600,000 Rohingya still inside Myanmar's Rakhine state remain in deteriorating and "deplorable" conditions.

"Myanmar continues to harbour genocidal intent and the Rohingya remain under serious risk of genocide," the investigators said in their final report on Myanmar, due to be presented today in Geneva.

The country is "denying wrongdoing, destroying evidence, refusing to conduct effective investigations and clearing, razing, confiscating and building on land from which it displaced Rohingya", it said.

Rohingya were living in "inhumane" conditions, the report continued, adding more than 40,000 structures had been destroyed in the 2017 crackdown.

Meanwhile, UN human rights experts yesterday urged the Bangladesh government to carry out an "independent, impartial and effective investigation" into all the deaths

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