

## UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY Bangladesh's resolution on 'Culture of Peace' adopted

UNB, Dhaka

The United Nations General Assembly, like every year, has unanimously adopted Bangladesh's resolution on the "Culture of Peace".

Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN Ambassador Rabab Fatima introduced the resolution on Thursday and called upon UN member states and stakeholders to advance the message of "Culture of Peace".

"Our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is carrying the legacy of championing the Culture of Peace and people's empowerment," she said.

During the first term of her government, on September 13, 1999, the UNGA adopted by consensus the resolution 53/243 on the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. Since then, Bangladesh has been facilitating this resolution at the Assembly every year, said a press release on Friday.

Rabab said Bangladesh is marching along the path of development with a people-centred development strategy under Prime Minister Hasina's Vision 2021 and Vision 2041.

The ambassador recalled the observance of the 20th anniversary of the seminal Declaration and Programme of Action on "Culture of Peace" at the UN on September 13.

"That meeting recognised the enduring value of the Culture of Peace for the full and effective implementation of the Agenda 2030. We see Culture of Peace as an overarching notion strengthening the message for peace in years to come and moving beyond the landmark Agenda 2030," she said.

Highlighting the resolution, Ambassador Fatima said the 75th anniversary of the UN, as well as two landmark anniversaries 20th anniversary of WPS (Women, Peace and Security) and Beijing +25 coming up in 2020, would be significant occasions to operationalise the concept of "Culture of Peace".

In this year's resolution, the international community welcomed not only the observance of the 20th anniversary of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, but also acknowledged its relevance in the 21st century and also among others for full and effective implementation of the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

The effort was also made to show the relevance of "Culture of Peace" across the three pillars of the work of the UN in facing contemporary global challenges.

This year, 126 countries from a cross-regional representation of the UN member states co-sponsored this resolution.

The continued support to this resolution, facilitated by Bangladesh every year, is a testimony to the huge confidence of international community on Bangladesh as a proponent of global peace, said the Bangladesh mission at the UN.

## Scientists devise

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their research appeared to be the first of its kind to build a "genetic predictive model to estimate the lifespan of vertebrate species from genetic markers."

The main aim was to look at "poorly understood and extinct species", for example the Woolly Mammoth (*Mammuthus primigenius*) which they established likely lived for about 60 years, compared with today's African elephant at 65.

Inevitably the question arises of how this might be applied to human beings.

"The lifespan clock estimated a 38-year lifespan for humans," the team said, in line with the accepted maximum life expectancy of 40 years for pre-modern man but less than half that of his contemporary today.

The researchers also looked at two of man's immediate predecessors -- Denisovans and Neanderthals.

"We estimated that Denisovans and Neanderthals both had a lifespan of 37.8 years. This suggests that these extinct Hominidae species had similar lifespans to their early human... counterparts," they said.

Mayne stressed that the lifespan clock cannot be used for individual human beings even if the species itself was "an interesting part of the study".

"It cannot be used to determine the lifespan of any individual human and the purpose of this study was to determine an important parameter of ecological significance which may assist in wildlife management," he added.

For example, it could be applied to managing species such as fish, sharks and threatened wild animals "where lifespan is critical in determining sustainable harvests and population viability," the paper said.



**Three-year-old Atiqur doesn't know what he has lost. Holding him tight in her arms, his mother Afsana wails as she mourns her husband Faruque Hossain, who died of burns at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Thursday. Thirteen people, including Faruque, died in a fire that broke out at a plastic factory in Keraniganj on Wednesday. The photo was taken outside the morgue of Dhaka Medical College yesterday.**

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Lost in despair

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Meanwhile, one of the injured Durjoy Das was taken to his village home in Keraniganj on Thursday after doctors said there was no hope for survival.

He is still alive and we have brought him here so that he can breathe his last at home, said his father Mintu Das.

A poor Mintu demanded government assistance that other injured or dead in the incident are receiving.

**'CHECK DOCUMENTS BEFORE PROVIDING UTILITIES'**  
Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka Abu

Saleh Mohammad Ferdous Khan yesterday called upon the utility service providers, including gas and electricity suppliers, to check necessary documents before providing their services to any factory.

Different government bodies including Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments, fire service and Department of explosives are trying to identify the non-compliant, unapproved factories to stop recurrence of such incidents, the DC said after visiting the spot.

Replying to a query, Ferdous Khan said, "We all would look into how the factory was set up and operate when it

was not supposed to be here."

He, however, tried to avoid when a journalist asked about negligence by the authorities in monitoring.

Meanwhile, Keraniganj upazila administration yesterday sealed off a warehouse-cum-factory of Prime Pet.

Besides, four factories were sealed off in different areas under Keraniganj upazila since Thursday as the authorities failed to show valid documents, said Keraniganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer Amit Deb Nath.

"If the factory authorities can show documents, then, we will take further decision in this regard," the UNO told reporters.

Talking to The Daily Star, several locals in Chunkutia area said they were in fear as many factories were still in operation in the nearby residential areas.

"There are several dying and washing factories in the area which are polluting the air and water. The government should ban these factories and shift them to elsewhere," Jahangir Alam Sarker, a resident of the area told The Daily Star.

"In the past, we were threatened by the owners and their goons when whenever we raised our voice. We did not even dare to complain against them," he said.

## On this day in 1971

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local boats help the Indian troops to cross the river.

A brigade of the allied force attack Pakistan base in Manikganj and defeat them. The brigade continues towards Savar.

The Pakistan army hold a strong defence on the bank of Turag River, the northern entrance point of Dhaka, and confront the allied force.

Meanwhile, an allied force brigade advance towards Dhaka from north-western corner towards Chandra-Savar-Mirpur. The allied force attack Pakistani fortification on the south-eastern part of Dhaka in Demra on the bank of Shitalakkhya River. Another faction cross the river and free Rugganj.

The allied force troops are airlifted for crossing Gumti River. They take

position near Baidyar Bazar.

Muktibahini destroy Pakistani base at Kumira in Chittagong and advance towards Chittagong port.

A brigade of Pakistani military caught red handed by Muktibahini while escaping to Burma (Myanmar) via Cox's Bazar.

General Manekshaw's speech addressing Rao Farman Ali broadcasted. He says, "My troops have cordoned Dhaka city. Dhaka cantonment is within my artillery range. Therefore, surrender! Or else you will be embracing death." He ensured protection for those who will surrender.

Hundreds of Pakistani military men surrender in different parts of Bangladesh. At Moynamati in Comilla, 1,134 Pakistan troops surrender.

The puppet governor Dr Malik sends wire message to President

Yahya Khan, asking for permission to surrender. Malik and General Niazi jointly send another message to the Pakistan president, urging him to accept the ceasefire proposal. Yahya rejected both of the requests saying that definitely China and the US would intervene into this matter. "Keep fighting," he says.

Among the three freedom fighter siblings fighting in Comilla -- Badiuzzaman, Karimuzzaman and Shahjahan -- Badiuzzaman makes their Ramkrishna Mission Road residence an outpost of the freedom fighters. The two younger siblings came to Dhaka on December 10 to meet their elder brother. Al-Badr assassins abducted them on December 13 from their home and their bodies are found later in the Rayerbazar killing ground.

## Mercury in skin care products

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report on behalf of the ZMWG recently. The ZMWG was formed in 2005 by the European Environmental Bureau and the Mercury Policy Project.

"These hazardous products pose a serious mercury exposure risk, especially to repeat users and their children," said Shahriar Hossain, ESDO secretary general.

Of the 16 samples, nine were imported from Pakistan, three from Thailand, two from China, and one from Malaysia. The rest one's origin was not mentioned in the report.

Samples of six whitening creams were collected from an online shopping site. The rest were from a new supermarket in Dhaka.

All the 16 samples were analysed at Biodiversity Research Institute's laboratory in the US and Amika Laboratory in the Czech Republic.

Abul Hashem, former chairman of BSTI chemical division, told The Daily Star that mercury in beauty products was a carcinogenic substance, and the consequences of mercury in skin-whitening creams were dreadful.

"We have to be more aware of it. If we use mercury-added products for a long time, then it will adversely impact on our health. So, consumer awareness is very essential. Only enforcement of law is not enough," he said.

"We can take action if anyone imports any mercury-added product, which is beyond our permissible level.

But if people bring the products by illegal means, then how will we act? There is no monitoring on online sales of products. We don't know who is selling what," said BSTI Assistant Director SM Abu Sayed.

He said there should be some sort of mechanism on monitoring the quality of products available online, and for this all have to work together.

The 16 samples were among 95 skin-lightening products bought in 12 countries. They contained banned mercury -- a heavy metal and dangerous neurotoxin, says the study. Testing found mercury levels ranged from 40ppm to over 130,000ppm.

More than two thirds of the creams -- 65 out of 95 -- were bought online.

## Sangram office

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office at 5:00pm yesterday.

In the afternoon, they staged the protest and issued a 24-hour ultimatum to the government to shut down the newspaper and arrest those who were involved in running the report.

Speaking to this correspondent on condition of anonymity, a staff of the Bangla daily alleged that some 50 members of Muktijuddho Mancha vandalised the newspaper office and padlocked its main gate during the protest.

However, Muktijuddho Mancha leaders denied the allegations.

Mohammad Al Mamun, general secretary of the platform, said Quader Molla was a notorious Razakar and he was hanged through a legal process for committing crimes against humanity.

"How could they [the newspaper] term him a martyr?" he questioned.

## Over 100

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the situation to the high ups and tried to mediate the issue, he said.

Meanwhile, the death of Abdur Sattar, a jute mill worker who was participating in the hunger strike and died at KMCH on Thursday, fueled up the protest.

Workers vowed to go on an even stronger protest following the death of Abdur Sattar, said Shahana Sarmin.

The authorities promised to pay Abdur Sattar's dues within a month after he died, she added.

Khalilur Rahman Sumon, former president of Platinum Jute mill Employees Union, told The Daily Star that Abdur Sattar was not the lone victim.

"At least 20 jute mill workers died while demonstrating hunger strike for their rights in last 10 years," he said, adding that the adamant workers would not leave the streets this time until the authorities fix the issues.

The Jashore-Khulna industrial belt, producing 86.39 metric tonnes of jute products every day, produced nothing in the last four days as the workers protesters remained on work abstention.

## US House panel

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Trump and Republicans say the president did nothing improper in his call with Zelenskii, and that there is no direct evidence he withheld aid or a White House meeting in exchange for a favour.

Trump would be the third US president to be impeached. Democrat Bill Clinton was impeached in 1998 for perjury for lying about a sexual relationship with a White House intern, but he was acquitted in the Senate. Democrat President Andrew Johnson was impeached in 1868 but not convicted in the Senate.

Republican President Richard Nixon resigned in 1974 before he was impeached over his involvement in the Watergate scandal.

Trump is running for re-election in 2020, a contest expected to be a bitter and partisan battle with a Democratic nominee who will be chosen next year. Biden, a former vice president, is among the leading Democratic contenders.

The impeachment inquiry was launched in September after a whistleblower complaint about the July 25 call between Trump and Ukraine's Zelenskii.

## Tories triumph in UK

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overwhelming mandate from this election to get Brexit done on the next EU deadline.

"We will get Brexit done on time by the 31st of January, no ifs, no buts, no maybes," he told cheering supporters.

He promised to then focus on other public priorities, notably by increasing investment in healthcare, schools and infrastructure.

"The work is now stepped up to make 2020 a year of prosperity and growth and hope," he concluded, to cheers from aides and activists outside Number 10.

Anti-Brexit campaign groups expressed dismay at the result, which spells the end of attempts to keep Britain in the European Union, although many voters welcomed a decisive result.

"At least it's clear," said lawyer Gordon Hockey in London. "It's not necessarily what I wanted but at least we know where we stand and Brexit will happen in some form or other."

Parliament will reconvene on Tuesday and Johnson is expected to publish legislation before Christmas needed to ratify the Brexit deal he agreed with Brussels in October.

This should be passed by January but Britain and the EU still need to thrash out a new trade and security agreement -- a process that officials have warned could take years.

At an EU summit in Brussels yesterday, the bloc's leaders expressed relief at the clear result and said they would work for a swift trade deal.

But they cautioned that talks on a new EU-UK relationship would be very difficult. They warned that any new arrangement must uphold European values and norms.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Britain would be an economic "competitor at our door" after Brexit.

The result of Britain's third election in almost five years signals a personal victory for Johnson, who remains a polarising figure.

He was a liberal London mayor for eight years but his tendency to play to the crowd -- particularly with anti-immigrant rhetoric during the Brexit campaign -- drew accusations of divisive populism.

US President Donald Trump tweeted his congratulations on a "great WIN!"

## Eight lakh yaba

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ASP Mashrur.

"They used to hide the drugs at different houses in Teknaf, and sent those across the country through different routes," he added.

Meanwhile, in a separate operation, a Rab-15 team arrested four men with 4,970 yaba pills in Teknaf early yesterday.

They are Kamal Hossain, 29, Akter Hossain, 32, Md Nur, 20, and Abdul Malek, 26, officials said.

and said London and Washington would be able to strike a "massive new trade deal".

"This deal has the potential to be far bigger and more lucrative than any deal that could be made with the EU. Celebrate Boris!" he wrote.

Johnson has promised new free trade deals with the EU and the United States, and after Thursday's victory, now has the political capital at home to press ahead.

Labour's support collapsed on Thursday, with the Tories taking many former strongholds in northern England and Wales that voted to leave.

The party lost 59 seats to end up with 203, after what Corbyn admitted had been a "very disappointing night".

He said he would be stepping down after a period of "reflection", and would not be leading the party into the next election, which is due by 2024.

Corbyn had promised a second referendum on Brexit in a bid to appeal to half of British voters who still want to stay in the EU.

But he had focused Labour's campaign on a radical programme of economic change, including re-nationalising some key industries, which failed to woo traditional voters.

Speaking early yesterday, the veteran socialist defended his "manifesto of hope" and maintained his policies were "extremely popular" during the campaign.

But he said: "Brexit has so polarised and divided debate in this country, it has overridden so much of a normal political debate."

Corbyn is personally unpopular and dogged by accusations of sympathising with proscribed terror groups and failing to tackle anti-Semitism within the Labour party.

After Labour's fourth successive electoral defeat -- and the second under Corbyn -- the party's ruling executive body will meet in January to consider the next steps.

After winning 48 of 59 seats in Scotland, SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon stepped up the pressure for a new referendum on independence.

"The stunning election win from last night for the SNP renews, reinforces and strengthens the mandate we have from previous elections to offer the people of Scotland a choice over their future," she said.

## 3 die

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added.

Tapos Kumar Sarker, resident medical officer at the hospital, contacted the youths' guardians. All of them fell sick due to toxic spirit consumption, confirmed the doctor.

The three died in the span of an hour after midnight, he said, adding that the rest three were undergoing treatment at the hospital.

The bodies were handed over to the families, said the OC, adding that they arrested Rafiqul Islam, the owner of the pharmacy, and sealed off the shop.