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Your Right to Know

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"India is in an 'extreme economic crisis' and the [Indian] government is trying to divert people's attention from it."
DU PROFESSOR EMERITUS SERAJUL ISLAM CHOUDHURY,
ABOUT CAA AND NRC OF INDIA (PAGE 3)



"We would need to ensure that money and muscle power would no longer serve as the most effective route to elective office."
CENTRE FOR POLICY DIALOGUE CHAIRMAN PROF REHMAN SOBHAN SAID
AT A LECTURE ON TAJUDDIN AHMAD (PAGE 3)



"The path, of course, is not always smooth, and may at times this year have felt quite bumpy, but small steps can make a world of difference."
BRITAIN'S QUEEN ELIZABETH II IN HER CHRISTMAS BROADCAST



Smugglers of zero line

How smuggled bikes from India flood B'baria, nearby dists

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MASUK HRIDOV, back from Kasba

It's a house right on the zero line.

Transnational syndicates have turned its kitchen into a storeroom of smuggled motorcycles. They also use it for assembling bikes, bringing in parts like tanks, wheels, headlights and seats from across the border.

A section of unscrupulous police officials and even some Border Guard Bangladesh men allegedly have links to the syndicates.

The Daily Star came to know about the house during an independent investigation into trafficking through Kasba border in Brahmanbaria.

On October 9, these correspondents, aided by a local police informant, travelled around 54km by road and rail from Brahmanbaria town to Kollapathar area in Kasba upazila. Then it was one-km walk to the border.

Around 10:30am, the informant called a person named Md Momen Miah, living in one of the houses built on the zero line, almost touching the Indian fence.

Momen, who was using a Bangladeshi SIM, was told that two customers have come to buy a bike.

Getting a positive signal, the source then took these correspondents near the house after ten minutes' walk along a trail through dense bushes. There were no border guards around.

Talking about the illegal trade to The Daily Star near the zero line, Momen said he had a brand new TVS Apache RTR bike in his kitchen and it costs Tk 1.20 lakh though its authorised price in Bangladesh is Tk 1.60 lakh.

As these correspondents showed an interest to buy it, he asked them to meet his aide Monir, who was also known to the police informant.

Talking to this paper in Kasba Bazar, Monir said they have to pay border guards on both sides around Tk 2,000 to Tk 5,000 for every bike. "Police officials also get almost

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Marked by a border pillar, the left half of this house is in Indian territory and the right in Bangladesh's Dhajanagar village in Brahmanbaria's Kasba. The Indian fence is about 100 yards away. Houses like these in Kasba upazila are safe houses for people who smuggle Indian motorbikes into the country. BGB men do not have jurisdiction in such houses.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Christmas today

UNB, Dhaka

The Christian community is set to celebrate the Christmas Day in the country, as elsewhere across the world, today to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Christmas, the biggest religious festival of Christians, is the celebration of rebirth, new beginning, forgiveness and peace, and renewing relationship with God and human beings.

Decoration of Christmas trees with colourful lights, special prayers, distribution of gifts among children, and exchange of pleasantries are the main features of the day's festivities.

Christmas carols and hymns will be sung before and after the prayer sessions

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

'Stunned by DU VC's biased role'

Parents, civil society members say in memo; 3 arrestees on remand

DU CORRESPONDENT

A number of civil society members and parents of several Dhaka University students yesterday submitted a memorandum to the DU Vice Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman criticising him for his alleged support to the controversial activities of Chhatra League.

"We are stunned by the biased role of the VC," the memorandum reads.

They also accused the VC of supporting the attackers of Ducus Vice President Nurul Haque Nur on Sunday and alleged that the university administration did not take any measures to quell the situation.

In response, the VC assured them that legal action would be taken against the perpetrators.

A group of eminent citizens in a joint statement yesterday also expressed

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

It's BCL men in garb of Moncho

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

Muktijuddho Moncho, which hit the headlines for attacking Ducus VP Nurul Haque Nur and Chhatra Dal activists in the last couple of months, has current and former Chhatra League leaders at its helm.

The Moncho claims to be comprised of children of freedom fighters. It was formed in October last year to counter quota reform demonstrations and initiate protests for the reinstatement of 30 percent freedom fighters' quota in government jobs.

Before the formation, Dhaka University's sociology professor AKM Jamal Uddin was made the convenor of the platform's nine-member convening committee. Asibur Rahman, son of Awami League leader and the then shipping minister Shajahan Khan, was made member secretary.

Prof Jamal was elected as a member of the DU senate from the Awami league-backed Blue Panel. He was the president of DU Kabi Jasimuddin Hall BCL between 1992 and 1994, and international affairs secretary of BCL central executive committee between 1994 and 1998.

The convening committee made Aminul Islam Bulbul the president and Al Mamun the general secretary of the Moncho's central unit.

Bulbul is a former organising secretary

of Shaheed Sergeant Zahurul Haque Hall BCL. He later became a vice-president of the pro-AL student body's central unit.

He is accused in an attempted murder case filed with Gopalganj Police Station on May 3 in 2010 for allegedly hacking one Sheikh Kuddus with a machete, show the case documents.

The Moncho leader was relieved of his post at the central committee after he sought his removal in writing, said BCL sources.

Al Mamun is still the deputy programme and planning affairs secretary of the BCL central unit. Besides, he is a former deputy liberation affairs secretary of the same unit. He also held posts at the Chhatra League unit in the university's Sir A F Rahman Hall, said BCL and Moncho sources.

General Secretary of the Moncho's Dhaka Metropolitan North unit Sohel Miah is a vice-president of the Dhaka Metropolitan North unit BCL.

Moncho leaders Hasanur Rahman Hasu is the deputy social service affairs secretary of BCL central unit, Sonnet Mahmud is a former joint general secretary of Sir A F Rahman Hall BCL, Rabby Hasan Shawon is a member of Dhaka College BCL and Al Amin Masum a former activist of Dhaka University BCL. These four are also joint convenors of the platform.

The other joint convener, Afrina Tuli,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Affif blitz guides Rajshahi to 7 wicket win

SPORTS REPORTER

Local players dominated the day with a 53-ball 76 from Rajshahi Royals all-rounder Affif Hossain trumping an unbeaten century from Cumilla Warrior batsman Dawid Malan as Rajshahi registered a seven-wicket win in their Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League match at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

Earlier in the day, it was Tamim Iqbal and Mahedi Hasan who helped guide Dhaka Platoon to an easy eight-wicket victory against Sylhet Thunder in the first game of the day at the same venue.

In the night fixture, Rajshahi got off to a flying start in chase of the challenging 170 for eight

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Coveted promotions only to be short-lived

7 promoted to senior secretary; one of them to serve just for a day, another for a few days

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Raisul Alam Mondal, secretary at the fisheries and livestock ministry, will serve as a senior secretary just for a day.

Strange as it may sound, but that is what a government gazette notification says.

The public administration ministry issued the notification on Monday night, stating that Raisul was promoted to one of the most-coveted administrative posts.

The order said his promotion will take effect on December 30. Interestingly, Raisul will go on post retirement leave (PRL) the following day.

Public Administration Ministry Secretary Faiz Ahmed, who also got promoted that night, will have a few more days to serve.

Faiz was elevated to the rank of senior secretary. But his promotion order came into effect immediately.

Like Raisul, he is going on PRL on the last day of the year. The ministry was quick to change his designation as senior secretary on its website.

Five more secretary-level officials were promoted to senior secretaries that night. They are Md Anwar Hossain, secretary at the science and technology ministry; Mofazzel Hossain, secretary at the railways ministry;

Shahin Ahamed Choudhury, member at the Planning Commission; Sajjadul Hassan, secretary at the Prime Minister's Office; and Mohibul Haque, secretary at the civil aviation and tourism ministry.

The promotion orders of all but three -- Raisul, Faiz and Anwar -- will take effect on December 31.

Mohibul will go on PRL on January 5, Sajjadul on January 10, Mofazzel on May 4, and Shahin on June 1 next year. Anwar's PRL starts on June 30, 2021.

The public administration ministry's move raised eyebrows of many in the bureaucracy.

A number of former bureaucrats say this will result in a significant rise in the top officials' post-retirement benefits though they will not have much time to serve.

M Hafiz Uddin Khan, a former bureaucrat, said, "Giving promotion just days before their retirement was nothing but a move to provide them with more financial benefits."

"They will get the benefits from the taxpayers' money but will not serve the country and the people for long."

"Why should a secretary be promoted to senior secretary? I find no justification here," said Hafiz, also former adviser to a caretaker government.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

7 ATTACKS ON DUCSU VP NURUL HAQUE NUR



JUNE 30, 2018

By BCL men in front of DU Central Library when he was leading quota reform protests

MARCH 11, 2019

By BCL men at Ruqayyah hall, DU during Ducus election

MARCH 12, 2019

By BCL men at Teachers-Students Centre, DU a day after Ducus election

MAY 26, 2019

By BCL men at Bogura, after being barred from joining an Iftar party

AUGUST 14, 2019

By local upazila chairman along with AL men at Ulania Bazar, Galachipa, Patuakhali

DECEMBER 17, 2019

By Muktijuddho Moncho activists near Raju memorial sculpture on DU campus

DECEMBER 22, 2019

By the activists of a faction of Muktijuddho Moncho inside his office at Ducus building

We mourn

We, the members of Bangladesh General Insurance Company Ltd. (BGIC) are deeply shocked to have the news of sad demise of Mrs. Rukhsana Samad, wife of company's chairman Mr. Towhid Samad on Tuesday, the 24 December 2019. (Inna...rajeun). She breathed her last at Apollo Hospital at around 9.00 AM. She was 68. She left behind her 1 son, 3 daughters & many more well-wishers, May Allah bless her departed soul with Zannat-ul-Ferdous for eternal peace. Her Namaz-E-Janaza will be held on Friday 27 December 2019, after jumah prayers at Gulshan Azad Masjid.

-BGIC Family



Rukhsana Samad
1951-2019



BGIC

বাংলাদেশ জেনারেল ইনসিওরেন্স কোং লিমিটেড
Bangladesh General Insurance Company Ltd.