

## Crisis or not

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You have given a 38-point manifesto. Do you think you will be able to implement everything on there, or will work get delayed due to the Covid-19 outbreak?

Atiq: A lot of it depends on how the current situation plays out. I haven't promised anything impractical in my manifesto. I talked about setting up lights, solving water and sanitation problems, developing newly added wards and so on.

But if there is a crisis of fund, it will be difficult to implement. No one knows what the state of the world will be even in a month, let alone the country. We will have to wait and see.

There have been complaints about mosquito infestation from multiple wards. How are you planning to tackle this amid the Covid-19 crisis?

Atiq: Before the coronavirus outbreak, we divided each ward into 10 sections and conducted anti-mosquito drives. Now there are mostly Culex mosquitoes in the city, but we always have to be cautious.

Institutions like Wasa and Rajuk also have to work hand in hand with DNCC. We have to keep in mind that we don't harm the environment while getting rid of mosquitoes.

The season of Aedes mosquito is coming. I urge people to keep their houses and nearby areas clean. Solving the mosquito problem is indeed a big challenge, because workers who will give their time and effort into anti-mosquito drives are also in fear of infection during this outbreak. But still they are doing their job. We are monitoring the situation closely.

You are a former BGMEA president and a garments owner. What would you say on RMG factory owners not paying workers on time, as well as workers returning to Dhaka amid the shutdown to rejoin factories?

Atiq: After the coronavirus outbreak, I stopped all operations at my factory, and paid workers' dues. Workers give their labour for owners' business, and now it's time for owners to benefit their workers during the crisis. Only workers cannot be put at risk while owners stay within the safety of their homes.

## BLAST AT CTG POLICE BOX

# Three 'Neo-JMB men' held

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Ctg

Militants who allegedly carried out a bomb blast at a traffic police box of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) in February learned bomb-making online, said Counter Terrorism unit of CMP yesterday.

They made the claim after arresting three suspected operatives of Neo-JMB -- an ultra-radical offshoot of banned outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) -- from the port city's Bakalia area on Sunday night.

The arrestees are Md Enran (25), Md Saifullah (24) and Md Abu Saleh (25). Enran is a student of Chittagong University, while Saleh studied at National Polytechnic College. Saifullah worked as computer operator in the city's Chawkbazar area, the law enforcers said.

"With the help of LIC unit of Police Headquarters, CT officers traced the

militants and arrested them from a flat in Bakalia-DC road," Deputy Commissioner of CT unit Hasan Md Showkat Ali told The Daily Star.

"They are self-motivated militants, and carried out the attack on police as their first operation," added the DC.

Seeking anonymity, a CT official told this newspaper that the miscreants used remote key of motorbike as a remote-control device to set off the explosive.

Sgt Arafat, Assistant Sub-Inspector Ataudin and three pedestrians were injured when the bomb went off in the city's Sholohahar area on the night of February 28. According to SITE Intelligence Group which tracks online activities of jihadist, IS claimed the responsibility of the police box attack similar to Dhaka and Khulna.

However, police ruled out the IS link.

## Police station locked down as cop tests Covid-19 positive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Kotwali Police Station in Rangpur city was put under lockdown yesterday after one of its officers tested positive for Covid-19.

All staff members have been shifted to another building, said an official. The administration is taking measures to send those who came in contact with the police official to quarantine, said Civil Surgeon Hirambo Kumar Roy. He said 11 people tested Covid-19 positive in the district on Sunday, including doctors, nurses and the

official.

Altaf Hossain, additional assistant police commissioner and media officer of Rangpur Metropolitan Police, said six policemen were asked to stay in home quarantine while samples of all police personnel at the station were collected yesterday for testing.

So far, at least 62 persons have been tested positive in the district since March 10. Of them, 14 are being treated at hospitals while the rest are receiving treatment at home. Four persons, including an 80-year-old man, have recovered so far.



## Prof Abu Zafar passes away

CITY DESK

Prof Abu Zafar, an eminent cardiologist and former director of National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases passed away at a local hospital on Sunday afternoon.

He was 81 and suffering from various old-age complications for the last few months.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at Baridhara mosque, and he was buried at Banani graveyard.

Prof Zafar played a significant role to improve the overall standard of higher education on cardiovascular diseases and its treatment in Bangladesh. In his long bright career, he also served as head of cardiovascular disease at then PG Hospital.

He left behind his wife, daughter, son and innumerable well-wishers to mourn his death.

## One month

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"These [class lecture] videos are uploaded so haphazardly across the internet that no one can find a lecture that they want with a sane mind, let alone the presentation and consistency. This is all a massive sham," he said.

KM Enamul Hoque, deputy director of the Campaign for Popular Education, said education through TV is a positive initiative. "It is releasing stress of students living at home. It is also continuing their learning habit in the emergency situation", he said.

He however said it is only partially fulfilling the objective, as about a half of the country's people -- many of them underprivileged, do not have access to TV sets. Most of them are from poor quantile, ethnic minorities, remote areas.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2019 of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics shows that 50 percent households of the country do not have television sets.

Enamul said on one hand, many teachers praised the TV education, and on the other hand many complained that the classroom environment is absent in TV education lecture. In many cases, even the whiteboards were not clearly visible.

Asked about it, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education Director General Prof Syed Md Golam Faruk said they would address the issues.

"We have received allegations of unclear picture and are working on the issue. We are uploading all lectures at different Facebook pages including Kishore Batyan; we will make it more organised," he added.

## Drug peddlers

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Mohammed Mohsin, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, told The Daily Star, "Drug peddlers are looking for opportunities as law enforcers are busy with ensuring lockdown and distributing relief and more. However, we are alert against their activities."

Contacted, Additional Commissioner (Traffic) of CMP Mostak Ahmed said "In every check post, police are instructed to check suspicious vehicles, maintaining proper safety and security."

He said traffic police have joined forces with regular police personnel at entry and exit points of the city.

## Ensure uninterrupted production

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He shares that the government's initiatives to waive tax and loans and, at the same time, to increase the salary of low-income workers and employees have created huge pressure on the national exchequer. Unless overall production in the country is increased these support schemes cannot be continued for a long period, adds Bangabandhu.

The prime minister also asks workers to beware of conspirators who are trying to destabilise the country. He calls upon them to maintain peace to ensure uninterrupted production in industries.

### DISTRIBUTION OF FREE TEXTBOOKS BEGINS

The government today starts the distribution of free textbooks among students from class 1 to class 5 across the country. However, the number of distributed books falls short of the requirement as the number of school-going students turns out to be higher than the government's estimate. The government advises students to share books with their peers.

### KARNAPHULI CLEARED OF MINES

The Soviet salvage team has successfully removed mines from the Karnaphuli River and made it accessible for incoming ships. They have also salvaged three sunken ships from the area. The Chittagong Port Authority informs that there are 18 more wrecks to be removed to fully activate the port.

### HOUSING SCHEME FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE

The government has taken up a plan to provide housing facilities to low-income people. These flats will be distributed at an affordable price and the payment can be made in instalments over a long period. In the first phase, Tk 15 crore has been sanctioned to build several multi-storied buildings in Dhaka, Chittagong, and Khulna to accommodate 7000 families. In the second phase, accommodation facilities for 50,000 families will be created across the country under this scheme.

SOURCES: May 6, 1972 issues of *Ittefaq*, *The Bangladesh Observer*, *Azad*, *Morning News*, *Dainik Bangla* and *Purbodesh*.

## 'Child killer'

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Konabari area around 1:30am to arrest Jewel, he said.

Sensing presence of the law enforcers, Jewel opened fire on them, forcing them to retaliate, which eventually triggered a "gunfight", Mamun said.

Jewel caught in the line of fire and died on the spot while two Rab men also received injuries, he added.

The body was sent to Gazipur Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Medical College morgue for an autopsy while the injured Rab men took primary treatment from the same hospital, said the official.

A firearm and some ammunition were recovered from the spot.

Jewel, Sagar and another youth, who is currently on the run, used to live in a rented house in Konabari owned by Alif's father Md Farhad and worked at different garment factories in the area, said Mamun.

Farhad slapped Jewel and Sagar about a week ago for teasing female garment workers in the area, he added.

They then planned to abduct the child and ask for a ransom to teach Farhad a lesson, the Rab personnel said.

On Wednesday evening, they took Alif to the rooftop of their building and strangled him, he said.

They then dumped the body in the warehouse housed in the next building and fled the house the next morning, he added.

Later, they demanded Tk 20 lakh over as ransom from the victim's father.

Rab men arrested Sagar on Saturday from Pubail area by tracing his mobile phone following a complaint filed by the family, Mamun said.

## Mummies

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posted on the ministry's Facebook page earlier this month.

Also excavated from the shaft were an incredible array of small artifacts, including 365 faience ushabti figurines, some inscribed with hieroglyphics. Ushabti are objects, usually small statues, that were buried in Egyptian graves to aid the body in its afterlife.

Inside the burial shaft, there was also a small wooden obelisk about 40 centimetres tall, painted with scenes featuring the Egyptian goddesses Isis, associated with rebirth, and Nephthys, associated with death, and the god Horus, one of the most renowned ancient Egyptian deities.

These small artifacts were removed from the shaft for restoration purposes. The sarcophagi and wooden coffins are being restored inside the shaft, says the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

## Bananas rotting in orchards

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January last year, were able to sell their produce before the crisis hit the market, he said.

"Livelihood of over 50,000 locals involved in the cultivation, marketing and transportation of the fruit have been badly affected due to the decline in the banana market," he added.

Bananas produced in the upazila are sold both directly from the plantations and also from a large market situated at Jalchhatra area in Madhupur.

Amir Ali, convener of Truck Drivers Union in Jalchhatra, said normally on

Fridays around 100 to 150 trucks from the area carry bananas to different parts of the country. Now, only four to five are going to adjacent districts with bananas.

According to the agriculture department in Madhupur, different varieties of banana including sobri and sagar were cultivated on 10,000 acres of lands in around 40 villages in the upazila this season.

Mahmudul Hasan, upazila agriculture officer, pointed out that the fruit cannot be preserved in cold stores. In developed countries, they make

banana paste and use it in food processing industries. But, such businesses have not developed here, he said.

Bananas, grown in the country, are also not exported to the European and American markets as qualities at cultivation stage cannot be ensured, he added.

Mahmudul observed that the demand for bananas in the cities decreased because the fruit's main consumers -- students and factory workers, living in hostels and lodgings -- left for their villages after the shutdown.

## Ensure six months' salary

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We must address the issue globally. Migrant-receiving countries cannot avoid responsibility," he said.

Bangladesh raised the issue at a time when some of the labour-receiving countries, mostly Middle Eastern ones, are putting pressure on labour-sending countries, mostly in South Asia, to repatriate migrants whose jobs have been terminated in the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic.

For example, the United Arab Emirates said it would review labour relations with countries that do not repatriate jobless migrants terminated by the private sector due to the pandemic.

Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain also said they want the undocumented migrants and those in deportation centres and jails to be repatriated. Kuwait even declared amnesty for undocumented migrants so they could be repatriated.

Apart from that, drop in oil prices and shutdowns have caused a slowdown of economic activities in all of the countries in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, home to some eight million Bangladeshi migrants. Construction projects, as well as other industries, may go for partial layoffs if the pandemic lingers, officials said.

A large portion of the migrants, except for those involved in emergency services like cleaning, healthcare, transport, agriculture, groceries, are now jobless. If the pandemic persists, many more may lose jobs, officials

in the Middle East and Southeast Asia have said.

It has become an issue of concern for Bangladesh, which received \$18 billion in remittance in 2019. The World Bank said Bangladesh's remittance from migrants could decline by 22 percent in 2020.

Foreign Minister Momen said return of migrants in large numbers will also create further concerns about how to create jobs for them domestically.

"We will surely see how we can domestically manage the returning migrants. But before that we need to protect the rights of our migrants while they are abroad. We cannot see them being terminated abruptly and returned home," he said.

Bangladesh ambassadors too are working to help migrants, including providing them food assistance, he noted. Expatriates' welfare ministry has allocated Tk 10 crore for 30 Bangladeshi missions abroad to ensure food assistance to migrants in distress.

Nahida Sobhan, Bangladesh ambassador to Jordan, said she has already held meetings with the garment factories employing some 50,000 Bangladeshis.

"We have asked the factory owners not to terminate the workers as long as their contracts do not expire," she told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We will continue our efforts to ensure the best for our migrants," Nahida said.

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The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents of following package from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches.

| Sl No. | Name of work   | Tender ID | Last date & time of submission documents | Tender/ proposal opening date & time |
|--------|--|-----------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1.     | Refilling of Fire Extinguishers Chemical ABC & E type dry-powder Co2 type and Foam type of Different Sheds Yards and Office at Benapole, Bhomra, Buriman, Akhaura, Nakugaon, Tamabil and Sonahat Land Port under Bangladesh Land Port Authority. | 457490    | 31-May-2020 14:00                        | 31-May-2020 14:30                    |

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

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Date: 26/04/2020

## e-Tender Notice

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| 454003 e-GP/18/EE/SRD/2019-2020      | Traffic Sign, Sign Post & Sign Signal of Jamalganj-Sunamganj Road (R-370) from Ch-0000 km to Ch-18300km under Road Division, Sunamganj during the year 2019-2020.  | 11/05/2020 16.00                                       | 12/05/2020 13.00           | 12/05/2020 13.00           |
| 454765 e-GP/19/EE/SRD/2019-2020      | Sub-Soil Investigation for different bridge and Topographical survey preparation of land Acquisition Plan along the road alignment from 42nd km of Madanpur-Diral-Shalla-Jalshukha-Azmiriganj-Habiganj Road (Z-2807) under Road Division, Sunamganj during the year 2019-2020. | 11/05/2020 12.00                                       | 11/05/2020 13.30           | 11/05/2020 13.30           |
| 454773 e-GP/20/EE/SRD/2019-2020      | Supplying of DBS-Wearing Coarse materials for different Bituminous maintenance work of different Roads under Road Division, Sunamganj during the year 2019-2020.   | 11/05/2020 12.00                                       | 11/05/2020 14.00           | 11/05/2020 14.00           |

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