

Keeping the flame alive

Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain's legacy carried forward by foundation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

His bravery epitomised what a human being should demonstrate at a young moment of truth.

Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, at the young age of 20, stood up during the bloody militant attack at Holey Artisan Bakery on July 1, 2016 to save his friends.

He was given choice to walk free from the eatery after he recited verses from the Holy Quran as per demand from terrorists, but refused to abandon his friends, embracing death as a hero.

His friends -- Abinta Kabir and Indian citizen Tarishi Jain -- were also killed along with 19 others, mostly foreigners, during the gruesome incident.

What Faraaz left behind is legacy and inspiration for generations.

To uphold his legacy, his family established the Faraaz Hossain Foundation, initiatives undertaken by which reflect Faraaz's dreams.

During the trying time of the coronavirus pandemic, the foundation has come forward to stand beside people in hardship, especially lower-middle income groups.

With support from Jaago Foundation, Faraaz Hossain Foundation has already reached to over 6,000 people with daily essentials including rice, flour, lentils, and edible oil.

Besides, the foundation supplied



medical equipment like oxygen concentrators to rural areas.

Faraaz Hossain Foundation, along with Jaago Foundation, launched a fellowship programme to uphold Faraaz's legacy. Under the programme, 20 youths have been selected, who will be trained with leadership skills and given the chance for internship at different companies under Transcom Group, so they can learn corporate ethics and behaviourism.

Over the past few years, Faraaz Hossain Foundation, with support from US-based Distressed Children

and Infants International, has been arranging eye camps, which provided treatment to more than 8,000 people all across the country.

At one such eye camp in Rajshahi in January, the foundation provided treatment including check-up and cataract surgeries to some 900 people.

Pharmaceutical giant Eskayef has named its new factory building in Tongi "Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain Bhaban".

Faraaz Hossain Foundation also provided various kinds of support to more than 20,000 Rohingya refugees who fled persecution in Myanmar.

Faraaz, son of Simeen Hossain and Muhammad Waqer bin Hossain, was a student of Economics at Emory University in Atlanta, US. Before going to the US, he studied at Sir John Wilson School and American International School in Dhaka.

Faraaz was honoured with a place in the Garden of the Righteous at the Italian embassy in the Tunisian capital Tunis. Milan-based non-profit organisation Garden of the Righteous Worldwide (GARIWO), with help from the Italian foreign ministry, took the initiative to set up the first Garden of the Righteous in an Arab country on July 15, 2016.

It hosts trees and memorial stones dedicated to five righteous Arab and non-Arab Muslims, one of whom is Faraaz.

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A heart of gold

Abinta Kabir's love for her country shines through

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abinta Kabir had always dreamed of helping the disadvantaged. Her heart cried for the common people -- rickshaw pullers, workers and children on the streets of Dhaka. And she carried those memories of her city when she travelled to study at Emory University in Atlanta, USA.

That sense of belonging brought her back to the country during her summer break in 2016, only to meet a tragic end in a brutal terrorist attack.

Abinta (19), and her friends Tarishi Jain and Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain were killed by fanatics on the dark night of July 1, 2016 at Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka.

Born to Ruba Ahmed and Md Ehsanul Kabir, Abinta was nurtured in an atmosphere of love and care, and brought up with a strong, unwavering sense of morals.

"My parents are the main authors of my story," Abinta once wrote.

She had grown up to be an exceptional person. Through her eyes, she sought out the best for her country and all those she loved. She was a peacemaker among friends and family.

"To Abinta, Bangladesh was always home. She had a steadfast sense of responsibility to the country she was born in, the country where she lived a significant portion of her life," her bio at Abinta Foundation's website reads.



Today, even though Abinta is no more, her patriotism is being carried forward.

Abinta Kabir Foundation was launched in 2017 to help underprivileged children get education, and the Abinta Kabir Foundation School was established to help materialise her dream.

Initially, 36 children enrolled, but eventually the number of students at the school at the city's Madani Avenue of Baridhara stood at 90.

The school has a library of about 3,000 books and a computer lab.

Students are charged a minimal fee, which is deposited in their names and will be refunded once they complete schooling.

"The supreme aim [of the school] is to empower the students with necessary skills to break out the cycle of poverty for leading a life of dignity in future," according to the website of the Abinta Kabir Foundation.

The foundation has a programme called "Little Arts" that organises painting exhibition for underprivileged children. So far, 28 schools have participated in the programme.

The foundation also helped establish "Abinta Cyber Centre and Archive" at the Institute of Fine Arts of Dhaka University.

Abinta always dreamed that parents would have the chance to live with their children in their last days. The foundation built houses for 12 homeless people at Kaliakoir in Gazipur, to honour that wish.

Besides, Abinta Kabir Foundation donated special "pressure garments" clothing to the Acid Survivors' Foundation, that is used to protect skin even after facing acid burns.

The foundation initiated the "Abinta Young Change Leader" programme, involving 15 universities, to nurture ideas of the students.

Those coming up with best ideas are recognised through this programme

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VIRTUAL FUNCTIONS

Lower courts to also deal with civil cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain yesterday asked the lower courts concerned to deal with the civil cases along with criminal cases through virtual system using information and communication technology in order to contain the coronavirus outbreak.

The chief justice took the decision after discussing with senior judges of the Supreme Court, according a circular issued by the Supreme Court administration.

SC Registrar Md Ali Akbar signed the circular saying that the civil cases and appeals will have to be filed with the offices concerned, keeping physical distance and strictly following the health guidelines.

The subordinate courts concerned will fix necessary process for filing the cases and appeals and issue the summons, the SC notification said.

The virtual court functions started on May 11 after a gap of 46 days in order to deal with the urgent criminal cases particularly the bail petitions.

The regular activities of courts remained closed since March 26 due to ongoing coronavirus outbreak.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Montu Mia lives in the Old Dhaka's Mill Barrack area near the river Buriganga, and makes a living from the river as well. He sets out on his small dinghi every day to collect plastic waste from the river, and on a good day, makes Tk 400-500 from selling those. Aside from being his bread and butter, his job gives him some mental peace as well, of doing a small part in helping the environment, Montu told this photographer.

Online service launched for mosquito control

Residents can apply to seek DSCC's help for killing mosquitoes, larvae

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday introduced a new online system which will enable residents to play a part in eradicating the mosquito menace.

Through a link at DSCC's web portal (dsc.gov.bd), residents of homes, and owners of commercial buildings or institutions can apply to seek help from the corporation for killing mosquitoes and its larvae.

Applicants will have to pay a certain amount for the service. "There are many hidden mosquito breeding sources, especially of Aedes mosquitoes... If a resident applies through their holding number, DSCC will take necessary actions within three days," said Taposh, while inaugurating the service at Nagar Bhaban.

The mayor said residents will have to provide feedback after receiving the service. Mobile courts occasionally conduct drives and impose fines if they find mosquito larvae, but compared to that fine, the service charge is much lower, he added.

Taposh said the new service will make residents more accountable and speed up mosquito control activities.

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An integral part of nation's history

99th anniv of DU observed

DU CORRESPONDENT

The 99th anniversary of Dhaka University was observed yesterday with a vow to ensure quality education and research.

This year's celebration -- which was curtailed considering the Covid-19 situation -- began with hoisting the national and university flags and releasing balloons on Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury senate building premises.

A virtual discussion was held on this year's celebration theme: "Dhaka University in its centenary. Context: Movement and struggle", attended by the vice-chancellor, two pro-VCs, three former VCs and senior teachers.

A one-minute silence in remembrance of teachers and staffers of the university who sacrificed their lives during democratic movements and frontliners of the Covid-19 pandemic was also observed.

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ROOPPUR POWER PLANT GRAFT CASE

SC stays contractor's bail order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for 16 weeks a High Court order that granted bail to contractor Asif Hossain in a case filed over corruption in purchasing furniture and household items for the officials of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant in Pabna. Chamber judge of the Appellate Division of Supreme Court Justice Md Nuruzzaman passed the order after virtually hearing a petition filed

by the Anti-Corruption Commission, seeking a stay on the HC order.

ACC lawyer Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that Asif Hossain, managing director of construction company -- Mujib and Sons -- cannot get release from jail following the SC stay order. The apex court stayed the HC bail order, considering the gravity of the offence allegedly committed by Asif, he added.

Barister FM Kamal appeared for Asif during the hearing on ACC's petition.

Following a bail petition filed by Asif, the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder on June 29 granted ad-interim bail to him in the case.

The same day, ACC filed the petition with the SC, seeking stay on the HC bail order.

The ACC filed the case with its Pabna district office against Asif and several others on December 12 last year on charges of irregularities involving Tk 26 crore in supplying

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DIGITAL SECURITY ACT CASE

Cartoonist Kishore, three others quizzed for 2 days at jail gate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore and three others were interrogated by the investigation officer for two working days at jail gate in connection with a case filed under the Digital Security Act.

Sub-inspector of Ramna Police Station Md Jamshedul Alam, also the investigation officer of the case, quizzed Kishore and three others and sent a forwarding report to the court yesterday.

In the forwarding report, the IO said the four accused gave important information about the incident, which was being verified. The four should be confined until the investigation is completed, the IO added.

The three other accused are -- writer Mushtaq Ahmed, Didarul Islam Bhuiyan, an activist of a platform called 'Rastrachinta', and businessman Minhaj Mannan Emon.

Earlier on June 16, another virtual court

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Armed police battalions take charge of Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar

MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAT, Cox's Bazar, and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Two special police battalions, formed to ensure security of Rohingyas, have finally taken over the responsibility to ensure law and order inside the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

From now on, officials of the special battalions -- APBn 14 and APBn 16 -- will be on duty inside the 34 refugee camps in Teknaf and Ukhia. The Cox's Bazar District police officials have already handed over the duties and left the camps, according to officials.

However, the responsibility of filing cases and investigation will be still under the jurisdiction of district police.

Confirming the development, Mahbub Alam Talukder, refugee relief and repatriation commissioner (RRRC), told The Daily Star that the special battalions have taken charge yesterday.

APBn (Armed Police Battalion) 14 will ensure security measures of the Ukhia camp while APBn 16 will take care of security measures of a portion of Ukhia and Teknaf camps, he said.

"The overall cases and investigation measures will be taken care of by the local police stations," added the RRRRC commissioner.

Members of the Rohingya community first started coming to Bangladesh from the Rakhine State of Myanmar in 1978. While they mostly came in sporadic numbers over the next few decades, a mass exodus happened since August 25, 2016, as hundreds of thousands fled persecution there.

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Condolence Message

MR. LATIFUR RAHMAN

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) is deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Latifur Rahman, the renowned industrialist and business icon of the country and former distinguished President of MCCI. Mr. Rahman breathed his last at around 11 am at his village home in Cumilla on 1 July 2020. Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi rajeun.

Mr. Rahman was the Chairman and CEO of Transcom Group, one of the largest conglomerates of the country employing over 10,000 persons and having more than 12 companies in the group. He was also founding director of Mediaworld Ltd., the owning company of The Daily Star, and Chairman of Mediastar, the owning company of the Prothom Alo, both leading English and Bangla newspapers in the country. As recognition for his business ethics and social responsibility, he had received the Oslo Business for Peace Award in 2012.

A visionary business luminary, Mr. Rahman served as the President of MCCI for a total of seven years in three different tenures. He also served as the President of Bangladesh Employers' Association. He was one of the pioneers in advocating for regulatory reforms and modernizing business process systems in Bangladesh. Mr. Rahman was the Vice-President of the International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh. He was also the chairman of several multinational companies in the country.

MCCI expresses its deepest condolences to the bereaved family.

He left behind his wife Shahnaz Rahman, his daughters Simeen Rahman, Shahzreh Huq, and son, Arshad Waliur Rahman. His third daughter (late) Shazneen Rahman passed away several years ago.

MCCI humbly requests all to pray for Mr. Rahman's departed soul and his family.