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SEE PAGE 12

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**BANGLADESH
UPDATE**



1,918
New cases in 24hrs



2,44,020
Total cases



3,234
Deaths



1,39,860
Recoveries

**GLOBAL
UPDATE**



699,699
Deaths



18,540,305
Total cases

KILLING OF EX-MAJOR SINHA

Cops' FIR, inquest report contradict each other

STAR REPORT

The first information report and the inquest report prepared by police over the death of Sinha Md Rashed Khan contradict each other, raising doubts about the precise sequence of events that led to the former army officer's death.

The FIR, filed by Sub-inspector Nandadulal Raxit of Teknaf Police Station, claimed that Liaqat Ali, in-charge of Baharchhara Police Investigation Centre, fired four shots at Maj (ret'd) Sinha to protect himself and the lives of his fellow officers.

However, the inquest report said a total of six gunshot wounds were found in the ex-army major's body after it was brought to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital morgue.

"His eyes are half-open. His body bears a total of six gunshot wounds: one beneath his left shoulder bone, one in his left rib cage, one above his left hip, one in his left arm, one in his back and one above his hip," mentioned the inquest report prepared by SI Aminul Islam of Cox's Bazar Model Police Station at 1:30am on



August 1.

But police's claims of firing shots in self-defence raised a question as to why the law enforcers had to fire four or six shots to protect themselves. Sinha's mother Nasima Akhter also asked a similar question.

Police could have shot him in the leg, injured him or made him surrender or interrogated him instead of killing him, she told this newspaper.

The FIR claimed that when Sinha was taking out his gun from the right side of his body, the cop fired four shots at him.

His family and friends told The Daily Star that the 36-year-old was right-handed. According to the inquest report, all the injuries on the front side of his body were in the left part.

Sinha, who served in the Special Security Force (SSF), was killed in police firing at Baharchhara police check post on Marine Drive road in Teknaf on Friday night, triggering angry reactions on the social media with many decrying it as police excess.

Following the incident, 21 policemen,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



The Padma devours structures of the Padma Bridge construction yard as it eats up its bank in Kumarbhog area of Munshinganj's Louhajang upazila. *Inset*, roadway decks of the bridge and construction machines go into the river. The photos were taken yesterday. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

PM assures Maj Sinha's mother of probe, trial

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said persons responsible for the killing of retired army major Sinha Md Rashed would be brought to justice after a proper investigation when she talked to his mother over phone.

"The prime minister today [yesterday] assured Rashed's family of carrying out a proper probe into the killing and trying the persons responsible," PM Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told BSS.

Karim said the premier consoled Rashed's mother and also assured his family of financial assistance.

He said Rashed's mother thanked the prime minister



SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Why was my son killed?

Asks mother, demands justice

ZYMA ISLAM

"Why was my son killed? If he had broken any law, they could have shot him in the leg or injured him or made him surrender or taken him to the police station for interrogation. But why was he murdered?"

Nasima Akhter, mother of Maj (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan, demanded to know as she spoke to The Daily Star yesterday morning.

She made the demand also when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina talked to her over the phone around 10:15am. The PM assured her of a fair investigation and justice.

It is indeed a justified demand. But more importantly, beyond the question of whether Sinha was shot unprovoked by a trigger-happy cop or whether he was shot by the police in self-defence, a mother has lost her son.

Speaking to this correspondent at her four-storey home, built lovingly by Sinha for his mother and sisters in the capital's Uttara Sector 14, Nasima said, "We will file a case and seek justice."

She remembered the details of the day her son was killed and how she found out what happened. "I spoke to him around eleven every night. On the night he was killed, I called him several times, but he did not receive the phone. Then after midnight, I received a phone call from a number."

"The voice asked me about Sinha's identity and where he works. I answered and then asked who I was speaking to. The caller identified himself as the officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Tests reduce yet cases rise in 5 days

50 reported dead in one day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Though the number of tests dropped significantly in the last five days, including the Eid holidays, the country witnessed a spike in the rate of daily Covid-19 positive case.

Between July 21 and 30, a total of 1,22,534 samples were tested, and results showed that 22.39 percent were positive.

From July 31 to yesterday, 9,131 were positive out of 37,061 samples tested, taking the infection rate to 24.6 percent.

Experts and WHO have been repeatedly asking the government to increase testing coverage to curb the spread of the deadly virus, but the country is lagging far behind in testing.

During yesterday's Covid-19 briefing, Prof Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the Directorate General of Health Services, said another laboratory began testing samples.

That brought the number of labs around the country to 83.

A total of 7,712 samples were tested in 83 labs across the country in 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday, she said, adding that 1,918 more people were diagnosed with coronavirus.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Export makes a stunning rally in July

This comes after record remittance inflows

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA and AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

July, it seems, will go down the annals as the month in which the Bangladesh economy lifted the pall of gloom brought on by the global coronavirus pandemic.

Soon after the outbreak of coronavirus across the globe, it was feared that Bangladesh's exports and remittance, the two pillars of the economy, would take a massive hit. But July's data of the two indicators suggests the fears were outsize.

Exports fetched \$3.9 billion in July, up 44.4 percent from the previous month and 0.60 percent from a year earlier, according to data released by the Export Promotion Bureau yesterday.

After declines in four consecutive months since February, July's export data "comes as a big relief", said Zahid Hussain, former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

"This much recovery amid the pandemic was unexpected," said Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh.

What is more remarkable is July's inflows beat the target for the month by 13.4 percent.

"It is a remarkable achievement given the disruptions to production and trade caused by the virus," Hussain said.

The charge was led by the garment sector, which accounts for about 84 percent of the country's total export earnings.

Garment shipments raked in \$3.2 billion, which is 14.1 percent more

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

CHINESE VACCINE Bangladesh likely to allow phase-3 trials

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is likely to allow the phase three trial of a coronavirus vaccine developed by Chinese biopharmaceutical company Sinovac.

Bangladesh Medical Research Council approved the vaccine in the middle of July more than a month after the icddr,b, local partner of Sinovac, submitted an application to the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) for a clinical trial of the vaccine.

"We will study the application for the trial of the Sinovac's vaccine and will let the icddr,b know the decision at the appropriate time," Health Secretary Abdul Mannan told journalists after a meeting with icddr,b scientists at the ministry yesterday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Huge blast in Beirut kills at least 10

Hundreds injured

REUTERS, Beirut

A huge explosion near the centre of Beirut killed at least 10 people, injured hundreds and sent shockwaves across the Lebanese capital yesterday, shattering windows and causing apartment balconies to collapse.

The most powerful explosion to hit Beirut in years shook the ground, leaving some residents thinking an earthquake had struck. Dazed and weeping, some of them wounded, people walked through streets checking to see if relatives were hurt.

The blast occurred in the city's port area. Lebanon's interior minister said initial information indicated highly explosive material, seized years ago, that had been stored there had blown up. Lebanon-based broadcaster Mayadeen cited the country's customs director saying tonnes of nitrate exploded.

Footage of the explosion shared by residents on

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



This picture taken yesterday shows the devastation after a huge explosion rocked the port of Lebanon's capital Beirut.

PHOTO: AFP

Tax cheats can whiten money until Nov 30

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Amnesty to black money has always been a nonstarter, so Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal's move to tuck in the facility with added benefits in this fiscal year's budget has left many scratching their heads.

But it now appears the government is racking its brains to ensure the provision is a success this time.

In its latest move, the National Board of Revenue has set a deadline for tax cheats who want to legalise their untaxed money.

To avail the opportunity, they have to declare their untaxed asset and pay the stipulated tax while submitting their income tax returns within November 30.

A notice would be issued by early next month detailing all aspects for whitening the black money, said a revenue official working on the matter. He wished to remain unnamed as he is not authorised to speak with the media.

This comes after the NBR last week came up with a declaration form for tax cheats interested in investing their undisclosed wealth with the capital market on paying taxes at a rate of 10 per cent.

The facility was added in fiscal 2020-21 and the investments would be locked in for a year.

The individual has to declare and give the stipulated tax within one month of pouring in the untaxed money in the stock market.

Besides, the individual has to provide particulars including his/her NID and TIN numbers, contact details, amount of money deposited in the share market, the beneficiary owner's account, the name of the brokerage house, among others.

From this fiscal year, individual taxpayers will be allowed to disclose any type of undisclosed properties, including

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3