Somela

FROM PAGE 3

Muslim League president Dabiruddin Ahamed, educationist Abu Nazem Mohammad Ali, Shamsul Huque, and student leader Safiar Rahman.

Almost all the male activists went into hiding. This is when the female revolutionaries came up to the forefront. They organised processions, meetings, arranged cultural programmes, and coordinated with movement leaders, all inspiring the district's people to keep raging on.

Finding no other way, police issued arrest warrants against Fouzia and Halima and warned guardians of female protesters to force their daughters to shun the movement.

"They tried everything they could, but we were indomitable. We held on until Bangla was declared the state language," Somela told this correspondent, almost in a single breath. Her eyes, ravaged by cataract and years of neglect, glistened, and one could almost see flashbacks of the events from those difficult days that led to glory.

The lines are long at Chattogram General Hospital's Covid-19 vaccination programme, where people are spending hours queued up to receive their inoculation. This photo was taken yesterday from the port city's Andorkilla area. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

MIGRANT WORKERS

Govt working for recognition of skills certification: officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is working to sign mutual recognition agreements (MRA) with different countries and regional bodies so Bangladeshi migrant workers' skills certifications are accepted internationally, two officials said yesterday.

Such agreements are required to ensure robust accessibility of Bangladeshi workers in the global market, they said at a consultation in a hotel in the capital.

WARBE Development Foundation with support of Solidarity Centre Bangladesh organised "Migration and Development: Trade Unions and Civil Society Organisations Platform".

Bangladeshi migrant workers in the Middle East earn lower wages than Sri Lankan or Indians, due to absence of proper certification, said Bangladesh Employers Federation.

Addressing yesterday's programme, Mir Khairul Alam, additional director general (training) of Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), said the government recently took a decision to provide skills training for migrant workers, in line with the National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework.

However, providing training will not be enough, since there is an issue of whether workers' certification is accepted in the global market, he said.

To resolve this, authorities are under process of signing MRAs with different countries, he said, adding that already some agreements have been signed.

Addressing the event as chief guest, Mujibul Haque Chunnu, chairperson of Parliamentary Standing Committee on labour and employment ministry, urged all stakeholders, including government officials and NGOs, to be sincere to end migrant workers' sufferings.

An actor etched

FROM PAGE 1

Abu Taher Md Shamsuzzaman was born on September 10, 1941, in Noakhali's Doulatpur -- his maternal grandfather's residence.

He grew up in Old Dhaka's Debendranath Das lane and studied in Pogose school, where he befriended fellow actor Prabir Mitra, before completing his HSC from Mymensingh City High School. He completed his higher studies in Jagannath College.

"I am physically unwell," said Prabir Mitra. "I am in shock. He was one of my dearest friends."

ATM Shamsuzzaman started his career as assistant director to Udayan Chowdhury, a renowned name at the time, for the film "Bishkonna". Even though he surfaced as an actor in 1965 in various comic roles, his first notable performance that shot him to fame was in Amzad Hossain's "Noyonmoni" (1976).

In a career spanning over six decades, he delivered excellent performances in "Surja Dighal Bari" (1979), "Dayee Ke?" (1987), "Madam Fuli" (1999), "Churiwala" (2001), "Mon Boshena Porar Table E" (2009) and "Chorabali" (2012), among many others.

His performance as Begaar Ali in Chashi Nazrul Islam's Liberation War-based film, "Ora Egaro Jon", will be celebrated for generations to come.

ATM Shamsuzzaman's portrayal of the character Mondol in "Golapi Ekhon Train E" (1978) earned him appreciation both at home and abroad, including the Moscow International Film Festival. His role of Kodom Ali in Aftab Khan Tulu's "Dayee Ke?" (1987) earned him a National Film Award.

In his illustrious career, he performed in more than 300 films.

"He had all the qualities that an actor should," said eminent actor Babita, who shared the screen with him in "Golapi Ekhon Train E" and "Noyonmoni".

"It is heartbreaking to hear of this loss."

Renowned actor and Member of Parliament Akbar Hossain Pathan Farooque worked with ATM Shamsuzzaman in many projects.

"I was just thinking today [yesterday] that I should call him," he said.

"Sadly, I can never call him again. He was a cut above legendary -- he could master any role at will. Another admirable thing about him was that he perfectly balanced family and career."

"All the talented names in the industry are leaving us," said actor Salma Begum Sujata.

"ATM Shamsuzzaman was a man of many talents, but more importantly, he was a gem of a person."

Besides films, his memorable projects on television include "Ronger Manush", "Bhober Haat", "Goru Chor", "Ghor Kutum", "Noashal", "Pita Putro" and "Sinduk Nama", among many others.

"He was obsessed with his work," said Suchanda, who worked with him in many productions and also directed the Shamsuzzaman-starrer film "Hajar Bochor Dhore."

"I felt honoured to be able to work with him."

"He was incomparable as a person," said renowned actor Anwara. "I am extremely hurt by the news of his passing. I am praying for his departed soul."

Veteran actor Abul Hayat said, "I would call him Khokon Bhai or sometimes Khokon Da. We lost such a good soul."

Apart from them, actors Sohel Rana, Tariq Anam Khan, Salahuddin Lavlu, Masum Reza also recollected their memories with him and prayed for his departed soul.

ATM Shamsuzzaman's pairing with noted thespian Salahuddin for his directorial debut "Molla Barir Bou" (2005), for which he also wrote the story, screenplay and dialogues, was an instant hit.

He was awarded the Ekushey Padak in 2015 and won the National Film Award five times for his outstanding performances.

According to his final wishes, his body was not taken to the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation or to the Shaheed Minar.

He was laid to rest at the Jurain Graveyard, after his Namaz-e-Janaza at Narinda Pir Shaheb Mosque after Zuhr prayers.

He left behind his wife, Runy Begum, three daughters and a son.

Woman, 90

FROM PAGE 12

working the phones every day in vain, reports said.

When she finally got one for last Sunday, Goldman was determined to keep her appointment -- several inches of snow on the ground be damned, according to the Seattle Times.

The weather made driving to the hospital where she arranged the shot unadvisable.

The day before, Goldman did a sort of trial run, walking most of the three-mile trek to the hospital.

ব্র্যান্ড নিউ ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়
নর্থ গুলশানের অভিজাত এলাকায় ব্র্যান্ড নিউ ৪৭৯৬ বর্গফুটের একটি অত্যাধুনিক ফ্ল্যাট (তিতাস গ্যাস সংযোগ) ২টি পার্কিং সহ বিক্রয় হবে।
যোগাযোগ: ০১৯৪৯ ১১১ ৯৯৯

Councillor

FROM PAGE 12

Netrakona, joined the beauty parlour four months ago, but the councillor (reserved seat for wards-16, -17 and -18) forced her to work as domestic help at her house in Gazipur city's Great Wall area.

Roksana, with the help of Nurul, was forcing the girl into prostitution for the last two months, read the case statement.

The girl fled the house on Tuesday and filed the case.

Yesterday, police produced the councillor before the Gazipur court seeking seven-day remand for her in the case, but the court granted remand for a day.

Over 200m

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G7 leaders plan to more than double their total support to worldwide coronavirus vaccinations, to $7.5 billion, including through the World Health Organization-led Covax scheme.

More broadly, 92 percent of doses worldwide have been given in countries classified by the World Bank as "high-income" or "upper-middle income", accounting for around half of global population.

Among the 29 countries the institution ranks as "low-income", only Guinea and Rwanda have begun vaccinating.

Israel is far ahead of any other country worldwide with almost half its population having received at least one vaccine dose. One in three Israelis has received both doses needed for full protection.

Other countries to have given more than 10 percent of their people at least one dose include Britain (25 percent), Bahrain (16), the US (13), Chile (12), the Seychelles (43) and the Maldives (12).

Teen held

FROM PAGE 12

before a Sylhet court, he was sent to jail on Friday, the OC said, adding that police was trying to arrest Sultana.

All three victims were taken to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, where Rubaiya and Maha were declared dead. Tahsin died a couple of hours later while undergoing treatment.

The killer's father Abdal Hossain, 42, is a shopkeeper. He was at work when the incident happened.

One of their relatives said Abdal's first wife lives in their village home with the 17-year old, while Abdal lived with Rubaiya and their two children in a house at Mirer Mahalla.

Abdal's first son recently began living with his father to help with his business.

Confessing to the killings, the boy said he was furious since his stepmother "did not take proper care of him", the OC said.

Over 20.82 lakh gets the first jab

FROM PAGE 12

Covid-19 vaccines purchased from the Serum Institute of India and 20 lakh doses of the same vaccines sent by the Indian government as gift.

The vaccination centers are open from 8:00am to 2:00pm every day, except holidays.

On January 26 and 27, a total of 567 frontline workers were vaccinated as part of a seven-day observation programme.

Of those who were vaccinated yesterday, 41 recipients showed side-effects, taking the total figure to 578 since the beginning of the campaign, according to a press release from the health directorate.

Zero death and no serious side-effects linked to the Covid-19 vaccination have been reported so far.

Of all vaccine recipients, around 13.78 lakh were males while around 7.04 lakh were females.

Meanwhile, a total of 31,36,976 people registered with www.surokkha.gov.bd to receive Covid-19 vaccines.

RECOVERY RATE 90.4 PERCENT

Five people have died from Covid-19 in 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday, according to a press release issued by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

With this, the total number of deaths reached 8,342 and the death rate stands at 1.54 percent.

At least 350 new infections were recorded in the meantime, taking the total number of people infected to 5,43,024, added the release.

Against a total of 11,148 tests, the current positivity rate is 3.14 percent while the total positivity rate is at 13.80 percent.

At least 424 Covid-19 patients recovered during the period.

With this, the total number of people recovered rose to 4,90,892 and the recovery rate to 90.4 percent.

One of the deceased was aged between 51 and 60 years and four were above 60, according to the release.

Among the five deceased, three were male.

Language Movement paved path for

FROM PAGE 1

programme at the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium, with State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid in the chair. The PM joined the event virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

Briefly describing the contributions of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to the Language Movement, Hasina said an Education Conference in Karachi in December 1947 had decided that Urdu would be the state language of Pakistan.

She mentioned that Bangabandhu formed Chhatra League on January 4, 1948 and the proposal for the Language Movement was adopted as per his proposal. "Basically, we attained our Independence through this struggle of the Father of the Nation, because he had launched his protest against those who attacked our language."

Following Bangabandhu's proposal, the "Sarbadaliya Rashtrabhasha Bangla Sangram Parishad" (All Party State Language Bangla Action Council) was formed at Fazlul Huq Hall of Dhaka University, comprising Chhatra League, Tamuddin Majlish and several other progressive student organisations in March (1948) for the movement to get the recognition of Bangla as a state language, the PM said.

She mentioned that the Bangalee nation attained independence under the leadership of Bangabandhu through long struggles starting from the Language Movement.

Quoting from Bangabandhu's speech delivered on February 21, 1971, Hasina said the Language Movement was not only to establish the rights of mother tongue, but also to achieve political, social, cultural and economic rights of the Bangalee nation.

She recalled the sacrifices of the great sons of the soil, including Rafique, Salam, Jabbar, Barkat and Shafique.

"If anyone is interested to know about the details of the Language Movement, I will request him to go through the Pakistan Intelligence Branch reports on Bangabandhu from 1948 to 1971. We are publishing those in books. Seven volumes have already been published while the remaining ones are under the process of publication."

The secret documents of the Intelligence Branch on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman are being published in 14 volumes.

The premier said, "We have attained our Independence going through many struggles and movements, and this attainment of independence is the most important one [in our history]."

Hasina mentioned that every achievement of the country has been attained through movement and struggle. "No one gave us anything willingly."

She reiterated her firm resolve that Bangladesh would go ahead at the world stage with dignity and holding its head high, and it will not depend on others.

Talking about the Covid-19 situation, the PM renewed her call to the people to follow health rules and wear masks even after taking vaccine.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque handed the Ekushey Padak to the recipients on behalf of the prime minister.

This year's winners of the award are: Motahar Hossain Talukdar (posthumous), Shamsul Haque (posthumous), and Afsar Uddin Ahmed (posthumous) (Language Movement), Begum Papia Sarowar (music), Raisul Islam Asad and Salma Begum Sujata (performing arts), Ahmed Iqbal Haidar (drama), Syed Salahuddin Zaki (film), Bhaskar Bandyopadhyay (recitation), Pavel Rahman (photography), Golam Hasnayen, Fazlur Rahman Khan Faruk, and Syeda Issabela (posthumous) (Liberation War), Ajay Dasgupta (journalism), Samir Kumar Saha (research), Mahfuza Khanam (education), Mirza Abdul Jalil (economics), Kazi Kamruzzaman (social service) and Kazi Rozy, Bulbul Chowdhury and Golam Murshid (language and literature).

2 killed as cops open fire

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"Twenty people were injured and two are dead," said Ko Aung, a leader of the Parahita Darhi volunteer emergency service agency.

One man died from a head wound, media workers including Lin Khaing, an assistant editor with the Voice of Myanmar media outlet in the city, and a volunteer doctor said.

Ko Aung and the doctor said a second man was shot in the chest and died later of his wound.

Police were not available for comment.

JU students break into their dorms

FROM PAGE 12

case would be filed against villagers over attacking students.

Visiting the halls in the afternoon, this correspondent found that some students were staying at the male dormitories.

At least 35 JU students were injured in Friday's clashes over a cricket match feud between JU students and villagers in Gerua Bazar.

Intermittent clashes took place between the two sides after locals were called in via loudspeakers of a local mosque, saying that robbers entered the village, said witnesses.

People armed with rods, sticks and other weapons attacked JU students and vandalised some motorbikes and shops during the clashes.

Speaking to this newspaper, JU Assistant Proctor Md Rony Hossain said 10 students were undergoing treatment at Enam Medical College and Hospital yesterday.

In a press statement, the JU Public Relations Office yesterday said staging demonstrations and breaking open the locks of residential halls during the closure of the institution were against the decisions of the university syndicate.

"As per the syndicate decision, the university is closed since Match 16, 2020, until further notice. The ban on visitors and holding all kinds of programmes is still in force. So, staging demonstrations and breaking open the locks of residential halls were against the decisions of the syndicate," read the statement.

Urging the students to respect the syndicate's decision, it further said the university authorities would bear the treatment expenses of all the injured students.

JU acting proctor ASM Firoz Ul Hasan said they would hold a meeting yesterday evening with the higher authorities of the state (education ministry, University Grants Commission) to resolve the problems.

STUDENTS IN TROUBLE

With the university closed for nearly a year, many JU students are forced to rent messes and houses in villages around the campus.

Samia Islam, a 45th batch student of the government and politics department, is one of them.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, she said several thousand students are renting messes and houses near the campus as they need to stay there to provide private tuitions to students.

"Besides, there is no good internet service provider at the students' homes in villages. That's why they are forced to stay near the campus," Samia added.

She said they were feeling insecure since Friday's clashes. She demanded the university authorities open the halls immediately to ensure their safety.

The university recently held the viva voce exams of its 45th batch students virtually.

Meanwhile, the JU unit of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Socialistic Students Front, and Jahangirnagar Cultural Alliance in separate press statements yesterday condemned the attack on students.

Speaking to reporters yesterday, Dhaka (North) Additional Superintendent of Police (crime) Abdullahil Kafi said police teams would be deployed on JU campus and nearby areas to maintain law and order.

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12

vaccine contracts that countries are signing with drug makers, and is pushing manufacturers to be more open about where doses are headed, as it races to get more vaccines to poor countries, the bank's president said.

The bank is working with local governments to identify and fill gaps in distribution capacity, after they purchase vaccines under a $12 billion World Bank programme, and also to standardise the contracts they are signing with manufacturers, he said.

The bank's International Finance Corp, its private financing arm, has $4 billion to invest in expanding existing production plants or building new ones, including in developed countries, but needs more data on where current production is headed, he said.

"We are eager to be investing in new capacity, but it's hard to do because you don't know how much of the existing capacity is already committed to the various off-takers," Malpass told Reuters. New or expanded plants could be used to produce other types of vaccinations in the future, he said.

The bank's funds could be used to expand plants in advanced economies, if the production was earmarked for developing nations, he said.

Malpass welcomed Friday's pledge by the Group of Seven rich countries to intensify cooperation on the pandemic, saying it could help jump-start deliveries of vaccines to poorer countries, which are lagging far behind rich countries in getting shots in arms.

Data compiled by Our World In Data, a scientific online publication, showed Israel was leading the world in Covid-19 vaccinations, with nearly 82 of 100 people vaccinated, while India and Bangladesh reported less than one person per 100. Many African countries have not started at all.

Malpass said he was heartened by news about new vaccines coming down the road, and about Pfizer Inc and BioNTech seeking permission to store their vaccine at higher temperatures, which would ease another obstacle to deliveries in lower-income countries.

Biden

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signed on February 17.

The US president formally accepted credentials of M Shahidul Islam as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Bangladesh to the United States.

Due to the exigencies of the Covid-19 pandemic, the US government did not arrange the traditional ceremony for in-person submission of the credentials to the president, said the Bangladesh embassy in the US yesterday.

The formal acceptance of the credentials by the president was done in a "paper-based" process.