

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

'Huge scope for private sectors'

Says foreign minister Momen on trade, investment with Japan

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen has said there is an enormous scope for private sectors of Bangladesh and Japan to engage in trade and investment for mutual benefit.

"We intend to conclude a 'Free Trade Agreement' with Japan. These will create enormous scope for private sectors of the two countries," he said while addressing a webinar on "Bangabandhu and Japan" held recently.

With Japan, Momen said, Bangladesh is now implementing a number of mega-projects for connectivity and power generation.

"We are engaged in Public-Private Economic Dialogue for strengthening business and investment ties," he said, adding that special Export Processing Zone is being set up in Araihaaz for Japanese investors.

Over the years, the relationship has further deepened and widened, Momen said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has ensured through her visits in 1997, 2014 and 2019 that the relationship continues to grow for mutual benefit, he said.

Japanese prime ministers have also visited Bangladesh, the latest being the immediate past PM Shinzo Abe in 2019. "These high-level engagements have driven our relations towards an upward trajectory," said Momen.

Department of Japanese Studies of Dhaka University and Japan-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry jointly organised the webinar recently to celebrate the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, Prof Dr ASM. Maksud Kamal, pro-VC (academic), Dhaka University; and Naoki Ito, ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh, spoke as special guests.

The webinar was chaired by Dr Abdullah-Al-Mamun, chairman, Department of Japanese Studies, DU.

Yuji Ando, president of JBCCI, delivered the welcome address while Tareq Rafi Bhuiyan, secretary general of JBCCI, delivered the vote of thanks.

The speakers discussed on the contribution of Bangabandhu in building the solid foundation of bilateral relations between Japan and Bangladesh.

Dr Momen said Bangabandhu believed in the Japanese model of development and sought cooperation of Japan in rebuilding the war-torn country immediately after independence.

Bangabandhu's friendship with Takashi Hayakawa, the then Member of National Diet, played a very crucial role in building the foundation of friendship between the two nations, said the chief guest.

Momen recalled the assistance of Japan during the Liberation War in 1971.

Naoki Ito, while speaking as special guest, stressed the need of promoting Japan-Bangladesh relations for building Sonar Bangla, dreamt by the Father of the Nation.

Woman, 90

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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 being 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.

On Sunday she bundled up, put on boots, grabbed two walking sticks and set out to get vaccinated. Goldman underwent hip replacement surgery last year.

"It was not easy going, it was challenging," Goldman told the paper of her winter hike.

She got to her appointment just five minutes late.

Goldman's daughter Ruth said she is a tough lady.

"My mother isn't going to let a little snow stop her from getting the vaccine," the younger Goldman said.

"She was willing to walk however many miles there and back to get it," she told the Seattle Times.

"She is a really remarkable person who has the attitude of 'You don't let a little adversity get in your way.'"

Councillor

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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

FROM PAGE 12

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).

In absolute figures, the US has injected more people than any other nation, with 59.6 million doses. China had reached 40.5 million by February 9, while Britain is at 17.5 million, India 10.7 million and Israel 7.1 million.

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 2,453,070 people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT yesterday. At least 110,700,000 cases of coronavirus have been registered.

JU students

FROM PAGE 12

out attacks on 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 clashes over a cricket match feud between JU students and villagers in Gerua Bazar on Friday evening.

Over 20.82 lakh gets the first jab

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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.

Language movement paved path

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 had been 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 "Sarbadoliya Rashtabhasha Bangla Sangram Parishad" (All Party State Language Bangla Action Council) was formed at the 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 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 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 premier.

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

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.

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.

Drama over Quader Mirza 'suspension'

FROM PAGE 12

The statement said Quader Mirza has been released from all types of the party's organisational functions on charge of delivering indecent speech that went against the party and threatened some party men.

Besides, the district AL president and secretary also recommended in the statement that party chief Sheikh Hasina permanently expel Quader Mirza and cancel his primary membership from the party.

Contacted, Khairul Anam said he earlier signed the statement but later withdrew the decision due to "unavoidable" reasons.

"The statement was issued mistakenly. Now, we are waiting for a decision from our party chief Sheikh Hasina on this matter," he said.

Mohammad Ekramul Karim Chowdhury could not be contacted over phone for his comment.

Quader Mirza termed the district AL committee illegal and said the committee does not have the jurisdiction to take such a decision.

Abdul Quader Mirza, younger brother of AL general secretary Obaidul Quader and elected mayor of Basurhat municipality under Companyganj

upazila, has been serving as the vice president of the district unit and a member of executive committee of the upazila unit.

Mirza has lately been delivering speeches against some party men, claiming they were involved in misdeeds and corruption. His remarks have put the AL top brass in an awkward position.

Meanwhile, followers of Mirza yesterday again locked into clashes with police near Companyganj police station yesterday, a day after mayhem in the area.

After the clash, Mirza at a press conference at Rupali Chattar in Companyganj claimed that 15 of his followers were injured.

Earlier on Friday, at least 50 people were injured in clashes between two AL factions over establishing supremacy in Noakhali's Companiganj upazila.

One group was led by Mirza and another group was led by Mizanur Rahman Badal, organising secretary of upazila unit AL, also a follower of lawmakers Ekramul Karim Chowdhury and Nizam Uddin Hazari.

Immediately after the violence, Mirza called a strike in Companiganj

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, Mujibur 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.

1 killed

FROM PAGE 12

by Sadequr Rahman -- over establishing supremacy following rivalry for sand trading in the upazila.

Both of them take contracts from a private company for earth filling.

An altercation took place on Friday night after people loyal to Sadeq intercepted Alauddin's sand-laden truck heading toward a site of a private company for earth filling, they said.

Several persons were injured after the two groups locked in a clash later in the night.

As a sequel to the clash, Sadeq's men wielded with sticks and sharp weapons attacked the houses of the supporter of Alauddin around 10:30am

Both groups later locked in clash and chase and counter chase took place, leaving at least 20 persons injured, locals said.

The injured were taken to Upazila Health Complex where Somor died in the afternoon, Tabidur Rahman, inspector (Investigation) of Sonargaon Police Station said.

Some of the injured were later sent to hospital in Dhaka. Filing of a case is underway, the police officer told our local correspondent.

Locals said Somor was a relative of Alauddin but the dead's family members said he was not involved in any feud.

Marjina Begum, a sister of the deceased, said her brother went to mown grass when people attacked his head from behind.

"The attackers also chased us when we attempted to help him," she said.

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ব্র্যান্ড নিউ ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়
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