Shamsur Rahman Khan passes away CITY DESK

Shamsur Rahman Khan, a retired civil service officer, breathed his last on March 4 following a brain hemorrhage. He was 93, said a press release. Born at Jantrael in

Nawabganj, Dhaka, SR

Khan graduated in Economics from Dhaka University before joined the civil service in 1961. He was responsible for coordinating relief and rehabilitation of the Chattogram Division after the 1970 tide.

Khan was honoured for his cooperation with Armed Forces officers in the Liberation War. While serving in the home ministry, he was instrumental in administering Fire Service and Civil Defence as its DG. He was later appointed governor of Bhola.

His qulkhani will be held at his house --House-43/A, Road-5, Dhanmondi, Dhaka today after Maghrib prayers.

Moyrunnesa no more CITY DESK

Mosammat Moyrunnesa, mother of Newspaper Hawkers' Welfare Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd secretary Md Shahabuddin, passed away on Friday night.

She was 95. She had been suffering from old age complications, said a press release.

Moyrunnesa, wife of Shamsul Haque Sardar from Khodkhasta village in Sonaimuri upazila of Noakhali, left behind three sons, grandchildren and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her.

Idle time FROM PAGE 3

Char for the displaced Rohingyas is safer than in Cox's Bazar camps, as "all modern facilities, income-generating opportunities, and heightened security systems have been ensured" on the island. To make livelihood in Bhasan Char sustainable, the report recommended few steps, including preservation of rainwater and its use in daily life.

It also recommended creating small and cottage industries and ensuring education of Rohingya children in their mother language.

Addressing the seminar, international relations expert Prof Delwar Hossain said understanding the geopolitical context of the Bay of Bengal, where there is a "scramble for influence", is important to understand the Rohingya situation. It is also important to understand the situation in Myanmar in terms of their repatriation.

He said Cox's Bazar has become a congested area, where Rohingyas were living in destitute condition. It is clear that living conditions in Bhasan Char is much better compared to situation not only in Cox's Bazar but in cities of many other countries.

The reported challenge Bangladesh faced regarding relocation is 'misinformation", he said.

There is a huge information gap among Bangladeshis and among global citizens when it comes to seeing the reality, he further said, adding that since Rohingyas are not well educated and informed, they could be used by different organised groups in Cox's Bazar.

Addressing as chief guest, DU Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof ASM Maksud Kamal said international communities need to put pressure on Myanmar and its junta for repatriation.

Prof Maksud, also a noted geologist, said from recent studies it was found that deposition phenomena of sedimentation in Bhasan Char was more stable than erosion phenomena. The island is a safer place for Rohingyas.

As per geological conditions, Bhasan Char is a stable area, since the island is still having sedimentation, said Prof Zillur Rahman of DU's disaster science and management department. More engineering measures should be taken to keep the island stable.

CFISS Chairperson Commodore (retd) MN Absar said misconceptions and negative propaganda were spread regarding Bhasan Char in terms of its sustainability to accommodate Rohingyas.

Prof Rafiqul Islam, lead researcher and chairperson of DU's peace and conflict studies department, and Prof Sadeka Halim, dean of DU's social science faculty, also spoke at the seminar.

Book on FROM PAGE 3

Register, a list of world's important documentary heritage, in 2017.

According to Unesco, the speech constitutes "a faithful documentation of how the failure of post-colonial nationstates to develop inclusive, democratic society alienates their population belonging to different ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious groups.

According to a press statement by the Bangladesh Mission in Paris, the book contains statements of Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and Education Minister Dipu Moni.

Paying homage to the memory of Bangabandhu, Bangladesh Ambassador to Paris and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to Unesco Kazi Imtiaz said the March 7 speech worked as a major source of inspiration for the nine-month long war.

He also thanked the ambassadors and permanent representatives who participated in the event, and those who worked for translation and printing of the book.

The envoys present at the event recalled the leadership of Bangabandhu in the 1971 Liberation War and lauded the Bangladesh mission to Unesco for this significant publication.

Taqi's

FROM PAGE 3

on March 18, accusing seven persons by name and 8-10 unnamed. Eight of the accused remain absconding,

while five have been arrested in the case. But, law enforcers are yet to file chargesheet in the case.

Adolescents'

FROM PAGE 3

Many said they live in such a community or groups, that belong to and practice age-old traditions and don't encourage any discussion on SRHR issues and in many cases, don't allow children discussing such issues.

Education Minister Dipu Moni joined the webinar as chief guest and said the responsibility of parents, teachers and health workers is to raise awareness among adolescents. The adolescents do not open up about their sexual and reproductive health with their parents or teachers, while the parents also do not make them aware of the issues. "This is why we need to work on changing mindsets. Two lakh teachers will soon start working to provide counselling at school level."

According to a 2018 Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics survey, the number of adolescents in the country is 2.77 crore.

Bangla Academy fellow Prof Dr Ratan Siddiqui; Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid, dean and professor at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health and Umama Zillur, founder of Kotha also spoke at the event, moderated by MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam.

Historic FROM PAGE 3

Shortly before his arrest on the black night, Bangabandhu proclaimed the independence.

On October 30 in 2017, Unesco recognised the historic speech as part of the world's documentary heritage.

To mark the day, different political parties and socio-cultural organisations have chalked out various programmes, including laying wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu and holding discussions and rallies, maintaining health guidelines.

The government has made hoisting national flag at all public and private buildings in the country and its diplomatic missions abroad compulsory on the historic March 7 from this year.

The "Historic March 7 National Day" observance programme will be held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre at 3pm today. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will join it virtually as chief guest.

Marking the day, Islamic Foundation called for arranging special prayers at all mosques, seeking eternal peace of the departed souls of Bangabandhu and 1971 Liberation War martyrs.

Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television as well as private television channels and radio stations will broadcast special programmes while national dailies will bring out special supplements.

Understanding the atmosphere of other

planets is a key way of knowing whether

they might serve as a home for life. If it

is lacking, it could be an indication that

its star is volatile and given to wiping it

out, probably making it inhospitable; a

more well-developed atmosphere would

suggest that it would be a better home for

degrees Celsius, and so is far too hot to

atmosphere to understand whether similar

planets could support humans and what

indications they might give us for whether

dreaming about for decades," said Ben

Montet, a co-author of the study, in a

super-Earths must exist around the nearby

stars, but we haven't had the technology to

"This is the kind of planet we've been

"We've known for a long time that rocky

"This finding has the potential to

support life that is anything like us.

they are home to life.

statement

atmospheres."

Gliese 486b's surface temperature is 430

But scientist hope they can examine its

Govt to turn it into

FROM PAGE 12

In September 2019, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in an Ecnec meeting, instructed the authorities concerned to collect tolls from long-haul vehicles on the national highways.

The move got momentum after she inaugurated the 55km expressway in March last vear.

Earlier, the authorities had decided to start collecting tolls on the expressway once the Padma Bridge has opened to the public. The authorities have not yet finalised the toll for the bridge.

But the Road Transport and Highways Division, in the last month, decided to start toll collection from vehicles using the country's first expressway -- Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway -- from July.

The division also agreed to a toll rate proposed by a special committee. As per the proposal, the toll for a medium truck (two axles) would be Tk 9.9 per kilometre.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader has fixed the rate at Tk 10 and the division has sent the proposal to the Finance Ministry last week, sources said

If the finance ministry approved the rate, a medium truck would have to pay Tk 550 for using the entire 55km expressway on top of the toll for using the Padma Bridge once it is open to the public in June 2022.

After the toll collection starts on the expressway, the authorities will gradually begin collecting tolls on the national highways that are at least dual-carriageways.

safety campaigners say the passengers will ultimately shoulder the burden as the transport companies would charge more from them once the decisions are implemented.

TOLL FOR SASEC CORRIDOR

The Division on January 11 wrote to RHD for implementing PM's instruction regarding toll collection from four-lane roads and recently gave a reminder, sources said.

In this given situation, RHD on Wednesday held a meeting with its Chief Engineer in the chair and attended by officials concerned, they said.

At the meeting, a committee led by Abul Kalam Azad, superintendent engineer (maintenance), was formed, Abdus Sabur

The committee will visit the highway and select sites for setting up toll plazas, he said, adding that they would submit a report regarding all necessary aspects within 15 days.

"We will take further steps following their report," he added.

The RHD is currently collecting tolls on the two-lane 50km Hatikumrul-Bonpara highway, 13.7km Chattogram Port Access Road, and 74km Dhaka-Sylhet highway between Jagadishpur and Sherpur.

Under 22,362km road network of RHD, 17.50km are eight-lane, 20.60km are sixlane and 584.54km are four-lane highways, according to its 2019-20 annual report.

Besides, 617km roads are now being upgrading into four lanes, Obaidul Quader

Missile strikes Astonishing nearby super-Earth on Syria oil refineries kill 4: monitor

AFP, Beirut

Missile strikes on makeshift oil refineries in northern Syria killed four people and injured more than 20 others, a war monitor said

yesterday. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said a series of strikes launched from Russian warships and by allied Syrian government forces hit the makeshift refineries in Aleppo province on Friday night, causing a massive blaze in the area controlled by Turkey and its Syrian rebel proxies.

The Britain-based monitor "documented the deaths of four people, while 24 others sustained various injuries and burns" in the attacks near the town of Jarablus.

At least one Syrian rebel was among the dead, said Observatory head Rami bdul Rahman Rescue workers spent hours trying to extinguish the fire which spread to about 30 oil tankers, according to the war monitor. Oil installations in Furkey-controlled parts of Aleppo have come under repeated attack in recent months although Moscow and the Syrian regime have not claimed responsibility. The Observatory reported two such missile attacks last month.

FROM PAGE 12 It is found around a star just 26 light years away, a relatively close neighbour at the scale of the universe. Gliese 486b orbits around and close to a red dwarf star that allowed researchers to find it in the first

One of the reasons it is so exciting is because it is a "transiting" planet, allowing scientists to examine it as it crosses in front of its star and makes itself visible to scientists who can examine its

But that is not the only way that scientists are able to study the planet. It is unusual because it can be seen in two ways: as well as spotting as it crosses its stars, it can also be detected through Doppler radial velocity, which looks for planets in the way their gravity wobbles other stars, and sticking the two together could allow for even more detailed understanding of the planet and its atmosphere.

That atmosphere is especially exciting, too - it is so hot that the atmosphere is "puffed up" by the temperature, letting transform our understanding of planetary astronomers measure it.

'Our revolution must win' FROM PAGE 12

in New Delhi.

search for them until recently.

The generals have shown no sign of

The delegation government officials and international agencies assisting host communities and Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. They reiterated their unwavering support for Bangladesh's refugee response, according to a statement issued by the US embassy in Dhaka

US, Australia

FROM PAGE 12

yesterday. It also visited a disaster preparedness project, food programmes, a learning centre, a health facility, and spoke with community health volunteers about their role in the Covid-19 response in the refugee camps and host

communities. The latest visit marks a year since the first cases of coronavirus were reported in Bangladesh. It was the first visit since the October 2020 Rohingya donor conference, which raised nearly \$600 million in additional relief funds for Rohingya refugees and host communities.

Since the outbreak of violence in Myanmar in 2017, Australia has provided over \$240 million, Japan has contributed \$140 million, and the US responded with an assistance of \$1.2 billion in humanitarian assistance to Rohingya and host communities in Cox's Bazar.

place. atmosphere.

Nine int'l rights bodies urge

FROM PAGE 12

Kennedy Human Rights.

In a joint statement on Friday, the organisations also urged the government to repeal the Digital Security Act (DSA) under which both writer Mushtaq Ahmed and cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore were charged.

"All digital and cybersecurity laws must conform to international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," it said.

Mushtaq and Kishore are among hundreds of victims whom the Bangladeshi authorities have held in detention under the DSA, it added.

"These vaguely defined provisions of the law are incompatible with international human rights law and are being used to criminalize freedom of expression."

It added that Mushtaq, 53, and Kishore, 45, a prominent cartoonist, were held in pretrial arbitrary detention under the draconian Digital Security Act of 2018, following their arrests in May 2020 for Facebook posts and social media communications that were deemed critical of the government.

There are strong reasons to believe that Kishore has been tortured while in custody of the Rab, which has been accused of serious human rights violations in the past.

In light of these developments, the organisations call on Bangladeshi authorities to conduct prompt, thorough, impartial, and transparent investigations into the death in prison of writer Mushtaq Ahmed and the allegations of torture against cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore. Perpetrators must be identified and brought to justice, the organisations said.

Authorities must also unconditionally and permanently release Kishore, and end

the practice of arbitrary, pre-trial detention of people solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression, they said

They also expressed concerns over reports of police violence on peaceful protestors, including activists of opposition political parties, who took to the streets to demand justice for Mushtaq's death in custody

They said individual states should urge the Bangladeshi authorities to address the allegations of grave human rights violations being committed in Bangladesh.

The international community should impose targeted sanctions on those responsible for grave human rights violations in Bangladesh, it said. Given the concerning record of human rights abuses committed by Bangladesh's security forces and law-enforcement agencies, the UN should review their participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations, the joint statement added.

PROTEST CONTINUES

Jatiya Swechchhasebak Dal yesterday held a rally protesting the death of writer Mushtaq in custody, and the killing of journalist Borhan Uddin Mujakkir.

Around 200 leaders and activists, including BNP National Standing Committee Member Mirza Abbas, joined the rally in front of Jatiya Press Club around 10:30am.

They demanded proper investigation and the highest punishment of those involved with the deaths.

They also called upon the government to scrap the DSA.

At another rally organised by the National Democratic Party in front of the Press Club, Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Zafrullah Chowdhury urged the prime

I was made FROM PAGE 12

Expressing worries about his future, Kishore said despite his ailments, he would have to appear before a court soon to prove himself to be innocent.

A doctor treating the cartoonist said they would examine him today and check his right ear to determine whether they would need to operate on

Kishore walked out of jail on bail on Thursday after staying behind bars for 10 months.

Inmate goes

FROM PAGE 12

with a murder case filed with Sadarghat Police Station," said the OC.

The Daily Star made several phone calls to the jail but no official picked up the phone.

However, jail sources said the prison guards were looking for the inmate inside the jail. They believe that he was hiding inside the jail.

named Abul Kalam Azad was stabbed to death by criminals in SRB Gate area under Sadarghat police in front of the press club, demanding the station on February 5. Rubel was arrested in this connection on February 9 under the DSA. Jaglul Haider Afrik and after the victim's mother Marzina Begum filed a case.

ownship with cafes, restaurants and bars that has emerged as a hotspot for unrest.

Security forces fired tear gas and stun grenades in the morning, scattering protesters, and removed their makeshift barricades with bulldozers.

Activist Maung Saungkha said the movement would persist -- even as security forces continued to step up their enforcement tactics -- as many remember the repression under the previous junta.

"In our past revolutions, we never won... this time we must fight to win," he told AFP.

"We must fight together with the younger generation to get victory."

Meanwhile, authorities in Myanmar have asked India to return several police officers who sought refuge to avoid taking orders from a military junta, an official in northeast India said yesterday.

A Reuters report said around 30 Myanmar police and their family members came across the border to India seeking refuge in recent days.

The senior-most official in Champhai, a district in the Indian state of Mizoram, told Reuters that she had received a letter from her counterpart in Myanmar's Falam district requesting the return of eight police "in order to uphold friendly relations."

Deputy Commissioner Maria CT Zuali said that she was "waiting for the direction" from the India's Ministry for Home Affairs

Don't let your guards down

FROM PAGE 12

wealthy countries were nonetheless still leaving others behind in the vaccination rush. "In the next week, Covax will deliver

14.4 million doses to a further 31 countries. That brings the total number of countries to 51," said Tedros.

"This is encouraging progress, but the volume of doses being distributed through Covax is still relatively small."

He called for vaccine production to be urgently ramped up, including through linking manufacturers with rival companies that have spare capacity.

Tedros also said the planet would be feeling the mental scars from the pandemic for years to come and said the scale of its impact would be worse than during the recovery from World War II.

In US, Democrats were on track yesterday for a final vote on President Joe Biden's massive Covid-19 relief package

heeding calls for restraint despite mounting international pressure, including targeted sanctions by Western powers.

The United Nations Security Council on Friday heard from UN special envoy on Myanmar Christine Schraner Burgener, who warned against any moves to grant legitimacy to the junta.

"The hope they have placed in the United Nations and its membership is waning and I have heard directly the desperate pleas -from mothers, students and the elderly," she said.

"Your unity is needed more than ever on Myanmar... The repression must stop."

But diplomats said the Security Council was unlikely to approve any international measures against the junta, and the session ended without any statement.

Condemnation against Myanmar's military has largely been unanimous, but veto-wielding China is still regarded as a key obstacle in getting consensus.

China's ambassador, Zhang Jun, said his country did not want to see instability in Myanmar.

The military has continued to justify its power seizure by alleging widespread electoral fraud in November's elections, which Suu Kyi's party had won in a landslide.

The Nobel laureate has not been publicly seen since she was detained on February 1.

benefits, with passage increasingly likely in the evenly divided Senate.

With the sun rising in Washington, bleary-eyed senators continued their all-night session voting on nearly two dozen amendments and counting as they hammered out the \$1.9 trillion stimulus bill, which Biden insists will revive the pandemic-hit US economy.

To pass the bill, the Democrats had to reach a compromise with moderate Senator Joe Manchin, who had balked at the scale of the benefits.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia yesterday said it will end most coronavirus-related restrictions today, including resuming indoor dining, reopening cinemas and resuming entertainment activities and events.

Some activities will remain banned, including weddings and corporate meetings. Social gatherings will continue to be limited to a maximum of 20 people, after agreeing to scale back unemployment SPA said, citing an interior ministry source. | the ambassador said.

"We continue work with international organisations to encourage Myanmar to create the conditions that allow for the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of refugees," said Miller.

"We strongly support all those calling on the Myanmar military restore power to the democratically elected government, release all those who have been unjustly detained, and cease attacks on journalists, activists, and others.

"The military must exercise maximum restraint and refrain from additional violence."

Australian High Commissioner Bruer said Covid-19 created many new challenges in Cox's Bazar.

"With case numbers steadying and with the vaccine in sight, it is as important as ever, for us to work together with the Bangladesh authorities to ensure humanitarian partners can deliver the much-needed assistance to both Rohingya and Host communities," said the high commissioner.

Japanese Ambassador Ito said the aim of the visit was to further promote support for Bangladesh and to strengthen cooperation with international organisations and NGOs. "We strongly hope that, as the coronavirus situation has been improving, comprehensive service delivery including education will restart soon,

DSA should

FROM PAGE 12

for abolishing or the amendment of the law, the eminent jurist said, "We are for abolishing the Digital Security Act."

About the his party leaders leaving, he said, "Some of our men have left the party. Ask them why they left. We urged all of them to come back, we need unity.

"But they might have different reasons for leaving the party. There might have been power-related interests. If they have a disagreement at the policy level, we can resolve it. But if not, how could we...?"

present at the press conference.

present at the human chain.

minister to repeal the act.

Alam, Suraiya Begum, among others, were

of Gonoforum organised a human chain

abolishment of the DSA and justice for

Mushtaq Ahmed, who died while in jail

Latiful Bari Hamim, among others, were

On the other hand, another portion

Gonoforum's acting secretary AHM Shafiqullah, Mostak Ahmed, and Jan-E-

Police said a businessman