Fire doused after 30 hours

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and frustration over the one-after-another fire cases inside the forest.

One such local named Afzal, of Rasulpur village adjacent to the forest, said, "Sundarban is like our mother. We depend on the forest for our survival. These fires are hurting us terribly.

"The reasons behind the fires are never clearly said to the people. Alongside the trees and animals inside the forest, we are also hurt by the fires. The authorities need to be more careful to avoid such incidents."

Another local named Fazlu Sheikh said the fire service was informed about the fire as soon as they saw the smoke. However, it took a long time to douse the fire because it was initiated in a deep forest and away from the locality.

Contacted, Golam Sarwar, deputy assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defense in Bagerhat, said there was no fire inside the forest after they called down their operations.

"There was no visible fire. Still, if there is any fire left, and the forest department informs us, we will make arrangements for watering the area again tomorrow."

Mohammad Belayet Hossain, divisional forest officer (DFO) of the Sundarban (east forest division), said, "We were able to put out the fire with the help of the fire service. Even then, if there is any dormant fire, that will be extinguished. If necessary, the cooperation of the fire service will be taken again. Forest patrols have been intensified in the area where the fire broke out."

A three-member probe committee was formed to identify the reason behind the fire, he added.

He also assured that legal actions would be taken against the accused if the report of the probe committee finds out that the fire was man-made.

HC directs S Alam to pay

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In the rule, the HC asked the government authorities to show causes why their inaction and failure to take appropriate legal actions against the perpetrators who killed and injured workers on April 17 and to ensure subsequent safety and security to the workers and their families should not be declared unlawful.

The HC in the rule also asked them to explain why they should not be directed to give compensations of Tk 3 crore to each of the families of the deceased workers and Tk 2 crore to each of the injured workers to ensure justice.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Sardar Md Rashed Jahangir came up with the order and rule in response to two writ petitions filed by six rights organisations seeking its necessary directives in this regard.

Lawyers ZI Khan Panna, Sayeda Rizwana Hasan, Syeda Nasrin and Shahinuzzaman appeared for the writ petitioners, while lawyer Arshadur Rouf argued for S Alam Group and deputy attorney generals Bipul Bagmar and Arobindo Kumar Roy represented the state.

During the hearing on the writ petitions, petitioners' lawyer Rizwana told the court that police opened fire on the workers of the power plant without any provocation and in violation of the Police Regulation 1943 when they (workers) raised their lawful demands. The duty of police is to ensure safety and security of the people, but they have shot the labourers to death, which is illegal and unconstitutional, she said.

Rizwana said four villagers were killed on April 4, 2016 and another was killed on February 1, 2017 in police firing over land acquisition for the same power plant, but no independent inquiry was carried out into those incidents and the victims' families did not get any compensation.

Opposing the writ petitions, S Alam Group's lawyer Arshadur Rouf said his client has already given Tk 3 lakh to each of the families of the deceased workers.

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), a leading rights organisation, filed one of the writ petitions as public interest litigation with the HC on April 21, seeking its directive on the authorities concerned to conduct a judicial inquiry into the April 17 incident.

On April 28, five other rights bodies collectively submitted another writ petition as public interest litigation seeking HC order on the authorities to conduct a judicial inquiry into the incident and to stop construction of the coal-fired power plant till completion of the inquiry.

The petitioners are: Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela); Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (Blast); Nijera Kori; Safety and Rights Society; and Association for Land Reforms and Development.

Seven workers of SS Power I Plant, a joint venture involving S Alam Group, were killed and at least 19 other people injured in the April 17 incident.

DMCH team completes

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mortem report ..." he told The Daily Star.

"It might take a month and a half or two to get the report," he said.

He earlier said they had asked for the DNA and viscera reports to determine whether the victim was poisoned. Replying to a question, the police official said DNA and viscera samples were sent to the CID.

The body of the college student was found hanging from a ceiling fan in her rented Gulshan flat. Police then sent the body to the morgue of Dhaka Medical College for an autopsy.

On April 27, the victim's sister filed a case against Bashundhara Group Managing Director Sayem Sobhan Anvir with Gulshan Police Station for abetting the student's suicide.

According to the case statement, the victim was in a relationship with Anvir, an influential businessman, who would often visit the flat.

Anvir faces a travel ban issued by a Dhaka court following a police appeal.

According to the complaint, Anvir developed the relationship with the victim, aged 21 at the time of her death, and promised to marry her. Police seized six dairies of the girl where she narrated ups and downs of her relationship.

After the body was recovered, Anvir's wife along with four other members of their family left the country in a chartered flight.

On Sunday, the victim's brother filed a murder case against Nazmul Karim Chowdhury Sharun, son of Awami League lawmaker and parliament whip Shamsul Haque Chowdhury, with a Dhaka court.

After recording the statement of the complainant, the court ordered that all proceedings of the murder case be stayed until the probe report on abetting suicide is finalised.

Police have already recorded statements of the flat owner Ibrahim Ripon, his wife and security guards, cleaners and staffers of the building under section 161 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Ibrahim said police interrogated them about everything, including who rented the flat and who used to visit it.

2 held under DSA

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The two were arrested under the DSA and also in a case filed under the anti-gambling law.

Cases were also filed against 14-15 others on the same charges, said OC Shah Alam.

Meanwhile, a 21-year-old was arrested and sued under the DSA by police in Cox's Bazar after he posted a video that allegedly levelled a death threat against the prime minister.

Mohammad Nur Alam was picked up by Chakaria police on Monday from his home in Kutakhali Union.

The case was filed by local Bangladesh Chhatra League leader Sujan Dey.

The first information report states that on April 22, Nur posted a video titled "Team with Air Cox Media" from his own social media handle.

In the video, Nur had a sentence threatening the Prime Minister, said the FIR. In addition, the FIR said that Nur Alam shared eight other links which were deemed inflammatory towards religion by the police.

Nur also has a YouTube channel where he posted content that could hurt the sentiments of "religious" people, said the FIR.

Dey said he felt that the content distributed by Nur Alam could provoke deterioration of the country's law and order. "That is why I filed the case," he told our correspondent.

Nur was sent to court where the magistrate ordered that he be sent to jail, said Shaker Mohammed Zubair, officer-in-charge of Chakaria police.

India's Covid cases

FROM PAGE 12

May 15, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said. With more than 100,000 infections, its death toll is nearing 3,000, government figures show.

The surge of the highly infectious Indian variant of the coronavirus has swamped hospitals and depleted supplies of oxygen, while sufferers have died in ambulances and car parks.

Rows of funeral pyres set up in parks and other open spaces are being used to cremate the overflow of corpses. A two-judge bench of the Delhi High Court has been holding almost daily video conferences to hear petitions from hospitals seeking oxygen and invoking India's constitutional right to protection of life.

But some hope surfaced in comments on Monday by a health ministry official who said infections in some regions were levelling out.

Government modelling points to a peak by today, a few days earlier than thought, since the virus has spread faster than expected.

India's surge has coincided with a dramatic drop in vaccinations due to supply and delivery problems.

At least three states, including Maharashtra, home to the commercial capital of Mumbai, reported scarcity of vaccines, shutting down some inoculation centres.

On Monday the state had injected 79,491 doses, after a record 534,372 a week ago.

Line laying to start in July

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construction Padma bridge at a cost of Tk 39,246 crore.

Although the revised deadline of the total project is 2024, the authorities planned to operate trains on the Mawa-Bhanga section from the first day when the bridge would be opened for public. Currently, Bhanga is connected with railway network.

"Though there is still one year to go, the last railway viaduct at the Mawa end has already been connected with the main Padma bridge," the minister told reporters, who accompanied him during the visit.

"… We are hopeful that we will be able to complete the rest of the work on time -- the first day when the bridge would be opened for the public. We are satisfied with the progress," he added.

He said the 42-km Mawa-Bhanga section has so far witnessed 66 percent progress, while the overall progress of the project is 41.5 percent.

He thanked everyone involved with the project and handed over a certificate of appreciation to the contractor for their work even during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

CAN JUNE 2022 DEADLINE BE MET?

This correspondent found dozens of workers busy at a place where the Mawa Station would be constructed. Some basic structures have already been built there.

At the Mawa end, construction of 2.58km railway viaduct is almost completed, as erection of 66 piers -- out of 67 -- and instalment of 65 out 68 spans have already been done. The remaining part of the work is likely to be finished within July as the project authorities had to change design of two piers following the opposition of the Bangladesh Bridge Authority.

Similarly, 95 percent work of construction of 4km viaduct at the Janjira end was also completed. On this side, the authorities also had to bring changes in design of a pier and the work may be done within November, according to the BR papers shared with journalists.

The contractor has already completed pre-assembling of 7 km of track and produced around 9,500 special sleepers, out of the required 22,000.

PBRLP Project Director Golam Fakhruddin Ahmed Chowdhury said they would begin installation of railway track at the Mawa end from July and at the Janjira end from August.

It may take four to five months to complete the work at the Mawa end and five to six months for the Janjira end.

"We will be ready to install rail track on the Padma bridge within October. Specialised manpower, who would be required for the work, will come within the time," Fakhruddin said.

He added that they already asked BBA when it would be able to hand over the bridge for installation of rail track, but did not get any reply yet.

After completion of installing spans of the bridge last December, contractor of the bridge is now installing railway and road slabs and gas line.

Contacted, Shafiqul Islam, project director (PD) of Padma bride, said they were yet to fix the date for handing over the bridge as work is going on.

Replying to a query, he said, "It may take till February or March next year to complete the installation of gas line. However, we are trying our best to finish the work within January."

PBRLP PD Fakhruddin added that they may get the bridge in January or February. "In that case, it would be tight for us [to meet June 2022 deadline]. However, we will try our best."

Wang Kun, project director for China Railway Group Ltd, also known as CREC, the railway contractor, said the last span to connect the railway viaduct and the main bridge was completed 51 days ahead of the schedule time.

"In June, the work prior to the track-laying of Mawa-Bhanga of PBRLP will be almost completed and track-laying work is about to start. If the goal can be achieved, it means within effective working period of 2.5 years, new rail line is built and opened to traffic," he said in a press statement.

"This will be a historic achievement and is seldom seen all over the world except in China," he added.

"Achieving this goal of Day 1 [when the bridge would be inaugurated] will depend on the progress of construction of stations and signalling work, availability of quick decision-making and effective support from Bangladesh Railway and the consultant to the contractor, and the timely solutions to the issues related to delayed measurement and payment," said Wang Kun.

Speedboats unregulated for decades

FROM PAGE 1

in Munshiganj said around 400 speedboats are operated on the route, flouting the safety rules.

Only a few of them have registrations while the rest are operating illegally, said an official of the Department of Shipping (DoS), a government body authorised to regulate the country's water transports.

The drivers do not have any institutional training or license. They move up the ladder from a driver's assistant to becoming the driver after a few days of gathering experience, said multiple sources in the Shimulia terminal.

After the accident on Monday, the local administration, law enforcement agencies, DoS and Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) are busy trading blame over the malpractice.

Talking to The Daily Star, Manjurul Kabir, chief engineer and ship surveyor of DoS, said registration of a speedboat is a must before it starts plying the country's waterways.

He also said drivers will not apply for their licences unless the relevant law is strictly enforced. The responsibility of enforcing laws falls upon law enforcers and other government bodies concerned, he said.

"It is our collective failure that we have not been able to force all the speedboats to complete registration," he added.

As per the Inland Shipping Ordinance, 1976, the owner and the driver of unregistered waterway transportscan be handed two years' imprisonment or Tk 2 lakh in fine, said BIWTA officials.

Munshiganj Deputy Commissioner (DC) Moniruzzaman Talukder said the BIWTA is responsible to check the malpractice. The naval police and the coast guards will enforce the relevant law if any unregistered speedboat is operated, he added.

"Nevertheless, we have directed the local administration officials to ensure that unregistered vessels, including speedboats, are stopped from plying the Shimulia-Bangla Bazar route. The BIWTA, however, did not seek any cooperation from us," he added.

Contacted, Sirajul Kabir, in-charge of naval police at Mawa of Munshiganj, said his department does not have the authority to stop operations of such unregistered speedboats.

Rather, the terminal is "controlled" by the BIWTA and the leaseholder, he said, adding, "We have asked them [the BIWTA and the leaseholder] to stop such speedboats and train all drivers. But we have not received any response yet."

Earlier on Monday, Lt Ashmadul Islam, commander of the coast guard's Pagla station in Narayanganj, told The Daily Star they are only responsible for ensuring safety measures like wearing of life-jackets and controlling overloading. The BIWTA is responsible for the overall services, he said.

Asked, BIWTA Assistant Director Md Shahdat Hossain said, "It is not possible only for the BIWTA to stop the malpractice. Rather, we need cooperation from all including police, coast guards and local administration.

"We have even asked naval police, coast guards and the leaseholder to take necessary measures so that speedboats cannot operate during the ongoing lockdown. But no action was taken," he said.

Contacted, Ashraf Hossain, elder brother of the terminal leaseholder Shah Alam Khan, said the process of registering speedboats was initiated a few years ago, but the initiative did not see any progress due to a lack of cooperation from speedboat owners and workers.

Meanwhile, a case was filed against four persons in connection with Monday's accident with Shibchar Police Station in Madaripur.

The accused are Shimulia ferry terminal's leaseholder Shah Alam Khan, the owners of the speedboat involved in the accident Chandu Miah and Jahurul Islam and the motorboat's driver Shah Alam, said police.

The driver is undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital under police surveillance. The three others are on the run, said Miraz Hossain, officer in-charge (OC) of the police station.

War with India

FROM PAGE 12

Yesterday, General Akbar Khan said the Indian Air Force placed six fields near East Pakistan on war alert, to which Pakistan responded by ordering an alert of her own.

General Akbar Khan commented, "Short of open war, India has taken everything possible available to it against us. We cannot rule out the possibility of war now, although we have no wish for it. In any case, we are ready."

The general regretted the inconvenience caused to newsmen by censorship but he sharply criticised foreign reporting of events in East Pakistan. He said censorship was necessary to preserve internal security.

General Akbar said he felt that many articles by foreign newsmen had distorted facts and "maligned our wonderful army tradition".

On March 26, as the Operation Searchlight began, foreign newsmen were expelled to West Pakistan and their notes and film were seized. Newsmen had since entered East Pakistan by crossing the Indian frontier.

General Akbar Khan denied that large numbers of civilian Pakistani refugees had fled to India.

"According to signals we intercepted two days ago, about 37,000 refugees, nearly all of whom are miscreants and common criminals, have crossed into India. India, which has a great many hungry people, claims there are one million refugees over there in order to get international help in feeding them."

DISAGREEMENT ON PLAN TO RETURN DIPLOMATIC STAFF

A tentative agreement between India and Pakistan on repatriation of their diplomatic staffs in Dhaka and Kolkata had bogged down over a Pakistani demand that India considers unreasonable.

Under the agreement two days ago, Pakistani diplomats in Kolkata and Indian diplomats in Dhaka would have been flown to their home countries at 11:00am today.

Two Soviet planes were standing by at Tashkent to airlift the Indian diplomats back to New Delhi, and an Iranian plane was reportedly standing by at an unknown airport to carry the Pakistani diplomats to Karachi.

But Pakistan said today that the repatriation could not take place until a Pakistani representative had interviewed individually "each and every member" of Pakistan's former deputy high commission in Kolkata to ascertain which ones did not wish to return to Pakistan

RECOGNITION: SMALL NATIONS MAY TAKE THE LEAD

Sir S Ramgoolam, prime minister of Mauritius who was visiting London, gave sympathetic hearing to the plight of Bangladesh. But the question of the recognition of Bangladesh by Mauritius depended on the lead from the big powers although some small countries were consulting each other as well as the big powers on whether the latter would help the situation if they took the lead.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

The Gates split

FROM PAGE 12

asserted their legal union was "irretrievably broken," but said they had reached agreement on how to divide their marital assets. No details of that accord were disclosed in the filing in King County Superior Court in Seattle.

Bill Gates, 65, who co-founded Microsoft Corp, and his spouse, Melinda French Gates, 56, met after she joined the software giant as a product manager, and they dated for a few years before marrying in January 1994 in Hawaii.

"After a great deal of thought and a lot of work on our relationship, we have made the decision to end our marriage," the two said in a joint statement posted on each of their individual Twitter accounts.

"We no longer believe we can grow together as a couple in the next phase of our lives. We ask for space and privacy for our family as we begin to navigate this new life," they said.

The divorce petition, which states that the couple have no minor children, comes after the youngest of their three offspring recently turned 18.

Launched in 2000, the nonprofit Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation ranks as the largest private philanthropic foundation in the United States and one of the world's biggest, with net assets of $43.3 billion at the end of 2019, according to the latest full-year financials shown on its website.

From 1994 through 2018, the couple gifted more than $36 billion to the Seattle-based foundation, the website said.

Last year, investor Warren Buffett reported donating more than $2 billion of stock from his Berkshire Hathaway Inc to the Gates Foundation as part of previously announced plans to give away his entire fortune before his death.

'NO CHANGES TO THEIR ROLES'

In their divorce petition, the couple asks the court "to dissolve our marriage" and to divide their communal property, business interests and liabilities "as set forth in our separation contract," though that accord was not made public.

Bill Gates is ranked No. 4 on the Forbes list of the world's wealthiest individuals, with an estimated $124 billion fortune.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Chattogram
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This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents of following packages from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches.

Tender Notice No. EE/EED/Ctg/e-Tender/2020-2021/52 **Date: 03.05.2021**

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID & procurement method	Last date & time of selling documents	Last date & time of submission documents
01	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW05	Construction Work of Internal Drain at Nasirabad Govt. Boys High School, Khulsi, Chattogram	575652 OTM	19-May-2021 16:00	20-May-2021 15:00
02	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW08	Repair & Renovation Work of Guard Room at Chattogram Govt. Mohila College, Khulsi, Chattogram	575655 OTM	19-May-2021 16:00	20-May-2021 15:00
03	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW09	Repair & Renovation Work of Hall Room at Chattogram City College, Doublemooring, Chattogram	575656 OTM	19-May-2021 16:00	20-May-2021 15:00
04	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW12	Repair & Renovation Work of Academic Building at Chattogram Collegiate High School, Doublemooring, Chattogram	575660 OTM	19-May-2021 16:00	20-May-2021 15:00
05	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW06	Repair & Renovation Work of Auditorium at Chattogram Govt. Mohila College, Khulsi, Chattogram	575653 OTM	23-May-2021 16:00	24-May-2021 15:00
06	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW07	Repair & Renovation Work of 5-storied south building at Chattogram Govt. Mohila College, Khulsi, Chattogram	575654 OTM	23-May-2021 16:00	24-May-2021 15:00
07	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW10	Repair & Renovation Work Including Raising the Floor of the Academic Building (East) at Chattogram City College, Doublemooring, Chattogram	575658 OTM	23-May-2021 16:00	24-May-2021 15:00
08	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW11	Re-construction of Boundary Wall at Chattogram Collegiate High School, Doublemooring, Chattogram	575659 OTM	23-May-2021 16:00	24-May-2021 15:00
09	Ctg/Rev/MAUSI-4931/19-20/RW13	Repair & Renovation work at Chattogram Zela Shikkha Complex, Doublemooring, Chattogram	575661 OTM	23-May-2021 16:00	24-May-2021 15:00

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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