

BANGLADESH
UPDATE



1,822
New cases in 24hrs



7,69,160
Total cases



11,796
Deaths



7,02,163
Recoveries

GLOBAL
UPDATE



3,262,653
Deaths



156,355,625
Total cases

HEFAJAT MAYHEM IN CTG

Fayezi, several others financed, organised it

Cops claim after grilling the detained ex-publicity secy of the Islamist outfit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Mowlana Jakaria Noman Fayezi, publicity secretary of the recently dissolved Hefajat-e-Islam central committee, was one of the financiers of Chattogram mayhem, said police.

Fayezi directly patronised the chaos in the port city between March 26 and March 28 during the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said officials of Chattogram district police yesterday.

The law enforcers came up with the information after arresting the Hefajat leader from Chakaria upazila of Cox's Bazar on May 6 and grilling him in custody.

A court placed Fayezi on a five-day remand in connection with a case filed over the violence.

SM Rashidul Haque, superintendent of Chattogram district police, said in primary quizzing Fayezi accepted that on March 26 he organised Hefajat men at Hathazari upazila with ill intention.

Addressing a press briefing, the police official also said that from other arrestees they got several names of Hefajat's financiers in the mayhem.

"Jakaria Noman is one of them," he said, adding they were investigating every aspect.

The police official also said that the arrested Hefajat men, during interrogation, admitted that they intended to create unrest situation in Bangladesh by carrying out subversive activities and toppling the government.

Khaleda not fit for long- haul

FROM PAGE 1

General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday urged the government to look at the matter from a humanitarian perspective and make the arrangements needed to send Khaleda abroad for treatment of her post-Covid complications.

Hospital sources said Khaleda's health has been showing no sign of improvement.

"This non-improvement is not a good sign and her condition is not suitable for flying for a six- or eight-hour flight," a doctor involved in Khaleda's treatment told The Daily Star.

The former prime minister is having breathing difficulties without oxygen support, he said.

"Her health neither improved nor deteriorated. But this stability is not good."

On the other hand, BNP sources said Khaleda's family members received "a positive signal" from the UK government regarding her treatment in a London hospital.

They will start preparing to fly her to London as soon as they get the clearance from the Bangladesh government.

Besides, it has not yet been decided which hospital to take her to and whether a special flight or an ambulance will be needed to fly her out of the country.

Fakhru told reporters that BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman was coordinating the process.

BNP leaders said getting the government approval remained the main challenge as she was released from jail through an executive order of the government on the condition that she does not leave the country.

That's why Khaleda's brother Shamim Iskandar wrote to the home ministry seeking permission on Wednesday night.

The BNP chairperson can be flown abroad if the law ministry amends the order, they added.

Law Minister Anisul Huq said he might give his opinion on the next work day, which would be Sunday.

"I received the file [regarding Khaleda Zia's treatment abroad] from the office of law secretary at 4:00pm. I will go through the file before giving my opinion on the matter," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Family sources said they will apply for a visa once they get the government approval. If she wants to go to the UK, then they will decide which hospital to take her to.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal told reporters that Khaleda will get the passport soon.

Her passport expired in 2019.

A passport owner's fingerprint and her signature are required on a passport, but the rule has been relaxed in her case, family members said.

The home minister on Wednesday told reporters that the government was "considering the issue positively".

Khaleda was admitted to Evercare Hospital on April 27, three days after she tested positive for coronavirus a second time. She first tested positive on April 11. She also has arthritis, diabetes and eye problems.

She was taken to the hospital's Coronary Care Unit with breathing difficulties Monday afternoon.

Her family members are thinking of taking her to the UK or Thailand or Singapore.

The government released Khaleda from jail on March 25 last year, suspending the sentence as per section 401 (1) of the Criminal Code of Procedure.

The suspension was later extended twice.

The BNP chairperson landed in jail on February 8, 2018, after a special court sentenced her to five years in prison in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case. On October 30, 2018, the High Court raised her punishment to 10 years.

Cops to take action

FROM PAGE 1

The CTTC has an online monitoring process, he said, "But radicalisation cannot be stopped by monitoring alone. We have taken steps to take action."

Saiful said the move comes after a 20-year-old man arrested on Wednesday told officers that he was taken to militancy after watching online videos and had plans to attack the national parliament.

Al Sakib was arrested in the capital's Sher-E-Bangla Nagar area around 7:45pm, the officer said, adding that the suspect is a member of the Al-Qaeda inspired militant outfit Ansar Al Islam.

Police found a black flag, a black handkerchief, a large knife and a mobile phone in his possession.

Sakib told police that when he contacted the speakers, they inspired him to make a terrorist attack through forming a group of like-minded individuals.

He sent invitations to people on messaging applications and had the large knife made by a local blacksmith.

He reached Dhaka from Sirajganj on Wednesday with a plan to gather 313 individuals and die in police firing while attacking the national parliament, said DC Saiful Islam. Thankfully, no one responded to his invitation.

Around 10:30am yesterday, police arrested Ali Hasan Osama, 27, in Rajbari on charges of advising Sakib to be involved in terrorist acts, Saiful said.

Osama is one of the speakers who had inspired Sakib.

CTTC officials said Osama is popularly known as "Banglar Osama".

"Osama has assumed the role of being the spiritual leader of Ansar Al Islam after the arrest of Mufi Jasim Uddin Rahmani in 2013. Osama had written between 40 and 50 instigating books in the last five years and we kept him under surveillance for the last two years."

Rahmani was sentenced to five years in prison in connection with the murder of blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider.

Saiful said many in Osama's large base of followers became radicalised by watching his speech on YouTube, and Telegram.

Earlier, a Bangladeshi citizen arrested in Singapore and two others in India told law enforcers that they were radicalised by watching Osama's online speeches, said the officer.

Osama used to meet 50 to 100 followers everyday at different mosques and houses in Rajbari.

Mufi Harun Izhari, former education and cultural affairs secretary of Hefajat, is also identified as an inciter, officers said.

Izhari was arrested by Rab on May 2 on charges of his involvement in the violence in Hathazari on March 26. He is an adviser of the Shiraiganj madrasa where Sakib studied.

Izhari will also be accused of militancy as he is an active organiser of banned militant outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami, a CTTC source said.



Police charge truncheon to disperse Chhatra League men on Paris Road on the Rajshahi University campus. At least 15 people were injured as activists of the pro-Awami League student body's Rajshahi city and RU units clashed in the area yesterday.

PHOTO: ARAFAT RAHAMAN

All for money?

FROM PAGE 1

"I turned my phone off because he [VC Sobhan] was calling me repeatedly and asking me to sign the recruitment documents," Prof Abdus Salam told The Daily Star yesterday.

Failing to convince the registrar, Prof Sobhan called Deputy Registrar Md Yousuf Ali and took his signature on the appointment letters the same day.

"Finding proof of bribery is difficult, but don't the activities and compulsion for the recruitment tell the story?" asked Prof Md Elias Hossain, a member of the Teachers' Society against Corruption.

During yesterday's clash, these correspondents saw that city BCL leaders assaulted Mamun-ar-Rashid, an assistant registrar, wrongly thinking that he was the signatory of the appointment letters.

When another RU official Abdullah Al Masud went forward to save Mamun, the BCL men tore his shirt and pushed him into a gutter.

Police brought the situation under control through baton charge.

Some 15 members of both BCL groups sustained minor injuries in the incident, they claimed.

Rajshahi city BCL President Nur Mohammad Siam said he did go to the campus to resist the illegal recruitments, but the city unit BCL members did not assault anyone.

RU BCL Vice-president Mahfuz Al Amin said Rajshahi city BCL leaders came to the campus to create unrest.

At 2:30pm, VC Prof Abdus Sobhan

came out of his residence along with his family members, heavily cordoned by the police, and left the campus.

The VC stopped near the main gate and told journalists, "I performed my duty successfully."

He also said, "The chair was challenging, but I dealt with the challenges."

These correspondents tried to contact the VC for further comments, but he did not answer phone calls.

The Daily Star obtained lists of names of appointed persons in different posts. Among them, nine were appointed as teachers, 24 office assistants, 19 section officers and 85 third- and fourth-class employees.

Md Mamun-ar-Rashid, assistant registrar, confirmed the contents of the list.

RU sources said yesterday more than 50 former and current leaders of RU BCL were recruited while some 10 journalists, both from the campus and city, were given appointments.

FOUR YEARS OF IRREGULARITIES During his four-year tenure, there were a flurry of allegations of irregularities and corruption against VC Prof Sobhan.

In January 2020, some teachers and job-seekers submitted 17 allegations to the Prime Minister's Office.

Investigating the allegations, the UGC uncovered more allegations and eventually found basis in a total 25 allegations of corruption, irregularities and nepotism against Prof Sobhan and other heads of his administration.

Some of the allegations include

providing false information to the university's chancellor on Prof Sobhan's voluntary retirement, lowering qualifications for appointing relatives, including his daughter and son-in-law as teachers, and several financial anomalies.

The UGC in its October 2020 report ordered cancellation of 34 illegal recruitments and in December, the education ministry issued the embargo on recruitments based on this report.

In January this year, RU BCL leaders and activists demanding jobs confined the VC and other officials at the VC's residence and padlocked the administrative buildings.

The VC assured them of "highest priority" in getting jobs, according to a leaked phone conversation reported in newspapers.

On April 2, BCL men again locked the VC residence demanding the same. RU teachers said the last-minute recruitment would never be legalised, but it would create "additional pressure" on the upcoming RU administration.

They said they never before saw such an instance of "open corruption and arbitrary recruitment".

Prof Sultan-ul Islam, the chairman of geology and mining department, said the VC defied the government order and the government should take steps now.

None of the police officials present during yesterday's clash was willing to talk on the matter.

The university's top officials also remained tight-lipped.

Tk 14,295cr cash, assets legalised

FROM PAGE 1

Some 52 legalised their investments in the share market by paying Tk 4.51 crore in taxes.

A total of 544 people legalised undisclosed assets in Khulna, 538 in Cumilla, 488 in Narayanganj, 387 in Rangpur, 369 in Gazipur, 295 in Rajshahi, 263 in Bogura, 241 in Mymensingh and 230 in Barishal.

The window the government provided to legalise undisclosed assets ends on June 30.

The NBR official, however, said the rate of legalising undeclared money dropped significantly in April due to what the official said was the second wave of Covid.

The top records of legalising undisclosed assets were in fiscal years 2007-08 and 2008-09 when the army-backed caretaker government was in power.

At that time, Tk 9,682.99 crore in total was legalised, according to NBR data.

The government this fiscal year allowed legalisation of undisclosed assets to accelerate economic growth, increase investments, and develop the stock market as previous attempts did not pay off.

It introduced a provision that no authority, including the NBR and the Anti-Corruption Commission, could question the sources of the legalised assets.

People were allowed to disclose any undisclosed homes, land, buildings, or flats by paying taxes as per the size of the property.

They were able to legalise undisclosed cash, bank deposits, saving certificates, shares, bonds or any other securities by paying 10 percent in taxes.

They were also allowed to invest in the capital market for at least a year and show the investments in their tax returns.

Talking to The Daily Star, Zahid Hussain, former lead economist at the

TAX ZONE	TAXPAYERS	TAX PAID
Dhaka	6,134	Tk 1,170cr
Chattogram	1,696	Tk 146cr
Khulna	544	Tk 40cr
Rajshahi	558	Tk 35cr
Mymensingh	241	Tk 15cr
Sylhet	244	Tk 15cr
Rangpur	387	Tk 11cr
Barishal	230	Tk 7cr
PERIOD	JULY-MARCH 2020-21	

World Bank's Dhaka office, said the scope for legalising undisclosed assets was on a limited scale before and the latest one was quite liberal.

Since no agency could question the matter, a lot of money was legalised.

"But we cannot see the other side of this... What is the impact of such an opportunity on honest taxpayers who paid a lot more in taxes abiding by the rules? This matter needs to be considered," he said.

"Why would the honest taxpayers pay taxes when many legalised their undisclosed assets paying only 10 percent in tax?" he asked.

An individual can end up paying as high as 25 percent income tax a year.

He said if this opportunity was given due to the pandemic, then why were honest taxpayers not given a similar opportunity?

To even consider the economic benefit of such a step, it needs to be seen if it has increased revenue, then how much, if at all, he said.

No policy should have so much discrimination, said the economist.

Former NBR chairman Nasiruddin

Celebrate Eid where you are now

FROM PAGE 1

Hasina said people can meet their near and dear ones later when the situation will be normal.

"In order to stop the spread of coronavirus throughout the country, I would like to request you all to abide by health protection rules and not to travel from one place to another unless there is an urgent issue."

She said no one knows who is carrying the virus during journeys. "When an infected person travels from one place to another, he may get many others infected and thus cause problems to their lives. This is why the government has taken steps to limit the movement of people."

Mentioning that the pandemic is now inflicting severe sufferings on people, Hasina said her government is making all-out efforts to assist people properly.

She said the government has already extended cash support of Tk 2,500 to each of 36.5 lakh families of extreme poor, jobless or day-labourers, rickshaw-

pullers, van-pullers, transport workers, and low-income people who have been hit hard by the pandemic.

Besides, the disaster management and relief ministry continues providing food support to the people in need during the ongoing Ramadan. The government is assisting people in different ways, the PM added.

Hasina urged the affluent people of society to come forward to help the destitute during the pandemic period.

INAUGURATION

The infrastructures and water vessels that the PM inaugurated include TS Iliya Ahmed Chowdhury Dada Bhai Training Ship, 20 cutter suction dredgers, 83 dredger-auxiliary vessels, newly constructed dredger base in Narayanganj, special inspection vessel "Pandirashi", passenger vessels MV Tajuddin Ahmad and MV Ivy Rahman, and four marine academies in Pabna, Barishal, Rangpur and Sylhet.

Besides, Hasina inaugurated the distribution of 500 pucca houses,

constructed under a rehabilitation project at Paira Port, among the families affected by land acquisition.

REGISTRATION MANDATORY

In an oblique reference to recent waterway accidents, the PM urged both operators and passengers of water vessels to remain careful and vigilant about the safety of their lives.

Hasina said sometimes vessels meet with accidents and people lose their lives due to overloading. "All will have to be careful and vigilant in this regard."

She said every water vessel will have to be registered. Problems arise in identifying vessels and realising compensations for lack of registration, the PM added. "If we can run vessels giving operators appropriate training the rate of accidents will come down."

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury presided over the function, joining it from the Bangladesh Secretariat. PM's Principal Secretary Ahmed Kaikaus conducted the virtual event.

Ex-bureaucrat's appointment at public university irks teachers

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The appointment of a former additional secretary as treasurer of Bangamata Sheikh Fojilatunnesa Mujib Science and Technology University in Jamalpur has irked teachers of public universities.

They said such an appointment was not a breach of the university law, but it is "unethical" and "unacceptable" and that they would announce programmes against the decision soon.

A teachers' leader said it was a "test case" and if the authorities became successful, they would try to appoint more former bureaucrats to different positions of universities.

Former additional secretary Abdul Mannan was appointed as treasurer of Bangamata Sheikh Fojilatunnesa Mujib Science and Technology University, with the approval of President Abdul Hamid, also the chancellor of universities, said a Secondary and Higher Education Division gazette notification issued on Wednesday.

Prof Nizamul Hoque Bhuiyan, secretary general of Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association, said they were stunned by the government decision.

"It is unethical and unacceptable. We condemn the decision. We will hold a meeting on Saturday and declare programmes protesting the decision," he said.

Although appointment of a former bureaucrat was not a breach of the university law, there is tradition that university teachers usually become treasurers, he said.

Criticising the decision, Dhaka University Teachers' Association President Prof Rahmat Ullah said, "This is an unfortunate incident... it is a test case, they [government] will appoint more people to different positions."

"Wait and see, you might find former bureaucrats in the top positions of universities," he added.

AKM Aftab Hossain Pramanik, additional secretary of Secondary and Higher Education Division, said the appointment was made in line with the law of the university. "There is no clause that only a teacher will be a university treasurer."

He refused to comment on the teachers' concern against the decision.

A top education ministry official said the university was established in 2018 and it was upgraded from an agriculture college.

"So, the authorities did not find any well qualified person among the university teachers to appoint him as treasurer. They thought as many administrative works of the university are incomplete, an experienced administrative person will help them do the job," the official said.

Earlier, the incumbent government appointed two former additional secretaries as treasurer and registrar of Islamic Arabic University and a government college teacher as Jashore University of Science and Technology treasurer.

Teachers had protested a government decision of giving Sher-e-Bangla Agriculture University registrar the charge of vice-chancellor of the university.

The registrar was not a teacher.

Covid may affect children big way

Warns Indian expert, says situation may worsen between Oct and Nov

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

An Indian virologist has warned the third wave of Covid-19 is expected to affect children in the country in a big way between October and November and both the Central and state governments should be ready to handle the situation.

The warning by virologist V Ravi came even as India's total daily fresh infection tally crossed the four lakh mark for the first time since the pandemic broke more than a year ago as the country reported 4.12 lakh cases, the Health Ministry data said this morning.

India also recorded 3,980 deaths in the last 24 hours, the highest in a day so far, pushing the total fatalities to 2, 30,168.

V Ravi, a member of Covid technical advisory committee in southern Indian state of Karnataka, one of the worst-hit, emphasized on the need to tone up medical infrastructure to treat Covid-infected children.

"We don't have enough pediatric Covid care wards and intensive care units for children. This has to be urgently scaled up," he said.

"The government should take some important policy decisions on what is their approach towards starting school the next academic year considering that the next wave will affect children, according to Ravi.

He said children would be more vulnerable because they are not vaccinated as of now by Covid vaccine.

The virologist also suggested the government take some stern steps to prevent crowding of people even after the end of the second wave.

Ravi, who is also the nodal officer for genome sequencing of SARS-CoV-2 virus in Karnataka, said the double mutant Indian variant (B.1.617) of the virus is spreading rapidly. "At the end of March, double mutant variant was detected in 5-10 per cent of community samples while it has now shot up to 45 per cent."