City













Nazrul's Photo Goof-Up

National poet's family to file defamation suit against Robi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

corporates alike.

Nazrul Islam's family.

In a post commemorating the national poet, the picture that they used was actually of Nobel Laureate

Khilkhil Kazi, the national poet's granddaughter, told The Daily Star yesterday that she is going to file a defamation suit against the telecom

"I refuse to believe that this was a simple mix-up," she said. "Whichever agency or individual was involved in making the post not only had to be unaware of both our national poet and Rabindranath Tagore, but the post had to be approved by officials of Robi who were in charge of the page. This is insulting to both legendary figures in

Khilkhil, a noted singer and organiser, said even the song lyric used in the post had errors in it. "This is a serious crime, and I will file a defamation case against Robi Axiata Limited," she said, adding that she had a meeting with her lawyer later that day to discuss the issue further.

The singer also expressed anguish at telecom companies profiting by using Kazi Nazrul Islam's work without

pay any kind of royalty to our family, even though they have been using his work for years.

Even though the telecom company removed the post from their social media, screenshots of it had already gone viral. However, the company and its affiliated agencies are allegedly working towards silencing the scandal.



জ্ঞাতীয় কবি কাজী নজৰুল ইসলামের লেখায় বিদ্রোহ, বিজয়, মায়া, মমতা, ভালোবাসা সবধরনের আবেগ পেয়েছিল এক নতুন দাত্রা। আজ ১১ই জৈষ্ঠ কবি কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম-এর ১২২ তম জন্মবার্ষিকী তে প্রিয় কবিকে জানাই বিনম্র শ্রদ্ধা।



"People have contacted my niece, Zoya, and her office and told her to remove the post that she made regarding the issue," says Khilkhil Kazi. "I am sure that they also contacted others who criticised their actions. They did not even have the decency to call me directly and apologise. Nonetheless, they will be held accountable."

Robi Axiata Limited has published an official apology on their Facebook page, saying that the post was made by their affiliated agency.

"We have always been respectful towards our National Poet, Kazi Nazrul Islam, and Bangladesh's art and culture. We are deeply sorry for this mistake," they wrote.

"This was just an unfortunate mix-up, and we did give our official statement on social media," said Shahed Alam, chief corporate and regulatory officer of Robi Axiata. Regarding the case, any citizen is well within their rights to file for defamation."

Ashraful Islam, media manager of Robi Axiata Limited, told The Daily Star that they have already made their official statement, and they have nothing more to add.



of sand, operation of engine boats and damaging the biodiversity of the river. The photo was taken on PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Hossain, superintendent

Big blow to fish farmers FORM PAGE 1 FOREST DEDARMMENT Under ST

in this district in the current financial year is 33,000 tonnes, he added.

claimed that the damage of fish and shrimp enclosures would not affect the production target, saying fish did not die; rather it went from one place to another.

several water vessels, watchtowers, jetties, crocodile sheds, foot rails and other structures were damaged by tidal waves and storms, inflicting a loss of around Tk 60 lakh, say forest officials.

Water of canals and rivers adjacent to the forest rose five to six feet on Wednesday. Besides, there was a strong wind. These inflicted infrastructural damage, said Joynal Abedin, assistant forest conservator of Sundarbans East

the series the Tigers will need to improve

was good in the first two games but

once again we lacked consistency with

Forest Department under Sharankhola

The disaster also damaged wildlife. Four bodies of deer were recovered after the storm, he added.

In Khulna, some 36 villages of Koyra upazila were inundated after embankments were breached.

Locals are repairing embankments at different points to stop gushing of water into the localities, said SM Shafiqul Islam, chairman of Koyra upazila parishad.

Koyra upazila is surrounded by Kabodak and Sakbaria rivers. There are around 155km embankments in the upazila. Of these, around 4km was breached at 25 points.

"We have already repaired four points, but 21 points are yet to be repaired," said Shafiqul.

engineer of Water Development Board in Khulna, told The Daily Star that they already distributed geo-bags to local chairmen to repair embankments. The chairmen were repairing the dams with the help of locals, he said. He added that they already engaged

workers at different points to repair the dams. "We are assessing the damage caused by the disaster."

Contacted yesterday afternoon, Enamur Rahman, state minister for disaster management and relief, said 27 upazilas of nine districts were affected by the cyclone.

Dams broke at 51 points in different districts and around 9,00 cattle were also affected. The government has already sent 16,500 packets of food for the affected people, he added.

Bagerhat. The target for fish production

The fisheries officer, however,

Meanwhile in the Sundarbans,

For Sri Lanka, though, it was the best performance all around and skipper Perera led from the front by scoring his sixth century after electing to bat first.

Perera, alongside Dhanushka Gunathilaka, scored 82 runs for the opening wicket, and despite Gunathilaka's departure for 39 off the bowling of Taskin Ahmed, Perea kept the scoreboard ticking.

The left-hander was dropped three times and made full use of those letoffs. He was first dropped on 66 by the ball and were shaky in our catching and fielding in the third game. So there

Mustafizur Rahman off Shakib Al
Hasan before being dropped on 79
the hosts with four wickets for 46 runs is still a lot of work to be done," Tamim by Afif Hossain. The easiest chance, in nine overs.

though, was grassed by Mahmudullah at mid-on off the bowling of Rahman, with the batsman one short of his Perera was eventually dismissed by

Shoriful Islam for 120 off 122 balls his innings featuring eleven fours and a six. Bangladesh did manage to pick up wickets at regular intervals but the early platform laid by the openers helped the risitors to continue the momentum. Dhananjaya de Silva's unbeaten 55 off 70 balls guided the visitors to the big total.

A lot of work to be done

fifties but it was never enough for

Govt plans to ease age bar Bangladesh with the required run rate climbing all the time. Apart from this, under the Covax Skipper Tamim, at the post-match facilities, a global vaccine alliance, conference, said that despite winning

> vaccine shots tomorrow. a lot in the coming days. Health officials said Pfizer vaccine "I would say we were lucky enough doses will be administered mostly in to win the first two games. Our batting the capital, considering the lack of hasn't been up to the mark and we need facilities to store those outside the city. to work on this aspect. Our bowling

China has already gifted Bangladesh five lakh doses of Sinopharm vaccine and promised to give another six lakh

Bangladesh will get 1.06 lakh Pfizer

The vaccine doses are being administered to medical students.

Seeking anonymity, a top health official told The Daily Star that the inoculation of university students is likely to begin once the first consignment of the Chinese vaccine arrives.

suspended government administering the first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine on April 26 soon after India temporarily banned export of Covid vaccine.

Bangladesh purchased three crore doses of AstraZeneca vaccine from Serum Institute of India and was supposed to receive 50 lakh jabs per month for six months from January to

delivered the first Serum consignment of 50 lakh doses in January, but shipped only 20 lakh in February. No other shipment has been made since then as the Indian government banned export of vaccine to meet its domestic demand.

Edible oil gets pricier again

processors for the steep rise in prices.

Aminul Islam, a low-income consumer in Dhaka, said the oil price hike came as "third blow" to the low and middleincome people as they faced two waves of the pandemic.

. Nazrul Islam, a private service holder, said he was finding it very difficult to run

his family due to price hike of essentials "How can I buy edible oil at such a high price? Is there no one to look into the matter?" he questioned.

Seeking anonymity, an official at a private company said the current edible oil prices in the country were not compatible with those in the international market.

When the prices go up in the international market, it is reflected in the local market. But the consumers don't see price adjustment in the local market when prices fall in the international market, he alleged.

Biswajit Saha, director for corporate and regulatory affairs at City Group, said prices of edible oil increased by 160 percent in the international market in the last one year.

According to the current price of soybean oil in the international market, the price would have been Tk 170 to 175

per litre in Bangladesh, he said.

Soybean oil now sells for \$1460 per tonne in the international market, iswajit added.

He said they have to pay the government an import duty of TK 28 to Tk 30 for each litre of soybean oil which was TK 15 previously.

"The soybean oil that we are selling now was bought earlier. At that time, the price in the international market was \$1260-1270 per tonne."

He said it would be possible for the processors to reduce the prices if the government withdrew the import duty.

Unchanging pictures, unending wait

She was at a human chain organised by "Mayer Daak", a platform of families with members who have been victims of enforced disappearances.

Hridi is now nine years old and a student of class 4. Each year, this newspaper has been watching her get a year older, but making the same demand for whoever had caused her father's disappearance to return him back to her.

"I don't even remember my papa," said Hridi, who would have been less than two when Parvez was picked up.

Hridi is not the only child who has been coming back year after year.

Eleven-year-old Lamia Ákhter Mim has also been coming back for the last eight years. Her father Kawsar Hossain, a driver who was 22 when he was picked up allegedly by law enforcers from his house in West Nakhalpara on December

According to Mayer Daak, Kawsar's mother passed away earlier this year in January, her wish to see her son return

Similarly, seven-year-old Safa has been coming to these protests every single year of her life. "I was in the womb when my father was taken away," said Safa.

Mosquitoes from the open drain beside her buzzed at her legs, but she sat dutifully on the curb holding a picture of her father Mahfuzur Rahman Sohel, a Chhatra Dal leader in Bangshal.

"My father had gone to buy flowers when they took him away," said Safa. The date was December 2, 2013.

"I know the other children here. I see them each year," she said. But how long before hope wears thin?

"Last year we got a telephone from Bangshal Police Station [asking us] to withdraw the general diary we had filed. But I have not lost hope. I will withdraw the GD when I find my husband," said Hridi's mother Farzana Akhter.

"We have often seen our loved ones

coming back. We cannot lose hope. We have to keep hoping that our family members will be back," said Abrar Ilias, son of Ilias Ali, the BNP leader who went missing on April 18, 2012.

Afroza Islam Akhi, whose brother Sajedul Islam Suman is a victim of enforced disappearance, said, "I have been coming here for the last 13 years. If the government thinks they can silence a person by forcefully disappearing him, it did not understand that that very act gave the rest of the family members the strength to yell louder.

Sajedul Islam Suman, the general secretary of ward-38 of the BNP's Dhaka city unit, was held along with five others in the Bashundhara residential area in Dhaka on December 4, 2013.

Nagorik Oikya convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna said, "Just because someone had a different political ideology doesn't mean he deserves to be forcefully disappeared."

If vaccinated, Tk 260cr could've been saved

Gulf nation, more than 30 migrant workers told The Daily Star.

After the new travel advisory came into effect, the workers were booking hotels with the assistance from officials of Saudi Arabian Airlines until May 25 when the officials stopped assisting the frustrated and confused

Minister AK Abdul Momen on Thursday said the government was considering whether to prioritise vaccinating the migrant workers.

considering whether to partly subsidise the expenses.

meeting has been scheduled for tomorrow to discuss the issue. Saudi health ministry requires no quarantine for non-residents and first-

time visitors who have proof that they spent 14 days after receiving all doses of a coronavirus vaccine. Fakhrul Islam, former finance

assist the workers in booking hotels and is the government's utter neglect in vaccinating the expatriate workers on

similar travel advisory as Saudi Arabia.

"We heard that several other countries may issue similar travel advisories. If they really do, the migrant workers will have to bear a massive financial burden. We could have saved several hundred crore taka had the workers been vaccinated,

Agency Oikya Parishad, said many of the migrant workers' travel abroad will be uncertain if more countries issue a travel advisory like Saudi Arabia had.

31 more die, 1,358 test positive for Covid in a day

Bss, Dhaka

yesterday Bangladesh 1,358 new Covid-19 cases, while the coronavirus claimed 31 more lives.

The tally of infections has surged to 7,96,343 as 1,358 new cases were confirmed in 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday, said a press release of Directorate General of Health

With the 31 deaths, the total number of fatalities from the pandemic rose to

Around 14,606 samples were tested in 24 hours at 497 authorised medical laboratories across the country.

The recovery count rose to 7,36,221 after another 1,064 patients were discharged from hospitals during the period.

The DGHS statistics showed of the people infected from the beginning, 92.45 percent recovered, while 1.57 percent died.

Ten out of the 31 died in Dhaka division alone, said the DGHS release.

Eighteen of them were men and 13 women. One was below 10 years, one between 11 and 20 years, four were in their 30s, five in their 40s, seven in their 50s and 13 were above 60 years, the release added.

Bangladesh recorded the highest number of Covid-19 fatality on April 19 this year when the virus killed 112 people in a day.

The country recorded 7,626 Covid-19 cases on April 7 this year, the highest daily spike since the outbreak of the pandemic, the release said.

Three US officers charged with killing of Black man in custody

AFP, Los Angeles

Two officers in the US state of Washington were charged with the murder of a Black man who died in police custody as he pleaded that he couldn't breathe, and a third was charged with manslaughter, prosecutors said Thursday.

Manuel Ellis died in Tacoma in March 2020, in a case that became a touchstone for protests in the Pacific Northwest, and which bears similarities to the killing of George Floyd by Minnesota police that sparked nationwide outrage two months later.

Ellis died after "felonious assault and/or unlawful imprisonment" by two of the officers, while a third "continued to hold Ellis in the prone position and to apply pressure onto his back" despite hearing Ellis say he could not breathe, a prosecutor statement says

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FROM PAGE 1

A special team has been sent to track her down and bring her to Bengaluru. Once she is back, her statement will be recorded by a magistrate. A 3:45 minute video clip of four men

and a woman torturing and sexually abusing the 22-year-old woman has been doing the rounds on social media for the last few days. Bengaluru police in a statement on Thursday said that on the basis of

the video clip and the questioning of the accused, a case has been registered under charges of rape, assault and other provisions with Ramamurthynagar Police Station. Karnataka Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai yesterday told reporters

that the victim's name has not been mentioned on the first information report (FIR), adding that the state police has submitted the information to a local court. He added that a probe has been ordered by the state government 'without any interference" Kamal Pant, commissioner of police in Bengaluru city, on his official Twitter

handle wrote, "The victim who is also a Bangladeshi was brought to India for trafficking and was tortured and brutalised due to a financial matter." The other two men were identified as Mohammed Baba Sheikh and Hakeel.

The identity of the female suspect has not been confirmed. Police in Dhaka said they identified he victim and one of the perpetrators as Bangladeshi and that Bangladesh police

were yet to be officially informed of the Mohiul Islam, assistant inspector general of National Central Bureau NCB), yesterday said, "The NCB, which is linked to the Interpol, tries to bring back the accused from abroad by maintaining communication with its counterpart. However, the Delhi NCB has not officially informed us about the

started the process of bringing them back to the country.' Commissioner Deputy Shahidullah of Tejgaon division said a case under the human trafficking act and the pornography act has been filed against Ridoy and several unnamed

arrests. We have contacted them and

others with Hatirjheel Police Station. It initially seems like the suspects are part of an organised human trafficking ring, he said, adding that police would investigate whether the suspects and the victim entered India illegally.

National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam's birth anniversary was celebrated worldwide on May 25, with tributes pouring in from individuals, organisations and

However, one "tribute" on telecom giant Robi Axiata Limited's Facebook page angered many, including Kazi

Rabindranath Tagore.

company for their "ignorance".

Bangla literature."

paying royalty.
"None of these telecom companies

vaccine," he added.

channels.

"I think we can observe the situation till next week and then we may go for a decision."

Arsalan suggested that the universities

A good number of teachers and

can reopen in phases and students be

inoculated accordingly. "First public universities, then private universities and then colleges. But this plan depends on the availability of

staffers have already been vaccinated. Dipu Moni said the government has a plan to inoculate 1.3 lakh university students. Educational institutions have

government extended the closure till At present, educational institutions are holding online classes and the government is broadcasting educational programmes on state-run television

Dipu Moni also said that if the

remained closed since March last year

due to the pandemic. Last week, the

current Covid situation improves, the government will reopen educational institutions on June 13. The government has already approved the use of Chinese Sinopharm vaccine and is expecting to sign a contract soon to purchase 1.5 crore doses. Once the deal is signed, the country is expected to

get 50 lakh doses of vaccines a month

UN honours

from June to August.

Saiful Imam Bhuiyan from Congo; LCPL Mohammad Abdulla Al Mamun from the Central African Republic; SGT Mohammad Ziaur Rahman from Congo; SGT Mohammad Mobarak Hussain from Congo; SGT Mohammad Ibrahim from the Central African Republic; LCPL Mohammad Saiful

Islam from Congo; and Washerman Nurul Amin from South Sudan. Permanent Representative Bangladesh to the United Nations, Ambassador Rabab Fatima received the medals on behalf of Bangladesh

The Permanent Mission will make necessary arrangements to send the medals to the family members of the deceased peacekeepers. Defense Advisor to Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN Mission

also attended this virtual ceremony. "I pay my deep homage to all the brave men and women in blue helmets who lost their lives while serving under the UN flag, and express my heartfelt condolences to their families and friends," said Ambassador Fatima in a condolence message given on the occasion.

She also said that Bangladesh lost many of its valiant soldiers in the line of their sacred duty for world peace. "This sacrifice, however, has never deterred us from responding to the UN's call for duty; rather reinforced our resolve to continue serving the cause of peace.'

She called upon the international community to honour the memories of the fallen peacekeepers through its pursuit for peace and by ensuring a world free from suffering.

The medals were virtually awarded

by the UN Secretary-General António

Guterres in presence of the respective

Permanent Representatives of the 44 countries at the event. The theme for this year is "The Road To A Lasting Peace: Leveraging The

Power Of Youth For Peace And Security". The UN Secretary-General also laid a wreath at the Peacekeepers Memorial Site in the North Lawn of the UNHOs in honour of all peacekeepers who have lost their lives while serving under the IN flag over the past seven decades.

Bangladesh is currently the top contributor of uniformed personnel UN peacekeeping operations and around 7,000 peacekeepers are deployed in nine peacekeeping missions currently. So far, 159 peacekeepers from

Bangladesh have lost their lives while

serving in the UN peacekeeping

operations, according to the Permanent Each year, the United Nations observes the International Day of the UN Peacekeepers on the UN headquarters premises.

However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the event was held virtually

Arabia had missed their flights to the

workers, leaving many of the workers It was at this point that Foreign

The government has decided to

A top official of the expatriates' welfare ministry said an inter-ministerial

secretary and president of the Recruiting Agency Welfare Organisation of Bangladesh, said the main reason behind the crisis facing the workers

He added that Bahrain also issued a

he said. Tipu Sultan, president of the Recruiting