

## Indian MPs want military

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CONVERSATION AMONG NIXON, KISSINGER AND KEATING

American President Richard Nixon today discussed the Bangladesh issue with his Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger and the Ambassador to India Kenneth Keating on the eve of his meeting with Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh.

In a reply to Nixon's question on whether India want the US to pressure Pakistan President Yahya Khan, Keating said, "Yes. I think he feels that—what he said is Russia and the United States are the only ones that can influence Yahya to stop the killing. And he said in my judgment the United States has more leverage with him than Russia has. And the only way is an economic way."

Nixon commented, "What we have to do, Ken [Keating], is to find a way to be just as generous as we can to the Indians, but also we do not want to do something that is an open breach with Yahya -- an open breach, an embarrassing situation. And that's really the problem."

Referring to the existing political situation in occupied Bangladesh, Keating said, "What political settlement that he [Yahya] can bring about ... that I'm not able to get in my head because this Amin [Nurul

Amin] was the biggest leader next to Mujib, he got one or two members of parliament, and ... Yahya tried to get him to head it up and he wouldn't touch it because he'd get his throat slit. Now they had a few, I'm told, a few members of the Awami League, about nine, who are ready to help form a government. But the bitterness is so great that I believe, and indeed Joe Farland does, that the old Pakistan is through."

**INDIAN ENVOY MEETS THANT**  
Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh conferred today with the UN Secretary General U Thant and urged that international pressure be exerted on Yahya Khan's government to cease atrocities in East Pakistan. The Indian minister, who had visited Moscow, Bonn, Paris and Ottawa, would go to Washington to schedule talks with President Nixon and Secretary of State William P Rogers.

After leaving Thant's office, he told correspondents that he had asked the secretary general to use his "tremendous influence" to impress upon the Pakistani government the need for a political solution to enable millions of refugees now in India to return home.

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## ASI Shoumen confesses

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statement claimed himself to be the husband of the Asma. He said he married her two years ago.

The ASI said he would submit the evidence of the marriage to the court in due time.

Shoumen said he wanted to take Asma to Khulna, but she did not agree. He was angry at this.

The accused said he suspected that Asma was in a relationship with Shakil and that's why she was following his advice.

The ASI told the court that he repeatedly enquired Asma on Sunday about her relationship with Shakil. As she kept mum, he pulled a pistol and opened fire.

He claimed he did not want to kill minor boy Robin, but it happened at one stage.

The cop also admitted that he left his workplace without permission. He said he brought with him a service pistol and bullets.

Hailing from Asba village in Magura, the ASI was working at Fultala Police Station in Khulna. He once worked in Kushtia.

Shakil's father Mejbab Rahman filed a murder case with Kushtia Model Police Station on Sunday night. Asma's mother Hasina Khatun filed the other murder case. Shoumen is the lone accused in both the cases.

Asma was from Natura in Kushtia's Kumarkhali upazila. She lived in Kushtia town.

Police on Sunday said they were not sure about the relationship between

the three dead.

"As Shoumen has claimed in court that Asma is his wife, police have nothing to say about it," said Additional Superintendent of Police Farhad.

However, Asma's family members claimed that she met Soumen when the latter was working in Kushtia. Soumen married her two years ago, they added.

Shakil from Sawnta village of Kushtia's Kumarkhali upazila was a local agent of digital money transfer platform BKash.

Meanwhile, police have suspended Shoumen following the triple murder. Khulna Superintendent of Police Mahbub Hasan said the ASI was suspended and departmental action would be taken against him. He went to Kushtia Sunday morning without taking leave from work.

An investigation committee was formed as per directive of the DIG (Khulna Range) of police to probe Shoumen's leaving the workplace without permission and carrying the firearm.

Police sources said Soumen was promoted to ASI from constable in 2015. The following year, he joined Kumarkhali Police Station in Kushtia. He later worked in some other police stations of the district.

Meanwhile, the bodies of the victims were handed to their families yesterday afternoon after autopsies. The three were buried at their respective villages following namaz-e-janazas.

## India gingerly eases curbs

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this week. "Visitors will have to step on a sponge-like platform which will act as a sanitiser for shoes," a government official told AFP.

Hospitals in Delhi had struggled to provide oxygen cylinders and beds to patients last month as infections surged but earlier this month, the city allowed businesses to bring back 50% of employees and they partially resumed public transport.

In the southern state of Tamil Nadu, known for automobile manufacturing, some businesses were allowed to bring back 50% of employees and salons and liquor shops re-opened. Bus services remained suspended until June 21, reports Reuters.

In Bengaluru, the capital of neighbouring Karnataka state and a major tech hub, traffic returned to the streets as authorities allowed the partial re-opening of businesses though strict night and weekend curfews remained in place.

The pressure to resume some economic activity has grown as millions depend on daily wages to pay for food and rent.

"India needs to reopen as the challenge of maintaining a fine balance between lives and livelihoods

is very crucial," said Rajib Dasgupta, head of the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health at New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University.

**DELTA VARIANT MUTATES**  
The highly infectious Delta variant of Covid-19 that first surfaced in India is feared to have mutated into a more virulent version called AY.1 or Delta+ -- one that is possibly capable of resisting even the monoclonal antibodies cocktail currently being prescribed as a cure for the virus.

According to Public Health England (PHE), an executive agency of the UK government's health and social care department, 63 genomes of Delta (B.1.617.2) with the new K417N mutation had been identified so far on the global science initiative GISAID.

In its latest report on Covid-19 variants, updated till last Friday, India had reported six cases of Delta+ as of June 7.

Dr Vinod Scaria, clinician and computational biologist at Delhi's Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, said an important point to consider regarding K417N was "evidence suggesting resistance to monoclonal antibodies Casirivimab and Imdevimab".

**একাদশ ব্যাচে**  
**অনলাইন**  
**রেজিস্ট্রেশন**  
**চলছে**

বাংলাদেশ মহিলা পরিষদ পরিচালিত জেডভার, নারীর ক্ষমতায়ন  
এবং উন্নয়ন বিষয়ক অনলাইন সার্টিফিকেট কোর্স ২০২১

অনলাইন রেজিস্ট্রেশনের জন্য মহিলা পরিষদের ওয়েব সাইট বা ফেসবুক পেজ দেখুন  
<http://mahilaparishad.org>  
[fbangladeshmahilaparishad](https://fbangladeshmahilaparishad)

রিসোর্স-পার্সন হিসেবে উপস্থিত থাকবেন বিভিন্ন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষক, অর্থনীতিবিদ, আইনজীবী, গবেষক ও নারী নেত্রীবৃন্দ

কোর্সের মেয়াদ	দুই মাসে (৮ সপ্তাহে) এবং ১৬ দিনে মোট ৩২টি ক্লাস।
ক্লাসের সময়	প্রতি বৃহস্পতিবার ও শনিবার বিকেল ৪.০০ - সন্ধ্যা ৭.০০
ক্লাস শুরু	১২ আগস্ট, ২০২১
ভর্তি যোগ্যতা	স্নাতক পাস (ম্যনুতম)
কোর্স ফি	৪০০০ [চার হাজার] টাকা
আবেদনের শেষ তারিখ	৩০ জুলাই, ২০২১

বাংলাদেশ মহিলা পরিষদ  
প্রশিক্ষণ, গবেষণা ও পাঠ্যবই উপপরিষদ, কেন্দ্রীয় কমিটি



Protesters make the three-finger salute as they take part in a flash mob demonstration against the military coup in Yangon, Myanmar yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

## Give migrants jabs with priority

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with new work visas have been waiting to go abroad.

He said if not vaccinated, workers travelling to Saudi Arabia will have to spend about Tk 70,000 additionally to undergo hotel quarantine there. Such workers were already paying additional money to get plane tickets.

Although the government has agreed to pay Tk 25,000 of the quarantine fees as subsidy, migrant workers still have to pay the rest and high air fare, which is a burden for them, he added.

"Migrant workers should be given priority considering their contribution to the country's economy," Alim said.

FWRAAB Secretary General M Mohiuddin said they have raised the

demand to ensure vaccination of both male and female, and new and old migrant workers.

The government has recently imported a little over one lakh jabs of the Pfizer vaccine, he said.

He said they want around 50,000 doses of those so that they can overcome the present crisis over migrant workers' travel abroad.

Mohiuddin said they have demanded Johnson and Johnson vaccine as experts suggest a person needs only one dose of the vaccine. This will help migrant workers save both money and time, he added.

He added that at present they were mainly sending workers to Saudi Arabia as most other markets remained closed due to the pandemic.

Mohiuddin said although the government earlier allocated about 1.20 lakh shots of vaccine for migrant workers, those were later used for other sector.

Referring to hassles workers have to face to ensure hotel quarantine in Saudi Arabia, he said if the government starts vaccinating migrant workers, such situation would not happen.

According to an estimate of this newspaper, migrant workers travelling to Saudi Arabia could have saved at least Tk 260 crore in one and a half months from paying quarantine fees had the government prioritised inoculating them against Covid-19.

FWRAAB is a platform of about 600 recruiting agencies which send female workers to different countries.

## A moniker that can't ring hollower

FROM PAGE 1  
East and the University of Oxford in the UK can be revealing.

We can begin by discussing what the universities have been doing amid the coronavirus pandemic.

In Bangladesh, the first cases of Covid-19 were detected on March 8 last year. As the situation kept deteriorating, authorities of the Oxford of the East announced an indefinite shutdown of the institution on April 9 last year. The dormitories have been closed since.

The shutdown is largely still in force, although the university did hold some examinations. But all other academic activities remain suspended.

The university's state of lockdown is easily visible to anyone visiting the campus.

There is a gigantic archway that constructed by the Dhaka University Alumni Association at the university's entrance at Nilkhet.

When the country enforced the lockdown, the authorities put bamboo fences across the archway to restrict entries of vehicles.

Over time, the government withdrew the lockdown, but the university has not removed the fences blocking traffic to the historic campus.

Not surprisingly, over time, temporary kitchen markets have sprouted there.

The DU authority also set up fences on Fuller Road, where there are living quarters of the teachers and officers.

Many people jokingly said that the DU authority is trying to prevent coronavirus with bamboo fences.

A few months ago, when the DU authorities decided to hold examinations without resuming classes, the fences were removed.

But then, the daily new cases of coronavirus skyrocketed and the bamboo fences reappeared.

Besides the fences, the authorities also took another "important" initiative: They banned the general public from the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) on campus.

The university's proctorial team used to patrol the TSC area and repeatedly asked "outsiders" through loud speakers to steer clear. Tea stalls and other temporary shops were also removed.

At that point, DU Proctor ARK

Golam Rabbani tested positive for Covid-19.

Thus far, much of the coronavirus prevention measures of the Oxford of the East seemed to involve shutting down the institution, setting up bamboo fences and ousting tea stalls and vendors.

Dhaka University authorities started conducting Covid-19 tests at its laboratories on May 5 last year. But a few days later, testing was stopped with authorities saying the laboratory facility would be used for academic and research purposes.

"It's a university; not a hospital," Prof Akhtaruzzaman, vice-chancellor of the university, told The Daily Star on June 1 last year. "The lab apparatus we brought from our three departments need to be returned for their research purposes. The apparatus needs to be disinfected and reinstalled in their previous places. That's why coronavirus samples will no longer be tested."

The kits and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) were supposed to be provided by the health ministry, and the university was supposed to bear the other costs of testing.

The university authorities had then said they needed at least Tk 15 to 20 lakh a month to do the testing, that bearing the expenses was difficult and an added pressure on the institution.

After authorities of the Oxford of the East stopped coronavirus testing for the masses citing unavailability of funds, they announced they would start testing only for its teachers and students, fixing the testing charge at Tk 1,500.

The teachers availed the facilities, but the students did not.

We now come to the University of Oxford in the UK.

Coronavirus was first detected in the UK in January last year, around three months before the first case was detected in Bangladesh.

The University of Oxford launched a mobile app for instant contact tracing on March 17, the day all educational institutions in Bangladesh were shut down.

A day later, a release claimed the scientists of the University of Oxford unveiled rapid testing technology. Two days later, they disclosed the roadmap for easily settable ventilators.

Later, in phases, the University of

Oxford conducted multiple researches on different aspects of Covid-19. These included research into which types of people would be massively infected, the practicable actions that could be taken by parents of isolated children, how lockdowns would be implemented, how the virus would affect pregnant women, and the mental health of infected people.

Most significantly, the University of Oxford signed a contract with AstraZeneca to develop a vaccine that got approval on December 30 last year.

While the University of Oxford in the UK was conducting such researches, the Oxford of the East was busy fencing up its streets to restrict movement of outsiders.

During this time, the Oxford of the East issued nine press releases.

One was a condolence message from the VC, two were about leave extensions and one about the decision to take Zoom classes.

Two other press releases were issued about the donation to the Prime Minister's coronavirus fund (Tk 1.37 crore). Three other messages were on raising awareness of using face masks, telemedicine programmes and mental health assistance services over phone.

Let us now discuss the general heritage and impact of each institution within their respective environments.

The University of Oxford has around 14,000 researchers. It is roughly estimated that some 91 percent of its graduates get jobs within six months of completion of their studies.

About the Oxford of the East, we can recall a remark of Vice-chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman.

In a programme in January 2019, he said, "Our university has another pride. You cannot find a cup of tea along with a piece of chaap, shingara and samosa for only Tk 10 anywhere in the world. But it is available in our university. If the international community come to know of this, it could be placed in the Guinness Book of Records."

Considering the divergent paths of each institution since the Oxford of the East opened its doors just under 100 years ago, the gulf between the two is much more than the 8,000 kilometres that separate them physically.

To paraphrase a famous poem, it seems never the two shall meet.

## Village chief shot

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member was gunned down by unknown criminals in Jurachhari upazila on April 10 last year.

Another union parishad member was gunned down inside a government office room by unknown assailants in Baghaichhari upazila of Rangamati on February 24 this year.

## Cops looking

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But the suspect had fled by the time they reached the scene, said AKM Sultan Mahmud, officer-in-charge of Kuliarchar Police Station.

Police have been looking for him since the girl's father filed a case on Sunday, he added.

## Khaleda's kidneys

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he said.

Fakhrul made the remarks at a press conference at party chairperson's Gulshan office after the party's standing committee meeting.

The BNP leader said they have repeatedly been saying that Khaleda has been suffering from post-Covid complications and that's why she could not return home even after one and a half months.

Fakhrul said the healthcare professionals of Evercare Hospital are trying their best, but at the same time they are saying that she needs to treat in advanced centre as their hospital is not equipped enough to treat her.

Khaleda was admitted to the hospital on April 27, three days after she tested positive for coronavirus for 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. Later, she tested negative and was shifted to cabin from CCU.

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

The BNP chief 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 that year, the High Court raised her punishment to 10 years.

## Two MPs blast

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bureaucracy, saying the situation becomes difficult if bureaucrats behave like the Pharaohs.

Speaking on the "Idiosyncratic Salt Bill, 2021", the BNP MP said, "In a bid to make people understand the despicable attitude of bureaucrats, the planning minister [MA Mannan] several days ago said that even the Pharaoh could not run his activities without bureaucrats."

Rumeen said, it's true that bureaucrats are necessary to run a modern country and its government.

She said an Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Bogura's Adamdighi Upazila fined a goat for consuming flower plants on the office premises in May.

A family in Narayanganj was subjected to harassment and fined after a member of that family sought food support by calling 333, said Rumeen.

The harassment of journalist Rozina Islam of Prothom Alo by health ministry officials has proved that people in different sectors are being harassed by the bureaucrats.

Pointing to a provision of mobile courts in the "Idiosyncratic Salt Bill", Rumeen said the mobile court must not exist in a country where there is an independent judiciary.

"Mobile court is being operated by the country's executive division which is totally contradictory to Article 22, Article 115 and Article 116 of the Constitution."

Operation of mobile court by an executive magistrate is against the spirit of the constitution.

Speaking on the proposed budget for 2021-22 fiscal, Workers Party leader Menon said the government has taken various actions against individuals involved in corruption in the health sector.

"But no actions were taken against officials who posed for photographs and inked the agreement with the Regent Hospital [owner]," he added.

The prime minister's brave measures to contain Covid-19 were of little use because of a group from the civil and military bureaucracy and rich individuals close to power.

"Although the finance minister has pointed out economic progress in the budget... structural weakness and corruption in health sector has been exposed over the last one year," Menon added.

The proposed budget is not people-friendly, it's business-friendly, he said. He also criticised imposing VAT on private universities.

**"ENSURE COMPLETE FREEDOM OF MEDIA"**  
Jatiya Party MP Salma Islam told parliament that the government must ensure complete freedom of the media and the opposition parties in order to strengthen democracy.

She also suggested that the government confiscate properties of loan defaulters.

Salma Islam, who was elected to a reserved seat for woman in parliament, also said the government should welcome criticism on any issue.

She said the government should not invite the loan defaulters to any state event.

"Air tickets should not be sold to them and licences of their cars should be revoked," she added.

## New Israeli govt

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in two years.

Instead of the traditional toasts marking Bennett's entry into the prime minister's office, Netanyahu held a low-key meeting there with the former defence chief, who heads the nationalist Yamina party, to brief him on government business.

"Sour, grumpy, not stately - Trump-like until the final moment," Yossi Verter, a political affairs commentator, wrote in the left-leaning Haaretz newspaper.

The government was already facing

a sensitive decision over whether to approve a flag-waving procession planned for today by Jewish nationalists through the Muslim quarter of Jerusalem's Old City.

**'DAY OF RAGE'**  
Palestinian factions have called for a "day of rage" against the event, with memories of clashes with Israeli police still fresh from last month in contested Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound and in a neighbourhood of the city where Palestinians face eviction in a court dispute with Jewish settlers.

## Songbirds act as one

FROM PAGE 12  
used for singing in the listening partner, which helps link the pair's brains and coordinate turn-taking for a seemingly telepathic performance," according to a news release.

It's not telepathy -- but almost,

according to study coauthor Eric Fortune, a neurobiologist and associate professor at New Jersey Institute of Technology's department of biological sciences.

"The birds hearing each other links their brains to act as one," he told CNN.