

'It was all business'

Says GM Quader on procuring vaccine from single source

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday alleged that the government decision to procure vaccines from a single source was taken from a business point of view.

Addressing a book launching ceremony at the JP chairman's office in the city's Banani, the deputy leader of the opposition said it will not be possible to deal with a pandemic like coronavirus with inadequate number of vaccines collected as gifts and donations alone.

"The health ministry is assuring us every day [about Covid-19 vaccine], but there is no success. Bangladesh has completely failed in the vaccine diplomacy. The ministry is taking a sigh of relief after receiving 5 to 10 lakh vaccines as gifts from different countries," said GM Quader.

The JP chairman said the issue of vaccinating 18 crore people in the country is still uncertain. "There is no credible information in the government's announcement. Frustration has spread among the people of the country about the vaccine."

He further said the government did not keep any alternative source for purchasing vaccine due to its shortsightedness.

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To mark Awami League's 72nd founding anniversary, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday placed a floral wreath at the portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the capital's Dhanmondi Road-32.

PHOTO: BSS

Ensure dignified repatriation of Rohingyas: PM

Urges global community at Moscow confce

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday renewed her call to the global community to ensure the dignified repatriation of Rohingyas as they are posing a big security threat to Bangladesh as well as the region.

"We've sheltered them on humanitarian grounds but such a huge population can't be lodged for an indefinite period... I request the world community to assist us in dignified and peaceful repatriation of the Rohingyas," she said.

The premier made the call in her pre-recorded speech at the three-day "IX Moscow Conference on International Security".

She said Bangladesh has been hosting more than 1.1 million forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals for about four years.

"They're posing a huge security threat to Bangladesh as well as the region," she added.

Hasina said it goes without saying that conflicts among states give rise to intrastate security problems.

Besides, she mentioned, the concept of security now includes, in addition to military threats, the socio-economic and political needs of individuals, mass involuntary migration, environmental security and other non-traditional security threats.

"Even, new challenges and issues of international security arise due to terrorism, extremism, separatism, weapons of mass destruction, cybercrimes, regional conflicts and ecological catastrophes," Hasina said.

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Recruits of ex-VC halt demos at RU

OUR CORRESPONDENT, RU

Many of the 137 illegal recruits at Rajshahi University (RU), who were recruited by former vice chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan, called off their demonstrations yesterday evening, after discussions with the authorities.

Sources said some 50 staffers, mostly former and current Chhatra League (BCL) leaders, locked the VC's residence on Tuesday evening and held a sit-in, demanding suspension of a syndicate committee meeting and letting them join work.

Though the authority suspended the meeting that night, demonstrators continued their movement till yesterday evening.

Mahafuz Al Amin, one of the demonstrators and vice-president of RU BCL, told The Daily Star, "After talking to the proctor body, we have decided to halt our demonstration for now. Authorities have called for a discussion with us tomorrow [today] at 11am."

Earlier, talking to this newspaper, RU acting VC Prof Ananda Kumar Saha said, "We have been requesting them to withdraw the demonstration through the proctor body, but they continued it. So, I have informed the education ministry and urged them to resolve the issue as soon as possible."

When asked about recruitment, he said, "We do not have such authority to sanction the recruitment. We have to follow the education ministry's order regarding the matter."

On June 19, RU authorities were forced to suspend their financial

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ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION IN LABOUR MIGRATION Formulating new rules a must

Say speakers on upholding migrant workers' rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Formulating new rules to address alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in labour migration is a necessity to uphold migrant workers' rights and end fraudulence in the sector, said speakers at a workshop yesterday.

They said disputes can be resolved through arbitration or mediation mechanism keeping government bodies such as the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) as the monitoring authority.

Refugee and Migrants Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) with support from British Council's project Promoting Knowledge for Accountable Systems (Prokas) organised the workshop on "Draft ADR Rules under Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013 to Address Migration Related Disputes" at a city hotel.

At the workshop, RMMRU

presented a draft copy of the proposed "overseas employment and migrant (resolving complaints through arbitration) rules" for stakeholders' opinions.

The draft set of rules has been prepared in line with the Overseas Employment and Migrant Act -2013 that cites "arbitration" as the alternative means to resolve disputes.

Addressing the workshop as chief guest, Anisul Islam Mahmud, chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, said it will not be appropriate if BMET or District Manpower and Employment Office (DEMO) is given the responsibility for resolving disputes since such authorities are involved in giving the final clearance for overseas jobs.

Either the upazila nirbahi officer

(UNO) or an official selected by the UNO such as assistant commission (land) can play the role of arbitrator, he suggested.

BMET can play the monitoring role which will uphold its independent role in the process, he added.

In his remarks, BMET director general Shahidul Alam stressed for identifying offenses that can be resolved under alternative dispute resolution.

Advocate Salma Ali, president of Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association, said mediation at the grassroots level was essential.

In many cases, trafficking victims seek compensation instead of filing case, she said.

Chairing the workshop, Barrister Shameem Haider Patwary, chairperson of Bangladesh Parliamentarians'

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CASE FILED BY PORI MONI

Nasir, Omi placed on 5-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed former Uttara Club Limited president Nasir U Mahmud and his associate Tuhin Siddiqui Omi on a five-day remand each in an attempted rape and murder case.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Rajib Hasan passed the order after Investigation Officer Md Kamal Hossain, an inspector of Savar Police Station, produced the two before the court with a ten-day remand prayer each in the case, court sources said.

Film actress Pori Moni filed the case against Nasir, also a real-estate entrepreneur and presidium member of Jatiya Party, Omi and four others on June 14.

On June 14, a team of detectives carried out a raid at a house in Uttara sector-1 and arrested Nasir and Omi in this connection.

They were later placed on a seven-day remand in a case filed with Airport Police Station under the Narcotics Control Act on June 15.



Rajshahi Medical College authorities have installed a new liquid oxygen vaporiser for uninterrupted supply and increasing oxygen pressure to Covid-19 patients. The vaporiser -- the hospital's second -- will help the authorities to extend wards for patients. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANWAR ALI

4 killed, 2 injured in M'singh road crashes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

At least four people, including a tenth-grader, were killed and two injured in two separate road crashes in Mymensingh on Tuesday night.

In Muktagachha upazila, three young brick-field workers were killed after a truck hit their motorbike at Horinatola area on Mymensingh-Tangail highway, said police, quoting locals.

The victims were identified as Selim Mia (21), Sabuj Mia (20) and Antor Mia (19), all hailing from the upazila's Charipara village.

Officer-in-charge of Muktagachha Police Station Mohammad Dulal Akanda said the accident took place around 8pm, killing bike rider Selim and injuring the others.

The injured were taken to Muktagachha Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared Sabuj dead. Critically injured Antor was referred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH), where he died, said the OC.

On information, police recovered the bodies and handed them over to family members yesterday afternoon. Police arrested the truck driver and seized the vehicle.

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Far too many issues!

Delegation including Barishal mayor, divisional commissioner find major faults at SBMCH

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

A high-level delegation, including city corporation mayor Semiabat Sadik Abdullah and Divisional Commissioner Md Saiful Islam, expressed displeasure at various management issues of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) after a visit yesterday afternoon.

They observed problems with the hospital's Covid-19 unit, elevators, electricity management and more.

After the visit, they sat for a meeting with hospital officials and based on the observations, they directed the hospital authority to co-ordinate with the public Works Department -- responsible for development works at the hospital -- to resolve the issues immediately.

The city mayor complained that the ongoing construction work at the hospital was substandard. Apart from this, as there is

no separate subsection of electricity for the corona unit, electricity load is increasing on the unit, which could lead to accidents at any time.

Hospital director Dr HM Saiful Islam said, "The main hospital was supposed to have two more lifts, but they haven't been installed. The hospital's corona unit has also not been repaired in a long time."

In addition, many of the air conditioners aren't working well and are in need of repair, plasters are falling off the walls, while water and toilet facilities also have several issues, he said. As a result, the hospital is not being able to provide even the minimum of quality service.

Md Moniruzzaman Shahin, in-charge of the hospital's corona unit, said, "This hospital is the only modern hospital for one and half crore people (of the region)."

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69 judges of lower courts promoted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The law ministry has promoted 69 lower court judges across the country.

Among them, 11 additional district and sessions judges have been promoted to the posts of district and sessions judges, and 58 joint district and sessions judges have been promoted to the posts of additional district and sessions judges.

The law ministry issued two notifications to this effect on Sunday, mentioning the promotions of subordinate court judges were made in consultation with the Supreme Court.

In both the notifications, the promoted judges were requested to join their new workplaces after vesting their responsibilities to their superior authorities concerned on June 27.

Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star yesterday that the promotions of lower court judges will enhance the speed in justice delivery system.

"I am sure that the promoted judges will further contribute to the ongoing process of delivering proper justice," he said.

"My ministry has already sent a requisition to the Bangladesh Judicial Service Commission requesting it to select new judges through holding relevant tests and examinations for the vacant posts in the subordinate courts across the country," the minister said.



As passenger trains going to and from Dhaka were suddenly suspended from yesterday midnight, many who were unaware of the decision, like this woman with her kids, came to Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday, only to find out that they can't go to their destination. Inset, people huddled in lines to return their train tickets, possibly exposing themselves to the coronavirus.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Nine pilots serve legal notice on Regent Airways

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nine pilots of Regent Airways have served a legal notice on the airlines authorities, demanding payment of unpaid salary and over other issues.

In the notice, sent on June 22, the pilots requested the airlines' authorities to pay for their simulator training, training costs and NOCs so that they can find work in other organisations.

Regent Airways' Deputy Managing Director, Salman Habib, informed The Daily Star yesterday that they will respond to the pilots through legal procedure.

Three months ago, they discussed reinstating the airlines' operations, according to Habib. But resuming flights amid the second wave of Covid-19 would not be viable for them.

Habib refuted several claims, including not providing NOC, by stating that eight Regent Airways pilots are now employed by other airlines.

He also said two of the nine pilots who have served legal notice are already working in other organisations. "In that case, the allegation of not giving NOC is incorrect."

He stated that they are serious about restoring airline operations but waiting for the right time.

Regent Airways pilots claim that they must complete specified trainings after a set amount of time in order to keep their licenses valid. Pilots also stated that they are obtaining training at their own expense in order to maintain the validity of their licenses.