

Lalmonirhat

FROM PAGE 16
mosque in Patgram.

According to DB police sources, police have so far arrested 49 people in three cases filed over the murder.

Earlier, Sramik League president of Burimari union unit Abul Hossain alias Hossain Decorator, the main accused in the murder case, Mosque Khadem, Jobed Ali, and four others have given confessional statements to a court.

Jewel was beaten up and burnt to death by a mob in Burimari area of Patagram upazila on October 29.

3 brothers shot

FROM PAGE 16
On information, teams of APBN and Teknaf police went to the spot and took the injured to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex, said Tariqul, adding that the on-duty doctors gave the injured treatment and then sent them to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital.

Locals said there were 10-12 Rohingya criminals in the group. Hashemullah, Nuru, Abu Taher, Abdur Rahman, Prakash Beji, Azimullah, and Shukkur were among the criminals, they said.

Police patrol has been increased in the area, said the APBN commander, adding that the situation was under control.

Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station, told The Daily Star that police were trying to arrest the attackers.

A case was filed in this connection.

Khaleda

FROM PAGE 16
considered that appeal under 401 [of penal code] and her sentences were suspended on two conditions and she was released," the minister said.

In addition, he said, the two conditions were that she would receive treatment from home and she would receive treatment within the country.

Khaleda's family accepted the conditions and took her home from jail, he added.

Pointing to BNP leaders' repeated appeals to send Khaleda abroad, the law minister asked, "Once an application is disposed of, can it be reconsidered?"

Throwing out a challenge, the minister said there are six sub-sections in the law.

"If you [BNP MPs] can show under those sub-sections that you will be able to apply again [to take Khaleda abroad], then I will not be in the legal profession anymore," he said.

Referring to Khaleda's treatment, he said she was treated at Evercare Hospital and got proper treatment.

Amid the coronavirus outbreak, the government on March 25 last year freed Khaleda from jail for six months suspending her jail sentences in two graft cases which were extended several times.

On February 8, 2018, the BNP chief was sent to the Old Dhaka Central Jail after a lower court had sentenced her to five years imprisonment in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case.

The High Court later doubled her jail sentence.

Khaleda was found guilty in another corruption case the same year. Her party, however, claims both the cases are politically motivated.

Seven houses

FROM PAGE 16
Salma Khatun, 28, said no beneficiary was interested in living in those houses as they already developed cracks and parts of some others were collapsing. She said they were not willing to put their life at risk by starting living in those houses.

However, the upazila administration said they were trying to protect the houses from further damage by piling of bamboos along the bank of the canal.

Asked why such land was picked for the project, Project Implementation Officer Samsunnahar Sheuly said, "The khas land was selected by an upazila taskforce committee."

Moynul Islam, Sherpur upazila nirbahi officer, told The Daily Star that they had filled up a low-lying land with soil during the construction work.

"Following the recent rainfall, the soil started subsiding into the canal. As a result, seven toilets and some walls of the houses have collapsed. We are now dumping sand in the area to protect the land. We will repair the houses later," he added.

Asked about electricity supply and tube well, the UNO said the local public health department would soon install some tube wells in the area. Electrical wiring in those houses was going on, Moynul said.

Malaysian palm oil giant accused of mistreating workers

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Migrant workers employed by a Malaysian palm oil giant have faced mistreatment ranging from physical abuse to poor living conditions, a rights group said yesterday.

US House passes bill to remove Confederate statues from Capitol

REUTERS, Washington

The Democratic-controlled US House of Representatives on Tuesday passed a bill to remove statues honoring those who upheld slavery or backed the Confederacy from the Capitol building, which displays statues selected by all 50 states.

It is the second year in a row that the House passed the bill, which the then-Republican-controlled Senate in 2020 declined to take up. Democrats now have a razor-thin Senate majority, which could allow them to force a vote on the measure, which would

need the support of 10 Republicans to pass.

The bill passed the House 285-120 with all the votes against the measure coming from Republicans.

The statues and busts targeted by the "Remove Hate" bill include one honoring former U.S. Chief Justice Roger Taney, who authored a key decision supporting slavery. They also include leaders of the rebellious Confederacy -- whose battle flag was seen in the Capitol on Jan. 6 when supporters of then-President Donald Trump launched a deadly attack that attempted to overturn his election

defeat.

Taney's bust would be replaced by one of former Supreme Court Associate Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first Black man to serve on the high court.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, said removing the statues will not erase the stain of racist acts from U.S. history, nor will it erase racism in the United States today. But she asked, "How can we expect to end the scourge of racism ... when we allow the worst perpetrators of that racism to be lauded in the halls of Congress?"

Opponents said it would be wrong

Faith in mankind reaffirmed

FROM PAGE 1

Artisan café on the fateful evening of July 1, 2016 at the mercy of armed Islamist terrorists, when most would have made a beeline for the exit.

That evening, the 20-year-old grandson of Transcom Group Chairman Latifur Rahman was a paragon of gallantry, selflessness, purity, friendship, and optimism -- confronting an adversary consumed by hatred and sadism.

The five militants' plan for the venue frequented by foreigners was loud and clear -- annihilating non-Muslims.

The diners were segregated on the basis of their ability to recite verses from the Holy Quran, which Faraaz was able to and was allowed to walk free.

But he stopped to ask if his two friends could come with him. His friends were Abinta Kabir, a US citizen of Bangladeshi origin, and Tarishi Jain, an Indian national.

The militants refused to let the two leave, so Faraaz stayed behind -- innocently sealing his fate.

The nation watched with utter horror, incredulity and agony as the five militants fended off attacks from the police and held the diners hostage overnight.

The terrorists went on to kill and maim the bodies of 20 hostages -- including Faraaz, Abinta and Tarishi along with nine Italians, seven Japanese, and another Bangladeshi.

The five militants were killed

during the joint forces operation the next morning, bringing to an end a 12-hour standoff.

Faraaz, the younger son of Simeen Hossain and Muhammad Waquer bin Hossain, lost his life but stood out as a beacon of hope for generations that will continue to reaffirm faith in mankind.

His bravery and sacrifice has been recognised with several posthumous awards.

Faraaz was a student of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia in the US. He came to Dhaka on May 18, 2016 to spend his summer holidays and was scheduled to return to the US a few months later.

On the fateful evening of July 1, he went to the restaurant to meet Tarishi and Abinta for a cup of coffee. During the siege, he made the unflinching decision to stay back with his friends in a situation that had only one possible ending -- death.

He remained staunch in the horrifying face of terror and death, proving with pride that humanity stands above all.

After the bloody siege in the Gulshan café, Faraaz became a symbol of friendship, hope and bravery. His sacrifice is being recognised across the world.

He was awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice in November 2016. His mother Simeen and elder brother Zaraq Ayaat Hossain received the

award in Mumbai.

The award, instituted in 2005 in memory of Mother Teresa, is the only one in the world recognised by the institution she founded, the Missionaries of Charity, Kolkata.

Receiving the award, Simeen said, "I wanted to raise my son as a good human being. Faraaz did not leave his friends, the people he loved, and he did not act like a coward."

"For you, Faraaz, I am the proudest mother in this world."

"When my son stood by his friends, including Tarishi who was an Indian, he represented true Islam while those who murdered them were monsters. I refuse to accept the terrorists were Muslims," she was earlier quoted by the Indian media as saying.

In an article in 2016, veteran Indian journalist and columnist Kuldeep Nayar wrote, "Just as statues of Bhagat Singh have been erected all over India, Faraaz should also be remembered in the entire subcontinent and I am confident that people would name their sons and statues after him, not only in Bangladesh but also in India and elsewhere."

In recognition of his courageous act, PepsiCo INC in 2016 launched the annual "Faraaz Hossain Courage Award" for the next 20 years. The recipients are awarded \$10,000, a certificate, and a plaque.

The purpose of the award is to recognise individuals for their acts of exceptional courage and empathy, the

to dictate to individual U.S. states whom they can honor by sending statues to the Capitol. Republican Representative Mo Brooks of Alabama said the bill was an example of "cancel culture and historical revisionism" by "elitists who claim they know more than regular citizens."

Taney wrote the majority opinion in the 1857 "Dred Scott" case, ruling that Black Americans could not be considered citizens and that Congress could not prohibit slavery. It later was overturned by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which was adopted in 1868.

very spirit Faraaz showed.

Besides, his family set up the Faraaz Hossain Foundation which works for distressed people.

Faraaz was honoured with a place in the Garden of the Righteous at the Italian Embassy in the Tunisian capital, Tunis.

Milan-based non-profit organisation Garden of the Righteous Worldwide, with help from the Italian foreign ministry, took the initiative to set up the first Garden of the Righteous in an Arab country on July 15, 2016.

It hosts trees and memorial stones dedicated to five righteous Arab and non-Arab Muslims, one of whom is Faraaz.

The tree dedicated to Faraaz bears the inscription: "In Dhaka, he chose not to leave his friends and was murdered by the terrorists."

In March 2018, students of Rummo High School in Benevento of Italy planted a tree honouring Faraaz.

On the first death anniversary of her beloved son, Simeen said, "I always thought he was a bit weak, except that night when he proved me wrong. Undoubtedly, he was among the strongest ones in the world."

"But I could not imagine he would make me so proud," said his mother.

Faraaz's sacrifice sent out a message of true humanity throughout the world. He was indeed a silver lining to a dark cloud -- a bright star who lit up one of the darkest nights in the nation's history.

Nationwide vaccination resumes today

FROM PAGE 16

Another 20 lakh doses of the vaccine were ready to be delivered from China.

Meantime, migrant workers heading abroad will get the Pfizer vaccines at seven centres in the capital from today. The vaccination will be done based on lists of workers provided by the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), said the health officials.

The centres are at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital, Mugda Medical College Hospital, Shaheed Shuhrawardy Medical College Hospital, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Kurmitola General Hospital and Sheikh Russel National Gastroenterology Institute & Hospital.

Prof Shamshul said students would also be able to register for the vaccination of the Sinopharm jabs as per lists of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

"No one will get the vaccine without registration and confirmation messages. The online registration has resumed," he said.

He also said the vaccine recipients would be able to go to the vaccination centres amid the ongoing nationwide strict Covid-19 lockdown, beginning today.

TWO MILLION SINOPHARM VACCINES READY

Two million shots of Sinopharm vaccines in Beijing are ready to be delivered to Bangladesh, said Chinese government officials.

Hualong Yan, deputy chief of mission at the Chinese Embassy in Dhaka, wrote in his Facebook post that the first batch of Sinopharm vaccines, under Bangladesh's commercial purchase, was ready for delivery.

Health ministry officials earlier said Bangladesh would have to make arrangements to transport the doses from China.

Besides, Bangladesh will get 2.5 million jabs of Moderna vaccine by July 3 under the Covax facility.

In yesterday's briefing, Dr Shamsul also said, "We expect to get many more vaccines in July."

The country has so far inoculated less than three percent of its population. Its vaccination campaign, which started on February 7, stumbled

due to suspension of vaccine supplies by the Serum Institute of India amid a surge in daily new cases and deaths there.

Bangladesh and Serum had an agreement that the latter would ship three crore shots of the Oxford vaccine in phases to Bangladesh between January and June.

Serum delivered the first 50 lakh doses in January, but shipped only 20 lakh the following month. No shipment has been made since. Besides, India sent 3.3 million doses as a gift to Bangladesh.

Amid a fast depleting vaccine stock, Bangladesh suspended administering the first dose of the vaccine on April 26. Registering people for vaccination was suspended nine days later.

Who will give back 24 yrs

FROM PAGE 16

[at Choto Haji village under Pirojpur's Mathbaria upazila], and so I said that in court."

Piara, whose father Anis Mridha passed away before the incident, told The Daily Star that her family had a dispute with her uncle Ziaul Haque over land. Piara's elder brother Yunus Mridha was out of the picture as he was working as a mason in the capital then.

When Ziaul's seven- or eight-year-old daughter died in 1997, he conspired so that Piara said in court what the police official had taught her. She was then taken to Pirojpur District Jail.

Piara could not remember the name of the police official. Local administration and this correspondent tried to reach Ziaul but could not because he lives in a remote area.

Deputy Inspector General of Police (Barishal Range) SM Akhtaruzzaman said, "We have heard of this incident. If there was any police role behind it, no apology would be accepted. We are investigating this incident."

Pirojpur District Jail Superintendent Shamim Iqbal said Piara had been convicted in a murder case.

She was sentenced on September 29, 1998 by a Pirojur district and sessions judge and her age was shown in the case docket to be 18 years.

She had since been in Barishal Central Jail until her release earlier this month.

Over these years spent in the women's ward of the prison, she said she has forgotten her family members, none of whom contacted her while she was incarcerated.

"I couldn't really identify my family members when I returned to

my ancestral house with a member of the social services department after being released from jail.

"I don't remember much about my childhood," said Piara.

"My uncle Ziaul Haque was hostile to us. His daughter died... I don't even remember how she died. I did not commit any crime but was imprisoned without any reason. The [Barishal] deputy commissioner arranged my release."

Sajjad Hossain, probation officer of the social services department and one of those who worked to get Piara released, said she had been sentenced to life imprisonment when she was a child.

He said due to her good behaviour, they applied for release at 24 years and the home ministry reduced her sentence by six years, paving the way for her release.

Barishal Deputy Commissioner

Nixon writes to India, Yahya

FROM PAGE 16

needs," added Nixon.

He explained the US's position regarding arms sales to Pakistan and said, "It is hoped that the recent difficulties over the delivery of arms ordered by Pakistan prior to March 25 will not prevent us from working together to achieve the objectives of peace and prosperity in South Asia, which are in the United States' interest as well as in India's. I understand the nature of your Government's concern. You can appreciate the essentially restrictive nature of the interim actions we have taken since the civil strife began in East Pakistan. The United States must maintain a constructive relationship with Pakistan so that we may retain some influence in working with them toward important decisions to be made in that country, as we have

in the past."

NIXON'S LETTER TO YAHYA

In a letter dated July 1, 1971, Nixon expressed regret to Pakistan President Yahya Khan as to the meeting of the Aid-to-Pakistan Consortium which concluded that that assistance, running at about \$500 million a year, should be withheld pending a political settlement of the crisis.

"The Consortium meeting was an informal one. No decisions with respect to economic aid to Pakistan were sought, and none were reached. Furthermore, a common position was not developed whereby all members of the Consortium would jointly suspend future aid or withhold already committed assistance. The Consortium members are now awaiting the final reports of the World Bank and Fund Missions and also the

completion by your government of a revised national development plan. As soon as resumption of national development programs was possible, we expect that a formal meeting of the Consortium, with Pakistani participation, will be called to review new aid requirements," informed Nixon.

He assured, "We wish to proceed with new agreements, subject to US legislative criteria, as soon as adequate grounds are established for a resumption of economic development throughout Pakistan. In the meantime, we are extending new humanitarian relief aid to East Pakistan within the framework of the UN-coordinated program, and are urging others to contribute as well."

BANGALEES WILL NOT ACCEPT YAHYA'S PLAN: BRITISH MPS

Arthur Bottomley, a former UK secretary of state for Commonwealth and Labour MP told newsmen in New Delhi today that he did not think the political solution proposed by President Yahya would be acceptable to the people of Bangladesh. He said solution to the problem must mean that "the Awami League and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman are involved in finding it". His two other colleagues Reginald Prentice (Labour) and Toby Jessel (Conservative) agreed with this view. They arrived in New Delhi this morning from Calcutta. They had visited a number of refugee camps in West Bengal. Earlier they had visited Dhaka.

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

Locals save

FROM PAGE 16

The pair were driven onto the beach by locals after previous encounters in which people have been killed, Fazlul Haque, councillor for the seaside town Teknaf, told AFP.

Elderly villager Jahid Hossain said residents had "very bitter experience of losing crops and even lives to these elephants as they can become very aggressive".

Stuck on the beach for four days without food, and having attracted thousands of onlookers, the elephants swam out to the Bay of Bengal in a panic on Tuesday.

Fishermen had to carry out a dramatic rescue using boats and ropes to bring them back to shore.

"The fishermen rescued them from certain death in the sea," regional forest department chief Humayun Kabir told AFP.

On Wednesday, the pair were being led inland, Kabir said.

Local residents tied ropes around the massive animals' necks to coax them to safety.

Raqibul Amin, country head of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), said this was the fourth such incident since last year.

"We need a transboundary dialogue between Bangladesh and Myanmar to monitor the elephants so that we take measures to reduce human-elephant conflict," he added.

At least seven wild elephants have been found dead in the region since last year, according to the forest department.

Rape victim's

FROM PAGE 16

supposedly immoral character of the victim is being used as a tool of presumption of consent in case of rape.

India in 2003 deleted the clause and prohibited raising the issue of complainant's character in cross-examination.

Rights activists have been demanding for long the parliament amend Section 155 (4) of the Evidence Act as it is totally a humiliation for a rape victim.

Allegations of rape are usually filed under the Women and Child Repression Prevention Act.

US, Russia at odds as UN Council confronts threat of cyberattacks

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council on Tuesday held its first formal public meeting on cybersecurity, addressing the growing threat of hacks to countries' key infrastructure -- an issue US President Joe Biden recently raised with Russia's Vladimir Putin.

While the US envoy to the world body asked that member states respect a framework already in place, her Russian counterpart called for a new treaty to be drafted.

"The risk is clear. Cooperation is essential" to combat such attacks, US ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said, without mentioning Russia, which is often accused by Western countries of hosting hackers or directly engaging in cyberwarfare.

"The framework that UN member states have worked so hard to develop now provide the rules of the road. We have all committed to this framework. Now, it is time to put it into practice."

At their summit earlier this month in Geneva, the US president set out red lines for Russia -- 16 "untouchable" entities, ranging from the energy sector to water distribution.

"This is the generic list of critical infrastructure which every country has," said one European ambassador who specializes in cybersecurity and spoke to AFP under condition of anonymity.

Already in 2015, agreement had been reached on "refraining from malicious cyber activities against each other's critical infrastructures as UN member states," the envoy said.

Russia's UN envoy Vassily Nebenzia said Moscow would play a proactive role in the global fight on cybercrime, calling for the adoption of "new norms" through a legally binding treaty convention by 2023.

"If the threats posed to global cybersecurity have made us all equal, then we must ensure that debate takes place with all UN member states, and not within a tight circle of technologically developed states," the Russian diplomat said.

Tuesday's meeting -- which was called by Estonia, the Council leader for the month of June -- was held virtually.

The Security Council has addressed the subject in the past, but only informally, both in public or behind closed doors.

"It is not the usual arms control topic where you can sign a treaty and then just verify. You have to have a more innovative approach," the European ambassador said.

Western nations suspect Russia, backed by China, wants a new treaty so it can limit free expression on the internet, and hence limit political opposition.

"Estonia holds the strong view that existing international law, including the UN Charter in its entirety, international humanitarian law and international human rights law, applies in cyberspace," Prime Minister Kaja Kallas told the meeting.