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Your Right to Know

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Data sovereignty or data control?

With a new law, govt plans to compel social media platforms to store data inside country

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and ZYMA ISLAM

The government is drafting a bill to make social media surveillance stricter and legal.

The purpose of the bill is seemingly benign -- protection of data generated within the country. Experts and social media users, however, fear that it will be less about protection and more about intervention into user data.

"There are a lot of restrictions in holding offline dissent on the internet became the place where people started coming to, but the small venue where people could express their opinions will not be there anymore. The law will dissuade me from participating in conversations to build my own country," said Dr CR Abrar, an academic currently operating as a part of Nagorik, a platform that works with civic rights and freedom of expression.

Most major social movements in recent

times all began by mobilising online, before hitting the streets.

It is in this climate that the new data protection act is being formulated. One of the main features of this new law will be data localisation, meaning data about citizens collected by major tech companies will have to be stored nationally.

State Minister for Information and Communication Technology Zunaid Ahmed Palak confirmed to The Daily Star that they are indeed drafting such a bill. The ICT division is making it.

"The new data protection act will have legislation which states that foreign internet companies have to build data centres nationally and store user data inside the country," said Palak. "This will help us identify and take legal action against those spreading rumours and abusing the internet."

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A Taliban fighter walks past a beauty saloon with images of women defaced using spray paint in Shar-e-Naw in Kabul, Afghanistan, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Bashundhara bosses, four editors sued

Whip Shamsul of Ctg files the defamation lawsuit against II

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Jatiya Sangsad Whip Shamsul Haque yesterday filed a Tk 500-crore defamation case against 11 people, including Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan and its Managing Director Sayem Sobhan Anvir, over publication of "fake, fabricated and baseless" news items in various newspapers and a TV channel run by the Group.

Lawyer Dipak Kumar Shil lodged the case with the Joint District Judge's Court in Patiya on behalf of the Awami League Lawmaker from Chattogram-12.

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Secys to blame in event of graft

Warns PM at Sachib Sabha

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Reiterating her stance against corruption, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday warned secretaries that they will have to shoulder all responsibilities if any corruption takes place in their respective sectors.

Hasina came up with the warning while participating in Sachib Sabha (secretary-level meeting), conducted by Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam, at the capital's NEC Conference Room. She joined the meeting virtually from the Gono Bhavan.

"Secretaries are the principal accounting officer of their respective ministries. So they will have to take the responsibility if any graft happens in their ministries," a

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Protests test Taliban's promise for peace

Three killed over flag protests; world urges actions on Taliban pledges as outline emerges of new Afghan govt

AGENCIES

At least three people were killed in anti-Taliban protests in the Afghan city of Jalalabad yesterday, witnesses said, as the Islamist group moved to set up a government and Western countries ramped up evacuations from a chaotic Kabul airport.

The Taliban have offered a pledge of reconciliation, vowing no revenge against opponents and to respect women's rights --

but there are huge concerns globally about the Taliban's brutal human rights record and tens of thousands of Afghans are still trying to flee.

A protest in Jalalabad, 150 km from Kabul on the main road to Pakistan, was an early test of that commitment.

Two witnesses and a former police official told Reuters that Taliban fighters had opened fire when local residents tried to install Afghanistan's national flag at a

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"This new law is being drafted to make sure that citizens' data will stay inside the country."

ZUNAI AHMED PALAK
STATE MINISTER OF
INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY



"We have no laws to take action against social media companies. We have no laws on data protection and nothing to protect the privacy of people... It is our ultimate goal to make social media companies follow the laws of Bangladesh."

MUSTAFA JABBAR
MINISTER OF POST AND
TELECOMMUNICATION



"We have known cases, prominent cases where private conversations came out into the open. There are reasons to believe that these were not private organisations executing these leaks. National security is an important issue, but this is often capitalised upon to serve partisan interests."

DR CR ABRAR
DHAKA UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR



অভিভাবক হারিয়ে মোহাম্মান আনোয়ার পরিবার

বাংলাদেশের অন্যতম বৃহৎ শিল্পগোষ্ঠী আনোয়ার গ্রুপ অব ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ এর প্রতিষ্ঠাতা ও সম্মানিত চেয়ারম্যান, লালবাগ এলাকার সাবেক সংসদ সদস্য, প্রথম প্রজন্মের বেসরকারি ব্যাংক সিটি ব্যাংকের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা ও সাবেক চেয়ারম্যান আলহাজ্ব আনোয়ার হোসেন মৃত্যুবরণ করেছেন। ইন্নালিল্লাহি ওয়া ইন্না ইলাইহি রাজিউন।

সারাজীবন মানুষ ও দেশের জন্য নিবেদিতপ্রাণ ছিলেন আমাদের প্রিয় অভিভাবক। আমরা আনোয়ার গ্রুপের পক্ষ থেকে মরহমের আত্মার শান্তি ও মাগফেরাতের জন্য সকলের কাছে দোয়া প্রার্থী।



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ALHAJ ANWAR HOSSAIN
30th October 1938 – 17th August 2021

BRIGHT STAR GLOWS FOREVER

We deeply mourn the passing of an icon – Alhaj Anwar Hossain, a founder and erstwhile Chairman of City Bank; founder Chairman of Anwar Group of Industries and a former Member of the Parliament. He was a visionary entrepreneur who left behind a strong mark in a wide number of industries – garments, textiles, spinning, cement, jute, automobiles, financial services, real estate and so on.

He leaves behind a pioneering legacy in shaping up the private sectors of Bangladesh.

He will be an inspiration for us forever.

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