



Milon, who is suffering from Covid-19, had been receiving treatment at a private hospital for the last few days, but after further health complications were detected, authorities referred him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Yesterday, after luckily getting a bed, Milon's loved ones were busy carrying him from the ambulance to the DMCH building.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

BANGABANDHU

The leader, the idealist, the pragmatist

Noted politicians, economists remember the Father of the Nation at virtual discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a man of his words, lived his life among the common people and worked towards building a society that is egalitarian and free of any form of exploitation, his close accomplices said yesterday.

While remembering the Father of the Nation's contributions in an online commemorative event, noted politicians and economists, who worked closely with him, highlighted that betterment of the country's people was Bangabandhu's first and foremost agenda.

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) arranged the discussion titled "Bangabandhu Kache Theke Dekha: Remembrance by



He [Bangabandhu] was different from those leaders who would say things but act differently after coming to power.

PROF REHMAN SOBHAN



Bangabandhu had sacrificed his life for a country free of exploitation, inequality and communalism. But his dream could not be fulfilled, even 50 years after liberation.

DR KAMAL HOSSAIN



People were Bangabandhu's first and foremost concern. He showed no discrimination based on someone's political ideology. He always respected opposition.

TOFAIL AHMED

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

TALIBAN: REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

A game-changing event

In conversation with Prof Shahab Enam Khan

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The Taliban's assumption of power in Afghanistan has sent global and regional politics into a spin. How things will unfold in the coming days is now being discussed across the world. In this context, The Daily Star recently talked with Prof Shahab Enam Khan of Jahangirnagar University's Department of International Relations to get a picture of the whole situation.

The Daily Star (DS): Why couldn't the Afghan Defence Force form any resistance against the Taliban?

Shahab Enam Khan: The Taliban used multi-pronged strategies, ranging from military to non-military tactics and diplomatic efforts. Moreover, the Afghan national security forces were incapable of dealing with even low-intensity conflicts without support from international forces. Reports earlier published by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction indicated that there were no qualitative changes in the Afghan Defence Force. That's why when the Taliban regrouped, they did not face any obstruction either from the defence force nor from the people.

DS: Is there any difference between the incumbent Taliban and the one that ruled Afghanistan before?

Khan: The Pashtun community dominated the Taliban force before they entered a dialogue process in 2014 to rebrand themselves as an all ethnic entity by getting Tajiks, Shias, Hazaras and others on board. That's why people from different ethnic groups are in leadership positions of the Taliban force.

But the biggest concern for the Taliban is to maintain unity among the different ethnic groups within its hierarchy.

DS: With the Taliban in power, what

does the future hold for the Afghan people?

Khan: If the Taliban sticks to its pledges to Beijing or Washington (during negotiation) and to the Afghan people, there can be stability. But, if they back out from promises and resort to pre-2014 extremist ideology, it won't be good for the region, let alone the Afghans. We have to wait a few more weeks to see how things unfold in Kabul.

Till date, there has been no alarming bloodshed in Kabul. The incident at the airport took place centring mob control. Some Taliban were entering houses to ask whether there were any arms and government vehicles. But we are yet to get any evidence of strong retaliation from the Taliban against pro-Ghani or pro-Western people. This situation may change though. There might be some looting or robbery, which sometimes happen during a transition. Nonetheless, the fear of returning to extremism is very much real among the Afghans.

Women's rights is also a big concern with the return of the Taliban in power. This is something that has to be monitored. Without women's empowerment, no

development will be real.

DS: How will this event impact global and regional politics?

Khan: This is a game-changing incident because two different trios have been formed. One is Beijing-Kabul-Islamabad and the other is Tehran-Ankara-Kabul. Besides, Delhi is a big factor and so is Dhaka.

Bangladesh has a key role to play in this situation. Since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is the senior most political leader in South Asia, she can reactivate Saarc. It's a big opportunity

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

4 more die of dengue, 306 hospitalised

STAR REPORT

Four more patients have died of dengue, while 306 more were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), 30 people have died of dengue infection in the country this year. All recorded deaths have been in July and August.

Twelve people died in July, while 18 have died in August so far. Among the 306 new cases, 33 are from outside Dhaka, according to the DGHS.

The total number of dengue patients this year has reached 6,956. Of the total infected, only 386 are from outside Dhaka. Among the 6,956 infected, 4,298 were diagnosed in August.

At least 2,286 patients were hospitalised in July, 272 in June, and 43 were infected in May, according to DGHS.

Though most of the patients who were hospitalised have so far been released, 1,193 are still undergoing treatment at hospitals across Dhaka, and 83 outside the capital, the DGHS data shows.

DGHS WORRIED

Meanwhile, DGHS yesterday expressed concern over the current dengue situation, reports UNB.

"We all witnessed how hard the dengue situation hit us

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

'A five-layered narcotics syndicate'

Detectives bust 'meth, yaba smuggling gang', arrest 9 members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

From Myanmar to Dhaka, expensive crystal meth, along with pink yaba tablets, are pouring into the country through the border.

This was discovered when detectives busted an organised syndicate that smuggles crystal meth, after nine members of the group were arrested on Tuesday, claim law enforcers.

They smuggled the narcotic consignment containing the drug -- popularly known as "ice" -- to Dhaka, targeting its high-end user base, police's Detective Branch (DB) disclosed the details yesterday.

Ice or crystal meth is a drug rich in pure methyl amphetamine and is extremely expensive, police said. It is possible to make several hundred pieces of yaba with

only one gramme of crystal meth.

After primary interrogation, detectives also discovered a five-layered strategy employed by the syndicate. Detectives are calling it the "cut-out" strategy.

Within the syndicate, each layer has its own chief. Only the "layer boss" knows the identity of the previous layer's chief, and no one in the syndicate knows all members of the whole group. It is called the "cut-out" system, as the layers are cut off from one another.

In case the consignment got seized by law enforcers, the "cut-out" strategy makes sure the ringleader remains out of touch.

The arrestees are Nazim Uddin, Abbas Uddin, Nasir Uddin, Sheuli Akter, Kohinur Begum, Sanjit Das, Hasan Ali, Rashida Begum, and Mousumi Akter.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



As far as the eyes can see, this makeshift bazaar takes up this area from the capital's Jurain to Kutubkhali. It sprang up right on top of the Kamalapur to Narayanganj rail track after authorities cleared the area to construct elevated expressways on both sides of the track. As the rail service was shut off during the pandemic, the bazaar only kept getting bigger, even earning a name for itself: Boubazaar. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

HEALTH COVERAGE FOR WORKERS

Nationwide initiative a must: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Introducing a national initiative regarding health insurance coverage for readymade garment workers and wage earners of other sectors, in collaboration with government and private entities, is crucial, said Md Mujibur Huq MP, chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee for Labour and Employment Ministry, yesterday.

He also asked the public insurance companies to offer health insurance for low-income earners.

The lawmaker was speaking at a virtual roundtable titled, "Health Insurance for RMG Workers in Bangladesh: Designing Policy and Management Structure".

It was organised by Health Economics Unit (HEU) of Health and Family Welfare Ministry, Institute of Health Economics (IHE) of Dhaka University,

Brac, Netherland-based development organisation SNV and the Bangla daily Prothom Alo.

HEU director general Dr Md Shahadat Hossain Mahamud said the RMG sector already has a systematic and formal structure in collaboration with BGMEA, BKMEA, and Labour and Employment Ministry's Central Fund, which enables the sector to be the initiator of institutional health insurance policy for workers' wellbeing.

Other sectors' workers could be brought under health insurance in phases, he added.

Brac Climate Change and Urban Development programmes director Dr Md Liakath Ali said the country should introduce health insurance for wage-earners, adding that the RMG sector is ready to introduce it, which can be scaled up in other sectors after success in RMG.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

RAPE, MURDER OF GIRL IN KUSHTIA SC confirms death for one, 3 get life term

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday affirmed the death penalty of a convict, Shukur Ali, and commuted death sentences of three others to life imprisonment in a case filed for abduction, rape and killing of a 13-year-old girl in Kushtia in 2004.

The Appellate Division of the SC also asked the jail authorities to shift the three lifers -- Nuruddin Sentu, Azanur Rahman and Mamun Hossain -- to normal cell from the condemn one.

A five-member bench headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain delivered the verdict after hearing separate appeals filed by the convicts challenging the High Court judgement that confirmed their death sentences.

On March 25 in 2004, Sabina, daughter of Abdul Malek Jhonu from Lalnagar village under Kushtia's Daulatpur upazila, went to a neighbour's house to watch television at night. The convicts abducted her while she was returning home. They took her away to a tobacco field. Later, they raped and killed her there.

The following day, her father filed a case with Daulatpur Police Station.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Hospitals need to have contingency plans

Say speakers on disaster management preparedness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hospitals of the country need to be brought under contingency plans to face natural disasters, like earthquake, said speakers at a webinar held on Tuesday.

"Hospitals are a sensitive space as they house vulnerable people. This is why disaster management preparedness is extremely important for them," deputy director (humanitarian) of Save the Children in Bangladesh Nazmun Nahar said at the webinar.

Titled "Paving Resilience through City Governance", the session was hosted by The Daily Star, while Plan International Bangladesh organised it. Population Services and Training Centre (PSTC) partnered with Save the Children in Bangladesh to execute it.

Nazmun Nahar said five hospitals in Dhaka and one in Narayanganj are under

contingency planning but similar plans should be in place for all hospitals, in line with the national policy.

As per the contingency plan, resource management and holding frequent mock drills are very important, she mentioned.

She spoke of the project being implemented in this regard. Titled "Strengthening institutional systems and governance mechanisms for improved earthquake preparedness and disaster response", it is funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO).

Disaster risk management specialist Rezaul Karim said the hospital disaster management plan and hospital disaster guideline were prepared in 2009, while the government also prepared a contingency plan for nine medical college hospitals afterwards.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4