



# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

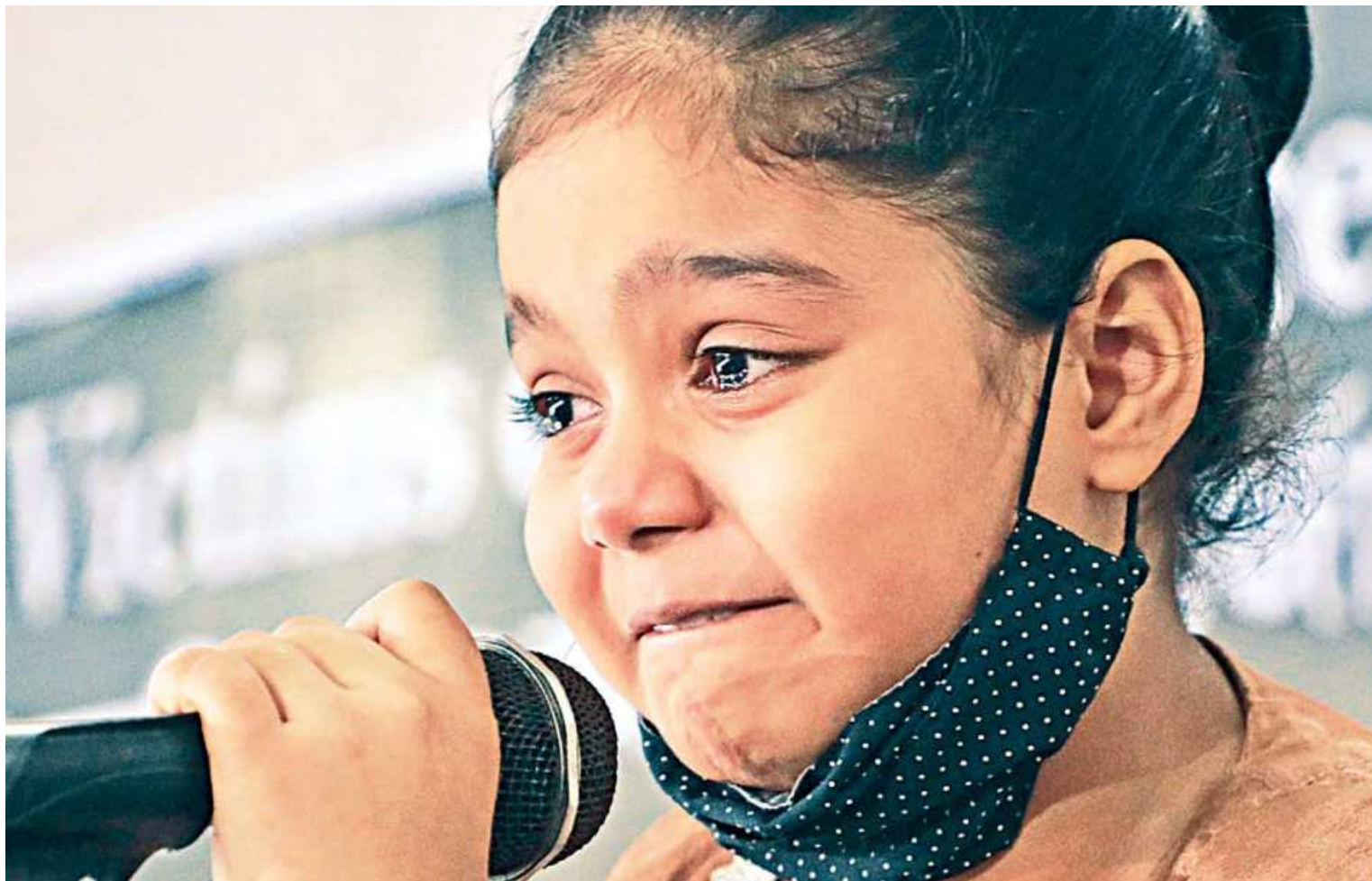


REGD. No. DA 781 | Vol. XXXI No. 219 | BHADRA 16, 1428 BS | **Your Right to Know** | MUHARRAM 21, 1443 HUIRI | 16 PAGES PLUS LIFESTYLE PRICE : Tk12.00

**"After the winter and summer, the BNP is now dreaming of ousting the government in the autumn."**  
AWAMI LEAGUE GENERAL SECRETARY OBAIDUL QUADER

**"It [the government] has destroyed our constitution, our democratic rights and the economy, and politicised the entire administration."**  
BNP SECRETARY GENERAL MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR

**"I believe that mandating vaccines for children to appear in school is a good idea."**  
TOP US INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXPERT DR ANTHONY FAUCI ON COVID JABS



Seven-year-old Safa struggles to hold back tears as she tries to say a few words during a programme at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. "I was in the womb when my father was taken away," she said. Her father Mahfuzur Rahman Sohel, a Chhatra Dal leader in Bangshal, disappeared in 2013.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Traffickers target slum women

Transnational gangs trafficked dozens of women from Dhaka, N'ganj, Gazipur slums

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Transnational human trafficking syndicates are now targeting women in city slums and selling them to brothels in India after promising them lucrative jobs.

At least 50 women were trafficked in the last six years. Around 20 of them were picked up from a slum in Kalshi area of the capital's Mirpur, according to locals and law enforcers.

Take for example the woman who left her Kalshi slum home for India on April 6. The mother of a four-year-old girl was enticed by a job offer from a trafficking ring. Traffickers offered her a job in a beauty parlour for a monthly salary of around Tk 35,000.

But she landed in a brothel in the neighbouring country.

"Mother, they have cheated me. Instead of giving me a job, they have sold me to a bad place in India," the victim's mother quoted her daughter as saying over the phone.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the mother said soon after receiving a call from her daughter, she rushed to Sohag and Kalu, who sent her abroad, for help.

At least 50 women were trafficked in last six years by the gang. Of them, 20 were from a single slum in Mirpur's Kalshi area in the capital

Investigators find involvement of 15 to 20 people in a syndicate that trafficked 15 women in the last one year

"Kalu and Sohag told me that all those information was nonsense and my daughter is fine," said the woman.

"My daughter is now in a brothel in Indian's Kishanganj. She is being tortured, forced to have drugs and meet bad people every day."

Holding the hand of her four-year-old granddaughter, the woman said she recently came to know about her daughter's whereabouts after another woman of the slum returned home from India with her daughter, who was trafficked to the same brothel in the neighbouring country.

The three were victims of the same

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### ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

## Return them to us, or acknowledge

Families of victims urge authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One could have found a couple of hundred tragic tales inside the Jatiya Press Club hall room where families of victims of enforced disappearances gathered yesterday, but they had not come just to shed tears.

They were seeking acknowledgement that their pain was caused by injustice, and some form of redress for having their loved ones snatched inexplicably away.

Many had lost the sole income earner in the family, throwing them into the abyss of poverty and financial hardship.

There were dozens of children who had never seen their fathers, or have not seen them in years. Tears flowed in the company of fellow sufferers.

While Raisa spoke on stage about how her father was missing for a month before being found dead, a woman in the audience wept quietly.

After getting up on stage, Raisa, a teenager, said, "What will I say? There is nothing to say."

"I cannot see my father even if I want to -- not even on my birthday," she said. "Since my father died, my mother is my father. We are three siblings, and my mother goes through a lot of hardship to support us."

The woman who had been weeping quietly had not gone up to the stage to talk, nor had she gathered with those holding placards and photos of their loved ones.

"He was picked up on January 15, 2016. Then he was officially taken into remand on February 15, a month later, at 3:45am. He died the same day at 8:00am of internal haemorrhage. They broke his rib cage."

WIFE OF ANWAR HOSSAIN MAHBUB  
A VICTIM OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

As Raisa spoke, however, the woman's sobs intensified, and it was easy to guess that she was Raisa's mother.

"My husband is Anwar Hossain Mahbub. He was picked up on January 15, 2016. Then he was officially taken into remand on February 15, a month later, at 3:45am. He died the same day at 8:00am of internal haemorrhage. They broke his rib cage," she said.

Mahbub, then 45, was the joint secretary of ward-23 of BNP's Dhaka South City Corporation unit, according to rights organisation Odhikar.

The long-suffering families said simply categorising enforced disappearance as a tragedy is a tragedy in itself -- it is an act of injustice, and that must be acknowledged.

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### 9 FORMER, CURRENT RAB OFFICERS

## Int'l rights body calls on UK to slap sanctions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Guernica 37, human rights-focused international justice chamber, has called on the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to slap sanctions on nine current and former senior officers of Rab for their alleged involvement in human rights abuses and corrupt practices.

The request, which was made on August 24, was done under the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020, said a press release from the Human Rights Watch that linked relevant submissions.

The Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020 put in place sanctions to deter and provide accountability for states and state actors violating an individual's "right to life; right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; and right to be free from slavery, not to be held in servitude or required to perform forced or compulsory labour", according to the UK government's official website.

The violations must have happened within the territory of the state. Guernica did not name the Rab officers in their website.

The officials have served as senior Rab officers during the past five years and have commanded units directly involved in serious abuses or held positions of

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### ABDUCTED ABROAD

## Desperations of father trying to free son in Iraq

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Around 9:00am on August 3, Badal Mia was selling fish on a pavement in the capital's Karwan Bazar when he received a video message on imo messaging app.

As soon as he opened the message, he saw his son 22-year-old Abdullah Haque Rabbi, an expatriate in Iraq, lying on a floor with his hands and legs in shackles. Rabbi looked extremely weak, he was begging for water.

Moments later, Badal received a video call on imo and he saw an unknown youth on the mobile screen. The youth told him that they abducted his son and that they want Tk 10 lakh for his release. He threatened to burn Rabbi alive if the money was not paid.

Badal told the abductors that he did not have the money but he could manage around Tk 5 lakh, to which the abductors agreed.

A few minutes later, the abductors sent Badal a message on the app, providing him with an account number at a private bank in Khilgaon. Badal was asked to deposit the money immediately.

Taking loans from relatives and selling land, Badal deposited the money on August 5, two days after getting the video call.

However, Rabbi is still traceless. Recently, the father filed a case with Hatirjheel Police Station over the matter.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Badal said Rabbi is the eldest of his three children. He went to Iraq in December 2017 through the legal channel and was working at a restaurant in Kurdistan.

The restaurant got closed amid the pandemic and Rabbi along with others there became unemployed.

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BUDDHADEB GUHA (1936-2021)

## A magician of words for all ages

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Though born in Kolkata and studied at St Xavier's College there, the foundation of one of Bengal's most popular writers Buddhadeb Guha's creative mind was shaped by his extensive journey through the swaths and rivers of Rangpur, Jaipurhat and Barisal districts.

It was a fascinating journey that brought Guha so close to nature. He heard the music in the ripples of rivers and ponds, the rustle of the swaying leaves of trees and chirping of birds across Bengal. One is reminded of Rabindranath

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## HEART ATTACK IN FLIGHT Biman Capt Nawshad passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Capt Nawshad Ataul Quaiyum, a reputed pilot of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, who suffered a massive heart attack while in command of a Muscat-Dhaka flight, died in an Indian hospital yesterday.

He was 44. The pilot was in deep coma with ventilation support soon after he was admitted to Kingsway Hospital in Nagpur

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## US drone attack 'arbitrary'

Say Taliban as 10 members of a family killed in Kabul

AGENCIES

A Taliban spokesman yesterday said a US drone strike targeting a suspected suicide bomber in Kabul on Sunday resulted in civilian casualties, and condemned the US for failing to inform the Islamist group before ordering the strike.

Zabihullah Mujahid told China's state television CGTN that many people were killed in the drone attack, describing the US action on foreign soil as unlawful.

A relative of the dead, however, told a local journalist working with BBC that 10 members of one family -- including six children -- were killed in the drone strike.

"If there was any potential threat in Afghanistan, it should have been reported to us, not an arbitrary attack that has resulted in civilian casualties," Mujahid said in a written response to CGTN.

The spokesman also said the headline Islamist group will crack down on Islamic



State attacks and expect them to end once foreign forces leave the country.

"We hope that those Afghans who are influenced by IS... will give up their operations on seeing the formation of an Islamic government in the absence of foreigners," he told AFP in a weekend interview.

"If they create a situation for war and continue with their operations, the Islamic

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

### 11th Death Anniversary

Today is the 11th anniversary of death of Late Alhaj Giashuddin Ahmed. On this day of remembrance, we the family members, directors, officers and employees of Popular Jute Exchange Limited as well as other sister concerns fondly recall the memories of his industrious & benevolent life, and pray for the salvation and eternal peace of his departed soul.

Late Alhaj Giashuddin Ahmed

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