

When my soldiers

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national liberation”.

He added, “In our fight for national independence, peace and prosperity and for the end of all exploitation we believe that the Indo-Soviet treaty will greatly help us. India, we are sure, will do more in support of our struggle. The Soviet Union in the past came in aid of the oppressed people’s struggle for emancipation. Naturally we could rely on the Soviet Union to give our people’s just struggle all possible help.”

Tajuddin Ahmed reiterated that the struggle was for complete national liberation. “It is only a matter of time when we shall be completely free.” **DHAKA KILLING NO FOOTBALL MATCH: YAHYA**
“What happened in Dhaka was no football match. ... When my soldiers kill, they do it cleanly,” Pakistan President Yahya Khan said today, reported Reuters.

In an interview published in the French daily Le Figaro today, Yahya said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman “is in prison ... and alive” and “that one should just take my word for it”. He described Bangabandhu as a “minor fascist”.

“I want to warn the world that if the Indians imagine they can take any parcel of our territory without provoking a war they are committing a grave error... This will mean war, a total war that I hate. But for the defence of my country, I will not hesitate,” stated Yahya. *Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com*

LPG prices

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internationally, we have to follow it in fixing the new price,” said BERC Chairman Abdul Jalil.

He said, “If the price comes down, we will act accordingly.”

However, the LPG price of the state-owned LP Gas Company Ltd will remain unchanged at Tk 591 for 12.5kg LPG as it sells products from condensates produced in local gas fields and has no relation with Saudi CP.

Some 20 private companies dominate the local LPG market with more than 95 percent market share through an annual import of 1.2 million tonnes while the LP Gas Company supplies only 25,000 tonnes.

Based on the Saudi CP, the BERC also revised the autogas price at Tk 50.56 instead of Tk 48.71 per litre.

The BERC chairman announced the new LPG price at a virtual briefing. Other members of the commission were present.

Usually, Armaco, the largest company of Saudi Arabia, announces its CP for bulk LPG at the fag end of each month for the next month’s transactions.

Most Bangladeshi private companies import their bulk LPG from the Middle East on the basis of Saudi CP and market it locally.

The BERC for the first time fixed the retail LPG price on April 12 after holding a public hearing to comply with a High Court order.

SI arrested

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and took her to a house in Niketon, assuring her of solving her problem, and raped her there, it added.

He also assaulted her and warned her against disclosing the incident, the victim said.

Brazil bank robbers strap hostages to cars during deadly raid

AFF, Sao Paulo

Heavily armed gangsters strapped hostages to their getaway cars after robbing two banks in Brazil, in a rampage that left three people dead, police and reports said Monday.

Using explosives, drones and heavy weapons, the assailants took over downtown streets in the southeastern city of Aracatuba, home to some 200,000 people.

After robbing two banks, they made their escape by strapping hostages to the roofs and hoods of moving cars, according to shocking images broadcast by local news channels.

Two civilians and one of the bank robbers were killed during the assault, which left at least six injured, according to police.

The assailants placed explosives in different parts of the city and surrounded some police stations to delay the arrival of reinforcements.

They wore “bulletproof vests, rifles and helmets,” and looked like soldiers, a witness who asked not to be identified told Globo TV.

“The scenes of terror experienced by the population of Aracatuba will not go unpunished,” vowed Sao Paulo governor Joao Doria, who ordered a task force of 380 police officers to hunt the gang down.

“Two criminals were captured and a third died when confronting the police,” he said.

Brazil has seen other such robberies in recent years, marked by a high degree of planning and heavy weapons, and carried out in medium-sized cities to ensure an escape route and a significant cash haul from the banks

‘Could’ve saved him if I were a doctor’

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Capt Nawshad was on life support soon after he was admitted to Kingsway Hospital in Nagpur. But the reputed pilot of Biman Bangladesh Airlines died on Monday.

Abdul Karim of Raojan in Chattogram were among multiple passengers of the flight The Daily Star spoke to.

“When Capt Nawshad was taken out the plane at the Nagpur airport, I saw him from very close distance. When I heard about his death, that image of his face appeared repeatedly in my mind,” said Karim.

Expatriate Ariful Islam of Hatiya upazila was in business class and could see the events unfold.

“He saved the lives of 149 passengers by his skills around five years ago ... We cannot forget him,” said Ariful.

Ariful was referring to the incident in which Capt Nawshad safely landed a Boeing 737 after one of its two tyres of a main landing gear exploded during take-off. Capt Nawshad landed the plane and the remaining tyre of the landing gear exploded on the runway. On August

28, only a few passengers in the front knew what was going on, he added.

The crew wanted to keep the information of Capt Nawshad suffering a heart attack a secret so that passengers did not panic.

Most passengers knew after the plane landed at the Indian airport.

“I think that the pilot suffered minor illness and he would get well soon. But I could not imagine that he would pass away so soon,” said Mohammad Nurul Huda, another passenger of the flight, who hails from Mirsarai of Chattogram.

He too thought the life of the pilot could have been saved, if there were a doctor on board.

After about three hours in the air, the cabin crew via the PA system asked if there was a doctor on board.

No one responded. So, the passengers assumed that someone might have become sick, but they never thought it was the pilot.

Abdul Karim was seated at the front and he could see all the passengers and none of them seemed sick. He figured a crew member was sick.

“The cabin crew at one stage wanted to know whether any passenger had a phone with international roaming service. Fortunately, I had such a phone and I offered it to them,” he said.

“Then, the cabin crew took the phone and went inside the cockpit. When I got back my phone, I found that the cabin crew called some phone numbers, including Bangladeshi ones,” Karim added.

A few moments later, the cabin crew announced the emergency landing, citing illness of someone. When the plane landed at Nagpur airport, two ambulances were ready there.

When the door was opened, two medics entered and took the pilot out attaching an Oxygen mask.

Karim and Ariful later learnt that it was the pilot in command Capt Nawshad.

“My mother had died one day before. I was upset and I was eager to come home quickly. But I forgot everything after seeing the face of Capt Nawshad,” said Karim.

The flight was delayed for around four hours in Muscat due to technical trouble. Furthermore, such

emergency landing in India triggered anger among passengers, who did not know what had happened at that time.

“Most of the passengers could not sense how severe the situation was? How much pressure the crew faced,” said Karim.

Karim helped in calming the passengers.

“Many passengers thought that the flight had technical problems again and that sickness of someone on board was just an excuse,” added Karim.

However, the passengers expressed their gratitude towards the pilot and his team when they learnt what had actually happened.

On the same night, another flight was sent to Nagpur to bring the 124 passengers home.

The cabin crew thanked Karim for his role.

“I was happy to get such an honour from the cabin crew. But all these appeared worthless to me when I heard the news that Capt Nawshad is no more. Now, I always think that if I were a doctor, I could have saved him,” said Karim.

Expectations high as the Tigers take on Kiwis

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This would, however, be Bangladesh’s last series heading into the World Cup and given that their series win against Australia came in pitches where the performances of the batters were hard to measure, Domingo has also said that they want to play on wickets that produced ‘150-160 runs’. It may, however, not be on the cards as pitches in Mirpur are generally on the slower side with turn available for spinners.

While the opening pair did not appear to be an issue in the Zimbabwe series, it will be a crucial one in the series against the Kiwis. The return of Liton Das gives options in the opening slot with Mohammad Naim and Soumya Sarkar having occupied the roles in the recent series. An air of

healthy competition has been flowing through the side in recent series and the return of Liton and Mushfiqur Rahim further adds a sweet dilemma for the selectors.

Nurul Hasan, who showed his usefulness behind the stumps, will share the wicketkeeping duties with Mushfiqur as Tigers look for alternative team combinations before the World Cup.

New Zealand, on the other hand, are in the opposite spectrum in terms of motivation, having sent in a side without any of the players that will be heading to the T20 World Cup in UAE. They have some young players that they want to blood for the future while Tom Latham’s experience will count as he leads the Kiwis in the format for the first time.

“We know things won’t be easy

over here looking at the Australia series,” Latham said in a press conference yesterday. However, this side have come prepared, knowing that shot-making is not so easy in these conditions with more power needed off the bat due to the slower nature of the surfaces. They identified Mustafizur Rahman as a key threat while knowing that spinners will play a big part in the series for the Tigers.

“They have threats all around their group. We saw how well they played against Australia. They have some great spinners and experience in the group. Our batting will be challenged by their spinners. They have some fearless batsmen, who take the game head on,” Latham said.

“We believe we can be successful in these conditions. Our goal is to win

the series,” he said.

Bangladesh captain Mahmudullah Riyad said that the best thing for them was the ‘positive competition’ in the side. The Australia series provided necessary belief with quite a few youngsters raising their hands and performing. “We have to show the same hunger we showed against Australia. If we can do that, keeping our focus, we will be able to improve,” the captain said.

All five matches in the series will be played at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium which had not favoured batsmen recently. But with depth in the lower-middle order, the Tigers’ think tank will be hoping that some key personnel can return amongst the runs and the team enjoys a spirited revival ahead of the World Cup.

Eriko, Imran, kids to stay together

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Jasmine Malika, 11, and Nakano Laila Lina, 10, -- will stay with both their parents so that they can lead a normal life until further orders, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Md Mostafizur Rahman said.

During the hearing of a writ petition, the HC bench ordered the deputy director concerned of the Directorate of Social Welfare to supervise the issues involved with the children and also asked the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and the Criminal Investigation Department of police to ensure their security.

Both the father and mother will equally bear the expenses of the residence, their living and other relevant issues, the HC said in the order.

The bench fixed September 16 for the next hearing and passing further orders on the issue, Deputy Attorney

General Bipul Bagmar told The Daily Star.

Earlier in the day, the bench heard the statements from the parents and their lawyers -- Mohammad Shishir Manir and Fawzia Karim Firoze -- virtually, he said, adding the judges delivered the order considering the welfare of the children.

The children, who were brought to the DMP victim support centre in Tejgaon on August 22 from their father’s custody, were brought to the HC bench yesterday morning in compliance with its August 23 directive, which said the children will remain at the centre, while the parents will have scheduled visitation rights till further orders.

The HC also asked Eriko’s lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir and Imran’s lawyer Fawzia Karim Firoze to play effective roles to resolve the problems with the children through compromise.

It passed the order while hearing

a writ petition filed by Eriko and an application submitted by Imran seeking its directive to hand over the children to their own custodies.

On August 19, the same bench directed Imran to produce his daughters before it on August 31, after his wife Eriko moved to Bangladesh and filed a writ petition for custody of their children.

It ordered the officers-in-charge of Adabor and Gulshan police stations to ensure that Imran and his sister Amina Jebin produce the children before the court on that day and to ensure that Imran does not to leave the country with his daughters in the next 30 days.

The HC also issued a rule asking the authorities concerned and Imran and Amina to explain why they should not be directed to produce the children before the court to ensure they are not confined illegally.

Eriko Nakano, 46, a doctor based

in Tokyo, came to Bangladesh on July 18 this year and filed a writ petition with the HC seeking a directive on Imran, 58, to hand over the children to her custody.

She submitted the petition with the court through lawyer Shishir, saying that Imran, who now lives in the Mohammadia Housing Society under the Adabor Police Station in Dhaka or in a Gulshan house, may flee Bangladesh with her daughters.

In the petition, Nakano said she and Imran got married on July 11, 2008, in Japan following Japanese and Muslim traditions.

Imran submitted a divorce notice to a Japanese court on January 18 this year. However, he did not appear before the court on the scheduled dates for the hearing.

On January 21 this year, Imran picked up the daughters from their school in Tokyo and came to Bangladesh on February 21.

2 CID men ‘framed trader for murder’

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“I fell sick from torture on June 12. They took me to Rajarbagh Police Hospital by an ambulance and I was treated there.

“SI Dolon demanded Tk 10 lakh from me... My brother later gave him Tk 2 lakh so that I’m spared from torture and hassles,” Yakub alleged.

Following the allegations, Serious Crime Investigation Unit of the CID was recently tasked with carrying out the probe in the case.

On June 20 last year, a 20-year-old man named Khairul Islam died from electrocution after falling from the third floor of a building where he had gone to meet a girl in the capital’s Badda area, said locals.

His father Abdul Quddus Sikder on July 1 last year filed a murder case with Badda Police Station.

According to the case statement, Khairul had a relationship with the girl for five years, which her father didn’t approve of. When Khairul went to her house on June 20 last year, four to five unidentified persons, including the girl’s father, beat him up and pushed him down to the tin-roof of an adjacent house. And Khairul got

electrocuted.

Inquest and autopsy reports of the deceased said Khairul died from electrocution, suffering severe electrical burns.

The post-mortem report, prepared by Sohel Mahmud, the then head of forensic medicine at Dhaka Medical College, on June 23 last year, said Khairul suffered 60 percent burns on his body from electrocution.

“The CID officers, however, are now saying that I brought kerosene and gave it to the girl’s father who set Khairul alight. After I was taken to the CID Headquarters on June 10, they said the girl’s father contacted me over mobile phone on the day of the incident and asked me to get kerosene...”

“I told them I knew nothing about it and had no contact with the girl’s father. But they handcuffed me, blindfolded me, and took me to another room. There they tortured me,” Yakub alleged.

He also said the CID officers could not show the call records of the mobile phone through which, according to them, the girl’s father contacted him.

On July 27 last year, the girl gave a statement in which she didn’t

mention Yakub’s involvement in the incident. She said Khairul slipped off the roof and got electrocuted.

However, around 11 months after the incident, the girl’s mother gave a statement under Section-164 on June 12, saying her husband caught Khairul when he came to meet their daughter and beat him up on June 20 last year.

The girl’s father then called his friend Yakub over phone to bring kerosene and then poured it on Khairul. To save his life, Khairul jumped off the roof and got electrocuted.

But on June 27, the girl and her mother submitted separate affidavits to a Metropolitan Magistrate’s Court, saying the IO asked them and three of their family members to go to the CID headquarters on June 10 and they did so.

The CID officers there confined them for three days and later forced the girl’s mother to give a statement against Yakub, according to the affidavits.

Talking to this newspaper, SI Dolon claimed that the allegations brought by Yakub and others are false.

“No such incident [of extortion] happened. His [Yakub] name came up following the statement by the

Every city dweller loses 7.7 years

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In 2020, Bangladesh’s air quality was the worst in the world, while its capital Dhaka was the second most air polluted city, it said.

The most polluted areas of the country are the divisions of Khulna and Rajshahi, where the average resident is exposed to pollution that is more than seven times the WHO guideline -- reducing life expectancy by more than six years, according to AQLI.

The PM 2.5 concentration is high in Narayanganj, Jessore, Rajshahi, Khulna, Pabna, Dhaka and Gazipur, reported the study.

Air pollution causes lots of diseases like ischemic heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary

disease, lung cancer and acute lower respiratory infections in children, said Lelin Chowdhury, a public health expert.

“That’s why it is related to life expectancy. Our life expectancy increased but how much quality improved, it should be a research topic. In a lifetime, how many days one has to be in hospitals? That should count, too.”

Fossil fuel is one of the most important elements of air pollution, said Chowdhury, also the joint secretary of Poribesh Bachao Andolon, a voluntary social organisation promoting Bangladesh’s environmental protection.

“The brickfields are the most dangerous, but those are decreasing.

But the use of fossil fuels is increasing day by day. If we develop our public transportation only then would private transportation would reduce along with using fossil fuel,” he added.

The average person is losing 2.2 years of life expectancy due to particulate pollution exceeding the WHO guideline of 10 mcg/m3, according to AQLI.

And permanently reducing air pollution according to the WHO guideline could increase the global average life expectancy from 72 to 74 years, and in total, the world’s population could gain 17 billion life-years.

The impact of particulate pollution is greater than the effect of devastating communicable diseases

like tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, behavioural killers like cigarette smoking and even war.

As a comparison, first-hand cigarette smoke reduces the global average life expectancy by about 1.8 years, alcohol, unsafe water and sanitation by seven months, HIV/AIDS by four months, malaria by three months and conflict and terrorism by 18 days.

Strong clean air policies can reduce fossil fuel emissions and help reign in climate change, which can also increase life expectancies, the study said.

Researchers exemplified China as the air pollution concentrations have declined there since 2011 and improved the average life expectancy by roughly 2.6 years.

Probe recent

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A helper was killed as a truck hit a running Khulna mail train while trying to cross an unmanned level crossing at Kazirhat point near Chilahati Railway Station in Nilphamari on August 24.

Earlier, at least five people were injured on August 13 as a lorry carrying gas collided with a train near Mirerbazar area in Gazipur.

Directives have been given to the railway police and the railway authorities to take legal action as per the Railways Act against the drivers of the vehicles involved in the accidents, the minister said.

Sujan also said many of the accidents took place at unauthorised level crossings.

According to meeting sources, when the minister enquired about the August 24 accident, a BR official informed that a case was filed a day after the incident.

The minister expressed discontent as the police officials concerned could not give any answer to what particular action was taken afterwards, they said.

Bhubon Chandra Biswas, additional secretary (administration) of the ministry, asked the railway authorities concerned to find out the people responsible for the accidents, said the sources.

He also asked railway officials to be more alert so that such accidents can be avoided.

Sardar Shahadat Ali, additional director general (operations) of Bangladesh Railway, said the minister directed them to identify the reasons behind the accidents and take legal action.

Railway sources said many of the accidents took place at unauthorised level crossings which were unmanned. Even many of the authorised level-crossing do not have gatemen.

According to railway documents, there are 1,149 unauthorised level crossings which have no gatemen.

At least nine government bodies were involved in setting up the unauthorised level crossings across the country, with the Local Government Engineering Department constructing about half of those -- 516.

Out of the 1,412 authorised level crossings, 964 (70 percent) do not have dedicated manpower, shows the documents presented at a BR meeting in January this year.

Yesterday’s meeting was attended by, among others, Railways Secretary Salim Reza and BR Director General Dharendra Nath Majumder.

It’s an act

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was functioning in front of the eyes of the administration, the report said.

“We’ve confirmed that there were all sorts of flammable amenities but no protection from fire or saving lives,” it said.

They pointed out that each floor of the factory building is above 34,500 square feet but the fire escape and staircase were far from the workspace which is a violation of the building code. There was no smoke detector, fire alarm and fire exit.

The probe committee found that the Fire Service knew about the faulty fire protection system yet allowed the factory to operate for the six-month interim period. They gave notices to Hashem Foods Limited four times to implement fire protection and the last notice was given four days before the incident.

Against the backdrop of the notice, director of Hashem Foods Tareque Ibrahim on a Tk 300 non-judicial stamp pledged of taking liabilities of damages by fire and accept legal actions.

“Needless to say, there is no legal basis of such affidavit. Accepting affidavit institutionally is nothing but averting duties,” reads the report adding, “All the evidence suggests that the government organisations are largely liable for the fire.”

There are allegations of negligence against the Department of Labour and Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments but no action has been taken.

The committee recommended taking legal action against the responsible government officials to avert incidents like this in future.

The probe committee recommended increasing the number of inspectors of the Department of Labour, Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments and Fire Service and strengthening the capacity of the fire service.

A member of the probe committee and professor of economics at Jahangirnagar University Anu Muhammad said the government is formulating Tk 6 lakh crore budget and taking mega projects on development but could not recruit necessary manpower at the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments.

The incident recurred as the persons responsible for the fire at Tazreen Fashion and Rana Plaza were not punished, he said.

Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua said the people were killed in the fire due to the negligence of the owner, fire service and factor inspector.

“Alongside increasing capacity of the government organisation, it is necessary to ensure their accountability,” he said.