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50 YRS OF BANGLADESH-INDIA RELATIONS

# Axe irritants, engage deeply

Experts say on partnership between neighbours

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Mutual respect, trust and equality should be the pillars of bilateral relationship between Bangladesh and India, foreign policy analysts and academics said at a discussion yesterday.

They said the two countries need to remove all the irritants and engage deeply to flourish and tackle the challenges emerging out of global geopolitics and climate change.

The observations came at a discussion, titled "50 years of Bangladesh-India Partnership: towards a journey in next 50 years", jointly organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India at a city hotel.

Analysts said despite a lot of challenges, Bangladesh and India have made some great achievements, with the major three being implementation of the Ganges Treaty, the Land Boundary Agreement and tackling cross-boundary terrorism. The two neighbours also progressed much in terms of connectivity and trade.

"At the same time, we also have problems," said CPD Distinguished Fellow Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya.

He said for trust, respect and equality, religious or ethnic minorities should be treated equally and that one should agree to live with a pluralistic view in one's own country.

"Equality means your agenda and my agenda are equally important. If you think my agenda is more important than the other, then you are not having equal treatment within

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Pedestrians negotiate vehicles stuck in traffic at Farmgate yesterday. The footbridge there has been dismantled and other bridges for crossing the street are not nearby.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

# Teachers of KUET go on strike after teacher dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The teachers of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology have called for abstention from academic activities as one of their colleagues died hours after his confinement by the Chhatra League activists on Tuesday.

Prof Selim Hossain, of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the university, was tortured mentally while he was confined, alleged the teachers.

The decision of abstention, protest meeting and black badge-wearing programmes came from a meeting of the KUET Teachers' Association yesterday afternoon, said Pratik Chandra Biswas, president of the association.

He said they would be boycotting academic activities until a solution occurs reviewing the CCTV footage, the president said.

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# Bring back Capt Mahbub

*Demands BAPA after Biman fires him*

RASHIDUL HASAN

Bangladesh Airlines' Pilot Association yesterday demanded reinstatement of Captain Mahbubur Rahman, a Boeing 787 pilot who was sacked from Biman on Tuesday.



A delegation of the association placed the demand during a meeting with Biman MD and CEO Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal at the airlines' headquarters in Kurmitola, said insiders.

It could not be known what would be the association's next course of action if their demand was not met.

A top official of Biman told The Daily Star that in October, amid agitations of pilots for restoration of pre-pandemic salary structure, several of them remained absent from flight duties causing a schedule disruption.

The next month, the 265th board meeting of Biman decided to empower the managing director and CEO to take action against "persons obstructing the activities of Biman".

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ROAD TO FREEDOM  
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

# Pressure on India won't work: Indira

DECEMBER 2, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

INDIRA CRITICISES UN OBSERVER PLAN

Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi declared today that it did not worry India at all as to who called her aggressor when she had not committed any aggression.

Making an obvious reference to the latest newspaper comments in London that Britain might describe India as an aggressor, Indira said, "Times have passed when any nation sitting three or four thousand miles away could give orders to Indians on the basis of their colour superiority to do as they wished. India has changed, and she is no more a country of natives."

"If any country thinks that by calling us aggressor it can pressurise us to forget our national interest, then that country is living in its own paradise and it is welcome to enjoy that," she added.

Referring to Pakistan's effort to get UN observers in East Pakistan, Indira said she did not know what useful purpose these observers could serve in the present situation. She added that the idea of posting observers to East Pakistan was to check the activities of the Mukti Bahini. But they were forgetting that all the checks and controls in Vietnam failed to stop the guerilla activities. "I do not know how observers can function when it is made plain by the Bangladesh government that it cannot guarantee their safety," Indira commented.

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# HSC exams begin today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent exams start today after a break of a year due to the pandemic.

The exams for 2020 did not take place last year, with the results prepared based on the candidates' performance in previous public exams.

This year's exam, which will have fewer subjects and a shortened syllabus, is being held eight months later than the usual schedule as the government waited for the coronavirus transmission to come under control.

The examinees will have to take tests only in three optional subjects. They will not have to sit tests in compulsory subjects like Bangla and English. The exams will carry fewer marks.

The HSC exams will end on December 30.

Education Minister Dipu Moni urged all to maintain Covid-19 health protocols

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# Sword carried by Napoleon up for auction



AFP, New York

The dress sword carried by Napoleon Bonaparte when he staged a coup in 1799 will go under the hammer at the weekend with five other weapons that belonged to the French emperor, US auctioneers announced.

The lot, which will be put up for auction from December 3 to 5 by the Illinois-based Rock Island Auction Company, is valued at \$1.5 million to \$3.5 million.

The sword, with its scabbard, is the "crown jewel" of the collection, said the auctioneers, who will host the sale both in person and online.

The weapon was made by Nicolas-Noel Boutet, who was director of the state arms factory in Versailles.

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# Case against Meghdol withdrawn

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted a petition for withdrawal of a case filed against members of popular band Meghdol.

Lawyer Imrul Hasan, also the complainant, on November 2 filed an application with the court, seeking withdrawal of the case, just five days after lodging the case against seven members of Meghdol.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mainul Islam

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PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 2

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
5-15 12-45 3-45 5-19 7-00  
5-50 1-15 4-00 5-22 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# Complete trials within 90 days

*CJ orders courts about cases related to communal harmony*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain has ordered lower courts and tribunals across the country to dispose of cases filed in connection with harming communal harmony within 90 working days.

Supreme Court's Registrar General Md Ali Akbar yesterday issued the notification to this effect under the directive from the chief justice.

The countdown would start from the receipt of the charge sheet.

The notification said if the subordinate courts and tribunals fail to finish the trials of the cases, they must send those with explanation to the Supreme Court.

On November 11, the chief justice told a programme in Dhaka that necessary steps would be taken so that the trial in any case for harming

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Fireworks illuminate the evening sky over Hatirjheel in the capital to celebrate 50 years of victory on the first of December, the month in which Bangladesh won the Liberation War.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# 'Don't freak out' about Omicron

*BioNTech CEO says vaccinated people likely remain protected against severe illness*

AGENCIES

The CEO of Covid-19 vaccine maker BioNTech has a message for those who are worried about the Omicron variant of the coronavirus: keep your cool.

In an interview with The Wall Street Journal (paywall) on Tuesday, Ugur Sahin, who co-founded BioNTech and invented one of the first Covid-19 vaccines, said that while the Omicron variant could lead to more vaccinated people becoming infected, they will likely remain protected against severe illness.

"Our message is: Don't freak out, the plan remains the same: Speed up the administration of a third booster shot," he told the WSJ.

Sahin said that the BioNTech mRNA jab, which he and his team of researchers invented in January 2020, and then developed together with United States drugs giant Pfizer, has already proven that it can protect against severe disease from other variants of the virus that vaccinated people have contracted.

He noted that while Omicron will likely be able to evade antibodies generated by vaccines better than Delta, due to the new variant's higher number of mutations, it is unlikely that Omicron will be able to circumnavigate the body's T-cell immune response to an infection.

"Our belief [that the vaccines work against Omicron]

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