

**BANGLADESH UPDATE**



**342**  
New cases in 24hrs



**15,82,364**  
Total cases



**28,054**  
Deaths



**15,46,664**  
Recoveries



**GLOBAL UPDATE**



**5,396,811**  
Deaths



**277,686,332**  
Total cases

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Bangladesh needs to follow its own model

Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud says after receiving Bangladesh Bank Award-2020 for his contribution to the economy.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh should follow its own model to ensure economic development, eminent economist Wahiduddin Mahmud said yesterday, after receiving the Bangladesh Bank Award-2020 for his contribution to the economy.

The economic models of some East Asian nations, which were treated as Asian tigers, had earlier been considered as a development formula for other countries, he said.

"Some global agencies, including the World Bank, had advised following the economic model of the East Asian nations...But, there is no scope to ensure economic development by blindly following other countries' formulae."

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal handed over the award to Mahmud at a programme at Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management at Mirpur 2 in the capital.

"New thinking process is important for better development and Bangladesh has been doing that. The country has managed development by following its own model," said Mahmud.

The development strategy of a country always should be time-befitting and the strategy has to be changed to stay with the times, he said.

The country's commoners, including farmers, and small and medium entrepreneurs, so far used all their capacities in response to the opportunities.

The government also gave assistance, including policy support, to this end. "This is the principle of Bangladesh's development."

Economists across the globe have almost reached a consensus that there is no pre-set formula to manage a country's economic development of a country.

"Following the development model of another country does not bring any output. Bangladesh has reached a new stage of development. The global economy is changing and there are

many challenges."

Ensuring technological development, building skilled human resources, and strengthening the accountability of corporate governance are essential for ensuring the next stage of economic progress, he said.

A strong financial sector should be built to tackle the volatility deriving from the global financial arena, Mahmud added.

Finance minister Kamal said the country's foreign exchange reserve would hit \$50 billion within this fiscal year, which now stands at around \$45 billion.

"Our debt to GDP ratio is relatively lower compared to many other countries."

The country will be able to provide loans to other countries in the quickest possible time, he said.

Kamal also thanked the central bank for nominating Mahmud for the award.

BB Governor Fazle Kabir presided over the ceremony and mentioned Mahmud's outstanding contributions in the country's economy.

Mahmud achieved his Bachelor of Arts (honours) degree in economics from Dhaka University in 1968. In 1977, he managed a Phd degree from Cambridge University.

He commenced his teaching career in the economics department at Dhaka University in 1969 and became a professor in 1984 and retired in 2011.

Mahmud played his role as a director of the central bank board between 1993 and 2007. He was also adviser of a former caretaker government.

Between 2009 and 2015, he was a member of the United Nations Committee for Development Policy and served the South Asia Network of Economic Research Institute as its chairman from 2009 to 2018.

Mahmud is currently serving the International Growth Centre as senior country adviser and is also chairman of the Bangladesh Economic Research Group.



Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal hands Bangladesh Bank Award-2020 to Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, left, for his outstanding contributions to the country's economy during a function at the auditorium of Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management in the capital's Mirpur yesterday. Bangladesh Bank Governor Fazle Kabir, extreme right, is also seen on stage.

PHOTO: AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

## Tourist raped in Cox's Bazar

FROM PAGE 1

The victim's husband said, "I have apologised to them many times. I even held their hands and feet ... but they did not return my wife."

"My wife is not well now. I'm worried about her," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Suspect Ashiquel was accused in over a dozen cases, including for murder, robbery, mugging, and extortion, filed previously with Cox's Bazar Sadar Model Police Station, said Officer-in-Charge Sheikh Munir-ul-Gias.

Joy and Babu were also accused in two and four cases filed earlier, police sources said.

Locals said Ashiquel walked out of jail on bail around three months ago.

Locals said the three men were close aides to Cox's Bazar Zila Chhatra League President SM Saddam Hossain.

Distancing himself from the trio, Saddam told The Daily Star last night that the men sometimes visited him since he lived in their neighbourhood.

OC Munir said the victim was being treated at a hospital.

Lt Col Khairul Islam Sarkar, commanding officer of Rab -15, said, "We have identified the rapists

scrutinising the hotel's CCTV footage and are conducting drives to arrest them."

Rab has detained the manager of Zia Guest Inn, Riazuddin Chhoton.

Superintendent of Police in Cox's Bazar Hasanuzzaman refuted that the victim called 999 for help. He added, "We are looking into how such an incident [gang rape] took place."

Forensic tests have been carried out on the victim and a case was filed accusing seven people, three of them unidentified, he said.

**PROTEST ON**  
Women's rights activists Shireen Huq said it is misogyny and banditry at its worst.

"That such an incident is possible is beyond one's imagination."

"I don't know whether to cry or to scream. All our protests appear to be falling on deaf ears."

The absence of rule of law gives licence for the most despicable behaviour from those who assume they are entitled to impunity, she said.

Expressing concern and resentment over the incident, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad demanded a fair probe, immediate arrest of the culprits, and

security for the victim's family.

Jatiya Nari Andolan and Sammilito Samajik Andolan also protested the incident.

**ANOTHER RAPED IN BANDARBAN**

Police in Lama, Bandarban, are looking for two men accused of rape and abetting rape of a pregnant woman.

Joyal, 32, a resident of Ruposhi Para, with the help of a man who is yet to be identified, tied the 28-year-old woman with a rope and raped her early yesterday, locking her two children in a room, police said, quoting the case filed with Lama Police Station.

Shahidul Islam, officer-in-charge of the police station, said, "Two criminals entered the house around 2:30am. Joyal, a local trader, raped the woman and left the place around 3:00am leaving the woman tied to a tree. We rescued the mother after being informed. We are trying to arrest the criminals."

The victim's family sources said the criminals also took away valuables and gold ornaments.

(The photos of the three accused used in this story were provided by Rab)

## Biman to launch

FROM PAGE 1

after the meeting.

The Bangladesh PM and Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation, especially in health, education, human resources development, youth and sports, fisheries and agriculture, between the two countries and work together to face the challenge of climate change and ensure early repatriation of the forcibly displaced Rohingyas to Myanmar.

Hasina said they reviewed the progress made so far on earlier decisions and found the outcome satisfactory.

She said they also discussed regularisation of undocumented Bangladeshi nationals who make substantial contributions to both economies.

The PM said they discussed cooperation in multilateral fora, support for each other's candidatures, and cooperation in countering terrorism.

Hasina said her government would not allow any terrorist activities against Bangladesh and any other country using its soil.

Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih also vowed to fight terrorism and extremism together to ensure regional and global prosperity, sustainability and peace.

He said his government would continue support for the early repatriation of the Rohingyas.

Solih thanked the Bangladesh premier for her support during the Covid-19 pandemic and sought initiatives on issuance of arrival visas for Maldivian citizens.

Describing Bangladesh as a desired destination for Maldivian students, particularly for medical students, the president urged the premier to issue full term visas for the students.

During the talks, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, Health Minister Zahid Maleque, Chief of Army Staff General SM Shafiquddin Ahmed, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, PMO Secretary Md Tofazzel Hossain Miah and NBR Chairman Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem, among others, were present from Bangladesh's side.

**THREE INSTRUMENTS SIGNED**  
Three instruments were signed and another one was renewed yesterday between Bangladesh and the Maldives.

The instruments are: MoU on Recruitment of Qualified Health Professionals, MoU on Cooperation in the Areas of Youth and Sports Development, Agreement on Elimination of Double Taxation with Respect to the Taxes on Income and the Prevention of Tax Evasion and Avoidance.

Besides, the MoU on the Areas of Healthcare and Medical Sciences was renewed.

The signing ceremony was held at the President's Office in Male in presence of the Bangladesh PM and the Maldivian president after the bilateral talks between the two leaders.

Bangladesh also gifted 13 military vehicles to the Maldives as a token of friendship between the two South Asian

nations during the ceremony.

On behalf of Bangladesh, Chief of Army Staff General SM Shafiquddin Ahmed made the symbolic handover of the keys of the military vehicles to Maldives Chief of Defence Force Major General Abdullah Shamaal.

After the signing ceremony, Bangladesh prime minister and Maldivian president issued separate statements in a joint briefing.

In the briefing, the two leaders said they had fruitful bilateral talks on promoting trade, investment, and connectivity between the two countries.

In her statement in the joint briefing, Hasina said during the bilateral talks with President Solih she re-emphasised the necessity of a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between the two countries and a bilateral investment protection arrangement for mutual facilitation of investment.

About the outcome of the talks, she said, "I am happy to share that we just held a very fruitful discussion on the entire spectrum of our bilateral relations. We reviewed the progress made so far on our earlier decisions and found the outcome satisfactory."

She said that they also discussed cooperation in multilateral fora including countering terrorism.

In his press statement, President Solih said he had fruitful bilateral talks with the Bangladesh premier.

"I look forward to enhancing our interactions on trade and investment," he said.

**PM ADDRESSES PARLIAMENT**

Addressing the Maldivian national parliament in Male yesterday, Hasina called upon the Maldives government and private sector to be partner in Bangladesh's development journey for mutual benefits.

"I hope that our warm and friendly relations will further be consolidated. Bangladesh is thriving with possibilities and potentials. I call upon both the government and private sector of the Maldives to be our partner in the development journey in the next fifty years for mutual benefit," she said.

Mentioning that no country in the world can prosper in isolation, the premier said the Covid-19 pandemic has taught all that they are interdependent and have to share their experiences for the sake of a better, secured, and prosperous world.

Hasina thanked President Solih for attending the opening celebrations of the Birth Centenary of the Father of the Nation and the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's independence in March.

Maldivian parliament Speaker Mohamed Nasheed and the deputy speaker received the PM on her arrival at the People's Majlis.

The Speaker in his speech highly praised Hasina for her role in leading the developing nations.

The premier later signed the visitors' book and held a meeting with the Speaker of the Maldives parliament.

Hasina arrived in Male on Wednesday on a six-day maiden bilateral visit by a VVIP special Biman flight.

## Lying low, continues recruitment

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"The outfit hardly has any physical activities, it only has online presence," he said, adding that some of its key leaders who lead the outfit's online activities have also been arrested lately.

According to police database, Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) in 56 drives arrested 31 members of Ansar Al Islam. The CTC unit arrested nine.

Most of the arrests were made in Dhaka and its nearby districts, said police sources.

A CTC official, wishing not to be named, said using a secret messaging app, the militant outfit's high-ups have recently asked to halt all recruitment in Dhaka and nearby districts.

They asked for more focus on other districts because those are under comparatively less vigilance from law enforcers, said the official.

## Where do they go from here?

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Now, they are not only entertaining the entire nation through dazzling performances but also bringing laurels for the nation one after another, all the while clearing the path for others to come into the sport without hesitation.

This group of girls started their international journey in December in 2015 and impressed all and sundry by becoming champions in the now-defunct AFC U-14 Girls' Regional Competition.

They have not looked back since, defending their title in Tajikistan the following year before gradually maturing and putting up some stunning performances against strong sides like Chinese Taipei and Iran to qualify for the finals of the AFC U-16 Women's Championship. Such performances compelled the BFF to bring in technical director Paul Smalley in late 2016 to further enhance the girls' standard of play.

So far, the girls have shown their ability in age-group tournaments by winning the SAFF U-15, U-18 and U-19 Women's Championships and qualified for the six-team final round of the AFC U-16 Women's Championship twice.

But they are still well away from becoming a strong senior women's football team. Despite the girls shining in age-group tournaments, their future is unclear due to weak infrastructure for women's football, financial constraints and girls

dropping out after a certain age.

However, Mahfuza Akter Kiron, the chairman of the BFF Women's Wing, is optimistic about the future.

"Forming a strong senior women's team is a process and we are on the right path. Some players like Krishna Rani, Israt Jahan Swapna, Misrat Jahan Mousumi, Masura Begum and Sheuli Azim have already made it into the senior team after coming through age-group teams. Others like Maria Manda, Monica Chakma, Anuching Mogini, Anai Mogini, Tahura Khatun, Shamsunnahar Sr and Akhi Khatun are going to be national-team regulars. We need three to four years to get a strong national team I think," Kiron opined.

"We now have 70-plus players in different age-group teams at the moment. We have a lot of players who belong to the same level. If you looked back at the U-19 match against Sri Lanka, only four regular players were fielded. The rest came from the bench. That means we have a lot of players of a similar standard. We are going forward with a strong pipeline," Kiron said, adding that only financial constraints were hampering them from making a proper plan for the senior team.

Head coach Golam Rabbani Choton praised upcoming players, labelling them as talented as their predecessors.

"We had been wondering how U-15 players like Shaheda Akter Ripa,

2016 in the capital's Kalabagan.

Another CTC official, requesting anonymity, said the chief of the outfit is now staying abroad. Its military wing is being operated by Sayed Mohammad Ziaul Haque alias Maj (sacked) Zia and he is hiding somewhere in Bangladesh, he said.

He also said the group does not allow three to four members to stay at the same house.

In the last year, the ATU has arrested around five militant suspects, who were self-radicalised online, according to database.

ATU chief Md Kamrul Ahsan told The Daily Star that they were on alert and closely monitoring the activities of the outfit. "Whenever we see any movement of the militants, we carry out drives to arrest them," he told The Daily Star.

## Suspended mayor

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place wreaths first. Besides, he might have slapped the officer under the influence of drugs, the Rab official said.

Rab said Shah was sued in at least five cases including ones related to drugs and assaulting policemen. A case was also filed in connection with the December 16 incident.

He was suspended from his mayoral post on December 21 and then expelled from his post of the district AL.

## CURBING DRUG ABUSE

# JS committee discusses relaxing liquor restriction

RASHIDUL HASAN

In its meeting last month, the parliamentary standing committee on the home ministry discussed relaxing restrictions on liquor consumption to some extent to curb drug abuse in the country.

It was said in the meeting that some alternatives to drugs should be made available to reduce people's dependence on the illegal substances and relaxing the restrictions on liquor could be quite useful in this regard, according to minutes of the meeting held on November 7.

The meeting also discussed the approval of cannabis' limited use in Canada and the United States, and opined that the government of Bangladesh needs to bring changes to its narcotics control policies.

The minutes were approved at the 19th meeting of the parliamentary committee held yesterday.

The meeting on November 7 also recommended reducing taxes on liquor and beer.

Ruling Awami League MP Shamsul Haque Tuku, chairman of the parliamentary watchdog, said the issue of relaxing restrictions on liquor consumption was extremely sensitive, said sources in the meeting.

He said drug abuse might go down if certain exemptions were given, but opinions and recommendations from government high-ups were needed first.

Although the issue was brought up in the meeting for discussion, the committee did not make any recommendation in this regard, the sources told The Daily Star.

Mentioning that 600 percent tax has been imposed on alcohol consumption in Bangladesh, Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed said all clubs in the country have liquor licence.

But they do not import any liquor, because they have to pay more taxes. Those clubs sell smuggled liquor illegally. As a result, the government is losing thousands of crore of Taka in taxes every year, meeting sources quoting the IGP as saying.

He, however, pointed out that any attempt to lower taxes on liquor would anger the Islamist forces in the country.

BGB Director General Major General Safinul Islam also said some policies must be changed to fight drugs.

Rab Director General Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun said the US and Canada have relaxed restrictions on cannabis consumption. "We have to bring some alternatives to drugs to the fore. So, we should think more about alcohol and cannabis."

Jatiya Party MP Pir Fazlur Rahman, a member of the committee, said liquor should be made legal if they have less than five percent alcohol, said meeting sources.

Mentioning that the government has adopted a long-term plan to stop drugs, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan also said some alternatives to drugs were needed to save the youth from the menace.

## Garbage truck

FROM PAGE 1

According to witnesses, the incident occurred on the east side of Tikatuli's Rajdhani Supermarket around 6:45am. The rickshaw carrying Swapna turned suddenly and he fell on the road.

A speedy truck ran him over, leaving him dead on the spot, they further said, adding that both the rickshaw puller and garbage truck driver fled the scene.

Contacted, Shah Iftekar Ahmed, deputy commissioner of police (Wari division), said the truck that locals identified is a vehicle of the city corporation.

"But we are not sure that the vehicle was involved in the accident as there was no clear footage in the place of occurrence."

Kabir Hossain Hawlader, officer-in-charge of Wari Police Station, said the speeding garbage truck could not be identified as its number plate was not visible due to morning fog and its headlights on.

The body was handed over to the family members after an autopsy at Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital.

As of filing this report at 7:00pm, no case was filed in this connection.

Contacted, DSCC Public Relations Officer Abu Naser said they were aware of the accident but was yet to know about the specific vehicle.

"This matter is being investigated," he added.

Earlier, in two separate incidents in late November, two persons -- a Notre Dame College student and a newspaper staff -- were killed after two such vehicles of DSCC and DNCC hit them in Dhaka's Gulistan and Panthapath areas.

In both cases, those driving the trucks were not registered drivers but cleaners working for the corporations.

In another incident on December 2, a 60-year-old RMG worker was injured when a garbage truck having the sticker of DSCC hit her in the Mohammadpur bus stand area.

Meanwhile, the Rapid Action Battalion detained the driver of the garbage truck, involved in yesterday's accident, from Jatrabaria area around 9:30pm. The arrestee was identified as Moshed, 29, Rab-10 Operation Officer Enayet Kabir told The Daily Star.

Deceased's brother Tapan Kumar Sarker filed a case against unnamed driver of an unidentified garbage truck with Wari Police Station around 8:30pm.