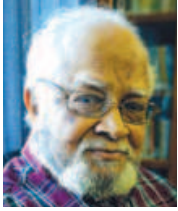


Archaeologist Enamul Haque no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent archaeologist, historian and art expert Prof Enamul Haque died at his home in the capital on Sunday.



He was 85. He breathed his last in his sleep at 3:35pm, said research fellow SM Saiful Islam.

"Sir died of old age. Civic tributes will be paid to him on the National Museum premises on Thursday [tomorrow] morning before his first namaj-e-janaza to be held there. His body will be then taken to his village home in Bogura and a second janaza will be held there," Saiful told The Daily Star.

Haque, also a former director general of Bangladesh National Museum, will be buried at his family graveyard after a third janaza prayers.

His body was kept at the mortuary of Birdem General Hospital.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid have expressed deep sorrow at the death of the famed archaeologist.

Haque completed his bachelor's degree in history and masters in archaeological history from Dhaka University. He later earned a PhD in South Asian Art from the University of Oxford. He also completed a post graduate diploma in museology from London.

The art expert joined Dhaka Museum (later Bangladesh National Museum) in 1962. He became the principal of the institution in 1965, director in 1969 and served as its director general from 1983-1991.

He had been the president of the International Council of Museums Asia-Pacific Organisation from 1983-86. He served as professor of national culture and heritage at the Independent University, Bangladesh. He was the president, chairman and academic director of the International Centre for Study of Bengal Art.

Haque, also a cultural and heritage activist, was awarded Ekushey Padak in 2014 and Independence Day Award in 2017.

He received many more accolades including the Bangladesh Shishu Academy Agrani Bank Literary Award (1986), Honorary International Council of the Asia Society of New York (1986-92), Ramaprasad Chanda Centenary Medal by the Asiatic Society of Calcutta (1993), DSc honoris causa by Open University of Alternative Medicines of India (1998), Rich Foundation Award (2012), and Padma Shri (2020), India's fourth highest civilian award.

During his studentship at Dhaka University, he was the founding editor of literature magazine "Uttaran".



A firefighter works at a site of a residential building damaged by a Russian military strike, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Mykolaiv, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Ukraine ramps up attacks on occupied south

'52 Russians killed' as rockets hit Kherson; Warring parties to hold Black Sea grain talks in Turkey

AGENCIES

Ukraine yesterday said it had launched artillery barrages that destroyed a Russian arms depot and carried out a "special operation" to free military captives in the Moscow-controlled Kherson region, a territory it eyes to retake in a counter-offensive.

The bombardments in the south came as Washington and the EU announced nearly \$3 billion combined for Ukraine and Turkey said delegations from Moscow and Kyiv would meet in Istanbul Wednesday to discuss restarting stalled grain deliveries across the Black Sea.

According to Ukraine, the strike hit an ammunition dump in the town of Nova Kakhovka in the Kherson region and killed 52 Russians. It came after Washington supplied Ukraine with HIMARS mobile artillery systems which Kyiv says its forces are starting to use with ever greater efficacy.

A Russian-installed official in Kherson gave a different version. He said at least seven people had been killed in the Ukrainian attack and that civilians and

civilian infrastructure had been hit.

The area Ukraine struck is one that Russian forces seized after launching on Feb. 24 what Moscow called "a special military operation" and is of strategic importance with Black Sea access, a once thriving agricultural industry, and a location just north of Russian-annexed Crimea.

Ukrainian government officials have spoken of efforts to marshal up to 1 million troops and of their aim to recapture southern parts of the country under Russian control which they have said are important for economic and political reasons.

"Based on the results of our rocket and artillery units, the enemy lost 52, an Msta-B howitzer, a mortar, and seven armoured and other vehicles, as well as an ammunition depot in Nova Kakhovka," Ukraine's southern military command said in statement.

Unverified videos posted on social media showed smoke and sparks, followed by an immense fireball erupting into the night sky. Pictures showed rubble strewn across streets and scorched buildings.

Images released by Russian state media showed a wasteland covered in rubble and the remains of buildings. Unverified reports on social media said the strike had killed several senior Russian military commanders.

Ukraine is itself bracing for what it expects will be a massive new Russian offensive in the east of the country where Moscow says it is determined to take control of all of the industrial Donbas region.

Russian forces have for weeks been shelling parts of the Donetsk region, which is part of Donbas, and are expected to launch an assault on the eastern city of Sloviansk.

After Russia failed to quickly take Ukraine's capital Kyiv, its forces turned to the Donbas, whose two provinces Donetsk and Luhansk have been partly controlled by Russian-backed separatists since 2014.

Russia now controls all of the Luhansk region and some of the Donetsk region. Russian President Vladimir Putin aims to hand control of the Donbas to the separatists whom Kyiv says are Russian-controlled puppets, a charge they deny.

BCL leader tortured over relationship

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A local Chhatra League leader was tied to a tree and tortured by a group of men over his relationship with a woman in Hatia Sunday evening.

Video footage of Riad Uddin Shakil, vice-president of BCL at Hatia Dwip Government College, being tortured went viral on social media the next day.

Police rescued him around 2:30am on Monday and arrested Nurul Amin, who is the father of the woman with whom Riad allegedly had a relationship, said Inspector Amir Hossain of Hatia Police Station.

Police are looking for the other suspects, he added.

9 die from Covid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health officials yesterday reported nine deaths from Covid and 656 new cases of the disease.

The current positivity rate is 13.78 percent, said the Directorate General of Health Services in a press release after testing 4,761 individuals.

The total number of confirmed cases rose to 19,91,031.

Henolux owners land in jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Henolux Group Managing Director Nurul Amin and Director Fatema Amin were sent to jail on July 9 on charges of instigating the suicide of a businessman.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Debdash Chandra Adhikary passed the order after Gazi Salauddin, inspector of Detective Branch of police, produced them before the court on completion of a two-day remand.

The magistrate also directed the jail authorities to ensure better treatment for the couple.

Nurul and Fatema admitted to police that they took a large sum of money from the late businessman and did not return the money, said the inspector.

Earlier on that day, the brother of the victim Gazi Anisur Rahman, who on July 5 died of burn injuries, filed the case against the couple at Shahbagh Police Station.

Jubo Dal leader hacked to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A Jubo Dal leader was hacked to death allegedly by his business opponents in Jashore town yesterday.

Badiuzzaman Dhani, 48, who was the senior vice-president of Jashore District Jubo Dal, and his wife were standing next to their house in Shankarpur Chopdarpara area around 12:15pm when four or five men appeared at the scene and stabbed him multiple times.

He died at Jashore General Hospital around 2:15pm, said his younger brother Monir Hossain.

Tajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Jashore Kotwali Model Police Station, said police were looking for the attackers.

President

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There was no official word from the president's office about his whereabouts, but he remained commander-in-chief of the armed forces with military resources at his disposal.

Rajapaksa is accused of mismanaging the economy to a point where the country has run out of foreign exchange to finance even the most essential imports, leading to severe hardships for the 22 million population.

If he steps down as promised, Wickremesinghe will automatically become acting president until parliament elects an MP to serve out the presidential term, which ends in November 2024.

According to the Sri Lankan constitution, if both the president and the prime minister resign, the parliament's speaker takes over the presidency. Current Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardene is a relative of the Rajapaksas.

Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$51 billion foreign debt in April and is in talks with the IMF for a possible bailout.

Pranay Verma

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of new Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra, who took charges in May succeeding Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

The Hindu newspaper reported that India's Ambassador to Bhutan Ruchira Khambhoj is taking over as the country's permanent representative to the UN.

Indian Ambassador to Japan Sanjay Kumar Verma is set to take over as the next high commissioner to Canada. Two senior officers, including one who has been dealing with Quad negotiations, and an ambassador in West Asia, are being considered for the ambassador to Tokyo.

Quad is a strategic security dialogue between Australia, India, Japan, and the United States.

Three new bridges usher in new hope

FROM PAGE 1

bridge, with 495m viaduct, became fully visible in December last year.

"All works of the bridge are done now and it's ready for opening," Project Director Abdul Awal Molla told this newspaper on July 5.

First, the Chinese Embassy in Dhaka will hand over the bridge to the road authorities, which is expected to be done soon, he said. "We have also started the process for inauguration ceremony too."

The bridge will not only establish Projipur's direct connection with Barishal city, it will also connect Barishal with Khulna.

Mongla port and the under-construction Payra port would be

the cost of Tk 959.45 crore. "We hope the work would be completed within August and the bridge would be readied for opening in September," said Project Director Shyamal Kumar Bhattacharyya.

This is a Nielsen-Lohse arch type steel bridge, which is 27.10m wide, and the first six lane bridge of the country, he added.

The Asian Highway-1 route, connecting Assam with West Bengal of India via Sylhet-Dhaka-Narail-Jashore, earlier had two missing links: one is the Padma Bridge and another Kalna Bridge. The Padma Bridge was opened to traffic last month.

"With the opening of the Kalna

commuters will have to travel less than two kilometre to reach Narayanganj city from Bandar upazila.

RHD in November 2010 initiated the bridge project with Saudi Arabia's funding. But it took over seven years to hire consultants and contractors before the physical works started in late 2017.

All major works for the 1234.5m bridge with 834.5m viaduct were done and works for installing lights and building walkways were going on now, Project Director Shoab Ahmed said on July 5.

"The bridge would be readied for use at the first part of October," he told The Daily Star.



BEKUTIA BRIDGE



KALNA BRIDGE

also connected by the bridge, and the travel from Khulna and other western parts of the country to Kuakata, a top tourist destination, will be easier, he said.

KALNA BRIDGE

RHD in May 2016 took up a project titled Cross-Border Road Network Improvement Project with a soft loan from Japan.

The Kalna Bridge over the Madhumati river, which is among 17 bridges being constructed under the Tk 3,745.51-crore project, will cut short the travel time between Dhaka and Jashore.

People are now using ferries to cross the river at Kalna.

The physical work of the 690m bridge started in November 2018 at

Bridge, the last missing link will also be disappeared," he told The Daily Star on June 6.

He said the length of the route from Dhaka to Jashore via Gabtoli-Paturia-Daulatdia-Magura-Jashore is 218km. It will be only 160km via Jatrabari-Padma Bridge-Kalana Bridge.

3RD SHITALAKHYA BRIDGE

The Shitalakhya river separates Bandar upazila from the Narayanganj district headquarters.

The project director said the bridge also fill up the missing link of a proposed outer ring road around the capital.

He said the bridge will not only connect Bandar upazila with Narayanganj Sadar but also would work as an alternative route to connect Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway (N-8) with Dhaka-Chatogram Highway (N-1), without touching the capital.

Currently, vehicles reach N-1 from N-8 through Jatrabari area in the capital.

But the bridge will connect N-1 with N-8 through Madangonj-Syedpur-Mukterpur-Munshigonj-Tongibari-Louhajang road.

The project director said the bridge also fill up the missing link of a proposed outer ring road around the capital.

[Photos: Sanad Saha/Collected]

IMF team to arrive tomorrow

FROM PAGE 1

of foreign currency for Bangladesh, are high.

The IMF officials will look into the impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war and escalated global commodity prices on the Bangladesh economy, the status of recovery from the global coronavirus pandemic and the government's large subsidy programme.

They will see whether the subsidy spending is justified and compare it with the other countries. If it is deemed excessive, the IMF mission may suggest ways to trim it.

Subsidy spending in the just-concluded fiscal year is Tk 66,825 crore, 24.1 percent more than the original allocation thanks to the spiral in fuel and fertiliser prices in the global market.

In this fiscal year's budget, Tk 82,745 crore has been earmarked for subsidy.

But considering the price trend of oil, gas, and fertiliser in the international market, the estimated spending can be 15-20 per cent higher than the initial estimates, said Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal in his budget speech in June.

The Washington-based multilateral lender could tie in conditions for the loan package.

The conditions could include measures to increase revenue, lower subsidy expenditure, market-based exchange rate and lending rate, and reforms in the banking sector and tax administration, the finance ministry official said.

The government has already moved to tighten its belts though.

It has unveiled a relatively smaller budget for the current fiscal year, put on hold low-priority projects, suspended foreign tours of government officials, adjusted the prices of gas and diesel to some extent, and loosened the exchange rate policy.

The government has also signalled that it may raise the price of fuel oil and has proposed to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission to increase the electricity tariff to cut the subsidy burden.

Surjit Bhalla, executive director of the IMF for India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka, who represented Bangladesh on the board of the Washington-based lender, is also set to visit Bangladesh separately.

Webb telescope reveals

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more distant galaxies behind it towards the observatory, in a cosmic magnification effect.

Webb's primary imager NIRC2, which operates in the near infrared wavelength spectrum because light from the early universe has been stretched out by the time it reaches us - has brought these faint background galaxies into focus.

Webb compiled the composite shot in 12.5 hours, achieving well beyond what its predecessor the Hubble Space Telescope could in weeks.

"Fantastic - galaxies upon galaxies upon galaxies," Jonathan Lunine, chair of the astronomy department at Cornell University, told AFP, rejoicing with the rest of the global astronomy community.

"Even though this is by no means the farthest Webb can see, it's the deepest image ever taken, and shows the power of this remarkable telescope: tremendous sensitivity, a broad range of wavelengths, and sharp image clarity."

Avi Loeb, a professor of astronomy at Harvard, explained the reddish arcs are the ancient galaxies, while the light colored circles and ellipses belong to the younger galaxy cluster in the foreground.

He added he was "thrilled" about the idea of Webb looking even closer to the Big Bang, back some 13.8 billion years ago.

The Webb Space Telescope yesterday began releasing a new wave of cosmic images, heralding a new era of astronomy.