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Learn from Bangamata

PM urges all women

UNB, Dhaka



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the women to learn from the life of Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnesa who set extraordinary instances and examples of firmness, intelligence, and farsightedness.

Sheikh Fazilatunnesa, wife of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and mother of the prime minister, was gunned down in the gruesome massacre August 15 in 1975.

The mayhem wiped out Bangabandhu, the father of the nation, and most members of his family.

Paying tribute to Bangamata, Hasina said she was "a person who sacrificed everything for the independence of a nation and its people".

"I never saw her breaking down in any crisis," she said.

Hasina said this while delivering her speech at an international conference titled "Bangamata: a paragon of women's leadership and nation building in Bangladesh".

Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Centre for Gender and Development Studies of Dhaka University organised the seminar at the Senate Bhaban Auditorium of the university.

The prime minister joined the programme virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

She said that all the decisions Bangamata had taken in family and politics proved to be very much appropriate for the family and the country.

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PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Oil tankers parked in front of Meghna depot in Khulna city's Khalishpur yesterday morning after tanker and filling station owners' associations called a strike, demanding higher lorry fare and more commission on fuel. Supply of fuel to 14 districts was suspended for nine hours.

Zim clinch ODI series

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Zimbabwe clinched their first ODI series against Bangladesh since 2013 as Sikandar Raza and skipper Regis Chakabva's 201-run stand set them on course for a dominating five-wicket win in the second ODI in Harare yesterday.

Hasan Mahmud gave the Tigers a positive start with the ball, bagging two early wickets, before spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Taijul Islam got one each to leave Zimbabwe in tatters.

Raza came in when the chips were down as his side were struggling at 49 for four. Along with Chakabva, Raza slowly got the score moving with both batters initially focusing on consolidating the innings.

The pivotal moment from Bangladesh's perspective came when Raza got a reprieve in the 26th over after Mehedi Hasan Miraz dislodged the stumps with his wrong hand while Raza was out of his crease, running back to the danger end. The third-

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Amnesty to black money falls flat

NBR's receipts drop 94.4pc last fiscal year

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The tax authority's receipts from black money dropped 94.4 percent year-on-year in fiscal 2021-22 after the increase in tax rate and additional penalty dulled the black money holders' interest to legalise their undisclosed wealth.

Last fiscal year, Tk 116.27 crore came in taxes and fines after 2,311 people legalised their undeclared wealth, according to the National Board of Revenue.

A year earlier, when the government had provided the scope to clean black money without any question asked regarding the source, a record Tk 2,064.9 crore was received by the NBR from 11,859 individuals.

The reason for the poor response is the increase in the tax rate and the imposition of penalties, said NBR officials on the condition of anonymity as they are not authorised to speak with the media.

In fiscal 2021-22, the tax for legalising undisclosed wealth by investing in the stock market, banks' savings products or national savings certificate was 25 percent and there was another 5 percent penalty on the computed tax.

The tax was 10 percent in fiscal 2020-21 and there was no additional penalty.

Subsequently, in fiscal 2021-22, 51 individuals legalised their hidden wealth by investing in the stock market, down from 286 a year earlier. The NBR received Tk 3.31 crore from the option, down 91.8 percent year-on-year.

Some 2,251 people declared their bank savings products or national savings certificate and cash holdings, yielding the NBR Tk 112.87 crore last fiscal year.

In fiscal 2020-21, 11,573 individuals gave the NBR Tk 2,024.64 crore in taxes by legalising their bank savings products or national savings certificate and cash holdings.

Undisclosed wealth could also be legalised by setting up new industries last fiscal year and the tax for that is 10 percent tax. Only nine people took up on the offer, with the NBR receiving Tk 90 lakh.

The amount of tax to legalise undisclosed property,

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Eastern refinery not expanded in 53 years

High demand forces govt to import diesel regularly

ASIFUR RAHMAN

The country has to regularly import diesel because of its inadequate oil refinery and storage facilities that have not been upgraded since 1968.

A project proposal to raise the capacity of the country's only state-owned Eastern Refinery Limited (ERL) was made 10 years ago.

However, physical work remains a far cry as the proposal, revised over 10 times, has yet to get cabinet approval.

Had the project been implemented earlier, the country would have been able to import more crude oil, which is cheaper, and refine it to make diesel.

Bangladesh could have saved Tk 2,500 crore a year had the project been implemented, mentions the Development Project Proposal for the Eastern Refinery Limited-2 submitted to the Planning Commission in January this year. The proposal has yet to be approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council, officials said.

In 2012, when the plan was made, the cost was estimated to be Tk 13,000, but following the subsequent revisions, the cost went up to Tk 19,372 crore.

After the project is approved by the Ecnc, officials will float a tender inviting companies to bid, ERL Managing Director Md

Lokman told The Daily Star.

Energy expert M Tamim said a conglomerate has shown interest in investing in the sector. "They are the ones who seem to have exerted influence to make sure the government capacity did not increase.

The ERL is capable of refining



15 lakh tonnes of crude oil a year. The aim of the project is to raise the capacity to 45 lakh tonnes.

Crude oil was \$88 and diesel \$135 a barrel, about 159 litres, in the international market yesterday.

If approved by the cabinet, international tenders will be invited for the appointment of contractors. The process may take around nine

months. The refinery will take at least five years to be in service, officials said.

In recent months, the BPC has been under pressure due to the dramatic price hike in international market. A barrel of diesel sold for \$83 in the international market in December last year. The price reached \$170 in June. M Tamim said had the ERL supplied its own diesel in June, each barrel would have cost about \$115.

An official said, "If the BPC could import more oil when the price was lower, the government could have saved foreign currency."

The official said at least Tk 15 crore had been saved on each litre of diesel if the government could import crude oil and refined it here in Bangladesh.

ERL MD Lokman said officials tried to have the project implemented by Technip, a French company that built the current facility. But it didn't happen as the company was seeking too much profit.

Asked why the process was taking so long, he said he joined last year and did not know enough to make a comment.

In 2020-21, Bangladesh used 72 lakh tonnes of diesel, of which the ERL supplied only 7.2 lakh.

In 2026-27, the annual demand would reach 80 lakh tonnes, it has been projected.

Small pterosaurs 'pole vaulted' to flight

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK



An analysis of a small pterosaur fossil has provided more evidence that the Jurassic-era flying reptiles used their long arms to rock back and forth to "pole vault" themselves into the air.

The research, recently published in the journal Scientific Reports, assessed a tiny pterosaur fossil

from rocks dated to the late Jurassic era about 163 million years to 146 million years ago unearthed in Germany.

Scientists studying fossils of pterosaurs since they were first discovered over two centuries ago have reasoned that the physical features of the flying reptiles, including a "forward centre of gravity", prevented them from a bird-like running launch.

Researchers have theorised a launch from water bodies for pterosaurs, similar to a method seen in modern-day water-feeding birds and bats. However, direct physical evidence of such mechanism has been elusive, until now.

In the new study, scientists, including Michael Pittman from the Department of Earth Sciences and University College London, analysed the fossil remains of a pterosaur type called *aurorazhdarichid* unearthed from the Jurassic rocks of Germany with well-preserved soft tissues, including a wing membrane and webbed feet.

Their analysis suggests the soft tissues were primary propulsive contact surfaces needed for the pterosaur's water launch with a four-legged pole-vaulting mechanism.

With previous studies indicating that

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RAPE IN BUS

5 suspects land in Gazipur jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

All five men, accused of gang-raping a woman in a moving bus in Gazipur on Friday night, were sent to jail by a court yesterday.

Rakib Mollah, 20, Sumon Khan, 20, Mohammad Sajib, 21, Mohammad Shaheen Miah, 19, and Sumon Hasan, 22, gave confessional statements before they were sent to jail.

Gazipur's Judicial Magistrate Court-3, Judicial Magistrate Court-4, and Senior Judicial Magistrate Court-2 recorded their statements, said SM Shafiullah, superintendent of Gazipur police.

A case was filed against them on Saturday.

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Farmers tending to their vegetable saplings on a floating seedbed in Maluhar village of Barishal's Banaripara. They grow almost all varieties of vegetable saplings on the seedbeds made of mainly hyacinth. This method proves profitable for the farmers. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

UNDOCUMENTED IN THE MALDIVES

34k Bangladeshis to get papers

JAMIL MAHMUD

About 34,000 Bangladeshi undocumented migrant workers in the Maldives are in the pipeline for regularisation under an amnesty programme there, according to an estimate of Bangladesh High Commission in Malé.

Once they are documented, the workers will get legal and health insurance benefits. Besides, they can remit money home using their own documents through banking channels, helping increase inward remittance, said people of Bangladeshi community and high commission sources.

They said many currently send money through unauthorised channels as they are undocumented.

For the regularisation, a worker's employer has to apply for "work permit" to the Maldives' Economic Development Ministry, said a notice of the Bangladesh High Commission last month.

During her visit to the Maldives

last December, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih discussed regularisation of undocumented Bangladeshis, BSS reported.

Sohel Parvez, first secretary (labour welfare wing) of Bangladesh High Commission in Malé, said they have been providing different support services to the workers to speed up their documentation process.

"We are providing them with required information and trying to hand them over passports sooner."

The official said the process, open for other undocumented foreign migrant workers as well, is underway and that the Maldivian authorities have not yet declared a closing date.

Following an initiative, about 45,000 Bangladeshi undocumented workers got registered with the Maldives government in 2019. Till May this year, around 11,000

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