

The plane that brought Bangabandhu home

Talks on to set up exhibition centre for the aircraft, which is now in Germany

DIPAN NANDY

It had been months since Bangabandhu last felt the breeze outside his jail cell in West Pakistan. Since the start of the Liberation War, he kept languishing there, while his people fought tooth and nail to fulfil the dream of an independent Bangladesh.

Then on December 16, 1971, freedom was announced. East Pakistan became Bangladesh, Pakistani authorities finally released Bangabandhu from solitary confinement, and later on, a plane was arranged to take him home to his motherland.

The very plane that bears memories of the extraordinary event later found a home at an aircraft museum in Germany. How the aircraft, which used to serve the UK's prime minister, ended up carrying Bangabandhu and then landed at the museum is a story worth telling.

Currently, some Bangladeshis are working with authorities of the museum in Hermeskeil to prepare an exhibition centre for showcasing the historic Comet jet (DH106 Comet 4C), which belonged to the British Royal Air Force (RAF), at the



PHOTO: COURTESY OF TARIK SUJAT

This is the plane that brought the Father of the Nation back from London to his freed motherland on January 10, 1972. According to eminent jurist and politician Dr Kamal Hossain, the aircraft left the UK at 7:00am on January 9, and after a transit in Delhi, landed in Dhaka around 1:44pm, while a rapturous welcome awaited Bangabandhu.



establishment.

"We are in talks regarding the exhibition centre... When they [museum authorities] got to know that this plane carried Bangabandhu home, they felt delighted to have it at the museum," said Tarik Sujat, who wrote the book "Bangabandhu Swadesh Pattayabartan Comet Biman o British Gopon Dalil", published in 2022.

In 2021, the museum authorities sent a letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also

eldest daughter of Bangabandhu, through Tarik, confirming that the plane is with them.

Tarik said the PM was happy and assured that if they set up an exhibition centre, Jatir Janak Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Trust will provide all necessary support.

Related documents, pictures, telegrams exchanged between authorities regarding the journey, and writings centring the

historical significance of Bangabandhu's homecoming will be provided for the exhibition, said Tarik.

The plane brought the Father of the Nation back from London to his freed motherland on January 10, 1972. Earlier, he was flown to London from Pakistan.

HOW THE PLANE LANDED AT THE MUSEUM

RAF sold the jet to DAN-AIR Service, a British private airline in 1975. The new

owner changed the livery (the special design and colour scheme). Air Classik then bought it in 1981. Both the airlines merged with British Airways in 1992.

Leo Junior, founder of the museum -- Flugausstellung L-P Junior -- bought the plane at auction in 1996, and since then, the aircraft has been there.

Tarik saw the plane during a visit in October 2021 and found that the livery used by DAN-AIR was still fine. The cockpit was

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COURT CORNER

Trial against GK Shamim begins

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Trial against GK Shamim, an expelled Jubo League leader, and his mother Ayesha Akhter in a case filed over amassing illegal wealth worth Tk 297 crore, began at a Dhaka court yesterday with deposition of the complainant.

Judge Shaikh Nazmul Alam of the Special Judge's Court-4 of Dhaka recorded statement of Deputy Director of ACC Md Salahuddin.

During the hearing, GK Shamim was present in the court while his mother went into hiding after getting bail from the High Court. The judge then fixed February 12 for cross examination of the complainant on behalf of the accused in the case.

BAR ON GM QUADER Court order on appeal Jan 15

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed January 15 for passing an order on an appeal submitted for lifting the injunction order barring GM Quader from taking any political decision regarding the party.

Judge AHM Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan of Dhaka District Judge's Court set the date after GM Quader filed the appeal against the order passed by the First Joint District Judge's Court on October 31 last year.

Pension bill for SC judges passed in JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The "Bangladesh Supreme Court Judges (Leave, Pension and Privileges) Bill, 2023" was passed in Parliament yesterday with a provision of a monthly special allowance of Tk 70,000 for a retired chief justice.

Law minister Anisul Huq moved the bill which was passed by voice vote.

As per the Bill, Chief Justice means the Chief Justice of Bangladesh while "Judge" means a Judge of Appellate Division and High Court Division of the Supreme Court and includes the Chief Justice and Additional Judges.

The special allowance will be given to meet expenses such as paying for house help, car driver, house guard and maintenance of office/residence.

The proposed law was brought to formulate a law repealing an ordinance of the military regime as per a judgment of the High Court.

The law will replace the Supreme Court Judges (Leave, Pension and Privileges) Ordinance, 1982.

A judge shall, on his retirement, resignation

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Govt overcame many hurdles for metro rail: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government overcame several challenges to implement the metro rail and different development projects in the country.

"There had been challenges when we went for any work, but we completed all those projects overcoming all hurdles," the PM said in her introductory speech in the weekly cabinet meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office.

Talking about the metro-rail project, she said in the initial feasibility study, the metro rail route was designed to go through Bijoy Sarani. "In that case, we would have to close down our Tejgaon airport, which has a 9,000-foot runway. I was dead against that proposal."

Hasina mentioned that during the 1998 floods, all the relief goods were transported through this airport as Kurmitola airport became inundated.

She told the meeting that if the old design was implemented, then the government would have to demolish 22 buildings. "I proposed the new route using the Khamarbari area."

The PM also mentioned that she extended the metro rail route up to Kamalapur station.

"At that time, demolishing Kamalapur station for the metro rail was proposed, to make space for turning and landing," she added.

The PM told officials concerned that it would not have been wise to demolish such a big station and construct another.

Hasina said she asked them how they could make space for the metro rail while keeping the Kamalapur station intact. "If necessary, the metro rail will go over the station

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'Just shows how judiciary is compromised'

Pro-BNP lawyers criticise court order to seize Tarique, Zubaida's assets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jatiotabadi Ainjibi Forum (BJAF), a body of pro-BNP lawyers, yesterday criticised a Dhaka court order that on January 5 asked police to confiscate movable and immovable assets of BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and his wife Zubaida Rahman in connection with a corruption case.

In a written statement, BJAF said the court order was just another step to substantiate the USAID report "Final Report Assessment of Rule of Law and Justice Sector in Bangladesh", published on March 12, 2022.

A BJAF statement mentioned that the USAID report had stated, "... The unrealised reforms on clear delineations of powers initiated in 2007, executive control and domination over the judiciary and increased politicisation of judicial appointments in the High

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'Road crashes have actually gone down'

Claims top transport leader; e-tickets for 711 more buses from today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While three organisations working on road-safety issues said road crashes are on the rise, Khondaker Enayet Ullah, general secretary of Dhaka Road Transport Owners' Association (DRTOA), yesterday claimed that the number is going down.

He, however, admitted that deaths in road crashes have increased.

Enayet made the claim at a press conference arranged to inform that 711 more buses under 15 companies based in the capital's Mohammadpur, Azimpur, and Gabtoli will be brought under e-ticketing system from today.

The conference was held at DRTOA office in the capital's Paribagh.

Three organisations -- Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, Road Safety Foundation, and Nirapad Sarak Chai -- recently published their annual road-crash reports, which said that both crashes and deaths have increased last year when compared with previous years.

According to Jatri Kalyan Samity, 9,951 people were killed in 6,749 road crashes last year. The numbers of crashes and deaths are the highest since 2015; they are 19.89 and 27.43 percent, respectively, higher than those in 2021.

Road Safety Foundation said 7,713 people were killed in 6,829 crashes last year, 27.14 and

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New law to appoint judges soon Law minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday told parliament that the work on enacting a law for appointment of High Court judges is ongoing.

"It will be possible to place the bill in parliament within a few days," the law minister said this while replying to opposition Jatiya Party and Gonoforum MPs remarks.

Gonoforum MP Mokabbir Khan said

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In an attempt to stop river erosion and encroachment, BIWTA authorities have taken up the initiative to set up concrete blocks on the bank of Turag river near Mirpur's Diabari. This photo was taken recently.

অভিনন্দন

প্রতিমশা চিকিৎসক বাংলাদেশ এবং উপমহাদেশের পাইলটদের কলোরেকটাল সার্জন বসন্ত শেখ মুজিব মেডিকেল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের কলোরেকটাল সার্জারী বিভাগের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা চেয়ারম্যান (অবঃ) **অধ্যাপক ডাঃ এ.কে.এম. ফজলুল হক** দেশের অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়নে রাজস্ব বোর্ড কর্তৃক ২০২১-২২ সেরা করনাত্মক সম্মাননার চিকিৎসকদের মধ্যে দ্বিতীয় সর্বোচ্চ করনাত্মক হিসেবে নির্বাচিত হওয়ার অর্থে তাকে জানাই আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন ও শুভেচ্ছা। উল্লেখ্য যে, অধ্যাপক ডাঃ হক কলোরেকটাল সার্জারীতে (পাইলট, ফিস্টুলা, ফিশার, লেজার, পলিপ, কলোনস্কপি, স্যাপারোস্কপি, কোলোন ও রেকটাম ক্যান্সার) বিশ্বব্যাপী সর্বাধিক সংখ্যক সফল অপারেশন সম্পাদনকারী সার্জন।

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PHOTO: RASHED SHUNON

PRAYER TIMING
JANUARY 10

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:30	12:45	4:00	5:36	7:00
JAMAAAT 6:05	1:15	4:15	5:40	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION