



BIMAN'S 7 DOMESTIC FLIGHTS LAST YEAR

## Pilots' blunder, cover-up put 500 lives at risk

They concealed info of engine damage due to their faulty flight operations



- The pilots erased the "maintenance and fault code messages"
- One of the 2 pilots was promoted even after the incident. However, the promotion was halted last week
- Biman had to spend Tk 16.5cr to repair the Dash-8 aircraft

**ZYMA ISLAM and RASHIDUL HASAN**

Did you take any of these seven Biman flights on February 1 and February 2 last year?

BG602 from Sylhet to Dhaka, BG605 and BG606 from Dhaka to Sylhet and back to Dhaka, BG467 and BG468 from Dhaka to Jashore and back to Dhaka, and BG471 and BG472 from Dhaka to Barishal and back to

Dhaka.

If so, two Biman pilots knowingly put your life and the lives of around 500 others at risk by hiding the fact that the plane's engines had been damaged due to the captain's improper operations of the plane mid flight.

According to a Biman investigation, there could have been a catastrophic "inflight engine failure" during any of the

seven flights of the De Havilland Canada Dash 8, popularly known as the Dash-8, a 'turboprop short-haul' plane that can carry up to 74 passengers.

The civil aviation law says that the punishment for flying an aircraft in a dangerous manner is life imprisonment. But instead of punishing them, the authorities promoted one of the two pilots for flying long-haul planes.

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**"The Biman management made the decision that the two pilots will not be able to avail any promotion until the departmental action against them is resolved."**

**Shafiqul Azim**, Biman Managing Director and CEO

## 'Why should we continue subsidies?'

PM tells consumers to pay actual cost of gas, power



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said consumers should pay the actual purchasing cost of gas and electricity to avail the utilities' supply.

"Gas and electricity supply can be provided if all agree to pay the purchasing costs. How much subsidy can be given? And why should we continue subsidies?" she said, adding that the government is providing subsidies to agriculture and food production for the nation's greater interest.

The PM said this while opening the newly constructed "Biniyog Bhavan" (Investment Building) of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) in the capital's Agargaon.

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## Business groups influencing state policies

Say economists at Sanem meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Influential business houses and groups are exerting their influence in order to make rules favourable to them, said a number of economists yesterday.

An example of such influence is visible through the retaining of the taka overvalued for a long time to support importers, the focus on the import of liquefied natural gas (LNG) instead of exploring gas resources locally, the electricity purchase through quick rental power plants, and various other regulations.

The issues came at a discussion at the 6th Sanem Annual Economists Conference at the Brac Centre Inn organised by the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem).

At the discussion styled "Regulation has become a source of capital accumulation," Debapriya Bhattacharya, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said since independence, capital accumulation has taken place in Bangladesh through the grabbing of abandoned properties, foreign-aided projects, the defaulting on loans taken from specialised banks in the 1980s, and the manipulation of stock markets.

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**"If every politician aspires to become a businessman, the consequence is the degeneration of party organisation."**

Prof Rehman Sobhan

## 'You are killing us'

HC blasts DoE over air pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday rebuked the Department of Environment for its inaction in curbing Dhaka's air pollution despite repeated directives.

"Air pollution in Dhaka was ranked highest in the world this [yesterday] morning too, though we had issued specific directives at different times to control it. There is no reflection of the directives.

"They [DoE officials] have the responsibility to control the pollution. They are neither abiding by the law, nor complying with the court orders... You are killing us by not curbing the air pollution, as it is bringing increased risks to the public health...," the HC bench of Justice KM Kamrul Kader and Justice Mohammad Ali told DoE lawyer Amatul Karim Swapna during the hearing on a writ petition.

Amatul had submitted a compliance report

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## No chance of debt distress

Says IMF in its latest debt sustainability analysis

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh has a low risk of external and overall debt distress despite higher external borrowing in recent terms, said the International Monetary Fund.

"External and overall debt indicators are below their respective thresholds under the baseline," said the IMF's debt sustainability analysis (DSA), conducted to inform its executive board's decision on the \$4.7 billion loan application from Bangladesh.

At the end of last fiscal year, the country's total external debt is \$166.1 billion, which is 39 percent of GDP and well below the threshold of 55 percent.

Of the sum, \$72.3 billion is foreign loan, which is 17 percent of GDP and well below the threshold of 40 percent of GDP.

And of the \$72.3 billion, the World Bank accounts for \$18.2 billion, followed by the Asian Development Bank (\$13.3 billion), Japan (\$9.2 billion), Russia (\$5.1 billion), China (\$4.8

billion) and India (\$1.02 billion).

External medium- and long-term debt, which are mostly concessional in nature and helped finance infrastructure projects, is expected to jump in fiscal 2022-23 due to large taka depreciation, before gradually declining to around 14.1 percent of GDP by fiscal 2032-33 and 8.6 percent of GDP by fiscal 2042-43.

This decline is mainly driven by a gradual reduction in concessional financing beyond fiscal 2025-26, while financing from bilateral donors is expected to continue to increase, partially offsetting the lower concessional financing.

The majority of public debt over the last decade is domestic and denominated in local currency.

In fiscal 2021-22, domestic debt was about 56.5 percent of all debt, with the National Saving Certificates (NSCs) accounting for the lion's share.

"NSCs stifle the development of a domestic bond market as they provide a yield of around 10 percent for the majority of the NSC

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- The majority of public debt over the last decade is domestic and denominated in local currency
- In 2021-22, domestic debt was about 56.5% of PPG debt stock
- Domestic debt service payments amounted to \$31.9b in 2021-22
- External debt service payments in 2021-22 comprised the payments to multilateral creditors of \$1.5b and bilateral creditors of \$0.6b
- About half of the outstanding domestic debt is composed of National Saving Certificates (NSCs)

## Adani plant to begin transmission from March

No scope for coal price manipulation, says Nasrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is no scope of manipulation in coal pricing by Adani Power as the rate will be fixed as per the Newcastle Index, the main price reference for physical coal contracts in Asia, said Nasrul Hamid, the state minister for power, energy and mineral resources.

"We will get coal at a competitive price in the international market -- there is no scope of manipulation in the pricing," he said at a briefing held at the secretariat yesterday.

The coal price for the Adani Godda power plant will not be more than the Payra power plant, said Power Secretary Habibur Rahman, who was also present at the briefing.

Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) pays \$245 per metric tonne for the coal used in the Payra power plant in Patuakhali, according to a report prepared by the Power Cell in January.

It pays \$254.38 per metric tonne for the S Alam power plant in Chattogram's Banskhali and the Rampal power plant in Bagerhat, and \$270 for the Barishal 307MW coal-fired power plant, according to the report.

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## 20<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary



**Late Shah Rafiqul Islam (Titu)**  
Death: 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2003

This day in 2003, we lost our beloved & honorable Director **Late Shah Rafiqul Islam (Titu)**. We mourn his pre-mature death. With our distressed heart, we pray to Almighty Allah for his eternal peace. May Allah bless him. Ameen.

All Employees

ABUL KHAIR GROUP

In 2003, on this very day, you left us at the will of Almighty Allah the Beneficent. Your pre-matured departure has made us and many of your relations overwhelmed with grief. It is straining that you are not in this mundane world with us. But we are feeling your existence by remembering the tender-aged days of your life.

We pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of his departed soul and request all friends, relatives, well-wishers to pray for him from the core of heart.

May Allah the Beneficent bless you with the eternal bliss of paradise. Ameen.

Bereaved members of the family