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CANADA ROAD CRASH

Kumar Bishwajit's son still not out of danger

Bodies of three students to be brought home

STAR REPORT

Kumar Nibir, son of singer Kumar Bishwajit, is still in critical condition, while the families of the other three deceased Bangladeshi students in the fatal Toronto road crash have started the process of bringing the bodies back home.

Singer Kumar Bishwajit, along with his wife Naima Sultana, rushed to Canada after receiving the news of the accident, in which their son was critically injured.

They reached Toronto around 11:30pm (Bangladesh time) on Wednesday, according to the family.

About the updates from doctors, Bishwajit said, "Nibir still has to undergo two stages of intensive treatment. By the grace of God, if we can cross these two stages perfectly, then I will be able to say that things have been 100 percent successful."

Meanwhile, the process of bringing back the bodies of the other three Bangladeshi students, who died in the road accident in Toronto on Monday night, has begun.

The deceased are Shahriar Khan, Angela Barai and Aryan Dipta.

All four, including Nibir, are students of Humber College.

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DEMOCRACY IN MYANMAR

Washington wants Dhaka on its side

Say experts; US ready to help address Rohingya crisis

PORIMOL PALMA

A major focus of US State Department Counsellor Derek Chollet's recent visit to Dhaka was the Rohingya crisis, and the US believes that addressing the problem involves restoration of Myanmar's democracy.

US Ambassador at Large for Global Criminal Justice Beth Van Schaack visited the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar before joining Chollet in Dhaka in meetings with the country's top leadership and international organisations.

Chollet said part of the reason why they visited Bangladesh was to send the message that the US will continue to stand by Bangladesh in addressing the Rohingya crisis despite so many other challenges around the world.

In early January this year, US National Security Council's Senior Director for South Asia Rear Admiral Eileen Laubacher visited the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar.

The State Department in a statement ahead of Chollet's visit said the delegation would meet senior Bangladeshi officials to discuss coordination and response to the Rohingya refugee crisis and "strengthening cooperation in international forums, and advancing the security partnership between the United States and Bangladesh".

Foreign policy analysts say Washington is increasingly engaged with Dhaka after the US Senate on December 15, 2022, passed the Burma Unified through Rigorous Military Accountability (BURMA) Act, which was also included in the National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA) 2023.

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TORTURE OF IU STUDENT

Give security to complainant, conduct probe

HC orders authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered authorities to ensure the security of a female student, who was tortured allegedly by two BCL leaders at the Islamic University in Kushtia.

In response to a writ petition, the HC directed Kushtia's deputy commissioner to form a three-member committee in three days and submit a probe report within seven days of its formation.

Meanwhile, the IU authorities have been ordered to restrict BCL leaders Sanjida Chowdhury and Tabassum Islam, who allegedly led the torture, from entering the campus until further notice.

The HC also directed the IU vice chancellor to submit the probe reports prepared by the committee formed by the university authorities through Deputy Attorney General Tushar Kanti Roy.

The bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Razik-Al Jalil issued the order following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Gazi Md Mohsin seeking necessary directives.

On February 14, the victim filed

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Comilla Victorians skipper Imrul Kayes lifts the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) trophy after his side's seven-wicket win over Sylhet Strikers at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. It was Comilla's fourth BPL title and second on trot under Imrul's leadership.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

DHAKA-CHATTOGRAM HIGHWAY

It's coming under watch, finally

1,427 CCTV cameras to be set up by June to check theft of RMG shipments, robbery

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The police are going to resort to artificial intelligence to stop the frequent theft of export-oriented readymade garment products from lorries and other crimes on Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

To make this happen, a total 1,427 closed-circuit television cameras are being installed at 490 locations under a Tk 152 crore project.

The monitoring of the highway will, however, partially start in March.

Barkatullah Khan, additional deputy inspector general (DIG) of Highway Police, told The Daily Star on Monday that they have set up a data centre at the Meghna Ghat in Daudkandi with a storage capacity of five petabytes (one petabyte is 1,024 terabyte). It will be able to store six months' footage from all cameras.

Footage from the cameras will be monitored from five other centres – the Gazipur regional superintendent of police (SP) office, Cumilla regional SP office, the Highway Police headquarters in the capital's Uttara and its two offices in Daudkandi and Chattogram.

Barkatullah, also the project director, said the data centre will be equipped with artificial intelligence (AI) to detect criminals, crimes, and speeding. With the help of AI, a vehicle can be identified with minor details and its number plate may not be needed, he added.

For instance, if someone is looking for a white microbus that used the highway on a specific date, the authorities will just need to input the date, possible time and nearby area names to the server and the AI will show the results, he said.

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EU for an all-inclusive nat'l election

Says Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said the European Union wants the next parliamentary election in Bangladesh to be participatory.

"I have talked to the representatives of seven EU countries. Ahead of the next general election, as the ruling party, we held a meeting with the EU today [yesterday]. They want all parties, including the BNP, to join the next polls," he said while talking to reporters after the meeting in the capital's Gulshan.

Quader, also the ruling Awami League general secretary, further said, "We said one thing clearly – Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stated in her Wednesday's speech that the next election will be credible, free and fair."

In addition, the Election Commission will play an important role and the government will provide the commission with all

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India wraps up 'survey' at BBC offices after 3 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian income tax authorities wrapped up their three-day-long "survey" at BBC's offices in Delhi and Mumbai last night.

They collected digital and print documents and prepared an inventory of financial data from some select staffers, said tax department sources.

The survey operation that started around 11:30am on Tuesday lasted for nearly 60 hours.

Earlier, the tax officials examined mobile phones and laptops used by some BBC editorial and administrative employees, reported Reuters.

Tax officials had remained at the BBC's offices, some sleeping there, since the surprise inspection was launched, according to witnesses.

Others said some employees were questioned on financial transactions late into the night.

The action by the income tax authorities came soon after the BBC aired a documentary on the 2002 riots in Gujarat when Narendra Modi was the state's chief minister.

The income tax survey has kicked off a political standoff between the opposition parties which denounced it as an "attempt" to intimidate the media and the ruling BJP hit back at the BBC accusing it of being "anti-India".

Tax officials said the survey was carried out following the BBC's "deliberate non-compliance" with the transfer pricing rules and "diversion of profits" despite repeated reminders.



BEARS OF THE BOUGHS ... A binturong, or *baash bhalluk* in Bangla, taking a nap on the bough of a tree in Sylhet's Lawachhara. A binturong may look like a bear-cat hybrid. They even have long tails which they use as an extra arm to climb trees. However, binturongs are neither bears nor cats, and are rather related to civets and fossas. They occur mainly throughout South Asian and Southeast Asian countries. Primarily arboreal creatures, binturongs prefer being confined to forested areas. While they often feed on birds, rodents and insects, they also make sure to involve fruits and vegetables in their diet. Binturongs have a very distinctive smell -- like buttered popcorn! As pleasing as that might sound, it is actually to let other binturongs know they are trespassing or to discourage potential predators. Unfortunately, this fascinating mammal has been categorised by the IUCN as "vulnerable", and also "endangered" in some parts of their range, as they are often at risk of habitat destruction, poaching and is considered a delicacy in some areas, for which they are hunted.

PHOTO: TIMU HOSSAIN

AL, BNP take to city streets today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League and its associate bodies will hold programmes across the capital today, countering the BNP's pre-scheduled road march.

Dhaka's north and south units of the BNP will bring out processions around 2:30pm to press home its 10 demands that include the next national election under a non-partisan caretaker government.

On the other hand, the ruling AL will hold programmes at 3:00pm and 4:00pm protesting "terror and anarchy of the BNP".

According to the BNP's Dhaka (north) unit, they will bring out their procession from Uttara's Jasim Uddin Intersection and march through Gausul Azam Avenue, Shah Makhdum Avenue and Sonargaon Janapath before ending at Abdullahpur Bus Stand.

The BNP's Dhaka (south) unit said they would bring out their procession from Gopibagh's Brothers Union Club Ground and march through Tikatuli, Dayaganj, and Dholaikhal before finishing it at Nayabazar.

Meanwhile, the AL's Dhaka (north) unit will hold a rally protesting the "terror and anarchy of the BNP" in front of Alhaj Mockbul Hossain

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