



QUESTION PAPER LEAK Biman official found negligent, yet made DC

ZYMA ISLAM and RASHIDUL HASAN

While 19 junior officers have been let go over the question paper leak in Bangladesh Biman recruitment, a senior officer of the main question-setting committee, who was also found guilty in the investigation, has been made a deputy commissioner.

Muhammad Nizam Uddin Ahmed, general manager of administration and human resources, was first made the deputy commissioner of Bhola, and then posted to Shariatpur. His first working week starts today.

An investigation report by the civil aviation ministry, however, clearly stated that the entire question-setting committee was responsible for the question paper leak.

The committee had seven members, including Nizam.

He had invited an unapproved office assistant to help with the photocopying, who was later found to have been the one who took photos of the questions and distributed them for money.

According to the Detective Branch of police, each leaked question paper was being sold for lakhs of taka.

The DB filed a charge sheet in the case on July 5, formally accusing 30 employees of Biman, including only one senior officer – Major Taiz Ibne Anowar, a former general manager of the ground service equipment department.

It did not charge Nizam, although the ministry found the entire committee responsible for the leak.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Nizam said he was not aware of any investigation report that blamed the entire question-setting committee responsible for the question paper.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Wearing caps in vibrant red, yellow and green, hundreds of activists of BNP's associate bodies gather at the youth rally at the historic Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday. The rally was organised by Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, Chhatra Dal and Swechchhasebak Dal to involve youth leaders and activists in boosting the BNP's one-point movement. The photo was taken around 4:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

BUSINESS

Wheat importers looking for alternative sources

Wheat importers of Bangladesh are exploring alternative sources to ensure uninterrupted domestic supplies after Russia pulled out of the UN-brokered Black Sea grain deal.

Importers say they are currently monitoring the situation, talking to suppliers of alternative sources and will decide on placing orders after a week.

“We are talking with suppliers of Bulgaria, Romania, Argentina and Brazil to ensure supplies,” said Md Aminul Islam, managing director of Nabil Group, one of the traders that import wheat.

STORY ON BI

Fair polls not possible under this government Says GM Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday said that a fair election is not possible under the present government, as it has complete control over the whole electoral system.

“All governments that have come to power in the past have tried to maintain control over the electoral system, just as the current government has done. However, the electoral system should always be independent and kept out of the purview of the government,” he added.

The deputy leader of the opposition in parliament made the remarks while speaking to reporters at his party office in the capital's Banani.

The government has appointed its own loyalists to key positions and reformed laws to favour its own interests in the next

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

50 RIGHTS DEFENDERS 65 percent faced obstacles at work Says report of Centre for Governance Studies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 65 percent of the 50 grassroots human rights defenders, covered by a survey, faced obstructions in their work from the state and ruling party.

One in five had been harassed by law enforcement agencies, according to the report by the Centre for Governance Studies, which surveyed the rights defenders from 36 districts.

A quarter of them faced obstacles from the ruling party, while one in ten had been harassed by intelligence agencies, said the report “Who defends the defenders? The predicament of human rights activists in Bangladesh”.

“Overwhelmingly, our respondents have described the situation in Bangladesh as unsafe,” said the report, which was authored by Ali Riaz, a distinguished professor of political science at Illinois State University.

Riaz, who was the principal investigator for the report, shared the findings of the study at an event in Dhaka yesterday.

Some of the major harassment tactics include legal cases, death threats, physical attacks and intimidation of family members.

Three of the human rights defenders reported having been victims of enforced disappearance for their work, while 12 of them were physically assaulted. As many as 15 of the survey respondents faced government repression.

One in ten got slapped with frivolous cases just for

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

UKRAINE COUNTEROFFENSIVE Kyiv attacks Crimea ammunition depot

Russian war reporter's death prompts Moscow's
outrage over alleged use of cluster bombs

REUTERS

A drone attack on an ammunition depot in Crimea prompted authorities to evacuate a five km radius and briefly suspend road traffic on the bridge linking the peninsula to Russia, the region's Moscow-installed governor said yesterday.

Ukraine said its army had destroyed an oil depot and Russian army warehouses in what it called the “temporarily occupied” district of Oktiabrsk in central Crimea.

The attack caused an ammunition depot to explode, said Russian-installed governor Sergei Aksyonov, adding there was no reported damage or casualties. Footage shared by state media showed a thick cloud of grey smoke at the site.

Meanwhile, A Russian war reporter was killed and three were wounded in Ukraine yesterday in what the defence ministry said was a Ukrainian attack using cluster munitions, prompting outrage from Moscow.

In a separate incident, German broadcaster Deutsche Welle said one of its journalists, Yevgeny Shilko, had been wounded elsewhere in Ukraine in

a Russian attack with cluster munitions that killed a Ukrainian soldier. It said his life was not in danger.

Reuters could not independently verify the use of such weapons in either incident yesterday. Both sides have used them in the course of Russia's 17-month invasion of Ukraine.

The dead Russian journalist was named as Rostislav Zhuravlev, a war correspondent for state news agency RIA. His three colleagues were evacuated from the battlefield after coming under fire in Ukraine's southeastern Zaporizhzhia region, the defence ministry said.

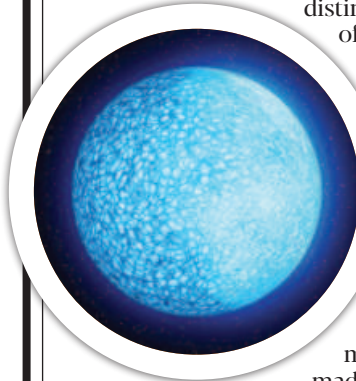
Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova denounced what she called “criminal terror” by Ukraine and said, without providing evidence, that the attack appeared deliberate.

“Those responsible for the brutal reprisal against a Russian journalist will inevitably suffer well-deserved punishment. The entire measure of responsibility will be shared by those who supplied cluster munitions to their Kyiv protégés,” she said.

Introducing Janus, the exotic ‘two-faced’ white dwarf star

REUTERS, Washington

Scientists have observed a white dwarf star - a hot stellar remnant that is among the densest objects in the cosmos - that they have nicknamed Janus owing to the fact it has the peculiar distinction of being composed



of hydrogen on one side and helium on the other.

“Janus is the Roman god with two faces, so we thought it was very appropriate. Moreover, Janus is the god of transition, and the white dwarf might be currently transitioning from having an atmosphere made of hydrogen to one made of helium,” said Ilaria

Caiazzo, a Caltech postdoctoral

fellow in astrophysics and lead author of the study published this week in the journal Nature.

The star is located in our Milky Way galaxy about 1,300 light years from Earth in the direction of the Cygnus constellation. A light year is the distance light travels in a year, 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion km).

Janus is fairly massive for a white dwarf, with a mass 20 percent larger than that of our sun compressed into an object with a diameter half that of Earth. It rotates on its axis every 15 minutes - very fast considering these stars usually rotate every few hours to a few days.

Cops not informed of Hero Alom's visit to polling centre

Says DMP chief; Alom
claims attack took place
in presence of police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Khandker Golam Faruq yesterday said police could not provide security to Ashraful Alom, better known as Hero Alom, an independent candidate in Dhaka-17 by-polls, as he went to the same polling centre for the second time without informing the police.

He added that the assailants might have taken the chance to attack him.

The DMP commissioner made the comments in response to questions from reporters after a programme at Polwel Market in the capital.

He said that due to a chaotic situation at the Banani Bidyaniketan polling centre, Hero Alom and his supporters were asked to leave. He was attacked outside the centre. The accused are being identified by scrutinising the CCTV footage, he said.

So far 10 people have been arrested in this connection, he added.

He said police will be more vigilant in the future for security of candidates.

The DMP commissioner added that the law enforcement agencies are ready

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Seven-year-old Shamim's fever has not gone down despite being under treatment for four days in the capital's Mugda Medical College Hospital. His mother resorted to pouring water on his head to help bring his temperature down yesterday. Like him, many children across the country are suffering as the dengue outbreak intensifies.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

MANIPUR SEXUAL ASSAULT 5th accused arrested Four detainees placed on remand for 11 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian police arrested a fifth accused in connection with the video that surfaced on July 19 showing two women being paraded naked by a mob and sexually assaulted in the country's strife-torn Manipur.

The four who were earlier nabbed for disrobing and parading two women in Manipur on May 4 were remanded to 11-day police custody on Friday, police said.

Several Naga civil society organisations in Manipur, including the powerful United Naga Council (UNC), All Naga Students' Association Manipur (ANSAM) and Naga People's Front, have strongly condemned the defiling of the two Kuki tribe women by a mob on May 4.

The UNC asked the Manipur government to take up the case in a fast-track court to deliver justice instantly.

“The government must initiate necessary steps for immediate booking of all the people involved in such dehumanizing crime,” the UNC said in a statement.

Violence erupted in the northeastern state of Manipur between the mainly Christian Kuki and the predominantly Hindu Meitei in May over job quotas and land rights, and intermittent clashes have continued since.

PHOTO ON PAGE 2