

## 2 arrested for impersonating Rab members, raping tourist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday said they arrested two persons involved in raping a tourist and mugging others while impersonating the elite force members.

The suspects, Jahid Hasan, 28 of Chowdhurypara, and Sanowar Hasan, 30, of Shibchar, Chapainawabganj, were arrested from Raja Guest House at Cox's Bazar bus stand area Saturday evening.

The arrested were part of a gang that robbed people in different parts of the district while posing as Rab members, said Assistant Director of Rab-15 (Law and Media) Abu Salam Chowdhury while briefing reporters yesterday afternoon.

Following several complaints, Rab launched an intensive operation and was able to arrest the suspects from the guest house, he said.

In primary integration, the arrested admitted to mugging a businessman near the bus stand in the early hours of Saturday and gang-raping a female tourist in the early hours of yesterday at the same guest house while pretending to be Rab members, the Rab director added.

Rab also found the involvement of one Jahidul Islam in the gang's activities, who is a toll collector for Cox's Bazar Municipality, and is conducting raids to arrest him, he said.

Two phones and cash, along with a t-shirt and a motorcycle with Rab's monogram, were seized from the arrestees' possession, he added.

Legal proceedings are underway, the Rab official said.

## Sayedee hospitalised with chest pain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Convicted war criminal Delawar Hossain Sayedee was taken to Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib Medical University last night following chest pain.

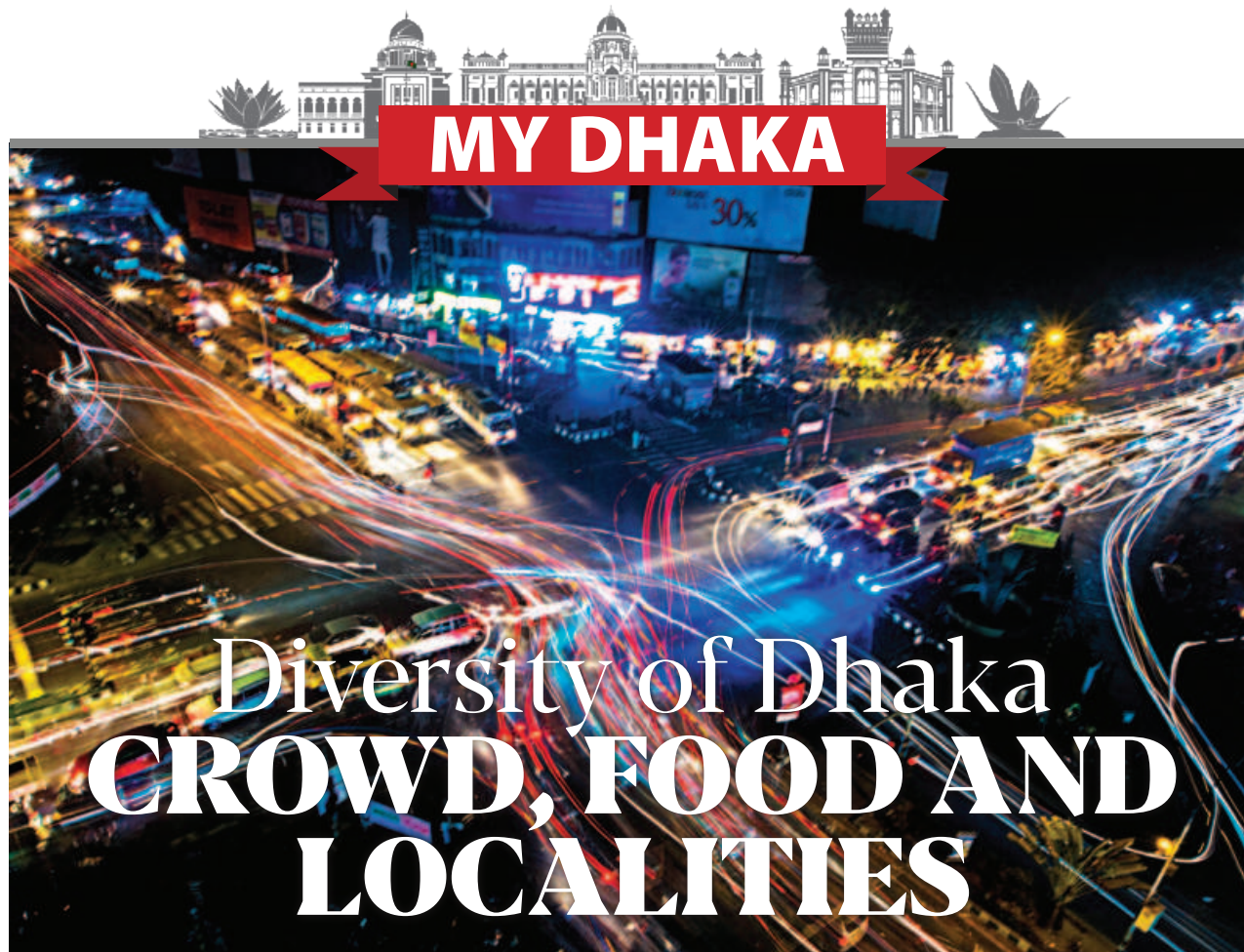
He was initially taken to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Medical College Hospital from Kashimpur Central Jail in Gazipur, said the hospital's Cardiologist Durul Huda.

He said Sayedee was brought to the hospital at 6:00pm but as his condition deteriorated, he was taken to Dhaka.

Jail Superintendent Shahjahan Ahmed said Sayedee has been in prison since 2019.



Dhaka, a city concentrated with buildings like Lego blocks and abuzz with a crowd that does not rest, is what we dearly call home. Despite the concrete jungle, the city has a distinct energy about it, an energy like no other, and what creates this vigour are the various places that make up the city, the vivacious crowd, and the myriad food among other things.



## Diversity of Dhaka CROWD, FOOD AND LOCALITIES

PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED

FARIHA AMBER

Being the central hub of Bangladesh, Dhaka has seen an influx of people from various corners of the country making it the true melting pot of cultures.

While some parts of Dhaka have captivated within them the bloodshed history of an epoch, such as the alleys and walls of old Dhaka, others such as Gulshan will transport you to a completely different world, with its contemporary buildings and modern architecture. Take an excursion in the older parts of Dhaka and you will find historical buildings we read about in books, the architecture of which will fascinate you.

Yet, the other modish part of the city is as if located in a separate time zone altogether with its skyscrapers, modern buildings, and urban architecture.

While a walk around TSC will remind you of simpler times and a humble lifestyle, the glass buildings on the other

side of the town shall remind you about the progress we have made and how far we aspire to go.

With the vastness of the many areas comes the multiplicity of people and localities, Dhaka is also diverse in terms of thoughts and dialects. Different people bring in their perspectives from all over the country



and these differences are what make conversations with people exciting.

Another interesting part about conversing with the people of Dhaka is the various dialects, languages, and accents you can hear. From the amusing Dhakaiya way of speaking, to the more organised "shudhho Bangla" and the several dialects of Bangla, Dhaka truly is the cultural hotspot. And you do not even need to travel or explore much

to experience this. From personal experience, shopping in New Market is enough to expose you to many.

The food scene of Dhaka and the variety that exists within is unmatched by any other. Some dishes have been passed down from generation to generation, such as biriyani, and then there are some that we have recently been introduced to owing to the diversity of the crowd, waffles for example.

The culinary hotspots of Dhaka even have their vibe – the authenticity of Nazira Bazar, variety in Satmasjid Road, and international options in Banani-II – all have their distinct ambience.

With people living in the city from all parts of the country, we get to taste the diverse taste Bangladesh has to offer, from various sweets and pithas to the many types of delectable meat dishes that represent different corners of the country. If you are lucky to be surrounded by a diverse crowd, then potluck parties should be enough to give you a taste of Bangladesh – and this is probably something no other city in the country can offer.

The diverse group of people, the vivacity of the culinary scene, and the liveliness of localities are truly what make this place magical.



## Risky loans stand at Tk 377,922cr

FROM PAGE 1

At the end of 2022, 80.8 percent of the rescheduled loans remained unclassified.

Ship building and shipbreaking industry accounted for 33.8 percent of the outstanding rescheduled loans, followed by the industrial sector (29.2 percent) and textile and garment (21.1 percent).

"There has been a general rise in classified outstanding rescheduled

loan ratio across most of the sectors."

The highest ratio was observed in the ship building and ship breaking sector, followed by industrial, garment and textile, and the export credit sector.

"This is not a good sign – it is a legacy of the past and didn't happen overnight," said Salehuddin Ahmed, a former BB governor.

He went on place the blame squarely on the policy.

"If the policy is not proper, if the implementation is not proper, the habitual defaulters will always get away. The underlying problem is deep."

He particularly singled out the practice of rescheduling loans more than once for the ballooning of the banking sector's stressed assets.

"It is encouraging signs to defaulters and a perverse incentive. It does not happen anywhere in the

world. If you give concessions, you get cumulative problems. This has never solved matters. It is a perverse incentive," he added.

Mansur, a former chairman of Brac Bank, said the chances of not getting back the rescheduled loans are high.

"There is no easy way out of this situation – it will be a painful process. How will the government capitalise such a sum? The government's debt will go up by 7-8 percent."

## We want to see free, fair polls

FROM PAGE 1

Momen said there is no demand for consensus here. The opposition party does not care about elections and they only care about the fall of the government, he said.

Asked if the congressmen provided any formula regarding the upcoming election, Momen responded in the negative.

After the congressmen's meeting with political parties at Haas's home, BNP Publicity Affairs Secretary Shaheed Uddin Chowdhury Annie said they said they want the election under a neutral caretaker government.

Annie briefed the congressmen on human rights violations in Bangladesh, false cases against BNP leaders, sentencing of leaders and activists in political cases, and claimed that the AL government failed to hold any free, fair polls, sources said.

He also mentioned attacks by AL activists and police on the BNP rally in Dhaka on July 28 and sit-ins on July 29, and the arrest of leaders and activists.

The congressmen asked how the next polls can be free and fair and Annie said the election must be held under a non-partisan caretaker government.

Almost all political parties are

united on this demand. If the non-partisan caretaker government system is reinstated, political compromise is possible, he told the congressmen.

Talking to The Daily Star, AL MP Nahim Razzaq said, "They [the congressmen] want to see a



Visiting US congressmen place a wreath at the mural of Bangabandhu on Dhanmondi-32. PHOTO: COLLECTED

participatory, free, and fair election and we told them it is the Awami League's commitment to hold a free and fair election."

JP MP Rana Mohammad Sohel told this newspaper, "The congressmen told us clearly that they want to see

an election in Bangladesh which the whole world can say was held in a neutral and democratic manner."

Sohel said the two congressmen did not say anything about the BNP and other opposition party's demand for a caretaker government and dissolving parliament before the polls.

He said the congressmen wanted to know the differences in political goals of the AL and the BNP.

"The AL and the BNP could not clearly answer this question. They just said what they have done and what they will not do," Sohel said.

After the meeting with political parties, the congressmen met civil society leaders and journalists, including Prothom Alo Editor Matir Rahman, Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumder, Odhikar Secretary Adilur Rahman, Bela Chief Executive Syeda Rizwana Hasan, rights activists Shireen Huq, Nur Khan Liton, Article-19 South Asia's Regional Director Faruq Faisal and Drik founder Shahidul Alam.

The meeting attendees told The Daily Star that the congressmen came here to assess the pre-election and human rights situations.

OTHER ISSUES

Talking about his meeting with the congressmen, Momen said their visit will help them understand

Bangladesh better and prevent propaganda.

"They said they heard the situation is bad here but it is not. We want them to come here and see the ground reality so that they don't decide anything based on biased reports."

"Many people told them that Bangladesh is a dangerous place and that it has been trapped by China. Police are killing people. We said no we are not in any Chinese trap. We believe in the free economy, privatisation, and democracy."

The congressmen suggested that Bangladesh train the Rohingyaas for work here. In response, Momen said Bangladesh itself is a heavily-populated country and not everyone has job opportunities.

The congressmen are scheduled to visit the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar today.

Momen said that US investment was not growing. "We asked them to support growth in US investment in Bangladesh, especially in IT and pharmaceutical sector," he added.

He also sought US congressional support for duty-free access to US market for Bangladesh's textile and garment products made with US cotton.

The congressmen expressed willingness to look into partnerships in pharmaceuticals.

## Ctg, madrasa boards pick new dates for 4 HSC exams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

The Chattogram Education Board yesterday announced new dates for four Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) exams that were deferred due to severe flooding in the region.

According to the new schedule, under the Chattogram board, the Bangla First Paper exam will now be held on September 27 while the Bangla Second Paper on October 1.

The English First Paper exam will be held on October 3, and the English Second Paper exam on October 5.

The other exams under this board will be held following the old schedule.

The Madrasa Education Board also published a new schedule for its deferred exams.

According to the notification, the Quran Majid exam will be held on October 1. The Arabic First Paper and Arabic Literature exams will be held on October 3. Furthermore, the Bangla First Paper exam has been rescheduled for October 5, and the Bangla Second Paper exam will now take place on October 8.

It has also instructed students to complete the practical exams between October 9 and October 17.

Meanwhile, the Technical Education Board, in a notification, delayed its exams scheduled for August 17, 20, 22, and 24, without announcing new dates.

It said the rescheduled timetable for these exams would be announced later. Exams from August 27 onward will be conducted as per the previous schedule.

## PILOT RECRUITMENT HC forms committee to investigate irregularities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday formed a three member committee to probe the allegation of irregularities in pilot recruitment and flight operations by Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

The committee is comprised of an additional secretary from the civil aviation and tourism ministry and a high official each from civil aviation and Biman Bangladesh.

The court asked the committee to submit its probe report to it in 30 days.

The bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Razik-Al-Jalil came up with the order after hearing a petition filed by Advocate Md Tanvir Ahmed, a Supreme Court lawyer.

He submitted the petition in April following two reports published in The Daily Star on March 1 – which was updated on March 13 with the title "Biman paying for hiring unqualified Boeing 777 pilots" – and also on March 2 with the title "Life lost amid irregularities".

## 2 die in Jashore road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Two passengers of an easy bike were killed and six others injured in a head-on collision with a truck on Jashore-Khulna highway this evening.

The deceased are Syed Mollah 60, of Ghuni area of Jashore Sadar upazila, and Amin Mia, 62, of Ramsara village of Abhaynagar upazila.

Nawapara Highway Police Station Officer-in-Charge Hamid Uddin Ahmed said the incident took place around 6:00pm when a Jashore-bound truck collided head-on with a three-wheeler in front of Shahida Petrol Pump near Prembagh area.

Two died on the spot and six other passengers were injured.

## HC declines to recall its probe order

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issued the order and rule on a suomoto (voluntary) move.

The bench told Ajmalul that its order has already been signed and therefore, there is no scope for recalling it, Anti Corruption Commission lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan, who was present at the courtroom during the proceedings, told The Daily Star.

Contacted, Advocate Mohammad Saifullah Mamun, another lawyer for S Alam Group, said they would now move a written petition before the HC against its August 6 ruling.

Ajmalul, a senior counsel, could not be reached for comments as his cellphone was found switched off.

Yesterday's verbal petition came just three days after S Alam served a legal notice on the government and four national dailies, including The Daily Star, essentially demanding that these newspapers publish no news on him or his business operations.

Two days after The Daily Star published a report, headlined "S Alam's Aladdin's lamp", the HC bench on August 6 ordered the ACC, Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) and Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police to investigate the allegations disclosed in the report.

The HC asked the Bangladesh Bank governor and head of BFIU to come up with a report clarifying whether any permission and approval from Bangladesh Bank has been given to S Alam Group to take the "money in question" to the foreign countries from Bangladesh.

ACC chairman, secretaries at the ministries of finance, Bank and Financial Institution Division, foreign affairs, law and home affairs, chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR), inspector general (IG) of police, special police super of immigration, and deputy commissioner and superintendent of police of Dhaka have also been made respondents to the rule.

The HC asked The Daily Star editor to submit an affidavit with regard to the authenticity of its report published

on August 4 to this court by October 10 and fixed the same date for passing further order on this issue.

The Daily Star investigation found that Alam built a business empire worth at least about \$ 1 billion (Tk 10,000 crore) in Singapore, although there is no record of him taking any permission from Bangladesh Bank to invest or transfer any funds abroad.

The Bangladesh central bank has so far allowed 17 companies to invest outside the country, and this Chattogram-based business giant is not one of them, according to a document obtained from Bangladesh Bank.

Yet in Singapore, Alam bought at least two hotels, two homes, one retail space, and other properties over the last one decade, all the while seeking to remove his name from the paper trails, documents cited by the report show.

Earlier on August 10, S Alam served a legal notice on the government, four editors of national newspapers – The Daily Star, Prothom Alo, New Age and The Business Standard – and seven journalists of the dailies for reports the dailies published about Alam and his group over the past few years.

The legal notice apparently sought to restrict reporting on S Alam Group.

The notice, also sent by Ajmalul Hossain KC, demands that the home secretary and the information secretary collect the evidence, based on which five articles were written by the journalists of these four dailies, to justify the allegations made against Alam and his group.

Until such information is provided, the notice demands, the secretaries must ensure that the journalists are stopped from publishing any statements or reports about Alam and his businesses.

It also demands that the two secretaries must ensure that the journalists give an undertaking that they will not repeat such actions in the future. In addition, the notice demands that all such content preserved in any public domain be removed.