

SAYEDEE'S DEATH 62 BCL men suspended over posts on Facebook

STAR REPORT

At least 62 Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders and activists of four districts were suspended over the last two days for making social media posts in favour of war criminal Delwar Hossain Sayedee, who died on Monday.

Of them, 20 are of different Chattogram BCL units, 17 from Brahmanbaria units, 19 from Jamalpur, and six from Narsingdi.

Those suspended were also served show cause notices and asked to explain why they should not be expelled from the ruling party's student body.

In Chattogram, Shahjahan Habib, joint general secretary of the district's south BCL, and Sajedul Haque, deputy employment affairs secretary of the same unit, were suspended for posting condolence messages for Sayedee's death on Facebook. Thirteen others suspended were from Chattogram's Lohagara upazila alone.

Brahmanbaria BCL issued two separate press releases, announcing the suspension of 17 BCL activists on Wednesday.

Yesterday, 19 BCL members from Jamalpur and six from Narsingdi were suspended for the same reason.

The Narsingdi unit also recommended the expulsion of the six activists to BCL's central executive committee.

Contacted, BCL President Saddam Hussain said, "There will be no place for such activists who support a war criminal or go against the principle of the organisation."

Sayedee, who was sentenced to life for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War, died while undergoing treatment on August 14.

Our Chattogram, Jamalpur, Narsingdi, Brahmanbaria correspondents contributed to this report.

Russia targets independent election monitor in raids

AFP, Moscow

Russian security forces yesterday launched mass raids targeting the independent election monitoring group Golos, the group said, as its co-chair was taken in for questioning.

Since Russia launched full scale hostilities against Ukraine last year, authorities in the country have intensified their crackdown on critical voices.

I was at an Indian restaurant the other day, and without knowing why, ordered a serving of cocktail samosas as appetisers. Perhaps, the idea of having a tiny, crisp, triangle of filo pastry filled with minced meat dipped in mint chutney seemed tempting. I was shocked when the waiter brought a platter of small shingaras, beautifully garnished with pickled onions, instead!



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

All about shingaras

RBR

There has always been a debate over which one -- shingara or samosa -- is the quintessential Bengali snack, but never has there been an identity crisis regarding the two.

The shingara is a thick dough of pyramid-shaped snack, usually stuffed with a masala potato mix. At times peanuts or chopped beef liver is added to the stuffing to add to the oomph factor. The dough is invariably sprinkled with nigella seeds that add to the taste. Samosas, on the other hand, are a thin, flaky, crispy, snack filled with savoury semolina or beef tripe.

Two totally different types of roadside specials have somehow got mixed in the two Bengalis -- Bangladesh's yummy shingara is called samosa in West Bengal. Yes, it is hard to comprehend, even revolting for true shingara enthusiasts.

Our staple mid-morning snack at any government, non-government office, or roadside tea stall is a plate of two shingaras sprinkled with rock salt and served with a mix of green



chilli and onions. The onion mix can be easily omitted but as far as true shingara connoisseurs go, it is a must with the snack. A bite into the crumbly dough with steam coming out and a sip of sweet milk tea is all you need to feel amped up for the rest of the day.

It is also a go-to snack when you need to entertain unexpected guests. You run to the favourite shabby shingara joint at the end of your lane. In Uttara Sector 5, a small shingara maker has become so sought after that people from Dhanmondi place orders for 200 or more pieces to devour at leisure.

Packets full of fried shingaras sold at famous sweetmeat shops are the best of all. They have flavoured vegetable stuffing with peanuts in it. Peanuts in shingaras are a matter of debate for some but a delight for others. The pastry dough of the sweet shops is of better quality than the makeshift

roadside ones.

There are area based, sought-after shingara joints and I know of people who will brave the Dhaka traffic for a bite of kolija shingaras at any corner of Dhaka.

Some places are famous for their large shingaras while others are famed for their bite-size shape. The small ones have taken the mass by surprise, people can neatly finish eight or ten of



them in one go.

Shingara makers are masters who have taken the preparation to an art form, adding their bits of imagination to the filling and the dough.

Shingara and samosas lovers have an unsaid enmity, but I will delve into the samosa story another time. For now, rainy evenings call for steaming hot shingaras and slurping sweet tea from the saucer -- a very Dhakaiti thing to do!

EC to review it for foreign observers

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coming national election likely to be held in January next year.

US Ambassador Peter Haas early this month said his country would send a monitoring team to Bangladesh in early October to assess the pre-polls situation here.

The Election Exploratory Mission of the European Union visited Bangladesh from July 9 to 23. The mission will prepare a report, based on which the EU will decide whether to send an observer team during the polls.

Members of the mission met the CEC on July 11 and enquired about the commission's preparations for the election, the voter list, voting centres, and installation of CCTV cameras.

The CEC informed the EU mission that it would be better if the EU sent the application for sending the observers by September.

The EU did not send any observers during the 2014 and 2018 national polls.

An EC source said the international communities, especially the EU, want to bring vehicle trackers, cameras, and other equipment when they visit as election observers.

"They wanted to know the official procedure through which the equipment can be brought in. There is also a tax issue in bringing equipment. The EC's current policy does not mention anything about bringing in equipment and tax issues," the official said.

As per the current guidelines, international observers and journalists need to take permission from the commission in prescribed forms. They need clearance from home and foreign ministries.

"Foreign observers should respect sovereignty and international human rights, the laws of the country and the authority of electoral bodies and the integrity of the international election observation mission," says the guideline.

Deception in Dhaka north

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Corporation (DNCC) on Monday issued a show cause notice on Marshal Agrovet and demanded information about the source of the larvicide by Friday. The company was yet to respond to the DNCC letter as of yesterday.

The larvicide boxes mention that they are from Singapore.

Marshal Executive Director Nasiruddin Ahmed did not comment, despite repeated attempts over the last two days via phone and text messages.

WORK ORDER WITHOUT LICENCE
DNCC opened the e-tender on April 11 for the import of the BTI in efforts to tame the breeding of Aedes mosquitos that carry dengue virus. The last date of tender submission was May 3.

On April 30, four days before the tender officially closed, the DNCC sent an interesting letter to the Plant Protection Wing of the DAE.

The letter, signed by its deputy secretary Ramendra Nath Biswas, said the city authorities were planning to import BTI but the licensing process "is lengthy and time-consuming".

"In this context, we need to know if your institution [PPW] will give a licence or a special permission in favour of the award winner [the selected bidder] among the bidders to import the item as a Public Health Product," the letter said.

The city authorities could not explain why they wrote such a letter ahead of the closing of the tender. Under the rules, tenders cannot be opened before the closing date, and without opening the tender it is not officially possible to know if the bidders have fulfilled the criteria or not, including if they have the required papers.

Also, when the tender was floated, a number of companies already had the required licence and that they do not need such special permissions.

In response to the DNCC letter, the DAE on May 2 said it previously gave such licences to some companies,

but did not name any. The letter also informed the city authorities that it can take necessary steps for the import under Pesticide Act, 2018.

Under this Act, no one can import, manufacture, package, re-package, or sell pesticides without obtaining the licence.

Strangely, the three companies that eventually took part in the tender did not have the licence, and Marshal was selected as the lowest bidder. The two other companies that submitted tenders are MR Enterprise and Procesta.

Faridul Hassan, acting director of PPW, said DNCC sought a general permission from them to import the larvicide without mentioning any names.

"Eventually, they gave the permission to a certain company," he said.

"Only two companies -- Ishpahani and Pratyasha -- have the licence to import BTI. Marshal has no licence to import BTI. I don't know how they have imported this larvicide," he told The Daily Star on Wednesday at his Khamarbari office in the capital.

He added that it takes about two years to complete the licensing process, which includes testing of samples at government laboratories.

"The city corporation authorities sent the larvicide to us for testing only after an allegation surfaced that the larvicide is counterfeit," he said, adding that they will have the report in 10 days.

BREACH OF LAW
Entomologist Manzur A Chowdhury said several laws, including the Pesticide Act of 2018, have been breached by the city authorities and Marshal.

He also questioned the effectiveness of the planned drive by the DNCC.

He said that the label on the package supplied by Marshal says it will have to be applied in drains, ditches, and sewers, but Aedes

mosquitoes do not breed in those places.

DNCC Mayor Md Atiqul Islam said they will take legal actions if their investigation finds any forgery on the part of Marshal.

"If we find that Marshal did not import the larvicide from Bestchem in Singapore, we will blacklist the company and take other legal steps at our disposal," he told The Daily Star at his office on Wednesday.

However, he defended awarding Marshal the work order for the import job.

"The Plant Protection Wing in its letter informed us that we can import BTI. Eventually, we issued the work order in favour of Marshal as per the Public Procurement Rule as it was the lowest bidder," he said.

German storm causes flight cancellations, floods

AFP, Frankfurt

Germany's biggest airport was scrambling to book passengers on new flights yesterday after a massive storm caused dozens of cancellations, and also triggered flooding that deluged streets and toppled trees.

The storm swept over southwest Germany late Wednesday, dumping huge quantities of water and reportedly unleashing over 25,000 bolts of lightning in about an hour.

Frankfurt Airport said it was forced to axe 90 flights while 23 more were rerouted to land at other airports.

Some passengers slept on camp beds while many spent the night at the airport hotel.

"Today, the situation will probably stabilise again," a spokesman told AFP.

"There are still passengers here who need to be booked onto new flights."

Biman employee dies after tanker hits him at Dhaka airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An employee of Biman Bangladesh Airlines died at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport after being hit by an oil tanker.

Sources at the airport and Biman said the incident happened when Md Saddam Hossain, aircraft technical helper of the national flag carrier, was working in the Bay-7 area of HSA on Wednesday. An oil tanker hit Saddam around 10:00pm, leaving him seriously injured.

He was rushed to a hospital in Uttara where the doctor on duty declared him dead, added the source.

Group Captain Kamrul Islam, executive director of HSA, yesterday said Saddam was carrying out some maintenance work on a Biman aircraft when the truck hit him.

The driver and the oil tanker have been handed over to police, he added.

A police official of the Airport Police Station said that they have seized the tanker and necessary legal procedures will be taken in this regard.

Man sentenced to death for killing wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A court in Jamalpur yesterday sentenced a man to death for killing his wife in 2020.

Shobhon Ahmed, resident of Dewanganj upazila, was accused of burning his wife to death.

He was present at the courtroom when Rafiqul Islam, judge of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-1, read out the verdict.

According to the case statement, Shobhon poured petrol on his wife Yasmin Akhtar and set her on fire on July 1, 2020.

As Yasmin screamed, neighbours rescued her and took her to a hospital.

She succumbed to her injuries 12 days later at the Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burns and Plastic Surgery in the capital.

Yasmin's elder sister Hajera Begum filed the case.

Student stabbed to death in Uttara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A tenth-grader was stabbed to death allegedly by his friend in Dhaka's Uttara last night.

The deceased was identified as Limon, a student of a local school.

According to Limon's friend Leon, he was stabbed by his friend during a heated argument over a trifle on Road-9 of Uttara-5.

Adnan, another friend of Limon, was injured in the same incident as he attempted to save Limon.

Limon was first taken to a local hospital and then to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Around 10:15pm, doctors declared Limon dead. Limon's father Abdul Khaleque said they live in a rented house in Dolipara area of Uttara.

S'pore charges 10 foreigners

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agencies and Financial Intelligence Units to detect, deter, and prevent Singapore from hosting such criminal elements," Director of the Commercial Affairs Department David Chew said in a statement posted on the website of the Singapore Police Force.

"We have zero tolerance for the use of Singapore as a safe haven for criminals or their families, nor for the abuse of our banking facilities. Our message to these criminals is simple - if we catch you, we will arrest you. If we find your ill gotten gains, we will seize them. We will deal with you to the fullest extent of our laws," Chew added.

During Tuesday's raid, Singapore police seized cash and assets worth S\$1 billion dollars. The assets include properties, luxury cars, and goods.

The group lived in good class bungalows (GCBs) and high-end condominiums, and owned luxury cars.

Police said they received information of possible illicit activities, including suspected forged documents used to substantiate the source of funds in Singapore bank accounts.

On Tuesday, the police conducted a massive island-wide blitz, hitting

several GCBs and high-end condos across Singapore simultaneously to nab several of the suspects. The areas raided included Tanglin, Bukit Timah, Orchard Road, Sentosa, and River Valley.

The group of foreign nationals are allegedly involved in laundering the proceeds of crime from their organised crime activities overseas, linked to scams and online gambling.

The police said prohibition of disposal orders were issued against 94 properties and 50 vehicles, with a total estimated value of more than S\$815 million, and multiple ornaments and bottles of liquor and wine.

The orders mean the suspects cannot sell these properties and vehicles.

The police also seized more than 35 related bank accounts with an estimated total balance of more than S\$110 million for investigations and to prevent transfers of the suspected criminal proceeds.

Also seized were more than S\$23 million in cash, more than 250 luxury bags and watches, over 120 electronic devices such as computers and mobile phones, more than 270 pieces of jewellery, two gold bars, and 11 documents with information on virtual assets.

6,100 sign up within 6 hours

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Upon their return home, they can continue the scheme by paying in taka or switch to another package. But they will get their pension in taka.

Private sector employees can apply for the Progoti scheme, whose monthly instalment options are Tk 2,000, Tk 3,000 and Tk 5,000.

While it is not mandatory for private sector companies to sign their employees up to the government's pension scheme, if they do so, they would have to contribute to half of

the monthly instalment.

If the company does not want to sign up for the scheme, the employees can still sign up on their own.

The beneficiary will start receiving pension benefit after 60 years of age and this benefit will continue until their death. If a beneficiary dies, their nominee will get pension benefits until the pension-holder's age reaches 75.

The pension-holder will be able to withdraw cash in their pension benefits through mobile financing service or bank account.