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ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

‘Want my father back’
Say daughters of ‘missing’ BNP activists

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

A decade has passed since Hridi's father, Parvej Reza, the then president of Paltan Thana Chhatra Dal, went missing without a trace. Year after year, on the occasion of the International Day of Victims of Enforced Disappearances, the 12-year old participates in various events, demanding the return of her father.

"I have been attending these events for as long as I can remember. I don't have many memories of him. I want my father back," she said yesterday holding a photograph of her father, her small hands gripping the frame tightly.

She was talking at a human chain organised by BNP to commemorate the day in front of the Nayapaltan party office.

"I don't want to observe enforced disappearances day; I want to celebrate Father's Day with my father," she said in a trembling voice.

She was not alone, family members of "missing" BNP and JCD leaders accompanied her.

Sadika Sarkar Safa, a second grader, was also among them. The daughter of missing JCD leader Mahfuzur Rahman Sohel, could not hold back tears as she spoke.

"My father has been missing for 10 years. I have grown



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BNP formed a human chain in front of its Nayapaltan headquarters, marking International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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‘Know our history before interfering’
Momen tells foreign govts

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said countries that always raise issues regarding democracy and human rights, should know Bangladesh's tragic history of political killings, coups, and military regimes that blatantly undermined democracy, human rights, and justice.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a seminar titled "Brutalities of 1975: Impacts on Human Rights and Governance Discourse of Bangladesh" at the Foreign Service Academy yesterday, which was attended by foreign diplomats, ministry officials, and civil society members.

Sharing the history of the killing of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his entire family in 1975, and the impunity that followed, the minister said

US deputy assistant secretary due next week

UNB, Dhaka

Mira Resnick, US deputy assistant secretary of state for regional security at the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, is likely to visit Dhaka next week to discuss issues of mutual interest.

She will likely arrive in Dhaka on September 4, as both the countries are preparing to hold the next round of security dialogue, said a foreign ministry official.

Resnick oversees the Bureau's Office of Regional Security and Arms Transfers, which manages over US \$40 billion annually in government-to-government defense equipment transfers through Foreign Military Sales, Third Party Transfers, and Excess Defense Articles.

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PRAYER
TIMING

AUGUST 31

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:30	12:45	4:45	6:33	8:00
JAMAAT 5:05	1:15	5:00	6:36	8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

FEMALE DENGUE PATIENTS

Higher mortality despite lower cases

HELEMUL ALAM

Amid the ongoing dengue outbreak, a recent data released by the Directorate General of Health Services has revealed a stark contrast in the impact of the mosquito-borne disease on men and women.

While men account for a higher percentage of dengue cases, comprising 62 percent of the reported infections, a concerning 63 percent of the reported deaths among dengue patients are female.

Delving deeper into the statistics, it becomes evident that the story of dengue's impact extends beyond mere infection rates, highlighting a complex interplay of healthcare accessibility, societal norms, and individual health disparities, said experts.

Late hospitalisation, malnutrition, weak immune system and social taboo are the main factors of high female death rate, they claimed.

Meanwhile, with seven new deaths recorded yesterday, the total number of dengue deaths rose to 576 this year, of which, 333 are female and 243 are male.

Besides, with the 2,367 new cases, total number of cases increased to 1,21,500, of which, 75,489 are male and 46,011 are female.

HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, said

many female patients who have comorbidity (obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, high blood lipid levels, arthritis, asthma, sleep apnea) are susceptible to dengue infection.

"There are some female patients who are pregnant. They are usually from groups who need special attention. Then there are women whose condition may become critical if they are infected with dengue during the time of their

Women's health conditions are often neglected and, in many cases, they are taken to the hospital late.

HM NAZMUL AHSAN
Associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital

menstruation," Nazmul said.

"These patients are vulnerable and many die if they do not get proper treatment," he added.

Another reason may be attributed to the patriarchal social norm -- women's health conditions are often neglected and, in many cases, they are taken to the hospital late, he explained.

When female patients have comorbidity, issues such as amenia (absence or cessation of menstruation) and a weakened immune system contribute significantly to women's mortality

or morbidity, he said.

He said dengue patients should be immediately hospitalised if they suffer from severe stomach aches, breathing difficulties, severe weakness, vomiting, or bleeding from gums and nose.

"If a patient showing such symptoms is not hospitalised within 24 hours, they may have dengue shock syndrome," he added.

There are two types of dengue shocks -- compensated shocks and decompensated shocks. If a patient is hospitalised immediately after their compensated shock, they don't reach decompensated shock, where the chance to be cured is only 50 percent, he said.

"The patient's blood pressure may remain normal during a compensated shock, which is why many don't realise it. Signs of compensated shock may include a drop in body temperature, increased heart rate, and increased breathing rate," Prof Nazmul added.

Entomologist Prof Kabirul Bashar of Jahangirnagar University echoed the same when asked about high female death rates.

Regarding male patients, he said people of the 21-40 age group go outdoors a lot, they are at risk of getting infected.

"People have to wear full sleeve tops, socks, shoes, and use mosquito nets while sleeping," he said.

GRAFT CASE
Foreign ministry official sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent Md Zakir Hossain, an administrative officer of the foreign ministry, to jail after rejecting his bail petition in a case filed over illegally amassing Tk 15.88 crore.

Judge (in charge) of the Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court, Faisal Atiq Bin Kader, passed the order after Zakir surrendered before seeking bail in the case.

Zakir, who was earlier posted at the Bangladesh High Commission in Kenya, hails from Bagerhat district.

According to the case statement, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in its primary inquiry found information on houses, flats, cars, and fixed deposit receipts (FDR) at different banks in Dhaka that Zakir acquired through illegal means.

Following the inquiry, ACC Assistant Director Afnan Jannat Keya filed the case against Md. Zakir on March 14 last year with its integrated district office in Dhaka.

The accused earned more illegal wealth, which was beyond his known source of income, according to the case statement.

NIKO GRAFT CASE
No bar in running trial against Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday cleared the lower court concerned to run trial proceedings against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in the Niko graft case.

The HC rejected a petition, which Khaleda filed earlier on March 19, challenging a lower court order that framed charges against her and seven others in the corruption case.

The HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Aminul Islam passed the order after hearing on the matter.

On May 17, the BNP chairperson filed the revision petition with the HC through her lawyers to scrap the trial court order, saying the charges were framed illegally.

The ACC filed the case on December 9, 2007,

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BNP started new game to foil polls
Says Quader regarding Yunus issue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Taking Dr Muhammad Yunus on board, BNP has started a new game to foil the election after failing to intensify their movement, alleged Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday.

He warned that they would not allow this "evil game" to be played.

"Their [BNP's] movement has lost momentum and failed to gather support. In this situation, they have started a new game with Dr Yunus, dreaming of a 1/11 situation," said Quader.

He made the remarks while addressing an event commemorating the 49th martyrdom anniversary

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A cloud of smoke coming from burning garbage dumped on the Dhaka-Aricha highway makes visibility an issue for vehicle drivers plying the road. Such actions not just pollute the environment but may also lead to accidents. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

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US envoy meets DMP chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas held a meeting with Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Khandker Golam Faruq yesterday, at DMP headquarters. The meeting was held between 11:00am and 12:30pm.

"Ambassador Haas met the police commissioner and appreciated the chance to discuss pre-election security environment and importance of respecting human rights in policing," US Embassy Spokesperson Bryan Schiller told The Daily Star.

However, he did not further elaborate on the matter.

DMP spokesperson Faruk Hossain said Peter Haas sought to know about the recent operation against militants in Moulvibazar and subsequent arrests. He also asked if there is a fresh surge of militancy in Bangladesh.

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