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Revoke Natore teacher's suspension order: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court bench yesterday said there were 22 "Awami Razakars" in the Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed-led cabinet, formed after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's assassination on August 15, 1975.

The ghost of razakars, who had collaborated with Pakistani forces during the Liberation War in 1971, still looms, the bench of Justice KM Kamrul Kader and Justice Mohammad Showkat Ali Chowdhury said.

The High Court bench made the remark while hearing a writ petition challenging the legality of suspension of one Md Masudur Rahman.

Masudur, an assistant teacher of Dorikachhikata Government Primary School in Natore's Gurudaspur upazila, was suspended for allegedly

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with a group of children at an event marking the 60th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's youngest son Sheikh Russel. The programme was held at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

PHOTO: PID

Repatriation is the only solution

Momen tells regional meeting on Rohingyas

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has urged international communities to meaningfully engage in improving the situation in the Rakhine state, while boosting humanitarian support for Rohingyas in Bangladesh.

"Safe, voluntary and sustainable repatriation is the only solution..." he said while addressing an event organised by UN Refugee Agency in Thailand on Tuesday.

UN High Commissioner for the Refugee Filippo Grandi; UK's Minister of State for Indo-Pacific Anne-Marie Trevelyan and the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration Julieta Valls Noyes were also present.

The meeting took place ahead of the Global Refugee Forum in December, at a time when funding for Rohingyas is declining. Merely 40 percent of the budget has so far been met, which is a sharp drop from 60-70 percent in previous years. Rohingya repatriation has also been stalled since the largest influx in 2017.

Currently, an initiative through mediation of China is underway, with authorities planning to start repatriation by this year. However, the US – the biggest donor for Rohingyas – says there should not be any forced repatriation.

Momen also sought UN cooperation to realise the rights and expectation of Rohingyas to return to Myanmar.

Grandi said voluntary repatriation is the solution to the crisis and assured to continue efforts to achieve that objectivity.

PRAYER TIMING		OCTOBER 19	
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:50	12:45	4:00	5:38 7:15
JAMAT 5:25	1:15	4:15	5:41 7:45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION			

DHAKA, BENAPOLE CUSTOMS DEPOTS

Of stolen gold and clueless cops

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MOHSIN MILON

It seems that the gold which gets stolen from customs warehouses in the country, whether in Dhaka or Benapole, is never found again.

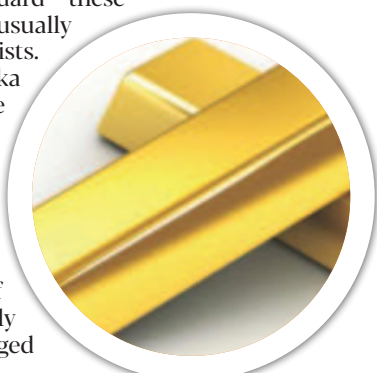
What is even more concerning is the assistant revenue officers, and the customs staffers meant to safeguard these valuable possessions, are usually the ones involved in such heists.

Take the case of the Dhaka Customs House warehouse at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport where 55.5kg gold was stolen in September this year. Four assistant revenue officers (AROs) and four security guards of Dhaka Customs are currently behind the bars for their alleged connection with the crime.

Meanwhile, five AROs and two temporary office staffers of Benapole Customs House warehouse have been suspended for their alleged robbery of 19.31kg of gold on November 7, 2019.

In connection with the gold stolen from the capital's customs warehouse, a case was filed with the Airport Police Station on September 3.

Police said the AROs, mainly Saidul Islam Saheed, and Shariful Islam, and the guards, primarily one Niamat Howladar, brought out small portions of gold from the warehouse over the last eight months and sold it in the local market. They did not touch any other valuables kept in the vault of the warehouse, police said.



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The Detective Branch of DMP was investigating the case.

The case has been transferred to the Police Bureau of Investigation.

"We have received the case documents, and now we are analysing it and will start the investigation soon," PBI chief Banaj

Kumar Majumder, also an additional inspector general of police, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meanwhile, On September 12, the Customs House authority suspended four AROs – Saidul, Shariful, Masud Rana and Akram Sheikh in this connection.

A day later, detectives took eight persons, including the four AROs, on a five-day remand for interrogation.

The four others are security guards Mozammel Haque, Niamat Howladar, Rezaul Karim, and Alzal Hossain.

Getting information from the arrestees, the detectives so far managed to recover 94 tola gold (around 1 kg), but the remaining is still untraced as of filing this report yesterday.

On the other hand, the Benapole heist took place three years ago, when thieves broke into the warehouse, located on the second floor of the old building at Benapole Customs House sometime between 8:00pm and 8:00am, and stole 19.31kg gold.

All the stolen gold is still untraced.

Like in Dhaka, the thieves did not take any other items.

It was also discovered that the CCTV cameras were not working at the time of the theft.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

‘Some political parties trying to create chaos’

Liberation War affairs minister tells law and order meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque yesterday said some political parties are attempting to deteriorate the country's law and order situation ahead of the upcoming national polls.

"The inclination to engage in illegal arms possession, subversive activities, religious provocation, and a disregard for discipline is noticeable within certain political parties. To address these issues and ensure public safety, law enforcement agencies must remain vigilant," said Mozammel, also chairman of the cabinet committee on law and order.

He made the remarks after a meeting at the secretariat.

"To maintain law and order, we have entrusted the home ministry's senior secretary with the responsibility to coordinate with various agency chiefs to ensure safety."

"The role of law enforcement agencies is not to meddle in the activities of political parties. However, if public safety is compromised, they will step in as needed," he said.

Regarding the upcoming election, the minister said the Election Commission has hinted at announcing the schedule in mid-November. During this period, only essential tasks will be carried out on a limited scale, as an interim government will assume its duties during the polls.

He said, "Directives have been issued to law enforcement agencies, including the Border Guard Bangladesh, to remain vigilant and prevent illegal arms smuggling."

‘Ensuring polls nomination for Tk 300 crore’

Rab says the arrestee used to identify himself as PM's relative

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



A man, who pretended to be a relative of the prime minister, was arrested by the Rapid Action Battalion for scamming people with promises of nominations in the upcoming polls and government jobs.

The arrestee is Abu Hanif Tushar alias

Hanif Mia, 39.

He was held from the capital's Bashundhara Residential Area on Tuesday night.

Rab also seized firearms along with edited photos and videos featuring the fraudster with government officials and other important people, said Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's Legal and Media Wing, at a press briefing yesterday.

"He used to demand Tk 200-300 crore on false promises of arranging nomination for various parliamentary constituencies," Moin said.

Rab said he used to edit pictures of himself with the PM's family members and send them to the targeted person to gain credibility.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

‘Protect, promote ethnic diversity’ Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Diversity among ethnic communities and races is an asset for the country and should be protected and promoted, speakers said in a panel discussion yesterday.

The US Embassy in Dhaka organised the event – "Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Community Expo" – at the American Club.

US Ambassador Peter Haas said, "Human rights is a very important part for the US, so we stand for it, and promote it around the world."

"There are people around the world who stand up to promote indigenous rights, a global issue. We found it important that such diversity should be protected and promoted," he said.

Rani Yan Yan, a human rights defender, said no one should be discriminated based on their group, ethnicity, or gender. "Diversity should be celebrated by respecting, promoting and upholding the rights of these people," she added.

Uaungchain Marma Milton, another discussant, said they have been working for indigenous students through an online platform to collect indigenous proverbs and stories to preserve those as documents for the future.

Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, said, "We have to work hard to change the world view and their understanding about indigenous community. Their land rights also needed to be secured."

Mau Ting Nyeu, a researcher, said education helps children to skip poverty and violence. However, hill district areas rank the lowest in providing early childhood education as they do not have schools within walking distance.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Family members look on as several BNP leaders and activists are being brought to a Dhaka court on a prison van yesterday. The BNP men were arrested from their residences, several entry points to the capital, and various hotels around the party's Nayapalton office earlier in the day. While the party's senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi alleged that the arrests were made prior to the party's rally to obstruct it, Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader claimed the arrestees were accused in various cases. The court later sent them to jail.