



THE GOODBYE... With sad eyes, Abu Taher waits for his son Mahabub's flight to depart. Defying the cold, the 65-year-old arrived at Dhaka airport from Cumilla at dawn to bid him farewell before he leaves for Dubai. The photo was taken in front of the terminal gate at 7:00am yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

The 'big boss' and his narco syndicate

DNC says so far they found citizens of 5 countries involved in cocaine trade

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The citizens of at least five countries were involved with the transnational syndicate that was smuggling narcotics from East African countries to India using Bangladesh as a transit route.

Under the guise of a readymade garment trader, a Nigerian citizen – Don Franki alias Jacob Franki – is the mastermind behind it.

Franki is known as the "Big Boss" among syndicate members. He has been living in the country for the last nine years. During the stay, he recruited a couple of Bangladeshis as local aide.

Mustakim Billah Faruqi, director general of the Department of Narcotic Control, disclosed

Cameroon, Nigeria, Malawi, Tanzania, and Bangladesh nationals found involved so far

Syndicate members visited Bangladesh on fake invitation

Bangladesh was used as transit to smuggle Cocaine to India and neighbouring countries from African countries

Franki aka 'Big Boss' has been staying in Dhaka for over 9 years as garment trader

the findings yesterday following arrest of five people including

Nigeria, Cameroon, and Bangladesh nationals.

The arrestees are Kelvin Yenge, 42, a Cameroon national, Nonso Ezema Peter alias Oskar, 30, and Ndulu Ebuka Stanley alias Podosky, 31, both Nigerians, and Saiful Islam Rony, 34, and Asaduzzaman Apel, 27, both Bangladeshis.

But the DNC failed to arrest Franki as he left the country for Nigeria nine months back. Franki's brother Wissly, who was taking care of the syndicate in his absence, also went into hiding.

Faruqi said they found out about the syndicate after 8.3 kilogrammes of cocaine were recently seized in Dhaka.

A DNC team in a joint drive with SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

AK Azad Noab president again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AK Azad, publisher of Samakal, has been elected president of the executive committee of Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) for the third time in a row.

Azad will spearhead the new committee for 2024-2025.

The newly formed executive committee was declared during Noab's annual general meeting yesterday.

ASM Shahidullah Khan Badal, chairman of New Age editorial board, and Matiur Rahman Choudhury, chief editor of Manab Zamin, have been re-elected vice president and treasurer respectively, said a press release.

The executive members are: Matiur Rahman, editor and publisher of Prothom Alo, Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, Tasmima Hossain, editor of Ittefaq, MA Malek, editor of Dainik Azadi, Mozammel Hoque, editor of Karatoa, Altamash Kabir, editor and publisher of Sangbad, Naem Nizam, editor of Bangladesh Protidin, Tarik Sujat, managing director at Mediascene Ltd that publishes daily Bhorer Kagoj, Shamim Islam, director of daily Jugantar, and Dewan Hanif Mahmud, editor and publisher of Bonik Barta.

Shamsul Huq Zahid, editor of Financial Express, read out the list of the newly formed committee on behalf of the election board.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

The newly-formed executive committee of Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab). The committee was declared during Noab's annual general meeting yesterday. AK Azad, publisher of Samakal, ASM Shahidullah Khan Badal, chairman of New Age editorial board, and Matiur Rahman Choudhury, chief editor of Manab Zamin, have been re-elected president, vice president and treasurer respectively.

'SHARIFA'S STORY' CONTROVERSY

An agenda to dismantle secular, inclusive education

Speakers tell conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday said the "hijra/transgender" controversy in the textbook serves as a camouflage for a hidden agenda to dismantle secular and inclusive education in the country.

At a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity, they termed the act of tearing up the textbook page by a teacher unconstitutional, saying that the activities that followed the tearing up incident are a threat to Bangladesh's existence, and demanded punishment for the instigators.

Shahriar Kabir, president of the organisation, said, "The new curriculum is very contemporary, but the religious extremists don't like it. Their goal is to create anarchy by making it a focal point." "We urge the government not to yield to this community and make any change to the content of the book," he added.

Students and teachers of all universities should come forward and protest against the ill intentions of this group, said Shahriar Kabir.

Prof Muntassir Mamoon expressed shock at the "shameful" acts of the teacher, saying, "A

teacher should not act in such a manner; it sets a harmful and bad example for future society."

Previously, on many occasions, the government was seen bowing down to this community and catering to their interests. Prof Mamoon said such weakness undermines secularism.

Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik said, "Our constitution prioritised gender equality and their rights. But the way a teacher tore the pages of a textbook and misled the content of the book is a violation of constitution."

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পূবালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি
PUBALI BANK PLC

কর্মজীবনের শেষে অবসরকালীন আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে

পিপলস পূবালী পেনশন স্কীম

আকর্ষণীয় সুদহার
(৬ মাসের এফডিআরের চেয়ে ১% বেশী হারে মুনাফা)

দৈনিক স্থিতির উপর মাসিক চক্রবৃদ্ধি হারে প্রতি মাসে মুনাফা

আপনার ভবিষ্যৎ আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে এবং স্বাচ্ছন্দ্যময় জীবনযাত্রার নিশ্চয়তার লক্ষ্যে পূবালী ব্যাংক নিয়ে এলো 'পিপলস পূবালী পেনশন স্কীম'।

১৮ থেকে ৫৯ বছর বয়সী যে কোনো বাংলাদেশী নাগরিক এই হিসাব খুলতে পারবেন। এই স্কীমে মাসিক কিস্তি বাধ্যতামূলক নয়, যেকোন সময় এবং যতবার খুশি ১০০/- বা তার গুণিতক হারে জমা প্রদান করা যাবে। কোন মাসে টাকা জমা দিতে না পারলেও জরিমানা দিতে হবে না। হিসাবধারীর ৬০ বছরে স্কীমের মেয়াদপূর্তি এবং মেয়াদপূর্তিতে এককালীন/মাসিক/আংশিক উত্তোলন সুবিধা পাবেন। আংশিক উত্তোলনের ক্ষেত্রে অবশিষ্ট স্থিতির উপর একই হারে সুদ/মুনাফা প্রদান করা হবে অথবা গ্রাহক আজীবন হিসাব চালু রেখে সুদ/মুনাফা গ্রহণ করতে পারবেন। হিসাবধারী মেয়াদান্তে ডেবিট কার্ড ও চেক বই ব্যবহারের সুবিধা পাবেন। মেয়াদপূর্তির পূর্বে যেকোন সময় হিসাব নগদায়ন করা যাবে, এক্ষেত্রে গ্রাহক জমাকৃত টাকা প্রযোজ্য সুদ/মুনাফাসহ তাৎক্ষণিক ফেরত পাবেন।

*বিস্তারিত জানতে ভিজিট করুন: www.pubalibangla.com অথবা নিকটস্থ শাখা/উপশাখা/ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং উইভোতে যোগাযোগ করুন

'How many died in 15 years due to negligence?'

Asks HC on United Group hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday wanted to know how many patients died at the hospitals of United Group "due to medical negligence" in the last 15 years.

The court ordered the director general of Directorate General of Health Services to submit a report to this effect in three months.

The HC also asked Deputy Attorney General Tushar Kanti Roy to submit the probe report on the death of five-year-old Ayaan.

Earlier in the day, the DGHS placed the probe report through the DAG before the HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Atabullah, in compliance with HC's January 15 directive.

The court did not disclose the contents of the report.

On January 15, the HC bench ordered the DG of DGHS to take steps to inquire into Ayaan's death at United Medical College Hospital and submit a report to the court in this regard.

The court issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of the hospital and government to explain why they should not be directed to give Tk 5 crore to the family of Ayaan, who died following a circumcision at the hospital allegedly due to "negligence and wrong treatment".

'AL can't hold back democracy-loving people'

Says Moyeen Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan yesterday said the party was not able to achieve what they expected on January 7, but there is no point in being disappointed about it.

"Don't be disappointed. Keep your morale high," he said, addressing the party men at a discussion organised by Gonoforum and Bangladesh Peoples Party in the capital.

He said the BNP wants to bring back a "democratic environment" in the country, not terrorism.

"Awami League will not be able to hold back the democracy-loving people of the country," Moyeen said.

Opposition parties have been most "oppressed" during AL's regime, while BNP never oppressed opposition parties when it was in power, he said.

Moyeen said black flag marches are a globally recognised form of peaceful protest.

"It's the language of protest. This is the language we will not stop using until this government is overthrown," he added.

India played its part as 'honest neighbour': Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India has played its due role in the 12th parliamentary election as an "honest neighbour", Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said yesterday.

Quader, also the general secretary of ruling Awami League, was speaking to reporters after the Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma met him at the former's Secretariat office.

"Many tried to destabilise the country centring the general elections. At that time, India stood beside us. We have to admit it," Quader said.

The minister said they talked about ongoing and potential projects to be implemented with Indian finance.

