



British-Bangladeshi Nazia honoured with Freedom of Luton

STAR REPORT

British Bangladeshi Dr Nazia Khanum, chair of the United Nations Association Luton Branch, was honoured with the Freedom of Luton, the highest and rarest recognition bestowed by the Luton Borough Council.

Dr Nazia, the first ethnic minority woman to receive this award, was recognised for her unwavering commitment to the betterment of Luton since 1983.

She was bestowed the Freedom of the Borough of Luton on March 26, by the Mayor Councillor Mohammed Yaqub Hanif at a unique ceremony organised by Luton Borough Council.

The Freedom of the Borough is a prestigious award reserved for individuals of exceptional merit who have made significant contributions to the welfare of the community, as deemed by the Council.

This latest recognition adds to Nazia's impressive array of over 30 local, national, and international honours. In 2014, she made history as the first ethnic minority woman appointed as Deputy Lieutenant to the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire in the 500-year history of the Lieutenancy.

Death anniv of Umme Saheha, Sabrina Sharmin



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the eighth and fifth death anniversaries of the mother and wife respectively of Mohammad Ali Mia, chief of Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

Mohammad Ali's mother Umme Saheha breathed her last on this day in 2016 while his wife Sabrina Sharmin Zaman, an admin cadre officer of BCS 20th batch, passed away on this day in 2019, said a CID press release.

All including relatives and friends of Saleha and Sabrina are requested to pray for the departed souls.

Siblings dead, parents wounded in road crash

UNB, Mymensingh

A teenager and her toddler brother were dead and their parents injured in a head-on collision between a bus and a microbus in Mymensingh's Tarakanda yesterday.

Mashura Noksaddes Tanas, 16, and her brother Anas, 3, children of Mokaddes Rahman of Sherpur — died on the spot.

The injured, including the microbus driver, are undergoing treatment at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Tarakanda Police Station's Officer-in-Charge Wazedul Islam said the microbus was carrying the siblings and their parents in Dakshin Bazar area.

He said all the victims were going to Dhaka from their village in Sherpur.

A unique alternative to plastic

Tangail entrepreneur making eco-friendly utensils from areca nut leaves



MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

In rural areas, sheaths (khol) of fallen areca nut leaves are usually used to build fire in earthen stoves for cooking.

However, these can be used to make single-use utensils as an eco-friendly alternative to plastic ones.

Kamrul Hasan Nahid, a 32-year-old youth from Tangail, has found success through this unique initiative.

After completing his graduation in textile engineering from a college in Dhaka, Nahid joined a job as a merchandiser.

However, two years later, he faced an uncertain situation regarding his career amid the pandemic.

One day, he saw a Facebook post from a couple in Tamil Nadu who make eco-friendly one-time items with sheaths of fallen areca nut leaves.

Nahid discussed the matter with his family. Later, he quit his job, and the family moved back to their ancestral home in Bagbari area under Bhuanpur upazila.

Later, Nahid went to Tamil Nadu and bought a machine to press the sheaths with Tk 8 lakh, and spent Tk 3 lakh more to set up the necessary infrastructures to start making the products by collecting areca nut sheaths from various places.

At present, Nahid's factory is producing various eco-friendly products including one-time plates, bowls, trays, food boxes of different sizes, and decorative items. The products are priced between Tk 6-12.

Several teenagers from the village work at the factory part-time alongside their studies.

These eco-friendly products have good demand among restaurants, resorts and owners of businesses who are environmentally conscious.

A consignment of 20,000 plates was also shipped to the US through an exporter recently.

"The sheath of fallen areca nut leaves is an alternative to machine-molded single-use plastic products. I started this with the desire to do something environmentally friendly," Nahid said.

"At first, we wash the collected sheaths with water. Those are then dried in the sun, before being used in the machine to be pressed at specific temperature to make the single-use plates. Our factory can produce



1,000 to 1,200 plates a day," said Shimul, a college student from the village who works at the factory.

"Nahid Bhai trained me how to work. I can earn Tk 300-350 daily by working part-time there," he added.

However, as plastic products are easily available and cheaper, it is not possible to sell the eco-friendly products as expected, said two other workers of the factory.

There is also a lack of necessary publicity, they said, adding that entrepreneurs need to come together with such innovative initiatives to generate a better market for eco-friendly products.

"Plastic is banned in Tamil Nadu, so these single-use items made from areca nut sheaths are quite popular there as an alternative. Families there export products worth Rs 800 crore annually," said Nahid.

While single-use plastic and polythene items are also banned in Bangladesh, their use has rather increased over time.

"Several others from various districts in Bangladesh are also making these eco-friendly products on a small scale. Some of these products are being exported abroad through third parties," Nahid informed.

"The real challenge, however, lies with procuring raw materials. These sheaths are rarely collected locally. Most of the sheaths are collected by entrepreneurs from areca nut plantations in Cox's Bazar and Bhola," he also said.

"Considering the harmful effects of plastic pollution, we need to come up with alternative ways to reduce the use of plastic products," Nahid added.

Recently, Nahid diversified his products to introduce single-use plates and food box made from leaves of sal and gajari trees.

This young entrepreneur, however, lamented that no one from the government or private sector came to him with any help or advice in the last two years.

Contacted, Jamil Hussain, an official of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industry Corporation in Tangail, assured all kinds of cooperation to promote, expand and popularise the products manufactured by Nahid's factory.

"BSCIC provides patronage to these small and cottage industries in the rural areas, especially those producing environmentally friendly products on an industrial scale. We will definitely contact him [Nahid] and try to provide any kind of assistance from BSCIC and the government," he said.

Tk 10.3 lakh worth of tech, cash stolen from Mirpur flat

ARAFATH SHETU

A flat in Dhaka's Mirpur DOHS area was robbed on March 17, with the thieves taking away cash and different valuables worth around Tk 10.3 lakh, the residents of the apartment said.

The whole incident was caught on closed-circuit camera, Nasir Uddin, the owner of the flat, told The Daily Star recently.

Police arrested the caretaker of the residential building the same day and he was later sent to jail by a Dhaka court in a case filed with Pallabi Police Station by Nasir Uddin's wife Mahmuda Begum, Sub-Inspector Tareq Rajib confirmed.

The arrestee, Ramzan, could not provide any information, the SI said.

Nasir told The Daily Star, "On that day [March 17], six family members were at home. Just a few days before the robbery, my UK expatriate sister-in-law and her daughter came to visit us. We all were sleeping when the valuables were looted."

"Around 8:15am, I woke up and noticed that the main door was open and my sister-in-law's bag was lying on the floor near the door. Then, I found that all the mobile phones in the house were gone. At that moment, we realised that we were robbed."

Nasir informed that the robbers took away four iPhones, one Samsung phone, an Apple Airpod and cash worth Tk 10.3 lakh. However, CCTV cameras captured clear images of the robbers, he added.

He further mentioned, "It's a six-storey building and we live on the top floor. A CC camera is installed on the third floor's staircase. In video footage, we found that around 7:21am, three people climbed



up the stairs one after another. They got down around 7:31am. While getting down, one of them was seen separating the charger from one of the handsets and leaving it on the stairs."

"We took the CCTV footage to Pallabi Police Station and lodged a case against unknown criminals. Later on, SI Tareq visited our house and detained caretaker Ramzan," the flat owner said.

"We have received CCTV footage of the incident. It is now being analysed. Once we get the CDR report of the CCTV footage, we will decide about the next steps," SI Tareq Rajib said.

Asked about the CDR report, he informed, "We received the IMEI numbers of the mobile phones that have been stolen. Now we are trying to track those handsets through the IMEI numbers. If someone uses them, there would be location information. Also, we are trying to figure out the call records and message history."

Asked why police could not nab the three suspects even though their faces were visible on the footage, SI Tareq said, "Maybe, they went into hiding. But we have sources in that area. Also, we have given the CCTV footage to different shops around that area. Thus, if anyone manages to identify them, they can inform us. We hope the robbers will be caught."

CWasa wants to hike Yaba peddling goes digital

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In recent times, CWasa has been supplying water to the southern part of the port city under a rationing system due to decrease in production following an intrusion of salt water in Halda river.

"We are suffering a lot without getting water regularly. We are getting water on only two or three days a week," said Tofazzal Hossain, a resident of Akmal Ali Road in CEPZ area.

Some CWasa board members, however, are against raising water prices.

"This is not the right time [to increase water prices] as people are already struggling due to hike in price of essential

commodities," said Jafor Sadek, a board member.

Sadek also said they urged CWasa to adjust the subsidy by reducing system losses.

"CWasa has no actual data in assessing production cost of water. Their need to adjust production cost with existing prices is baseless," claimed SM Nazim Hossain, vice president of Consumer Association of Bangladesh.

"We have advised CWasa to stop their system loss and ghostly bills to tackle the losses. However, they have always been trying to tackle losses by increasing water tariff, thereby adding burden to the city dwellers," he added.

Support one candidate

FROM PAGE 3

their yaba supply from Geneva camp.

A source, requesting anonymity, told this newspaper, "Kata Sumon runs the drug business in the slum. But there is no supply of yaba now. If anyone orders online, it is collected from Mohammadpur Geneva camp and then delivered."

"For this reason, the prices are a little high at the spot. Here it is sold for Tk 250 per pill."

Support one candidate

FROM PAGE 3

the national election, will widen further with multiple candidates contesting the upazila polls.

However, the AL central leaders said the decision to keep upazila polls open is highly unlikely to be changed.

At the meeting, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader gave guidance on various issues including upazila elections and party conflicts.

"It has been said that MP-ministers or district AL leaders will not interfere in the upazila elections. Even though it is not visible, everyone will eventually interfere," said Chattogram AL district South president Abdus Salam.

"Upazila polls were held previously without party symbols but the party had supported a

single candidate. The organisational discipline is maintained that way. Now if several people contest for chairman post, the MP will support one, district AL leaders will support Another..." he added.

Cox's Bazar AL district president Faridul Islam echoed him.

Several leaders also alleged that the lawmakers were trying to create their own "circle" in local politics by supporting their own people in the upazila polls.

The AL central leaders said those who became MPs with party tickets, as well as independent MPs who hold party posts, will work in association with the party activists.

Leaders from Rangpur division also placed similar demands in a separate meeting.

According to sources, yaba is sold in Teknaf for Tk 30-35 now, but by the time it reaches Dhaka, the cost rises to Tk 60-70.

At spots like Geneva camp, the yaba is then sold for Tk 200 per piece.

Mehedi Hasan, assistant director (north) of the Department of Narcotics Control, shared that the on-spot yaba trade declined due to continuous drives.

Recently, traders have shifted to online platforms. They have created small

clusters in the encrypted apps and sell the pills to regular customers, he said.

Mehedi, however, said, "We have also improved our technological capacity so that no one can evade arrest."

As on-spot yaba sales have declined, traders have shifted to selling marijuana. Sachets of marijuana are being sold openly by traders, at Tk 50-80 per sachet.

Kh Mahid Uddin, additional commissioner (crime and operation) of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said that they have increased vigilance and drives to arrest narcotics traders are underway.

(Interviewees' identities have been protected with pseudonyms)

A first in trafficking

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is the first in the country's history.

"Recording witness testimony via video conferencing can greatly expedite the trial process for human trafficking cases, especially when many witnesses are unaware of their legal obligation to attend court and reside in remote locations," he said.

Despite necessary directives and provisions in the anti-human trafficking law, no witness evidence was recorded via video conferencing before, said Tariqul.

"Our study showed that 68 percent from 354 cases were stuck simply because witnesses were not attending the court to record their evidence," he added.

হারানো বিজ্ঞপ্তি

আমার পুত্রী নতুন শহর এক্সপ্লোরেশন বেসেসশিক ক্যাডেটসিটিতে ২০১৬ নং কোর্সের অর্ন্তভুক্ত ০৩ নং সেক্টরের, ৪১১ নং রক্তর, ১০ কটা আয়তনের ০০৮ নং এন্ট্রির সাময়িক বন্ড পর রাউন্ডক এন্ট্রি/পূর্ণাঙ্গ/১২২-তরিশ ১৮/০২/২০০৩ ইং এবং চুক্তির বন্ড পর রাউন্ডক/এন্ট্রি/পূর্ণাঙ্গ/১০/১০৪ তরিশ ২২/০৮/২০০৫ ইং এই কাগজপত্র তলি পাত ১৮/১২/২০২৩ ইং তারিখে আনুমানিক বিকাল ৪.০০ ঘটিকার সময় বন্ডী খানবিন জার্ড নং ১৯ ইউনিয়ন/ওয়ার্ড এর রোড নং ১১ এলাকা থেকে হারিয়ে যাই। এই কাগজ পর পাওয়ার লক্ষ্যে বন্ডী খানায় ৩১/০৩/২০২৪ ইং তারিখে একটি সাধারণ ডায়েরী করা হয়েছে, যাবার লিডিং নং-৬২০৮-এলাকা, লিডিং নং-১১০৪ যোগাযোগের ঠিকানাঃ সাকিব আহমেদ খান মোবাইল নং-০১৭৪৭৯২৭১৫১

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TENDER INVITATION

Tenders are invited from the intending suppliers/firms for the following items:

Procurement of: (a) Supply of lab Equipment (Oscilloscope, Digital Function Generator, Analog/Digital Trainer Board) for EEE Dept. (b) Supply of Brand PC (HP/Dell/Lenovo/Asus) for EEE Dept. (c) Supply of Desktop Computer, Laptop and CPU (HP/Dell/Lenovo/Asus) for the Department of Architecture.

The schedules of the items with terms and conditions (hard copy) can be obtained from the Procurement Officer of the University within **Apr. 01, 2024 during office hours (by 03.00 p.m.)** on working days. The interested bidders are requested to submit the tender schedule (hard copy) by **Apr. 03, 2024 within 12.00 noon**. Hard copy of the tender must be dropped in the tender box kept at the office of the Treasurer of the University. Tender (s) submitted within the deadline will be opened on the same day **Apr. 03, 2024 at 01.00 p.m.** at the Treasurer's Office of AUST in presence of the bidders (if any).

The bidders must mention the **"Name of the item and department"** at the top of the envelope, otherwise the bid documents will be treated as canceled.