

## 3 Bangladeshis to compete in Japan's SpoGomi World Cup

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three young Bangladeshis will represent the country at the 2nd SpoGomi World Cup in Japan this October.

The participants – Md Imran Hossain, Md Jubair Sheikh, and Md Tanvir, all students of Daffodil International University – competed as Team Eco Fighters and secured victory in the Bangladesh qualifiers held yesterday in Dhaka.

Originating in Japan, SpoGomi is a team-based competition where participants collect litter from designated areas within a set time and sort it into categories. Teams earn points based on the type and weight of collected waste.

The contest aims to promote environmental awareness and public engagement in waste management in a fun and competitive manner.

The Bangladesh qualifier took place at the Sandhya Malati ground of the Rajuk Uttara Apartment Project in Uttara Sector-18.

Seventy teams competed, with Team Eco Fighters scoring the highest. Each team had one hour to collect waste and 20 minutes to sort it.

Different categories carried different point values.

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Administrator Mohammad Azaz highlighted the importance of civic responsibility in keeping the city clean.

"We want to advance the city's cleanliness through community participation. Without awareness and cooperation from all walks of life, it is impossible to keep the city clean," he said.

He also criticised unauthorised markets occupying sidewalks, making waste management more difficult. "We clean the city's garbage all night, but by noon it becomes dirty again due to citizens' negligence. Without public awareness and active participation, the city cannot remain clean," he added.

## Missing man found dead in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

A man was found dead in Netrakona after his family said they paid a ransom for his release.

Md Jahirul Islam, 33, of South Kandapara village in Kalmakanda, went missing on the morning of August 14. When he did not return home that night, family members began searching for him. His mobile phone was found switched off.

The following day, an unknown caller demanded a ransom of Tk 60,000 for his release. The family managed to send the full amount in three instalments, but Jahirul did not return. About 36 hours later, on August 15, locals discovered his body in the Ronger Bazar area of Sadar upazila and informed the police.

The body was recovered, identity confirmed, and handed over to the family. On August 16, the body was sent to Netrakona Modern Sadar Hospital for autopsy. Kalmakanda Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Lutfur Rahman said the case initially appears to be a murder. No written complaint has yet been filed, but legal action will follow once it is lodged, he added.

## Burglaries at Khulna

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group of burglars vandalised and looted a Dutch Bangla Bank Fast Track ATM booth along with two shops on Sadar Road early yesterday.

Around 3:30am, the gang stormed the ATM booth at Adalatpara, tied up and assaulted security guard Mojibur Rahman, and then vandalised the booth, looting a laptop, said Sadar Police Station OC Imtiaz Ahmed.

Mojibur, left seriously injured after being struck on the head, was admitted to Patuakhali Medical College Hospital.

About 20 minutes later, the same gang broke into "Fashion Optical" on Sadar Road, stealing products, a



## Stop pushing unnecessary tests

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"Look into the matter seriously," he said.

Prescribing unnecessary medical tests is another complaint, he said, citing the case of his house help who was prescribed 14 tests by a Dhaka hospital.

Aggrieved by the sheer number of tests prescribed, the house help went to his hometown, Mymensingh, for treatment by a doctor he knew and was cured without any tests.

"Stop this torture. It's fine if you charge the rich more, but please end the practice of prescribing 14 or 15 tests for poor patients."

Another complaint is about compelling patients to buy medicine from a particular company, he said.

"In any part of the world, do doctors set aside specific times in hospitals or clinics for pharmaceutical company representatives? Is there any country where this happens? Are you agents of pharmaceutical companies? Are the doctors of major hospitals in this

country intermediaries for pharmaceutical companies? Where are you placing yourselves?"

Wrong test results and low salaries of service providers are the other complaints, he said, while urging more investment in manpower to improve the quality of services.

People would not need to go to India or Bangkok for treatment if they received proper care here, he added.

People receive treatment from both government and private medical facilities, so the standards of these two types of facilities should not differ, Rahman said.

Similarly, the quality of education in government and private medical colleges cannot be different as both produce doctors.

The government will establish a Health Facilities Accreditation Council to ensure quality, he said.

The practice of undue profit must be stopped, he said, adding that healthcare providers should limit themselves to justifiable

profits.

Talking about the low salaries of service providers,

he said that doctors at most

medical facilities earn less

than Tk 30,000 monthly

while nurses receive about

Tk 12,000.

In which country in

the world do people work

for such low wages, except

Cuba, where the government

provides everything? This

has reached a shameful level."

Subsequently, he urged

healthcare providers to

establish a salary structure

keeping their social dignity

in mind.

The government wants

a salary board for health

service providers and sought

the owners' support in this

regard.

He also termed the

annual renewal of licences

for private medical facilities

as irrational.

The government is

working to review the

process, he said, adding that

the authorities must ensure

proper inspections within

the fixed period.

## Newborn's death exposes

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suspects, the police officer said.

Abu Taher remains absconding. Jahangir's name is not in the case. When contacted, he denied involvement, claiming he heard of the death through social media.

The case also names Md Billal, Abdul Hai, along with five to six unidentified suspects.

Hai, president of the Ambulance Owners' Welfare Association, denied involvement with the syndicate. He said the baby had breathing problems from birth and that a verbal altercation occurred between drivers and the family. "Eventually, the baby died in the ambulance. Life and death are in the hands of Allah," he said.

Civil Surgeon Dr Mohammad Rehan Uddin acknowledged the allegations against his driver and promised an investigation committee. "If proven guilty, departmental action will be taken. Legal action will follow in coordination with police and administration," he said.

Shariatpur General Hospital Superintendent Dr

Habibur Rahman reiterated that the fare for a trip to Dhaka is fixed at Tk 4,000 and anyone charging higher will face disciplinary measures.

But syndicate-controlled ambulances charge Tk 6,000–8,000, adding extra "toll fees" of Tk 3,000–4,000, despite exemptions at highways and places like the Padma Bridge, said Jafrul Hasan, who has recently taken his kidney patient mother to Dhaka.

If families try to hire ambulances from other districts at lower costs, those vehicles are detained, sometimes even with patients inside, he said.

Shariatpur has around 45 ambulances, one government and the rest private. Victims, ambulance drivers, and locals told The Daily Star that the syndicate extorts commissions of Tk 2,000–3,000 from ambulances leaving Shariatpur hospitals. Drivers from outside are paid only part of the fare, while the syndicate pockets the rest.

Since the tragedy, ambulance services at Shariatpur Sadar Hospital have dwindled sharply, with only one or two vehicles

operating, leaving families in urgent need exposed and vulnerable.

The harrowing chain of events began when Nur Hossain's wife was admitted to New Metro Diagnostic Center and Clinic with labour pain on Thursday.

After a failed natural delivery, she underwent a caesarean section at 3:00pm. The baby was first taken to Fatema Medical before being referred to Shariatpur Sadar Hospital, where doctors advised urgent transfer to Dhaka.

By 6:45pm, the family had secured a Dhaka-bound ambulance for Tk 5,000. But as hope seemed

within reach, around a dozen people intercepted the vehicle, seized the keys, and demanded the child be taken in a local ambulance instead.

For half an hour, the family pleaded, protested, and prayed. By 7:15pm, the baby had died.

"Had I known my child would die over a Tk 2,000 dispute, I would have paid the higher fare. I demand justice and strict punishment for the perpetrators," Nur Hossain said, his grief raw and unfiltered.

## RU students still face poor food

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computer monitor, and about Tk 2 lakh in cash.

Around 4:30am, they targeted "Shikdar Store" in the area, looting a CCTV monitor, cash, recharge cards, and other items, the OC added.

Md Rinku, channel officer of Dutch Bangla Fast Track, confirmed Mojibur had been tied up and attacked.

"We have obtained video footage of the incident. An investigation is underway, and the culprits will be identified and brought to justice soon," the OC said.

Others, however, note some improvement.

Saida Akhter, a resident of Khaleda Zia Hall, said, "Although the lack of residential facilities creates problems, the process of seat allocation has become fairer since August 5. Seats are now given accordingly and in a transparent way."

Shariful Islam, a resident of Amir Ali Hall, also praised the "end of seat trading" and the inclusion of poor students in the allocation process.

An RU professor, requesting anonymity, alleged that some teachers run private boarding houses in nearby areas such as Kajla, Binodpur, and Meherchondi. "If the university becomes fully residential, it will hurt their business. That's why genuine initiatives for full residential accommodation are rare," the professor claimed.

Calling on devotees to carry forward the teachings of Lord Krishna, the army chief said, "Let his teachings radiate from here to everywhere, inspiring us to live together in peace and unity," he said.

August 5, all seats have been allocated through a transparent, score-based system with quotas properly applied.

Officials claim that seat allocation is now entirely merit-based. However, several students allege that political influence still affects some cases.

Tisa Khatun, a third-year botany student living in July 36 Hall (Bangamata Fazilatunnisa Hall), has spent more than a year in the hall's overcrowded Gono Room.

"There is no ventilation, no personal space, and I have been sharing a bed with another student for more than a year," she said.

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Shariful Islam, a resident of Amir Ali Hall, also praised the "end of seat trading" and the inclusion of poor students in the allocation process.

Dining managers point to soaring prices as a major obstacle. "A week ago, daily groceries cost Tk 8,000 to Tk 10,000. Now the same items cost Tk 10,000 to Tk 15,000. But meal rates are fixed at Tk 30 for lunch and Tk 22 for dinner. There are no subsidies, so it is very hard to maintain quality," said Shopon Ali, dining manager of Sher-e-Bangla Hall.

Private eateries near RU also reveal how campus politics once dictated student life. Manik Hossain Babu, who runs a hotel near Ziaur Rahman Hall, said,

"During the Awami League period, Chhatra League leaders ate at my hotel without paying. Around Tk 8.5 lakh is still due. I even filed a case. But now, the situation is different. Students pay their bills regularly."

Prof Zamirul admitted that dining was "not excellent" but claimed it has improved compared to earlier years. He said the university provides indirect support through subsidies on electricity and infrastructure. He also blamed past irregularities on politically backed students who ate for free – a practice he claimed has "almost disappeared".

In some halls, dining services have been outsourced to private caterers in addition to canteen facilities, but residents insist the meals are unhygienic, monotonous, and lack nutrition. Female dormitories are particularly affected as they have no canteen, forcing students to depend entirely on hall dining.

"There were temporary improvements in food standards when the provost directly supervised the dining, but they lasted only a few days. Potatoes are in every dish, three times a day. The food is the same every day, and even hall shops don't stock basic items," said Asheka Jaima of Khaleda Zia Hall.

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"During the injunction, Anisul's faction held the council and formed a committee. On August 11, the court transferred the case to the Sixth Joint District Judge's Court. The next day, the judge allowed the complainants to withdraw it, lifting the injunction on GM Quader."

In response, Anisul and 10 leaders filed a case with Dhaka First Joint District Judge's Court against Quader and joint office secretary Mahmud Alam. The court imposed a temporary injunction on the organisational activities of both sides until August 12.

## Implementation timeline

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Prof Ali Riaz, vice-president of the consensus commission, confirmed to The Daily Star that the commission had sent the integrated final draft to the parties, adding that they had been asked to send their feedback on language and wording by August 20.

"The content will remain unchanged," he added.

About the charter having no specific deadline for the parties, he said the two-year deadline was mentioned in the preliminary draft to initiate discussions.

The government wants a salary board for health service providers and sought the owners' support in this regard.

He also termed the annual renewal of licences for private medical facilities as irrational.

The government is working to review the process, he said, adding that the authorities must ensure proper inspections within the fixed period.

A member of the commission, preferring anonymity, also said the timeline was initially mentioned to initiate discussions on implementation.

"We are now discussing the legal bindings of the charter. Once that's established, we expect a timeline will naturally emerge."

The draft outlines 84

issues on which political