

Headlines:

- **Shajahan Khan leads Committee Formed to Curb Road Accidents**
- **Deadly Fire Kills 78 in Dhaka's Chawk Bazar**
- **102 Yaba Dealers Surrender in Cox's Bazar**

Details:

Shajahan Khan leads Committee Formed to Curb Road Accidents

A 15-member committee, headed by former minister Shahjahan Khan, has been formed to restore discipline in transport sector and curb road accidents on roads across the country. The committee will recommend within 14 days how to control road accidents and restore discipline in the road transport sector. Necessary steps will be taken as per recommendations of the committee. (*The Daily Ittefaq, February 17, 2019*)

By making the former shipping minister Shahjahan Khan head of the Road Accident Control Committee, this government has proved that governments under democratic system always work for the capitalists, ruling classes and vested interest groups by abandoning the rights of the general masses. When due to the interference of the this craven politician, people are suffering a lot with no solutions to the road anarchy, this decision of mockery to make him the head on road safety has further distanced people from the government. People has realized that the real motive behind keeping this influential person, who also happens to be the executive president of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation, on the committee is not to bring solutions, but to find out a way to take general people's attention away from their anger on the escalating road accidents and thus keep the dishonest regime-associated businessmen of this deteriorated transport sector happy. Like the rest of the other useless committees in Bangladesh, this one is also not meant to bring any solutions whatsoever.

In this context of the formation of the said committee, another unique characteristic of democracy has again came to the fore – “the illusion of free speech”. Democracy allows people to vent their anger in the form of ‘freedom of expression’ and massive ‘media coverage’, whereas it very well knows that it will never succeed in bringing about the remedies due to the conflicting interest of the ruling elites and their associates whose interests get the priority in this man-made system. Thus, this system makes people “desensitized” as it knows that in the long run this will be seen as merely “freedom of expression”, which has no effect in real life and people will eventually become numb due to this overexposure to the so-called freedom to criticize. In Bangladesh also, the reality is same; we see people's ‘freedom of speech’ only in social media and continuous coverage by the news agencies criticizing formation of such useless committees and people like Shahjahan Khan which has no impact on the ground.

Deadly Fire Kills 78 in Dhaka's Chawk Bazar

At least 78 people were killed and 55 others injured as a deadly fire broke out in a densely populated residential area at Chawk Bazar in old town of Dhaka Wednesday night. The fire brings back to mind the devastating fire that had broken at Nimtoli in the old town in 2010 killing 124 people and injuring 200 others. Originated from a stove in a building housing

combustible chemical depot, the fire spread to eight residential buildings and 20 shops rapidly. (*New Age, February 21, 2019*)

When Hasina government is bragging about mega-infrastructures in the name of vision towards being a developed country, a significant number of deaths by fire in Chawk Bazar has exposed the true reality of 'development' this government is undertaking. The fire broke out in Chawk Bazar which is very close to Nimtoli where such incident happened in 2010 that caused 140 deaths. That time also this government took several eye-catching steps such as arranging marriage ceremony for some victim orphans and promising to relocate the chemical warehouses etc. to tap into people's emotion. But 8 years after we see nothing has changed, and again similar type of fire disaster for very same reasons which took place due to government's corrupt intention only. The recent incident actually proved that the steps which were taken by the government after Nimtoli tragedy was nothing but "art of treachery" to relinquish peoples' anger and divert their attention from the horrific events. If they were sincere to protect the lives of people, by now, they would have relocated the dangerous chemicals warehouses and factories from the areas to ensure safe neighborhood. But they had no intention to affect the interest of the vested interest groups which is pivotal in the democratic system as it plays the vital part to ensure profit maximization. So, the fate of the general mass is always compromised for the interest of the ruling class and their associates.

102 Yaba Dealers Surrender in Cox's Bazar

Seven family members of former Awami League lawmaker and alleged yaba kingpin Abdur Rahman Bodi are among the yaba dealers scheduled to surrender in Cox's Bazar, according to police sources. The surrendering drug dealers are expected to turn in the remainder of drugs and any firearms in their possession. In addition, new cases will be filed against the dealers if they return to their drug dealing ways. Regarding the illegal wealth accumulated by the drug dealers, sources said the Anti-Corruption Commission, Bangladesh Bank, and National Board of Revenue (NBR) will investigate the matter before taking legal action. (*Dhaka Tribune, 18 February, 2019*)

This is a play very common in our country to save the criminals who are the kinsmen of the ruling elites. Democratic governments can declare anyone as criminals by banning them and their activities or anyone can be made free from any charges. This is done with democratic magic wand known as 'the law making capacity' of this system. That is the reason we see the current regime is being kind enough and able to make a way out for her own malefactors. So the swordfishes attempt to rehabilitate these crooks ignoring the damages they did to the nation. This is how the government kept her promises to criminals. After all their criminal activities, these criminals will now be freed soon after a pretentious jail mockery.

If we look into current reality, nothing really has changed as narcotics are still widespread at every corner of the society. The general people are still scared of the threats and intimidation of the drug peddlers even during this surrender drama. No one can touch the thugs under 'thugocracy' (democracy) as the administration is ready to protect them, the parliament is ready to announce indemnity and the head of the state is waiting to sign a mercy petition if demanded. Criminals and crimes are free in abundance under secular democratic reign.