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SECOND EDITION



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"There are no new SIMs in the company."
 GRAMEENPHONE CEO YASIR AZMAN WARNS OF A CRISIS IF BTRC DOESN'T ALLOW IT TO SELL NEW SIM CARDS



"We want to set ourselves a goal of trying to win a Test series outside Bangladesh."
 HEAD COACH RUSSELL DOMINGO BEFORE THE UPCOMING TEST SERIES IN PAKISTAN (PAGE 12)



"I see no need to bind ourselves to an agreement with the EU."
 UK PM BORIS JOHNSON SETS OUT BRITAIN'S POSITION FOR POST-BREXIT TALKS (PAGE 10)



BB RESERVE HEIST

Int'l payment system now slower, costlier

No tangible progress in four years

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON, MD FAZLUR RAHMAN and RAFIUL ISLAM

It has been four years since a band of hackers broke into the Bangladesh Bank's account with the New York Fed with the intent to pull off what would have been the biggest cyber heist in history.

Thanks to stroke of good fortune, the hackers made way with less than one-tenth the sum -- and Bangladesh is no closer to seeing that money back four years on as there has been little tangible progress in the legal battle at home and abroad.

Not just that, there has not been any lasting solution to prevent a repeat of the incident that left the central bank \$81 million short -- and would have left it with a \$951 million-size hole in its books.

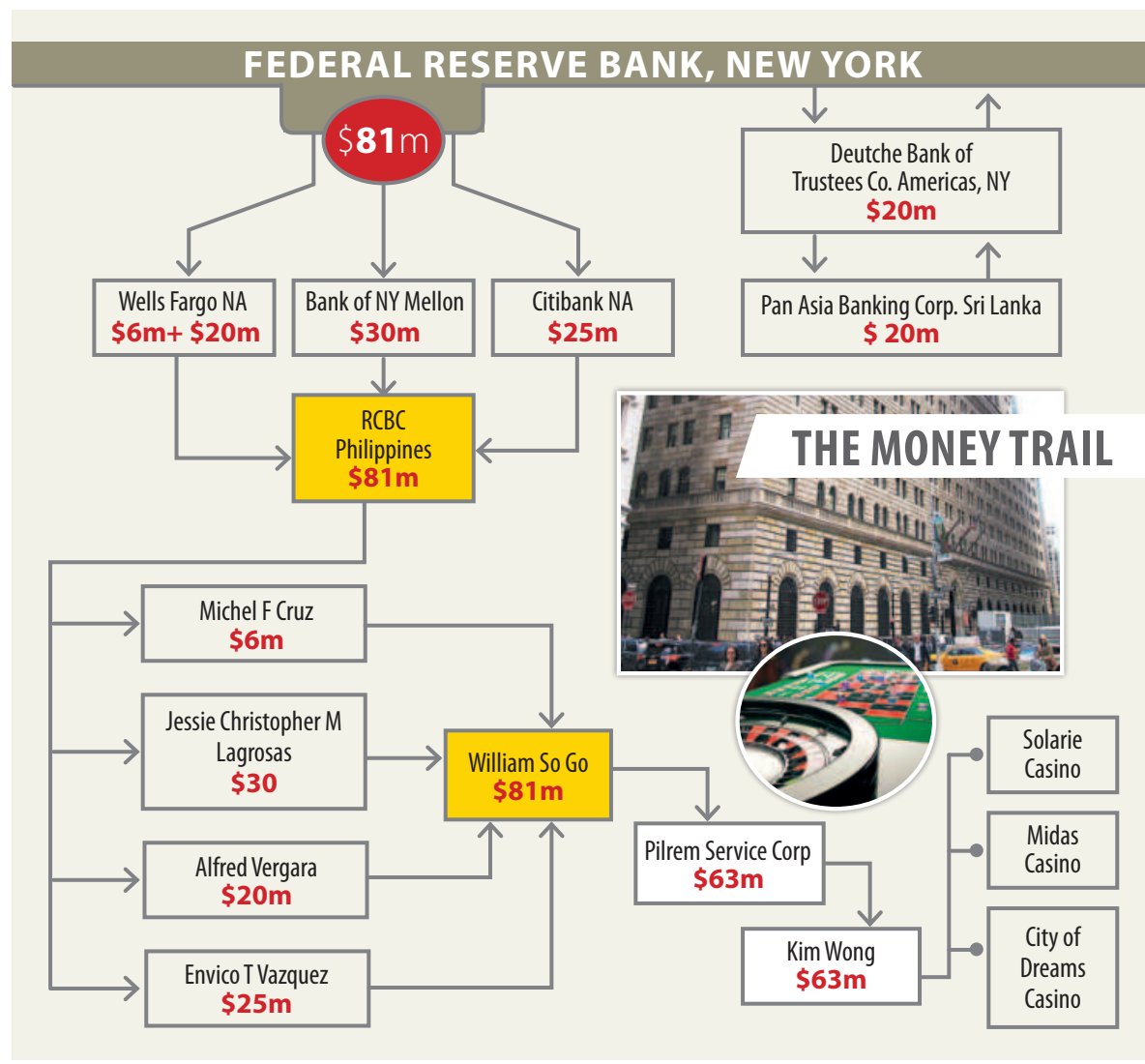
The central bank is working under a temporary arrangement for four years that is costing additional time and money.

Under the makeshift system since 2016, the BB sends payment instructions to the New York Fed through the SWIFT system and follows it up with an email. After receiving the email, the New York Fed calls the BB to double-check whether it has sent the payment instruction or not.

Until the three-tier security system is ensured, the Fed does not carry out any fund transfer instructions. And this arrangement is for Bangladesh only.

Not just that, the Fed transfers funds for only two days a week now,

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GP faces crisis over SIM sales

The operator running out of its BTRC-approved SIMs; yet to get nod for new sales

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Grameenphone may not be able to sell new SIMs after a week or two as it has come close to exhausting the new connections it was allowed to sell by the regulator, said its CEO yesterday.

The company may face a major crisis unless the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission allows it to sell new SIM cards or resell the ones that have not been used in 15 months, said Chief Executive Officer Yasir Azman, who took charge of GP on Saturday.

"We will be able to sell Grameenphone connections in the next week or two only," the 12th CEO of the largest mobile carrier told a press conference at his office yesterday.

Contacted, BTRC Chairman Jahurul Haque told The Daily Star that GP's crisis would be solved if it gave the money it owed the government.

An audit of GP, ordered by the BTRC in 2015, concluded that the company owed the government Tk 12,579.95 crore. GP has since been refuting the audit claim. The dispute resulted in the regulator imposing

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China virus deaths top SARS toll

Beijing in urgent need for protective equipment

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

360 DEATHS (ALL IN CHINA)
17,200 CONFIRMED CASES

AGENCIES

China said yesterday it urgently needed medical equipment and surgical masks as the death toll from a new coronavirus jumped above 360, making it more deadly than the SARS crisis nearly two decades ago.

The 57 new deaths confirmed yesterday was the single-biggest daily increase since the virus was detected late last year in the central city of Wuhan, where it is believed

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Govt has taken all necessary steps

Nothing to panic about, says health minister; no case reported yet in Bangladesh

PREVENTING CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has taken all necessary measures to prevent coronavirus from entering the country, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said yesterday.

"The situation at present is nothing to panic about. Even if it [the virus] comes, we're fully prepared," he said at a seminar, organised by Bangladesh Medical Association, at the capital's Segunbagicha.

He also said a cabinet meeting earlier in the day decided that the government would not send any more chartered flights to China to bring home Bangladeshi nationals.

"If any Bangladeshi wants to come back, he or she will have to do that themselves. The government would provide necessary support.

But those returning from Wuhan will have to remain quarantined for two weeks."

On Saturday, 312 Bangladeshis, who had been stranded in the Chinese city, landed in Dhaka in a special flight. Three hundred and ten of them remained quarantined at Ashkona Hajj Camp while the other two were at a hospital last night.

The minister said another 171 Bangladeshis had recently sought to return from Wuhan, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak.

On the temporary ban on on-arrival visa for Chinese nationals, he said all Chinese nationals would need to show health certificates to the Bangladeshi authorities for the visa.

Anyone returning from China will have to be quarantined, he added.

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Transport leaders score another win

Govt relaxes experience requirement for licence to drive heavy vehicles

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Accepting another demand of road transport association leaders, the government has relaxed the experience requirement for getting a heavy vehicle driving licence.

Now a person holding a light vehicle driving licence for three years can apply for a heavy vehicle driving licence. The heavy vehicles include bus and truck.

Earlier, one would have required at least six-year experience to secure such a licence.

The road transport and bridges ministry issued a circular in this regard on Sunday. It said the order came into effect immediately.

A top road transport expert said the government's latest move would jeopardise road safety. However, another expert stressed the need for providing proper

training and ensuring quality of driving test before issuing a heavy vehicle driving licence.

Transport leaders had long been demanding the government reduce the experience requirement for heavy vehicle driving licence. The demand grew stronger after the government in November last year went to implement the relatively tougher Road Transport Act-2018.

Transport leaders claim around 70 percent bus drivers only have licences for light- or medium-seized vehicles even though they have been driving heavy vehicles for years.

The relaxation of experience came just two weeks after the government waived the late fines for vehicle owners and drivers

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Children attend class, wearing protective masks at Mascot Innovative School and College in the capital's Ashkona area. Inset, a notice hung on the school gate requests all to put on masks for protection against coronavirus. More than 300 Bangladeshis, brought back from coronavirus-hit Chinese city of Wuhan, are being kept in quarantine at nearby Ashkona Hajj Camp.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SSC EXAMS

Wrong test papers given at 4 centres

STAR REPORT

Wrong question papers were distributed among students during yesterday's Bangla first part SSC exams at four centres in Barishal, Nilphamari, Jashore, and Feni.

The Secondary School Certificate and equivalent exams began on the day.

In Barishal, 17 students got wrong sets of MCQ question papers, based on the old syllabus, in the city's Halima Khatun Girls' High School centre.

At the centre, more than half of the candidates were expected to appear for the test with question papers from the current syllabus. However, 17 had to answer questions based on the old syllabus, said Shah Alam, headmaster of Jagadish Saraswat Girls' High School in the city.

The Barishal education board authorities were notified of the matter, but it was too late by then. The candidates were affected as they could not answer all the questions, he added.

After visiting the centre, board Chairman Mohammad Yunus said the matter would be considered so that the

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42nd Death Anniversary

(Abul Company) The founder of Abul Khair Group noted industrialist and social worker

Late Janab ABUL KHAIR



Death: 4th February, 1978

In accordance with the will of Almighty Allah the Beneficent, you left this mundane world, leaving us and many of your relations overwhelmed by grief. In our everyday life your bright ideals serve as beacon. You are immortal in your death. We pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of your departed soul.

May Allah the Beneficent bless you with the eternal bliss of paradise. Ameen.

Your loving Sons, Daughters and Relatives

21 Yaba, hundi traders surrender to police

Turn in 10 locally-made firearms, 21,000 Yaba pills to cops in Teknaf

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Around 21 yaba and hundi traders yesterday formally surrendered to police with 21,000 yaba pills and 10 locally-made firearms in Teknaf of Cox's Bazar.

It was the second such surrender programme that was organised by district police at Teknaf Government College playground.

On February 16 last year, 102 yaba traders formally surrendered to law enforcers at a programme at Teknaf Pilot High School in the presence of Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and top police officials.

Those, who surrendered yesterday, are -- Abdur Noor, Abdur Razzak, Bashir Ahmed, Abdul Amin Abu, Abul Kalam, Fazal Karim, Md Rashel, Md Idris, Md Hossain, Mohammad Ismail, Imam Hossain, Shahadat Hossain, Mohammad Saddam, Abdul Gafur, Md Taiyab, Md Zahed, Farid Alam, Imam Hossain, Mizanur Rahman, Noor Mohammad and Md Redwan.

After their surrender, two separate cases -- one for possessing illegal firearms and the other for possessing drug -- were filed against all 21, said ABM Masud Hossain, superintendent of police (SP) of Cox's Bazar.

They were shown arrested in these cases and were later produced before a court, which sent them to jail yesterday evening, the SP told reporters.

Police sources said the 21 people had been communicating with law enforcers for the last couple of months saying they want to surrender.

They surrendered to police separately in phases over the last couple of months. They were the kept at police's "Safe Home" at Kolatoli by-pass area on

the outskirts of the district town.

Yesterday morning, they were taken to Teknaf, around 87-kilometer away from the safe home, amid tight security.

There, they were initially kept at the science laboratory, adjacent to the surrender venue. Around 4:30pm, they were taken to the venue under police protection.

Senior police officials, who were on the stage, received them with flowers.

Khandker Golar Faruq, deputy inspector general (DIG) of Chattogram range, was present as the chief guest. The programme was chaired by SP Masud.

Several district police officials, members of the local administration, as well as political and religious leaders were also present at the programme.

Of the 21, Mohammad Ismail sustained bullet injuries to his leg in a gunfight with police around one year ago, after which one of his legs was amputated by doctors. He surrendered to police a few months later and was kept in the "safe house" for the last seven months, said police sources.

According to police, there are around 1,250 enlisted yaba traders in Cox's Bazar. Of them, 912 are in Teknaf.

Some 209 drug traders were killed in "gunfights" with law enforcers in the district since an anti-narcotics crackdown began on May 4, 2018, till December 2019. Of them, 56 were Rohingyas.

Last year, some 27.35 lakhs yaba pills were recovered and 98 traders were arrested in December alone. Of the arrestees, 45 were Rohingyas.

Speaking to journalists, Teknaf police station's officer-in-charge Prodig Kumar Das said police would continue the anti-narcotic crackdown.



Haphazardly parked motorcycles occupy a part of the pavement in front of the gate of Kurmitola General Hospital in the capital, preventing pedestrians from using the footpath. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Wrong test papers given at 4 centres

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17 examinees were not affected.

The chairman then formed a three-member inquiry committee.

Barishal education board decided to issue a show cause notice to those who were tasked with distributing question papers at the centre, board sources said.

A similar incident took place at Rabeya Balika Bidyaniketan centre in Nilphamari town where 98 candidates from two schools were provided with written question papers from the old syllabus (2018).

After answering the questions for around an hour, the candidates brought the matter to the invigilators' notice. Later, Mahafizur Rahman, exam centre secretary and headmaster of Rabeya Balika Bidyaniketan, communicated the matter to the authorities concerned.

On information, Azharul Islam, additional deputy commissioner (general), visited the centre and spoke to Tofazzur Hossain, Dinajpur education board examination controller, in this regard.

The controller then directed the invigilators to provide the candidates with the right question papers and give them an extra hour to complete their answer.

Talking to The Daily Star, Mahafizur said 620 students appeared for yesterday's exam at the centre. Of them, 619 were regular candidates and one was an irregular candidate.

"As per the rules, we got seven bundles of question papers for the 619 regular candidates and one bundle for the irregular candidate. Each bundle has 100 question papers," he said.

"Mistakenly, the question papers, based on the old syllabus, from that one bundle were distributed among the regular candidates," he added.

In Jashore's Chowgachha, five teachers of an examination centre committee, including the centre secretary, were relieved of their duties over providing students with wrong sets of MCQ question papers, said the upazila nirbahi officer, also the exam centre in-charge.

The incident happened at Chowgachha Government Shahadat

Pilot Secondary School centre where 19 regular candidates were given question papers based on the old syllabus and two irregular candidates with those of based on the current syllabus.

The teachers relieved of their duties are Azizur Rahman, exam centre secretary and headmaster of the school, and Abdul Jalil, Salma Khatun, Lucky Akter, and Rabiul Islam.

Talking to this newspaper, Azizur said the mistake was unintentional.

"We informed Jashore education board examination controller and Chowgachha UNO and provided the candidates with right question papers for the written test," he added.

"The controller assured us that it will not affect the examinees' results," he added.

Sixty-six students were given wrong sets of MCQ question papers at Fazilpur WB Kadri High School in Feni Sadar upazila.

Our Barishal, Nilphamari, Jhenidah, and Feni correspondents contributed to this report.

UN medical evacuations to begin from Yemen's rebel-held Sanaa

AFP, Sanaa

Critically ill Yemenis in need of medical care were set to be flown out of rebel-held Sanaa yesterday, an airport official said, under a United Nations humanitarian evacuation plan for the war-torn country.

The internationally recognised government, backed by a Saudi-led military coalition, has been fighting the Iran-aligned Huthi rebels since 2014, when the rebels seized control of the capital.

In November, the coalition -- which controls Yemen's airspace -- said that patients needing medical care would be allowed to be flown out of Sanaa, which has been closed to commercial flights since 2016.

"Patients and families are due to arrive in Sanaa airport at 12:30 local time (09:30 GMT), and the aircraft is expected to leave today," a Huthi official at the airport told AFP.

The Huthis on Sunday criticised the

evacuation plan as inadequate for the needs of thousands of people in urgent need of treatment.

"The World Health Organization said it will transport via a small UN plane only seven patients with their escorts per flight," the rebels said in a statement carried by their Al-Masira channel.

"The number of people signed up for medical evacuations are around 32,000 patients with serious illnesses."

The United Nations and the WHO could not immediately comment on whether the airlift was going ahead and how many patients would be involved.

But aid sources in the Jordanian capital Amman said they were preparing to receive Yemeni patients.

UN special envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths last month told a Security Council that "we are very close to seeing the first flight move 30 patients who are now waiting in Sanaa for their treatment".

China virus

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to have jumped from animals at a market into humans.

The virus has since spread to more than 24 countries despite many governments imposing unprecedented travel bans on people coming from China.

The World Health Organization has declared the crisis a global health emergency, and the first foreign death from the virus was confirmed in the Philippines on Sunday.

"What China urgently needs at present are medical masks, protective suits, and safety goggles," foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a press briefing.

Authorities in provinces that are home to more than 300 million people -- including Guangdong, the country's most populous -- have made it compulsory to wear masks in public in an effort to contain the virus.

But factories capable of producing around 20 million masks a day are only operating at between 60 and 70 percent of capacity, industry department spokesman Tian Yulong said, adding that supply and demand remained in "tight equilibrium" as a result of the Lunar New Year break.

Tian said authorities were taking steps to bring in masks from Europe, Japan and the US, while the foreign ministry said countries including South Korea, Japan, Kazakhstan and Hungary had donated medical supplies.

All but one of the 57 new deaths reported yesterday were in Wuhan and the rest of Hubei province, most of which has been under lockdown for almost two weeks.

The national death toll reached 361 -- exceeding the 349 mainland fatalities from the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak of 2002-03.

The number of infections also jumped significantly, passing 17,200.

SARS, caused by a pathogen similar to the new coronavirus and also originated in China, killed 774 people -- with most other deaths in Hong Kong.

India has set up a task force to monitor the situation after third case

of coronavirus was detected in Kerala's Kasargod. Around 2,000 people are under observation in the southern Indian state.

ECONOMIC WOES

The virus is having an increasingly heavy economic impact, shutting down businesses across China, curbing international travel and impacting production lines of major global brands.

The Shanghai stock market plunged almost eight percent yesterday on the first day of trading since the holiday as investors played catch-up with last week's global retreat, reports AFP.

In Wuhan, which has been transformed from a bustling industrial hub into a near-ghost town, residents have been living in deep fear of catching the virus.

The city's medical facilities have been overwhelmed, with state news agency Xinhua reporting yesterday that 68 medical teams of 8,300 staff had been sent to Hubei.

And amid mounting pressure, the government has been racing to build two new hospitals to treat the infected.

The first of those, a 1,000-bed facility, was due to open yesterday, just 10 days after construction began.

About 1,400 military medics will treat patients at the hospital, dubbed "Fire God Mountain", according to state media.

However with the death toll surging in Wuhan and other areas of Hubei, it was not immediately clear what overall impact the hospitals would have on containing the epidemic.

The eastern industrial city of Wenzhou, 800 kilometres (500 miles) to the east, was placed under a similar lockdown to Wuhan on Sunday and its nine million people ordered to stay indoors.

China's foreign ministry yesterday criticised the US for being the first to evacuate nationals without providing "substantial assistance" to China.

The US actions had caused "panic", said spokeswoman Hua Chunying.

Mongolia, Russia and Nepal have closed their land borders, while semi-autonomous Hong Kong announced yesterday it was closing all but two land crossings.

Int'l payment system now slower

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down from four days initially.

As a result, the BB processes international payments with the help of a foreign bank on other days, resulting in an additional cost.

In 2017, the SWIFT, the Fed and the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) designed a permanent payment instructions system for the BB. The system is secure, said a central banker.

The SWIFT sent the design in June 2016 and it was reviewed by the BUET. The Fed also examined the design.

Accordingly, the central bank purchased necessary software and hardware by the end of 2017 to make the system up and running.

But they have not been installed yet as SWIFT officials keep pushing back their Bangladesh visit fearing they will face legal actions in the hacking case filed with the Criminal Investigation Department.

Until December last year, no SWIFT official visited Bangladesh fearing that they might face legal actions in the hacking case filed with the CID.

The government high-ups assured that they would not face any sort of hassle or questioning from the law agencies. Convinced, a team of the SWIFT met with the BB governor in Dhaka on December 19 last year.

A SWIFT team will visit Bangladesh in order to install the hardware and a third party will audit its effectiveness. Once the SWIFT and the Fed give their green light in favour of the new system, it will be put in place.

The team that visited Bangladesh in December proposed two more initiatives that would make the payment instructions more secure.

One of them is Global Payment Initiative (GPI), which SWIFT is calling the new standard in global payments.

Another is payment control service (PCS). In case of any irregularities during the transaction such as higher-than-usual fund size or uncommon transaction timeframe, the channel can block the transaction and notify the bank.

A team from the SWIFT has to come to install the system. It has sent a list of the officials to Bangladesh, but the date for their visit could not be known.

Once the SWIFT installs the system, the BB would float a tender for a third-party audit of it. If the SWIFT and the Fed vet the audit report, the system will be fully up and running.

"If the officials of the SWIFT cooperate with the BB, we would be able to move to the new system within three to four months," Debdulal Roy, executive director of the BB, told The Daily Star.

The delay has been largely caused by the time being taken by the SWIFT officials, he said.

In November last year, a team from the Fed also visited the country.

NEW SECURITY SYSTEM IN CENTRAL BANK

Although the BB has not taken any measure in line with the

recommendations made by the Farashuddin-led probe committee, the central bank and the government have taken high-level security measures to safeguard the BB's IT infrastructure.

A censor has been installed at the BB in association with the Computer Incident Response Team (CIRT), the national body under the ICT ministry, Roy said.

The CIRT now monitors the activities of every computer of the BB and reports to the central bank every month.

It reports every suspicious activity, he said, adding that some 4,000 BB officials have been given training on IT and cyber security.

The IT management and the security system of the dealing room that manages the SWIFT messaging with the New York Fed are being handled separately, Roy said.

The Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) provides a network that enables financial institutions worldwide to send and receive information about financial transactions.

BB CASE IN NEW YORK

On February 1 last year, the BB filed a case with the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York against the Philippines' Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) and others, including several top executives, for their involvement in a "massive and multi-year conspiracy" to steal its money.

The court heard the statements from both Bangladesh and the Philippines in the last week of December last year.

"We are awaiting the court verdict on whether it would accept the case or not," Abu Hena Mohd Razee Hassan, head of the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit, told The Daily Star.

LEGAL PROCEEDING IN MANILA

The Philippines has filed 12 cases against the RCBC.

The Department of Justice has ordered the filing of charges for four counts of money laundering against the owners of local remittance firm Philrem Service Corp. in connection with the heist, reported the Inquirer of the Philippines on January 9.

In a 23-page resolution dated December 12, 2019, Justice Undersecretary Adrian Ferdinand Sugay reversed an earlier department ruling dismissing the charges against the remittance firm's owners.

He said Philrem, a covered institution under the Anti-Money Laundering Act, failed to report to the Anti Money Laundering Council (AMLC) the series of suspicious transactions that paved the way to conceal the money stolen from the BB almost four years ago.

Last year, the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 149 found former RCBC branch manager Maia Deguito guilty of eight counts of money laundering in connection with the heist and sentenced her to a jail term ranging from 32 to 56 years. The case is currently on appeal, the Inquirer said.

KILLING RAPISTS IN CROSSFIRE

JP MP Kazi Firoz backtracks on his stance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party senior lawmaker Kazi Firoz Rashid yesterday in parliament backtracked from his earlier position regarding the killing rapists in crossfire.

Participating in the discussion on the thanksgiving motion on the president's speech, the JP MP yesterday demanded that the government completes trials of alleged rapists within 90 days in a special tribunal.

He also demanded capital punishment of rapists by amending the existing laws.

Firoz and several other senior MPs on January 14 demanded that law enforcers kill rapists "in crossfire" to stop rape incidents, which have recently increased at an alarming rate.

Different quarters, including rights activists, strongly condemned such a demand.

About his previous comment of killing rapists in crossfire, Firoz yesterday said he was emotionally charged when he said it.

The JP MP also demanded that the government form a judicial commission to investigate widespread corruption and looting of public money from different banks.

Criticising Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu, Firoz said Bangabandhu would not have been killed had they not announced war against Bangabandhu or loot police stations.

Mudslide traps

500 tourists in

Canadian ski resort

AFP, Montreal

Some 500 tourists were trapped inside a ski resort in western Canada on Sunday after a mudslide destroyed the access road, local media reported.

Heavy rains knocked loose mud and debris, and the ensuing mudslide washed out about 0.6 miles (one kilometer) of the only access road to the Sasquatch Mountain Resort, the British Columbia transportation ministry said in a statement.

Govt has taken

FROM PAGE 1

Speaking at the programme, IEDCR Director Prof Meerjady Sabrina Flora also said they had taken all sorts of preparations in line with the WHO guidelines to prevent any possible outbreak of the virus.

Urging all not to panic, she said in around 80 percent coronavirus cases in China, patients recovered without needing any hospital admission.

"Most of the patients who had been taken to hospitals also recovered after a certain period," she said.

"We have analysed the coronavirus cases and found that most of the victims who died either had other infections or were infants or elderly people," she said.

Less than three percent of those infected died, she said, adding that the mortality rate was lower than that of the outbreaks of SARS or MERS.

The new type of coronavirus has already claimed more than 300 lives and all the victims, except for one, died in China.

"The man who died in the Philippines had co-infections. It will be wrong to say he died only of coronavirus," she said.

Prof Flora then said the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) tested samples taken from 34 people, and found none of them carried the virus.

She urged all not to panic and maintain hygiene. "If you have symptoms of cold, it does not mean you are infected with coronavirus. But if anyone has been to China recently and have symptoms of flu, they require special care."

Citing different studies, Prof Nazmul Hasan, assistant professor of BSMMU's internal medicine department, presented the "Clinical Features and Management of 2019 n-CoV" and described the source and spread of the virus.

"It is believed the novel coronavirus has spread from bat to snake and then to humans. Later, it spread through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes," he said.

Speaking as a special guest, former BSMMU vice-chancellor Prof Nazrul Islam said, "It is the seventh new strain of coronavirus, which is usually carried by bats."

Prof Dr ABM Abdullah, a former dean of BSMMU's internal medicine department, suggested that people stay clean to prevent the spread of the virus.

EIGHT RETURNEES

NOT INFECTED

Meanwhile, the IEDCR yesterday confirmed that none of the eight Bangladeshis, suspected of contracting coronavirus, was infected with the virus.

They were among the 312 Bangladeshis who returned from Wuhan on Saturday. Of the eight, seven were sent to Ashkona Hajj Camp while the other was at a hospital.

GP faces crisis

FROM PAGE 1

multiple restrictions on the company's business operations.

When GP launched its service in the country, its numbers began with 017. After the company exhausted the allocated 10 crore connections with the prefix, the BTRC in October 2018 gave it permission to sell 2 crore new connections that would begin with 013.

The company has almost sold out the connections it was allocated at the time, the CEO said yesterday.

GP wrote to the BTRC several times seeking permission to sell new SIMs and resell the unused ones, but the regulator had not responded, he added.

"There are 30 lakh unused connections, that can be sold again," he said, adding that the company sold around 50,000 SIMs every day.

As of last December, the carrier had 7.64 crore active subscribers.

Yet another crude bomb explodes at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

A crude bomb went off near Dhaka University's Madhur Canteen yesterday. A witness said the explosion took place around 11am.

No casualty was reported.

Contacted, DU Proctor Prof AKM Golam Rabbani said they notified police of the incident and the law enforcers visited the spot.

"We are trying to find out those involved in the incident. Legal actions will be taken against them," he added.

Earlier on January 5, three crude bombs exploded near the university's Kalabhaban (arts building) and Ducus building.

Also, two more crude bombs went off near Madhur Canteen on December 30 last year in which canteen staffer Hridoy sustain minor splinter wounds.

Four such bombs detonated in the morning and evening at the same place on December 29 while an unexploded bomb was found near the area on December 26.

Proctor Golam Rabbani said they could not identify anyone involved in those explosions.

PHOTO OF THE DAY

ANISUR RAHMAN



Students nervously get some last-minute studying in before sitting for the first of their SSC exams. A long month of nail-biting suspense awaits them. The photo was taken yesterday at Motijheel Govt Boys High School.

ATTACK ON JOURNOS
Freedom of media shrinking: Article 19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Article 19 yesterday expressed grave concerns over attacks on journalists during Saturday's Dhaka city polls.

"Freedom of the media is constantly being shrunk by attacks on journalists, which is a huge threat to democracy," said Faruq Faisal, regional director (Bangladesh and South Asia) of the UK-based human rights body.

In a press statement, he also said although the government has reiterated its commitment towards freedom of the media and protection of journalists as well as rights activists, the reality has changed little.

"Of all the attacks on journalists in the near and far past, none have been tried yet," he added.

According to the rights body, at least 10 journalists from different media houses were attacked and assaulted while performing duties during the Dhaka city corporation polls on Saturday.

Leaders and activists of the ruling party were allegedly involved in these attacks, it said, adding that journalists also voiced helplessness over non-cooperation from members of law enforcement agencies and election officials.

It also urged the government to ensure safety of journalists and human rights defenders, in line with international standards.

DUJ, CRAB ANNOUNCE PROTESTS

Dhaka Union of Journalists and Bangladesh Crime Reporters' Association yesterday condemned the attacks, and urged the authorities to bring the culprits to book immediately. The two organisations will hold separate demonstrations in the city today and tomorrow respectively.

Meanwhile, Chhatra League leader Shahidul Islam Khan Riyad, who allegedly assaulted two journalists during Saturday's polls and later filed a general diary against the victims to blame them, was suspended yesterday "for breaching organisational discipline", said a press release.

Riyad allegedly confined Mahabub Momtaji, staff reporter at Bangladesh Pratidin, and Nurul Amin, staff reporter at The Business Standard, for more than one and half hours to a polling centre in Gendaria. Nurul yesterday filed a general diary with Gendaria Police Station.

DHAKA CITY POLLS
Submit expenses in 7 days: EC to contenders

BSS, Dhaka

The Election Commission (EC) has asked candidates of Dhaka city elections to submit their polls expenditure statements within seven days of polls result announcement.

The EC issued a circular in this regard yesterday, signed by its Deputy Secretary Md Atiar Rahman.

As per the Local Government (City Corporation) Election Rules-2010, every candidate is supposed to submit a statement on their election expenditures within seven days from the date of the polls result announcement.

The rules allow a mayor candidate to spend maximum Tk 7 lakh as personal and election expenditure.

As per election rules, a mayor candidate can spend Tk 1 lakh as personal expense if there are fewer than 20 lakh voters. For over 20 lakh voters, they can spend Tk 2 lakh as personal expenditure, and Tk 5 lakh as election expenses.

A councillor candidate can spend up to Tk 50,000 as personal expenditure, and Tk 6 lakh as election expenses.

There were a total of 30,10,273 voters in Dhaka North City Corporation, while 24,53,194 voters in Dhaka South City Corporation.

Recycling a nuisance
Bidyananda Foundation turning laminated posters into notebooks, bags and strings

MATHEWS CHIRAN

Amid concerns over the massive amount of laminated election posters causing serious environmental damage, a youth organisation has undertaken initiatives to recycle the material to help underprivileged children.

The flipside of the posters will be turned into notebooks, while the plastic will be used to pack clothes and made into string to bind food packets.

Bidyananda Foundation, a voluntary organisation working for street children, collected some 1 lakh posters till yesterday from Balurghat, Pallabi, Adabar, Banani and Khilgaon.

"We have six orphanages supporting 350 underprivileged children. They need notebooks to

write," said Salman Khan, head of the Dhaka branch of the foundation. "Even if we can manage food for them from donations, we cannot afford notebooks adequately," he said.

"We alone cannot clean the city, but reusing the posters can play a simple part in it," said Salman, a private university student.

According to Faruque Ahmed, a volunteer, they were unsure of the initiative at first as they thought local political leaders would be offended by it, but the initiative turned out smooth. "We are getting responses from councillor candidates too. Their representatives are calling us to collect posters," he said.

DNCC mayor-elect Atiqul Islam yesterday handed over his campaign

posters to the foundation.

Welcoming the initiative, DNCC's Additional Chief Waste Management Officer SM Shafiqur Rahman said, "So far we have talked to two organisations who are collecting the posters, and we are hopeful all posters will be removed soon, through our initiatives and their support."

Established in 2013, Bidyananda currently has 20 projects across the country, operated by 300 volunteers from various backgrounds. Some of their projects have gained plaudits from all corners -- like the "1-Taka meal", under which any street children can have lunch for Tk 1 every day.

Similarly, they have another project where they provide medical care to the underprivileged for Tk 1.

Tk 111cr spent on govt vehicles last year
State minister for public admin tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain yesterday told parliament that around Tk 111.23 crore was spent on operating government vehicles in last fiscal year.

He said this while replying to a query from Awami League MP Nurunnabi Chowdhury (Bhola-3).

The organisations concerned have been asked to limit their fuel expenses within the stipulated ceilings. Besides, they are being encouraged to use public transport instead of government vehicles to inspect the work at field level.

In reply to another question from treasury bench MP Benjir Ahmed (Dhaka-20), Farhad informed the House that around 3,25,082 posts remain vacant at present under different ministries.

He also said over 88,000 new posts were created in government jobs.

He said the Ministry of Public Administration gave consent to create 88,123 new posts in different ministries, departments and offices from January 1 to December 30, 2019.

Saluting cancer warriors
United Hospital honours 10 individuals for their unwavering will

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leading a healthy life, early detection and immediate treatment of cancer, and quality healthcare services can save many lives from the deadly disease, said speakers at a programme yesterday.

They said fighting cancer is one of the bravest and hardest battles one can go through, and a strong will is needed in this regard. Also, they have to be provided with every possible support, speakers stressed.

United Hospital Cancer Care Centre organised the programme on its premises at Gulshan-2 to mark the 10th anniversary of the centre, and to observe World Cancer Day today.

At the programme, 10 individuals, receiving treatment at the centre, were recognised as "Cancer Warriors" for their unwavering will to fight the disease.

Speaking at the event, noted health specialist and writer Prof Subhagata Choudhury said spreading of cancer can be prevented by avoiding smoking. "It's one of the preventing measures that people need to be aware of," he added.

He said if people see symptoms of cancer at any part of their body, they must undergo immediate screening and treatment to prevent its spread.

Speaking as a special guest, noted environmentalist Advocate Syeda Rizwana

Hasan stressed the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. She also urged doctors to be more patient friendly, which will help patients' trust physicians more.

Calling on doctors to serve patients without thinking of monetary benefits, the hospital's Managing Director Faridur Rahman said, "When patients select a specific doctor from our hospital and say they want to be treated by that physician, it makes us feel proud. It also proves that patients have confidence and trust in us."

He also acknowledged the cancer patients' struggles and spirit.

United Hospital Chief Executive Officer Faizur Rahman said the cancer care centre was inaugurated in 2010 and since then, they have been dedicated in providing quality services to people.

"We look forward to treating more with care and compassion," he said.

Cancer warriors Mohsena Tabassum Mimi and Khaleida Perveen shared the challenges they face and the determination needed to move forward. They also thanked the hospital and doctors for their care and treatment.

Cancer care centre consultants Dr Ashim Kumar Sen Gupta and Dr Rashid-Un-Nabi were also present at the event. The hospital's communication and business development chief Dr Shagufta Anwar conducted the programme.

5 held over SSC question leak rumours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab claimed to have arrested five youths allegedly involved in spreading rumours of question leak in SSC exams and taking money from people with fake questions.

The youths were arrested on Saturday and Sunday from different areas.

They deceived people and the questions they provided through social media were fake, Rab officials said.

Abu Baker Siddique (26) was arrested from Gazipur; Shakil Mahmud (20) and Saimun Islam (20) from Khulna; Al Mahmud (18) from the capital's Rampura and another 16-year-old boy from Hazaribagh.

Rab officials said the five tried to create panic among examinees by spreading rumours of question leak.

Child's body recovered from canal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fire-fighters yesterday recovered the body of a four-year-old boy, who drowned in Manda canal in the city's Mugda on Sunday.

Divers recovered the body of Asadul at 9:10am, said Ershad Hossain, duty officer of Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Asadul drowned in the canal around 4pm on Sunday. Divers had failed to recover the body and called off their search that night, Hossain said.

Another team is still in search for five-year-old Toha Moni, who drowned in a ditch in Kodomtoli area on Saturday, he added.



Two bookworms begin their hunt by browsing catalogues of new books at a stall in Suhrawardy Udyan, on the second day of the month-long book fair yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Readers scope out catalogues

SAYED MOHMUD ULLAH

Enthusiastic publishers -- with catalogues of their new titles -- are all set to welcome bookworms at the Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela 2020, as the book fair was seen warming up to visitors in its second day yesterday.

After the fair gate opened at 3pm, some booklovers were seen collecting lists from different publication houses and discussing with friends what to buy this year.

"I am yet to buy any book, because the fair has just started; I collect catalogues first and later buy books accordingly after selecting from these lists," Fabian, a third-year student of a private university, said.

According to the Bangla Academy sources, a record number of 560 organisations have set up stalls for the fair -- on Bangla Academy and Suhrawardy Udyan premises -- this year.

Besides a rise in publishing houses, the number of new books



has also been increasing at the fair over the years. In 2014, the number was 2,959, which rose to 4,284 last year, according to fair sources.

Nonfiction "Bhideshi Tara" by Md Jahidul Islam is available at Alokayan publication (stall-566) at Suhrawardy Udyan premises. The book focuses on various aspects of the quota reform movement, safe road movement, Rohingya crisis and stories of rape victims, said the writer.

Like every year, books by young writers have arrived at the fair early. "Chandralekha" by Abdullah Al Imran and "Meghdubi" by Kingkor Ahsan are available at Annesha

Prokashon (stall-33) on Suhrawardy Udyan premises.

"My novel is set against the rural background of the country's south" Imran told The Daily Star.

Prothoma Prokashon is bringing a total of 100 new books this year, including "Manobadhikar" by Asif Nazrul, "India-Pakistan-Bangladesh: A primer on political history" by Nurul Islam, "Ekusher Shaheed" by Anisul Hoque and the English translation of Sareng Bou -- titled "A seaman's wife" by prominent novelist Shahidullah Kaiser, salespersons at the stall said.

Delwar Hossain (35), employee at a private company, said he bought a book titled "Bangabandhu: The Luminous Ascetic of Midnight" from Agamee Prokashoni.

The publisher said they have published 163 books including fresh and reprinted books this year.

Meanwhile, a total of 37 books arrived at the fair yesterday.



Cancer warriors, physicians and guests at the programme yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

AR Mallick's 23rd death anniv today

CITY DESK

Today is the 23rd death anniversary of Dr AR Mallick, an eminent educationist and the first technocrat finance minister of the country.



On the occasion, a discussion and milad mahfil were held at RKB Mallick School and College premises at his village home in Rajapur, Dhamrai.

Dr Mallick was professor of South Asian Regional Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, USA, in the early 1960s, and the founding vice-chancellor of Chittagong University (CU).

He was president of the Liberation Council of Intelligentsia, the first education secretary of Bangladesh, the first High Commissioner to India, and was elected chairman of Asian Development Bank.

His publications include, "British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal" and "Amar Jibon Kotha O Bangladesher Mukti Sangram". Bangla Academy published "Dr AR Mallick Swarak Grantha", comprising articles by renowned personalities from home and abroad along with commemorative photographs, and text of his speeches. The book is available at the Ekushey book fair.

He also served as the first Professor Emeritus at Jahangirnagar University (JU). "Prof Dr AR Mallick Lecture Hall" have been inaugurated at JU, Dhaka University and Rajshahi University. The administration building at CU has also been named after him.



Eighty-five-year-old Bhagapati Pal cries tears of despair, as her family lost all their belongings in the fire at Madarbari slum in Chattogram. The photo was taken yesterday morning.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Masterplan undertaken to curb river pollution

State Minister Zahid Faruque tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Water Resources Zahid Faruque yesterday told the parliament that the government has undertaken a masterplan to curb pollution of rivers.

The initiative was taken as per the instruction of the Prime Minister, he said in reply to a query from AL lawmaker Moazzem Hossen Ratan from Sunamganj-1. The masterplan includes short, medium and long-term plans and it would be implemented in ten years, said the state minister, adding that a draft has already been finalised to bring navigability alongside checking pollution and encroachment of Buriganga, Shitalakhya, Turag, Balu around Dhaka and Karnaphuli in Chattogram.

He also said the ministries of shipping and water resources have begun a joint

programme to make riverbanks of Karnaphuli and Buriganga free from illegal encroachment. The eviction programme is already ongoing, he added.

64 SPECIES OF FRESHWATER FISH UNDER THREAT

State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock M Ashraf Ali Khan Khosru yesterday told the House that some 64 species of freshwater fish are under threat in the country.

Of them, nine are critically endangered, 30 are endangered and 25 are vulnerable. Khosru cited the statistics from a report of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) while replying to a question by ruling AL MP Manjur Hossain.

He also said about 13 species of fish at Kaptai Lake in Rangamati and Khagrachari districts are on the verge of extinction.

Anwarul Azim no more

CITY DESK

Syed Anwarul Azim, a former teacher and oil company executive, passed away on Saturday.

Born on January 1, 1923, he began his career as a teacher of Buet, where he helped establish the chemical engineering department. He moved on to be a successful executive at oil companies. After retirement, he set up one of the first readymade garment factories in the country.

Azim left behind his brother, son, three daughters, six grandsons and a great granddaughter.

His kulkhwani will be held tomorrow after Maghrib prayers at his Dhanmondi residence.

Madarbari slum fire leaves 800 without homes in Ctg

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chattogram

Rickshaw-puller Md Abu (55) was wailing as all his belongings were burnt to ashes in a fire at a slum at West Madarbari in the port city yesterday.

Abu and his 19-year-old daughter managed to escape their homes, like several hundred of their neighbours.

"I had arranged Tk 20,000 for my daughter's marriage and kept the money in the house. I could not retrieve it when the fire started spreading early in the morning," said Abu.

"It was around 5am; we were asleep... all of a sudden, we heard loud cries outside that there was a fire," he described the incident, "In a half-asleep state, I caught my daughter's hand and came out of the house."

Another victim, Md Hashem (45), a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver, said he could only save himself from the fire, and lost all valuables. "I am ruined," he lamented.

Zakeya Begum (50), had also arranged around Tk 3 lakh for her daughter's marriage and kept the money at home.

"All the money was burnt to ashes with

other belongings," she was wailing, "I wanted to shift [the family] to a better place to marry off my daughter, but my dreams have been shattered."

Like Abu, Hashem and Zakeya, around 800 people became homeless as 270 shanties were burnt in the fire.

The fire originated around 5:10am in a shanty, and quickly spread to the whole slum, said Azizul Islam, deputy director of Fire Service and Civil Defence, Chattogram. On information, 15 firefighting vehicles rushed to the spot and managed to douse the blaze around 7:50am, he added.

The cause of the fire could not be known immediately, he said, adding, "We are investigating into the incident."

Golam Mohammad Jobair, Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) councillor of ward-29 (West Madarbari), visited the spot around 11am.

He said no casualty occurred in the fire and relief materials would be distributed to the victims in the afternoon [yesterday].

Jobair, however, said they made a list of 800 people of 148 affected families and every family would be given a blanket and 18 kg of daily essentials.

Road crashes claim 10 lives

STAR REPORT

At least 10 people were killed in road accidents across the country in the last two days, our correspondents and news agencies report.

In Dinajpur, Jobaidul Islam (21) died at a hospital early yesterday after a bus ran him over in front of Birganj Govt College of Birganj upazila.

Witnesses said on Sunday, a battery-run three-wheeler hit Jobaidul's motorcycle, and a bus then ran him over. He was taken to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries.

In Bogura, three people, including a Higher Secondary Certificate examinee, were killed in separate road crashes in Shibganj and Shahjahanpur upazilas yesterday.

In Shibganj, two people were killed after a truck hit their motorbike in Choukirghat area in the morning, according to police officials.

The deceased are Rony (18) and Hanjela (24).

In Shahjahanpur, Robin (24) was killed after a truck hit his motorbike in Kamarpara area around 11am, said police.

In Faridpur, Padma Rani Golder (69) was killed after a motorcycle ran her over in Joynagar Bottala area of Boalmari upazila around 1pm yesterday.

The motorcyclist fled the scene after the

incident, police said.

Elsewhere in the district, Rakib Fakir (16) was killed after a pick-up truck hit his three-wheeler in Moshaujan area of Nagarkanda upazila around 9pm on Sunday, police said.

The truck was seized but its driver fled. In Joypurhat, Kayem Mandal (50) was killed after a tractor hit his bicycle in Berakha Bazar area of Panchbibi upazila on Sunday night, said police.

In Mymensingh, Wazed Hasan Akanda Joy (21) died after his motorcycle collided with a human haulier in Sutar Chapur area of Gafargaon upazila on Sunday.

Robin was a student of BAF Shaheen College in Dhaka. He died on the spot, said police, quoting locals.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy. Police seized the human haulier but its driver fled.

A case was lodged in this connection. In Tangail, two pedestrians were killed after a truck ran them over on Tangail-Jamalpur highway in Dhanbari upazila on Sunday.

One of the deceased is Humayun Kabir (40). The other's identity could not be known yet.

They died on the spot, said police. Later, the bodies were sent to Tangail General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

LAND FOR SALE
At Gulshan-2 (North) opposite of American club & lake park 8 kathas land with modern building. Connected by two roads. Rajuk provided residential plot.100% hassle free. Single Owner. Pls. Cont: **Monjur: 01711-877837**

To-Let in Gulshan Area
House # 1/A, Road # 79, 1st Floor, Gulshan-2, 2700 sqft, 4-Bed, 4-Bath with Garage for rent. (Residence only) Mobile : 01762-327361, 01795-594960, 01718-553961

Demolish structures on Mayur river: HC to govt
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The High Court yesterday directed the government to remove all illegal structures built on land of Mayur River in Khulna in two months.

Ref. No. LRFP-2020-9155838
LRFP: Request for Proposal for Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Anti-Ram Crash Rated Bollards and Crash Rated Gates at UNICEF BCO Office at Agargaon, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
UNICEF-Bangladesh is inviting interested companies with a strong record and credibility for supply and installation of the above. Interested companies are requested to obtain Request for Proposal document from the link: <https://uni.cf/2A1Pkth> or please email to "supplybangladesh@unicef.org"
The deadline to submit proposal is **Thursday, 27 February 2020; Time: 11:00 am (Dhaka time).**
Please note UNICEF does not charge any fee at any stage of solicitation process.
www.unicef.org/bd

unicef for every child

Expression on Interest (EOI) - Title & Other Sponsorship Rights
Mujib 100 T20 Cup Bangladesh 2020 - Asian All Star XI Vs Rest of the World XI
Ref No: BCB/MKT&Commercial/Mujib100T20 / 2020/56 Date: 04th February 2020
The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) hereby invites financial offers from reputed Companies / Corporate Houses / Firms / Agencies for Title & Other Sponsorship Rights of 02 T20i matches between Asia All Star XI & Rest of the World XI tentatively scheduled on 21st & 22nd of March 2020 in Dhaka, Bangladesh to commemorate birth centenary of the founding father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the said event shall be called "MUJIB 100 T20 CUP BANGLADESH 2020".

Sponsorship Rights:
1) Title Sponsorship Rights 2. Co-Sponsorship Rights 3. Associate Sponsorship Rights 4. In - Stadia Branding Rights (Ground / Perimeter Boards, Mid - Wall, Sight Screens, Score Boards, Boundary Rope, Pitch Mat, Bowling Ends, Umbrella, Stumps Brandings, Dugout Branding, Roman Banners, Presentation Backdrop Branding etc.) 5. Official Carbonated Beverage. 6. Official Mineral Water. 7. Official Energy Drinks. 8. Official Strategic Time-out. 9. Official Umpires' Attire Sponsor. 10. Team Attire Sponsor (Asia All Star XI & Rest of the World XI) & other sponsorship.

Non-Eligibility:
i. Companies related to Tobacco, Alcohol (surrogated and non-surrogated), Betting, online betting shall not be eligible to participate in the EOI Process.
ii. Any person(s) or entities / companies with an existing unresolved dispute (i.e. Financial, Disciplinary and any other) with BCB or ICC on a point of law or fact shall be ineligible to acquire the aforementioned rights or to participate in the EOI Process.

EOI Submission Procedure:
A document detailing sponsorship rights / BCB requirements / Guideline in relation to the submission of EOI procedure will be available at BCB management office and the BCB official website: www.tigercricket.com.bd

The EOI must be submitted at the BCB Management Office at Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216, Bangladesh by **Monday 17th February 2020** to be addressed to: **Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Cricket Board.** Interested overseas participant may submit the EOI electronically via email at mujib100@bcb-cricket.com

The following documents must be submitted along with the EOI:
a) Latest auditor's report on financial statements (In case of consortium, each party's auditor's report needs to be submitted individually).
b) Bank Solvency Certificate along with Bank Statement.
c) Updated VAT registration certificate, Trade license and Tax Identification Number (TIN) Certificate or similar documents.
d) Company Profile and Individual Directors' / Owners' Profile.
e) Memorandum and Article of Association along with Certificate of Incorporation or similar constitutional documents.
f) In case of consortium Notarized consortium Agreement.

The BCB reserves the right to cancel the entire EOI process and / or modify, add or alter the terms of the document and/ or the conditions for EOI by issuing an addendum(s) at any time prior to the submission of the EOI and to reject any or all offers at its sole discretion, without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Chief Executive Officer
Bangladesh Cricket Board
Sher-E-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216
Tel: +880 2 8031001-4, Fax: 803 1199

TENDER NOTICE
Institute of Water Modelling (IWM) invites sealed quotations for supplying & installation of Server & OS in IWM. For details Specifications, pls visit IWM web site: www.iwmbd.org.
House # 496, Road # 32, New DOHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1206.

SKS দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
Andheri- Hife Bonn, Germany এর সহায়তায় এসকেএস ফাউন্ডেশন কর্তৃক বাস্তবায়িত "Sustainable Livelihood for marginalized communities living in Gaibandha" প্রকল্পের আওতায় সোলার হোম সিস্টেম এর ব্যবস্থা সামগ্রী ক্রয় ও স্থাপন এর নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ীগণের নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রের শর্তাবলীসমূহ এবং দ্রাবের বিবরণ ও সংখ্যা সিডিউলে বিস্তারিত উল্লেখ থাকবে।

BASIC Bank Limited
A STATE OWNED SCHEDULED BANK
Head Office: Sena Kalyan Bhaban (6th floor), 195, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka, Phone: 9564830, 9568190, 9556616, 9590548-9, Email: basicho@basicbanklimited.com, www.basicbanklimited.com
TENDER NOTICE FOR RENOVATION WORK
01. Sealed tenders are invited from bona-fide vendors for renovation work of Mirpur Branch of the Bank.
02. The participating companies must have at least 05 (five) years proven experience of interior decoration work to any scheduled Bank or must have previous record of successfully interior decoration work to BASIC Bank Limited. Copy of previous work order(s) must be supplied along with the tender as proof in this regard.
03. 2.5% of the quoted price has to be submitted with the tender through PO in the name of BASIC Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka as earnest money. Earnest money can be forfeited for reasons mentioned in the tender schedule.
04. The tender schedule may be obtained from Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of BASIC Bank Limited between 10:00 A.M. and 04:00 P.M. of all working days at a cost of Tk.500/- only. No schedule will be sold after 04:00 P.M. of February 16, 2020.
05. Sealed tenders have to be dropped in the tender box kept at Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of BASIC Bank Limited on February 17, 2020 by 03:00 P.M., and the tenders will be opened at 03:30 P.M. on the same day in presence of bidders, if any.
06. Other terms and conditions can be found in the tender schedule

Deputy General Manager
Common Services Division
Head Office, Dhaka

Bangladesh Bank (Central Bank of Bangladesh) Head Office
Motijheel, Dhaka-1000 Bangladesh
Invitation for Tenders (IFT)

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Finance.
2	Agency	Bangladesh Bank.
3	Procuring entity name	Executive Director & Project Director, Investment Promotion and Financing Facility II (IPFF II) Project.
4	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
5	Invitation for	Goods.
6	Invitation Ref. No.	IPFF II/08(Goods-G8A)/2020-94
7	Date	02 February 2020.
8	Budget and source of funds	Development Budget & IDA (Credit No. 6004-BD & 6005-BD).
9	Development partners	International Development Association (IDA).
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
10	Project code	509055000
11	Project name	Investment Promotion and Financing Facility II (IPFF II) Project.
12	Tender package No.	IPFF II G8A.
13	Tender package name	Smart TV, Wireless Conference Systems and Camera.
14	Tender publication date	
15	Tender last selling date	19 February 2020 Time: 5:00pm
16	Tender closing date and time	20 February 2020 Time: 3:00pm
17	Tender opening date and time	20 February 2020 Time: 3:30pm
18	Name & address of the office	Address
-Selling tender document		
IPFF II Project Cell, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office (2nd Annex Building, 24th Floor), Motijheel, Dhaka.		
-Receiving tender document		
Same place.		
-Opening tender document		
Same place.		
19	Pre-tender meeting	Pre-tender meeting shall not be held.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
20	Eligibility of tenderer	Eligibility requirements as mentioned in ITT 5 (Eligible tenderers) of tender documents. Tender shall comprise as mentioned in ITT 21 (Contents of tender) of tender documents.
21	Qualification requirements	• The maximum 2 (two) number of arbitrations against the tenderer over a period of last five years. • The tenderer shall have a minimum of 5 (five) years of overall experience in the supply of goods and related services. • The tenderer shall have successfully completed minimum 1 (one) number supply contract of similar goods within last 5 (five) years with a minimum value of BDT 25,00,000.00 (twenty-five lac Taka). • The minimum amount of liquid asset or working capital or credit facility is BDT 22,00,000.00 (twenty-two lac Taka).
22	Brief description of goods	Smart TV, Wireless Conferencing Systems and Camera (Wireless Access point, Chairman unit, Delegate unit, Pluggable microphone, Rechargeable Li-ion Battery, Battery Charger, Public Address (PA) System Mixture Amplifier, Wireless handheld microphone with receiver, wall mount speaker, speaker cable, power cable, online UPS etc.).
23	Price of tender document	Tk 1000.00 (one thousand Taka).
24	Tender security amount	Tk 75,000.00 (seventy-five thousand Taka).
25	Completion time in months	1 (one) month.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
26	Name	Dr. Abul Kalam Azad.
27	Designation	Executive Director & Project Director.
28	Address	Investment Promotion and Financing Facility II (IPFF II) Project, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office (24th Floor, 2nd Annex Building), Motijheel, Dhaka-1000.
29	Contact details	Phone: 02-9530230, Fax: 02-9530193, Email: bb.tiff@bb.org.bd
30	Note:	• Letter of Commitment for Bank's undertaking for Line of Credit (Form PG3-6a). This tender form is to be used for credit facility. • Brochure/catalogues of offered models (Smart TV, Wireless Conference Systems and Camera) are required. • The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender proceedings.

ব্যাকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হারানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে কোন করণ।

Dr. Abul Kalam Azad
Executive Director & Project Director
IPFF II Project Cell
Phone: 9530537

DCP: 48/2020-428
Date: 03-02-2020
GD-228

HC seeks

FROM PAGE 14

The lawyer submitted the petition to the HC on January 26 requesting it to order the respondents to stop selling, transferring or handling any machine used for gender detection of unborn babies and to submit lists of hospitals, diagnostic centres and other entities registered to do so before the court.

In her petition, Ishrat requested the HC to issue a rule seeking an explanation from the respondents on why they should not be ordered to maintain a database of diagnosis reports of unborn babies conducted by registered hospitals, diagnosis centres and other entities.

She also said that most people desire baby boys considering that "male babies are the vessels of future generations and can give protection".

If the unborn baby's gender is not to the liking of the parents in the detection test, pregnant mothers become frustrated, which has mental and physical impacts and affects the baby's growth inside the womb.

Thus, gender detection of unborn babies is a violation of gender equality, right to life and right to protection guaranteed by the constitution, Ishrat said in the petition.

Barrister Md Abdul Halim and Ishrat moved the writ petition while Assistant Attorney General MMC Sarwar Payel represented the state.

PM leaves

FROM PAGE 14

Later, representatives of the Italian business companies will call on Hasina at the meeting room of Parco dei Principi Grand Hotel and Spa.

The premier will attend a dinner, to be hosted by the Bangladesh ambassador to Italy, at the hotel.

On Wednesday morning, Hasina will have an audience with Pope Francis.

She will depart Rome for Milan by a train at 12:50pm (local time) and reach there at 4:00pm (local time). In Milan, the PM will stay at Excelsior Hotel Gallia.

On Friday, she will leave Milan Malpensa International Airport for home by an Emirates flight at 1:40pm (local time).

Hasina will reach Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka at 8:10am (BST) on Saturday via Dubai.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has said three bilateral instruments are likely to be signed between Dhaka and Rome during the PM's visit to Italy.

The proposed deals are on cultural exchange, political consultations and cooperation in the diplomatic field, he told a press briefing at the foreign ministry in Dhaka on Sunday.

The minister hoped that the tour would be beneficial for Bangladesh economy and the country's ongoing development.

Italy is one of the largest trading partners of Bangladesh. More than 200,000 Bangladeshi expatriates live there.

Albatross

FROM PAGE 14

"They are like drones, only intelligent."

Nearly 170 albatross were fitted with devices for six months in the "Ocean Sentinel" project conducted by a team from France and New Zealand, the CNRS said.

Researchers said that illegal fishing threatens the ocean's natural ecosystems, estimating that over one third of fishing boats in international waters were undecoded.

The study concluded that technology can open up the potential to use "seabirds to patrol oceans" for conservation purposes.

CNRS said the birds were fitted with a device containing a GPS system to track their location and a radar detector to intercept signals from vessels.

The research centre said that the technology "could be adapted for other marine species, like sharks and sea turtles".

Conservationists have warned that illegal fishing puts endangered sea creatures at risk of extinction, including wedgefish and guitarfish, nicknamed the "rhinos of the ocean".

In a move to combat illegal fishing last year, Indonesia sunk over 50 foreign ships they claimed were operating unlawfully.

Against the tide

FROM PAGE 14

after my sick mother and at the same time arrange food for the two of us," she recollected.

"At that point, I decided I will not get married leaving my mother alone," she said, recounting how she vowed to take responsibility of her family.

"I had thought of joining a garment factory. But who would look after my mother then? Similarly, if I got married, I would have to take care of another person's family."

However, there were no opportunities for any other work in remote Dabhangra for Laily, who never went to school. "People travel to other places from here to look for work," she said.

Laily's father had left about 30 decimals of land and she decided to make the best of it. "I decided I would work on the field myself instead of leasing it out for sharecropping," she said.

With help from a neighbour she learned how to sow seeds, plant, irrigate and harvest crops, and started cultivating. The money she earned,

however, was not enough to cover the living expenses of two people.

That is when Laily turned to the Bishkhal. "I asked a relative to take me fishing, but he ignored me and sort of chided me for making such a request."

But Laily wouldn't give up. She compelled him to take her on a fishing trip in the river.

"I was steadfast in my objective to learn fishing and I slowly became adept at it," said the proud fisherwoman.

Laily, who earns about Tk 500 to Tk 1,000 per day from fishing, had borrowed Tk 50,000 from a fish trader to build a fishing trawler along with a partner and buy nets and traps. Because of this, she has to sell her catch to the trader at a price lower than the market rate.

While fishing in the river, Laily spends about six to seven hours waiting for the tidal cycle. Out in the sea, it is a six to seven days' task.

"I was somewhat frightened during my first few fishing trips, but my fellow fishermen gave me courage and we always abide by the weather alerts," said Laily, her weather-beaten face

devoid of any fear.

A RESOLUTE LAILY

"There are many women on the coast who are constantly struggling to survive. I thank Laily, who did not give a damn to traditional norms and social etiquettes, in the struggle of life," said Hosseinara Hasi, executive director of local pro-women development organisation called "Jago Nari".

Patuakhal District Fisheries Officer Mollah Emdadullah said, "Some women of the Bede [nomadic] community fish in small boats in the canals and rivulets of this region, but Laily is the only woman in Barguna with a license to catch hilsha."

Director of Barishal Fisheries Department Azizul Haque also said he has not heard of any other enlisted fisherwoman in the southern division.

Barguna Deputy Commissioner Mustain Billah praised Laily's endeavour and assured her all kinds of cooperation.

"We have already inquired about Laily Begum. She will get all kinds of support from the government," he said.

UN says its soldiers cleared rebels from town in CAR

AFP, Bangui

UN peacekeepers have pushed out a leading rebel group from the restive southern town of Alindao in the perennially unstable Central African Republic, the UN mission in the country said.

Alindao has been wracked by violence and witnessed heavy fighting last month between CAR troops and rebels from the Unity for Peace in C.Africa (UPC), a key rebel group.

"Under the aegis of the military operation 'Mo Kiri'... the UN blue helmets forced the UPC... to abandon its positions in the centre of Alindao," Vladimir Monteiro, the spokesman for the UN mission, known by its French acronym MINUSCA, said late Sunday.

SSC examinee

FROM PAGE 14

and raped her there.

Yusuf also threatened the girl with life if she disclosed the incident. The girl returned home in the evening on that day, said the OC.

Police said the girl failed in a subject in last year's SSC examinations and she is scheduled to sit for the subject test on February 11.

The girl informed her family of the incident on Sunday evening and her father, a poor farmer, lodged the case.

Police produced Yusuf before a Mymensingh court yesterday afternoon and the court sent him to jail, said the OC.

The girl was sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital for tests, the police official added.

Baul singer

FROM PAGE 14

Sunday, Dhaka Cyber Tribunal Judge Mohamamd Ash Sams Joglul Hossain took cognisance of the case, recorded the statement of the complainant and instructed the deputy inspector general of the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) to investigate the matter and submit a report by February 2.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury instructed PBI to submit a report by March 3 after investigating the matter.

Earlier, another Baul singer Shariat Sarkar was sued on January 9 under the Digital Security Act on charge of hurting religious sentiments during a performance.

On January 11, Shariat was arrested from Mymensingh's Bhaluka upazila in the case filed with Mirzapur Police Station.

Bangabandhu's

FROM PAGE 14

Bangabandhu, giving his reaction to West Germany's recognition of Bangladesh says, "We welcome this gesture and look forward to the development of friendly understanding and cooperation with Bonn."

On Britain's recognition, Bangabandhu says, "We are indeed happy to receive recognition from a country like Great Britain which has been a cradle of democratic values and basis of human rights." He shares that the Bangladesh government will adopt necessary measures to become a member of the Commonwealth.

BBC, for the first time, airs the national anthem of Bangladesh, *Amar Sonar Bangla*, when at 8.15 pm (BST) it announces Britain's recognition of Bangladesh.

BANGLADESH RUNS SHORT OF 2.5M TONS OF FOOD GRAINS

AHM Kamaruzzaman, Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation, informs that the country runs short of 2.5 million tonnes of food grains for the current year. He discloses that every day he is receiving many telegrams from different districts for the immediate supply of food. He says that there is no stock of food, particularly in the northern districts, where the demand has been increasing every day with the return of hundreds of refugees from India.

Due to transport difficulties and lack of communication, the distribution of foodstuff to some

districts is being delayed, adds Kamaruzzaman. He requests the UN to immediately arrange some helicopters for Bangladesh to help in the quick distribution of food grains to hard-to-reach areas.

Bangladesh Biman starts internal operation

Bangladesh Biman, the national airline of Bangladesh, begins its internal commercial flights with a Dakota aircraft flying between Dhaka and Chittagong.

234 TECHNICAL EXPERTS KILLED BY PAK ARMY

234 technical personnel of different autonomous bodies of the government including Bangladesh Industrial Development Corporation, Titas Gas, Oil and Gas Development Corporation were killed by the Pakistani occupation forces, according to a preliminary assessment made by the government.

EMERGENCY LOANS FOR FARMERS

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Bank has decided to give loans on an emergency basis to farmers for buying bullocks. A loan not exceeding Tk 600 will be given for buying a pair of bullocks to any farmer who holds five acres of land or less. A bigger loan will be given to farmers having more than five acres of land.

Sources: February 5, 1972 issues of *Dainik Bangla*, *The Daily Ittefaq*, *Morning News*, *The Bangladesh Observer* and *Purbodesh*.

OIC rejects

FROM PAGE 14

Quds Al-Sharif (Jerusalem) and the other Arab territories occupied since (the) June 1967 (Middle East war)".

The Arab League on Saturday also rejected the controversial plan, saying at a meeting in Cairo that it did not meet the "minimum rights" of the Palestinians.

They insisted on a two-state solution that includes a Palestinian state based on borders before the 1967 war -- when Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza -- and with east Jerusalem as its capital.

Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas announced in Cairo that he will cut all ties with Israel and the US.

"We are informing you that there will be no relations with you (Israel) and the United States, including on security cooperation," he said.

The Trump plan also gives Israel the green light to annex the strategic Jordan Valley -- making up 30 percent of the West Bank -- and all Jewish settlements, which number more than 200.

NO PALESTINIAN RECOGNITION US presidential advisor Jared Kushner said on Sunday that if Palestinians are unable to meet the conditions of

the new Middle East peace plan he crafted, Israel should not take "the risk to recognise them as a state."

Kushner was challenged by CNN host Fareed Zakaria in a program aired Sunday to explain why demands made of the Palestinians before they are given a state -- a free press, free elections, religious freedom, an independent judiciary and a reliable financial system -- did not amount to "a killer amendment."

"There is no Arab country that would meet these criteria, certainly not Saudi Arabia, Egypt" or other countries Kushner has worked with closely, Zakaria said.

Kushner replied that the Palestinian territories amount to "a police state... not exactly a thriving democracy."

"For the Palestinians, if they want their people to live better lives, we now have a framework to do it," he said.

"If they don't think they can uphold these standards, then I don't think we can get Israel to take the risk to recognize them as a state."

Kushner added: "The only thing more dangerous than what we have now is a failed state."

EU top diplomat holds talks in Iran 'to de-escalate tensions'

AFP, Tehran

Top EU diplomat Josep Borrell yesterday held talks in the Iranian capital on a mission aimed at lowering tensions over the Islamic republic's nuclear programme.

Borrell's trip, his first to Iran since taking office, follows a spike in tensions between arch foes Washington and Tehran after the January 3 assassination in Baghdad of a top Iranian general in a US drone strike.

The two-day visit opened with a meeting with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, ahead of talks with President Hassan Rouhani and parliament speaker Ali Larijani.

The 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and a group of world powers has been crumbling since US President Donald Trump withdrew from it

in 2018, and Washington has since stepped up sanctions and a campaign of "maximum pressure" against Iran.

Tehran has gradually stepped back from its own commitments under the deal, while military tensions with the US brought the two countries to the brink of full-blown confrontation last month.

Borrell's mission aims "to de-escalate tensions and seek opportunities for political solutions to the current crisis," said the office of the EU's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy.

The trip will allow Borrell "to convey the EU's strong commitment to preserve" the nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and to discuss cooperation between the EU and Iran, his office said.

Transport leaders

FROM PAGE 1

who failed to update their documents on time.

Exempting the vehicle owners and drivers from late fines was also one of the major demands of transport workers when they enforced strikes in some districts in November last year, protesting the implementation of the Road Transport Act.

Following the protest, the government decided to go for relaxed implementation of several sections of the law till June this year.

Under the current rule, motorists holding light vehicle driving licence for three years can only apply for the medium-sized vehicle driving licence. Similarly, the licensed drivers of medium-sized vehicles can apply for heavy vehicle driving licence after having three-year experience.

As thousands of students took to the streets following the death of two college students in July 2018, a grim picture of the country's road transport sector came to the fore. Transport leaders said most of the bus and truck drivers were driving vehicles with light or medium-sized vehicle driving licence.

In face of the demand of transport owners and workers' leaders, the government in August 2018 relaxed the experience requirement for getting heavy and medium-sized vehicle driving licences.

According to the relaxed requirement, light vehicle drivers can apply for medium-sized vehicle driving licence if they gain one year's experience. Holders of medium-sized vehicle driving licences can also apply for heavy vehicle driving licence if they have the same experience.

The government on several occasions extended the tenure of the offer for up to six months. As per the latest extension order issued on November 27 last year, drivers can avail this opportunity until June this year.

However, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) sent a proposal to the road transport ministry last month for further relaxation of the requirement.

As per the "amended circular" issued on Sunday, if a motorist holds a professional driving licence for light vehicle for three years, he can apply for a heavy vehicle driving licence. He, however, has to follow the necessary procedure, including taking a driving test.

The circular said the government has taken the decision to make up for the shortage of licensed medium and heavy vehicle drivers and to keep the services of passenger and goods-laden vehicles normal.

Around 43.01 lakh vehicles got registered with the BRTA till December last year since the country's independence. Of them, 2.02 lakh are buses and trucks.

On the other hand, the BRTA has issued 27.63 lakh driving licences till yesterday, including 1.87 lakh for heavy vehicle drivers, a BRTA official said.

'MOVE WILL JEOPARDISE ROAD SAFETY'

Transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque said reducing the experience requirement for driving licences would jeopardise road safety as the driving tests, conducted by the BRTA, were not up to international standards.

"In Bangladesh, the BRTA driving tests are conducted on its office compounds. But in many other countries, such tests are held on roads. That's why drivers' experience is very important here," he told *The Daily Star*.

Compromising on drivers' experience would create a big obstacle to safe road, said Shamsul, also a former director of Accident Research Institute (ARI) of Buet.

Another transport expert Prof Moazzem Hossain said if a driver holding light vehicle driving licence can drive heavy vehicles after getting proper training and get heavy vehicle driving licence after taking proper tests, it would not pose any security threat.

"But I have doubt about the quality of driving test [conducted by the BRTA]," said Moazzem, another former director of ARI.

A top BRTA official said transport leaders demanded a driver be issued a heavy vehicle driving licence if he passed the driving test.

"But we could not accept the demand. So, we suggested that a driver must have a light vehicle driving licence and three-year experience to get a heavy vehicle driving licence," he said wishing anonymity.

BRTA Chairman Kamrul Ahsan said they decided to relax the experience requirement to meet the huge shortage of drivers, especially heavy vehicle drivers.

"It will not pose any risk to road safety as a driver would get a heavy vehicle driving licence only after passing a proper driving test. We will not compromise on the quality of the test," he told this newspaper last night.

Asked whether the BRTA faced any pressure from transport leaders in this regard, he replied in the negative.

Osman Ali, general secretary of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers' Federation, said they had raised the demand as there was a huge shortage of drivers holding medium and heavy vehicle driving licence.

In Bangladesh, a person becomes a bus or truck driver after working in vehicles as helper and so they gain experience of driving a heavy vehicle, claimed Osman.

Asked whether they put pressure on the government to relax the experience requirement, he said they only raised the "rational demand" before the government and it was accepted.

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বিশ্বব্যাপি বীমা শিল্পের প্রসার, দক্ষ জনশক্তি সৃষ্টি এবং এ পেশায় নিয়োজিত জনবলকে যুগের চাহিদা মোতাবেক পেশাগত জ্ঞানে সমৃদ্ধ করে গড়ে তুলতে বীমা বিষয়ক "পোস্ট গ্র্যাজুয়েট ডিপ্লোমা" অর্থাৎ এসোসিয়েটশীপ অব বাংলাদেশ ইনসিওরেন্স একাডেমি (এবিআইএ) অতীত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করে আসছে। বীমা শিল্পের ত্রমবর্ধমান অগ্রযাত্রায় অংশগ্রহণ করার জন্য প্রতি বৎসরের ন্যায় এবারও বাংলাদেশ ইনসিওরেন্স একাডেমির ডিপ্লোমা মে-২০২০ পরবে পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলকে অহবান জানানো হচ্ছে। ডিপ্লোমা ভর্তি ও পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত তথ্যাবলী নিম্নরূপঃ

বিষয়	সময়সীমা	ফি
ভর্তি ও রেজিস্ট্রেশন	০৪ ফেব্রুয়ারি থেকে ০৫ মার্চ ২০২০ পর্যন্ত	৬০০/- টাকা
কাউন্সিলিং ফি এবং পরীক্ষার ফি প্রদান (বেসিক)	০৪ ফেব্রুয়ারি থেকে ০৫ মার্চ ২০২০ পর্যন্ত	
কাউন্সিলিং ক্লাস	০৮ মার্চ ২০২০ থেকে শুরু	প্রতি বিষয়- ৪৫০/- টাকা
পরীক্ষায় ফি প্রদান এবং প্রবেশপত্র সংগ্রহ	০২ মার্চ থেকে ০২ এপ্রিল ২০২০	প্রতি বিষয়- ৫০০/- টাকা
পরীক্ষা	০৭ জুন ২০২০ হতে শুরু	পরীক্ষার সময়সূচি ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে পাওয়া যাবে।

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জিডি-২২৫ কর্তৃপক্ষ

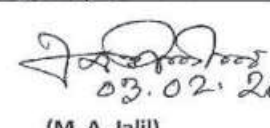
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Inspector General
Bangladesh Police
Police Headquarters, Dhaka

Corrigendum of International Tender Notice

Memo No-44.01.0000.058.07.039.19/211 Date : 03/02/2020.

Invitation for International tender Notice Published in different national dailies as per Invitation ref No-44.01.0000.058.07.023.19/16(2019-2020) Date: 09/12/2019 for procurement of Bomb Disposal Suit, Anti Explosive Blanket in FY 2019-2020 is hereby amended as follows:

Particular Information	Published	Revised
Tender last selling date	09 February 2020	16 February 2020
Tender closing date and time	10 February 2020 at 14:00 hrs	17 February 2020 at 14:00 hrs
Tender opening date and time (Technical offer only)	10 February 2020 at 14:30 hrs	17 February 2020 at 14:30 hrs


(M. A. Jalil)
BP No-7703027830
Assistant Inspector General (Arms & Ammunition)
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GD-223

Shocking rise in BSF border killings

India must deliver on its promise of "zero deaths" at border

WE are outraged at the recent rise of border killings along the India-Bangladesh border despite India's repeated promises of bringing down the number of such deaths to zero. Reportedly, seven people were killed at the Bangladesh-India border only in January this year. In July 2019, our home minister informed the parliament that a total of 294 Bangladeshis were killed by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) along the border over the last 10 years, while also assuring the house that the number of such deaths had dropped in the previous three years. However, according to Ain O Salish Kendra, the number of border killings tripled last year compared to 2018—at least 43 Bangladeshis were killed by the BSF in 2019 while it was 14 in 2018. We note with frustration that the BSF has been violating the 2018 accord under which both countries agreed not to resort to lethal weapons in dealing with cases of border crossing.

After every incident of border killing when our government expresses its concerns, the Indian side routinely makes promises of stopping the killings. But surprisingly, the killings persist even after the issue has been discussed in different forums by the two governments. It is also disturbing that at the meetings held between Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and India's BSF, the Indian side always terms these killings as "undesirable deaths" and comes up with the same excuse—that they have killed our citizens in self-defence. According to various media reports, however, the BSF indiscriminately shot Bangladeshis who were unarmed and defenceless on different occasions. There are also many reported cases of BSF's torture on innocent Bangladeshis, including children.

Clearly, border killings continue because the BSF personnel are never held accountable for their action or their excessive use of force. Under the circumstances, the Bangladesh government should take a strong stance and make India answer for the killings committed by its border security force. It is reassuring that our foreign minister has raised his concerns about the issue and reminded India of the promises it made to bring down such deaths to zero. Now the government should mount its pressure on India and ensure that its promise is kept.

Election posters still strewn all over

Mayors should clean up their mess

IN the run-up to the Dhaka city corporation polls, candidates were criticised for their indiscriminate use of laminated posters that seemed to cover every inch of this city, especially in the final two weeks before the February 1 election. This occurred despite a High Court order in mid-January that asked all concerned to immediately stop the production and display of these posters, which clearly fell on deaf ears. All mayoral aspirants promised their voters a clean and beautiful city, all the while enveloping the city with a potentially toxic material that will never biodegrade and is almost impossible to recycle.

It is extremely disappointing, to say the least, to see such a flagrant disregard for the environment displayed by the candidates including our newly appointed mayors even before they stepped into office. Now the question is: are we, the taxpayers, responsible for clearing up this clutter? Or, will the DSCC and DNCC authorities take responsibility for this situation and do what they should have done long ago?

We urge the mayors to prove their commitment to their voters and uphold their pledges by immediately cleaning up the mess that they have created along with others. However, since it was their personal decision to cover the city with laminated posters, they should use their own resources—not that of the mayor's office—for the purpose. We urge the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to take the lead on this and collaborate with them so that the posters can be cleared up in the least harmful way.

The most obvious fear is that these posters will eventually find their way into the drains of Dhaka and create waterlogging, but even if this is dealt with, there is still the question of how to dispose of the plastic itself. It will not degrade in landfills, and burning plastic is extremely hazardous for health and therefore out of the question. Whatever route of waste management is taken, the damage to the environment has already been done—now the only thing to do is to try and minimise it.

We strongly recommend that in future elections, the Election Commission outlaw the use of laminated posters to prevent such unnecessary damage being done to the environment. We also ask our mayors and all other political aspirants to be mindful of the consequences of their actions in the future, especially since we are already living in one of the world's most polluted cities. Earning votes is one thing, but if the new mayors want to earn and keep the trust and respect of the people of Dhaka, they must immediately take responsibility for their actions and make sure such mistakes are not repeated again.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Regular parent-teacher meetings good for students

Parents in Bangladesh are often unaware of their children's out-of-class activities that are harmful for the environment as well as their school's reputation as a whole. Students sometimes end up getting involved with politics, or the local offshoots of political parties. Some even get involved in crimes. One may recall the disturbing reports that emerged in recent months highlighting how many school-age children and students got caught up in the web of teen gangs.

Although parents generally do the best they can for the betterment of their children, it's important that they are aware of the many social and non-academic influences they get exposed to as they grow up. This is why there should be regular parent-teacher meetings. It will help remedy such behavioural issues.

Mardia Khan, Rajbari

Coronavirus: the psychology of those quarantined

MEHTAB GHAZI RAHMAN

AS the coronavirus epidemic continues to rage and threatens to become a pandemic, the world remains in a state of paranoid vigilance. The coronavirus outbreak has taken the world by shock and surprise, and all nations are rightly fearful of the consequences of the threat due to the increasing number of deaths and the lack of an effective vaccine as yet.

Countries across the world have commenced the repatriation of their citizens back to their homelands. Repatriated citizens are being nursed under quarantine conditions to minimise the spread of the virus. This Saturday, February 1, saw the first contingent of around 300 Bangladeshi citizens being repatriated back from Wuhan, China; these individuals will remain under quarantine at the Ashkona Hajj Camp for 14 days, under the supervision of the Bangladesh Army. During this period, according to *The Daily Star*, individuals quarantined will not be allowed to meet their family members or any others.

In view of the virulence of the coronavirus and in the interest of public protection, it is entirely appropriate that repatriated individuals remain under quarantine for the 14-day observation period to minimise the risk of the virus spreading. However, it is important that we remember our duty of care towards these quarantined individuals; this duty includes looking after their mental health alongside their physical health, which can otherwise be easily overlooked. When under quarantine, individuals are likely to suffer from significant psychosocial difficulties that need to be addressed from the very start of their quarantine period.

Currently, many of the 300-plus individuals who remain quarantined are likely to be suffering from anxiety and fear—they will be anxious that they could be harbouring the coronavirus in their bodies, or that they may be in close proximity of another who may be infected with the virus. They would suffer feelings of guilt and the shame of being alienated from society. They are highly likely to be suffering from boredom due to isolation from their families and social networks. They would be harbouring feelings of frustration and possibly anger that they are under constant watch round the clock. Some are likely to be preoccupied with anxiety about how society would respond to them when their quarantine is terminated. They are unlikely to have adequate access to resources that provide them comfort, such as books, music and television, the lack of which will certainly add to their feelings of frustration and boredom. Indeed, the mental strain the quarantined patients are going through will be immense.

Try to put yourself in the shoes of a quarantined person. These individuals will have been greeted by healthcare workers—fully covered in Hazmat suits—unable to see their faces properly. They will be subject to rigorous daily clinical

examinations and tests; they will have to anxiously wait for the test results to return, and be constantly aware of any signs or symptoms that may indicate they are infected. They will be constantly hyper vigilant and on the lookout for other quarantined individuals who show symptoms suggestive of a coronavirus infection, and want to isolate themselves from the person in a state of panic. They are likely to be intensely praying that they do not become the next victim of the deadly virus. And this would certainly not be the end of their mental trauma.

Research from the last SARS outbreak revealed that even individuals who were quarantined during the epidemic developed symptoms suggestive of a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or clinical

For those in quarantine, recognition of the stress and the fear they go through is tremendously important. They should be assured that their feelings of fear and anxiety are a normal response to the situation they are in. They should be allowed a confidential space to speak about their stressors with trained mental health professionals competent in dealing with high-pressure situations. Clinicians should avoid labelling these emotions as being pathological at the first instance, and instead attempt to provide psycho-education and teach coping strategies to allow them to deal with their intense feelings in a therapeutic manner. Given the finite resources and time, healthcare professionals should try their best to provide emotional support and spend

epidemic. The provision of clear, factual information to the public is therefore paramount. Campaigns should be consistent and easily understandable, and be clear about the risks of exposure and the actual threat of the virus on the population. Certain quarters of Bangladeshi media have the propensity to fear-monger by exaggeration of news reports that perpetuate panic within people. The public health department should, therefore, work in close alliance with the media to stop sensationalisation of the epidemic and disperse scientifically accurate and precise information to the public to maintain calm whilst the prognosis of the virus still remains uncertain. Public education about good hygiene to minimise the risk of infection



Bangladeshi returnees from China's Wuhan idle away their time in Ashkona Hajj Camp, where they are being kept in quarantine.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

depression as a result of the emotional trauma of being isolated from society for a prolonged period of time. The study showed that the longer the quarantine period, the more likely a person was likely to develop a diagnosable mental health condition in the future. When under the restrictions of quarantine, individuals undergo periods of high emotional stress secondary to the uncertainty they face about their health, which makes the need for mental health support during this period of isolation essential.

Once quarantine is terminated, individuals may face societal stigmatisation; their social support structures may become avoidant towards them due to fears of contracting the illness, which in extreme cases can lead to isolation and ostracisation from society.

time with these individuals to reduce fear and the sense of isolation. Interventions should be put in place to enable access to the outer world through the provision of Internet and teleconferencing facilities, such as access to Skype, Viber and WhatsApp, to allow them to stay in regular touch with friends and family. Access to television and newspapers would help them maintain a sense of connection with the outside world.

It is the government's responsibility to provide accurate and evidence-based information about the coronavirus to the public in a timely manner to avoid mass panic and emotional distress. Any delays or secrecy in launching a public health campaign would undermine the belief people have in the government's credibility in dealing with the coronavirus

should be done in a detailed, step-by-step manner using a variety of visual formats, such as infographics.

The provision of mental health support to those under quarantine is not a choice but an essential component of their clinical care. Clear communication, regular updates and provision of interventions to reduce isolation whilst in quarantine will reduce emotional distress and instil hope for the future among these individuals. Timely, accurate public health communication by the government is key to reducing fear, eliminating mass hysteria and controlling the spread of infection if a positive coronavirus case emerges in Bangladesh in the future.

Dr Mehtab Ghazi Rahman is a consultant psychiatrist specialising in Intensive Care Psychiatry. He works for the National Health Service of the United Kingdom.

DHAKA 4.0

In a hyper-competitive world, Dhaka needs to think big

ARIJIT CHAKRABORTI

ABOUT two and a half years ago, a global e-commerce company published its plan to set up its second headquarters, and invited proposals from cities that would be interested to collaborate with them in setting this up. More than 200 cities from multiple countries submitted their proposals for the intended collaboration. The company shortlisted a few cities and finally chose a location to build the headquarters.

Hyper-competitive cities are fast emerging to attract investors and residents, becoming preferred choices for living, working and investing. With half of the world's population living in urban areas, this trend of cities becoming big-ticket investment destinations is going to become more common. Under these circumstances, it is important to understand Dhaka's position with respect to the emerging trends, and the challenges and opportunities ahead. In the near future, will Dhaka stand a chance to submit a proposal to a multinational corporation for its second headquarters plan? If Dhaka gets chosen by a global corporation for setting up its global or regional headquarters, what would be the reaction of the city's stakeholders be? If a Bangladeshi company becomes a multinational company, will it shift its headquarters from Dhaka to some other international location?

Dhaka has a population of more than 20 million people today. The city area covers more than 300 square kilometres and is administered by two large municipal corporations—Dhaka North City Corporation and Dhaka South City Corporation. With rapid urbanisation, the

The ambition of becoming a smarter city (Dhaka 4.0) in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution comes with many challenges. At the same time, there will be opportunities for improvement in many areas, which could be utilised towards becoming a more competitive city.

city's population is growing continuously. According to data published by the United Nations' World Population Prospects, the urban population of Bangladesh has been increasing by 3.17 percent annually during the last five years. However, Dhaka's ability to provide contemporary urban services to such a large number of people is not growing at the same pace.

The ambition of becoming a smarter city (Dhaka 4.0) in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution comes with many challenges. At the same time, there will be opportunities for improvement in many areas, which could be utilised towards becoming a more competitive city. To maximise the benefits from these opportunities, the city should adopt a technology-led transformation of the services provided to citizens. Such a transformational journey should address the issues around several areas including

transportation, environment, citizen safety and information communication.

The Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL), a government agency responsible for the development of a mass transportation system for Dhaka, has embarked on developing the metro rail system in the city. The work is in progress and the first route is expected to be operational by 2021. At the same time, a smarter city should also build an inclusive transportation framework. The residents should have enough spaces to be able to walk and ride bicycles safely and comfortably. Such facilities will reduce pollution in the city and help its residents become healthier. Additional emphasis on the adoption of electric vehicles will further help in reducing the environmental pollution.

With the change in urban lifestyles, the nature of urban crimes is changing as well. The incidence of crimes committed inside households and on the internet is increasing. Incidents of domestic violence, child abuse and elder abuse are reportedly taking place in the upper floors of multi-storeyed buildings. Along with technological advancements, cybercrimes are increasing at a high rate and cybercriminals are often difficult to apprehend, as many of them operate from outside the country. Accordingly, urban policing needs to change. While patrolling the streets is important, it is equally important to monitor and prevent crimes from happening indoors and online. These situations create new challenges for law enforcement agencies. A technology-led crime prevention framework should enable the law enforcement agencies to deal with such varying kinds of crime effectively.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police

(DMP) has set up a website with extensive information for its citizens. The DMP website also allows citizens to apply for a police clearance certificate online and track the status of the application. They also maintain a page on Facebook and have a mobile app to communicate with the public. As the next step, the department may focus on expanding digital interfaces for citizens by introducing online crime reporting, online status updates of investigations and providing a platform for secure digital interactions with individual citizens regarding their individual issues.

For a city to become smarter, it must create a plan to upgrade its communications infrastructure and foster an environment in which private enterprises can participate in the upgrading task. Adoption of next-generation technologies such as 5G will foster innovation and collaboration among stakeholders to build value-added services for the residents of the city. According to a news report, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) is planning to roll out 5G services in the country by 2021.

Dhaka 4.0 needs to prepare itself for fulfilling its development ambitions and evolving into a hyper-competitive city. Progress has been made in many areas, resulting in the overall development of the city in recent years. A transformational goal towards becoming a hyper-competitive city will make it ready for competition in the region. Becoming a smarter city will make Dhaka ready for regional-level competition, and this preparation will be an important factor for success in the future.

Arijit Chakraborti is a partner at PwC. The views expressed here are personal.

ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS

Why the ICJ order is not enough to solve the crisis and what we can do about it



THE International Court of Justice (ICJ) order on provisional measures issued unanimously by a full bench of seventeen Judges on January 23, 2020 in the matter of *The Gambia v Myanmar* is historically

significant and an important development of international law. It recognises and highlights the need for protective measures for the Rohingya residing in Myanmar, and by extension those several hundred thousand Rohingya refugees seeking asylum in Bangladesh. While this preliminary ICJ decision has been applauded by several governments and countless jurists and activists and of course the Rohingya community, it will not solve the Rohingya refugee crisis.

Indeed, international justice measures before the ICJ and International Criminal Court (ICC) may paradoxically make finding a return solution more challenging by creating contradictory pressures on the Myanmar authorities. Putting Myanmar and its military leadership on notice that they will be held to account for potential crimes or failure to ensure the human rights protection of the Rohingya—an ethnic group which is not recognised by the government—may result in the military-as-an-institution digging in and refusing to relinquish power. As noted by Australian researcher Morten Pedersen, the Myanmar generals “will be well aware of what happened to, for example, General Pinochet, and that the only way for them to remain safe is to be in power.”

Assuming power alliances in Myanmar remain intact, the current prospects of return are extremely remote given the Rohingya's demands for citizenship, reparations, human rights and physical protection by the Myanmar authorities. And while many



Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh waiting to receive aid.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS/MOHAMMAD PONIR HOSSAIN

Of course, the international community cannot overlook the serious violations of human rights experienced by the Rohingya. Some measures of accountability and seeking justice for the Rohingya are essential and will remain on the agenda.

Rohingya have expressed the desire to return “home”, it is unconscionable to expect they will do so in light of the preliminary finding by the World Court that “plausible” genocide has taken place and a risk of harm remains. Similar to the exodus of Jews from fascist Europe, Rwandans after the Rwandan genocide, or Bosnians and other refugees from the former Yugoslavia, the Rohingya cannot be expected to return to a territory where they are demonised, disenfranchised, and most importantly, remain unprotected. Delivering on the Rohingya's demands requires commitment from Myanmar, and from the perspective of the Rohingya, may be essential before any move to return. But such commitment is currently lacking and may not materialise.

The issue of refugee return was specifically addressed by the ICJ in referencing Myanmar's statement during oral proceedings

that it is currently engaged in repatriation initiatives to facilitate the return of the Rohingya. Myanmar further submitted that it intends to promote ethnic reconciliation, peace and stability in Rakhine state, and to make the military accountable for violations of international law. However, the ICJ rejected this plea and noted that Myanmar had not presented “any concrete measures aimed specifically at recognising and ensuring the right of the Rohingya to exist as a protected group under the Genocide Convention.” The ICJ went on to cite the UN General Assembly's December 2019 resolution on Myanmar that “the situation has not improved in Rakhine state to create the conditions necessary for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to return to their places of origin voluntarily, safely and with dignity.”

An additional consideration for safe return is the role of the United Nations. The UN continues to have a limited operational presence, political leverage and opportunities to expand its role with a human rights and refugee protection focus in Myanmar. How the UN can engage in a repatriation scheme with a credible monitoring role in Myanmar and robust advocacy for the Rohingya is unclear at best, and remains unlikely given the current and foreseeable politics.

Further, why the events of August 2017 which gave rise to the mass exodus of Rohingya refugees to Bangladesh did not prompt decisive action by the UN Security Council in what may be considered a textbook case envisioned by the “Responsibility to Protect” regime can be summed up in a few words: *lack of collective political will*. The Security Council's permanent members China and Russia in particular have not to date agreed to any Council action against Myanmar. Despite the current impasse, as an executive organ with authority to adopt enforcement measures under the UN Charter, the Council should have a clear obligation to act when credible allegations of genocide or crimes against humanity are brought before it. While some have suggested UN peacekeepers or international observers or monitors be deployed to ensure the safety and security of the Rohingya upon return, that is a far reach

without the full agreement of all Council members.

Two and a half years on since the latest mass influx, the Rohingya refugee crisis remains an enormous challenge for the international community and in particular Bangladesh. The current political climate on the Rohingya issue isn't easy and there is a legitimate concern that the international community may lose interest which can impact delivery of available resources. Bangladesh would then face the challenge of coping without continued international support, and it is unlikely to absorb a million of its neighbour's would-be citizens.

Against this background, the following options could be taken by the Bangladesh government and the international community to help alleviate the suffering of the Rohingya refugees and pressure on Bangladesh. While neither novel nor unprecedented, these proposals have received limited attention to date.

Bangladesh (and other countries hosting Rohingya refugees) should grant them access to public schools and temporary work rights in addition to ensuring health care including psycho-social support, family planning and reproductive health services. Bangladesh is permitting some of this type of assistance already as the UN and dozens of domestic and international NGOs are present there and working on a range of protection and assistance programmes in the camps. But full access to education is particularly important—over 70 percent of Rohingya are illiterate and innumerate, so the recent announcement that Bangladesh will permit access to schools for Rohingya refugee children is highly commendable. Hopefully, this move by the Bangladesh government will encourage other countries in the Asia region to adopt a similar approach.

The World Bank and UN development actors have committed to upscale the welfare and economic absorption and co-existence of the Rohingya with local communities. Delivering services requires considering an end to encampment and permitting refugees to be hosted in communities outside of Cox's Bazar. Registration of the refugee population with a national authority and international

organisation would similarly meet the law and order concerns of the Bangladesh authorities.

Apart from providing services, it should be acknowledged that refugees have skills and want to work and help themselves. While the Rohingya may currently find limited work in the informal economy in Bangladesh, the absence of legal protection makes them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Permitting them to work legally in areas with labour needs contingent on being registered would be a significant step forward. Engaging the International Labour Office in supporting skills training and creating job opportunities, similar to initiatives for Syrian refugees in Jordan, could also be explored.

Another solution is resettlement. Canada is one country which has communicated its interest to resettle Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh. A properly managed resettlement programme with UNHCR support can avoid risks of fraud or so-called “pull factors”. Any resettlement would initially be modest and prioritise urgent protection cases such as women victims of violence, the medically at risk, and separated or unaccompanied family members. Malaysia, for example, generously permits an estimated 150,000 Rohingya refugees to *de facto* reside in the country; it also, with UN support, facilitated over 10,000 Rohingya to be resettled to several countries including Canada, the United States, Japan and New Zealand over the last decade.

Resettlement and other options to move abroad should be explored in the Asia region and beyond. There is public sympathy for the plight of the Rohingya, and several Southeast Asian and Gulf states have vibrant economies which can and do provide work opportunities, including for many Bangladeshis. Regional solidarity through a managed programme of moving Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh to neighbouring countries would be a positive example of global responsibility-sharing envisioned by the UN New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants and the Global Compact on Refugees which have received strong diplomatic and political support from Bangladesh. Similar to the Comprehensive Plan of Action adopted for

Indo-Chinese refugees, there are various options which could be adopted including temporary protection in a third country; temporary protection and stay with eventual resettlement; or repatriation under international supervision with an option of applying for asylum if conditions require.

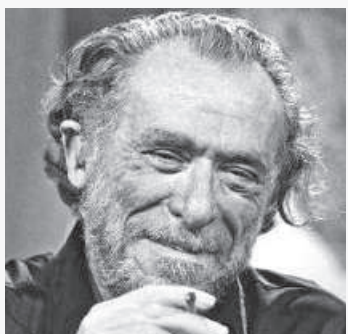
Of course, the international community cannot overlook the serious violations of human rights experienced by the Rohingya. Some measures of accountability and seeking justice for the Rohingya are essential and will remain on the agenda. The investigation underway by the ICC and proceedings before the ICJ are important steps, but a resolution of these international justice measures will take several years. Beyond individual criminal and state accountability, and of more immediate impact, UN human rights monitors have suggested an embargo on business interests tied to the Tatmadaw to cut off financial and other support. There are also options to impose sanctions against military officers and family members. Identifying and seizing hidden assets outside Myanmar is another area that national departments of justice can explore.

The immediate task is to continue to support Bangladesh and the Rohingya refugees with humanitarian assistance. Looking ahead, inclusive and systematic refugee representation in important decisions which affect them, especially about repatriation, is a must. Failure to engage with and include the Rohingya will limit or prevent buy-in to whatever is negotiated on their behalf.

The humanitarian dimension of the current crisis can continue to be well managed with sound leadership, strategic planning, creative diplomacy and advocacy and a degree of political good luck. But luck alone is insufficient and will not lead to solutions the Rohingya deserve, and Bangladesh and the international community legitimately demand. The options discussed above deserve urgent attention.

Brian Gorlick is a human rights lawyer and tutor on Gender, Sexual Identity and Age in the Refugee Context at the Refugee Law Initiative, School of Advanced Study, University of London. Previously, he worked with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UN Secretariat for over twenty-five years.

QUOTABLE Quote



CHARLES BUKOWSKI
(1920-1994)

German-American poet, novelist, and short story writer

We are here to laugh at the odds and live our lives so well that death will tremble to take us.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

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| 1 Casino machines | 35 Memorable time | 9 Tall wardrobe |
| 6 Comic Imogene | 36 Dyeing tub | 12 Entertainer Bette |
| 10 Gin mixer | 37 “Gnarly!” | 17 Follower's suffix |
| 11 Warning sound | 38 Winter coat | 20 Wild party |
| 13 Sports spot | 40 Dodge | 21 Roadside stop |
| 14 Physicist Enrico | 42 Beer mug | 24 Brews, as tea |
| 15 Letter after sigma | 43 Spring bird | 25 1040 booklet info |
| 16 Tell whoppers | 44 Shade trees | 26 Clothes |
| 18 Silent assent | 45 Flag features | 27 Convent group |
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| monster | 2 Dr. Seuss' environ- | 32 Resort off |
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| 27 Ranch animal | 3 Outdo | 33 Lowest point |
| 28 Gift-wrapping | 4 Light metal | 34 Perfect places |
| need | 5 Triangle type | 39 Kipling book |
| 29 Suit accessory | 6 Casual eateries | 41 Auction buy |
| 30 Quick checkout | 7 Bullring cheer | |

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

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BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker

BABY BLUES

by Kirkman & Scott



The span of the damaged bridge, on Panaullah canal in Boktarpur area of Natore's Singra upazila, lies precariously on top of its broken pier. Inset, a man pulls a rickshaw-van on the bamboo platform that the locals made to be able to use the bridge.

PHOTO: BULBULAHMED

The long wait for safety

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

About a couple of years back, a JSC examinee died while crossing the bridge that sustained substantial damage during floods in 2018. It started to tilt about five years ago. And ever since, number of people injured, while using the bridge, continue to rise.

However, despite such incidents, the authorities remain indifferent to safety of citizens, who continue to use the bridge -- in Boktarpur area of Singra upazila -- as they do not have any other alternative.

The bridge, over Panaullah canal in Lalor union of Singra, is a vital means of communications for inhabitants of at least 12 villages in Singra, Naldanga and Sadar upazilas of Natore and Atrai upazila of Naogaon.

Instead of providing a safer solution, the local administration did their part by making a makeshift bamboo bridge beside the damaged concrete bridge.

After the makeshift bridge also collapsed about a year ago, locals made a bamboo

platform to be able to use the damaged concrete bridge.

Now thousands, including students of six educational institutions, use the severely damaged bridge every day, risking their lives, said locals.

Nearly two months ago, 12 pedestrians and passengers of a rickshaw-van were injured after the vehicle overturned on the bridge, they added.

During a recent visit to the area, between 9:00am and 12 noon, this correspondent counted at least three hundred light vehicles -- rickshaw-vans, auto-rickshaws and motorbikes -- that crossed the damaged bridge using the bamboo platform.

Nazrul Islam, chairman of Lalor Union Parishad, said students of a high school, four primary schools and a madrasa, on both sides of the canal, take extreme risks every day to cross the broken bridge.

Hundreds of residents from 12 villages in three upazilas of Natore and one in Naogaon use the bridge every day to reach Natore, Naogaon

and Bogura. Moreover, farmers in Chalan Beel area face immense sufferings as they use this bridge to transport their agricultural goods, he also said.

Md Aktar uz Zaman, a lecturer at Patul Hapania Degree College, said thousands of people have been suffering for years due to the risky bridge, but the local administration did not take any step in this regard.

"Crossing the bridge with our children is an everyday struggle," said expecting mother Salma Begum.

Teligram village resident Nurjahan Begum said, "We have no other option but to risk our lives on the bridge."

Engineer Hasan Ali of Local Government Engineering Department in Singra said they already prepared a Tk 2.5-crore project proposal for a new bridge, but it might take a year to get the project approved.

Considering the urgency, local public representatives have asked disaster management and relief ministry to build a bridge there immediately, he added.

Damaged historic nilkuthi yet to be repaired

Nilphamari police, archaeology dept trade blame over responsibility

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

The damaged roof of historic 'nilkuthi' (house for indigo business in British era) at Notkhana village, three kilometres from Nilphamari town, is yet to be repaired. 40 days after breaking of the part by labourers engaged by the district police.

Earlier on January 1, The Daily Star ran a report titled "Archaeology dept, police at odds over damage of historic building".

The government's archaeology department two years ago declared the 175-year-old building at Notkhana village in Polashbari union of Nilphamari Sadar upazila as a proposed archaeological site and set a signboard to the effect.

But to the surprise of locals, some day labourers sent by district police on December 24 last year started dismantling the roof of nilkuthi.

"As villagers put serious objection to the act, a police team went there and the sub-inspector concerned said that bricks were being collected to make a sales centre of 'Women Police Welfare Association' in the district town, as per directive from the authorities," said Mamtaj Ali Pramanik, chairman of Polashbari union parishad.

"Finally we persuaded police not to break the building but by the time, labourers damaged a portion of the structure's roof, separating around 250 bricks. Some other bricks broke into pieces," he added.

Visiting the site on Sunday, this correspondent found that the nilkuthi's partially damaged roof remained in the same condition while the separated bricks

lay on its premises with none to guard it. "Some bricks have gone missing by this time," said Hazrat Ali, 65, who runs a makeshift tea stall nearby.

Sanjoy Kumar Roy, the then custodian of Rangpur museum, said, "I requested the additional superintendent of police in Nilphamari to arrange repair of the damaged roof but didn't get satisfactory response."

Abul Bashar Mohammad Atiqur Rahman, additional superintendent of police in Nilphamari, said, "The land on which the nilkuthi is situated belongs to us and the department concerned didn't inform us in writing about declaration of it as a proposed archaeological site. And so, they are responsible for the misunderstanding and there is no scope to repair it from our part."

On the other hand, Nahid Sultana, regional director of archaeology department in Bogura, said, "Police should repair the nilkuthi with our technical support, keeping its historic impact intact. I wrote to our director general, requesting arrangement as per rule."

According to 'Nilphamarir Itihas' (History of Nilphamari) written by Jahangir Alam Sarker (published by Bangla Academy in July 2018), British traders established the nilkuthi in 1845 as a centre for cultivation and business of indigo during the colonial era.

The traders also used a portion of it as a torture centre to punish the farmers who refused to cultivate indigo for low pay, mentions the book.



Without any arrangement of regular guarding, bricks removed from the proposed archaeological site of 175-year-old 'nilkuthi' at Notkhana village in Polashbari union of Nilphamari Sadar upazila lie in front of the historic structure on Sunday. The district police, who employed labourers to break the structure on December 24 last year, stopped the work shortly after serious objection by locals.

PHOTO: STAR

Complaint boxes placed for students

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

At first sight, anyone can be curious to see a box named 'UNO BOX'. It is basically a complaint box hung on walls in the corridors of different educational institutions in Ashuganj upazila.

Ashuganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Nazimul Haider has recently taken an initiative to install such box at different institutions so that anyone, especially students, teachers and guardians, can put complaint against any misdeed in it.

From last Monday to yesterday three boxes have been put up on the walls of three high schools in Ashuganj. The institutions include Rowshan Ara Jalil Girls High School and Haji Abdul Jalil High School.

A total of 18 educational institutions in the upazila, by turns, will get the box, made of timber and transparent glass, within this current month, said Nazimul.

Every Wednesday, a representative of UNO will open the box, he said, adding that later, stern action will be taken against the accused after investigation.

"After joining here in July last year, I saw that some famous institutions in the area have lost its past glory due to misdeed and mismanagement of the authorities concerned," said the UNO.

He further said the Feni madrasa girl was killed for protesting sexual harassment by a madrasa principal.

He has mainly taken the initiative to install the complaint boxes to prevent sexual harassment and improve the standard of quality education, said the UNO.

"But we must remain alert so that

head of an institution and others are not unnecessarily harassed," he added.

During a visit to Haji Abdul Jalil High School on Saturday, this correspondent found one complaint note in the UNO box.

Rezaul Azad, headmaster of Rowshan Ara Jalil High School, said the box is now a threat to stalkers. It will also curtail child marriage, corruption and nepotism.

Sayed Khanam Bushra, a Class X student at Rowshan Ara Jalil Girls High School, said "We often deal with stalkers on our way to school. As the box has been installed, from now we

can communicate with the upazila administration directly if we face such situation. It is really a great initiative by the UNO."

Nur-e Jannat Tusha, a Class IX student of the same school, said "It is really a good initiative to install such box to report sexual harassment. I think it will reduce child marriage and stalking."

Saidur Mia, a guardian in the upazila, said "I feel very happy to see the boxes at different educational institutions in the area as we can put complaints against any misdeed in the boxes from now."



A complaint box named UNO BOX has been installed at a school in Brahmanbaria's Ashuganj upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

CHT Land Commission meet held

The body still awaits rules of business

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

The meeting of Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT) Land Dispute Resolution Commission, tasked with settling the land issues in the region, was held in Bandarban yesterday, apparently without any headway.

"We are still waiting for the formulation of the rules of business to settle the fate of more than 24,000 petitions on land disputes," commission Chairman Justice Anwar-ul Haque said in yesterday's meeting.

The commission was constituted in line with the CHT Peace Accord signed in 1997 between the then Awami League government and regional political party Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS).

Of the commission members, Jyotindra Bodhipriyo Larma (popularly known as Santu Larma), chairman of CHT Regional Council, Debasish Roy, Chakma Circle chief, Chacing Prue, Mong Circle chief, Kongriari Chowdhury, chairman of Khagrachhari Hill District Council, Brisho Ketu Chakma, chairman of Rangamati Hill District Council, and the divisional commissioner of Chattogram, were not present at yesterday's meeting.

Three punished for illegal sand lifting from Jhinai

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A mobile court yesterday awarded punishment to three people for illegally lifting sand from the Jhinai river in Tangail's Basail upazila.

Of them, two were fined and jailed for different terms and the rest was fined only.

Razu Miah was jailed for two months while Jahidul Islam for three months. The court also fined them Tk 2 lakh each.

Mohammad Monu Miah was fined Tk 2 lakh, said Executive Magistrate Mohammad Rokonuzzaman who led the court.

The court also damaged three excavators that were used to lift sand from the river. The excavators were later burnt following the court's order.

The executive magistrate said a section of local influential sand traders had been lifting sand from the Jhinai river, a branch of the Jamuna river, in Basail's Nothkhola area for long.

Being informed, the mobile court conducted a drive in the area and detained six people.

Of them, the sand lifters were punished and three labourers were freed.



An excavator that was used to lift sand from the Jhinai river in Tangail's Basail upazila was burnt yesterday during a mobile court drive.

PHOTO: STAR

Locals said the influential traders continued illegal sand lifting from the river for the last few years, posing erosion threat to an important bridge on Tangail-Basail Road nearby.

It is also threatening nearby Nothkhola Government Primary School. Earlier, a portion of the school and its Shaheed Minar were devoured by the river.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার	
পরিচালকের কার্যালয়	
সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতাল, সিলেট	
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি	
১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়।
২	সংগ্রাহক/স্বত্বাধিকারীর নাম সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতাল।
৩	অর্থায়নের উৎস আসবাবপত্র খাতে প্রাপ্ত বরাদ্দ হইতে।
৪	আহবানকৃত দরপত্রের স্মারক ও তারিখ স্মারক নং-ওসমানী/সি/দা/২০১৯-২০/৮১৪/১২ তারিখ ০২/০২/২০২০ইং।
৫	দরপত্রের নাম/কাজের বিবরণ ২০১৯-২০২০ইং অর্থ বছরে সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতালের আসবাবপত্র সরবরাহের দরপত্র।
৬	সংগ্রাহক স্বত্বাধিকারীর জেলা সিলেট।
৭	ক্রয় প্রক্রিয়া পিপিআর-২০০৮ মোতাবেক।
৮	দরপত্রদাতাদের যোগ্যতা সফলভাবে কাজে যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন সকল উৎপাদনকারী/সরবরাহকারী/এজেন্ট ইত্যাদি প্রতিষ্ঠান।
৯	দরপত্র তফসিলের মূল্য প্রতিটি কাজের প্রতিটি সিডিউলের মূল্য বাবদ ১৫০০/- (এক হাজার পাঁচশত) টাকা মাত্র চালানোর মাধ্যমে কোড নং- (১)(২)(৩)(৪)(৫) (০)(০)(০)(০) (২)(৩)(৬)(৬)-এ বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক, সিলেটে জমা প্রদান করিয়া চালানের মূলকপি অত্র হাসপাতালে দাখিলপূর্বক সিডিউল সংগ্রহ করিতে হইবে।
১০	বায়নার টাকা দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী/নিয়মাবলী মোতাবেক।
১১	দরপত্র তফসিল বিক্রয়, দর প্রস্তাব গ্রহণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ও ঠিকানা সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতালে পরিচালকের কার্যালয়।
১২	দরপত্র তফসিল দাখিলের স্থান সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতালে পরিচালকের কার্যালয়, জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, সিলেট ও পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, সিলেট।
১৩	দরপত্র তফসিল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময় ১৮/০২/২০২০ইং তারিখ ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১৪	দরপত্র খোলার দস্তরের নাম ও ঠিকানা পরিচালক, সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতালের কার্যালয়, সিলেট।
১৫	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময় ১৯/০২/২০২০ইং বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১৬	দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলার তারিখ ও সময় ১৯/০২/২০২০ইং বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা (দরপত্রদাতাদের সম্মুখে যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন)।
বিঃ দ্রঃ বিস্তারিত বর্ণনা ও অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী/নিয়মাবলী আসবাবপত্র সরবরাহের দরপত্র তফসিল মোতাবেক।	
ত্রিগো জেঃ মোঃ ইউনুস রহমান	
পরিচালক	
জিডি-২২৪	সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতাল, সিলেট

NEWSIN brief

'Jihadists' kill 18 people in Burkina Faso

AFP, Ouagadougou

Suspected jihadists have killed 18 civilians in an attack in northern Burkina Faso, the governor of Sahel region said. "The defence and security forces brought back the body of the nurse to give it to her family in Yalgo and secure the area to allow the burial of other victims," Colonel Salfou Kabore said on Sunday. Several similar attacks were carried out a week ago in the country's north, with one on January 25 leaving 39 civilians dead in the neighbouring province of Soum, northwest of Seno.

Cross-border mortar kills 7 in Pakistan

AFP, Khar

A mortar shell fired from Afghanistan hit a house in a border village in northwest Pakistan Sunday, killing seven people who were members of the same family, officials said. "The mortar fired from Afghanistan hit the house of local villager Fazal Ghani. He along with his wife and five other members of the family died on spot," senior police official Gulzar Khan told AFP. The dead included three women, three children and the head of the family.

Greek police fire tear gas at migrants

AFP, Lesbos Island

Police on the Greek island of Lesbos yesterday fired tear gas at hundreds of migrants protesting against tougher new asylum rules, officials said. Brandishing makeshift signs with the word "freedom", some 2,000 men and women walked out of the overpopulated camp of Moria to demonstrate. The protesters walked some seven kilometres (4.3 miles) towards the port capital of Mytilene, but were blocked by police outside the town.



Parents bring their kids to school wearing protective facemasks in Bangkok yesterday. Thailand so far has detected 19 confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus believed to have originated in Chinese city of Wuhan. *Inset*, medical staff members from Shenyang bidding farewell with family members and friends before leaving for Wuhan at Xiantao International Airport in China's northeastern Liaoning province.



PHOTO: AFP

Residents stock up on food

HK suspends 4 more border crossings with mainland China

AGENCIES

Panic-stricken residents have emptied shelves in major supermarkets in Hong Kong, stockpiling meat, rice, cleaning products and soap as fears escalate over a coronavirus epidemic on the mainland. The rush to procure food in the city of 7.4 million people is unprecedented, residents say, describing it as far worse than the panic during the 2003 outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) that killed nearly 800 people around the world, including nearly 300 in Hong Kong. The new coronavirus originated in central China's Hubei province and has so far killed 361 people in the country. Over the weekend in Hong Kong, hundreds of people queued for hours to buy masks and immune-boosting products such as vitamin C. At a major supermarket in the bustling Wan Chai district, counters selling chilled meat and seafood were empty by mid-morning on Friday and over the weekend, with stocks of fresh vegetables dwindling. "Everybody is really worried. I think everyone is afraid of what is going to happen in the next few days. Prices are also going to rise," said Cindy, a

retail executive who was buying dry food and soap. Dozens of mask-wearing shoppers pushed trolleys down empty aisles showing sold-out signs for hand wash and antiseptic liquids. Others tried to stock up on remaining bags of rice and packaged noodles. The rush to buy food and cleaning products comes as some shoppers said they were concerned that a potential shutdown of the border would impact the supply of products. Around 90 percent of the city's total food supply is imported, with the bulk coming from the mainland, according to official data, reports Reuters.

Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam announced the closure of four more border crossings with mainland China yesterday, leaving just three checkpoints open, but stopped short of demands for the entire border to be closed to curb the spread of the new coronavirus. Meanwhile, China's foreign ministry yesterday criticised the US for being the first to evacuate nationals without providing "substantial assistance" to China, reports AFP. The US actions had caused "panic", said spokeswoman Hua Chunying.

CORONAVIRUS FEARS IN HONG KONG

Around 90pc of city's total food supply is imported, with the bulk coming from China

US reaction to virus spreads 'panic': China

Drug cocktail seems to help fight virus

AFP, Bangkok

A Chinese woman infected with the new coronavirus showed a dramatic improvement after she was treated with a cocktail of anti-virals used to treat flu and HIV, Thailand's health ministry said Sunday night. The 71-year-old patient tested negative for the virus 48 hours after Thai doctors administered the combination, doctor Kriengsak Attipornwanich said during the ministry's daily press briefing. "The lab result of positive on the coronavirus turned negative in 48 hours," Kriengsak said. "From being exhausted before, she could sit up in bed 12 hours later." The doctors combined the anti-flu drug oseltamivir with lopinavir and ritonavir, anti-virals used to treat HIV, Kriengsak said, adding the ministry was awaiting research results to prove the findings. The news comes as the new virus claimed its first life outside China -- a 44-year-old Chinese man who died in the Philippines -- while the death toll in China has soared above 300. Thailand so far has detected 19 confirmed cases of the virus believed to have originated in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, which is under lockdown. That is the second highest number of cases outside of China, with Japan recording 20. So far, eight patients in Thailand have recovered and returned home, while 11 remain in hospital.



White House candidates brace for Iowa vote

Months into the Democratic nomination marathon, after seven debates, countless rallies, bitter candidate clashes and an impeachment effort to remove the US president, Iowa was set to hold the first-in-the-nation vote yesterday to see who challenges Donald Trump in November. More than two dozen White House hopefuls began the journey, some as early as a year ago. Eleven now remain, exactly nine months from Election Day. Despite the historically diverse field consisting of men and women of color and young candidates with little Washington exposure, the two frontrunners are septuagenarian white men -- Bernie Sanders and Joe Biden -- with more than 80 years of political experience between them.

Norway sued over 'risky' spy recruitment

A concrete producer took the Norwegian state to court yesterday claiming the intelligence agencies' clumsy approach to recruiting informants had caused the company financial loss. At Oslo district court, concrete manufacturer Olen Betong accused the Norwegian internal (PST) and external (E-tjeneste) intelligence services of contacting two employees working in the Murmansk region in order to turn them into informants. The company, with business in Russia's northwest, said the intelligence services had made repeated indiscrete contact over the last decade, which was spotted by Russian government agencies. Olen Betong claimed this led to the loss of an important contract in Russia and legal trouble for company founder Atle Berge and employee Kurt Sto.

Dozens of koalas lying dead at Australian logging site



Dozens of koalas have been euthanized and some 80 more are being treated for injuries and starvation after their habitat was logged, prompting an Australian government investigation yesterday. Victoria's environment department said the state's conservation regulator was investigating a "very distressing incident" at a bluegum plantation near the coastal town of Portland that resulted in the deaths of dozens of koalas. "If this is found to be due to deliberate human action, we expect the conservation regulator to act swiftly against those responsible," the department said. Those responsible could face steep fines under laws designed to protect Australia's native wildlife. SOURCE: AFP

UK's Johnson, Barnier trade blows over post-Brexit ties

AFP, London

Britain and the EU yesterday laid down their red lines for post-Brexit trade talks, offering contrasting visions for their future relationship that raise the prospect of clashes to come. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson envisioned his country as a global champion of free trade, emphatically rejecting EU insistence on full alignment with Brussels. But he still pledged not to "undermine EU standards", after the UK finally went its own way on Friday after nearly half a century in the bloc and an 11-month transition period began. Worries over trade negotiations sent the pound sinking more than 1.1 percent against the dollar in London midday deals yesterday. "I see no need to bind ourselves to an agreement with the EU," Johnson said in a speech at the Old Royal Naval College, which chronicles Britain's past as a



maritime superpower. "We will restore full sovereign controls over our borders, immigration, competition, subsidy rules, procurement (and) data protection." He added: "We will not engage in some cut-throat race to the bottom." "We are not leaving the EU to undermine European standards. We will not engage in any kind of dumping, whether commercial, social or environmental." In Brussels, EU chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier formally offered a deep future relationship but only as long as Britain makes guarantees to trade fairly. Barnier said fisheries and fair trade would be his top priorities in the talks, with a special focus on denying Britain "unfair competitive advantages". Brussels will offer a close post-Brexit trading relationship -- but will demand tough terms on fisheries and a level playing field for businesses, he said.



Palestinian women take part in a protest against a US-brokered Middle East peace plan, while holding placard that reads in Arabic "down with the deal of the century" in Gaza City yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Political design behind anti-CAA stir in Delhi: Modi

TOI, New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday broke his silence over the anti-CAA protests in the national capital and said there was a political design behind the stir. Launching a scathing attack at the opposition, PM Modi said, "Protests in Seelampur, Shaheen Bagh and Jamia over CAA are no coincidence but an experiment." Blaming the Aam Aadmi Party and the Congress for playing vote-bank politics in the national capital, Modi said that "these people are saving those who want to break India into pieces." "If the protests had been against one law, they would

Turkey, Syria troops trade fire

Erdogan tells Russia to stand aside as 9 civilians killed in Idlib

AFP, Beirut

Turkish and Syrian troops traded deadly fire in Syria's northwest yesterday, further raising tension between Ankara and regime backer Moscow over the war-torn Idlib rebel enclave. An air strike also killed at least nine civilians in the same area, where the latest government offensive has caused one of the nine-year-old Syrian conflict's worst waves of displacement. The tit-for-tat shelling between Damascus and Ankara was the deadliest since Turkey deployed troops in Syria in 2016 and escalated tensions between the conflict's two top foreign brokers. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had offered rare criticism of Russia last week, accusing it of "not honouring" agreements to prevent a regime offensive on the northwestern region of Idlib. The overnight clash began with regime shelling on Turkish positions in Idlib, hours after a Turkish military convoy of at least 240 vehicles entered

northwest Syria, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor. The attack killed four Turkish soldiers and wounded nine others despite previous coordination on where Ankara's forces would be in



A Turkish military convoy of at least 240 vehicles entered northwest Syria. Rocket attacks by Ankara on regime positions killed 13 Syrian govt troops

Most Syrian troops were killed south of Saraqeb, a flashpoint Idlib town that Damascus has been trying to encircle in recent days, said the Observatory. State news agency SANA said the Syrian army had not suffered any casualties. Speaking to reporters at an Istanbul airport before leaving for Ukraine, Erdogan called it an "ongoing operation," and said that 30 to 35 Syrian forces were "neutralised" in the counterattack that targeted 40 locations. "When we have martyrs on our side, it is not possible for us to remain silent," said Erdogan, warning Russia not to stand in the way of its response. A senior Turkish official said that the regime attack on Turkish troops and the government offensive in general were conducted "with Russian protection." "Russia should remove this protection from the regime elements which attack Turkish forces in this region," ruling party spokesman Omer Celik told CNN Turk. "Our target is not Russia," he said. "The regime in this region after this attack is a target for us."

Russia not target in US army's Europe deployment: Nato

AFP, Brussels

Nato chief Jens Stoltenberg insisted yesterday that a massive transfer of US and allied troops to Eastern Europe as part of a military exercise was not aimed at Russia. About 37,000 soldiers from 18 countries are to participate in the US-run manoeuvre dubbed Defender Europe 2020. This is "the largest deployment of US troops to Europe in more than 25 years," Stoltenberg told AFP. The exercise "shows the strong US commitment to Nato and to the freedom and security of Europe," he added. The exercise will take place in May and June, mainly in Germany, Poland and the Baltic States. The US will move 20,000 soldiers to Europe in the coming months. "Defender Europe is not directed against any particular country," Stoltenberg said. "This defensive exercise demonstrates the ability to rapidly move a large force from the United States to Europe to help protect other Nato Allies, if needed," he said. The exercise comes amid doubts over whether the US is still prepared to defend

Europe. After his inauguration, US President Donald Trump initially described Nato as "obsolete". But after Germany and the other European members pledged higher defence spending, Trump reaffirmed his commitment to the alliance. Nato's sense of purpose took a boost after the annexation of the Crimean peninsula by Russia in 2014, fuelling fears among eastern Nato members. The alliance has since significantly strengthened its presence in Eastern Europe and built the capability for a rapid deployment of troops in the event of conflict. Stoltenberg underlined that Nato members Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia celebrated their 30th anniversary of independence this year, referring to the three Baltic states' split from the Soviet Union. Portions of "Defender Europe" were to be held in the three countries. "Russia has every right to feel safe within its borders, but so do our member states," said Stoltenberg.



have ended after assurances of the government. But AAP and Congress are provoking people. Constitution and tricolour are being kept in front and attention is being diverted from the real conspiracy," Modi said. Referring to the ongoing stir at Shaheen Bagh, he slammed the protesters for causing inconvenience to the people commuting between Delhi and Noida. Urging people to give a decisive mandate for the BJP, Modi said "anarchists can't be allowed to take over or else tomorrow some other road will be blocked." The Shaheen Bagh protests have taken centre stage in the BJP poll campaign with the top party leadership raking it up in every rally.

WHAT'S ON

Group Art Exhibition
 Title: Three Worlds
 Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, Lalmitia, Dhaka
 Date: January 31 – February 11
 Time: 3 pm – 8 pm

Winter Festival
 Title: Heem Utshab
 Venue: Jahangirnagar University
 Date: February 6-7
 Time: 10 am onwards

Book Fair
 Title: Amar Ekushey Bhai Mela
 Organiser: Bangla Academy
 Venue: Bangla Academy
 Premises
 Date: Feb 2 – 29
 Time: 3 pm onwards

Group Art Exhibition
 Title: Breaking Ground: Modern Art in Transition
 Venue: Subir Choudhury Exhibition Hall, Bengal Shilpalay, Dhanmondi
 Date: Dec 17 – Feb 15
 Time: 1 pm – 8 pm (Except Sundays)

Group Art Exhibition
 Title: 7
 Venue: Galleri Kaya, Uttara
 Date: January 24 – February 7
 Time: 11:30 am – 7:30 pm



PHOTO: MONON MUNTAKA

Saiful Huq Omi's 'In Search of The Future' ends

RASHEEK TABASSUM MONDIRA

Saiful Huq Omi has been documenting the lives of Rohingyas since 2009. A solo photography exhibition, *In Search of The Future* by Omi was arranged by UNHCR at Edge Gallery, Gulshan, recently. Steven Corliss, UNHCR Representative in Bangladesh and Masud Bin Momen, Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh were present as guests in

the opening day. Through the eyes of the photographer, the audience were taken through a journey of pain, suffering, sacrifice and despair. The exhibition, curated by Counter Foto, featured 41 recent photographs of Rohingya refugees and the Bangladeshi communities who gave shelter to them. Some of the photographer's previous works were also on display. The exhibition is set

to launch in Geneva, among other cities. *136: I Am Rohingya* and *136: I Think Rohingya* -- are two of Omi's published works on Rohingyas. The photographer has been working on a film on the lives of Rohingya refugees which will be released this year. Omi will travel to the Middle East to work on his upcoming book, *Memories of War*, soon. He also aspires to work on climate change.

EKUSHEY SPOTLIGHT

'Boshonto, Kokiler Kortobyo'

– A delightful read by Pias Majid

SHARMIN JOYA

Pias Majid is a renowned name in the world of Bengali literature. The poet-writer was honoured with HSBC-Kali O Kolom Young Poets and Writers Award for his contribution in the literary arena, in 2012. He also achieved City-Ananda ALO Literary Award and the Prodottyo Darabar Jayga literary award, Kolkata, in 2016 and 2017, respectively. Currently, the poet is working as a Public Relations Officer at Bangla Academy.



PHOTO: COURTESY

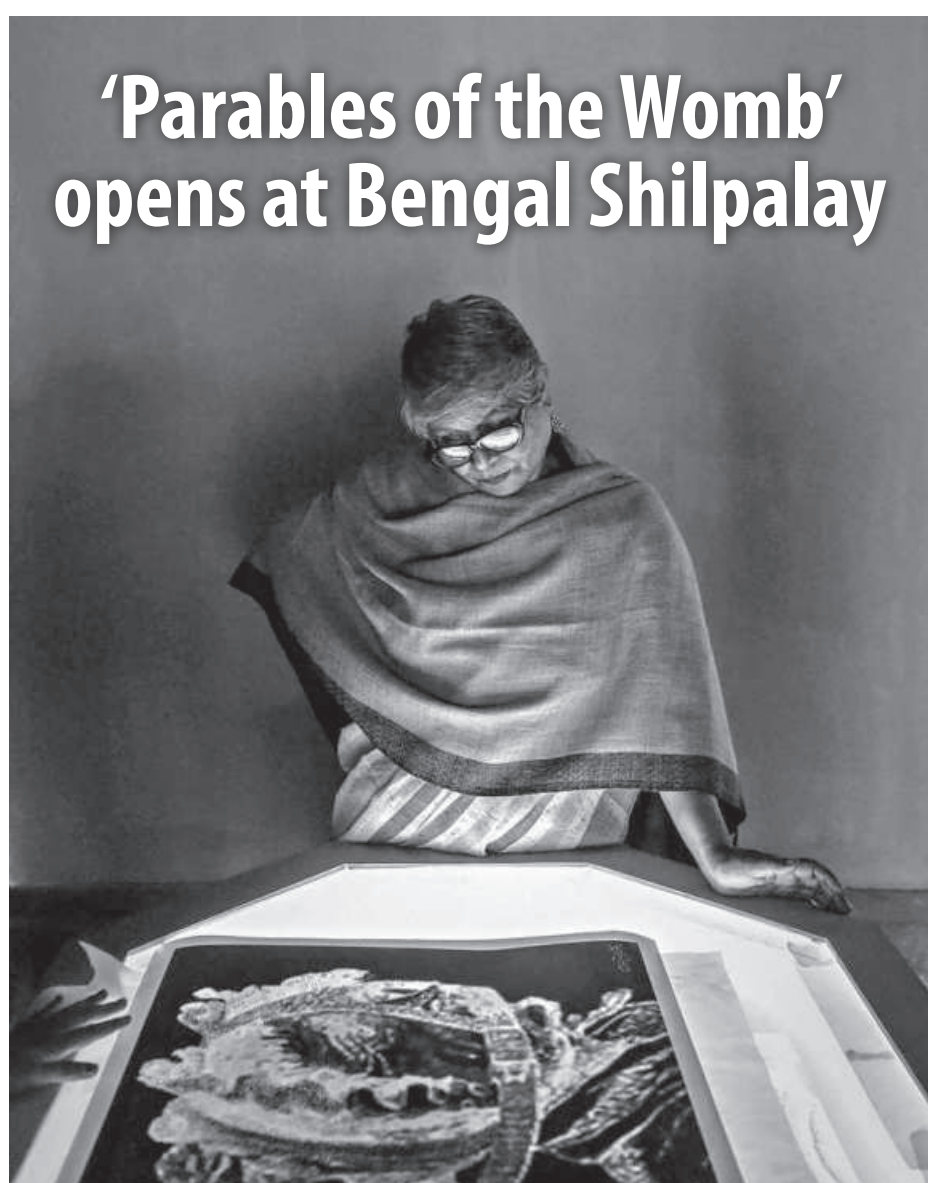


effort to make the readers feel the necessity of nature in our lives."

The poet says that he intends to keep a parallel connection between the consequences of disrupting nature in the world. He also tried to keep his works in simple tone for the readers' comfort. "I have tried to work

more on themes rather heavy words, an aspect that readers often complain about," laughs Pias.

His other books releasing this year are *Kobitay Kaya O Kushum* published by Bidhya Prokash (pavilion 266-69), *Kothar Kolloi* issued by Mawla Brothers, *Ek Prithibi Boier Bari* printed by Bengal Boi, *Golaper Nohobot*, Panjeri Publications (pavilion 19) and *Shoron Bhromon Japon* published by Shomoy Prokashoni.



'Parables of the Womb' opens at Bengal Shilpalay

PRIYANKA CHOWDHURY

Artist Dilara Begum Jolly is known for her works which touch upon themes of gender, trauma and the feminine figure. Initially trained as a painter from Government Arts College, Chattogram, and later as a printmaker from Santiniketan, Jolly has expanded her practice on various media. Her solo exhibition, *Parables of the Womb*, starts today at Bengal Shilpalay. In an intimate chat with *The Daily Star*, the artist shares her art concepts, inspiration and more. The exhibition aims at showcasing her conception about how war destroys the 'womb', and in turn, destroys the existence of a nation. Jolly also focuses on the fact that in our everyday battle, the character remains the same. She dedicates the show to all the women who safeguard and nurture human race, even though they are juggling between their everyday struggles. Jolly considers herself to be her only competitor and thus, her will to be better has worked as motivation through tough times. "Honestly, this journey began as a consequence of bad academic result," smiles the artist in nostalgia. Although she was blessed with her family's support and her institution preferred a gender balanced environment,

the society she has grown up in always reminded her that she was a girl. "I still remember this incident from my 3rd year during my undergrad when we visited a brick field. I, like most of us, stood near the furnace where some of the workers were burning bricks. Some of the labours took offense and asked me to step down as they believed that the touch of a girl made the bricks impure!" she says. Baffled by this experience, Jolly began to inquire how the society actually portray women. Jolly defines herself as an organic practitioner. "I develop my art through the process of creating it. However, I research the subject thoroughly," she asserts. Transforming her knack for stitch work in her art, Jolly developed a signature practice of needling on paper and, more recently on photographs – a painstaking process during which she draws motifs on paper, or highlights areas on photographs, through needle pricking. The exhibition will feature the screening of her first documentary film *Jothorleena*, alongside performing arts and animation films. *Jothorleena*, an experimental production, portrays the life of war hero Roma Chowdhury along with archived letters collected while filming. The exhibition is open for all till March 28.

PHOTO: COURTESY

'Jatiya Kabita Utshab 2020' concludes

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The 34th national poetry festival, *Jatiya Kabita Utshab*, concluded yesterday at University of Dhaka. Jatiya Kabita Parishad (JKP) organised the two-day festival with the theme of 'Mujib is the poet of immortal poetry of my freedom' (Mujib Amar Swadhinotar Omar Kabber Kobi). Floral wreaths were placed at the Central Shaheed Minar and graves of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, painter Kamrul Hasan, poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, ahead of the inaugural function in the morning, according to a press release. Noted poet Mahadev Saha inaugurated the festival, which began with the playing of the national anthem, along with hoisting of the national flag. The Ekushey song and festival song were also presented. The festival will feature elaborate programmes, including recitation of



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

poems, seminars, discussions and exhibitions on poets and poetry. Poets from different countries including India, Turkey, Nepal, Spain, Sweden, Uzbekistan and Malaysia participated in the festival. At the event, three eminent poets and

language movement veterans — Ahmed Rafi, Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury and Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir — were honoured with the Jatiya Kabita Parishad Sommanona. Poetry sessions took place on each day of the festival till 9 pm.

Best of BAFTAs 2020



Bong Joon Ho with his award for Film Not in the English Language for 'Parasite'.

1917, Sam Mendes's visually extravagant World War I drama that takes viewers into the chaos of the trenches was the big winner at the British Academy Film Awards recently, taking seven awards, including best film. Mendes was also named best director at the event. Better known as the BAFTAs, the programme is Britain's equivalent of the Oscars. Here is a list of winners in the other key categories:
Best Actress
 Renée Zellweger – *Judy*
Best Actor
 Joaquin Phoenix – *Joker*
Best Casting
 Joker
EE Rising Star Award (voted for by the public)
 Micheal Ward
Best Film not in the English language
Parasite
Best Special Visual Effects
 1917



The team of '1917' with their award for Best Film.

Best Supporting Actor
 Brad Pitt-*Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*
Best Original Screenplay
Parasite – Han Jin Won, Bong Joon-ho
Best Documentary
For Sama
Outstanding Debut by a British writer, director or producer
Bait – Mark Jenkin (writer/director), Kate Byers, Linn Waite (producers)
Best Adapted Screenplay
Jojo Rabbit – Taika Waititi
Best Supporting Actress
 Laura Dern – *Marriage Story*
Best Cinematography
 1917
Best Editing
Le Mans '66
Best Costume Design
Little Women
Best Production Design



Joaquin Phoenix with his Best Actor award for 'Joker'.

1917
Best Sound
 1917
Best Original Score
Joker
Best British Short Film
Learning to Skateboard in a Warzone (If You're a Girl)
Best British Short Animation
Grandad Was a Romantic
Best Makeup and Hair
Bombshell
Best Animated film
Klaus
Outstanding British film
 1917
Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema
 Andy Serkis
Bafta Fellowship
 Kathleen Kennedy
 SOURCE: REUTERS



Tigers to leave for Pakistan today



RUSSELL DOMINGO
Preparation not ideal

According to Bangladesh head coach Domingo, the preparations for the first Test in Rawalpindi have not been ideal. Although cricketers took part in the first round of the Bangladesh Cricket League -- a domestic first-class competition -- just before the tour, according to Domingo it would have been ideal to reach Pakistan at least seven or eight days before the Test match. Bangladesh will reach on Wednesday and take part in the Test from Friday. He also added that it would have been good if the visitors played a couple of practice games.

Adapting to the pitch will be challenging
With Rawalpindi known to offer a pace-friendly pitch, Domingo admitted that it would be a challenge for the Bangladeshi batsmen, but also added that the Tigers' batting consultant Neil McKenzie had

worked on some technical aspects with the cricketers. Domingo said the batsmen needed to show more commitment after the dismal show in India.

Winning Tests away from home

The 45-year-old has emphasised on the importance of winning a Test series away from home to gain confidence and he is eyeing the series in Pakistan as the start towards that target.

Setting up a batting order

It was possibly the first time that a Bangladesh coach gave a clear indication about the batting order before a Test. According to Domingo, Tamim Iqbal is set to open the innings with young Saif Hasan while Nazmul Hossain Shanto will bat at number three. Skipper Mominul will bat at four, followed by Mohammad Mithun, Mahmudullah Riyad and Liton Das at five, six and seven respectively.

Just eight days after Bangladesh's three-T20I series against Pakistan ended in a 2-0 defeat, the Tigers will once again travel to Pakistan today for the second phase of the tour to take part in the first match of a two-Test series starting from February 7 in Rawalpindi. Skipper Mominul Haque and coach Russell Domingo shared common insights into what the team management would want to improve in Pakistan. Both coach and captain were eager to have a settled squad in order to have player continuity for the coming days. However, there was a slight difference in opinion, with Mominul thinking that preparations have been good enough while Domingo said the preparation was not enough for the longest format. Bangladesh would also want to make an impact after the 2-0 Test series defeat against India to begin their ICC Test Championship campaign last year.

The following are some of the pertinent points from the pre-tour press conferences of Mominul and Domingo at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.



MOMINUL HAQUE

Preparation is good

Although coach Domingo was not happy with the preparation, according to skipper Mominul the preparation for the Tigers has been good. Mominul informed that all the players of the Test side had a good outing in the first round of the BCL, which will help them in the first Test against Pakistan.

Don't want frequent changes in the squad

Frequent changes have often plagued the Tigers' team combination in the past and according to Mominul it is important to have a settled side in the longest format of the game. Mominul informed that as a captain he was always in favour of giving enough opportunities to players to get the

best out of them.

Improve as a captain

According to Mominul there are quite a few aspects in which he would want to improve as a captain of the Test side, having just led the team in two tough Tests in India. Mominul's mantra as a captain is to lead the side from the front through performance and also to improve few aspects both on and off the field.

Don't want to repeat mistakes

The recent performance from the Tigers, especially in the longest format of the game, has been disastrous, whether it was the defeat against Afghanistan or the thrashing in the two-match Test series against India last year. Mominul said that it would be important for the Tigers not to repeat the same mistakes, and he also hoped to win a Test match away from home.

Why is Mushy's place uncertain?

SPORTS REPORTER



"I think that goes without saying... the whole of Bangladesh and the rest of the cricket world knows that not having a batsman like Mushfiqur [Rahim] Bhai in your team is a big thing, and everyone will miss [him]. It is a big loss for a captain, and there is no question about whether he will play or not against Zimbabwe. As the match is in Bangladesh, of course he will play."

Those were the words of Bangladesh Test captain Mominul Haque yesterday, when out of the blue the place of arguably Bangladesh's best batsman over the last two years had been called into question.

Because of security fears and his family's concern about conditions in Pakistan, Mushfiqur had withdrawn from the three-stage tour of the country on January 17. After much uncertainty and diplomatic back-and-forth, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) agreed on January 14 to tour the country in three phases. The Tigers departed for Pakistan on January 22.

Questions had arisen about Mushfiqur after chief selector Minhajul Abedin said that the squad picked for the first Test against Pakistan would also play the one-off home Test against Zimbabwe from February 22 and the second Test against Pakistan from April 5. Mushfiqur is the only player not part of the squad for the Pakistan Tests who would slot in for the home Test against Zimbabwe. Head coach Russell Domingo also seemed to be leaning towards Mushfiqur not playing the Test in between.

"I am under the impression that this is the squad for this one Test match. We will re-evaluate once we get back. You have to remember that Mushfiqur got runs in the last Test, but we also need to consider the fact that it is hard to pick a batting line-up, change it for one Test, and then change it again for the third Test. I want to give guys a run, but we also need to consider that Mushfiqur was our best player in India," Domingo said in a press conference today.

Continuity has been a buzz word for Domingo, but Bangladesh making changes



Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim heads to the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium's indoor facilities for some batting practice yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

to their Test lineup from one match to the next is not new. Moreover, after a tough assignment in the first Test in Rawalpindi, one would think that the Tigers would want their best on the field for a home Test they are expected to win and then go into the second Test in Pakistan with a confidence boost.

If it does not make sense, BCB President Nazmul Hassan's words in this regard may shed some light, however murky. Before the tour was confirmed, Hassan had said that it will be up to individual players to decide whether or not to go. After the first phase where Bangladesh were thrashed in the two completed T20Is, Hassan seemed to be a little indignant about Mushfiqur's choice. "When Tamim came back, we had to change the opening pair [Imrul Kayes and Shadman Islam] that we used in previous series [in India]. Now Mushfiqur didn't go [to Pakistan]. So, we have a problem with number four. If we had known some things from before, we could plan forward," Hassan said on January 29.

There is a ring of disingenuity when Hassan talks about knowing things from before when the uncertainty about the tour,

never mind the length or nature, prevailed till the BCB decided to go ahead around eight days before the team's eventual departure.

"If you tell me to take a rest from any Bangladesh series, it is like a sin for me," Mushfiqur had said on January 17. "As my family did not give me permission to go there, I can't go against that."

It was learned that Hassan, who has publicly said that he 'cannot abide losing', was annoyed by Mushfiqur's absence. There are also rumours that not picking him for the Zimbabwe Test would be a form of punishment.

If indeed true, it raises serious questions about the board's relationship with players and also suggests that players should not take the president's words seriously. As Mushfiqur -- possibly the hardest-working cricketer in Bangladesh -- said, not touring felt like a sin. Whether or not Mushfiqur plays against Zimbabwe will reveal much about the priorities of the board -- for which players' safety and security should be paramount -- as it will actually prove whether it thinks that it is a sin for a player to choose security over cricket.

Liton joins ton train; East thump Central

SPORTS REPORTER



The first round of the Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL), which was considered as preparation for the national players ahead of their Pakistan tour, saw some morale boosting performances from members of the 14-man squad for the upcoming Rawalpindi Test.

On the final day of the first round, Liton Das smashed an unbeaten century for North Zone that helped his side draw their game against fellow BCB-run team South Zone at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

Other national players to hit tons in the first round were Bangladesh and East Zone skipper Mominul Haque, South Zone's Mahmudullah

HIGHLIGHTS

Tamim Iqbal, Mahmudullah Riyad, Liton Das and Mominul Haque -- all part of the 14-member squad for the first Pakistan Test, smashed tons in the first round. Shamsur Rahman, Fazle Mahmud and Shahriar Nafees are the other players who also scored centuries.

Tamim recorded the highest-ever score in first-class cricket in Bangladesh when the stalwart smashed an unbeaten 334 playing for East Zone against Central Zone on Day 3.

Liton was the latest one to score a century as his unbeaten 103 saw North Zone draw their match against South Zone yesterday.

SCORES IN BRIEF

CENTRAL ZONE: First innings 213 and second innings 333 all out (Saif 33, Nazmul 54, Rakibul 29, Mithun 83, Taibur 62, Hom 35; Nayeem 6-85, Tajjul 2-82)

EAST ZONE: First innings 555/2d.

Result: East Zone won by an innings and 9 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Tamim Iqbal.

SOUTH ZONE: First innings 262 and second innings 398/3d

NORTH ZONE: First innings 207 and second innings 278 for 4 (Mizanur 29, Rony 37, Junaid 61, Liton 103 not out, Naeem 43; Razzak 2-66)

Result: Match drawn.

Player-of-the-match: Shafiqul Islam.

Riyad and East Zone's Tamim Iqbal, whose Bangladesh-record 334 not out set up a victory by an innings and nine runs over Central Zone yesterday.

North Zone, chasing a target of 454 runs, started the day on 22 for no loss. It would have been overly optimistic to try and score the 432

runs in a day and hence North Zone aimed to play through the day and settle for a draw. And, thanks to Liton's unbeaten 168-ball 103 that lasted for almost three hours, North Zone were able to see the day through.

Liton strung together a 125-run third-wicket stand with Junaid Siddique after North Zone were in a spot of bother, losing their openers in the first session. While Junaid was dismissed after a 127-ball 61, Liton built another crucial partnership with next batsman Naeem Islam. The Liton-Naeem duo accounted for a 79-run fourth wicket stand before Naeem fell in the final over. Liton, who also reached the 5000-run landmark in first-class cricket yesterday, powered his ton with nine fours and two sixes and persevered until the end as the match was drawn.

Meanwhile in Mirpur, off-spinner Nayeem Hasan, who will also leave with the national side for Pakistan today, bowled a match-winning spell for East Zone, scalping four of the seven Central Zone wickets that fell yesterday. Central Zone started the day on 115 for three trying to wipe out East's mammoth 342-run lead. However, Central were bundled out for 333 as Nayeem finished with figures of six for 85.

Just like playing against any other team: De Kock

South Africa-England first ODI today

REUTERS, Cape Town



New South Africa captain Quinton de Kock says facing world champions England will be just like playing any other team as they prepare for the three-match one-day international series starting at Newlands on Tuesday.

South Africa are seeking to rebuild after a disastrous World Cup in England last year in which the hosts claimed the trophy in thrilling fashion with victory over New Zealand in the final.

This will be England's first match since the decider at Lord's in July.

"It is just like playing any other team," De Kock told reporters on Monday. "Just because you have a World Cup doesn't

change anything. It is still the normal England team we will play against.

"I remember last time they came here (in 2016) we did pretty well and won the series. So it doesn't really matter if they are World Cup winners or not. It is the same as if we are playing Australia, India, Bangladesh, or whoever."

South Africa have struggled in both the ODI and test formats in the last 12 months, and while there could be a certain amount of experimentation as they begin a new cycle to the 2023 World Cup, De Kock says most important is to get a series win.

"We have new guys that have come in and they bring a lot of energy. We have guys who will potentially make their debut, so the team is very excited," he said.

"We are in a rebuilding phase and we

are looking forward to the next World Cup squad. We want to give the opportunities to youngsters and help them grow as cricketers.

"But for this series, we just want to win. There is a lot of time to give opportunities, but for us right now it is better to get a series win, just for the morale of the team."

England have rested Ben Stokes, arguably the world's best all-rounder, but De Kock says there is still much quality in the squad.

"It's always nice not to have to play against Ben Stokes, but they still have quality players," he said. "There are World Cup winners that are part of the squad and they have also got exciting young players."

"To start off with a win would be great for the team environment and the boys seem to be up for it."



PHOTO: FEROZ AHMED/COLLECTED



A six-wicket haul from spinner Nayeem Hasan (C) propelled East Zone to an innings and nine-run win over Central Zone in their Bangladesh Cricket League match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. (Inset) An unbeaten 103 from Liton Das helped North Zone draw their BCL fixture against South Zone in Chattogram.

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS 3
ICC U-19s World Cup
Super League Semifinal-1
India v Pakistan
Live from 2:00pm

SONY SIX
South Africa v England
First ODI (D/N)
Live from 5:00pm



Thanks to Lionel Messi's two assists, Ansu Fati, 17 years and 94 days old, became the youngest player in La Liga history to score a brace during Barcelona's 2-1 win against Levante at Nou Camp on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Messi sets Fati up for history

AFP, Madrid

Ansu Fati became the youngest player ever to score a brace in La Liga on Sunday by capitalising on two brilliant Lionel Messi assists to give Barcelona a 2-1 victory over Levante.

Fati, at 17 years and 94 days old, broke the previous record held by Juanmi Jimenez, who scored twice for Malaga against Real Zaragoza at 17 years and 115 days old in 2010.

Messi teed up Fati's quick-fire double with a defence-splitting pass and then a trademark weaving run before Ruben Rochina scored Levante's goal in the 92nd minute, which really should have come sooner.

Barca reduce the gap at the top to three points behind Real Madrid and begin to regain some rhythm under new coach Quique Setien after Thursday's 5-0 thumping of Leganes in the Copa del Rey.

"We could have won 8-2 or 8-3," said Setien. "We lost a little control in the second half and conceded too much but it was a good job from the team."

Yet Levante should have converted more of a handful of excellent chances in the second half, that suggested Barcelona's defensive problems and fragility when in the lead are far from solved.

Leganes and Levante, who sit 18th and 13th respectively, offered a relatively straightforward route back to winning ways too for

Barcelona, who were wobbling last weekend when they followed a last-gasp win over Segunda side Ibiza with a convincing defeat by Valencia.

Setien, who replaced Ernesto Valverde as coach last month, found his methods questioned and there was evidence against Levante to suggest he may have decided to introduce his style of play more gradually.

Barca played with more urgency and ambition, their dominance of possession sacrificed occasionally for riskier passes forward.

Yet Levante also pressed high and left gaps to be exploited, despite the likes of Valencia and Granada enjoying more success against Setien's team by sitting deep and bursting out on the break.

Fati has been one of the main beneficiaries of Setien's arrival.

He exploded onto the scene at the start of the season but was used increasingly rarely by Valverde, who may have been wary of burdening the teenager with too much too soon.

Instead, Setien has started Fati in all five of his games in charge so far and this was the first time his faith has really been rewarded.

"He is a boy who is emerging and has great potential," Setien said. "Today he had a historic day for his goals and for helping the team."

Messi's own excellent form also continues. He now has nine goals and four assists in his last 10 league games.

His first set-up for Fati came from the centre circle where he played a reverse pass through three Levante players that sent clear his teammate, who cut inside Jorge Miramon and finished.

Less than two minutes later, Fati was in again. Levante lost the ball upfield and Gerard Pique fired straight into Messi inside the right flank, midway inside the opposition's half.

He drove into the penalty area and when he finally stopped by a cluster of Levante chasers, he slid left to Fati, who fired through the legs of Aitor Fernandez for a second.

Nelson Semedo crashed a shot against the crossbar and then hopped over Tono only for Antoine Griezmann to tap wide at the front post.

But Levante were more dangerous in the second half and could have taken a draw if they had been more clinical with a handful of opportunities.

Sevilla and Real Sociedad both lost ground in the race for Champions League qualification as Getafe beat Athletic Bilbao to climb to third.

Real Sociedad lost 2-1 away at struggling Leganes while Sevilla were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Alaves.

In between, Getafe had carved out a 2-0 victory away at Bilbao to put them in pole position behind Real Madrid and Barcelona.

Jose Bordalas' team are now ahead of Sevilla on goal difference, while Real Sociedad are five points further back.



Daniel keeps Maldini flag flying

REUTERS, Undated

Daniel Maldini continued his family's long association with AC Milan when he made his league debut on Sunday to follow in the footsteps of his father Paolo and grandfather Cesare.

The 18-year-old attacking midfielder, wearing the number 98 shirt, came on in stoppage time of Milan's 1-1 home draw with Hellas Verona.

"It was a dream, a shame about the result. We hope to bring home the three points next game," Maldini said. "It (the debut) was a goal that I set for myself, now we hope to go on like this."

NATIONAL FOOTBALL Four teams in final round

SPORTS REPORTER

Pabna, Cumilla, Netrokona and Cox's Bazar moved into the final round of Bangabandhu National Football Championship yesterday.

Pabna emerged Shitalakkha zone champions after beating Kushtia 1-0 on aggregate while Netrokona beat Sherpur 4-2 in tiebreaker in Meghna zone, Cumilla beat Narayanganj 5-3 in tiebreaker in Padma zone and Cox's Bazar beat Chattogram 6-5 in shootout in Jamuna zone.

'Man City must do better next season'

REUTERS, London



Pep Guardiola refused to criticise his players but said they must do better next season after Manchester City wasted numerous chances, missed a penalty and had Oleksandr Zinchenko sent off in a 2-0 Premier League loss at Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday.

The Spaniard took close to an hour to appear for his post-match news conference, prompting talk of a dressing down for his players after a sixth league loss of the season which left them 22 points behind leaders Liverpool.

But Guardiola was giving little away, bemoaning an unusually bad day at the office for his feared strike force that has helped City rack up more than 100 goals in all competitions this season.

"They (Liverpool) are unstoppable with a lot of points...now is the target for the (other) competitions and quality for the Champions League next season," Guardiola



Jose Mourinho hugs Pep Guardiola following Tottenham Hotspur's 2-0 win against Manchester City on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

said. "The distance is so big and next season we have to do better."

City had 18 goal attempts compared to Tottenham's three, the hosts taking the lead in the 63rd minute when debutant Steven Bergwijn volleyed home with Jose Mourinho's side's first attempt on target.

Conte proves his point

REUTERS, Milan



Few coaches would have dared challenge the club leadership as Antonio Conte did this season when he complained that Inter Milan had made "important mistakes" in planning, leaving him with a wafer-thin squad.

But not only did the famously combative Conte -- who had only been in charge for five months at the time -- get away with his public criticism, he was also given what he wanted with several reinforcements arriving in the January transfer window.

After watching his side win 2-0 at Udinese on Sunday to maintain their Serie A title challenge, Conte said his haranguing of the Inter board had paid off.

"A club like Inter must also have a strong substitutes' bench," said Conte, whose side stayed three points behind leaders Juventus as they bid to end the Turin side's run of eight consecutive titles.

"When you have more quality within the squad, it allows you to find more solutions." Playing away to teams such as Udinese

was exactly the sort of match in which he needed more options, Conte added.

"You always find difficulties here in Udine, where they are good at closing down and then breaking. Putting more quality in the squad helps unravel these situations. The victory was deserved, even if it was complicated."

Inter have spent around 180 million euros (\$199 million) in the transfer market since Conte arrived, including a reported club record 80 million euros on striker Romelu Lukaku who has repaid the investment with 16 Serie A goals.

However, a series of injuries and suspensions, plus a crowded fixture list, left Conte short of options between September and December. The coach also complained he lacked proven winners.

But the arrival in January of Victor Moses, Christian Eriksen and Ashley Young, all from Premier League clubs, has taken a weight off his mind.

Moses and Eriksen made their Serie A debuts against Udinese and, although the Dane struggled to make an impact, Conte was not concerned.

VILLA FAN TOM HANKS'S PREMATURE SPECULATION?

Tom Hanks attracted attention on social media Sunday after the Aston Villa supporter posted a tweet appearing to celebrate the English side's League Cup triumph -- a month before the final. The two-time Oscar-winning actor has long said he is a fan of the Birmingham club. "Aston Villa took the Carabao Cup! Up the Villa! Hanx," the 63-year-old wrote, referencing the sponsors name for the tournament. Aston Villa beat Leicester on Tuesday to reach the final, where they will face holders and red-hot favourites Manchester City at Wembley on March 1. "Premature speculation?," tweeted former England striker Gary Lineker in response.

--AFP



Maziya quietly confident

SPORTS REPORTER



Following a one-and-a-half-hour drive from Paltan to Dhanmondi, Maziya S&RC coach Marjan Sekulovski was in a furious mood, but his charges seemed cheerful as they went through their first training session at the Abahani ground yesterday, ahead of tomorrow's AFC Cup prequalification (stage-1) tie against six-time Bangladesh Premier League champions Abahani.

The Maziya players only had a stretching session and a bit of a fun among themselves, probably in a bid to keep themselves relaxed following a 14-hour journey from Male. They came to Dhaka having completed their Premier League campaign

"It is good to be optimistic [against Abahani] but every year has different condition and different players. However, we are hoping to repeat the kind of results we produced against them in 2017."

In 2017 and 2018, none of the Bangladeshi clubs managed to beat their Maldivian counterparts at the pre-qualification stage or the group stage, and Abahani are seemingly under pressure ahead of this match even though Marjan believes past record will not have an impact on the game.

"Every game is different, so I don't think we have advantage on the basis of previous record. The important thing is that our players will give their best performance and win the game," said Marjan.

"We watched Abahani's matches of the



Maziya Sports and Recreation Club players do some light jogging at the Abahani ground yesterday ahead of Wednesday's AFC Cup fixture against Abahani.

PHOTO: STAR

on January 28 with a 10-match unbeaten run, including a goalless draw against TC Sports in their last fixture following nine consecutive wins.

The Maldivian outfit, who played in the group stage of the AFC Cup five consecutive times from 2013 to 2017, are upbeat about repeating their feat from the 2017 campaign when they beat Abahani 2-0 in both home and away fixtures.

When asked about their 2017 results, confidence and determination was apparent on the face of the 46-year-old coach.

Federation Cup; they are a good side and it is not important which department of theirs is strong. The most important thing is the result and the pitch we are going to play on," the Maziya coach said. "The target is to get a good result [in the away match] and then in the home match and advance to the second round of prequalification stage."

Maziya have eight current national players along with four foreign players -- two from Afghanistan, one each from Serbia and one from Granada.

'I came from nothing'

AFP, Melbourne



All-conquering Novak Djokovic Sunday said a turbulent childhood where he had to queue for milk and bread in war-torn Serbia made him hungrier for success, after he fought back from the brink to win his eighth Australian Open.

The 32-year-old needed to dig deep to rally from two sets to one down for the first time in a Grand Slam final and battle past fifth-seeded Austrian Dominic Thiem 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

His eighth victory in eight finals at Melbourne Park handed him a 17th Major to move within three of Roger Federer's all-time 20.

Asked how he managed to keep winning in pressure situations, Djokovic said it stemmed from his early life.

"My upbringing was in Serbia during several wars during the '90s, difficult time, embargo in our country where we had to wait in line for bread, milk, water, some basic things in life," he said.

"These kind of things make you

stronger and hungrier for success I think in whatever you choose to do.

"That probably has been my foundation, the very fact that I came from literally nothing and difficult life circumstances together with my family and with my people.

"Going back to that, reminding myself where I came from always inspires me, motivates me to push even harder.

"That's probably one of the reasons why I managed to find that extra gear or necessary mental strength to overcome challenges when they present themselves."

The match against Thiem was one of those occasions.

He looked in trouble after losing the second and third sets, with his energy levels down and a trainer telling him he was dehydrated.

"I definitely did not feel good. I didn't know what the next moment brings. I was trying to keep myself alive mentally as well, and emotionally," he said.

"I was a bit shocked that I did feel that way because everything was fine before the match. For the first two sets, everything was okay. But it's something that you have to

accept that you're going through.

"Those kind of circumstances really kind of force me to let things go and to really try to be in the moment and fight my way back."

Victory ensured Djokovic will once again be world number one when the new rankings are released on Monday, displacing Nadal. Federer remains third with Thiem moving up a place to a career-high fourth.

It also moved him alongside Nadal (12 at the French Open) and Federer (eight at Wimbledon) as only the third man ever to win eight or more titles at the same Slam.

Djokovic said winning Major titles was the reason he kept playing tennis.

"Obviously at this stage of my career, Grand Slams are the ones I value the most. They are the ones I prioritise," he said.

"Before the season starts I try to set my form, shape for these events where I can be at my prime tennis, mental and physical abilities.

"Grand Slams are one of the main reasons why I am still competing and still playing full season."






Against the tide

A Barguna fisherwoman fights against poverty as well as social barriers

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

She has become the only fisherwoman with licence to catch hilsa in Barishal division after securing a place in the traditionally male-dominated fishing industry.

A member of rural coastal community, Laily Begum has been sailing and fishing in the Bishkhali river for the last 13 years.

This correspondent met the tall, robust fisherwoman one winter afternoon at her tin-hut house in North Dalbhanga village at Dhalua union in Barguna Sadar upazila.

The 35-year-old recounted how necessity had driven her towards the arduous task of fishing in the river and sometimes the sea.

Life in the disaster-prone Dalbhanga has always been hard because of the continuous erosion. Like other villagers, her family has never seen prosperity.

Things worsened further after the cyclone Sidr hit their village in 2007. Within a couple of months, Laily lost her farmer father Hachon Pader and her elder brother to illness.

Her younger brother got married and moved away with his family. With his meagre income, he could not support his family and also provide for Laily and her sick and elderly mother.

"I felt completely at loss as I did not know how to look

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Laily Begum along with a local man pulling up a fishing net in the Bishkhali river near Barguna Sadar's Dalbhanga village. The 35-year-old fisherwoman took up the male-dominated occupation to run her family. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN



PM leaves for Italy today

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will leave Dhaka for Rome today on a four-day official visit to Italy at the invitation of her Italian counterpart Giuseppe Conte.

The PM would hold a bilateral meeting with Giuseppe Conte tomorrow, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told BSS.

He said a VVIP flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the premier and her entourage members will take off from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for Rome in the morning today.

The flight is scheduled to land at Fiumicino Airport, Rome at 4:15pm (local time). Minister Plenipotentiary of Italian Foreign Ministry Cristiano Cottafavi and Bangladesh Ambassador to Italy Abdus Sobhan Sikder will receive the PM at the airport.

After the reception, the Bangladesh PM would be taken in a motorcade to Parco dei Principi Grand Hotel and Spa, where she will be staying during her visit to the Italian capital.

Hasina will attend a reception, to be accorded in her honour, at the hotel in the evening.

Tomorrow morning, she will inaugurate the Chancery Building of the Bangladesh Embassy in Rome's Via Dell'Antartide area.

In the afternoon, the PM will hold bilateral talks with the Italian premier and join an official lunch at Palazzo Chigi, the latter's official residence.

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GENDER DETECTION OF FOETUS HC seeks govt's explanations

Questions why guidelines should not be framed to prevent such detection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to explain within six weeks why they should not be directed to frame a guideline to prevent gender detection of unborn babies, in order to ensure protection of the unborn and pregnant mothers.

In the rule, the court also asked respondents to show cause why their failure to frame a guideline to prevent gender detection of unborn babies should not be declared illegal.

Secretaries to the ministries of health, women and children affairs, and social welfare affairs, Directorate General of Health Services, family planning department of women affairs, and national institute of population research and training have been made respondents to the rule.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman issued the rule following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Ishrat Hasan seeking necessary orders.

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH

Bangabandhu's nation-building challenges



A set of 14 volumes of works of Tagore which were looted by Pakistan Army from Bangabandhu's Dhanmondi residence after March 25, 1971 is being presented to him by Shahana Khanam, lecturer, Dhaka College who purchased these books from a footpath shop (Feb 4, 1972).

FEBRUARY 4, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

UK, WEST GERMANY AND EIGHT OTHERS RECOGNISE BANGLADESH

Ten nations announce their recognition of Bangladesh, thus bringing the total number of countries recognising the new republic so far to 30. The latest list is made up of Britain, Norway, West Germany, Denmark, Israel, Iceland, Republic of Ireland, Finland, Sweden and Austria.

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DIGITAL SECURITY ACT Baul singer sued over comments on religion

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Yet another Baul artist was sued under the Digital Security Act for making "derogatory comments" about religion and hurting people's sentiment.

Recently, a video had gone viral on social media, which showed singer Rita Dewan making the comment during a song performance.

On February 1, another video surfaced where Rita, along with her two daughters, was shown apologising for the matter.

Advocate Imrul Hasan had earlier on Sunday filed the case against the singer with the cyber tribunal in Dhaka, while short filmmaker Rasel Mia filed another case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court in Dhaka yesterday.

After a hearing on

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Albatross 'cops' spy on illegal fishing vessels



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Albatrosses have been fitted with technology to help in the fight against illegal fishing in a new trial.

Researchers tracked the birds as they flew over the Antarctic Ocean and were drawn towards fishing boats.

The study found that the albatross successfully "detected and localised fishing vessels over large oceanic sectors".

"Our results demonstrate the potential of using animals as ocean sentinels," the researchers said.

The birds were "perfect candidates" for the experiment because they "fly great distances and are particularly attracted by fishing boats", according to the France's National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), who were involved in the study published in the US journal PNAS.

Henri Weimerskirch, the lead author, told AFP:

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 4

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:15 5:52 7:15
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:30 5:56 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SSC examinee raped after abduction in Mymensingh

One held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police arrested a man on Sunday night on charges of raping a female SSC examinee after abduction in Mymensingh's Tarakanda upazila.

The arrestee, Yusuf Ali, 35, is a father of four in Charia Purbapara village of the upazila.

The girl's father filed a case with Tarakanda Police Station against Yusuf and his accomplice on Sunday night. Police then arrested Yusuf from a relative's house in Charia Purbapara village.

The other accused is on the run, police said.

Quoting the case statement, Abul Khayer, officer-in-charge of the station, said Yusuf, owner of a grocery shop at Charia Bazar, abducted the girl when she was going to her tutor on January 26 morning. He took the girl elsewhere of the upazila

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A community police member asks two children to get down from the front side of a locomotive parked at the capital's Airport Railway Station yesterday. Every day, many like these two children travel on footboards of locomotives or even train roofs without tickets, putting their lives at risk.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

OIC rejects Trump's ME peace plan

Calls on its member states not to help implement it

AFP, Jeddah

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation yesterday rejected US President Donald Trump's peace plan for the Middle East, calling on its 57 member states not to help implement it.

The pan-Islamic body, which represents more than 1.5 billion Muslims worldwide, "rejects this US-Israeli plan as it does not meet the minimum aspirations and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and contradicts the terms of reference of the peace process", it said in a statement.

A meeting of foreign ministers at OIC headquarters in the Saudi city of Jeddah called on "all member states not (to) deal with this plan or cooperate with the US administration efforts to enforce it in any way or form".

Under the US plan unveiled last week, Israel would retain control of the disputed city of Jerusalem as its "undivided capital" and annex settlements on Palestinian lands.

Trump said Palestinians would be allowed to declare a capital within annexed east Jerusalem.

The OIC reiterated its support for east Jerusalem as capital of a future Palestinian state, stressing its "Arab and Islamic character".

It said peace would "only be achieved with the end of the Israeli occupation, the full withdrawal from the territory of the State of Palestine in particular the holy city of Al-

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