



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

ধুলো ময়লায় সুরক্ষিত সত্বাধার
BERGER
Weather Coat
ANTIDIRT
SUPREME

REGD. No. DA 781

Vol. XXX No. 36

FALGUN 5, 1426 BS

Your Right to Know

Plus 40 Pages 29th Anniversary Special Supplement Segment 4

JAMADIU SANI 23, 1441 HIRI

20 Pages Plus Lifestyle Price: Tk 12.00



"The level of radiation from mobile network towers is below both international and BTRC limits."
SAYS MD SHAHIDUL ALAM, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SPECTRUM MANAGEMENT AT BTRC (PAGE B4)



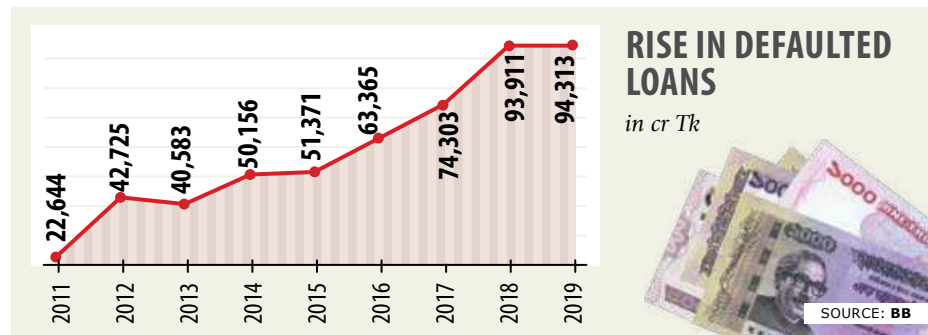
"We need to look at that Test we won against Bangladesh [in Sylhet]...about how we played and achieved that victory. We need to repeat that type of performance."
ZIMBABWEAN REGIS CHAKABVA ON THEIR UPCOMING TOUR IN BANGLADESH

"I can tell you that there are no [militant] safe havens here."
PAKISTANI PM IMRAN KHAN REFUTES ACCUSATION THAT HIS COUNTRY HARBOURS TERRORISTS (PAGE 8)



Defaulted loans still going up

Despite record rescheduling, non-performing loans rose to Tk 94,313cr in Dec 2019 from Tk 93,911cr a year ago



AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

Defaulted loans crept up last year despite the government's attempts to subdue them -- by hook or by crook.

A record Tk 50,186 crore was rescheduled last year, often by breaching banking norms, and yet defaulted loans hit Tk 94,313 crore at the end of 2019, up 0.42 percent year-on-year, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

Defaulted loans, however, decreased last year in proportion to total outstanding loans: it stood at 9.32 percent, down from 10.30 percent at the close of 2018.

"This is a great success for the

government as defaulted loans went down to single digit after a long time," said Md Serajul Islam, spokesperson of the central bank.

Serajul, also an executive director of the central bank, though admitted that the relaxed rescheduling facility had helped show a lower defaulted loan tally.

Of the sum regularised in 2019, Tk 18,584 crore was done under the central bank's relaxed loan rescheduling policy that was announced on May 16 last year.

The policy allowed defaulters to reschedule their classified loans with a down payment of just 2 percent of the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

A man walking on a plank of wood, placed over an under-construction drain, to enter a building on Paschim Biren Ghosh Street in Old Dhaka's Chawkbazar area yesterday. The Dhaka South City Corporation authorities started the construction nearly three months ago, but locals said the work was progressing slowly. In this situation, people in the area are suffering. The sharp iron rods left there also pose danger to them.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Digitisation has revolutionised life, in all corners of the world, in every way imaginable. As the potential for technology to dramatically increase or decrease inequality looms large, how can individuals, policymakers and society at large, best ensure that our future, is an inclusive one? Find out in the fourth instalment of The Daily Star's five-part special supplement series, titled "DIGITISATION AND INCLUSIVITY: TAKING EVERYONE ALONG" which is out today.

The final part of the special series, titled "THE YOUTH IN THE ERA OF DIGITALISATION" is scheduled to come out on February 20.

MAKE SURE YOU GRAB A COPY OF THIS COLLECTOR'S ITEM FREE OF CHARGE FROM YOUR HAWKER!

Dhaka Wasa for 80pc tariff hike

Sends proposal to LGRD ministry; cites rising operational costs, implementation of dev projects as key reasons

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority has proposed hiking water prices by 80 percent for residential and commercial uses.

Amid allegations of poor quality of tap water in the mega city, Wasa wrote to the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives for increasing the prices on September last year.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the letter. Wasa has proposed Tk 20 for each unit (1,000 litre) of water for residential use. The existing price is Tk 11.57. For commercial purpose, it has recommended Tk 65 against the existing rate of Tk 37.04.

Wasa said it has become necessary to hike water prices so that it can repay loans taken for implementation and maintenance of different development projects. Besides, its operational costs have gone up.

"We have sent a proposal and the government is scrutinising it. Possibly, it is at the Prime Minister's Office for approval right now," Taqsem A Khan, managing director of Dhaka Wasa, told this correspondent yesterday.

Huge investment was required for modernising Wasa in recent years, and operational costs have also risen. In this situation, there is no alternative to hiking the price, he added.

"To run an organisation smoothly, subsidy is not an option. We have reduced system loss and modernised the service. So, hike in water prices is a must," he said.

Water prices were increased by 22 percent and 18 percent for residential and commercial uses respectively in 2017. The price of each unit of Wasa water was only Tk 6 in 2009, when the Awami League

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK Death toll nears 1,800

Hundreds of Americans flown home from cruise ship, 14 with coronavirus

AFP, California

More than 300 Americans rescued from a cruise ship quarantined off Japan because of the new coronavirus arrived back in the US yesterday to begin a further two-week period of medical seclusion, as the epidemic claimed more lives in China to push the death toll above 1,700.

The COVID-19 virus has infected more than 70,500 people in China, and hundreds more elsewhere, sparking panic buying, economic jitters and the cancellation of high-profile sporting and cultural events.

With fresh cases emerging daily in Japan, the government has advised citizens to avoid mass gatherings, and cancelled public events -- including annual celebrations in central Tokyo for the Emperor's birthday and the amateur portion of the city marathon, affecting around 38,000 runners.

Beijing's municipal authorities have ordered everyone arriving in the capital to self-quarantine for 14 days, the presumed incubation period of the virus.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 16

Picked up, forced to sign cheques of Tk 1.25 crore

Police official faces probe over businessman's complaint

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around midnight on January 22, the doorbell rang at Mehedy Sheikh's flat at the capital's Kalachandpur in Gulshan.

Opening the door, the businessman saw two police officers waiting for him. They told him to go with them to Dhanmondi Police Station to pay Tk 50 lakh he owed to someone.

When Mehedy asked whether there was a warrant for him, the officers handcuffed him and forced him into a police vehicle.

He was then taken to Dhanmondi Police Station where he was beaten up and locked inside a room until the morning, Mehedy told The Daily Star.

Around 12:00pm the next day, he was asked to tell his family members to bring his cheque book and trade licence to the police station.

After his family members brought the book and the licence, Mehedy was forced to sign a cheque of Tk 65 lakh and another of Tk 60 lakh.

Around 5:00pm, Mehedy was taken to the office of Deputy Commissioner Sajjadur Rahman of Ramna division, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP). Mehedy said he had a money-related dispute with the Ramna DC.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

HC can't give inexecutable directives

Says SC about HC verdicts on river grabbing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday said the High Court cannot deliver any verdict with inexecutable directives.

A four-member SC bench, led by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, said this referring to an HC verdict regarding river grabbing and pollution.

Following a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, the HC on February 3 last year declared the Turag a "legal person" and a "living entity" and also directed the authorities concerned to free the river from all kinds of encroachments.

The court issued a 17-point directive to save the country's rivers and waterbodies from grabbers and

SEE PAGE 2 COL COL 3

MASTERPLAN TO SAVE DHAKA, CTG RIVERS

Demarcation to be completed by 2022

Relocation of factories discharging liquid waste to start in 2026

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As per a masterplan for saving rivers in and around Dhaka and Chattogram cities, the government from January 2026 would start relocating factories that discharge liquid waste to a special zone.

The zone would have facilities to treat their discharge and ensure the factories use environment-friendly technologies from 2030, according to the plan documents this paper obtained.

The plan also fixed December 2021 for the authorities concerned to complete demarcation of the rivers and identify legal issues, if any, for stopping river grabbing and maintaining navigability.

In Dhaka, the rivers are: The Buriganga, Dhaleshwari, Turag, Balu, Shitalakkhya, Pungli and Tongi canal.

The Karnaphuli and the Halda in Chattogram will get the masterplan's protection.

In the 10-year-long plan of action to save the rivers, the government identified three major tasks -- stopping pollution, maintaining navigability, and preventing river grabbing.

For achieving the goals, it drew up a roadmap with deadlines for different government agencies and ministries. The masterplan sets short-, mid- and long-term work and goals.

Several agencies and ministries would work under the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

কে বলে দুধ বোরিং? আমি তো নিজেই তৈরি করে খাই!

নিউট্রিশনটা নিয়ে যখন নো টেনশন, তখন দুধটা ওদেরকে ওদের মতো করেই খেতে দিন। এলো নিউট্রিফাইড মিল্ক পোড কাউ মাস্টার। এর জিংক, ক্যালসিয়াম, আয়রন, প্রোটিন আর ভিটামিন দেয় প্রয়োজনীয় নিউট্রিশন প্রতিদিন।

রেড কাউ মাস্টার না খেলে চলে?

RED COW Master INSTANT FULL CREAM MILK POWDER

New Zealand Dairy Excellence in Quality

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

India for trans-border protected areas

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India yesterday proposed trans-border protected areas for cooperation in wildlife conservation with neighbouring countries.

"Several protected areas in India share boundaries with the protected areas of neighbouring countries," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, adding that cooperation in conservation of wildlife by establishing 'trans-boundary protected areas' would lead to very positive outcomes."

For instance, the Sundarbans forest, home of the Bengal tiger and other wildlife, spread across India and Bangladesh.

Modi was speaking after inaugurating via video conferencing the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

India took over the presidency of the conference for three years in the presence of senior government officials, environment activists, researchers and biodiversity leaders from 130 countries.

Modi elaborated some of India's priority areas while holding the presidency.

India is a part of the Central Asian flyway for migratory birds, he said, adding that with a view to conserving birds along the flyway and their habitats, India has prepared a national action plan for conservation of migratory birds and would be happy to facilitate preparation of such plans for other countries.

"We are keen on taking the conservation of migratory birds to a new paradigm with active cooperation of all the Central Asian flyway range countries," he added.

Modi said India is one of the seven megadiverse countries in the world and has four biodiversity hotspots -- Eastern Himalayas, Western Ghats, Indo-Myanmar landscape and Andaman and Nicobar Islands -- and is home to 500

species of migratory birds from across the globe.

India's Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said migratory birds, mammals and aquatic species are in increased danger on their migration routes and countries need to work together to protect them.

Stressing the need for taking collaborative action towards conservation, Convention on Migratory Species Executive Secretary Amy Fraenkel said, "COP13 comes at a critical time for wildlife conservation, with continued downward trends of habitat loss and species decline."

The Convention on Migratory Species is the only multilateral treaty dedicated to addressing the needs of migratory species and their habitats on a global scale. The conference will set in motion actions needed to better protect migratory species that rely on multilateral cooperation for their survival."

India is home to several migratory species of wildlife including snow leopard, Amur falcons, bar-headed Geese, black-necked cranes, marine turtles, dugongs and humpbacked whales.

Modi said India has been championing the cause of "climate action" through conservation, sustainable lifestyle and green development model. In this context, he mentioned the push towards electric vehicles, smart cities and conservation of water.

He explained how conservation programmes focused on species have shown encouraging results.

"India has achieved its target of doubling the number of tigers from 1,411 in 2010 to 2,967, two years before the committed date of 2022," he said, before elaborating initiatives taken for the conservation of Asian elephants, snow leopard, Asiatic Lions, one-horned rhinoceros and the Great Indian Bustard.

GAS EXPLOSION IN N'GANJ HOUSE

Woman killed, seven of her family suffer burns

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A woman died and seven of her family members suffered burn injuries in a gas explosion at a Shahedpara residence in Narayanganj's Siddhirganj upazila early yesterday.

Nur Jahan, 60, was declared dead at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) around 10:15am, said Inspector Bachchu Miah, in-charge of DMCH police camp.

She had sustained 100 percent burn injuries, he said.

The injured -- Kiron Miah, 45, Abul

Hossain, 25, Hiron Miah, 25, Kausar Miah, 16, Mukta Akter, 20, Ilma Akter, 3, and Apon, 10 -- were also admitted to the burn unit.

Five of the injured are in critical condition, according to DMCH sources.

The family lives on the ground floor of a five-storey building, said Abdullah Al Arefin, deputy director of Narayanganj Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Officials suspect that the family may not have switched their gas stove off at night, which caused the explosion when a match was struck in the kitchen around 5:00am, said Al Arefin.

Death toll nears 1,800

FROM PAGE 1

State media said China may postpone its annual parliamentary session, which has been held in March for the last 35 years.

Outside China, the biggest cluster of infections is from the Diamond Princess cruise ship off Japan's Yokohama, where an additional 99 cases were revealed yesterday.

That brought the total to 454 diagnosed despite passengers being confined to their cabins during a 14-day quarantine.

As criticism grows of Japan's handling of the ship crisis, governments are scrambling to repatriate their citizens. Canada, Australia, Italy, and Hong Kong were poised to follow Washington in removing nationals from the vessel.

The first US flight touched down at Travis Air Force Base in California shortly before midnight Sunday, followed by the second early yesterday at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.

Before they boarded the flights, US officials were informed that 14 of the passengers tested days earlier had received positive results. Authorities allowed them to fly but isolated them from other passengers in a 'special containment area'.

Those on board will undergo a further two-week quarantine period on US soil.

"Every precaution to ensure proper isolation and community protection measures are being taken, driven by the most up-to-date risk assessments by US health authorities," said a joint statement from the State Department and the Department of Health and Human Services. "We continue all possible efforts to protect the welfare of US citizens."

"I am happy and ready to go," American traveler Sarah Arana told AFP before leaving the ship. "We need a proper quarantine. This was not it."

The latest country to order its citizens evacuated from the ship is Australia, whose more than 200 citizens still on board were to be rescued on Wednesday. Some Americans on the Diamond Princess declined their government's offer.

"My health is fine. And my two-week quarantine is almost over," tweeted Matt Smith, questioning why he should want to leave.

Forty other US passengers tested positive for the virus and were taken to hospitals in Japan, said Anthony

Fauci, a senior official at the National Institutes for Health.

It was not immediately clear if they were already counted among the confirmed cases of infection on the ship.

In China, authorities have placed about 56 million people in the central province of Hubei under quarantine, virtually sealing off the epicentre province from the rest of the country in an unprecedented effort to contain the virus.

New cases outside the epicentre have been declining for the last 13 days. There were 115 fresh cases outside Hubei announced yesterday-- sharply down from nearly 450 a week ago.

Chinese authorities have pointed to the slowing rise in cases as proof their measures are working even as the total death toll reached 1,770.

But World Health Organization head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has warned it is "impossible to predict which direction this epidemic will take".

Concerns remain about global transmission, especially on cruise ships which appear to have become especially virulent breeding grounds.

Fears are mounting over passengers on one vessel, the Westerdam, who all received a clean bill of health when they disembarked in Cambodia -- a staunch Beijing ally.

But an 83-year-old American woman was stopped by authorities in Malaysia over the weekend when she was detected with a fever and later diagnosed with the virus.

There were more than 2,200 passengers and crew on the ship when it docked in Sihanoukville, many of whom have now dispersed around the globe.

With the virus battering tourism and disrupting global supply chains, experts are fretting about the toll it could take on a fragile global economy.

IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva said there could be a cut of around 0.1-0.2 percentage points to global growth but stressed there was "still a great deal of uncertainty."

Fears over the new coronavirus weighed on Asian markets, and Singapore cut its growth forecast for this year as the virus hammers the city-state's tourism and trade.

"If it comes out bad enough for confidence to plummet, investors could quickly find themselves up the creek... without a paddle," said Stephen Innes of AxiCorp.



In Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's presence, Bangladesh Honda Private Limited Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Himihiko Katsuki hands the keys of two 1800CC motorcycles to SSF Director General Maj Gen Md Majibur Rahman at a function at her office yesterday.

PHOTO: P10

Dhaka Wasa for 80pc tariff hike

FROM PAGE 1

assumed power.

According to section 23 of the Wasa Act-1996, Wasa board can raise water price by five percent annually.

It also hiked the price five percent last year, citing inflation.

City dwellers and experts said water price hike would be a burden for people.

In summer, people of Jatrabari, Shyampur, Mir Hazirbagh, and adjacent areas suffer severe water crisis.

"Last year, there were instances that we stayed awake all night to get water but failed," said Sirajul Hoque Khan, a resident of Mir Hazirbagh.

"Like in ancient times, we had to wait for rain. Because on rainy days the supply [of water] used to get normal," he said.

He sees the decision as a blow to the city dwellers.

Sazzadur Rahman, a resident of Mohammadpur area, said he does not get adequate water supply every day.

"We are not getting the water we are paying for. If the service does not get better, why will we pay more?" he asked.

Contacted, Consumers Association of Bangladesh President Ghulam

Rahman said, "Wasa's overall service quality is not good. In some places, the service is good, but in most places, especially in the densely populated areas, the service is poor. In this context, price hike of water every year is not acceptable in anyway."

Quality of Wasa water always remains a big concern.

Last year, Transparency International Bangladesh in a survey report said nearly 45 percent people in the capital do not get the desired amount of water from Wasa.

Besides, about 35 percent complain of poor-quality water throughout the year.

It also said 91 percent clients of the Wasa have to boil the water before drinking, although it is supposed to be safe for drinking.

LETTERS

On September 2 last year, Wasa sent the letter to LGRD secretary.

In the letter, it was mentioned that from 2016-19 some projects were implemented and some were under implementation. So, the existing prices of water for residential and commercial uses are not sufficient.

It added that if water supply starts from Padma Water Treatment Plant in

Munshiganj, costs of each unit of water will be Tk 27-28.

In the letter, the Wasa MD said to make the Dhaka Wasa financially sustainable, its income should be increased. It is hard to provide the city dwellers with quality service when the organisation is run with subsidy.

Wasa requested the price hike from January last.

The local government ministry replied to the letter on January 14.

In its letter, the ministry asked costs of each unit of water, amount of Wasa's loan, water price in Delhi and Kolkata of India, Kathmandu of Nepal, Seoul of South Korea, Manila of the Philippines, London of the UK, and Stockholm of Sweden.

Wasa replied on January 16. In a letter, it mentioned that only production costs of each unit of water is around Tk 20. With other expenses, the total costs go up to Tk 25.

It added that Dhaka Wasa's loans for implementing different projects is around Tk 600 crore.

It also mentioned each unit of water price is Tk 31 in Delhi, Tk 21.73 in Kathmandu, Tk 39.52 in Seoul, and Tk 21.87 in Stockholm.

Defaulted loans still going up

FROM PAGE 1

outstanding amount instead of the existing 10-50 percent.

The banks recovered only Tk 479 crore as down payment from the loans rescheduled under the relaxed policy.

"It is a temporary relief -- the negative situation will come back in a very dreadful way," said Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute.

Loan rescheduling following a relaxed manner is not a lasting solution as defaulters earlier misused such facilities, he said.

Given the generous policy support afforded to delinquent borrowers historically, many good borrowers are tempted to default, said Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled, a former deputy governor of the central bank, while urging the BB to crack down on habitual defaulters with fervour.

"The soured loan situation would

not have been this bad had a good amount of the rescheduled loans did not become defaults again," said Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

In fact, Tk 13,284 crore of the bad loans regularised last year have defaulted, according to data from the BB.

This means, nearly one-fourth of the rescheduled loans has turned bad again.

"There is no scope to feel satisfaction given the feeble recovery track record," Fahmida said.

Ahsan, also the chairman of Brac Bank, urged both the central bank and the government to ramp up their recovery drive.

The high volume of toxic assets means the banks will be unable to bring down the interest rate on lending to single digits, he said, while advising the BB to start calculating classified loans by including the rescheduled and written-

off loans as well to take stock of the stressed asset scenario properly.

"The ongoing haphazard situation in the banking sector will get worse in the days ahead," Fahmida added.

The upward trend of defaulted loans cannot be stopped if banks do not follow the rules and regulations when disbursing loans, said Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank.

Going forward, banks should sanction loans only to compliant borrowers, who repay on a regular basis, he added.

BB data showed more than 50 percent of the defaulted loans were with the eight state-run banks. As of December, the eight banks had Tk 48,057 crore of defaulted loans, down 10.14 percent year-on-year.

The 41 private banks together had defaulted loans amounting to Tk 44,174 crore, up 16 percent from a year earlier.

Demarcation to be completed by 2022

FROM PAGE 1

supervision of a 25-member committee led by the LGRD minister, according to the documents. Some of the work would be monitored directly by the Prime Minister's Office, the documents read.

Since January, the authorities have started identifying the reasons, types, and sources of river pollution. They would continue their work until December 2021.

In 2007, the government and the World Bank jointly conducted a study which found that around 7,000 industries in and around the capital were discharging 1.5 million cubic metres of liquid waste into the rivers every day.

It also found that 61 percent of the liquid waste was from factories and the rest from homes.

By 2022, the government plans to demarcate the rivers as per the documents available at the land record office, district administration office, Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk), and Chattogram Development Authorities (CDA).

It plans to evict grabbers after demarcation but continue the effort.

However, eviction of already identified river grabbers and closure of factories polluting the rivers have begun, according to the documents.

As per a recent report of the National River Conservation Commission (NRCC), there are 49,162 river grabbers in the country. The report did not mention river and canal grabbers in the capital.

Within the first few months of this year, the committee would decide if existing laws need amending to protect the rivers.

Between 2022 and 2025, the law; environment, forest and climate change; LGRD; and industries ministries will complete formulating laws and guidelines, if required, for protecting the rivers.

The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), and Chattogram Port Authority have been dredging rivers for maintaining navigability.

The NRCC; the Department of Environment; the CDA; Dhaka and Chattogram Wasa; three city corporations concerned; Rajuk; Dhaka and Chattogram district

HC can't give inexecutable directives

FROM PAGE 1

pollution.

It also directed the Election Commission to disqualify the people responsible for river grabbing and pollution from running for public office.

The HC also said the grabbers and polluters would not be able to get bank loans.

It asked the government to recover the land of the Turag under the possession of Nishut Jute Mills Ltd of Hameem Group and Hossain Dyeing and Printing Mills Ltd of Anwar Group. Challenging the HC verdict, Nishut

Jute Mills and Hossain Dyeing filed appeals with the SC.

The top court rejected the appeals on February 4.

However, the SC held an additional hearing yesterday.

During the hearing, the SC asked Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh's lawyer Manzill Murshid whether all the directives issued by the HC were implementable in accordance with the law and whether the HC could order the government to formulate a law.

The lawyer told the SC that the HC had kept his petition as a continued

mandamus [which allows people to seek further orders on the matter] and any aggrieved person could approach the HC if there was any hurdle in executing the directives.

The SC said many of the HC directives and findings regarding the Turag were not acceptable and implementable and it would expunge those from the full text of its verdict.

"What will the government do if we do its tasks?" said the bench.

Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star that the government, following the SC verdict, could recover the land in the companies' possession.

Chinese envoy plays down

Rohingya crisis

Compares Bangladesh-Myanmar tension with quarrel of a couple

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Li Jiming has apparently downplayed the Rohingya crisis as he compared Bangladesh-Myanmar tension over the issue with a quarrel of a couple.

He said there is a Chinese saying that goes: "If a couple quarrels and goes to someone else and tries to settle the dispute, that could be a problem."

"If they can settle the problem between the two then the problem never becomes too serious. That's the basic idea of China," he said while addressing DCAB (Diplomatic Correspondent Association of Bangladesh) Talk at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

A journalist then suggested that the Rohingya crisis involving Bangladesh and Myanmar should to be considered a domestic issue as seen by the ambassador.

The journalist pointed out that Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh after Myanmar military killed many of them. Bangladesh took the matter to an international platform only after becoming a victim of the crisis.

In response, Jiming said he agreed to the journalist's view.

At the programme, journalists repeatedly asked a question: Why China has been protecting Myanmar which is accused of genocide against the Rohingyas and is now facing a genocide case filed with the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

The ambassador said China too wanted a solution to the crisis, but emphasised on finding it through bilateral discussions between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Fleeing military crackdown in Rakhine, some 750,000 Rohingyas took shelter in Bangladesh since August 2017. Since the beginning, China has been seeking a bilateral solution to the issue, although UN investigators said the crackdown had genocidal intent.

UN Security Council has not taken any concrete actions against Myanmar amid opposition from China and Russia, which hold veto powers.

Jiming said since the ICJ was still working on the case, he would not make any comment, except that the ICJ decision should be fully respected.

He said Bangladesh and Myanmar are good friends and as a friend of both the countries, China is trying to help solve the problem.

"If two neighbors are quarrelling, as a friend, you probably try to stop the quarrel and try to calm down the neighbours ... In the international platforms, we are not trying to protect anyone. We are just trying to calm down those neighbors."

He said if Myanmar was pushed too hard, there would be some misunderstandings. Since Myanmar faced pressure from Western countries for many years, its people have some fundamental reactions of resistance to pressure, Jiming said.

"They [Bangladesh and Myanmar] are like brothers and sisters ... they are good neighbours. They don't have to go somewhere else to solve the problem."

China, as a friend of both Myanmar and Bangladesh, wants to help, he said, adding that China wants immediate stoppage of further violence in Rakhine state, speeding up of Rohingya repatriation from Bangladesh and economic development in Rakhine.

"We are working on it," Jiming added.

HC petition says Mahbubey Alam too old to be AG

Hearing on Feb 23

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday set February 23 to hear on a writ petition that challenged the legality of Advocate Mahbubey Alam holding the Office of the Attorney General.

SC lawyer Eunos Ali Akond filed it last month.

The bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir set the date after Eunos placed the matter before the bench.

As per the petition, Mahbubey Alam was appointed Attorney General under Article 64 (1) of the Constitution, which says the appointee has to be qualified to be an SC judge. The age limit of an SC judge is 67 years and thus Mahbubey Alam cannot hold the office any more, since he has turned 71 this year, the petition said.



With the metro rail construction taking up around 60 percent of the road, maintenance work of fibre optic cables is eating up precious space on a street in Purana Paltan. Not only this, the work is also being done unsafely, with unprotected cables being piled by the side and no safety signs in sight.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

New agreements to boost bilateral ties with Qatar

Says state minister Shahriar Alam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Qatar are going to sign four to five agreements soon to further boost bilateral relationship between the two countries, State Minister for Foreign Affairs M Shahriar Alam said yesterday.

The countries are working on a “cooperation model” under which Qatar can provide its resources and funds while Bangladesh can utilise its workforce, the state minister told reporters after the first Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between the two countries held in Dhaka.

“Qatar has a very small population. They cannot manage or look after everything by themselves regarding overseas business,” he said.

If Bangladesh government or a large business group come up with projects in future, then Qatar can invest, he added.

At the FOC, the countries elaborately discussed establishing of a mechanism on how Qatar’s fund can be invested in profitable trades in Bangladesh, said Shahriar, who led the Bangladesh delegation.

“The main issue is to increase trade cooperation,” he added.

Qatar’s per capita income is among the world’s highest while the present Bangladesh government has created an investment-friendly environment in the country, he said.

Qatar Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad Al Muraikhi headed his country’s delegation at the meeting, which took place for more than two hours at the state guest house Meghna.

Bangladesh arranged a successful trade fair “Made in Bangladesh” in Doha at the beginning of January. Beside Bangladeshi traders, many Qatari entrepreneurs attended the fair, said Shahriar.

He said they are expecting to sign the new agreements in the next three to four months.

One of the agreements will be for “repatriation of sentenced persons”, he said.

If any expatriate Bangladeshi commits crime and subsequently gets sentenced in Qatar, then the agreement will help bringing the convict back to Bangladesh to serve jail sentence here, he said.

Bangladesh has such agreement with other countries, he added.

Qatar is home to some 3.5 lakh Bangladeshis who are involved in various occupations, Shahriar said.

The two countries have “almost finalised” an agreement for visa-free entry of diplomats and other officials. There will be an agreement on “avoidance of double taxation”, he also said.

The delegates further discussed about cooperation over elections of different international bodies, including that of the United Nations.

How the two countries can enhance high-level visits was also discussed, Shahriar said.

The state minister said the expatriates’ welfare ministry will strongly work with its Qatar counterparts to widen job opportunities for Bangladeshi workers in the Gulf country.

CHILD HEALTHCARE

Cabinet okays draft law to improve service

BSS, Dhaka

The cabinet yesterday approved in principle, the draft of a law keeping a provision of merging Dhaka Children Hospital and Bangladesh Institute of Child Health, with the aim to provide better treatment facilities to children.

The approval came from a regular weekly meeting of the cabinet with Prime Minister Sheikh in the chair at the Prime Minister’s Office.

Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam made the disclosure at a news briefing at following the meeting.

“Dhaka Children Hospital was established as an autonomous body in 1977. It has no basis in law as it was formed under ‘Dhaka Children Hospital Ordinance, 2008’ by the then caretaker government,” he said.

The draft law has recommended to form a 12-member board of directors to run the hospital as an autonomous body in a proper manner, he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

METRO RAIL

Mock-up on public display soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In order to inform people about the metro rail -- a new mode of public transport in Bangladesh, a mock-up of the coach will be displayed soon.

The display will start at the Metro Rail Exhibition & Information Center in the capital’s Uttara next month.

There, people will be able to learn about the looks of the inside of the train and the ticket-buying process, MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL), told The Daily Star yesterday.

DMTCL, a government-owned company, is implementing the metro rail projects. Mass Rapid Transit (MRT)-6, which is first among six such projects, is the route between Uttara Third Phase and Motijheel.

Siddique said they brought the mock-up coach from Japan on December 26 last year and kept it inside the under-construction exhibition and information center at Uttara’s Diabari.

“Today [Monday], we have unpacked the [mock-up] coach and installed it at the base of the exhibition centre, so that other incomplete work can be done smoothly,” he said.

All work will be completed soon and the mock-up coach will be opened for public late next month, he said.

Besides, they will set up a mechanism there so that people can have first-hand experiences like how to buy tickets at a station, he added.

Construction work of the Tk



A mock-up coach of the metro rail was installed at the Metro Rail Exhibition & Information Center in Uttara yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

22,000-crore MRT Line-6, which began in 2016, has made 40.36 per cent progress as of January, and is expected to be opened to the public on December 16, 2021, coinciding with the golden jubilee of the country’s independence.

Once completed, the rail service, which has 16 stations, will be able to carry 60,000 passengers per hour, reducing travel time from Uttara to Motijheel to at least less than an hour from the current two hours.

More than nine kilometres of the 20.1km long viaduct is now visible

and work is continuing on the remaining ones.

Meanwhile, the government has decided to extend the line -- now under construction from Uttara to Motijheel -- up to Kamalapur Railway Station so that people can avail the rail service directly from the country’s largest railway station.

The topographical survey for it has already been done and now a “social survey” is being conducted. After completing the extension work, the total length of the rail route would be 21.26km with 17 stations.

Adding a touch of history

SAYED MOHMUD ULLAH



Thousands of book lovers’ footsteps graced Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday, a venue for Amar Ekushey book fair. But this site has witnessed significant historic events, most importantly, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s speech on March 7, 1971.

Aspecialcornerofthefairhighlights the words of Bangabandhu’s speech. Titled “Shangram” corner, this area celebrates the Father of the Nation’s illustrious life and work.

Visitors are learning more about the country’s history and achievements through these exhibits

set up near Mukto Moncho at the Udyan. There is another corner titled “Arjan Chatter,” which lists the achievements of the country starting from 1997.

“Ekushey book fair is generally revered as the biggest festival for books, but these new corners and exhibits really added more value to the fair,” said Tanbir Hasan Shaikat, a member of Dhaka University Central Students’ Union (Ducs).

The festivals at Shangram corner include Bangabandhu’s statement against Ayub Khan’s “basic democracies” on June 25, 1962; formation of Sorbodolijo Chatra Sangram Parishad O Danga Committee on March 11, 1964;

presentation of six-point demand on February 5, 1966; Agartala Conspiracy case of 1968 and so on.

“These initiatives will help the public learn more about the history of our country,” said Shaikat.

Visitors were keenly observing these special corners, while many took photos and selfies as well.

At Arjan Chatter, fair authorities set up a total of 13 festoons including establishment of Payra port at Patuakhali on November 19, 2013; inauguration of Mayor Mohammad Hanif Flyover on October 11, 2013; establishment of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant at Ishwardi on October 2, 2013; verdict of Bangabandhu murder on January 28, 2010 and so on.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS, RASHED SHUMON

Large, bright posters at Sangram and Arjan corners of the book fair have proven to be a great way to learn about the country’s history and achievements, alongside taking a few photos.

OVERVALUING SPORTS EQUIPMENT

Former civil surgeon embezzled Tk 41 lakh: ACC inquiry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Exaggerating prices of sports equipment several times higher, former Satkhira civil surgeon Dr Towhidur Rahman misappropriated about Tk 41 lakh from public fund, found an ACC inquiry.

The price of a Tk 2,200 football was inflated to Tk 5,000. Similarly, a cricket bat’s value was shown at Tk 15,000, at least three times higher than the actual price, said officials of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Already facing cases for procurement anomalies, Towhidur bought 20 footballs and 50 cricket bats for a Medical Assistant Training School (MATS) and Institute of Health Technology (IHT) in 2017-18 fiscal.

“Towhidur didn’t wait for approval from DGHS [Directorate General of Health Services] to procure these,” said an inquiry official.

Meanwhile, ACC Director Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya said the commission has already approved filing of two cases in this regard.

The anti-graft watchdog will sue Towhidur Rahman and Benevolent Enterprise owner Shahinur Rahman for misappropriation.

ACC sources said Towhidur sought allocation on December 31, 2017 from the director of DGHS for procuring sports and medical equipment and furniture.

Even before getting allocation, the former civil surgeon floated tender for supply of footballs, cricket bats and balls, gloves, stumps, pads, helmets on February 15, 2018.

He gave work order to Benevolent Enterprise on May 15, 2018. Nine days later, it supplied all the equipment and submitted two separate bills each worth Tk 50 lakh, document shows.

After deducting VAT and income tax, then civil surgeon approved his bills and paid him about Tk 89 lakh.

An expert team comprising Directorate of Sports members visited both MATS and IHT and inspected quality of those items on September 26, 2019.

An ACC official said, “They found that the actual price of the sports equipment supplied to MATS is Tk 23.69 lakh and IHT is Tk 23.88 lakh.” “Both contractor and civil surgeon misappropriated Tk 41.42 lakh,” he added.

ACC deputy assistant directors Ferdous Rahman and Shahidur Rahman investigated the incident, which was supervised by Deputy Director Shamsul Alam.

On September 9 last year, a Satkhira court sent Towhidur to jail in another graft case filed over misappropriating Tk 16.61 crore.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare allocated the money in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 fiscal years for procuring various medical equipment for hospitals and health complexes.

But, the then civil surgeon Towhidur, who retired in February 2019, allegedly embezzled the money by issuing fake documents of procurement. ACC sources said Towhidur is now on bail. The Daily Star could not reach Towhidur and Shahinur for comments.

GENDER-DIVERSE POPULATION

98pc face stigma, harassment: report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The gender-diverse population of Bangladesh have been facing a wide range of violence, including sexual assault and rape by members of the mainstream community, forced marriages, abuse from family, denial of inheritance and much more, a study has revealed.

Some 98 percent of the population faces harassment, stigma, and discrimination, while 97 percent of them face police entrapment and harassment in public places, said the study, titled “Political Economy Analysis for Gender Diverse Communities in Bangladesh”.

Bandhu Social Welfare Society, a non-government organisation working for the rights of the sexual minority, organised a programme to disseminate findings of the report at The Daily Star Centre.

The study was conducted among 346 respondents in five districts -- Chattogram, Dhaka/Gazipur, Mymensingh, Narayananj and Rajshahi between January and April last year. Aged between 15-65, they included sex workers, dancers, activists, students, service holders, entrepreneurs and others.

Prof ASM Amanullah from Dhaka University presented the paper, moderated by Md Moshir Rahman, deputy manager of Bandhu.

According to 98 percent of respondents, policymakers and stakeholders are not sensitised about them, their culture and behaviour, the study showed.

Although the third gender was recognised by the government in 2013, they have continued to face extreme discrimination in every aspect of their lives -- from accessing healthcare services, education, safe living spaces, public transports to constitutional rights.

The study also revealed that 82 percent of respondents have no permanent income. A vast majority of them have no permanent jobs or do not get any formal job due to their behaviour, lack of education, and adverse attitude of the society.

Although the third gender has been

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Girl arrested over stepmother’s murder in Ashulia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Sheli Begum (40), lived with her husband and two children at their home in Charalpara area of Ashulia of Savar. On Friday night, she was alone at home while the rest of the family went out, and she was found murdered later in the night. According to the case statement, the victim's son Shobuj, a university student, found the lights switched off at the house when he returned around 9:30pm. After entering, he found his step-sister Sanjida Akter with an unknown person at the house. Upon seeing Shobuj, the two tried to flee. Locals caught Sanjida but the other person managed to escape. Meanwhile, Shobuj discovered his mother's dead body at home. Sanjida lived in a separate house in Ashulia. Police detained her on Friday and yesterday she was shown arrested after the victim's husband filed a murder case accusing Sanjida and an unknown person. Nurul Huda, sub-inspector of Ashulia Police Station said the dead body was sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital for autopsy. Javed Masud, inspector (investigation) of Ashulia Police Station said they were investigating the incident. Motive behind the murder is yet to be known.



A family of four rides a motorcycle clearly cramped for space. As one child sits on the tank, another is sandwiched between his parents. This puts not only the family but vehicles around them in great risk of accidents. The photo was taken from Shanir Akhra on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Road accidents kill four, injure six

STAR REPORT

At least four people were killed and six injured in road accidents across the country yesterday, report our correspondents. In Faridpur, college student Md Tarek Bapari (16) was killed and five were injured after a battery-run auto-rickshaw collided with Tarek's bike at Nayrashi Jorinar Kupparia Bridge area of Sadarpur upazila around 8:45am. Tarek was a 12th-grader at Sadarpur Govt College and son of Siraj Bapari of the upazila. Quoting locals, Md Sohidul Islam, chairperson of Sadarpur union parishad, said after the accident, Tarek died on the spot and the auto-rickshaw fell into a roadside ditch, injuring five of its passengers. The injured were rushed to the upazila health complex, and later, three of them were shifted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital as their condition deteriorated, he said. In Savar, Rashid Khan (35) was killed on the spot after a speeding truck hit him while he was crossing the road at Fulbaria area around 8am, said police. Police were trying to trace the truck and its driver. In Rajbari, Md Hanif Biswas (37) died and one was injured after their motorbike collided with a roadside tree at Majbari area of Kalukhali upazila around 10:30am, said police, quoting locals. The accident occurred after Hanif lost control over the vehicle. The injured pillion passenger was taken to the upazila health complex. In Mymensingh, Mozammel Haque (50) was killed after a truck hit his motorbike at Ramgopalpur Baluakandi area of Gouripur upazila around 7am, said police, quoting locals. He was taken to the upazila health complex and was then referred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) as his condition deteriorated, they added. Mozammel died at MMCH around 1pm. Police recovered the body and sent it to the hospital's morgue for autopsy. They also seized the truck but its driver managed to flee. A case was lodged.

2 jailed for running coaching centre

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A mobile court convicted two people for running a coaching centre during SSC examinations in Mymensingh yesterday. The court led by Executive Magistrate Md Saiful Islam jailed Ariful Islam (35) and Touhidul Islam (25) for one month each. They were running a coaching centre “Arif Private Coaching Centre” at Bhaikandi in Phulpur upazila defying a government ban that all coaching centres have to be kept shut during public exams, said Saiful Islam, also Phulpur upazila nirbahi officer. The coaching centre is close to a centre of ongoing SSC exams, he said.

Cabinet okays draft law

FROM PAGE 3 A director of the hospital will be the executive officer of the hospital while each of the directors will be appointed for three years, he said. Anwarul also said that the government will formulate necessary rules through gazette as part of the move to implement the law accordingly. The cabinet also approved the draft of the agreement to be signed between Bangladesh and Greece regarding assistance on education and culture, he said, adding, “Bangladesh has already signed agreements with 44 countries on cultural assistance aimed at enhancing cultural ties with those countries.” The meeting was apprised of the premier's participation in “Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week 2020” and “Zayed Sustainability Award 2020” in the United Arab Emirates from January 12-14.

Police rescue infant from Ctg graveyard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police on patrol duty rescued a seven-month-old baby who was abandoned at a graveyard in Chattogram Polytechnic Institute area yesterday afternoon. “We saw a man getting down from a CNG-run auto-rickshaw with something wrapped in a cloth around 1:30pm,” Assistant Sub-Inspector Hiron Miah of Khulshi Police Station said. “The man threw it to the graveyard and quickly got back on the auto-rickshaw,” he added. Intrigued, the police team approached the spot and found out it was a baby girl. “We rushed the rescued baby to Chattogram Medical College Hospital,” Hiron Miah said. “The baby is undergoing treatment at the ICU. We don't understand why the man threw a baby into a graveyard.” Pranab Chowdhury, OC of Khulshi Police Station, said police were investigating the matter.

Furniture trader murdered in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A furniture trader was found murdered near his shop at a fair in Chattogram early yesterday. The body of Md Jamal (50) bore injury marks on the head and right eye, said police. His head might have been thrashed with any heavy object, said Patiya Police Station Officer-in-Charge Borhan Uddin. Jamal from Narsingdi set up his makeshift shop at Nalanda in Patiya upazila for the fair that is traditionally held during an urs (a religious programme) at nearby Garibullah Shah Shrine, said the OC. Yesterday was the urs' last day, which began on February 10. The police officer could not confirm the exact reason behind the murder. “A gang of robbers might have attacked him,” said OC Borhan. There was no sign of ransacking inside the stall. After investigation, it will be cleared whether any valuable or money has been taken away, he said. The OC said they did not find any who could assist Jamal run the shop. Police filed a murder case over the incident and sent the body to Chattogram Medical College morgue for autopsy.

98pc face

FROM PAGE 3 included in voter registration, 86 percent of respondents said they have no separate voter list, 83 percent think political parties are not thinking about them and 77 percent believe political parties do not have any specific agenda for them. Focus group discussions findings also point out that although sometimes they have been used to entertain political campaigns, they are victims of sexual harassment by political leaders and are often tortured by the police over false accusations. 90 percent respondents also said they face mental and sexual harassment while receiving health services, while 88 percent said their sexual and reproductive health needs are not adequately addressed. “If we really want inclusive as well as sustainable development, we must include our sexual and gender diverse population, because the key agenda of SDG is leaving no one behind,” said Saleh Ahmed, executive director of Bandhu while speaking at the event. Prof Md Farhadul Islam, member of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) assured that from this year, they are going to revise the curriculum, including the issue of the third gender and gender-diverse population in it. M Rabiul Islam, deputy director, member secretary of Transgender, Dalit, and other excluded minority committee of National Human Rights Commission; and Slavica Radosevic, political processes team lead of USAID Bangladesh spoke at the event, among others.

Prof Akhtar Jahan no more

CITY DESK

Prof Akhtar Jahan Farida Banu passed away yesterday at United Hospital in the capital at the age of 82, said a press release. Prof Akhtar served as a head of the Bangla department at Eden College, and professor of Bangla at Dhaka College. She was also a Rabindra Sangeet singer of BTV and Bangladesh Radio. She was the wife of Late Dr Ashequr Rahman Khan, former director of Holy Family Hospital. She left behind her son Advocate Adilur Rahman Khan, daughters Dr Tashmim Farhana Dipta, Taskin Fahmina Prita, their spouses and five grandchildren and a host of well-wishers to mourn her. Her namaz-e-janaza was held after Esha prayers at Gulshan Azad Mosque. She will be laid to rest today at their family home in Munshiganj's Srinagar.

150 rape

FROM PAGE 3 Among the eight crime divisions of DMP, Lalbagh and Tejaon divisions jointly achieved first rank in combating crime. Among four divisions of its Detective Branch, the south division achieved the first rank in combating crime and investigating cases. DMP Commissioner Shafiqul Islam awarded best police officials at conference, for their duty in ensuring public security and maintaining law and order.

Seminar, campaign on coronavirus held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'singh

A scientific seminar and mass awareness programme on “Recent Outbreaks of Novel Coronavirus” was held at Mymensingh Medical College's (MMC) auditorium yesterday. The event was a joint effort of MMC's Department of Medicine and Bangladesh Society of Medicine (BSM), Mymensingh branch. Speakers said the global situation regarding coronavirus is worsening every day, as the mortality rate is increasing. World Health Organization (WHO) has recently declared an emergency health situation throughout the world as the virus has created a serious panic. Although cases of coronavirus are yet to be reported in Bangladesh -- doctors, nurses and common people must take precautionary measures, they said. “[We] urge doctors, nurses and citizens to know about the dangers coronavirus poses,” said Dr Md Khurshed Alam, an associate professor of Medicine at MMC. People involved in coronavirus treatment must ensure hand-washing and sanitising facilities, Dr Khurshed added. Prof Chandanendu Bhushan Sarker -- president of BSM, Mymensingh branch -- was in the chair, and top health officials in Mymensingh were present at the programme.

Flat for Sale at Uttara, Sector-7
3 bed, 4 bath, spacious living and dining rooms, study, family lounge, kitchen pantry store, maid's room and bath, 2500sft. Driver's room and 2 car park at the ground floor.
Contact-01792579242, 01817024701


INDUSTRIAL PLOT SALE
Fifty bigha land in Khulna, bank of Bhairab river with boundary wall with Verieties size Building. Total area 1,68,754 SFT.
Contact : 01852-110111

NOTICE FOR CLOSING DOWN PULS TRADING FAR EAST LIMITED, CHITTAGONG LIAISON OFFICE

This is for information of all stakeholders of the **Puls Trading Far East Limited, Chittagong Liaison Office** that the Board of Directors of Puls Trading Far East Limited, the parent company of the above Liaison Office, have taken a decision for closing down Puls Trading Far East Limited, Chittagong Liaison Office, Bangladesh in a Board meeting held on 4th February, 2020 at 10.00 A.M. at 22 Floor, Tower 6, China Hong Kong City, 33 Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
According to the board decision, the effective closing date of the Liaison Office will be 14th of May 2020.
After publication of this notice, if any person has any objection or any claim with Puls Trading Far East Limited, Chittagong Liaison Office, he/she is requested to contact **Mr. Ziaur Rahman** of Puls Trading Far East Limited (authorized through the above mentioned Board meeting dated 4th February, 2020) in writing by **30th April 2020 latest.**

To-Let
Independent 3 Storied building at Nikunja-1, adjacent Army Golf Club. Duplex, Central gas, Basement, 3 parking House-2A, Road-2.
Ph: 01715 034984

Full furnished Flat TO-LET
A full furnished 1700 sft. flat in **Dhanmondi**, Road 9/A. Foreigners preferred.
Contact : 01931222888, 01711840084

Death Anniversary

Today is the 9th Death Anniversary of Ali Ul Islam, Former Chief Selector and Manager of Bangladesh Cricket Board, foremost Captain of Abahoni Cricket Team and the owner of Alees Marketing. To mark the day, a Milad and Duamahfil will be held at his work place today.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Director
Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control & Research (IEDCR), Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212
Telephone: 9842270, 9898796, 9898691 Fax: 9880440
e-mail: info@iedcr.gov.bd Website: www.iedcr.gov.bd
Memo No. IEDCR/STI Surveillance/Re-E-Tender/2019-20/ Date: 16.02.2020

Re-Tender Notice: 02/2019-20

Re-E-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of the following goods:

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of the items	Tender ID No.
1.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender P-1	Desktop, Printer, UPS, Modem	427785
2.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender P-2	Laptop	427833
3.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender P-3	Real Time PCR Machine	427847
4.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender P-4	Automated Microbial Identification & Susceptibility System with MIC	427856
5.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender P-5	Heating Block	427862
6.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender/P-6	RT PCR Kit	427868
7.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender P-7	Bacterial DNA Extraction Kit	427880
8.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender/P-8	NH Test Card, Calibration Kit, others	427883

This is an online tender, where only Re-E-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
To submit Re-E-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the Re-E-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 2.00pm on 09.03.2020.
The closing & opening time of tenders are shown below:

Sl. No	Description	Date	Time
1.	IEDCR/STI/Re-Tender P-1, P-2, P-3, P-4, P-5, P-6, P-7, P-8	09.03.2020	Closing 3:00pm Opening 3:00pm

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
NB: Funding for this procurement under STI Surveillance (Survey Code-3257104).

GD-302

Kurmitola Golf Club
Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Request for Expression of Interest for Selecting Consultancy Firm

Division/ Office/Entity Name	Kurmitola Golf Club
Expression of Interest for Short listing of consultant for	Selection of Local/ International Consultant Firm
Key Information	
Procurement Method	Kurmitola Golf Club
Budget and Source of Fund	5th March 2020 by 12 00 Hrs
Particular Information	
EOI Closing Date	5th March 2020 by 12 00 Hrs
Name and Address of the Office	
Office of the “Chief Executive Officer, Kurmitola Golf Club, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka - 1206, Email - kgcdhaka@hotmail.com	
Information for Tenderer	
Brief Description of Assignments	
Kurmitola Golf Club is a veritable heaven for golf enthusiasts in Bangladesh and other golfers around the world. This club is providing state of the art facility for all golfers and reached its summit by hosting International Tournaments. Looking forward, the club decided to make the following renovation to maintain the standard of this renowned club:	
1. The club currently has a residential building, maintenance building, pump house and mosque complex westside of club house Building. The club desires to design and construct new residential building, maintenance building, pump house and mosque complex in a new multi storied building to an international level with all modern facilities and amenities that will add value to this International Standard club including basement car parking, KGC Office, and other all existing facilities. The total area of KGC is covered with an old fashion boundary wall. This needs to be reconstructed with new and modern look boundary wall which will not only enhance the beauty but also ensure adequate protection and security.	
2. The club house currently has one main entrance with parking on both sides of the main approach road. The club desires to redesign / modify the same.	
Referring to the above mentioned plans for renovation, the club authority is inviting interested renowned local/international consultancy firms to provide their Expression of Interest (EOI) for the said work.	
All Studies and Designs for the renovation shall be in accordance with the highest standards of International Engineering Profession.	
Qualification and Experience	
Eligible Consulting firms are to indicate their Interest in providing the said service. The consultant must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services along with supporting documents e.g. brochures, past experience certificate etc. Submitted EOI needs to be supported by the following: ⇒ Reputable corporate international / national organizations with 10 years of experience in same of the above activities ⇒ Proven track record with strong engineering (technical) and management team (documentary proof to be provided) ⇒ Good track record and experience in consultancy management / service. ⇒ Strong interpersonal and communication skills for reporting and negotiating with relevant authorities ⇒ The consultant shall have sufficient knowledge of residential and mosque building / multi storied building including car parking at basement and engineering design. ⇒ Evidence of availability of qualified professional personnel ⇒ Updated Trade License ⇒ Certificate of Incorporation, Bank Solvency, VAT and TIN Certificates.	
The above mentioned criteria are an outline of the selection criteria. The KPI of the company should be highlighted.	
The detailed TOR, qualification criteria and resource requirements will be clearly mentioned during the RFP. RFP will be issued to ONLY shortlisted Consultancy firms.	
Special Instruction	
1. To visit the facility, please contact the Kurmitola Golf Club seeking assistance in facilitating the site inspection. 2. The club authority reserves the right to accept or reject all EOI's.	
Deliverables	
2 X Colour Hard copy addressing the following: Office of the “Chief Executive Officer, Kurmitola Golf Club, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka - 1206, Bangladesh” Email - kgcdhaka@hotmail.com	

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Institutional Development and Capacity Building (Phase-2) Project
River Research Institute, 72 Green Road, Dhaka
Phone: +880-2-58155538 Fax: 0631-63065 Web Site: www.rrri.gov.bd


Memo No.-RR1/Pra. Unnoyoni/1359/2018/324 Date: 16/02/2020

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concerned that the following tenders are invited in the national e-GP portal:

Sl.No.	Tender ID No.	Last Selling Date	Opening Date
1	425547	08/03/2020	09/03/2020

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)


16.02.2020
(Dr. Moniruzzaman Khan Eusufzai)
Senior Scientific Officer & Project Director
mkeusufzai@rrri.gov.bd

GD-305



ব্যাংক এশিয়া এজেন্ট ব্যাংকিং

বাংলাদেশে এজেন্ট ব্যাংকিং সেবার প্রবর্তক (১৭ জানুয়ারী - ২০১৪)

ব্যাংক এশিয়া



Corporate Office
Rangs Tower
68, Purana Paltan
Dhaka-1000
Tel: +88029515106
www.bankasia-bd.com

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA TUESDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2020, FALGUN 5, 1426 BS

Wasting ICU equipment

Why has such gross negligence gone unpunished?

IT is a blatant display of utter neglect. When many hospitals in the country lack rudimentary lifesaving devices, that a hospital in the country would allow costly equipment in its inventory to fall into disrepair and eventually become obsolete before being put to use, is shocking. And even more so if that happens to be a specialised hospital set up for the treatment of cancer. It is outrageous, but true, that the National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital (NICRH) has been negligent in the maintenance of very expensive hospital equipment, including ICU ventilators. And in this respect, five senior doctors and officials of NICRH have been found in dereliction of their duty, in a report forwarded to the High Court (HC) following its ruling. It taxes one's credulity to learn that this equipment had been procured 12 years back and none of the several project directors found the time to have them installed.

But there are other even more outrageous aspects of this episode. Were it not for the fact that the matter was exposed in a report in January this year in this newspaper, and the suo moto rule of the High Court on the government that very day, one wonders whether the matter would have come to light at all? One also wonders about the chain of oversight and supervision in the entire system of the health ministry's administration. Are we to believe that nobody from the ministry or the DG Health's office had visited the hospital even once in the last 12 years? The situation exposes a serious systemic void bordering on criminality.

We thank the HC, without whose role some of the issues of public interest, including this one, would have continued to be neglected and public funds would have continued to be frittered away with impunity. We are glad that the HC has sought further information regarding the steps taken against the officials and set February 23 as the date to pass further orders on the issue. Squandering public money deserves the severest of punishments.

17-year-old ban yet to be fully applied

Why are unfit vehicles invisible only to the authorities?

BANNED three-wheelers with two-stroke engines continue to ply the streets of Dhaka, as seen in a photograph published by this newspaper yesterday. In the photo, taken in the city's Lalbagh area, three-wheelers that have no fitness certificates can be seen, with one of them running on the street with passengers in it. The three-wheelers in question have no turn signals and no number plates, with just a few numbers painted on them by their owners. Yet, they continue to operate in broad daylight.

How is this possible? What happened to the much-touted drives to free Dhaka's streets from all unfit vehicles? And how did the owners and drivers of these vehicles become so emboldened as to operate them so openly? The most likely explanation, of course, is that they are plying the streets in exchange for bribes.

The decision to ban three-wheelers with two-stroke engines was taken in 2003—nearly two decades ago now—based mainly on environmental considerations, as exhaust from these vehicles reduces air quality. According to a study published in the *Journal of the Air & Waste Management Association*, samples collected from 2000 to 2004 showed how removing these vehicles reduced fine particulate matter and black carbon concentrations from city roads. Now, with so much talk going on about Dhaka's poor air quality, it is shocking to see drivers of three-wheelers with two-stroke engines ignoring the ban without any fear, and without the authorities stepping in and removing them from the streets.

The authorities need to strictly enforce the ban on vehicles with two-stroke engines. And the only way to make that happen is for the authorities to actually launch and continue with drives to remove unfit vehicles from the roads. These drives cannot be sporadic, but must be continuous.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Why should there be rigid timings for Boi Mela?

Yesterday I visited the book fair around noon and all I could see were closed stalls and the security dismissing people, saying that the fair won't start until 3 pm. What is this new rule? People from all over the country spend their valuable time and money to visit the book fair, only to be dismissed in this way.

Why let the fair continue if people for whom it is held are deprived of it? So many people are missing out on the event due to this ridiculous rule. Also, where was it stated in the first place that no one will be allowed entry before 3 pm? People deserve to be reimbursed the commute fare they are spending on their way in, especially when they're being sent back in this manner. It's a matter of concern for the general public and we demand an explanation for this rule!

Nawazeesh M. Ali, Sent via email



PHOTO: STAR



MS SIDDIQUI

NOVEL Coronavirus was first identified in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei province, in early December 2019. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the virus a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on January 30. However, the virus has not yet been declared a "pandemic"—a term used to describe an infectious disease which has spread globally—and the WHO has not recommended any trade or travel restrictions.

However, a number of countries have issued warnings against travelling to Hubei and elsewhere in China, as well as restrictions on entry of travellers from China. Some international commercial airlines have suspended flights to and from China and some vessels are also not calling at Chinese ports.

The Chinese government has imposed restrictions on movement within China in response to the outbreak. Manufacturing industries are on an extended holiday that began during Chinese New Year. The shutdown of Chinese manufacturing is likely to have an impact on the global supply chain, along with a consequential impact on construction projects and other downstream industries.

The final consequence of this is a slowdown of the "global factory" due to the coronavirus outbreak, through both the domestic markets of China and their involvement in the global supply chain. Chinese goods make up more than 26 percent of Bangladesh's total imports, which includes raw materials, finished products, machinery and consumer products worth around USD14 billion per annum. The consumer market in Bangladesh is also dependent on Chinese supply.

Though there have been no coronavirus cases detected in Bangladesh so far, the country's economy is now likely to face an adverse impact because it maintains close trade relations with China. Readymade garments (RMG) is a major sector of manufacturing and export for Bangladesh, and more than 50 percent of the raw materials used for this industry are brought from China. Due to the virus outbreak in China, disruptions in the supply chain could continue for several more months, leading to a financial loss worth BDT 14-15 billion for the garments accessories sector alone. The failure of delivery from Chinese exporters may compel buyers in other countries to claim compensations for a breach of contract with regard to timely delivery, and on the other hand, the overseas buyers of RMG from Bangladesh may also claim compensation from exporters in Bangladesh.

However, the contracting parties may be excused from this breach of contract by using the "force majeure" (FM) clause. Force majeure events are unexpected circumstances outside of a contracting party's reasonable control that, having arisen, prevent it from performing its contractual obligations. Usually, international sales contracts do not explicitly mention this clause. Affected parties should consider whether

their contracts make provisions for force majeure clauses and whether the outbreak falls within the protection offered by the relevant clause.

Force majeure clauses can be relied upon only if all reasonable steps have been taken by a party to mitigate the effect of the event, so it is unclear whether Bangladesh can be excused by invoking this clause. The shortage of component materials may have an impact on pricing now and in future months, the scarcity of such parts may well drive prices upwards if demand remains stable. As a result, contracts should be reviewed to ensure that protection against price rises is also included, or whether they need to agree to new terms or "flex" other parts of their supply chains to ensure adequate provision of stocks at a commercially sensible price.

On the basis of the emergency declared by the WHO, force majeure provisions are likely to be increasingly relied upon and invoked by an affected party. The China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) announced



PHOTO: STAR/FILE

that it would be offering "force majeure certificates" to businesses in China affected by the outbreak of the coronavirus in Wuhan.

Whether a Chinese exporter can successfully invoke FM, and/or rely on the CCPIT certificates to do so, will depend on the governing law of the contract and the terms of the relevant clause. The CCPIT has already issued its first force majeure certificate to a manufacturing company in Zhejiang province to help stem the firm's losses, arising from its inability to meet its contractual obligations with Peugeot's African plant, which potentially exposed it to a damages claim.

Release from performance as a result of force majeure is not recognised as a standalone principle in some countries, such as the UK. It is therefore a matter for parties to deal with expressly in their contracts and the protection afforded by the clause will depend on the precise drafting. In the event of a dispute as to the

scope of the clause, the English courts will apply the usual principles of contractual interpretation.

According to global law firm Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher, "The usual rules of contractual interpretation under English law apply to the interpretation of force majeure clauses. The court must ascertain the objective meaning of the language which the parties have chosen to express their agreement, and consider not only the wording of the particular force majeure clause but must also consider the contract as a whole and, depending on the nature, formality and quality of drafting of the contract, give more or less weight to elements of the wider context in reaching its view as to that objective meaning. Market practice may also be relevant to the exercise of interpretation, provided that it is clearly evidenced. In practice, however, market practice may be difficult to prove and a recent English case has confirmed that evidence of market practice after a contract is concluded will not result in terms being implied into a contract."

The crisis along shipping lines are likely to be more acute, since the business is highly regulated by laws and protocols. The shipping industry is likely to be impacted in a number of ways—they are facing disruptions in voyages to and from China, but also from delays in other countries as a result of quarantine and port checks due to cases, or suspected cases, of the coronavirus amongst crew and passengers on board vessels. Delivery of cargo may be delayed, or cargo may need to be discharged at alternative or interim ports, with expensive consequences and significant logistical and insurance implications.

International law firm Morrison and Foerster LLP recently provided an overview of force majeure clauses under Chinese law and English law, noting that in relation to Chinese law, "Useful guidance in evaluating the applicability of force majeure to the coronavirus outbreak is a notice of the Supreme

People's Court (SPC) issued in 2003 in relation to the SARS epidemic, which confirmed that force majeure would apply where the SARS epidemic or government measures adopted to combat it rendered a contract unable to be performed. It is not unreasonable to expect similar SPC guidance in response to the current outbreak, but even without that formal guidance, force majeure may be a useful doctrine for defaulting parties in appropriate circumstances."

As for the Hong Kong law, the authors examined the importance of the doctrine of frustration in circumstances where a contract does not contain a force majeure clause and, in relation to force majeure itself—"Whether the coronavirus outbreak qualifies as a force majeure event ultimately will depend on the construction of the contractual clause at issue. Some clauses may make it reasonably clear if they specifically identify "disease", "epidemic", or "quarantine" as force majeure events. Other clauses may include more general events such as "acts of God", "acts of

government", "strikes", or "circumstances beyond the parties' control". The current outbreak could be a combination of more than one factor, the disease/epidemic itself and the government/public actions that ensue. Affected parties should carefully review the force majeure clauses in their contracts to determine whether they may apply."

Consequently, Bangladeshi exporters may evaluate their sales contracts and also the possible impacts of failure to export RMG on time, and figure out whether they can claim compensation from Chinese sources of raw materials. The Export Promotion Bureau and BGMEA should study the issue, evaluating the laws and practices related to force majeure of buyers' countries. This will be a new experience for buyers and sellers of Bangladesh and act as a good reference for trade law practitioners.

MS Siddiqui is a legal economist. He can be reached at mssiddiqui2035@gmail.com

Tainted politicians, elections and judiciary



PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

THE Indian Supreme Court's order on February 13—making it mandatory for political parties to put on public domains like Facebook and Twitter the criminal cases that have been lodged against their candidates contesting elections, and to justify the giving of nominations to them once again—has moved the spotlight onto a major area of concern in the country's electoral democracy: the growing criminalisation of politics.

In a recent report, rights group Association of Democratic Reforms pointed out how nearly half of the 542 Lok Sabha lawmakers elected last year have declared criminal cases against them, as shown in their mandatory affidavits. It noted a sharp increase—within the decade since 2009—in elected parliamentarians with cases against them for serious criminal acts, including murder and rape. In their latest report on the Delhi assembly polls held on February 8, it found that 37 of the 70 legislators are facing serious criminal cases.

The apex court, in its February 13 order, noted that in 2004, 24 percent of the members of parliament had criminal cases against them, and that figure went up to 30 per cent in 2009, 34 per cent in 2014 and 43 per cent in 2019. What the latest court order has done is to provide a legal compulsion after the Election Commission had earlier proposed that political parties must go public with an explanation for fielding candidates with criminal cases against them. What is significant about the February 13 order is that it also sought to make the

parties accountable for choosing people with criminal antecedents as their candidates, and not untainted people. The significance of the order lies in the fact that parties often resort to citing the "winability" factor of a candidate as its justification for choosing him or her for the poll.

The criminalisation of politics has, for long, remained a matter of worry. The Election Commission and the judiciary have, from time to time, taken steps to deal with this problem. The Supreme Court in 2013 scrapped a loophole in the Representation of People Act (RPA), which gave a convicted lawmaker the power to remain in office on the grounds that appeals have been filed within three months of conviction, and held that the lawmaker shall be disqualified from the date of conviction. Secondly, not too long ago, the Supreme Court ordered the setting up of special courts to speed up the trial of lawmakers and legislators. The total number of lawmakers in the bicameral parliament and the state assemblies is pegged at 4,896.

While the leaders of various parties have, by and large, welcomed the apex court's February 13 order to make public the details of criminal cases against their candidates, they are not happy with the direction to justify the choice of such candidates. CPI(M) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury was quoted as saying that courts "cannot dictate on the internal affairs of a party." Senior Congress leader and lawyer Ashwani Kumar told The Indian Express that "credentials about leadership are to be established or negated in the people's court and not by judicial diktats" and "whether legislative lassitude and executive lethargy on such issues can justify the court's binding policy prescriptions on matters quintessentially political is highly disputable."

Another difficulty that may be encountered with regard to the court order is that there are times when criminal cases are filed against politicians with a political motive. A solution to this difficulty may be overcome by speedy trial, even though this is often wishful thinking, given the pace of the judicial process.

Will the Supreme Court's February 13 order have a deterrent effect? Former

What is significant about the February 13 order is that it also sought to make the parties accountable for choosing people with criminal antecedents as their candidates, and not untainted people.

Chief Election Commissioner SY Quraishi pointed to the fact that the number of lawmakers with criminal cases went up in last year's Lok Sabha elections. The question that arises is: if the law cannot put a blanket ban on candidates with criminal cases contesting elections, why should political parties refrain from putting them up as their nominees?

There is a view that putting details about criminal cases against candidates on the parties' official websites and social

media platforms only have the effect of "naming and shaming" them and may not be enough to tackle this problem. It is felt that only parliament can enact legislation to ensure that people with criminal antecedents, particularly with cases of heinous crimes against them, are not to be allowed to enter the electoral fray and enter public life. But can this happen if there are already lawmakers with criminal cases against them? There is also the question of whether such a ban is feasible, especially when criminal charges are at times levelled against political rivals with political motives.


In fact, it has already been suggested by some that the judiciary seeking an explanation from parties for its choice of candidates with criminal antecedents, however well-intentioned it is, runs the risk of over-stepping its jurisdiction. It has also been argued that it is the voters who, through their "well-informed" assessment, will decide on whether to elect a person with criminal antecedents. One answer to this line of argument is that, shouldn't the judiciary act when the legislature fails or the Election Commission is not empowered enough to take tough calls? In any case, it is the higher judiciary that is the arbitrator whenever the decisions of the Commission or laws passed by elected legislatures are challenged, even though it is true that the legislature has the power to get around any judicial verdict through suitable legislations.

One may go on endlessly debating the number of ways to curb or stop criminalisation of politics. But the problem will remain intractable as long as the culture of impunity, under which parties field tainted candidates in election after election, continues. That culture must end irreversibly.

Pallab Bhattacharya is a special correspondent for The Daily Star. He writes from New Delhi, India.

BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE

Our missed opportunities



HASEEB MD
IRFANULLAH

ACCORDING to the Global Risks Report 2020 from the World Economic Forum (WEF), biodiversity loss is now the third most serious risk our world is facing in terms of impact. In its 15-year history, the Global Risks Report has never listed biodiversity loss as one of the top five global crises in terms of impact, although it did make the top five global risks in terms of likelihood in 2011, and is featured in the latter list for 2020 as well. Weapons of mass destruction occupied the top position for global risks in terms of impact for the last three years. It is now number two, losing its position to climate change or more specifically, our failure to take proper action against climate change.

Biodiversity conservation and climate change are topics that often come to the fore in discussions. The Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) is an example of this. The BCCSAP talks about adaptations in the fisheries sector, livelihoods in ecologically sensitive areas, and the creation of coastal forests to fight cyclones. “Monitoring of the ecosystem and biodiversity changes and their impacts” is, however, the only programme in that document that explicitly mentions biodiversity. Nevertheless, given the urgency of other climate actions, like flood risk management or inventing climate-resilient crops, one may expect biodiversity-related actions to get less priority among the 44 programmes listed in the BCCSAP.

Back in 2010, when Bangladeshi climate change activists and environmentalists were disappointed with the outcome of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December 2009 and the country’s own Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT) and the donor-funded Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF) were yet to be functional, something fantastic happened. Two long-term development partners of Bangladesh, the British Department for International Development (DFID) and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), supported the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to produce the “Protocol for Monitoring of Impacts of Climate Change and Climate Variability in Bangladesh”.

This was indeed a ground-breaking effort by Bangladesh. After rigorous exercise, detailed methodologies and indicators were developed to measure climate change impacts on the biodiversity of our rivers, wetlands, coasts, sea, and forests. It also



PHOTO: SAYAM U CHOWDHURY

did the same for other important areas, like hydro-meteorology, agriculture, livestock, human health, livelihoods, and poverty. After its publication in 2011, if used, this comprehensive impact monitoring protocol could have helped us to learn how our biodiversity has been changing over the past decade due to climate change and how to respond to that.

Unfortunately, this never happened—a missed opportunity indeed. In fact, this document and long-term biodiversity monitoring simply disappeared from the climate change discussions in Bangladesh. It is not mentioned, for example, in the second and third National Communications on climate change submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2012 and 2018, respectively, or in the sixth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) submitted in November 2019.

The BCCRF has so far allocated around USD 385 million to a wide range of ministries, agencies and NGOs to implement about 660 climate change projects. However,

it did not fund any large-scale, long-term biodiversity and ecosystem monitoring project; it only supported a short-term one in the coastal areas, with the Nature Conservation Management (NACOM), through the Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) in 2013.

Bangladesh has completed a good number of biodiversity projects since the impact monitoring protocol was finalised. Large, multi-year conservation projects, like the Integrated Protected Area Conservation (2009–2012) and Climate Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (2013–2018), both supported by USAID, engaged in biodiversity monitoring in the protected areas to check project impacts. The Wetland Biodiversity Rehabilitation Project (2009–2016), supported by the German agency GIZ, monitored the aquatic biodiversity of the wetlands and rivers of the Rajshahi region, continuing two years after the main project activities were finished. However, none of these projects, such as the USD 36 million Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Project (2011–2016) of the

Bangladesh Forest Department or the Switzerland-funded Tanguar Haor project (2006–2016) of the IUCN, thought of monitoring climate change impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems.

These missed opportunities show that even long-term conservation initiatives that are sufficiently funded by single donors can fail to acknowledge the need for long-term biodiversity monitoring with regard to climate change. They failed to see beyond the project tenure. Our recent conservation projects have been thinking more of people, rather than biodiversity *per se*.

It is true—we have lost a decade and are still yet to combine biodiversity monitoring with climate change, but let us now look forward by looking into the past. One of the best examples of long-term monitoring of biodiversity in Bangladesh is the migratory water bird census. Every winter, the Bangladesh Bird Club (BBC), a group of bird-enthusiasts, coordinates this survey in haors, riverine chars, and the coastal areas of Bangladesh. Over the last three decades, this census has been giving us a yearly picture

of migratory water birds, their numbers and diversity. We can now use this large database and link it with national and regional climate data from the past 30 years to explain changes in the migratory birds’ visits to Bangladesh.

We can do the same for other ecosystems. Numerous projects and individual researchers have been collecting biodiversity and ecological data from different forests and wetlands, as well as natural and modified ecosystems, for a long time. We can compile the data, analyse it, and study the trends of change in certain wildlife, plants or other elements of a particular ecosystem over the past few decades. Relating biodiversity data with changes in our climate could help us to forecast the future trends and plan for it.

But who will lead or coordinate such ventures? We have two real opportunities before us. The Bangladesh Forest Department is now implementing the USD 175 million Sustainable Forests and Livelihoods (SUFAL) project, funded by the World Bank, to be run till 2023. This project has an “Innovation Window” to fund research proposals, including those related to climate change impacts on forests and biodiversity conservation. SUFAL can take up the impact monitoring protocol developed by the IUCN in 2011, update it, and start implementation. This would be a fantastic step forward, one which should have started long ago.

The second opportunity comes with the second phase of the Sundarban Management Project (2019–22). In this phase, GIZ plans to establish a model of ecological monitoring of the Sundarbans, which will later be scaled up for the whole forest. UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee (WHC) has been expecting ecological monitoring reports on the Bangladesh Sundarbans since 2016. In 2017, the Bangladesh Forest Department compiled available ecological data and submitted a report to the WHC. That report could be a good starting point and climate change-biodiversity aspects could be included in it, which is also what the WHC suggested.

We talk about creating new forests with billions of seedlings to remove extra carbon dioxide from the air and fight climate change. Stopping ecological destruction, protecting existing forests and wetlands, and restoring damaged ecosystems are also an important part of reducing climate change impacts. At the same time, we should immediately put together our biodiversity information and climate data, in order to analyse the past changes, predict the future, and make preparations for what lies ahead.

Dr Haseeb Md Irfanullah is a biologist-turned-development-practitioner with a keen interest in research and its communication. He is an independent consultant working on environment, climate change, and research systems. His Twitter handle is @hmirfanullah



পাবেন বেশি | দেবেন কম | বাংলাদেশে এই প্রথম

ক্যাশ ইন-এ
প্রতি হাজারে
৫ টাকা
ক্যাশ ব্যাক

প্রতি হাজারে
ক্যাশ আউট চার্জ
১৪.৫
টাকা



নগদ
ডাক বিভাগের ডিজিটাল লেনদেন

ডায়াল *৯৬৭৯ | বিকল্পিত আনব্রহে 16167 | 09609616167 | nagad.com.bd

App ডাউনলোড
করতে স্ক্যান করুন



NEWSIN

brief

Nirbhaya convicts to hang on March 3

NDTV ONLINE

The four convicts, who got death penalty for the gangrape and murder of a 23-year-old medical student in Delhi - dubbed Nirbhaya by the media -- more than seven years ago, will be hanged on March 3, at 6:00am. The death warrant was issued after the Tihar jail authorities informed the trial court that three of the four convicts -- Vinay Sharma, Pawan Gupta, Mukesh Singh and Akshay Singh -- have exhausted all legal options.

Taliban kill five Afghan soldiers

AFP, Kabul

At least five Afghan soldiers were killed when Taliban fighters stormed their base in northern Afghanistan, officials said yesterday, as the country waits for an expected "reduction in violence" before a US-Taliban deal. The attack happened in Shora Khak area of volatile Kunduz province on Sunday.

Somali journalist shot dead: police

AFP, Mogadishu

Several gunmen shot dead a Somali journalist near Mogadishu, police said yesterday, in the latest attack on press. Freelance journalist Abdiweli Ali Hassan, was killed yesterday in the town of Afgoye, some 30 kilometres from the capital. The journalist contributed to the London-based Somali channel Universal TV and the Mogadishu-based Kulmiye Radio Station. The murder comes just days after Amnesty International said in a report that journalists in Somalia are "under siege", facing bombings, beatings, attacks and arrests.



Protesters hold placards reading "Margaret Macron, this time we will win" under a photomontage of both late British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and French President Emmanuel Macron as they demonstrate in front of Paris' Louvre Museum yesterday, in Paris as part of a multi-sector strike against the French government's pensions overhaul.

PHOTO: AFP

CRITICISM OF INDIA OVER KASHMIR

UK MP stopped at airport, deported

REUTERS, London

A British lawmaker, who chairs an all-party group on Kashmir, has been denied entry to India after she criticised the government's decision to strip the disputed region Himalayan region of its constitutional autonomy. Debbie Abrahams, a member of parliament for the opposition Labour party, landed at New Delhi's international airport yesterday but claims she was unable to clear customs after her Indian visa was rejected. Abrahams said she had no plans to visit Kashmir during what she called a "private visit" to India to see relatives, although she had been planning to journey on to the Pakistani capital Islamabad to discuss the issue. She has been critical of the Indian government for revoking Kashmir's special status last August, which allowed the region to make its own laws, in an attempt to integrate the country's only Muslim-majority region more fully. Abrahams said she was "treated like a criminal" and told to leave India before being marched on to a plane bound for Dubai. "The immigration officer looked at his screen and started shaking his head and saying 'no, no, no'," she told Sky News. "Then he said the visa had been rejected, took my passport, went off to consult with others, kept us waiting for about ten minutes and then said: 'No, you are being denied entry.'" There was no immediate comment from the Indian government.

ERDOGAN'S REMARKS ON KASHMIR

India summons Turkey envoy

REUTERS, New Delhi

India yesterday summoned the Turkish ambassador to lodge a diplomatic protest over President Tayyip Erdogan's remarks on the disputed region of Kashmir and warned it would have a bearing on bilateral ties. During a visit to Pakistan last week, Erdogan said the situation in Indian Kashmir was worsening because of sweeping changes New Delhi introduced in the Muslim-majority territory and that Turkey stood in solidarity with the people of Kashmir. India, which considers all of Kashmir an integral part of the country, told Turkish envoy Sakir Ozkan Torunlar that Erdogan's comments lacked any understanding of the history of the Kashmir dispute, the Indian foreign ministry said. "This recent episode is but one more example of a pattern of Turkey interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. India finds that completely unacceptable," foreign ministry spokesman Ravesh Kumar said. He said that India had served a strong demarche, or formal diplomatic note.



India withdrew Kashmir's autonomy in August and brought it under federal rule as a way to integrate the territory fully into India and quell a 30-year revolt. Pakistan, which controls a part of Kashmir, slammed the measure, and other Muslim-majority countries such as Turkey and Malaysia joined in calls for India to reconsider its actions. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration has put curbs on palm oil imports from Malaysia in retaliation and officials have said it is planning to cut some imports from Turkey as well. India blames Pakistan for stoking the revolt in the territory in which tens of thousands of people have been killed. It accused Turkey of trying to justify its arch foe's use of "cross border terrorism." "These developments have strong implications for our bilateral relations," the foreign ministry spokesman said, referring to Erdogan's comments. Pakistan denies direct involvement in the rebellion, but says it provides diplomatic and moral support to the Kashmiri people in their struggle for self determination.

Women should serve as army commanders

Rules India SC, slams 'disturbing' govt stance

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's top court yesterday ruled that women could serve as army commanders, dismissing the government's stance that male soldiers were not ready to accept orders from female officers as "disturbing". The Supreme Court also ordered the government to extend permanent service - which has only been applicable to men so far - to all women officers, signalling a move towards gender parity in the traditionally male bastion. With this women will get the same opportunities and benefits as their male colleagues, including ranks, promotions and pensions, and be allowed to serve longer tenures. Currently women are inducted through a short service commission that lets them work for up to 14 years, and only allowed permanent commission in the army's legal and educational wings. Last week the government opposed women being appointed to top roles such as colonels and brigadiers, saying most soldiers were men from rural backgrounds who were not "mentally schooled to accept women officers in command". The government also argued that men and women officers were physically different and could not be treated equally. The top court rebuked the government, describing its views as "disturbing" and urged "the need for change in mindsets to bring about true equality in the army". It, however, did not rule on deploying women in combat roles, saying a competent authority needed to decide. India began recruiting women to non-medical positions in the armed forces in 1992, yet they make up about 4% of the army's more than one million personnel, according to latest data.



Pakistan not a militant safe haven

Says Imran Khan

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan yesterday insisted that his country is no longer a militant safe haven, and said his administration fully supports the Afghan peace process. Khan's comments come as the US and the Taliban appear on the brink of a deal that would see US forces begin to pull out of Afghanistan. In return, the Taliban would enter talks with the Afghan government, stick to various security guarantees and work toward an eventual, comprehensive ceasefire. Pakistan, which has long been accused of supporting the Taliban and other extremist groups along its border with Afghanistan, is seen as key to helping secure and implement any deal. "I can tell you that there are no safe havens here," Khan said at a conference in the capital Islamabad. "Whatever the situation might have been in the past, right now, I can tell you... there is one thing we want: peace in Afghanistan." Khan's comments came after Sarwar Danish, Afghanistan's second vice president, accused Pakistan of allowing the Taliban to recruit new fighters from Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. While Pakistan cannot "completely guarantee" that no Taliban are hiding among the estimated 2.7 million Afghans living in Pakistan, Khan said his government had done all it can to prevent attacks in Afghanistan, including by building a border fence.



Farmer Bussa Krishna, 33, offers prayers to a statue of US President Donald Trump, at his residence in Jangaon district, some 120 km from Hyderabad, yesterday, ahead of the visit of US President Donald Trump to India. Trump and his wife Melania will start a high profile two-day visit to India in Ahmedabad, the home turf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on February 24.

PHOTO: AFP

India's use of facial recognition tech during protests causes stir

REUTERS, Mumbai/New Delhi

When artist Rachita Taneja heads out to protest in New Delhi, she covers her face with a pollution mask, a hoodie or a scarf to reduce the risk of being identified by police facial recognition software. Police in the Indian capital and the northern state of Uttar Pradesh - both hotbeds of dissent - have used the technology during protests that have raged since mid-December against a new citizenship law that critics say marginalises Muslims. Activists are worried about insufficient regulation around the new technology, amid what they say is a crackdown on dissent under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose Hindu nationalist agenda has gathered pace since his re-election in May. "I do not know what they are going to do with my data," said Taneja, 28, who created a popular online cartoon about cheap ways for protesters to hide their faces. "We need to protect

ourselves, given how this government cracks down." Critics also accuse authorities of secrecy - highlighting, for instance, that the software's use during Delhi protests was first revealed by the Indian Express newspaper. But police said worries about facial recognition were unwarranted. "I'm only catching targeted people," said Rajan Bhagat, a deputy commissioner of police at Delhi's Crime Records Office. "We don't have any protesters' data, nor do we plan to store it." He declined to give details of



potential arrests, however. When it comes to surveillance, India trails far behind neighbouring China. New Delhi, for example, has about 0.9 CCTV cameras for every 100 people, versus about 11.3 per 100 in China's commercial hub of Shanghai, a 2019 report by PreciseSecurity.com showed. Despite the concerns, law enforcement across India could soon be using facial recognition technology. Modi's government is seeking bids to create a nationwide database, the National Automated Facial Recognition System, to help match images captured from CCTV cameras with existing databases, including those of passport and police authorities. The system will boost police efficiency, says the National Crime Records Bureau, which launched the tender that closes at the end of March. But critics say it puts India on the path to China-style mass surveillance.

Are you in safe hands?

SINCE 1988

Trust Reliance and make it your lifetime partner for your complete general insurance solutions

With our unwavering commitment to quality services we offer an array of products and services tailored to meet all your requirements

Property | Marine | Motor | Engineering | Health | Export Credit | Casualty and many more.....

We care, we go beyond ...

Reliance Insurance Limited

Head Office : Shanta Western Tower (Level-5), 186, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh
PABX: +88 02 8878836-44, Fax: +88 02 8878831-34
E-mail : info@reliance.com.bd, Web: www.reliance.com.bd

REGIME OFFENSIVE IN NORTHWEST SYRIA

900,000 displaced since December

AFP, United Nations

A Russian-backed regime offensive in northwest Syria has displaced 900,000 people since the start of December, and babies are dying of cold because aid camps are full, the UN said yesterday.

“The crisis in northwest Syria has reached a horrifying new level,” said Mark Lowcock, the UN head of humanitarian affairs and emergency relief.

He said the displaced were overwhelmingly women and children who are “traumatized and forced to sleep outside in freezing temperatures because camps are full. Mothers burn plastic to keep children warm. Babies and small children are dying because of the cold.”

The Idlib region, including parts of neighboring Aleppo province, is home to some three million people, half of them already displaced from other parts of the country.

Lowcock yesterday warned that the violence in the northwest was “indiscriminate.”

“Health facilities, schools, residential areas, mosques and markets have been hit. Schools are suspended, many health facilities have closed. There is a serious risk of disease outbreaks. Basic infrastructure is falling apart,” he said in a statement.

“We are now receiving reports that settlements for displaced people are being hit, resulting in deaths, injuries and further displacement.”



A member of the Syrian Civil Defence, also known as the “White Helmets”, inspects through debris and rubble while searching for survivors at a destroyed hospital in the town of Darret Ezza, about 30 kilometres northwest of the northern Syrian city of Aleppo yesterday, after a reported air strike hit the building. Amid continued violence, Syria yesterday said that it would reopen Aleppo airport to civilian flights this week for the first time since the war forced its closure in 2012.

PHOTO: AFP

DETECTION OF CORONAVIRUS IN CRUISE SHIP IN CAMBODIA

WHO warns countries against ‘blanket measures’

AFP, Geneva

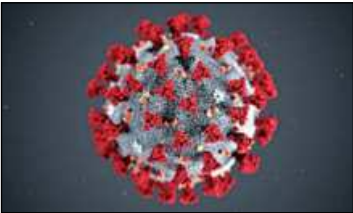
The World Health Organization (WHO) yesterday warned against “blanket measures” over the novel coronavirus outbreak, pointing out the epidemic outside of China was only affecting a “tiny” proportion of the population.

WHO also said that -- with a mortality rate of around 2 percent -- COVID-19 was “less deadly” than other coronaviruses such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) or Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).

“Measures should be taken proportional to the situation. Blanket measures may not help,” WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters in Geneva.

The outbreak has battered manufacturing and tourism across the region and led to multiple travel restrictions including for flights and cruises.

Michael Ryan, head of WHO’s health emergencies programme urged caution, but



not panic. He said that even at the epicentre of the crisis in the city of Wuhan in central Hubei Province, the “attack rate” -- a measure of the speed of spread of the virus -- was four per 100,000.

“This is a very serious outbreak and it has the potential to grow, but we need to balance that in terms of the number of people infected. Outside Hubei this epidemic is affecting a very, very tiny, tiny proportion of people,” he said.

Tedros said that more than 80 percent of patients infected with the virus have mild disease and recover, while 14 percent have severe diseases such as pneumonia.

Around five percent of cases are considered critical with possible multi-organ failure, septic shock and respiratory failure and, in some cases, death,” he added.

Tedros said there were “relatively few cases” among children and more research was needed to understand why.

‘Animals live for man’

China’s appetite for wildlife likely to survive virus

REUTERS, Hong Kong/Beijing

For the past two weeks China’s police have been raiding houses, restaurants and makeshift markets across the country, arresting nearly 700 people for breaking the temporary ban on catching, selling or eating wild animals.

The scale of the crackdown, which has netted almost 40,000 animals including squirrels, weasels and boars, suggests that China’s taste for eating wildlife and using animal parts for medicinal purposes is not likely to disappear overnight, despite potential links to the new coronavirus.

Traders legally selling donkey, dog, deer, crocodile and other meat told Reuters they plan to get back to business as soon as the markets reopen.

“I’d like to sell once the ban is lifted,” said Gong Jian, who runs a wildlife store online and operates shops in China’s autonomous Inner Mongolia region. “People like buying wildlife. They buy for themselves to eat or give as presents because it is very presentable and gives you face.”

Gong said he was storing crocodile and deer meat in large freezers but would have to kill all the quails he had been breeding as supermarkets were no longer buying his eggs and they cannot be eaten after freezing.

Scientists suspect, but have not proven, that the new coronavirus passed to humans from bats via pangolins, a small ant-eating mammal whose scales are highly prized in traditional Chinese

medicine.

Some of the earliest infections were found in people who had exposure to Wuhan’s seafood market, where bats, snakes, civets and other wildlife were sold.

“In many people’s eyes, animals are living for man, not sharing the earth with man,” said Wang Song, a retired researcher of Zoology at the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The outbreak of the new coronavirus, which has killed more than 1,600 people in China, revived a debate in the country about the use of wildlife for food and medicine. It previously came to prominence in 2003 during the spread of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), which scientists believe was passed to humans from bats, via civets.

Many academics, environmentalists and residents in China have joined international conservation groups in calling for a permanent ban on trade in wildlife and closure of the markets where wild animals are sold.

Online debate within China, likely swayed by younger people, has heavily favoured a permanent ban.

Nevertheless, a minority of Chinese still like to eat wild animals in the belief it is healthy.

The United Nations estimates the global illegal wildlife trade is worth about \$23 billion a year. China is by far the largest market, environmental groups say.

UN: 14 children among 22 killed in Cameroon massacre

Armed men have massacred 22 villagers including 14 children in an anglophone region of Cameroon, according to the United Nations, with the opposition blaming the killings on government troops. The bloodshed occurred on Friday in the Northwest region of Cameroon, James Nunan, a local official with UN humanitarian coordination agency OCHA, told AFP yesterday. The central government has been battling separatists in the minority English-speaking regions for three years, a conflict that has left 3,000 people dead and forced more than 700,000 to flee their homes. The army has denied any involvement.

24 killed in Burkina Faso church attack: governor

Gunmen have killed 24 people and wounded 18 in an attack on a Protestant church in a village in northern Burkina Faso, officials said yesterday. The assault occurred on Sunday during a weekly service at a Protestant church, security officials said. Christians and churches in northern provinces have become frequent targets by armed Islamists. On February 10, suspected jihadists in Sebba seized seven people at the home of a pastor. Five bodies were found three days later, including the pastor, according to the local governor. According to UN figures, jihadist attacks in Burkina and neighbouring Mali and Niger left nearly 4,000 people dead last year.

India’s ‘Usain Bolt’ turns down sprint trial



A buffalo jockey in India has refused to take part in a track and field trial after his record-setting performance in a traditional footrace drew comparisons with Olympic sprint legend Usain Bolt. Srinivas Gowda and his buffaloes ran 142.5 metres in 13.62 seconds, setting a record in the annual race known as Kambala in Karnataka. With a time that equates to running 100m in 9.55 seconds, compared to the retired Bolt’s world record of 9.58sec, social media buzz erupted over the chiselled construction worker. But with the Tokyo Olympics looming in July, Gowda politely declined an invitation from India’s sports minister to try out at the Sports Authority of India in Bangalore. “Kambala and track events are different and those who have done well in one cannot replicate in the other.

SOURCE: AFP

ORION
FOOTWEAR

Never be
the Same

SHOP NOW

ORION
Online

www.orionfootwearbd.com
facebook.com/orionfootwearbd

WHAT'S ON



Art Camp
Title: 4th Annual Art for Autism 2020
Venue: Charukola, University of Dhaka
Date: February 22
Time: 8:30 am – 3pm



Solo Exhibition
Title: Parables of the Womb
Artist: Dilara Begum Jolly
Venue: Bengal Shilpalay, Dhanmondi
Date: February 4 – March 28
Time: 2 pm – 8 pm (Except Sundays)



Book Fair
Title: Amar Ekushey Boi Mela
Organiser: Bangla Academy
Venue: Bangla Academy Premises
Date: Feb 2 - 29
Time: 3 pm - 8 pm; 11 am - 9 pm on weekends



Art Exhibition
Title: In/Out of the stones of our mind
Venue: Dwip Gallery
Date: February 19- 29
Time: 3pm to 9 pm (February 19 from 6pm to 9pm)



Art Workshop
Title: Kata Kuti - Collage Workshop
by Kazi Tahsin Agaz Apurbo
Venue: Studio 6/6 (Mohammadpur)
Date: February 22
Time: 11 am to 6 pm

A WALK DOWN THE MEMORY LANE

Shahiduzzaman Selim reminisces his roots

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

National Film Award winning actor-director Shahiduzzaman Selim is a prominent artiste in the theatre, television and films. Since 1983, Selim has been a part of Dhaka Theatre. The actor, along with some of his peers, formed Jahangirnagar Theatre, which is active to this day. In an interview with *The Daily Star*, the multi-talented personality shared the memories of his early days in the industry.

After getting admission in Jahangirnagar University (JU) in 1983, Selim and his friends went on a rehearsal for a stage show, which was led by Humayun Faridi. Faridi was the secretary of drama in the Chhatro Sangsad of JU at that time. "As he was rehearsing for *Abar Baul Aibo Fira*, when I entered in the room," shares Selim, "He kept telling me to read a dialogue, without even looking at me! Interestingly, he did not know who I was. However, when I read the line, he instantly cast me as the protagonist for that play," says a nostalgic Selim. His journey in acting started at that point.

Shahiduzzaman Selim was the first among his peers to get the opportunity to act in Dhaka Theatre. "I would come to TSC (Teacher-Student Centre) every day from JU for rehearsals. Those days were very exciting," he recalls.

After completing his studies, Selim came back to Dhaka and started a day job. Due to the job, he had to keep himself away from acting for some time. "A few days before *Keramot Mongol* was about to be staged, the protagonist fell sick," he shares. "However, I was called to be the proxy, and this is how I came back to acting." The actor amazed everyone with his performance, and kept working with the group.

The actor-director attributes 1987 as one of the most significant years of his life. "This was the year when I started to be cast as the protagonist, instead of just a backup," he states.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

While working on the play *Haat Hodai* (Seven types of groceries), by Dhaka Theatre, Selim was called for the auditions arranged by Bangladesh Television (BTV), where he was selected. "Besides theatre, I worked in the mega serial *Jonaki Jole*, telecasted on BTV, which brought me a lot of popularity at that time,"

recalls the artiste.

Shahiduzzaman Selim, in his life, let many opportunities go, for his passion in acting. The diligent actor told *The Daily Star* that wants to keep working in this field for the rest of his life, with the appreciation and support from his fans and well-wishers.

EKUSHEY SPOTLIGHT

‘Chokhey Tar Shishirer Ghran’ portrays 22 fragments of our bittersweet lives

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

"In our lives, we go through many hardships. However, a fleeting moment of joy is able to trump all of them, and make you happy," said Taposh Barua, a former student of journalism, who had his first book release at the Ekushey Boi Mela.

Chokhey Tar Shishirer Ghran is a result of the writer's keen interest in portraying the bittersweet moments in our lives, even amidst the mountain of struggles that we have to overcome.

"None of the stories I wrote span more than 1500 words," said Taposh, who is heavily inspired by Banaphul and Zahir Raihan. "These are fragments of the society that we live in." *Chokhey Tar Shishirer Ghran* is comprised of stories



PHOTO: COURTESY

like *Service Charge*, *Nimontion*, *Tobu*, *Shay Dekhilo Kon*, *Bhoot* and *Purono Ami*. Published by Jayoti Prokashoni, it is available at their stall (458-459) at Sohrawardi Udyan in the Ekushey Boi Mela for BDT 200.



Indonesian artist collective Ruangrupa to curate 'Documenta 15' in 2022

PRIYANKA CHOWDHURY

This year, the Dhaka Art Summit collaborated with around 30 artist collectives from home and abroad. One of them was Ruangrupa, a group of artists and creators from Jakarta, showcasing numerous interesting concepts. The collective has been appointed as the curators and artistic directors of the exhibition, *Documenta 15*, in Germany in 2022. Farid Rakun (Ruangrupa), MG Pringgotono (Serrum) and JJ Adibrata (Serrum) took out some time from their busy schedule to discuss their collective art practices with *The Daily Star*.

Two years after the fall of the repressive Soeharto regime (1998), the collective made maximum use of their newly found freedom. "The fall of the regime was one of the causes, but it was also MTV that inspired us to form the collective," explains Rakun. "Some of us were

board member of Serrum, the ecosystem offers 11 courses for the students. "We do not follow the top-down method. Rather, we initiate dialogues on socio-political and urban issues with an educational and artistic approach," explains Adibrata. Such initiatives often face challenges when it comes to sustainability. "If the concepts are owned by the community, then it will have better chances to grow," suggests Pringgotono.

The trio explained that there is no formula to form a collective. "There are defined opportunities for artist collectives in recent times, but I do not think artists should fall for those. It is not the definition but the context that matters," adds Adibrata.

Appointed unanimously by the board, Ruangrupa is set to curate the 15th edition of the renowned international exhibition of contemporary art, *Documenta*, which began in 1955. This marks the first



PHOTO: MONON MUNTAKA

really interested to learn how to make videos. We actually got together quite coincidentally."

With an objective to make art to serve their community, Ruangrupa, together with Serrum and Grafis Huru Hara, initiated GUDSKUL: Contemporary Art Collective and Ecosystem Studies in 2018. It is a public learning space that promotes the importance of critical and experimental dialogues through sharing and experience-based learning.

MG Pringgotono, the director of GUDSKUL, described the venture as a responsible one. "We believe in collective ideas. While some institutions want students to work individually, we believe that working together can bring better results. That is why we call it an ecosystem," says the director.

According to JJ Adibrata, an artistic

time that an artist collective has been selected to curate *Documenta*, and the first time that its curatorial leadership has come from Asia. Ruangrupa is expected to highlight inclusion and diversity in their approach. Each individual in the collective comes from different backgrounds and disciplines. "Learning should not be a parasitic concept but a mutual one, where everyone can learn from each other. We see *Documenta* as an opportunity to connect, learn and share with others," explains Rakun.

During the Dhaka Art Summit this year, Jog Art Space, Ruangrupa and Gudskul made a collaborative project from the collective body, Gerobak Cinema or Cinema Cart. The project was reimagined with a Bangladeshi rickshaw and a two-hour video was projected on a screen at Ramna Bridge for public viewing.



Rafiqun Nabi (R) with his siblings at the exhibition.

PHOTO: STAR

‘Parampara’ celebrates art and family history

SUMAIYA KABIR

Parampara, a slightly different exhibition, opened at Gallery Chitrak on February 15. While it is still a regular display of photographs and paintings, what makes it unique is the tribute it pays, as well as the lives of the two generations of artists it celebrates.

Parampara is an ode to artist Rashidun Nabi (1914-1995). Besides his own art practices, throughout his life, he also ensured that his children are just as inspired to pursue art. In order to pay respect to such a fact, *Parampara* exhibits a collection of his most powerful artworks, alongside that of his sons, the distinguished artists Rafiqun Nabi and Rezaun Nabi, renowned photographer Tauhidun Nabi as well as his daughter-in-law,

Sohana Shahreen.

The exhibition was opened by eminent artist Mustafa Monwar, chaired by Professor Bulbul Osman, with painter Hashem Khan as the special guest. The artists began the ceremony by talking about their late father and the life he'd lived. Despite his love for art, Rashidun Nabi unfortunately never had a proper exhibition or received recognition for the talented artist he truly was. As it so often happens, life takes you places the hard way and art falls behind. *Parampara* fulfills such a long gone wish, and also greatly celebrates his successors, who say they are nothing without their father's contribution to their creativity.

Rashidun Nabi gifted many of his paintings to his close ones. Subsequently, collecting all of his best works were difficult.

Nevertheless, around 70 paintings are on exhibit at the event. Most of his paintings portray a raw and rural Bangladesh – from its villages to its boats, rivers, birds, animals as well as its ever changing seasons and its women – through ink or watercolour on paper. Some of Rashidun Nabi's clay works are also on display.

Other art pieces displayed include Rafiqun Nabi's pencil sketches, woodcuts, charcoal drawings on paper, Tauhidun Nabi's photographic captures from his travels to India, Egypt, Bhutan, Singapore and Paris, as well as Rezaun Nabi and Sohana Shahreen's acrylic and watercolor paintings on canvas.

Parampara will remain open for all until February 29 at Gallery Chitrak from 10 am to 8 pm every day.



Music video for Kamal Ahmed and Priyanka Biswas's 'Shudhu Bhalobasha' released

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The music video for Kamal Ahmed and Priyanka Biswas's duet, *Shudhu Bhalobasha*, was published by Laser Vision in their official YouTube channel, recently. The song, featured in the audio album *Neel Shamudro*, is written by Munshi Wadud and composed by Fuad Naseer. The music video has been directed by Zamiur Rahman Lemon.

Don't bring back

FROM PAGE 16

don't recommend [bringing the 172 Bangladeshi students back]. That's my advice," he said at the Diplomatic Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (DCAB) Talk at National Press Club yesterday.

He cited examples of how people got infected outside China and would not advise repatriation of the Bangladeshi students now as apart from the risk to Bangladesh, they would also endanger themselves during travel.

On February 1, Bangladesh repatriated 312 Bangladeshis from Wuhan, the epicenter of coronavirus in China, by a Bangladesh Biman flight. They were quarantined for 14 days and released on Sunday.

India, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Oman, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait and the UK have imposed restrictions on pilots and crew members of the flights that brought the 312 Bangladeshi students from Wuhan.

On Sunday, Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen said the government was exploring options to bring back Bangladeshis from Hubei province but noted that it depended on China's permission.

Bangladesh has asked China to pave the way for the Bangladeshis to return.

Asked about it, Jiming said permission of the Chinese government is not a problem, but there are some technical difficulties.

Bangladesh Islam refused to transport the students back to Bangladesh from Hubei because they would then have to stop operations in certain countries that have imposed restrictions on the crews who brought the students back from Wuhan.

"We are also trying to offer some other alternatives – commercial flights and so on. We are working on it. We are in touch with Bangladesh embassy in Beijing," Jiming said.

He appreciated Bangladesh for being responsible for its citizens and the way 312 Bangladeshi students were quarantined for 14 days in Dhaka.

Jiming suggested that the Bangladeshis coming from China now should also be quarantined as Chinese people who are coming from China to Bangladesh are isolated for 14 days.

"Put them in quarantine for 14 days. Each day 30 to 50 Bangladeshi people are coming from China to Bangladesh. Though they are checked at the airports, there is a risk that they carry the virus. So, they should be quarantined," he said.

He also suggested that Bangladesh enhances its ability to diagnose the virus.

New Virus Scanners from South Korea to be piloted in Bangladesh Airports

Cabinet secretary Khandakar Anowarul Islam yesterday said all the [three international] airports will be equipped with newly modified "virus scanners" as part of a test run by a South Korean company.

"It is further modified [compared to thermal scanner]. Any virus [in the passengers' body] could be detected. This machine will be installed in line with the existing [thermal] scanners," the secretary said in a briefing yesterday.

"A [South] Korean company has invented this technology; it is more secure. They are providing it to us as a test case. It would be very good if it is a success," he added.

Major search

FROM PAGE 16

science." SETI scientists plan to develop a system that will "piggyback" on the Very Large Array (VLA) telescope based in Mexico and provide data to their technosignature search system.

Dr Beasley added: "As the VLA conducts its usual scientific observations, this new system will allow for an additional and important use for the data we're already collecting."

Life forms, whether intelligent or not, can produce detectable indicators such as large amounts of oxygen, smaller amounts of methane, and a variety of other chemicals, the experts said.

So in addition, scientists are also developing computer models to simulate extraterrestrial environments that can help support future searches for habitable planets and life beyond the solar system.

Victoria Meadows, principal investigator for Nasa's Virtual Planetary Laboratory at the University of Washington, which studies to detect exoplanetary habitability, said: "Upcoming telescopes in space and on the ground will have the capability to observe the atmospheres of Earth-sized planets orbiting nearby cool stars, so it's important to understand how best to recognise signs of habitability and life on these planets.

"These computer models will help us determine whether an observed planet is more or less likely to support life."

Meanwhile, SETI's Breakthrough Listen Initiative, which launched in 2015 to "listen" for signals of alien life, has released nearly two petabytes of data from the most comprehensive survey yet of radio emissions from the plane of the Milky Way galaxy and the region around its central black hole.



Muslim protesters gather as a young Muslim couple (C) gets married during a protest against India's new citizenship law, in Chennai, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Massive help needed without delay

FROM PAGE 16

delivering arms to Pakistan while the Pakistan army was killing people in Bangladesh. How can a civilised government give help to such an army, he asks. The US government, which maintained representations in East Bengal, he adds, must have known about the Pakistan army's brutalities. Bangabandhu notes that the feelings of the Bangladesh people were conveyed to Senator Edward Kennedy when he visited the country.

During the interview, Bangabandhu also expresses his wish that Bangladesh would be admitted immediately to the United Nations.

He envisages that, in the long run, Bangladesh will be better off than Pakistan, which has now lost 75 million people as a market for its industries.

Bangabandhu emphasises, "I need massive help now without delay because the monsoon is coming in three or four months. I have to give

some shelter to my people." While being emphatic about this need, he makes it clear that Bangladesh will accept no help with political or other strings attached.

DRASTIC ACTION AGAINST FAKE MUKTI BAHINI

Bangabandhu warns that drastic action will be taken against anybody indulging in harassing citizens in the name of Mukti Bahini. Earlier, members of the Road Transport Workers' Union brought out a procession from Baitul Mukarram to protest against the hooliganism of the fake Mukti Bahini. The representatives of the Union later called on Bangabandhu.

AL WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING ENDS

The two-day meeting of the Bangladesh Awami League working committee, which concludes today, is learnt to have empowered Bangabandhu to set up an organising committee in place

of the existing working committee. The names of the office-bearers of the proposed committee are expected to be announced by Bangabandhu soon.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS' TREATMENT MUST BE PRIORITY

Priority must be given to the medical necessities of the freedom fighters who are now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College, says Minister for Health Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury. He adds that prompt decisions must be made at all levels of the Health Ministry to fulfill all the requirements towards the treatment of the freedom fighters, and if anyone fails to do that, he or she will be treated as criminals before the eyes of the public because the freedom fighters sacrificed their all for the liberation of Bangladesh and they are the national heroes.

SOURCES: February 19, 1972 issues of Dainik Bangla, The Daily Ittefaq, Azad, Morning News, The Bangladesh Observer and Purbodesh.

India FM defends CAA in Brussels

FROM PAGE 16

players Japan, Vietnam and Singapore -- the pair have no formal agreement, and India approaches such agreements carefully.

"You don't necessarily need trade deals to do trade," Jaishankar told AFP, stressing that India's economy is driven by domestic demand.

"Trade deals are useful, I mean I'm not at all denying that, but I think they are not necessarily as compelling as sometimes all of us tend to tend to think."

European business wants to win more access to markets in a country with 1.4 billion people, and Jaishankar was clear that Delhi would like closer cooperation with Europe on security and strategic policy.

But some in Europe are worried about what they see as India's populist shift under Modi's right-wing government.

Lawmakers in the European Parliament have drafted a resolution condemning India's Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019 as "discriminatory in nature and dangerously divisive."

But the non-binding resolution has yet to be passed and Jaishankar insisted the law had been misunderstood.

The CAA laws eases citizenship rules for religious minorities such as Hindus

and Christians from Muslim-majority Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Protests have erupted in India, and concerns have been raised abroad, led by those who fear the Hindu nationalist government is discriminating against Muslims and putting secularism in danger.

But Jaishankar said Delhi's critics have misunderstood the government's policy and been taken in by the politics of a "very passionate" democratic society.

He compared the CAA rules to immigration and refugee resettlement policies across Europe, pointing out that many EU countries also use national or cultural criteria.

"They created pathways to naturalisation to citizenship," he said, citing among others Germany's rule allowing ethnic Germans from eastern Europe to seek citizenship.

"Now, they did it with a context and they did it with a criteria. I mean, no European country said: 'Anybody anytime, anywhere in the world can come because they feel it's nice to live in Europe.'"

Without mentioning Pakistan by name, he said some of India's neighbours have Islam as a state religion, "and there are persecuted religious minorities who came to India because many of them find people

have the same faith."

He said India's new law would reduce statelessness, and pointed to the fierce debates that Europe has also had around immigrations and the "political changes" these have caused.

Modi's government also raised eyebrows in Brussels when it stripped Indian Kashmir of its partial autonomy and imposed a security crackdown in its only Muslim-majority region.

Indian invited international ambassadors to tour the region last week and Jaishankar was keen to stress that, alongside the political dispute, the government is investing there.

"Kashmir in its social economic outlook was less and less aligned with the rest of India because the rest of India is moving in a very progressive direction," he said.

Jaishankar reeled off a list of projects in Kashmir, including the electrification of 330,000 homes and increasing pension and benefits coverage from 62 to 80 percent of the population.

Seven medical colleges are "in the pipeline" and three frozen hydroelectric projects have been unfrozen.

"It's our case that Jammu and Kashmir is moving in the right direction but we also have been honest enough in saying that, well, there are there are challenges still ahead," he said.

Picked up

FROM PAGE 1

At his office, Sajjadur wrote on his diary the date when the cheques would be encashed. Mehedy was asked to put his signature along with date below. Sajjadur's brother-in-law Masud Hossain alias Shubhro wrote the amount of money.

Bangla daily Prothom Alo published a report on the incident on Monday.

Yesterday, The Daily Star talked to the victim.

On February 12, Mehedy wrote to the inspector general of police and the DMP commissioner regarding the matter.

DMP Commissioner Shafiqul Islam yesterday told The Daily Star that his department had enquired about the allegations.

"The allegations don't seem to be true. But we will investigate further," he added.

Mehedy is an importer of different products. He lent Tk 50 lakh from DC Sajjadur in 2018. He was supposed to give Tk 2.5 lakh, the profit from his Tk 50-lakh investment, to the officer every month.

Mehedy gave the officer a cheque of Tk 50 lakh and the officer's brother-in-law Shubhro received the profit from him every month.

After Mehedy started incurring losses, he stopped giving the money.

When the cheque of Tk 50 lakh was submitted to the bank, it was dishonoured. The DC's brother-in-law Shubhro then filed a case against Mehedy, who is on bail in the case.

Then last month, he was picked up from home and forced to sign the two cheques. When those two cheques were dishonoured, a legal notice was sent to Mehedy by Shubhro and his relative Hadiuzzaman.

OFFICERS WHO PICKED HIM UP

Mehedy was picked up by Raju Ahmed, assistant sub-inspector of Hazaribagh Police Station and Zillur Rahman, sub-inspector of Dhanmondi Police Station.

Raju had worked with the Ramna DC previously when his was posted in Satkhira and Narayanganj.

Refuting the allegations, ASI Raju told The Daily Star that he was not involved and he didn't go to Mehedy's flat on January 22.

Asked whether he was at Dhanmondi Police Station that night, he said, "I cannot remember."

Most of Mehedy's allegations are false, he claimed.

Contacted, SI Zillur said he fell sick yesterday and was in no position to talk. He told Prothom Alo that he and Raju were together that night.

Zillur said they went to Mehedy's flat after a general diary was lodged by Hadiuzzaman, a relative of the Ramna DC.

Give us clear

FROM PAGE 16

These games depend on luck or chance and not on competence, and therefore are banned by the law, the HC observed.

The HC also ordered law enforcers to immediately seize any kind of equipment used for gambling and take action against those who gamble or organise gambling.

The HC on December 5, 2016, directed the government to immediately stop gambling at all 13 clubs.

The clubs are Dhaka Club Ltd,

He added that they went there to settle the dispute and his higher authorities were aware of it.

Zillur did not say an officer from Hazaribagh Police Station accompanied him.

SOURCE OF THE MONEY?

Mehedy said Sajjadur gave him Tk 50 lakh. "I took money from the DC to invest in my business. I gave him part of the profit."

DC Sajjadur didn't answer his phone despite repeated attempts yesterday.

He was quoted by Prothom Alo as saying that he did not give the money and that it was his brother-in-law who did.

"When a man does not get his money back, he comes to us. My brother-in-law also came," Sajjadur told Prothom Alo.

The DC added that nothing illegal had been done.

"Besides, if you look at the complainant's record, you will know how bad a person he is."

The DC said that Mehedy was taken to his office. But he was not forced to do anything.

Asked about the allegations of harassment and forcing someone in custody to write a cheque, he said, "These allegations are false... I assisted in the settlement of the issue."

Mehedy said he would go to court for justice.

He added that he had given a total of TK 67 lakh in profit shares.

"They are using the Tk 50 lakh cheque to harass me. Now they forcibly took two cheques from me," he claimed.

DC Sajjadur Rahman told Prothom Alo, "He did not pay dividends on the money, nor did he return the original money."

Mehedy said he used to import different products via Five One BD, which is owned by the DC.

"I suffered a huge loss by importing powdered milk... that my capital was gone... They know the whole thing. But I am being harassed."

Experts said it was not legal to pick someone up from home and force them to sign cheques.

Talking to this newspaper, eminent jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik said that it was a civil offense not to return the money. Failing to pay the money is a breach of conduct that should be resolved in a civil court.

"Police have nothing to do with the incident. People go to police in such cases," he said.

Such cases have been increasing in the last 5-7 years. That's why police are abusing their powers, he added.

"What the police officer did in this particular incident, was not right at all. First of all, he has his own involvement and then he has abused his power."

Won't allow road there

FROM PAGE 16

Fatikchari upazila. The Daily Star yesterday obtained a copy of the report.

The RHD had planned to make the road through the protected areas, but the proposal whipped up strong opposition among the divisional forest office (north) under Chattogram forest circle.

The RHD had also not taken clearance from the forest department for making the road.

Following the dispute between the two bodies, the committee -- led by Chandan Kumar Dey, additional secretary of the road transportation and bridge ministry -- was formed to assess the impact of the project.

In its final report, the committee came up with the alternative route considering the sensitivity of the biodiversity and wildlife resources of the forest.

After visiting the wildlife sanctuary and national park on 18 December 2019, the committee held a tripartite meeting where representatives of the RHD emphasised on the necessity of the road, insisting wildlife can be protected through erecting barriers, fencing and making corridors.

In the meeting, RHD representatives argued that the road would reduce the distance travelled by vehicles between Dhaka and Chattogram Hill Tracts by 70 kilometres and bring about socio-economic change for Mirsarai and Fatikchari upazilas.

The forest department said whenever a road is built through forest, logging, poaching and encroachment increase within the forest. It also highlighted the rich biodiversity that would be affected if the proposed road was built.

They said the two forests housed

189 rare species of trees, 119 species of shrubs and 170 species of herbs.

Besides, the forest was home to many reptiles and mammals, including the capped langur, monkeys, red junglefowl, oriental garden lizard, Tokay gecko, monitor lizard, wild boar, wild cat, python and deer.

Chandan Kumar Dey told The Daily Star that they did not want the road through the forest given its rich wildlife and biodiversity.

"Rather we recommended the existing Mirsarai-Narayanhat road connecting Mirsarai and Fatikchari upazila to be expanded by 18 feet so that more traffic can use the road," he said.

Meer Ahemed Tariqul Omar, deputy chief (roads transportation wing) under Physical Infrastructure of Planning Commission, during the meeting had also said that the road would endanger the biodiversity of the forests.

"The existing road can easily be expanded and improved. Besides, a four-foot wide trail can be made for the tourists so that they can relish the beauty of the forest on foot," he said in the meeting.

Earlier, the RHD issued a work order to its selected contractors to build a nine kilometre road through the protected areas after the Executive Committee for National Economic Council approved the project in May 2018.

The construction came to a halt after the forest department objected to it as no clearance was taken from them in line with a circular issued by the cabinet division in 2015. Earlier on November 10, 2018, The Daily Star published a report on the proposed road titled "Hazarikhil Wildlife Sanctuary: Plan to build road without cleara

LAW OPINION

The legal challenges of intellectual property protection for data

MOHAMMAD ATAUL KARIM

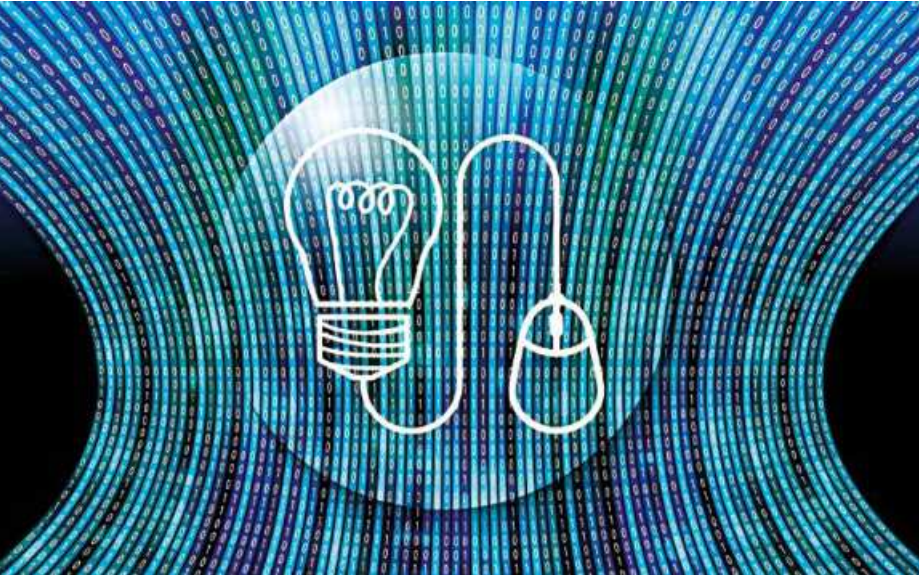
DATA is the primary building block of the digital economy. Data is, therefore, logically termed as ‘new oil’ and ‘infrastructure’ of digital economy. In digital economy, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) tools overwhelmingly rely on the volumes of data which are fed to create new inventions or works. Similarly, data driven global giants such as Google, Amazon and Facebook require great volume of data to keep their business up to date and concomitantly, they remain in control of huge amount of data produced by the users. Reasonably, there are number of ethical and legal conundrums involved in dealing with data issues which range from privacy, personal security, personal data protection to ownership, processing and control over the data. Till date, the legal provisions, for example EU General Data Protection Regulation, (GDPR) 2016, have mainly addressed these issues, precisely giving emphasis on protection of natural person’s data and processing thereof. Thus, intellectual property protection over data with creative and economic values has remained largely unattended. However, given the creative nature, economic and other values attached to data, it remains a critical question as to whether data can be protected as intellectual property. If so, who owns the data? Broadly, what are the legal challenges of intellectual property protection for data?

In EU, Database, as opposed to raw data, is protected under either copyright law or *sui-generis* system. In the former case, it must be original expressions whereas in the latter case, there must be substantial investment in obtaining, verifying and presenting the contents of the database. As far as the IP protection of data is concerned, there remain legal and practical challenges. Relevantly, three forms of intellectual property, namely, copyright, patent and trade secret may attract the attention in dealing with data. As copyright protects the original expressions and not the ideas, therefore, readily available and non-rivalrous data

with little creative or original expressions is not protectable. Thus, figure and data presented in the copyrighted works is free from legal protection unless originally expressed. Patent protection for data could be of little help. It inherently lacks novelty and non-obviousness. Readily available data may be equated with products of the nature and as such is non-patentable or falls within the exclusion clause of patentability. Trade secret seems to be nearly appropriate for IP protection of data. However, such protection is only applicable for corporations, if they generate or compile and keep it secret from the competitors and values attached to because of the secrecy. Critically, it is always susceptible to be known

public policy or public interests. However, global big corporations are pressing the issues to protect the data since their business models are overtly data driven. The concerns exist that the corporate ownership of data might hinder the public policy issues, innovations or knowledge generation and most significantly access to the knowledge. Again, question remains that how far people’s data is safe with the corporations? The world has experienced the misuse of data by Cambridge Analytica and many other corporations. Further, the traditional concept of ‘consumer’ is now shifting towards new concept of ‘prosumer’ where users not only use but also contribute to the development of novel dataset of the corporations, for

The traditional concept of ‘consumer’ is now shifting towards new concept of ‘prosumer’ where users not only use but also contribute to the development of novel dataset of the corporations, for instance, through the ‘keywords’ search in google search engine.



by competitors in due course without resorting to any unlawful means. Beyond the IP paradigm, such data of company or corporation may also be protected through the agreements with employees and any other third parties in case of joint ventures.

The existing IP system does not sufficiently provide legal mechanisms to protect data. Moreover, data *per se* is kept open without IP monopoly because of the

instance, through the ‘keywords’ search in google search engine. This value addition, in one way, demands the openness of data for all. In another way, if at all, any proprietary rights are recognised, then, the prosumers should have a due place, in any form, on the scheme of legal regime.

Till date, AI or ML generated contents are not protected under the existing IP regime. However, ‘data ownership’ would

be a crucial factor in both the input and output processing of data, if AI and ML generated contents are to be protected in future. Since IP protection of data inherently is not possible, at least not under current legal framework, a policy solution as data producer’s right- a new special property right for the data producers, has been suggested in EU by the legal scholars and experts. However, the proposal is also subject to criticisms from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

In Bangladesh, ICT division is considering data related draft Policies, Laws, Rules and Regulations such as Internet of Things (IoT) Strategic Paper, 2019, National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in Bangladesh, 2019-2024, National Core Data Inoperability Standard (NCDIS), 2019, and National Core Data Definition Standard, (NCDDS), 2019 for adoption and some of them are already adopted. Bangladesh is also considering enacting new Patents and Designs law, Copyright Law, Personal Data Protection Law. While adopting the relevant Policies, Laws, Rules and Regulations, Bangladesh should duly address the legal challenges of intellectual property protection for data as well.

THE WRITER IS SENIOR LECTURER IN LAW, EAST WEST UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH.

PEOPLE’S VOICE

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LEGAL KNOWLEDGE

LAW encompasses every sphere of life and society. So, knowledge of law is indispensable for every citizens of a country. Common perception of the mass people about law and legal system is that, judges and lawyers form the core of justice system. When law is violated or law is misapplied or abused or laws are not consistent with the constitution of the country, it is the task of the administration of justice to bring the violator or wrongdoer to book or declare the law unconstitutional. But the judges and the lawyers are not the only actors in the administration of justice. Administration of justice of a country addresses the concerns of each and every person living in that particular country.

General principle of law in Bangladesh is *Ignorantia juris non excusat*, i.e. ignorance of the law is no excuse. More specifically, a person who is unaware of a law may not escape liability for violating that law merely because he or she was unaware of its content. Article 21 of the Constitution of Bangladesh says that, it is the duty of every citizen to observe the Constitution and the laws, to maintain discipline, to perform public duties and to protect public property. At the same time, to enjoy the protection of the law, and to be treated in accordance with law has been guaranteed as fundamental right. Preamble to the constitution enumerates that the rule of law, fundamental human rights and freedom, equality and justice, political, economic and social, will be secured for all citizens. So, for the purpose of enjoying the rights as guaranteed in the constitution and at the same time for performing public duties and maintaining discipline you must know the laws.

However, the primary, secondary and higher secondary level of education in Bangladesh contains no mandatory legal education. Chapter 15 of the National Education Policy, 2010 talks about development of legal education. This is all about law students of universities and law colleges. It does not have any strategic plan for inclusion of legal education in primary, secondary and higher secondary level. Moreover, right to education is enshrined in international instruments such as UDHR and ICCPR.

In Bangladesh, many crimes are committed without knowledge of consequences. Recurrent road accidents are happening in Bangladesh because in most of the cases, drivers or commuters

are found to be ignorant about road safety laws. All government and non-government instructions are governed by laws of the country. If people are made aware of the law, they will surely be aware of their rights in these institutions. Ignorance in most cases makes people deprived of rights that he or she is entitled to. For establishing rule of law and creating a conscious civil society, legal education deserves importance.

The 2010 Policy further affirms that to realise a society which is free from exploitation, the significance of legal education cannot be ignored. Primary knowledge about laws and legal system of Bangladesh will be a strong tool to ensure the fundamental rights. Recently, in a discussion held at The Daily Star, young lawyers recommended that people be made



more aware of legal remedies available at local and district levels, so that every matter is not brought to the higher courts. They further suggested making people aware of sectoral laws and policies -- including those dealing with medical and educational services, banking sector, road safety, consumers’ rights and food safety.

To insert primary legal education in the national curriculum, the incumbent government can form a committee comprising of legal experts from judges, university teachers and lawyers. This committee, after proper scrutiny, will formulate guidelines for inclusion of primary legal education in the national curriculum in an easily comprehensible manner. There may be two separate books for secondary and higher secondary level respectively. Introducing legal education at school-level will be a significant step for making people conscious and empowered.

SHEIKH SADI RAHMAN
SENIOR LAW RESEARCH OFFICER AT INTERNATIONAL CRIMES TRIBUNAL, BANGLADESH.

LAW ANALYSIS

Analysing the draft Bangladesh Maritime Zones Act

MOHAMMAD RUBAIYAT RAHMAN

THE term ‘areas beyond national jurisdiction’ (ABNJ) refers to maritime zone where no littoral state has any obligation for management. Put more simply, approximately two thirds of the high sea of world’s ocean fit within this term. Because of their unique biophysical features, management and enforcement needs, such areas in ocean need legislative emphasis.

The 1972 Stockholm Conference on Human Environment first specifically addressed the significance of marine environment conservation and protection. However, it did not provide any rules or standards for protection of marine environment. The 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development, urged States to act in all possible ways to address the degradation of marine environment. The provisions

The draft Maritime Zones Act of 2019 should have some measures associated with strict and continuous monitoring mechanism in fulfilling coastal state’s obligation of exercising due diligence mentioned in article 208 of the 1982 UNCLOS.

of the 1982 UNCLOS consolidate the rights of coastal states over maritime zones adjacent to their territories. Article 56 enables the coastal states to exploit marine resources within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), whereas Article 76 allows coastal states to conduct offshore activities ranging from economic exploitation to energy production. Article 194 further enumerates that exploration and exploitation of marine resources should be managed in such manner that would minimise the potential of pollution, accidents or emergencies to the fullest possible extent.

Under the rubric of ‘Biodiversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction’, section 128 of the draft Bangladesh Maritime Zones Act of 2019 enumerates that government may initiate programs for ensuring conservation as well as sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. The provisions of Clause 4 of section 128 also pick up the discussion on the significance of management of marine protected



areas. A vital takeaway from the provision is that the wordings of this sub-clause emphasise on enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction; and on facilitating research support to monitor the management system.

In 2008, the FAO *International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Sea* advocates coastal states to adopt national policy for better alignment with international law relating to areas beyond national jurisdiction. According to the FAO (Food & Agriculture Organisation) and the UN Environmental Program, a national policy on ABNJ should include number of issues encompassing: sustainable use of marine living resource; prevention of impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems; incorporation of policy relating to IUU fishing; endorsement of precautionary and ecosystem approach. Furthermore, national policy should also highlight the requisite measures to effectively materialise those issues.

However, regarding the draft Maritime Zones Act, 2019, all is not what it seems. The draft law has had the scope to update and strengthen legal elements that a littoral state like Bangladesh should take into account. Keeping in mind with the fragility of marine environment and uncertainty associated with marine exploration and exploitation activities, the draft Maritime Zones Act of 2019 should have some measures associated with strict and continuous monitoring mechanism in fulfilling coastal state’s obligation of exercising due diligence mentioned in article 208 of the 1982 UNCLOS.

The functions of such monitoring mechanism can be carried out through establishing national scientific and technological body for exchanging and integrating maritime information on biodiversity among neighboring littoral states. To identify any infringement of legal provision and to review exploration activities, there is urgent necessity to establish a system of maritime database and information bank. Such

maritime dataset is also helpful for state mechanism in multiple ways: to forecast the requirement of international cooperation and coordination required in which maritime sector; to submit report to international institutions to highlight state’s compliance of international law obligations and recommendations for future drafting of hard law and soft law. However, in the draft Maritime Zones Act, there is no mention of such ‘comprehensive’ legislative, administrative or database construction measures to formulate such body.

In latter days, various fast track maritime projects (i.e., construction of sea ports, coal power plants and LNG terminals) are currently underway in the coastal areas adjacent to *Sonadia, Mongla, Pyra and Matarbari*. The offshore gas blocs in the Bay of Bengal are revving up for drilling and explorations. The marine biodiversity of these areas is experiencing fast pedestal of change. The vista of gargantuan development is getting filled to the brim. However, measures in mapping out any elaborate impact on those areas’ marine ecosystem still remains as distant foghorn. Serious pollution from land-based activities may spread beyond the limits of the place of origin. It may also affect the maritime areas beyond internal water and territorial sea.

The draft Maritime Zones Act of 2019 lacks any specific provision about how these existing heavy development projects will make a face-off with the marine biodiversity and ecosystems. The Act has surely missed the opportunity to synchronise and address the spirit of marine environment protection with these intensified development projects.

Nonetheless, the success or failure of the law lies with its implementation through the national institutional and administrative apparatus. As of the time of preparing this write up, it would be prudent to opine that whether the law would be a turning point or simply a passing phase remains to be appraised.

THE WRITER IS TEACHING ASSISTANT, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY, USA.

A Shaheed Minar falling apart

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Just a couple of days ahead of Language Martyrs' Day on February 21, the central Shaheed Minar of Kulaura upazila under Moulvibazar lies in an awful condition.

Visiting the Shaheed Minar a few days ago, this correspondent saw large cracks in the structure while its surroundings remained dirty.

"This Shaheed Minar built in Kulaura municipality in 2002 is now on the verge of collapse due to lack of maintenance amid utter negligence of the authorities concerned. Often cattle roam around on its premises," said Mahfuz Shakil, a local journalist.

People from different areas of the upazila come to the Shaheed Minar to pay respect to the martyrs of 1952 Language Movement on February 21 every year but the authorities seem too forgetful about its maintenance, said locals.

Roksana Rahman, mother of a student at Kulaura Girls' School in the upazila town, said she is afraid to send her daughter to the Shaheed Minar for any programme due

to its risky condition.

It is regrettable that garbage is dumped just beside the Shaheed Minar, said Nasir Uddin, a fruit trader in the area.

"People coming to see the Shaheed Minar get upset due to its dilapidated condition and stink from the garbage," said Munem Ahmed, who came to visit the Shaheed Minar from Nomoja village in Kulaura upazila.

Mohammad Ali, a resident of Magura area under Kulaura municipality, said the entrance of the memorial gets flooded even in a moderate shower due to poor drainage facilities around.

"We raised the issue with the local authorities on several occasions but to no avail," he added.

Syed Mahfuz Hamid, founder of Facebook group 'Kulaura problems and prospects', said, "This Shaheed Minar has become so rickety that no repair work will be enough. It needs major renovation or reconstruction."

Contacted, Kulaura Upazila Nirbahi Officer ATM Farhad Chowdhury said they have taken an initiative to repair the Shaheed Minar before February 21.



With large cracks, the central Shaheed Minar of Kulaura upazila under Moulvibazar remains awfully risky, much to the worry of locals ahead of the Ekushey February. Inset, garbage dumping just beside the language martyrs' memorial bears testimony to the callousness of the authorities concerned regarding maintenance of the premises.

PHOTO: STAR

Lalmonirhat village roads damaged by kiln owners

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A two-and-half kilometre road at Dhairkhata village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila has almost been badly damaged due to random movement of overloaded tractors carrying earth for a brick kiln.

The road's condition becomes worse when it rains, said locals.

Like Dhairkhat, village roads around 47 brick kilns in five upazilas of the district are in bad condition due to plying of overloaded earth-laden tractors.

There are paved roads at some places, but condition of the roads also worsens, said Delwar Hossain, a farmer of Pashchim Nawdabansh village in Hatibandha upazila.

Carpeting of many parts of the village roads wore off and a number of potholes developed on the roads, said local people.

The roads have become almost unfit for vehicular movement during the rainy season, they said.

The villagers said tractors carrying earth being used for making bricks continued plying the roads, but no one dares to protest against it as the brick kiln owners are very powerful and influential.

Shahidul Islam, owner of a brick kiln at Bamonerbasa village in Aditmari upazila, said as



PHOTO: STAR

Village roads are being damaged due to random movement of tractors carrying earth for brick kilns in Lalmonirhat. The photo was taken from Dhairkhata village in Sadar upazila recently.

they pay tax to the government, there is no bar to use the village road.

The road has been damaged lightly due to movement of tractors, said Shahidul.

Ashraf Ali Khan, executive engineer of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in Lalmonirhat, said the village roads in the upazilas are being damaged due to plying of earth-laden tractors.

The brick kiln owners will be given letter to stop random movement of the tractors, said the LGED engineer.

RAPES IN THREE DISTRICTS

Two including 85-yr-old sent to jail

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Two people including an 85-year-old man were sent to jail over rape of children in separate incidents in Tangail and Sunamganj yesterday, while a man was arrested on Sunday night on charge of raping a woman in Jashore.

A Tangail court sent Hasan Ali, 85, from Madhupur upazila, to jail after he was produced before it. Police arrested the man on Sunday, reports our Tangail correspondent.

Tarik Kamal, OC of Madhupur Police Station, said the accused lured the child, a pre-primary student at a local school, into his house around 11:30am on Sunday with a pack of chips.

He then raped her after gagging her with a piece of cloth. At one stage, the gag slipped off her mouth and she started screaming for help. Locals then came to her rescue and caught the accused. Informed, police arrived at the scene and arrested Hasan.

The child's mother filed a case with the police station that night, the OC said, adding that they sent the victim to Tangail General Hospital yesterday for medical tests.

In Sunamganj, a court sent a youth to jail after he was produced before it over rape of a fourth-grader in Bishwambharpur upazila.

Abu Sufian, 21, forcibly took the 10-year-old girl near a paddy field and raped her around 7:00pm on Saturday while she was on way to her relative's house, our Moulvibazar correspondent reports quoting her relatives.

The severely injured girl was first given treatment at the upazila health complex and later transferred to Sunamganj Sadar Hospital as her condition deteriorated.

Rafiqul Islam, a doctor at the hospital, said her condition was improving.

Contacted, Bishwambharpur Police Station OC Mahbubur Rahman said the child's father filed a case with the police station on Sunday morning and they arrested the accused in the afternoon.

In Jashore, Sumon Hossain, 35, from Abhaynagar Sadar upazila, was arrested around midnight on Sunday for raping a 20-year-old woman earlier that night, reports our Benapole correspondent.

Quoting the statement of the case, filed by the victim, OC Tajul Islam of Abhaynagar Police Station said Sumon and his cohorts entered the woman's house by force and raped her in her bedroom while her husband and other family members were out of the house.

Police sent her to Jashore General Hospital for medical tests yesterday.

21 hurt in clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Fairdipur

At least 21 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups over establishing supremacy at Choto Nowdubi village in Nagarkanda upazila of the district yesterday morning.

Six houses were also damaged and looted during the incident, said police.

The injured were admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital and Nagarkanda Upazila Health Complex.

Locals said there had been a longstanding conflict between one Shahin Matabbar and Joynal Matabbar of the village over establishing supremacy in the area.

As a sequel to the conflict, the supporters of Sahin and Joynal attacked each other with lethal weapons around 8:00am yesterday. At the time, 21 people from both sides were injured.

Six houses were also damaged and looted during the clash.

Of the injured, four injured were admitted to the hospital and the rest to the health complex.

Sohel Rana, officer-in-charge of Nagarkanda Police Station, said on information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.



Hundreds of inhabitants in Barabogi and Sonakata unions in Barguna's Taltali upazila have been suffering immensely after this bridge collapsed on January 20. Built on a canal running between the two unions in 1992, the bridge is the only means of communications for residents as well as for people visiting several tourist attractions in the area -- Tengragiri Eco Park, Guamtala and Rakhine villages in Saudagar Para and Kobiraj Para Bazar.

PHOTO: SOHRABHOSSAIN

TRAWLER CAPSIZE IN BAY

3 more bodies found, death toll now 21

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Three more bodies were recovered from the Bay of Bengal between Sunday and yesterday morning, taking the death toll in the February 11 trawler capsized to 21 now.

Coast Guard members recovered two bodies from the sea near St Martin's Island yesterday morning and the other was recovered on Sunday, said Lt Nayeem-ul-Haque, Coast Guard commander of St Martin's Island base.

"It has been confirmed that the three people were on board the trawler that capsized in the Bay," said Prodipt Kumar Das, OC of Teknaf Police Station.

The Coast Guard on Friday and Saturday recovered three other bodies, said Lt Nayeem.

On February 11, a trawler carrying Rohingya refugees, who were trying to go to Malaysia illegally, capsized in the Bay around 5:45am near Zinjira point, some 8km northwest of St Martin's Island and drowning of at least 15 people were confirmed after the incident, said Lt Hayat Ibna Siddique, media officer of Bangladesh Coast Guard.

Afterwards, 72 people, including four boatmen, were rescued, while 50 others are feared missing.

Another trawler, which also capsized in the same area that day, is yet to be traced.

At least 300 people started for Malaysia on the two trawlers from Monakhali area around 8:00pm on February 10.

So far, nine people including the four boatmen were arrested in a case filed in this connection with Teknaf Police Station.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH					
Director, Stores & Supplies					
Department of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Dhaka.					
Tender for Goods (Multiple Lots)					
Ref. No.CMSD/G-1907/ICT/19-20/D-2/71			Dated: 17/02/2020		
KEY INFORMATION					
1	Procurement Method / Document		ICT Open		
FUNDING INFORMATION					
2	Source of Funds		Development Budget (Government)		
3	Development Partner				
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
4	Project / Programme Code				
5	Project / Programme Name		4th HPNSP		
6	Tender Package No.		G-1907		
7	Tender Package Name		Procurement of "Lab Equipment (NCL)"		
8	Tender Publication Date		19/02/2020		
9	Tender Last Selling Date		05/04/2020		
10	Tender Closing Date and time		06/04/2020 11:00 AM		
11	Tender Opening Date and time		06/04/2020 11:30 AM		
12	Name and Address of the Office(s)				
	-Selling Tender Document(Principal)		Central Medical Stores Depot, 30, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Swarani, Tejgaon, Dhaka.		
	-Selling Tender Document(Others)		CMSD		
	-Receiving Tender Document		Do		
	-Opening Tender Document		Do		
13	Place/Date/Time for Pre-Tender Meeting		CMSD, Conference Room (# 115), Date: 04/03/2020 Time: 11:30 AM		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
14	Eligibility of Tenderer		As mentioned in the Tender Document.		
15	Brief Description of Goods or Works		Procurement of "Lab Equipment (NCL)"		
16	Brief Description of Related Services		Procurement of "Lab Equipment (NCL)"		
17	Tender Document Price		BDT 4,000.00 (Taka four thousand) or US\$ 50.00 (US Dollar fifty) only payment will be in Pay Order from any scheduled Bank in Bangladesh.		
17	Lot No	Identification	Location	Tender Security Amount in Taka	Completion Time in weeks/months
	Lot-1	Procurement of Lab Equipment (Analytical Balance, Disintegration Machine, Dissolution Tester, Data Logger, Millikpore Filter Unit, Pycnometer & Pyrometer).	CMSD	BDT 95,000.00 or US\$ 1,000.00	To be delivered on or before 16 weeks following the date of contract signature, or the date of opening of L/C, or date of confirmation of the L/C.
	Lot-2	Procurement of Lab Equipment (HPLC (Thermodinex ion chromatogram system for polysaccharide, Column & Accessories).	CMSD	BDT 1,75,000.00 or US\$ 2,000.00	Do
	Lot-3	Procurement of Lab Equipment (Raman & UV-Vis Spectrophotometer, Spectrometer-FTIR & Lamps for AAS).	CMSD	BDT 3,00,000.00 or US\$ 3,500.00	Do
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS					
18	Name of Official Inviting Tender		Brigadier General Md Shahidullah		
19	Designation of Official Inviting Tender		Director, Stores & Supplies, CMSD,Tejgaon,Dhaka.		
20	Address of Official Inviting Tender		Tejgaon, Dhaka		
21	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender		Tel. No: Tel: 9129231 Fax: Fax 88-02-9126547 E-mail: cmsdstore@dhaka.net		
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders					

Director, (Stores & Supplies),
DGHS, CMSD, Tejgaon,Dhaka.
Tel: 9129231; Fax: 9126547
e-mail : cmsdstore@dhaka.net.

GD-308

Director, (Stores & Supplies),
DGHS, CMSD, Tejgaon, Dhaka.
Tel: 9129231; Fax: 9126547
e-mail : cmsdstore@dhaka.net.

GD-308

SOCIAL MEDIA, ENCRYPTED APPS 80pc militants use those to stay in touch

Say police based on info from 250 arrested militant suspects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 80 percent of those linked to militancy use social media and different encrypted messaging applications to communicate with each other.

Militant outfits, who mainly target those aged between 15 and 25, use the tools also to recruit new members, said Md Moniruzzaman, additional deputy inspector general of police's Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU).

He made the comments while presenting the keynote speech at a seminar titled -- "Preventing Terrorism and Extremism Through Community Engagement" -- at the auditorium of Independent University Bangladesh (IUB) in the capital.

The analysis was based on information gleaned from around 250 arrested militant suspects, he said, adding that 120 of the alleged militants are aged between 15 and 25 while 110 between 26 and 35.

He said 82 percent of the 250 militants were radicalised through social media. Besides, 56 percent of the 250 had general education background and 22 percent madrasa background.

DIG Moniruzzaman identified frustration as one of the main factors that lead youths to extremism. The frustration stems from family affairs, unemployment, among other issues, he said.

He suggested engaging youths in different social activities to help them overcome that frustration.

He also said around three million people were involved in community policing across the country and that law enforcers were using those people to raise awareness on the matter.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



Relatives stretcher a critically injured burn victim to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery from nearby Dhaka Medical College Hospital. They had to bring the patient, named Emon, out in the open as no ambulance was available at the DMCH. Emon is among the eight of a family who suffered burns in a gas explosion at their home, inset, in Narayanganj's Siddhirganj earlier in the day. He lost his aunt in the blast. Story on page 2.

PHOTO:
ANISUR RAHMAN

ABRAR'S DEATH Prothom Alo editor gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Prothom Alo Editor and Publisher Matiuur Rahman in a case filed over the death of college student Naimul Abrar Rahat.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (in-charge) Md Kaisarul Islam passed the order upon a bond of Tk 2,000 with two guarantors after Matiuur surrendered before the court and sought bail. The court fixed February 24 for the next hearing.

The High Court on January 20 granted him bail for a period of four weeks and directed him to appear before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court of Dhaka after expiration of the period.

While granting the anticipatory bail to Matiuur, the HC directed law enforcers not to harass or arrest him or any of the five other accused until police report was filed or charges were framed in the case over the death of Abrar, who was a student of Dhaka Residential Model College.

As per the HC direction, Matiuur surrendered before the court yesterday and sought bail, his lawyer

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Give us clear definition of gambling

Dhaka Club, Gulshan Club file petitions for stay on HC verdict

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Club and Gulshan Club yesterday filed two separate petitions with the Supreme Court seeking a stay on the High Court verdict that asked the government to stop games involving cards, roll of the dice or luck.

After holding a brief hearing, Justice Hasan Foez Siddique of the Appellate Division sent the petitions to its full bench and fixed February 23 for a hearing on those.

Barristers Rakanuddin Mahmud and Fida M Kamal appeared on behalf of the two clubs that sought the stay from the SC.

The clubs want a definition of gambling; they argue the casinos run commercially at sporting clubs and the indoor games at social clubs are not the same.

Following a writ petition, the HC on February 10 declared gambling in any form, involving cards, roll of the dice or luck and through games like bingo a criminal offence and ordered the government to stop these nationwide.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Massive help needed without delay



Bangabandhu being presented with a leaflet titled 'Read Bengali and write Bengali' by the leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League on February 18, 1972.

FEBRUARY 18, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MUJIB BLASTS NIXON ADMINISTRATION

Bangabandhu says that although he has friendly feelings towards the people of USA, he cannot support President Richard Nixon's administration, which has still not recognised Bangladesh.

In an interview with United Press International, Bangabandhu says that the Nixon administration had adopted a policy of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



CTG RESERVE FORESTS Won't allow road there

Inter-ministerial body decides about an RHD proposal

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

An inter-ministerial body has decided against making a road through two reserve forests -- Hazarkhali Wildlife Sanctuary and Boroiyadala National Park -- in Chattogram.

The body was formed to resolve the dispute between the forest department and the Roads and Highway Department (RHD) over the proposed nine-kilometre road.

In its final report submitted to the RHD on January 29, the body comprising nine members from the forest, environment and climate change ministry, road transport ministry and planning ministry also suggested an alternative -- expanding the existing Mirsarai-Narayanhat road connecting Mirsarai and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Major search for aliens launched



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have launched a major new search for alien life.

The new scheme uses the latest techniques to scour the skies in the hope of finding data that could be an indication of extraterrestrial intelligence.

And they will also make the data from their searches available to the public in the hope that citizen scientists can spot potential evidence in what they have found.

The researchers at the SETI Institute, which is devoted to looking for alien life, are hunting for "technosignatures", or hints in the data that suggest they could be coming from planets that are home to other beings. They could be anything from sniffing hints of chemicals on alien worlds to indications that there could be structures or lasers on other planets.

Dr Tony Beasley, director of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) telescope based in Virginia, US, said: "Determining whether we are alone in the universe as technologically capable life is among the most compelling questions in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

CORONAVIRUS SCARE Don't bring back the 172 from Hubei

China envoy suggests Dhaka about the Bangladeshi students

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Li Jiming has recommended that the 172 Bangladeshi students in China's Hubei Province not be brought back home as that would risk spreading coronavirus in Bangladesh.

"We should try our best to stop such possibilities and minimise the risk. Personally, I don't suggest, I

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 18

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:20 12:45 4:30 6:03 7:30
JAMAAT 5:55 1:15 4:45 6:07 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Near a cautionary street sign, a bus lying on its side after the driver lost control of the vehicle on Rangamati-Chattogram Link Road in Rangamati's Manikchhari area around 7:00am yesterday, leaving at least 10 injured. The bus was carrying picnicers to Bandarban from Rangamati.

PHOTO:
ANVIL CHAKMA

India FM defends CAA in Brussels

AFP, Brussels

India's Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar yesterday defended his country's controversial new citizenship law and crackdown in Kashmir, as he came to Brussels to promote what he hopes will be closer strategic ties to the European Union.

Delhi's top diplomat was the guest of honour as EU foreign ministers met in Brussels with an eye to renewing relations and boosting trade with the south Asian giant.

EU president Ursula von der Leyen's new Commission wants to give Brussels a more "geopolitical role" and as part of that hopes to host a March summit with powerful Indian leader Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"India and the European Union share a lot of things," said Europe's high representative for foreign policy Josep Borrell, citing climate change, the digital revolution and rise of China as shared challenges.

Jaishankar, standing by Borrell, noted that the new government in India and the new commission in Brussels are "both quite fresh" and that they hoped to take relations to a "new level".

He said he hoped the lunch talks would confirm the "strategic partnership."

Taken together, the EU member states are Delhi's biggest trade partner, with India's imports and exports to and from the bloc each representing about 45 billion euros a year (\$49 billion).

But -- while Europe has inked trade deals with big Asian

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

হুমি হবে নীরবে.....

যাসফুল-প্রতিষ্ঠাতা
শামসুন্নাহার রহমান পরাগ
এর মে মৃত্যুবাব্বিকিতে
বিন্দু শ্রদ্ধা।
তার বর্ণাঢ্য কর্মজীবের
আলোয় তিনি উদ্ভাসিত
আমাদের মাঝে



শামসুন্নাহার রহমান পরাগ
(০১ লা জুন ১৯৪০ - ১৮ই ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০১৫)



GHASHFUL
www.ghashful-bd.org

যাসফুল পরিবার