



www.thedailystar.net Your Right to Know

Jamadius Sani 26, 1441 Hijri

PLUS 8 PAGES TABLOID INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY SPECIAL

24 Pages Plus Toggle Price: Tk 12.00

Pay Tk 1,000cr by Monday

Apex court orders Grameenphone over audit claim dispute with BTRC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A senseless

official

act of a govt

He shared info on

suspected Covid-19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A top official at the

Benapole Customs in

Jashore yesterday allegedly

posted on Facebook the

photograph, identity and

address of a passenger,

claiming a coronavirus

After the post was

updated, health officials,

patient was identified at the

patient on Facebook

The Supreme Court yesterday ordered Grameenphone to pay Tk 1,000 crore by Monday, in a development that can be viewed as the walls closing in on the country's leading mobile operator in its protracted tussle with the telecom regulator over unpaid dues.

"First pay Tk 1,000 crore to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission and then come on February 24 [Monday] for further orders," said Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, who led the seven-member Appellate Division bench, while passing the order yesterday.

The order came in response to a review

petition filed by Grameenphone earlier on January 26 to allow it to pay Tk 575 crore in 12 equal instalments.

The review petition was filed after the apex court had directed Grameenphone on November 24 last year to pay Tk 2,000 crore to the telecom regulator within three months (by February 23) against the claim of Tk 12,579.96 crore determined by an

audit, which looked into Grameenphone's books from its inception until 2014, claimed that the carrier owed the amount in revenue shares, taxes and

But at the hearing yesterday for the review

Games involving luck, money are

gambling Defines HC in its full verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court observed in the full text of a verdict that games played with money at stake and dependent on luck rather than skills are gambling.

It said playing such games and organising them were punishable offences, but excluded authorised lotteries. However, the games will be allowed when played

without money or valuables at stake, the court added. It is expected that the government will seriously consider amending the law so that the prohibition applies equally to all people, irrespective of their financial and social



AMAR EKUSHEY TODAY

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paying homage to the Language Movement martyrs at the Central Shaheed Minar early today. People across the country will observe the International Mother Language Day and commemorate the martyrs today.

TEACHING ETHNIC PUPILS IN MOTHER TONGUE

Govt initiative faltering

MATHEWS CHIRAN

The government move to ensure children from ethnic communities are given early childhood education in their mother tongue is apparently falling flat due to a lack of teachers with a good command of these languages. As per the government plan, ethnic

minority students would learn exclusively in their mother tongue from pre-primary level up to class II and gradually learn Bangla from class III.

With this aim, the government decided to publish textbooks in ethnic languages in 2012. And since 2017, it has been distributing textbooks in Chakma, Marma, Textbook Board (NCTB) has distributed 2,30,130 copies of textbooks in these languages for 97,594 students. But it all risks coming to nought as

most of the teachers can speak in the languages but they do not know how to read and write them. "They need intensive trainings on

teaching using the textbooks," said the headteacher of a government primary school in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila.

The teachers, who don't have thorough knowledge on their language, still do not know how to impart lessons based on the textbooks, said several teachers and education officials while talking to this newspaper.

No Shaheed Minar in 77pc pry schools

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

A staggering 77 percent of the government primary schools do not have Shaheed Minar, a monument where students can pay homage to the martyrs of the Language Movement.

The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), while preparing its annual report, recently came up with the data revealing that in some districts over 90 percent of state-run primary schools have no language monument.

Teachers and education officers cited a lack of funds as one of the main reasons SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

Buet, CU won't adopt centralised entry test

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Buet and Chittagong University will not adopt the centralised admission system this year as they have decided to follow the existing admission system for student enrolment.

The two universities made the decision at the meetings of their academic council in the last two days.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Buet academic council member Prof Md Mizanur Rahman



PM says at Ekushey Padak ceremony, hands awards to 21 recipients

Unb, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for paying special attention to further spread Bangla literature and culture in the world.

"We are Bangalees. Our cultural practices will also continue. We have to pay special attention so that our literature and culture could be spread further in the international stage," she

PM was addressing a programme marking the distribution of Ekushey Padak-2020, the second highest civilian award, at the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

Hasina said though there was need to learn other languages, the own language (mother tongue) should not be forgotten. Those who stay abroad

for different reasons would have to respect their mother tongue, she added.

City

"Ekush [February 21] has taught us not to bow down. Ekush taught us the sense of self-esteem.

Mentioning that the bloodshed on February 21, 1952, paved the way for Bangladesh's independence in 1971, she said, "Ekush is a very glorious day for us. We want our next generations to know this glorious history."

About the contributions of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to the Language Movement, the PM said he had to face imprisonment and harassments time and again for going to wage the movement.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 3



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the winners of Ekushey Padak, the second highest civilian award in Bangladesh, at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital yesterday.

4 killed in 'gunfights' with police

Four alleged criminals, including two robbers, were killed in "gunfights" with police in Dinajpur, Pabna, and Chapainawabganj early yesterday.

In Dinajpur, two members of a robber gang -- Rafiqul Islam, 28, of Gaibandha, and Wazed Ali, 30, of Dinajpur -- were killed in a "shootout" with police in Nawabganj upazila.

Police arrested the duo from Nawabganj on Wednesday.

Gleaning information from the two, a police team took the duo with them and raided Chhoto Magura village to recover firearms around 3:00am, said Ashok Kumar Chauhan, officer-incharge of Nawabganj Police Station.

Sensing the law enforcers' presence, other members of the gang opened fire. Police retaliated, claimed the OC.

Rafiqul and Wazed were shot dead when they were trying to escape from police custody. However, others managed to flee, he added.

Four police personnel were injured in the incident, the OC claimed.

Rafiqul was accused in three robbery cases and Wazed in two robbery cases,

said police. The two bodies were sent to M Abdur Rahim Medical College in Dinajpur for

autopsies, he added. In another "gunfight", a suspected

A senseless act

passenger, who came in a train from

edited the post providing the update

and then deleted it later in the day.

The incident resulted in

reaction from health officials.

At this, the customs official first

By that time, the post caused rumours

Breaching the privacy of any

passenger is not only unethical, but

also a violation of the service rule on

maintaining secrecy which is mandatory

for all government officials, said IEDCR

been asking all government officials

concerned to be careful about the

privacy of anyone suspected of being

infected. During such a crisis, many fail to maintain this...," the director of

the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease

Control and Research (IEDCR) told The

infections, the protocol was to inform

the high-ups concerned or contact the

health ministry, is the only organisation

in the country which has the capacity to

As part of the countrywide

surveillance system, the IEDCR collects

sample from any suspected patients

reported by local health authorities.

test suspected coronavirus cases.

She said that if there were cases of

The IEDCR, which is under the

"From the beginning, we have

Director Prof Meerjady Sabrina Flora.

India, did not carry the virus.

on social media.

drug dealer, Habban Ali Sheikh, 45, of Pabna town, was killed in Pabna.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team conducted a drive in Char Shibrampur area of Pabna Sadar upazila around 2:00am, said Rafiqul Islam, superintendent of Pabna police.

When police reached the spot, the criminals fired on police. The law enforcers returned fire. After the "gun battle", police found bullet-hit Habban lying on the spot, he said.

Habban was declared dead after being taken to Pabna Sadar Hospital, the SP said.

He stood accused in 12 cases filed with different police stations, the police official added.

Four police personnel were hurt in the incident and they were admitted to Pabna General Hospital, the SP said, claiming that police recovered a firearm and five bullets from the spot.

In Chapainawabganj, the key suspect in a seven-year-old girl murder was killed in a "gunfight" with police at Horishpur in Sadar upazila yesterday

Torikul Islam alias Saddam, 32, of Manik Hajir Tola village under the same upazila, was accused of killing the girl

Dinajpur, Pabna, Chapainawabganj contributed to this report.

So far, the IEDCR has tested 77

Besides, 20,767 incoming passengers

were screened at all airports, seaports

and land ports across the country in 24

hours till 3:00pm yesterday, according

None of them had any coronavirus

Prof Flora urged officials concerned

to contact respective upazila health

officials or civil surgeons or directly

call to IEDCR hotlines. The numbers

She urged people not to panic as

the government has taken necessary

preparation to prevent and contain any

Meanwhile, a new coronavirus case

was reported in Singapore yesterday,

taking the total number of cases to 85,

Four Bangladeshis, among the 48 confirmed cases who are still in

hospital in that country, are stable and

still in critical condition in the intensive

Bangladesh has received 500 real

time PCR kits for testing coronavirus,

through the Chinese embassy in Dhaka,

Besides, one Bangladeshi patient is

In a development, the IEDCR in

Straight Times newspaper reported.

probable outbreak of coronavirus.

01927711784,

01937000011, and 01937110011.

01927711785,

samples and found all to be coronavirus

makes the results public.

to IEDCR.

Pay Tk 1,000cr by Monday

petition, Grameenphone's counsellor AM Amin Uddin requested the SC to grant the operator six months to pay Tk 500 crore out of the court's earlier order for payment of Tk 2,000 crore.

In response the chief justice said: You feel that the court of Bangladesh is very small. It is very painful. This is the highest court of the country."

He also said: "BTRC's claim is Tk 12,000 crore. We had asked you to pay Tk 2,000 core. Are you ignoring the order of the Appellate Division?" Attorney

General Mahbubey Alam, who represents the BTRC, told the court that no money was paid by Grameenphone to the telecom watchdog after the court delivered the

But the full amount will be collected once an administrator is appointed for running the carrier, he added.

Mehedi Hasan one of the lawyers fighting for Grameenphone, told The Daily Star the compound interest rate was applied on the Norwegian Telenor Group's subsidiary's late fees.

But in the case of Robi, which was locked in a similar tussle with the telecom regulator, simple interest rate was used, he said. NO OPTION BUT TO PAY TK 1,000CR: BTRC

After the court order, BTRC Chairman Md Jahurul Haque told The Daily Star that Grameenphone now has no option but to pay the Tk 1,000 crore.

"It is my personal opinion that this time Grameenphone will pay the public money," he told the correspondent yesterday at his office following the apex court's order.

After receiving the Tk 1,000 crore, the telecom regulator will decide whether the bar imposed on Grameenphone for network equipment import and package approval will be lifted.

If Grameenphone refuses to pay the sum on Monday, the BTRC would proceed as per the telecom act, which empowers it to appoint an administrator.

And the telecom regulator has taken all preparations for appointing the administrator should Grameenphone fail to pay up on February 24.

The BTRC chairman even met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office on Monday and discussed a few potential candidates for the panel of administrators.

"But everything will depend on Monday's order. We do not intend to embezzle from Grameenphone. Rather, we want to collect public money. The administrative panel's main responsibility will be to realise

The administrator will enjoy full authority over hiring and firing of employees just as a chief executive officer would, while the remuneration will be similar to that of the company's top brass, he added. GRAMEENPHONE'S OPTION TO ARRANGE THE SUM

Contacted, Grameenphone said: "We have not received the relief that we were seeking in our review petition. We have no further comments at the moment.

The operator declined to disclose whether it will pay the sum.

But arranging the sum stipulated by the apex court is unlikely to be too difficult for the operator.

The operator logged in Tk 3,450 crore as net profit in 2019. After disbursing 130 percent cash dividend for 2019 to the 135.03 crore shares, the carrier still has Tk 1,695 crore.

Including money retained from the previous year, the carrier has Tk 2,123.26 crore.

Given the substantial amount retained from Grameenphone Chief Executive Officer Yasir Azman was pelted with the question in his first press conference two weeks ago: was it for depositing to the national coffer?

He, however,

Only 38.60 percent of the 4,204 ethnic community teachers in the three hill districts have attended a 14-day training on their respective almost impossible.

district councils in Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban, were only intended to introduce the alphabets

"I have been acquainted with the Chakma letters, but I still don't know how to read or write a sentence properly," the teacher said, wishing

also admitted that the training was not adequate to make the teachers

Khorshed Alam, district primary education officer of Rangamati, said, "The training provided by the government was of good quality, but

Echoing his view, Siddiqur Rahman, assistant primary education officer in Bandarban, said more training is

In December last year, the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) started providing a 10-day training to the ethnic language teachers in the hill districts, but there is still a long way to go.

worse as no training programme has so far been organised for ethnic language teachers, depriving students of the opportunity to begin their schooling in mother language.

of Garo and Tripura language teachers was so acute that conducting training for ethnic language teachers there was

"We discussed the issue [absence of training with the primary education ministry and the NCTB," he said, adding they were yet to receive any instructions from the higher authorities in this regard. Against this backdrop, teachers in

classrooms prioritise Bangla textbooks over the ones written in ethnic languages for imparting lessons.

Sunali Deb Barma, a student of class II at Daluchhara Government Primary School in Moulvibazar's Sreemangal upazila, told the Moulvibazar correspondent of The Daily Star that they received their books in Tripura language at the beginning of the new year, but no class has been taken using these books.

Moreover, there is no clear instruction for teachers on how to impart lessons in a class where there are students from more than one community.

"When we take classes of Marma Chakma students, Tripura students find nothing to do and loiter around," said a Chakma teacher at a Khagrachhari school.

Experts say establishing mother tongue-based education at the primary level is not only limited to distributing books.

"It also requires proper training for the teachers and guidelines regarding the teaching method as multilingual teaching system is different from traditional teaching," said Prof Sourav Shikder, a teacher at Dhaka University's linguistics department.

deputy director at the DPE in Sylhet given a minimum three months of

training.

Rabindranath Soren, president of Jatiya Adibasi Parishad, said ensuring proper training is necessary for ensuring the quality of the teaching.

"Besides, we need to keep our languages alive," he added.

Abdul Hye Al Hadi, an anthropologist and chief executive of Save the Heritage and Environment, said the ethnic languages in Sylhet region are disappearing due to the dominance of Bangla.

The ethnic people, particularly their children, can't practise their languages at schools and other places. At one stage, they hesitate to speak in their language even in the family atmosphere.

Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples' Forum, said the United Nations Charter gives all communities of the world the right to get educated in their mother languages and Bangladesh is a signatory to the charter.

He recommended a special teachers recruitment process for the schools in indigenous communities.

The teachers said that they also found it hard to decide which language to use in the question papers.

"When we ask, the upazila primary education officer they can't give us any specific direction," said a teacher in Rangamati.

Contacted, Primary and Mass Education Secretary Akram-Al-Hossain said, "If more training is needed, we will arrange that by talking with the officials concerned and

indigenous community leaders." Asked about the evaluation, he said, "There will be no internal exam for students up to class III as these He suggested that the teachers be students are subjected to formative

from Palashbari village in the upazila and an activist of Gokul union BNP unit, said Sumon, general secretary of the Gokul Union Swechhasebak Dal,

profession, Suman said.

Station.

As Apel and Mamun went to Chandihara Bazar area, Mizanur's accomplices took them to a nearby

them to the Bogura Shaheed Ziur Rahman Medical college hospital where doctor pronounced Apel dead, the inspector said, adding that Mamun is undergoing treatment at the same hospital.

report last night, Inspector Rezaul said.

Lagos as Nigeria deaths top 100

AFP, Lagos

"Cumulatively from week 1 to week 07, 2020, 103 deaths have been reported with a case fatality rate of 17.6%," said the Nigeria Centre for statistics on the virus released on

cases rose by 115 last week to a total of 586 across the country.

"Sixty-three people that may have been in contact with the patient and who may have been infected in the process have been identified and are being monitored," the state government wrote on Twitter on

belongs to the same family as the Ebola and Marburg viruses, but is much less deadly.

The disease is spread by contact

not show symptoms but the disease can go on to cause severe bleeding and organ failure in about 20 percent of cases.

An outbreak of Lassa fever killed some 170 people around Nigeria last

The number of cases usually climbs around the start of the year linked to the dry season.

While the overall number of confirmed cases and deaths is up this year on the same period in 2019, the mortality rate is lower.

Twenty health workers across the country have been confirmed as contracting the disease so far in 2020.

town of Lassa in northern Nigeria, where it was first identified in 1969.

Govt initiative faltering division, told The Daily Star the crisis

languages in the last three years.

A Chakma teacher who took part in the training told The Daily Star that she could not learn much from the training and that it was not sufficient

anonymity.

Several district education officials have a good grip on their languages.

its duration was not enough.'

required for the teachers.

In Sylhet, the situation is even

Contacted, AKM Shafayet Alam,

scepticism that such a government to maintain "confessionalism and

Allawi said he was calling on parliament, which is currently on a break, to sit for a confidence vote on February 24.

new government on February 1, after President Barham Saleh gave political parties an ultimatum, saying he would name a new premier unilaterally if they did not agree on a candidate.

Allawi warned Wednesday that if no government is formed by the March because there are indeed parties that

corruption". Outgoing

Mahdi had also applied pressure earlier Wednesday, saying it would not be fair for him to hold his post beyond the constitutional deadline for confirming his replacement and warning against a "very dangerous" vacuum.

After testing the sample, the IEDCR said a press release. Games involving luck

"The above-mentioned games, namely nipun khela 1-10, 1-8 charchari, dice, housie, three cards, flash, poker and any other games (except government authorized lottery) played physically, electronically or by any other instruments, the outcome of which predominantly depend on luck and not on skill, are gambling.

"Accordingly, owning, occupying any place of such games and any instruments and allowing such games to take place, is an offence under the law of the land," it read. It added: "Raffle draws/coupons

given as a side-product of door tickets for attending picnics or to purchase any products from shopping malls, the dominant intention/purpose in those cases being to attend picnic or to purchase products, do not come within the mischief of gambling.

The bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan

Arif and Justice Md Mahmud Hassan Talukder had delivered the verdict on February 10, following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyers Samiul Huq and Rokonuddin Md Faruq in 2016, seeking orders on the government for taking action against gambling. "Keeping any place or office for drawing lottery, not being authorised by

government, is an offence punishable

under Section 294 A of the Penal Code,

Law enforcing agencies are directed to take immediate actions for seizure of clubs, gaming equipment and prevent people from playing such games in those clubs and other clubs, it said.

The HC judges said the government should think seriously about increasing the punishment for gambling as the present punishments are lenient, considering the financial and other status of the people who are commonly engaged in those games.

The court also asked its office concerned to send the copy of this judgment and order to the authorities concerned of the government, including cabinet secretary, inspector general of police, police commissioners, Rab and deputy commissioners concerned, so that the information is disseminated and actions taken.

On February 17, Dhaka Club and Gulshan Club filed two separate petitions with the Supreme Court against the HC verdict seeking a definition of gambling.

They argue in the petitions that the casinos run commercially at sporting clubs and the indoor games at social clubs are not the same thing.

After 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.

Iraq PM-designate calls for confidence vote Monday Iraqi officials have quietly expressed are working for instability" in order

AFP, Baghdad

Iraqi prime minister-designate Mohammad Allawi Wednesday for parliament to hold a confidence vote on his government early next week. Nominated as a consensus candidate

among Iraq's divided political parties, Allawi emphasised that his cabinet was not drawn from the political elite, a key demand of the protest movement sweeping the country's capital and south since October 1.

In a speech broadcast on state TV, Allawi said he was proposing "an independent government without any party candidates for the first time in would earn parliament's approval.

He was charged with forming a

Addressing the Iraqi people,

premier Adel Abdel

Abdel Mahdi stepped down

in December in the face of the unprecedented anti-government protests demanding an end to corruption, an independent prime 2 constitutional deadline, "it will be minister and a total government

Man stabbed to death in Bogura OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

DHAKA **FRIDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2020, FALGUN 8, 1426 BS**

A man was stabbed to death and his brother injured allegedly by rival groups over a previous feud in Bogura Sadar upazila yesterday, police said.

The dead, Apel Mahmud, 30, was adding that his brother Al Mamun, 40, was also an activist of the same

Both the brothers were butchers in

The incident took place in the ıpazila's Buzrukbari village as about 10 people, led by one Mizanur Rahman, swooped on the two brothers with sharp weapons at a litchi garden around 8:30am, said Rezaul Karim, inspector of Bogura Sadar Police

The inspector said Mizanur had a long-standing rivalry with Mamun, who is accused of killing a follower of Mizanur in 2018.

Quoting Mamun, the inspector said an unknown person called Apel and told that he wanted to sell a goat.

litchi garden and stabbed them with machetes, the inspector said. Later, local rescued them and sent

No case was filed till filing of this

Lassa fever hits

An outbreak of Lassa in Nigeria has killed 103 people this year, health authorities said, as the first confirmed case was reported in the economic hub Lagos.

Disease Control (NCDC) in its latest Wednesday. The overall number of confirmed

Separately, health authorities in Lagos, Nigeria's most populous city with 20 million inhabitants, said an infected person was diagnosed there on February 17 and being treated in isolation in hospital.

Γhursday. Endemic to Nigeria, Lassa fever

with rat faeces or urine or the bodily fluids of an infected person. The majority of those infected do

The virus takes its name from the

Their wounds have not healed Cops still clueless

Families still reeling from loss of loved ones; DSCC gives compensation to 31 victim families



MEMORIES OF HORROR ... Locals look on at a banner commemorating the devastating blaze one year ago on the very spot that claimed dozens of lives. The photo was taken yesterday in front of Haji Wahed Mansion in Chawk Bazar's Churihatta.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four-year-old Junayed still waits for his father to return home with a bag full of chips and toys, a promise he was given a year ago. "He still complains to his mother why his father was not coming back with chips... 'Why is abbu [dad] still taking so much time to come home from downstairs?' he asks," said Junayed's mother Shirin Aktar yesterday, in a choked-up voice.

Junayed's father Shahadat Hossain, who used to run a tea stall in Satrawza, was one of the victims of the tragic fire in Chawk Bazar's Churihatta last year.

He had died on the spot.

Shahadat was one of the 71 people burnt to death on the night of February 20 last year.

Whenever someone knocks, my little boy rushes to the door hoping his father has returned," Shirin told this correspondent at a programme yesterday.

"Every time he asks me the question, I tell



him his father went downstairs, and will come back soon. I haven't vet tried to make him understand that his father is dead. He is too young to understand," she added

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) yesterday arranged the programme where they gave compensation to family members of 31 victims of the Churihatta blaze.

Like Shirin, family members of 30 more victims were present at the programme, each of them still reeling from the wound inflicted by the horrendous fire.

Shirin and 20 others were offered jobs on a

master roll [pay-per-work] basis at DSCC's waste management department. They are offered Tk 475 per day, with

condition that they can be sacked anytime without any reason. Asked, Md Ripon, son of a fire victim Joynal Abedin, said, "I have to be content with this.

There is nothing to do." "They gave the job and I'll do it," said Ripon, who now works at a private organisation.

Of the 31 that received compensations, four were given allocation of shops, and two Tk 4 lakh each. Four applicants of victim family members -- who had higher educational qualifications -- were promised jobs at DSCC as per their qualifications within two weeks.

Replying to a question, DSCC Mayor Sayeed Khokon said of the victims, only 31 applied for compensation, and that is why they were giving compensation to them.

He said the bureaucratic process has taken them a long time to hand over the compensation to victims' families.

"We have to learn from such a fire incident. If we forget, such heart-wrenching incidents will recur," Khokon said, adding, if people become conscious, the magnitude of damage will reduce

LOCALS RALLY FOR JUSTICE

Meanwhile, a mass-signature programme was held in Chawkbazar area yesterday morning, demanding compensation for the families of the 71 victims of the devastating fire.

Around 100 locals, including victims' family members, participated in the programme held in front of Wahed Mansion, where the fire had originated.

The participants, wearing black badges, recalled the horrific incident and demanded the compensation authorities had promised them.

However, on the anniversary of the tragedy, nobody from the government, not even the local government members, visited the spot.

MA Rahman, one of the key organisers of

A year after Chawk Bazar blaze, no headway in probe RAFIUL ISLAM

Exactly one year after the tragic blaze at Wahed Mansion in Chawk Bazar, police have neither arrested a single accused, nor made any headway in investigation.

Despite a public outcry for their arrest, owners of the building remained out of law enforcers' radar until they surrendered before a High Court bench on March 11 and secured bail. The two siblings finally landed in jail on April 2 after they surrendered to a lower court. However, the duo secured a six-month bail in August -- which was later extended by a year -- and are currently out

Much like the building owners, law enforcers in the last one year could not arrest the owners and top officials of the chemical warehouse in the building. On that fateful day, huge explosions took place at the warehouse on the first floor of the residential building, initiating the fire that engulfed the nearby areas.

The victim families, meanwhile, are still bearing the brunt of the incident, with some shifting to their village homes -- unable to bear daily expenses in the city. The investigation officer has so far taken nine dates from the trial court to submit a probe report. The next date of submitting the report is February 26.

The only thing investigators can say for certain in one year of investigation is the name of the warehouse -- Paarl Trading International -- and its owner and some top officials.

Kabir Hossain Hawlader, inspector (investigation) of Chawk Bazar Police Station, said they could not identify and locate the owners, as they did not get any clue about them.

"We got some information and addresses going through their trade licence, passport and national ID cards. But visiting those places, we found the information were incorrect," Kabir, the investigation officer

of the case filed following the incident, said

The police officer, however, said they were investigating with sincerity, and waiting for the post-mortem report from the forensic medicine department at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. According to police, Mohammad Kashif, the executive director of the company; and two directors Imtiaz Ahmed and Mozammel Iqbal -have gone into hiding after the incident.

The company's offices at Moulvibazar of Old Dhaka and Hatirpool has remained shut since then. Family members of victims, however, are frustrated over the progress in investigation, and raised questions about sincerity of law enforcers in tracking down

"Our police are very capable, and are arresting dreaded criminals; I do not know why police are not able to arrest them [the culprits]. They are moving freely... The building owners, after coming out of jail on bail, are also leading their normal lives, said Nahida Rahman, wife of slain ASM Anwar Hossain, a pharmacy shop owner near Wahed Mansion.

"Our families have been destroyed... We want justice and compensation," she said.

"They are just biding time... We fear the case will be buried after a couple of years," said a family member of another victim, preferring anonymity.

The victims in the deadly fire are mostly pedestrians, people travelling on rickshaws and cars, residents of the buildings as well as owners and staff of the shops located near the Wahed Mansion.

Md Asif, son of victim Md Jummun, filed a case with Chawk Bazar Police Station against two Wahed Mansion owners -- Hasan and Sohel -- and at least 12 unnamed persons after the incident.

Talking to The Daily Star, Asif said, "We do not see any sign of getting justice... I want justice for all those who are responsible."

Prof Perween new TIB chair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Dr Perween Hasan, vice chancellor of Central Women's University, has been elected chairperson of the trustee board of Transparency International Bangladesh

She was elected during the 103rd meeting of the board at TIB office of Islamic History and Culture Department in the capital's Dhanmondi yesterday, according to a press release.

She will succeed Advocate Sultana Kamal

and will take charge tomorrow. former cabinet Besides. secretary Ali Imam Majumdar has been elected the new secretary general while Prof Tasneem Siddiqui and Advocate Sushmita Chakma have been elected new members of the board.

Prof Perween, also a noted educationist, is a former teacher of Dhaka University. She obtained her PhD in Islamic architecture from Harvard

University of the United States.

Award named

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday announced the names of nine persons and an institution for the Independence Award for their outstanding contributions to the nation in various fields.

They are: Bir Pratik Golam Dastagir Gazi, late Commander (retd) Abdur Rauf, late Muhammad Anwar Pasha, Azizur Rahman, Prof Md Obaidul Kabir Chowdhury, Prof AKMA Muktadir, freedom fighter SM Rois Uddin Ahmad, Kalipada Das and Ferdousi Mazumder.

The institution is Bharateswari Homes which was nominated for its contribution to the education sector.

Dastagir, Rauf, Anwar and Azizur were nominated for their contributions to the country's Liberation War and independence, while Prof Obaidul and Muktadir for their outstanding contributions in medical science.

Kalipada and Ferdousi were nominated under the culture category and Rois for his work in literature.

PM Sheikh Hasina will hand the awards on March 25, at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

CASE AGAINST SK SINHA Charge framing hearing Mar 25

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday transferred the graft case filed against former chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha and 10 others to the Special Judge's Court-4 of

Dhaka for its trial. After getting copies of advertisements published in two national dailies, Judge KM Emrul Kayesh passed the order. The court set March 25 for hearing on charge framing against Sinha and 10 others.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

10 laureates for Independence Not enough books on Language Movement



Although the most number of books on Language Movement has been published by Bangla Academy, the institution has stopped printing new editions of many of those.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Amar Ekushey book fair has always been a manifestation of people's love for their mother tongue. On the eve of Ekushey, the fair has been buzzing with people, many of them interested in learning from books on the Language Movement.

The Language Movement is of particular interest to the younger generations, as books can be a major medium to learn history from.

Although this is a topic that has been covered by older authors in the past, there are barely a handful of contemporary writers working on it. So readers are left with just a few options.

On the other hand, the authorities of Bangla Academy, which had a reputation for publishing

such books, did not release new editions of these books at the fair this year as of yet, according to their stall attendants.

Ahmed Rafiq, a Language Movement activist, has written many books on the topic. Among these, one titled "Bhasha Andolon: Teknaf to Tetulia" features how the Language Movement spread all over the country during that time.

Another book Ekusher Dinlipi also narrates significant moments of 1952.

"These two [books] are very important to me," said the veteran.

written by a few of us, and these were

written at a time when the movement

When asked why books on the movement are published rarely now, Rafiq said, "People are reading these books

protest that led to Bangla being the state language. Finally, one must know a lot to Publishing house Ananya has brought several books on the Language Movement,

including Ekusher Dalil by MR Akhtar Mukul and Ekusher Golpo edited by Hasan "We want to publish more books on

was very important. This was a successful

language movement but nobody is writing on it. I will publish if I get

good manuscripts," said Monirul Haque, owner of Ananya. The stall attendants

of the academy told this correspondent that there is a huge demand for such books at the fair, although there have not been new editions.

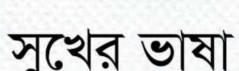
This correspondent found the lowest number of books on language martyr Abdul Jabbar, although books on him are in heavy demand at the fair.

Bangla Academy had published several books including "Ekusher Smritycharon" in 1980, "Bhasha Andolon o Shaheed Minar" by Rafiqul Islam in 1982, and "Bhasha Andolan: Tatparjo o Itihash" jointly written by Abdul Matin and Ahmed Rafiq in 1992.

However the latest editions of these books could not be found.

A Bangla Academy official seeking anonymity, told The Daily Star, "The copies of these books have run out. Only the printing division of the academy can provide insight on this."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



ঘর যেন এক মায়াময় অবয়ব। কিছুটা বাস্তব, অনেকখানি কল্পনা। কোন কোন ঘর আছে আমাদের টেনে নেয় ভেতরে। আশ্রয় দেয়, মায়াময় করে, দেয় বেঁচে থাকার প্রেরণা। আবার কোন কোন ঘর আমাদের করে ঘরহীন। পার্থক্য ভাষা আর ভাষার প্রকাশে। মায়ের ভাষা ঘরকে করে দ্যুতিময়। মনের ভাষা ঘরকে করে শ্রুতিময়। পরস্পরের বোঝাপড়া ঘরকে করে ঐশ্বর্যময়। আর সেখানেই শুরু সুখের। সেখানেই শুরু আমাদের। প্রতিটি ঘর হয়ে উঠক সুখের এক অনাবিল উৎস।



2nd Edition

This car collided head-on with a truck, and was then engulfed in flames, injuring three people in Manikganj's Shivalaya upazila yesterday. PHOTO: ZAHANGIR SHAH

Not enough books

Moni Haider, an official of Bangla Academy, told The Daily Star that printing of the new edition of a book titled "Bhasha Andoloner Itihash, Koyekti Dalil" is going in full swing. "This book by Dr Ratanlal is also an imporant read," he said.

The stall attendant said a book titled "Prothom Shaheed Minar o Piaru Sharder", edited by Anisuzzaman is very popular among book lovers.

Asked if there's a crisis of books on Language Movement, eminent writer Imdadul Haque Milon told Language Movement. The parent of a "But more books like this are needed."

The Daily Star that Bangla Academy has published most of the books that were written on this topic. "Other publishers should bring more books on Language Movement. This would benefit younger readers," he said.

Asked why books on the Language Movement are not being released, Milon said a lot of research is needed to write a book on this, which might be deterring writers.

Meanwhile a few school students were seen disheartened after not being able to find an appropriate read on the

child mentioned that she was looking for a book that's suitable for children, but couldn't find anything.

Farid Ahmed, president of Bangladesh Knowledge and Creative Publishers' Association and publisher of Shomoy Prokashon, said many publishers cannot bring out adequate number of books due to lack of enriched manuscripts.

Tarigul Islam Roni of Tamralipi publication said his house has published a book on Language Movement especially for children.

7-year-old killed in road crash

6 dead, 8 injured in other accidents

At least seven people were killed and eight injured in road accidents yesterday, report our correspondents and a news agency.

In Mymensingh, a schoolgirl was killed after a battery-run auto-rickshaw hit her at Duthnoi of Dhobaura upazila.

Mansura Akter (7), daughter of Monjurul Islam, was a first-grader at Duthnoi Govt Primary School, said locals.

Officer-in-Charge Ali Ahmed Mollah of Dhobaura Police Station said Mansura and other children were going home around noon. When they were standing in front of the school, the auto-rickshaw crashed into Mansura, killing her on the spot, he said.

On information, police recovered the body and seized the auto-rickshaw, but its driver managed to flee the scene.

A case was lodged and drives were underway to arrest him.

Elsewhere in the district, at least two people were killed and one was injured after a pick-up van and truck collided in Bhoraduba area of Bhaluka upazila.

The deceased are van driver Amirul Islam (30), and poultry trader Shamim Mia (35). Quoting locals, police said the poultry

carrying van hit the truck from behind after the van driver lost control over the vehicle, killing two on the spot around 3am. On information, police and firefighters

rescued the injured person and took him to the upazila health complex, they added. Police also recovered the bodies and handed them over to family members. A

case was lodged, and police seized the van. In Tangail, two college students were killed and one was seriously injured after a bus ran over their motorcycle in Razabari

area of Kalihati upazila at noon, said police.

The deceased are Imon (17) and Shawon (18), and the injured is Asif (18) -- all students of Elenga Shamsul Haque College. Locals rescued the youths and sent them to Tangail General Hospital, where doctors declared Imon dead.

Shawon and Asif were referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, but Shawon succumbed to his injuries on the way there. Police seized the bus but its driver and

helpers managed to flee, they added. In Manikganj, three people were injured as a car caught on fire after colliding with

a truck in Tepra area of Shivalaya upazila. Police said after the collision, the truck fell into a roadside ditch.

The injured are truck driver Abdul Aziz (25), his helper Sohag Apon (27) and car passenger Md Mofazzal (25). They were admitted to Shivalaya Upazila Hospital. Sohagh was shifted to Savar Enam Medical College Hospital after his condition deteriorated, they added.

Four firefighting units doused the blaze, which originated from the car's battery, according to firefighters.

In Chattogram, Mohammad Ismail was killed following a collision between two covered vans at Takurdighirpar of Mirsarai upazila in the morning, reports BSS. Police said after the accident, Ismail,

who was helper of one of the vans, was taken to a hospital, where the duty-doctor declared him dead.

The body was sent to the morgue for autopsy, they added.

In Habigani, Helena Begum (55) was killed on the spot and three were severely injured after a collision between a microbus and auto-rickshaw on Nabiganj-Aushkandi road of Nabiganj upazila around 1pm, said police and witnesses.

The injured -- deceased's husband Modarish Miah (60), son-in-law Mizanur Rahman and the auto-rickshaw driver were rushed to the upazila health complex, reports BSS.

Later, the injured were taken to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital for better treatment.

Police seized the vehicles and filing of a case was underway.

Sajiba Khatun passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sajiba Khatun, mother of Mostafa Kamal, president of Dhaka Sangbadpatra Hawkers Bahumukhi Somobay Samity Ltd, passed away yesterday at her residence at Kalshi, Mirpur. She was 105 years

All directors, officials, employees and general members of the samiti expressed their deep condolence over her death.

Their wounds

FROM PAGE 3

programme a member of a local social organisation, said authorities showed concerns only for around seven days after the incident.

"Since then, nobody from the government has shown any interest in helping locals and victims," Rahman said.

Jarina, who lost two brothers and a two-anda-half-year-old nephew in the fire, said the only compensation they received was Tk 20,000 along with the body bags.

"We haven't seen a penny of the compensation money promised to us by the authorities," Jarina said.

Families and locals will hold a press conference today followed by a human chain, demanding compensation for all the victims' families.

Faculty Search

Summer 2020

3.9m children stunted

LAND FOR SALE

A five katha land at Sector-4 (close to main

Interested buyer please contact directly.

Contact Number- 01711-526692

road), Uttara, Dhaka will be **Sold.**

FROM PAGE 5

said access and affordability to healthy food is difficult for most Bangladeshis.

Iftekhar Rashid, health specialist at the World Bank, said the government programme regarding nutrition in the past two-and-a-half decades was predominantly in rural areas.

Fernholz Manfred, team leader of the European Union Delegation to Bangladesh, hoped Bangladesh will renew its food and nutrition security commitments, which will be reflected highly in the eighth five-year plan.

He said effective role of the national parliament is required to overcome the challenges of malnutrition.

partners should be included in addressing nutrition challenges.

Food Representative and Country Director in Bangladesh Richard Ragan said private sector stakeholders will also have to come forward.

Robert Simpson, country representative of Food and Agriculture Organization, stressed for undertaking more micro level nutrition policies.

Mujibul Haque Chunnu, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on Labour and Employment Ministry, said the government is working to major cause of stunting and it is a big Dutch Ambassador to Bangladesh ensure nutrition for the poor and

TO LET

Exclusive furnished flat (2500)

for rent in Gulshan-2, Road-36, 3

bed, 4 bath, spacious living

dining, family lounge, kitchen. (Foreigners preferred)

01552-478270

Harry Verweij said private sector malnourished, especially children.

The government has taken steps to increase availability of protein-Programme rich food, said Planning Commission member Zakir Hossain Akanda.

> Bangladesh National Nutrition Council Director General Shah Nawaz said more than 20 ministries are involved in the nutrition programme. Some of the ministries have spent significantly high on nutrition, and it is required to see whether their expenditure was for the right people, he said.

> Prothom Alo Associate Editor Abdul Quayum said malnutrition is a problem in Bangladesh.



NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY

The First Private University in Bangladesh

FACULTY POSITIONS

Applications are invited for faculty member positions in the following areas: • English (Linguistics, TESOL), (Ph.D. only)

Philosophy (Business Ethics)

· Law (Ph.D. only)

• History (Bangladesh History and World Civilization) Psychology (Ph.D. only)
 Computer Science

Computer Engineering

Computer Science and Engineering

 Electrical and Computer Engineering • Electrical Engineering

• Electrical and Electronic Engineering Mathematics

Physics

Attractive salary and benefits (50% house rent of basic salary, medical allowance, two festival bonuses, gratuity, provident fund, group insurance). Salary is negotiable in case of outstanding candidates.

Qualifications:

Ph.D. for Assistant Professor and above and Master's degree for Lecturers from a globally reputed university.

Application Guidelines: –

Please apply by 3rd March, 2020 with a cover letter, CV, two copies of recent photos and copies of SSC, HSC or equivalent, graduate (Master's or Ph.D.) certificates, transcripts/mark-sheets. Please indicate the discipline on the top of the envelope or in the subject line of the e-mail and send to:

Please visit the NSU website for downloading the application form. Incomplete applications and applications received past the closing date will not be entertained. Vice-Chancellor

in Bangladesh

ASIA 2020

North South University Bashundhara, Dhaka-1229 E-mail: mahfuzur.rahman@northsouth.edu www.northsouth.edu

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Increasing Access to Justice in Bangladesh Program

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST - INCREASING ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN BANGLADESH - Grants - IAJ-2020-001 and IAJ-2020-002

The Increasing Access to Justice in Bangladesh Program is announcing a Call for Applications open to registered Bangladeshi NGOs for outreach and legal awareness activities in Dhaka District

and Rajshahi District. Interested applicants are invited to submit their applications in electronic

copy to grants@ncsc-bd.org and in hardcopy to the Increasing Access to Justice in Bangladesh

Program office located at House 9, Road 29, Flat A-4, Gulshan-1, Dhaka 1212. Full Application submission documentation, including eligibility conditions, selection process, and application

forms and guidelines, are accessible at http://www.justice-bd.org under the "Get Involved" and

'Grants Program" headings. Please contact grants@ncsc-bd.org to report any problem in

accessing the Application documentation. The deadline for submission is 3:00 PM March 5, 2020.

House # 09, Road # 29, Flat # A-4, Gulshan-1, Dhaka

Pubali Bank Limited, the largest online commercial Bank in Bangladesh is hereby inviting sealed Tenders from the eligible Tenderers, who can participate in any of the following tenders but in separate envelope as defined in the tender

■ Supply & installation of Air Coolers at our (i) Shantinagar Branch, Dhaka (ii) Bhanga Branch, Faridpur (iii) Lohagara Branch, Chattogram (iv) Hajigonj Branch, Chandpur & (v) Kazirhat Branch, Feni.

Please visit our web site, https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp for details. Interested Parties may purchase their Tender document by **27 February, 2020** duly filled up all requirements and submit their offer in the Tender Box by **01 March, 2020** (before 11.00 A.M).

Dilip Kumar Paul



भूवाली वां निसिक्ति | Establishment Division PUBALI BANK LIMITED

Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Pubali Bank Limited, the largest online commercial Bank in Bangladesh is hereby inviting Tender from the eligible Tenderers for Supply of following vehicles:

1. 04 (Four) units 100% Reconditioned Toyota Allion Car, CC: 1500, Color: Silver, Year of Manufacturing: 2016 Push Start with remote key, All auto power switch, DVD player, Alloy Rim, New Tyres, Low Mileage, Standard tools with spare wheel, etc. Auction grade 4 & above. 2. 04 (Four) units 100% Reconditioned Toyota Hiace Microbus with

modification for Cash carry, CC: 2000, Color: Silver, Manufacturing Year: 2015, remote Key, all auto power switch, DVD player, Alloy Rim, New Tyres,

Low Mileage, Standard tools with spare wheel, etc. Registration to be done as

standard van for Cash carry. Tender to be submitted in their own pad.

PUBALI BANK LIMITED

Please visit our website, https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp for more details. Interested parties may submit Tender in the Tender Box (7th Floor) by **04 March, 2020** (before 11:00 A.M.) & Tender will be opened on **04 March, 2020** at 11:30 AM. in presence of bidders (if any).

Dilip Kumar Paul General Manager

भूताली वां निसिक्ति | Establishment Division Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

Charge framing FROM PAGE 3

The same court vesterday also granted bail to Farmers Bank's former MD, AKM Shamim, and senior executive vice-president and former head of credit division Gazi Salahuddin after they surrendered

before it, seeking bail. On January 22, the court directed the authorities to publish advertisements in two national dailies asking SK Sinha and 10 others to appear before it by

vesterday in a graft case. On January 5, the same court issued arrest warrants against the accused as they were shown "fugitives" in the charge-sheets.

Flat Rent

House-129, Road-7, Block 'D' Bashundhara R/A, Beside 60 ft Road South Facing Corner Plot Single Unit 2270sqft, 3 Bed, 3 Bath, Drawing Dining, 5 Balcony, Gas and 2 Parking. 01717894162

OFFICE SPACE SALE

At a prime location of Mohakhali C/A, 1345 sft. Office Space is ready for Sale. Cont: 01713-043651 01819-941955

LAND FOR SALE

Commercial Land For Sale at Purana Paltan main road **5 Katha** South East Corner Plot (Opposite of Baitul Mukarram Mosjid). 01713-083371

House Sale

Lalmatia Residential Area Block D 8 Katha Corner Plot with Building for sale. 001-469-287-5037 001-972-505-9855 Email: moonorchid11@yahoo.com D-25

APARTMENT TO LET

3200SFT Apt. - 4 Bed, 4 Bath, Servant Room & 1 Parking for Ren ADDRESS: FLAT # A-2 (2N FLOOR), HOUSE # 11, ROAD # 13 SECTOR # 7, UTTARA. CONTACT 01711842595, 01817106626 D-3

STAY UPDATED

We are looking for Future Leader!

One of the major and highly compliant RMG manufacturing conglomerates with diversified areas of business and yearly turnover of around USD 200 Million is looking for some bright & highly motivated self-driven and result oriented personnel for the following positions in the factory and Head Office.

SL	Designation	Qualification	Experience
1	CEO (Garment Accessories & Packaging Industry)	Graduate/ Post Graduate, but individuals with engineering degree will get preference(but not mandatory)	Minimum 5-7 years working experience in garments accessories/garment manufacturing company at similar role is a must. Individuals are having good orientation in MNC environment will get advantage and those who managed a business for less than US\$30 million annual revenue are discouraged to apply.
2	GM/CMO- Marketing & Merchandising (Woven Division)	MBA/Masters in Business Administration	At least 15 to 18 years working experience in Marketing & Merchandising for Woven Garments Business (top & bottom). Individuals who managed a business for less than US\$100 million annual revenue are discouraged to apply.
3	General Manager- IE	B.Sc./M.Sc. in Industrial & Production Engineering (IPE)	At least 3-5 years working experience in IE (Knit & Woven Garments & textile industry) at similar role. Individuals who managed factories with less than 4000 machines are discouraged to apply.
4	Head of Sales (Accessories & Packaging Industry)	Bachelor/Masters in Business Administration	At least 5 to 7 years' experience in sales & marketing for Garment accessories industries at similar role
5	AGM/DGM- Maintenance (Sewing Unit)	Bachelor of Science(B.Sc.) & Engineering	B.Sc. Engineer (Electrical/Electro Mechanical) having minimum 12 years of experience to work in sewing maintenance (Woven & Knit) and utility department in reputed garments industries.
6	AGM/DGM- Maintenance (Textiles Unit)	Bachelor of Science(B.Sc.) & Engineering	B.Sc. Engineer (Electrical /Electro Mechanical) having minimum 12 years of experience to work in textiles, dyeing, finishing, washing and utility department in reputed garments industries.
7	AGM/ DGM-Production (Knit Factory)	Masters/ Graduate in any Discipline/ IE background will be given preference.	Minimum 15-20 Years working experience, practical working with reputed brands at UK & USA will be given preference, Having strong /Dynamic leadership and capable to handle the factory.
8	Senior Manager(Warehouse) –1 Positions Under SCM Department	Masters/ Graduate in any Discipline/ Engineering background will be given preference.	At least 10 to 12 years working experience in Purchase, procurement and supply chain management in reputed garments industries.
9	Senior Procurement Manager – (Garments Accessories/yarns/fabrics/ink, dyes & chemicals/machineries & spares/Project Procurement Management) – 3 Positions Under SCM Department	Masters/ Graduate in any Discipline/ Engineering background will be given preference.	At least 10 to 12 years working experience in Purchase, procurement and supply chain management in reputed garments industries.

Handsome package with other benefits will be offered to the deserving candidates.

Job Location: Savar, Dhaka

Apply Instruction If you find yourself competitive to apply for the position, kindly send your resume enclosing a recent passport size photograph addressing to HR Department, by March 1, 2020 through e-mail to recruitmentchr86@gmail.com

PHOTO OF THE DAY



BNP to announce nominee on Feb 24

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

BNP will declare its mayoral candidate for Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) polls on February 24. Party insiders, however, said unlike Awami League, which chose a surprise candidate, their leadership will not make such a move.

Meanwhile, not too many leaders have sought nomination from BNP, unlike the situation with AL. While AL chose Rezaul Karim Chowdhury as its mayoral candidate among 19 nomination seekers, only six have

bought nomination forms from BNP office. They are -- city unit president Shahadat Hossain, general secretary Abul Hashem Bakkar, vice presidents Niaz Mohammad Khan and Syed Azam Uddin, women affairs secretary Lucy Khan and former joint general secretary Ershad Ullah -- said Idris Ali, city unit assistant office

BNP Chattogram Divisional Organising Secretary Mahbubur Rahman Shamim said leaders and activists do not believe fair polls can be held under the present EC.

"You've all seen what happened in Dhaka city corporation polls and in the by-polls to Chattogram-8 constituency," he said. "For this reason, not too many leaders are interested to contest the election."

"We'll take part in the polls to expose the government and EC," he said. "Besides, we've taken it as part of the movement to free our leader Khaleda Zia from jail." Through campaigning in the election, we can reach the

people, which we can't normally do due to the repressive

attitude of the government and law enforcers," he added.

Contacted, Abul Hashem Bakkar said he was hopeful to get party nomination. "I have reached this position after doing politics at grassroots level for a long time and have been in multiple movements for years," he said.

Shahadat Hossain could not be reached over phone. Contacted, Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, BNP central standing committee member, told this newspaper, "We are participating for the sake of keeping the democratic system in place."

Miscreants assault man, loot house

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Members of a local gang beat up a man and looted his house in Savar, according to a complaint.

Kamal Hossain (36) a clothes trader, filed the complaint with Savar Model Police Station on Wednesday night.

In his statement, Kamal said a group of people including Omor Faruk, who claimed to be a journalist, stormed into his Hemayetpur house on Tuesday. Kamal was with one of his female cousins who came to him for a loan.

They confined Kamal to a room and beat him indiscriminately, he said.

The group forced them be photographed inappropriately, demanded Tk 3 lakh from him, looted Tk 46,000 and a TV worth Tk 40,000, Kamal said in the statement.

When the gang left, locals took the injured to Savar Upazila Health Complex.

Hamidur Rahman, subinspector of the police station, said following the complaint they were trying to arrest Faruk, who had been cheating people introducing himself as a

RMG workers block Savar road over arrears

was taken from South Kaunia Khan Bari area of the city yesterday.

3,000 demonstrate for four hours in two phases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Around 3,000 RMG workers and staff members of two factories in Savar blocked a road for four hours in two phases yesterday, demanding arrears.

They blocked the Hemayetpur-Singair road around 10am. Following assurance from law enforcers and worker leaders, they left the area around 12:30pm and took position inside the factory premises. Around 5:30pm, they once again

blocked the road and stayed there for over an hour. Workers left the place at 7pm after worker leaders went to the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments office in Dhaka to discuss the issue.

BGMEA officials and owner of the both factories are also present at the meeting there, Kabir Hossain, vice president of National Garment Workers' Federation, told this correspondent around 7:30pm. He said the meeting was still going on.

He said the owner has decided to not be contacted for comments. shut down the factories and they were negotiating on how soon he can clear the

Workers of "Raquef Apparels Washing and Packaging Industry and "Passion Jeans Ltd" in Savar's Tatuljhora area said

they were supposed to get paid for the month of January within the first week of

With patience and care, a group of children sculpt a Shaheed Minar on a roadside in Barishal city. It may not be accurate, but that did not

deter them as two of them spiritedly spread clay over the pedestal while others gently hold onto the columns. They said every year before

Ekushey February, youngsters in the area build Shaheed Minar on their own to pay tributes to the Language Movement martyrs. This photo

Instead, the authorities said they would pay the salary yesterday. When workers went to the factory in the morning, they did not find any one, prompting them to take

Meanwhile, staff members of both the factories alleged that they did not get salaries for last four month. They also expressed solidarity with the workers'

Fazlul Haque, a staffer of Passion Jeans Ltd, said, "I only got some Tk 15,000 out of Tk 80,000 salary in the last four month. How can I maintain my family if this persists?"

Contacted, Abul Kalam, deputy general manager (production) of both the factories, said he is not handling the matter and it would be best to contact DGM (admin) Shakil Mahmud in this regard.

Despite repeated attempts, Shakil could

Model Police Station, said vehicular movement on the road was normal by

Law enforcers were deployed in the area to avoid any untoward situation, he added.

Haji Danesh University

Tension over driver's remark about VC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A fourth-grade employee of Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University in Dinajpur allegedly made a derogatory remark against the vice chancellor (VC). In protest, a group of students led by Riad Khan, a

student of agriculture allegedly assaulted Jahangir Alam.

Jahangir is the president of HSTU third and fourth grade

Protest and counter-protests have taken place on campus surrounding the incicent, turning the situation tense.

Talking to The Daily Star, Prof Fahima Khanam, dean of post-graduation faculty of HSTU, said she heard "bad remarks" made by Jahangir against the VC when she was walking past him on the campus Sunday. She informed it to university high officials, and filed a written complaint to Prof Md Fazlul Haq, registrar of the university, on Monday.

Jahangir denied the allegations. He said he was attacked by 8-10 students on campus on Sunday and Monday. Some teachers brought the matter under control, he said.

Jahangir also filed a complaint to the registrar yesterday. Protesting the driver's remarks, Democratic Teachers Council of HSTU formed a human chain on Tuesday, accusing Jahangir of previous misconduct.

Another section of teachers under Progressive Teachers' Forum formed a human chain on campus on Wednesday, saying an opportunist group was trying to destabilise the situation at HSTU, and allowing such situation to continue would hinder the educational atmosphere of the university

Contacted, HSTU registrar said Progressive Teachers' Forum is destabilising the campus by holding different agitation programmes. Steps will be taken against the accused driver after holding a meeting, he said on Wednesday afternoon.

'3.9m children stunted due to malnourishment'

Speakers urge govt to ensure nutrition for all



Participants at the roundtable vesterday. STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While progress has been made in country, said Piyali Mustaphi, chief of various areas including food security, the government needs to focus on ensuring nutrition for the disadvantaged and malnourished, speakers said at a roundtable

yesterday. They said malnutrition poses a big challenge to build an economically productive population, and stressed enhanced government-private

partnership to address the issue. Bangla daily Prothom Alo and Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) jointly arranged the roundtable on "Sustainable Development Goals: Advancing Food and Nutrition Commitments" at the newspaper's office in the capital.

Latest government data shows further reduction in stunting. However, there are still 3.9 million children stunted in the nutrition at Unicef Bangladesh.

"The number is still huge and we cannot be complacent about it," she said.

Malnutrition among children in urban slums, tea estate communities and parts of CHT region is high, she added.

Malnutrition costs Bangladesh more than Tk 7,000 crore in lost economic productivity each year, said GAIN Executive Director Lawrence Haddad, referring to a 2012 study.

Children who have inadequate nutrition and early stimulation during the first 1,000 days have a lifelong disadvantage in terms of productivity and economic potential, he said in a paper presented during the roundtable.

Lawrence, who also moderated the event, SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

http://books.thedailystar.net

3,950 bottles of Phensedyl seized from warehouse

Our Correspondent, Dinajpur

At least 3.950 bottles of Phensedyl were seized from a warehouse for spice and salt in Badarganj upazila of Rangpur yesterday.

A team of Criminal **Investigation Department** (CID) conducted the raid.

A man, Md Moshiur Rahman (24), who used to live in the warehouse, was detained in connection with the incident, said Ferdous Waheed, an inspector of CID in Rangpur.

The Criminal **Investigation Department** inspector said they conducted the raid in the area on information that the warehouse used to keep contraband drugs.



Dense fog envelopes mango trees in Khulna city. Even though a tree adorned with buds is always a welcoming sight as flowers start to bloom at the onset of Bangla month of Falgun, farmers fear prolonged winter and cloudy sky will affect the buds. This photo was taken from Mostor Mor area early yesterday.

INT'L MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY

Foodpanda to launch app in Bangla today

Foodpanda, an online food delivery service, is going to launch its Bangla app today, says a press release.

The latest edition of the fully optimised Bangla language app, anticipates that more and more Bangladeshis will be able to use and enjoy its simple and fast delivery services.

The announcement also marks International Mother Language Day. Foodpanda resonates with the core message of this day by having a vision to create an online delivery service for all people living in Bangladesh.

Striving for excellence for all its customers, Foodpanda's new Bangla app brings more accessibility and more resonance with Bangladeshis, to bring the food they love right to their doors.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Suspend RU school teacher: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed authorities concerned to suspend Md Durul Huda, a teacher of Rajshahi University School and College, who allegedly sexually harassed a student in October last year.

It also asked authorities to take legal action against Huda, and issued a rule seeking explanation why their failure to take action should not be declared illegal. Authorities of Rajshahi University School

and College and Rajshahi University must ensure security of the victim, the HC said. The bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif

and Justice Md Mahmud Hassan Talukder came up with the order and rule following

writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Jobaida Gulshan Ara.

She filed the petition as a public interest litigation, following a report published on a national newspaper headlined, "Sexual harassment victim unable to go to school: Accused teacher on bail".

Advocate Mijanur Rahman, appeared for the writ petitioner, told The Daily Star that Durul Huda will remain suspended until he is exonerated from charges brought against him.

The victim's mother has filed a case with Motihar Police Station in Rajshai against Durul Huda following the incident, he said, adding that Huda is now on bail in

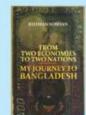
AMAR EKUSHEY **BOOK FAIR**

Daily Star Books Stall # 491-92 Suhrawardy Udyan



The Transition





Inner State

HAVE A NICE DAY From Two Economies to











Late blight resistant potato seed in the offing

Our Correspondent, Nilphamari

With the objective to eradicate late blight disease in potato, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) in Domar upazila is currently growing trial varieties of the crop that is resistant to the disease.

Based on the success of growing the trial varieties at its Foundation Seed Potato Production Farm (FSPPF) in Domar, the BADC hopes to disseminate the variety among farmers across the country by the next potato cultivation season.

Bangladesh Agriculture Institute (BARI) genetically modified two foreign varieties to develop two trial varieties. In November last year, National Seed Board (NSB) approved the trial

Potato farmers in the country are now awaiting a better harvest from the new seed after incurring losses to the late blight disease for years.

Enamul Haque, deputy director of FSPPF, said they cultivated the new varieties on trial basis on 10 acres of land and hope to get a yield of more than 100 tons.

successfully, the Department of Agricultural

Extension (DAE) would promote the new seed to the farmers who waited long for such a variety, he added.

Amal Kumar Das, principal scientific officer of BARI in Panchagarh, said they modified the late blight resistant potato varieties according to local climate from two varieties -- Alouette and Carolus -- that they had imported from the Netherlands.

He also said the modified varieties were named BARI-90 and BARI-91.

Explaining their work process, he said "We conduct genetic research for years and observe the adaptation tendency [of a variety] in our climate."

DAE deputy director in Nilphamari Nikhil Chandra Biswas said late blight is considered a curse for farmers as it ruins their potato fields rapidly and they are compelled to spend an additional Tk four thousand per acre to spray pesticides at least five times before harvest.

"We are instructed by the higher authorities to popularise the newly released late blight resistant potato seed varieties among farmers and we are hopeful that they [farmers] would start After their trial cultivation is completed cultivation from next season with much enthusiasm," he added.





SAVING LIVES CHANGING LIVES

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST Expresssion of Interest Number: WFPCO20NF01EOI

UNWFP, Bangladesh is undertaking an exercise of updating its supplier's roster and hereby invites expression of interest from

WFP will draw up a list of suppliers and service providers who meet the criteria set out at point no. 3. Each time a specific tender is to be concluded, WFP will invite all vendors on the list of the relevant categories of goods/services to submit a tender.

Inclusion on the list of WFP Vendors does not mean that a company shall be invited in all tenders and does not constitute any contractual relationship between the company and WFP, it only means that if included in the database, a company will be given an equal consideration in process of supplier selection.

2. LIST OF GOODS AND SERVICES:

- IT Equipment (Desktop Computer, Laptop, UPS, Digital Sender, Scanner, GIS Work station, Barcode Scanner, Plotter, Battery, ICT Accessories, Server etc.)
- Office Stationeries
- Office Equipment and Maintenance Photocopiers, Printer, PABX etc.
- Mobile call service providers (Telecommunication Company)
- Electrical Equipment and Maintenance Service Generator, Air- Conditioning System, Megaphone etc.
- Household items (Refrigerator, Television, Microwave oven etc.) Mobile phone suppliers/company (Handset)
- Supply of fuel (Vehicle) Cleaning and security companies
- Drinking water supply
- Courier Service Provider (International and Local)
- Outsource service provider (drivers, vehicle rental, office maintenance etc.) Online vacancy announcement service provider (Online Portal) Surveys, Evaluation and Data Collection
- Printing, Publishing Service Provider Insurance Service Provider
- Vehicle maintenance services and spare parts (Garage Services) Firefighting equipment, services and maintenance Interpretation and Translation
- Landscaping Service Provide Advertisement Company (Publish in newspapers) Electronic Safety, Security & IT solution
- Training service provider (IT, language etc.)
- z) Event management company
 aa) Promotional and visibilities materials (Banner, sign post, caps, T-shirts, branded vest, bags etc)
- bb) Medicine/First Aid kits/surgical items
- cc) Plastic container/plastic goods dd) Miscellaneous and General Suppliers (Tiffin Box, Uniform etc.)

3. CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION ON ONE OR MORE OF CATEGORIES OF SERVICES OR GOODS: In expressing your interest to UNWFP, the prospective suppliers and service provideres must submit the following requirements

- and this shall be the criteria for inclusion and exclusion from the vendor list A cover letter introducing the prospective suppliers/service provider and a brief business profile
- Completed & signed WFP Registration Form Copy of Trade/Business License
- Copy of Import License (if applicable)
- TIN No.
- Bank Solvency Certificate with Account No., Audit Report of last 2 years (in case of limited company) Client's List
- Trade/Purchase Reference from the existing clients of last 1 year Certification of Registration/Incorporation, Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association.
- VAT Registration and Compliance Certificate ISO Certificate(s) (if applicable)
- WFP's Registration Form for Non-food Supplier and Traders is available in the following link: https://rebrand.ly/orn7u12

Those already in UNWFP supplier's roster aren't required to make a fresh expression of interest.

Expresssion of interest must be sent in zipped folder to the following email: ban.nfiprocurement@wfp.org with a hard copy hand delivered to WFP Country Office located in Bangladesh/Dhaka, IDB Bhaban 14th Floor E/8-A Rokeya Sarani, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar and clearly marked in subject line: Expression of Interest no.WFPC020NF01E0I.

All expression of interest should be received no later than 10 March 2020 at 16.00 Bangladesh Time. No expression of interest will be received after the closing date and time. This exercise may include an interview with the applicant, inspection of applicants' office/premises, facilities and any other items of interest to UNWFP

Richard RAGAN

WFP - Country Director & Representative Dhaka, Bangladesh



A trial variety of late blight disease resistant potato is being grown at Foundation Seed Potato Production Farm in Nilphamari's Domar upazila.

RAPE OF 2-YEAR-OLD

Lone accused arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-14) arrested a youth from Kishoreganj's Katiadi Bus Stand area early yesterday in connection with a case for raping a two-yearold girl on Saturday.

The accused is Akram Mia, 17, son of Milon Mia of Manikdi Paratola village in Bhairab upazila.

A team of Rab-14 led by Bhairab Company Commander Rofiuddin Mohammad Jubaer raided the area and arrested Akram around 3:00am.

At a press briefing yesterday, the company commander said they had been conducting drives to arrest Akram since father of the victim filed a case with Bhairab Police Station Quoting the case statement, Officer in Charge of

Bhairab Police Station Mohammad Shaheen said Akram, a neighbour of the victim girl, took her to his house on Saturday evening and raped her. Hearing screams, family members and neighbours

rushed to the spot, rescued the girl and admitted her to Bhairab Upazila Health Complex.

The following day, she was sent to Kishoreganj General Hospital for medical test.

Man killed by son for property

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazan

A man was killed by his son for property in Azmeriganj upazila of Habiganj.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Mohammad Ullah said this during a press briefing at his office in the town

Police arrested one Monir Ahmed, 30, son of Emad Uddin of Jakiganj municipality in Sylhet, and his motherin-law Sufia Khatun, 55, of Kalaiura village in Sylhet's Bianibazar upazila.

Prime accused Kawsar Ahmed, a first-year student of MC College, is still at large.

In a general diary filed with Ajmeriganj Police Station on January 6, Kawsar said his father Omar Ali went missing on December 31 last year.

After investigation, it was found that Kawshar gave Monir and Sufia Tk 5,000 to kill Omar Ali.

Later, Omar was hacked to death and the body was dumped in the Sonai river. On January 21, police recovered the body from the river.

The arrestees gave confessional statement to the Senior Judicial Magistrate's court in Azmeriganj under Section 164 on Wednesday night, said the police

Police were raiding different areas to arrest Kawsar, he said.

Youth crushed under train while talking over phone

Our Correspondent, Brahmanbaria

A youth was crushed under wheels of a train while crossing rail tracks in Narsingdi town yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Shaheen Alam, 29, son of Siddique Mia of Birgaon village in Raipura upazila. He worked at Darigaon Community Clinic in the upazila as a community health provider.

Narsingdi Railway Police Outpost Sub-Inspector (SI) Firoz Ahmed said Shaheen was talking over mobile phone when the train hit him.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Narsingdi General Hospital for autopsy, said the SI.

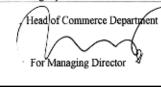




23.02.1565.341.53.006.20.1151

Dated: 19-02-2020

01.	Procuring Entity Name	Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd.				
02.	Invitation for	Purchase of 02 (Two) Sets CENTRIFUGAL FIRE PUMP(CAPACITY: 90 TON/HOUR)				
03.	Invitation Reference No	23.02.1565.341.53.006.20.1150 Date:19-02-2020				
04.	Procuring Method	Open Tender				
05.	Budget & Source of Funds	Own Finance				
06.	Tender Last Selling Date	20 February 2020 to 12 March 2020 at 12.00 PM (Office Time only)				
07.	Tender Closing Date and Time	12 March 2020 at 12.15 PM				
08.	Tender Opening Date & Time	12 March 2020 at 12.30 PM				
	Name and Address of the Office(s) for Selling, Receiving and Opening of Tender Documents: a Selling Tender Document	(1) Cash Section, Accounts Department, Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd, Bangladesh Navy, East Patenga, Chattogram.				
09.	b. Receiving Tender Document	Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd,				
	c. Opening Tender Document	(1) Chittagong Dry Dock Ltd, Bangladesh Navy, East Patenga, Chattogram. (2) Tenderers' and their authorized representatives are allowed to attend.				
10.	Submission of Tender Documents	2 (two) envelopes submissions to be followed. Financial documents in one envelop and Technical documents in othe envelop. Both the envelops to be sealed in covering envelop.				
11.	Price of Tender Document	1000 (One Thousand) TK (Non-refundable)				
12.	Contact Details	Phone: +88 031 2501117 , Fax: 880-31-2501123 E-mail: drydock.bd@gmail.com				
13	Special Instructions	The procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all or any tenders prior to acceptance without showing any reason.				







ADMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN GENOCIDE STUDIES, SPRING 2020

Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS), University of Dhaka is offering Postgraduate Diploma in Genocide Studies.

Eligibility: Graduates from any discipline with at least 2nd Division/GPA or CGPA 2.50 in all examinations.

Duration: Three Months

Class time: Weekends (Friday & Saturday)

Course fee: Tk. 20,000 (including a field trip to Khulna/Sylhet)

Total seat: 48

GD-332

Class will start: 04 April 2020

Application procedure: Application form of TK. 200 (two hundred only) can be collected from 23 February 2020 at the office of the Centre for Genocide Studies.

Last date of submission of application: 23 March 2020

Please Contact at:

Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS)

Room No: 403, Center for Advanced Research in Arts and Social Sciences (CARASS) Building (Between TSC & Atomic Energy Commission), University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000.

> Phone: PABX: 880-2-9661900, Ext: 4647 Cell Phone: +8801716264416, +8801746484223

> > Email: cgs@du.ac.bd

Blog site: http://www.cgsdu.org Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/genocide.du

GD-329

LANGUAGE MOVEMENT IN PABNA

Two female heroes still not recognised

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

In 1948, when Dhirendranath Dutta's proposal to recognise Bangla as one of the state languages of the then Pakistan was rejected in the parliament, protest raged like fire all over the erstwhile East Pakistan.

Students, both male and female, took to the streets demanding the right of Bangla as a state language.

In Pabna, too, a number of female revolutionists took part in the Language Movement between 1948 and 1952 alongside their male counterparts. Unfortunately, none of them have yet been recognised.





Among the female revolutionists were Selina Banu and Sabera Mustafa, who played vital roles in motivating young people and

TO WATCH

VIDEO

students to join the protests. Selina Banu was born in Pabna on October 12, 1926, to an educated and political family. She passed her



SELINA BANU

Pabna Edward College in 1945 and graduated in science from the same institution in 1949.

While a student, she joined a left leaning student group and took part in social work during the famine of 1943. She was the President of Pabna District Students Federation from 1946 to 1948.

"As in other districts, students of Pabna organised protests, demanding Bangla as the state language of Pakistan. Hartal was observed in the district on February 29, 1948, and a mass rally was arranged at Pabna Edward College for the recognition of the mother tongue," recalled Ranesh Maitra, a language veteran, who took part in the protest.

"Aminul Islam Badsha and Mahabub Ahmed Khan were joint conveners of Rashtra Bhasa Sangram Parishad in Pabna, but from the college the most significant roles were played by Selina Banu and Intermediate examination from Sabera Mustafa," he said.



SABERA MUSTAFA

Ranesh said the women did not join the procession as it was not possible to do so in the conservative atmosphere that existed in Pabna at that time.

Both of the revolutionists, however, motivated young people and students to hold the protest rally, he added.

Selina continued the role of an organiser throughout the movement that climaxed in 1952, forcing the then Pakistani government to give in to the demands and recognise Bangla as a state language, Ranesh

Later in the 50s, Selina joined the Awami Muslim League and then the National Awami League. The unsung Language Movement veteran died on January 26, 1983, at the age of 56, leaving behind an illustrious political carrier.

While Selina pursued a political career, Sabera shifted her focus more towards cultural activities.

Born to an educated family in Movement.

Pabna Sadar Upazila's Gobinda village as Sabera Khatun Shamsun Ara in August 25, 1934, she later married another language activists and journalist KG Mustafa and left the district before the Liberation War.

In the mid-1950s, Sabera became one of the first women in the former East Pakistan to act on stage. She also worked as a teacher for four decades teaching at different colleges in Dhaka, Rajshahi, Barisal and Sylhet. Sabera died on April 15, 2012, at the age of 78.

Professor Dr Abdul Alim, head of the Bangla department of Pabna University of Science and Technology, also a researcher of the Language Movement in Pabna, noted that the role women played during the Language Movement has remain largely untold.

He said Selina Banu and Sabera Mustafa's name have been mentioned in different books on the movement but there is no consolidated work on the female revolutionists.

"In my opinion, female revolutionists should be given due respect and state recognition to present the authentic history of the Language Movement to the new generation," he added.

Locals of Pabna also feel the same way. Amzad Hossain, a resident of Pabna's Gobinda village, urged the government to take initiatives in Sabera's hometown to inform the future generations of her contributions in the Language



As most of the Boro saplings turn yellowish, a farmer couple at Kamlabari village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila is sorting saplings.

Boro Saplings Crisis

Lalmonirhat farmers face setback

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Boro farmers in the district are facing serious problem in the peak Boro cultivation season due to shortage of saplings, following damage of seedbeds during the prolonged cold wave coupled with dense fog this year.

Although Boro cultivation started in full swing, many farmers in the district have left their land vacant due to acute crisis of saplings.

They are now rushing from here to there to collect their required Boro saplings.

Farmer Ranjit Chandra Barman of Kamalabari village in Aditmari upazila said he prepared Boro seedbeds on 10 bighas of land this year, but half of the saplings have damaged and turned yellowish due to prolonged cold accompanied by dense fogs.

"Though I have planted Boro paddy on seven bighas of land. I am trying to collect more seedlings from others as three bighas of my land still remained uncultivated,"Ranjit said.

Another farmer of the village

crisis, he planted Boro paddy on four bighas out of six bighas land this year.

"About half of my Boro seedlings on 10 decimals land have been completely damaged. If I failed to collect the saplings in time, I won't be able to cultivate Boro paddy this season," said Nazrul Islam, a farmer at Harati village in Sadar upazila.

"I covered my entire seedbed with polythene in a bid to save the saplings, but still many of those got damaged," he said, adding that, now he is trying to collect seedlings from his neighbours and relatives.

Officials at Lalmonirhat Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) said this year they have set a target to cultivate Boro on 70,000 hectares of land in five upazilas of the district.

Farmers said transplanting of Boro seedlings will be completed by the end of this month.

Lalmonirhat DAE Deputy Director Bidhubhushan Roy said many farmers planted Boro seedlings on more land than they require and those who are in crisis will Mohammad Ali said due to acute sapling be able to collect their saplings from others.

Dormitory lies unused for 9yrs

Fund crisis is blamed for not using the Tk 3.29 crore building for children in Rangamati's Kawkhali upazila

ANVIL CHAKMA, Rangamati

There are bushes inside the boundary wall. The playground has almost become a jungle. Doors and windows are broken.

This is the picture of a hostel at Chelachara village in Kawkhali upazila, which has been lying useless since its construction nine years ago due to poor allocation of fund.

An official of Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) said in 2010-11 fiscal year, the three-storey hostel building was built at the initiative of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education at a cost of Tk 3.29 crore. It has eight rooms for 80 students and a kitchen, a dining room and separate living rooms for staffers.

Five people were appointed as caretaker, nightguard, cook and sweeper in 2013, said a hostel official, adding that they are getting salaries

correspondent found bushes inside the boundary wall and some doors and windows broken.

Villagers said when the hostel was being education officer.

built, they were assured that children of remote areas would get education from there but it still lies useless due to lack of allocation for food.

Despite repeated pleas, the authorities concerned are yet to take any initiative in this regard, they said.

Santu Chakma, head cook of the hostel, said he is getting his salary regularly but there is no boarder in the hostel. Ching Chai Thoyai Roaza, head teacher

superintendent of the hostel, said the hostel building has been lying abandoned for long. Many students from remote areas are communicating to come to the hostel. District Primary Education

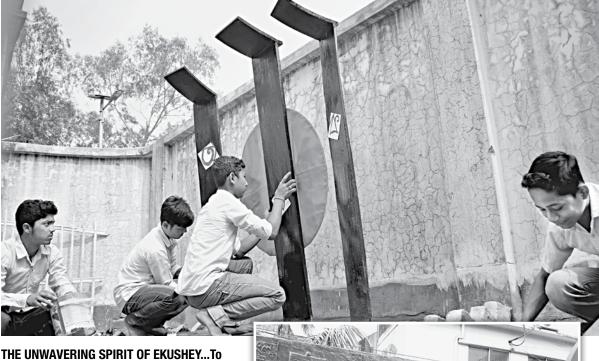
Muhammad Khorshed Alam said if the hostel building lies in such abandoned state for long, will collapse one day.

"We can't start operation of the hostel as we During a recent visit to the hostel, this are yet to get any allocation for food from the ministry," he said.

They have already informed the ministry concerned about the matter, said the



The three-storey dormitory in Rangamati's Kawkhali upazila lies unused for nine years due to poor allocation of fund.



THE UNWAVERING SPIRIT OF EKUSHEY...To pay homage to the Language Movement martyrs who laid down their lives 68 years ago, Bangalees across the country gather at Shaheed Minars every year on Shaheed Day, the 21st of February, which is also observed as International **Mother Language Day. In line with the** spirit, students of Azimpur High School in Dinajpur's Biral upazila build a makeshift **Shaheed Minar on the school premises** yesterday, while a worker paints a mural at the Shaheed Minar in Tangail town, *inset*.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKAR, MIRZA SHAKIL

বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী সোনাকান্দা, নারায়ণগঞ্জ

www.dewbn.gov.bd ফোন ঃ ০২-৭৬৬১৪৮২ ফ্যাক্স ঃ ০২-৭৬৬১০২৭

ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ

o७.o२.७१৫৮.১७৫.১১.১७৫.२o.১٩७

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

২০ ফেক্য়ারি ২০২০

বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী কর্তৃক পরিচালিত ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ, সোনাকান্দা, নারায়ণগঞ্জ এ নিমুলিখিত পদে চুক্তিভিত্তিক জনবল নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখান্ত আহবান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

	इन्ड नर	পদের নাম	পদের সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা	বেতন	যে সকল জেলার প্রার্থী আবেদন করতে পারবেন	
۵	١ د	সহকারী প্রকৌশলী	০৬ (ছয়)	ক। বিএসসি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ইন মেকানিক্যাল/ নেভাল আর্কিটেকচার। খ। ন্যূনতম ৩ বছর কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন।	প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিজম্ব বেতন কাঠামো ঃ		
N	ξI	সহকারী প্রকৌশলী	০১ (এক)	ক। বিএসসি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ইন ইলেকট্রিক্যাল/ ইলেকট্রনিক্স। খ। ন্যূনতম ৩ বছর কাজের বাস্তব	১৭৬০০-৭৮০- ২৩০৬০-৮৬০- ৩২৫২০	সকল জেলা	

- মূল বেতন সাথে অন্যান্য ভাতাদি প্রতিষ্ঠানের বেতন কাঠামো , নিয়োগ নীতিমালা ও প্রচলিত নিয়মানুযায়ী প্রদান করা হবে।
- নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স অনুর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর। বিশেষ অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীর ক্ষেত্রে শিথিলযোগ্য। 9 |
- অত্র প্রতিষ্ঠানের চিকিৎসা কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক প্রদন্ত মেডিক্যাল ফিটনেস সার্টিফিকেট সম্ভোষজনক প্রতিপাদিত হলে চাকরিতে নিয়োগ
- আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদেরকে পূর্ণাঙ্গ জীবন বৃত্তান্ত, ০৪ (চার) কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙিন ছবি, নাগরিকত্ব সনদ, জাতীয় পরিচয় পত্র/জন্মনিবন্ধন, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সংক্রান্ত সকল সনদপত্রসমূহের সত্যায়িত কপি এবং ব্যবছাপনা পরিচালক বরাবর আবেদনপত্র "ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ, বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী, সোনাকান্দা, বন্দর, নারায়ণগঞ্জ" এর ঠিকানায় আগামী ০**৫ মার্চ ২০২০** তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ের মধ্যে প্রেরণ করতে হবে।
- প্রার্থীকে বাছাই কমিটি কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত পরীক্ষায় অংশ গ্রহণ করতে হবে।
- লিখিত/ মৌখিক/ ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় অংশ গ্রহণের জন্য প্রার্থীকে কোন প্রকার টিএ/ ডিএ দেওয়া হবে না।
- অসম্পূর্ণ এবং ক্রটিপূর্ণ আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।



Australian train derails killing two

AFP, Melbourne

A passenger train derailed killing two people in Australia yesterday, with medics saying many more were being assessed for injuries. Emergency services said the train travelling from Melbourne to Sydney came off the tracks near the town of Wallan. Police confirmed that two people had died at the scene and Ambulance Victoria said "one person is being airlifted to Melbourne." The incident is believed to have occurred shortly before 7:45 pm.

19 children among dead in Yemen raids

AFP, Sanaa

Nineteen children were among at least 31 civilians killed in Saudi-led coalition's air strikes on rebel-held northern Yemen last week, the United Nations said yesterday. "UNICEF is sad to confirm that the recent attack in Al-Jawf, north of Yemen, on February 15, took the lives of 19 children (eight boys and 11 girls) and injured another 18 (nine boys and another nine girls)," the UN children's agency said in a statement. Saturday's air strikes came after the Iran-aligned rebels claimed to have shot down an aircraft of the Saudi-led coalition supporting the government.

China, Asean to meet at coronavirus summit

AFP, Vientiane

China's foreign minister was set to meet his Southeast Asian peers in Laos yesterday for crisis talks over the coronavirus which has seeded panic and constricted economies dependent on the flow of goods and tourists. Wang Yi will hold talks with counterparts from the 10 Southeast Asian (Asean) countries in Vientiane in a hastily-convened meeting over the health scare.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (C) announces the plan to build a new neighborhood in the Israeli settlement Har Homa (background), in Jerusalem, yesterday.

EXPANSION OF EAST JERUSALEM SETTLEMENT

Israel plans to build 3,000 more homes

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced plans yesterday to build thousands of new homes for Jewish settlers in annexed east Jerusalem, a project unveiled less than two weeks before a general election.

"I have huge news today -- we're adding another 2,200 units to Har Homa," Netanyahu said in a video message posted by his office.

The contentious Har Homa community was first built in 1997, during a previous Netanyahu government.

The prime minister said he had approved that initial construction "despite objections from the entire world" and estimated that Har Homa's population would grow from 40,000 to 50,000 when the new units were completed.

Netanyahu also announced approval to build a new settlement with several thousands homes in Givat Hamatos, next to the mainly Palestinian east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Safafa.

The new community will include 3,000 homes for Jewish residents and 1,000 "for the Arab residents of Beit Safafa", Netanyahu said.

Watchdog Peace Now called the Givat Hamatos project "a severe blow to the two-state solution," as it would interrupt "territorial continuity between Bethlehem and

Israel seized east Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War. It later annexed it in a move never recognised by the international community.

Jewish settlements in east Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank are also considered illegal by most foreign governments and the United Nations.

Kashmir journalist wins Kate Webb Prize

Freelance reporter Ahmer Khan was named the winner of the 2019 Agence France-Presse Kate Webb Prize yesterday for his coverage on the ground in India-controlled Kashmir during Delhi's lockdown of the region.

The award, named after one of AFP's finest correspondents, recognises journalism by locally hired reporters in Asia operating in risky or difficult conditions.

Khan, 27, was honoured for a series of video and written reports that vividly illustrated the impact on locals in the Muslim-majority area following India's decision to strip Kashmir of its semi-autonomous status in August.

The country's Hindu-nationalist government imposed restrictions on movement and a communications blackout, virtually cutting the Himalayan region off from the outside

India insisted the move was aimed at bringing prosperity and peace to a region where tens of thousands of people have died in a decades-old separatist rebellion that India blames on arch rival Pakistan.

Despite curfews and a heavy security presence, Khan took to the streets with his camera to document the tensions, concerns and frustrations among the residents of Srinagar and other cities in Kashmir.

Unable to skirt the communications shutdown, he flew in and out of Delhi to file his stories.

The Kate Webb Prize, with a 3,000 euro (\$3,400) purse, honours journalists working in perilous or difficult conditions in Asia, and is named after a crusading AFP reporter who died in 2007 at the age of 64, after a career covering the world's troublespots.

Gunman kills 9 in migrant bars

Police say suspect killed himself; Merkel denounces 'poison' of racism

REUTERS, Hanau

A gunman with suspected far-right links shot dead nine people, some of them migrants from Turkey, in an overnight rampage through a German city before killing himself, officials said.
Chancellor Angela Merkel condemned the

attack on two shisha bars in Hanau, near Frankfurt. She told reporters it appeared to have been motivated by the "poison" of racism that was to blame for "too many crimes", as Turkish officials called on her government to respond robustly.

The presumed killer was a 43-year-old German man who held a firearms licence and was a member of a gun club.

Police chased a car used to leave the scene of one shooting to its owner's address, where they found his body and that of his 72-year-old mother, said Peter Beuth, interior minister of Hesse state, where Hanau is located

Federal prosecutors said they had taken charge of the case due to its likely extremist motive, and newspaper Bild said the suspect had expressed far-right views in a written confession.

In shisha bars, customers share flavored tobacco from a communal hookah, or water pipe. In Western countries, they are often owned and operated by people from the Middle East or South Asia, where use of the hookah is a centuries-old tradition.

Turkey's ambassador in Berlin, Ali Kemal the holiest day of the Jewish year, and killed two Aydin, told state broadcaster TRT Haber that five Turkish nationals were among the dead.

The Confederation of the Communities of Kurdistan in Germany said several victims were Kurdish, expressing anger that Germany's political leaders "are not resolutely opposing right-wing networks and right-wing terrorism.



Germany, which is home to three million people of Turkish origin including one million ethnic Kurds, has seen its political landscape polarised in recent years, with a wave of immigration and a slowing economy helping to fuel support for extremist groups at both ends of the spectrum.

In October, an anti-Semitic gunman opened fire outside a German synagogue on Yom Kippur,

people as he livestreamed his attack.

Authorities have banned some far-right groups endorsing violence, while Germany's post-war centrist political consensus has been undermined by growing support for the antiimmigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, notably in the former-Communist eastern states.

Social Democrat Vice Chancellor Olaf Scholz said that, 75 years after the Nazi dictatorship, rightwing "terror" had returned. "We must defend our liberal democracy," he posted on Twitter.

Police said there were no indications that other suspects were involved in the Hanau attack.

They said investigations into the identity of gunman and victims were ongoing and, Beuth said, whether any letters of confession had been

The minister said the suspect was in legal possession of weapons and belonged to a shooting club, and Bild said ammunition and gun magazines were found in the suspect's vehicle.

French President Emmanuel Macron expressed his immense sadness over the attack and his support for Germany, according to a Twitter posting.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, who is German, said in a tweet that she was deeply shocked by the shooting and that she mourned with the families and friends

Trump conditionally 'offered pardon' to Assange: report

US President Donald Trump promised to pardon WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange if he denied Russia leaked emails of his 2016 election rival's campaign, a London court was told on Wednesday.

Assange's lawyer Jennifer Robinson said in a document that Trump relayed the offer through former US Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, the UK's domestic Press Association news agency

The White House quickly issued a denial that Trump had dangled a pardon in exchange for help in the Russia controversy, which has cast a shadow over his first term in office. "The president barely knows

Dana Rohrabacher other than he's an ex-congressman. He's never spoken to him on this subject or almost any subject. It is a complete fabrication and a total lie," Trump press secretary Stephanie Grisham said in a statement.

The revelation came at a case management hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court before Monday's formal start of Washington's extradition request for him to face espionage charges. If found guilty in the United States, he could be jailed for 175 years.

Assange's defence cited a statement from Robinson in which she said that Rohrabacher had been to see Assange and said "on instructions from the president, he was offering a pardon or some other way out, if Mr Assange... said Russia had nothing to do with the DNC leaks".

District Judge Vanessa Baraitser said the evidence was admissable. Tuesday Rohrabacher on evening denied the allegations

that he had offered Assange a deal. US intelligence agencies have concluded Russia hacked into the computer servers of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) during Trump's campaign

against Democratic rival Hillary Clinton. WikiLeaks later published the emails, which proved politically damaging to Clinton, before the November 2016 vote.

Australian national Assange, 48, is facing 18 counts in the US -- 17 of them under the Espionage Act.



Restaurant workers wear protective clothing as they prepare food to sell on the street outside their restaurant in Beijing, yesterday. China yesterday touted a big drop in new virus infections as proof its epidemic control efforts are working, but the toll grew abroad with deaths in Japan and South Korea.

Climate change could kill all of Earth's coral reefs by 2100

Climate change could destroy almost all of Earth's coral reef habitats by 2100, according to new research.

About 70-90% of all existing coral reefs are expected to disappear in the next 20 years due to warming oceans, acidic water and pollution, said scientists from the University of Hawaii Manoa, who presented their findings Monday at an ocean sciences conference.

"By 2100, it's looking quite grim," said Renee Setter, one of the University of Hawaii Manoa researchers, in a press release.

Some environmental activists and coral reef researchers have been working on coral restoration -- growing live corals in a lab, then placing them back into marine environments to try and revive dying reefs. But this may not be

enough to save Earth's reefs, the researchers warned. The new study mapped areas of the ocean that would be best suited to this type of coral restoration, taking

into consideration factors like acidity, water temperature, human population density and fishing frequency. After examining the world's oceans, they reached a somber conclusion: "By 2100, few to zero suitable coral

Most parts of the ocean where coral reefs live today won't be suitable by 2045 -- and the health and condition of these environments are only likely to get worse by 2100, according to the team's simulations.

"Honestly, most sites are out," Setter said in the press release. There may only be a few viable sites for coral reef restoration by 2100, like portions of Baja California and the Red Sea -- but even these aren't ideal reef habitats

ecause they're close to rivers. The researchers warned that climate change was the big killer human pollution, while a problem, is only a small part of

he larger threat. "Trying to clean up the beaches great and trying to combat pollution is fantastic. We need to continue those efforts," Setter said

in the release. "But at the end of the day, fighting climate change is really what we need to be advocating for in order to protect corals and avoid compounded stressors.

Scientists have been warning for years that the world's reefs are heading for "massive death" and a "planetary catastrophe," as ocean warming and acidification kill off entire swaths of reefs.

Iran votes today in litmus test for establishment

REUTERS, Dubai

Campaigning officially ended yesterday for Iran's parliamentary election, a day before a vote seen as a litmus test of the popularity of the clerical establishment.

Street cleaners were out early stripping posters and banners off walls to clear the way for Iran's first poll since US President Donald Trump pulled out of a nuclear deal with Tehran in 2018 and reimposed punishing sanctions.

With Iran facing growing isolation on the global stage and discontent at home over economic hardships, analysts have said the turnout will amount to a referendum on the leaders' handling of the Islamic Republic's political and economic

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has said voting is "a religious duty" but some prominent pro-reform politicians in Iran and activists abroad have called for a boycott of the election.

"We need to launch a strong boycott campaign to respond to the repressive policies of the system," jailed human rights

activist Narges Mohammadi said from her cell in Zanjan city in a message posted on her husband's Facebook page this week. Iranian activists and opposition

groups are distributing the Twitter hashtags #BoycottIranShamElections and #VOTENoVote widely on social media. The vote to pick 290 lawmakers will have

no major influence on foreign affairs or Iran's nuclear policy, which is determined by Khamenei, whose hardline loyalists are likely to dominate the parliament. The Guardian Council, which must approve candidates, has rejected about 6,850

moderate or leading conservative hopefuls in favor of hardliners from among 14,000 applicants seeking to contest Friday's vote. "We anticipate 50% of people will participate in the election," Abbasali Kadkhodai, the spokesman for the

Guardian Council, told a televised news

conference on Wednesday. Turnout was 62% in the 2016 parliamentary vote and 66% of people voted in 2012. About 58 million Iranians are eligible to vote.

Australia launches nat'l inquiry into bushfires

AFP, Sydney

Australia set up a national inquiry Thursday into its month-long bushfire crisis that affected three in four Australians and prompted widespread criticism of the government for its sluggish response to the blazes.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the vast scale of the fires -- which killed more than 30 people and destroyed thousands of homes -- required a new response from the bushfireprone nation. The Royal Commission

inquiry will be tasked with finding ways to improve Australia's preparedness, resilience and response to natural disasters, but has been criticised as an effort to put off tackling the problem. Australia has seen dozens

of inquests into the causes of bushfires and steps that could be taken to mitigate them, with mixed results.

Many measures from the dozens of inquests going back to the 1930s have still not been implemented.

The opposition Labor party accused Morrison of trying to "shift attention to the things that he thinks are politically convenient to talk about" rather than "actually fixing and change getting emissions under control."

Morrison said panel would be asked to consider establishing new powers for the federal government to declare a national state of emergency, which he argued would allow a faster response to fires.

The conservative leader, who was criticised for his sluggish reaction to the months-long crisis, has defended his actions by pointing to regulations requiring states to formally request federal assistance.

CORONAVIRUS

No time for complacency

Says WHO as cases drop in China REUTERS, Geneva

A continued decline in the number of new cases of coronavirus infections in China is encouraging, the World Health Organization said yesterday, but it is too early to know if this trend will continue.

"We are encouraged by this trend but this is no time for complacency," the WHO's director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, told a briefing in Geneva.

He also noted that the number of coronavirus cases in the rest of world was very low compared inside China, but added: "That may not stay the same for very long"

The latest cases reported by South Korea are from "several distinct clusters", Oliver Morgan, the WHO's director of health emergency information and risk assessment, told the briefing.

"The number seems quite high, (but they are) mostly linked to existing outbreak, he said. "That doesn't signal a particular change in global epidemiology."



Members of Syria's opposition National Liberation Front fire a rocket at a position near the village of al-Nayrab, about 14 kilometres southeast of the city of Idlib in northwestern Syria, amid clashes with government forces, yesterday.

No relent in fighting in Idlib

Civilians suffer as Russia-Turkey talks bring no results

REUTERS, Azaz, Syria/Ankara

Russian warplanes struck at rebelheld towns in northwest Syria again vesterday and Turkish artillery supported insurgent attacks elsewhere as officials from the two countries struggled to reach a compromise to halt an escalation in the Syrian war.

In Geneva, the United Nations refugee chief called for a halt to the fighting to allow hundreds of thousands of trapped civilians to move to places of safety.

Syrian troops backed by Russian forces have been battling since December to eradicate the last rebel bastions in Idlib and Aleppo provinces in what could be one of the final chapters of the nine-year-old civil war.

But Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday threatened to launch a military operation against the government forces unless they pulled back, and Turkish troops and weaponry have already massed inside Syria.

Talks between Ankara, which supports some rebel factions, and Moscow to avert a wider war and a

struggled to make progress.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said there had been some rapprochement with Russia in the talks but they were still not at the desired levels. Ankara and Moscow have accused each other of flouting a 2018 de-escalation agreement that allowed Turkey and Russia to set up observation posts in Idlib.

Turkey has said some of its posts in Idlib were surrounded by Syrian government forces

Residents and relief staff said Russian warplanes yesterday resumed attacks on the towns of Darat Izza and Atareb in the northern corner of Aleppo province, where Turkish troops have set up a line of defence to thwart further advances by the Syrian army and allied Iranian militias.

In Idlib province, Turkish artillery provided cover fire for renewed rebel attacks on Nairab and the strategic crossroads town of Saraqeb, according to rebels and residents.

Meanwhile there was no end in sight

possible direct confrontation have for the misery of the nearly one million people - most of them women and children - who have fled the fighting to seek sanctuary in the border area.

The exodus has overwhelmed relief agencies but Turkey, which is struggling to cope with the 3.7 million Syrian refugees already camped inside its borders, says it can take no more.

Families are sleeping outside by roads and in olive groves, burning garbage to stay warm. Some children have died from the cold. Some have already been displaced more than once after fleeing battles in other parts Syria earlier in the conflict.

The UN humanitarian affairs agency (OCHA) said the crisis had reached a horrifying level, with more and more displaced people crammed into a small pocket of Idlib.

More than 300 people, many of them women and children, had been killed in Idlib and Aleppo due to the hostilities since the start of the year, it said. Indiscriminate attacks had damaged or destroyed hospitals, schools and other

Thousands of women hold green scarves demanding the the decriminalization of abortion, in Argentina, in Buenos Aires, on Wednesday. Abortion in Argentina is allowed only in cases of rape, or if the mother's health is in danger. The green scarves are a symbol of the women's fight to legalize abortion.

Democrats bare fangs at Bloomberg in fiery debate

Former New York mayor Michael Bloomberg endured a punishing assault in his debut Democratic presidential debate Wednesday from rivals who savaged him for parachuting in late and throwing astronomical amounts of money at the race.

The Las Vegas showdown came at a tense time in the party's nomination race, with leftist firebrand Bernie Sanders coalescing as the frontrunner and some challengers fighting for survival.

US media magnate Bloomberg found himself targeted from the start, as candidates from Sanders to former vice president Joe Biden impugned the man whose sudden prominence in polling has scrambled the race to defeat President Donald Trump.

"Understand this: Democrats take a huge risk if we just substitute one arrogant billionaire for another," Senator Elizabeth Warren said in a

fiery attack on Bloomberg.

"Democrats are not going to win if we have a nominee who has a history of hiding his tax returns, of harassing women, and of supporting racist policies," she added.

Sanders hit Bloomberg hard on his vast wealth at a time of "grotesque" income inequality in America.

"Mike Bloomberg owns more wealth than the bottom 125 million Americans," Sanders said in one of the night's many abrasive moments. That's immoral.

All eyes were on Bloomberg's first appearance on the debate stage after spending hundreds of millions of dollars on campaign advertising.

He endured a very public vetting and struggled to highlight his roles as problem solver, businessman, city manager and philanthropist.

He found himself on the defensive

when pressed to explain sexual

harassment claims against him and

employees, his delay in releasing his taxes and more.

Political analyst Aaron Kall of the University of Michigan said Bloomberg proved "really weak" in the face of the onslaught.

Bloomberg at one point managed to push back forcefully against Sanders, saying if the self-declared democratic socialist is the nominee, "we will have Donald Trump for another four years.'

But Trump himself was dismissive of Bloomberg's performance onstage. "He was stumbling, bumbling and grossly incompetent. If this doesn't knock him out of the race, nothing

will," the president tweeted. A Washington Post-ABC News poll out Wednesday showed Sanders with a commanding double-digit lead nationally, at 32 percent. Sagging former frontrunner Biden was second at 16 percent, followed by Bloomberg at 14 and Warren at 12.

COMBATING SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS

Conspiracy theories hurting efforts: China

An outbreak of disinformation in China and elsewhere has hurt global efforts to combat the new coronavirus, said a specialist infectious disease lab located at the epicentre of the epidemic -- and at the heart of a number

In a statement issued on Wednesday, the state-backed Wuhan Institute of Virology said "internet rumours" had "received close attention from all walks of life" and "caused great harm to our research staff on the front line of scientific research".

The institute has been accused of "artificially synthesising" the coronavirus in one of its laboratories, it said. It also referred to other claims circulating online that the "patient zero" in the current outbreak was a graduate student from the institute, and that one of its researchers had also died after the virus "leaked".

Many of the rumours circulated domestically and overseas claim the coronavirus was engineered by local scientists and leaked, deliberately or by accident, in Wuhan where the virus was first detected and is the epicentre of the epidemic.



. Wuhan Institute of Technology. Shanghai government newspaper Liberation Daily has published a regular round-up of misinformation, including allegations that large numbers of infected patients are coming to the city for treatment, and a

claim the virus can be cured by strong curry. A team of 27 scientists published a statement in the Lancet medical journal on Tuesday condemning the conspiracy theories, which "do nothing but create fear, rumours and prejudice that jeopardise our global collaboration in the fight against this virus." They said scientists overwhelmingly conclude that this coronavirus originated in wildlife and transmitted to humans from a seafood market in Wuhan.

Japan firm lands massive Sri Lanka airport contract

A Japanese firm was chosen by Colombo yesterday to build a new \$570 million terminal for Sri Lanka's main airport, as Tokyo re-emerges as a key infrastructure backer amid a raft of Chinese projects. The cabinet announced the Taisei Corporation was picked to develop the Japanese-funded project, with the new terminal expected to double capacity at Bandaranaike International airport to around 20 million passengers a year. The decision follows the financing of Colombo's planned \$1.5-billion light rail system last year by Japan's overseas development agency -- the biggest single foreign investment in the island nation.

Lesotho PM to be charged with murder of ex-wife

Lesotho Prime Minister Thomas Thabane is expected today to be charged with the murder of his estranged wife, who was gunned down two days before his inauguration in 2017, police said yesterday. The news came as Thabane announced he would step down on July 31, following pressure from his party to quit over the scandal. Lilopelo Thabane, 58, was killed in June 2017 by unknown assailants on the outskirts of the capital Maseru, two days before the premier, now aged 80, took office. The couple had been embroiled in bitter divorce proceedings when Lipolelo was murdered in front of her home in the capital Maseru.Her death shook the tiny mountainous kingdom of Lesotho, which is entirely surrounded by South

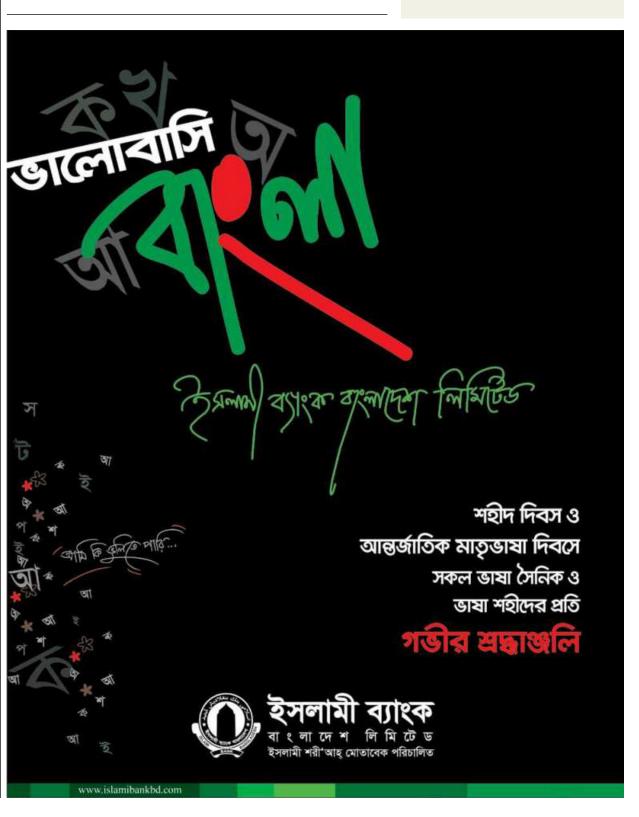
Silicon Valley inventor of 'cut, copy and paste' dies



Silicon Valley on Wednesday was mourning a pioneering computer scientist whose accomplishments included inventing the widely relied on "cut, copy and paste" command. Bronx-born Lawrence "Larry" Tesler died this week at age 74, according to Xerox, where he spent part of his career. "The inventor of cut/copy & paste, find & replace, and more was former Xerox researcher Larry Tesler," the company tweeted. "Your workday is easier thanks to his revolutionary ideas. Larry passed away Monday, so please join us in celebrating him." A graduate of Stanford University, Tesler specialized in humancomputer interaction, employing his skills at Amazon, Apple, Yahoo, and the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC).

Sweden creates \$1m prizes for sustainable food solutions

Sweden has created two \$1 million prizes for solutions to feed billions of people, as climate change threatens the world's food supply and a growing population requires sustainable food systems, organisers said yesterday. The world's population, currently at 7.8 billion, is expected to grow to close to 10 billion by 2050. Feeding a population of that size will be possible only through transforming eating habits, improving food production and reducing food waste, experts say. Eradicating hunger by 2030 is one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The first prizes will be awarded "later in 2020", organisers said.







Preparing for International Mother Language Day

Students of the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka, repaint and redecorate the Shaheed Minar, in preparation of International Mother Language Day.

PHOTOS: COURTESY

International Art Festival 2020 to set off at Nilsagor, Nilphamari

ZAHANGIR ALOM

The 3rd International Art Festival 2020 will set off at Nilsagor, Nilphamari on February 26. The prime purpose of the annual four-day (February 26-29) event is to diffuse the flow of art to the remote countryside of Bangladesh. Under the supervision of eminent cultural personality and former Cultural Minister Asaduzzaman Noor, MP, Vision 2021 Nilphamari and Art Bangla are organising the festival.

A press conference was held in this regard at the Department of Graphic Design, Faculty of Fine Art (FFA), University of Dhaka (DU) on February 19. Professor Mohammad Eunus, the convener, Md Harun-Ar-Rashid Tutul, the curator, Rashedul Islam Rana, the joint convener and Dinar Sultana Putul, the co-curator of the festival were present, as they elaborated on the diverse aspects of the grand art event.

"Alongside pledging a contemporary art scenario, renowned artists -- from both home and abroad, will share their experiences to the local school students, in order to enhance their views on art, culture and creative expressions," said the convener Mohammad Eunus, also a Professor at the Department of Graphic Design, FFA. DIJ

"The festival aims to decentralise art practice, and to inspire artists to indulge in creating art beyond the chaotic city life," said the curator Harun-Ar-Rashid Tutul, also an Assistant Professor at the Department of Graphic Design, FFA, DU. "Set in a natural environment, the festival will include an international art camp, art exhibitions, curated contemporary art projects, artists' talk, seminar, cultural programme, folk art and craft fair, camp fire and sightseeing."

KM Khalid, MP, State Minister of Cultural Affairs, will grace the opening ceremony of



From left: Rashedul Islam Rana, Dinar Sultana Putul, Professor Mohammad Eunus and Md Harun-Ar-Rashid Tutul at the press conference.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

the festival as the chief Guest on February 27. Eminent artist Professor Rafiqun Nabi and eminent art connoisseur Abul Khair, also the Chairman of Bengal Foundation, will jointly inaugurate the international art festival at 11 am on the same day. Hafijur Rahman Choudhury, Deputy Commissioner, Nilphamari, and Md Moklesur Rahman, BPM, PPM and SP, Nilphamari, will be present as special guests. Eminent cultural personality Asaduzzaman Noor, MP, also the chief adviser of the Art Festival 2020 Nilphamari organising committee, will preside over the programme.

Over 500 artists from around the world, including Bangladesh's renowned artists --Rafiqun Nabi, Monirul Islam, Syed Abul Barq Alvi, Farida Zaman, Ranjit Das, Afzal Hossain, Mohammad Eunus, Jamal Ahmed, Mostafizul Haque, Rokeya Sultana, Ahmed Shamsuddoha, Nisar Hossain, Sheikh Afzal, Shishir Bhattacharjee, Torun Ghosh, Mohammad Iqbal, Md. Anisuzzaman, Shameem Subrana, Mustapha Khalid Palash, Susanto Adhikari, Reza Asad Al Huda Anupom, Anukul Mojumder, Nazia Andaleeb Preema, Bishwajit Goswami and Sourav Chowdhury -- will participate in the festival.

Several Bangladeshi contemporary artists and art organisations will produce and display contemporary art projects, while around 50 promising artists from various art educational institutes of Bangladesh will work with 200 local school students of Nilphamari.



Bangla



Jhutum Pakhir Kotha



Bhashajoyita



Bhul Golpo

TV specials on International Mother Language Day

Arts & Entertainment Desk

As the world celebrates linguistic and cultural diversity on International Mother Language Day, The Daily Star has compiled a list of television programmes set to be aired in the country today.



Ekusher Jonno



Laal Ronger Golpo

Telefilm *Bangla*, directed by Taslima Mukta, will be aired on Maasranga Television at 10: 30 pm. It stars renowned actors Abul Hayat and Nusrat Imrose Tisha, among others.

The Language Movement laid the foundation of nationalism and paved the way for the birth of Bangladesh. Women actively participated in the movement, at a time when the society was largely conservative. Deepto TV's documentary, *Bhashajoyita*, shines a light on the lives of activists Rawshan Ara Bachchu, Halima Khatun, Sufia Ahmed, Sofia Khan, Rani Bhattacharya and Pratibha Mutsuddi. Directed by Shabnam Ferdousi, it will be aired on the channel at 10 am.

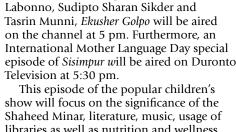
Bhul Golpo, directed by Tuhin Hossain and starring Afran Nisho and Mehazabein, among others, will be aired on BanglaVision at 9:05 pm. Ekusher Jonno, a poetry recital show, will be aired at 6:05 pm on the channel as well. Shimul Mustapha, Ahkam Ullah, Sharmin Lucky, Naznin Naaz, Mehedi Hasan and other artistes will recite heartfelt



Raat Jaga Niye

poems on the show.

On Duronto Television's Ekusher Golpo, prominent journalist and Language Movement veteran Kamal Lohani will be answering queries about the martyrs of the Language Movement. Helmed by Monirul Hossain Shipon, the show is based on a group of children in a village who have built a Shaheed Minar out of clay. Featuring child actors Joyeth Kolyan, Rizia Sultana Rafia,



Mehraz Rahman Swapnil, Arika Hossain

show will focus on the significance of the Shaheed Minar, literature, music, usage of libraries as well as nutrition and wellness among other topics. Another Monirul Hossain Shipon directorial, *Jhutum Pakhir Kotha*, about a girl who has a pet parrot, will be aired on the channel at 8 pm. It stars Syed Hasan Imam, Sabiha Zaman, Jitu Ahsan, Sushama Sarker and Mugdhota Morshed Riddhi.



Ekusher Golpo

The telefilm, *Laal Ronger Golpo*, starring Tauquir Ahmed and Bipasha Hayat, will be aired on NTV at 11:30 pm. It is helmed by Mahmud Didar

Mahmud Didar.
The telefilm, *Raat Jaga Niye*, written and directed by Shahiduzzaman Selim, will be televised on Channel i at 7:50 pm. Shahiduzzaman Selim also stars in the telefilm, alongside Ashna Habib Bhabna and other prominent actors.

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







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 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

Dance Show Title: Positive VIBES Venue: Bangladesh National Museum Date: February 28





Shunno perform in 'NESCAFÉ Presents Shunno Unplugged'

Arts & Entertainment Desk

Shunno will be releasing unplugged versions of four of their mega hits – Bedona, Jhoriye Dao, Sritir Chera Pata and Rajahin Rajjo in the programme, NESCAFÉ Presents Shunno Unplugged. The first song, Bedona, was released on February 14 on their official YouTube page.

Kaushik Sankar Das to start shooting for 'Punch'

Tele-fiction director
Kaushik Sankar Das is
set to start shooting for
his first film, 'Punch',
on March 4. The film,
produced by Mominul
Haque under the banner
of Zero Aowaj Films,
features Niloy Alamgir
and Meghla Mukta in
lead roles, among others.



ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

The story of the film revolves around Kabir, a national boxing champion, who gets involved in malpractices in this industry. Inspired from the existing mixed marshal art practices around the world, the action film also shows Kabir's inner conflict and how this affects his marital life with his wife Asha.

"I am known for directing romantic films throughout my career spanning since the last decade. However, I wanted to break out of this categorisation, which was very challenging and exciting at the same time," shares Kaushik Sankar Das who has also written the story and dialogues for the film. "We have invited 5 specialised stunt directors from JAIKA Stunts Team, a stunt direction company based in Thailand, for special action scenes."

Along with direction, Kaushik Sankar Das is also the cinematographer of the project. "I believe that *Punch*, with its unique storyline and the fresh onscreen duo, will be an amazing watch for the audience," he concludes

"Love stories are better told in the time of xenophobia"

Mostofa Sarwar Farooki

Internationally acclaimed director Mostofa Sarwar Farooki is arguably one of the finest filmmakers from Bangladesh. He is currently working on his forthcoming project, No Land's Man, a predominantly English film.

No Land's Man stars renowned actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui, who is also one of the producers of the movie. It also has noted singer-turned-actor Tahsan Khan in a prominent role. The principal photography of the project wrapped up recently. The film is set in three different continents: America, Australia and Asia.

No Land's Man is the second film in Farooki's identity trilogy. The first film in the trilogy is Saturday Afternoon (Shonibaar Bikel), which was screened internationally in festivals like Busan, Sydney, Munich, Moscow, and recently at Vesoul International Film Festival, and won the NETPACK award and the High School Jury award on its concluding day, along with several others. In the course of its festival journey, the film bagged two independent jury awards in Moscow. However, the theatrical release of the film was banned by the Film Censor Board of Bangladesh. About the updates of the film, he replies "I can't make any comment. I can only remain silent". There probably lies a message within the director's

Farooki first introduced No Land's Man at Asian Project Market, Busan in 2014. From there, he went on to win the Motion Picture Association of America - APSA Film Fund and the Best Project Award in Film Bazaar India in the same year. He thought the film was going to go on the floors very soon. However, he found it very difficult to raise funds for such an ambitious project. At one point, he had lost all hope and started to concentrate on other projects. Consequently, after Doob (No Bed of Roses), he got busy with the development of Memoria, his third his in the identity trilogy,



Tahsan Khan clicks a selfie with the cast and crew of 'No Land's Man'.

PHOTO: COURTESY

which revolves around the Rohingya crisis.

In March 2019, he was having a final production meeting with the team of Memoria at his office. During the meeting, he talked about a dream that he had that day, while he was taking a nap after lunch. "I don't know whether it was a signal for me or not. I saw Nawaz in my dream today. I saw him standing in front of Worli Bridge and he looked sad. Does it mean I should pause Memoria's shoot and go ahead with No Land's Man instead?" Farooki asked his team at the meeting.

While they were dealing with this dilemma, Farooki received a text message from an unknown number, which happened to be Nawaz's. Farooki quickly saved the new



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

DAN CAKE

SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

number, called Nawaz, and shared what he was discussing with his team a few minutes ago. Both of them had a conversation about the film and later, met up in Mumbai. After many discussions, they knew that No Land's Man was set to begin its journey.

Besides Nawazuddin's Magic If Films, Farooki, National Award winning actor Nusrat Imrose Tisha, art patron Anjan Chowdhury, and Spirit Award winning US producer Shrihari Sathe are producing the film. Popular content platform BongoBD is one of its coproducers, while UK based filmmaker Ahsan Zaman is the co-executive producer.

"It really doesn't matter how popular an actor is. For me, what matters is their capability to portray the character," says Farooki. "Having said that, I think Nawazuddin Siddique is one of the best actors in world cinema right now. He is a prepared, yet an effortless artiste, who makes you feel that acting is the easiest job in the world."

Tahsan Khan will be seen as a Non Residential Bangladeshi living in America. Fans of the artiste will get to see him in a new light

No Land's Man is also the debut feature film of Megan Mitchell, an Australian actor, primarily known for theatre.

According to Farooki, our world is going through a strange phase of identity fascism and conflict right now. People are carried away with confused ideas about racism, religion and food habits, among other things. "I would be glad if, after watching the film, the audience feels compelled to think about what, how and why they have done things to this world," Having said that, "I must also add that I wanted to make a love story, because I believe that love stories are better told in the time of

No Land's Man is expected to be released this year, depending on the pace of the post production.

EKUSHEY SPOTLIGHT

Rudra Goswami spreads love through 'Ghum Bhangchei' and 'Obhijog Nei'

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

Celebrated writer Rudra Goswami has managed to win a million hearts with his love poems over the years. Two of his new ventures, Obhijog Nei, his 5th poetry collection, and his second novel Ghum Bhangchei, were released at the Ekushey Boi Mela 2020, recently. In the candid chat, the writer shared his thoughts and expectations with The Daily Star.

Published by Anindya Publishers, both the book covers are designed by Charu Pintu. His much awaited release, Obhijog Nei, features poems grounded on the refrains of love, nature, friendship,

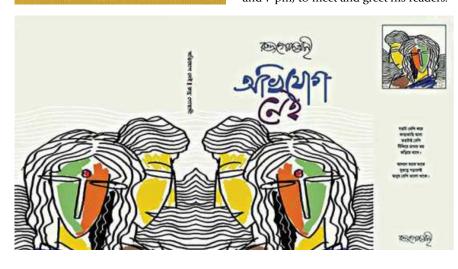


communal harmony and bonding. "I only believe in love and therefore, always try to spread it in my readers through words," mentions the writer. "My prime aim is to depict positivity in simple youth narratives which, in turn, will compel the youths to turn towards literature."

Rudra Goswami intends to keep providing his readers with realistic insights through his work in his best form of expression—literature. "Each and every person has the capacity to express their emotions, thoughts, and principles. I choose to express it in poetic verses, he asserts. "I also believe, silence is the best form of expression as it conveys a lot more than words or sounds.

Both the books, Obhijog Nei and Ghum Bhangchei, are at available at pavilion no 31 for BDT 112 and 180, respectively (under 25 percent discount) at the Ekushey Boi Mela 2020. The writer also visits the fair every day between 4 pm and 7 pm, to meet and greet his readers.

Classiune





The Baily Star

Champs21



Study Buddy: Empowering differently abled children

SHARMIN JOYA

Study Buddy is an organisation that supports differently abled children and those with learning disabilities and difficulties. Sheikh Inzamam, founder and CEO of the organisation, studied Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) at Ahsanullah University of Science & Technology (AUST), Department Of CSE.

Study Buddy provides services and products to help children who face problems with learning from an initial stage. "Children with learning disabilities are often marginalised by the society," says Inzamam, who grew up with a sister with special needs. "Parents of these children face many difficulties to maintain their lives smoothly, because the society is not supportive. In 2017, my sister passed away at the age of twenty-four due to infections in the respiratory system. I dedicate all the efforts of Study Buddy to her." He started the organisation after his sister's

Study Buddy participated in the start-up incubation programme, Zeitgeist, organised by German Embassy, Grameenphone and Better Stories. It was held on May 2018, where they won the competition. They have been selected for the Youth Co: Lab Accelerator Bangladesh 2.0 programme organised by UNDP Bangladesh in December 2019 as well.

The organisation also beat more than 430 applications and made it to the top 15 of the final stage of the incubation programme, Toru. They also made it as one of the leading companies in Under iDea project (4th batch), ICT Division, in 2019.

According to Inzamam, dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia are common disorders faced by three out of ten children.



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA



A device by Study Buddy through which differently abled children can learn four different motor skills. PHOTO: COURTESY

E e Elephant St.

Study Buddy developed an application that creates augmented reality, motivating students to read and learn. PHOTO: COURTESY

learning and reading, which leads to them dropping out of their education before high school, and even entails risks of unemployment and loss of jobs later in life.

To help prevent these disorders in children from an early stage, Study Buddy developed an application that creates augmented reality, motivating the students to read and learn. They have created another interesting device, through which differently abled children can practice and learn four different motor skills. The organisation plans

to increase the number of activities in the future

Other than working for children with special needs, Study Buddy also provides support for their families and careers, with professional services personalised for each individual. They aim to empower parents and educators of children with special needs all over the country. "We want to create a community for kids with learning disabilities, so that they can enjoy academic, social and emotional skills required to

succeed in life," asserts Inzamam.

Presently, Study Buddy is actively working with ten special schools and supporting more than 200 working parents of differently abled children with the help of their

Rotaract District 3281.

The Study Buddy app can be downloaded from https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.inzamam.engn.slidingtab&fbclid=IwAR2BdVcxmmw6VwKyW3M3jJE0ZhXjEk4-

1W67tfprxAUnDEv56wr-18gxR2

volunteer partner, the social organisation,



www.youthop.com

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES Diversity and Inclusion Youth Conference 2020 in Malaysia

The DIYC Conference 2020 is a three-day youth conference inspired by the Model United Nations proceedings (MUN procedure) which form a key milestone and a biennial event of the movement. Covering issues such as world politics, international relations, and justice, participants will be given the opportunity to test their leadership skills, debate current issues, deliver speeches, draft resolutions, make executive decisions, and realize through experience the complexities of managing diversity in an international relations setting.

DEADLINE: March 05, 2020 | Conference

12th International Inter University Short Film Festival 2020 in Dhaka

Dhaka University Film Society (DUFS) in association with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), presents the 12th edition of the International Inter-University Short Film Festival 2020. It is a festival that aspires to promote and inspire the work of young university going filmmakers with the slogan 'Take Your Camera, Frame Your Dream'.

DEADLINE: April 24, 2020 | Competition

Nominations Open for The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity 2020 in Tokyo

The MIDORI Prize is a biennial international prize co-organized by the AEON Environmental Foundation and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that honors three individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. It aims to encourage positive action for biodiversity and inspire others by showcasing the notable work of those it honors.

DEADLINE: March 30, 2020 | Awards





The Unexpected Friend: A story dedicated to Rohingya children

TIASHA IDRAK

Throughout decades, over a million Rohingyas have fled the violence in the Rakhine state of Myanmar. The persecution of the Rohingya people led to the exodus that began in August 2017, marking one of the most tragic humanitarian crisis in recent history. The biggest victims of this catastrophe were women and children, who witnessed the targeted violence and are limited to the identity of refugees today.

With the belief that marginalised communities have every right to be heard, writer Raya Rahman and illustrator Inshra Sakhawat Russell worked together on the book, *The Unexpected Friend*, which tells the story of Rohingya children. The book was published on December 10, 2019, in both English and Bangla, by Guba Publishing, in partnership with Save the Children.

The plot of *The Unexpected Friend* revolves around Faisal, a resident of the refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, who finds an injured bird. The medical clinics of the camp are crowded by patients who are in urgent need of help. Amidst the long queues of refugee patients, no one notices the injured bird. Subsequently, Faisal decides to care for the bird with his sisters. The children, thrilled to have a pet, face a dilemma once the bird's wings start to heal. While the book focuses on the children, it subtly mentions the issues of exodus, life in the refugee camp, the daily struggles of the refugees and the deforestation which resulted from the crisis. Dedicated to the Rohingya children, the illustrated story is based on a report by Linda Steinbock and Eline Severijnen, titled Childhood Interrupted: Children's voices from the Rohingya Refugee Crisis (2017). The illustrator Inshra said that Steinbock and Severijen turned to Guba Publishing to work on a book that could educate Bangladeshi



Raya Rahman and Inshra Sakhawat Russell

kids and the international community about the hardships of the Rohingya children.

Childhood friends Raya and Inshra co-founded Guba Publishing, with a view to introduce children's books that reflect Bengali culture, in both English and Bangla. It took them six months to develop *The Unexpected Friend*. Inshra visited the camps in Cox's Bazar to learn about the experiences of the refugees directly. "The book features unique colour codes for each of the characters - all of which are intentional and are left for the observant eyes," said the illustrator.

According to the author, the little red bird, the titular 'unexpected friend', symbolises childhood innocence. The author and the illustrator further spoke about the challenges they faced while depicting a sensitive issue

like the Rohingya refugee crisis. "The initial drafts contained backstories about the violent situation in Myanmar, but child protection advisors from Save the Children asked us to remove that bit, as they wanted the story to be a form of escape for kids. Any kind of political rhetoric is also absent from the book. Ultimately, the story focuses on the feeling of community amongst the residents of the camp," said Raya. "It is about how hope can emerge even from the most unexpected places."

PHOTO: COURTESY

The book, written for children between the ages of three and ten, can be purchased from Bengal Boi, Pathak Shamabesh, Aarong, Fantasium, Bibi Productions, Batighor and Bookworm Bangladesh at BDT 440. It is also available at the Ekushey Boi Mela 2020 at stall 3, Guba Publishing's official stall.

Police said the woman, aged

around 40, was alone at home on

February 11. At that time, Sekandar

entered the house and forcibly took

After returning home, the victim

Her brother filed a rape case against

her to a nearby field and raped her.

disclosed the incident to her family.

Sekandar yesterday morning. Police

later arrested him from his home,

said Abul Hasnat, officer-in-charge of

Nilphamari correspondents contributed to

Our Rajshahi University and

neighbour of the victim.

Saidpur Police Station.

this report.

for Land Reform and Development

(ALRD) were also present at the event

promised that the chemical

warehouses of Old Dhaka would

be removed [and relocated] to

Shyampur and Tongi, the Bangladesh

Chemical Industries Corporation has

only just established the foundation

stone of the proposed warehouses

on January 9," said Syeda Rizwana

Hasan, chief executive of Bela,

reading out a statement on behalf of

spread across six acres of land and will

be built using a budget of Tk 79 crores

though the government was supposed

to finish this project by 2020, its future

is in question because a few days into

operation, the government found a

large crater on spot, thus increasing

the budget of the project by another

Furthermore, the project lacks

any guidelines on chemical storage,

worker safety and environmental

impacts in spite of being located

loved ones to the fire incident attended

the event and all conveyed their need

for financial assistance. They said they

have not received anything since the

eports that private banks donated Tk

30 crore to the Prime Minister's relief

and welfare fund for the Chawkbazar

victims. This money belongs to them

and a guideline needs to be created

on how to disburse the money," said

Shamsul Huda, chief executive of

Dr Ifterkharuzzaman, executive

members

neighbourhoods,

director of TIB, said, "The victims are

not in want of anybody's sympathy.

demanded transparency from the

Sultana Kamal pointed out that

after the Nimtoli fire incident of 2012

that killed 124 people, the High Court

had given certain directives, none of

These include the removal of

warehouses and factories from

increasing surveillance on agencies

seeking licenses for this trade and

undertaking legal action against

The organisers demanded that strict

action be taken against those in Old

Dhaka who rent out their residential

"A Chemical Safety Committee

comprising experts in the field must

be formed nationally to prevent such

chemical disasters in the future,'

said the statement distributed by the

which has been implemented.

factories without fire licences.

buildings as warehouses.

They only want what is their right."

The civil society

related quarters.

residential

organisers.

"We have come to know from media

Families of those who lost their

The statement further said that even

The proposed warehouses are to be

"Even though the government

held at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

The state

FROM PAGE 20

those present.

42 lakhs.

Tk 1.5 crore.

beside the Buriganga.

for schools not having a language memorial. For schools located in cities space is the main constraint, they said.

All public and private schools in the country remain open on February 21, the International Mother Language Day to mark the historic Language Movement of 1952. People from all walks of life commemorate the day by placing wreaths at their local language

However, students of the schools without Shaheed Minar only perform cultural activities and sometimes build makeshift monuments to pay homage to the martyrs of the Language Movement, informed students, teachers and education officers.

of Champa Parul Government Primary School in the capital's Mirpur area told this correspondent that there is no Shaheed Minar at their school for observing the Language Martyrs' Day.

Mohammad Rahim, a 4th-grader of Champa Parul, said they come to school on February 21 and take part in some cultural activities but cannot pay homage to language martyrs.

Suraiya Majumdar, a teacher of the school, which has 283 students, said there is no available space on their school compound to set up a Shaheed

Champa Parul is not an isolated case; 71 percent of the 10,930 government primary schools in Dhaka division do not have a Shaheed Minar.

Chattogram has the highest number of public primary schools without a Shaheed Minar, which accounts for 86 percent of all state-run elementary institutions in the region.

Of the eight divisions, Mymensingh has the lowest percentage of schools without a replica of the iconic monument.

Among the districts, 96 percent of the 999 government primary schools of Thakurgaon do not have any Shaheed Minar.

In Bhola and Meherpur, 95 percent out of a total of 1,048 and 92 percent out of 309 public primary schools, respectively, are without a language monument.

However, Bhola district Primary Education Officer Nikhil Chandra Haldar and Meherpur district Primary Education Officer Fozleh Rahman opined that setting up a Shaheed Minar at schools should be

"If a Shaheed Minar is set up inside a school, students can see it daily and acquire knowledge about the language movement besides learning about it from their textbook," Fozleh said.

"But there is no allocation from the government to build such memorials, he added.

WHY WE NEED SHAHEED MINAR AT SCHOOLS

Activists of the Language Movement and educationists emphasised the need for Shaheed Minars in schools

to encourage students to learn about the history of the movement and obtain a clear understanding about its significance. Educational institutions across the

country were the breeding grounds for the Language Movement, said Language Movement veteran Ahmad

There should be a Shaheed Minar at all educational institutions, he

"Children will come to know the at the centre of the outbreak.

history of the Language Movement and the memorial will instil patriotism among them from their childhood," he added.

he said people in the education sector think that there is no need to remember the Language Movement's history as Bangla has already earned

Dhaka University Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury said, "It is unfortunate that so many schools do not have a Shaheed Minar. The Language Movement is an event that is a symbol and source of inspiration for all nationalistic and democratic struggle and the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

the dignity and significance of the Language Movement. As there is hardly any learning of history, they no longer consider the Shaheed Minar as a symbol of pride. This is not an isolated incident. Rather, it is a manifestation of their attitude

Meanwhile, DPE officials told The Daily Star that they are thinking of establishing Shaheed Minar at all government primary schools.

"We will set up Shaheed Minars at all schools and school authorities can spend money from the grants they get under the School Level Improvement Plan given by the DPE," said DPE Director General Md Fashiullah.

The language movement began in 1948 and reached its climax on February 21, 1952, when police firing killed several protesters, who were demanding that Bangla be one of the state languages of Pakistan. Bangla was later adopted as a state language

21 as the International Mother Language Day to celebrate the ethnolinguistic rights of people around the world and pay tribute to the martyrs of the Language Movement.

fugitive spotted in virus-hit Chinese city

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

A fugitive Malaysian financier wanted over a massive graft scandal has been spotted in the city at the centre of the coronavirus outbreak, police said, although it was unclear if he had left before Chinese authorities imposed a lockdown.

Low Taek Jho -- commonly known as Jho Low -- is accused of playing a major role in plundering billions of dollars from sovereign wealth fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad.

Looted money was used to buy everything from a super-yacht to art, in a fraud that allegedly involved former leader Najib Razak and contributed to his government's downfall in 2018.

rumoured to be in China.

"Previously, we received intelligence that he was active in Wuhan," national police chief Abdul Hamid Bador told a press conference late Wednesday, referring to the city

Buet, CU won't adopt

on Wednesday decided that Buet will enrol students through admission

the reasons, Mizanur, also the director of Directorate of Students' Welfare at Buet, said they were not against the uniform entrance test system which was introduced by the University Grants Commission (UGC) recently. "But we will follow our own rules for the tests.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) seeks applications from admission seekers, draws up a shortlist of eligible candidates, holds admission tests and enrol students on the basis of their

said they would observe how the new system styled "Central Admission Test (CAT)" goes on this year before making a decision on whether to

condition of anonymity.

Earlier on January 23, the UGC, the statutory apex body for higher education, announced that it would go for a uniform admission test for the 2020-2021 academic year to reduce hassles of the admission seekers.

On February 12, the commission held a meeting with the vice-

to discuss the new admission system. Kazi Shahidullah said the commission would start the work in full swing next month to set the procedures and

methods of the admission system.

Blaming the apathy of authorities,

the status of a state language.

"People are gradually forgetting towards it," he added.

In 2000, Unesco declared February

Malaysia 1MDB

Low, who denies any wrongdoing, has long been on the run and is often

tests like it has done over the years."

Without giving a direct answer for

According to the current system,

Meanwhile, the CU authorities

At a meeting of the CU academic council yesterday, most of its members agreed on not to go for the CAT after discussing the pros and cons of the new system, an academic council member told this newspaper on

chancellors of 12 public universities

At the meeting, UGC Chairman Prof

But, the VCs of Buet, CU, Dhaka

University Jahangirnagar University had said they would inform the UGC about their decisions after discussing the issue at their respective academic councils.

They mentioned that none of the VCs of the four universities, run under the 1973 ordinance, can make a final decision on their own and that's why they wanted to sit with the academic councils.

The UGC asked them to come up with their decisions by February 26.

Dhaka University Jahangirnagar University are yet to hold the meetings. There are 39 public universities,

which enrol around 65,000 students every year through separate admission tests. Last year, some 9.88 lakh students passed the HSC and its equivalent examinations under the 10 education boards.

For higher education, public universities remain students' top choice. But the number of seats is quite less than the number of admission

The idea of a centralised entrance test has long been in discussion as admission seekers and their guardians face hassles every year when they prepare for admission tests at multiple universities in different parts of the

President Abdul Hamid on several occasions asked the VCs of all public universities to introduce a unified admission system to reduce such

But some top public universities had opposed the idea after it was floated around a decade ago.

One of the reasons behind their opposition was that the implementation of the system would cut the income of the universities and also teachers from the sale of admission forms, invigilation, and checking of answer scripts.

No Shaheed Minar in 77pc | Rape victim dies taking poison

FROM PAGE 20

Meanwhile, a man was arrested yesterday for allegedly raping a speechimpaired woman in Nilphamari.

Police said the girl, who was a 10th grader of a school in Rajshahi's Charghat upazila, knew Jamiul Islam Joy, aged around 23, a student of Rajshahi College and resident of Baneshwar area in Puthia upazila.

On Sunday, Joy, promising to marry her, took the girl to an isolated place in Baneshwar area and raped her, said Iftekhair Alam, additional superintendent and spokesperson for Rajshahi police.

Failing to convince Joy, the girl took poison on Monday, the police official claimed quoting the victim's

She was rushed to the RMCH where she died on Wednesday night, said Iftekhair.

He added that police would take action against Joy if the girl's family filed a case.

In Nilphamari, police yesterday arrested a man on charges of raping a speech-impaired woman in a village of Saidpur upazila.

Accused Sekandar Ali, 45, is a

Family wants judicial probe

law enforcement agencies, is a must to investigate deaths in custody.

Talking to this newspaper yesterday, Jahangir alleged that police personnel charged batons on their relatives when they asked law enforcers the reason for beating her sister to death.

Police, however, denied allegation of charging batons.

Victim's son Yasin Arafat Jisan yesterday said, "There is no case against my mother who used to run a poultry farm...To protect themselves, mother as a drug peddler.'

Yasin, quoting those who bathed his mother before the funeral, said that the body had numerous marks of bruises. Jisan said they would soon go to

the local police station for filing a case

against the police personnel involved. According to the family, about 4-5 men in plainclothes, who introduced themselves as DB officers, showed up at their home in Bhawal on Tuesday

evening and said they were looking for

his father Abdul Hai over allegations

of drug dealing against him.

When he and his mother told them

Around 11:00pm, Jisan received a phone call from someone who told him that his mother had fallen ill and had been taken to Gazipur Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College

Going there around 1:00am on Wednesday, he found his mother

during the four days. I thought 'Is it

A specialist in infectious diseases

at Kobe University slammed as

"completely chaotic" the quarantine

procedures on board in rare criticism

inadequate in terms of infection

control," said Kentaro Iwata in videos

announced 51 new cases, with more

than 40 in a cluster centred on the

Shincheonji Church of Jesus, an entity

The infections apparently came

from a 61-year-old woman who first

developed a fever on February 10 and

attended at least four services before

Local media said she had twice

Authorities were investigating

refused to be tested for the coronavirus

on the grounds she had not recently

whether she might have visited the

hospital where a long-term patient

contracted the virus and later died.

Some 15 other patients have now

people with him to heaven on the day

Shincheonji claims its founder,

often accused of being a cult.

Korea,

"The cruise ship was completely

meanwhile,

from a Japanese academic.

he has since deleted.

being diagnosed.

travelled abroad.

South

really OK'?"

China sees big drop

and the number of infections in the

Iran reported two deaths yesterday, the first in the Middle East. Deaths have previously been confirmed in France, the Philippines, Taiwan and

containment efforts, including quarantining tens of millions of people in Hubei and restricting movements in cities nationwide, have started to pay off.

said at a special meeting on the virus with Southeast Asian counterparts in Laos, citing the latest data.

and Wuhan, but an official in a central government team dealing with the epidemic said it was still "very severe". Chinese authorities Wuhan, the city of 11 million, under

quarantine on January 23 and quickly

locked down the rest of the province in the days that followed.

"Following

officials would be "held accountable" if any infections were missed.

Cities far from the epicentre have limited the number of people who can leave their homes for groceries, while rural villages have sealed off

While China has boasted progress

The huge vessel moored in Yokohama is easily the biggest coronavirus cluster outside the Chinese epicentre, with 634 cases confirmed

Another 13 people on board the ship were diagnosed with the virus vesterday, Japan's health ministry said. Still, passengers were disembarking

period -- packing into yellow buses and leaving for stations and airports. Questions were asked over the wisdom of allowing them to mingle

screamed a headline in the Nikkan

15, but only left four days later.

Lee Man-hee, has donned the mantle of Jesus Christ and will take 144,000

been found to have the virus.

of judgement. A man in his 60s tested positive for the coronavirus after dying Wednesday following symptoms of pneumonia,

South Korean authorities said

that Abdul was not at home, they started beating her up and took her in custody, he said.

Hospital.

"I thought I could be infected

country nearly doubled yesterday to 104 -- including 15 at a hospital in Cheongdo county.

The mayor of Daegu -- South Korea's fourth-largest, with 2.5 million people -- advised residents to stay indoors, while commanders at a major US military base in the area restricted access.

Hong Kong. Chinese officials say their drastic

"Results show that our control efforts are working," Foreign Minister Wang Yi

Wang said the situation was 'significantly improving" in Hubei

Wuhan authorities this week carried out a three-day, door-to-door check on residents, with the local Communist Party chief warning that

Sorbodolio Rashtrabhasha Bangla

Sangram Parishad [All Party State

Language Bangla Action Council

was formed at the Fazlul Huq Hall

of Dhaka University, comprising

Chhatra League, Tamuddin Majlish

and several other progressive student

organisations on March 2 [1948] for

the movement to get the recognition

as the Bangla State Language Demand

Day and the day was initially observed

Hasina said March 11 was declared

She said one can learn about the

role of Bangabandhu in the Language

Movement from the Unfinished

Memoirs of Bangabandhu where the

Father of the Nation wrote how he

"But unfortunately once attempts

were made to completely erase his

The PM said "Secret Documents of

Intelligence Branch on Father of the

Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

name from the Language Movement.'

of Bangla as a state language.

as the Language Day.

waged the movement.

his proposal, the

access to outsiders.

Richard Brennan, a World Health Organization official, said in Cairo that China was making "tremendous progress" and "trends are very encouraging, but we are not at a turning point yet".

in its fight against the COVID-19 epidemic, Japan's government has been criticised for the quarantine measures it placed on the Diamond Princess.

among passengers and crew.

after negative tests and having completed a 14-day quarantine

in Japan's crowded cities. "Is it really safe to get off?"

The paper quoted one passenger who said he was tested on February

volumes with reports of Pakistani

The book would be a great source

No country in the world published

intelligence reports given against their

leader, Hasina said, adding that she

was publishing the full reports so that

people could know the truth as an ill-

attempt continued for long to distort

power in 1996, the then Awami League

government had placed a proposal

before the United Nations and sent

necessary papers to the UN members

to get the international recognition of

February 21. The move was made in

support of an initiative taken by late

Rafiqul Islam, Abdus Salam and some

17, 1999, unanimously recognised

February 21 as the International

"As a result, Unesco on November

The premier said after assuming

of history of Bangladesh. Four

volumes of this book have already

submitted from 1948 to 1971.

been published, she added.

Bangabandhu

intelligence over

the history.

Spread Bangla culture, literature across world

Rahman" is being published in 14 Mother Language Day." Hasina distributed the prestigious Ekushey Padak-2020 among 20 eminent personalities and an organisation in recognition of their

contributions to different fields. Badsha Aminul Islam posthumous) was given the award for

his role in the Language Movement. Begum Dalia Nowshin, Shankar Roy and Mita Haque were handed the award for their contributions to music while Golam Mostafa Khan, SM Mohsin and Prof Farida Zaman for contributions to dance, performing

arts and fine arts respectively. Hazi Akhter Sarder (posthumous), Abdul Jabbar (posthumous) and AAM Mesbahul Haque (posthumous) were given the award for their role in the

Liberation War. Journalist Zafar Wazed was chosen for the award for his contribution to journalism, while Jahangir Alam, Hafez Qwari Syed Saifur Rahman Nizami Shah and Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute for their role in research, and Prof Bikiran year's Ekushey Padak winners.

Prasad Barua for his contribution to education

Prof Shamsul Alam and Sufi Mohammad Mizanur Rahman got the award for their contribution to economy and social service respectively, while Nurun Nabi, Sikder Aminul Haque (posthumous) and Nazmun Nesa Piari for their contribution to language and literature, and Dr Sayeba Akhter for

contribution to medical science. Each recipient was given a gold medal, a certificate, and a cheque of

State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid presided over the programme, organised by his

ministry. Cabinet members, PM's advisers, judges, lawmakers, foreign diplomats, littérateurs, poets, academics, writers, journalists, Ekushey Padak winners of previous years and top civil and

military officials were present. On February 5, the cultural affairs ministry announced the names of this

'Build a society free from exploitation'

other expatriate Bangladeshis.

FROM PAGE 20

in 1952. That day our boys gave blood, became Shaheed to establish the Bengali language. But was that merely a language movement?

That was never just a language movement. Our children shed their blood not just for language. They struggled for establishing their cultural identity, they struggled to live as human beings. Many a person did not want to realise that the people of Bangladesh had risen to a man, that it was a futile attempt to suppress the people of Bengal. And it was from that very day that the preparation for a real struggle had started.

Our brothers and sisters of the country have observed this day every year as Shaheed Day. But even if they observed Shaheed Day, repeated blows were dealt on the observance of the day. In the real sense of the term we could never observe this day. Because the ruling clique used to snipe at the observance of this day and so went all the way out to crush this sentiment. Even the conspirators and the ruling junta had attacked the Shaheed Minar

After that many a year rolled on and innumerable brothers and sisters of Bangladesh laid down their lives. They gave their lives for establishing the rights of the people, for the liberation struggle of Bangladesh. They wanted to lead a life as human beings. They wanted their rights, they wanted to lead a life as the citizens of an independent country. But the brutal forces did not accept those facts. So, they killed my brothers and sisters. They had struck at our very culture, at our very economic backbone.

They oppressed our mothers and sisters. They turned the people of Bangladesh into mere paupers. But the Bengalees are such a nation that knows how to shed blood. There is no power on earth to suppress those people which have learnt how to die. The ruling junta could not appreciate this reality. So, they jumped on us with all their might.

It is true that today we have achieved freedom. But if we fail to establish a society free from exploitation, we will

not be able to enjoy the fruits of our freedom.

We have become independent. But it was achieved at the cost of much blood. No country, no nation gave so much blood for independence. But this shedding of blood will be futile if we fail to make the people happy, if we fail to free the people of the country from exploitation, if we fail to establish a society free from exploitation and if that has to be done, the people would then have to build Bangladesh on the foundations of nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism. I hope the seven and a half crores of people of Bangladesh will take a vow in this regard.

So, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, party and opinion, the students, youth, farmer and workers -- all have to advance -- this is what we hope. The vow which we have to take today is we have earned freedom, and if necessary, we shall give more blood to preserve our independence. We shall, if necessary, give more blood to build up our country. Today we have

to take a resolution keeping in mind the blood of the martyrs, keeping in memory the dedication of those who died, laid their lives as Shaheeds, of those mothers who lost their children, of those sisters who became widows, and of those innumerable others who became destitute.

This determination will be to establish on the soil of Bengal a society free from exploitation and to introduce a socialistic pattern of economy. We have to proceed to work to ensure that the people suffer no longer, they are not oppressed and tyrannised anymore. So, I appeal to you especially to the youth, students, farmers and labourers to come forward unitedly.

We are in great danger. We have practically nothing. So, we have to build up everything anew. Let us come forward unitedly to build up the nation, establish a society free from exploitation. Long live Shaheed Smriti, Joy Bangla.

SOURCE: February 22, 1972 issue of Morning News.

14 | The Paily Star EDITORIA

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA FRIDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2020, FALGUN 8, 1426 BS

How can a woman just die in police custody?

The police must answer for her death

E demand immediate and impartial investigation into the death of a woman in police custody, only a few hours after she was picked up by the Detective Branch of police in Gazipur on February 18. Her family claims she was being beaten up even before she was taken into custody, when the DB came looking for her husband. Her 17-year-old son told reporters that he saw injury marks on her legs, arms and some other parts of the body. In characteristic style, however, the police has denied any responsibility, claiming she "fell sick" and was later taken to the hospital. The hospital's Residential Medical Officer apparently told reporters that there were no injury marks on her body and that she had probably died from a cardiac arrest.

Even if we are to take the medical officer's claim at face value, the fact remains that a woman in good health died from inexplicable reasons within a few hours of being picked up by the DB. What happened in those hours? If she did indeed have a cardiac arrest, what could have led to such an event? We must not forget that she was in police "custody" and as such the responsibility to prove that she did not die from unnatural causes lies with the police.

We must also ask whether the DB had enough grounds to take her into custody in the first place. The Supreme Court issued guidelines on May 24, 2016 following the death of Shamim Reza Rubel in police custody to stop law enforcement agencies from making arbitrary arrests on suspicion and torturing arrestees on remand. Were all the guidelines followed? These are questions that must be asked and answered, through an impartial investigation.

A three-member committee has already been formed to investigate the incident. While we hope that the committee will do its due diligence and submit an impartial report about the incident, past allegations of custodial deaths do not give us much hope. Last year alone, according to rights body Ain O Salish Kendra, a total of 14 people died in custody after arrest; six people died due to torture before arrest; 12 died from bullet injuries; and at least 58 inmates in different jails died of diseases and other reasons. How many such incidents have been investigated and law enforcers held accountable? The answer, unfortunately, is none. Instead, the police has repeatedly asked the government to amend the Torture and Custodial Death (Protection) Act-2013 to make it less restrictive.

The United Nations Committee Against Torture (CAT) has asked the government to ensure that its authorities, preferably independent bodies, carry out prompt, impartial and effective criminal investigations into all complaints of torture, ill-treatment, unacknowledged detention, and death in custody. We must ask the government to do the same. The widespread impunity enjoyed by law enforcers must end if we are to profess to be a country that still believes in and upholds the rule of law.

The power of the mother tongue

Ekushey must go beyond symbols and rituals

As we commemorate Ekushey with honour, respect and genuine love for our mother tongue, this is also the perfect time to reflect on our responsibility to promote and preserve the Bangla language. True, we have the unique privilege of having Amar Ekushey being declared by Unesco as the International Mother Language Day, and yes, we now enjoy the freedom to express ourselves in our mother tongue in informal and formal settings and we owe all this to the sacrifices made by our Language Movement heroes. But have we been able to give the respect that such sacrifices deserve? It is a question that warrants deep introspection.

The primary focus has to be in improving the quality of education by making curriculums more modern, updated and accessible, and ensuring effective, creative teaching methods and proper training of teachers.

The tendency of a large section of the elite class to give less importance to the Bangla language, giving the impression that it does not serve any real purpose in nurturing it, has resulted in an apathy among young people towards it. This has been accentuated by the inordinate proclivity towards Bollywood culture which again seems to dominate in most celebratory occasions marginalising Bengali culture in the process. This must be countered by encouraging reading in Bangla by producing better books in Bangla, promoting existing Bangla literature and making concerted efforts to propagate good Bangla translations of foreign literature of all genres. There is also a glaring paucity of quality Bangla movies, TV serials and children's programmes in Bangla, which adds to the apathy towards the language.

At the same time, while we must make sincere efforts to preserve and promote Bangla, let us not forget that there are other mother tongues in our country, spoken by other ethnic communities. Many of these languages have gone extinct while some are on the verge of disappearance. The state of a mother tongue is closely related to the social reality of those who speak it. We must always remember why our heroes willingly risked their lives to make sure that their mother tongue was not marginalised or made irrelevant. On this day which has become a global celebration of the mother tongue, we must recognise the importance of all mother tongues in our country and the right of all ethnic minorities to assert their cultural identity. Our diverse cultural heritage, which includes the different languages spoken by minority communities, is something that we should protect and preserve.

A breath of not so fresh air

A data-driven exploration of Dhaka's air quality



TIMOTHY S. GREE

know that the air quality in Dhaka is bad. Anyone living in the city only has to clean a surface at home in the morning and see the visible layer of dust magically

reappear by the time you return from work, or spend a little time outdoors and just feel the air in your throat to know there is a real problem. But how bad is it truly? And are there insights that the data can reveal to us?

The US consulate in Baridhara has been collecting air quality readings since March 2016 and, in the spirit of open data, publishes an hourly update online (it even has its own Twitter handle @ Dhaka_Air). Their air quality monitor measures the average concentration of fine particle pollutants (PM2.5) in the air over an hour and converts this into an Air Quality Index (AQI) value. AQI is a numerical scale, between 0 and 500, informing how potentially dangerous the air is to health, where small numbers are good and large numbers are bad.

The recognised acceptable standard for AQI is up to 100; once the quality of air degrades to an AQI above 100, sensitive groups of people may experience adverse health effects. AQI values above 150 are considered "unhealthy", meaning everyone begins to be at risk of adverse health issues, the severity of which increases as the AQI gets larger—with air deemed "very unhealthy" at AQI in excess of 200, and "extremely unhealthy" above 300.

From analysing and displaying the data from the last four years, two things are immediately obvious from the graph: (1) Dhaka's air is rarely below the safe AQI standard of less than 100, and (2) there is clearly seasonal variation, with air quality being much worse during the winter months and at its best during the monsoon season.

Over the last four years, only 25 percent of days had an average AQI in the desirable safe range of less than 100, and 45 percent of days had an average AQI in the "unhealthy" range of more than 150.

By exploring how the data changes with respect to time of day, it turns out that the air quality is at its worst during the night and early morning. Despite the increased number of cars on the road at this time, the hours with the best air quality are generally 10 AM to 6 PM. In the dry winter months from November to March, the air quality is especially bad and is commonly in the "very unhealthy" or even "extremely unhealthy" range. In fact, with the exception of December 2017 (which was borderline at 195), the monthly average AQI for December, January and February has been "very unhealthy" (i.e. AQI>200) consistently for the last four years.

Intuitively, anyone living in the city already knows this. Just recall how pleasant it is to take a deep breath after a monsoon rain and compare it to last weekend (which saw an "extremely unhealthy" average AQI of 307 on the day of Pahela Falgun). But why is this the

During winter in Bangladesh, an unfortunate combination of meteorological, geographical and human factors works in tandem to create and keep high levels of pollutants in the air. Firstly, highly polluting industries like brick manufacturing (a Department of Environment study in 2014 attributed 58 percent of Dhaka's air pollution to

from the air *and* many pollutants-creating industries and construction work scale

Given that we are breathing in "unhealthy" air during nearly half (45 percent) of the year in Dhaka, what exactly are the health risks? The data analysed here is based on readings of PM2.5, which are measurements of fine particulate matter, arguably the most dangerous commonly measured pollutant. The size of these pollutants (less than 2.5 microns) means they can be suspended in the air for long periods of time and can infiltrate deeply into the lungs, bypassing the body's natural filtration systems, and even enter the bloodstream, increasing the risk of cardiovascular and respiratory disease, and cancers. A 2016 World Health Organisation (WHO) estimate says that air pollution causes 4.2 million premature deaths worldwide per year.

Is there any way for us to avoid this bad air quality? Well, if you are healthconscious and going for an early morning jog or walk thinking "less cars are out effects to your personal health. Avoid vigorous exercise outdoors during the night and morning hours when air quality is worse. If you are fortunate enough to be able to afford one, a good-quality face mask can protect you while outside (unfortunately, a scarf or a cheap surgical mask does little to filter out these harmful fine PM2.5 pollutants). When indoors, close the windows and use an air purifier, especially during winter nights when the air quality is at its worst.

But of course, like in all environmental issues, it is the more vulnerable members of society that are most at risk—those without the luxury of homes with windows, and access to expensive masks and electrical appliances. This situation is exacerbated by the common practice of cooking on open fires in and around the home in these communities—another significant source of air pollutants. With this in mind, the only thing we can do is to try and exert whatever pressures we can on getting increased regulation for high pollutant emitting industries, such as brick kilns. A Department of Environment



STAR FILE PHOTO

brick kilns) and construction work see a substantial increase in activity in winter to offset lost productivity during the wet season. This then combines with a meteorological phenomenon called "temperature inversion", in which colder winter air, which you may recall from physics classes is more dense (since hot air expands), gets trapped under a layer of warmer air in the atmosphere. This blanket of warmer air prevents polluted air at ground level from mixing with clean air at higher altitudes and dispersing pollutants away. So, we have a situation where there is a higher production of pollutants and a weakened mechanism to carry them away.

Relief eventually comes as temperatures rise for summer, since the warmer air mixes with the higher atmosphere and is more effective in dispersing pollutants. Additionally, as the monsoon rains begin in earnest, the rains wash out pollutants

so the air must be cleaner", I have some bad news for you. By exploring how the data changes with respect to time of day, it turns out that the air quality is at its worst during the night and early morning. Despite the increased number of cars on the road at this time, the hours with the best air quality are generally 10 AM to 6 PM. What is going on? Well, remember the temperature inversion, where cooler air doesn't mix as well with the upper atmosphere? The same thing happens during the night. So counterintuitively, despite more pollutants being produced during the day, there is less pollution because the hotter daytime air rises and mixes with cleaner air at higher altitudes, dispersing these pollutants more

So unfortunately, we have little individual control over the air around us. However, there are certain small measures you can employ to mitigate the adverse

(DoE) report suggests that over 2,400 brick kilns were operating illegally as of August 2019. Positive initiatives seem to be underway in this area, with DoE Director Ziaul Haque announcing in July 2019 that the government plans to convert all brick kilns from fire to nonfire ones, and in November 2019, the High Court ordered the closure of illegal kilns in order to curb air pollution. However, reports have since emerged that some of the kilns closed in this drive are already resuming operations, so clearly there is a lot more that needs to be done.

In the meantime, the data brings some hope. March is coming and the air should improve over the months ahead—the silver lining to the sweaty Bangladeshi summer.

Dr Timothy S. Green is a British physicist and data enthusiast. He works as Technical Lead, Libraries Unlimited at British Council Bangladesh.

PROJECT **■** SYNDICATE

Who Can Beat Trump?



Elizabeth Drew

presidential election in November is the most consequential in modern history. Whether the increasingly authoritarian, vindictive, and dangerous Donald Trump wins

another four years in power could define the US for a long time to come.

This year's election will be no typical struggle between two parties that differ more in degree than in kind. But first, the Democrats must select their candidate, and this time that contest is exceptionally fluid.

Former Vice President Joe Biden's third attempt to win the country's top job isn't going much better than the first two. Biden is a well-liked figure—a decent, empathetic man who lacks a mean streak. But Biden's very likability might well be his electoral undoing. He lacks what I call presidentialness—a certain dignity and remoteness that conveys the sense that crossing him or her would be unwise. He also lacks a message: reminding Democrats that he was Barack Obama's vice president tells voters little about how he would govern.

Nor is it surprising that the air has gone out of Elizabeth Warren's campaign. At the outset, she responded to questions by saying, "I have a plan for that." She's knowledgeable about domestic government and has attracted a passionate following. But she seemed not to grasp that enacting so many new programmes would be impossible. Several of her Senate colleagues—including allies—told me early on that she wouldn't "wear well". They dislike her "holier-than-thou" attitude. There's a coldness to her that all the selfies with fans don't quite overcome.

Senator Bernie Sanders, too, is a victim of over-promising. He still does best among the youngest voters; most older voters question how he would pay for all his promises, including free tuition at public colleges and forgiveness of student debt.

Both Warren and Sanders have run into trouble with "Medicare for All," universal health insurance. No one has shown how replacing Obamacare with a single-payer system wouldn't raise taxes on the middle class, and some unions oppose it because it would replace the better health-care plans they negotiated, having given up other benefits. (Warren later adjusted her proposal, but not convincingly.)

Sanders, a self-proclaimed "democratic socialist," is a worrisome figure at a time when party unity is seen as crucial to defeating Trump. Sanders's ideological rigidity limits his following, and so he has failed to grow his constituency. Although he won New Hampshire, which borders his home state, Vermont, he won 50 percent fewer votes than in 2016. But right now, he cannot be ruled out as a strong possibility for the nomination.

Helped by a political press looking for a new story and by a good debate performance four nights before the New Hampshire primary, Senator Amy Klobuchar turned a third-place finish there (she was fifth in Iowa) into a "surge." But debates are a poor indicator of a presidency: they test likeability, cleverness, and a vision, but they reveal little about candidates' temperament, judgment, curiosity, wisdom, and diplomatic skill.

For now, Klobuchar's bump has overshadowed her reputation for meanness in dealing with staff, which has caused difficulty in attracting and retaining top-tier aides. But Klobuchar also lacks a vision. She recites an apparently impressive record of winning elections in Minnesota, where she hasn't

had strong opposition, and emphasises her modest origins (her grandfather was a coal miner). What she doesn't point out is her corporate backing, including by the agribusiness giant Cargill, America's largest privately held company and one of

the most controversial.

Pete Buttigieg, 38, has been the most surprising phenomenon in the contest, thanks to his sharp intellect and unusual composure. His rivals deride his political experience as mayor of a small city (South

To be able to buy political advantage may be unfair or wrong, but Trump is such an alarming figure that many voters so far appear willing to overlook what they would never forgive otherwise.

Bend, Indiana), but that has familiarised him with how federal programmes work. He volunteered for the military and served in Afghanistan, and he has given more thought to foreign policy than most of his rivals (except Biden). He handles being a married gay man with aplomb. He has a wry sense of humour and can subtly skewer an opponent in a way that recalls Obama.

But is that enough to win? Bill Clinton projected empathy. Americans saw Obama cry following the Sandy Hook elementary school massacre in 2012. It's hard to imagine seeing Buttigieg cry. He can come off as the reserved McKinsey

planner he once was. That, as much as controversial personnel decisions he took as mayor, may underlie his difficulty so far in attracting support from minority voters. And while one can imagine Buttigieg's sharp intellect and quick sense of humour unnerving Trump, it's unknown whether the electorate as a whole would be as accepting of a gay candidate as Democratic voters are.

Once Mike Bloomberg, a three-term New York City mayor, rose in opinion polls, he began to get closer scrutinywhich has landed him in choppy waters. For example, he has been accused of racism, essentially because of his "stopand-frisk" programme as mayor, and of misogyny in his business practices; vulgar statements he made before becoming mayor are now being circulated. But Bloomberg has drawn upon his enormous wealth to self-finance his campaign and build important alliances by donating to candidates and offering training grants to mayors, most of them black, and helping women advance.

Moreover, Bloomberg's governing experience and his calm competence make him attractive to many. But his major draw is that he's viewed as the best equipped to defeat Trump, who seems rattled by the prospect of facing a challenger who is far wealthier than he is (and evidently privy to his unseemly New York business practices).

To be able to buy political advantage may be unfair or wrong, but Trump is such an alarming figure that many voters so far appear willing to overlook what they would never forgive otherwise. That's because the 2020 election is being fought at a time of crisis for American democracy.

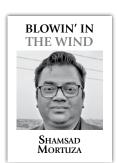
Elizabeth Drew is a Washington-based journalist and the author, most recently, of Washington Journal: Reporting Watergate and Richard Nixon's Downfall.

Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2020. www.project-syndicate.org (Exclusive to *The Daily Star*)

International Mother Language Day

When Two Becomes One

Ekushey is a living example that subsumes seemingly oppositional ideas.



versity of Arizona, we had a visiting professor from Stanford University, Prof. Joshua Fishman. Touted as one of the doyens

of sociolinguistics, Prof. Fishman is known for his role in reversing language shift, particularly in reviving indigenous languages all around the world. I caught his attention in a large class with a quip. When asked about the first image that came to our minds after hearing the word "language", I replied, "the smile of a mother" or Shaheed Minar, the monument erected in honour of the language martyrs of 1952. Intrigued by my response, he hurled a volley of follow-up questions, and eventually enquired, "Are you a Bengali who knows about Islam, or a Muslim who knows about Bengali?" Embedded in the question of the orthodox Jewish scholar was the presupposition that these two identities—religious and cultural—are not mutually inclusive.

Yet here we are in Bangladesh proving it otherwise. Ekushey is a living example that subsumes the seemingly oppositional ideas. Surely, it did not happen at one fell swoop, and definitely not on one day. It has a long history that dates back to many stories of oppression, marginalisation, deprivation, disillusionment, trampled hopes and shattered dreams triggering off a resistance. Ekush is the name we give to the resistance that shaped our national identity. Ekush is our symbolic hope and pride.

A national body with two wings and

one religious soul, craftily designed by an amateur cartographer, Sir Cyril Radcliffe, was a non-starter. Perhaps the search for a home for the Muslim population was a political reality in 1947. With limited access to education and bureaucracy, the Muslims were feeling disenfranchised under the colonial rule. The focus shifted to religion for a political upheaval; the issue of culture, however, was not fully factored in. Soon after the Partition, the political leaders of West Pakistan realised the significance of language for national integration; so did our emerging educated middle class that foresaw the economic and cultural trap that awaited the new nation if Urdu was to become the official language as desired by the central government.

Students, the vanguards of society, were the first to protest. As early as December 1947, the Rastrabhasha Sangram Parishad (Language Action Committee) was formed, which remained alert to any possible transplant of a foreign language. The resounding "no" that exploded the eardrums of the neo-masters was reciprocated by gunshots. An attack on February 21, 1952 on the agitating students demanding Bangla as the official language left scores killed. A 19-year-old Gaffar Chowdhury wrote a poem standing next to an injured activist, which was published in a newspaper, and was put to a tune first by Abdul Latif and then by Altaf Mahmud. Ever since, the poem amar bhaiyer rokte rangano... ("a day stained with my brother's blood/ can I ever forget February the twenty-first?") has become the song that epitomises our national sentiment.

Bengalis irrespective of their religious creed join the probhat feri, a procession to the language memorial on the morning of February 21. Many would do so after saying their morning prayers. They would sing in chorus and carry floral offerings, remembering the dead souls on a day that defined our nation and that is tinged with both cultural and religious politics—an idea to which Prof. Fishman was referring. Ekush (21) has merged the two into one. It is a day that has morphed into a date that bridges divisions.

Bangladesh is an organic growth

as the International Mother Language Day, signifying the symbolic spread and endorsement of the idea that language defines our essential existence. The scope and challenge of Ekushey have thus widened, and the onus is on us to learn to respect and accommodate other languages.

It is a shame that the overwhelming presence of media, as an atrophy of what is known as globalisation, often



A man holds a miniature version of Shaheed Minar on the premise of the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka on February 21, 2019. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

where national identity is synonymous with our language. Bangla-deshliterally, the Bangla Country—is our motherland where our mother tongue is the essence of our identity. We can put on foreign garb, speak many other languages to correspond and communicate at a professional sphere—but that does not take away from our national consciousness. In 1999, UNESCO recognised Ekushey

makes us forget who we really are. A satire written by Bhabaniprasad Majumdar has recently captured the doubts that our cousins in West Bengal are suffering from. His poem, Banglata Thik Ashe Na, reads like this:

"My son is rather serious, he hardly ever smiles

To tell you the truth, he can't get his Bangla right

He can say rhymes in English

Debate and studies too He is very positive, and stays away from futile dreams

To tell you the truth, he can't get his Bangla right" [my translation]

The urge to speak in English and disregard Bangla has also become a fad in our part of the Bangla-speaking territory. Often our new-moneyed class thinks it demeaning to express themselves in their native tongue. Mimicry of the west can only lead to a hybrid nation that yields in quantity, but takes away its essential quality to germinate. The glory and glamour of Ekushey that I mentioned need constant nurturing. It can be done through giving due importance to Bangla as well as through learning to respect the languages of others.

When I was growing up, we lived in a culture that promoted community spirit. Stealing flowers from your neighbour's garden on the eve of Ekushey was approved; publishing wall magazines with plenty of mistakes and slanted lines with ink blotches was tolerated; having small cultural and sports clubs in every locality was common, and joining the morning procession followed by a trip to the book fair was a must. But today's apartment culture has created a postnuclear fragmented society where we rather watch the procession of agenda-ridden bodies on the TV. While we take pride in *Ekushey*, we also take it for granted. I guess the stories of disenfranchisement that I briefly mentioned need revisiting so that our new generation becomes aware of the sacrifices made by our previous generations for us to see the smile in our mother or the flowers that adorn the feet of the Shaheed Minar.

Shamsad Mortuza is a Professor of English, University of Dhaka (now on leave). Currently, he is Pro-Vice-Chancellor of ULAB. Email: shamsad71@hotmail.com

Celebrating Common Threads

A son's tribute to his father



¬ EBRUARY important day for our country and for the world. This is the day when we remember the sacrifice that brave martyrs made for the

Bengali language and culture. It is also the day that people around the world celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity. But while the nation and the world think of today as International Mother Language Day, it has a different meaning for me. To me, it is a day that is inextricably intertwined in my mind with my father, Syed Muazzem Ali. This is particularly so this year as it is the first such day without him. The first of many Ekusheys without him, I expect.

My father was part of the extraordinary team that made sure this day would be commemorated globally. When Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the government of Bangladesh made a formal proposal for the International Mother Language Day to UNESCO, he was posted at the time as the Bangladesh Ambassador to France and Permanent Representative to UNESCO. He did his utmost to make sure that the proposal would be accepted, obtaining support from partner countries. Ultimately, the resolution was passed unanimously so that the entire world recognises

the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity on the same day as we remember the sacrifice a generation mathematics and economics, and made for our language. I know that he felt very fulfilled and fortunate to have been part of the team that made it happen. I too feel grateful that he could be part of it, and after his passing, for me, this could be a part of him and his legacy.

The second reason that I associate him with this day is remembering the many discussions we had at the time about cultural and linguistic diversity. It was December 1999, soon after the

UNESCO resolution had passed. I was then an undergraduate studying was visiting my parents over winter break. During one of our many long conversations, my father spoke about the importance of making sure that different languages and cultures survive together, and that these voices weren't lost in the waves of globalisation. I remember questioning him why it was important to preserve a language if it weren't being spoken.

"Wouldn't it be more useful to just let the languages perish and for



us all to coordinate on one common language?" I remember asking. He responded: "Son, economics cannot capture everything. There is a different value to linguistic and cultural diversity." But just like on many other occasions, he accepted with a chuckle that his children held a different point

It turns out that both he and I may have been wrong: there is a value to linguistic and cultural diversity, as my father would argue, but this can be captured by economics. What I did not realise then, but do so now, is that at least two aspects of language have economic value.

The first is that the vocabulary we use to express ideas necessarily has an effect on the ideas that we have. What might be black or white in one language is expressed in shades of grey in another. To the extent that innovation often calls upon people to think of the world differently, perhaps a world where we speak a multitude of languages will foster having a multitude of ideas.

The second is a clear externality effect that I was ignoring: the choice of preserving a language or not is felt not only by the current generation but also by future generations. These generations do not have a say in whether the language is passed onto them, but in choosing to not pass that language on to them, they experience a loss of literature, fiction, culture, and ideas. They lose the chance to glimpse the beauty of an idea expressed in one language that is obscured by every

The final reason that I associate my father with the International Mother Language Day is that there are aspects of him, and some I see in his generation, as being quintessentially Bengali. There is a certain charm, a whimsical nature to the humour and jokes, a ray of sunshine... all of these were qualities of him that drew inspiration from his love of Bangla literature. There was a style of speech and conversation that made him at home in Dhaka, in Sylhet, in Kolkata—anywhere where Bangla was being spoken—that made him less at home in San Diego or Boston. Bangla was a source of energy for him, and he was a source of energy for others. As someone who primarily thinks in English, I know that this is something I cannot recreate or reproduce for my children; I may not even be able to explain it to them at this stage. But with my father's loss, I feel a loss of that energy that came from his inherent Bengali-ness.

My father didn't sacrifice his life for Bangla in the way that the martyrs did. But he put his life to making sure that their sacrifice would be remembered. And today, I remember both those who gave their lives for Bangla, and my father who drew so much of his life's energy from Bangla.

Syed Nageeb Ali is a Professor of Economics at Pennsylvania State University, USA. He is the son of late Syed Muazzem Ali, a former foreign secretary and career diplomat of Bangladesh

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY



February 21, 1965 Malcolm X assassinated

Malcolm X, who articulated concepts of racial pride and black nationalism in the United States, was assassinated this day in 1965 and became an ideological hero after the posthumous release of 'The Autobiography of Malcolm X'.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 1 Reach across 5 Washroom sight 10 Way of speaking 11 Venus's sister 12 Guinness of film 13 Guileful 14 Double loops 16 Blonds 20 Like some kicks 23 Garden visitor 24 Magnet ends 25 Lombardy city 27 Period of history 28 Gadget protector 29 Hardly blue-blooded

32 Urban dwelling

36 Director's cry

39 Proceed slowly 40 Is appalling 41 Oklahoma city 42 Pains in the neck 43 – a one (zero)

1 Rough guess 2 Game with mallets 3 Over again 4 Cravat 5 Bed on a boat 6 Stand 7 Brief time 8 Tattoos, slangily

9 Dissenter's vote

11 Vermont resort

17 Skilled 18 College head 19 Dispatched 20 Milky stone 21 Canceled 22 Murdered 25 Prepare potatoes 26 Reply to a knock 28 Half of a chess set 30 Pain in the

31 Takes a gander 33 Radius partner 34 Evening, in France 35 Water whirl 36 Inquire 37 Letter before psi

neck

15 Tacit approvals 38 Great weight WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.

VECTEDDAVIC ANCWEDO

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS										
С	0	R	П				0	Α	Γ	F
Α	М	0	U	R		М	Α	М	-	Е
В	Α	М	В	_		Α	H	0	Z	Е
Α	Z	Α		┙	_	Z	S	Е	Е	О
L		Z	П	Е	Z	S		В	C	S
	S	Υ	R	C	Р		R	Α	Р	
			0	Р	Е	R	Α			
	L	Ι	Р		R	J	Z	G	Ø	
S	Α	G		┙	_	Z	Т	Е	∟	0
L	Τ	Z	0	0	L	Z		L	Α	Т
Α	О	0	R	Z		Е	L	Α	Т	E
Р	U	R	E	E		R	Α	Т	Е	R
S	Р	Е	W				W	0	R	Ζ



BABY BLUES DO YOU THINK WELL, IT'S LESS THAN HAMMIE HAS IT'LL LAST TIL CHPISTMAS?







Spring, The Sweet Spring!

O welcome the king of seasons, different areas in Dhaka wore a colourful look on the first day of spring, mimicking the vibrant colours of Boshonto. This time around, Phalgun and Valentine's Day fell on the same date, meaning there were twice as many colours as ever before. A dominant feature -- apart from the cultural programmes -- were the number of flowers around, fragrance from which swayed the senses. Laughter rang out in the crowded Charukola, the most famous spot for the celebration. Dazzling hues of yellow, red, orange, along with pink, could be seen everywhere. As Spring wakes the world from its slumber, so do our senses come alive. And Phalgun is the prime evidence of just that.

Photo: Anisur Rahman























BANGLADESH

Message

On the occasion of great 'Shaheed Day (Language Martyrs' Day) and the International Mother Language Day' 2020, I extend my warm congratulations and sincere felicitations to all multilingual people of the world along with Bangla-speaking people. It is a unique celebration in protecting mother tongue as well as own culture and heritage.

The great Language Movement is a memorable event in our national history. Today, I pay my deep homage to the language martyrs namely Salam, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar, Shafiur and so many unknown and unsung language heroes who laid down their lives for the cause of mother tongue Bangla. I also remember with profound respect, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led Sarbodolio Rashtrobhasa Sangram Parishad (All Party State Language Action Committee), formed in 1948 and was arrested for his active role in the language movement. I recall Dhirendranath Dutt, the then member of Gonoparishad (Constituent Assembly) who raised the proposal before the Gonoparishad to turn Bangla into the state language. I also remember language heroes for their bravery, farsightedness, unmatched valour, organizing capability and taking instantaneous steps in this regard that facilitated the Language Movement to reach its ultimate culmination of February 21, 1952 and consequently, the Bangalee achieved their right to the mother tongue.

The aim of the language movement was to establish the right of our mother tongue as well as to protect self-entity, cultural distinction and heritage. Being a source of ceaseless inspiration, Amar Ekushey (Immortal Shaheed Day) inspired and encouraged us to a great extent to achieve the right to self-determination and struggle for freedom and war of liberation. With the bloodshed passages of Language Movement in February, we achieved the recognition of Bangla as our mother tongue and consequently, we attained our long-cherished independence under the charismatic leadership of the greatest Bangalee of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1971.

Language and culture are invaluable assets of human races. On the one hand, it encompasses the eternity of time, and on the other hand, it keeps flowing the diverse lifestyle of human civilization from generation to generation. Every day some languages of the world are becoming extinct due to multifarious causes including poverty, imperialism, commercialism, propagation of religion, immigration, motivated financial and human assistances, lack of proper exercise of languages, declining of birth rate of some races and nation, degradation of the environment and satellite culture etc. The extinct of language means to disappear of culture, nation and civilization on the earth. The people of the world will have to raise their voice for the preservation of defunct language along with flourishing respective mother tongue and culture.

In fact, to embrace martyrdom for the cause of mother tongue is a rare incident in world history. February 21 has now been recognized by the UNESCO as the 'International Mother Language Day' in 1999 with the spontaneous willingness and sincere endeavour of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with the primary efforts of some Bangla-loving expatriate Bangladeshis. As a nation, it is our great achievement. International Mother Language Institute, an institute for the research and preservation of the flourishing and nearly extinct languages of the world, has been established in Dhaka in 2001. Besides, textbooks and teaching methods have also been introduced for the tribes minor races, ethnic sects and communities in our country with a view to protecting and developing their own languages and culture. Observing the International Mother Language Day, I firmly believe, will play a positive role in attaining the sustainable future through multilingual education.

The spirit of Amar Ekushey in now the incessant source of inspiration for the protection of own languages and culture of people around the world, Imbued with the spirit of Amar Ekushey, let the bond of friendship among multilingual people be strengthened, world's almost defunct languages be revived and the globe be diversified in respective societies- it is my expectation on Shaheed Day and International Mother Language Day.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Abdul Hamid

My Courage Habibullah Sirajee

I had the courage to glorify the language martyrs.

Now the time is for taking sides,

The moment the tongue touches wine after meal

The veins turn blue. Drifting on a current in anot

The veins turn blue. Drifting on a current in another direction The pull of shackles breaks down as I float; Those who were on barbed wire, on knife's edge

They hoist the blood-coloured flag today.

I had the valour to repay my brothers' debt of blood with blood. This age is by far the most damaging
The zeal dies easily, in exchange for a negligible price
Of human actions. Some wave the floating opportunities

Of human actions. Some wave the floating opportunities In the pupil of their eyes. Becoming a habitual pillow Made of feathery cotton I look at the sea and sky alone Sorrow understands the real value of grief: the deft plough Of power cultivates my own land.

I had the courage to be proud of my father's pledge.

It was as if living in utter stupor

It is difficult to add a bight to make the students of the students

It is difficult to understand which tongue
Becomes what snake; the fang with the jewel oscillates
Grace mingles with illusion, swoops on beauty –
How dangerous infatuation can be?

It is as if spending the night with the salt of infinite pain.

At the confluence of animals bereft of labour and brain!

I had the courage to cross the limits of my age
I had the bravery to wash roads by igniting the flame of Sixty-nine

I had the guts to participate in the holy bath of Seventy-one

I have the boldness to become the joint family of Fifty-two.

Translation: Dr. Helal Uddin Ahmed

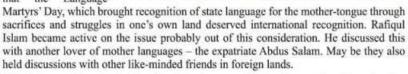
How the Martyrs' Day became 'International Mother Language Day'

Ahmad Rafique

The day was 17 November 1999. On that day, the 21 February (Martyrs' Day) was declared as the International Mother Language Day at the plenary session of a general meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The basis of that declaration was the adoption of a proposal submitted by Bangladesh at the United Nations (12 November). The genesis and history of that proposal was quite colourful. It may be recalled that the proposal was adopted unanimously during that UNESCO session. The episode was a matter of great pride and glory not only for Bangladesh, but also for all Bangla-speaking people.

Two expatriates (Canada) were involved in this initiative from the very outset. They were the Bangalis Rafiqul Islam and Abdus Salam. Coincidentally, these two names bore resemblance to the names of two martyrs who were killed by police firing in Dhaka on 21 February 1952. Imbibed with the love for language, these two youths Rafiq and Salam were active members of an organization called 'Mother Language Lovers of the World' in Canada.

Whatever might have been the reason, they suddenly became active on the matter. May be they realized that the Language



After that came the episode of sending letter. It was sent by the aforementioned organization on mother languages to the UN Secretary General on 29 March 1998, pleading for accepting the Martyrs' Day on 21 February as the International Mother Language Day. But there were some problems. Firstly, the issue was not under the purview of the UN Secretary General's office; rather it was under the jurisdiction of UNESCO. Secondly, as the UN and UNESCO were international bodies, they could not accept or implement such a proposal when it came from an individual person or private organization.

For this to be considered, the proper procedure was to send the proposal or petition on behalf of a member-state of the United Nations. The aforementioned world mother language lovers' organization was therefore given such an advice in reply to their letter. After that, they started communications with the Government of Bangladesh.

In reality, the initiatives undertaken on the issue were multi-dimensional. The labour, dedicated efforts and initiatives of the 'Mother Language Lovers of the World' as an organization and Rafiqul Islam as an individual were praiseworthy. Naturally, the letter sent to the UN secretary-general as well as the one received from UNESCO were submitted as attachments with the letter sent by Rafiqul Islam on behalf of the aforementioned organization to the Ministry of Education in Bangladesh.

The matter did not end there. The Bangladesh Government was urged to expedite the diplomatic and state-level initiatives by establishing communication with the UNESCO keeping in mind the subject's significance. On the other hand, the concerned department of Bangladesh Government also demonstrated much adroitness in pursuing the matter.

The wheel of actions centring on the subject of International Mother Language Day progressed very swiftly at different layers through sending a summary to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on behalf of the Education Minister ASHK Sadique. Luckily, no sides resorted to any procrastination on the issue.

UNESCO displayed a kind of interest on the subject for contentious reasons.

In our view, the theme of mother language was sufficiently sensitive in the global context, and there were dissents especially in countries of Europe having more than one language. There was also the question of conflict between the languages of the majority and minority populations. On the other hand, the United Nations usually declares international days for worldwide observance with the goal of creating empathy and solidarity on many issues.

The diplomats of Bangladesh took recourse to an intense diplomacy on the question of Mother Language Day. The rationale was that, the declaration of International Mother Language Day would be helpful in generating mutual respect, tolerance and international linguistic solidarity on the subject of mother languages. The renowned diplomat Syed Muazzem Ali had highlighted the latter aspect.

It should be remembered that just as there was anxiety in the global community about the extinction of many languages, similarly all nations nurture a sense of supremacy regarding their own mother language, which was in a sense parochial. Therefore, declaration of a Mother Language Day centring on events of a particular occasion might not have been liked by all. Here lay the ingrained problem in the issue.

Therefore, despite the liberal attitude of the UNESCO secretary-general, the subject of declaring 21 February as the International Mother Language Day was not an easy matter. There was scope for internal dissents behind the visible reactions outside. Therefore, the Bangladesh Government had to undertake a vigorous diplomatic endeavour for achieving its objective.

Syed Muazzem Ali disclosed that they were able to bring the situation in their favour through tireless efforts. The main problem was with those European countries that had more than one language. Even then, co-sponsorship supports and consents could be extracted from 28 countries of different continents. A big reason for that was the history of Ekushey (21 February), peaceful movement of unarmed students and the illogical and unjustified firing by police on their peaceful assembly and the resultant death of numerous students. That could conquer the minds of many foreign delegates. The firing by police and the deaths of innocent people came up for discussion again and again. That made the 21 February of 1952 both tragic and glorious. This kind of incident is quite rare in the history of the world.

But although rare, there are other examples in the global perspective. For example, worldwide observance of the May Day was initially in protest against the killing of workers. The workers of Chicago were waging a movement and enforcing a strike in 1886 in support of their demand for an 8-hour work-day when police opened fire on them. The 'May Day' is observed globally in commemoration of that incident. That was a day of protest. But the significance of International Mother Language Day was different. It is an occasion for showing respect and love for one's own language, which is also a symbol for the flourishing of all mother languages. There is no place for hatred or hostility here. The Bangladesh Government was able to convince the delegates attending the UNESCO session about these issues that were related to the observance of Language Martyrs' Day.





Message



I would like to greet the Bangla-speaking people and people of all languages and cultures across the world on the occasion of the glorious Martyrs and International Mother Language Day.

The great Ekushey is the symbol of grief, strength and glory in the life of every Bangalee. On this day in 1952, many valiant sons of the soil, including Salam, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar, Shafique had sacrificed their lives for protecting the dignity of the mother tongue.

I pay my deep homage to the memories of the martyrs. I also pay my deep respect to the greatest Bangalee of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who had led the language movement and all other language veterans.

In 1948, State Language Movement Council was constituted comprising Tamuddun Majilish, Student League and other student bodies as per a proposal of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The council called a general strike on 11 March to realize the demand for recognising Bangla as the state language. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with a number of student leaders was arrested on the day from in front of the Secretariat. They were released on 15 March. Bangabandhu chaired a public meeting at Amtola in the Dhaka University campus on 16 March.

The movement for the demand of mother tongue spread all over the country. On 11 September 1948, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was arrested from Faridpur. He was released on 21 January 1949. He was again detained on 19 April and released at the end of July. On 14 October, Bangabandhu was again arrested from Dhaka and confined to jail. His undaunted inspiration from inside the jail provided new impetus to the people's movement. In continuation of the movement, the language martyrs sacrificed their precious lives on 21 February 1952 while breaking Section 144 imposed by the rulers.

The resonance of the pride of Amar Ekushey is now resounded in the hearts of the people of the world surpassing the boundary of Bangladesh. Some expatriate Bangladeshis living in Canada including Salam and Rafiq took initiative for recognition to the 21 February as the International Mother Language Day.

The then Awami League government placed the demand to the United Nations. Therefore, the UNESCO gave the recongnition to the 21 February as the International Mother Language Day on 17 November 1999. The International Mother Language Day is now a source of inspiration to all people of the world in establishing the truth and justice.

We have already placed the demand before United Nations to make Bangla, spoken by over 26 erore people of the world, as one of the official languages of the UN. We established 'International Mother Language Institute' in Dhaka to preserve the languages of the world and carry out research on those.

Holding the spirit of Ekushey and war of liberation, our government achieved huge progress in every sector including macro economy, agriculture, education, health, communication, information technology, infrastructure, power, rural economic development, diplomatic success and cooperation during the last 11 years. Bangladesh is now a 'Role Model' for development in the world.

Through the implementation of Vision 2021 and 2041, and Delta Plan-2100 we have been working to build a hunger-poverty-free and happy-prosperous Golden Bangladesh as dreamt by the Father of the Nation. Let us be firmly committed in the spirit of the great Ekushey, we will unitedly build the Golden Bangladesh of the Father of the Nation.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Sheikh Hasina

The officiating diplomats and relevant officials were able to establish the significances of love for language and patriotism centring on the Language Martyrs' Day through relentless efforts. This information could be gathered from the relevant people via many sources.

The outcome of such an initiative of Bangladesh Government was positive. Even the sceptics did not hesitate to extend support to the proposal and voiced their opinion in its favour. A comment of Syed Muazzem Ali (who was intimately involved in the process) regarding this unprecedented initiative was very significant. He wrote, 'Fortunately, our relentless persuasion or lobbying bore fruit. A number of co-sponsors issued statements in support of our proposal. As a result, the multilingual European parties could not oppose our resolution.'



Ultimately, the declaration for observing 21 February as 'International Mother Language Day' was unanimously adopted at a plenary session of UNESCO's general meeting as a consequence of these actions. The accomplishment of the then government of Bangladesh headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was undeniable. It is now the responsibility of the Bangladesh missions abroad, the International Mother Language Institute at home as well as all concerned people to highlight this day by showing due respect.

A big deficiency in our national life is that we achieve many things through much labour by making many sacrifices, but we seldom take the initiative to hold on to those by according due honour. We should remain conscious about the International Mother Language Day by realizing its importance. We should continuously strive to preserve its prestige. Only then would the victory we achieved centring on the International Mother Language Day become meaningful.

Author: Veteran of the language movement

Translation: Dr. Helal Uddin Ahmed



'Mentality is our main strength'

SPORTS REPORTER



Sikandar Raza said yesterday that their impressive performance in the home Tests against Sri Lanka has provided much confidence ahead of the one-off Test against

Bangladesh starting tomorrow in Mirpur.

We lost the first Test against Sri Lanka, which we could easily have drawn. The second Test was a lot closer than the result showed. We have taken a lot of confidence from there. We are playing our third Test in a very short span, but over the years Zimbabwe have always played well in Bangladesh," said Raza, who was adjudged player-of-the-match in their last Test against Sri Lanka in Harare.

"Over the years, the way we apply ourselves, it is nice and fresh to see the way the boys have come again with a strong mentality. The mentality of the boys is our main strength. We always had a strong mentality. We are ready for the challenge," he added.

Raza also recalled their success in Sylhet against

"Bangladesh spinners have a very good record against us but I think with the experience we have of coming to Bangladesh, we learned something and tried to improve our game, and you can say that their spinners have taken lot of wickets, but we have started to score some runs against them. The Test match in Sylhet was a prime example of that, where we won that game.



Sikandar Raza's focused stance indicates that the all-rounder is all set to replicate his performance from 7imhahwe's recent home series against Sri. Lanka when they face Bangladesh in the lone Test in Mirpur from tomorrow.

Tamim Iqbal (L) and Liton Das were all smiles during Bangladesh's practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. The Tigers would hope that their willows also smile when Bangladesh take on Zimbabwe in the lone Test starting from tomorrow in Mirpur.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Tigers up against what they lack

SPORTS REPORTER



Zimbabwe are far off from matching the

experience, strength and quality possessed by Bangladesh, their opponents in the lone Test starting from tomorrow at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

And maybe when there is a series against Zimbabwe, the side lingering at the bottom in every format, even a ninth-ranked Test side like Bangladesh may opt to take a lenient approach.

After all, Zimbabwe went more than a year without playing Test. The side that had their ICC membership suspended in July 2019 following government interference in the running of the board had played a Test against Bangladesh in November 2018 and since then have played just two more Tests, during their tour of Sri Lanka last month.

Even in 2018, it was only after thumping by Zimbabwe in Sylhet that the Mahmudullah Riyad-led Bangladesh were able to salvage a draw

win in Mirpur in the following game.

That Zimbabwe side went through some major changes and add to the fact that they have been away from the longest version, considered the toughest format of all, for over a year, one might think that their Test skills have become rusty.

But Zimbabwe reminded that they did not forget how to play Tests on their tour of Sri Lanka. Although they lost the first Test in Harare by 10 wickets, for the majority of the second and final Test, it was Zimbabwe who dictated terms before a magnificent unbeaten ton from Kusal Mendis on the fifth day salvaged a draw for the

Skipper Sean Williams' century, all-rounder Sikandar Raza recording his best figures and the second-best bowling figures by a Zimbabwean of seven for 113 in a Test innings and the contributions with the bat from Raza and Brendan Taylor had almost sealed a win for the visitors.

Such inspiring performances from shocking but deserving 151-run Raza, Williams and Taylor even after simply playing regular cricket against returning to the toughest form of Zimbabwe and even Bangladesh cricket following a considerable gap prove that the one thing that the

During the time Zimbabwe spent in Test exile,

Bangladesh played a total of five Tests and lost by an innings margin in four of them, the other being a 224-run thumping by Test rookies Afghanistan at home. The Tigers stretched their list of Test defeats to six when they lost to Pakistan, again by an innings margin, in Rawalpindi earlier this month.

Bangladesh might have had plenty of resources and opportunities compared to Zimbabwe during this period but the one thing that was missing from the struggling Bangladesh side was the very thing that Zimbabwe displayed during their Sri Lanka tour -- fighting spirit.

Bangladesh have looked wayward and the urgency to win a game was always missing from the Tigers' squad during the bleak period.

It would be very foolish of the Mominul Haque-led side to think that they can get back to winning ways by Cricket Board President Nazmul Hassan acknowledged the tough in the two-Test series with a 218-run Zimbabwe still possess is their fighting challenge that awaits the Tigers.

A worthy realisation for Saif

SPORTS REPORTER



Saif Hasan's childhood dream came true when he opened the innings with star Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal in the first ICC World Test Championship

match against Pakistan in Rawalpindi earlier this month. Now, the right-hander's aim was to build a long opening partnership with the seasoned campaigner, but he is well aware that he still has a long way to go to realise his second dream. It was not a dream debut for the young man against Pakistan but his scores of 0 and 16 taught him some good

"I was aware that Test cricket would not be easy but so far I did everything [possible] to reach this point. When I say not easy, I mean that international cricket is not like the game that I have been playing in the domestic circuit. We have to be mentally prepared and must prolong the innings if we get the chance," said Saif yesterday.

While talking to reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, Saif said that the team has been working on making a fresh start against Zimbabwe in the

"We sat together after the last Test defeat against Pakistan. Everyone is trying and planning on making a fresh start."



Bangladesh opener Saif Hasan was seen honing his football skills at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Tigresses win a thriller



Khadija Tul Kubra and Jahanara Alam inspired Bangladesh to a morale-boosting five-run victory over Pakistan in the final ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020 warm-up fixture at Allan Border Field in Brisbane

Bangladesh, who chose to bat in Brisbane, couldn't find freedom but Murshida Khatun made 43 to lift her side to 111-8 from 20 overs.

Pakistan couldn't stitch together any meaningful partnerships in reply with Javeria Khan's 41 the lone hand.

Bangladesh's top order were decimated in the second over as Shamima Sultana (3) mistimed a sweep to be caught behind off Anam Amin and a mix-up led to the run-out of Sanjida Islam (0).

Promising keeper-batter Nigar Sultana Joty couldn't make an early impression when Murshida's straight drive was deflected onto her stumps by Aiman Anwer, run out backing up for

Murshida, set to make her T20 World Cup debut this month, heaved back-to-back boundaries and found her most reliable partner in Fargana Hoque.

Fargana's 21 saw the pair club together for 52 before Murshida was run out by Diana Baig in the 14th over.

This win will give us a lot of confidence as we look to make a strong start to the tournament. We were happy with our batting performance but we struggled in the last five overs, our run-rate was not very good, so that's something we'll look to work on and we didn't bowl our yorkers well either at the death. This match was a great opportunity for us to reset and rethink ahead of the World Cup.

> **SALMA KHATUN** BANGLADESH CAPTAIN



Pacer Jahanara Alam (L) and spinner Khadija Tul Kubra celebrate the Tigresses' five-run victory over Pakistan in their final ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020 warm-up fixture in Brisbane yesterday.

Pakistan kept things tight late on and the momentum swung their way when Aiman Anwer took two wickets in two balls in the final

Bangladesh skipper Salma Khatun and attack leader Rumana led an early assault as Pakistan succumbed to 23 for three after three

The dangerous Bismah nicked off while driving, as did opener Ayesha Naseem on one of her first appearances for her country.

The experienced duo of Javeria and Nida Dar offered temporary respite with a partnership of 27, the opener pulling to the boundary in the fifth over and Dar clearing long-on with a six in the seventh.

Javeria kept fighting the tide and turning over strike but Nida could only find mid-wicket on 14 and when Iram Javed departed cheaply it was 59 for five.

Javeria, who has featured in every edition of the Women's T20 World Cup, peeled off successive fours in the 15th over to give her side hope but was sensationally caught on the longon fence by Fargana Hoque, the crucial moment that settled the match.

From there, it was all Bangladesh and three wickets in her final two overs saw Jahanara seal the victory in emphatic fashion.

Pakistan top-scorer Javeria Khan said: "We're a bit disappointed. We made mistakes at crucial times. It was a good practice, but not the result we wanted.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Bangladesh: 111 for 8 in 20 overs (Murshida Khatun 43, Fargana Hoque 21; Aiman Anwer

Pakistan: 106 all out in 19.4 overs (Javeria Khan 41; Jahanara Alam 4-22, Khadija Tul Kubra 3-11) Result: Bangladesh won by five runs.

Women's T20 World Cup kicks off today

Hosts Australia to face India in opener

AFP, Sydney



Defending champions Australia suffered a blow on the eve of the Women's Twenty20 World

Thursday with young pace spearhead Tayla Vlaeminck ruled out of the tournament with a foot injury.

The fast bowler, 21, reported pain in her foot this week and scans revealed a stress fracture just a day ahead of Australia facing India in the opening game of the 10-team event.

Head coach Matthew Mott said the squad was disappointed to lose one of the quickest bowlers in the game, as the hosts bid to win a fifth World Cup title.

Off-spinner Molly Strano was drafted in as her replacement.

Skipper Meg Lanning admitted the team was "pretty devastated" to lose

able to adjust from there. Indian skipper Harmanpreet Kaur said her side was ready to exploit any

Vlaeminck and they may have to rethink

so we will have to slightly tweak how we

are going to go about it," she said. "But

generally our plans are pretty flexible

anyway, so we don't feel like it's going to

what the conditions are doing and what

the Indian batters are doing and being

"The important thing is getting used to

be too much of a disadvantage.

"There's no one quite the same as Tay

their approach.

Australian weaknesses in the opener at the Sydney Showground. "We are a side that can put pressure on

any team, we just look to stay in the right mindset and play in the way we can because that is our biggest strength," she said.

The World Cup will culminate in the final at Melbourne on March 8.



Sajjad Hossain's unbeaten 261 off 115 balls, studded with 29 fours and 15 sixes, powered Chattogram **Sunshine Grammar School** to a massive 422-run victory over Chattogram **Collegiate School at the Chattogram Women's Cricket Ground yesterday** in the Bangabandhu **National School Cricket** tournament, presented by Prime Bank. Sunshine scored 489 for seven.



STAR SPORTS 1 New Zealand v India First Test, Day 1 Live from 4:30am South Africa v Australia

STAR SPORTS SELECT 2 Bundesliga Bayern Munich v Paderborn Live from 1:16am (Saturday)

First T201

Live from 10:00pm

TEN 2 Serie A Brescia v Napoli Live from 1:45am (Saturday)

Atalanta's night to 'remember forever'



Atalanta coach Gian Piero Gasperini hailed a performance his club will "remember forever" after the Italian side

crushed Valencia 4-1 on Wednesday to take a giant step closer to reaching the Champions League quarterfinals for the

Dutch wing-back Hans Hateboer scored twice on 16 and 62 minutes, sandwiching goals from Josip Ilicic and Remo Freuler.

"This is an evening that we'll remember forever," said Gasperini. "It's an amazing result, full of emotion."

It was an extraordinary night for the side from Bergamo who travelled to the San Siro with over 40,000 of their fans as their home stadium 55km second behind Manchester City. away does not meet UEFA regulations. Denis Cheryshev pulled one back

for Valencia in the first leg of the last-16 tie at the San Siro, the same stadium where the Spanish side lost the 2001 final to Bayern Munich on penalties.

Valencia, seventh in La Liga, had finished top of their group after away wins over Ajax and Chelsea but were missing several key players through injury and suspension.

"It certainly complicates things a bit, it's a pretty overwhelming result, this 4-1," said Valencia coach Albert Celades. "In the end it doesn't reflect much what we saw on the pitch.'

Atalanta's run comes despite losing their opening three Champions League group games, before finishing let's play well in our stadium."

"Three goals ahead is a nice reward," added Gasperini. "But there were a lot of dangerous situations, these are things we'll need to improve in Valencia.

"We are satisfied with this victory and above all with this advantage. Yesterday I would have signed to go to Valencia in the return game with a three-goal lead."

tournament debutants dominated the first half with Mario Pasalic having their first chance on eight minutes, but Valencia goalkeeper Jaume Domenech pushed the ball over.

"We had opportunities and we didn't finish them," said Celades. "The result is clear enough today, but it's not impossible (to turn around). Let's see what happens at Mestalla,



Pep '100% staying'

AFP, Manchester

Pep Guardiola insisted on Wednesday that he will stay with Manchester City and vowed that the "truth will prevail" over their shock two-year ban from European competitions.

City were banned from the Champions League and Europa League for the next two seasons UEFA found them guilty of committing "serious breaches" of financial regulations.

"If they don't sack me I will stay here 100 percent more than ever. First because I want to stay. It's something special, more than the contract I have," Guardiola said after Wednesday's 2-0 win against West Ham.

"I said before, I say now, I want to stay and help the club and maintain this level as long as possible. When I said I love this club I like to be here, why should I leave? No matter what happens I will be here next season."



Bangladesh ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (L) was welcomed warmly by head coach Russell Domingo and spin consultant Daniel Vettori (2nd from R) as he joined the Tigers' training camp for the Zimbabwe series for the first time yesterday.

Police hold Kings

SPORTS REPORTER



champions Defending Bashundhara Kings received a jolt in their second match

of the Bangladesh Premier League as promoted Bangladesh Police came from behind to hold them to a 1-1 draw at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

In the day's other match, title contenders Sheikh Russel, who played out a 1-1 draw against Brothers Union in their previous match, were held

Police

Faisal 72' (OG)

Rahmatganj

to a goalless draw by Rahmatganj.

Federation Cup champions Bashundhara, who secured

hard-fought 1-0 win over Uttar Baridhara in their opening match, faced a stiff challenge from Bangladesh Police, who came into the match on the back of a 0-2 loss to Abahani.

Police started promisingly, unlike in their previous match against Abahani, and created a few opportunities in the first 20 minutes, with Bulgarian forward Laskov Antonio and American striker Riveria Sidney coming close to breaking the deadlock.

Antinio saw his free-kick was brilliantly tipped over by goalkeeper Anisur Rahman Zico in the 17th minute before a Sidney volley narrowly missed the target.

Those served as wake-up calls for Bashundhara, who gradually took control. They went close to taking a lead in the 23rd minute after availing a fumble from Police goalkeeper Saiful Islam Khan, but Towhidul Alam Sabuz failed to muster a shot from the edge of the box with Saiful tumbling to the ground after taking a goal-kick.

Bashundhara kept pressing for the lead and came close from a goal-mouth melee, but Kyrgyz defender Aider Mambetalieve

made a goal-line save from Nicolas Delmonte's backheel in the 35th minute. Five minutes from the break,

Sidney tried from the distance and missed narrowly, much to Zico's relief.

1 - 1 Kings

Sabuz 53'

0 - 0 Sheikh Russel

After resumption, Sabuz failed to connect to the ball with an open net waiting but the forward made amends in the 53rd minute, tapping in a rebound from close range after goalkeeper Saiful parried Delmonte's shot.

Police equalised when substitute MS Bablu rattled the far post and Bashundhara defender Nurul Nayeem Faisal bundled the ball into his own net from inside the sixyard box in the in the 73rd minute as the teams shared a point each.

Navy clinch Shaheed Smriti Hockey title

Bangladesh Navy clinched the title of Shaheed Smriti Hockey tournament with a 6-3 win over Bangladesh Army in the final at Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Studded with national players, Navy dominated the game and took a 3-1 lead in the first half with Ashraful Islam, Rasel Mahmud Jimmy and Mahbub Hossain scoring one apiece. Monoz Babu pulled one goal back for Army.

After resumption, Navy maintained their stranglehold three more goals came from Moinul Islam Koushik, Abed Uddin and Ashraful Islam before Army staged a late resistance with two goals from Milon Hossain and Nayeem --Sports Reporter

CCCL to hold mini-marathon in March

The Cadet College Club Ltd (CCCL) is going to host a mini-marathon titled CCCL-RunBangla International 10km next March at Hatirjheel with the theme 'towards a special future for our special

1,200 people are expected to take part in marathon, which has been recognised by the international body, the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS). The date is scheduled to be held on March 13 at 6:30am.

Interested participants have to register online with Tk 1,000 while foreign participants have to pay USD 35. A portion of the money will be disbursed to differently-abled children, speakers at a press briefing at the NSC auditorium said yesterday. --Sports Reporter

Federer out of French Open

Roger Federer has undergone surgery to resolve a longstanding knee problem and said Thursday he would be out of action until after the French Open.

The 20-time Grand Slam winner revealed on his Facebook account that he underwent surgery in Switzerland on Wednesday and would miss a string of tournaments including the May 24-June

"As a result, I will miss Dubai, India

Wells, Bogota, Miami and the French Open," he said.

"I can't wait to be back playing again soon, see you on grass!"

Barca sign Braithwaite

Barcelona have signed Denmark striker Martin Braithwaite from fellow La Liga side Leganes for 18 million euros after receiving permission from the league's organising body to acquire a player outside the transfer window.

The Spanish champions paid the player's release clause and signed him till June 2024. The 28-year-old, who scored six league goals in 21 starts for Leganes this season will be officially unveiled at the Camp Nou later on Thursday.

PSG boss indicted in bribery case

PSG chief Nasser Al-Khelaifi and FIFA's disgraced former secretary general Jerome Valcke have been indicted in Switzerland for alleged corruption in the attribution of football broadcasting rights.

The Swiss attorney general's office said in a statement on Thursday that the two had been charged "in connection with the award of media rights to various World Cup and FIFA Confederations Cup tournaments."

Al-Khelaifi, who is also the boss of Qatari television channel BeIN Sports, is suspected of giving inappropriate gifts to Valcke -- including rent-free access to a luxury property -- in order to secure broadcast rights to prestigious events, including the World Cup.

Myanmar-Kyrgyzstan game investigated for fixing

FIFA is investigating allegations Myanmar deliberately threw a 2022 World Cup qualifier match last year, the country's football body said Thursday.

Myanmar lost the October match against Kyrgyzstan 7-0, the Southeast Asian side's third defeat in a row. Myanmar football writer and analyst Htun Htun Oo said he was unconvinced there had been foul play. "Losing by lots of goals comes as no surprise to Myanmar fans," he said.

Went to a gunfight without bullets, Jose says after loss



Jose Mourinho had his excuses ready made for a 1-0 home defeat to RB Leipzig that leaves Tottenham needing to recreate their escape acts of last season to progress to the

Champions League quarterfinals. Already without Harry Kane due to a long-term hamstring injury, the news that Son Heung-min could miss the rest of the season with a fractured right arm on Tuesday was a body blow to Spurs' chances of progressing.

"It's like going to a gun fight without bullets, so we did what we could do," concluded Mourinho. As the Portuguese complained about his lack of

resources, it was easy to forget that Leipzig were the novices at this stage of the competition. Tottenham progressed further in the Champions League for the past three years under Mauricio Pochettino, culminating in a rollercoaster run to last season's final.

A similar run this season is hard to imagine with even Mourinho questioning how his side muddles through to the end of the season without their two top goalscorers.

"What I am worried with is not with the 1-0 because the 1-0 is an open result. The 1-0 you can perfectly go there and win the tie," added Mourinho. "What worries me is that these are our players for I don't know how many matches. We have to play in two days again. We could see Lucas (Moura) absolutely dead, (Steven) Bergwijn absolutely dead, (Giovani) Lo Celso dead."

Given his paucity of options up front, Mourinho needs to get the best from those he does have. However, Dele Alli stormed off when he was replaced 20 minutes from time and slammed his boots down in the dugout.

"I think he was angry with his performance, not with me," insisted Mourinho. "I think he understood why I took him off and the team improved.

"I don't know what they are doing," Spurs legend Glenn Hoddle told BT Sport. "I don't see a team pressing together and I don't see a team with good movement when they've got possession. They look like a team just hoping they play well and get a break.'

Mourinho is certainly hoping his injury list gives him a free pass even if it goes wrong in three competitions between now and the end of the season.



RB Leipzig striker Timo Werner (C) continued to shine away from home, making the difference with his seventh away strike in the Champions League in a 1-0 win over Tottenham Hotspur in London yesterday.

Nat'l School Chess revived after 7 years

SPORTS REPORTER

The National School Chess championship is set to return after seven years as the Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) signed an MoU with Abul Khair Group yesterday to stage the championship for the next five years.

The BCF had previously staged the championships regularly with help from Standard Chartered Bank, who withdrew support after the 2013 championship due to a lack of transparency in the BCF committee. Since then, BCF has failed to rope in sponsors.

BCF general secretary Syed Shahabuddin Ahmed Shamim and Abul Kair Group executive director Shahidullah signed the agreement, which will see sponsors provide Tk 77 lakh per year for the tournament.

"We were trying to patronise school chess for a long time and we finally have a sponsor. If we can provide sustainable support to school chess for three to five years, we can produce a lot of chess players and may also get Grand Masters in the near future," said BCF president and RAB director general Benazir Ahmed.

BCF general secretary Shamim informed that they would first organise at the district level with the participation of upazilas before two players, one each from the boy's and girl's section, would advance to the divisional stage. From there, five players from each division in both sections will qualify for the 80-player final round to be held in Dhaka. He added that they will soon set the date for the championship at district level.



PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT IS BEING BUILT WITH BSRM

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT BSRM



GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM



One Year of Chawkbazar Fire

The state must be held accountable

Noted citizens say at event commemorating the tragedy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The state must be held accountable for the deaths in the disastrous fire in Chawkbazar's Churihatta last year, eminent citizens yesterday said at an event to commemorate one year of the tragedy.

"This was manslaughter, murder by negligence. These deaths happened because of people who did not adhere to their moral and legal responsibilities...,

said Sultana Kamal, a noted human rights

She decried how the owners of Wahed Mansion, where the fire had occurred, had gotten out on bail a few days into being

The heads of Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB), Ain O Salish Kendra, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association (Bela), Association



Hosne Ara wipes tears with her scarf as she holds a photo of her son Rajaul Karim, one of the 71 victims killed in Chawkbazar fire a year ago. The photo was taken yesterday at the Nagar Bhaban, where Dhaka **South City Corporation** mayor held an event to announce compensation for families of some of the fire victims.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

'Build a society free from **exploitation**



Bangabandhu offering prayers at the Azimpur Graveyard on February 21, 1972.

FEBRUARY 21, 1972

BANGABANDHU'S MESSAGE ON NATIONAL MARTYRS DAY 1972

My dear countrymen—brothers and sisters, We are going to observe Shaheed Day for

the first time on the soil of a free country. This struggle of ours had started from as far back as March 11, 1948. That day, we were arrested in the language movement. It was not merely a language movement. In truth, this was a movement for establishing the rights of the people of Bangladesh, nay it was an independence movement.

This struggle started gradually from 1948 and reached its zenith

SEE PAGE 13 COL 3

WOMAN'S DEATH IN COP CUSTODY

Family wants judicial probe

Police form committee to probe allegations

STAR REPORT

Family members of Yasmin Begum, who died in the custody of Gazipur police on early Wednesday, yesterday demanded a judicial probe into the death saying they have no faith in the police investigation.

"Police beat up my sister after failing to find her husband on Tuesday night... How could police investigate the same murder?... They will be biased. We want a judicial probe, we want justice," Yasmin's younger brother Jahangir Hossain told our Gazipur correspondent yesterday.

Manjur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Detective Branch (DB) of police in Gazipur, however, said Yasmin was arrested with 120 yaba pills and taken to the DB office in the city. She later fell sick and was taken to the hospital where doctors declared her dead.

Gazipur Metropolitan Police on Wednesday formed a three-member committee led by its additional commissioner Md Azad Mia to investigate the incident.

Meanwhile, rights body Ain o Salish Kendra yesterday said to ensure justice, an independent inquiry committee, including experts other than members of

SEE PAGE 13 COL 3

China sees big drop Rape victim dies taking poison

STAR REPORT

A schoolgirl, who took poison on Monday allegedly after being raped, died at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital on Wednesday night.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 3



PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 21 Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha AZAN 5-20 12-30 4-30 6-03 7-30

JAMAAT 5-55 1-15 4-45 6-07 8-00 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

in coronavirus cases

394 new cases reported on Wednesday; Iran, South Korea report first deaths

China yesterday touted a big drop in new virus infections as proof its epidemic control efforts are working, but the toll grew abroad with deaths in Japan and South Korea.

Fatalities in China hit 2,118 as 114 more people died, but health officials reported the lowest number of new cases in nearly a month, including in hardest-hit Hubei province.

China had 394 new confirmed cases on Wednesday, the National Health Commission (NHC) said, sharply down from 1,749 cases a day earlier and the lowest since Jan 23.

That brings the total accumulated number of confirmed cases in mainland China to 74,576. Hundreds more cases were reported in over 25 countries. The number of deaths outside mainland China climbed to 11.

Japan's toll rose to three as a man and a woman in their 80s who had been aboard a quarantined cruise ship died, while fears there mounted about other passengers who disembarked the Diamond Princess after testing negative.

South Korea reported its first death, SEE PAGE 13 COL 3 অব্যক্ত কিংবা সরব, বুঝে নেই মনের ভাষা

সব কথা কি বলতে হয়। কিংবা সব ভাবের প্রকাশ। রাগ, অভিমান অথবা অনুরক্তের ভাষা অনেক। শব্দের জোর কখনো সীমিত, কখনোবা প্রবল। তেমনি শব্দহীনতারও। নীরবতার মতো প্রবল প্রকাশ এখনও হয়নি আবিষ্কার। কখনও কি ভেবেছি, বলতে না পারা মানুষের কন্ষী। কত ভাবেই না তারা দেখেন পৃথিবীকে, মানুষের অবয়ব কিংবা বিচ্যুতি। এবারের ভাষা দিবসে মিশে যাই শব্দহীনদের সাথে। সম্পূর্ণ নতুন এক ভাষায় গল্প লিখতে।



m pranfoods.net f pranrflbd f pran-rfl-group 09613737777

