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"We don't need so many leaders. What we need now are true activists."
AWAMI LEAGUE GENERAL SECRETARY
OBAIDUL QUADER SAYS



"This [coronavirus] is going to be with us for some time -- it's endemic in human populations and is not going to go away without a vaccine."
INFECTIOUS-DISEASE EXPERT AT JOHNS HOPKINS CENTER FOR
HEALTH SECURITY AMESH ADALIA (PAGE 2)



"We are watching. As a domestic issue, we would want India to control it. It is our expectation,"
FOREIGN SECRETARY MASUD BIN MOMEN SAID ABOUT
DELHI VIOLENCE (PAGE 2)



MOHAMMADPUR GENEVA CAMP

Exiled yaba lord reclaims throne

Returns to country after staying out for 2 yrs amid anti-drug purge; business of mad drug fully on as some law enforcers keep backing it up

SHAHEEN MOLLA, MUNTAKIM SAAD and
MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

He is back.

Ishtiaq Ahmed, known as the drug lord of Mohammadpur Geneva Camp, was forced to stay out of his empire after the anti-narcotics crackdown began in 2018.

But he reclaimed the throne this year, thanks to some unscrupulous law enforcement officials, and a top underworld criminal who had got life term but came



out of jail recently, said intelligence and camp sources.

Ishtiaq first appeared on the scene in 2006. It was initially a gang of six but more people eventually joined him, and by 2015, he led a gang of 250.

After the countrywide drives began in May 2018, he took shelter in "safe houses" in different Asian countries, including Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, and back home, dozens of his gang members got

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'FIR MANIPULATION' SC rejects Puthia OC's appeal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court verdict that directed the authorities to enquire into the allegation against then OC of Rajshahi's Puthia Police Station Shakil Uddin Ahmed and others of manipulating the FIR in labour leader Nurul Islam murder case.

A four-member bench led by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain passed the order after dismissing a leave to appeal petition filed by the OC challenging the HC judgment.

Following a writ petition filed by Nurul's daughter Nigar Sultana, the HC on December 1 last year observed that the allegation against Shakil of manipulating the FIR is undoubtedly grave, which is a punitive offence under sections 166 and 167 of the Penal Code.

The two sections of the Penal Code are included

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The lower level of the Padma bridge, construction of which is scheduled to be completed by June 2021. Trains will ply the lower level, while the upper will be for vehicles. *Inset*, people working on a pier that will be the last to be completed.

PHOTO:
TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Experts want meticulous monitoring

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although the government is working to prevent the novel coronavirus from entering the country, it is not getting all personnel of the health sector involved, say public health specialists.

They said luckily, there was still no confirmed case of coronavirus infection in the country. But the situation could be bad if an infected person enters the country due to limitations in screening.

"The situation in China has become serious as the country was 'reluctant' at the very beginning of this disease outbreak. We have to learn from China. They have assigned necessary human resources, integrated all government and private organisations and built makeshift hospitals. Have we such capacity? the [national preparedness] plan should have been ready much earlier," Prof Muzaherul Huq, founder of Public Health Foundation of Bangladesh, told The Daily Star

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CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Deaths, cases rise across the globe

Trump urges calm after US death

AFP, Beijing

Thailand, Australia became the latest country to report its first death from coronavirus as the outbreak continues to spread around the world with more than 86,000 people infected.

Yesterday, several European countries, including The Czech Republic, Luxembourg and Ireland, announced their first cases.

China also reported a fresh spike in coronavirus infections yesterday, as US President Donald Trump urged calm after the first death on American soil and Australia registered its first fatality.

The virus has spread to more than 60 countries around the globe, prompting the World Health Organization to raise its risk assessment to its highest level.

Worldwide, nearly 3,000 people have been killed and more than

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Abuzz with life, tinged with worry too

Padma bridge work goes on in full swing but there is concern over coronavirus fallout

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

It was a sunny spring morning last Thursday.

The construction site of the much-anticipated Padma bridge was humming with activity. With the relatively calm river beneath, around 30 workers were placing rods to make the base of a pier of the bridge.

Counting from the Mawa side of the river, this would be the 26th pier -- one of the four piers yet to be completed, and the last one to be finished.

The men were smiling and talking to each other as they worked. They were on the cusp of accomplishing a monumental task.

"Concreting over the metal base of the 26th pier will be done in



two days and it will take around a month to construct the rest of the pier," one of several Bangladeshi engineers overseeing the work told this correspondent.

The task of driving into the ground the 294 piles supporting the piers was completed in July last year.

Over a kilometre away, around 40

workers and several Bangladeshi and Chinese engineers were working on the top level of the double-decker bridge. On the Janjira side of the bridge, over 600 metres of road was visible. The bottom level is for trains.

Over 3.7 km of the 6.15 km bridge is visible with 25 of the 41 spans

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Liton, Saifuddin get Tigers back to winning ways

MAZHAR UDDIN from Sylhet

Opener Liton Das smashed his second century that, along with Mohammad Saifuddin's all-round efforts, helped Bangladesh return to winning ways in the fifty-over format in the first ODI against Zimbabwe at the Sylhet International Stadium yesterday.

The home side posted their highest total against Zimbabwe of 321 for six and registered their largest victory in the format, by 169 runs, surpassing the 163-run victory against Sri Lanka in 2018.

Zimbabwe never looked like posing any threat in chase of the huge target and were eventually bundled out for 152 in 39.1 overs.

The game also witnessed Mashrafe Bin Mortaza become only the fifth bowler in ODI history to take 100 wickets as skipper when he picked up the last Zimbabwean wicket, his second of the match, of Tinotenda Mutumbodzi. It was also his 700th wicket in his professional career.

Earlier, Liton, who was all set for an even bigger score than the 126 he had reached, had to surrender Sylhet's heat and humidity as the right-hander was forced to retire hurt and bring an end to a magnificent knock that took just 105 deliveries.

Bangladesh capitalised on Liton's hundred as

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Modi to visit Dhaka on March 17

Foreign secretary says Delhi violence India's domestic issue; Indian foreign secretary due today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka considers the recent violence in Delhi as India's domestic issue and expects the country's authorities to control it.

"As a domestic issue, we would want India to control it. It is our expectation," Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen told reporters after a seminar on Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) at its auditorium in the capital yesterday.

The comment comes a day before Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla's two-day visit that begins today.

His visit comes following days of violence that erupted over the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) since February 23 in Delhi. The violence left 42 people dead and over 200 injured.

The enactment of the CAA by the Indian government late last year triggered widespread protests across India, but the latest one in Delhi turned most violent. The CAA created a pathway for Indian citizenship to the illegal migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian communities from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, but not for the Muslims.

Critics say the CAA violates India's secular constitution.

Asked about the government's response to some political parties demanding the cancellation of Modi's visit, the foreign secretary said Indian PM Modi will be coming to Bangladesh to attend Bangabandhu's birth centenary programme on March 17 at the invitation of the Bangladesh government.

"We are going to hold a mega programme. India played the biggest role during our Liberation War. So, we would expect the Indian Prime Minister to attend the event," he said.

Talking about Shringla's visit, he said the objective of the Indian Foreign Secretary's visit is mainly to do the groundwork for the visit of Indian's Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 17.

This is Shringla's first visit to Bangladesh after taking charge as India's foreign secretary. He will meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen during his two-day visit. He will also attend a seminar on Indo-Bangla relations organised by the BISS today.

"As he was a high commissioner of India to Bangladesh earlier, his understanding on Bangladesh is good. During his time, the two countries consolidated the relations. So, he will take stock of the developments of the relationship and review the progress," Masud Bin Momen said.

Indian PM Modi will also hold a bilateral meeting with Hasina on March 17.

Asked what would be the issues that Bangladesh would raise during

the meeting, Momen said Dhaka will focus on the celebration of the birth centenary of Bangabandhu.

However, he said, there are already a number of projects underway that may be inaugurated during Modi's visit.

"We may also sign some MoUs that have been readied. These issues will be on the table, but our main focus would be the centenary celebration."

Our correspondent in Delhi reports that Modi may take his visit to Dhaka to discuss some deliverables or major markers in a forward movement in bilateral relations like a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), giving a push to defence cooperation for which India announced a 500-million dollar line of credit during Hasina's visit to India in April 2017, and connectivity.

The issues are also likely to be high on Shringla's agenda of talks in Dhaka ahead of Modi's visit.

The CEPA, which is a free trade deal in goods and services between two economically asymmetrical countries, was discussed at the meeting of Commerce Secretaries of the two countries in New Delhi in January.

India and Bangladesh signed a MoU of defence cooperation during Hasina's April 2017 visit for purchasing defence hardware from India. For the last two years, both the sides were in talks on modalities for using the soft loan.

Bangladesh has already agreed to put coastal radar system supplied by India along the Bay of Bengal shore to protect its own exclusive economic zone and marine resources.

On the connectivity front, the two countries are likely to finalise two more passenger train services besides the existing two between Dhaka and Kolkata (Maitri Express) and Khulna and Kolkata (Bandhan Express).

One passenger train route between Rajshahi-Kolkata via Rohonpur (Bangladesh) – Singabad (Malda in West Bengal) and another between Dhaka and Siliguri via Chilkabari and Haldibari of Coochbihar of West Bengal are under discussion between the two sides.

The two countries have already agreed to increase the frequency of Maitri Express and Bandhan Express from four to five days a week.

Shringla's visit will be the first high-level contact between the two countries since the controversy over CAA/NRC created rough edges on an otherwise burgeoning bilateral tie, reports our correspondent from New Delhi.

Bangladesh had cancelled visits by its Foreign Minister A K Abdul Momen, his deputy Shahriar Alam and Home Minister Azaduzzaman Khan Kamal to India in the last few months in the wake of violence.

In an interview with Gulf News, Hasina had termed CAA "not necessary". On another occasion, Momen had said that CAA would "weaken" India's secular image.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with a mug of Joy Bangla Concert 2020 to be held at the Army Stadium on March 7. She also unveiled a poster and T-shirt of the concert at the Gono Bhavan on Saturday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Exiled yaba lord reclaims throne

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arrested, according to law enforcement sources.

Finally, he returned to the country early last month on "green signal from his network", they said.

Now believed to be running the show from India, the 36-year-old has reorganised his gang with around 150 members including women and children who directly take part in retail sales of yaba.

The Daily Star got this picture after a three-week investigation. These correspondents talked to people who work for Ishtiaq, local sources and members of different law enforcement agencies.

THE RACKET

A ragpicker 20 years back, Ishtiaq now controls the yaba supplies in Mohammadpur, Gabtoli, Aminbazar, Beribadh, Hemayetpur and Ashulia.

His gang has adopted a new model of yaba trade and only sells the pills to trusted buyers and prefers online order and payment.

A member of Ishtiaq's gang sells minimum 50 and maximum 500 pink pills a day at Tk 250 to Tk 300 each in Mohammadpur. He or she gets Tk 2,000 to Tk 5,000 as commission, depending on the sale.

According to law enforcement sources, Molla Arshad, Ishtiaq's second-in-command, mostly takes care of the narcotics network.

Born in Saidpur, Arshad is a childhood friend of Ishtiaq. Both grew up in the Geneva Camp, a densely-populated settlement of more than 25,000 Urdu-speaking Biharis.

Once the driver of a doctor in Mohammadpur, he teamed up with Ishtiaq in 2011. The gang reached its peak after 2015 when the Geneva Camp became a hotbed for the mad drug. Nadim aka Pachish was Ishtiaq's second-in-command back then.

Arshad took the charge after Nadim was killed in a "gunfight" with Rab in July 2018. He was arrested with 60,000 pieces of yaba tablets in March that year but came out on bail just in 21 days.

HIS PROPERTY

Ishtiaq has over 100 bighas of land in Savar and Ashulia, where most people know him as Kamrul Islam, according to an investigation report of a law enforcement agency. He buys land from the needy by paying them high prices, said locals.

Ishtiaq and his wife Pakhi own two buildings in Ashulia. Around Tk 3 lakh is collected as monthly rent from the two buildings.

Sahab Uddin, caretaker of one of the buildings, said Pakhi used to live here with three sons in this building two years back but none of his family members come anymore.

Asked about Ishtiaq's whereabouts, Sahab said they hand over the rent to their manager Ibrahim every month. "We have heard that Ibrahim sends the money to India, where he [Ishtiaq] is living now."

The Daily Star rang Ibrahim's mobile phone dozens of times but he did not answer.

A high official of the Department of Narcotics Control said on January 27 that they have submitted their report to the Anti-Corruption Commission regarding Ishtiaq's property and the ACC already registered a complaint.

The ACC on November 11 last year filed two cases against Ishtiaq and his wife Pakhi on charges of amassing illegal wealth and not submitting their wealth statement.

Regarding the latest updates, an ACC official told The Daily Star on January 28 that the cases are still under investigation. They have no updates to disclose yet, he added.

A high official of an intelligence agency, who is watching Ishtiaq's movement for the last two years, also confirmed to this newspaper that the drug lord is hiding in India now.

"We have got some clue about his activities and trying to pinpoint the precise location."

Khorshid Alam, assistant director of DNC, who is taking care of Ishtiaq's cases, told The Daily Star on January 27 that they are on alert and always checking updates on Ishtiaq and his gang members.

BACKING OF POLICE

According to sources, Ishtiaq's men give Tk 8-10 thousand to some officers at Mohammadpur Police Station

every night and Tk 75 thousand to detectives every week to run the business without hassle.

Tanvir Adnan, an advisor to Ishtiaq, acts as liaison with police.

Since the very beginning, some unscrupulous police officials are protecting the drug lord in exchange for hefty amount of money. He is also backed by a number of local ward councillors linked to some ruling party leaders.

Locals alleged that whenever they handed over Ishtiaq's accomplices to police, officers brought weak charges showing a small recovery of drugs, helping them get bail in a short time.

On September 23 last year, a section of camp dwellers wrote to the home ministry and Police Headquarters naming three officials of Mohammadpur Police Station -- sub-inspectors Sajib Koch, Apurba Barman and Md Hasan.

Sajib, who is still the beat-in-charge of Geneva Camp area, allegedly receives certain amount of money from narcotic dealers in the camp through his informants.

Talking to The Daily Star on January 25, he brushed off the allegation and said drug dealers are spreading propaganda to malign him. "We have arrested many drug dealers at the camp. They are doing this to keep pressure on us."

There are allegations against the police personnel that they run drug business at the camp using police informants.

In November last year, Sajib's informant Kalim Jambu was arrested by the Detective Branch with 50 grams of heroin.

Asked about it, the official said, "Most of the informants are bad people. What Kalim did was not my responsibility."

He admitted that the drug business in the camp is still going on but the peddlers are using new strategies. "Earlier, they used to keep drugs inside camps. Now they keep those at the flats adjacent to the camp area."

On an average, 150 cases are filed with Mohammadpur Police Station per month, he said, adding that half of those are narcotics cases related to Geneva Camp area.

Contacted, SI Apurba Barman and SI Hasan made similar comments over the allegations against them.

Regarding action, a high official at the Police Headquarters, told The Daily Star that they investigate every complaint they receive and take action only after getting valid evidence.

Locals also alleged that the drug business in the camp is run by the nexus of police and narco bosses including Ishtiaq, Arshad, Golam Zilani alias Kana Zilani and Shakil alias Ganja Shakil.

This newspaper could not contact any of them.

DNCC ward-32 councillor Habibur Rahman Mizan, widely known as Pagla Mizan, and ward-33 councillor Tarequzzaman Rajib backed these drug kingpins, according to the law enforcers.

Both the councillors have been arrested in recent anti-graft drives and they are still behind bars.

There is an allegation that Rajib used to "manage" some top ruling party leaders for smooth operation of the narcotics business. His aide Imran Hossain, one of the top yaba dealers in Mohammadpur, was arrested in November last year with 11,000 contraband pills.

Asked about Ishtiaq's gang, Abdul Latif, officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station, told this newspaper that he couldn't say much as he joined the station recently.

About the allegation against the police officials, he said, "Allegations were raised against the very officers who were the most active and arrested a big number of drug peddlers in the area. All the allegations are not true."

He said the duty areas of the officers have been changed.

However, one of them is still assigned to the Geneva Camp even after a complaint against him was filed with the Police Headquarters in September last year. The man who lodged the complaint, had to leave the camp fearing reprisal, according to local sources.

Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), told The

Daily Star that police are working against drug trade with zero-tolerance policy.

Asked about involvement of some police officials, Masudur said, "If anyone files any specific allegation, we will investigate and take action."

BUSINESS IS GOOD

Two years into the "War on Drugs", which claimed over 400 lives, there is no dearth in supply and availability of yaba. According to police intelligence, over 90,000 pills are sold daily in Mohammadpur area alone.

According to drug users, the business of Geneva Camp now has expanded to its nearby safer places. The dealers are more careful now, they don't sell it in their own area and verify the customers before meeting them.

The entrance road of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College & Hospital, Town Hall Bazar, Banshbari slum and a few roads near the Geneva Camp are safe zones where dealers deliver yaba pills to the customers.

Generally, the drug dealers prefer crowded place like restaurant forefront, hospital area to avoid suspicion.

"Deals are all done over phone. Even you can pay it through mobile transaction. When you go to the place, s/he will hand over the pills to you and leave the place immediately without any talk," said a drug user, who now buys yaba pills from Town Hall bazar area.

The drug users also said there is a change in quality now. Quality varies from dealer to dealer, place to place.

"Earlier there were three to four types of pills. Now there are more variations but the quality is down. Earlier there were symbols like RX and WY written on the pills. Now there is no such symbol on a pill; it's all plain," said another user, who has been taking yaba for the last five years.

According to the Department of Narcotics Control, around 3.10 crore yaba tablets were seized in 2019 despite major crackdowns by the law enforcement agencies.

The Border Guard Bangladesh seized 13,13,218 pills across the country in last two months, and 2,84,610 pieces worth over Tk 8 crore in Teknaf early Saturday alone.

Intelligence sources said previously yaba tablets were smuggled into Bangladesh mostly through the Myanmar border in large quantities. Now they are opting for new routes and strategies, adding Indian border and bringing in smaller consignments.

[Our Savar correspondent Akhlakur Rahman Akash contributed to this report]

Coronavirus might be here to stay

Expert at Johns Hopkins say

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts think that the new coronavirus might end up being a seasonal flu and will probably continue to circulate indefinitely.

"This is going to be with us for some time -- it's endemic in human populations and is not going to go away without a vaccine," Amesh Adalja, an infectious-disease expert at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security was quoted as saying by the Business Insider.

"It may decrease in transmission frequency so that you'll be able to have time to get a vaccine scaled up by the next appearance of it," Adalja added.

Many, including US President Donald Trump and Chinese president Xi Jinping have expressed hope that the upcoming warm weather will hinder the spread of coronavirus. Respiratory viruses such as the coronavirus are more active in cooler climates because lower temperatures help harden the protective gel-like coating around the virus, making it more resilient.

If the coronavirus winds up fluctuating with the seasons like the flu, it could retreat in summer and return in the fall and winter each year.

Speaker calls off India tour at eleventh hour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury yesterday postponed her four-day India visit that was scheduled to begin today.

The speaker postponed her visit citing important responsibilities connected to Mujib Borsho -- the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman -- celebrations starting from March 17, said a press release issued by the parliament secretariat around 10:45pm last night.

Her visit, originally scheduled to take place from March 2 to 5, is in response to invitations from speakers of India's Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

As she is in charge of organising and coordinating several events, including special sessions of parliament to be held on March 22 and 23, Shirin is currently unavailable for visits abroad, the press release added.

It was therefore decided that she would make the visit after the end of the celebration programmes.

The speaker postponed her visit at a time when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is facing widespread criticism amid recent eruption of violence in Delhi between supporters and opponents of the Citizenship Amendment Act, that left 43 people dead.

Two killed in 'gunfights'

STAR REPORT

Two suspected criminals were killed in two "gunfights" with law enforcers in the capital and Feni early yesterday.

The man, who was killed in a reported gunfight with Rab members in the capital's Shyamoli area, was identified as Shahin Bishwas, alias Hanif Mia, 48, from Narayanganj, said Mohammad Mohiuddin Faruqui, company commander of Rab-2.

The incident took place when a Rab team signalled a CNG-run autorickshaw to stop at a checkpoint in front of the National Institute of Kidney Diseases and Urology around 12:15am, he said.

As the Rab men asked the three passengers and the driver to get off the vehicle, all but Shahin followed the instruction, the Rab official said.

When the Rab men were forcing Shahin to come out, the others suddenly fired blank shots and tried to escape by crossing the adjacent boundary walls of National Institute of Mental Health and Hospital.

Rab members were forced to fire back when Shahin also started firing on them from inside the autorickshaw, triggering a "gunfight", Faruqui said.

Hanif caught a bullet injury during the incident and was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Later, the Rab team seized the vehicle and recovered a firearm and six bullets from the spot.

Meanwhile, a youth was killed in a "gunfight" between two gangs of robbers in Chhagalnaiya upazila of Feni early yesterday, police said.

Mahbubur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Chhagalnaiya Police Station, could not confirm the identity of the deceased but claimed that he was an active member of an inter-district robbery gang.

Police recovered a firearm and two bullets from the spot, reports a correspondent quoting police.

Receiving information of fire exchange between two gangs, a police team rushed to the spot around 2:00am, said Mahbubur.

They found the victim lying on the ground with a bullet injury and took him to Feni General Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead, the inspector said.

Macron calls for 'lasting' Syria ceasefire

AFP, Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron has called for Turkey and Russia to implement a lasting ceasefire in Syria's Idlib province in conversations with the two countries' leaders, the Elysee said.

Moscow-backed Syrian forces have since December led a military offensive against the final major rebel stronghold, where Ankara supports some rebel groups.

Macron expressed his "very strong concern about the unfolding humanitarian crisis" to Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Russian leader Vladimir Putin, according to a statement released on Saturday.

He also warned of the risk terrorist groups would spread "because of the military offensive of the Syrian regime and its allies," adding it undermined the 2018 Idlib agreement between Russia and Turkey to create a demilitarised zone in the northwestern province.

Experts want

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yesterday.

According to the government high-ups, their focus is on preventing the coronavirus from getting into the country. As part of this, the government has scaled up its screening process at all air, sea, and land ports.

The screening is only based on checking high body temperature, cough and respiratory illness using thermal scanners or infrared hand-held thermometers first. If anybody's body temperature is found high, health workers at ports check them further, they said.

Besides, any suspected patients are being admitted to the isolation unit of the government hospitals across the country.

But experts said this process would not work if any inbound passenger takes medicine like aspirin. They suggested that no suspected patients should be taken to hospital directly, as there is a chance of spreading the virus if they are infected.

"So, screening should be special for those coming from any affected country," Prof Md Nazrul Islam, former vice-chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, told this correspondent.

The virologist warned that the situation could be bad if the government was slow in responding.

On Friday, the joint commission of WHO and China issued a five-point advice for the uninfected countries in which it urged preparedness to immediately activate the highest level of emergency response mechanisms to trigger the all-of-government and all-of society approach that is essential for early containment of the coronavirus outbreak.

It has suggested testing national preparedness plans in light of the new knowledge on the effectiveness of non-pharmaceutical measures, largescale case isolation, respiratory support capacities and rigorous contact tracing and management.

The commission has also recommended testing all atypical

pneumonia patients for the coronavirus virus and adding testing for the virus to existing influenza surveillance systems.

In parallel with enforcing measures of infection prevention, it has asked to assess the general population's understanding of the virus and adjust national health promotion materials and activities accordingly. It urged engagement of clinical champions to communicate with the media.

Prof Muzaherul said, "Why experts from other government institutions like BSMU are not involved in the national preparedness plan? Why test of any suspected coronavirus patient is done at one place?"

He proposed checklists for preparedness: preparing health workers, special isolation and quarantine arrangements for suspected or confirmed patients, arrangement for treating them at home, and awareness campaign.

"Screening is not enough for prevention. Educating the whole population is the key. Once it could be done, the country would not only be safe from this coronavirus, but also this generation would be safe from any such virus in future," said Prof Muzaherul, also a former adviser of WHO's South East Asia region.

He also recommended initiating a national campaign for educating people on three specific issues -- frequent handwashing, ideal sneezing manner, and staying three feet away from flu infected people.

Talking to this newspaper yesterday, Prof Sabrina Flora, director of Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), said, "The preparedness plan would be finalised soon."

Currently, the IEDCR alone has the capacity to detect the new coronavirus.

Earlier, Prof Abul Kalam Azad, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services, said, "We will have everything in the national action plan -- what measures would be taken at different levels of emergencies."



PHOTO OF THE DAY

AMRAN HOSSAIN



Spring flowers adorn the trees at High Court premises and brighten the grounds as they fall. Two children collect these fallen petals, later to be made into floral arrangements. This photo was taken recently.

Youths want to be agents of change, not onlookers

Says UNV Asia-Pacific regional manager in interview with Star

PORIMOL PALMA

South African anti-apartheid revolutionary Nelson Mandela's saying "The youths of today are the leaders of tomorrow" remains true in every sense even today. When they aspire to be leaders – be it in politics, economy or society – or become professionals, they need to learn the skills relevant to their field.

In the era of artificial intelligence, skills-set requirements are also changing. Teamwork, negotiation, critical thinking and creativity are some of the abilities which will be essential in the coming days.

"These are the skills you will learn when you become UN volunteers," said Shalina Miah, UN Volunteers (UNV) regional manager for Asia-Pacific, during her recent visit to Bangladesh to inspire the country's youths to engage in volunteering.

During her visit, she signed a memorandum of understanding with the Economic Relations Division (ERD), with the latter committing to fully fund ten Bangladeshi civil servants to work as UN volunteers in Asia-Pacific and Europe as experts on various areas of development.

This is the first such deal between UNV and Bangladesh, which will increase the representation of the country in the UN system.

"It's a landmark deal," Shalina, a Bangladesh-origin Belgian citizen, said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star at UNV Bangladesh office in the capital on February 17. She lauded how the country is now playing important roles in the international development discourse.

The civil servants, who will gather international experience while working as volunteers, will add value to the services they provide to the people at home, she said.

UNV engages a lot of youths as volunteers, and Bangladeshi youths should be engaged more in the UNV programme, she said.

"We have database of more than



Shalina Miah

3,00,000 volunteers worldwide. Of them, only 337 Bangladeshis are registered in the database. Given the level of population in Bangladesh, the number should be more," Shalina said.

"We want more volunteerism. This is one way of accelerating Sustainable Development Goals. When we reach 2020, there will be only ten years left for achieving the SDGs," she added. "You can achieve the SDGs with more volunteers who can reach out to the marginalised levels."

Noting that Bangladesh is at the stage of demographic dividend, having more than 40 percent youths in its population, she said through volunteering they can learn technical skills and soft skills like teamwork, negotiation and creativity.

"For youths, this is a very good pathway to learn these skills and then use [them] in different contexts – government, private sector or international development. This helps them to be selfless and contribute to the society," Shalina said.

She said youths in Bangladesh are very engaged, active, passionate and eager to make the world a better place.

"Wherever I go, I have the best time seeing the spirit of the youths. The youths today are active. They want to be agents of change, not onlookers. We want to bring that spirit to the UN level."

NINE PERCENT INTEREST RATE Writ petition filed against BB decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed with the High Court yesterday challenging the legality of Bangladesh Bank's (BB) decision that instructed the scheduled banks to set a maximum nine percent interest rate on all loans except credit cards.

Md Mahfuzur Rahman, an apprentice lawyer, submitted the petition praying to the HC to issue a rule upon the respondents to explain why the direction issued by BB on February 24 should not be declared illegal.

The finance secretary, BB governor and its general manager (Banking Regulation and Policy Department) Rezaul Islam have been made respondents to the prayed rule.

The petitioner also requested the HC to stay all operation of the direction till disposal of the rule.

In the writ petition, Mahfuzur Rahman said the central bank's February 24 decision may severely affect the already suffering banking sector and such restriction about reducing the interest rate is unlawful against establishment

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Charred remains of a family's hopes and dreams

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Thirty-eight-year-old Jannatul Ferdous dreamed of becoming a successful entrepreneur.

She was resolutely working her way towards the goal. Along with her job as an accountant of a pharmaceutical company, she had started an online clothing business.

"She named her business 'Rushdi's Closet' after her son AKM Rushdi," Sheikh Reshma, Jannat's sister-in-law told The Daily Star yesterday.

Although her career was in line with her dreams, Jannat was exhausted from having to work double duty all day. She was desperately looking for some free time to spend with her family. It showed on her Facebook. She last posted - "How far is Friday?"

But all of this is a memory now. One of the victims of the fire that broke out at Eskaton's Dilu Road last Thursday, Jannat lost the battle with her injuries while undergoing treatment at the Incentive Care Unit (ICU) of Sheikh Hasina National Burn and Plastic Surgery Institute.

With 95 percent inhalation burn, she was put on life support from Thursday noon. She later died around 9:30am yesterday, said Dr Samanta Lal Sen, coordinator of the institute.

Not only Jannat, the fire also killed her beloved Rushdi, who died in tragic circumstances. With 45 percent burns, her husband Shahidul Kirmany Rony is undergoing treatment at the same facility.

After the fire broke out in the five-storey building around 4am, the family woke up from sleep and tried to escape. With Rushdi in his arms, Rony tried to lead the family out of the building using the stairwell.

However, unable to see in the dark, Rony lost his footing and tumbled down the stairs, with Rushdi falling out of his arms, said Nasrin Akter, Rony's sister. This is the last thing Rony said before being put on life support, she added.

Seeing Rushdi fall into the fire, Jannat jumped in to try and save her son, but failed to do so. Rony wasn't going to abandon them. Already under duress, he tried crawling back up the stairs but lost consciousness due to the smog, Nasrin said.

Moments before she was put on life support, Jannat repeatedly asked for her baby and husband, in whispers, the only sound she could muster.

"We did not let her know that Rushdi had already died. We thought that she might come

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



In an effort to rid Dhaka of dusty roads, a vehicle sprays water on the streets as it drives along. In a recent report, Bangladesh's air ranked the worst, and authorities are taking measures to get the situation under control. This photo was taken on Saturday in front of the High Court.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DHAKA TODAY

SEMINAR

Bangladesh and India: A Promising Future
Organiser: BIISS and High Commission of India
Venue: Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel
Time: 10am

DISCUSSION

Crisis of Public Toilet, Health Hazards and Our Responsibilities
Organiser: People's Health Movement –Bangladesh
Venue: Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital, Dhanmondi
Time: 10am

BOOK LAUNCHING

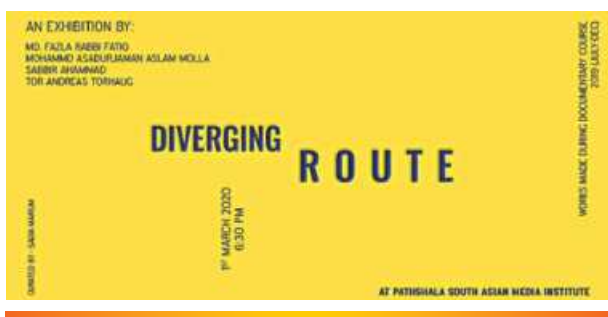
Jamdani: A World Class Tradition of Bangladesh by Maleka Khan
Organiser: Ananya Prokash
Venue: National Museum
Time: 3pm

ACADEMIC SESSION

English Speaking Club
Venue: EMK Center
Time: 4pm

EXHIBITION

Diverging Route
Venue: Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, Dhanmondi
Time: 11am



EKUSHEY BOOK FAIR

4,919 new books, none published from DU

SAYYED MOHMUD ULLAH

The month-long Amar Ekushey Granthamela, which ended on Saturday, witnessed the highest number of newly published books. However, no new title was released by Dhaka University (DU) publication, bringing into question why the university is lagging in the publishing scene.

The university's stall, which covered a gigantic area on Bangla Academy premises, only displayed old reprinted books, dissatisfying booklovers, this correspondent observed.

Academics said many writers belonging to the university bring their books out through commercial publication houses, as most do not get quick response from DU publication's authorities, due to its lengthy procedures for releasing new books.

Different publication houses, government service providers and autonomous bodies published a total of 4,919 new books this year, according to the information centre of Bangla Academy.

DU publication's dismal condition is nothing new, as the university had

published only three books last year, two in 2018, one in 2017, four in 2016, and none in 2015 and 2014, according to the catalogue of DU Publications Bureau.

"This sad situation indicates the waning impact of the university that was once the hub for many renowned writers and researchers in the country," said noted educationist Syed Anwar Hussain.

According to the bureau, the university has published only 180 books in the 99 years since its establishment in 1921.

The first published book was "The Construction of Reading Material for Teachers of Foreign Language" by Michel West in 1926, said DU publication stall attendants.

When asked, they failed to provide any updated catalogue, as it was last updated in June 2019.

"DU updates it [the catalogue] in June every year, but we generally make a temporary list of new titles for the fair. We didn't make any list this year as no book was published," said MD Shaheed, one of the stall attendants.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Release Baul singer Shariat Sarkar

Demand 44 eminent citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-four eminent citizens demanded unconditional release of Baul singer Shariat Sarkar who have been in jail since January 11 in a case filed under the Digital Security Act, on the charge of hurting religious sentiment.

In a statement, they demanded abolishing controversial provisions of the Digital Security Act and urged police to play unbiased role while implementing the law.

"We believe that arresting and imprisoning Shariat Boyati under Digital Security Act is a breach to freedom of expression. Apart from this, it also contradicts Bangladesh's obligation to international laws regarding human rights," read the joint-statement.

The 40-year-old Baul singer was arrested in Tangail's Mirzapur on January 11 after a cleric filed a case over comments made at a stage performance in December.

The civil society members said they have listened to the video clip of the show but did not find it hurting the belief of the religion.

"Freedom of expression will shrink further if the arrest spree under the Digital Security Act continues. Such incidents may put the country into a deep trouble in future," the statement added.

They said diversity in opinion is a major prerequisite for democracy and running the country in line with the spirit of Liberation War.

With the shrinking of freedom of expression,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Submit probe report by March 24

Court asks ACC in case against Khalid Bhuiyan

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again asked the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to submit by March 24 the probe report of a case filed against expelled Jubo League leader Khalid Mahmud Bhuiyan over amassing wealth through illegal means.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order as ACC Deputy Director Zahangir Alam, also investigation officer of the case, failed to submit any report yesterday.

On October 21 last year, the ACC filed the case against expelled Jubo League Dhaka south organising secretary Khalid for amassing Tk 5.58 crore illegally.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Appeal for help

CITY DESK



Kamruz-zaman Vashkar, a multiple award winning digital

artist and animator who had his work featured in “Meena”, was diagnosed with kidney illness in 2012. Through the years, his condition deteriorated, eventually leading him into dialysis in 2017.

Vashkar currently needs dialysis once every three days. The only way that remains for him is to get a costly kidney transplant.

However, to go for a transplant, the cash-strapped artist will need financial assistance from the people he has spent his life entertaining.

A trained sculptor from Dhaka University’s Faculty of Fine Arts, Vashkar also worked on “Ant and the Dove”, “The Three Gold Coins”, “Night of the Pumpkins”, “The Pink Diamond Enigma” etc.

Apart from personal contributions, artworks can also be donated to raise funds. For more information, please contact Tarana Halim - 01676992455.

For donations, use the following details:

Account name: Mohammad Kamruzzaman Vashkar; Account no.: 1017451504031; IFIC Bank; SWIFT: IFICBDDH017

Provide info on ex-NICRH

FROM PAGE 5

been chief of the anaesthesia department since February 7, 2015.

Besides, Prof Md Hafizur Rahman Ansary, who was the director at the NICRH from February 8, 2009 to August 16, 2009, did not install ICU ventilators and Prof Sheikh Golam Mostafa, who was the director and project director from May 19, 2014 to August 3, 2014, “did not have the time” to do so, the probe committee said.

The probe committee, led by the health ministry Additional Secretary Md Sirajul Islam, submitted the report before the HC on February 16 through Deputy Attorney General

Amit Talukder, as per its January 2 suomoto order.

After going through the report, the bench expressed dissatisfaction because the report did not mention whether any action had been taken against the NICRH officials for their negligence.

Following a report titled “ICU on sickbed” published in The Daily Star on January 2, the HC bench issued the suomoto rule on the same day and directed the government to suspend the retirement benefits of Prof Md Moarraf Hossain.

It also ordered the health secretary and the director general of the

Directorate General of Health Services to form a committee and investigate the allegations of negligence by the NICRH authorities, and submit a report before the court upon its completion.

In the rule, the court asked the government authorities concerned to explain why the reported negligence of the NICRH authorities should not be declared illegal.

SC lawyer Manoj Kumar Bhowmick placed The Daily Star’s report before the HC bench, seeking necessary orders on January 2.

Advocate Bakhtiar Uddin Ahmed appeared for Moarraf Hossain.

Release Baul singer

FROM PAGE 3

self-censorship by citizens is surprisingly on the rise, they observed.

The eminent citizens said arbitrary arrests and persecutions of folk singers remind them of the Pakistani rule when such harassments and deterrent to cultural practices had been rationalised in the name of religion.

The signatories include human rights activists Advocate Sultana Kamal, Barrister Sara Hossain, Nijera Kori Coordinator Khushi Kabir,

Dhaka University teachers Prof Gitira Nasreen, Prof Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) Chief Executive Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Dhaka University Prof Robayet Ferdous, Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shaheen Anam, Jahangirnagar University Prof Mirza Taslima Sultana, Prof Meghna Guhathakurta,

writer and former Jahangirnagar University professor Rahnuma Ahmed, Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar, noted photographer Shahidul Alam, DU Prof Asif Nazrul, Illinois State University Prof Ali Riaz, eminent jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik, Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Dr Zafullah Chowdhury, human rights activist Dr Hamida Hossain, DU Prof CR Abrar, educationist Rasheda K Choudhury and Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua.

Submit probe report

FROM PAGE 3

According to the FIR, Khalid showed his movable property worth Tk 1.66 crore. However, the ACC believes the property value would be Tk 4.50 crore.

Besides, Khalid in his 2018-19 income tax file showed having immovable property worth Tk 1.32 crore. Of these, ACC did not find legal source of Tk 90.16 lakh.

On September 18 last year, Rab

arrested Khaled from his Gulshan-2 residence for operating a casino. Three firearms, ammunition and 585 yaba pills were also seized from his possession.

Later, five cases were filed against Khalid, who used to run a casino in Fakirerpool Young Men’s Club, under the firearms, narcotics control and money laundering acts.

Earlier, Rab pressed charges against

Khalid in the cases filed under the arms and narcotics control acts.

The Criminal Investigation Department submitted a charge sheet against him, his two brothers and three accomplices in the money laundering case.

On February 26, another Dhaka court framed charges against Khalid in the case filed under the Narcotics Control Act.

IUB hosts seminar on coronavirus

CITY DESK

With the aim to raise awareness on coronavirus (COVID-19), a seminar was held at the Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) on Wednesday.

IUB’s School of Environmental Science and Management (SESM) and School of Life Sciences (SLS) jointly organised the programme.

In addition, a month-long awareness campaign was launched at the seminar, said a press release.

Newly elected Mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Atiqul Islam attended the programme as chief guest.

Deans, senior members of the faculty and administration, and students attended the seminar, the press release said.

4,919 new books

FROM PAGE 3

The publication has, however, brought new editions of some previously published books this year.

This correspondent found university teachers and students, and researchers browsing books at the stall, but most went away without buying anything, after finding no new book.

“DU’s ranking among universities around the world is going down every year. This is mainly due to inadequate academic and research initiatives. I think the university should take care of these aspects, if DU wants to restore its glory,” said Sadik Galib, a final-year student of

DU history department.

When asked, Prof Syed Anwar Hussain of DU history department said vice chancellors in the last few years did not take proper initiatives to enrich university publications.

He claimed the university publication has a lengthy procedure for publishing new titles, and that is the reason why many writers lose interest to have their works published through it.

“If the university introduces standard facilities in this regard, they could draw attention of university teachers,” said Prof Anwar.

When inquired, Voboranj Chakraborty, deputy director of DU

Publications Bureau, also admitted the problem.

“Firstly, our committee receives the manuscript of a book and then the manuscript is reviewed by two senior experts. Apart from other formalities, the process takes time,” he said.

Voboranj said a huge number of books written by DU teachers and academic writers are being published every year through commercial publication houses due to the issue.

“We will soon take an initiative to eliminate such crises after discussing the problem with higher authorities” he added. He stressed on formulating a proper guideline to draw in more writers.

Five friends killed

FROM PAGE 5

the scene. A case was filed with Jashore Kotwali Police Station, said OC Moniruzzaman.

Meanwhile in Madaripur, rickshaw-van puller Sohridul Morol (55) was killed after a truck hit his vehicle at Kuluapdi area under Sadar upazila around 12pm yesterday, reports our Faridpur correspondent.

Critically injured by the collision, Sohridul was rushed to Madaripur General Hospital, where on-duty doctors declared him dead, said Sohridul Islam, SI of Sadar Police Station.

Charred remains

FROM PAGE 3

back with the strength and belief that her family is alive,” said a heartbroken Reshma.

Alongside Jannat and Rushdi, Abdul Kader Liton (40) and Afrin Jahan Juthi (17), a student of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College, also died in the fire.

Family members have completed the burial of Jannat and Rushdi in Narsingdi, said Reshma. They were buried in adjacent graves, befitting of their love.

Reeling from grief

FROM PAGE 5

its kind for the village.

Seeing friends lose their lives in front of their eyes, the injured are now left to deal with trauma. “I went senseless seeing the gore around me,” said Pias Mia, an eighth grader injured in the accident.

Some of the locals said the journey was hazardous and risky, with a bunch of students travelling on two small, vegetable carrying pick-up vans to get to the picnic spot, some 70 kilometres from Gouripur.

Those who organised the picnic showed their utter callousness, said Mizanur Rahman, a local student politician.

7 to vie

FROM PAGE 5

During the declaration of legality of their candidature yesterday, Rezaul and Shahadat sat next to each other and was seen exchanging pleasantries.

Afterwards, Shahadat told reporters that if a free and fair environment exist throughout the election, their party will come out victorious.

“Since the beginning of the election procedure, we have been experiencing discriminatory behaviour from the administration and police,” he alleged. He also demanded that the authorities must make it mandatory to show NID cards at the polling centres. Rezaul, on the other hand, said he was confident of winning.

Responsibility lies

FROM PAGE 5

and conducted the symposium while Cosmos Foundation Chairman Enayetullah Khan delivered welcome remarks.

Cosmos Foundation, a charitable organisation under Cosmos Group, hosted the event as part of Cosmos Dialogue Ambassadors’ Lecture Series.

The ambassadors stationed in Dhaka stressed resolving the Rohingya crisis.

“Norway has repeatedly said that the responsibility for creating a conducive environment that ensures the return of Rohingyas lies on the government of the Myanmar,” said Ambassador Bleken.

She said the ICJ order on provisional measures under the Genocide Convention is an important step towards ensuring protection of Rohingyas. “The order is legally binding and we expect Myanmar to fully implement the order.”

Appreciating Bangladesh’s role, she said Norway will continue its humanitarian efforts for Rohingyas and the host communities apart from continuing their dialogue with Myanmar to resolve the situation.

Swedish Ambassador Schlyter said it will be important that Rohingyas can return home and responsibility rests on Myanmar for making their “voluntary, safe and sustainable” return possible.

Danish Ambassador Winnie Estrup Petersen emphasised building peace in Myanmar and addressing the accountability issues for atrocities committed against Rohingyas in Rakhine State.

The ambassador said Bangladesh is blessed with a vibrant youth population and they need to be engaged and heard. “That’s crucial for the future of this young democracy.” Dr Iftekhar said the purpose to have such a productive discussion is to have leaders interact with diplomats and foreign ministry representatives on core issues.

Enayetullah Khan said Bangladesh enjoys a good relationship with the Nordic countries and termed the relations “all-weather friendship”. He said the Nordic commitment and contribution to international development is by no means reflected only in Bangladesh.

Former Ambassador Farooq Sobhan; former adviser to a caretaker government Rasheda K Chowdhury; former principal secretary to the prime minister Md Nojibur Rahman; foreign affairs experts; civil society members; business leaders and journalists attended the event.

The five Nordic countries -- Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden -- all recognised Bangladesh on the same day -- February 4, 1972.

Writ petition filed

FROM PAGE 3

of financial policies and international practices of free market economy.

The BB’s notification has not mentioned any reason behind its direction, he said in the petition, adding that such restriction will further stifle the availability of loans necessary for setting up and expansion of small, medium and large businesses and commercial entities and industries.

Consequence of significant reduction in the interest or profit charged by the bank

would also sharply fall impacting upon income of the depositors via fixed deposit schemes etc. resulting in serious prejudice to middle income group of the country, the petition said.

Therefore, the BB decision is a violation of the fundamental right of “equality before law” guaranteed under article 27 of the constitution, it added.

Petitioner’s lawyer Barrister Syed Sayedqul Haque Suman told The Daily Star that the HC may hear the petition today.

Urgent Plot Sale at Baridhara
Plot sale at Baridhara diplomatic zone. Land area: 8 katha 2 chatak with 10 storied approved plan by RAJUK.
Contact: 01971148679

JOB WANTED
English medium student Bachelor & double Master degree in Accounts and Finance from Australia. About two years work experience in a big leasing Company in Australia.
Mahmood- 01766-685501

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃপঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়

সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর, সিরাজগঞ্জ

E-mail: serajangsadar@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

স্মারক নং- উপঃ/স্বাস্থ্য কমঃ/সদর/সিরাজ/এমএসআর/২০১৯-২০২০/১৯৫ তারিখঃ ০১/০৩/২০২০ইং

সংশোধনী দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃপঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর, সিরাজগঞ্জ এর স্মারক নং-উপঃ/স্বাস্থ্য কমঃ/সদর/সিরাজ/এমএসআর/২০১৯-২০২০/১৭৪ তারিখঃ ২৪/০২/২০২০ইং মোতাবেক অত্র কার্যালয়ের নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন বিভিন্ন ইউনিয়ন উপ-স্বাস্থ্য কেন্দ্রসমূহের জন্য ২০১৯-২০২০ অর্থ বৎসরের এমএসআর সামগ্রী ক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে দরপত্র আহবান করা হয়। উক্ত দরপত্রের ক্রমিক নং-১৭ এমএসআর গ্রুপ সমূহের তথ্যাদির বিবরণ সংশোধন, ফোন নম্বর সংশোধন এবং ক্রমিক নং-২৩ বাতিল করা হইল।

এমএসআর গ্রুপ সমূহের তথ্যাদির বিবরণ সংশোধন			
ক্রমিক নং	বর্তমান এমএসআর দরপত্রের গ্রুপ সমূহ	সংশোধিত এমএসআর দরপত্রের গ্রুপ সমূহ	মন্তব্য
ক	ঔষধপত্র	ঔষধপত্র	গ্রুপ-ঘ (কেমিক্যাল
খ	গজ, ব্যাভেজ, তুলা	গজ, ব্যাভেজ, তুলা	রি-এজেন্ট) এর বার্ষিক
গ	মেডিকেল যন্ত্রপাতি	মেডিকেল যন্ত্রপাতি	চাহিদা পত্র না থাকায়
ঘ	আসবাবপত্র	(ঙ) আসবাবপত্র	দরপত্র আহবান করা
ঙ	লিলেন	(চ) লিলেন	হয় নাই।

দরপত্রের বিজ্ঞপ্তি/দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

ডাঃ মোঃ জাহিদুল ইসলাম
উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃপঃ কর্মকর্তা
সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর, সিরাজগঞ্জ
ফোন নং- ০৭৫১-৬২৪৪৯

জিডি-৩৯৯

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Marine Fisheries Academy
Chattogram

Reference No. 33.07.0000.001.07.048.89-255 Date: 01 March 2020

e-Tender Notice
Corrected Tender Notice
Open Tendering Method (OTM)

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

SI No.	Tender ID	Name of work	Tender publication date & time	Last selling date & time	Closing date & time	Opening date & time
01	430827	Cleaning Materials Supply	23 Feb 2020	09 March 2020	09 March 2020	09 March 2020
02	430846	Books and Periodicals Supply	23 Feb 2020	09 March 2020	09 March 2020	09 March 2020

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

Principal
Marine Fisheries Academy

GD-401

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Upazila: Dacope, District: Khulna
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.4717.000.07.002.18-165 Date: 01/03/2020

e-Tender Notice No. 08/2019-20

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

SI No.	Name of works	Package No.	Closing & opening time
01	Construction of boundary wall including gate of 01) CHUNKURI MAKTAB 02) LOUDOVE M.N & 03) NALIAN FOREST Primary Schools under Dacope Upazila, Khulna (Tender ID 430432)	e-tender/PEDP-4/KLN/DAC/2019-20/W14.0474	23-Mar-2020 12:00

The other necessary information for submission of e-Tender is as follows:

- This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
- Registration of the interested tenderers with the National e-GP Portal is a must for the submission of tenders.
- The requisite fees have to be deposited in the registered bank through online system for downloading the e-Tender document.
- The deadline for downloading the e-Tender document is up to 22-Mar-2020, 17.00.
- The method of the tender is Open Tendering Method (OTM).
- The tender is limited only for the enlisted tenderers mentioned in the tender document. The interested tenderers may visit National e-GP Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) for further information where necessary information and guidelines are available.

Noni Gopal Das
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Dacope, Khulna
e-mail: ue.dacope@lged.gov.bd

GD-405

বাংলাদেশ টেলিযোগাযোগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ কমিশন

আইইবি ভবন, রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০, বাংলাদেশ

নকল/ক্লোন/অবৈধভাবে আমদানিকৃত মোবাইল ফোন হ্যান্ডসেট ক্রয় সংক্রান্ত সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, গত ২৯শে জুলাই ২০১৯ তারিখে বিটিআরসি থেকে প্রকাশিত মোবাইল ফোন হ্যান্ডসেট ক্রয়ের পূর্বে সেটিটির বৈধতা IMEI এর মাধ্যমে যাচাই করে ক্রয় করা এবং বিক্রেতার নিকট হতে ক্রয় রশিদ গ্রহণপূর্বক তা সংরক্ষণের জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো হয়। সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলকে মোবাইল হ্যান্ডসেট ক্রয়/বিক্রয় এর ক্ষেত্রে সতর্কতা অবলম্বনের জন্য পুনরায় অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে। মোবাইল হ্যান্ডসেট এর বৈধতা যাচাই এর পদ্ধতি নিম্নে প্রদান করা হলোঃ মোবাইল ফোনের মেসেজ অপশনে গিয়ে KYD<space>১৫ ডিজিটের IMEI নম্বর লিখে ১৬০০২ তে প্রেরণ করতে হবে [Example: KYD 123456789012345]।

উল্লেখ্য যে, মোবাইলের বক্স/প্যাকেটে প্রিন্টেড স্টিকার হতে অথবা *#06# ডায়াল করার মাধ্যমে তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে সংশ্লিষ্ট হ্যান্ডসেটের IMEI জানা যাবে।

অবগতির জন্য আরও জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ১লা আগস্ট ২০১৯ তারিখ হতে যে সকল নকল/ক্লোন IMEI সফলিত ও অবৈধভাবে আমদানিকৃত মোবাইল হ্যান্ডসেট মোবাইল নেটওয়ার্কে সংযুক্ত হয়েছে সেগুলো অচিরেই স্থাপিতব্য National Equipment Identity Register (NEIR) এর মাধ্যমে নেটওয়ার্ক হতে বিচ্ছিন্ন করা হবে। সুতরাং, বৈধ মোবাইল ফোন হ্যান্ডসেট ক্রয়ের জন্য উপরোক্ত পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করা প্রয়োজন।

জনস্বার্থে বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি জারী করা হলো।

লেঃ কর্ণেল মোহাম্মদ ফয়সল
পরিচালক
স্পেকট্রাম বিভাগ
বাংলাদেশ টেলিযোগাযোগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ কমিশন

জিডি-৪০৪

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Upazila: Dacope, District: Khulna
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.4717.000.07.002.18-165 Date: 01/03/2020

e-Tender Notice No. 08/2019-20

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

SI No.	Name of works	Package No.	Closing & opening time
01	Construction of boundary wall including gate of 01) CHUNKURI MAKTAB 02) LOUDOVE M.N & 03) NALIAN FOREST Primary Schools under Dacope Upazila, Khulna (Tender ID 430432)	e-tender/PEDP-4/KLN/DAC/2019-20/W14.0474	23-Mar-2020 12:00

The other necessary information for submission of e-Tender is as follows:

- This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
- Registration of the interested tenderers with the National e-GP Portal is a must for the submission of tenders.
- The requisite fees have to be deposited in the registered bank through online system for downloading the e-Tender document.
- The deadline for downloading the e-Tender document is up to 22-Mar-2020, 17.00.
- The method of the tender is Open Tendering Method (OTM).
- The tender is limited only for the enlisted tenderers mentioned in the tender document. The interested tenderers may visit National e-GP Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) for further information where necessary information and guidelines are available.

Noni Gopal Das
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Dacope, Khulna
e-mail: ue.dacope@lged.gov.bd

GD-405

7 to vie for CCC mayor post

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Ctg

Nomination papers of seven mayoral candidates for Chattogram City Corporation election were ruled legal by the regional election office yesterday.

Hasanuzzaman, regional election officer of Chattogram, okayed the nomination papers of the candidates after verifying their affidavits and other related documents at the district's Shilpakala Academy.

The election office rejected nomination papers of two independent mayoral candidates.

Besides mayoral candidates, nomination papers of councillor candidates for general and reserved seats are also being verified by the election office.

The mayor contestants are Awami League's Rezaul Karim Chowdhury; BNP's Shahadat Hossain; Jatiya Party's Solaiman Alam; Bangladesh Islami Front's MA Matin; People's Party's Abul Manjur; Islamic Front Bangladesh's Md Wahed Murad and Islami Andolon Bangladesh's Md Jannatul Islam.

Hasanuzzaman said nomination papers of Mohammed Tanjir Abedin and Khokan Chowdhury were rejected as there were some discrepancies in their documents.

On February 27, nine candidates for mayoral post and 278 candidates for councillor posts submitted their nomination papers to contest the CCC polls, scheduled for March 29.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Officials remove posters of aspirants from a wall in port city's Eidgah area yesterday. With the Election Commission finalising the list of contesting candidates for the Chattogram city mayoral polls, the district administration initiated the drive.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

WASTING ICU EQUIPMENT Provide info on ex-NICRH officials: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday wanted to know former National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital (NICRH) officials' details including their present addresses and status, who were found negligent in preserving and protecting hospital equipment.

During hearing a suomoto (voluntary) rule, the court also sought information from the government on what actions have been taken.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman asked the attorney general's office to collect the information from the authorities concerned and place it before the court by March 10.

The bench also set March 10 to pass further orders. On February 16, a government probe committee submitted a report to the HC, saying that it has found five NICRH officials negligent in preserving and protecting hospital equipment, including intensive care unit (ICU) ventilators.

The five are: AMM Shariful Alam, a director and project director between May 3, 2007 and February 8, 2009; Farhad Halim, project director from March 16, 2004 to May 3, 2007; Mollah Obaidullah Baki, a professor between August 16, 2009 and May 19, 2013; Prof Md Moarraf Hossain, a director and project director between December 31, 2014 and June 6, 2019; and Prof Manosh Kumar Bashu, who has

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

ANOTHER BLOODY DAY ON ROADS

Five friends killed in Gopalganj accident

3 others die across country

STAR REPORT

Eight people died in separate road accidents across the country yesterday.

In Gopalganj, at least five people were killed in an accident on Dhaka-Barishal highway at Mukshudpur upazila in the afternoon, reports our Faridpur correspondent.

The deceased were identified as Farid Mia (34), Shahin Alom (42), Khorshed Alom Khokon (33), Md Masud (30), and Abdul Mannan (45). They were all friends.

Shoriful Islam, a friend of the victims, said, "Ten friends were returning from Kuakata on two private cars. Farid was driving the car that perished in the accident."

Ataur Rahman, OC of Bhanga Highway Police Station, said, "The accident took place when the Dhaka-bound private car lost control and hit a roadside tree. Immediately afterwards, the car caught on fire."

"This killed three passengers on the spot while the other two died as they were being taken to Faridpur Medical College Hospital," he added.

In another accident in Jashore, two people were killed and four were injured after a truck ran over an auto-rickshaw in Sadar upazila in the morning, reports our Benapole correspondent.

The deceased are Taniya Islam (32), an employee of Brac Bank, and Hasan Ali (48).

The accident occurred around 11am and left both of them dead on the spot. The injured were rescued and taken to Jashore General Hospital by locals, police said.

Police have seized the truck but the driver and helper managed to flee

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Reeling from grief

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Sometimes, it only takes a moment for the joys of life to turn into disaster. This is certainly true for a road accident that killed four school students at Netrakona on Saturday night.

What started out as a picnic joyride ended in sheer tragedy after two pick-up vans carrying 23 students from different educational institutions in Mymensingh's Gouripur upazila were hit from both sides by two trucks, said police. The accident occurred at Birisiri-Netrakona road in Durgapur upazila around 9pm. The troupe had come to Birisiri for the picnic on Saturday morning.

The accident left three dead on the spot and one of the injured later died at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, police confirmed.

The deceased are: ninth grader Rakib Khan Ridoy (15), third grader Yeasin Mia (10), eighth grader Ashrafur Alam (13), and Dakhil candidate Mahbub Alam (17).

"My wife and I work at a garment factory in Dhaka, leaving our two children with my parents at Shalihor village. We were hoping to educate them so that they go on to lead decent lives, but everything feels lost now," said a wailing Romzan Ali Khan, father of deceased Ridoy.

The incident put a shadow over Shalihor village under Durgapur upazila, from where most of the victims hail. When this correspondent visited the area yesterday, the village was seen shrouded by grief. Many shops and business establishments had their shutters down for the entire day.

Sheikh Md Abu Sayeed, headmaster of Shalihor Hazi Amir Uddin High School said this is the first incident of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Cops rule out IS claim

Culprits reconned Ctg police box several times

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Ctg

The unidentified perpetrators who carried out the attack at a traffic police box in Chattogram's Sholoshahar gate-2 on Friday had reconned the area multiple times before, said investigators.

They [culprits] knew that the CCTV cameras in the area were not functioning, said police yesterday.

However, Deputy Commissioner of Counter Terrorism (CT) unit of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) Hasan Md Showkat Ali ruled out the claim of Islamic State (IS) over the attack.

CMP officials said the attack is similar to ones carried out by militants in three spots last year in Dhaka on police and the type of IED (Improvised Explosive Device) is quite similar to the previous attacks.

Investigators have said carrying out such an attack in a busy area is not possible without reconnaissance. The attackers also knew the detailed positions of CCTV cameras installed by CMP in the area and other establishments near the traffic police box.

Police sources said the investigators did not find any usable CCTV footage that shows what exactly happened during the attack.

CMP sources said there are 104 CCTV cameras installed in different points across the city but only 25 are functional. The rest, including the four installed at Sholoshahar gate-2 have not been working for a long while, said police sources.

Talking to the newspaper, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) (Operation) Polash Kanti Nath of CMP counter-terrorism unit said, "We

have collected footage from around 40 cameras of different establishments near the blast spot and started analysing the footage."

"The IED which was kept inside the box blasted around 8:30pm and we are matching the time with the footage to find suspects," added the ADC.

DC Hasan Showkat Ali said, "We ruled out IS' claims regarding the incident... without investigation, we cannot say who carried out the attack on police."

"We are investigating the attack and we will disclose their [culprits] identities very soon," he added.

This correspondent made several attempts to speak to CMP Commissioner Mahbubor Rahman about the CCTV cameras not working, but he did not answer the calls.

Traffic Sergeant Arafat, Assistant Sub-Inspector Atauddin, and pedestrians Jahid Bin Jahangir, Sumon and ten-year-old Nowshad were hurt after a pipe bomb exploded inside the traffic police box on Friday night.

After the attack, Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) came to Chattogram and collected the evidence. Bomb experts said the IED is locally made and strong enough to kill.

According to SITE Intelligence Group which tracks online activities of jihadist organisations and white supremacists, IS claimed the responsibility of the police box attack similar to Dhaka and Khulna.

A case was lodged with Panchlaish Police Station on Saturday night accusing unidentified persons in this regard.

Dhaka the 'OIC Youth Capital' for 2020

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka won the title of "OIC Youth Capital 2020", marking a significant recognition for the country in the youth sector.

This victory came after yearlong concerted efforts by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for projecting the strengths and opportunities that Bangladesh offers to the youth, according to a statement from the foreign ministry.

Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum, an international institution affiliated with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) made this declaration on December 25, 2019.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen and Youth and Sports Minister Zahid Ahsan Russel revealed the information as they yesterday launched the OIC Youth Capital website -- <https://www.dhakaoyc2020.org/> -- at the state guest house, Padma.

The website will act as a platform for the registration and for providing all relevant information regarding the programmes and activities.

The foreign ministry said in a statement that Bangladesh has chalked out 10 mega events for celebrating "OIC Youth Capital 2020".

Youths from the OIC member states will participate in the events. The grand celebration will be organised by eight lead ministries and twenty co-lead ministries round the year.

AL lacks true activists

Observes Quader; Liton, Dablu at Rajshahi city AL helm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday observed that his party now lacks true activists amid the increasing number of leaders mostly driven by the greed for power and money.

"It appears that the number of activists in the party is decreasing and that of leaders is increasing. We don't need so many leaders. What we need now are true activists," he said.

Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, was addressing the triennial council of Rajshahi city unit of AL at Madrasa field in the city.

"One can understand the present situation by looking at the stages [of the ruling party] during meetings. We've no lack in leaders. Billboards on streets are filled with pictures of these leaders. Many are not even familiar among people; they have become leaders by themselves," he said.

He said once it was difficult to gather a hundred people for bringing out a procession in Rajshahi, but now more than a hundred people can be seen on the stage during a public meeting.

He said most of them are driven by greed and these opportunists would leave the party during its bad times. "Leaders must shun this path and



PHOTO: COLLECTED

follow the ideologies of Bangabandhu," he said.

He also said the party will choose its leaders selectively as conspiracies are on to destabilise the country.

Later, the AL leader abolished the present AL committee in Rajshahi. Quader announced the new committee of Rajshahi city of AL, making Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton president and Dablu Sarker general secretary.

He asked the new leaders to declare the full committee within a month.

Responsibility lies with Myanmar

Say ambassadors of 3 Nordic countries on Rohingya return

UNB, Dhaka

The ambassadors of three Nordic countries -- Denmark, Norway and Sweden -- have promised a stronger partnership with Bangladesh with a focus on green growth and increased investment flow.

The three countries also emphasised ending Rohingya crisis through safe and sustainable return of the Myanmar nationals to their place of origin in Rakhine State, reminding Myanmar that the responsibility lies with them.


Danish Ambassador Winnie Estrup Petersen, Norwegian Ambassador Sidsel Bleken and Swedish Ambassador Charlotta Schlyter shared their priority areas from renewable energy to blue economy, sustainable use of ocean resources, climate change and rights issues.

They also sought a more favourable environment for investment in Bangladesh.

Issues related to labour and other rights, role of private sector, ocean pollution, climate change, river and air pollution, women rights and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were also discussed at the dialogue. The ambassadors were addressing a symposium titled "Bangladesh and Nordic Countries: Prognosis for Partnership" at a city hotel on Saturday.

Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, principal research fellow, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, chaired

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ
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ফোনঃ ০২-৭৬৬১৪৮২ ফ্যাক্সঃ ০২-৭৬৬১০২৭

০৬.০২.৬৭৫৮.১৬৫.১১.১৬৫.২০.১৯৪

০১ মার্চ ২০২০

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী কর্তৃক পরিচালিত ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ, সোনাকান্দা, নারায়ণগঞ্জ এ নিম্নলিখিত পদে চুক্তিভিত্তিক জনবল নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

ক্রঃ নং	পদের নাম	পদের সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা	বেতন	যে সকল জেলার প্রার্থী আবেদন করতে পারবেন
১।	উপ-সহকারী প্রকৌশলী (কম্পিউটার সাইন্স)	০১ (এক)	ক। ০৪ (চার) বছরের ডিপ্লোমা ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং (কম্পিউটার সাইন্স) ডিগ্রি। খ। কোন প্রতিষ্ঠিত শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠানে ন্যূনতম ০৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন। গ। ল্যাপটপ/প্রিন্টার/স্ক্যানার/সার্ভার/অন্যান্য আইটি যন্ত্রপাতির হার্ডওয়্যার, সফটওয়্যার এর ইন্টেলেশন, কনফিগার, মেরিনটেন্যান্স সম্পর্কে পরাদর্শী এবং নেটওয়ার্ক সেটআপ, ট্রাবলশুটিং ও গ্রাফিক্স ডিজাইন সম্পর্কিত কাজের অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীকে আগ্রহীকার দেয়া হবে।	সরকারি বেতনস্কেলের সাথে সামঞ্জস্যপূর্ণ অত্র প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিজস্ব বেতন কাঠামো অনুযায়ী	সকল জেলা

২। মূল বেতন সাথে অন্যান্য ভাতাদি প্রতিষ্ঠানের বেতন কাঠামো, নিয়োগ নীতিমালা ও প্রচলিত নিয়মানুযায়ী প্রদান করা হবে।

৩। নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর। বিশেষ অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীর ক্ষেত্রে শিথিলযোগ্য।

৪। অত্র প্রতিষ্ঠানের চিহ্নস্বা কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত মেডিক্যাল ফিটনেস সার্টিফিকেট সন্তোষজনক প্রতিপাদিত হলে চাকরিতে নিয়োগ প্রদান করা হবে।

৫। আত্মীয় প্রার্থীদেরকে পূর্ণাঙ্গ জীবন বৃত্তান্ত, ০৪ (চার) কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙিন ছবি, নাগরিকত্ব সনদ, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র/জন্মনিবন্ধন, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সন্তোষজনক সনদপত্রসমূহের সত্যায়িত কপি এবং ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক বরাবর আবেদনপত্র "ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ, বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী, সোনাকান্দা, বন্দর, নারায়ণগঞ্জ" এর ঠিকানায় আপামী ১৬ মার্চ ২০২০ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ের মধ্যে প্রেরণ করতে হবে।


৬। প্রার্থীকে বাছাই কমিটি কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে।

৭। লিখিত/মৌখিক/ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য প্রার্থীকে কোন প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ দেওয়া হবে না।

৮। অসম্পূর্ণ এবং ত্রুটিপূর্ণ আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

জিডি-৩৯৮

ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক



e-Tender Notice
Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education, Dinajpur

Memo No: মাউশিবেদি/প্রশাঃ/ই-জিপি-০৮/৫৪৬৩(২), তারিখ-২৪/০২/২০২০ e-Tender Notice No. ইজিপি-০৮/২০১৯-২০

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

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description	Online tender notice publication date and time	Online tender closing date and time
429716	G6/2020/SSC. HSC/OMR	Procurement of OMR Machine	24-Feb-2020 10:00	10-Mar-2020 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for last selling/downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to date & time.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Prof Md. Aminul Haque Sarker
Secretary, Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education, Dinajpur
e-mail: secretary@dinajpureducationboard.gov.bd
Phone: 0531-51884

GD-397

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA MONDAY MARCH 2, 2020, FALGUN 18, 1426 BS

People continue to die on the roads

Do the authorities care?

IS the administration concerned about road accidents? It would seem not. Road accidents, unfortunately, have become quite a norm in Bangladesh given that hardly a day passes without some grim stories and pictures in the media of road accidents and the death and destruction that they wreak. The last day of February witnessed road crashes in four districts resulting in the death of 16 people, including seven from a family in one road crash alone. Of the dead, five were SSC examinees.

Only those who use the roads to travel, particularly outside of the capital, would know how terrifying an experience it is. The already unsafe roads are made even more unsafe by drivers with wanton abandon, served by a sense of impunity, dilapidated, unfit and unauthorised vehicles/contraptions, and absence of regular and strict monitoring by the police. It is a pity that despite the cavalcade of accidents and deaths, we do not find any noticeable action by the administration to ameliorate the situation. On the contrary, the situation is getting worse every day.

The statistics is very disturbing. Death toll in road accidents in 2019 exceeded the previous year's by nearly 18 percent, with more deaths and injuries as a consequence. We have fared even worse so far in 2020, considering the statistics we have of January this year. Reportedly, in January alone, at least 445 people were killed and 834 others injured in 340 road accidents across the country.

It appears the suggestions of the experts from time to time have fallen on deaf ears. It's a pity that the reactions of the authorities are episodic. Only when there is a public uproar, as we saw initiated by the students in 2018, do we see the police, the BRTA and other related agencies sit up. But eventually, it peters out primarily due to lack of commitment. The new road transport act became effective more than a year after it was passed but that, too, after some of the provisions were diluted to meet the demands of the owners and workers. Even that is not being implemented effectively, however. Nothing short of action on a war footing can reduce the procession of deaths on the roads.

Negligence of authorities ruining Sonadanga Bypass Road

A constant calamity for commuters

A recent report published by this daily revealed that Sonadanga Bypass Road, the main way leading in and out of Khulna, is in a dilapidated state because the concerned authorities have paid no attention to the dire condition it faces. With hundreds of vehicles plying the road on a daily basis, the bypass must bear the onslaught of cars, buses and commuters, the combination of which far exceeds its capacity. And in the absence of a footpath, thousands of pedestrians risk their lives trying to make their way along the thoroughfare, contributing to the chaos.

Since its completion in 2013, no repair work has been done at all. Even the asphalt on the road has eroded overtime. To make matters worse, cluttered bricks and stones along with a myriad of potholes—full of mud during monsoon or dust otherwise—are now a trademark of Sonadanga Bypass Road, with occurrences of multiple minor accidents on a regular basis. Why then this indifference from the concerned authorities?

There is really no excuse for this total lack of maintenance work of a road that is so vital for safe, efficient movement of vehicles and people. The government should exert pressure on the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) to prioritise the maintenance of a road as crucial as the one in question. It is a matter of concern that there are many roads and bridges all over the country that are also in a bad condition, adding to the road crashes that are taking precious lives every day. Around 25 percent of the country's roads under the Road and Highways Department are in "poor, bad or very bad" shape, according to an RHD survey conducted on 17,452 km of roads last March. Clearly, the RHD is well aware of the situation and should repair these roads on an urgent basis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

COVID-19: We must stay alert

The rate at which the virus COVID-19 is spreading is nothing short of alarming. We have seen how countries around the world have taken precautionary measures to prevent the virus from infecting their respective citizens, but to little avail so far. The coronavirus pandemic is now a staple topic in everyday news, as the global death toll continues to ascend with no sign of improvement whatsoever.

From what I see on social media, normal life is slowly ceasing to exist the way it used to wherever COVID-19 is taking over. Till now, many of the developed nations have not been able to contain the situation, and the very thought of the virus entering Bangladesh, which I think is inevitable at some point in the future, makes my blood run cold. With India and some other neighbouring countries already facing it, I think it is only a matter of time before we do, too.

But how will we deal with it? Recently, I noticed during my travels that the airport authorities in Dhaka have taken only some very basic precautions and many from the now-infected countries were coming into our country. I urge the government and medical authorities to stay alert and prepare for a likely spread of the virus on our land.

Meem Morshed, Dhaka



RMG
NOTES

Some brands are doing a lot. Some brands are doing a little. Some brands are doing nothing at all.

And yet, who, if they are honest, can tell the laggards from the leaders? As a factory owner, I know the difference, of course. I know who is walking the walk and who is talking the talk. I also know that sometimes there is a world of difference between what brands say in public and what occurs behind the scenes.

But do consumers know? I suspect most consumers cannot tell the difference between a laggard and a leader. My point is this: PR and marketing are key to our industry. It's amazing what can be achieved with a well-formulated public relations strategy. It's amazing how perceptions can be changed, how weaknesses can be glossed over and small victories painted as grand achievements.

The global apparel industry is brilliant at this. To offer a few examples, it has managed to convince much of the Western press that recycling and closing the loop is massive in our industry when, in reality, recycled collections are still few and far between—and often only small runs. It has also managed to convince the world that it has made great strides on the issue of sustainability when the reality is that the whole industry is still moving far too slowly in this regard and, in practical terms, not that much has changed in the past decade.

Most brands and retailers manage to paint a positive picture of their work. But what about their suppliers? What about Bangladesh's RMG industry? First, the good news: I know for a fact that the RMG industry has made massive progress in recent years in terms of safety, environmental compliance, and corporate governance. Our factories are safer than ever. Many of them use sophisticated effluent treatment technology, which means they are no longer polluting national waterways and have introduced brilliant water and

energy saving techniques to make them more efficient. They have invested in green technologies for developing more LEED factories than any other country in the world.

Yet do they get the credit? Of course not. Any that credit there is goes to brands which shout out that they are supporting renewable energy and other projects in their supply chains (which factory owners fund). Meanwhile, the only time we hear about RMG suppliers is when something goes wrong—when workers are striking, when there is



Our factories should be better equipped to communicate what we do and the progress we have made, especially in terms of reducing emissions in the apparel industry.

STAR FILE PHOTO

an accident or when there are factory closures.

We are seriously missing a trick here. I have touched on this issue briefly before, but it really does need to be repeated: we have to change the narrative, we have to get smarter, and we have to start altering the conversation around supply chains. There is an important reason for this.

and more interested in what is actually happening in supply chains, about how their clothing is made, and the impact of clothing production on the environment.

As individual factories, in fact, as a whole industry, we need to get better at explaining what we do and the progress we have made, which is considerable. We need to expand our capacity to offer clear

fighting our corner. Our customers are brilliant at presenting their sustainability achievements in the best possible light, often taking the plaudits for work done by suppliers. It's time for us to turn the tide.

Mostafiz Uddin is the Managing Director of Denim Expert Limited. He is also the Founder and CEO of Bangladesh Denim Expo and Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE). Email: mostafiz@denimexpert.com

Generation Equality: Four ways to accelerate progress

JEMIMAH NJUKI

THE global gender community will meet in New York in the second week of March to review progress on gender equality and women's empowerment in the 25 years since the Beijing Declaration. The theme for this year's UN Commission on the Status of Women gathering is Generation Equality, emphasising how the current generation must close the gender gap.

Examples of gaps include how women's representation in national parliaments is only 23.7 percent. In 39 countries, daughters and sons do not have equal inheritance rights. In 49 countries, there are no laws protecting women from domestic violence, and globally 750

years. This is alarming.

While numerous development actors are engaged in projects around the globe that seek to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, governments and other agencies need to act fast and at scale to accelerate progress to ensure generation equality.

First, there needs to be political commitment by governments across the world to address gender inequality and women's political participation. This can be in the form of women's representation in parliament, gender-responsive budgeting or advancing policies that protect the rights of women.

By February 2019, only 12 countries—led by Rwanda with 61.3 percent—had over 40 percent representation of

Second, governments need to accelerate laws that protect the rights of women and girls. Without these laws, the efforts of organisations will not be sustainable as they are not protected under the law. Evidence shows that discriminatory laws still exist in many countries.

For example, the Women, Law and Business report 2020 shows that 90 out of 190 countries still have at least one restriction on the jobs women can hold. In terms of laws to redistribute women's care work, more than half of the economies covered paid leave specifically reserved for fathers, but the median duration of that leave is just five days.

Only 43 economies have paid parental leave that can be shared by mothers and fathers. This is despite research showing

Governments need to accelerate laws that protect the rights of women and girls. Without these laws, the efforts of organisations will not be sustainable as they are not protected under the law.



PHOTO: REUTERS

While some progress has been made in addressing gender inequality, a big push is clearly needed in this last decade before the expiry in 2030 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

million women and girls are married before the age of 18. In the agriculture sector where I work, women are just 13 percent of agricultural landholders globally.

While the UN hopes these kinds of gender gaps can close in a generation, analysis by the World Economic Forum in their Global Gender Gap Report 2020 sets different expectations. The report says it will take 99.5 years to close the gender gap if we accelerate progress, but if we continue the current pace, it could take up to 257

million women and girls are married before the age of 18. In the agriculture sector where I work, women are just 13 percent of agricultural landholders globally.

Equal political participation by women and men needs to be the norm rather than the exception. Strategies that have worked include quotas for women's representation, reforming political parties to be more gender equal, and ensuring a level playing field for women political aspirants.

that law reforms and policies that empower women are not only good for women's empowerment, but they also boost economic growth.

For example, when women can move more freely, work outside the home and manage assets, they're more likely to join the workforce and strengthen the economy.

Third, we must address the harmful social and cultural norms and societal perceptions of women as laws by themselves are not enough in protecting the rights of women. Evidence from

Bangladesh, for example, shows women who routinely wore burkah/hijab, and hence are more compliant with religious and cultural norms, are less likely to be engaged in outside work.

In Kenya, while equal inheritance of land and other property is entrenched in the constitution, women own less than 7 percent of the land in the country, mainly due to cultural norms that still do not recognise the rights of women and girls to inherit land.

Engaging men, boys, traditional and religious leaders can change norms and practices that are harmful to women and girls. In countries like Zambia and Malawi, traditional chiefs have been instrumental in reducing forced and early child marriage.

And finally, we must invest in research and evidence to test what works, where we are making progress and where progress is not happening so as to inform future action. While there are indicators to track progress, the analysis of what is working in different contexts to achieve gender equality is not always that robust.

Tools like the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index track women's empowerment in agriculture and show the impact of different interventions on different indicators of women's empowerment. Analysing data used to track SDG 5 on gender equality to assess what is working and using the lessons for future implementation can help to accelerate progress.

While some progress has been made in addressing gender inequality in recent years, a big push in this last decade before the expiry in 2030 of the Sustainable Development Goals is clearly needed. Now we must use different tools than those that created the problem.

Jemimah Njuki is an expert on gender equality and women's empowerment. She is an Aspen New Voices Fellow. Copyright: Inter Press Service (IPS)

Polish student told to leave India over CAA

NDTV ONLINE

A Polish student of Jadavpur University has been told by the Foreigner Regional Registration Office (FRRO) to leave India after he participated in an anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA rally in Kolkata, university sources said yesterday.

The incident comes close on the heels of a Bangladeshi student of Visva Bharati University being issued a similar directive by the FRRO after she posted photographs of an anti-CAA demonstration, held on the campus, on social media.

Kamil Siedcynski, a Polish student of Comparative Literature, was asked by the FRRO to visit its Kolkata office, which he did on February 24, news agency Press Trust of India reported quoting an unnamed source. Siedcynski was served a notice by the FRRO asking him to leave the country within 15 days, the source said, PTI reported.

The JU source said several teachers and Left-leaning students of the varsity were of the view that Siedcynski was paying the price for attending an anti-CAA rally at Moulali in Kolkata in December last year where he was interviewed by a Bengali daily and a brief report on him was published the next day.

"Some people probably forwarded a copy of the report to the FRRO. Siedcynski has no political leanings but his enthusiasm to attend the protest rally and click photographs landed him in trouble," the source said.

Siedcynski, who is supposed to write his MA examinations this year, could not be contacted. JU authorities also did not take calls.

The Polish student had earlier studied Bengali and Sanskrit at the Visva Bharati University.



Migrants from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestinian territories arrive on a dinghy near the city of Mytilene, after crossing part of the Aegean Sea from Turkey to the island of Lesbos, Greece, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS, AFP

Afghan deal hits a snag over prisoners' release

Ghani says his govt hasn't committed to release 5,000 Taliban

REUTERS, Kabul

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani yesterday rejected a Taliban demand for the release of 5,000 prisoners as a condition for talks with the Afghan government and civilians, included in a deal between the United States and the Islamist militants.

"The government of Afghanistan has made no commitment to free 5,000 Taliban prisoners," Ghani told reporters in Kabul, a day after the deal was signed in Qatar to start a political settlement aimed at ending the United States' longest war.

The accord said the United States and the Taliban were committed to work expeditiously to release combat and political prisoners as a confidence-building measure, with the coordination and approval of all relevant sides.

It said that up to 5,000 jailed Taliban would be released in exchange for up to 1,000 Afghan government captives by March 10.

However, on the issue of the prisoner swap, Ghani said, "It is not in the authority of United

States to decide, they are only a facilitator."

Saturday's accord was signed by US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and Taliban political chief Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, witnessed by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

After the ceremony, Baradar met foreign ministers from Norway, Turkey and Uzbekistan in Doha along with diplomats from Russia, Indonesia and neighbouring nations, the Taliban said, a move that signalled the group's determination to secure international legitimacy.

US President Donald Trump said he would meet Taliban leaders in the near future.

Under the agreement, Washington is committed to reducing the number of its troops in Afghanistan to 8,600 from 13,000 within 135 days of signing. It will also work with allies to proportionally reduce the number of coalition forces in Afghanistan over that period, if the Taliban adhere to their security guarantees and ceasefire. A full withdrawal of all US and coalition forces would occur within 14 months.

Trump says will soon meet with Taliban leaders

Taliban start diplomatic outreach



Mamata 'triggered riots' on CAA
Says Amit Shah in Kolkata rally

THE STATESMAN/ANN

Indian Home Minister Amit Shah yesterday targeted West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee in Kolkata at a rally to launch BJP's Aar Noi Annay' (no more atrocity) campaign said that 'sonar Bangla' (golden Bengal) is not possible as long as Mamata's government remains in power.

He accused Banerjee of "triggering riots" and "burning trains" to oppose Citizenship Act. The protests by the Bengal CM, who opposed it staunchly will be of no avail, Shah said as "Mamata didi by doing all this could you stop us?"

Amit Shah said the Narendra Modi government would not stop until and unless all refugees in the country are granted citizenship under



the amended citizenship law (CAA).

In a virtual kick-start to the BJP's campaign for upcoming civic bodies poll in West Bengal, he accused opposition parties of misguiding the refugees and minorities and said not a single person will lose citizenship as a result of the CAA which was at the centre of riots in parts of north east Delhi last week that left 43 people dead and over 250 injured.

The CAA offers citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jains and Buddhists who took shelter in India till 2014 after fleeing "atrocities" in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

Sri Lanka heads for snap polls

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's new president is set to dissolve parliament shortly and call snap a legislative election six months ahead of schedule, a state-run newspaper said yesterday.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa is expected to exercise his constitutional power to sack the assembly when it completes four-and-a-half out of its five-year term on Sunday night, the Sunday Observer said.

Rajapaksa, 70, won a landslide at November presidential polls and appointed his older brother and former president Mahinda as prime minister in a move that saw the family consolidate their hold on power.

Official sources told AFP that a general election was most likely in the final week of April if the 225-member national assembly is dissolved by Monday as widely expected.

Mahinda, who had been president twice and prime minister thrice, is expected to lead the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP, or People's Front) party to a comfortable victory. Political commentators have said it would be a formidable challenge for the opposition to prevent Rajapaksa securing a two-thirds majority which will allow him sweeping powers to govern the nation.

The Rajapaksa are adored by the Sinhala-Buddhist majority -- but loathed among minority Tamils -- for spearheading the defeat of separatist militants in 2009 to end the island's 37-year ethnic war.



Health officials, wearing face masks amid fears over the spread of the COVID-19 novel coronavirus, check the body temperature of policewomen before an anti-government rally in Bangkok, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Want peace, but not at our cost

Women in Afghanistan fear Taliban's return

AFP, Kabul

As US troops prepare to leave Afghanistan, opening the door for a potential Taliban comeback, women across the war-torn country are nervous about losing their hard-won freedoms in the pursuit of peace.

The militants were in power for around five years until the US invasion of 2001. They ruled Afghanistan with an iron fist that turned women into virtual prisoners under a strict interpretation of sharia law.

The Taliban's fall transformed women's lives, much more so in urban areas like Kabul than in conservative rural Afghanistan.

But across the country, women remain wary of the insurgents, desperate to see an end to the violence, but fearful of paying a heavy price.

Under the Taliban, women were barred from seeking education or work -- rights that Afghan female professionals are fiercely protective of today.

In the western city of Herat, saleswoman Setara Akrimi, 32, told AFP: "I will be very happy if peace comes and the Taliban stop killing our people."

"But if the Taliban come back to power... with their old mentality, it is a matter of concern for me," the divorced mother of three added.



"If they tell me to sit at home, I will not be able to support my family," she said.

"There are thousands of women like me in Afghanistan, we are all worried."

Akrimi's anxieties are echoed by Kabul-based veterinarian Tahera Rezaei, who believes "the arrival of the Taliban will affect women's right to work, freedom and independence".

"There has been no change in their mentality," the 30-year-old told AFP.

Passionate about her career, Rezaei said she was pessimistic about her prospects if the insurgents return to government, even in a truncated capacity.

"Looking at their history, I feel less hopeful... I believe the situation will get harder for working women like me," she said.

In the run-up to the US deal, the militants made a vague commitment while they now allow girls to attend primary school in some areas, occasional reports of floggings and even the public stoning of women persist, fuelling fears they will turn back the clock if they return to power.

The Taliban control large swathes of Afghanistan and while they now allow girls to attend primary school in some areas, occasional reports of floggings and even the public stoning of women persist, fuelling fears they will turn back the clock if they return to power.

AFTERMATH OF DEADLY ATTACK ON TURKEY TROOPS IN SYRIA

Migrants head to Greece after floodgates opened

Turkey says it has destroyed scores of Syrian army targets

REUTERS, Kastanies/Lesbos

Greece placed its borders on maximum security footing yesterday after hundreds of migrants used porous crossing points to enter the country from Turkey, with thousands behind them seeking entry after Ankara relaxed curbs on their movement.

At least 500 people had arrived by sea on three Greek islands close to the Turkish coast within a few hours yesterday morning, police said.

On the mainland further north, migrants waded across a river to the Greek side at Kastanies.

A Greek government source put the number of people gathered on the border yesterday at 3,000, while the International Organization for Migration estimated the number at 13,000.

Turkey said on Thursday it would no longer restrain hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers in its territory from reaching Europe despite a deal to do so reached with the EU in 2016.

Turkey's turnaround came after an

air strike killed 33 Turkish soldiers in neighbouring northwest Syria where Ankara has deployed forces to help secure its border against a new influx of refugees from the Syrian civil war.

Meanwhile, Turkey yesterday said it had destroyed air defence systems, more than 100 tanks and downed two planes belonging to the Syrian army as part of an operation it launched after the attack on its soldiers.

Tensions in northwest Syria have escalated sharply as fighting between Turkey-backed rebels and Russian-backed Syrian government forces risks bringing the two regional powers into direct confrontation.

Diplomatic efforts by Ankara and Moscow to defuse tensions have so far fallen short of achieving a ceasefire in the Idlib region of northwest Syria, the country's last major rebel stronghold after nine years of civil war.

The Syrian Observatory, a Britain-based war monitor, said 74 Syrian government troops and pro-Damascus fighters had been killed since Feb. 27.

Hundreds rally in US cities against Delhi violence

Hundreds of Indian Americans of different faiths rallied outside Indian consulates in major American cities on Friday evening to protest against the recent violence in Delhi that has killed at least 42 people, and injured hundreds. Violence erupted in the Indian capital last week with Hindu mobs attacking Muslim homes, shops. The attacks were carried out on protesters, who have been rallying against a new citizenship law, after the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Kapil Mishra threatened peaceful sit-ins would be removed from the streets. India's Hindu nationalist government says the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is meant to help persecuted minorities from neighbouring countries, but critics say the law, which makes faith a basis for granting citizenship, is against the country's secular ethos. More than 30 people have been killed in a harsh police crackdown on nationwide peaceful sit-ins against the "anti-Muslim" law.

India crowd wows Modi

US President Donald Trump on Saturday praised Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling him a "great guy" who is loved by his countrymen. Terming his recent visit to India "worthwhile", President Trump, while addressing a rally in South Carolina also quipped that he would never be excited again about crowds after having addressed over 1 lakh spectators in Ahmedabad's Motera Stadium earlier this week. "I may never be excited again about a crowd after going to India. Think of this, they have 1.5 billion people. We have 350, so we're doing pretty well, I'll tell you what, but I love this crowd, and I love that crowd too. Tell you they have a great love for ... They have a great love. They have a great leader, and they have a great love for the people of this country. That was really a worthwhile trip," he added. President Trump, accompanied by wife Melania and a high-level delegation, visited India last week.



UK PM Johnson announces engagement with partner

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his partner, Carrie Symonds, have announced they are expecting a baby and are engaged to be married. Downing Street confirmed on Saturday. No further information is being provided by the Prime Minister's office at this stage. The last time a child was born to a sitting prime minister was in 2010, when David Cameron and his wife, Samantha Cameron, welcomed their daughter Florence. Johnson, 55, has four children from his second marriage. Symonds, 31, has enjoyed a successful political career, working as part of the campaign team that helped to get Johnson re-elected as mayor of London in 2012. Symonds went on to become the youngest-ever director of communications at the party, at 29, and analysts say she was crucial in tidying up Johnson's famously disheveled persona during the leadership campaign.

SOURCE: AFP, NDTV, AL JAZEERA

NEWSIN brief

Steyer quits race

AFP, Columbia

Billionaire activist Tom Steyer dropped out of the race for the Democratic presidential nomination on Saturday after a disappointing finish in the South Carolina primary. Steyer spent more than \$20 million on advertising in South Carolina but was heading to a third-place finish behind former vice president Joe Biden and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders.

Israel votes

AFP, Tel Aviv

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and rival Benny Gantz wrapped up another bitter election campaign, before voters cast their ballots for the third time in 12 months today. After inconclusive elections in April and September, latest opinion polls put the two opponents neck and neck in a gruelling political triathlon. According to the projections, Netanyahu's right-wing Likud and Gantz's centrist Blue and White alliance would each win 33 seats in the 120-member Knesset.

Asia Bibi offered asylum in France

REUTERS, Paris

Asia Bibi, a Christian woman acquitted of blasphemy in Pakistan, has said she had been invited to live in France, after a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron. Bibi had been sentenced to death before her acquittal by the Supreme Court last year in a case that has become emblematic of fair trial concerns in such cases. She left Pakistan for Canada in May 2019 and has been living there with her family ever since.

WHAT'S ON



Group Painting Exhibition
Title: Guru-Shishya Shishya-Guru
Presented by: The Oriental
Painting Studio Bangladesh
Venue: Zainul Gallery – 1, DU
Date: March 2 – March 8
Time: 10 am – 8 pm



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



Concert
Title: Joy Bangla Concert 2020
Venue: Bangladesh Army Stadium
Date: March 7
Time: 12 pm to 10pm
Tickets available at <https://ticket.youngbangla.org/>



Theatre Performance
Title: Krishna Sarothi
Venue: EMK Center, Dhamondi
Date: March 7
Time: 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm



Cartoon Exhibition
Title: Shojinghati Rekha
Venue: Kala Kendra
Date: February 21 - March 17
Time: 4:30 pm - 8:30 pm



Professor Muhammad Yunus speaks at the programme.

PHOTO: MONON MUNTAKA

Launching ceremony of ‘Oporajeyo Muhammad Jahangir’ held

BORNALY DEBNATH

The memoir, *Oporajeyo Muhammad Jahangir*, in remembrance of prominent cultural activist, media personality and journalist Muhammad Jahangir, was launched at Bishwo Shahitto Kendro on February 29. The event was hosted by dancer duo Shamim Ara Nipa and Shibli Mohammad from Nrityanchal.

Muhammad Jahangir breathed his last at the age of 68, on July 10, 2019, after an uphill battle with cancer for years. He was the executive director of Centre for Development Communication and the coordinator of Nrityanchal.

Family members of Muhammad Jahangir, including his wife, his son Apurba Jahangir and his

brothers, Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus and former Physics Professor at DU Muhammad Ibrahim Yunus, were in attendance. Ekushey Padak awardee and theatre activist Keramat Moula, noted dancers Kajol Ibrahim, Doly Iqbal and Anisul Islam Hero, along with prominent actor Ferdous were also present. Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Chairman, Bishwo Shahitto Kendro, also attended the event, which featured poetry recitations and instrumental performances. The esteemed guests shared their thoughts and memories of Muhammad Jahangir at the programme.

“We wrote this book with our family members, relatives and people who were close to my

father. He was a man of many talents. I will try to continue his legacy in every way I can,” said Apurba Jahangir. “This was our first Ekushey Boi Mela without my brother, Muhammad Jahangir. He always encouraged me to publish books during the fair. I think he would have liked this book that we have compiled for him. He enjoyed visiting different countries with me and always gave me good advice about life,” added Professor Muhammad Yunus. “We often went to our village during vacations. He carried a list with him that had important topics we could discuss in our group conversations. He was a disciplined man.”

The event ended with a performance by students of Nrityanchal.

Curtain falls on the sixth edition of DIMFF

PRIYANKA CHOWDHURY

The country’s first ever mobile phone based filmmaking festival, ‘Dhaka International Mobile Film Festival’ (DIMFF), is organised by Cinemascope, a film based apprenticeship programme of ULAB. The sixth installment of the festival took place at Star Cineplex, Shimanto Shambhar, this year.

Devaki Bist (Nepal), Sadia Khalid Reeti (Bangladesh), and Arifur Rahman (Bangladesh) served as the jury members of the event. The partners of the festival were Prothom Alo, ABC Radio, Star Cineplex and MedFlect.

202 films were submitted from 41 countries from around the world this year, whereas, last year, 95 films were submitted from 34 countries. *The Conundrum*, directed by Anupam Hore and Tahsin Ahmed was announced as the winner at the grand finale of DIMFF 2020.

Other films nominated in the competition category were: *Distortion*, *Nostalgia*, *Sealed Deal*, and *Alive and Lily*. Meherunnesa won the ULAB Young Filmmaker Award for her film, *All Winner*. Like the previous year, the center of attraction of this year’s DIMFF was the one-minute film category, where students of grades 1 to 12 submitted their works.

Professor Gitiara Nasreen, Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, DU, attended the programme as the chief guest, along with filmmaker Kamar Ahmad Simon as the special guest and Professor Jude William Genilo, Head of Media Studies and Journalism from ULAB.

The government has decided to observe April 3 as the National Film Day from this year. Keeping that in mind, the film submission procedure for next year will begin from April 3, mentioned the organisers.



PHOTO: MONON MUNTAKA



PHOTO: COURTESY

‘Ispanahi Mirzapore Banglabid’ sees a splendid response in Sylhet

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Ispanahi Mirzapore Banglabid, one of the most popular TV reality shows of Bangladesh, has begun their fourth season, with the promise of introducing Bangla to a wider audience. After the registration for the contest, more than 1,500 students (from grades 6 to 10) from Sylhet participated in the qualifying round. The selection round was held at Government Agragami Girl’s High School & College recently. According to a press release, this round saw the highest number of participants in the history of the show. Eight students were selected for the main rounds of the programme in Dhaka.

Dr Farzana Siddika, Professor, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology and renowned elocutionist Mahidul Islam judged the session, while Md Aslam Uddin, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Sylhet, and S M Didarul Hasan Deputy General Manager, Marketing, Ispanahi Tea Limited, handed over the crest to the winners of the Sylhet round.

The winner of *Ispanahi Mirzapore Banglabid* will receive BDT 10 lakh, while the first and second runners up will receive BDT 3 and 2 lakh, respectively. In addition, the top ten participants of the contest will be given laptops and books worth BDT 50,000 for their personal libraries.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF DPS STS

Young talents impress at DPS Rock Fest 2020

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

To promote young talents and help create a network of friendship and goodwill among students from different schools around Dhaka, Delhi Public School Dhaka (DPS STS) organised their annual programme, ‘Rock Fest 2.0’, at their senior campus.

Other than the students of DPS, there were participants from Aga Khan School,

Scholastica, and South Breeze. Along with representing their schools, they showcased their musical talents at the event. Popular bands Vikings and AvoidRafa also performed at the event.

Madhu Wal, Vice Principal of Delhi Public School Dhaka attended the event. Friends, families, and teachers were also present to support the young performers.

Unapologetically yours, Aqi Thami

Sister Library in Dhaka



Aqi Thami (C) at a workshop in Goethe-Institut Bangladesh.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF GOETHE-INSTITUT BANGLADESH

PRIYANKA CHOWDHURY

Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, in partnership with HerStory Foundation, hosted a pop-up of the Sister Library at their Rein Library recently. Founded by Aqi Thami, an indigenous artist based in Mumbai, the Sister Library is the first community-owned feminist library in South Asia. Rooted in the culture of do-it-yourself (DIY) initiatives, self-publishing and guerrilla poster making, Aqi believes in creating art that is grounded in the act of ‘doing’ and addresses sociopolitical issues. Healing, marginalisation and resilience are prime aspects of her art practice.

Through thick and thin, Aqi found solace in books written by powerful women across the world. As her collection grew over time, she decided to share her books with others. With that in mind, her journey with Sister Library, a space that celebrates women’s creativity, began. The library has one thousand works of female writers, artists and zine makers. It is an evolving and generative project that engages with an in-depth reflection of the visual and reading cultures of our time. The goal of the library is to bring readers together, acknowledge accomplishments of female writers and artists, explore women’s literary contributions and celebrate women in the

creative arena.

Hailing from Darjeeling, Aqi migrated to Mumbai at the age of fifteen. Against all odds, she found comfort in art and reading. Six years back, Aqi noticed a gap in her personal collection of books -- only 20 percent of her shelves was occupied by books written by female authors -- this imbalance opened her eyes to the patriarchal set-ups around the world. “I made a very conscious decision to exclusively read books by women,” says Aqi. She also made certain other changes to her lifestyle, choosing everything from food and clothes to music, films and art that were made and produced by women.

Throughout her travels, she enjoyed her time at feminist libraries, and not having one in India made her upset. She wanted to take the stories she read beyond her bookshelves, and start the Sister Library. Aqi also won the National Award for Emerging Artists (India) in 2018. She began to travel around India and set up her installation of bubblegum pink shelves, stacked with books of various genres and sizes, all of which had different stories of women. In 2019, she raised some money through crowd funding to set up a physical space for the library in Mumbai.

“The way these female authors told their stories and their ways of looking at the

world made a significant difference to my way of thinking,” shares Aqi. She shared books with people who struggled to gain access to reading. Among other things, her collection includes rare graphic novels, zines and artistic books.

The Sister Library also encourages young boys and men to read different books by women. However, some of their workshops and discussion sessions are exclusively for women. “Sometimes, we have a *Mahila Mandali*, where women come and talk about issues which they would not be comfortable talking about in front of men. We believe that the more people read and experience creative works by women, the more they would be open to celebrating women,” adds Aqi.

Aqi’s work heavily focuses on societal taboos or sensitive topics, for which she has received significant backlash. “The library was kicked out of its physical space twice. I have also been detained for my projects. I understand that the kind of work that I do can upset a lot of people, but that just means I must be doing something right. I may be in a vulnerable position without a safety net, but I do what I do unapologetically,” asserts Aqi.

The Sister Library Dhaka Chapter will commence at the Rein Library of Goethe-Institut Bangladesh on March 11, 2020.

Modi

FROM PAGE 16
Amid ongoing turmoil over the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) across India, the statement has created quite a stir.
CAA was passed by the Parliament of India on December 11, 2019. It amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 by providing a path to Indian citizenship for illegal migrants of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian religious minorities, who had fled persecution from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan before December 2014.

Liton

FROM PAGE 1
Mohammad Mithun scored his fifth ODI fifty and Mahmudullah Riyad hit a quick 28-ball 32.
It was then Saifuddin who, making a comeback to the side after recovering from his back injury, struck three sixes in the last over from Chris Mpofu and remained unbeaten on 28 off 15 balls, helping the hosts go past the 300 mark with ease.
Taking first guard, Bangladesh were off to a steady start riding on openers Liton and Tamim Iqbal, who added 60 runs. Tamim took his time to settle but Liton started aggressively and took on the Zimbabwe bowlers.
Tamim was dismissed after scoring 24 runs when the left-hander was caught on the crease and became the first wicket of 19-year-old debutant off spinner Wesley Madhevere. Tamim, who was given out leg-before, went for a review but even that could not help him as replays showed the ball was hitting the stumps.
Liton was solid at the other end remained and reached his fifty off 45 balls with Nazmul Hossain Shanto at the other end. Nazmul, however, departed after scoring 29 while the experienced Mushfiqur Rahim was also dismissed cheaply, for 19.
But Liton kept the scoreboard ticking along at good pace after a watchful period following his fifty, and eventually reached his second hundred off 95 balls and went on to accelerate the innings before he had to leave the field with cramps.
Bangladesh literally toyed with the Zimbabwean batters with Saifuddin making a strong statement as an all-rounder, bagging three wickets for 27 runs from seven overs. Apart from Mashrafe, off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz also picked up two wickets for the Tigers.
Lack of experience at the top has been the biggest concern for the visitors as they kept losing wickets at regular intervals.
Young Madhevere's 35 off 44 balls was the highest score for the batting side as Zimbabwe helplessly surrendered to the hosts without putting up a fight at all.
There will be questions over Zimbabwe's strength as an opponent with a lack of bite in the side but this win will surely boost the morale of the Tigers, who had lost their last five games in the format.

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coincided with restrictions imposed on transportation and business activities, as millions of people are being quarantined, the space agency noted.
Nasa and the European Space Agency (ESA) have used pollution monitoring satellites to analyse the changes, reports Yahoo News.
They then released two maps to show the differences.
"This is the first time I have seen such a dramatic drop-off over such a wide area for a specific event," Fei Liu, an air quality researcher at Nasa's Goddard Space Flight Centre, said in a statement, according to the BBC.
A decline in nitrogen dioxide levels was observed during the economic recession in 2008, but that decrease

SC rejects

FROM PAGE 1
in the Anti-Corruption Commission Act-2004, the HC said.
It is the sole jurisdiction of the OC to investigate a case after it has been filed with a police station, the court added.
The HC ordered the chief judicial magistrate of Rajshahi, who conducted a judicial enquiry into the allegation, to send the probe report along with relevant documents and witnesses' statements to the ACC.
It also directed the graft watchdog to initiate the next course of action based on the judicial enquiry report under the ACC Act-2004 and the ACC rules-2007 after receiving the documents from the chief judicial magistrate.
Rajshahi's CJM Md Mehedi Hasan Talukder submitted the probe report to the HC in November last year, saying that the enquiry has found five police officials, including three additional superintendents of Rajshahi police and OC Shakil, responsible for manipulating the FIR.
Besides Shakil, four other police officials are additional superintendents of police (administration and crimes) Mahmudul Hasan, M Matiur Rahman (DSB) and Abul Kalam Shahid (Puthia circle), and Inspector (investigation) Mohinul Islam of Puthia Police Station.
In the verdict, the HC directed the investigation officer of the case to immediately transfer it to the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) for investigation. It also expected that PBI chief Banaj Kumar Majumder would play a special role in supervising the probe.
The court also asked the IGP to take departmental action against OC Shakil after conducting an enquiry into the allegation against him.
Yesterday, Nigar's lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua told The Daily Star that the ACC and the PBI were probing the allegation against the suspended OC and others following the HC verdict.
Shakil is reportedly trying to influence the probe, he said, adding that there is no legal bar for the ACC and the police administration to continue the investigation following the apex court order.
Yusuf Hossain Humayun and Abdul Matin Khasru appeared for Shakil, while Fida M Kamal and Jyotirmoy represented Nigar before the court.



FROM LEFT ... development activist and lawmaker Aroma Dutta, Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives Minister Tazul Islam, GAF Coordinator Mohsin Ali, Economist Prof MM Akash and UNDP Bangladesh's Senior Project Manager Sardar M Asaduzzaman speak to the media during a views exchange meeting in the capital's Cirdap auditorium yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Held back by lack of political will

FROM PAGE 16
report.
Talking to this newspaper after the event, Ziaul said officials of these departments bypass upazila parishad in terms of accountability.
For example, he continued, upazila health and family planning officers (UHFPOs) are supposed to report to the upazila parishad, but in reality they are reporting to superior departmental officials, bypassing the upazila parishad.
According to the upazila parishad act, upazila chairmen are assigned to prepare the annual performance report of the officials of the 17 departments while the senior officials of their respective departments are charged with the responsibility of preparing the annual confidential report (ACR).
On the other hand, the parent department does not properly monitor the activities of the UHFPOs as their activities have been transferred by law.

It is a big reason for the healthcare facilities in rural areas being poor, he added.
Referring to Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009, Ziaul said functions of seven government offices were "transferable" to union parishad authorities.
He said for proper implementation of the laws, the government needs to abolish and withdraw some policies, directives, and circulars.
Harunur Rashid, president of Upazila Parishad Foundation, alleged that the ministries do not want local government representatives to take care of the public services.
Providing public services through the local government institutions is the most efficient way as they have better service delivery capacity, said Prof Ferdous Arfina Osman of Dhaka University's public administration department.
GAF Coordinator Mohsin Ali said

although the elected representatives were the heads of local government institutions on paper, they did not actually have such powers.
He said an efficient local government was imperative to reducing the service-delivery discrimination between urban and rural areas.
Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Minister Tazul Islam said pubic representatives have to be more competent in providing services. They need to press relevant authorities harder for implementing development projects in their areas.
Economist Prof MM Akash, development activist and lawmaker Aroma Dutta, UNDP Bangladesh's Senior Project Manager Sardar M Asaduzzaman, and Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum President Zakaria Alam, among others, spoke at the event.

China sees dramatic drop

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show the differences.
Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations in late January and early February have previously been linked to decreases in pollution levels, but the levels normally went up again once the celebrations were over, Nasa noted.
"This year, the reduction rate is more significant than in past years and it has lasted longer," Liu told BBC.

Death toll now 3 in Meghalaya

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region to curtail rumours that could deteriorate law and order, state officials said.
The tension started on Friday when clashes broke out between Khasi Students' Union (KSU) members and non-tribals during a rally organised against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and demanding implementation of the Inner Line Permit (ILP), at Ichamati, district Superintendent of Police Claudia Lyngwa said.
Eight people have been arrested in this case and a magisterial inquiry has been instituted to probe into the incident, she said.
One person was stabbed to death at the lewduh market under Cantonment Beat House on Saturday when unidentified persons went on an attacking spree that left seven others seriously injured, the SP said, adding that no one has been arrested so far in this connection.
Three companies of central forces have been deployed in the sensitive areas of the district, including in the affected areas of the city, the officials said.
Governor Tathagata Roy and Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma have appealed to the citizens to maintain peace. Both had taken to social media to issue their appeals even as mobile internet services were suspended in the six districts.
The Citizenship (Amendment) Act makes religion the test of citizenship in India for the first time. The government says it will help minorities from three Muslim-dominated countries to get citizenship if they fled to India because of religious persecution.

Critics say it is designed to discriminate against Muslims and violates the secular principles of the constitution.
The indigenous people of the northeastern states are worried that the entry of these people will endanger their identity and livelihood.
Inner Line Permit is an official travel document issued by the concerned state government to allow inward travel of an Indian citizen into a protected area for a limited period. It is obligatory for Indian citizens from outside those states to obtain a permit for entering into the protected state.
Protesters in Meghalaya have been demanding for ILP to be implemented in their state. ILP is in place in Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

Bangladesh will always

FROM PAGE 16
the government of the newly-independent state' and hopes that under his leadership the new republic would grow from strength to strength.
Bangabandhu expresses his sincere gratitude for the tremendous support given by the Soviet Union to the people of Bangladesh in their struggle for freedom and independence.
Bangabandhu visits the Lenin Museum in Red Square and lays a wreath bearing the inscription "to the immortal Lenin from the Prime Minister of Bangladesh."
Addressing a vast gathering at Moscow University in Bangla, Bangabandhu says that we believe in neutral and non-aligned foreign policy aimed at the establishment of world peace. We believe in co-existence as the Soviet Union does, he adds.
Bangabandhu further says, "Never can we forget the help given by the Soviet Union in the hour of our nation at peril."
The Soviet Union and Bangladesh today sign a 38-million Ruble agreement to aid the ongoing projects in Bangladesh. The four ongoing projects in Bangladesh that will come under this agreement are Ghorashal Thermal Plant, electric manufacturing plant at Chittagong, radio transmitters and oil and gas exploration.
FIRST EXPORT CONSIGNMENT
A large quantity of carpet backing cloth and frozen shrimp are loaded today on ships for export. This is the first export consignment from the Chittagong Port after the liberation of Bangladesh.
EXODUS FROM RURAL AREAS FOR JOBS
Of late there has been a tremendous exodus from the rural areas to Dhaka. Two reasons have mainly contributed to this exodus: firstly, inadequate job opportunities in the rural areas and secondly, people believe that if they can register their names with the

employment exchange programme of the government they would be assured of a job. Since independence, about 1,75,000 job-seeking people have registered their names with this programme. Of those, 95 percent are seeking jobs in mills, factories and other places where they could be employed as labourers. All of them are unskilled workers.
FOODGRAIN HOARDERS WARNED
Food and Civil Supplies Minister Phani Bhushan Majumdar warns against the hoarding of foodgrain. He informs that the food position up to December is 18 lakh tonnes and the government is making arrangements to fill up the gap from local production and import from abroad. The government is distributing 2 lakh tonnes of foodgrain as relief and modified ration each month, he adds.
SOURCES: March 3, 1972 issues of Dainik Bangla, The Daily Ittefaq, Azad, Morning News, The Bangladesh Observer and Purbodesh.

Indians can't be split

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a lack of government effort to tackle the violence.
"I am very worried and disturbed that the violence took place in the capital of the country. If minorities are tortured and police failed or could not discharge their duties, then it is a matter of serious concern," Sen said after attending an event organised by the Pratichi Trust according to the correspondent.
Sen reiterated that he was merely raising a few questions about the Delhi violence out of concern and would not jump to any conclusions

without analysing the entire matter.
He also said the timing of Justice S Muralidhar's transfer, who was hearing the Delhi violence case, raised questions even though the decision for transfer was taken long ago.

Deaths, cases rise

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87,000 infected since the virus was first detected late last year in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.
China yesterday reported 573 new infections, the highest figure in a week after a dip. All but three of them were in Hubei province, of which Wuhan is the capital.
Despite the increase, China said its response to the epidemic -- which include temporarily closing factories and quarantining Hubei -- "continues to be good" though risks still remained.
"The next step is to focus on the risks brought by the resumption of work and the increasing number of foreign cases," said Mi Feng, spokesman at the National Health Commission.
While the numbers in China are still far lower than the huge daily increases reported during the first two weeks of February, COVID-19 has spread rapidly across borders, with South Korea, Italy and Iran emerging as hotspots.
South Korea, which has the most infected people outside China, reported 586 new cases yesterday, bringing its total to 3,736.
Australia reported the first death on its soil -- a 78-year-old man who had been evacuated from the coronavirus-stricken Diamond Princess cruise ship in Japan.
There are fears the disease could hammer the global economy, and stock markets last week plunged to their lowest levels since the 2008 financial crisis.
Global attention turned to the United States on Saturday after the first fatality on American soil was confirmed.
"We've taken the most aggressive actions to confront the coronavirus," President Donald Trump said at a hastily arranged White House press conference.
"Our country is prepared for any circumstance... There is no reason to panic at all."
The fatality occurred in Washington state's King County, which includes Seattle, a city of more than 700,000

people, health officials said.
The victim was in his 50s and had "underlying health conditions," officials added, as they also announced a possible outbreak in a Washington state nursing home, where a health worker and a resident in her 70s were both confirmed sick with the virus.
Other residents and staff were "ill with respiratory symptoms or hospitalised with pneumonia of unknown cause," the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said.
The death and two confirmed Washington cases all involved patients who had not travelled overseas or come in contact with anyone known to be ill, indicating the virus was spreading in the US.
"We will see more cases," Health Secretary Alex Azar said at the White House.
"But it's important to remember, for the vast majority of individuals who contract the novel coronavirus, they will experience mild to moderate symptoms."
France cancelled gatherings of 5,000 people or more after a surge of new cases were confirmed there on Saturday. The country's total stands at 100, with two deaths logged.
In two regions hard-hit by the virus, Oise and La Balme-de-Sillingy, some schools were closed, while authorities warned against non-essential travel and encouraged people to work from home if possible.
Yesterday's Paris half-marathon and an agricultural symposium were among the events axed.
Italy, the hotspot of the outbreak in Europe, saw a jump in new cases on Saturday, with its number of infections exceeding 1,000 and the death toll rising by eight to 29.
The outbreak forced the postponement of five matches in Italy's top-flight Serie A football league, including the heavyweight clash between champions Juventus and Inter Milan.

New Malaysia PM

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premier but then sought to return.
The king's decision Saturday to pick Muhyiddin Yassin as premier was greeted with shock as Mahathir's allies claimed to have enough support, and it sparked widespread anger that the democratically elected government had been ejected.
Muhyiddin's coalition includes the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), the party of disgraced ex-leader Najib Razak, as well as a hardline group that wants tougher Islamic laws.
UMNO was the corruption-riddled lynchpin of a coalition thrown out at the 2018 elections as allegations swirled that Najib and his cronies looted billions of dollars from state fund 1MDB. Najib is now on trial for corruption.
Just before Muhyiddin's inauguration, Mahathir accused him of betrayal and said he would seek a parliament vote challenging the new premier's support -- signalling the political crisis is far from over.
"This is a very strange thing ... losers will form the government, the winners will be in the opposition," he said.
"The rule of law no longer applies." A candidate for prime minister must prove to the king, who appoints the position, that he has the backing of at least 112 MPs. Mahathir claims to have that number and believes Muhyiddin does not.
Mahathir's alliance said parliament should be allowed to re-convene on March 9, as it is scheduled to do, as speculation grows the new government might seek a delay.
Muhyiddin's inauguration went ahead yesterday morning at the national palace, although Mahathir's alliance boycotted it.
Meanwhile public anger is growing at the ejection of the reformist alliance, with the hashtag "NotMyPM" trending on Twitter and more than 130,000 people signing a petition that said the move is a "betrayal" of voters' choice at the 2018 poll.
Mahathir -- who served a first stint as premier from 1981 to 2003 before staging a comeback two years ago -- also raised concerns that ongoing court cases against Najib related to the 1MDB scandal could be affected by the change of government.

Abuzz with life

FROM PAGE 1
installed. According to the revised deadline, the country's longest bridge will be open to traffic in June next year. It will connect the capital with 21 southern districts and is expected to boost Bangladesh's gross domestic product by 1.2 percent.
However, there was a palpable fear that the coronavirus outbreak would hamper the progress of the project.
The headquarters of the Chinese company building the bridge, China Major Bridge Engineering Co Ltd, is in Wuhan city, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak.
The outbreak started affecting the project and officials were worried that progress would suffer further if the situation in China did not improve soon.
The construction work and the river training are being carried out by two Chinese firms. Most of the construction materials are being imported from China.
Of the 980 Chinese citizens involved in the project, 332 went home to celebrate the Chinese New Year in mid-January. Most have not been able to return due to the outbreak, according to a government report.
Thirty-nine spans have arrived from China, 25 of which have been installed. But the company in China constructing the remaining two spans is currently closed due to the coronavirus outbreak.
At a press briefing at the Awami League party office in Dhanmondi on Saturday, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said the construction work of the bridge would be slightly affected if the coronavirus

situation did not improve in "two months" and the employees were unable to return.
A senior engineer said the coronavirus "has started affecting our work".
"Most of those stuck in China are workers and that's why it is a problem," he told The Daily Star, requesting anonymity.
Various construction materials for the project are being imported from China and most of the source factories are based in Hubei Province, according to a finance ministry report on the potential impact of the virus on the economy.
"Regular import of construction materials is being hampered as many factories in China are now closed and the number of ships used for importing has decreased," the report said.
"If the situation lingers, the inventory management of the project could be hampered," it added.
PADMA BRIDGE PROGRESS
Eighty-six percent of the bridge's construction and 70 percent of the river training works have been done, said Quader on February 26.
This correspondent found that construction of the first nine piers from Mawa was done. Two spans have been installed between piers 5, 6, and 7.
At Janjira end, road slabs have been installed between piers 38th and 42nd. On the top level, around 40 workers were busy installing more.
A total of 2,917 slabs will be installed on the bridge, an engineer said. The rail lines will be set under the Padma Rail Link project.



President of the Palestinian Authority (PA) Mahmoud Abbas has said “a thousand no’s” to the Mideast peace plan.

PHOTO: ABBAS MOMANI/AFP



A man holds a flag of Palestine as protesters take part in a demonstration in front of the US consulate in Istanbul on January 29, 2020.

PHOTO: AFP

TRUMP'S 'DEAL OF THE CENTURY'

An attempt to repackaging Israel's 'Steal of the Century'

ERESH OMAR JAMAL

Amidst much fanfare, US President Donald Trump officially unveiled his long awaited “Deal of the Century”—the plan for resolving the century-old Palestinian-Israeli conflict—on January 28. Except for some additional details, the lengthy document did not add much to what had already been previously leaked about the deal. Yet, the content of it has already been widely criticised.

Jewish author Stephen Lendman described it as a “degrading spectacle” which “has nothing to do with peace, nothing to do with respect for Palestinian rights and welfare, everything to do with serving US/Israeli interests exclusively at the expense of regional peace and stability.” Even before the “official” unveiling, Peter Ford, former British ambassador to Bahrain and Syria and a senior official to the UN Agency for Palestinian Refugees until 2015 had this to say: “I don’t think this plan is serious at all. If you read the 96-pages of this plan it reads like a real-estate prospectus for some utopian maybe one of Donald Trump’s real estate developments or a new golf course, where the Palestinians perhaps would have jobs as caddies and green-keepers, looking after it for the Israeli owners of the territory.”

The Arab League, after concluding a meeting on the matter, unanimously rejected the plan, while reconfirming the Palestinian rights for statehood and liberation. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) also issued a similar rejection following a meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The UN too has opposed the plan—reiterating that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be solved based on UN resolutions and international law—as have many other world powers, in addition to credible Jewish voices in the US and in Israel. According to Hasan Abu Nimah, a retired Jordanian Ambassador, “the highly biased content of the deal confirms previous predictions that it was entirely authored in Israel by the most hardline extremist and racist settler elements there; the elements that openly claim Palestine as the land of the Jewish people with no place for the Palestinians in it.”

Disturbing historical parallels have been drawn between Palestinians and the Bantu people of South Africa by Sheena Anne Arackal, who specialises in the field of ethnic conflict. Ten territories were designated as quasi-autonomous states for the black African population during the mid to late 20th century and kept under control of the white supremacist state. The “Steal of the Century” is intended to bring about a similar fate for the Palestinians. The 181-page description of the proposal, which radiates racism and contempt for Palestinians, effectively denies that Palestinians were forced from their homes, ignores their right to their property and compensation, blames them for “terrorism” despite their (at least) 80:1 death rate with Israelis over the past decade.

What was revealed on January 28 is not a deal, or a peace proposal, or a plan, it is an endorsement of Israel’s extremist position that aims at eradicating the Palestinians from their homeland once and for all. Under President Trump’s

newly unveiled peace plan, the Palestinians will be granted limited autonomy within a Palestinian homeland that consists of multiple non-contiguous enclaves scattered throughout the West Bank and Gaza. The government of Israel will retain security control over the Palestinian enclaves and will continue to control Palestinian borders, airspace, aquifers, maritime waters and electromagnetic spectrum. Israel will be allowed to annex the Jordan Valley and Jewish communities in the West Bank, while the Palestinians will be permitted to select the leaders of their new homeland but will have no political rights in Israel, the state that actually rules over them. The plan, made by Jared Kushner, Trump’s son-in-law and advisor, David Friedman, US Ambassador to Israel, and Jason Greenblatt, Special Assistant to the President for International Negotiations,

administer this funding: Israel, with its long history of skimming from the top of donations to Palestinians, will almost certainly administer any funding.

Under the Plan, the Palestinians would essentially recognise the illegally built Israeli Settlements, and give up any hope of rights to Jerusalem as a shared capital—Trump has already placed the US Embassy in Jerusalem to make sure there is no misunderstanding in regards to that. The deal says that Muslims wanting to visit their historic al-Aksa Mosque must get Israeli permission. UNWRA, The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, would disappear. Other UN agreements and arrangement specially concluded in support of the discriminated Palestinian people would also be cancelled—all under the pretext that Palestine is now an autonomous state.

settlements, now littered across the West Bank, as well as the vast agricultural basin of the Jordan Valley, while Israel will continue to have military control over the entire West Bank.

Furthermore, the Trump administration appears to be considering giving a go-ahead to the Israeli Right’s long-held hopes of redrawing the current borders in such a way as to transfer potentially hundreds of thousands of Palestinians currently living in Israel as citizens into the West Bank. That would almost certainly amount to a war crime. The plan leaves no right of return for Palestinians, and it seems the Arab world will be expected to foot the bill for compensating millions of Palestinian refugees.

All of this has been dressed up as a “realistic two-state solution”, offering the Palestinians nearly 70 percent of the occupied territories—which in turn

would not be not permitted to have any international treaties unless specifically approved by Israel, leaving them on their own and completely at the mercy of their tormentors.

Like all one-time deals, this patchwork “state”—lacking an army, and where Israel controls its security, borders, coastal waters and airspace—has an expiry date. It needs to be accepted within four years. Otherwise, Israel will have a free hand to start plundering yet more Palestinian territory.

But the truth is that neither Israel nor the US expects or wants the Palestinians to accept the deal. That is why the plan includes—as well as annexation of the settlements—a host of unrealistic preconditions before what remains of Palestine can be recognised: the Palestinian factions must disarm, with Hamas dismantled; the Palestinian Authority led by Mahmoud Abbas must strip the families of political prisoners of their stipends. And as Robert Fisk explained, “the belief that the Palestinians would dream of accepting such a deranged, farcical set of political demands is without precedent in the western world.”

The deal is most likely Trump telling his supporters that I am sticking to my campaign pledge of solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. However, it is not actually serious about solving the problem. But it does allow Trump to go back and say, we proposed a great deal, it is the Palestinians who rejected it—the same argument that the US and Israel have been sticking to now for decades.

For some critics, the timing of the declaration was seen as an opportunistic move to salvage two in-crisis leaders from problems they are facing at home—in fact, Netanyahu was indicted on corruption charges while in Washington awaiting the announcement ceremony of the deal. And to help Netanyahu in his battle in the third Israeli general election due on March 2, as well as Trump’s bid for a second presidential term at the end of this year. And, according to Hasan Abu Nimah, “nothing could be more distressing than when the destiny of an entire people, the Palestinian people, is immorally, illegally and inhumanely utilised for such pure personal purposes.” However, that is what this Machiavellian game that the US and Israel are playing with the Palestinians is.

Which is why the plan seems to have been designed intentionally in such a way that it is rejected by the Palestinians, so that they would be held responsible for missing another opportunity for peace and losing also their share as very poorly defined in the deal, the imagined Palestinian state, while the Israelis would then be free to grab most of the territory that it hasn’t already. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has announced his intention to bring just such an annexation plan before his cabinet as soon as possible. And this will no doubt be at the centre of his efforts to win a tightly contested general election that is due today.

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US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu take part in an announcement of Trump’s Middle East peace plan at the White House in Washington, DC, on January 28.

PHOTO: MANDEL NGAN/AFP

grants the Palestinian homeland autonomy over civil matters like education and healthcare, while keeping critical areas such as trade, immigration, and security under Israeli control.

But the “miracle plan” has two parts, one with an economic and the other with a political focus. On the economic side, it talks about a USD 50 billion investment budget over the next 10 years, partly substituting USAID’s funding cuts from ongoing and future Gaza and Palestine development projects—so, hardly any new money. While Germany has paid at least USD 100 billion (so far) to the Jewish/Israeli communities as compensation for damages in World War II, Israel has yet to pay anything for its theft of a nearly an entire country, the contents of homes and businesses and for the many thousands of those it murdered and maimed. To add insult to injury, the Palestinians will not be permitted to

Not only was this sham of a “peace plan” made without the participation of Palestinians, but it defies international law and international precedent on the issue and ignores Palestinian interests. Without question, by declaring Jerusalem Israel’s “undivided” capital, Trump has angered and pushed Palestinians away from coming to any sort of possible resolution to decades of violent conflict. Due to this proposal, Israel now has more of a reason to annex major illegal Israeli colonies in occupied West Bank.

The so-called “Vision for Peace” unveiled by Trump simply confirmed that the US government has publicly adopted the long-running consensus in Israel: that it is entitled to keep permanently the swaths of territory it seized illegally over the past half-century that deny the Palestinians any hope of a state. Importantly for Israel, it will get Washington’s permission to annex all of its illegal

comprise 22 percent of their original homeland. Put another way, the Palestinians are being required to accept a state on 15 percent of historic Palestine after Israel has seized all the best agricultural land and the water sources.

As described by Bill Van Auken, the maps revealed along with the plan: “show a patchwork of Palestinian cantons surrounded by Israeli territory, linked one to another by a series of Israeli-controlled bridges, tunnels and roads. The cantons themselves are peppered with what the plan describes as ‘Israeli enclave communities,’ i.e., Zionist settlements that will be walled off, linked by apartheid-style Israeli-only security roads, and protected by Israeli security forces.” Imports and exports would have to pass through Israel, making the “cantons” vulnerable to possible Israeli siege. While over 140 countries have recognised Palestine, Palestinians



Farmers collect onion seedlings at a field of Piprul village in Naldanga upazila of Natore. *Inset*, seedlings being planted at another field of the same village.

PHOTO: STAR



Woman’s head shaved for dowry

Husband among four land in jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

A housewife was brutally tortured and her head shaved off allegedly by her dowry-greedy husband and in-laws in Dinaipur town on Saturday.

Meanwhile, police arrested four people including the victim’s husband on Saturday night after victim Sohagi, 19, filed a case with Dinaipur Sadar Police Station in this connection the same evening.

The arrestees are Sohagi’s husband Jony Islam Sumon, 23, of Daptaripara area under Dinaipur municipality, Sumon’s father Hafiqul Islam, mother Jabina Begum and sister Sumi Begum.

According to the case statement, Sohagi, daughter of Abu Sayem of Songloni village in Nilphamari Sadar upazila, was married off with Sumon in 2017.

During the marriage, Sohagi’s father gave Tk 35,000 to Sumon. But since the marriage, Sumon and his family members had been demanding more money from Sohagi’s parents.

Police said as Sumon and his family members could not realise the additional money from Sohagi’s parents, they brutally tortured her for an hour and shaved off her head on Saturday afternoon.

Hearing Sohagi’s cry for help, neighbours went to the spot and rescued her.

They also arranged Sohagi’s shelter at a nearby house and informed the matter to her parents.

Officer in Charge of Dinaipur Sadar Police Station Mozaffar Hossain said they produced the arrestees before a court yesterday that sent them to jail.

Woman found murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police recovered the throat-slit body of a woman from Meduari village in Bhaluka upazila of the district yesterday.

The deceased, Hena Akter, 45, was wife of Rafiqul Islam of the village.

Quoting the victim’s family members, Officer in Charge of Bhaluka Police Station Mohammad Mainuddin said Hena, mother of three children, went to visit her elder daughter’s house in adjacent Kumarkata area on Saturday.

After having her meal on that night, Hena went to sleep with her granddaughter Shraboni, 7, and one of her relatives Samola Akter.

But finding Hena missing from her room yesterday morning, family members started searching her.

At one stage, they spotted her throat-slit body inside a jungle nearby the house and informed the police.

Being informed, police recovered Hena’s body and sent it to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Meanwhile, police detained three people including Samola for their alleged involvement in the murder, the OC added.

No case was lodged as of filing this report around 8:00pm yesterday.

High price boosts onion farming

Seedlings inadequate to meet the rising demand in Natore

BULBUL AHMED, Natore

A large number of farmers in Natore are opting for onion cultivation this year due to the high market price of the vegetable used a common cooking ingredient.

However, many of them are failing in their efforts as supply of seedlings is not that much.

“Farmers have cultivated onion on 4500 hectares of land in Natore this year, which is 950 hectares more than our target. We are hopeful of 63,000 tonnes of yield. In last year, onion was cultivated on 3,380 hectares of land,” said Subrata Sarker, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Natore.

“An additional 1,000 hectares would be brought under onion cultivation if seedlings were aplenty. Many farmers now want to cultivate onion, especially against the backdrop of its high market price during the last couple of months,” he added.

This correspondent recently visited onion fields in different areas of the district and talked to farmers.

“Every year I grow rice but this year I am cultivating onion on two bighas of land due to high prices of the vegetable. After

meeting the family’s requirement, I will sell the rest in the market,” said Abu Bakkar Siddik of Khajura village in Naldanga upazila of Natore.

“For the first time I am cultivating onion on three bighas of land this year. The cultivation cost is around Tk 20,000 per bigha while I am hopeful of 80 maunds of yield per bigha,” said Babu Pramanik, a farmer of Barbaria village in Lalpur upazila.

Several farmers, however, expressed frustration over shortage of onion seedlings.

“I have prepared five bighas of land for onion cultivation but I could plant seedlings on only one bigha. The remaining four bighas are still empty due to shortage of seedlings,” said Dulal Fakir, a small farmer of Ramnagar village under Natore Sadar upazila.

“Taking the opportunity of shortage of onion seedlings in the local market, a section of people are selling it at high prices this season,” he added.

Ashraful Islam, a farmer of Taherpur village of Rajshahi, said he sowed onion seeds on one bigha and got 50 maunds of seedlings this season.

The cultivation cost was Tk 25,000 and the seedlings were sold for Tk 50,000, he said.

The clock set for countdown to Mujib Borsho, celebrating the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, went dysfunctional on the premises of Bahubal Upazila Parishad in Habiganj on Saturday, much to the dismay of conscious citizens. The upazila officials seemed too reserved to talk about the matter although the device remained in the same condition as of filing this report yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO:MINTUDESHWARA



New school building after 65yrs

The two-storey school building with modern facilities in Patuakhali Sadar upazila was constructed at a cost of Tk 1 crore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Students of a 65-year-old school made of corrugated tin sheet, which was vulnerable to collapse anytime, have recently got a new building, thanks to the initiative of Muslim Aid, a UK-based donor organisation.

The two-storey school building with modern facilities was constructed at a cost of Tk 1 crore, said Haripado Bhuiyan, acting headteacher of Kuripaika High School at Kuripaika village in Sadar upazila.

Established in 1955, Kuripaika High School has now 412 students, said Haripado, adding that it is the only one high school in the village.

Teachers and students had been attending classes in the shabby schoolhouse made of tin amid risk of accident for long, he said.

Jannatun Ferdous, a ninth grader at the school, said attending classes in the dilapidated schoolhouse was a nightmare as both students and teachers could not keep their eyes off the ceilings of the classrooms, worrying about possible fatalities due to the rusted tin roofs.

Rainwater entered the classrooms through multiple leakage of the tin roof and they and their books got wet, she said, adding that the new school building is now a great relief for them.

It was very tough to attend classes in the tin-shed schoolhouse during unbearable heat, said Sameer Pine, a Class VIII student of the school.

They informed the authorities concerned about the matter several times but it did not work, said headteacher Haripado.

In June 2016, Muslim Aid demolished the shabby schoolhouse to pave way for a new building there, he said, adding that construction of the two-storey building was completed two months ago.

During the period, the teachers and students attended their classes in a makeshift house near the school compound, situated on one acre of land, said Haripado.



Rabia Sultana, country director of Muslim Aid Bangladesh, on Tuesday inaugurated the new school building, he said, adding that they are now attending classes in the building.

On behalf of Muslim Aid Bangladesh, the new two-storey building was a gift for the teachers and students of the school in the “Mujib Borsho”, said Rabia Sultana.



The newly-constructed schoolhouse of Kuripaika High School in Patuakhali Sadar upazila.

PHOTO:STAR

		<div>গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার</div> <div>বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ</div> <div>অতিরিক্তের কার্যালয়</div> <div>র‍্যাণ্ডিগ এ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন-৭</div> <div>পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম</div>		
<div>উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি</div> <div>"The Public Procurement Act-2006" and "Regulation-2008" এর বিধি মোতাবেক ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের জন্য রাই-৭, উত্তর পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম জেলার একটি জনিক সরবরাহের পূর্ব পৃষ্ঠক টেন্ডার বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশ করা হলো।</div>				
১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	১।	অতিরিক্ত মন্ত্রণালয়/বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ	
২।	সংস্থা	২।	র‍্যাণ্ডিগ এ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন	
৩।	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	৩।	অতিরিক্ত, রাই-৭, পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম	
৪।	কি কার্যকর দরপত্র আহ্বান	৪।	গ্রুপ "ক" টাউন পেনন সাম্মান্য সরবরাহ। গ্রুপ "খ" জালানি কাঠ সরবরাহ। গ্রুপ "গ" গম পিটাই। গ্রুপ "ঘ" তুলি (কেন্দ্রা পেনন সাম্মান্য পাঞ্জীতে উঠানো/নামানোর জন্য)। গ্রুপ "ঙ" জোতা তৈল (সোয়ালি) সরবরাহ। গ্রুপ "চ" জোতা তৈল (সোয়ালি) সরবরাহ। গ্রুপ "ছ" জোতা তৈল (সোয়ালি) সরবরাহ।	
৫।	দরপত্র সূত্র নং	৫।	স্মারক নং-৭৪০/৩০/৩০/৩০/৩০	
৬।	তারিখ	৬।	তারিখ ২০ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২০ চট্টগ্রাম	
সরবরাহ বিবরণ				
৭।	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	৭।	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র	
অন্য বিবরণ				
৮।	ব্যাংক ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	৮।	পিন্ডা একাউন্ট খাতে বার্ষিক অর্থ খাতে (ব্যাংক খাত)	
অন্যান্য বিবরণ				
৯।	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	৯।	০২ মার্চ ২০২০ চট্টগ্রাম	
১০।	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	১০।	২০ মার্চ ২০২০ চট্টগ্রাম মোতা ২০.০০ টাকার পত্র (সেরাফরি ট্রাউট মিন ব্যাটাই অফিস প্রকাশনালি মতে)	
১১।	দরপত্র অর্থ প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১১।	২৪ মার্চ ২০২০ চট্টগ্রাম ১২.০০ ঘটিকা	
১২।	দরপত্র প্রদানের তারিখ ও সময়	১২।	২৪ মার্চ ২০২০ চট্টগ্রাম ১২.০০ ঘটিকা দরদানকারে সন্মুখ (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন)	
১৩।	দরপত্র প্রদানের তারিখ ও সময়	১৩।	৩০ মার্চ ২০২০ চট্টগ্রাম সময় ১২.০০ ঘটিকা	
অতিরিক্ত নথি ও প্রিন্টার				
১৪।	অতিরিক্ত নথি ও প্রিন্টার	১।	অতিরিক্ত, রাই-৭, পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম	
দরপত্র ভূমিকা/সিদ্ধি/বিভাগ				
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২। ইক্সিট্রাল পুলিশ-৩, চট্টগ্রাম।				
৩। ইক্সিট্রাল পুলিশ-৩, চট্টগ্রাম।				
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SPORT



Liton Das was framed in similar fashion numerous times as the right-hander played some magnificent strokes on way to his second ODI ton and a career-best 126 before retiring hurt in the first ODI against Zimbabwe in Sylhet yesterday.

‘Nervousness’ brings the best out of unhurried Liton

MAZHAR UDDIN from Sylhet



When it comes to talent, there were never any doubts about Liton Das, who was highly rated even before making his international debut in 2015. The questions surrounding him were always about consistency. The stylish wicketkeeper-batsman has all the shots in the book in his arsenal and, more importantly, when Liton gets going, it is a tough prospect for any opponent as the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium witnessed yesterday. His masterclass against Zimbabwe in the first ODI was one of those days when the right-hander showed how a composed approach could help him find success.

Liton smashed his second ODI hundred, which helped Bangladesh post their highest-ever total of 321 for six against Zimbabwe and eventually clinch a comprehensive 169-run win.

However, the right-hander had to retire hurt after having cramps during the 37th over for a magnificent 105-ball 126 that featured 13 fours and three sixes.

Liton was confident from the get-go and

smote his first boundary with a cracking drive towards cover region to Chris Mpofu after Bangladesh had opted to bat.

The highlight of Liton's innings was the way he paced it, with a mixture of aggression and sensibility that was quite unlike him. The right-hander previously tended to throw away his wicket after getting set.

The 25-year-old, who batted at number five in the World Cup, returned to his actual position and opened the innings. His maiden hundred had come batting at opening slot, against India in the final of the Asia Cup in 2018.

Interestingly, Liton revealed that he was nervous before the start of the game and that helped him focus more yesterday.

"Many might not have noticed, but I have been nervous since last night [Saturday]. I haven't played the fifty-over format for a long time. I missed the Sri Lanka tour after the World Cup. I also knew that I was going to open the innings today (Sunday), which added more pressure to the back of my mind. I think that nervousness worked positively for me as long I was at the crease because I was more focused,"

said Liton yesterday.

When asked to compare his two centuries, the cricketer said that it required the same amount of focus to hit a ton against any opponent.

"Centuries are always right at the top for me. Yes, the first hundred was in the Asia Cup final, which was a big match. This game might not be as big as that, but it was big for me personally. If you think of a team effort, we could easily win against Zimbabwe. But that was not the case in the Asia Cup. But to score a hundred, I had to keep the same focus and I had to remain focused today as well," he said.

There has certainly been a change in Liton's personality over the past two years and the cricketer said that it was a change in mentality that had helped him develop his game.

"Now I know what I have to do to score a hundred in international cricket. I have to bat till the 30th over. It played in the back of my mind that I would not hurry and look for singles after reaching my fifty. I will also look to score boundaries if there is a bad ball and I was nervous at the start, but once I got set, I tried to bat till the 30th over."

BD-ZIM SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH	R/B	4s/6s
Liton rtd hurt	126/105	13/2
Tamim lbw b Madhevere	24/43	2/0
Nazmul lbw b Mutumbodzi	29/38	1/2
Mushfiqu c Mutumbami		
b Tiripano	19/26	0/0
Mahmudullah lbw b Mpofu	32/28	2/1
Mithun lbw b Mpofu	50/41	5/1
Saifuddin not out	28/15	0/3
Mehedi c Kamunhukamwe		
b Mumba	7/4	0/1
Mashrafe not out	0/0	0/0
Extras: (lb-1, w-5)	6	
Total: (For 6 wks in 50 overs)	321	
Did not bat: Tajjul, Mustafizur.		
Fall of wickets: 1-60, 2-140, 3-182, 3-206*, 4-274, 5-289, 6-298.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mpofu	10	0	68	2
Mumba	8	0	45	1
Madhevere	8	0	48	1
Tiripano	7	0	56	1
Raza	10	0	56	0
Mutumbodzi	7	0	47	1

ZIMBABWE	R/B	4s/6s
Kamunhukamwe b Saifuddin	1/10	0/0
Chibhabha c Mahmudullah		
b Mashrafe	10/22	1/0
Chakabva lbw b Saifuddin	11/18	1/0
Taylor b Tajjul	8/15	1/0
Madhevere c Mashrafe		
b Mehedi	35/44	5/0
Raza c Mahmudullah		
b Mustafizur	18/32	2/0
Mutumbami run out	17/14	0/2
Mutumbodzi c Saifuddin		
b Mashrafe	24/47	3/0
Tiripano c & b Mehedi	2/13	0/0
Mumba b Saifuddin	13/12	1/1
Mpofu not out	9/8	0/0
Extras: (lb-1, w-3)	4	
Total: (All out in 39.1 overs)	152	
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-23, 3-23, 4-44, 5-79, 6-84, 7-106, 8-109, 9-130, 10-152.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mustafizur	6	0	22	1
Saifuddin	7	0	22	3
Mashrafe	6.1	0	35	2
Tajjul	9	2	27	1
Mehedi	8	1	33	2
Mahmudullah	3	0	12	0

Result: Bangladesh won by 169 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Liton Das.

Lee appointed Tigers' new trainer

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced the appointment of Nicholas Trevor Lee as its head of physical performance, a post that has been vacant since former fitness and conditioning trainer Mario Villavarayan parted ways with the board at the end of February this year.

Lee, who will start working on his new role from this March, has agreed a three-year term with the BCB which will end in April 2023.

Before joining the BCB, Lee worked as the strength and conditioning coach of Sri Lanka from 2016. Prior to his role with Sri Lanka, the Englishman also worked as a strength and conditioning coach for Sussex.

Earlier, Villavarayan and the BCB mutually agreed to part ways after the former had received an offer to work as the physio of IPL side Sunrisers Hyderabad.

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet



Bangladesh head coach Russell Domingo had previously said that he missed a seaming all-rounder like Mohammad Saifuddin, who could add variety to the Tigers' line-up.

Perhaps knowing the ability of the young all-rounder, the South African kept an eye on 23-year-old, who made his return to international cricket after suffering a back injury more than five months ago during a T20I against Afghanistan.

Saifuddin, who played his last ODI against Pakistan at Lord's at the ICC World Cup last year, made an impressive return to the fifty-over format against Zimbabwe in the first of the three-match series in Sylhet yesterday.

The cricketer showed his mettle as a genuine seaming all-rounder that the team management have been looking for with his handy seaming skills both with the new ball and in the death overs, combined with his ability to hit

big shots.

His first impact came with the bat when Bangladesh required some big hits in the final stage of the innings. Saifuddin, coming in at number seven with 19 balls left in the innings, did exactly what the Tigers were looking for.

The left-hander hit three sixes off Chris Mpofu in the final over of the innings, which yielded 22 runs and helped Bangladesh post their highest ODI total: 321.

During his 15-ball 28-run cameo, the left-hander played proper cricketing strokes. His hits down the ground off the full face of the bat reflected his ability to take on bowlers. His big-hitting abilities at the end were something that the Bangladesh team management felt the team was missing over the years.

The cricketer from Feni was then instrumental with the new ball and picked up the first wicket when Zimbabwe opener Tinashe Kamunhukamwe dragged the ball onto his stumps off a beautiful length

delivery.

The right-arm seamer, who was getting consistent swing with the new ball, then trapped Regis Chakabva leg before when the right hander went for a rather fancy slog sweep.

Saifuddin went on to scalp his third wicket by dismissing Carl Mumba and ended up with figures of three for 22 from seven overs.

Saifuddin's presence on the field was also noticeable as he was seen diving all around and saving crucial runs. His body language yesterday was also definitely something worth discussing.

Yes, there are questions regarding the strength of the Zimbabwe side. But as the buzz this series has been to create a good cricketing culture, it is also a platform for Domingo to have a look at youngsters like Saifuddin.

These are still early days for Saifuddin, but if the cricketer can improve his skills further, Bangladesh's hopes of finding a world class all-rounder after Shakib Al Hasan will certainly be looking brighter.

Mash's '100' as captain

Bangladesh ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza entered an elite club, becoming the fifth bowler in ODI history to bag 100 wickets as captain.

He entered a coveted list with only Imran Khan, Wasim Akram, Shaun Pollock and most recently West Indies captain Jason Holder for company. Mashrafe had been waiting on the brink of clinching the record for a long time, having scalped 97 before the 2019 World Cup. However, his dismal record in the World Cup, where he managed a solitary wicket saw his record delayed and he missed the tour of Sri Lanka through injury.

All eyes were on the Bangladesh captain before the start of the series against Zimbabwe yesterday and he clinched his first wicket since the World Cup with the wicket of Chamu Chibhabha after nearly eight months. He then went on to bag the last Zimbabwe wicket to fall, finishing with figures of 2 for 35 and in the process also bagging the unique record.



For over five months, Bangladesh not only missed the trademark two-arms-open celebration of Mohammad Saifuddin, the Tigers also missed a seam-bowling all-rounder. Saifuddin returned to the international scene and showed his class, smashing a quickfire 28 before taking three with the ball against Zimbabwe in Sylhet yesterday.

Media instigated Mashrafe: Hassan

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) President Nazmul Hassan yesterday said that media personnel went a bit too far during the pre-match press conference on Saturday, when Bangladesh ODI skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza reacted angrily to one particular question.

During the pre-match press conference on the eve of the first Bangladesh-Zimbabwe ODI in Sylhet, a reporter had asked about Mashrafe's 'sense of self-respect' during a question about him continuing to play despite declining form. A visibly irritated Mashrafe responded by saying that he was not a thief and had nothing to be ashamed of.

"Seeing his press conference I felt that

you people instigated him too much. This is the time when you should have been more supportive, but instead you hurt him. We should not be discussing anything about it. He already made clear what he wants," said Hassan during a press-conference in Sylhet yesterday.

Mashrafe's captaincy and place in the team has generated a lot of speculation, especially after the 36-year-old led the Tigers to an eighth-place finish in the World Cup last summer.

Mashrafe, who took two wickets yesterday against Zimbabwe in Sylhet, etched his name in the records book as he became only the fifth player to have scalped 100 ODI wickets as captain.

"The board will decide who will become captain. And when he [Mashrafe] retires is his decision. So let him decide," concluded Hassan.

SA, Eng seal semi spots

REUTERS, Sydney



South Africa and England registered comfortable victories against Pakistan and West Indies respectively in their Group B matches on Sunday to seal their spots in the semifinals of the Women's Twenty20 World Cup.

Group A leaders India were the first to reach the last four and the final place will go to the winner of Monday's clash between hosts Australia and their trans-Tasman rivals New Zealand.

After South Africa registered a 17-run win against Pakistan, England thumped West Indies by 46 runs to claim their third win and climb to the top of Group B on net run-rate. South Africa, however, have a game in hand against the Caribbean side.

Laura Wolvaardt did not get a chance to bat in the previous two matches but made a brisk, unbeaten half-century to help South Africa to a win over Pakistan.

NZ leave India reeling

AFP, Christchurch



New Zealand fast bowler Trent Boult said his side's "pack" mentality had left India reeling a day two of the second Test on which 16 wickets fell including another cheap dismissal for Virat Kohli in Christchurch on Sunday.

At stumps India led by just 97 lead with only four wickets remaining and three days to play.

Kohli's side dismissed New Zealand for 235 to take a seven-run first innings lead, but they stuttered to 90 for six at stumps with Boult taking three for 12 off nine overs.

"It was a good feeling to see the back of him," Boult said of Kohli's dismissal.

"Obviously he's a big player for them and we were just try to put enough

pressure on him, keep him quiet and it was nice to see him make a few errors."

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 242 and second innings 90 for 6 (Pujara 24, Kohli 14;

Boult 3-12)

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 235 all out (Latham 52, Blundell 30, De Grandhomme 26, Jamieson 49, Wagner 21; Bumrah 3-62, Shami 4-81)



New Zealand pacer Trent Boult (R) celebrates one of his three wickets against India on Day 2 of the second Test in Christchurch yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

SL complete whitewash

AFP, Pallekele

Angelo Mathews held his nerve with the ball to help Sri Lanka clinch a tense six-run win over West Indies in the third ODI and sweep the series 3-0 on Sunday.

Mathews claimed four wickets and denied West Indies 13 runs in the last over, restricting the tourists to 301 for nine in their chase of 308 in Pallekele. "Angelo put his hand up in the absence of Pradeep. He used his experience which is what I was expecting," skipper Dimuth Karunaratne said of his 32-year-old veteran allrounder. "Beating West Indies 3-0 is not easy."

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS 1
New Zealand v India
Second Test, Day 4
Live from 4:30am (Tuesday)

STAR SPORTS 2
ICC Women's T20 World Cup
Bangladesh v Sri Lanka
Live from 6:00am
Australia v New Zealand
Live from 10:00am

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh Premier League
Sheikh Jamal v Arambagh KS
Time: 3:30pm

Uttar Baridhara v Brothers Unionon
Time: 6:30pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National

Stadium, Dhaka
Ctg Abahani v Sheikh Russel
Time: 6:30pm

Venue: MA Aziz Stadium,
Chattogram

NADAL CRUISES TO ACAPULCO TITLE

World number two Rafael Nadal captured his first ATP Tour title of 2020, easily defeating unseeded Taylor Fritz in straight sets, 6-3, 6-2, in the final of the Mexico Open on Saturday. The 33-year-old Nadal, playing in his first tournament since losing in the quarter-finals at the Australian Open last month, didn't drop a set all week and improved to 19-2 all-time at this event. He nabbed his third Mexico Open title to go with victories in 2013 and 2005. "I couldn't be happier. I played a great event from the beginning to the end," Nadal said. "Acapulco was the first big title that I won in my career, so to be able to stay here after 15 years is amazing. I can't thank enough the people who make me feel at home every single time."

--- AFP



Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp consoles defender Andrew Robertson after the leaders' unbeaten run came to an end with a 3-0 defeat against Watford at the Vicarage Road Stadium on Saturday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Klopp warns Reds as unbeaten run ends

AFP, Watford



Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp insisted the title is not won yet after his side were beaten for the first time in 45 games in the Premier League as Watford thrashed the European champions 3-0 on Saturday.

Klopp's men still enjoy a 22-point lead at the top of the table and need a maximum of four wins from their remaining 10 games to secure a first league title for 30 years.

However, defeat at Vicarage Road continues a downturn in form as they sneaked past relegation-threatened Norwich and West Ham in their two previous league games and lost the first leg of their Champions League last 16 tie to Atletico Madrid.

"What the boys did so far is exceptional but it is not over," said Klopp.

"We did not expect the number of games we won. It was never easy and it will never be easy, so now let's carry on."

Klopp has long been an advocate of a winter break amid the gruelling English campaign to give his players a chance to rest and recuperate.

But a two-week break earlier this month appears to have disrupted the Reds' rhythm. "Shape, form is not something we can take for granted. We fought against each every feeling in the body. We fought against everything and that's why we have that amount of points," added Klopp.

"The biggest surprise for me is that Watford is fighting to stay in the league. Now is the moment when everybody is fighting like crazy.

"We don't think it is the biggest catastrophe in world football. We feel the defeat really and now we have the chance to show the reaction again."

Ismaila Sarr was the star for Watford as the Senegalese struck twice in six minutes at the start of the second half and then teed up Troy Deeney to add a third.

The comprehensive scoreline had the added bonus of edging Watford out of the relegation zone by one goal ahead of Bournemouth.

However, after slipping back into the bottom three following a fine start to his reign, Hornets' boss Nigel Pearson is all too aware of the importance of backing up a famous win for the remainder of the season.

"It's such an important win for us. But it is one win," said Pearson.

"They are such an outstanding side, we had to get our performance right and I thought we thoroughly deserved the win.

"We threatened with the ball and defended with discipline, energy and commitment. That's been the message from day one.

"It's in our own hands, and we have to deliver that performance week in, week out."

Jibon rescues Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER



A 'controversial' headed goal from Nabib Newaj Jibon rescued Abahani in the Bangladesh Premier League in a single-goal win over Rahmatganj MFS at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Jibon, who seemed to be in an offside position, nodded a Kervens Belfort header into the net following a freekick from Mamunul Islam as the Sky Blues took revenge for their tiebreaker defeat against the Old Dhaka outfit in the Federation Cup quarterfinals.

Coming into the match on the back of a 1-1 draw against Brothers Union, the six-time professional league champions could hardly improve their performance against Rahmatganj, who took a counter-attacking approach by keeping a compact defence. However, captain

Jibon rescued his side with a decisive header which prompted the Rahmatganj players to protest by surrounding assistant referee Monir Dhali but referee MA Nahid stuck to his decision.

Rahmatganj, who held Sheikh Russel to a draw in their previous match, were in a defensive mood from the word go and kept their superior opponents at bay, thanks to some brilliant saves by former national goalkeeper Rasel Mahmud Liton.

Abahani forwards broke the Rahmatganj defence a few times, but Liton stood tall to deny Sunday Chizoba, Jibon, Edgar Bernhardt and Belfort.

Belfort released a nice forward-pass to Sunday in the fifth minute but the Nigerian striker saw his low drive inside the box easily gripped by Liton, who then stopped a powerful 25-yard shot from Jibon in the 13th minute.

Jibon once again came close to breaking the

deadlock in the 35th minute but failed to beat Liton from close range before eventually getting the better of Liton in the 55th minute.

After conceding the lead, Rahmatganj started to press against the Sky Blues, who however went close to doubling the lead but Sunday hit the ball straight at Liton after Saad Uddin whipped in a low cross from the right.

Rahmatganj's real chance to level the margin came in the 75th minute, but Guinean defender Camara Younoussa saw his header go inches over the crossbar while Belfort failed to beat Liton from a one-on-one situation four minutes later.

In face of pressure from Rahmatganj, Abahani coach Mario Lemos sent on Egyptian defender Eissa Elmaghrabby in place of Sunday and Abahani left the field with their second win in their third match to join leaders Bashundhara Kings and Saif SC on top of the table.



Manchester City players Bernardo Silva, Benajmin Mendy, Riyad Mahrez and Raheem Sterling pose after securing a memorable hattrick of the League Cup.

PHOTO: REUTERS

City retain League Cup

AFP, London



Manchester City claimed the League Cup for the fourth time in five seasons by beating Aston Villa 2-1 at Wembley on Sunday thanks to goals from Sergio Agüero and Rodrigo.

Mbwana Samatta pulled a goal back, but their wait for the club's first silverware since 1996 goes on as Pep Guardiola's men have now won six of the last seven major trophies in English football.

Guardiola made eight changes from the side that won 2-1 at Real Madrid in the Champions League on Wednesday with Kevin De Bruyne among those left on the bench.

However, it mattered little as City had the luxury of recalling Agüero, Raheem Sterling and David Silva to the starting XI, and the gulf in class showed.

Guardiola's raft of changes also handed a rare start to Phil Foden and the 19-year-old more than justified his selection.

Rodrigo's fine pass picked out Foden to head back into the path of Agüero and the Argentine's deflected effort beat Orjan Nyland in the Villa goal to open the scoring on 20 minutes.

Foden was then inches away from a goal himself with a deflected shot that

flew inches wide.

Villa felt aggrieved when City were awarded a corner moments later after Jack Grealish fired the ball off Ilkay Gundogan for what should have been a goal kick.

Instead, City doubled their lead as Gundogan's corner was met with a powerful downward header from Rodrigo.

Villa could barely even get a touch for the next 10 minutes as the holders threatened to run riot in a repeat of the 6-1 thrashing they handed the hosts at Villa Park last month.

Sterling had a glorious chance for his first goal of 2020 deflected behind by a brave block from Tyrone Mings.

But moments later the reason Mings is ahead of John Stones in the pecking order for England selection became clear as the City defender inexplicably fell to the floor to give Villa a lifeline.

A long ball forward eventually came to Anwar El Ghazi and from his cross Samatta headed low past Claudio Bravo to the delight of the travelling thousands from Birmingham and Villa fan Prince William in the stands.

The difference in the desperation for success between the supports was obvious as Villa were roared on vociferously throughout, while City failed to sell out their allocation.

SHORT CORNER

Kings put 13 past Spartan

Bashundhara Kings recorded another big win in Tricortex Women's Football League when the title-contenders handed a 13-0 defeat on Spartan MK Galactico Sylhet FC at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

Bashundhara Kings, boasting a host of national team players, came into the match on the back of a 12-0 win over Begum Anwara Sporting Club in the opening match. The Kings dominated yesterday's game against the Sylhet side, which featured six girls working in a tea garden.

Striker Sabina Khatun and midfielder Monika Chakma struck hattricks while Tohura Khatun and Dipa Munni scored two goals each. Krishna Rani Sarker and Sheuli Azim netted one goal each while Mukta Das scored an own goal. --SPORTS REPORTER



Monika Chakma scored three goals as Bashundhara Kings beat Spartan MK Galactico 13-0.

PHOTO: BFF

School hockey

Shaheed Mamun Mahmud School of Rajshahi notched a massive 6-0 win over Navy School and College of Khulna in First Security Islami Bank National Hockey School tournament at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Jahid Hasan scored twice while Nur Hossain, Tahmidur Rahman, Shakil Hossain and Habib Hossain hit the board once in the one-sided match. Meanwhile, Muslim Mission School of Faridpur beat Lohagara Govt. Pilot School of Narail 2-0, with Mizanur Rahman and Maruf Mollah scoring

one goal apiece.

--SPORTS REPORTER

Inter-University sports meet underway

Bangabandhu Inter-University Sports Championships got underway with a colourful opening ceremony at Hazi Mohammad Moshin Hall ground of Dhaka University yesterday.

Foreign minister Dr A K Abdul Momen officially declared the championships open as some 101 public and private universities will take part in the championships. Approximately 6000 athletes including 1200 female athletes are expected to vie for 687 medals in 12 disciplines -- athletics, football, cricket, basketball, table tennis, badminton, volleyball, cycling, swimming, handball, chess and kabaddi.

As many as 13 universities will host the championships which will come to an end on April 18.

State minister for youth and sports Zahid Ahsan Russel, University Grants Commission chairman Dr Kazi Shahidullah and Mohsin Hall provost professor Nizamul Haque Bhuiyan were, among other present, at the occasion. -- SPORTS REPORTER

Glaxose-D Dhaka Half Marathon 2020 takes place

The Glaxose-D Dhaka Half Marathon took place on February 28, highlighting Bangladesh from a new perspective on the global platform. Dhaka Run Lords organised the event which consisted of a 21.1km half marathon and a 7.5km mini marathon.

In the half marathon men's category, first, second and third places were awarded respectively to Sazzad Hossain, Emon Hossen and Mahfuzul Haq.

In the half marathon women's category, Jane Crowder, Alexa Mekonen and Hamida Akter Jeba attained first, second and third places respectively.

In the mini marathon men's category, Rakibul Islam, Mohammed Moshir Ahmed and Shahriar Bin Bashir came in first, second and third place respectively.

--Sports Reporter

'Ashamed' Bayern to punish culprits

AFP, Berlin



Bayern Munich chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge vowed to "take all-out action" against the fans who unfurled a banner insulting Hoffenheim benefactor Dietmar Hopp during the Bundesliga leaders' 6-0 victory on Saturday.

The game in Hoffenheim finished in bizarre circumstances with both teams passing the ball between each other after a lengthy delay over an offensive banner in the section housing travelling Bayern supporters.

Players from both sides stood on the field but refused to play for the final 10 minutes as the clock wound down.

Rummenigge said he was "deeply ashamed of these chaotic people" who have "discredited the name of FC Bayern".

The entire Bayern team -- along with coach Hansi Flick and Rummenigge -- approached the ultras block and pleaded with fans to remove the banner.

"Today, at the absolute latest, the moment has come when the entire Bundesliga needs to take action against these chaotic people.

"We must all stand together. We have closed our eyes for far too long. This is the ugly face of football."

German Football Association boss Christian Seifert indicated after the match that no action would be taken against either side.

The fans refused to withdraw the banner, prompting a surreal conclusion to the match.



Manchester United's new recruit Bruno Fernandes continued to shine, scoring the goal to rescue a 1-1 draw with Everton in a Premier League game yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Ancelotti sees red after VAR drama

AFP, Liverpool



Everton manager Carlo Ancelotti was sent off after approaching the referee as yet more VAR controversy contributed to a fiery finish in a 1-1 draw with Manchester United on Sunday.

Goalkeeping errors by both United's David De Gea and Everton's Jordan Pickford were central to the outcome at Goodison Park.

But Everton thought they had won the game in stoppage time when a shot from Dominic Calvert-Lewin, who had opened the scoring, deflected off United's Harry Maguire and into the net. The goal, however, was ruled out by VAR with the offside Gylfi Sigurdsson, lying in the path of De Gea, deemed to have obstructed the view of the keeper. Ancelotti was sent off after approaching referee Chris Kavanagh on the field after the final whistle and arguing the merits of that decision.

"He sent me off the pitch but then after that I had a long conversation with him that I would like to keep private," Ancelotti told Sky Sports. "I hope not because I did not disrespect the referee, he knows this."



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DECENTRALISATION INITIATIVE

Held back by lack of political will

Experts tell meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government initiative to decentralise several public service deliveries by transferring them to local government bodies has not been properly implemented even though a law was enacted for this nine years ago, said development practitioners and governance campaigners yesterday.

As a result, rural people are being deprived of quality services, they said at a views exchange meeting at the capital's Cirdap.

Governance Advocacy Forum (GAF), a platform of NGOs, arranged the meeting.

Speakers said bureaucratic and political unwillingness were the major obstacles and urged ministries concerned to take prompt action.

Referring to Upazila Parishad (Amendment) Act 2011, Ziaul Karim, coordinator of governance programme at the Manusher Jonno Foundation, said activities and manpower of 17 government bodies were transferred to upazila parishad.

The bodies include directorates of health, family planning, agricultural extension, fisheries, livestock, disaster management, social welfare and primary education.

But in reality, the government "lacks the political will" to hand over the functions of these offices to upazila parishad, he said while presenting the outcome of a survey

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



HIGH HOPES FOR HIGH TIDE... Goods-laden vessels are stuck at the confluence of Chaktai canal and the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram. Silt and accumulated waste has raised the bed and during low tide, the boats waste precious business hours stuck in mud, getting relief only when the tide comes in. This picture was taken from Chattogram's Marine Drive yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



Modi a citizen by birth, lacks documents

ANANDARAZAR ONLINE

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a citizen by birth but lacks documents to back the claim, his office has said in reply to a query recently made under the Right to Information act.

On February 17, a person named Shubhangkar Sarker asked if the prime minister possessed citizenship documents.

A secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, said that Modi was Indian by birth according to clause 3 of the Citizenship Act, 1955, reports Indian Bengali-language daily Anandabazar.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Indians can't be split along religious lines

Amartya Sen says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Voicing concern over the recent violence in north-east Delhi, Nobel laureate Amartya Sen said India is a secular country and people cannot be divided along religious lines.

"India is a centrally-ruled territory. We can't divide Hindus and Muslims. As an Indian citizen, I can't help but worry," reported our New Delhi correspondent quoting Sen.

Sen demanded an investigation to find out whether the Delhi Police was inefficient or there was

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

'Bangladesh will always remain with Soviet people'



Bangabandhu being warmly greeted by Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev in Kremlin on March 2, 1972.

MARCH 2, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MUIJIB-BREZHNEV TALKS

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev hold a discussion on the question of further developing and consolidating relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. The two leaders also discuss some international issues of mutual interest. Brezhnev greets the 'outstanding leader and the head of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



VIOLENCE OVER CAA

Death toll now 3 in Meghalaya

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

A 37-year-old man was killed by three unidentified people at his home in Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills district in the early hours yesterday, taking the toll from clashes over amended citizenship law and inner line permit issues in the Indian state to three, police said.

The situation was already tense following the death of two persons in separate attacks in Ichamati area in East Khasi Hills district on Friday and at state capital Shillong's lewduh market on Saturday.

After the clashes, curfew was imposed at noon in the two police station areas in Shillong while night curfew was imposed in the entire city.

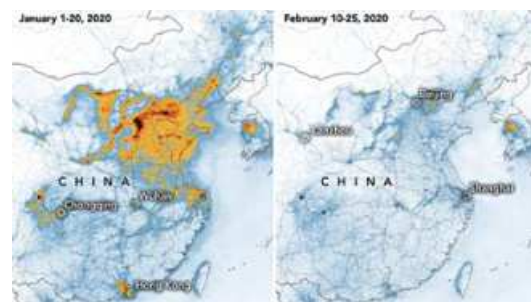
The night curfew was lifted from many parts of the city yesterday, reported our New Delhi correspondent.

However, East Khasi Hills district authorities said the curfew was extended in areas under the jurisdiction of Lumdingjri and Sadar police stations, and Cantonment Beat House over fears that there might be a serious breakdown of law and order in those places.

Mobile internet and messaging services have been temporarily suspended in six districts of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

CORONAVIRUS SLOWDOWN China sees dramatic drop in air pollution



MAIL ONLINE

Satellite images taken by US space agency Nasa have shown a dramatic decline in levels of air pollution over China, which is "partly" an outcome of the economic slowdown prompted by the coronavirus outbreak in the country, it said.

The Nasa maps showed that levels of nitrogen dioxide -- a noxious gas emitted by motor vehicles and industrial facilities -- are falling this year following a record decline in industrial activities in China as manufacturers stop work in a bid to contain coronavirus, report BBC and Daily Mail.

The reduction in nitrogen dioxide levels was first apparent in Wuhan city -- the epicentre of the virus outbreak -- but then spread across China, scientists at Nasa said.

Nasa compared the images from the first two months of 2020 with the same period last year.

The decline in China's air pollution levels

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

New Malaysia PM sworn in

Mahathir vows to fight on

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

A staunch Muslim nationalist backed by a scandal-mired party was sworn in as Malaysia's premier yesterday after a reformist government's collapse, but ex-leader Mahathir Mohamad, 94, slammed the move as illegal.

The Southeast Asian nation was plunged into turmoil after Mahathir's "Pact of Hope" alliance, which stormed to a historic victory in 2018, collapsed amid bitter infighting.

Mahathir initially quit as

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



PRAYER TIMING MARCH 2

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-15 12-45 4-30 6-05 7-30
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



This picture taken in Savar of mango buds carries the promise of culinary delights as it will not be long before Bangladesh's favourite fruit floods the market and becomes the preeminent item at homes, restaurants and food stalls across the country.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

মুজিব শতবর্ষ ১০০

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