

## Drug baron

FROM PAGE 16

Mahbubul said, adding that it would be handed over to his family members after all the procedures are completed.

On October 25, 2007, Rab arrested Amin and his partner Ahsanul Haque Hasan from their Gulshan office and seized 130,000 yaba pills from their possession.

On July 15, 2012, the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 of Dhaka sentenced 79 years of rigorous imprisonment to Amin and his partner Ahsanul in two cases filed with Gulshan Police Station.

On February 11, 2013, the HC granted bail to the businessman for six months on health grounds.

On May 5, the same year, following two government petitions, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court cancelled Amin's HC bail and directed him to surrender before the trial court.

On June 2, 2013, a Dhaka court sent Amin Huda to jail rejecting his bail petition after his surrender.

Amin was in prison for almost seven years since then.

During this period, he was admitted to different hospitals, including BSMMU and Birdem.

## Nine out of 10

FROM PAGE 16

Qatar and Nigeria, both at 99.73 percent.

Countries with the lowest population of those with sexist beliefs were Andorra, at 27.01 percent, Sweden with 30.01 percent and the Netherlands, 39.75 percent.

France, Britain and the United States each came in with similar scores, 56 percent, 54.6 percent and 57.31 percent of people respectively holding at least one sexist belief.

The numbers show "new clues to the invisible barriers women face in achieving equality" despite "decades of progress," the UN Development Programme said in a statement accompanying the report.

"The work that has been so effective in ensuring an end to gaps in health or education must now evolve to address something far more challenging: a deeply ingrained bias -- among both men and women -- against genuine equality," UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner said.

The agency called on governments and institutions to change discriminatory beliefs and practices through education.

Beyond inequalities in education, health and the economy, the statement also called out one of the report's most chilling findings: 28 percent of people believe it is okay for a man to beat his wife.

## Egypt

FROM PAGE 16

"We are in awe as to how he was able to create this structure, which has remained standing for 4,700 years," said Anani.

Restoration work stopped in 2011 after Egypt's popular uprising that toppled longtime President Hosni Mubarak, but resumed at the end of 2013.

Djoser's Step Pyramid, the first large-scale stone construction in history and the largest pyramidal funerary complex, is located at Saqqara archaeological site, west of Cairo.

The 60-metre-high pyramid consists of six stacked steps over a burial shaft tomb which is 28 metres deep and seven metres wide.

Speaking alongside the pyramid, Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly said Egypt was engaged in many large-scale projects, and the restoration of its heritage was one of them.

"Although of course we are very proud that this is an Egyptian legacy, we also know very well it is world and global heritage that we are very keen to maintain," he added.

The project saw efforts to prevent the pyramid from collapsing, and external and internal restoration work, including of the paths leading to the pyramid and the internal corridors leading to the burial chamber.

Experts also restored the sarcophagus of King Djoser within the pyramid and the walls of the burial shaft tomb.



Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and judges of Appellate and High Court divisions of the Supreme Court yesterday paid homage to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. They placed wreaths at his grave in Gopalganj's Tungipara upazila, as part of observing his birth centenary.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## India now a majoritarian state

FROM PAGE 16

reminiscent of the dark periods in India's history. Institutions of law and order have abandoned their dharma to protect citizens. Institutions of justice and the fourth pillar of democracy, the media, have also failed us.

**CHARRED SOUL OF THE NATION** With no checks, the fire of social tensions is rapidly spreading across the nation and threatens to char the soul of our nation. It can only be extinguished by the same people that lit it.

It is both futile and puerile to point to past instances of such violence in India's history to justify the present violence in the country. Every act of sectarian violence is a blemish on Mahatma Gandhi's India. Just in a matter of few years, India has slid rapidly from being a global showcase of a model of economic development through liberal democratic methods to a strife ridden majoritarian state in economic despair.

At a time when our economy is floundering, the impact of such social unrest will only exacerbate the economic slowdown. It is now well accepted that the scourge of India's economy currently is the lack of new investment by the private sector. Investors, industrialists and entrepreneurs are unwilling to undertake new projects and have lost their risk appetite. Social disruptions and communal tensions only compound their fears and risk aversion. Social harmony, the bedrock of economic development, is now under peril. No amount of tweaking of tax rates, showering of corporate incentives or goading will propel Indian or foreign businesses to invest, when the risk of eruption of sudden violence in one's neighbourhood looms large. Lack of investment means lack of jobs and incomes, which, in turn, means lack of consumption and demand in the economy. A lack of demand will only further suppress private investments. This is the vicious cycle that our economy is stuck in.

Adding to these self-inflicted woes is the real threat of the COVID-19 epidemic that has originated in China. It is still unclear how far this global health hazard will spread and impact the world. But it is very clear that we should be fully prepared and ready to

counter it. A health epidemic is one of the most dangerous threats that a nation can face. It is imperative that all of us collectively prepare to face this threat. We have not faced a public health crisis in contemporary times at the scale that the current crisis threatens to unfold. It is therefore important to launch a full-scale, mission-mode operation to counter this threat immediately.

**DEALING WITH COVID-19** Nations across the world have sprung into action to contain the impact of this epidemic. China is walling off major cities and public places. Italy is shutting down schools. America has embarked aggressively both to quarantine people as well as hasten research efforts to find a cure. Many other nations have announced various measures to address this issue. India too must act swiftly and announce a mission critical team that will be tasked with addressing the issue. There could be some best practices we can adopt from other nations.

Regardless of whether this virus will enter our shores on a large scale or not, it is now evident that the economic impact of COVID-19 will be very big. International bodies such as the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have already pronounced a sharp slowdown in global economic growth. There are reports that China's economy may even contract, which, if it happens, will be the first time since the Cultural Revolution of the 1970s. China today accounts for nearly a fifth of the global economy and a tenth of India's external trade. The forecast for the world economy is quite dire. This is sure to impact India's economic situation too. Millions of small and medium businesses in India that account for more than three-quarters of all formal employment are part of the global supply chain. In such an integrated global economy, the COVID-19 crisis can further slow India's GDP growth by half to one percentage point, other things being constant. India's economic growth was already tepid and this external health shock is bound to make things much worse.

**BRINGING IN REFORMS**

It is my belief that the government must quickly embark on a three point plan. First, it should focus all energies and efforts on containing the COVID-19 threat and prepare adequately. Two, it should withdraw or amend the Citizenship Act, end the toxic social climate and foster national unity. Three, it should put together a detailed and meticulous fiscal stimulus plan to boost consumption demand and revive the economy.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi must convince the nation, not merely through words but by deeds, that he is cognisant of the dangers we face and reassure the nation that he can help us tide over this as smoothly as we can. He must immediately provide details of the contingency plan for the threat of the COVID-19 scare. A moment of deep crisis can also be a moment of great opportunity. I recall that in 1991, India and the world faced a similar grave economic crisis, with a balance of payments crisis in India and a global recession caused by rising oil prices due to the Gulf War. But we were able to successfully turn this into an opportunity to reinvigorate the economy through drastic reforms. Similarly, the virus contagion and the slowing down of China can potentially open up an opportunity for India to unleash second-generation reforms to become a larger player in the global economy and vastly improve prosperity levels for hundreds of millions of Indians. To achieve that, we must first rise above divisive ideology, petty politics and respect institutional salience.

It is not my desire to offer a dire prognosis or to exaggerate fears. But I believe it is our solemn duty to speak truth to the people of India. The truth is that the current situation is very grim and morose. The India that we know and cherish is slipping away fast. Wilfully stoked communal tensions, gross economic mismanagement and an external health shock are threatening to derail India's progress and standing. It is time to confront the harsh reality of the grave risks we face as a nation and address them squarely and sufficiently.

*Dr Manmohan Singh was the Prime Minister of India from 2004 to 2014.*

## Brac ranked top NGO

FROM PAGE 16

Brac Global Board Chair Ameerah Haq.

After nearly five decades of experience in Bangladesh and beyond, Brac recently announced a new 2030 strategy that prioritises scaling its global reach, targeting participants with multiple interventions, and developing collaboration and knowledge-sharing leadership across the development sector.

Earlier in 2019, it formed a new Global Board to lead and implement this strategy.

"In the Brac Global Strategy, Sir Fazle has set an audacious goal for us, empowering at least 250 million people to have control over their

own livelihoods by 2030. We'll keep striving every day to make his vision a reality," Ameerah Haq added.

NGO Advisor Editor-in-Chief and CEO Jean-Christophe Nothias cited Brac's renewed commitment to innovation and impact and its advanced preparations to transition leadership and governance responsibilities to the next generation of leaders as key factors that contributed to the number one ranking.

"This 2020 list is launched with excitement as the social profit sector keeps growing and transforming the world, but also with sadness as the founder of Brac, Sir Fazle, passed away in 2019," wrote Jean-Christophe.

## A symbol of hope

FROM PAGE 16

agreement not only in bilateral relations but in their appreciation of world problems.

The Soviet Union has agreed to provide 38 million rubles as assistance for the ongoing projects in Bangladesh, informs the foreign minister. The rate of interest would be two percent instead of the two and a half percent earlier applicable to Soviet assistance for Pakistan. The Soviet Union will also provide 5 million rubles of commodity aid to Bangladesh, he adds.

Abdus Samad Azad further informs that the Soviet Union has agreed to give two ships, each with 1000-tonne capacity, 10 fishing trawlers with cold storage facilities, 50 locomotives for railways, 30,000 tonnes of rice and 5,000 tonnes of edible oil.

**SUBMIT WAR DOCUMENTS TO MUSEUM** Bangabandhu today appeals to the countrymen to submit the articles, documents and any other materials

that carry the mark or indicate anything related to the liberation struggle to the national museum in Dhaka. Bangabandhu makes the appeal while handing over to the curator of Dhaka Museum the Bangladesh flag, which was hoisted ceremonially on the Bangladesh Mission in Kolkata after the members of the mission expressed their allegiance to the Bangladesh Government formed at Mujibnagar.

**RELIEF OPERATIONS INTENSIFIED** The government has intensified relief operations with a clear-cut priority on distribution of food grains, and a crash programme for providing shelter, says a government handout. The transport facilities available in the country, including 12 mini-bulkers and three aircraft, have been deployed for movement of food grains to interior distribution points.

**JATIYA RAKKHI BAHINI ORDER** President Abu Sayeed Chowdhury makes an order titled 'The Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini Order 1972' which

comes into force at once and extends to the whole of Bangladesh.

**AGREEMENT ON REPAIR OF RAILWAY BRIDGES** The Indian government has entered into an agreement with the government of Bangladesh to repair and bring into commission four major railway bridges of Bangladesh during the next four months.

**SOURCES:** March 8, 1972 issues of Daimik Bangla, The Daily Ittefaq, Azad, Morning News, The Bangladesh Observer and Purbodesh.

## Six BGB men

FROM PAGE 16

Ishak was accused in the new case.

Five people, including a BGB soldier, were killed in Tuesday's clash.

The incident took place when labourers were loading tree trunks on a truck in the morning. After reaching there, a BGB team from Khagrachhari barred them, which led to the clash.

## Beating the odds

FROM PAGE 16

After she was married off to Proan Robi Das of Manikganj town in 1991 at the age of 12, she had to quit school because of pressures from her in-laws.

"They would not let me go to school wearing the uniform and insisted that I wear a saree. My school, on the other hand, did not allow any other attire except the uniform, so I had to drop out."

Then, astute Nelima found a way to continue her education. Using tutoring as an excuse to get out of the house, she got admitted to Open University and completed her secondary education.

"My family found out about my studies only when my SSC [Secondary School Certificate] result came out in 2004."

By then, she was a mother of three and needed money not just for her own education but also her children's.

In 2007, she got a full-time teaching job at a non-government organisation on a salary of Tk 2,500. The same year, she gave birth to her daughter, Mou Das.

All these responsibilities did not stop Nelima from earning her Higher Secondary Certificate in 2009 and the Bachelor of Arts degree in 2013.

Finally, she completed the LLB course from the Khondaker Nurul Hossain Law College in Manikganj in 2018.

"I want to be a lawyer because I wish to provide people with legal aid to fight discrimination," said Nelima, who is also making sure that her daughter and three

sons receive proper education.

Despite poverty and lack of family support, she never stopped her children's schooling.

Her eldest son Biplob Das Bappi is currently preparing for the Bachelor of Arts examination, which he missed in 2016 because of financial distress.

Her second son Pallab Das Niloy is studying civil engineering at Manikganj Technical School and College, while the third son Pranto Das Prem and daughter Mou are studying at the tenth and seventh grades.

"I want my children to live a dignified life."

Nelima is particularly keen about Mou's education because she does not want her daughter to face the same fate, she had endured.

"I have been subjected to scorn and neglect because of my dark skin. My daughter also has the same skin tone. I want her to be established and independent."

"Mou got GPA-5 in the PSC exams. She wants to become a doctor."

Nelima is currently working as a doctor's assistant at a clinic in Manikganj. She lost her job at the non-government organisation after its project ended in 2018.

She is also doing an apprenticeship under senior lawyer Abdur Rashid at Manikganj Judge Court every Sunday.

In 2018, Deputy Commissioner of Manikganj SM Ferdous honoured Nelima's perseverance with the government's Joyeeta award.

## 27 killed in attack on Afghan rally

FROM PAGE 16

a construction site near the ceremony in the city's west, which is largely Shia.

Photos on social media showed several dead bodies being collected after the attack.

President Ashraf Ghani condemned the massacre, calling it a "crime against humanity".

The ceremony was attended by many of the country's political elite, including Afghanistan's chief executive Abdullah Abdullah.

The interior ministry later confirmed to reporters that "all the high-ranking officials were safely evacuated from the scene".

"We left the ceremony following the gunfire, and a number of people were wounded, but I do not have any reports of martyred people for now," Hazara leader Mohammad Mohaqiq told Tolo News.

**CONTINUED VIOLENCE** The incident comes less than a week after the US and Taliban signed a deal that would pave the way for the complete withdrawal of foreign troops in 14 months.

The US withdrawal hinges to a great extent on the Taliban being able to control

jihadist forces such as the Islamic State group.

If such groups remain, so too does the American military.

Since the much-trumpeted deal signing, fighting has continued to rage across Afghanistan, casting a pall over hopes the agreement would lead to a reduction in violence and talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

IS, which follows a radical Sunni interpretation of Islam, first became active in Afghanistan in 2015 and for years held territory in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

It has claimed responsibility for a string of horrific bombings, including several in Kabul targeting the city's Shia community.

In recent months the group has been hit by mounting setbacks after being hunted for years by US and Afghan forces along with multiple Taliban offensives targeting their fighters.

Still, IS remains in Afghanistan, notably in eastern Kunar province near the Pakistan border, which also neighbours Nangarhar, as well as in Kabul.

## 3 Bangladeshis recover

FROM PAGE 1

critical state] condition slightly improved but was not stable. He is now in ICU."

He was the first Bangladeshi to be infected with COVID-19 in Singapore on February 9.

At least five Bangladeshis were infected with the virus between February 9 and February 16 in the country.

No non-resident Bangladeshi was reported to be infected with the virus so far except of Singapore, United Arab Emirates and Italy, Flora said.

Meanwhile, 23 Bangladeshis who went to India from Chinese city Wuhan were kept quarantined around 40 miles away from Delhi, she added.

According to the IEDCR, three Filipino sailors of a coal-laden ship who came to Mongla port from Indonesia were out of danger. However, they were kept under monitoring.

Flora said the sailors left Indonesia more than 14 days ago and had not left the ship ever since.

The ship -- MV Serenitas-N -- arrived at Mongla port via Chattogram on March 4 with 24,000 tonnes of coal.

As per the rule, a medical team went on the ship on the same night and conducted tests on the sailors. All three sailors had above 100 degrees Fahrenheit body temperature then.

About fake health tips that circulated on internet in the name of Unicef and drew criticism, the IEDCR director said, no such health tip was circulated by the organisation. She made the comment on behalf of Unicef.

Meanwhile, neighbouring country Bhutan reported its first case of the coronavirus after a US tourist tested positive, reported AFP.

The Bhutan government immediately shut borders to foreign visitors for two weeks in an effort to limit the impact of a disease that has wreaked havoc in more developed countries around the world.

The number of positive cases of novel Coronavirus or COVID-19 in India has risen to 31 with the latest being reported from West Delhi, where the patient has a travel history to Thailand and Malaysia.

The virus killed 3,412 people and infected over 1 lakh across the globe so far.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer, DPHE Pabna Division, Pabna Tel: 880-731-65754 E-mail: ee.pabna@dphe.gov.bd		
<b>Invitation for e-Tender Notice (2019-2020)</b>		
1	Ministry/Division	Local Government Division.
2	Implementing agency	Department of Public Health Engineering.
3	Project name	Village Water Supply Project.
4	e-Tender ID	436746
5	Tender publishing & opening date	04 May 2020 & 22 May 2020.
6	Description of works	1) Installation of 02 Nos. automated AIRP with pressure vessel (capacity 0.50m3/hour) under Village Water Supply Project of Department of Public Health Engineering in 1 No. Arsenic effected VWSP-TW at Division Office Campus & Bera Upazila Office Campus during the FY 2019-2020.
7	This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: <a href="http://www.eprocure.gov.bd">www.eprocure.gov.bd</a>	
<b>Md. Ahsan Habib</b> Executive Engineer, DPHE Pabna Division, Pabna		
GD-447		