

**CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**  
 Hundreds of girls, women have disappeared in Peru  
**SEE PAGE 6**

# The Daily Star

Premium Exterior Paint  
**BERGER WeatherCoat ANTIDIRT SUPREME 10 YEAR DURABILITY**

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**BANGLADESH UPDATE** **2,654** New cases in 24hrs **2,46,674** Total cases **3,267** Deaths **1,41,750** Recoveries **GLOBAL UPDATE** **706,464** Deaths **18,807,106** Total cases

## A murder in cold blood

*Slain Major (retd) Sinha's sister says in statement to magistrate; police asked to register it as regular case; Rab tasked with probing the incident*

STAR REPORT

Around 9:25pm on Friday, Inspector Liaqat Ali of Baharchhara Police Investigation Centre and Sub-inspector Nandadulal Raxit of Teknaf Police Station stopped Maj (retd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan's car at Shamlapur police checkpoint on Marine Drive in Teknaf.



While continuing to abuse Sinha and Shifat, Liaqat made a phone call to Pradeep Kumar Shaha, officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station. At one point, the inspector told the OC, "Alright. [I] am going to finish this scoundrel."

Before Sinha could realise anything, Liaqat fired several shots at him in cold blood.

In that car were Sinha and one of his associates Shahedul Islam Shifat. After Sinha revealed his identity to the policemen, the cops flung open the passenger door of the vehicle and dragged Shifat out.

As Shifat also told them who they were, the two policemen became furious. At this, Sinha came out with hands up and yet again said he was a former major of Bangladesh Army.

"I have seen many majors like you. I'll now show you how the game is played," Inspector Liaqat yelled at Sinha.

This is how Sinha's elder sister Sharmen Shahria Ferdush narrated the sequence of events that led to the death of her brother, in a case filed with Teknaf Senior Judicial Magistrate Court around 11:30am yesterday.

She accused nine people, including Liaqat, Pradeep and Nandadulal. Liaqat is the number one and Pradeep is the number two accused. The case mentioned 10 witnesses.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Tamanna Farha directed Teknaf Police Station to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



A view shows damages at the site of Tuesday's blast in Beirut's port area, Lebanon, yesterday. The death toll from the huge blast has risen to at least 113, Lebanon's Health Minister Hamad Hassan said. At least 4,000 people were also wounded, while dozens of people were still missing as rescue efforts continued, he told reporters.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Teknaf, the valley of 'gunfight'

*Marine Drive is a 'favourite spot'*

ZYMA ISLAM

At least 87 people have been killed in 48 incidents of "gunfights" involving Teknaf police alone between August 1, 2018 and August 1, 2020.

An analysis of reports published by The Daily Star during this period shows this figure.

Pradip Kumar took over as officer-in-charge of Teknaf Model Police Station on October 19, 2018.

A total of 107 incidents of "shootouts" in Cox's Bazar, including 48 in Teknaf, were recorded by this newspaper during the same two-year period. At least 184 people, including 65 Rohingyas, were killed in those incidents.

Apart from Teknaf police, Border Guard

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Death of ex-major 'isolated incident'

*Says army chief; IGP says 'crossfire' is an NGO term*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The killing of ex-major Sinha Md Rashed Khan is an isolated incident and it will not cause a rift in the relationship between the army and police, said Chief of Army Staff General Aziz Ahmed and Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed yesterday.

General Aziz and Benazir made the remarks at a joint briefing at Cox's Bazar Army Rest House

Sinha was shot at a police check-post on Marine Drive road in Teknaf upazila of the district on Friday.

A reporter at yesterday's briefing pointed out that "crossfires" took place frequently on Marine Drive road.

Benazir then said he would not use the word crossfire. NGOs use the word, he added, they bring money from abroad talking about different issues. There are many things they can say to justify that, and crossfire is one of them, he said.

About the investigation into Sinha's killing, he said, "We can assure you that the government-formed probe body will conduct the investigation impartially."

The relationship between army and police has been good for almost 50 years as both forces have confidence in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Aziz Ahmed Benazir Ahmed

## HC can't ask JS to enact or amend law

*Says top court in verdict in a river grabbing case*

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The High Court does not have the jurisdiction to enact or amend any law, said the Supreme Court in the full text of a verdict regarding river grabbing and pollution.

It said the HC Division had exceeded its jurisdiction while delivering a verdict on the recovery of the land of the Turag from two companies.

"The High Court Division may pass necessary directions to the authorities concerned to protect the biodiversity, ecological balance and environment of Bangladesh. But, the High Court cannot direct the parliament to enact or amend a law or declare any principle to be part

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

## BEIRUT EXPLOSION

### Four Bangladeshis among the dead

*80 others including 21 navy personnel injured; death toll tops 100*

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

At least four Bangladeshis have been killed and around 100 others, including Bangladesh Navy officials, have been injured in a deadly warehouse explosion in Lebanon's capital Beirut on Tuesday.

Bangladesh embassy in Lebanon's Head of Chancery Abdullah Al Mamun confirmed this to The Daily Star at 8:00pm yesterday.

Two of the dead were identified as Mehedi Hasan from Brahmanbaria, and Mizan from Madaripur. Both of them were working as cleaners in an area close to the warehouse where the explosion took place.

Mamun said they had both been working in Lebanon legally for the last several years.

The other two were identified as Rezaul and Rassel Miah, both from Brahmanbaria. The blast, which was possibly caused due to huge amounts of explosives being stored together, killed around 100 people and injured around 4,000.

The tragedy struck while the country is still suffering from months of political and economic crises and a global pandemic.

Of the injured Bangladeshis, 21 are from Bangladesh Navy ship "Bijoy", which was deployed under peacekeeping mission United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) Maritime Task Force.

One Navy official was injured severely in the explosion, said a press release by Inter Services Public Relations Directorate (ISPR).

All the injured navy officials were undergoing treatment at the

MORE ON PAGE 6

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## Hasina seeks more Japanese investment

*Talks to Abe over phone on pandemic assistance, Japan-funded projects*

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has sought more investment from Japan to further bolster economic ties as well as put emphasis on further strengthening bilateral cooperation between the two friendly nations.

The PM was talking to her Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe over phone yesterday afternoon.

During the nearly 25-minute conversation that began around 1:05pm, the two leaders discussed issues related to

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BANGLADESH GETS FIRST TRANCHE OF \$1B JAPANESE LOAN - PAGE 12

## Several cities, large towns see spike in Covid cases

*Says WHO report on Bangladesh; 33 die, 2,654 infected in a day*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some large towns and cities have been witnessing a spike in Covid-19 cases.

The World Health Organization in its latest situation report divided the country in five segments according to the severity of the outbreak, below 250 per million people being the lowest and 2,000 per million the highest.

Bhola, Bagerhat, Jashore, Kushtia, Pabna, Natore, Sirajganj, Chapainawabganj, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Sherpur, and Netrakona districts are in the segment with the lowest number of cases.

The number of people per million infected with the coronavirus gives a glimpse of the severity, officials said.

The highest rate is in Dhaka where about 14,824 people per

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



People arrive in the capital after spending the Eid in their hometowns. Train and bus terminals were crowded over the last couple of days with people returning to work after the holidays. The photo was taken at Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Fun trip turns into tragedy

*17 drown as boat sinks in Netrakona haor*

STAR REPORT

At least 17 people drowned as a boat capsized in Gobindasree Haor in Madan upazila of Netrokona yesterday.

Forty-eight people were on the boat and enjoying a post-Eid get-together programme before the accident took place around 12:00 noon, said police.

The victims are teachers, students and guardians of Kunapara Markajul Sunna Madrasa in Sadar upazila of Mymensingh, said AKM Manirul Islam, additional superintendent of Mymensingh police.

Shamsul Islam, sub-inspector of Madan Police Station, said 17 bodies were recovered as of 4:30 pm. The divers of fire service conducted the rescue operation there.

Freedom fighter Idris Ali lost his eldest son in the boat capsized. The 85-year-old was wailing, "Even yesterday I was telling my son that he might have had to say my Janaza prayers soon as I was not doing well."

The people who died in the incident are Hafez Maulana Md Mahfuzur Rahman, 35, principal (Mohtamim), his two sons Masqur Hasan, 11, and Mahub Hasan, 17, both madrasa students; Mahfuz's niece Lubana Akter, 12, and Julfa Akter, 9; Maulana Zakir Hossain, 25, Mujahid, 16, and Hafez Jubayer, 25; Hafez Maulana Hamidul Islam, 35, Saiful Islam Ratan, 30, Jahidul Islam, 20, Shafiqul Islam, 40, Shahidul Islam, 35, and Ichha Mia, 40.

All of them hailed from Konapara and its adjacent villages in Char Sirta union of Mymensingh Sadar upazila. Meanwhile, the death toll in two other boat capsized incidents in Manikganj and Habiganj rose to eight.

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It's a clear

FROM PAGE 3
dissent and the State is using frequent intimidation and harassment as a tool to stifle Kashmiri journalists, the statement said.

"Many journalists in Jammu and Kashmir have been arrested, detained, and interrogated for reporting under the lockdown, without any legitimate reason given by the authorities," it added.

Additionally, the Indian government has now implemented a New Media Policy 2020 for Jammu and Kashmir, which further increases the government's control over journalists and press in the region.

Article 19 said this policy gives Jammu and Kashmir's Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) the de facto right to exercise pre- and post-publication control over all journalism in the territory for the next five years.

"This is of great concern, considering that a year has gone by with no stop to the violence and ease of the restrictions put on Jammu and Kashmir and this new policy essentially giving the government a leeway to prosecute and discredit any journalist who stand to critique the State," said Faruq Faisal.

Global

FROM PAGE 12
Trump said the coronavirus outbreak is as under control as it can get in the United States.

"They are dying, that's true," Trump said in an interview with the Axios news website. "It is what it is. But that doesn't mean we aren't doing everything we can. It's under control as much as you can control it. This is a horrible plague."

Erosion hits 10 districts

FROM PAGE 12
day. Now, my family of seven has become homeless.

In Manikganj, over 500 houses and various establishments have already been washed away by flood water. A total of 7,645 square metres in six upazilas have gone under water.

In Brahmanbaria, around 50 houses, around four square kilometres of land, one kitchen market, one mosque and five rice mills have been devoured by the river in the last month.

Pradip Chandra Das, a school teacher of Panishwar village under Sarail upazila, said, "We are struggling to prevent river erosion. Many of this area have lost their homes."

In Sunamganj, as flood water recedes, many riverside areas are facing extreme river erosion.

Most of the rivers have become shallow over decades and water recedes slowly, causing erosion, said Md Sabibur Rahman, executive engineer of WDB in Sunamganj.

In Tangail, 780 houses were lost to erosion at six upazilas over the last month. Besides, two educational institutions at Kalihati and Nagarpur upazilas and one religious institution also went into the rivers, according to official data.

The erosion by Pungli river, a branch of the Jamuna, also hit the Tangail town protection embankment had at several points.

In Sirajganj, over 200 houses, a mosque and a huge amount of livestock was lost to flood at Songacha area under Sadar upazila, said locals.

Most of the people could not move their houses, livestock and other valuables as erosion was quick.

"I saw my house and poultry farm of 500 chickens going under water in the span of one and a half hours," said Aminul Islam, a

resident of Pachthakuri village. The sudden erosion was due to the huge pressure of water, said Md Shafikul Islam, executive engineer of Sirajganj WDB.

In Nilphamari, the river devoured 215 houses and around 200 acres of cultivable land in the last five days. Over 500 people displaced by river erosion have moved to safer places.

Aroz Ali, 65, of Char Kharibari shoal, under Dimla upazila, said, "Around 32 houses of our village went under water in the last few days as the Teesta started receding with a circular current."

In Gaibandha, many houses, temples, schools and cropland went under water during the recent floods.

Our Correspondents from Lalmonirhat, Tangail, Manikganj, Brahmanbaria, Nilphamari, Bogura, Pabna and Sylhet contributed to the story.

3 schoolgirls raped

FROM PAGE 12
According to the police official, one of the three victims went out of her home following family feud on the day. On information, rest of the two offered her company and they went to the town's Tiger Pass area together around 8:30pm.

Following their movement, a man asked them about their issue and offered them accommodation for the night. He then called the two accused.

On information, the duo came to the spot and took the girls to a house in Khulshi area. There, they raped the girls overnight and fled the scene in the morning.

Later, the victims lodged a complaint with police with the help of their family members. The law enforcers then arrested the duo early yesterday and produced them before the court.

Dhaka gets first tranche

FROM PAGE 12
And the agreement signed yesterday between ERD Secretary Fatima Yasmin and Japanese Ambassador Ito Naoki and JICA Country Chief Hayakawa Yuho were for the first tranche of the loan, he said.

"Like the others, Japan do not sign agreements for the entire loan amount at once. They do it in phases."

The remaining portion of the loan would be given in two phases soon, he said requesting anonymity as he is not authorised to speak with the media.

The first tranche, which is of \$320 million (35 billion yen), would be used to fund the government's stimulus packages amounting to Tk 103,117 crore, which is about 3.7 percent of the country's GDP, announced to shake off the ill effects of the pandemic.

"This is timely support for Bangladesh amid the COVID crisis," the Economic Relations Division said in a press release yesterday.

The funds will contribute to the health and economic recovery, which will eventually contribute to promoting the country's social and economic stabilisation

and development efforts, it added.

The interest on the loan would be 0.01 percent and the repayment period 15 years including a four-year grace period, according to the ERD press release.

The loan would not have any impact on the financing of the projects JICA have already committed, the ERD official said.

Japan is the single largest bilateral development partner of Bangladesh, providing financial support for the country's socioeconomic development. Until June, Japan has provided \$14.23 billion in official development assistance.

The Far East nation will provide another \$1.7 billion to Bangladesh under the 41st ODA package for seven ongoing projects.

The projects include the construction of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib railway bridge that would go over the Jamuna river, the Matarbari ultra supercritical coal-fired power plant and the Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit.

The loan agreement is expected to be signed next week, another ERD official told The Daily Star yesterday wishing not to be named.

Death anniv of Kamaluddin observed

CRITY DESK



The 8th death anniversary of Advocate Alhaj Kamaluddin Ahmed Khan, a former member of the Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association, was observed on August 1, says a press release.

His relatives, friends and well-wishers were asked to pray for salvation of his soul.

Kamaluddin, father of Anis A Khan, former managing director and CEO of Mutual Trust Bank Ltd, was a philanthropist.

He was born in Chattogram on February 19, 1927. He passed BA from Chittagong College in 1947 and obtained the LLB degree in 1962 from Chittagong Law College.

He was awarded "The Governor of Bengal Medal" in 1942 for his service in Assam during the Second World War. He also served as port commissioner of Chittagong Port and as Honorary Chief Warden of Civil Defence, Chittagong.

He founded Patharghata Girls High School.

KL to deport

FROM PAGE 12
immigration department was informed that the earliest flight available from Kuala Lumpur to Dhaka was at the end of August, said The Star report.

Rayhan is alleged to have made false allegations on Malaysia's treatment of illegal immigrants in its fight against the Covid-19 pandemic when he was interviewed in an Al Jazeera documentary.

He was arrested on July 24 by a team of immigration officers from the Putrajaya office and has been remanded. Rayhan has since apologised.

Rights groups and global journalists' platforms condemned Malaysia's moves to arrest and deport Rayhan for criticising the government's treatment of migrant workers on a news show, saying such moves underscored the country's backsliding on press freedom in recent months, Voice of America reported yesterday.

Combined with the pressure on Al-Jazeera, Rayhan's arrest "clearly shows that the current authorities in Malaysia don't tolerate any independent reporting and consequently have very little respect for press freedom," said Daniel Bastard, Asia Pacific director for Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

Rights groups said Rayhan's arrest will also make the millions of migrant workers in Malaysia all the more reluctant to speak to the press about alleged abuses, raising the risk that they will fester, according to the VoA report.

"Now the implication is that most other migrant workers will be completely afraid of speaking out," said Watshlah Naidu, executive director of Malaysia's Centre for Independent Journalism.

Matthew Bugher, Asia programme director for freedom of expression advocates Article 19, said the arrest will further "stifle the media's ability to bring... abuses to light".

Bangabandhu

FROM PAGE 12
also appeals to people to observe austerity in their day-to-day lives.

EROSION THREATENS CHANDPUR TOWN

Four salt factories have been eaten up by the Meghna erosion in Chandpur. Pura Bazar is also facing threat of total extinction from erosion. The overall flood situation in the northern part of the country is improving as water is receding.

RELIEF TALKS WITH INDIA

The three-day conference between Bangladesh and India on refugee rehabilitation and relief requirements concludes today. The Indian team is led by Relief and Labour Minister RK Khadilkar while the Bangladeshi side is headed by Relief and Rehabilitation Minister AHM Kamaruzzaman.

SOURCES: August 7, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.



NRB Bank Ltd celebrated its seventh anniversary at the bank's corporate head office in the capital on Tuesday. Due to the pandemic, the bank's management decided to celebrate using digital platforms. NRB Bank Managing Director and CEO Mamoon Mahmood Shah and Deputy Managing Director Md Khurshed Alam were present.

INVITATION FOR TENDER
Pubali Bank Limited, the largest online commercial bank in Bangladesh is hereby inviting sealed tenders from the eligible Tenderers, who can participate in any or all of the following tender, but in separate envelope as defined in the tender documents of the under mentioned work as per terms & conditions stated below:

Tagore
FROM PAGE 12
Academy, Shishu Academy and different government and non-government institutions and cultural organisations have set up programmes on a limited scale.

The wait
FROM PAGE 12
centuries is ending," Modi said in a speech, after taking off a white mask that he wore as a novel coronavirus precaution. "See the amazing power of Lord Ram. Buildings were destroyed, there was a lot of effort to eradicate his existence, but Ram remains in our mind even today."

জমি বিক্রয়
৫ কাঠার দক্ষিণ কর্ণার প্লট নং ১১, রোড-৪১৫, সেক্টর-৮, পূর্বাঞ্চল আইকন টাওয়ার ও বানিজ্য মেলা কাছাকাছি। ০১৭১৫-০৩৯২২৬

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বিজ্ঞান, প্রকৃতি (বাংলা ভাষান) প্রকৃতি (ইংরেজি ভাষান) নিবা (বাংলা ভাষান) নিবা (ইংরেজি ভাষান)
আবেদনের ন্যূনতম যোগ্যতা
Online-এর মাধ্যমে ঢাকা সিটি কলেজকে পছন্দের তালিকায় এক নম্বর রেখে আবেদন করতে হবে। আবেদনের সময় ধনা 'ধনসর্পি' নির্বাচন করতে হবে।

World Health Organization Bangladesh
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
The World Health Organization in Bangladesh invites proposals/bids using "Two-envelope system" from the interested Companies in Bangladesh for the following service:

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh			
Office of the Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (Telecom) Bangladesh Railway 16, Abdul Gani Road, Rail Bhaban, Dhaka-1000			
<b>Invitation for Tender of WD3 Package Under Construction of Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line Project (International)</b>			
1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Railways.		
2. Agency	Bangladesh Railway.		
3. Procuring entity name	Project Director, Construction of Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line Project, Bangladesh Railway, Kamalapur, Dhaka. Telephone: 8801711505313 e-mail: gmp@railway.gov.bd		
4. Procuring entity code	Not used at present.		
5. Procuring entity district	Dhaka.		
6. Invitation for	Package No. WD3: Construction of Non-interlocked color light Signaling System for all stations (09) including construction of Telecommunication System with optical fiber.		
7. Invitation References No.	54.01.0000.501.16.015.17-1394		
8. Date	30.07.2020		
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>			
9. Procurement method	One Stage Two Envelope (International) (within Indian firms or Contractors only).		
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>			
10. Budget and source of fund	GOB and Indian Line of Credit (LOC).		
11. Development partners	Government of India through Exim Bank of India.		
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>			
12. Project/programme code	5560		
13. Project name	Construction of Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line.		
14. Tender Package No.	WD-3.		
15. Tender package name	Package No. WD3: Construction of Non-interlocked color light Signaling System for all stations (09) including construction of Telecommunication System with optical fiber.		
16. Tender publication date	30.07.2020		
17. Tender document last selling date	22.09.2020 (during office hour).		
18. Tender closing date and time	Date: 23.09.2020 Time: Up to 12.00 hrs BST		
19. Tender opening date and time	Date: 23.09.2020 Time: 12.30 hrs BST		
20. Name & address of the office(s):			
Selling of tender document (principal)	Office of the Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (CSTT)/(Telecom), Bangladesh Railway, Rail Bhaban, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka-1000. Telephone: 88029562365 E-mail: cstet@railway.gov.bd, dstethq@railway.gov.bd		
Selling of document (others)	Office of the Project Director, Construction of Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line, Bangladesh Railway, Kamalapur, Dhaka. Mobile: 8801711505313 e-mail: gmp@railway.gov.bd		
Receiving of tender document	Office of the Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (CSTE)/(Telecom), Bangladesh Railway, Rail Bhaban, Dhaka-1000. Telephone: 88029562365 Email: cstet@railway.gov.bd, dstethq@railway.gov.bd		
Opening of tender document	Office of the Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (CSTE)/(Telecom), Bangladesh Railway, Rail Bhaban, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka-1000. Telephone: 88029562365 E-mail: cstet@railway.gov.bd, dstethq@railway.gov.bd		
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>			
21. Eligibility of tenderer	Tenderers only from India. The tenderer of India shall have a minimum of 5 (five) years of overall experience as prime contractor in the supply, installation, testing & commissioning of Non-Interlocked and/or Interlocked Colour Light Signaling System and optical fiber based Telecommunication network with IP transmission network based voice and data for Railway use or any other purposes in India and/or outside India.		
22. Brief description of works and services	Design, supply, installation, testing, commissioning and related services of non-interlocked color light Signaling System at all stations (Nine stations) and optical fiber based Telecommunication System in connection with construction of railway line from Khulna to Mongla Port.		
23. Brief description of related services	Design, installation, testing, commission and maintenance of Signaling and Telecommunication System with providing training, spare materials.		
24. Price of tender document (Tk)	BDT 10,000.00 (ten thousand) in cash (non-refundable).		
25. Package No.	Identification of package	Location	Completion time in months
WD-3	Construction of Non-interlocked color light Signaling System for all stations (09) including construction of Telecommunication System with optical fiber.	Khulna to Mongla Port	Eight (08) months
26. Tender security amount	BDT 50,00,000.00 in favour of Financial Advisor & Chief Accounts Officer (Project), Bangladesh Railway, Kamalapur, Dhaka.		
<b>EMPLOYER DETAILS</b>			
27. Name of official inviting application	Ahmed Istiaque Johur.		
28. Designation of official inviting application	Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (DSTE)/(Telecom), HQ Bangladesh Railway, Rail Bhaban, Dhaka.		
29. Address of official inviting application	Office of the Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (CSTE)/(Telecom), Bangladesh Railway, Rail Bhaban, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka-1000. Telephone: +88029562365 Email: cstet@railway.gov.bd, dstethq@railway.gov.bd		
30. Contact details of official inviting application	Mobile: +8801711-500893 Email: dstethq@railway.gov.bd		
31. The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the applications or hold the application proceedings.			
<b>Ahmed Istiaque Johur</b> DSTE (Telecom) HQ Bangladesh Railway Rail Bhaban, Dhaka			



A worker sorts pineapple harvested from the field of Nazrul Islam at Moterbazar under Mohishmara union in Tangail's Madhupur upazila. Below, Nazrul, who cultivates the fruit without using any hormone, holds a Jaldugi variety of ripe pineapple at his orchard.

PHOTO: STAR

## Famous Madhupur pineapples getting back taste and flavour

A section of growers returning to its hormone-free cultivation

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

When the famous Madhupur pineapple started losing its reputation amid use of excessive hormones for increasing the size and early ripening of the popular fruit, several growers returned to its production in natural ways, bringing back its original taste and flavour.

One of them, Nazrul Islam of Moterbazar area under Mohishmara union

cultivated 'Honey Queen' (locally called Jaldugi) pineapples on three acres and 'Giant Q' (locally called Calendar) varieties on one acre of his lands this season.

Awal Mahmud, director of Nirapod Khadya Andolon, a private organisation in the district town, bought around 60,000 Jaldugi and 10,000 Calendar variety of pineapple from Nazrul with advance payment.

They are taking away the pineapples from the orchard every week on trucks and selling these to wholesalers at different places including Dhaka and Tangail.

Mirza Shajahan, quality controller of the organisation, said the hormone-free pineapples, which are juicy and tasty, have got



so much popularity that the stock is sold out within a short time.

Demand of pineapple is also high this year as people want to take the nutritious fruit during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, he said.

A pair of Jaldugi is selling at Tk 50 to Tk 60 while Calendar, a larger variety, at Tk 70 to Tk 80, he added.

Asma Khan, a housewife of Victoria Road in the town, said she bought 10 Jaldugi pineapples from them at Tk 250.

It is really tasty and have good flavour, she added.

Pineapple grower Nazrul, who does a government job in Tangail, said he started cultivating pineapple five years ago but he produced the fruits without using any hormones for the first time this year, being inspired by Sanwar

Hossain, another pineapple grower in adjacent Garobazar area.

"I have spent around Tk 3 lakh for the cultivation and hope to sell the produces for Tk 10 lakh. I shall cultivate the fruit on a larger area the next season," he said.

Contacted, Sanwar Hossain said he has been producing pineapples without using hormones since 2015 and following him several others in the upazila also started doing so.

"Local growers use hormones to make pineapples larger and ripen it faster for getting early market and sell the popular fruit for higher prices. The representatives of the hormone producing companies also encourage them to use the hormones in the fruits," he said.

Now with the resumption of hormone-free pineapple cultivation by some growers, reputation of the famous Madhupur pineapple along with its real taste and flavour is returning, he said.

Like many others, Shamsul Haque, a large-scale pineapple grower of Aushnara area uses hormones in his fruits.

Asked why he uses the hormones, Shamsul said the pineapple produced without using

hormone is small in size and looks dark green but the buyers like large yellow colour fruits.

"The wholesalers prefer the fruits ripened with hormone as it lasts about double time than the fruits that ripen naturally."

Moreover, I can take specific amount of the fruit to the market by ripening it with hormones. Otherwise, the fruits ripens on the orchard at a time and I incur loss for not getting sufficient buyers," he added.

Madmul Hasan, upazila agriculture officer in Madhupur, said around two lakh tonnes of pineapple is produced on around 6,500 hectares of land in Madhupur upazila every year.

It is also cultivated on over 3,000 hectares of land at adjacent Ghatail upazila in Tangail and Fulbaria upazila in Mymensingh.

"The hormones that the local pineapple growers use are not so harmful. However, use of the hormones has been reduced a lot," he said.

"The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation is looking for a land in Madhupur for setting up a food processing factory based on pineapple and other fruits produce here," he added.

## Woman found dead in Jashore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Police recovered the hanging body of a housewife from her in-law's house in Jashore's Manirampur upazila on Tuesday night.

The deceased, Sharmin Khatun, 20, mother of a girl child, was wife of Raju Ahmed of Madhupur village in the upazila.

Victim's father Abdus Salam, however, claimed that his daughter was murdered in a pre-planned way as there had a feud between him and his son-in-law Raju for the last couple of months. Police recovered the body and sent it to Jashore General Hospital for autopsy.

## HC can't ask JS to enact

FROM PAGE 1

of the law," the Appellate Division of the SC said in the verdict.

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

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

It directed the Election Commission to disqualify people responsible for river grabbing and pollution from running for public office. It declared the principle of compensations made by the river polluters as a part of the law.

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

The HC in its verdict asked the government to recover the land of the

Turag under the possession of Nishut Jute Mills Ltd of Hameem Group and Hossain Dyeing and Printing Mills Ltd of Anwar Group.

Challenging the HC verdict, jute mills and the dyeing company appealed with the SC. The top court rejected the appeals on February 4 this year.

However, the SC held an additional hearing on February 17 and passed a short judgement the same day.

The SC recently released the full text of the verdict after four judges concerned of the apex court, led by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, signed it.

In the verdict, the Appellate Division said the HC cannot give such directives in accordance with the law.

However, the three directives of the HC mentioned could be its opinions or suggestions in such matter of public interest, the SC said in the full text of the verdict.

The Appellate Division observed,

"The government must be very cautious about deciding the matter and the government shall not under any circumstances lease or sell any land within the boundary of the river Turag, including its foreshore areas or for that matter, any other river of Bangladesh to protect the biodiversity, ecological balance and environment of Bangladesh".

"The government or authorities concerned must bear in mind that at the time of survey it shall always start survey from CS [cadastral survey] map and then go to RS [revisional survey] map and not the other way round," the apex court said.

Lawyer Manzill Murshid, who moved the writ petition before the HC and placed arguments before the Appellate Division on behalf of the writ petitioner Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, told The Daily Star yesterday that the government, following the SC verdict, could recover the land in possession of the companies.



**OBITUARY**  
Abdul Mannan, one of the Founders and Chairman of Bengal Airlift Group passed away on Tuesday, 04 August 2020 at 9:15 PM in Evercare Hospital, Dhaka. Inna Lillahi wa inna Ilaichi Raji'un.

He was 78 years old and was suffering from several health complications for the last few days.

He was Fellow & Member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (FCMA), London, UK. During his successful and illustrious career spanning four decades, he was the quintessential person in establishing Bengal Airlift Group as a pioneer in travel, logistics and supply chain solutions. The major business concerns of the Group are Bengal Airlift Limited, Bengal Knittex Ltd., Bengal NFK Textiles Ltd., Air Alliance Ltd. (Authorized service contractor of UPS) and many others.

He was an esteemed former Member of Parliament from 1991-2006, former State Minister for Civil Aviation & Tourism, former State Minister for Ministry of Textiles, former Chairman of Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture, former Director of Finance and Managing Director of Biman Bangladesh Airlines from August 1978 to May 1982, former Director of Finance in Bangladesh Tanneries Corporation and Bangladesh Forest Industries Corporation.

He was also former President of South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA), former Council Member of The Institute of Cost and Management Accountants (ICMA), former President of Pacific Asia Travel Association Bangladesh Chapter (PATA), Past District Governor of Rotary International (Zilla-3280) Bangladesh and Member of Dhaka Stock Exchange.

His Namaz-E-Janaza was held on 5 August 2020 in four different places, including his birthplace at Nawabganj and his burial completed in Azimur Graveyard, Dhaka.

He is survived by his daughter, son-in-law, grandchildren and a host of admirers and well-wishers. We offer our deepest condolences and pray for eternal salvation of his departed soul.



# A book's plea for a better internet

ZIHAD AZAD

"Happily, the Web is so huge that there's no way any one company can dominate it," wrote Tim Berners-Lee, the man who invented the World Wide Web (WWW) in 1999. In retrospect, this statement might seem naïve. But early adopters—both developers and users—truly saw the internet as a decentralising and democratising force, while traditional media at the time scoffed at it as nothing more than a hipster sub-cultural obsession. That being said, was that utopia ever within grasp? What if the internet was never a post-racial, egalitarian space to begin with, and only recently did its many problems balloon out of proportion due to its pervasive presence in our lives?

In *Lurking: How a Person Became a User* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020), author Joanne McNeil prods at this question as she charts a history of the internet from the early days of AOL forums and CompuServe chat rooms to today's Facebook and WhatsApp, from the vantage point of an early user.

As a 'lurker' in the early 1990s—which in internet parlance is a silent observer who explores the conventions and norms of an online community before deciding to actively engage—McNeil witnessed the internet when it was compartmentalised like walled gardens,

and the primary objective of AOL (the first ever ISP) was to keep its users engaged solely with its own content. Back then, a person's identity online was plastic. Tethered only to a username, the chance to reinvent one's image on the internet seemed limitless.

However, after the dotcom crash paved the way for surveillance capitalism to become the *modus operandi* in Silicon Valley, online visibility was forcefully tied to the user's real-life identity under the guise of authentication. But authenticity, taken to its logical limits, becomes an act of totalisation. Google has assigned a user identification number to every single human being on earth. Facebook, in classical Orwellian fashion, refuses to acknowledge those who do not use its platform by calling them "unregistered" users. And with visibility on the internet now fastened to a person on the ground, cases of online harassment and exploitation are skyrocketing.

This book is notoriously difficult to pigeonhole. At times it reads like an autobiography; other times it is historical, socio-political, and philosophical, all the while providing a critique of the internet. It tries to shoehorn so many things into its 300-page breadth that several key points were

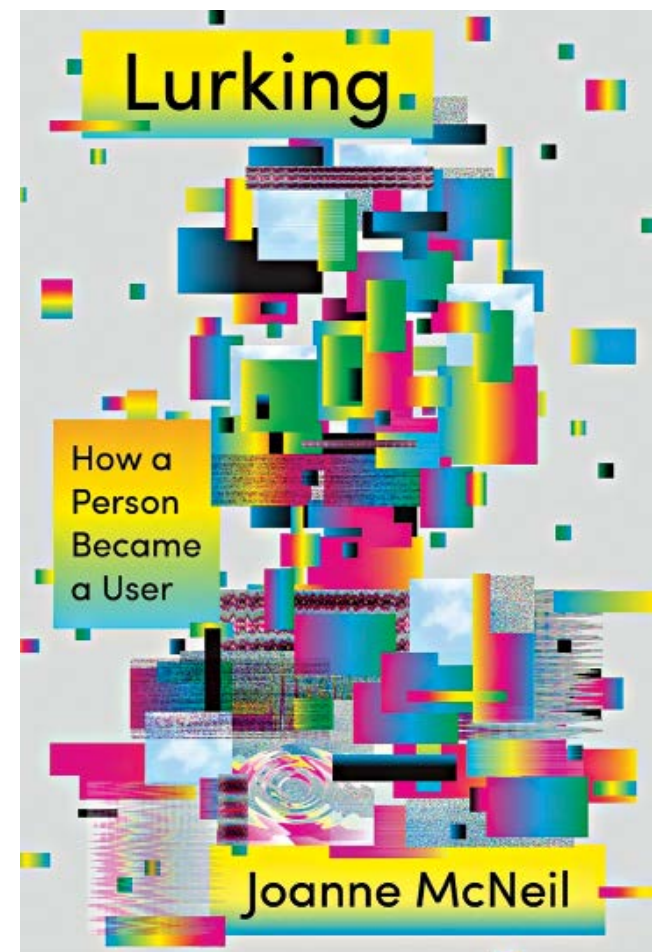
bound to suffer from under-analysis. The author exacerbates the problem by constantly employing '90s East Coast metaphors, and not the ones accessible to a larger global readership, like *Seinfeld* or *Friends*.

However, as she volleys past Friendster and Myspace in the early 2000s and arrives at present-day internet, she hones her critical tone to a near-perfect pitch. She presciently points out that stringent regulation can only accomplish so much when the individual shares such a lopsided asymmetry of power in favour of the tech giants. Similarly, promises of self-regulation by the Silicon Valley executives can only yield superficial changes rather than address deeply ingrained structural problems. Breaking up social media behemoths without de-commodification of the user can only serve as a stopgap, while nationalisation would augur a Big Brother-esque scenario in which government bodies like CIA would have access to users' personal data.

She occasionally gives vent to her resentment at the traditional media for not intervening earlier with sharp criticism of the Big Tech. But how much of the fault lies with the news media is open to debate. Any critical piece in, say, the *NY times* would have been

counteracted by scores of blog posts and *YouTube* motivational videos that slavishly celebrate the genius of the near-mythical "entrepreneur" (think of the millennial obsession with Elon Musk). In any case, it is unrealistic to expect hard-hitting analyses of Silicon Valley unicorns when the angel investors that back them also own all the major media outlets. These companies succeeded with their anti-competitive practices because proper regulatory bodies that could have checked them from the outset failed to emerge as surveillance capitalism rode the coattails of early '80s neoliberal economic policies. Blaming it all on the press reveals the obvious blind spots in McNeil's analysis. Her enduring achievement, however, is demonstrating that the present-day internet is basically the white cis-male monoculture foregrounded to the mainstream, especially after the dotcom crash purged all other alternative avenues like Café Los Negros. The meandering tone of the book might be an issue for the casual reader. Otherwise, it is worth a read.

Zihad Azad works as a research assistant at the BUET nanophotonic research group, with primary focus on plasmonic nanolasers.



FROM PAGES TO PIXELS

## 'Shirley' crystallises the contested legacy of Shirley Jackson

SHEHRIN HOSSAIN

*Shirley* (2020), directed by Josephine Decker and adapted by Sarah Gubbins from the 2014 eponymous novel by Susan Scarf Merrell, interweaves fact and fiction into an imagined narrative about the time when author Shirley Jackson was writing her second novel *Hangsaman* (1951). Yet the film places it close to the end of her life, when the writer famously suffered from crippling agoraphobia. This is clearly intentional as Jackson's illness is easy to glamorise along with her existing reputation as a writer of gothic horror and psychological thrillers. The psychologically chaotic viewing experience of *Shirley* is a palpable embodiment of the experience of reading Jackson—suffocating and dizzying with its disorienting camera work and cacophonous background score.

Upon their first meeting in the film, Shirley serves their houseguest Rose with a long, searching look, saying, "No one said you were pregnant," while silent shock creeps into the latter's face. The narrative is heavy with such moments that revel in the imagined magical abilities of writer-witch Shirley. The hallucinatory quality of the film gradually builds in pace and intensity, and by the time the climax arrives, the viewer no longer knows what's real. Given that Decker's stated aim was to "[make] the audience feel like they [are] inside of a Shirley Jackson story," *Shirley* surely triumphs. But at a cost.

The heavily-researched Jackson biography *A Rather Haunted Life* (2016), authored by Ruth Franklin, focuses heavily on how Jackson as a writer, beyond "The Lottery", has rarely been recognised, even though works such as *Life Among the Savages* (1953)—a novelised collection of her experiences with motherhood and homemaking—contributed hugely to her creative development. In mid-1950s America, wanting both a family and a career made a woman "schizophrenic" in the eyes of society, as feminist writer Betty Friedan wrote in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). Yet here was Jackson, rearing four children while establishing herself as the primary breadwinner over her husband Stanley Hyman.

Hyman was an antagonistic figure in Jackson's life: he constantly criticised and belittled her as his own writing career plodded. He rarely participated in raising their children and was continually, openly



PHOTO COLLAGE: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

unfaithful in their marriage. In her public life, Jackson was imposing, witty, and calmly self-possessed. Privately, she was cowed by her abusive marriage, and Franklin argues that Jackson's work became a crucial vessel for the distress this produced.

On such counts, *Shirley* is faithful: its primary thematic concerns are female suffering and ambiguous endings, both crucial ingredients across Jackson's works. But the liberties it takes do not do real-life Jackson any favours. A warm and loving mother is swapped for a witchy, almost malevolent Shirley in the film, and this polarisation—while easier to commercialise—destroys the defining multitudes she contained as an individual and as a writer.

For Jackson, human cruelty was a direct avenue into questioning and understanding how we structure our realities. Her protagonists were invariably female, be it *Hill House's* desperate Eleanor, *Hangsaman's* fractured Natalie, or the mischievous Merricat of *Castle*. The writer herself was an unhappy caregiver for her entire family who

succeeded in becoming an instrumental part of the gothic/horror canon. In this way, she has come to assume the form of a mythological figure.

Which is what artists will always ultimately be if we keep failing to separate them from their art. Despite Decker's claims that *Shirley* is not intended as a biopic, it undeniably functions as one. Where biographer Franklin argues for a diverse, multifaceted profile of Shirley Jackson, *Shirley* immortalises her as a "witchy" horror writer rather than an artist of unbounded versatility and character. As evolved consumers of increasingly complex art, we can—and should—do better to remember that artists are, at the end of it all, real people.

An extended version of this article is available online.

When she's not spending time with her dogs or her books, Shehrin Hossain sometimes likes to write. She welcomes suggestions for what to do with her English Literature degree at shehrin@gmail.com.

## Earth calls the soul in 'Inner State'

RASHA JAMEEL

"A poet's work is to name the unnameable, to point at frauds, to take sides, start arguments, shape the world, and stop it going to sleep."

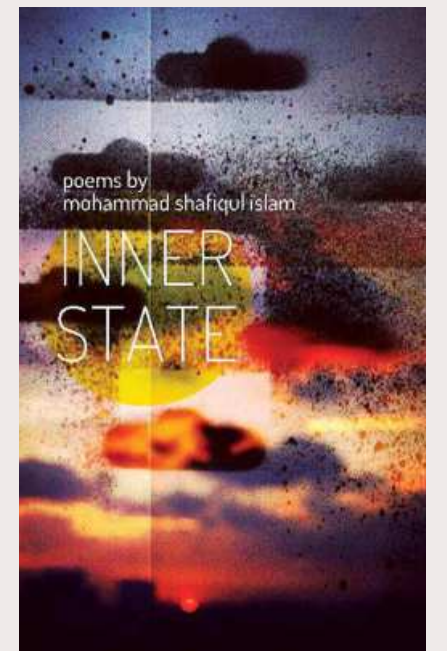
It appears as though *Inner State* (Daily Star Books, 2020) takes the aforementioned Salman Rushdie quote to heart, with a similar sentiment echoed in the poems "A Scribbler's Insight" and "When Tears and Rainwater Unite".

Mohammad Shafiqul Islam's collection of 48 poems is rather politically charged, and it doesn't apologise for being so. It offers an appeal for us all to pay better attention to our surroundings—little things like the presence of a beautiful woman adorned in a white saffron sari, and more pressing matters like global destruction via wars and climate change—everything counts. But amidst these subjects, the poems more deeply explore the Bangladeshi landscape in the aftermath of war, pollution, socioeconomic divides, and political corruption, as depicted in "Tabula Rasa", "Food for Thought", and "An Eye Opener".

War, despite being horrifying in its actuality, is often glorified in the name of patriotism, to encourage people to enlist in droves in service of their nation. But *Inner State* argues against the destruction that follows such phenomena. Mohammad Shafiqul Islam doesn't hold back when talking about mass rape, countless ruined childhoods, widespread famine, people being sentenced to a life of poverty, and the environmental damage, all of which constitutes a war-ravaged landscape. In "Shadow Lines", the poet paints an image of war at its most brutal, each word heavy with the trauma and horror experienced by those caught in the crossfire. The poem itself is a tribute to Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* (1988) which explores the implications of 'lines' that simultaneously draw and divide people. Islam's poem contains references to historical events like the Indo-Pak Partition and human rights issues such as racism, colourism, religious discrimination, and refugee crises, and in all these verses, the truth in his words are harsh, but necessary. The book also dwells significantly

on humankind's relationship with nature. Islam repeatedly equates nature with innocence—such as in "Walking Barefoot On Grass"—and attempts to shake loose the ignorance that complicate the state of ethics in our surroundings and fuel humanity's unquenchable need for consumption.

Finally, the last few pieces explore the idea of personal growth through the poet's experience with love and anxiety. While the former can feel somewhat unrelatable, with the fine line between love and infatuation left undetected, the latter is illustrated with a certain degree of grace. "My Last Evening on



COVER ART: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

Park Street" can be especially suited to a bookworm's sense of romance. Overall, this poetry collection expertly addresses all that it takes to be 'woke' in 2020, particularly in Bangladesh. Whether by choice or otherwise, we've all been deaf for too long. *Inner State* can be a fitting wake up call.

*Inner State* is available for sale at Bookworm Bangladesh, Bookends Unimart, Boipathai.com, and Rokomari.

Rasha Jameel studies microbiology while pursuing her passion for writing. Reach her at rasha.jameel@outlook.com.

## Rise in export earnings a welcome surprise

*We must ensure continuity and fair practices in the export sector*

**I**N recent months, our news cycle has been dominated by the burgeoning health crisis created by the unchecked spread of coronavirus in Bangladesh, the impacts of a global economic downturn on our economy, and the seasonal floods that have swept across the country and affected millions of people. Against this backdrop, the promising rise in exports and remittances in the month of July this year is welcome news indeed.

According to data from the Export Promotion Bureau, exports fetched USD 3.9 billion in July, which is 44.4 percent more from the previous month and 0.6 percent more from a year earlier. The rise in export earnings was led by the garment sector—garment shipments raked in USD 3.2 billion, which is 14.1 percent more than the target set by the commerce ministry for July and most surprisingly, almost the same amount that was earned in July last year.

However, while we welcome these promising prospects in the exports sector, let us not forget the possibility that July's earnings were higher because most of the shipments that were stuck between April and May due to lockdowns all over the world were dispatched in the last two months. As markets began to open up in the rest of the world and retail sales, especially in Europe, recover and potentially return to pre-lockdown levels, we must take this opportunity to bolster our exports as much as possible. This means focusing not just on garments, but on jute and jute goods, home textiles, agricultural products, and primary and pharmaceutical product shipments—the export of all of which picked up in the last month.

At the same time, we must also look to the businesses in our economy that make up these important export sectors, and the workers whose hard labour leads to these highly-valued export earnings. Let us not forget that more than 25,000 garment workers have lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic. This daily also published an extensive report on at least 1,931 global brands which have either delayed, put on hold, or simply cancelled their orders (worth around USD 3.7 billion) to Bangladeshi suppliers since the onset of Covid-19. We must do all we can to ensure that these Bangladeshi companies and workers get their fair dues during these difficult times.

## Confirmed Covid-19 cases and deaths increase during Eid holidays

*Why have guidelines not been enforced?*

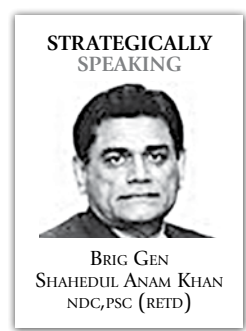
**I**T is a matter of grave concern that the number of new Covid-19 cases in the country increased during the Eid holidays despite the fact that the number of tests dropped significantly during this time. According to the DGHS briefing, 50 people died of Covid-19 across the country in 24 hours till the morning of August 4 while on August 5, 33 new deaths were confirmed by them. The spike in the number of new infections and deaths is an ominous sign for the country which has apparently failed to ensure that the health guidelines given by the government to contain further spread of the virus are maintained by the people in general.

People have gone to the villages and come back to the cities in overcrowded buses, trains and launches, without maintaining any social distancing and health guidelines. They went to buy sacrificial animals in the local haats, went to the bazaars and mosques, hardly maintaining any health directives. Apparently, the authorities took little measures to make people abide by the government directives, which might have resulted in this sudden spike in new cases.

It is extremely disappointing to learn that the infection rate has increased to 24.6 percent in the last few days while it was 22.39 percent before the Eid holidays. While experts and the WHO have been repeatedly asking the government to increase testing coverage to curb the spread of the deadly virus, what we see is just the opposite—it has brought down the number of daily tests. A total of 11,160 samples were tested in 83 labs across the country in the last 24 hours until the DGHS briefing on August 5 while the previous day, only 7,712 samples were tested. And data shows that the number of tests per million people stands below 7,500 in Bangladesh. Despite that, Bangladesh is currently the 16th worst affected country in the world in terms of the number of cases.

Although in view of the situation, the government issued an order extending countrywide restrictions on public activities and movements from August 4 to August 31 and gave a fresh 10-point directive, we wonder if these directives can be properly enforced as the government previously failed to implement many such directives. We have seen how it struggled to enforce the zone-wise lockdown system.

The new directives include keeping markets, shops, and shopping malls closed by 8:00pm; making sure there are temperature-checking and hand-washing facilities, sanitisers, and vehicle disinfecting services at the entries to shopping malls, etc. It also said that people will have to face legal action if they do not wear masks, maintain social distancing and follow health guidelines while staying outside of home. We now hope that the government will strictly enforce these directives and also increase the number of tests to curb further spread of the virus in the country.



BRIG GEN SHAHEDUL ANAM KHAN NDC, PSC (RETD)

**STRATEGICALLY SPEAKING**

**P**ERHAPS this was one murder too many by the police. Sinha's is yet another name added to the long list of victims of the law enforcing agencies, killed in gross violation of all norms of law. It is regrettable that many among those responsible for upholding the rule of law and maintaining law and order are themselves trampling the rule of law. Some may well say that my lament is only because the one killed is an ex-soldier. What about the several hundred others killed in similar manner and comparable circumstances? That is indeed so, and I make no apologies for it. But I have not withheld my feelings on this matter regarding other such killings before. Every unnatural and avoidable loss of life pains me, as it must every sensitive human being. This has pained me even more, because Sinha was a kindred spirit, a relationship that neither the difference of age nor absence of direct association, diminishes.

I weep for Major Sinha because he was someone who had undergone a hard grind like all his brothers and sisters in arms, to serve his country. He joined the

*The killing of Major Sinha has given rise to many questions, which only an impartial investigation can reveal, for one thing, the contradiction in FIR and the inquest report must be looked into. It should also expose the fact that the police narrative of self-defence is a subterfuge to distort the facts.*

# I weep for Sinha

military to dedicate his life's service to the country, just as his father did in 1971. He chose to leave the army prematurely, not because of any shortcomings, but because he had developed predilections for other pursuits. He left the army just as he had joined it, of his own volition. But his life was cut short most brutally.



Retired Army Major Sinha Rashed Khan.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

contemptible and despicable act that caused it cannot be adequately described, given the account of the circumstances that one has come to know through various channels. Some have explained away the incident by laying blame on the "poor training" of the police. I submit that the killing has nothing to do with fortune, misfortune or infortune, or training of the agencies either, but everything to do with the psyche of the police force, of all denominations, that drive their actions. The force is driven by the brazen impunity that they have been invested with, which demands no accountability for their behaviour, however illegal the actions might be. The law keepers do not only believe that they are above the law, it would not be remiss to suggest that they are also treated as if they are. But there are of course some honourable exceptions that one should have no grudge in admitting.

Some use the argument that the action of a few should not be used to run a broad brush to paint the entire force as guilty. This explanation is a fig leaf that

fails to hide the brazenness of police behaviour and the blasé attitude of some of its members. Such an explanation would have been acceptable if the killing was a one-off incident. There have been far too many of such instances to admit the killing of Major Sinha as a solo stray occurrence. And were it not also for the rather repetitive explanation regurgitated by the police after every killing, that the victim was killed in crossfire or that he was a known criminal or was an accused

an Indian journalist to sow rift within, what is the most disciplined and well-trained force, the Bangladesh Army. The tone and tenor of this particular piece should raise our concerns. The author has quoted extensively a "senior Bangladesh intelligence official". The aim and objective of the news portal is quite clear from the comments of this particular post. The writer certainly has access to "senior intelligence official" but they are not Bangladeshi intelligence officials. It defies common-sense that a senior Bangladesh intelligence official would choose a foreign news portal, with hostile agenda against Bangladesh, to vent his views instead of using own media resources, if the story is true.

By painting a fabricated story, the piece not only wanted to paint Major Sinha as a drug dealer with international mafia links, but to establish the link of the army as well in the alleged act. The piece has also scurrilously attempted to establish that Bangladesh Army is involved in training ARSA with the purpose of destabilising the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. Such fabricated, concocted, and half-baked reports have serious security implications for our country, which one hopes the relevant quarters in the administration would take note of and effect appropriate action.

The killing of Major Sinha has given rise to many questions, which only an impartial investigation can reveal, for one thing, the contradiction in FIR and the inquest report must be looked into. It should also expose the fact that the police narrative of self-defence is a subterfuge to distort the facts.

Sinha has now become one with Nature, but it must be ensured that his reputation is not besmirched by dubious machinations by deflecting the course of investigation and the victim made the accused. Reportedly, the police are trying to implicate an eye witness in a yaba case to discourage any eye witness evidence. It has already lodged two cases against Sinha's companion, one under the drugs control act and the other for preventing government officials from performing their duty.

Justice must be served. And we would hope that Sinha is the last to have met such a pathetic death. It is a chance to prove that the rule of law is supreme, and that nobody is above it. Let the police be made to understand that they are to serve the people, not lord over them.

Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan, ndc, psc (Retd), is a former Associate Editor of The Daily Star.

## 'Coronavirus Resilient Villages'



BADIUL ALAM MAJUMDAR

**B**ANGLADESH was unable to put in quarantine 213 students who came from the Chinese city of Wuhan—where the coronavirus originated—in early February and the subsequent influx of hundreds of thousands of people from countries like Italy where the virus was causing havoc. Similarly, Bangladesh failed to contain the outbreak of the deadly virus in a few hotspots like Dhaka, Narayanganj and Gazipur early on, causing it to spread all over the country. This "community transmission" was accentuated by the back and forth movement of people from the cities to the villages due to the declaration of the general holiday in late April and two Eid holidays thereafter.

Since the coronavirus does not have an approved treatment protocol and there is no certainty when an effective vaccine will be available, we will have to live with it for quite some time. According to some experts like Dr Anthony Fauci, we may never be able to get rid of the virus. Taking into consideration such expert opinion, The Hunger Project (THP) has launched an initiative in late March 2020 to create "coronavirus resilient villages" around the country.

Although local governments have not been given any direct responsibility by the government for controlling the virus, we have been working closely with Union Parishads in creating coronavirus resilient villages. Our initiative is leveraged on the "SDG Union Strategy", which THP had designed in 2015 to "localise" the SDGs. Village Development Teams (VDTs), self-help groups and the large number of volunteers mobilised as part of the SDG Union Strategy are the bedrock of the initiative.

Broadly speaking, the initiative involves:

First, making a declaration that "we are in it together" based on the realisation that protection of every single person is required to protect everyone from the coronavirus in a community. Such realisation creates community ownership of its wellbeing and community members' engagement in the efforts to contain and mitigate locally the effects of the spread of the virus. Success of these efforts depend primarily on fomenting a social movement to protect the community from the onslaught of the virus. The Hunger Project's trained volunteers have been playing the catalytic role in mobilising their neighbours and creating social capital to collectively

declare and initiate planned interventions to make their communities coronavirus resilient villages, making it a self-interest driven, decentralised and community-led initiative.

Second, raising awareness particularly by promoting 3Ws—washing hands, wearing masks and watching distance—in order to bring about behavioural changes in people to break the chain of infection. The volunteers use leaflets and direct personal contact—while maintaining safe distance—to disseminate information among villagers and motivate them to abide by health guidelines and manage the waste. In this effort, volunteers use the help of the health professionals posted in Union-level community clinics. They encourage religious and community leaders to dispel misinformation and disinformation about the virus. They also sensitise their communities against

households with children and persons with mental and physical disabilities. Volunteers also enrol those who are eligible into the government's social protection schemes, while helping others with money and materials collected locally through community philanthropy.

This self-interest-driven, communitywide and volunteer-led initiative is already making a huge difference. The initiative is underway in about 1,500 villages. As of the middle of July, the volunteers created awareness among over 3 million people. They engaged Imams and other important people to carry out over 5,000 campaigns against misinformation and disinformation about the virus. They collected nearly USD 450,000, in cash and kind, from the local people through "community philanthropy" to support those in distress. They helped enrol over

quickly control the coronavirus pandemic in Bangladesh. For example, Dr Mushtaq Husain, an adviser to IEDCR, recently wrote: "Your 'Corona resilient village' is a model not only for our villages, it may be replicated in our cities and towns. It is very urgent to minimise the numbers of Covid-19 patients from the community. The Covid-19 pandemic will not die down naturally. China, South Korea halted it through active effort of aggressive containment and mitigation measures, not only so-called 'lockdown'... If your model is followed all over Bangladesh, we will control Covid-19 within a month. Other countries will follow us."

The model has also begun to receive recognition from abroad. On July 23, LOGIN Asia—a Delhi-based network of organisations committed to local governance—arranged a webinar to share our experiences. Representatives and experts



Women and children washing hands with sanitiser at a cyclone shelter in Satkhira on May 20, 2020.

PHOTO: STAR

violence against women and children and child marriage, which tend to increase during a pandemic.

Third, identifying, isolating and assisting those showing symptoms of coronavirus and help them isolate in their homes and get them professional medical help, including testing for the infection. The volunteers mobilise villagers against stigmatisation of the "victims" of the coronavirus. They also arrange quarantine for outsiders coming to the village.

Fourth, identifying and supporting households and individuals who are on the verge of starvation due to loss of livelihood. THP volunteers prepare lists of female headed households and

36,000 persons under the government's social protection schemes. Nearly 400 youth volunteers helped farmers to harvest rice from 42 acres.

The World Health Organization issued several technical guidelines to effectively face the coronavirus pandemic, an important one of which is, Risk Communication and Community Engagement, intended to create awareness and community ownership. THP volunteers' corona resilient villages is a reflection of this guideline, which is already making a difference, and earned the accolade of experts.

Many experts feel that THP's approach, if applied throughout the country, could

from many of the Asian countries attended the webinar and showed serious interests in our model.

To conclude, to bring the coronavirus under control, we need to mobilise the people to confront it from the community level. Like in 1971, mobilise volunteers to create resistance against it from their neighbourhoods. The coronavirus resilient villages can be a model for such resistance, and it can be upscaled with the partnership of the government to stop the virus in its track. We seek the attention of the authorities towards this important initiative.

Dr Badiul Alam Majumdar, Global Vice President and Country Director, The Hunger Project Bangladesh.



# Did Hiroshima teach us any lesson?

ALI AHMED ZIAUDDIN

WHEN the battlefield of Verdun was getting drenched in combatants' blood from all contending sides, the political leadership, unable to define the stalemate, was trying to sell the war as the war "to end all wars". But that war beget countless wars and after a century the end is nowhere in sight. Even worse is with hundreds and thousands of nuclear warheads pointed at each other, the potential of an Armageddon cannot be ruled out. In such an eventuality Hiroshima looks like a tea party. But then developing the most advanced but destructive weapon to destroy or scare or subdue the enemy and establish supremacy is a human failing/ambition/instinct as old as civilisation itself. When any of these elements (or all combined) becomes the motive behind creating such weapons, rationality vanishes into thin air. Humanity gets sacrificed at the altar of greed, and naked ambition to dominate others becomes the guiding principle.

Developing, acquiring, and deploying WMDs, or for that matter any war of aggression, is never easy to sell. Because they are incredibly costly both human and resource wise, it needs to be justified by depicting enemies as monsters or creating new ones. The real motive, however, always remains hidden. For example when America entered the First World War it was not to liberate Europe from the Germans nor even to pursue the lofty idea of the right to self-determination of nationalities, but in the words of a decorated US general, Smedley Butler: "When the war reached a stalemate in the trenches an allied commission in late 1916 met president Wilson and said this, 'There is no use kidding

ourselves any longer. The cause of the allies is lost. We now owe you (American) bankers, munitions makers, manufacturers, speculators and exporters five or six billion dollars. If we lose, which we will without your help, we, England, France, and Italy cannot pay you back... and Germany won't." In early 1917 Wilson declared war on Germany though he was elected to keep the US out of the war. (*War is a Racket*, p. 43-44). Many such cases abound including the more recent one in Iraq.

The dropping of the first atomic bomb also had a hidden intent other than a military one as I have said in another piece: "It would demonstrate the power of the bomb, bring the Japanese to their knees, while simultaneously warn Russia the US imperial ambition was global and it dare not challenge." Even after learning about the devastation the atom bomb caused in Hiroshima, Truman couldn't care less and ordered the next one to be dropped in Nagasaki. If a hundred thousand Japanese civilians got vaporised instantly it was worth the price to pay to establish US hegemony. The message however, was loud and clear to the Russians who soon joined the nuclear club; and then all hell broke loose.

Subsequently over the next two decades or so all the UN Security Council members acquired theirs and now Israel, Pakistan and India have their globe threatening toys. They not only procured nuclear weapons but chemical and biological weapons also became part of the WMDs. But what no one noticed in their mad rush to get ahead of the perceived enemy, which became crystal clear later, is that the development of all types of WMDs became integral to economic development.

Consequently acquiring these weapons became more of an economic necessity than a security concern. Does all this make sense?

Now, everyone is threatening everyone else. Even Obama who had declared dismantling of all nuclear weapons one of his goals ended up revamping the US nuclear arsenal costing trillions. If one cares to read between the line of volumes

machine. The defence establishment and all other affiliated corporations make huge money out of it. Thus, the war industry becomes a racket. And the less said about Trump's ignorant quip "if we can't use the WMDs why do we have them" the better.

The story is not much different close to home. India and Pakistan are armed to the teeth with nuclear missiles—even though everyone

of Indians barely survive, hovering around the poverty line, so long as the money making machine of war industries go on reaping profits for the few.

When Bertrand Russell had initiated the campaign for nuclear disarmament (CND), ruling elites across the Cold War divide were alarmed and got busy selling the idea that a nuclear war was winnable if

chemical, or biological WMDs must go on. In the process, basic human needs increasingly get ignored triggering anger and resentment, not only in the developing world but even in the most advanced industrial states as well. And that's why a tense situation across the world has become a regular affair. A big chunk of the world's precious resources goes to waste in developing weapons that can never be used unless humans are seeking to destroy themselves.

It's about time CND is revived not only in countries possessing WMDs but across the world in every society. According to the nuclear doctrines and programmes concerning the WMDs, if one nuclear missile is launched whether by intent or accident, reflex reaction would trigger dozens to be launched within minutes. During the Cold War at least, three such nuclear close calls have been recorded. One during the Cuban missile crisis, involving a Russian nuclear submarine, the second during the Yom Kippur War, when Israel deployed nuclear armed bombers, and the third during a NATO exercise in 1983. At present, when sharp threats are being exchanged on a nearly daily basis between superpowers, an accident cannot be ruled out at any moment.

Any sane mind will agree that disarming the entire stock of WMDs is the need of the hour yet, the powers flaunting those weapons justify them using all kinds of excuses. This is the consequence of trying to sustain a fundamentally unsustainable socio-economic and political order that compels competition to turn into a death race. Where does it end? Has Hiroshima taught the world any lesson?

Ali Ahmed Ziauddin is a researcher and activist. Email: aliahmedziauddin@gmail.com



Hiroshima after the United States detonated the first ever nuclear bomb in an armed conflict on August 6, 1945. Approximately 80,000 people were killed as a direct result of the blast and another 90,000-146,000 died from its acute effects.

PHOTO: REUTERS

of literature justifying such huge expenditure even after knowing full well the futility of a nuclear warfare—which at best is unwinnable and at worst will assure mutual extinction—it becomes absolutely clear the programme is a money making

knows that a nuclear showdown will lead to mutual annihilation. The entire subcontinent will be reduced to nuclear ash including the warmongers creating hysteria. But they couldn't care less if nearly half of Pakistan and around 40 percent

one had enough capacity to strike back, totally ignoring the fact that the other side may also possess similar capacity. And now it has become such a vicious cycle that competing powers can no longer stop. The search for the most advanced nuclear,

## Fast fashion's thorny question



know that hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of garment and textile orders have been cancelled or postponed. We also know that this is a global issue—affecting Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Cambodia and all other garment production hubs. As I write this, mountains of clothing which may never be sold is piled up at ports, in warehouses,

sustainability perspective—re-use is high up on the "hierarchy of waste" in sustainability discussions.

What about the rest? Here we come to a rather unpalatable truth. The stark reality is that in many garment production hubs, the options for upcycling, recycling or downcycling clothing are somewhat limited. These are new and emerging markets in many cases. Nobody knows what will happen to the—literally—billions of garment items that will no longer be required because of Covid-19. But I fear that a sizeable amount of these items will be either incinerated or landfilled.

Just consider the irony of that! We have spent years talking about sustainability and the need to make better use of the world's precious

*Bangladesh as a garment hub depends on people purchasing things they often do not need. We may not have worried about this in the past, but this is an issue our leaders surely ought to consider moving forwards.*

What this tells me is what many have been saying for years—we purchase a huge amount of clothing we do not really need. It's frivolous and unnecessary.

Here's another thing: Bangladesh as a garment hub depends on people purchasing things they often do not need. We may not have worried about this in the past, but this is an issue our leaders surely ought to consider moving forwards.

Fast fashion—and this is what we are talking about here—is a brilliant job creator. You only need to look at what happens when you temporarily take fast fashion away from Bangladesh to see this is the case. Our RMG industry is being decimated by the slowing down of fast fashion and millions of jobs are at risk.

But what if after all this is said and done, people globally begin to realise that—actually—they coped quite well not going out and purchasing clothing every weekend? What if new buying habits emerge in the wake of Covid-19 as people start focusing on what they need rather than what they desire?

These are awkward questions, and I do not have any real solutions. What I do know, however, is that fast fashion is criticised day in, day out, in the international media. I have no doubts that the world cannot go on indefinitely creating an excess of "disposable" clothing but I also recognise that, when the world begins to wake up to this fact, countries like Bangladesh will face a real economic problem.

Perhaps now is the time for Bangladesh to start thinking long and hard about its own future in the apparel space. I firmly believe the fashion industry's leaders will be under huge pressure to place more emphasis on value and longevity in clothing production in the coming years. Will our factories be ready to respond?

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



PHOTO: AFP

and on factory floors. What on earth will happen to it all? It is impossible to tell but there are several possible options for such clothing. It might still be sold to buyers. In fact, many brands have agreed to take their orders, but they want a large discount.

What happens to clothing that brands will not take? In some cases, brands have been offering to pay towards the cost of orders, but they do not wish to take the order. They have told the factory supplier they can do with the clothing what they wish, provided that they remove all the brand's labelling and all other traces. Will factories be able to re-sell this clothing? In some cases they may do, but in a great many it is doubtful. For instance, George, the clothing arm of UK retailer Asda, has cancelled a lot of school uniforms. It is difficult to see how such clothing will find a new market anywhere.

It also needs to be factored in that all clothing is seasonal—nobody wants to buy coats in the summer any more than they will buy shorts in the winter.

There are other possible destinations for this excess clothing. It could find its way into the second-hand markets. This would be an excellent option from a

resources. We have heard talk of failing cotton crops because of global warming. And yet here we are in a situation where clothing may end up being destroyed because the industry has produced too much. How did we ever get in this mess?

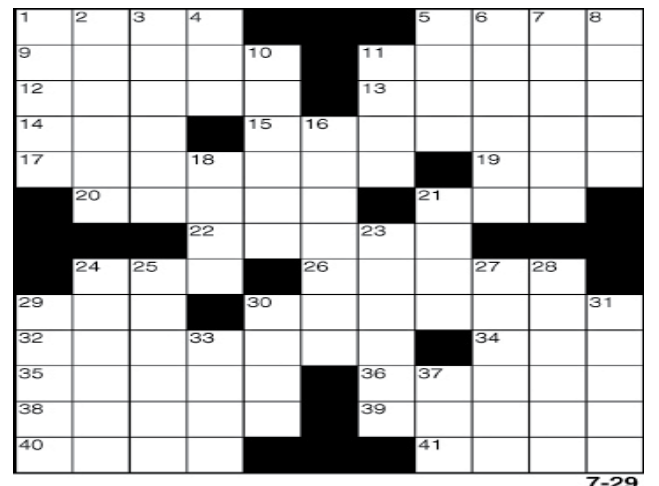
These are exceptional times, we all know that, and nobody could have predicted how this pandemic would pan out and the impact it would have. We have all been blindsided.

But there is something else worth considering here. Since this pandemic began, millions of clothing sales which would otherwise be made have been postponed and may never happen at all. Millions of trips to purchase clothing have not happened. As individuals, we have all purchased far less clothing in the past 1-2 months than at any time previously. In fact, by the end of this year, the overall reduction in the amount of clothing purchased will likely be down by at least 10 percent—probably much more.

And yet, is anybody going cold because they don't have clothing? Are people complaining because they do not have the right shirt or T-shirt or the correct suit? Are people falling ill because they cannot purchase clothing? Obviously not.

### CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Woeful cry
  - 5 Fill completely
  - 9 Labor leader
  - 11 Chavez
  - 11 Summer fruit
  - 12 Critical asset
  - 13 Have a spat
  - 14 Try out
  - 15 Work on stage
  - 17 Courtroom crime
  - 19 Spanish king
  - 20 Map division
  - 21 Tie the knot
  - 22 Stop
  - 24 Inquire
  - 26 Under sedation
  - 29 Band blaster
  - 30 Make
- DOWN**
- 1 Carry on
  - 2 Rent agreements
  - 3 State as true
  - 4 Plunked down
  - 5 Lowly worker
  - 6 1990s veep
  - 7 Saw the sights
  - 8 Foe
  - 10 Good name
  - 11 Painter
  - 16 Device for a book lover
  - 18 Face card
  - 21 Showed sorrow
  - 23 In a way
  - 24 Aviator
  - 25 Quick run
  - 27 Cry of discovery
  - 28 Talked on and on
  - 29 Segregated
  - 30 Stock holders
  - 31 Overbearing
  - 33 Star in Lyra
  - 37 Chum



### YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

S	E	A	R	C	H	B	E	A	T
I	M	P	A	L	A	U	N	D	O
P	U	T	S	A	H	O	L	D	O
C	R	A	N	K					
S	O	A	K		S	U	B	S	
P	U	L	L		D	E	P	O	T
A	D	D		K	I	T		G	O
L	A	I	D	O	N	S	U	N	S
N	E	A	R		A	P	S	E	
				M	E	C	C	A	
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I	S	E	E		A	T	T	I	R
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### Local/International Re e-Tender (2nd Call)

Electronic tenders (e-Tenders) are hereby invited from the competent local/international manufacturers/suppliers for supply of the following items for this Corporation as per under noted schedule. Re e-Tender documents showing terms and conditions with specifications will be available at web: [etender.spcl.org.bd/114.130.43.56](http://etender.spcl.org.bd/114.130.43.56). It is to mention here that this is online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted and no hard copy will be accepted except price of e-Tender schedule and earnest money. To submit e-Tender bidders need to register on e-Tender.spcl.org.bd/114.130.43.56. For more details please contact cell: 880-1534002183 & 880-1534002184. Necessary information is given below:

Name of the items	Nature of Re e-Tender	Date of publishing Re e-Tender	Last date and time for submission of Re e-Tender	Date & time for opening of Re e-Tender	Value/set of Re e-Tender schedule (non-refundable)
Supply of 02 (two) Nos. Battery Powered Fork Lift Truck.	Local/International Re e-Tender (2nd Call)	06.08.2020	10.09.2020 up to 11.00am	10.09.2020 at 11.15am	Tk 500.00

Bidder may collect e-Tender schedule from the aforementioned website. Earnest money @ 3% (three per cent) of the total quoted price shall have to be submitted in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order/Irrevocable Bank Guarantee from any scheduled bank in Bangladesh in favour of The Managing Director, The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd., Gazipur along with the price of Re e-Tender schedule in the form of a separate Pay Order/DD in the tender box kept at Corporation's office in Gazipur on or before the scheduled deadline for submission of Re e-Tender. In the case of international tender, Irrevocable Bank Guarantee may also be given as earnest money from any international commercial bank abroad with a counter guarantee from any scheduled bank in Bangladesh. e-Tender(s) without earnest money and price for procurement of e-Tender schedule shall not be acceptable. The e-Tender shall have to be submitted as per Re e-Tender guidelines mentioned at the above website. Offer(s) will be opened as per schedule mentioned above in presence of the tenderer(s) if any. 01 (one) Re e-Tender schedule is applicable only for one supplier/manufacturer for submitting one offer against each item along with earnest money and price of Re e-Tender schedule. The authority reserves the right to reject or accept any e-Tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever. Submission of e-Tender after the specified time shall not be acceptable under any circumstances.

**Sheikh Mohammad Shoab Nazir**  
General Manager (Foreign Purchase)  
Phone: 88-02-9205661

## A Melodious BOND



Since the beginning of her career, Mitali Mukherjee has left a lasting impression on the people of both Bangladesh and India. With her melodies, she has changed the music industries of both countries. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, she talks about her family and 'Ghazal' music.

COVER STORY

**Rafi Hossain:** Welcome to *Uncensored* with Rafi Hossain. Today, we have with us a very special guest —Mitali Mukherjee. Mitali, we are very happy to have you here with us.

**Mitali Mukherjee:** I am very happy to be here. I would like to thank both The Daily Star and you, Rafi, for having me here.

**Rafi:** Your son, Amandeep is also a musician, right?

**Mitali:** Yes, he is a musician as well. He plays the electric guitar, and he even worked on the title track for the movie, *Dangal*. Amandeep also composes, and his work has appeared on both Bhupinder's and my albums. He has also worked on the tracklist for the movie *Ae Dil Hai Mushkil*. Now, he is taking online courses, and since he is very interested in jazz music, he is working on that.

**Rafi:** At one point, 'Ghazal' music had a lot of avid listeners. Now, it seems that not many people listen to it. Do you think so too?

**Mitali:** I would not say that the number of listeners has decreased by much. It is just that *Ghazal* music does not get publicity on platforms like television. If you look at the industry in Bombay, all music is film-oriented. So, all the music that gets promoted is mainly from movies.

In the past, along with the films' songs, other songs used to be promoted, but, unfortunately, the other songs do not get as much publicity as they used to. So, you do not get to see genres like *Ghazal* getting publicity on television. But, the music style is still very popular. A lot of people come when we do shows.

**Rafi:** You have made quite a number of songs with Alauddin Ali if I'm not mistaken.

**Mitali:** Yes, I worked many times with him. I have worked numerous times with Ali bhai, Anup Bhattacharya and Sheikh Said bhai. Many of my hit songs came from

working with Ali bhai.

**Rafi:** Growing up, your family was very invested in music. Am I correct?

**Mitali:** I consider myself very fortunate that my parents were very supportive of whatever I or my siblings wanted to do. I have seven siblings, and all of us were involved in music or dance. My late elder sister was even a gold medalist for *Kathak*

in both East and West Pakistan. My elder brother, Deepak, was an amazing *Tabla* player. He would listen to all kinds of Bangla songs, and then have me sit with him and sing. Unfortunately, in 1988, he was suffering from kidney disease, and after a kidney transplant, his body rejected the kidney and he passed away. He was very young when he died, and I cannot express how badly his death had affected me. One of my most popular songs, *Keno Asha Bedhe Rakhi*, was dedicated to him. I composed the tune for this song and my brother had actually written it. Whenever I sing this song, his face comes to my mind.

**Rafi:** Did you compose the tune for more songs after this one?

**Mitali:** I actually composed all eight songs on that album. I had also composed *Ghazals*, and composed one of Gulzar Saab's *Nazm*. While I was working on that

album with him, I used to say that he is more partial towards Bhupi, and that he would not give me anything. He then told me that he will give me a *Nazm* one day where I will be the voice for all of womanhood. For many years now, women have been forced to obey men, and they had to face discrimination just because of their gender. The *Nazm* was about that.

**Rafi:** Thank you Mitali. I had a really great time talking to you.

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

*I consider myself very fortunate that my parents were very supportive of whatever I or my siblings wanted to do. I have seven siblings, and all of us were involved in music or dance.*



### GRAPE VINE

## Newly wed Kornia

Vocalist Zakia Sultana Kornia has recently tied the knot with SOS band founder and keyboard-player, Nabil Salauddin. Nabil has previously worked with many renowned bands, namely *Prometheus* and *Ark*, as well as artists like Kaniz Suborn and Mehreen Mahmud. The wedding, which was set to take place in March, had to be postponed due to the pandemic. The akht finally took place on July 27, 2020, with only a few of their loved ones present. Kornia said, "Ours is not a love marriage, but one that our families arranged. The wedding was scheduled to take place on March 26, and the reception on April 1, but we had to delay it due to the COVID-19 outbreak. I spent the first day of this Eid at my in-laws' place, and had an invitation to my sister-in-law's house the next." In terms of her career, Kornia first appeared in private television music show, *Power Voice*, in 2012, where she became a runner-up.



Shreya Shomoyeeta



## Puja Cherry in 'Hridita'

Actor Puja Cherry recently signed up for a government grant film, *Hridita*, directed by the duo Ispahani-Arif Jahan. Starring opposite her will be Dhaka Attack famed actor ABM Sumon. The film is an adaptation of the story *Hridita* by Anisul Hoque. Puja said, "The duo Ispahani-Arif Jahan is one of the best directors in our industry. This will be the first time I am going to work for a storyline adapted from a novel. I will try my best to portray the character Hridita just as the book and reach the hearts of the audience. Aside from this, Puja Cherry's *Shaan* and *Jinn* is still awaiting their releases.



## CHANDNI'S first song

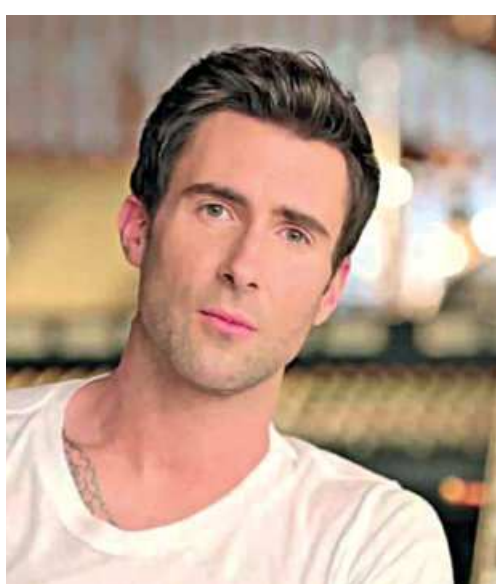
National Award winning actor and dancer Chandni has given her voice for the first time to a song. The song, titled *Janina*, has been written by her mother, Fatema Begum. The tune of the song and music direction have been done by the Farhan Labib Ahmed from the band *The Rockchild*, while the musical arrangement was done by Zahin Rashid. The music video was made by Tuku Khandokar. Chandni said, "Although acting and dancing run in my veins, I love music. Previously, I had sung *Dhono Dhanno Pushpe Bhora* for a dance, but this is my first-time giving voice to a song." *Janina* was released on her own YouTube channel, *Chandni Tube*.

Amina Hossain

### GUESS THE CELEBRITY

Guess who the celebrity is?

HINT: BRING BACK MEMORIES



ANSWER FROM THE PREVIOUS ISSUE:  
"BRAD PITT"

### POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some binge worthy movie and series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.

#### STRANGERS FROM HELL



*Strangers from Hell*, also known as *Hell Is Other People*, is a South Korean TV show, initially released on August 31, 2019, on OCN. It was written by Jung Yi-do, directed by Lee Chang-hee, produced by Kim Woo-sang and Kwon Mi-kyung under the banners of *Woo Sang Film* and *Studio N*, and stars Im Si-wan and Lee Dong-wook in the leads. The story, which is based on the eponymous webtoon series, follows the life of a writer who moves to a suspiciously cheap apartment in Seoul where mysterious and dangerous residents live.

#### 2GETHER: THE SERIES

*2gether: The Series* is a Thai TV show based on the eponymous 2019 novel by Jitti Rain. It was directed by Weerachit Thongjila, and produced under the banners of GMMTV and *Housestories 8*, and stars Metawin Opas-iamkajorn (Win) and Vachirawit Chiva-aree (Bright)



in the lead. The story follows the life of university student who starts a fake relationship with a classmate to make an admirer leave him alone. It was first released on February 21, 2020 on GMM 25 and LINE TV, but can now be watched on Netflix as well.

#### LOOTCASE



*Lootcase* is an Indian dark comedy film. It has been directed by Rajesh Krishnan, and produced by Fox Star Studios and Soda Films, under the banner of *Disney+Hotstar*. The film stars Kunal Khemu and Rasika Dugal in the lead, alongside Vijay Raaz, Ranvir Shorey and Gajraj Rao. It tells the story of a man who accidentally finds a suitcase full of cash, and has to decide what he to do with it next. It was released on July 31, 2020.

Amina Hossain & Shreya Shomoyeeta



Dr Ali Emran (C), an associate professor of BSMMU, leads Bangladesh national football team manager Satyajit Das (L) and a batch of footballers to the testing facilities where the players and officials got tested for Covid-19 yesterday before travelling to an isolated resort in Gazipur for a residential camp. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Four test positive, but booters raring to train

SPORTS REPORTER



Moving past the fear of coronavirus infection, national footballers were looking forward to starting afresh as the first batch yesterday joined the training camp for the Joint Qualifiers for World Cup and Asian Cup at Sarah Resorts in Gazipur after four and a half months of inaction.

Team manager Satyajit Das Rupu informed defender Bishwanath Ghosh, who was part of the first batch of 12 players, will not join the camp as he tested positive for Covid-19 on August 3 as part of the Bangladesh Football Federation's (BFF's) prerequisites to join the camp. The BFF organised a second round of tests for the footballers and seven officials yesterday at the BSMMU before leaving for Gazipur yesterday evening.

Three more footballers - Suman

Reza, MS Bablu and Nazmul Islam -- were found positive in yesterday's tests as those three, along with Bishwanath -- were eventually left behind in Dhaka.

The players are supposed to start low-intensity training this afternoon while the second batch of 12 footballers are scheduled to join the camp today after going through the Covid-19 tests. On Friday, seven other footballers will follow the same process, while captain Jamal Bhuiyan's and defender Tariq Raihan Kazi's presence will be subject to the availability of return flights to Bangladesh.

Head coach Jamie Day and assistant coach Stuart Watkiss are scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on August 16.

"My family did not want me to come to Dhaka during the coronavirus pandemic but I convinced them a month ago and continued training at my club ground," said midfielder Mohammad Abdullah, who was

recalled to the preliminary squad after two years following an injury sustained in 2018.

"Everyone is scared of coronavirus but I am not worried because we have to overcome the barriers and if we can train while maintaining social distance, there is nothing to worry about," said the Sheikh Russel KC midfielder.

"I know it is now more challenging to secure a place in the final squad but I like the challenge because I know the pain of staying away from the national team," said Abdullah.

"Coronavirus is of course to be feared because we travelled from different districts to come to Dhaka and don't know each other's health conditions," said striker Suman Reza, who was later found to be Covid-positive.

Bangladesh will host Afghanistan in Sylhet on October 8 before travelling to Qatar to play their away match against the Asian Champions on October 13.

## Azhar's duck in Pak's shaky start

AFP, MANCHESTER

Pakistan captain Azhar Ali was out for a duck as the first Test against England got under way at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

At lunch, the tourists were 53-2, with opener Shan Masood having batted through a tough session to be 27 not out and Babar Azam unbeaten on four.

With two leg-spinners in Yasir Shah and Shadab Khan in Pakistan's side, there was a logic in Azhar's decision to bat first after he won the toss, with his slow bowlers likely to be more effective on a wearing pitch.

Nevertheless, the overcast skies and piercing floodlights made life tough for opening batsmen with conditions favouring England's four-man pace attack, who had been involved in a recent 2-1 series win over the West Indies. In contrast, Pakistan's preparation for this three-match series amounted to just two intra-squad warm-up games.

Shan Masood and fellow opener Abid Ali did well to survive the first hour against an unchanged England.

James Anderson, closing in on his 600th Test wicket, took the new ball on his Lancashire home ground in the company of longstanding team-mate Stuart Broad, fresh from becoming just the seventh bowler to take 500 Test wickets.

But it was Jofra Archer who made the breakthrough as he cleverly bowled Abid Ali with a full-length delivery for 16.

## Kirsten 'meets' TIGERS

SPORTS REPORTER



Former India head coach Gary Kirsten, who was appointed by the Bangladesh Cricket Board as a consultant in the past and oversaw the selection of Steve Rhodes as head coach in 2018, took part in a virtual meeting of the Bangladesh national cricket team yesterday.

Members of the national squad had a few virtual meetings since the Covid-19 outbreak, with head coach Russell Domingo and his staff conducting the meetings. It was Kirsten who shared his experience with the 'Tigers' and the coaching staff yesterday.

The meeting lasted more than an hour where the former South African opening batsman shared his experience both as a player and also as a coach. Few of the cricketers relayed their queries to Kirsten as the players are gearing to get back to the field following a long break from cricket since mid-March.

"Mainly he (Kirsten) discussed on how we could return to cricket and the areas that we need to focus on and things like that. It was a pretty general meeting where we all took part in the discussion," one of the members of the national squad, requesting anonymity, told The Daily Star.

Following the long break, a number of national team members have already begun individual practice at BCB's facilities across the country, with more players showing interest to start training from August 8.



Bangladesh batsman Mahmudullah Riyad was seen practising at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: BCB

## Nadal skips US Open

AFP, New York

Defending champion Rafael Nadal said Tuesday he will not play the US Open, citing concerns over the coronavirus and slamming tennis's "barbaric" revised calendar.

"After many thoughts I have decided not to play this year's US Open," Nadal said on Twitter.

"The situation is very complicated worldwide, the Covid-19 cases are increasing, it looks like we still don't have control of it."

"This is a decision I never wanted to take but I have decided to follow my heart this time and for the time being I rather not travel."

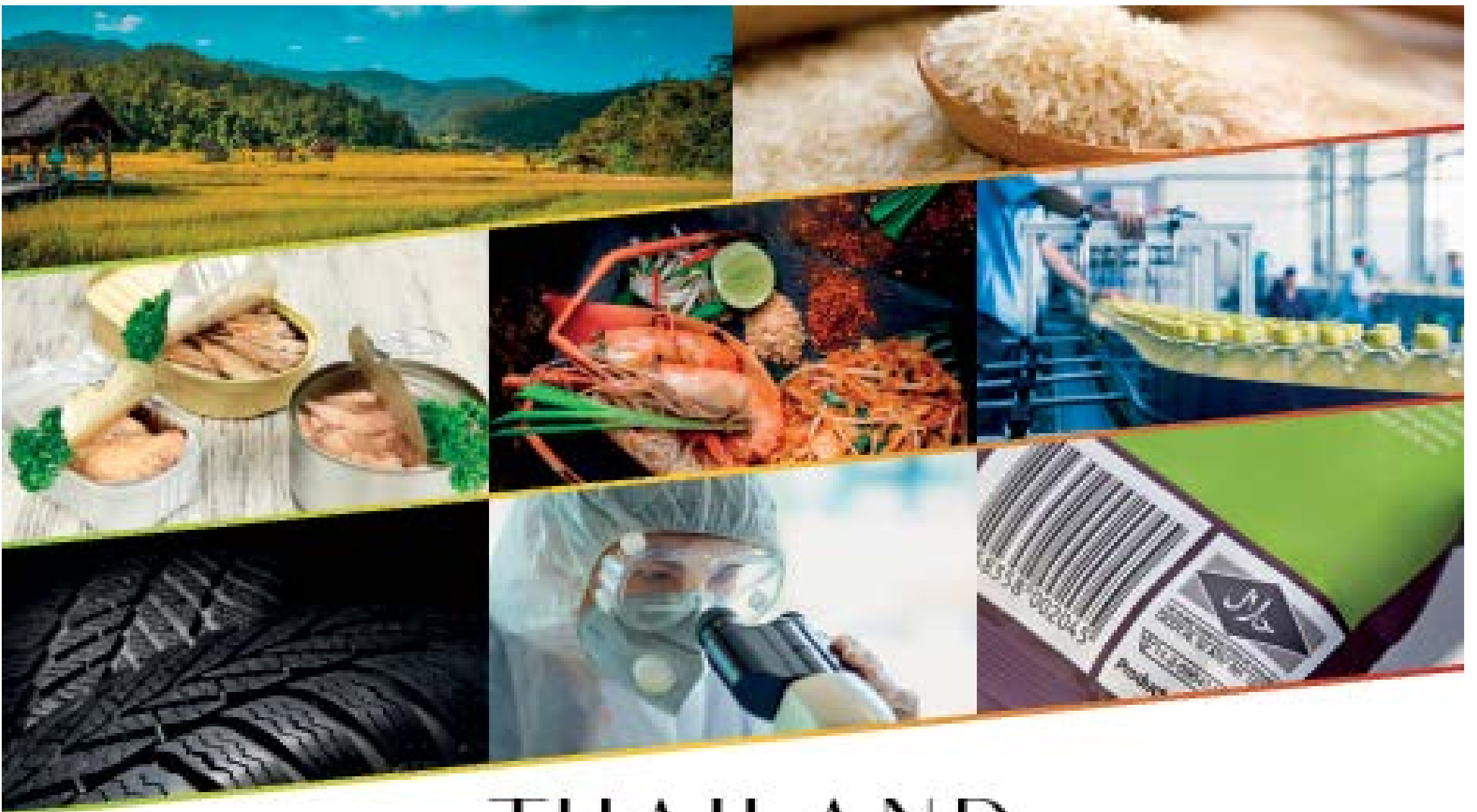
The 34-year-old Spanish star also took aim at the international tennis schedule, which has been revised following disruptions sparked by COVID-19 shutdowns.

The US Open in New York, scheduled for August 31 through September 13, will be followed a fortnight later by the French Open at Roland Garros.

"We know that the reduced tennis calendar is barbaric this year after 4 months stopped with no play..." Nadal said.

With Nadal's long-time rival Roger Federer already ruled out of the tournament as he recovers from knee surgery, the US Open will mark the first time since 1999 that neither player has featured in the main draw of a Grand Slam event.

Nadal, who has 19 Grand Slam victories, could have equalled Federer's tally of 20 Slam wins in New York.



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## Dhaka gets first tranche of \$1b Japanese loan

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh yesterday got the first tranche of the \$1 billion loan pledged by Japan to bounce back from economic whiplash brought on by the global coronavirus pandemic. Japan joins the likes of development partners such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank International Monetary Fund and the Islamic Development Bank in rallying behind Bangladesh.

The five multilateral development lenders have altogether provided about \$2 billion in Bangladesh's efforts for economic recovery.

Japan normally provides project aid to Bangladesh and now would call the planned support as budget aid, which came after Dhaka sought help following the outbreak of coronavirus in the country in March that necessitated a two-and-a-half month-long general shutdown.

While the virus could not be snuffed out, the shutdown caused great damages to the economy.

The pandemic stands to wipe off the gains made in poverty reduction in the past decade, according to the World Bank; and as per estimates, more than 1.5 million of the poor and the vulnerable have lost their livelihoods for the shutdown.

This means the need to spend substantially on social safety net programmes and job creation has become imperative. At the same time, its purse strings have been tightened for the near-collapse of economic activities.

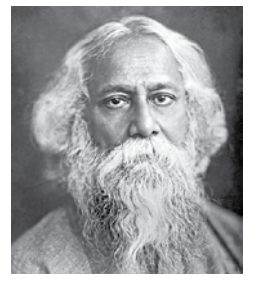
"So, Japan has committed \$1 billion to aid in economic recovery," said an official of the Economic Relations Divisions involved in the proceedings.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



What used to be a canal has become a pit of floating garbage in Nandipara of the capital's Khilgaon. Waste from a nearby kitchen market and floodwaters have been making their way into the water body for years now, turning it into a perfect breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes and more.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



## Tagore's 79th anniversary of death today

BSS, Dhaka

The nation is observing the 79th death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore today recalling the great poet who did not leave any human emotion untouched in his works, especially poems and songs.

The day is being observed with limited programmes amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Rabindranath died at the age of 80 on August 7 in 1941, according to the Gregorian calendar. But his death anniversary is observed in Bangladesh on Sraban 22 of the Bangla calendar.

To mark the day, Bangla Academy, Shilpakala

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Erosion hits 10 districts as flood water recedes

STAR REPORT

With flood water receding, erosion has become devastating in 10 districts, devouring homesteads, croplands, educational institutions and other structures.

Many rendered homeless by river erosion have taken shelter on roads, dykes and other safe places for survival.

Officials of Water Development Board (WDB) said they were trying to prevent river erosion by dumping geo-bags.

Over 55 lakh people of 162 upazilas under 33 districts have so far been affected by floods, said the latest report of National Disaster Response Coordination Centre (NDRCC)

In Kurigram and Lalmonirhat, at least 4,000 homesteads and vast stretches of arable land with standing crops, orchards and bamboo clusters have so far been eroded by flood water in the last week or so.

Local WDB have identified at least a hundred spots in the two districts that witnessed serious erosion.

Meher Ali, 62, of Balapra village under Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila, said, "Our homesteads on around 12 decimal of land along with another three bighas of arable land were eroded by the Teesta on Eid

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

### Bangabandhu worried over floods

August 6, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

#### BANGABANDHU'S TALK WITH OFFICIALS

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today holds important discussions with Bangladeshi officials in London. What is discussed in the meeting cannot be ascertained but sources close to the prime minister inform that the flood situation and food problem are among the important topics. The sources say that the prime minister is very worried about the flood in Bangladesh and he has been keeping in touch with acting Prime Minister Syed Nazrul Islam and other ministers to know details and the measures that have been taken to tackle the situation.

As for Bangabandhu's health condition, the stiches from his gallbladder stone operation are likely to be removed in a couple of days, informs Bangabandhu's personal physician Dr Nurul Islam. "His condition is very good," he adds. Dr Islam hopes that Bangabandhu may leave the clinic in two to three days.

#### TAJUDDIN'S CALL TO CHINA

Finance and Planning Minister Tajuddin Ahmad calls upon the People's Republic of China to recognise the reality of Bangladesh. He says that China had made a mistake by not supporting the liberation struggle. "Even then, we don't hold any grudge against them," he adds.

On aid from capitalistic countries the minister says it is advisable that Bangladesh takes it as less as possible. The finance minister

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



## KL to deport Bangladeshi worker over TV interview

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi expatriate Rayhan Kabir will be deported by Malaysia over the country's attorney general's chambers completes looking into the investigation papers of the case, Malaysia's Immigration Department Director General Khairul Dzaimie Daud said yesterday.

He said the department was made to understand that the investigation papers regarding Rayhan's case had been handed to the AGC, reported The Star.

"Once the AGC is done, we will deport him to Bangladesh.

"And he will never step foot in Malaysia again as he will be blacklisted," he said at a press conference.

Asked how soon it would take to send Rayhan back to Bangladesh, Khairul said the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## AI helps doctors fight Covid in Brazil



AFP, Sao Paulo

Doctors in Brazil, the country with the second-highest number of cases and deaths in the coronavirus pandemic, have a new tool in their fight against Covid-19: artificial intelligence to detect infections.

Under-testing remains a huge problem in the sprawling South American country, but AI is helping fill the gap, thanks to a system called RadVid-19 developed using algorithms from German company Siemens and Chinese firm Huawei.

Brazil has been hit harder by the pandemic than any country except the United States, with nearly 2.8 million infections and 95,000 deaths.

Experts say the numbers would be much higher if there were more widespread testing.

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## 3 schoolgirls raped in Ctg

Two arrested, sent to jail  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A metropolitan magistrate court in Chattogram yesterday sent two men to jail on charges of raping three schoolgirls in the town's Khulshi area.

The accused are Mohammed Liton, 37, of Noakhali, and Sohel Rana Raju, 28, of Cumilla, said police.

Pranab Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Khulshi Police Station, said the duo kept the girls confined at a house in Khulshi area on July 29 and raped them overnight.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



### PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 6

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4-20 12-45 5-00 6-47 8-15  
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## The wait of centuries is over

Says Modi as temple construction begins in Ayodhya

REUTERS, Ayodhya

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday launched the construction of a Hindu temple on a site that has been contested by Muslims for decades in a dispute that has sparked some of country's most bloody communal violence.

The Supreme Court ruled last year that Hindus, who believe the site in the northern town of Ayodhya is the birthplace of Lord Ram, a physical incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu, be allowed to build a temple there, ending years of litigation.

Modi, whose Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) campaigned for more than three decades for the temple, unveiled a plaque at the site in an elaborate ceremony to inaugurate construction.

"The whole country is thrilled, the wait of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Phool Khatun, 70, tries to have a roof over her head again after the mighty Jamuna devoured her house on Char Chunduni in Tangail's Bhuapur upazila. After her husband died many years ago, she had already been struggling to make ends meet because of floods, and now river erosion has only added to her woes.

PHOTO: SHEIKH ENAMUL HAQ

## Global Covid deaths top 700,000

Data shows one person dying in every 15 seconds as hotspots see record cases

AGENCIES

The global death toll from the coronavirus surpassed 700,000 yesterday, according to AFP and Reuters tallies, with the United States, Brazil, India and Mexico leading the rise in fatalities.

Nearly 5,900 people are dying every 24 hours from COVID-19 on average, according to Reuters calculations based on data from the past two weeks.

That equates to 247 people per hour, or one person every 15 seconds.

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 701,112 people since the outbreak emerged in China last December, according to AFP. At least 18,572,720 cases of coronavirus have been registered in 196 countries and territories. Of these, at least 10,917,200 are now considered recovered.

On Tuesday, 6,784 new deaths and 252,972 new cases were recorded worldwide.

Based on latest reports, the countries with the most new deaths were United States with 1,302 new deaths, followed by Brazil with 1,154, and Mexico with 857.

The United States is the worst-hit country with 156,830 deaths from 4,771,846 cases. After the US, the hardest-hit countries are Brazil with 95,819 deaths from 2,801,921 cases, Mexico with 48,869 deaths from 449,961 cases, Britain with 46,299 deaths from 306,293 cases, and India with 39,795 deaths from 1,908,254 cases.

Despite the consistent death toll, US President Donald

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