



The Daily Star



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BANGLADESH UPDATE	2,907 New cases in 24hrs	2,60,507 Total cases	3,438 Deaths	1,50,437 Recoveries	GLOBAL UPDATE	735,341 Deaths	20,105,982 Total cases
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'Drama by cops' gone wrong

Some policemen took the bomb inside Pallabi Police Station to stage a bomb-recovery and frame someone in a case. But due to clumsy handling, it exploded in an officer's room, injuring four policemen and a civilian at the station on July 29.

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Some policemen took the bomb inside Pallabi Police Station to stage a bomb-recovery and frame someone in a case. But due to clumsy handling, it exploded in an officer's room, injuring four policemen and a civilian at the station on July 29. Officials familiar with the matter said a section of crooked policemen "collected" the bomb which was fitted inside a weighing machine from the associates of a local political leader. The aim was to frame the associates of another leader. And they received hefty sums to pull off the staged "bomb recovery", the officials said, requesting not to be named. After the explosion, Dhaka Metropolitan Police formed a three-member committee led by Joint Commissioner (operations) Monir Hossain to investigate the incident. The committee concluded that the policemen posted at Pallabi Police Station were solely responsible. The officers were not supposed to take the bomb inside the police station and they did not inform the bomb disposal unit on time, the investigators said after a weeklong probe. The investigators also said the officer-in-charge of Pallabi Police Station and deputy commissioner of Mirpur Division failed to give proper instructions regarding the situation.

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Standing in over ankle-deep water, a boy opens the tap of a line from a water pump in Bagpara of the capital's Nasirabad area. As the locality does not get water supply from Dhaka Wasa, locals have to rely on this pump, which they set up two years ago. Together, they also pay for the electricity needed to pump up the water. Each line supplies water to 70-75 households. The photo was taken on Friday, when the place got waterlogged after rain.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh confirms over 2.6 lakh virus cases

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh's officially confirmed novel coronavirus cases went up to 260,507 with the detection of 2,907 new cases in 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday. The death tally rose to 3,438 with 39 new deaths, said Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), at a regular online briefing in the afternoon. Of the deceased, 79.14 percent are men and 20.86 percent women. Bangladesh's fatality rate stands at 1.3 percent while the recovery rate is 57.7 percent. The country reported its first Covid-19 cases on March 8 and the first death on March 18. Labs around the country

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Sefat gets out on bail

Shipra, Sefat have to stay in Cox's Bazar for quizzing

STAR REPORT

Stamford University student Shahadul Islam Sefat was released yesterday from jail after a Cox's Bazar court granted him bail in two separate cases -- murder and narcotics -- filed by Teknaf police. The court also ordered the handing over of the investigation of the two cases to the Rapid Action Battalion instead of police, Sefat's lawyer Mohammad Mostafa told The Daily Star. Around 2:15pm, Sefat came out of Cox's Bazar Jail. Witnesses said that he was escorted by plainclothes men in a silver coloured microbus without a number plate. No media could talk to him. Speaking to The Daily Star later in the afternoon, Sefat's uncle Masum Billah said Sefat was with him in Cox's Bazar and they

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SINHA MURDER CASE Four accused give 'vital info'

Rab seeks their 10-day remand

STAR REPORT

The investigation officer of the Maj (retd) Sinha murder case yesterday sought 10-day remand for four of the seven accused as they "disclosed very important information" during a two-day interrogation at jail gate. "We have gleaned very important and sensitive information from the four accused. So, we sought their remand from the court for quizzing them intensively," Lt Col Ashik Billah, director of Rab Media Wing, told The Daily Star yesterday. He, however, refused to disclose the information gleaned from them during their grilling at the Cox's Bazar jail gate. The Rab official, however, said the four accused, who were on duty at the check post in Teknaf where Maj (retd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan was shot dead, gave details of the incident during interrogation. About the three key accused in the case, he said, "After collecting more information, we will take them in custody and interrogate them." The three are suspended police officers Pradeep Kumar Das, former officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station, Inspector Liaqat Ali, and Sub-Inspector Nandadulal Rakhshit. Liaqat is the main accused in the case.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Be ready to deal with long-lasting flood

PM asks officials

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the authorities concerned to make preparations in advance to face any possible long-term flood as forecasted by the meteorological department. She gave the directive during the weekly cabinet meeting. The PM chaired the virtual meeting through videoconferencing from the Gono Bhaban, while the other cabinet members joined from the secretariat. Briefing reporters after the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said, "The prime minister has made us



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Kotwali OC, 4 cops sued for extortion

Trader claims they took Tk 3.5 lakh threatening him; court orders PBI to probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five members of the capital's Kotwali police station were sued in an extortion case yesterday and Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) was instructed to carry out the investigation. The accused are Officer-in-Charge Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, sub-inspectors Pabitra Sarkar and Sheikh Khalid, Assistant Sub-inspector Shahinur Rahman and constable Md Mizan. Magistrate Abdus Sufian Mohammed Noman of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court-31 in Dhaka accepted the case and instructed the PBI to look into it, said Md Zakir Hossain Hawlader, lawyer for the plaintiff. The plaintiff, Sohel Miah, a 50-year-old cloth trader and also toll collector at Waizghat in Old Dhaka, alleged that SI Pabitra and the others extorted Tk 3.5 lakh from his family by threatening to falsely implicate him in a case. The case document says, "The incident happened on August 8, at about 4:00pm. I had just crossed the river on a boat and was coming ashore Waizghat when the sub-inspectors, the assistant SI, and the constable

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Nasima Akhter, mother of former army major Sinha Rashed Md Khan, speaks at a briefing at her home in the capital's Uttara yesterday. Sinha was killed in police firing in Teknaf on July 31.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

REDUCING ROAD CRASHES

Activities aplenty, achievements little

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Whenever a major road accident occurs, people of the country see the same old tired response from the government. Amid public outrage, probe committees are formed in no time at all, recommendations are made, and that is the job done. A majority of the recommendations of these investigation committees are left to gather dust in some bureaucratic labyrinth till the next major crash stirs public emotion.

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CHINESE VACCINE Decision on phase-III trial next week

MOUDDUD AHMED SUJAN

The health ministry is going to sit next week to decide phase-III clinical trial of a Chinese Covid-19 vaccine, its Secretary Abdul Mannan said. "There is no decision [on icddr,b's vaccine trial] yet. [We] will sit next week," Mannan said while talking to The Daily Star

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Janata Bank Ltd.

Credit Rating Report

Rating Mode	Long Term	Short Term
Government Support	AAA	ST-1
Without Government Support	A	ST-2
Outlook	Developing	
Date of Rating	19 July 2020	
Expiry Date	18 July 2021	

AAA Bank rated in this category is adjudged to be of best quality, offer highest safety and have highest credit quality.

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ST-1 Highest Grade: Highest Certainty of timely payment. Short-term liquidity including internal fund generation is very strong and access to alternative sources of funds is outstanding. Safety is almost like risk free Government short term obligations.

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French aid workers among 8 killed by gunmen in Niger

AFP, Koure

Gunmen on motorcycles killed eight people including a group of French aid workers as they visited a part of Niger popular with tourists for its wildlife, officials said.

"There are eight dead: two Nigeriens including a guide and a driver, while the other six are French," the governor of the Tillaberi region told AFP on Sunday.

France confirmed its nationals were among the dead, without giving a figure.

French aid group ACTED said several of its workers were among those killed during a tourist outing.

"Among the eight people killed in Niger, several were Acted employees," said the NGO's lawyer Joseph Braham.

It is believed to be the first such attack on Westerners in the area, a popular tourist attraction in the former French colony thanks to its unique population of West African or Niger giraffes.

"We are managing the situation, we will give more information later," governor Tidjani Ibrahim Katiella said, without indicating who was behind the attack.

Activities aplenty

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Azha that year.

The committee had found that small and slow-moving vehicles were responsible for three of the four accidents and the negligence of a bus driver in the other.

Apart from recommending legal action against the responsible persons, other suggestions from the committee included stopping operation of illegal battery or CNG-run auto-rickshaws and three-wheelers on highways.

But the authorities concerned seemed to have taken no measures in the light of the recommendations over the last two years as three-wheelers were involved in both accidents on Saturday.

Experts believe that noncompliance of their recommendations is the major setback in ensuring discipline and safety on the roads.

A passenger's welfare platform said on Sunday that the number of deaths in road crashes during this year's Eid holiday rush increased even with a reduction in public transport operation due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

At least 242 people died in 201 accidents across the country over the 13 days of the Eid rush to travel home and come back to Dhaka, said Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity.

According to the corresponding report of the organisation after last year's Eid-ul-Azha, at least 224 people were killed in 203 road crashes in 12 days of holiday rush.

RECOMMENDATIONS NOT IMPLEMENTED

On August 25, 2018, the ministry had formed a probe committee to identify the reasons behind the accidents that took place in Narsingdi, Feni, Natore, and Kushtia during the Eid rush of that year.

Led by Safiqul Islam, the then additional secretary of the ministry, the committee submitted its probe report. As all four incidents were almost the same, they discussed the Natore accident in detail.

At least 15 people were killed and 20 others injured as a bus collided head-on with a human hauler on the Natore-Pabna highway in Natore on August 25, 2018.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of the probe report.

The committee had found the human hauler was modified, overloaded and its driver had no licence. It also blamed the operation of slow-moving and small vehicles on the highways for the fatal accident.

Accordingly, the committee recommended taking action against the human hauler owner as the driver died in the crash. It also called for taking action so that no slow-moving and small vehicles can run on highways.

The committee also said that while vehicles like auto-rickshaws and human haulers are necessary for rural areas, ensuring road safety is not possible if those are allowed to ply the highways.

It also advised that the roads and highways department carry out a survey about whether "suitable service roads" can be made in several important areas.

The committee had also recommended making short video clips on driving basics and to circulate those on social media as it was not possible to train a huge number of drivers through

traditional methods.

The government had banned three-wheelers, including those made locally, and other slow vehicles on 22 national highways in August 2015, and on several occasions issued directives to implement the ban.

But these vehicles keep operating -- causing frequent accidents -- allegedly with the blessings of local representatives. Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader on several occasions admitted as much.

Kazi Md Shifun Newaz, assistant professor of Accident Research Institute of BUET, was member of the committee.

Asked whether their recommendations were implemented, he said, "We had given several recommendations following investigation. I don't know whether those recommendations were implemented or not."

"But we see similar types of reasons for almost all accidents. Such accidents might not have happened had the recommendations been implemented. I don't see any effective measures to implement those," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Another committee member, wishing not to be named, said, "Some recommendations may have been implemented. Other recommendations, like creating service roads, would take time to implement."

Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of Jatri Kalyan Samity, said the authorities concerned do not take the necessary steps to implement the recommendations of probe committees.

"Most problems [that cause accidents] have already been identified. Solutions are also known. What is needed is to take action," he said.

A committee led by former shipping minister Shahjahan Khan in April last year provided 111 recommendations to curb accidents. The government, in October of the same year, formed a task force led by the home minister to implement those.

Instead of forming another probe committee, the authority should implement those 111 recommendations, form a committee to curb road crashes and instil discipline in the road transport sector, he said.

This correspondent could not reach the Road Transport and Highway Division's Secretary Nazrul Islam for comments over phone, even after sending texts.

COMMITTEE FORMED AGAIN

The ministry yesterday formed a five-member committee to investigate the accidents in Mymensingh and Chuadanga.

The committee was formed a day after Obaidul Quader directed the authorities concerned to form a probe committee to investigate accidents that took place while people were returning to Dhaka after Eid.

The committee, led by the ministry's Joint Secretary Jesmin Naher, was asked to submit its report within a week, Additional Secretary Yousub Ali Mollah said.

The committee will have representatives from Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Highway Police, and local administration and police in respective districts, he added.

Decision on phase-III trial

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it. The GAVI will now decide the protocol to supply the vaccines in its next board meeting this month," Shamsul Alam, director of the health directorate's maternal nutrition & child healthcare programme, told this newspaper.

Officials said Bangladesh could get the vaccines from GAVI either free of cost or at a low cost and it would be decided by GAVI.

The GAVI will supply vaccines to 92 poor and low-income countries under this management.

Officials said GAVI can supply vaccines in bulk or in ready-to-use form.

The health secretary said his ministry was also discussing with local companies which have vaccine plants to help them if needed.

A meeting will also be held with different local vaccine producers soon, Shamsul told this correspondent. "The ministry called today's [yesterday] meeting and will organise the next meeting."

Speaking at yesterday's meeting via video conference, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said, "The government's aim is to ensure that Bangladesh get the [Covid-19] vaccine when it will be available in the market."

On July 18, Bangladesh Medical Research Council permitted the icddr, to run the trial of the Chinese vaccine in seven hospitals.

But the trial became uncertain after the health minister and the secretary said the government would take time to decide on the trial.

2 WAYS TO GET VACCINE

As a low-income country, Bangladesh will get Covid-19 vaccines from the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations (GAVI).

The second option is bilateral agreements with any inventor company.

Experts say allowing trial of a vaccine may make it easier for the country to get it.

The trial of Chinese vaccine is, however, still uncertain due to "unknown" reasons and is waiting for decision from the government high-ups, sources said.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh has received confirmation from GAVI that it will supply Covid-19 vaccines to the country as soon as it is available in the market, say officials.

"We had sent our expression of interest and the GAVI has accepted



The sign hanging from the balcony of a building in Uttar Mugda in the capital says the house and a warehouse will be leased out. A branch of a private school named Dhaka Standard School, housed in the building, was closed recently due to fund crisis. The school authorities said parents were failing to pay fees since their income was slashed by the pandemic.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

'Drama by cops' gone wrong

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Joint Commissioner Monir told The Daily Star that the probe report has been submitted before the DMP commissioner.

Contacted, DMP Commissioner Shafiqul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday, "The bomb was not handled properly at the police station and they acted unprofessionally."

DMP's Mirpur division DC Mostaq Ahmed, Additional DC (Pallabi) Mizanur Rahman, Assistant Commissioner (Pallabi) Firoz Kawsar, Pallabi Police Station Officer-in-charge Nazrul Islam, Inspector (investigation) Abdul Mabud and Inspector (operation) Emaranul Islam have been transferred.

DMP boss Shafiqul Islam said the transfers were not punitive.

"I need to go through the probe report and separate punishment awaits whoever is responsible," he added.

SOURCE OF BOMB

Investigators said they identified two suspects named Jamil and Mamun. They are brothers and are believed to be hiding somewhere in India and Nepal.

"The two brothers took a contract to kill either Pallabi Jubo League General Secretary Jewel Rana or Councillor of Ward-6 Taizul Islam Bappi," said a police official, involved with the investigation.

Police then started investigation and arrested Shahidul Islam, Mosharruf Hossain and Rafiqul Islam on July 28

and July 29. They are associates of the suspect Jamil, sources said.

"After the arrests of these three, Councilor Bappi made a deal with a section of Mirpur division police, offering around Tk 2 crore, so that the arrestees are produced as members of Jewel Rana's gang," said the official.

Both Bappi and Jewel Rana are close aides of ruling party lawmaker Elias Mollah, he said.

"But, Bappi wanted to get rid of Jewel Rana as he was trying to run for the post of the councillor. Besides, Bappi wanted to establish supremacy and take control of Pallabi areas. For that reason, Bappi wanted to drag Jewel's name into criminal activities," according to police sources.

As per the deal, a police team took the arrestees near Kalshi graveyard area and collected a firearm from Bappi. Police also collected the bomb and some bullets from his associates.

The officers then took the bomb, firearm and ammo to the police station. They were arranging them at an officer's room when the bomb went off, said multiple officials involved with the investigation.

A high official of DMP, requesting anonymity, said the six top officials of Mirpur division were transferred right after the investigators learned about the plot and the deal.

The Special Action Group (SAG) of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTIC) unit is now investigating the cases filed after the blast.

SAG Deputy Commissioner Abdul Mannan told The Daily Star yesterday that some issues had come forward and they found a number of people's involvement.

But he refused to disclose further details for the sake of the investigation. "We are now analysing the facts."

Contacted, Councilor Bappi said he had a very good relationship with Jewel.

"I am not involved in any kind of plots. Some people might be spreading rumors against me to smear my image in politics and destroy my relationship with Jewel," he said.

Bappi further said that he has come to know that someone wanted to kill both of them.

Without disclosing the name of who he thought might have wanted him dead, Bappi said, "Police are investigating the case and we are expecting a fair investigation."

The Daily Star also tried to contact Jewel, but his phone was unreachable.

Regarding the person, who might have hired Jamil and Mamun to kill someone in the first place, a high official of DMP, involved with the findings, said their investigation was stuck because they were out of the country.

"We are now trying to find his associates and collect information about their activities. Once they get arrested, we would be able to say further about the matter," the official added, requesting anonymity.

Four accused give 'vital info'

FROM PAGE 1

Upon a prayer from the IO of the case on August 6, a Cox's Bazar court placed the three on a seven-day remand.

At a press briefing yesterday, the Rab director said the court gave an order to complete interrogation and remand of the three accused within 10 working days. Rab yesterday prayed to the court to lift the time limit and the court granted it.

"Rab wants to give assurance that it will investigate the case impartially without any interference," he said.

He said they would also interrogate Shahedul Islam Sefat, who was released from prison on bail yesterday, and Shipra Devnath. Sefat and Shipra, both students of a private university, went to Cox's Bazar from the capital with Sinha to make travel documentaries.

Asked why police didn't show Sefat's laptop and camera in the seizure list, Ashik Billah said they would ask Shifat whether those items had been seized from him.

The Rab official said that if Sefat makes such a claim, they would also quiz the policemen involved in preparing the seizure list.

He further said their main objective is to find out the real culprits and the reasons why such an unexpected incident had taken place.

Replying to a query, he said both

Sefat and Shipra are safe and now staying in their relatives' houses.

Ashik said he didn't know anything about Shifat being whisked away from the jail gate in a vehicle without any number plate upon his release.

Sefat, who was accompanying Sinha, is a key witness in the case. He was present at the scene when Sinha was shot. He had been in police custody after the incident on July 31.

The following day, he was shown arrested in two cases filed by SI Nandadulal, who was later made an accused in the Sinha murder case.

Yesterday, Rab official Jamil Ul Haque, the IO of the case and assistant superintendent of police, filed a petition with the Teknaf Upazila Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court, seeking 10-day remand for four of the accused -- suspended ASI Litan Miah and constables Kamal Hossain, Abdullah Al Mamun and Safanur Karim.

The court will hear the petition tomorrow, said Ashik.

Earlier, a Cox's Bazar court had allowed the IO of the case to interrogate the four accused for two days at jail gate.

Maj (ret'd) Sinha, 36, had been making travel documentaries for a YouTube channel called "Just Go". On July 31, he was returning to Cox's Bazar from Teknaf. His car was stopped at Shaplapur on Marine Drive.

Police claimed that they tried to search the vehicle, and Sinha aimed his pistol at them prompting them to shoot back in self-defence. They also claimed that they seized drugs from the vehicle.

However, witnesses gave a different account of the incident. They said Sinha got down from his car, put his hands over his head, and then police shot him.

RAOWA DEMAND

Retired Army Officers' Welfare Association (RAOWA) Chairperson Maj (Ret'd) Khandaker Nurul Afsar yesterday said the superintendent of police in Cox's Bazar must also be brought to book.

"Since a RAOWA member has been murdered, we will implore all levels of the state so that the investigation is fair and justice is served," Afsar told journalists at the house of slain Maj (ret'd) Sinha yesterday.

The RAOWA chairperson paid a visit to Sinha's mother Nasima Akhter to offer his condolence.

Nasima echoed similar thoughts and also expressed satisfaction over the prosecution of ex-OC of Teknaf Police Station Pradeep and Inspector Liaqat Ali.

While this is a satisfying step in the positive direction, the system must be changed to make society more humane, she said.

Be ready to deal with long-lasting flood

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aware especially of the flash flood in mid of the Bangla month Bhadra [at the end of this month] which may prevail for a longer time."

The PM asked the authorities concerned to quicken the rehabilitation since the water level of the major rivers such as the Padma and the Jamuna have continued to decline for the last few days, Anwarul told the briefing at the secretariat.

A rehabilitation programme, which has been taken to this end, would be implemented in three phases, he added.

The cabinet secretary said the LGRD ministry has been tasked with reconstructing or repairing the damaged infrastructures and the water development board with repairing the embankments damaged by the floods.

He said a huge allocation has been made in this regard.

Hasina also asked the authorities concerned to take special care of the production of the Ropa Aman (T-Aman) to ensure food security.

"The prime minister directed us to

take special care on the production of Ropa Aman as the seeds of Aman were destroyed due to the ongoing floods," Anwarul said.

She also advised the authorities concerned to plant water tolerant varieties (of paddy) comparatively on higher places as Aman seeds were destroyed.

The cabinet secretary said the agriculture ministry has received a huge allocation to this end.

'MAKE PEOPLE AWARE OF USING MASK'

Meanwhile, the government has asked the field-level administrations to conduct mobile court operations alongside gearing up awareness campaigns to make people aware of using masks to stem the spread of the Covid-19.

"We have held talks at the cabinet meeting about measures to check the spread of coronavirus," said the cabinet secretary.

He said they have asked the field-level administrations to take appropriate measures for enforcement of law and

conduct massive awareness campaigns to encourage people to follow the health guidelines properly, particularly about wearing masks.

Anwarul said nowadays it is seen that awareness on wearing masks among many people has declined.

"We will have to make the people more aware of it. So we have asked the field administrations to visit the spots physically and make people aware by using loudspeakers and installing billboards."

Mobile court could be operated in some cases and the media should cover the drives properly to help make people aware, the cabinet secretary said.

"If the people come to know that some people have been punished through mobile courts in buses, markets and other places for not wearing masks, they will become aware of it," he said.

Referring to the Sunday's secretary-level meeting, he said they have given necessary directives to the authorities regarding measures to check the spread of the virus.

Face covering must in offices, places of worship

Govt issues directives on wearing masks

Bss, Dhaka

The government yesterday issued several directives regarding wearing mask for overall public safety in the country during the current Covid-19 pandemic.

Officers, employees and service recipients in government, semi-government, autonomous and private offices will have to wear masks and the authorities concerned will ensure it, said a handout of Press Information Department (PID).

Recipients of services at all healthcare centres, including public and private hospitals, must wear mask and the hospital authorities will ensure it.

The use of masks must be ensured at all places, including educational institutions, mosques, temples and churches. The local administrations and steering committees will make sure the directive is followed.

Buyers and sellers at shopping malls and shops must use masks while the local authorities and the market management committees will ensure the matter for public safety.

Buyers and sellers will use masks in markets or haat-bazaars.

Buyers and sellers should not buy or sell any product without wearing masks. The local administrations and haat-bazaar committees will strictly monitor the matter.

Public transport drivers, their assistants and passengers must wear masks. A passengers must wear a mask before boarding a public transport while the authorities concerned, law enforcement agencies and the owners' associations will ensure the matter.

Workers at all industrial factories, including garment factories, pedestrians, hawkers, rickshaw-pullers, van drivers and persons working in hotels and restaurants should wear masks.

During holding public gatherings or social ceremonies, all will have to ensure complying with the rule of wearing masks for overall public safety.

Mauritius races to clean up oil as ship leaking fuel breaks up

AFP, Port Louis

Salvage crews yesterday raced against time to prevent a second disastrous oil spill off the picture-perfect coastline of Mauritius, with a damaged tanker carrying thousands of tonnes of fuel at risk of splitting apart.

The bulk carrier MV Wakashio ran aground on July 25 with 4,000 tonnes of fuel aboard and began seeping oil last week, staining coral reefs, mangrove forests and tranquil lagoons in an unprecedented environmental catastrophe for the archipelago nation.

More than 1,000 tonnes has already oozed from the ship, its Japanese operator says, causing untold ecological damage to protected marine parks and fishing grounds that form the backbone of Mauritius' economy.

Fuel was being airlifted yesterday by helicopter to the shore, but efforts to pump more from the hold were being thwarted by rough seas and strong winds.

Bangladesh

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have conducted 1273,168 tests so far, including the latest 12,849, and found 20.46 percent of the samples to be positive.

Nasima said 2,067 more patients have recovered during the 24-hour period, bringing the total number of recoveries to 150,437.

The fatalities include a child below 10. Twenty-three of the deceased are aged between 51 and 70 years.

Novel coronavirus cases were first reported in China in December last year. In March, the World Health Organization declared it a pandemic.

There are now over 19.7 million confirmed Covid-19 cases globally, with more than 729,000 fatalities and 12 million recoveries, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

The United States currently has the highest number of confirmed cases (5044,864) and deaths (162,938). Brazil is the second worst-hit country with 3035,422 cases and 101,049 deaths.

Neighbouring India has the third-highest number of coronavirus cases (2215,074) and fifth-highest death toll (44,386), according to JHU.

Bangladesh has been recording a high number of cases in recent weeks. Many fear that the number will increase if more tests are conducted.

The government has requested the people to properly follow the health guidelines.

DGHS official Nasima reiterated that taking precautions is the only way to tackle Covid-19 for now. She urged everyone to follow hygiene rules.

Finally, a bigger Sylhet city!

To be expanded to 58 sq km from 26.50, says dist admin; not big enough, refutes mayor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Over a century-old Sylhet municipality was upgraded to a city corporation in 2002, consisting 26.50 sq km area. In 2014, a proposal to expand the country's smallest city corporation to 160.62 sq km was forwarded to the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives by the city corporation as per the masterplan for the city.

And after six years, the city is finally being expanded to around 58 sq km in total and Sylhet District Administration circulated a public notice in this regard on Sunday.

In the notice, signed by the deputy commissioner of Sylhet, the administration listed parts of four unions of Sylhet Sadar upazila and three unions of Dakshin Surma upazila to be included to the city corporation area.

In the circular, locals of these areas are asked to file their written objections or suggestions to the deputy commissioner by September 8.

Meer Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman, deputy director of the local government in

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PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

The already difficult life of a hawker now includes risk of catching a dangerous virus. In pursuit of securing the barest minimum of income, they have started returning to the streets as traffic has started to normalise in the capital. Even though coronavirus risks remain high, they have no choice but to do so. In a loss-loss situation, they stand to lose everything if they do get infected, as there's no safety net for them or their families.

Primary education thru' radio set for launch tomorrow

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government is set to broadcast lessons for primary students through radio to reach the maximum number of children during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It started television education through Sangsad TV on April 7, so primary students can make up for losses due to closure of educational institutions.

Many guardians said it was only partially fulfilling the objective, as about a half of the country's people -- many of them underprivileged -- do not have access to TV sets.

A recent survey of primary and mass education ministry shows that almost 60 percent of households that have primary school going children do not have TV sets.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey-2019 of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics showed that 50 percent of households do not have television sets.

"We had launched TV education but many cannot avail this service, so we are now going to start education through radio. We will broadcast lessons from Wednesday," Akram-Al-Hossain, primary and mass education senior secretary, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He added that Bangladesh Betar and community radio channels will broadcast the one-hour lessons from 4:05pm every Sunday through Thursday.

During that hour, they will air 10-minute sessions for first to fifth grade students, and children will be informed about routine.

He claimed Bangladesh is the first country in Asia-Pacific to introduce education through radio.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

EC mulls renaming local govt bodies, posts in Bangla

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission is considering Bangla names for local government bodies and the positions within them by amending the relevant existing law.

It is planning to introduce Bangla names for the terms city corporation, municipality and union parishad and the posts mayor, chairman etc by amending the election-related laws of local government bodies.

A draft version of the law to hold city corporation, municipalities and union parishad election were discussed at an Election Commission meeting yesterday, said EC senior secretary Md Alamgir after the meeting held at the EC office in Dhaka.

He said that they would hold further discussion on the issue later this month to finalise the decision. "We will also take opinions from stakeholders before finalising it," he added.

Alamgir said that they have taken the move as Bangla is an enriched language.

EC proposed renaming of city corporation to mahanager sobha,

pouroshabha to nagarshabha, union parishad to palli parishad and ward into mahalla.

It also proposed renaming of corporation to sobha, city corporation mayor to mahanager sobha adhikarik or mahanagerpati, councillor to sadasya or paarishad.

EC is considering renaming of pouroshabha mayor to puradyakko or nagarpati, union parishad chairman to palli parishad pradhan, upazila parishad chairman to upazila parishad pradhan, upazila vice chairman to upazila parishad upa-pradhan and others.

EC officials said that they have decided to amend the election-related laws of local government bodies in Bangla to make it easy to read and understandable to all.

At the meeting, election commissioners discussed due by-polls. Alamgir said the commission will likely to announce by-elections to Dhaka-18 and Pabna-4 constituencies on August 22 or 23.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

'They have nothing better to do'

BNP leader Rizvi on EC's move to rename govt institutions, posts

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday said that Election Commission (EC) is going to unilaterally change names of local government institutions and their posts at the "behest" of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

"Now, EC has no work as they have sent elections to the graveyard. He [chief election commissioner] is now trying to rename 'union parishad' as 'polli parishad', 'upazila chairman' as 'upazila pita [father]' and 'city mayor' as 'mahanagar pita'," said BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi.

Speaking at a doa-mahfil, he said, "CEC is changing the traditional names and systems of [local government] institutions following the instruction of Sheikh Hasina. He is not taking opinions of any other political party."

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal arranged the programme on the ground floor of BNP's Nayapaltna central office, to seek salvation for Swechchasebak Dal President Shafiq Bari Babu and BNP Assistant Organising Secretary Abdul Awal Khan.

Though EC is an independent body, Rizvi said the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

High risk, higher uncertainty

Pandemic takes toll on ambulance drivers

MATHEWS CHIRAN

Mostafa Kamal (45) has been working as an ambulance driver for nearly 10 years. In the past, he took two to three calls per day, which would be enough to meet his family's needs.

But as soon as the coronavirus hit the country, his circumstances changed unimaginably. For one, his job suddenly became hazardous, as he risked contracting the virus every time he transported a patient and transported them to a hospital. But of course, he had to continue, because he had no alternative to feed his family.

Secondly, as the number of calls

result to the house owner and he finally agreed to let us stay," he said. However, this has not stopped the landlord from nagging Kamal every now and then.

Kamal's is one of many such stories on the misery of ambulance drivers during the pandemic.

Md Monir (45), a former colleague of Kamal's at Anjuman Mufidul Islam, a welfare organisation, spoke of a different woe for ambulance drivers -- the pandemic comes with a stress on their mental health. "Wherever we go, people avoid us, as if we have Covid-19," Monir said.

"Even patients don't want to use



In a desperate bid to revive falling incomes, ambulance drivers Monir and Kamal have put up simple adverts everywhere they can think of.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

from regular patients -- such as patients with heart-related illnesses -- declined, ambulances drivers experienced a sharp decrease in their incomes.

But the worst was yet to come. One day, after he got home from work, Kamal was told by his landlord that he needs to look for a new place. The owner of the house feared he might be carrying the Covid-19 virus.

"It was a big shock for me. I have never faced such a dire situation in my life," Kamal told this correspondent. "I tried to reason, but the owner didn't want to listen. At a time when it's hard to make ends meet, shifting would be a big financial burden," he added.

Out of luck, Kamal started looking for places, but finding rent within one's budget isn't easy in Dhaka.

"Then I decided to test myself. Fortunately for me and my family, the result came out negative. I showed the

ambulances out of coronavirus fear," Monir exclaimed.

Sharing one experience, he said, "Two months back we were carrying a Covid-positive patient's body from Dhaka to Narsingdi. Shockingly, we had to turn our ambulance midway as villagers and the area's chairman received information and refused to let us in."

"We had to bury the body in Dhaka's Mohammadpur," Monir said.

Other drivers shared a host of stories with this correspondent. From staying out of home for two months to spending nights inside ambulances, the community has seen it all during these trying times.

But for all their woes, ambulance drivers have no source of regular income as they work as freelancers and have no affiliation with any government or private hospitals.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

JP lawmaker Firoz Rashid charged in land grabbing case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against Dhaka-6 constituency lawmaker Kazi Firoz Rashid, also a presidium member of Jatiya Party, on the charge of grabbing a government land.

Md Jahangir Alam, an ACC deputy director and also the case's investigation officer, submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka, showing 15 people as prosecution witnesses.

In the charge sheet, the IO said the charges brought against the accused were primarily proved and he should be brought under trial.

Zulfikar Ali, a former deputy director of ACC, filed the case against Firoz Rashid with Tejgaon Shilpanchal Police Station on April 5, 2016.

According to the first information report (FIR), a government house on a one-bigha of land in Dhanmondi residential area was allocated to then Canadian High Commissioner Mohammad Ali on November 3, 1951.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Opportunities open up in Bahrain for Bangladeshis

JAMIL MAHMUD

Bangladeshi migrant workers in Bahrain are seeing fresh employment opportunities amid the coronavirus pandemic, as some local employers there, especially in the construction sector, are opening up jobs for such workers.

Although nominal in number, the opportunities came as a beacon of light for the Bangladeshi workers, many of who had been facing hardship due to job losses in current situation.

The Bangladesh embassy in Manama has been trying to assess and meet the employers' demands after communicating with unemployed workers, and mediating between them and the employers, said an official at the embassy.

Unlike other Gulf Cooperation Council countries, foreign workers in Bahrain, home to about 1,50,000 Bangladeshi workers, have the opportunity to change their sponsors and employers by obtaining "flexi permit" from the country's Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA).

In May, LMRA informed Bangladesh mission that some 7,000-8,000 Bangladeshi migrant workers have lost their jobs amid an economic shutdown.

Following this, the embassy communicated with some local training centres aiming to facilitate

new set of skills training and re-employment for such workers in different sectors, said the mission official.

On July 9, the embassy issued a circular via social media to this end, and attached a form with it to input necessary information of expectant Bangladeshi workers who were in need of job.

Within a week, some 800 workers responded and about 300-400 of them sought job opportunities, said the official, wishing not to be named.

He said they also collected several circulars looking for foreign workers in recent weeks and conveyed the information among Bangladeshi workers, while also providing data of the workers to the recruiters.

Sheikh Mohammed Tauhidul Islam, labour welfare counselor at Bangladesh Embassy in Manama, said a number of companies run by Bangladeshis work on sub-contract basis in Bahrain and they mainly supply workers to different construction sites.

"Recently, such companies have been talking about workers' shortage," he added.

Tauhidul said present market demand suggests the number of people affected by the pandemic could be lesser in Bahrain than what was estimated earlier.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

17 more Tabligh members return home from India

STAR REPORT

Seventeen more Bangladeshi Tabligh Jamaat members, including eight women, returned home on Sunday night after languishing in an Indian jail for 40 days.

Mohsin Khan, officer-in-charge of Benapole Check-post Immigration Police, yesterday said Indian immigration police handed them over to the Bangladesh authorities through Benapole check-post around 11:30pm on Sunday.

All the returnees were sent to Gazir Dargah institutional quarantine in Jhikargachcha upazila of Jashore for 14 days, said Habibur Rahman, a medical officer of the health department of Benapole check-post.

The 17 Bangladeshis are residents of different areas of the country, our Benapole correspondent reports, quoting the officer. According to immigration police, 265 Tabligh Jamaat men went to India in February this year. They were staying there during the coronavirus outbreak.

Indian police arrested them from different parts of the country at the end of March for violation of the Foreigners Act, visa rules and Covid-19 lockdown rules.

Of them, the 17 Bangladeshi Tabligh Jamaat members were sent to central jail of Haryana after arrest, said immigration police, adding that a court of the state later sentenced them to 40 days' jail. The decision to return them was taken following discussion between high officials of the two countries after their jail term ended.

On August 7, 14 out of 265 Tabligh Jamaat members returned home after languishing in jail for the same period.



Students gather at a shop in West Tejpurbar yesterday to fill up college admission forms. The young students have been waiting for two months since the publication of SSC results to move on to the next step in their education. The only thing missing seems to be face masks.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

FARMERS BANK SCAM

Shahed remanded for seven days

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Regent Hospital Chairman Mohammad Shahed on a seven-day remand in a case filed over misappropriation of Tk 2.71 crore of Farmers Bank Ltd.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after Anti-Corruption Commission's Deputy Assistant Director Mohammad Shahjahan Meraj, also the case's investigation officer, produced Shahed before the court with a 10-day remand prayer.

In the remand prayer, the IO said Shahed, in association of other accused, embezzled the money from the bank. So, he needs to be remanded to know further information about the embezzlement, the IO added.

Claiming himself innocent, Shahed told the court that he had FDR of Tk 50 lakh in Farmers Bank against the loan. Moreover, he claimed that he is unwell as he has been in police custody since July 15 and appealed to the court to reject the remand prayer.

No lawyer was present in the court to defend him yesterday.

After hearing both sides, the magistrate rejected his pleas and issued the remand order.

On July 27, the ACC filed the case against Shahed and three others with its Integrated District Office-1 of Dhaka.

The other accused are -- Mahbul Haque Chisty, of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Tk 12cr going down the drain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

All the public money, Tk 12 crore to be specific, spent by the Water Development Board (WDB) to excavate 31.5 kilometres of the Buri Teesta river in Kurigram recently, is turning out to be useless.

The excavation was done to revive the natural flow of the river that runs by the upazila town of Ulipur in Kurigram. But thanks to indiscriminate dumping of garbage by the Ulipur municipality, the river is getting constricted again.

The pollution has degraded the water quality of the river, especially near Gunaigachh bridge, so immensely that aquatic life in the river is disappearing. The air in the area has also become quite difficult to breathe due to the emission of foul odour from the decomposing garbage there.

Khokon Roy, a businessman from the area, said the overpowering

stench has become unbearable for locals, but the workers of the municipality continue to dump garbage at the location every day.

All the town's garbage being dumped into the Buri Teesta is not only obstructing the river's natural flow and emitting foul smell, but also polluting its water to such an extent that it is no longer safe for consumption, said Khairul Islam, another local businessman.

Expressing similar concerns, Ekramul Haque, a passerby, said it is almost impossible to walk by the Gunaigachh bridge without pressing one's nose and the authorities of Ulipur municipality are to blame for the situation.

The recent excavation of the Buri Teesta river was carried out in response to people's demands made on numerous occasions. But unfortunately, the river is going back to its former state due to the dumping

of garbage by the municipality, said Umme Habiba Poly, head teacher of Ulipur Government Model Primary School.

It is now impossible even to take a walk beside the river without pressing one's nose, let alone bathing in its water, she said frustratingly.

Ariful Islam, executive engineer of WDB in Kurigram, said it is unfortunate that the water of the river is getting polluted and its flow getting obstructed again despite the excavation work done in the river recently, at a cost of Tk 12 crore.

The WDB would write to the mayor of Ulipur municipality, urging him to take steps against dumping of waste in the Buri Teesta river, he added.

Ulipur Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Quader said after his office issued several warnings against the Ulipur municipal

authorities for polluting the river, they promised that they would stop the act.

The UNO added that they would issue warnings against the municipality again, for the sake of saving the river and the overall environment.

However, Mayor Tariq Abu Ala of Ulipur municipality refuted the allegation and claimed that they dumped some waste in the river near Gunaigachh bridge only to protect the bridge.

Contacted, local Awami League Lawmaker MA Matin said although he had personally warned the Ulipur municipality authorities more than once, they continue to pollute and obstruct the natural flow of the Buri Teesta river by dumping garbage in it.

He assured that he would take all necessary steps to protect the river from destruction.



A recent photo taken from near Gunaigachh bridge in Kurigram's Ulipur upazila town shows how garbage, dumped by the town's authorities, is choking the flow of the Buri Teesta river.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY



The Santals from Joypurpara and Madarpur villages in Gobindaganj upazila of Gaibandha march towards the upazila town to join a human chain there in observance of International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on Sunday.

INT'L DAY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OBSERVED

Ethnic communities want aid for jobless during Covid-19, reiterate demand for land rights

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Indigenous communities organised programmes in different districts marking International Day of the World's Indigenous People on Sunday.

This year's slogan of the day is 'COVID-19 and indigenous people's resilience'.

Hundreds of men and women from the Santal community in Gobindaganj upazila of Gaibandha brought out a procession and arranged a human chain in observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on Sunday, reports our correspondent from Bogura.

They demanded return of their forefathers' land, justice for the killing of three Santals and looting and torching of their houses at Sahebganj in 2016.

They urged for government help for those who lost income sources during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and measures for establishment of all rights and privileges for the indigenous people.

The Santals from Joypurpara and Madarpur villages in Gobindaganj joined a nine-kilometre procession to the upazila town under the banner of Sahebganj-Bagda Farm Bhumi Uddhar Sangram Committee, Adivasi-Bangalee Sanghati Parishad, Jatiya Adivasi Parishad, Bangladesh Adivasi Union, Janaudyog and ALRD, Gaibandha.

They organized a human chain beside Dhaka-Rangpur highway at Gobindaganj Thana More intersection at noon.

Rabindranath Soren, president of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad, addressed the programme, over mobile. Mihir Ghosh, president of the Gaibandha district CPB, also attended, among others.

Speakers at the programme alleged that the then parliament member from Gobindaganj Abul Kalam Azad and some policemen were responsible for the torching and looting of Santal houses and killing of three Santal men at a village in Sahebganj on November 6, 2016 but Gaibandha PBI dropped their names in the charge sheets.

They urged the Criminal Investigation Department, which

is doing their investigation now, to conduct a neutral probe and frame charge against the main culprits.

Our Tangail Correspondent reports: The organisations of indigenous communities at a press conference in Tangail Press Club on Sunday presented their 11-point demands, including constitutional recognition and land rights.

Joyenshahi Adivasi Unnoyon Parishad, UCGM, TWA, ACVF, Thongani Co-operative Credit Union, Abima Adivasi Co-operative Credit Union, BAGSAS, GASU, GSF and Achik Michik Society jointly organized the press conference.

Ajoy-A-Mre, former president of Joyenshahi Adivasi Unnoyon Parishad, presided over the programme while Sulekha Mroing, general secretary of Achik Michik Society, read out a written speech.

The written speech stated that thousands of indigenous people of greater Mymensingh region lost their job from different sectors including beauty parlours, garment factories, and different companies and organisations due to the impact of Covid-19 situation.

The indigenous leaders demanded providing help for the affected families.

The 11-point demand include their recognition as 'Indigenous People' in the constitution, establishing a separate ministry for the indigenous peoples of the plainland areas and giving an indigenous person the responsibility as a full minister, forming a separate land commission for protecting land rights of the plainland indigenous peoples, preserving five percent quotas for the indigenous people in all levels of education and government jobs, and quick disposal of the false cases filed against them.

Joyenshahi Adivasi Unnoyon Parishad President Eugin Nokrek, Josthina Nokrek, vice-chairman of Madhupur Upazila Parishad, and Goutam Chandra Chanda, senior research officer of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, attended the press conference, among others.

Our Dinajpur Correspondent reports: Once again, the people of the indigenous community have demanded constitutional rights and

urged the government to formulate an independent land commission to protect their land rights and separate ministry to deal with the indigenous peoples living in plain lands.

The demands were made at a programme on Sunday, marking the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, being observed on August 9 every year across the globe.

Jatiya Adivasi Parishad (JAP) organized a public meeting and formed a human chain at Kolom Soren-Alma Soren Ground at Barokona village in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur on Sunday, marking the day.

The speakers urged the government to provide help for those who became jobless during the coronavirus pandemic.

They urged the police in Dinajpur's Hakimpur upazila to find the criminals who slaughtered a man of the indigenous community on August 2.

Rabindranath Soren, president of JAP, and Basanti Murmu, president of Adivasi Nari Parishad, spoke, among others.

Our Chapainawabganj Correspondent adds: People belonging to small ethnic communities formed human chain and held a rally in Nachole bus stand area of Nachole upazila town on the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on Sunday.

Miscreants often attack indigenous people, harass their women, and threaten them in different areas, but adequate action are not taken against the culprits, speakers said at the programme organised by Jatiyo Adivasi Parishad's Nachole and Gomostapur upazila units.

They alleged that land grabbers have been grabbing the cultivable lands, residences, ponds, graveyards, cremation ground and temple's lands.

They urged the government to form a separate ministry and an independent land commission for the plainland indigenous peoples and ensure their security and other social rights.

Bichitra Tirki, president of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad's district unit, and its general secretary Tunu Pahan, spoke at the rally, among others.

Woman found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Police recovered the body of a woman in Shibganj upazila on Sunday.

The victim, Ferdousi Begum, 26, was wife of Shahidul Islam of Raninagar village in the upazila.

Officer in Charge of Shibganj Police Station Shamsul Alam said Ferdousi went out of her house on Saturday and remained missing since then. Villagers spotted her body in a ditch on Sunday morning and informed the police, who recovered it and sent it to Chapainawabganj Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Housewife killed by husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A woman, who was stabbed by her husband allegedly over a family feud in Dewanganj upazila on Sunday night, died at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) early yesterday.

The deceased, Rubina Aktar, 25, mother of a new born baby, was wife of Khurshed, 28, of Dakkhin Gamarra village in the upazila.

Quoting locals, Officer in Charge of Dewanganj Police Station Moynul Islam said, following a family feud, Khurshed stabbed his wife on the stomach while she was taking her meal with her parents and other siblings around 9:00pm.

Meanwhile, soon after stabbing his wife, Khurshed tried to take his own life by taking poison.

Family members admitted the couple to MMCH, where Rubina succumbed to her injuries around 4:00am.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Prime Minister's Office
Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority
Monem Business District (Level-12)
111, Bir Uttam C.R.Dutta Road, Dhaka-1205
www.beza.gov.bd

Memo No: 03.07.0000.020.07.079.2020-1536

Date: 10 August 2020

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) International Competitive Bidding (ICB)

Description:			
1. Ministry/Division	: Prime Minister's Office		
2. Agency	: Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA)		
3. Procuring Entity	: Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA)		
4. Title of Service	: BEZA ICT Interface (BICIT)		
5. Procuring Entity District	: Dhaka (BEZA HQ)		
6. EOI for Selection of	: Consultancy service for ICT Roadmap/Action Plan and Experience Center Design for Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar (BSMSN)		
7. EOI Ref. No.	: PS2-Own DPP-2020		
8. EOI Publication Date	: 14 August 2020 or before		
9. EOI Closing Date & Time	: 17 September 2020 at 3.00 PM (Bangladesh Local Time)		
Procurement Information:			
10. Procurement Method	: International Competitive Bidding (ICB)		
11. Procurement Sub-Method Applied	: Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)		
Funding Information:			
12. Budget and Sources of Funds	: BEZA Own Fund (Own Fund Project)		
13. Project/Program Code	: Not Applicable		
14. Project/Program Name	: Construction of Road & Drainage at Mirsarai EZ in BSMSN and Consultancy Services Project (BEZA Own Fund Project)		
15. Development Partner (if applicable)	: None		
Particular Information:			
16. Brief Description of the Assignment	: The services include not limited to: Component 1: Strategize ICT roadmap and identify key ICT elements to transform BSMSN into a smart industrial city; Component 2: Design an Economic Zone Dashboard for situational awareness through Analytics-driven Command and Control Centre (ADCCC); Component 3: Identify requirement and assessment of DC / DR; and Component 4: Design an Economic Zone Experience Centre at BEZA.		
Information for Applicant:			
17. Experiences, Resources, & Delivery Capacity Required			
a) Qualification and Experiences	: i) Minimum 5 (five) years of general experience in the role of Consulting Firm from its years of operation in country of incorporation (In case of JV, each member shall meet the requirement). Prime consultant or JV member has to register in Bangladesh and 'age of firm' in Bangladesh with permanent or registered office is minimum 3 (three) years. The consulting firm must have at least CMMI Level 3 (In case of JV, each member shall meet the requirement). ii) Minimum 2 (two) years specific experience under consultancy contract related to IT solution in the role of Prime consultant or JV member to the main client (In case of JV, each member shall meet the requirement).		
b) Required Financial Capability	: i) The audited balance sheets, statements of profit & loss and annual reports for the last 3 financial years (FY 2016-17 to FY 2018-19) must demonstrate (a) 'Positive Net Worth' for each of the last three (3) financial years; (b) Profit (i.e. Profit Before Tax) for at least two (2) out of last three (3) financial years; (c) Minimum 'Annual Total Revenue' averaged USD 5.00 (five) million in the last three (3) financial years; and (d) Minimum 'Annual Consultancy Revenue' averaged USD 2.00 (two) million in any one (1) of the last three (3) financial years. ii) In case of JV, requirement (a) and (b) above shall be met by each member, and requirement under (c) and (d), each member shall meet at least 25%, lead member shall meet at least 40% and all members together shall meet 100%.		
c) Expected Team (Key-Staff) Composition	: Team Leader, Project Manager cum Smart Campus/Experience Centre System Management Expert, ICT Expert, Command & Control Centre (CCC) Expert, IT Network Specialist, DC/DR Expert, and Procurement Expert.		
18. Contract Execution Period	: The duration of the contract is expected to be 6 (six) months.		
19. Other Details (if applicable)	: The firm should have long standing experience in IT infrastructure implementation/data center design/smart city design of large-scale government projects. The firm should also have experience of implementation, knowledge and understanding of the operation of industrial zones or EZs, verifiable success in the delivery of high-quality outputs within time and budget constraints.		
20. Association with Foreign Firm	: The firms may associate to enhance their qualifications but should mention whether the association is in the form of a 'joint-venture', or of 'sub-consultancy'. All members of such association should have real and well-defined inputs to the assignment, and it is preferable to limit the total number of firms/institutes in the association to three. Moreover the lead firm/bidding entity should be a CMMI level 3.		
21. The Criteria for Shortlisting	: The criteria for shortlisting would be past contract performance and litigation, financial status and capacity, and general & specific experiences of the firm(s).		
22. Package Details			
Ref./Package No.	Location	Indicative Start Date	Indicative Completion Date
PS2-Own DPP-2020	Dhaka (BEZA HQ)	01 January 2021	30 June 2021
Procuring Entity Details:			
23. Name & Designation of Official Inviting EOI	: Doyananda Debnath Manager (MIS & Research)		
24. Address of Official Inviting EOI	: Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority Prime Minister's Office Monem Business District (Level-12) 111, Bir Uttam C. R. Dutta Road Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh		
25. Contact Details of Official Inviting EOI	: Phone: + (88) (02) 9632463 E-mail: mimis@beza.gov.bd		
26. Particular Instruction:	: • The Procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EOIs for any reason whatsoever; • Consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedure set out in Public Procurement Act 2006 and Public Procurement Regulations 2008; • This EOI notice is also available in www.dgmarket.com as well as BEZA website www.beza.gov.bd and CPTU website www.cptu.gov.bd ; and • The list of required documents to be submitted with application and detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) are available in the website www.beza.gov.bd .		

Doyananda Debnath
(Deputy Chief)
Manager (MIS & Research)
Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority

GD-1239

China fumes as US lauds Taiwan's democracy

AFP, Taipei

A US cabinet member heaped praise on Taiwan's democracy and its success in battling the coronavirus as he met the island's leader yesterday during a historic visit that China has slammed as a threat to peace.

Health Secretary Alex Azar is in Taipei for a three-day visit billed as the highest level visit from the United States since it switched diplomatic recognition from the island to China in 1979.

China insists Taiwan is its own territory and vows to one day seize it.

Yesterday, Azar met President Tsai Ing-wen, who advocates the island being recognised as a sovereign nation and is loathed by China's leaders.

"Taiwan's response to COVID-19 has been among the most successful in the world, and that is a tribute to the open, transparent,



democratic nature of Taiwan's society and culture," Azar told Tsai.

Tsai thanked the US for supporting its bid to be part of the World Health Organization (WHO), a body Beijing keeps the island frozen out of.

Soon after the meeting Taipei's defence ministry said Chinese fighter jets had made a brief incursion across the median line in the Taiwan Strait that the two sides have long treated as a boundary.

Chinese warplanes routinely fly into Taiwan's defence zone to put pressure on the island but crossings of the median line are much rarer because it is such a sensitive area.

ROW OVER CONTROVERSIAL SECURITY LAW IN HONG KONG

China flexes muscles with raid, arrests

AGENCIES

Hong Kong pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai was arrested yesterday and led in handcuffs through his newspaper office as police raided the building, part of a sweeping crackdown on dissent since China imposed a security law on the city.

China also imposed sanctions on 11 US citizens including legislators in response to the US imposition of sanctions on 11 Hong Kong and Chinese officials accused of curtailing political freedoms in the former British colony. Among those targeted were Senators Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, Tom Cotton, Josh Hawley and Pat Toomey and Representative Chris Smith, as well as individuals at non-profit and rights groups.

"In response to that wrong US behaviour, China has decided to impose sanctions on individuals who have behaved egregiously on Hong Kong-related issues," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a regular press briefing yesterday.

He did not specify what the sanctions entail. Lai, 71, was among nine people detained on charges including colluding with foreign forces -- one of the new national security offences -- and fraud in an operation targeting his Next Digital publishing group.

It was the latest police operation against dissidents under the sweeping new law introduced at the end



Police arrest Hong kong pro-democracy media mogul Jimmy Lai from his home under the new national security law in Hong kong, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP of June.

Two of Lai's sons were among those detained, a police source told AFP as well as Wilson Li, a former pro-democracy activist who describes himself as a freelance videographer working for Britain's ITV News.

The most serious national security crimes carry up to life in jail.

Journalists working at Lai's Apple Daily broadcasted dramatic footage on Facebook of some 200 police officers conducting the raid, and the newspaper's chief editor Law Wai-kwong demanding a warrant from officers.

Apple's staff were ordered to leave their seats and line up so police could check their identities as officers conducted searches across the newsroom.

Police said the search was conducted with a court

warrant which was shown to staff.

The Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong said the raid signalled "a dark new phase" that "upended" previous assurances by China and Hong Kong's government that the national security law would not end press freedoms.

The security law was introduced in a bid to quell last year's huge and often violent pro-democracy protests, and authorities have since wielded their new powers to pursue the city's democracy camp, sparking criticism from Western nations.

Lai's Apple Daily and Next Magazine are unapologetically pro-democracy and critical of Beijing. China routinely calls Lai a "traitor" and a "black hand" behind last year's protests.

Critics, including many Western nations, believe the law has ended the key liberties and autonomy that Beijing promised Hong Kong could keep after its 1997 handover by Britain.

The United States on Friday imposed sanctions on Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam as well as the city's current and former police chiefs, under an executive order signed by President Donald Trump.

Last month, China announced sanctions against Cruz, Rubio, Smith and other U.S. officials after the United States penalized senior Chinese officials over the treatment of Uighur Muslims in its Xinjiang region.

Beijing's latest measure includes sanctions against the heads of five US-based, non-government organisations - the National Endowment for Democracy, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the International Republican Institute, Freedom House and Human Rights Watch.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Taliban pledge Afghan peace talks after prisoner release

The Taliban yesterday said they were ready to hold peace talks with the Afghan government after a contentious prisoner exchange, which authorities said would begin in the next two days. "Our stance is clear, if the prisoner release is completed, then we are ready for the intra-Afghan talks within a week," Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen told AFP, adding that the first round of talks will be held in Doha, Qatar. Thousands of prominent Afghans on Sunday agreed to the release of hundreds of Taliban prisoners accused of serious offences, overcoming a key hurdle in starting negotiations. The prisoner exchange was a key part of the February deal, which saw Washington agree to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan in return for a pledge from the Taliban to hold peace talks with Kabul.

Survey: 70% of Japanese find newspapers reliable

About 70% of people find newspapers to be a reliable source of information, according to a survey. The survey was conducted online by the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association on May 26 and 27 in light of the current flood of incorrect information regarding the novel coronavirus. The 1,243 respondents ranged from 15 to 79 years old and came from all across the nation. Of the questions included, one asked about the credibility of 13 categories of media, such as newspapers and television. The ratio of those who replied that newspapers are either "reliable" or "rather reliable" was 69.5%, followed closely by television at 66.8% and radio at 56.7%. The perceived reliability of social media sites, such as Twitter and Facebook, stood at 15.4%.

Rival Thai protests raise fears of return to violence



Rival protest groups rallied in and around the Thai capital yesterday, raising the political temperature amid almost daily anti-government student protests nationwide and stirring fears of a return to street violence. Thailand was roiled for more than a decade by sporadic street clashes between conservatives and those loyal to former populist prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra. There have been two military coups in the past 15 years, the last led by current Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha Bangkok in 2014. Dozens of supporters rallied in front of Parliament House on Monday in support of Prayuth's government. Thousands later joined an anti-government demonstration at Thammasat University on the outskirts of Bangkok, the largest such protest by students, challenging the government and conservative royalist establishment.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS, ANN

J&K militants kill fifth BJP politician

AFP, Srinagar

A Kashmir politician who died of gunshot wounds yesterday has become the fifth member of India's ruling nationalist party to be killed by militants in the turbulent region since last month.

The string of attacks have sent panic through local ranks of the Bharatiya Janata Party, a year after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government roused anger in the Himalayan territory by abolishing its semi-autonomous status.

The elected village chief was shot near his home on the edge of the main city Srinagar.

"He was attacked while taking a morning walk," said a police official. His death followed a militant attack which killed a BJP leader, his brother and father -- also members of the party -- in the Bandipora area of Kashmir early last month.

Suspected rebels killed two other elected village officials affiliated with the party last week.

At least 16 BJP members have publicly quit the party since the attacks began last month -- eight of them in the last two days. They insisted they had "no contact" with Modi's party anymore. Authorities moved scores of BJP officials and activists from their homes to secure government facilities in the wake of the attacks.

Kashmir, where an armed uprising erupted in 1989, has been especially tense since Modi's decision to revoke the territory's constitutionally mandated local autonomy last August.

Belarus election 'rigged'

Lukashenko asked to step down after 'electoral farce'

REUTERS, Minsk

The opposition in Belarus rejected official election results handing President Alexander Lukashenko a landslide re-election victory yesterday, saying the poll was rigged and that talks needed to begin on a peaceful transfer of power.

Earlier, the central election commission said Lukashenko, in power for more than a quarter of a century, won 80% of the vote in Sunday's election, while Svetlana Tikhanouskaya, who emerged from obscurity to become his main rival, took just 9.9%.

"The authorities are not listening to us. The authorities need to think about peaceful ways to hand over power," said Tikhanouskaya, a former English teacher who entered the race after her blogger husband was jailed.

"Of course we do not recognise the results." Foreign observers have not judged an election to be free and fair in Belarus since 1995, and the run-up to the vote saw authorities jail Lukashenko's rivals and open criminal investigations into others who voiced opposition.

Events are being closely watched by Russia, whose oil exports run through Belarus to the West

and which has long regarded the country as a buffer zone against Nato, and the West, which has tried to lure Minsk from Moscow's orbit.

The streets in the capital and other cities were quiet after violence on Sunday night, when riot police used force to disperse thousands of protesters who had gathered to denounce what they said was an electoral farce.

But Lukashenko signalled he would not step down. "The response will be appropriate. We won't allow the country to be torn apart," the 65-year-old leader was quoted by the Belta news agency as saying.

Lukashenko repeated allegations that shadowy forces abroad were trying to manipulate protesters. The European Union's foreign policy chief and its commissioner for enlargement said the election had been marred by "disproportionate and unacceptable state violence against peaceful protesters".

A spokesman for the German foreign ministry said there were numerous indications of electoral fraud and that the EU was discussing how to react. Neighbouring Poland said it wants a special EU summit on Belarus.



Tikhanouskaya



Relatives of Lebanese army corporal Estephan Rouhana mourns as she is lifted behind his coffin during a funerary procession for him at his hometown of Batroun in northern Lebanon on August 10, 2020, after he died in the August 4 massive blast at the port of Beirut.

PHOTO: AFP

Lebanon govt set to resign

Says minister as anger grows over blast; donors pledge \$298m

REUTERS, Beirut

Lebanon's prime minister was set to announce the resignation of his government yesterday, the health minister said, after a devastating explosion in Beirut that has stirred public outrage and spurred a string of ministers to step down.

The Aug. 4 port warehouse detonation of more than 2,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate killed at least 163 people, injured over 6,000 and destroyed swathes of the bustling Mediterranean capital, compounding months of political and economic meltdown.

The cabinet, formed in January with the backing of the powerful Iranian-backed Hezbollah group and its allies, met yesterday, with many ministers wanting to resign, according to ministerial and political sources.



Health Minister Hamad Hasan told Reuters that Prime Minister Hassan Diab would soon announce the resignation of the entire cabinet. Diab was set to deliver an address to the nation at 7:30pm local time, his office said.

For many ordinary Lebanese, the explosion was the last straw in a protracted crisis over the collapse of the economy, endemic corruption, waste and dysfunctional governance, and they have taken to the streets demanding root-and-branch change.

The information and environment ministers quit on Sunday as well as several lawmakers, and the justice minister followed them yesterday.

Anti-government protests in the past two days have been the biggest since October, when angry demonstrations spread over an economic crisis rooted in pervasive graft, mismanagement and high-level unaccountability. Protesters accused the political elite of siphoning off state resources for their own benefit.

An emergency international donor conference on Sunday raised pledges worth nearly 253 million euros (\$298 million) for immediate humanitarian relief. But foreign countries demand transparency over how the aid is used, wary of writing blank cheques to a government perceived by its own people as deeply corrupt.

Advertisement for Bangladesh government services, including a table of dates and a website link.

Advertisement for 'Holy warrior!' featuring a Pakistani teen accused of blasphemy.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh e-Tender Notice for road construction work.

LAW IN-DEPTH

On revocation of mailbox for pharmaceutical patents

MD AZHAR UDDIN BHUIYAN

Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz in his book *Making Globalization Work* showed that the international pharmaceutical patents law, the WTO Agreement on the Trade related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) 1994, was framed against the interest of the developing and least developed countries (LDC). However, a few flexibilities were consciously inserted in the Agreement to ensure that ideological dissenters of the agreement would not otherwise lose out in the negotiations in the deeply divided world. Notably, Bangladesh is seemingly unaware of (or at least less concerned about) these flexibilities in international law in order to protect public health by ensuring access to



required of the LDCs to have a mailbox for storing patent applications with Exclusive Marketing Rights (EMR) for pharmaceutical products starting from 1 January 1996. Later, through several decisions from the TRIPS Council, the obligations of the LDCs were waived in phases at different stages. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina played a crucial role in propounding the latest grant of waiver. In the 64th World Health Assembly she advocated for another waiver period for the LDCs. Her bold stand was subsequently followed by a successful formal request to the TRIPS Council on behalf of the LDC group. As the TRIPS currently stands, the obligation of the LDCs to protect pharmaceutical patents including the 'no roll-back' clause have been waived until 1 January 2033 or the graduation of the LDCs to Developing Country

status, whichever is earlier. It means that even countries with existing patent regimes are not only waived of their obligations to grant patent protection but also that they could provide for lesser to no protection than they previously had provided.

Due to its colonial legacy, Bangladesh had been granting product and process patent since 1911 until when the National Drug Policy 1982 disallowed product patent. In the post TRIPS era, the waiver for the LDCs was followed by a prohibition of process patent in 2002 by a notification in the Official Gazette of Bangladesh. In 2007, the Government of Bangladesh issued a questionable executive Order establishing a mailbox which is still storing applications in the mailbox. Professor Mohammad Towhidul Islam in his book *TRIPS*

Agreement of the WTO: Implications and Challenges for Bangladesh shows that the establishment of a mailbox by a mere executive notification was beyond the limits of the then government in 2007. Such an opinion is justified on the ground that the Patents and Designs Act 1911 did not give the government power to establish a mailbox. To establish a mailbox, it would have required a legislative enactment. Thus, the mailbox provision goes beyond the tenets of the law. However, the 2015 waiver in international pharmaceutical patent law permits Bangladesh to entirely revoke its mailbox making the submitted applications null and void.

The rationale of an anti-mailbox campaign in Bangladesh is that under the TRIPS Agreement, in cases of mailbox applications, if patents rights are granted after the transition period, they shall come to effect from the date of filing of the application. Very recently in July 2019, Brazil Federal Court of Appeals ruled that Mailbox Patents shall be granted with the validity date of 20 years from the date of filing, resulting in a retrospective effect given to the operation of patent rights facilitating infringement suits for past production of generic drugs. Bangladesh is one of the largest generic medicine producers of the world fulfilling 98% of its own needs and the only LDC in the world that has pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity. Around a fifth of drugs produced in the country is patented in other countries and rest of the manufactured medicines are those the patent protection of which have been expired. All the received

applications in the mailbox shall be burdensome for Bangladesh in the long run if proper steps are not taken immediately. Because the day Bangladesh graduates from LDC status, all the generic medicine manufacturer companies shall be sued for their past infringement of patent rights and they will be required to immediately suspend such production. Being forcefully stopped to manufacture generic medicines and being sued for past production thereof shall bring a disastrous impact on the public health and economy in general of Bangladesh.

Moreover, the increase of medicine price due to such legal proceedings shall result in losing out export business of these pharmaceuticals. The revocation of the mailbox in its entirety would result into no suits for infringement of patent rights during the pre-graduation days.

For long Bangladesh seems to have been unaware about its approach to international law with regard to the protection of public health and pharmaceutical industry. As a result, the country seems to have taken additional international obligation on itself without being required to do so. In the context of Bangladesh's booming economy till Covid 19 outbreak, the rapid progress of Bangladesh towards attaining a developing country status, Bangladesh now needs to use all the impending flexibilities of international law at hand to safeguard its citizens' public health and to ensure smooth growth of the pharmaceutical industry of the country.

THE WRITER IS A LAW GRADUATE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA.

Bangladesh now needs to use all the impending flexibilities of international law at hand to safeguard its citizens' public health and to ensure smooth growth of the pharmaceutical industry of the country.

medicine.

The TRIPS Agreement requires the member states to provide patent protection for both pharmaceutical products and processes while the Least Developed Countries are waived of such obligation. It was initially

LAW OPINION

Digitising the NGO Affairs Bureau

LAMISA FAHIMA ALAM, ABIR CHOWDHURY AND RAMISA JAHAN

In the context of Covid-19 pandemic, it is evident that governments worldwide have to adapt to unconventional methods and ensure the incorporation of technology in the workplace. Digitisation has become not just a call of the time, but a need for a sustainable development of the economy. The world at large, even after the lockdown measures adopted by countries come to an end, will have to adapt to a 'new normal'. This vision of a 'new normal' for businesses across the countries predictably includes the need to be able to produce deliverables with the help of technology.

While the policy and regulatory framework of most developing economies have not yet adapted to an ideal model of e-governance, the government of Bangladesh has been proactive in the last decade in digitalising the government and non-government sectors, with major investments in high tech parks, establishment of data centres, etc. In light of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's 'Vision 2021' of establishing Bangladesh as a middle-income country at the 50 years of independence, the dream of 'Digital Bangladesh' began to take shape. Several regulatory and legal reforms in the last decade have paved the way for crafting adjustment towards the new normal, by further digitising government and non-government institutions.

With this end in view, it is necessary for the government to immediately take measures to digitise the registration process of the Non-Government Affairs Bureau (NGOAB). Owing to the complex procedure and an influx of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in Bangladesh to rehabilitate the Rohingya refugees, there has been a severe backlog of registration, with an average registration taking much longer than the stipulated time (which is supposed to be approximately a period of 5 weeks), and this backlog is expected to get worse with the Covid-19 pandemic.

The contribution of the NGOs in Bangladesh since its inception in 1971 has been significant, with national and global assistance working in harmony to ensure poverty alleviation, healthcare and education, and expediting the process of relief and rehabilitation as a response to all the natural disasters that have hit Bangladesh over the years.

While it remains the State's responsibility to work for the welfare of the citizens during the pandemic, the NGOs can play a significant role in rendering support to the State for reaching

out to the vulnerable and affected people. In this regard, the State needs to facilitate the infrastructure necessary for the NGOs to operate effectively.

While it is evident that the poorer countries have been unable to adopt to the stringent, smart and systematic use of technology like the developed ones, the crisis has in itself presented an opportunity for these countries to adopt bold measures in incorporating the same in their forms of governance. The fruits of this modification, while accrued to address the need of the current time, could eventually outlast the crisis period, and serve the countries in the future.

This pandemic has revealed several layers of fault lines in the system, highlighting particularly the need for a collaborative approach between public and private sectors to ensure basic human rights. While the inertia created by bureaucratic regulations was initially prevalent, the government was expeditious in realising the need to act quickly during the pandemic. As such, approvals were being given online during the early stages of Covid-19. However, with government offices re-opening, there is a likelihood for the system in general of going back to the old practice of inviting hard copy applications followed by lengthy approval procedure. It is important that we carry forward the good practices established during the pandemic and make use of our existing technological framework to ease the functioning of NGO ecosystems.

Sections 19 and 20 of the Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Act, 2016 provide power to make rules and pass executive orders when necessary. Therefore, the NGOAB can issue an internal notification/circular setting out the steps for digitisation as the 2016 Act itself provides the platform for digitisation of the registration system. Furthermore, in a crisis situation like Covid-19, special notifications easing the requirement to complete the registration process could be waived temporarily, allowing all international NGOs to function without impediments.

It is imperative for the government to realise that technology, perhaps, is the strongest weapon readily available at our disposal to fight the pandemic. This is also in symmetry with the government's vision of a Digital Bangladesh. Every crisis is an opportunity. We must utilise this opportunity to bring about drastic regulatory changes which will outlast the present crisis.

THE WRITERS ARE ASSOCIATES OF THE LEGAL CIRCLE.

REVIEWING THE VIEWS

Evaluation of factoring rule of Bangladesh Bank

M S SIDDIQUI

Bangladesh Bank (BB) issued a circular on June 25, 2020 allowing factoring in Bangladesh. The Government of Bangladesh has not yet ratified the UNIDROIT Convention on International Factoring (Ottawa, 28 May 1988). Factoring is a trade finance product. The rule of factoring issued by BB mostly focuses on recovery of export proceeds but not full factoring services such as export trade finance. It does not have details of other issue of probable disputes and dispute resolution methods. Furthermore, the circular is silent about single factor or two factors methods.

The traditional bank finance relies on security of mortgage, but the factoring does not require such mortgage of fixed assets and others. A trend has recently started of accepting receivables as collateral, but mostly as supplementary securities. This trend has left many of the SMEs struggling to get funding in the absence of hard collateral and has created a strong basis for development of factoring in the market.

Factoring as per circular has some probable challenges. As per Gazette Notification issued under Section 12 of Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA), 1947, export proceeds must be repatriated within four months of shipment. Factoring is a kind of short-term loan up to 180 days. The Foreign Exchange Regulation should be amended in order to get optimum benefit of this financial product.

The scope of factoring reflects in the definition of the UNIDROIT Convention. It states that the factoring is traditionally associated with functions beyond pure financing to include collection of receivables, debtor management, and protection against default by debtors.

The guideline of international factoring prepared by technical committee and adapted by BB in the rule referred that, -- in factoring, 'invoice' is the only document that gives right to the debt. Section 6 of the circular mentioned that Authorized Dealers (Ads) might allow 'transport documents' to be issued in accordance with underlying arrangements among the parties. It is conflicting with the guideline of technical committee of BB. The circular is silent about single factor or double factors methods although the guideline of BB stated that the assignment of the invoice gives the right to the import factor to recover the money from the importer, which in turn enables import factor to provide the guarantee to the export factor on behalf of the importer. This guarantee is what enables export factor to advance funds to the exporter at



the post shipment stage. It may be presumed that BB will allow single and double factors to provide the services. The rule recognises the designated institutions which are international factoring companies/foreign banks/foreign financial institutions/trade financiers/insurance entities, but historically the insurance companies are not in this finance trade anywhere in the global market and their law does not permit such trade.

Factoring service has many risks in its operation. Commercial risk represents the risk of disputes between the assignor and debtor. The others are performance risk of the exporter and credit and payment risk of the import factor. The other generic risks include defective/false/fake invoices, direct payment by the importer to exporter in spite of assignment of receivables and not to routing all invoices of exporter through the factor. Fraud risk represents the risk of factoring "fresh air" invoices or pro-forma invoices, which are not based on an actual delivery.

There may be documentary risk represents the risk that the receivables or the assignment may not be properly prepared and hence in the event of enforcement procedure the factor may have collecting difficulty. There are many operational risks which represent the risk of human operational error and can be mitigated through minimisation of manual work with the implementation of high end software for managing the factoring transactions, and by applying the four-eye principle. Most importantly, the relevant market risks of volatile foreign exchange and the interest rate risk.

To face those risks and smooth functioning of factoring, several global institutions have been established which support, promote and facilitate factoring activities: Factor Chain International (FCI) and International Factors Group (IFG) and others.

The scope of their activities includes receivables financing, such as promoting best practices on developing markets, training staff in specific skills, as well as participating in the synchronisation of the global legal practices and improvement in the business environment. EU Federation for the Factoring and Commercial Finance Industry (EUF), is the representative body in the EU, acting as a platform between the factoring and commercial finance industry and key legislative decision makers across Europe.

In order to mitigate the risk of the service, the FCI issued (a) the General Rules for International Factoring (GRIF), (b) the edifactoring.com Rules, and (c) the Rules of Arbitration. These rules constitute the basic framework governing co-operation between members and these rules define the rights and obligations of the parties to transactions under the two-factor system. However, the United Nations Convention on the Assignment of Receivables (UNIDROIT) and the UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Secured Transactions are two important instruments for better factoring services. All those apply to international factoring, and govern the legal principles related to the effectiveness of assignments, the rights and obligations of the factor, the assignee and the assignor, and the subsequent assignments.

Bangladesh should consider ratifying UNIDROIT Convention to facilitate the factoring services. Bangladesh may consider having a law on factoring services. BB should clarify the issues related to general rule of factoring, effective communication with edifactoring and arbitration in order to resolve the disputed and smooth transaction of factoring in domestic and international trade.

THE WRITER IS A LEGAL ECONOMIST.



Call a "drive" a "drive"

Health minister's puzzlingly contradictory remarks

WE are a little confused by the apparent disagreement between the health minister and health secretary in the term used for the government's efforts to clamp down on healthcare institutions that are running without renewing their licenses or amongst other irregularities. While the health secretary has termed it as an ongoing "drive" against anomalies at private healthcare institutions, the health minister finds the word "drive" objectionable. Why is this so? What is actually objectionable is that he has said that he finds the term disagreeable because "drives are conducted in Chittagong Hill Tracts area; terrorists stay there and drives are conducted there." The CHT is where a majority of our indigenous communities live and making such a comment is both insensitive and incendiary.

The issue is about whether law enforcement agencies should independently raid government and private hospitals, which the health ministry seemed to have initially not been very enthusiastic about. The newly formed task force has come to a consensus that these raids will be conducted jointly by the health and home ministry. This seems reasonable considering criminal activities such as fraudulent test reports and the procurement of fake masks have been taking place, as exposed by the media, which would require law enforcers to arrest those behind such scams. We therefore do not really understand the reason behind why the minister is so sensitive to the term "drive", which is what it is essentially—a drive against corruption.

By objecting to the term, the health minister is implying that he is not much in favour of such actions, which is puzzling in itself. If indeed the taskforce makes surprise visits to these institutions and if irregularities are found and it takes action against those responsible, it may be possible to stop the anomalies that have been so publicised by the media and which sadly, the health ministry has not bothered to address for all these years, leading to catastrophic consequences for patients, especially during the pandemic. So where is the problem?

By publicly contradicting the health secretary, the health minister has unnecessarily exposed the former to controversy, not to mention his insensitive remarks regarding the CHT, which is a public *faux pas* and quite uncalled for. A minister should think before he speaks.

Flood victims still await government assistance

Urgent rehabilitation is crucial

WE are worried about those flood victims who have not received any government relief yet, according to reports. It is unfortunate that amidst the pandemic, floods have wreaked havoc across the nation, and countless people have been made homeless as a result. Many of the victims took shelter on dams, dykes and educational institutions during the flood, and some have returned to their place of residence when the water receded, only to find their homes and croplands damaged or even worse, devoured by the mighty rivers. The flood-hit people, mostly from Bogura, Nilphamari and Sylhet, are in desperate conditions without any means of income or government assistance, while spending their days under the open skies.

According to the National Disaster Response Coordination Centre, over 54 lakh people under 163 upazilas of 33 districts have been affected by floodwater and the government has so far allocated Tk 4.18 crore, 16,510 tonnes of rice, Tk 2.88 crore for fodder and Tk 1.40 crore for baby food for people in the flood-affected districts. Moreover, 300 bundles of corrugated iron sheets and Tk 9 lakh have been allocated for rebuilding the victims' houses. While it is reassuring that aid is being provided, not everybody who needs them the most are receiving it. Add to that the severe shortage of medical facilities and supplies to address the increasing number of patients falling sick to waterborne diseases, and the fact that there is a lack of rehabilitation programmes for the victims, and it seems quite clear that their situation will only worsen.

Authorities claim that government aid—money and food—was mostly directed towards victims of river erosion, and they were also planning to provide corrugated iron sheets soon for rebuilding purposes following approval from the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief. But what about the other victims who are suffering and who cannot afford to repair their destroyed homes? And what good will money do when they are unable to commute or purchase their necessities? As rehabilitation remains a far cry in many regions, and as the government is yet to identify all the affected people, most of the victims continue to suffer helplessly. Therefore, the government should allocate the necessary resources to all the flood-hit regions in order to provide systematic assistance immediately. Those affected do not have time to wait—they are hungry, homeless and without basic sanitation facilities. The government must help them build their homes again and address their needs now.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Extrajudicial killings are never the solution

Everyone has the right to the protection of law, regardless of their crime. The court will decide what punishment will be awarded to the criminal under the existing laws of the country. Extrajudicial killings are not the right way of punishment. It tends to raise suspicions in the general public that the reality is being altered. The law enforcement agencies must follow the rule of law and allow justice to prevail instead of endorsing such killings.

Md Zillur Rahaman, Dhaka

Murder on Marine Drive

It is high time to shine a spotlight on extrajudicial killings in Bangladesh



C R ABRAR

THERE have been some important developments following the murder of Major Sinha on July 31 in Teknaf. The family was able to file a case without much of a hindrance. The inquest report was

made available within a very short time after the body was committed to the Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital. It contradicted the claims made by the Teknaf police in the First Information Report about the bullet wounds on the victim.

To console the grieving family, the prime minister telephoned the mother of the victim, assuring the latter that an inquiry will be launched and justice will be served. As a follow up to this commitment, a joint enquiry team was immediately formed. Within 24 hours, the team was strengthened by the induction of a senior official as the leader. In a matter of days, the judicial magistrate ordered the incarceration of the alleged perpetrators, the law enforcers involved in the "gunfight". The chiefs of Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Police jointly visited the site of the fateful occurrence. They announced that they too wanted "a fair enquiry... ensuring exemplary punishment". The chair of a leading human rights organisation hailed this as "a rare example of justice". The media (albeit erroneously) reported this as the first case in the long history of extrajudicial killings in the country in which the family of a victim pointed fingers at the police.

Extrajudicial killings (death by "encounters", "crossfires" or "shootouts in self defence" by the members of law enforcement agencies) have become almost an integral (though not lawful) element of law enforcement in Bangladesh. Family members of more than a couple of thousand victims of extrajudicial killings have alleged that their loved ones were picked up from homes, streets and other public places by persons claiming to be of law enforcement agencies. In not a single occasion was the victim served with any warrant of arrest.

In some instances, the families were told that they were being taken for questioning and would soon be returned; only to be informed later that the

accused was killed either when he tried to flee as he was being taken to identify the hideout of his accomplices, caches of arms or drugs, or during an attack launched by his accomplices. In most cases, such encounters occur in the wee hours of the morning when eyewitnesses are found wanting. The other standard narrative is that the victims collapse during interrogation or commit suicide in custody. In many instances, the agencies subsequently deny involvement in detaining them. In other cases, sometimes days later, the decomposed body of the person taken to detention is found in a ditch, roadside, shallow grave or, as in the seven murder case of Narayanjanji, floating on the water, as perhaps the River Shitalakshya refused to be an accomplice in the dastardly act.

There are ample examples in which individuals from various walks of life (from pickpockets and petty traders to journalists, political activists and affluent industrialists) have been threatened with extrajudicial killing by errant members of law enforcement agencies if they did not comply with their wishes. While many saved their lives by conceding to such demands, a section who did not or could not, met with dire consequences. It is worrisome that those in charge of law enforcement are yet to acknowledge

The claim of the pervasiveness of extrajudicial killings is vindicated when powerful people connected with the ruling party and political establishment mete out threats of crossfire. In one instance not so long ago, even on the floor of the parliament, some lawmakers demanded that "rapists should be put to crossfire". According to Prothom Alo, earlier last month, a ruling party MP candidly stated to the media that he ordered the killing of five "terrorists" in crossfire. All these are signs that "encounters" or "crossfires" have been internalised by some influential quarters as a method of law enforcement.

Article 27 of the Bangladesh Constitution, the supreme law of the land, reads "All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of the law". Article 31 clearly stipulates "To enjoy the protection of the law, and to be treated in accordance with law, and only in accordance with law, is the inalienable right of every citizen... and every other person for the time being within Bangladesh". It also clearly stipulates that "no action detrimental to the life, liberty, body, reputation or property of any person shall be taken except in accordance with the law". It is pertinent to note that Article 35(3) clearly states that any person accused of criminal offence "shall have a right to a speedy and public

It appears that the government's anti-narcotic drive has a direct correlation with the spike in extrajudicial killings. Transparency International Bangladesh has noted that 287 people had died due to "gunfights" with law enforcers since the anti-narcotic drive began in 2018. So far, no state functionary has been prosecuted. Overzealous and unbridled law enforcers also contribute to the increase in such deaths. Based on police sources, media reports inform that in Teknaf during the 22 month tenure of the Officer in Charge Pradeep Kumar Das, 204 people have died in 144 gunfights. Extrajudicial killings thus far have failed to gain traction in the justice delivery mechanism. Over the past decade, state authorities have not once responded to the higher court's directive to determine whether crossfires or gunfights would be considered as extrajudicial killings. Rather, all three benches of the High Court were dissolved after the beginning of the hearing process of the writ petitions filed in connection with such incidents.

In a joint press conference, the chiefs of the army and police forces have claimed that the Sinha killing was an "isolated incident". It is not clear what the two most senior functionaries of the state security services were alluding to. For common citizens, Sinha's murder was quite in



PHOTO: COLLECTED

If these were indeed isolated acts and were carried out by wayward members of law enforcement agencies on their own whim or volition, what precludes the state to launch proper and impartial enquiries into the allegations lodged by the loved ones of the victims?

the reality that delinquent members of law enforcement agencies are increasingly getting tied up in settling personal vendettas and business disputes of private individuals, which often result in extrajudicial killings.

The failure to produce warrants while detaining a person, hindrances in reporting cases of persons allegedly taken by plainclothesmen or men in uniform, refusal to register cases and earnestly conduct investigations, and mounting challenges to writ petitions demanding investigations in cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, appear to be indicative of the state machinery's complicity in the acts. If these were indeed isolated acts and were carried out by wayward members of law enforcement agencies on their own whim or volition, what precludes the state to launch proper and impartial enquiries into the allegations lodged by the loved ones of the victims?

trial by an independent and impartial court or tribunal established by law". The International Convention of Civil and Political Rights (1966), an instrument ratified by Bangladesh in 2020, stipulates "every human being has the inherent right to life". The Covenant also says that "the right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life".

Despite such explicit constitutional prohibitions and international legal obligations, extrajudicial killings have been a reality under successive governments in independent Bangladesh. Over the last couple of decades, there has been a significant rise in such killings. Odhikar figures inform that 44 persons were killed in 2001. The figure rose to 355 in 2006, before ebbing to 84 in 2011. It registered an increase to 178 in 2016 before shooting up to a staggering sum of 391 in 2019. Up to June 2020, 158 people have been reported to have fallen victim to "gunfights".

sync with the general aberration in law enforcement and the justice delivery systems of the country.

One hopes that Sinha's family will secure fair justice, as promised. Perhaps time has come for the political leadership to acknowledge the stark reality of the day, in which constitutional provisions pertaining to rights of citizens and also of aliens are being systematically abused. It is also time for those in law enforcement and justice delivery structures to have a fresh look at the state's pledge to its own people and the international community and uphold those in proper stride. The onus also lies on those at the helm of the state not only to reiterate their commitment made in February 2009 for "zero tolerance" with regard to extrajudicial killings but also to deliver on that promise.

C R Abrar is an academic with interest in migration and rights issues.

Harnessing the power of partnerships



RMG NOTES

MOSTAFIZ UDDIN

businesses received from their apparel brand customers. Such letters would refer to their suppliers as "valued partner" or "trusted partner" on the one hand, while in the same letter telling this partner that they were cancelling numerous orders from them or wanted a huge discount from their orders.

Thousands of suppliers globally will have received correspondence of this nature—and I count myself in this group.

It left me scratching my head and pondering the meaning of the phrase "partner". We hear partner or partnership used so much in business, but to me it has become one of those phrases that lose all meaning because they are so widely used—a bit like "sustainable".

If the Covid-19 pandemic did anything, it exposed one of the big lies at the heart of our industry—partnership in the true sense of the word is a very rare thing, and those that have clients who truly treat them as equal partners should cherish them. Such clients do not come along very often.

There are, of course, some household name brands in the apparel space which respect their suppliers, which have empathy for them, and which have been supportive and understanding of their individual situations during Covid-19. I have seen first-hand—or heard about—plenty of such examples these past few

months. I have seen clients paying for orders in double-quick time, of making long-term commitments and advance forecasts to suppliers, of keeping them informed of their thinking, of providing a sounding board and generally making them feel part of the "process". This is partnership in the truest sense—brands and their suppliers looking out for one another and recognising there is genuine mutual benefit to such an arrangement.

Sadly, this has been the exception rather than the rule. First and foremost, I recognise that Covid-19 has been an extraordinary time, and brands have been forced to take decisions which they might not wished to have done.

But the issue of partnership in our industry very much transcends Covid-19.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

The lack of genuine partnership runs far deeper than that. There is a power imbalance within the apparel and textile sector which buyers and sellers are both very aware of. Put simply, this is a buyer's market, with far too many suppliers competing for too little business, and

The lack of genuine partnership runs far deeper than that. There is a power imbalance within the apparel and textile sector which buyers and sellers are both very aware of.

Covid-19 has only exaggerated this problem. Whether consciously or not, many buyers take advantage of this power imbalance to their own benefit—driving down unit prices, playing suppliers off against one another and generally abusing the notion of equal partnerships. Few suppliers in our industry are large or powerful enough to stand up for themselves and, in any case, often lack the negotiation skills to ensure that they are equal partners in the supplier-buyer relationship.

In such a situation, the notion of partnership becomes redundant. More common in the industry is that brands say "jump" and their suppliers say "how high?" It has been this way for far too long, and I believe things need to change.

They need to change not because, at present, far too many suppliers are getting a raw deal. No, I believe the bigger reason that we need to move towards true partnership is because this is key to a more sustainable industry. Many of the challenges our industry will face moving

forward are far too big to be tackled by brands and their suppliers working in isolation. We all as an industry need to truly collaborate if we are to properly—and quickly—address sustainability challenges moving forward.

One of the clearest examples of why this is so important is in the area of costing. More sustainable supply chains cost more, certainly, in the short term. There is a capital outlay involved in moving towards renewable energy sources, or using safer, more environmental finishing techniques. Who should pay this cost?

If we don't have true partnership, the cost will end up being borne by the supplier. So why not split the bill? Or why not suppliers and their brand customers work together to devise mutually beneficial solutions? When suppliers and their customers work together on sustainability issues in true partnership, great things can happen. I won't mention specific names, but we have seen several brands work closely in partnership with their suppliers on water and energy saving programmes in recent years. We need more of this.

We cannot continue as an industry where brand-supplier relations are, in far too many cases, adversarial. Partnership—the exception at the moment—has to become the norm.

Looking ahead, our industry has some huge issues to tackle, and we need to get this right for all our benefits. Let's work in true partnership to address these issues rather than just paying lip service to the idea of partnership.

Together we are stronger.

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Return of the Rajapaksas in Sri Lanka



SMRITI S PATTANAİK

THE victory of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) in Sri Lanka's parliamentary elections held on August 5 was very much anticipated,

although the extent of the victory was speculated on. The victory is impressive and marks the second innings of the Rajapaksa brothers under the newly formed SLPP. The election also marks the death of two grand old parties—the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)—and the massive fragmentation of the political parties representing the minority Tamils and the Muslims, who constitute more than 20 percent of Sri Lanka's population.

Mahinda Rajapaksa, who had lost the election in 2015 to Maithripala Sirisena, has been sworn in as the prime minister of Sri Lanka. Rajapaksa had formally joined the SLPP on November 11, 2018, a party founded by his brother Basil Rajapaksa in 2016, after he and his supporters decided to break away from the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) headed by the then President Sirisena. The SLPP made its mark as a political party when it received 40.47 percent of the votes leaving UPFA and the United National Party (UNP), led by the then Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, far behind. Later, in the presidential election held on November 16 last year, Gotabaya Rajapaksa was elected as the President, securing 52.25 percent of votes, which indicated his soaring popularity.

The loss of the UPFA in which the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) was the major alliance partner was a gain for the SLPP. This election also ended the political career of former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, the chairman of the UNP whose party could not even win one seat, and former President Maithripala Sirisena of the SLFP and chairman of UPFA, whose party just became an appendage of the SLPP to survive Rajapaksa's political onslaught.

From the womb of these two grand old parties, two brand new parties have emerged and pushed the mother parties to oblivion—the SLPP and Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) led by young leader Sajith Premadasa, son of the former assassinated President Ranasinghe Premadasa.

The political clash between Ranil and Sajith came out in the open, especially after the presidential election. Sajith was nominated by the UNP but Ranil Wickremesinghe kept the control of the party in his hand, ultimately leading to the split. Sajith Premadasa's supporters strongly believed that under the leadership of Ranil, the party would

Tamil majority Northern Province, CV Vigneswaran, left the TNA in 2018 and formed his own party. There were other smaller Tamil parties who contested in the elections, resulting in the division of Tamil votes.

The Sri Lankan Muslims were also equally divided. While Sri Lanka Muslim Congress was part of SJB, the All Ceylon Muslim Congress, Muslim National Alliance, National Congress and All Ceylon Makkal Congress contested the elections separately. Most of the divisions are the result of the emergence of hardliners within the minority parties.

The SLPP manifesto gives priority to national security, friendly non-aligned

remittances from the Gulf. The first quarter of the financial year shows a 1.6 percent negative growth rate for the economy. The total outstanding external debt as a percentage of GDP stood at 66.6 percent and annual debt service payments accounted for 79 percent of total debt service payments in 2019. It is unlikely that the tourism sector, which contributes 5.7 percent to GDP, would be back on track soon. This indicates a bleak prospect.

The government is now likely to push to amend the 19th amendment to the constitution, which is one of the poll promises. This amendment diluted the power of the executive president as

issue and addressing the alienation of the Muslim minority. Successive governments have undermined the TNA by not addressing the long pending political issues concerning the Tamil minorities within the constitutional framework of Sri Lanka. This has given space to hardliners within the community, which explains its poor show in the election, winning only 10 seats compared to the 16 in the last parliament that helped it to emerge as the official opposition party in the parliament. Similarly, after the Easter attacks, Sri Lankan Muslims are increasingly feeling alienated. They have been demonised, labelled as terrorists and their businesses and shops have been attacked and boycotted by hardline Buddhist monks. It requires the political will of the Rajapaksas, whose landslide victory is attributed to the massive Sinhalese Buddhist votes it received, to address the political and identity issues of the minorities.

On top of that, the SLPP has not hidden its majoritarian agenda. The polarisation of the post-war polity is evident and is reflective of the SLPP's victory. It is true that President Gotabaya Rajapaksa is seen as a bulwark against separatism and terrorism, and the manner in which he handled the last phase of the war has led to him being regarded as a saviour of the country by the Sinhalese Buddhist majority. Depending on how this majoritarianism is going to manifest, the extent of radicalisation of the ethnic and religious minorities will be determined. One has seen the manifestation of this radicalisation in the past. It is hoped that the return of the Rajapaksa brothers would not see the repetition of the last Rajapaksa regime that was characterised by enforced disappearances, establishment of high security zones, massive corruption and alienation of the Tamil and Muslims in Sri Lanka. Majoritarianism has its own trajectory, but they are also the only leaders who can address the alienation of the minorities.

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Crowds at a rally in Sri Lanka showing their support for the Rajapaksa brothers

PHOTO: LAKRUWAN WANNIARACHCHI/AFP/GETTY

lose the parliamentary elections. This prediction proved correct as the UNP that dominated the last parliament could not win a single seat this time.

The SLPP has got nearly a two-third majority in the 225 member parliament. Including the national list, it has 145 seats with 59.09 percent of votes, the SJB has 54 seats with 23.9 percent of votes, and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) won 10 seats with 2.82 percent of votes. In spite of the Covid-19 pandemic, voter turnout was an impressive 71 percent.

This election is one of the most fractured elections in Sri Lanka in recent times, in terms of minority politics and their votes. The TNA witnessed a division from within. Former chief minister of the

foreign policy, a corruption-free polity and economic development, apart from its promise to promulgate a new constitution. It needs to be noted that the last Unity government attempted to promulgate a new constitution that addresses long standing political grievances of the Tamil minority and determine the place of religion, but it could not muster the majority as the unity of the National Unity Government was marred by the power struggle between the president and the prime minister, which paralysed the government from the very beginning.

The most challenging job for the government would be to fix the economy, which is dependent on tourism and

established in 1978 and transferred them to the parliament, and made the prime minister more powerful, on whose advice the president would appoint the cabinet. Unlike before, the parliament cannot be dissolved before four and a half years. It revived the Constitutional Council and established independent commissions who would be appointed by the parliament rather than the president. This restored the credibility of independent commissions that was originally mandated through the 17th amendment to the constitution and reversed by the then President Mahinda Rajapaksa through the 18th amendment.

Another key focus would be the long pending political settlement of the Tamil

Taking responsibility for our actions



FIRDOUSI NAHER

I was trying to manoeuvre my way through a small gap between a security barricade on my left and the moving trail of vehicles on my right, when a speeding car almost went over

my foot. Hugely relieved to have avoided it, I murmured a little prayer.

The pavement, meant for pedestrians like me, was stocked with bricks, while concrete and rods occupied a good part of the road. Being a regular user of the road, I knew that this had been the status quo for more than six months. With no other alternate feasible path, thousands use this road everyday, putting themselves at risk. Amongst the pile of construction materials was propped a signboard with details of the ongoing project and a "sorry for the inconvenience" note at the bottom. This is a common scenario, particularly in urban Bangladesh and understandably so, given the fast-paced urbanisation taking place in the country.

However, one question, is this the right way to go about it? Does that "sorry" note suffice for the imposed restrictions on one's freedom of movement for a prolonged period? Could the contractor have done his job in a more responsible way, generating minimal inconvenience for fellow passersby?

For most of us in Bangladesh, there seems to be a rush to get over with one's committed task, never mind how it is done but as long as it is done. The municipality man who sprays for mosquito control, the road cleaners, store-keepers, pharmacists, doctors, school teachers and other professionals

and administrators are all doing their respective duties, but how responsibly so? Is the mosquito spray a genuine one or are the cleaners working sincerely and at the right time? Do the pharmacists make sure that customers are informed about the expiry dates of their drugs? Is the school teacher ensuring full comprehension of the students so that they don't need private lessons after school? Are patients being prescribed the right tests and referred to the right doctors? Are authorities adequately and

contractor would have been executing his duties responsibly if he had ensured the least infringement of his activities beyond the boundaries of his site. Duty without responsibility can bring about disastrous consequences. To cite a recent example, the setting up of a separate ward for Covid-19 patients by a private hospital without adhering to safety and security norms, led to the tragic death of several patients, when a fire broke out in the ward.

Given the ramifications of one's

actions, the development efforts will get substantially magnified.

That said, it is also true that the reach of responsibility stretches to a multitude of actors and cannot be narrowed down to a single line of individual liability. One's actions are contingent on a maze of underlying causes and existing conditions. For instance, in our construction case, the contractor's actions would be dependent on a host of actors and conditions including, among others, building material suppliers, transport owners and availability of skilled labour. While there is little that can be done in the short run about existing conditions such as the availability of labour, the actors do have a critical role to play by way of delivering responsibly. If we take the case of the transport owners, they must exercise utmost caution, discipline and consideration during the transportation and delivery of heavy construction materials.

In our daily interface with many actors in development, we are often subject to a boorish demeanour—as if to say that we should be grateful for the work they are doing for a better future for us. While we all look forward to a better life, there is no reason to think that they enjoy any kind of immunity on account of that. It must be remembered that the public expect these actors to perform their jobs with utmost responsibility.

Unfortunately, the values and institutions that have developed in Bangladesh have a colonial flavour, with the masses accepting things the way they are. With a greater focus on outputs rather than outcomes, we have fallen into the trap of path dependency, wherein the past trends have continued and determine the current state. This path dependency has yielded preconceived notions and unwritten rules of the game

at the cost of the overall welfare of the nation.

Every society has its own norms of behaviour. What is acceptable in one society may not be so in another. It is easy to overlook something that is not right, be it out of convenience or compulsion or just plain indifference. Leaders can choose to ignore, law enforcers can turn a blind eye and citizens can opt to remain mute spectators, but eventually that leads to a point when the wrong becomes right. It is then that we face the harsh consequences of not owning up to our responsibilities. We can evade responsibilities today but we will have to face the consequences someday.

The ability to perform assigned tasks with due responsibility cannot be drilled into individuals overnight. It has to be instilled in a person through developing a sense of ownership and accountability for one's actions. And to inculcate these values, the key element is ethics. It is through ethics that one learns the values of integrity, honesty and discipline. Ethics teaches a person to think critically, to put oneself in others' shoes and to contemplate on the practical consequences of personal and collective actions. Ultimately it boils down to sound and proper education. The essentiality of education in fostering development is well-known and ethics must form an integral part of that education. This is imperative if we want to produce better citizens—citizens who have the ability to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong. In delivering our responsibilities, both the means and the ends are equally important for a sustainable tomorrow.

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PHOTO: STAR

sensitively addressing public woes? We, very often, refer to duty as being synonymous with responsibility. However, there is a fine yet a weighty difference between the two. Duty is a certain task that one has committed to perform as a part of one's job. Responsibility refers to the state of completing the task in an accountable way, taking the onus of any consequence—positive or negative—that may emerge in the process. In the construction instance cited above, the

actions on others' lives, a critical path to achieving sustainable development is to make informed choices that balance both personal and social objectives. This involves taking into consideration the rights and freedoms of others and how they will be affected by our actions. Nobel laureate Amartya Sen's discipline of consequential evaluation talks about the need to take responsibility for the consequences of one's choice. If we can practice (or at least start with) taking responsibility for our choices and

QUOTABLE Quote

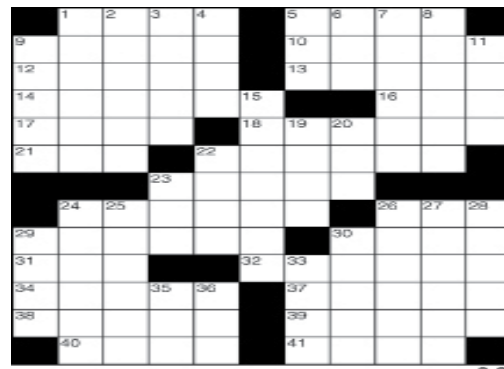


ALEX HALEY (1921-1992) American writer.

Either you deal with what is the reality, or you can be sure that the reality is going to deal with you.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Remove rinds from
 - 5 Misplaced
 - 9 Kind of wave or basin
 - 10 Kind of kitchen
 - 12 Tests
 - 13 Feel in the dark
 - 14 Muscular-looking, in slang
 - 16 Make a choice
 - 17 Hardens
 - 18 Corduroy features
 - 21 Snaky shape
 - 22 Straightened up
 - 23 Lassoed
 - 24 Reporters' exclusives
 - 26 In what way
 - 29 Corset's cousin
 - 30 Fizzy drink
 - 31 Gorilla or gibbon
 - 32 Dropped down
 - 34 Petty arguments
 - 37 Indian social class
 - 38 Potpourri bit
 - 39 Fixes copy
 - 40 Refuse
 - 41 Painter Magritte
- DOWN**
- 1 Sprites
 - 2 Makes suitable
 - 3 Highway exits
 - 4 Different
 - 5 Trip segment
 - 6 Crew need
 - 7 Fall guy
 - 8 Rewarded good service
 - 9 Far from wordy
 - 11 Brooklyn team
 - 15 Needed fixing, as a faucet
 - 19 Mid-March date
 - 20 Performed
 - 22 Hammer or hacksaw
 - 23 Fishing pole
 - 24 Drank daintily
 - 25 Dream up
 - 26 Accepts a driver's invitation
 - 27 "Swan Lake" role
 - 28 Walks in water
 - 29 Shocked sound
 - 30 Black card
 - 33 Bakery worker
 - 35 Light brown
 - 36 Cunning



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

P	L	A	N	A	C	O	O	L	S
I	O	N	I	A	A	D	M	I	T
C	L	I	M	B	S	E	E	M	E
K	I	M	I	K	E	L	I	P	S
S	T	A	B	L	E	J	E	T	S
A	L	L	E	Y	C	A	T	S	
A	N	G	U	S					
U	N	D	E	R	D	O	G	S	
T	R	U	E	I	G	N	I	T	E
A	B	C	A	P	E	J	O	B	
C	A	L	M	S	L	E	A	V	E
K	N	E	E	S	S	A	N	E	R
S	A	I	N	T	T	E	S	T	

BETLE BAILEY



BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES



WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.

UN Council

FROM PAGE 12

you very much for your kind message of good wishes. By the grace of God I am making steady recovery and hope to be able to return Bangladesh soon."

DON'T STAND IN THE WAY OF OUR UN ENTRY

Acting Prime Minister of Bangladesh Syed Nazrul Islam yesterday appealed to the People's Republic of China not to stand in the way of the rightful admission of Bangladesh into the UN. He said that 85 countries of the world had already recognised Bangladesh. China had herself suffered in the past due to the obstructionist policy of various imperialist powers, he added. The acting prime minister earnestly hoped that Chinese leaders would appreciate Bangladesh's struggle for freedom and accept the reality.

SOURCES: August 12, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Ex-Indian

FROM PAGE 12

"I request the people who came in contact with me in the last week, to please self isolate and get tested for Covid-19," the Congress leader, who was president from 2012 to 2017, said.

A number of Indian politicians, including Home Minister Amit Shah, Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Chief Ministers of Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh Ka, tested positive in recent weeks and were in hospital.

Coronavirus has affected more than 22 lakh people till yesterday with 62,064 new cases in the last 24 hours while the death toll climbed to 44,386 with 1,007 more fatalities, the health ministry said.

Messages wishing speedy recovery for Pranab from leaders cutting across party lines poured in soon after the news about his test for Covid-19 positive broke.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee expressed concern and wished Pranab, the first Bangali president of India, a speedy recovery. "Concerned to hear about Former President Pranab Mukherjee Da testing positive for #COVID19. My prayers are with him & his family during this time and I wish him a speedy recovery," Mamata tweeted.

Noab worried

FROM PAGE 12

houses women, children, and patients," said the statement, issued by Noab President AK Azad. It called the incident disappointing and unfortunate.

Noab stated that newspapers across the country have fallen on economic hardship as a result of the ongoing pandemic. "Crores upon crores of taka are owed to these newspapers for advertisements by the different departments of the government and corporate entities. The income of newspapers has fallen, so did the circulation," said the statement.

The association stated that while many sectors have received stimulus packages, the national budget did not meet the five-point demand from the Noab, including reducing the illogical VAT imposed on newspaper.

Noab also expressed hope that the current stalemate of the Chattogram newspapers would soon be solved.

Mystery

FROM PAGE 12

skull, revealing "several very clear adaptations for life in water".

Olivier Rieppel, a paleontologist at the Field Museum in Chicago and one of the authors on the study, said: "That neck doesn't make sense in a terrestrial environment. It's just an awkward structure to carry around."

Rieppel described the creature as "a stubby crocodile with a very, very long neck".

The scan showed that the 20-foot reptile had nostrils on the top of its snout and curved, interlocked teeth - both indications of an animal that would have hunted in the water.

Stephan Spiekman, a paleontologist at the University of Zurich in Switzerland and lead author on the study, said: "It likely hunted by stealthily approaching its prey in murky water using its small head and very long neck to remain hidden."

Tanystropheus fossils were discovered in on the border between Switzerland and Italy.

Nearby, scientists found fossils of a creature that looked similar, but was only 4-feet long, leading them to wonder if they were juveniles or a different species. Analysis revealed they were fully grown, and therefore a separate species.

Nick Fraser, keeper of natural sciences at National Museums Scotland and a co-author on the paper, said: "It is hugely significant to discover that there were two quite separate species of this bizarrely long-necked reptile who swam and lived alongside each other in the coastal waters of the great sea of Tethys approximately 240 million years ago."

Spiekman added: "These two closely related species had evolved to use different food sources in the same environment.

"This is really remarkable, because we expected the bizarre neck of Tanystropheus to be specialised for a single task, like the neck of a giraffe.



A motorcyclist wades through a flooded street after heavy monsoon rains in Lahore, Pakistan yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Outbreak shows signs of peaking

FROM PAGE 12

The death toll is more than 731,500 worldwide since the coronavirus emerged in China last December, according to a running tally from official sources compiled by AFP.

India yesterday reported more than 1,000 new deaths, the most the country has recorded in a single day since the pandemic began.

The new toll put India's total at 44,386 deaths, trailing only the United States, Brazil, Mexico and Britain.

The country has also reported more confirmed new cases than any other in the world for six consecutive days, including 62,000 yesterday.

MASKS IN HEATWAVE PARIS

Face masks became compulsory in tourist hotspots in Paris yesterday amid warnings of a resurgence of cases.

The requirement came as France

along with much of Western Europe sweltered in a heatwave, with temperatures soaring above 35 degrees Celsius (95 F).

The blistering heat sent crowds flocking to beaches at the weekend despite health warnings about the risk of infection.

In Berlin, thousands of children returned to school yesterday after the summer break, sporting masks which are compulsory in common areas like school courtyards. Schools in some other German regions also reopened, though with differing rules on masks.

"No child forgot their masks this morning, so we see everything is back to normal," said Domenico Aciri, headmistress of the Carl Orff primary school in Berlin.

In Pakistan, all restaurants and parks were allowed to reopen yesterday, as well theatres, cinemas

and public transport, after the country saw a drop in new cases for several weeks.

The United States is by far the worst-hit country with nearly 163,000 deaths. On Sunday, it reached the extraordinary milestone of five million cases, according to according to John Hopkins University.

President Donald Trump's Democratic opponent in the presidential election, Joe Biden, tweeted that five million coronavirus cases was "a number that boggles the mind and breaks the heart."

GRIM MILESTONE FOR BRAZIL

After the US, Brazil has the most cases, and on Saturday it became the second country to pass 100,000 fatalities.

President Jair Bolsonaro has played down the coronavirus from the beginning, dismissing it as a "little flu," questioning the lockdowns

ordered by some state governors and saying their economic impact could be "more deadly than the virus."

Following the news of the latest milestone, Brazil's most widely viewed TV network Globo criticised Bolsonaro's handling of the crisis, asking "Has the president of the republic done his duty?"

In Peru, indigenous people armed with spears and angry over what they consider government neglect of their communities in the pandemic assaulted a settlement for oil workers deep in the Amazon, triggering a clash with police that left three natives dead, the government said Sunday.

In Spain, top-flight football club Atletico Madrid on Sunday reported two positive coronavirus tests, just four days before they face Germany's Leipzig for a place in the Champions League semi-finals.

Farmers lose crops, seedbeds

FROM PAGE 12

In Manikganj, around 1, 76, 000 farmers have been affected as their crops on 31,577 hectares have been deluged, said local agriculture officers.

"We have incurred a loss of around Tk 4 lakh as papaya on 33 decimal, banana on 60 decimal and tree garden on 33 decimal lands have gone underwater. Moreover, three of our fish ponds have been washed away," said Solaiman Khan, a flood victim of Madhabpur village under Sadar upazila.

Contacted, district deputy commissioner SM Ferdaus said the affected farmers would be provided with seeds and other assistance to cover up their losses.

In Sirajganj, crops on around 22,650 hectares land in seven upazilas have been inundated, affecting over

2 lakhs farmers and causing a loss of around Tk 200 crore.

"I cultivated jute on 5 bighas of land. But all of my crops were washed away by the first phase of flood in early July. Later, I tried to prepare seedbeds for Aman but it was also damaged by the second phase of the flood," said Shafikul Islam, a flood-victim of Suvogachain village under Kazipur upazila.

Local DAE officials said they were distributing cost-free seeds among farmers.

In Nilphamari, crops on around 1,500 acres of lands have been damaged by flood, causing immense sufferings to marginal farmers.

"I cultivated peanut on my 2.5 acres of lands. The peanuts were matured and were about to be harvested. But all of them were damaged by

floodwater," said Shahidul Islam, a resident of Dakkhin Kharibari under Dimla upazila.

"I had to take loans for cultivating the peanuts. I thought I would repay the loans after selling the peanuts. But all have been destroyed. Now, I don't know how I will repay my loans," he added.

In Kurigram and Lalmonirhat, crops of around 4,500 hectares of land have been damaged by flood, affecting around 45,000 farmers.

In the north-eastern region, Aush paddy on around 3,000 hectares, vegetables on 56 hectares, and Aman seedbed on 116 hectares were destroyed in four districts -- Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar and Habiganj.

With the support from the DAE, community seedbed was prepared on a total 3.99 acres of land in the

division, said Debnath, additional director of the DAE in Sylhet division, adding that 680 units of floating seedbed were also prepared.

In Bogura, crops of over 6,434.1 hectares lands worth around Tk 74 crores have been damaged by flood, affecting around 50,000 farmers.

In Gaibandha, crops of 2,533 hectares lands worth of over Tk 27.95 crore have been damaged by the recent flood in six upazilas, affecting some 30,000 farmers.

Local DAE officials said farmers would not be able to cultivate Aush and Aman Paddy in the upcoming season as seedbeds were destroyed. So, there might be a low production of paddies this year.

Our correspondents from Manikganj, Pabna, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Bogura and Sylhet contributed to this report.

Sefat gets out on bail

FROM PAGE 1

wanted to keep him out of stress for some days.

He said they are happy about the bail, but at the same time, they are concerned about his overall safety, as he is the prime eye-witness to the incident.

Sources said that Sefat and another Stamford student Shipra Debnath have to stay a few more days in Cox's Bazar as the investigating agency will be questioning them.

Lt Col Ashique Billah, director of Rab's legal and media wing, told reporters yesterday that the Rab's investigating officer has already started talking to Shipra and Sefat in this connection.

As they went through a trauma, they will talk to them gradually for further information.

The Rab official further said that Shipra Debnath, who came out in bail on Sunday, gave some "sensitive information" while talking to the investigators.

He, however, didn't share details.

"What is most important is that

she said she will fight till the last day of her life to get justice," the Rab director said at a press briefing at its headquarters in the capital's Uttara.

In a Facebook status, Shipra wrote: "I am good to go far for justice. Back to my family. Just allow me some time."

She thanked everyone for their support and empathy.

Shipra's father Nabakumar Debnath believes that police had framed his daughter in a false case and he wants the charges against her to be dropped.

Earlier in the morning, Sefat's lawyer told the court that police didn't find any arms or drugs in Sefat's possession. He is a prime eye-witness of Major (Retd) Sinha's killing. To screen him off, police framed him in a fabricated case.

After the prosecution opposed the plea, Teknaf Senior Judicial Magistrate Court Judge Tamanna Farah granted him bail.

Meanwhile, Sefat's lawyer told the court three cases have been filed relating to one incident, and so it would be good if these cases are

investigated by one agency.

The Rab is investigating the murder case filed by Sinha's elder sister Sharmen Shahria Ferdush with the same court on August 5, accusing nine policemen, including Inspector Liaqat Ali of Baharchhara Police Investigation Centre, Teknaf OC Pradeep Kumar Das and Sub-inspector Nandadulal Raxit.

Among 10 witnesses, Sefat is the number one eye-witness.

The documentary film crew was arrested at the scene after police in Teknaf shot dead the team leader Maj (retd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan on July 31.

Sefat, who saw the shooting, was accused in murder and narcotics cases by Teknaf police.

The police's account raised many questions, prompting the government to form a high-level committee to investigate the incident.

Stamford students Sefat, Shipra Debnath and Tahsin Rifat Noor were in Cox's Bazar to shoot a travel video for Sinha's YouTube channel named "Just Go". They were staying at Nilima Resort in Himchhari area on Marine

Drive Road.

After Sinha got killed, Ramu police raided the resort and picked up Shipra and Rifat on August 1. Police handed Rifat to his parents' custody, but arrested Shipra under a narcotics case. She got out on bail on Sunday.

Talking to a private TV channel yesterday, Rifat said their documentary was about travel. They had shot several videos and were planning to upload those. On that day, Sinha and Sefat went to Marishbunia mountain to capture some "time-lapse" videos, he added.

He said that they didn't see Sinha using drugs during their long stay and also termed the police cases against Shipra and Sefat false.

Rifat said police took him and Shipra to Cox's Bazar Police Superintendent's Office. Then they were taken to Ramu Police Station.

Sinha, 36, who served in the Special Security Force (SSF) and took voluntary retirement from the army two years ago, was killed in police firing at the checkpoint, triggering an uproar across the country.

Internet speed

FROM PAGE 12

repair the submarine cable line around 12:00am and resumed operations around 12:17am," said the BSCCL MD.

The underground cable line was damaged at Alipur under the district's Kalapara upazila around noon on Sunday when some local workers were operating an excavator.

Workers pulled out 25 feet of the cable from five feet below the surface, said BSCCL Deputy General Manager Md Tariqul Islam.

Harun-or-Rashid, security officer of the submarine cable landing station in Kuakata, filed a case accusing five with Mohipur Police Station in this regard on Sunday night.

Yesterday, police held two of the accused -- Md Hossen Molla, 40, and Abul Hossain, 35 -- from Alipur, said Md Monir Hossain, officer-in-charge of the police station.

Hossen is the younger brother of Ansar Uddin Mollah, chairman of Latachapli union parishad.

Ansar had employed the labourers to excavate the earth to fill a piece of land next to the landing station, Tariqul had said on Sunday.

"We are trying our best to arrest the others accused in the case," said the OC.

The cable provides nearly 40 percent of the total bandwidth used in the country. Due to the damage, consumers had been experiencing slow internet service.

The 20,000km cable system connects 19 countries from Singapore to France.

'Vast global gap'

FROM PAGE 12

"For the vaccines alone, over \$100 billion will be needed," Tedros said. This sounds like lot of money and it is.

"But it's small in comparison to the \$10 trillion that have already been invested by G20 countries in fiscal stimulus to deal with the consequences of the pandemic so far."

However, he said he saw "green shoots of hope".

"It is never too late to turn the pandemic around," Tedros said. The message is to "suppress, suppress, suppress".

Dr Mike Ryan, head of WHO's emergencies programme, said the coronavirus was simple, brutal and cruel.

"It's brutal in its simplicity, it is brutal in its cruelty, but it doesn't have a brain," he said. "We have the brains... we can outsmart something that doesn't have a brain but we are not doing such a great job right now."

Ryan said that Brazil is registering 50,000-60,000 cases per day. "Brazil is sustaining a very high level of epidemic, the curve is somewhat flattened, but it's not going down and the system is under great deal of pressure."

"In a situation like that, hydroxychloroquine is not a solution and not a silver bullet," he added, referring to the malaria drug which President Jair Bolsonaro has encouraged Brazilians to take against Covid-19.

Janmashtami

FROM PAGE 12

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina greeted the members of the Hindu community on the occasion of Janmashtami and wished them success of the programmes.

Parishad General Secretary Nirmal Kumar Chatterjee said a one-day programme has been taken centrally, which will be held on Dhakeshwari National Temple premises, marking the festival.

Religious rituals, including recitation from Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, would begin in the morning, he added.

Ramkrishna Math and Ramkrishna Mission, Dhaka will hold recitation of Gita from 9:00am to 11:30am. Other rituals include Bhajan (religious music) and distribution of Prasad in the afternoon and delivery of sermons.

To join the programmes, devotees must have to abide by health guidelines, including wearing mask and maintaining social distancing.

According to mythology, Sri Krishna was born on the eighth day of dark fortnight in the Bangla month of Bhadra. He takes birth in ages in the world to safeguard the good and pious people from the hands of bad persons by establishing truth, justice and beauty in the society.

Different religious, cultural and social organisations have drawn up identical programmes across the country to observe Janmashtami.

National dailies have published special articles while Bangladesh Betar, Bangladesh Television, and private TV channels and radio stations are airing special programmes highlighting various aspects of the eventful life of Sri Krishna.

Bomb kills six in Pakistan's Balochistan

AFP, Quetta

An improvised bomb planted on a motorbike killed six people in Pakistan's restive southwestern Balochistan province yesterday, police said.

Kotwali OC, 4 cops sued

FROM PAGE 1

Sohel alleged that he was then intercepted me. They went on to frisk me and upon finding Tk 2,900, pocketed the money. I asked for the money back and this angered them -- they started to pull me towards a [police] van, stating that they will take me to the [police] station.

"When people started to gather around, OC Mohammed Mizanur Rahman and constable Md Mizan produced two packets of yaba from their pockets, put them into my hands, announced to everyone that I had been caught with 214 yaba pills. Then they started taking my photos with their cellphones."

met the policemen at the police station compound later around 10:30pm to hand Tk 2 lakh to SI Pabitra and SI Sheikh. "Another Tk 1.5 lakh was given by my sister's husband the next morning," said Sohel. The same two policemen received the money, he alleged.

Sohel was then arrested and prosecuted under the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance Section 89, on charges that he was found taking drugs inside Mitford Hospital.

"I have children. I am a businessman. I have not been to

Mitford hospital in months, let alone taking drugs there!" exclaimed Sohel, speaking to The Daily Star.

The police then took him to a lower court, made him plead guilty to the charges and pay a fine of Tk 500 to the court before releasing him, he alleged.

"While releasing me, they threatened that I need to keep my mouth shut, but I refuse to do that. I will fight this," said Sohel.

Despite repeated attempts, the SIs, the OC, assistant police commissioner of Kotwali zone and the divisional commissioner concerned could be reached over phone for comments.



Bangladesh opener Soumya Sarker (R) underwent a fitness drill at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur with women's team star all-rounder Jahanara Alam waiting for her session.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

National camp after SL tour is finalised

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board is gearing up towards a proper resumption of cricket and is looking to start the training camp of the national team keeping the upcoming tour of Sri Lanka in mind.

BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury said the two boards are still in discussion about the tour. Sri Lanka Cricket have proposed a three-match T20I series alongside the originally scheduled three-Test series during the tour now expected to take place in late September.

"We are in constant touch with

the Sri Lankan Cricket Board and according to our primary discussion, we were scheduled to play three Tests during the tour. In addition to that they have also proposed that we play a three-match T20I series. We will discuss the matter amongst ourselves and communicate our final decision. We have not finalised the tour schedule yet. We will do that once we have decided what formats we are going to play," Nizamuddin told the media over a video message on Monday.

Meanwhile, cricketers have already started individual practice sessions at the BCB facilities under a special arrangement. The number of cricketers turning up is increasing day by day with the inclusion of women's team players across different venues in

the country.

Cricket has remained suspended in the country since mid-March due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The BCB, despite discouraging individual training, did provide facilities to cricketers for individual practice sessions. But the board is still waiting to start group training through a national camp, which will be finalised only after the schedule for the Sri Lanka tour is confirmed.

"We will be able to decide on the national camp only after having confirmed the schedule for the Sri Lanka tour. As per the plan at the moment, we will have a national conditioning camp before we leave for Sri Lanka in September," he said.

There has been talk about whether the BCB should also arrange coronavirus tests for

cricketers who are training individually. Nizamuddin said the board have been monitoring the cricketers through a health app and the proper protocol will be followed including Covid-19 tests and isolation protocols, if required.

"Once we decide on the schedule of the camp, we will have the cricketers isolated and have them undergo Covid-19 tests. The cricketers will join the camp only after completing the initial part of the protocol," explained Nizamuddin.

The CEO added that the board was looking at other countries, like England, who have successfully restarted cricket and the protocols they have in place so that they can learn from the example and apply it to the Bangladeshi context.

Booters keeping fingers crossed

SPORTS REPORTER



The management of the national football team will be hoping to receive as few Covid-19 positive cases as possible for a smooth start to the team's preparation camp for upcoming World Cup qualifiers as 26 footballers yesterday underwent tests twice at Sarah Resorts in Gazipur.

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) decided to test all 26 players and six members of the coaching and support staff twice in a single day after 18 out of 29 available players and one coach had tested positive on Wednesday and Thursday.

Praava Health and ICDDR,B collected the samples and are supposed to deliver the results today and tomorrow respectively.

The unexpected number of infections put the game's local governing body in trouble, especially after 15 players and one coach tested positives in the second tests despite returning negative results in initial tests before reporting to the BFF.

Ahead of Bangladesh's match against Afghanistan on October 8 in Sylhet, BFF announced a 36-member preliminary squad, with only 31 players available to join. Three Bashundhara Kings players were not released by the club while captain Jamal Bhuiyan and newly-called Tariq Raihan Kazi -- are currently in Denmark and Finland and are not expected to join very soon.

Not only the team management, all footballers will have their fingers crossed as majority of them had tested positive at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, only three to four days after returning negative results in their initial tests

which were carried out at different private and government hospitals.

"Two institutes collected samples," team manager Satyajit Das Rupu said over phone from Gazipur. "During the sample collection, our doctor also checked all the players and no one complained about any sickness. Everyone is physically fine."

Rupu informed that the players are a bit demoralised but confident about being negative again.

"The players are a bit demoralised after being tested positive just one or two days after they had tested negative. They strongly believe that they will be negative in today's tests and will be able to join the others soon," Rupu said.

He also informed that four more players, who tested positive and are currently in Dhaka, were also supposed to give away samples.

After being tested negative, defender Tapu Barman on Sunday said that they would have gym, swimming and other training sessions separately, adding that players with positives test results are also doing core training in their respective rooms.

"If we sit idle, it will hamper us. So we want to continue training individually like we did at home," Tapu said. "I had tested four times and the results came out negative every time. The players are a bit frustrated with positive results as none of them have any symptom such as breathing problem, fever or sore throat."

However, the smooth conduct of the camp will depend on the latest test results, which will also define whether the game's local governing body takes further steps such as calling up new players or request FIFA and AFC to defer Bangladesh's matches.



PHOTO: BFF



Neymar yesterday uploaded this picture on his social media accounts of himself with his PSG teammate Kylian Mbappe as the Parisiens prepare for the Champions League quarterfinal against Atalanta on Wednesday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Sigh of relief for Atletico

AFP, MADRID

Atletico Madrid breathed a sigh of relief on Monday after further coronavirus tests on their players and staff turned up negative, allowing the team to travel to Portugal on Tuesday for their Champions League quarterfinal against Leipzig.

Tests at the weekend had revealed two coronavirus cases at the club, which Atletico confirmed on Monday to be players Angel Correa and Sime Vrsaljko.

Both players are asymptomatic and will remain isolated at home while the rest of the squad will return to training in the Spanish capital on Monday afternoon, before flying to Lisbon on Tuesday for Thursday's game against Leipzig. "The first team and members of the coaching staff underwent new PCR tests yesterday, the result of which has been negative in all of them, after the appearance of two positive cases in the tests carried out on Saturday," Atletico announced on Monday.

"As a result, 21 first-team footballers plus academy players Alex Dos Santos, Manu Sanchez, Riquelme and Toni Moya will travel to the Portuguese capital tomorrow to gather for the Champions League quarter-final."

The club said the case of Vrsaljko "is considered resolved by the health authorities as he generated antibodies several months ago".

'Never say no in football'

Left foot or right, there have been few as lethal as Liverpool's legendary striker Ian Rush. Five Premier League titles and two European Cups under his belt, the Welshman was part of the last Liverpool side to win the league before a long 30-year drought set in, one ended by Jurgen Klopp's incredible side this season. Rush spoke about the current Liverpool side, his friendship with Diego Maradona and that long wait to see Liverpool lift the trophy again during an interview with The Daily Star's Abdullah Al Mehdi arranged as part of a promotional campaign by the club's commercial partners Standard Chartered Bank.

"Never expected the wait to be so long. If anyone had told me that Liverpool won't win the title in 30 years, I wouldn't have believed it. I would have had a laugh," Rush said with the kind of humility befitting his energy and legendary status as one of the game's greats.

Even when European success came in 2005, the league continued to be elusive for the Reds.

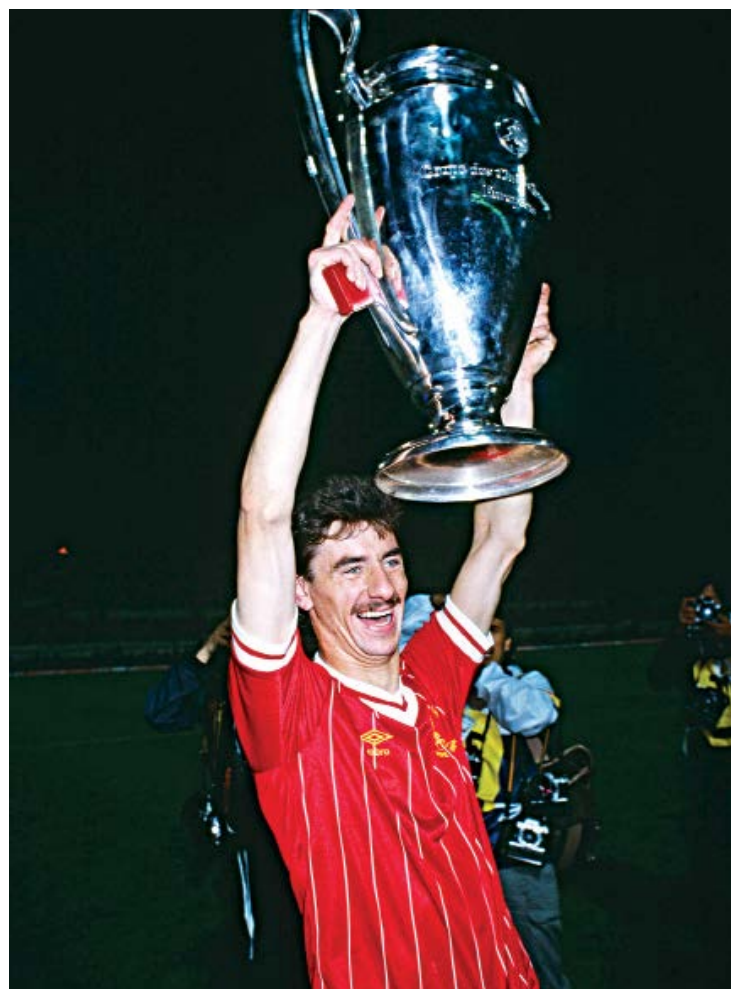
"Liverpool have had so many great players like [John] Barnes and [Steve] Mcmanaman in the 90s, and great coaches like Gerard Houllier and Rafa Benitez and others who couldn't manage to win the league. It was a matter of great sense of pride after the win."

Rush himself is a legend among legends and one of the greatest strikers the world has ever seen. For him, past greats would have no problem adjusting to today's game.

"Today's players are fitter. The game is so much quicker now and it's because the balls and boots are lighter and the pitches are so perfect now. But no matter in what era, great players even from the 50s or 60s would adapt. It's about mental toughness, that sets great players apart."

Kenny Dalglish was his favourite Liverpool player but there was a special place for Diego Maradona however, and a friendship he developed after his move to Juventus. "When I played in Italy, I played with Michel Platini and Maradona. They were special players. Maradona turned an average Napoli side into a championship-winning side."

"Individually, he was fantastic.



It was great to play on the same pitch as him." Rush spoke fervently. "I remember when Juventus won in Turin and I scored and then in Naples, they beat us 3-1. Maradona scored that game and then came up to me to say 'It's my turn in Napoli

as it was your turn in Turin". I'm still great friends with Maradona now."

What about his favourite players in the modern era?

"[Robert] Lewandowski is a great goalscorer this era, but I think it's hard to get past [Lionel

Messi or [Cristiano] Ronaldo, they have taken it to a new level," he remarked. When pointed out that Lewandowski is often called the 'Polish Ian Rush', he joked: "Obviously I would be happy with so many goals but you get a challenge from getting a moustachio going like me back in the day, then we will see."

For him, the current side is already up there with some of the best, if not already the greatest Liverpool side.

"They won the Champions League [last season], and the league this year. It's time to start comparing them to the greatest Liverpool sides. They broke so many records this season. It's amazing but winning the league is easy, retaining is hard. And if they manage it, they will be right up there, if they aren't already." "The team spirit is like what we had in the 80s and that comes from the manager," he said of Klopp.

Rush lived the atmosphere of many great stadiums but said: "There is something different about Anfield. The crowd becomes the 12th man. Many incredible occasions in European nights. In the evening games, the supporters would come home from work, get changed, go to a game and they are all excited. The

big difference is that the crowd is very close to the players, different from stadiums in Italy or Spain. At Anfield, the crowd is virtually on the players."

Not many teams suffered a heavier consequence than the current Barcelona side. "The crowd was getting the ball boy going, the ball boy got Trent [Alexander-Arnold] going and he then got [Divock] Origi going. That sums it up for me. That was the greatest comeback I've ever seen at Anfield," Rush explained with a glint in his eyes.

That Anfield factor and the 'look in the eyes of the fans' when he kept notching incredible numbers every season was what he says drove him. "I always wanted to improve no matter my age. I wanted to do that again and again," said the legend with 346 goals for Liverpool.

Asked about suggestions to young strikers in Bangladesh, he remarked: "What I would say to young players not only in Bangladesh but worldwide is that never be scared to miss a goal. I played in games where I missed four goals but then scored the fifth chance. It's about that mental toughness and no one will remember misses when you score."

Having coached in various countries, would he work here in Bangladesh? "Never say no in football. My job is to pass on my knowledge and if I can pass on my experience, then that's what it's all about," he reiterated and it is that kind of attitude that now drives the current Liverpool side.

The team spirit is like what we had in the 80s and that comes from the manager.
Rush said of Klopp.

4-LANE DHAKA-BHANGA EXPRESS HIGHWAY BUILT WITH BSRM XTREME

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT BSRM

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM

SHAH CEMENT

'Vast global gap' in funds to fight virus

Says WHO chief

REUTERS, Geneva

There is a "vast global gap" between funds needed to fight the coronavirus pandemic and funds committed, World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said yesterday, and the WHO was only "10% of the way" there.

More than 19.92 million people have been reported to be infected by the coronavirus globally and 729,883 have died, according to a Reuters tally.

Infections have been reported in more than 210 countries and territories since the first cases were identified in China in December 2019.

"The coming three months present a crucial window of opportunity to scale-up the impact of the ACT Accelerator for global impact," Tedros told a briefing in Geneva, referring to the "Access to Covid-19 Tools" initiative.

"However to exploit this window, we have to fundamentally scale up the way we are funding the ACT Accelerator and prioritise the use of new tools. There is a vast global gap between our ambition for the ACT Accelerator, and the amount of funds that have been committed."

He said the WHO was only "10% of the way" to funding the billions of dollars required.



SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



Children returning home after fishing at Jilkar haor in Sylhet's Sadar upazila. It has become a pleasant activity for people of all ages in the vicinity as more fish are being caught with the floodwater started recede. People in rural areas often go fishing as a community.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR



Janmashtami today

BSS, Dhaka

Janmashtami, the birth anniversary of lord Sri Krishna, one of the major festivals of the Hindu community, is being celebrated across the country today with due religious fervour.

The day is a public holiday.

Amid the Covid-19 outbreak, this time all rituals and programmes will be arranged inside temples maintaining health guidelines as a decision has been taken to cancel all types of processions and rallies marking the festival.

The decision was made recently at a virtual meeting of the district and city units of Bangladesh Puja Uddhapan Parishad.

In separate messages,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Farmers lose crops, seedbeds

Devastated by floods, many fear they won't be able to grow Aman

STAR REPORT

Tens of thousands of farmers across the country suffer a double blow due to the prolonged flood that has damaged matured crops as well as seedbeds on vast swathes of land.

Many farmers are fearing that they would not be able to cultivate Aman paddy in the upcoming months as most of their seedbeds have been destroyed.

Besides, those who started cultivation with loans have been plunged into further trouble as they are in no situation to repay the loans.

Floods have damaged crops worth nearly Tk 350 crore till mid-July, said officials of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE).

The latest estimation is yet to be made available.

Over 54 lakh people under 163 upazilas in 33 districts have been affected by floodwater, said a report of National Disaster Response Coordination Centre.

Our correspondents from different districts reported on the plight of flood-hit farmers.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

UN Council strives to avert Chinese veto

August 11, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MEMBERSHIP ISSUE DEFERRED TILL AUGUST 21

Security Council members, striving to avert a Chinese veto, today agree to defer until August 21 further consideration of Bangladesh's application for the UN membership. The 15-member council's committee on admission also agrees to waive the rule requiring 35 days' notice for the admission of a new state by the General Assembly. The Assembly begins its 27th session on September 19.

Bangladesh submitted its membership application on August 8, 1972 and the Security Council voted to place it on its agenda yesterday, overriding strong objection by China.

BANGABANDHU CONFERS WITH AIDES

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who has been recovering from a gallbladder operation at London Clinic, this morning for the first time comes out to the corridor, goes to the room where his personal staff are staying, and has a meeting with them. Bangabandhu is recovering satisfactorily, informs a health bulletin issued today by his personal physician Professor Dr Nurul Islam.

BANGABANDHU THANKS SUHARTO

Bangabandhu today thanks Indonesian President Suharto for his message wishing him an early recovery. Bangabandhu says, "Thank

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Internet speed back to normal

2 held for digging up submarine cable

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Internet services across the country returned to normal early yesterday after 12 hours of disruption due to damage caused by an excavator to the country's second submarine cable on Sunday.

Two of five accused, including the brother of a union parishad chairman, in a case filed over the incident were arrested yesterday.

Normal services resumed around 12:17am Monday morning after the damaged part near Kuakata submarine cable landing station in Patuakhali district were repaired, said Moshir Rahman, managing director of Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Limited (BSCCL).

"We were able to fully

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Mystery of ancient reptile solved

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have solved the mystery of how a 242-million-year-old reptile with a neck three times the length of its torso moved around, discovering that it lived in the ocean.

Paleontologists have been puzzled ever since fossils of the creature, which is part of the Tanystropheus genus, were first discovered in 1852, as they were unable to work out how the animal could have supported the weight of its neck.

The creature's "bizarre body didn't make things clear one way or the other", researchers said, and its giraffe-like neck left scientists unsure over whether it lived on land or in the sea.

The puzzle was solved when a new study by the University of Zurich reconstructed the reptile's

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Noab worried at CUJ protest around editor's house in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) has expressed deep concern over Chattogram Journalists' Union staging protests surrounding the residence of Dainik Azadi editor.

On July 29, 2020, Chattogram Journalists' Union [CUJ] surrounded the house of editor MA Malek at Ghat Farhadbagh with some demands, Noab said in a statement, circulated to the media yesterday.

Publication of five newspaper in Chattogram has remained halted since that day. The publication has not resumed even after Eid, the statement said.

"Occupying the streets outside the editor's residence, instead of protesting at the Press Club, or at the newspaper's office is unprecedented. The residence also

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Ex-Indian president Pranab Mukherjee infected

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India's former president Pranab Mukherjee yesterday tested positive for coronavirus infection and was admitted to the Army's Research and Referral (R&R) Hospital in New Delhi.

Mukherjee himself broke the news about his testing Covid-19 positive yesterday afternoon after he went to a hospital for a routine check-up.

"On a visit to the hospital for a separate procedure, I have tested positive for Covid19 today," the 84-year-old leader tweeted.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Day labourers having an afternoon nap near the capital's Chandrimal Udyan. A large number of them do not get work every day as many construction works have been stalled since the outbreak of coronavirus in the country. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Outbreak shows signs of peaking

Says Australia; global cases pass 20 million

AGENCIES

Australia recorded its biggest one-day rise in Covid-19 deaths yesterday although a slowdown in new cases gave hope that a second wave of new infections in the state of Victoria may have peaked.

Nineteen people had died from the virus, all in Victoria, in the past 24 hours, a national daily record. However only 337 people had been diagnosed with Covid-19 across the country, the lowest one-day rise since July 29, officials said.

"This is an agonising day for the members for the 19 families who have lost a loved one to Covid-19 today," Michael Kidd, Australia's deputy chief medical officer, told reporters.

"We are now seeing the first promising signs of a significant decline in the number of cases."

The slowdown in cases comes more than a month after the nearly 5 million residents of Melbourne, the capital of Victoria, were told to stay home, and a week after most businesses in the country's second-largest city were ordered to close in an attempt to slow the spread of the virus.

With about 21,000 Covid-19 cases and 314 deaths, Australia has still recorded fewer infections and fatalities than many other developed nations. Outside the two largest states of Victoria and New South Wales, the virus has been effectively eliminated.

Globally, 20 million cases have been officially registered.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 11

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:25	12:45	4:45	6:41	8:00
JAMAT	5:00	1:15	5:00	6:44
			8:30	

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION