



# The Daily Star



REGD. NO. DA 781 | Vol. XXX No. 211 | BHADRA 8, 1427 BS | **Your Right to Know** | MUHARRAM 3, 1442 HJRI | 16 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00

<b>BANGLADESH UPDATE</b>	<b>2,265</b> New cases in 24hrs	<b>2,92,625</b> Total cases	<b>3,907</b> Deaths	<b>1,76,567</b> Recoveries	<b>GLOBAL UPDATE</b>	<b>805,300</b> Deaths	<b>23,235,279</b> Total cases
--------------------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------------

## Sultan of swindle

ACC probe shows how PK Halder went to great lengths to pocket Tk 3,500cr from 4 NBFIs

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN



He created some businesses that exist only on papers, took loans from one non-banking financial institution and used the money to buy shares of another to gain control of the latter.

Eventually Prashanta Kumar Halder took loans from four non-banking financial institutions (NBFIs) and is believed to have left the country with at least Tk 3,500 crore.

The four NBFIs are now in serious crisis, officials said.

But far from being bothered by law, he now lives in Canada.

The NBFIs he had ravaged are People's Leasing and Financial Services, International Leasing and Financial Services Ltd, Reliance Finance Limited, and FAS Finance and Investment Ltd.

The allegations against Halder were made after the ACC launched an enquiry into illegal casino owners last year. On January 8 this year, the Anti-Corruption Commission filed a case against him for amassing property worth around Tk 274.91 crore from unknown sources.

In order to hoodwink any future investigation, the suspected fraudster, better known as PK Halder, used to move his money among multiple financial institutions

and accounts.

PK Halder was a deputy managing director of Industrial and Infrastructure Development Finance Company Limited (IIDFC) in 2008. He joined Reliance Finance as its managing director in 2009. He became the managing director of NRB Global Bank in July 2015.

Between 2015 and 2019, his cousin Amitav Adhikari was the director of People's Leasing and Financial Services and former colleague Uzzal Kumar Nandi was its Chairman.

Amitav is also the managing director of Anan Chemicals. Its current director and chairman is Uzzal and his wife Anita Kar is its director. Although they were at the helm of the organisation, PK Halder was its actual owner, ACC officials said.

Anan Chemicals borrowed Tk 70.82 crore from International Leasing and Financial Services (ILFS) in 2015 to expand the business.

"But they mostly laundered the money out of the country," said an investigator requesting anonymity.

The probe found that no collateral was kept against the loan probably because PK Halder owned shares in the company.

Of the money, about Tk 5 crore was transferred to Ookayama Limited -- another

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Rayhan Kabir, the Bangladeshi who was arrested in Malaysia for speaking to Al Jazeera about state of Bangladeshis there, hugs his father in a car after returning home. They broke into tears as soon as they were reunited outside Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport early yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Import of 20 products drop by a quarter

NBR loses Tk 5,554 crore in revenue

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Chattogram

Import of 20 items dropped by 25 percent in the fiscal year 2019-20 compared to the previous fiscal year, shows customs and NBR data.

Those items include recondition cars, trucks, piston engines, motorcycles, high-speed diesel fuel, lubricants, crude oil, lube-base oils, scrap vessels, petroleum oil, cement clinker, finished ceramic products, wires of refined copper, and betel nut.

Importers and customs officials said the main reasons for the drop in imports were closure of industrial units and fewer vehicles plying amid the pandemic since March.

The other reasons include decline in power demand, hike in prices of some goods in the international market, fall in demand of some products, and increase in production of some others in the domestic market, they said.

According to data from Chittagong

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## 'Rab trying to frame' trader

Alleges family over arms case, says business rivalry behind it; crime busters deny allegation

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

The family of a businessman has accused a Rab team of arresting him in a false arms case because of his rivalry with a business partner in Anwara upazila of Chattogram.

However, the elite force officials said the arrestee, Md Nasir Uddin Shah, 43, son of late Abdul Sabur Shah, is a criminal and used to extort money from people.

They also claim to have recovered seven machetes, one Chinese axe, one shotgun and two cartridges from his bedroom on the third floor of Imam Shopping Centre in Battoli area of the upazila. However, the family alleged that a young man in civil clothes placed those under the bed during the drive.

Talking to The Daily Star on Friday, Nasir's younger brother Nazim Uddin Shah said, "My brother has the showroom of Malai Sweet on the ground floor of Imam Shopping Centre and he also has a fish farming project with Akhtaruzzaman Khan Mizan for the last eight years in Anwara's Lusai Park area.

"Recently, a rift started between the two over a financial issue of the fish project and some influential locals were trying to settle the matter through discussion."

Around 11:00am on August 18, an arbitration was arranged to solve the issues between Nasir and Mizan at Lusai Park. A team of Rab appeared all of a sudden and detained Nasir, said Nazim, a grocer by profession.

"We asked for the reason but they [Rab members] did not answer. When they left, we also asked Mizan where they had taken my brother.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Pandemic may be over in two years

Hopes WHO; reports promising trend in Brazil, US

AGENCIES

The world should be able to rein in the coronavirus pandemic in less than two years, the World Health Organization said, as the number of deaths from the disease surpassed 800,000 around the world yesterday.

Western Europe has been enduring the kind of infection levels not seen in many months, particularly in Germany, France, Spain and Italy -- sparking fears of a full-fledged second wave.

The number of new infections in Germany topped 2,000 in the past 24 hours, a high not seen since the end of April, with authorities suggesting large numbers of returning tourists may be bringing the virus with them and other experts highlighting a big increase in testing.

South Korea yesterday announced it will ramp up restrictions across the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Rayhan returns, head held high

He faced tough times for speaking out against Malaysia's mistreatment of migrants

SHARIFUL HASAN

Fajr azaan had just ended. Everyone was awake since midnight at a house in the Bandar area of Narayanganj, especially a mother who was praying since night. Her son was returning home. At five o'clock in the morning on Saturday, her wait ended with the sound of a car.

The car stopped in the Shahi Masjid area. Rayhan had arrived. Rayhan Kabir, for whom everyone had been waiting for so long, got out of the car and started walking towards the house. By that time his mother had also come out. The son practically jumped into his mother's embrace. Both started crying.

It can be hard to believe that crying can contain so much love, happiness and relief. The mother and son were hugging and crying. Rayhan's sister also joined in. His father was watching from a distance. Emotions running high touched the neighbours whose eyes watered too. It was Rayhan who stopped the crying after a few minutes. A bold voice who spoke out against unfairness, his mother should not cry. No more crying.

Rayhan's journey started from Kuala Lumpur at 9pm on Friday, for this long-awaited reunion. He received the message on Friday morning that he could return to Bangladesh at night. Earlier, he had to stay in custody of Malaysian immigration police for 27 days. Before that, Rayhan had to stay in hiding for 21 days. A four-hour interview with him revealed the events

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



A car goes almost entirely into a bus after the bus T-boned the car when it was making a U-turn on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Bhaluka yesterday. Inset, firemen trying to rescue the victims.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## 8 killed in Mymensingh road crashes

Four of a family among the dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Eight people, including four of a family, were killed and five others injured in two road crashes in Mymensingh yesterday morning.

Hasna Begum, 30, her son Hasibul Hasan, 8, sister Nazma Begum, 26, and mother-in-law Jannati Begum, 60, their neighbour Billal Hossain, 45, and car driver Monir Hossain, 50, died when a bus rammed into their car on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Bhaluka.

Five others in the bus were injured in the crash.

The car was making an U-turn on the highway around 8:45am when the bus of Imam Paribahan hit it, said Mohammad Mainuddin, officer-in-charge of Bhaluka Police Station.

Occupants of the car died at the scene, the OC said, adding that the bus driver managed to flee.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
পরিচালকের কার্যালয়  
ন্যাশনাল ইনস্টিটিউট অব ইএনটি  
তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৮  
Web: [www.nationalinstituteofent.webs.com](http://www.nationalinstituteofent.webs.com)  
E-mail: [nient@hospi.dghs.gov.bd](mailto:nient@hospi.dghs.gov.bd)  
ফোনঃ +৮৮-০২-৮৮৭৮১৫৫ (অফিস), ফ্যাক্সঃ +৮৮-০২-৮৮৭৮১৫০  
স্মারক নং-এনআইইএনটি/প্রশাসন/২০২০/৯০৮ তারিখঃ ২০/০৮/২০২০

**সম্পূর্ণ শ্রবণ প্রতিবন্ধীদের কক্ৰিয়ার ইমপ্লান্ট  
ডিভাইস প্রাপ্তির আবেদন প্রসঙ্গে**

মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনার নির্দেশে সমাজ কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়ের উদ্যোগে জাতীয় নাক কান গলা ইনস্টিটিউট, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকায় সম্পূর্ণ শ্রবণ প্রতিবন্ধী শিশু/ব্যক্তির জন্য বিশ্বের সর্বাধুনিক চিকিৎসা পদ্ধতি কক্ৰিয়ার ইমপ্লান্ট কার্যক্রম চালু রয়েছে। সমাজ কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়ের নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী নির্বাচিত প্রার্থীদেরকে সার্জারীর মাধ্যমে এই ডিভাইস (যাঃ) প্রদান করা হয় এবং প্রার্থীদেরকে ডিভাইসের নামমাত্র আংশিক মূল্য পরিশোধ করতে হয়। উল্লেখ্য যে বরাদ্দের ক্ষেত্রে ৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের কম বয়সের শিশুর অগ্রাধিকার পাবে।

কক্ৰিয়ার ইমপ্লান্ট ডিভাইস বরাদ্দ পাওয়া ও সার্জারীর মাধ্যমে কানে স্থাপনে অগ্রহী শ্রবণ প্রতিবন্ধী রোগী/অভিভাবকদের পক্ষ থেকে আবেদন আকান করা যাচ্ছে। প্রতিদিন সকাল ৯:০০ ঘটিকা হইতে দুপুর ১:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত) রুম নং ৭০৯ (সভ্য তলা) - কক্ৰিয়ার ইমপ্লান্ট কার্যক্রম, জাতীয় নাক কান গলা ইনস্টিটিউট, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা এই ত্রিকানায় আবেদনপত্র বিতরণ ও জমা নেওয়া হবে। সংগৃহীত আবেদন ও প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র ই-মেইল ([cocchlea.nient.bd@gmail.com](mailto:cocchlea.nient.bd@gmail.com)) অথবা সরাসরি যেকোন একটি মাধ্যমে আগামী ১৫ই সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০২০ তারিখের মধ্যে জমা দেওয়া যাবে।

অধ্যাপক ডাঃ মোঃ আবু হানিফ  
পরিচালক কাম অধ্যাপক  
ন্যাশনাল ইনস্টিটিউট অব ইএনটি  
তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা

জিডি-১৩০৩

## 'Rab trying to frame' trader

FROM PAGE 1

"A few minutes later, the Rab members came back and said Nasir was arrested as his partner Mizan lodged a complaint against him with Rab. They then took my brother to his house."

He added, "My brother's residence was locked from outside as his wife had gone out for shopping. On hearing the news, she rushed to the spot."

At the press conference the day after the arrest of Nasir, his wife Sharmin said, "The Rab members entered our house and sent me to another room during the search."

"With the Rab team, a young man in civil dress and carrying a bag entered our house. We had nothing in the room but Rab said they found the arms under our bed."

"It's a drama to frame my husband so that Mizan can take over my husband's fish farming project. The young man placed the bag under the bed."

Nazim added, "Mizan is a land grabber and because of his suspicious behaviour, my brother had become alert while doing business with him."

Mizan told this newspaper yesterday, "It's true that he was my business partner earlier. He had leased out the fish project from me but resorted to fraudulence."

"As I tried to take over the project after the leasing period ended, he threatened me with his goons and that's why I filed complaints with Rab and Anwara police. Nasir is a Jamaat man and the allegation brought against me is false and baseless."

But Md Emon, Anwara upazila Shwechhasebak League's joint secretary, said, "Nasir is a good man. We do business at the same building,

Imam Shopping Centre, but never found him involved in criminal activities."

"I also went to the arbitration as the president of local union Awami League told me to represent him."

Talking to The Daily Star, Additional SP Sohel Mahmud of Rab-7, who conducted the raid, said, "Nasir is a criminal and his business partner Mizan has lodged a complaint against him, saying Nasir threatened to drive him out of the fish farming project."

"When we arrived at Nasir's residence, it was locked from outside. We called two shopkeepers of the market and the owner of the building as the witnesses. The owner managed to get a key to the house by calling one of Nasir's relatives. Within minutes of opening the door, his wife arrived."

Sohel also said, "We found the arms and sharp weapons under the box bed of his bedroom. It is quite impossible for outsiders to lift the box bed and put arms under it."

The official added Nasir was accused in a case filed with Anwara Police Station in 2013 and "he has long been involved in criminal activities and using the weapons."

Nasir's family members said the 2013 case was filed by a neighbour over a land dispute.

Contacted, Anwara Police Station's Officer-in-Charge (OC) Dulal Mahmud told The Daily Star, "Rab handed over a man with a firearm and sharp weapons to the police station. Now we will investigate the case."

Rab has filed an arms case over the recovery of the weapons.

Nazim said his brother is innocent and the family will go to court to set his brother free and demand justice.



PHOTO: ARMAN HOSSAIN

Ignoring road safety guidelines, a man try to cross the Mirpur Road through a blocked central reservation. A footbridge was there within 100 meters. The photo was taken near Shishu Mela intersection yesterday.

## Rayhan returns, head held high

FROM PAGE 1

that led to his homecoming.

On July 3, Al Jazeera published an investigative documentary titled "Locked Up in Malaysia's Lockdown". In the documentary, along with citizens of many other countries, Rayhan gave an interview, which angered the Malaysian authorities.

A warrant was issued against Rayhan Kabir. He was arrested by Malaysian police on the evening of July 24. After 14 days of interrogation, police produced him in court on August 6 and it granted a 13-day remand which ended on August 19. Police said there were no charges against him. Immigration police then decided to send him back to Bangladesh.

Rayhan was informed on Friday morning that he would be sent to Dhaka on a night flight. Then the preparations for return home began. First the lawyers and then the High Commission officials came.

Immigration officials took him to Kuala Lumpur International Airport at 9pm. After completing all procedures, he waited for the flight at around 10:30 pm.

**A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE AT KL AIRPORT**

Rayhan had a strange experience while waiting for his flight at the airport in Kuala Lumpur.

"I had been wearing the same shirt for 30 days after my arrest. The shirt was torn in many places, in awful condition and dirty. I was wearing a face mask. No one recognised me. When I took the mask off for a brief period, someone recognised me and shouted, 'Rayhan Kabir!'"

"At that time, around 150 people standing in line for the plane started crowding around me. They started taking pictures with me and said 'you have spoken truth that we can't say'. I cannot describe this love shown to me. All the troubles I had endured for a month were gone," he recounted.

**LANDING IN DHAKA**

Rayhan landed in Dhaka on a Malaysia Airlines flight MH-196 at 1am on Saturday (August 22). Expatriates also greeted him at Dhaka Airport. Police officers at the airport also took pictures with him, including the officer who completed his immigration process.

His father Shah Alam broke down in

tears after seeing his beloved son at the airport. Their reunion touched everyone around them.

At the airport, Rayhan's father told The Daily Star, "We were eagerly waiting for our son to come to us. He's here now. We have the Eid moon in our hands!"

His mother had sent food in a tiffin carrier. Rayhan was ecstatic to find rice, hilsa and shrimp as soon as he opened the box. After a quick meal, Rayhan started his journey to Narayanganj, where his mother was eagerly waiting.

**ON THE WAY TO NARAYANGANJ**

From Dhaka airport to Narayanganj's Bandar upazila where Rayhan's family lives -- he was looking at everything on both sides of the road with fascinated eyes. As if he wanted to absorb everything about this country, his motherland. In the meantime, he answered some questions.

What was his reaction to the Al Jazeera interview? Rayhan replied, "I gave a very simple interview. I only expressed my views, spoke about what I saw in Malaysia during the pandemic. But Malaysians did not like it. Police have repeatedly asked me why I said what I said."

Why did he say that? Rayhan said, "I was in Malaysia for about six years. I often saw drives against migrant workers. They would be handcuffed, chained and humiliated. Often, this was done to Bangladeshis. This is not how citizens of other countries are treated. You won't find Europeans, Americans and Chinese being tied up. This is how Bangladeshis are treated. It deeply hurt me. I said the same to Malaysian police."

"I didn't think Malaysians would be outraged by this," Rayhan said. "And I didn't want to hurt anyone. But a summons was issued against me. Then my work permit was revoked. I was arrested on July 24 and interrogated for 27 days."

What did they ask him for 27 days? Rayhan's answer: "Mostly they asked, whether I have any involvement with the Malaysian opposition party. Sometimes they woke me up late at night. Some days, from 7am to 7pm, I was interrogated. Repeatedly, they asked if anyone paid me to say what I said in the documentary. They asked me to apologise and say I'm wrong. I said, I cannot lie."

How was their attitude? Rayhan said,

"They had treated me incredibly well, except for the first day. There were 14 detainees where I was. They provided good food for all. I urged them to not stop this kind behaviour when I leave. When I was leaving on Friday, they said, 'Rayhan, you didn't lie'. They praised me in front of the people of the High Commission."

Was he aware what was happening outside the prison? "I didn't know what was happening in Malaysia or Bangladesh when I was in prison. I could only listen to the radio. I heard some statements from different countries about me. I heard news on CNN and BBC. But I could not hear any news from Bangladesh," he said.

What did he miss most about Bangladesh while in jail? "I missed everything about my country. I wondered when I would return to my beloved country," he said.

During conversation, a bus was coming from the opposite direction while crossing the signboard area of Narayanganj. Rayhan shouted, "Oh my God! As someone who drives, there needs to be discipline!"

However, he was fascinated by the new bridge in Kancharpur. "What a beautiful bridge!" he said.

When the lawyer went to see him, he asked for some books on Bangabandhu, especially the unfinished autobiography. Why did he ask for those books? Rayhan responded, "If anyone stays in jail day after day, he will become mentally weak. I too felt like that at times. Then I thought, Bangabandhu had been in jail for 14 years for the country and for the people. If I can read books on him, I will get inspiration and mental strength."

Does he have a message for people of the country? "I have forgotten all the hardship because of the people of Bangladesh, millions of expatriates, journalists, the government -- everyone who stood with me. I am grateful to everyone," he said.

What is his future plan? "My demands are very few. I can do something based on my qualifications. But I want to work for migrants. These people are oppressed in various ways that are not always highlighted. But first, I want to take rest for a few days," the young man said.

The writer is a freelance journalist.

## Import of 20 products drop

FROM PAGE 1

Customs House and National Board of Revenue (NBR), the total import volume of these 20 items came down to 2.09 crore tonnes totaling Tk 32,544 crore in 2019-20 from 2.89 crore tonnes totaling Tk 49,630 crore in 2018-19.

Speaking on the issue, Mahbubul Alam, president of Chattogram Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told The Daily Star, "Most factories in the country remained closed for months due to the pandemic. Even though many of those reopened, their production went down. Due to such reasons, import of raw materials by the industry has reduced."

He also said, "Import volume of others products has declined due to price hike in the international market and hike in dollar rates."

According to the customs and NBR data, around 39 lakh tonnes of high-speed diesel were imported in the last fiscal year while the figure was 29 lakh tonnes in the previous year.

Import of petroleum oil came down to two lakh tonnes from 13.56 lakh tonnes while import of crude oil fell

to 6.87 lakh tonnes from 11.12 lakh tonnes.

Similarly, around 13,044 recondition cars were imported in 2018-19, but last fiscal year the number was only 5,223. A total of 95,123 motorcycles were imported last year compared to 34,1234 in 2018-19.

Also, businesses brought in 141 lakh (14.1 million) tonnes of cement clinker in the last fiscal year, down from 165 lakh tonnes a year ago.

Import of scrap vessel decreased to 15 lakh tonnes compared to 34 lakh tonnes the previous year, finished ceramic products to 82 thousand tonnes from 1.35 lakh tonnes.

Customs officials said import of some items dropped due to the pandemic. Besides, prices of alternative or similar products rose in the international market, resulting in the decline in imports.

Customs data shows drop in the import of the 20 products caused the authorities a loss of Tk 5,554 crore in revenue compared to 2018-19 when they earned Tk 13,950 crore. In 2019-20, the amount was Tk 8,396.

## Pandemic may be over

FROM PAGE 1

country starting today to try and control a growing outbreak, with 332 new cases reported in the past 24 hours -- the highest daily figure since early March. The latest deaths took the country's tally to 309 with 17,002 cases.

The expanded measures include restrictions on gatherings and activities including professional sports, which will be played behind closed doors again, while beaches nationwide will close.

But WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus sought to draw favourable comparisons with the notorious flu pandemic of 1918.

"We have a disadvantage of globalisation, closeness, connectedness, but an advantage of better technology, so we hope to finish this pandemic before less than two years," he told reporters on Friday.

By "utilising the available tools to the maximum and hoping that we can have additional tools like vaccines, I think we can finish it in a shorter time than the 1918 flu", he said.

The WHO also recommended children over 12 years old now use masks in the same situations as adults as the use of face coverings increases to stop the virus spread.

With no usable vaccine yet available, the most prominent tool governments have at their disposal is to confine their populations or enforce social distancing.

In total, since the new coronavirus emerged in China late last year, 800,004 fatalities have been recorded globally, out of 23,003,079 declared infections.

Latin America and the Caribbean is the region the most affected with 254,897 deaths. More than half of global fatalities have been reported in four countries: the United States with 175,416, Brazil with 113,358, Mexico 59,610 and India 55,794.

The number of deaths has doubled since June 6, and 100,000 have been recorded in the last 17 days alone.

The Americas have borne the brunt of the virus in health terms, accounting for more than half of the

world's fatalities. Still, new daily cases of the coronavirus have been dropping sharply in the United States for weeks -- but experts are unsure if Americans will have the discipline to bring the epidemic under control.

After exceeding 70,000 confirmed infections per day in July, the country recorded around 43,000 cases on Friday.

Further south, Latin American countries were counting the wider costs of the pandemic -- the region not only suffering the most deaths, but also an expansion of criminal activity and rising poverty.

But the WHO said the coronavirus pandemic appeared to be stabilising in Brazil -- one of the world's worst hit countries -- and any reversal of its rampant spread in the vast country would be "a success for the world".

India reported a record daily jump of coronavirus infections yesterday, bringing the total near 3 million and piling pressure on authorities to curb huge gatherings as a major religious festival began.

The 69,878 new infections - the fourth straight day above 60,000 - take India's total cases to 2.98 million.

In Thailand, authorities plan to extend its state of emergency till the end of September to stave off a potential second wave of coronavirus infections, despite not recording any local transmission for close to three months. Thailand so far has detected 3,390 infections, including an additional imported case reported on Friday. New outbreaks in erstwhile regional front runners like Vietnam and New Zealand have put Thai officials on their guard.

Meanwhile, the Nepal government yesterday decided to resume international flights from September 1. Earlier, the country had planned to resume the services from August 17, but it was extended till August 31 amid the resurgence of coronavirus cases.

The country has reported 30,483 COVID-19 cases so far, while 137 people have lost their lives and 18,214 have been recovered.

## Sultan of swindle

FROM PAGE 1

borrower of the leasing company on June 15, 2016.

Four days later, about Tk 9.4 crore was transferred to Hal International's account at Bank Asia's Dhanmondi branch. Two days later, the money landed on PK Halder's personal account.

Another Tk 11.4 crore was used to reconcile loan of Deya Shipping Limited that borrowed from Reliance Finance.

Managing Director of Reptile Farm Rajib Som received Tk 10 lakh.

Analysing a bank account history of Anan Chemicals with Shahjalal Islami Bank, investigators found that about Tk 15 crore was transferred from ILFS on November 15, 2015.

The money was later transferred to Borno Neutral and Arbi Enterprises' accounts with Shahjalal Islami Bank and misappropriated.

Another Tk 7 crore was transferred to the bank on November 17, 2015 from ILFS. The money was also transferred to Sukhada Ltd, another client of Shahjalal Islami Bank.

The money was eventually transferred to accounts associated with PK Halder. Amitav and Uzzal then used the money to buy shares of PLFS and they became its director and chairman respectively.

They borrowed more money from ILFS using fake borrowing identities, source said, adding that in the same way they then borrowed loan from People's Leasing and ran the company to the ground.

Documents show that PK Halder transferred Tk 104 crore to his friend and Mercantile Bank Director AKM Shaheed Reza's five organisations.

Another Tk 74 crore was transferred to the owner of JK Trade International and former managing director of Bank Asia Irfan Ahmed Khan from seven accounts of businesses that exist on papers only.

To misappropriate the loans, PK Halder used 14 name-only business organisations. He used two addresses

for these organisations. One of the addresses is 56, Purana Paltan Lane.

"He misappropriated money by giving loans to only paper-based organisations through fraudulence, irregularities and graft. To dodge investigators, he then transferred the money to different accounts from where the money flowed to him," an official said.

At a board meeting of International Leasing on January 30, 2017, about Tk 60 crore was sanctioned to MTB Marine Ltd.

"But the money did not reach MTB Marine's account."

About Tk 5.5 crore was transferred to the accounts of Padma Weaving Ltd, Padma Bleaching and Dyeing Limited and Fashion Plus Ltd. The companies are owned by AKM Shaheed Reza, director of Mercantile Bank.

About Tk 26.65 crore working capital loan was sanctioned to Konika Enterprise but the money was not also transferred rather it went to different accounts.

On March 8, 2016 about Tk 11.5 was transferred through three cheques to Total Transportation Ltd's account at Standard Chartered Bank.

Through three cheques another Tk 6.7 crore were transferred to Sandip Corporation's Bank Asia account on March 10 and March 15 of 2016. Swapam Kumar Mistri was the owner of Sandip Corporation.

On February 8, 2016 about Tk 1.65 crore landed at one Sadab Hossain's account at Meghna Bank.

About Tk 3.3 crore was transferred to Mercantile Bank's client Denim Processing Plant Ltd on March 8, 2016.

Another Tk 2 crore was transferred to the bank accounts of Hal International and Moon Enterprise at Dhanmondi Branch of Bank Asia on September 21, 2016.

Reza's Padma Weaving also received a chunk of the loan. About Tk 1.5 crore was transferred to Padma Weaving's account on November 2, 2016.

One Milon Kumar applied for loan

## Daily deaths rise again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The daily death toll from Covid-19 rose again yesterday.

In the past 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday, 46 people died due to coronavirus, according to the health directorate.

This is the second highest number of daily deaths in August. The highest number of deaths was 50 on August 4.

In the previous day, the number of deaths was 39.

The total number of deaths due to this highly infectious virus rose to 3,907 -- 1.34 percent of all confirmed cases.

As 2,265 people tested positive for the virus in the same 24 hours yesterday, the total number of confirmed cases rose to 292,625.

The positivity rate was slightly less than 20 percent. The overall positivity rate was more than 20 percent.

Yesterday, 2,952 new patients recovered from their illness. With this, 60 percent of all infected people recovered from their illness.

According to reference website worldometers.info, Bangladesh is now the sixth highest number of actives cases (113,151).

Besides, in terms of total confirmed cases, Bangladesh is currently on the 16th position in the list of the worst affected countries in the world.

The position is one step behind Pakistan and one step ahead of Italy.

Of the yesterday's deceased, one died in home and 45 died in hospitals.

Ten of them were females and 36 were males.

One of them aged between 31 and 40, six between 41 and 50, six between 51 and 60 and 33 over 60.

Nearly half of the dead were aged over 60 years, according to the press release of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

One each of the dead yesterday was from Rangpur and Khulna divisions, two each were from Barishal and Sylhet while five from Chattogram, eight from Rajshahi and the highest 27 were from Dhaka division.

So far, the highest number of deaths -- nearly half -- due to Covid-19 were from Dhaka division.

In the same 24 hours, 550 people were put in isolation, according to the press release.

## 3 undocumented Bangladeshis held in Malaysia

THE STAR, Alor Setar

Three Bangladeshis men, allegedly with no travel documents, and a female private taxi driver were arrested at a roadblock in Jalan Napoh, Changlun, near Jitra in Malaysia.

Kubang Pasu OCPD (officer-in-charge of police district) Mohd Ismail Ibrahim said police stopped the vehicle driven by the 33-year-old woman with the three men, aged between 30 and 36, at 5:10pm on Thursday.

"According to preliminary investigations, they were heading to Kateri, Perlis, from Sentul in Kuala Lumpur. The woman claimed she was asked by an acquaintance, a Bangladeshi man, to drive the three men to the location for a fee of RM450 per person," the OCPD said in a statement.

He added that the woman left Sentul with her passengers at 10:00am on Thursday.

He said the three men, who had been in the country for almost three years and had worked as labourers at construction sites and at furniture factories in Kuala Lumpur, had fake work permit cards and were going to Perlis to look for new jobs.

The woman, who had no prior criminal record, was remanded for 28 days to facilitate the investigation under Section 26A of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act 2007.

"The three foreigners are on a 14-day remand for investigations under Section 6(1)(c) of the Immigration Act 1959/1963 for staying in the country without travel documents," the police official said.

## 8 killed

FROM PAGE 1

The injured people took treatment at Bhaluka Upazila Health Complex.

Billal's niece Ritu Akter said Billal lived in Joydevpur area of Gazipur. He and his neighbour Hasna's family were going to see a healer in Billal's village home in Darirampur area of Trishal. They were travelling in a rented car.

Hasna's brother-in-law Jewel Mia said her husband, who lives in Malaysia, and her two-and-a-half-year-old daughter, who was not in the car, are the only ones alive.

Her nephew Abdus Samad urged the authorities to properly investigate the crash. If the people responsible for such crashes are not brought to book, lives will continue to be lost on the roads, he said.

In the other crash on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road in Jashora area of Nandail, cattle traders Saidul Islam, 42, and Mustakim Hossain, 20, of Kishoreganj's Pakundia died when their truck rammed another truck parked on the road, said Monsur Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Nandail Police Station.

The driver driver managed to flee the scene, he added.



**Mrinal Haque passes away**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Renowned sculptor Mrinal Haque breathed his last at his Gulshan residence at around 2am yesterday. His coworker, Md Rubel, confirmed the news to The Daily Star.

He was 61 years old. The sculptor had been ill for quite a few days and was treated at Evercare Hospital in the capital. Mrinal Haque suffered from various conditions including diabetes. His sugar level dropped on Friday night, as did his oxygen level.

After being taken to the hospital, the doctor on duty declared him dead.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



**Landslides on multiple parts of the Baizid-Fouzdarhat bypass road in Chattogram -- that was made by cutting hills -- has raised alarm among locals. They said the last few days of rain has caused the small slides, which could be a warning sign for a bigger accident. The photo was taken yesterday.**

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

**'Not an isolated incident'**

**Civil society group demands judicial inquiry into killing of 3 boys at correction centre**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing grave concern over the incident of deaths of three boys and injuries of many due to torture at the Juvenile Development Centre in Jashore, civil society network for child rights has urged the formation of a judicial inquiry committee into the matter.

While forming the probe committee, the necessary advice related to the selection of the members and the determination of the scope of work must be taken from the Supreme Court Special Committee for Child Rights, the network mentioned through a joint statement yesterday.

According to the statement, by conducting an impartial inquiry and identifying the weaknesses of all other development centres, especially the juvenile development centres in Tongi and Kashimpur, the proposed committee can recommend necessary reforms, including what actions should be taken against the responsible persons and institutions.

The statement also demanded that in accordance with the amended Children's Act, the activities of the Child Welfare Board should be started immediately at all administrative levels, so that all children can freely express their grievances.

According to news reports, the issue of torture and abuse to children, their

mysterious deaths and disappearance has become almost an everyday affair in all centres, including in Jashore. However, media only covers "suicide" or mysterious deaths, and in some cases sexual harassment. But the news of regular and continuous torture always remains invisible, it mentioned.

The network also said the Jashore incident is not an isolated one; rather it is the latest reflection of the ongoing violence on the children on the pretext of maintaining discipline.

On behalf of the civil society for child rights, Prof Emeritus Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, University of Dhaka; Dr Tofail Ahmed, vice-chancellor, University of Britannia, Comilla; Advocate ZI Khan Panna, Supreme Court, and member, Bangladesh Bar Council; Shamsul Huda, executive director, ALRD; Shaheen Anam, executive director, Manusher Jonno Foundation; Advocate Jyotirmoy Barua, Supreme Court; Advocate Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association; Afsan Chowdhury, historian, writer and teacher, Brac University; international development worker Laila Khandaker; Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, executive director, Coast Trust; writer and researcher Dipu Mahmud;

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

**Money down the drain!**

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Money flies in the air of Dhaka -- it's an age old saying in Bangladesh. But it was found flowing in a sewer in the country's north-western city of Rajshahi yesterday. In fact, a lot of money, in notes of one hundred, five hundred, one thousand, and various other denominations.

Besides money, prize bonds, numerous documents of bank accounts and welfare funds, and vouchers worth lakhs of taka of Rajshahi Road Transport Group were also found in the sewer. Some of the documents were from 2011.

All of this was found in a sewer that runs along the Rajshahi-Dhaka highway, right outside the boundary wall of the Rajshahi Railway Hospital, located on the east side of the Rajshahi Railway Station, said officials of General Railway Police and Boalia Police Station.

Contacted, Matuil Haque, general secretary of the Rajshahi Road Transport Owners Group, said their staffers threw some old papers into the sewer.

"Those papers were old and rotting in our balcony. Without burning the papers, the staff mistakenly threw them down the drain."

He couldn't say for sure how the money got there though. From morning to afternoon, more than 50 people were seen kneeling in the sewers and fetching money from the sewer channel, while thousands gathered around the spot.

One Sakib came to the location around 3pm. He said he searched for half-an-hour and found two five-hundred and one hundred taka notes. He said those who came here in the morning found a lot more. A railway security guard said he saw someone gather Tk 10,000 alone, while a child told this correspondent that he found three 20 taka notes.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

**Release 225 returnee migrants from jail**

**Migrant Forum, Lawyers Beyond Borders urge govt**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Regional migrant rights groups Migrant Forum in Asia and Lawyers Beyond Borders yesterday called upon Bangladesh government to release the 225 returnee migrant workers who have been in jail and accused of "suspicious activities".

As the situation of the migrant community becomes aggravated during the coronavirus pandemic, it must be recognised that there should be no space for depriving these individuals of their liberty, the organisations said in a joint statement.

Particularly, when they have been placed in situations of exacerbated vulnerability, have been forced out of their jobs, and forced to leave behind the livelihood their families depend on, they said.

"We are in a time when the human rights and dignity of persons must be at the forefront and high priority of our immediate response," they added.

Citing media report, the organisations said the 225 workers have completed their quarantine for Covid-19 after their deportation from Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

**'Don't share photo or video of Padma Bridge'**

**Authorities instruct officials, staff**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authority of Pamda Multipurpose Bridge Project has asked all of its officials and staffers not to share any information, photos and videos of construction activities of the long-cherished bridge on social media.

It also said any interaction, ideas, thoughts or information, including any "hazardous occurrences or natural disaster" shall not be given using Facebook, Viber or Whatsapp etc.

However, officials would be allowed to use e-mails, SMS or written documents to maintain communication with the superiors, colleagues and subordinates, it said.

The authority sent a letter to all departments concerned of the project on Saturday, sources said.

The directive comes at a time when construction works of the project is facing huge challenge due to Covid-19 pandemic and strong current in the Padma river. No span could not be installed after June 10, when the 31st span was installed, due to

strong current on the river, officials said.

Besides, at least 192 railway stingers and 220 roadway decks, supposed to be used for construction of the bridge, fell into the Padma on July 31 as erosion hit a part of the bridge project's construction yard.

Although the erosion will not affect the main Padma bridge site as it occurred nearly two kilometres off the bridge site, it may cause some delay as the railway stingers have to be imported from Luxembourg.

"I have received a letter not to share any photo or information on social media. I think all officials involved in the project got the letter too," an official of the project said, wishing not be named.

Contacted, Project Director Shafiqul Islam said admitted giving such an instruction. "More than 5,000 people are working in the project. Should I allow all to share photo in the social media?" he told The Daily Star yesterday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

**Tourist spots in Ctg reopen after five months**

UNB, Ctg

After five months of closure, tourist spots of the port city were finally reopened yesterday.

Deputy Commissioner Elias Hossain said all tourist spots of the city -- including Chattogram Zoo, Foy's Lake, and Patenga beach -- have been reopened for the public.

However, visitors can visit the sites only on 16 conditions, which include maintaining health guidelines, hygiene, and social distancing, he said.

Following the outbreak of the coronavirus, the recreation centres were shut from March 18 to contain the spread of the virus, said district administration sources.

The decision to reopen the tourist spots was taken at a meeting of Chattogram District Committee on Coronavirus Prevention, said the deputy commissioner.

The last meeting of the committee was held at the conference room of the deputy commissioner on Wednesday.

In addition, sea beaches, tourist spots, and hotels and motels in Cox's Bazar municipality area were reopened on August 17 on a limited scale.

**Tidal surge inundates Ctg cremation ground**

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Ctg

On Wednesday, Debobroto Pal brought the body of his sister to the cremation ground in Boluadhighir Par area of Chattogram to perform her funeral.

Her body was kept upon a wood pyre, while Debobroto with a heavy heart waited for the cremation to be completed when suddenly, tidal surge mixed with garbage flooded the ground, leaving the family in shock.

After much struggle, the family was able to protect the pyre, let the flame burn and finish the ritual amid the filthy water.

"I don't know what to say... I never thought the last rites of my sister would be performed in such a condition. This is unacceptable. The authorities must do something to resolve such a crisis. The dead deserve a graceful adieu," Debu told The Daily Star.

This is not just an isolated incident. Many are forced to cremate their loved ones in such an awful condition at the largest and century-old cremation ground in the city.

Even the cremation authorities are helpless as they have no other alternatives, said priest Rupam Chakrabarty. "Every monsoon, we experience this as the ground gets inundated by tidal water," he added.

He said they have been facing this issue for almost a decade. "People come here to bid farewell to their family members and grieve. But instead, they have to go through such a terrible experience," he added. Every day, they perform two funeral rites on an average, he added.

He mentioned that Khuresd Alam Sujan, the newly-appointed administrator of Chattogram City Corporation, visited the cremation ground on Friday and assured them of taking necessary steps to rid the place of tidal surge.

The cremation centre lies adjacent to Chaktai canal from where the tidal surge enters the premises every monsoon.

Jahar Lal Hazari, president of the centre's managing body, told The Daily Star that the canal remains clogged, resulting in the situation. "We

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



**Young people hang out in groups at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital, but there is not a face covering in sight. It is now legally required to wear a mask in public, but there seems to be no enforcement of this rule. The photo was taken on Friday.**

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



**Motorbikers sit on their rides, occupying nearly half the road along with street hawkers and obstructing traffic movement in the capital's Fulbaria. Although two-wheeler ridesharing has been suspended on grounds of Covid-19 risk, informal, verbal contract-based ride-hailing continues in the city. The photo was taken last week.**

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

**BCC official served show-cause notice**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

The Barishal City Corporation (BCC) authorities have sent a show cause notice to its Executive Engineer Md Anisuzzaman to explain about proposal of a development project which was not approved by the ministry concerned.

BCC Chief Executive Officer Md Israil Hossain confirmed that he served the notice on Thursday.

Citing the notice, Anisuzzaman said an allegation of negligence in preparing the project proposal was brought against him.

BCC officials said the project was about development of different city roads, reduction of waterlogging and garbage management.

The executive engineer said, "We first submitted a proposal of the project of Tk 1,182 crore to LGRD ministry which sent it back with a recommendation to correct it. We corrected it five times reducing the project cost, but to no avail. Last, it was sent to the ministry in February this year."

The ministry is yet to reply to the proposal, said the BCC official. "If the authorities do not approve it, what can I do?" he added.

**Law enforcers' support has been inadequate**

**Speakers say about violence against women**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

New and different strategies are needed in the fight against increasing incidents of violence against women (VAW) amid the pandemic, in absence of proper legal support from the law enforcement agencies and NGOs working for preventing VAW, said speakers at a webinar yesterday.

Titled "Different strategies to prevent violence against women during Covid-19 pandemic", the webinar was jointly organised by Nari Nirapotta Jote, a platform working for women's safety, and Amrai Pari Paribarik Nirjaton Protirodh Jote (We Can).

Shaheda Akter, a survivor from Atgharia Upazila of Pabna shared her experience on how she was severely beaten by her husband for dowry and received no support from the union parishad chairman and police station. Finding no way, she had to go back to her perpetrator even after being admitted to a local hospital for a month.

Sanatan Das, convener, Sirajganj's Tarash Upazila Nari Nirapotta Jote, talked about the increase in incidents of violence against women in his upazila and shared that at least 50 incidents of child marriage happened in the upazila during the ongoing pandemic.

"The actual number is higher as parents are marrying off their daughters secretly. The reduction of income also worked as a major factor for the increase in child marriages," he added.

The programme was presided over by Shaheen Anam, convener of Nari

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

# Twice as many men use cellphone than women

Says study by ActionAid and Sanem

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eighty percent of male youth in rural and urban areas have their own mobile phones, whereas only 40 percent of the female youth do so. On the other hand, only six percent of households have access to computers and less than four percent of women have ever used a computer.

The findings were revealed at a webinar titled "Gender and Youth Inclusiveness in Technology in Bangladesh," which was jointly organised by South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem) and ActionAid Bangladesh. The paper was presented by Mahtab Uddin, research economist of Sanem. Prof Selim Raihan and Sakil Ahmed were co-authors for this paper.

He pointed out that in case of access to computers, Bangladesh lags behind other South Asian countries. Fifty percent urban households have computers while the ratio falls to 30 percent in rural areas, while only 10 percent of women have ever used the

internet.

He also said that 24 percent of the females from the poorest income decile own mobile phones, while the rate is 73 percent for the richest income decile. On the other hand 72 percent of male youths from households in the poorest income decile own a mobile phone compared to the 92 percent in the top income decile.

"It is evident that the male-female gap is 44 percentage points in the poorest income decile and 19 percentage points in the richest income decile," said Mahtab Uddin.

Chief guest of the program, Deputy Minister of Education Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury said that gender discrimination in technology is often a result of patriarchal and conservative culture.

"When women use technology they often have to face stigma and digital harassment, without a change in [people's] mentality it would be difficult to overcome this discrimination," he said. Acknowledging the growing spread of fundamentalist, misogynistic and anti-Liberation War ideas

online, he called on all to work together to overcome the stigmas and uphold social values and tolerance.

Anir Chowdhury, policy adviser of a2i, shared findings from a2i's research and explained that despite efforts from the government to spread education through digital platforms, it has been difficult to include certain demographics such as low-income groups, women, persons with disabilities, displaced people and people in remote areas.

The webinar was chaired by ActionAid Country Director Farah Kabir and moderated by Research Director of Sanem, Prof Sayema Haque Bidisha. Special remarks were delivered by Prof Selim Raihan, Executive Director of Sanem. Joint Secretary (technical) of Education Ministry Ayatul Islam; Deputy Secretary of Youth and Sports Ministry Md Sayed Ali, and Senior Vice President of Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) Farhana Rahman were also present.



Insistent rain in the last few days has put road communication at Postogola's Rajabari Mor under severe strain, with massive potholes turning into dangerous puddles.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Law enforcers'

FROM PAGE 3

Nirapotta Jote. She stressed that women should step out of the attitude of accepting violence in the pandemic, and there should be a massive campaign that establishes violence against women as a serious offence. "It can't be a normal incident that someone is beating his wife just because he is hungry or has things to worry about," she said.

Shehla Pervin, additional inspector general of police and joint secretary of Bangladesh Police Women Network said since many women are not being able to reach police stations for making a complaint amid the pandemic, they can seek help using the helpline 999.

"Besides, there are also apps like BD Police Helpline and Hello CI, through which the women can send audio and video messages to ask for help," she said.

Shehla also urged victims of violence to not settle the cases out of court.

Speaking as chief guest, lawmaker Meher Afroze Chumki, also president of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, said if a strong committee can be formed in

every upazila, consisting of representatives of organisations working for women's rights, ministry officials, representatives of union parishad (female UP members and vice-chairperson), women can get support from them, without the hassle of going to multiple agencies or organisations.

"They can also contact over phone and the members will visit their homes," she added.

Md Shawkat Hossain, additional district and sessions judge at a Shariatpur court, stressed on increasing the budget and logistical support of the judiciary in order to ensure proper justice and speedy trial. He also suggested that police should keep a database of the sexual offender like other developed countries, as history says child molesters do this type of crime repeatedly.

MB Akhter, co-chair at WE Can; Afroza Mahal, Dhaka and country portfolio manager at Plan International Bangladesh; Nasimun Ara Haque Minu, president, Centre for Women Journalists and survivors of violence spoke at the event as well.

Zinat Ara Haque, executive coordinator of We Can, moderated the webinar.

## Bazar Bandhu supports flood victims

CITY DESK

Bazar Bandhu, a micro-merchant project run by ekShop and Synesis IT, has raised fund and relief for distribution among flood victims, says a press release.

On August 19, Bazar Bandhu distributed food and health protection items to flood-hit people in Tangail and Sirajganj. It also conducted health camps for them. Bloodman, Manabseva and Kandari also participated in the activities.

Bazar Bandhu is a micro-merchant based eCommerce project through which grocery stores can transform their limited products inventory into one million products with the help of eCommerce.

At present it is being operated in Sirajganj, Tangail, Jamalpur and Sherpur. In Covid-19 pandemic, health care products are being supplied to these districts through Bazar Bandhu. UNCDF and the European Union are providing support to the project.

## Money down

FROM PAGE 3

A woman said she heard from a rickshaw-puller that he got Tk 50,000. "While urinating on the sewer bank, the rickshaw-puller noticed money flowing in the drain," she said. "I came here to see it with my own eyes after hearing it directly from him."

Nibaran Chandra Barman, officer-in-charge of Boalia Police Station, said they have looked into the matter, but did not take any action as the area was out of their jurisdiction.

The railway police avoided the incident too. OC Shah Kamal of railway police said since the location of the sewer is outside the railway boundary, they took no action in spite of being informed of it.

Even though he is not certain, Road Transport Owners Group's Matuil referred to an old incident and said the money might have something to do with it.

Three years ago, Bipul, an employee of the organisation, lost about Tk 2.5 lakh belonging to a bus owner. He kept the money inside his desk drawer at the group's office, but later said he couldn't find it.

Bipul is still repaying the lost money to the bus owner from his salary. The group has also given him a grant of Tk 1 lakh to complete the repayment. But whereabouts of the money remained unknown, he added. "We think that the person who took the money hid it in the pile of paper. But our office was under CCTV camera network and no one dared to go there, get the money, and get out. When the papers were dumped in the drain, the money might have gone along with them," said Matuil.

However, Matuil said the total money collected by locals would not be more than Tk 3,000.

## Don't share

FROM PAGE 3

Asked whether sharing photo or videos of the project was causing any problem, he said, "Yes, this is causing some problems."

Many people are posting on social media or uploading video on YouTube mixing some true and false information regarding the project, he said.

"We have asked our officials not to share photo or document on social media," he said.

Construction of the Padma Bridge started in November 2014 to connect the country's southwestern region with the capital through road and rail links.

The current deadline of the project is June 2021. The project cost rose to Tk 30,193 crore following several revisions of deadline.

The current deadline is going to be deferred further due to the Covid-19 pandemic and strong current in Padma, officials said. The overall progress of the project was around 80 percent till June this year.

Once opened, the 6.15km-long bridge will connect the capital with 21 southern districts. It is expected to boost the country's gross domestic product by 1.2 percent.

**APARTMENT FOR RENT**  
Size 2650 sq feet with one car parking, 4 Bed, 5 Bath, Marble floor with sophisticated interior decoration.  
Address: House no 66, Road no 8/A Flat 2A, Dhanmondi, R/A, Dhaka.  
Mob: 01711155034 or 01552308233  
Provable time for rent: 01-10-2020

**Probashi Kalyan Bank**  
Common Services Department  
Head Office, Dhaka  
Website: www.pkb.gov.bd

**Invitation for Tender (Goods) Through e-GP**  
e-Tenders is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.aprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following goods as follows:

Tender ID/Reference No.	Name of supply	Date of last selling of document	Closing date & time
481711 PKB/CSD/FUR/2020-21/01	Manufacture, Supplying and Installation of Fire Proof Iron Safe	10-Sep-2020 16:00	13-Sep-2020 16:00

The interested bidders may visit the website [www.aprocure.gov.bd](http://www.aprocure.gov.bd) to get the details of the tender. This is an online tender invitation, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal ([www.aprocure.gov.bd](http://www.aprocure.gov.bd)) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any e-GP registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helodesk@aprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helodesk@aprocure.gov.bd)).

**Mohammad Zainal Abedin**  
Assistant Vice President  
E-mail: [csd@pkb.gov.bd](mailto:csd@pkb.gov.bd)

GD-1306

## Not an

FROM PAGE 3

development professional, theatre worker and rights activist Asif Munir; Sirajud Dahar Khan, executive director, Interaction; Shah-e-Mobin Jinnah, executive director, CDA, Dinajpur; development worker and researcher Navsheshwar Tripathi; development worker and researcher Pulak Raha; researcher and economist Nazmi Sabina; Gowhar Naem Wara, member secretary, Disaster Forum; and poet Farooq Wasif issued the statement.

## Release

FROM PAGE 3

and are now being detained in Kashimpur jail, allegedly for violation of Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Most of them were previously arrested in the host countries for committing administrative infractions such as overstaying of visa or work permit, or petty crimes, they said.

Thereafter, they all obtained state pardon in the host countries after serving at least two-thirds of their sentences, they added.

"If these 225 returned Bangladeshi migrant workers are being detained solely for 'suspicious acts' during their period of quarantine and 'for tarnishing the image of the country' for acts they committed in Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain, and for which reason they were charged, imprisoned, and subsequently pardoned by those states, we... would like to appeal to the government of Bangladesh to immediately cause the release from imprisonment of these 225 returned Bangladeshi migrant workers for they have not committed any new crime," they said in the statement.

The organisations said the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Guidance for Covid-19 highlights that states should urgently explore options for release and alternatives to detention to mitigate the risk of harm within places of detention.

Besides, as one of the country signatories to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Bangladesh government is duty bound to protect the human rights of migrant workers and members of their families, they further said.

Lawyers Beyond Borders is an international network of legal experts interested in advocating for the rights of migrant workers, brought together by Migrant Forum in Asia.

## Mrinal Haque

FROM PAGE 3

After his Namaz-e-Janaza took place at Gulshan Azad Mosque post-Asr prayers, he was buried at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals Graveyard. He left behind his wife, a daughter and a son, and a host of fans and well-wishers.

Born in Rajshahi on September 9, 1958, Mrinal Haque was best known for making murals on the streets of Dhaka. He immigrated to USA in 1995, and began his sculpting career there. He returned to the country in 2002, and settled here permanently.

The sculptor built the Balaka sculpture in Motijheel on his own initiative. The Golden Jubilee Tower, built on the golden jubilee of Rajshahi University in 2003, is one of his best works of art.

Besides, he has done a plethora of sculptures all over the country, including Ratnawadi in front of the Prime Minister's office in Dhaka, Rajsik in front of Hotel Sheraton, Janani O Gorbato Bornomala at Paribagh, Kotwal at Eskaton and Mayur at Satrasta. He is also the creator of various other sculptures including Atolantike Boshoti at the Navy Headquarters, Arghyo at Science Laboratory, and more.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, MP has expressed his condolences at the death of Mrinal Haque.

## Tidal surge

FROM PAGE 3

urge CCC to excavate the canal immediately. We also have a masterplan to renovate the place," he added.

Contacted, Shamsuddoha, chief executive officer of CCC, said, "We are trying to resolve the issue. We will also review the masterplan submitted by the cremation centre committee to help mitigate the crisis."

Mentionable, CDA (Chattogram Development Authority) has taken up a mega project to end this perennial crisis. The project to mitigate waterlogging included excavating 9.50-lakh cubic meters of mud from 36 canals, building 85km road on canal banks, constructing three flood water retaining areas, constructing five tidal regulators, building 42 silt traps, expanding 15.5km side drain and building 2000 cross drain culverts, Lt Col Md Shah Ali, CDA project director, told The Daily Star.

By the end of this year, they will be able to complete construction of five tidal regulators also, which will help control tidal surge, he said.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Divisional Forest Officer  
Social Forest Division, Rajshahi

**Invitation for Tenders**

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	
1	Ministry/Division: Ministry of Environment and Forest and Climate Change.
2	Agency: Bangladesh Forest Department.
3	Procuring entity name: Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Rajshahi.
4	Procuring entity code: Not used at present.
5	Procuring entity district: Rajshahi.
6	Installation by: Procurement of Physical Service of Contractual Staff.
7	Installation Ref. No: 01/2020-21
8	Date: 20/08/2020
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>	
9	Procurement method: Open Tender.
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>	
10	Budget and source of funds: Revenue Fund (GOB).
11	Development partners (if applicable): N/A.
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>	
12	Project/programme code (if applicable): N/A.
13	Project name (if applicable): N/A.
14	Tender Package No: 01/2020-21
15	Tender package name: Procurement of non skilled contractual staff.
16	Date: 23/08/2020
17	Tender publication date: 08/09/2020
18	Tender closing date and time: 07/09/2020 12:00 Noon
19	Tender opening date and time: 07/09/2020 1:00pm
20	Name & address of the office(s): - Selling tender document (principle): Officer in-charge, Poba S.F.N.T.C, Social Forest Division, Rajshahi. - Selling tender document (others): None.
No conditions apply for sale, purchase or distribution of tender documents.	
21	- Receiving tender document: Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Shaibagan, Rajshahi and Deputy Commissioner's Office, Rajshahi. - Opening tender document: Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Shaibagan, Rajshahi.
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>	
22	Eligibility of tenderer: • Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the contract under the Applicable Law. • Tenderers shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh. • Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh.
23	Brief description of services: Procurement of non skilled contractual staff (Three Office Sahayok).
24	Price of tender document (Tk): 500.00
25	Package No. Identification of package Location Tender security amount (Tk) Completion time in weeks/months 01/2020-21 Outsourcing of Office Sahayok Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forest Division, Shaibagan, Rajshahi. 20,000.00 (twenty thousand) only 02 (two) weeks
<b>PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS</b>	
26	Name of official inviting tender: Ahmed Niamur Rahman.
27	Designation of official inviting tender: Divisional Forest Officer.
28	Address of official inviting tender: Social Forest Division, Shaibagan, Rajshahi.
29	Contact details of official inviting tender: Ph: 0721-761677, Email: <a href="mailto:divisionalforest@rajshahi.com">divisionalforest@rajshahi.com</a>
The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings.	
Ahmed Niamur Rahman Divisional Forest Officer Social Forest Division, Rajshahi Ph: 0721-761677 Email: <a href="mailto:divisionalforest@rajshahi.com">divisionalforest@rajshahi.com</a>	

GD-1309

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare  
Health Services Division  
Health Economics Unit (HEU)  
Gender, NGO & Stakeholder Participation (GNSP) Unit  
14/2, Topkhana Road (4th Floor), Dhaka-1000

**Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of Consulting/Research Firm for Conducting Research/Study**

1	Ministry/Division	HEU, MHP/W.
2	Agency	HEU
3	Procuring entity name	HEU
4	Procuring entity code	N/A
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka
6	Expression of Interest for Selection of Consulting Firm/Research Organization.	
7	EOI Ref. No.	45.05.5000.006.31.002.19 Date: 13.08.2020
8	Date	24/08/2020
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>		
9	Procurement method	Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS).
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>		
10	Budget and source of funds	Govt (Dev) Fund.
11	Development partner (if applicable)	N/A.
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>		
12	Project/programme code (if applicable)	
13	Project/programme name (if applicable)	Study on gender inequalities and inequalities in prevailing nutritional disorders: policy implications for interventions.
14	EOI closing date and time	11/09/2020 & 12:00pm.
<b>INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT</b>		
15	Brief description of the assignment	<b>Objectives:</b> 1. To understand the scopes and utilization of nutrition services across the hierarchy of Health Facilities. 2. To identify the gender sensitive indicators and performance management in nutrition services. 3. To explore the influence of gender inequality on optimizing access to nutrition services at Health Facilities. 4. Identify and prioritize areas for future policy implication towards a more gender-responsive nutrition services.
16	Experience, resource and delivery capacity required	The service provider shall be a Consulting Organization/Institution focused on the field of health care service and system having demonstrated expertise in evaluating programmes or undertaking research. The applicant organization/institution i. Must be a registered Company. ii. Must have Tax Identification Number, Business Identification Number and up-to-date Income Tax Certificates (Submitted status), and not declared bankrupt/insolvent/banned by the Court. Academic background of the members of the team. iii. Team lead must have at least masters (PhD would be an advantage) in public health/nutrition/anthropology, with a focus on gender in health is desirable. iv. At least 5 years of experience at national level in health systems research focusing on issues around nutrition, gender in health. v. Strong track record in qualitative assessments. vi. Demonstrated experience of working with government, INGO, development partners especially in the area of health system strengthening. vii. Previously engaged with the formulation process of national level policy/strategy document, evaluation of any national level health program. viii. Publications of official inviting EOI in nutrition, gender in health. ix. Skills in facilitation of stakeholder engagement/workshop.
17	Other details (if applicable)	N/A.
18	Association with foreign firm is	Encouraging.
19	Phasing of Services	Indicative start date (month/year) Indicative completion time (month/year)
	Not Phased	October 2020 May 2021
<b>PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS</b>		
20	Name of official inviting (EOI)	Dr. Mohd. Shauhid Hossain Mahmud.
21	Designation of official inviting EOI	Director General, Health Economics Unit and Joint Director (Health Economics and Financing)
22	Address of official inviting EOI	Health Economics Unit, 14/2, Topkhana Road (3rd Floor), Dhaka-1000.
23	Contact details of official inviting EOI	Telephone: 9566822, Fax No. 9582207, E-mail: <a href="mailto:mshmu25212@yahoo.com">mshmu25212@yahoo.com</a>
24	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EOs.	
<b>Director General</b> Health Economic Unit & Joint Director (Health Economics and Financing OP)		

GD-1506

DAMAGED BUILDING OF LGED

Concrete debris turns Kuakata beach hazardous

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Large and small chunks of concrete rubble with protruding iron rods and jagged edges have turned the Kuakata sea beach hazardous for beachgoers.

A good number of beachgoers already sustained injuries from the debris that remains out of sight during high tides, the safest time to bathe in the sea.

Kuakata beach is a popular destination from where both rising and setting of the sun can be observed.

Locals said the rubble is from the boundary wall and parts of a rest house and bio-gas plant, owned by Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), which got damaged when super cyclone Sidr lashed on the shores of Bangladesh in 2007.

The parts of the damaged boundary wall had

remained underneath the sand in the beach since then, but it started to emerge after the recent super cyclonic storm Amphan struck the region in May.

The damaged building was cleared off later, but the damaged sections of the boundary wall had remained intact under the sands of the beach. The remains of the wall finally surfaced during the monsoon in 2016. Every year, the debris gets covered by sand in the dry season and it gets washed up in the rainy season, usually between May and October, the locals also said.

Abdul Hannan, who came to enjoy the beach from Jashore, said, "While bathing in the sea during high tide, I got injuries from concrete chips."

For the sake of safety of a large number of tourists from home and abroad, the authorities need to keep the beach clean from hazardous

materials, he also said.

Anwar Hossain Anu, secretary of Tour Operators Association of Kuakata, confirmed that many tourists have been getting injuries from submerged concrete debris at the beach.

Contacted, Kuakata town Mayor Abdul Berek Molla said they would take urgent steps to remove the concrete debris from the beach.

He also said that some of the debris was removed from the beach last year, but its resurfacing this year has been causing great distress to tourists.

Abu Hasnat Md Shahidul Haque, upazila nirbahi officer of Kalapara and also the secretary to Kuakata Beach Management Committee, said they would soon clear the hazardous materials from the beach to ensure safety of all tourists.



Concrete debris with protruding iron rods and jagged edges scatter the Kuakata beach. The photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN



A cotton field at Bakra village in Jashore's Jhikorgachha upazila. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Cotton cultivation sees rise in Jashore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Farmers of six upazilas in Jashore region are showing much interest in cotton farming as its cultivation proved to be more profitable than other crops. Due to this, cotton cultivation is increasing every year in the region.

The farmers said they have been incurring losses by cultivating paddy for the last few years. As a result, they have showed interest in cotton farming as it is profitable and production cost is low.

Encouraged by the higher prices in the markets, the farmers are bringing more areas of land under cotton cultivation, said officials of Jashore Cotton Development office.

According to the Jashore Cotton Development Office, around 19,000 bales of cotton fibre are being produced here annually. To boost production, cotton cultivation has been increased in the region.

Chief zonal officer of Cotton Development Board in Jashore Md Qutub Uddin said in the 2018-19 fiscal year, the target for cotton cultivation was 3,500 hectares while 3,105 hectares of land were brought under cotton farming. Around 16,696 bales of cotton fibre were produced from the land. Earlier, the target for cotton cultivation was 2,465 hectares of land in the 2016-17 financial year, but farmers brought 3,200 hectares of land under cotton cultivation. Around 18,265 bales of cotton fibre were produced from 3,200 hectares.

The target for cotton cultivation was

3,500 hectares in the 2019-20 fiscal year. About 3,125 hectares were cultivated. Around 19,230 bales of cotton fibre were produced from the land. In the current fiscal year 2020-21, 3,200 hectares of land have been brought under cotton cultivation. Farmers have already started sowing seeds.

Mozaffar Hossain of Sujalpur village in Jashore Sadar said he would plant cotton on two bighas of land this time. He has already started sowing seeds. Hopefully the cotton cultivation will bring good yield this time.

Asadul Islam, a farmer from Jhikorgachha upazila, said he has made all preparations to cultivate cotton on three bighas of land this season. Last year, he brought his three bighas of land under cotton cultivation and got good yield of cotton.

Rezaul Islam of Khajura village in the same upazila said he is now cultivating cotton on five bighas of land. Last year, he planted cotton on two bighas of land, spending Tk 18,000 and got 32 maunds of cotton from the land. Per maund of cotton was sold at Tk 2,500.

Mizamur Rahman of Shiorda village in the upazila said he got 14 maunds of cotton from his three bighas of land last year.

The chief zonal officer of Jashore Cotton Development Board said cotton cultivation has been increasing in Jashore region for the last five to six years as it is profitable item. They have provided local cotton seeds to the farmers. They are also giving loans to the cotton growers.

"The cotton produced in our country is world-class," said the officer.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Office of the Project Director of Integrated and Participatory Project to Control Noise Pollution. Department of Environment, Paribesh Bhaban, E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207. Request for Expression of Interest (Eoi) for National Individual Consultant. Includes a table with project details and qualification requirements.

Kurigram abducted girl yet to be rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A schoolgirl, who was abducted allegedly by one of her neighbouring youth in Kurigram's Ulipur upazila on Thursday, is yet to be rescued.

The victim is a Class VII student at a local school. According to the case, filed by the victim's father with Ulipur Police Station on Friday, one of his neighbour's son Sohail Rana with the help of his men entered their house forcible and picked up the girl on Thursday evening.

Later, victim's father filed the case accusing 12 people, including Sohail.

Officer in Charge (OC) of Ulipur Police Station Moazzem Hossain said accused Sohail and his family members went into hiding soon after filing of the case.

They were conducting drives to arrest the culprits involved in the abduction of the schoolgirl, the OC added. Meanwhile, victim's father alleged that police are seem reluctant to rescue his daughter and arrest the culprits due to unknown reason.

On the other hand victim's mother complained that the accused and his men have been treating them to withdraw the case.

Earlier, in January this year, the girl's father filed a rape case with the same police station accusing Sohail.

According to the prosecution, Rana, an Intermediate second year student at a local college, developed a relationship with the schoolgirl and later raped the victim, promising to marry her.

Police already submitted the charge-sheet of the case to the court.

Missing man found dead in Jamalpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

An elderly man, who remained missing from Jamalpur municipality since Friday, was found dead in Melandah upazila of the district on Saturday.

Deceased, Samad Miah, 60, a resident of Haat Chandra village under the municipality, was son of late Taj Mahmud Sheikh.

Quoting the deceased's family members, Officer in Charge of Melandah Police Station Rezaul Karim said Samad went out of his house on Friday morning and did not return home.

Family members looked for him in every possible places but failed to know his whereabouts, he said.

Local people spotted his body floating in a pond at Purbo Adra village in Melandah upazila around 9:00am the following morning and informed the police.

On information, police went to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Jamalpur General Hospital for autopsy, he said.

OC Rezaul said the motive behind the death will be clear after the autopsy is completed.

পঞ্চশতাভিত্তী বাংলাদেশ সরকার. বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ. পুলিশ স্থাপনের কার্যালয়. পিরোজপুর. উন্নুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি. Includes a table with details of the tender process and a list of bidders.

# Facebook vows to curb hate speech in India

## Move comes after lawmaker's 'Rohingyas should be shot' comment sparks row

AFP, New Delhi

Social media giant Facebook has admitted it has to do better to curb hate speech as it battled a storm over how it handled comments by a member of India's ruling party who called Muslims traitors.

"We've made progress on tackling hate speech on our platform, but we need to do more," Facebook India's managing director Ajit Mohan said in a statement that denied any bias.

Hindu nationalist lawmaker T. Raja Singh posted comments and made speeches saying that Rohingya Muslim refugees should be shot and Muslims were traitors.

Facebook has been caught in a growing controversy in its biggest market in terms of users since The Wall Street Journal reported that an executive refused to remove the comments because it would damage the company's business interests.

"Over the last few days, we have been accused of bias in the way we enforce our policies. We take allegations of bias incredibly seriously, and want to make it clear that we denounce hate and bigotry in any form," said Mohan.

Mohan did not give details however and his online post did not explain the case of Raja Singh, a member of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party.

The controversy came after Facebook India's top public policy executive, Ankhil Das, told staff that hate speech rules should not be applied to BJP individuals and party allies even though the post had been flagged by staff, the Journal reported.



The Iron Dome anti-missile system fires interception missiles as rockets are launched from Gaza towards Israel, as seen from the city of Ashkelon, Israel on Friday. Israeli tanks shelled military positions of Gaza's ruling Hamas movement early yesterday, the army and Palestinian security sources said, hours after a rocket was launched at southern Israel. Israel has bombed Gaza almost daily since August 6 in retaliation for the launch of balloons fitted with fire bombs, or, less frequently, rockets.

PHOTO: REUTERS

### COVID SCIENCE

#### New questions about remdesivir's efficacy

A new study is raising fresh questions about the efficacy of Gilead Sciences Inc's anti-viral medication remdesivir in Covid-19 patients. A randomized, controlled trial of remdesivir in 584 moderately ill Covid-19 patients hospitalized with pneumonia yielded disappointing results in research published on Friday in JAMA. Compared to standard care without remdesivir, a 10-day course of the drug did not show a statistically significant effect on disease course at 11 days after treatment started, the study found. A five-day remdesivir course did make a statistically significant difference, but one so small that the researchers are not sure it really matters. Several other gold-standard trials are still underway, but as of now important questions remain regarding remdesivir's efficacy, Erin McCreary and Derek Angus of the University of Pittsburgh wrote in an editorial published alongside the study.

#### Breast milk an unlikely source of transmission

Transmission of the novel coronavirus to infants through breast milk appears unlikely, a new study indicates. Researchers analyzed 64 breast milk samples from 18 infected mothers. One sample contained inactive genetic material from the virus, but none of the samples contained active virus particles, the researchers reported on Wednesday in JAMA. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has advised nursing mothers with possible or confirmed COVID-19 to wear a cloth face covering while breast-feeding a baby and wash hands before touching the child and any pump or bottle parts.

#### Maintain indoor humidity to limit airborne coronavirus

Keeping indoor humidity levels between 40% and 60% will help limit airborne transmission of the novel coronavirus by minimizing the presence of infectious viral droplets in the air, according to a new study. The authors said that as the amount of water vapor in the air rises, viral droplet size increases and the heavier droplets fall from the air more quickly, providing less chance for other people to inhale them and become infected. By contrast, when humidity is low, the virus-containing droplets dry out - but the small infectious virus particles survive, floating in the air for longer periods and increase the chance of infection.

SOURCE: REUTERS

# 'It's actually murder'

## WHO chief says graft involving PPE for health workers unacceptable

AFP, Geneva

Corrupt practices around medical safety gear for Covid-19 health workers is tantamount to "murder", the World Health Organization chief said Friday.

In strong remarks, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that corruption which deprives health workers of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) threatened not only their lives but also the lives of their patients suffering from the novel coronavirus.

The WHO director-general was asked about graft in South Africa, which is reeling from coronavirus-linked corruption scandals that have battered President Cyril Ramaphosa's credibility



and the country's image abroad. "Any type of corruption is unacceptable," Tedros told a virtual news conference.

"However, corruption related to PPE... for me it's actually murder. Because if health workers work without PPE, we're risking their lives. And that also risks the lives of the

people they serve. "So it's criminal and it's murder and it has to stop."

The outcry in South Africa began with reports that local government officials were hoarding and selling food donations meant for families without income during lockdown.

Then anger mounted further when some hospitals found that state purchases of masks, gowns and other PPE were not reaching staff.

South Africa's Special Investigating Unit is probing more than 160 companies to check the authenticity of coronavirus-related equipment and services provided. It will publish all contracts for PPE for health workers.

# California wildfires spread

## 6 killed, many injured, 175,000 evacuated

AGENCIES

California's lightning-sparked wildfires more than doubled in size into some of the largest in state history on Friday, with one blaze advancing to within a mile of the University of California, Santa Cruz (USCS).

At least six people have died, 43 firefighters and civilians have been injured, and more than 500 homes and other structures destroyed as fires have burned an area larger than the United States state of Rhode Island.

Firefighting forces were depleted as they fought around 560 blazes. Only 45 of 375 out-of-state fire crews requested by California had arrived, said a spokeswoman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire).

The state has been hit by its worst dry-lightning storms in nearly two decades. Close to 12,000 strikes have sent fires racing through lands parched by record-breaking heat, forcing 175,000 to evacuate their homes, largely in Northern California.

The lightning strikes, driven by record temperatures, were a consequence of climate change and more such storms are expected today, Governor Gavin Newsom told a Friday news conference.



Demonstrators demand US President Donald Trump's resignation for failing to protect lives during a march to honor people who have died during the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) outbreak, in Manhattan, New York, US, on Friday night. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Friday said the number of deaths due to the new coronavirus had risen by 1,074 to 173,490 and reported 5,551,793 cases, an increase of 44,864 cases from its previous count.

PHOTO: REUTERS

# Kremlin critic Navalny 'stable' after landing in Germany

AFP, Berlin

Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny is in a stable condition after arriving in Berlin by air ambulance yesterday following a suspected poisoning, the German NGO that chartered the flight told AFP.

"Navalny's condition is stable," said Jaka Bizili, the head of the Cinema for Peace NGO after the flight touched down at Berlin's Tegel airport.

Ambulances seen at the airport were expected to transfer him to Berlin's Charite hospital for treatment.

The 44-year-old lawyer and anti-corruption campaigner, one of President Vladimir Putin's fiercest critics, went into a coma after falling suddenly ill Thursday on a plane to Moscow that had to make an emergency landing in Omsk.

Aides say they believe Navalny was poisoned, apparently by a cup of tea at the airport, and blamed Putin, though Russian doctors said tests showed no trace of any poison.

# J&K rivals close ranks to fight for lost special status

NDTV ONLINE

Just over a year after India revoked special constitutional rights granted to Jammu and Kashmir and divided the state into two union territories, its main regional parties have formally joined hands to fight against the move in a significant political shift away from long-standing rivalries.

In a joint statement, the National Conference, People's Democratic Party (PDP), Peoples Conference, Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), Congress and Awami National Conference have said that the August 5, 2019 decision of the centre has changed the relationship between Jammu and Kashmir and New Delhi. They vowed to fight collectively for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status as guaranteed by the constitution under Article 370.

The statement said that all parties will abide by the "Gupkar declaration" of August 4, 2019 in which regional parties and the Congress resolved to protect Jammu and Kashmir's special constitutional status and fight against any move to dilute it.

The Congress, however, already seemed to be having second thoughts. "Our representative had signed Gupkar declaration last year. A lot has changed since then. We are for restoration of statehood to J&K but on abrogation of 370, we should wait for Supreme Court verdict rather than forging any political entente," said CA Mir, state Congress chief.

"Yesterday, draft was framed and circulated among leaders. It was approved by all leaders," said a senior political leader. "Delhi establishment managed to do which no one could have done in Kashmir. Our

party politics is in a suspended animation and our collective goal will be to fight for restoration of constitution," he said.

In a tweet, Mehbooba Mufti who is still under detention under the Public Safety Act, has praised her long-time rival Farooq Abdullah for ensuring political unity in Kashmir to fight for its rights.

Sajjad Lone, once a close ally of the BJP, also put his weight firmly behind the new



arrangement. He tweeted: "A very satisfying day. We firmly believe that a collective mechanism is the only way out. It is no longer about power. It is about a struggle to get back what rightfully belongs to us."

The centre had revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special rights, like the ability to enact its own laws, last year in August by scrapping provisions of Article 370 of the constitution and divided the state into two centrally-governed union territories - Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The move was accompanied with a strong security crackdown, the world's longest internet shutdown in a democratic country and the detention of hundreds of political leaders including three former Chief Ministers in an effort to curb a backlash.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
 বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ  
 পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বরিশাল  
 (www.barisal.police.gov.bd)

**উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

The Public Procurement Regulation-2006 & The Public Procurement Regulation-2008 এবং তৎপরকর্তীতে সংশোধিত আইন/বিধিমালা মোতাবেক চলতি ২০২০-২১ অর্থ সালের ২য় কোয়ার্টারে বরিশাল জেলা পুলিশের রেশন স্টোরে নিম্নোক্ত ০৭ প্রপ কাজের রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয়ের লক্ষ্যে সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত তিকাদার/প্রতিষ্ঠান/সরকারী/ব্যক্তিগতের নিকট হইতে সীলমোহনসহকৃত প্রাপ্য কাজের নাম উল্লেখপূর্বক প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে।

১	বিভাগ/মন্ত্রণালয়	স্বস্তি মন্ত্রণালয়, জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।
২	দরপত্র নম্বর	০৪/২০২০-২১।
৩	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা	পুলিশ সুপার, বরিশাল।
৪	সংগ্রহকারী জেনারেলের নাম	বরিশাল জেলা।
৫	বিভাজিকৃত কাজের নাম	মতর চাল/সয়াবিন তৈল/জ্বালানি কাঠ/গম পেছাই/পোল্যাট চাল/বস্তা নিলাম এবং মালামাল পরিবহনের সুবিধা।
৬	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং	২০২০-২১ অর্থ বছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টার।
৭	কাজের পদ্ধতি	কার্যসমাপ্তি প্রতিষ্ঠার পর নিজ খরচে মালামাল সরবরাহ।
৮	সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি "দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন/২০০৮" অনুযায়ী।
৯	ব্যাংকি এবং সোর্স অব ফান্ড	পিএল ব্যাংক।
১০	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	২০/০৮/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ হইতে ২৬/০৮/২০২০খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত সময়ের বে কোন ০১ (এক) দিনের জন্য।
১১	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৯/০৯/২০২০খ্রিঃ বেলা ১৪.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১২	দরপত্র দাখিলের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১০/০৯/২০২০খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১৩	দরপত্র বোন্ডার তারিখ ও সময়	১০/০৯/২০২০খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকায়।
১৪	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ ও সময়	১৩/০৯/২০২০খ্রিঃ বেলা ১১.০০ ঘটিকা।
১৫	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বরিশাল।
১৬	দরপত্র সিভিল বিক্রয়কারী অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	পুলিশ অফিস, বরিশাল এবং ডিআইজি, বরিশাল রেঞ্জ, বরিশাল এর কার্যালয়।
১৭	দরপত্রের যোগ্যতা	(১) হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (২) হালনাগাদ পর্যন্ত আয়কর পরিশোধের সনদপত্র (৩) স্ট্যট নিবন্ধন সনদপত্র (৪) আর্থিক স্বচ্ছতার ব্যাংক সনদপত্র ও ব্যাংক স্টেটমেন্ট (৫) ন্যাশনাল সনদপত্র (৬) সদ্য তৈরি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ছবি (৭) প্রতিষ্ঠানের একক মালিকানা সংশ্লিষ্ট হস্তাক্ষর (৮) নমুনা আক্ষর।

লট নং	মালামালের বিবরণ	পরিমাণ	সিভিল মূল্য	টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটি	সরবরাহের সময়
০১	উন্মুক্তমতর মতর চাল (উন্মুক্তমতর স্মক পলিপ্যাকে ২ কেজি এবং ১.৫ কেজি প্যাকেটে চাহিদানুযায়ী সরবরাহ করিতে হইবে। প্যাকেটের গায়ে গুজন, উৎপাদন এবং মোয়াল উল্লেখিত তারিখ উল্লেখ করিতে হইবে।	৩৬,০০০ কেজি	৭৫০/-	পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট আকারে	(সিভিল মূল্য উল্লেখ আছে)
০২	সয়াবিন তৈল	৩৬,০০০ লিটার	৭৫০/-		
০৩	গম পেছাই (ফুলি ও পরিবহনসহ) উন্মুক্তমতর স্মক পলিপ্যাকে ৫ কেজি এবং ২ কেজি চাহিদা অনুযায়ী সরবরাহ করিতে হইবে। প্যাকেটের গায়ে গুজন, উৎপাদন এবং মোয়াল উল্লেখিত তারিখ উল্লেখ করিতে হইবে।	১,৮০,০০০ কেজি (কম/বেশি)	৪০০/-		
০৪	পোল্যাট চাল	১,৫০০ কেজি (১ কেজির প্যাকেট)	৪০০/-		
০৫	জ্বালানি কাঠ	৬০,০০০ কেজি	৪০০/-		
০৬	পরিবহনের সুবিধা মঞ্জুরী (চাল সদর এলএসজি/সিএসজি গ্যোডাউন হইতে উঠানো ও রেশন স্টোরে নামানো এবং চিদি মধুখালী, ফরিদপুর হইতে উঠানো এবং রেশন স্টোরে নামানো)।	চাল = ১,৯৫,০০০ কেজি (কম/বেশি) চিদি = ২৫,০০০ কেজি (কম/বেশি)	৪০০/-		
০৭	বস্তা নিলাম	মোট চটের বস্তা = ৩৫০০টি (৩০ কেজি ওজনের) প্রায়িক বস্তা = ৫০০টি (৫০ কেজি ওজনের)	৪০০/-		

১৮	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	জনাব মোঃ সাইফুল ইসলাম, বিপিএম (বার)।
২০	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর পদবী	পুলিশ সুপার, বরিশাল।
২১	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	পুলিশ সুপার, ফোনঃ ০৪৩১-৬২১২৩, ফ্যাক্সঃ ৬৪১৫২।
২২	বিশেষ শর্তাবলী	(ক) নির্ধারিত সময়ের পরে দরপত্র বিক্রি করা হবে না; (খ) কার্যসমাপ্তিকৃত ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহকে অযোগ্য ঘোষণা করা হবে; (গ) গম পেছাই কাজের বরিশাল রেঞ্জের সকল জেলা, খুলনা রেঞ্জের বাগেরহাট এবং ঢাকা রেঞ্জের মাদারিপুর জেলার মিল মালিকদের আধিকার নেওয়া হবে। মিল মালিকদের মালিকানা সংক্রান্ত সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি দাখিল করিতে হবে। জেলা পুলিশ কর্তৃক মনোনীত প্রতিষ্ঠানের উপস্থিতিতে গম পেছাই করে নিতে বাধ্য থাকবে। (ঘ) কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র অথবা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ/প্রতিষ্ঠান করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। লট নং ১-৭ বর্ণিত মালামাল সরবরাহিতাবে পাওয়া গেলে ঠিকাদারের সাথে সুস্থিতপত্র বাতিল হবে। এছাড়া বিস্তারিত শর্তাবলী সিভিল মূল্য উল্লেখ আছে।

৩০/৮/২০২০  
 মোঃ সাইফুল ইসলাম, বিপিএম (বার)  
 বিপি নং-৬৪০১১০৬৫০৫  
 পুলিশ সুপার, বরিশাল  
 ফোনঃ ০৪৩১-৬২১২৩/ফ্যাক্সঃ ৬৪১৫২

সিভি-১০১০

# Weight matters: obesity and COVID-19

FAHMIDA HASHEM

The COVID-19 pandemic is presenting unprecedented challenges around the world. Apart from the health risks of the coronavirus, the food we eat, the way we work and how physically active we are having all been changed and impacted in ways hardly imaginable only a few months ago. As time goes by, we are learning more about COVID-19 and it is now becoming clear that people with non-communicable diseases are more likely to have severe symptoms.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has characterised both the COVID-19 outbreak and obesity 'epidemic' as international public health emergencies and it may be one of the most important predictors of severe coronavirus illness, new studies say. According to WHO, in 2016, more than 1.9 billion adults were overweight, of whom 650 million were classed as obese.

Researchers know people with obesity have a higher level of inflammation in their bodies, which can impede the body's immune response and make it more difficult to fight coronavirus.



When the virus comes and infects, then this inflammation seems to become more pronounced. This can contribute to this very strong immune response that is seen in COVID-19. Serious outcomes for COVID-19 can now be added to the long list of other diseases and complications including cardiovascular disease and asthma that are a consequence of obesity.

Patients with obesity often have respiratory dysfunction, obesity is also associated with an increased risk of diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular and kidney diseases and

comorbidities that are considered to result in increased vulnerability to pneumonia-associated organ failures. Measurement of anthropometric characteristics and metabolic parameters is crucial to better estimate the risk of complications in patients with COVID-19.

Scientists have discovered that an enzyme called angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2), present in cells, is the main way for the virus to enter the body. Higher levels of this molecule are thought to be found in adipose tissue or fatty tissue, which people who are

obese have more of - under the skin and around their organs. Top of everything else, the ability of the body to fight off the virus - known as the immune response - is not as good in people who are obese. That is due to inflammation driven by immune cells called macrophages which invade our fat tissue. They interfere with how our cells respond to infection. According to scientists, this can lead to a 'cytokine storm' - a potentially life-threatening over-reaction of the body's immune system which causes inflammation and serious harm.

Given our health systems are already stretched with obesity-related illnesses, there is no better time than now, to tell the public that the time to change their diet is now. COVID-19 has really put a highlight on this because it is so sudden and unexpected. But it does shine a light on the importance of obesity prevention at a public health level.

No one is arguing that slim and fit people are safe because obesity is not something that can be changed overnight. It is not a time to panic about your weight, but it could be a good time to concentrate on healthier choices.

These restrictions can be challenging and might lead to reduced physical activity and eating for comfort or to ease boredom, potentially resulting in weight gain. The best way is to eat a healthy, balanced diet and exercise regularly. Otherwise, try to eat slowly and avoid situations where you could be tempted to overeat.

A healthy lifestyle will not only lower your risk of disease but also ensure your immune system is working at its best, which is essential now.

The writer is a nutritionist.  
E-mail: fahmidahashem60@gmail.com

## HAVE A NICE DAY

### COVID-19: the biggest psychological experiment on urban population

DR RUBAIUL MURSHED

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only affected us physically but also mentally, especially the urban population. Although there is a broad consensus among academicians about psychological care following disasters and major incidents, still people are going through countless psychological issues in adjusting to the current lifestyle and fear of the disease.

Since the end of March 2020, an outstanding situation declared by the government created mental health concerns like anxiety, worries and insomnia slowly and silently. Although the World Health Organisation has urged to take necessary precautions to tackle the negative impact of the spread of COVID-19 on psychological health and well-being - it was not easy for the healthcare professionals to concentrate on this pulsating issue as the key focus has mostly been on testing, finding a cure and preventing transmission of COVID-19.

As the disease progressed, concerns regarding health, economy and livelihood increased. Working under such a stressful atmosphere not only creates panic and causes headaches, but can also lead to vertigo, hypertension, weakened immune system, depression and ultimately agitation.

The uncertainty of COVID-19 has caused a lot of insecurity in the lives of the public. This is probably the world's biggest psychological experiment after the 1918 pandemic. Hopefully, more research will be able to help and inform the health professionals and public to provide mental health interventions to those who are in need.

E-mail: rubaiulmurshed@gmail.com

## HEALTH bulletin



### Honey outperforms usual care for upper respiratory tract infections

Honey is better than many common remedies for upper respiratory tract infections, according to a systematic review and meta-analysis in BMJ Evidence Based Medicine.

Researchers examined data from 14 randomised trials comparing honey with placebo or various usual-care remedies in patients with upper respiratory tract infections. Among the findings:

- Two of three studies comparing honey with placebo showed a beneficial effect on combined symptoms.
- Honey was superior to usual care for improving cough severity, cough frequency, and combined symptoms.
- When usual-care remedies were examined separately, honey outperformed diphenhydramine and was similar to dextromethorphan.

The researchers conclude: "When clinicians wish to prescribe for [upper respiratory infections], we would recommend honey as an alternative to antibiotics. Honey is more effective and less harmful than usual care alternatives and avoids causing harm through antimicrobial resistance."

## Physical & psychosocial problems after recovery from COVID-19

K M AMRAN HOSSAIN AND DR MOHAMED SAKEL

Coronavirus infection can damage the entire body and mind, not just the respiratory system. Global research confirms that SARS-CoV-2 can affect the brain, nerves, cardiovascular system, kidneys, and liver, individually or in combination. Any blood vessel may get clogged damaging that organ and can cause stroke, heart attack, lung infarction, kidney failure etc. There is a worry that a long term legacy of COVID-19 will be an upsurge of degenerative conditions like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease. Similar to the Spanish flu pandemic in the 19th century, we may have millions of 'encephalitis lethargica' in the 21st century with profound fatigue stricken population.

The virus is also thought to be responsible for 'cytokine storm' in the brain resulting in encephalitis or paralysis. A study from Italy published last week elicits 35% of the recovered COVID-19 patients suffer from musculoskeletal pain, numbness, physical frailty and functional immobility that may lead towards disability. Moreover, due to infecting both upper and lower respiratory tract, the respiratory fitness is deteriorating and speech, swallowing and vocal cord issues are being prominent. The virus is also affecting the nicotinic lipids in the blood causing stroke or heart attack that also fates towards disability. However, there are secondary reasons too. 5-15% of COVID-19 patients need oxygenation, bed rest, and critical care and prolonged

staying in bed results in physical frailty, movement problems, chronic pain, and difficulties in activities of daily living. Mental health issues are a global concern. Our patients, families, health workers, and mass people are suffering from fear, anxiety, insomnia, and a spectrum of mental health issues.

Post COVID-19 rehabilitation is termed as a package of care that enhances a quicker recovery and early integration of recovered patients to his normal life. Research explores, 30-35% of total COVID-19

the early recovery and complete care of the newly recovered cases of COVID-19.

On an optimistic note, Bangladesh has now an opportunity to integrate a multidisciplinary rehabilitation team in the COVID-19 care facility. Recently, Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) started 'Post COVID-19 rehabilitation services' in Savar and Mirpur, Dhaka centre with the technical guidance from the specialist neuro-rehabilitation



positive cases require rehabilitation services after being negative in real-time PCR tests. The Stanford Hall Consensus published in the British Journal of Medicine explains the service is provided by the teamwork of physicians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, psychologists, and nurses. Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) describes, the team interacts and plays a comprehensive role for

team from the East Kent University National Health Service (NHS) Foundation Trust (FT) Hospitals of the United Kingdom.

K M Amran Hossain is a Faculty and Researcher at the Bangladesh Health Professions Institute, Bangladesh.

Dr Mohamed Sakel is a Consultant Neuro-Rehabilitation Physician and Director at the East Kent University NHS FT Hospitals, United Kingdom.



### 2 in 5 schools lack basic handwashing facilities prior to COVID-19 pandemic

As schools worldwide struggle with reopening, the latest data from the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) reveal that 43% of schools around the world lacked access to basic handwashing with soap and water in 2019 - a key condition for schools to be able to operate safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the report, around 818 million children lack basic handwashing facilities at their schools, which puts them at increased risk of COVID-19 and other transmissible diseases. In the least developed countries, 7 out of 10 schools lack basic handwashing facilities and half of the schools lack basic sanitation and water services.

The report stresses that governments seeking to control the spread of COVID-19 must balance the need for implementation of public health measures versus the associated social and economic impacts of lockdown measures. Evidence of the negative impacts of prolonged school closures on children's safety, wellbeing and learning are well-documented, the report says.

Other key findings include:

- In the 60 countries at highest risk of health and humanitarian crises due to COVID-19, 3 in 4 children lacked basic handwashing service at their school at the start of the outbreak; half of all children lacked basic water service; and more than half lacked basic sanitation service.
- 1 in 3 schools worldwide had either limited drinking water service or no drinking water service at all.
- 698 million children lacked basic sanitation services at their schools.

  /StarHealthBD



## Rumors and Misconceptions Unveiled

### Can COVID - 19 be transmitted in areas with hot and humid climates?

- The COVID- 19 virus can be transmitted in any climate, including areas with hot and humid weather.

The best and most effective way to protect yourself against COVID-19 is by maintaining physical distance of at least 1 metre from others and frequently cleaning your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or washing them with soap and water.

By doing this you eliminate viruses that may be on your hands and avoid infection that could occur by then touching your eyes, mouth and nose.

### Can cold weather kill the new corona virus?

- There is no reason to believe that cold weather can kill the new corona virus or other diseases.

The normal human body temperature remains around 36.5 to 37 °C, regardless of the external temperature or weather.

Public awareness by:



In Search of Excellence

#Coronavirus #COVID19



## Complicity of certain law enforcement units in extrajudicial killings

*Why are these units so trigger-happy?*

THE murder of Major (retired) Sinha has brought to the fore the disturbingly high number of deaths due to “gunfights”, “shootouts”, and “crossfires” at the hands of the police in Teknaf upazila over the last two years. However, an investigation by the Daily Star has revealed that this is not the only law enforcement unit in the country that has an alarming record of extrajudicial deaths; nor is it just the police who are implicated in “gunfights”, “shootouts” or “crossfires.” Based on analysis of data over the last two years—since the “war on drugs” was initiated in May 2018—the investigation found that an overwhelming majority of extrajudicial deaths happen at the hands of three agencies: the police, Rapid Action Battalion, and Border Guard Bangladesh. Moreover, some units of these agencies were found to be particularly “trigger-happy,” recording a disproportionate number of deaths compared to their counterpart units.

For instance, of the 68 deaths due to so-called gunfights in Chattogram, Feni, Rangamati and Khagrachhari districts, 31 were by one unit alone, Rab-7, and most of the deaths took place in Banshkhal and Sitakunda. In Dhaka and surrounding areas, Rab-1 was responsible for 17 deaths due to “shootouts” in this two-year period, while Rab-2 was responsible for 18. The investigation also analysed the rhetoric or defence put forward by each unit following these deaths, and found that they used one particular narrative for almost all the cases under its jurisdiction and provided no specific details of the incidents or evidence of law enforcement officials being injured to journalists.

Despite repeated demands from different quarters nationally and internationally to end the impunity for extrajudicial deaths, including from the United Nations, the government has been consistent in its refusal to acknowledge the complicity of certain members of its law enforcement units in such deaths and take action against them. Our investigation clearly highlights how some units have been allowed to take the law into their own hands for far too long, and with complete impunity—in strict violation of the constitution. The stories offered by law enforcement as defence for these deaths are filled with so many holes and contradictions that our home ministry can no longer remain oblivious if it is to convince us of its commitment to upholding the rule of law, sanctity of the Bangladesh Constitution and basic principles of human rights. The ministry must initiate an in-depth and neutral investigation into each case of death at the hands of these “trigger-happy” units and take proper action to bring about systematic change in the way law enforcement approaches extrajudicial killings.

## Newspaper industry requires urgent attention

*Without govt intervention, newspapers may not survive the pandemic*

THE ongoing coronavirus pandemic has led to a global economic slowdown that has affected multiple industries and led to mass unemployment and retrenchments across the world. In Bangladesh, at the beginning of the “general holiday” aimed at tackling the spread of coronavirus in the country, the government also announced measures to support industries that were facing great risks due to the pandemic-induced economic conditions. However, the newspaper industry, despite being severely impacted by the crisis and on the verge of collapse, has received very little attention from the authorities.

We fully support the recently released statement from the Newspaper Owners’ Association of Bangladesh (Noab), which urged the government to stand beside the newspaper industry during these trying times. Many newspapers across the country have been forced to discontinue print publishing and move online—even after employing multiple cost-cutting techniques, most newspapers are struggling to earn revenue and maintain regular payment of their employees, and some have had to make the difficult decision of reducing their workforce in the midst of a pandemic. Noab has held multiple meetings with different government ministries to represent the demands of newspaper owners, editors, journalists, agents and hawkers and ask for support; nevertheless, very few of their recommendations have been taken into account while preparing budget allocations and formulating policies during this crisis period.

During the pandemic, even when the economy came close to a standstill, journalists continued to do their jobs—going to great lengths and often putting themselves at risk to report from the field and provide the latest updates. News media has played an essential role in keeping the nation informed during these times of national emergency, but without government support, they will not be able to continue to provide these crucial services.

We urge the authorities to pay heed to the demands put forward by Noab, especially with regard to the reduction of taxes—as a service industry, newspapers are void of any special benefits and have to pay corporate tax of 35 percent, whereas despite being a for-profit sector, the RMG industry’s corporate tax stands at 10 to 12 percent. The Noab demands of reducing corporate tax to 10 percent, omitting the 15 percent VAT on the import of newsprint and reducing the Tax at Source on advertising revenue and advance tax on raw materials demand careful consideration. Almost every sector has been given incentives and concessions by the government to help them over during this period. The situation of newspapers and mass media is dire enough to warrant similar levels of support. Without government interventions, the industry may not survive the pandemic.

# Poverty alleviation projects require stronger monitoring



NAWSHAD AHMED

GOVERNMENT projects targeting the poor, like any other projects, if not well planned and properly implemented, will not yield their desired outcomes. On July 28, the government slashed the allocation of two projects focusing on poverty reduction: “Income Support Programme for the Poorest Project” and “Amar Bari Amar Khamar Project”. The objectives of the first project was to benefit six lakh poorest pregnant women and lactating mothers and 27 lakh poor people across 43 Upazilas in four of the poorest districts which are Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari. The second project had a nation-wide coverage and was targeted to benefit 54.6 lakh poor people through agriculture-based income generation activities.

In case of both these projects, there have been some implementation issues that prompted the reduction of funding which will ultimately affect poverty alleviation efforts for the poor and vulnerable people in the country. The various weaknesses in project implementation and management in general such as frequent amendments, cost escalation, delays, time extensions, etc. the Planning Ministry seriously regretted during a high level meeting attended by all secretaries from all the

ministries and divisions, on August 13.

The state of poverty has deteriorated during the last four months due to the widespread economic woes resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic—after significant gains in poverty reduction were made over the last three decades. As per the Planning Commission, the percentage of the ultra-poor in total population has gone up from 10.5 percent to 20.5 percent as of June, 2020. In this situation, the

poor, alternatively called social safety net schemes, are funded through the revenue budget.

In Bangladesh, there is no central monitoring system for social safety net projects/programmes. The progress of implementation are monitored by the respective projects/programmes themselves. However, the monitoring arrangements and practices are not well established in these programmes.

A technical assistance project is currently being implemented by the government to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation capacity of the social security sector in the country.

Monitoring is an ongoing process that collects routine information to find out whether a project is making progress as per its planned objectives. Proper monitoring should continuously collect critical information, give status of project implementation, assess benefits derived by the target population, and measure the knowledge and skills acquired by the target people with project support.

Currently, monitoring of social safety net projects and programmes in Bangladesh is limited to tracking of activities implemented. Primarily, it covers progress achieved in terms of cash disbursement, food distribution, number of beneficiaries enrolled, training/meetings conducted, and awareness promotion materials produced. No programmes and projects have adequate tools to conduct in-depth monitoring. The monitoring process is not systematically used to assess the actual changes in status of the target families, identify weaknesses and undertake improvements in project implementation. There is no system to track desired results from these projects/programmes and find out whether the ultimate objectives of the interventions which are: improving the overall well-being of the target population, reduction of poverty, employment generation, technical capacity improvements, etc., have been achieved or not.

Most of the social safety net programmes do not have detailed logical framework and thus it is difficult to comprehend what specific results they are trying to achieve. These do not have adequate measurement standards and guidelines, i.e., performance indicators, data collection and use norms, baselines, quality control and reporting procedures.

For effective implementation, there is a need to monitor the programmes more systematically. Routine monitoring and data collection is a necessity in social security related projects and programmes since these are funded out of the revenue budget of the government and monitoring is weaker compared to the development projects and programmes. Systematic and routine monitoring are essential to assess the intervention quality, processes and measurement of performance of inputs, outputs and outcomes. In the absence of strong monitoring system, there will be some shocks, as in the case of the two poverty reduction projects, “Income Support Programme for the Poorest Project” and “Amar Bari Amar Khamar Project”, whose funding were cancelled.

Dr Nawshad Ahmed is an economist and urban planner.



The state of poverty has deteriorated during the last four months due to the widespread economic woes resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

PHOTO: STAR

*In general, the social safety net programmes and projects have weak monitoring capacity. The National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) adopted in 2015 has recognised the weakness in their monitoring capacity and recommended to build a strong results-based monitoring and evaluation system for the social safety net schemes.*

government should make best possible efforts at implementation and monitoring of projects so that their impact on poverty reduction is truly felt.

Since a large-scale out migration of population from the cities to the rural areas has taken place during the last four months due to loss of employment and income, for the first time in decades, it is plausible that a significant pressure on poor families are being generated by the in-comers due to sharing of food with their family members. This is bringing down average food consumption which is affecting nutrition levels. Those who used to work in urban areas and sent money to their families living in the villages, have themselves become burdens upon their own families. This phenomena is forcing millions of families to slip back into the poverty bracket.

It is important to note that the two above projects whose budget has been curtailed, are funded from the government’s revenue budget. In fact, most of the projects/programmes for the

The Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) under the Ministry of Planning conducts monitoring activities of the development projects as per its mandate. In 1984, when the IMED was established from its parent organisation, Project Monitoring Division, established in 1977, it has been monitoring several hundred projects included in the Annual Development Programme every year.

However, IMED is not responsible for monitoring projects/programmes funded through the revenue budget of the government. Most of the social safety net programmes are funded from revenue budget and IMED is not monitoring them.

In general, the social safety net programmes and projects have weak monitoring capacity. The National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) adopted in 2015 has recognised the weakness in their monitoring capacity and recommended to build a strong results-based monitoring and evaluation system for the social safety

# Regional economic programme vital for Afghan Peace

GUL MAQSOOD SABIT

ACHIEVING peace in Afghanistan is a strenuous and complex task due to the overlapping interests of many that have turned the country to the forefront for geopolitical rivalries.

The consensus of regional countries involved both directly and indirectly in the conflict is essential to achieving enduring peace. Anything less will only transfer the conflict to different parties resulting in the continuation of the war. While addressing the various conflicting views may be difficult if not impossible, the economic impact of Covid-19 has created a common ground for regional players to work together for direly needed economic recovery and growth. It may be time to transform the economic pressure into an opportunity for economic cooperation and regional integration that can have a boosting effect on the Afghan peace process.

The sudden spread of Covid-19 caught policymakers off-guard, making it difficult for some central and south Asian countries to develop a well-thought strategy for combating the backbreaking economic impact of the virus. These countries who were already experiencing economic and financial challenges further slipped to the verge of deep recessions. Pakistan’s rising public debt of 87.5 percent of GDP, inflation of 11.8 percent, a contracting economy with a projected growth of only 2 percent in 2021, a growing population whose 24.3 percent live under the poverty line and several other worsening economic indicators, reported by the World Bank, signifies the need for urgent action. Similarly, Iran who has been hit hard both by Covid-19 and US economic sanctions and India’s slowing economic growth and increasing demand for energy necessitates the need for growth-oriented policies and strategies. Energy-rich central Asian countries, whose economies have not grown much since their independence from the Soviet Union, are struggling to liberalise their commodity-based economies, develop soft infrastructure, connect, and begin expanding their economies.

It is beyond doubt that economic integration and enhanced connectivity of south and central Asia can result in propitious economic conditions and favourable opportunities for all countries of the region. Enhanced regional connectivity that has been weak or non-existent due to the long war in Afghanistan is essential for realising potential economic benefits. The current situation may be an opportunity to focus on connectivity and, thus, secure cooperation in peace effort through an

economic programme, supported by multilateral development agencies with investment contributions from the countries involved, that includes energy, transportation, and trade projects will result in regional integration, enhanced trade, and investment opportunities. A programme that includes transnational projects similar to CASA 100 that transfers energy from central Asia to Pakistan and India through Afghanistan will deflect the focus of the region from conflict to collaboration. Pressured by



A man waves an Afghan national flag during Independence Day celebrations in Kabul, Afghanistan on August 19, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

economic programme. The programme could connect Pakistan, India, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan through large transnational projects. Afghanistan, due to its geographical location, can play a key role in such connectivity by providing safe routes for trade and other economic exchanges. This will induce cooperation in peace efforts in Afghanistan as the success of the programme will depend on stability there.

As Afghan peace effort progresses, a concurrent multinational regional

deteriorating economies and demand for action by its citizens, such a programme will compel regional players to cooperate who, otherwise, may oppose each other in Afghan matters. The programme could provide a framework for economic connectivity, fostering cross-nation cooperation that will not only have a positive impact on the peace process in Afghanistan but could be instrumental in sustaining it.

Besides, sustaining endured peace inside Afghanistan is not possible if the population, including Taliban fighters,

are not provided with a livelihood alternative. Taliban gained strength over the years, not because of their religious views but due to the availability of a large destitute and deprived pool of rural population, who did not benefit from the billions of dollars the world poured into the country. Living in meagre and lawless conditions with no alternatives to livelihood, many joined fighting groups to simply survive. According to the World Bank’s new projections, over 71 percent of Afghans will fall below the poverty line this year. Access to a proper justice system, schooling, and effective governance is either very limited or does not exist, creating a perfect recruiting pool of people for terrorist and government-opposed groups. US-Taliban peace agreement and a possible Afghan government and Taliban peace deal will only translate into long-term stability and sustained peace if Taliban fighters and the poverty-stricken population are provided with economic opportunities enabling them to earn a livelihood for their families. The regional economic programme could provide livelihood opportunities for Afghans once multinational projects are implemented.

The peace agreement between the Taliban, the US, and the Afghan government will not lead to stability in Afghanistan unless all regional countries and groups reach an understanding. The worsening economic conditions of the region due to Covid-19 and the growing need for recovery and economic growth may be an opportunity to attain consensus by converging the regional countries into an economic programme. A conducive multinational regional economic programme that focuses on economic integration and development, supported by multilateral development agencies will deviate attention from war to economic development in the region, having a fortifying effect on sustained peace in Afghanistan.

Gul Maqsood Sabit teaches business at Ohlone College of Fremont, California, USA. Formerly he was Deputy Minister of Finance for the Afghanistan government and President and CEO of Pashtany Bank, a state-owned bank in Afghanistan. Email: gsabit@gmail.com



# New credit guarantee scheme approved by Bangladesh Bank

*Necessary, but not sufficient*

TASNEEM RAIHAN

In a bid to support the cottage, micro, and small enterprises (CMEs) mired in financial difficulty caused by Covid-19, Bangladesh Bank approved a credit guarantee scheme (CGS) worth Tk 20,000 crore on July 23, 2020. Subsequently, the CGS Unit of BB issued a circular on July 27 defining the scope and detailing other aspects of the scheme such as, the eligibility criteria for scheduled banks and financial institutions (FIs) as well as for enterprises, application procedure, fee structure, responsibilities of the scheduled banks and FIs, claim settlement, etc. Following the implementation of the scheme, CMEs which fail to meet the collateral requirements of the banks or other FIs, can be provided with the support from the CGS. Although late, it has responded to the long-standing market demand for such a scheme providing third-party credit risk mitigation to CME lending institutions.

The timing of the CGS introduction marginally follows those introduced in Kenya and Colombia. At a time when credit risk is heightened and lenders have become more risk-averse, especially when it comes to lending to the CMEs, the introduction of CGS holds promises. However, I would like to discuss several factors that the Bangladesh Bank should consider in order to ensure that the CGS achieves its expected goals.

The CGS in Bangladesh, modelled as a Hybrid Portfolio Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme is, in general, a well-designed scheme that ensures all parties have a *skin in the game*. To avail themselves of the CGS facility, first, banks and non-bank financial institutions (NBFI) have to apply for participation in the CGS programme. After signing up for a 5-year long agreement, FIs will have to pay an initial annual fee called guarantee fee of 1 percent of the total value of an individual loan to avail themselves of the guarantee for that loan. This fee will be lower for subsequent years for a guaranteed loan if the FIs can maintain a non-performing loan (NPL) rate of 5 percent or less. If a loan under the CGS goes bad, a participating FI will get 80 percent coverage of a credit given to an individual or a company while the FI will have to bear the risk of 20 percent of the loan amount. While assessing loan applications, FIs are required by the CGS to stick to their internal loan policies. While the newly introduced CGS is predicated on these conditions, there are other nitty-gritties of the scheme that an interested reader can easily look up from BB's SMESPD Circular No 03.

While the design of the CGS is mostly in line with international best practices, there is an opportunity for the CGS to benefit from certain reparameterizations. One of the main eligibility criteria that an FI needs to fulfil to be able to participate in the CGS is a minimum of 3 years of SME lending experience. While the intent is clear from BB—ensure that the guarantee is available to appropriate FIs which know how to deal with SMEs—the policy does not provide a clear guidance as far as the definition of “SME lending experience” is concerned. Will an FI that has been lending to SMEs for 5 years, with SME loans constituting only 0.05 percent of their portfolio, be eligible to participate in the scheme? Let's assume that the answer to this question is yes. Next consider another FI which started lending to SMEs only 2 years ago, but already has an SME portfolio that accounts for 10 percent of its total loan portfolio. Why would the second FI not be eligible for the CGS facility despite having a larger share of SME portfolio? These are some practical issues that may arise down the line and BB need to consider them ahead of time to avoid hiccups during full-fledged rollout of the scheme.

Another CGS eligibility criterion for FIs stipulates that only those FIs which maintained an NPL rate of 10 percent or less in the preceding year will qualify for CGS participation. However, this criterion along with the aforementioned one do not apply to state-owned banks. This has an important implication for creating a non-level playing field for banks. In particular, this sends a

wrong signal to the market where commercial banks may see themselves at a disadvantage in comparison with the state-owned banks. To put it differently, a state-owned bank with subpar performance receiving a guarantee fund will cause a crowding-out effect on the funds that could be made available for better performing non-state-owned FIs. Moreover, this differential policy may further exacerbate the *moral hazard* that state-owned banks in developing countries often exhibit. As a minimum, BB may consider imposing conditions on state-owned banks (with NPL rate exceeding 10 percent) to improve

not find it financially attractive to lend to small borrowers if they have to resort to legal recourses when these borrowers default. As a result, the CGS may fail to support the most underserved section of the borrowers. In this regard, BB may follow the CGS policy germane to claim settlement process stipulated by the government of India. According to India's CGS policy, “initiation of legal proceedings as a pre-condition for invoking of guarantees shall be waived for credit facilities having aggregate outstanding up to Rs 50,000, subject to the condition that...a Committee of the Member Lending

the banks which have become more risk-averse in terms of lending to the SMEs during the pandemic. While one-time seminars or workshops are useful to introduce the new facility, FIs should be communicated to at different levels (CEO, manager etc.) on a regular basis such that they can retain their trust in the CGS facility. The same is true for CMEs which are the target of the scheme in Bangladesh.

While CGS has the potential to channel funds to the section of the economy which has limited access to finance, it is not a panacea for all CMEs. Reportedly, more than 90 percent of the CMEs in Bangladesh are informal which are not registered with any government authority and do not maintain any financial records. As a result, these CMEs are highly unlikely to benefit from the newly implemented CGS since commercial banks do not usually lend to informal businesses because of higher perceived risks. In order to ensure that these CMEs can obtain support from CGS soon enough, the government should consider designing, revamping, and aggressively implementing financial literacy programmes around the country which will encourage more CMEs to become formalised.

Finally, the government may consider enacting a Secured Transaction Law as has already been done by several African countries (and also some Latin American and Southeast Asian countries) with Ghana being the pioneer. This will allow the establishment of a collateral registry that will enable FIs to register their claims on assets pledged as collaterals by borrowers. This will abate the FIs' concerns over the same collaterals being pledged by the borrowers at different FIs simultaneously. In addition to immovable properties such as lands or buildings, the law will also allow movable properties such as laptops, accounts receivables, inventories, etc. to be used as collaterals for loans. Such a collateral registry may not only lead to a reduction (probably a small one) in the risk premium charged by the FIs but will also encourage FIs to increase their lending activity in the CSME sphere without financial support from BB. This is an opportune time for the Bangladesh government to facilitate the establishment of the collateral registry which can be another milestone to achieve following the rollout of the CGS.

Dr Tasneem Raihan is a Bangladeshi-American Financial Economist working at the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB), USA, and previously taught at the University of California, Riverside.



*To ensure that lack of interests do not mar the potential of CGS in Bangladesh, a strong awareness raising campaign should be designed and implemented to inform both the supply side and the demand side of the CGS facility.*

their internal control and loan underwriting policies before allowing them to avail themselves of the CGS facility.

Another design related aspect that needs attention is the claim settlement process when a guaranteed loan defaults. The success of any CGS scheme depends critically on the ease of this process. In order to encourage the FIs to use CGS, the claim settlement process should not be complex, time-consuming, or costly. In line with international best practices, the CGS in Bangladesh requires the lending institutions to make all possible efforts to recover a loan as they would have done for non-guaranteed loans. In addition, the lending institutions are required to file cases according to the Money Loan Court Act 2003 (Artho Rin Adalot Ayeen 2003). However, this requirement may act as a deterrent to issuing small loans by FIs.

Commercial banks, in particular, may

Institution (MLI) headed by an Officer not below the rank of General Manager should examine all such accounts and take a decision for not initiating legal action, and for filing claim under the Scheme.” Bangladesh Bank should also consider establishing such a threshold aggregate outstanding for credit facilities.

In order to ensure that lack of interests do not mar the potential of CGS in Bangladesh, a strong awareness raising campaign should be designed and implemented to inform both the supply side and the demand side of the CGS facility. Otherwise, information asymmetry between the lender and prospective borrowers may lead to suboptimal usage of the CGS funds. In this regard, Bangladesh should take lessons from recent international experiences. For example, Colombia launched a partial CGS in April 2020 which still has not been able to sensitise

# What causes the inequality in life-expectancy between men and women?



**W**OMEN are sometimes considered to be the weaker sex because men on average are taller, more muscular, and seemingly stronger than women. Medical

science, however, has a different story to tell us: women are biologically stronger than men. In all countries across the world, women consistently live longer than men on average. This is also true for many other species of mammals.

The natural sex ratio at birth is male-biased, with 105 boys born on average against 100 girls on a global level. As the offspring grow up, males die in greater numbers than females at any given age, leading to a more balanced sex ratio in adult age. The population sex ratio again reverses in old age, with women outnumbering men in most countries. Consequently, around 90 percent of all supercentenarians (110-plus years old) living on the planet today are women.

The ongoing coronavirus pandemic further reminds us of the gender gap in mortality. In countries with available data, Covid-19 has been found to be killing more men than women (*The New York Times*, February 20, 2020). In Bangladesh, the number of deaths from Covid-19 is nearly four times higher among men compared to women. The higher prevalence of fatal diseases in men and the stronger immune system in women are presumably driving the gender differences in Covid-19 mortality globally.

Women usually report more psychological problems while men suffer more from severe and life-threatening illnesses like heart diseases, stroke and cancer. These diseases are the major killers of our time and the main culprits for premature deaths and gender gap in mortality worldwide.

Women face gender discriminations at every sphere of the society, which limit their potential to maximise health and wellbeing. Yet, women paradoxically seem to be the healthier sex. The mechanisms that underlie the gender-health paradox are complex and not fully understood. Several biological and social mechanisms are suggested as explanations.

From a biologic point of view, men

are naturally programmed to die earlier than women at the very moment of conception. Available evidence indicates that the male foetus is biologically weaker and more vulnerable to pregnancy complications than the female foetus. Moreover, the neonatal and infant mortality rates are higher in boys compared to girls. These sex differences at birth provide the foundation for the biologic explanation of male disadvantage in life-expectancy.

The sex hormones are argued to play a crucial role in the female advantage in longevity. The female sex hormone oestrogen is protective of cardiovascular diseases and is partly responsible for lower incidence of such diseases in

excess fat in the hips and thighs. Any excess fat is harmful, but abdominal fat is more dangerous for cardiovascular health.

Genetic disorders are sometimes held responsible for excess mortality in men. A damaged gene on the X chromosome can be naturally compensated by a similar gene in the second X chromosome in women, but not in men due to the lack of double X chromosomes. The higher infections, congenital disorders, and deaths in male babies are possibly an expression of their lack of double X chromosomes.

Furthermore, the mitochondrial DNA, which is known as the powerhouse of cells and is believed to be exclusively inherited from the mother, leads to

months per year (i.e., 6 hours a day) from 1841 to 2000. However, it increased at a much slower rate in men than in women, resulting in a wider gender gap.

Men are more exposed to work-related stress and unhealthy behaviours, e.g., smoking and alcohol abuse, which are responsible for their lower longevity. Furthermore, men are typically disadvantaged by occupational hazards and so-called masculine behaviours that are highly risky. As a result, they die disproportionately in work-related accidents, car crashes, war, and sporting activities.

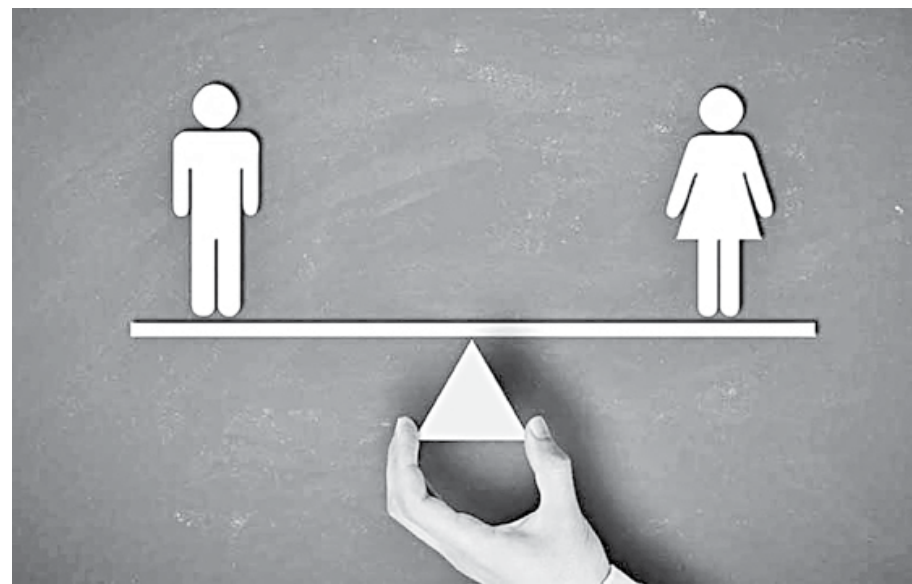
The male sex hormone testosterone is believed to be responsible for predisposing men to risky behaviours. This is why, perhaps, research finds a link between marriage and increased life-expectancy in men but not in women. Marriage protects men from risky social habits whereas women are less prone to risky behaviour regardless of their marital status.

Compared to the past, the gender gap in global life-expectancy has narrowed in recent years. This is unsurprising given that women are increasingly entering the workforce and adopting health-damaging lifestyles like smoking and drinking. An interesting case in point is Sweden where females smoke more than males and the male-female longevity gap is relatively low. Improved medical management of fatal diseases might also have contributed to the reduced gap.

Women are evidently the healthier sex and real champions in the ultimate game of life. Nature has given women a biological advantage over men, perhaps to compensate for the structural disadvantages they experience in the society. Biology is, of course, only a part of the full story since it cannot answer why the female advantage in life expectancy would fluctuate over time.

The biological gap in life-expectancy between women and men is a natural destiny which no society can avoid. However, the social gap in life-expectancy is unjust and unfair. We can rarely alter our biological make-up, but we can certainly promote healthy lifestyles and design a society where both men and women will have a fair chance to maximise their health potentials.

M Zakir Hossain is a Managing Editor at the European Journal of Public Health, Oxford University Press, UK and a PhD fellow at Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden.



women until menopause. By contrast, the androgen hormone, which is higher in men, is associated with higher risk of cardiovascular diseases.

The stronger female immune system is another factor that could contribute to the longevity gap. Female bodies are known to produce larger amounts of antibodies compared to males. This offers females an increased capacity to fight off respiratory, bacterial, and viral infections including the deadly Covid-19.

Moreover, female bodies carry higher amounts of the beneficial cholesterol (HDL) which protects against heart diseases. Men are disadvantaged even in the distribution of fat because they tend to accumulate excess fat around the stomach while women tend to carry

male-specific harmful mutations in the mitochondria. The mitochondrial dysfunction is associated with ageing and chronic diseases.

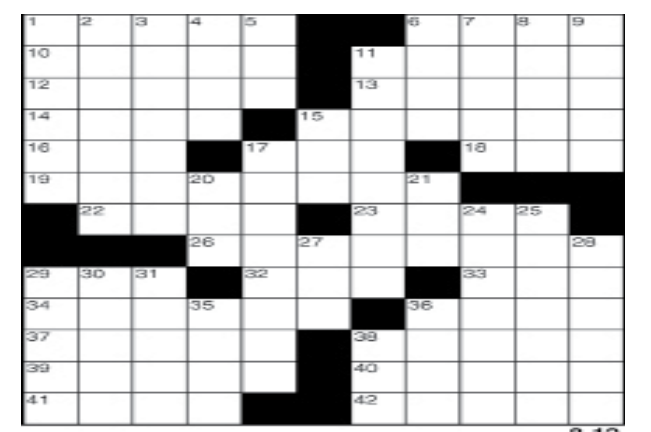
If biology were the sole cause behind the gender gap in life-expectancy, one could expect the gap to be relatively constant over time and across societies. However, the gender gap in life-expectancy considerably varies by time and contexts, suggesting that social forces are in operation to drive the trends. For instance, a Bangladeshi boy born today is expected to live 3.8 years shorter than a girl while the corresponding male-female gap is 10.5 years in Russia.

Thanks to medical advances and improved standard of living, global life-expectancy linearly went up by three

## CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- |                                      |                              |                             |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                        | 32 Retina setting            | 9 Despises                  |
| 1 Big hit                            | 33 Old hand                  | 11 Fullerton                |
| 6 Poland's Walesa                    | 34 Crafty                    | 15 Queue                    |
| 10 Soup server                       | 36 Garden sections           | 15 Squeezing snake          |
| 11 Hooded snake                      | 37 "Semper Fiedlis" composer | 17 It helps pay for schools |
| 12 Mayflower name                    | 38 Worth                     | 20 Pop's daughter           |
| 13 Concerning                        | 39 Book section              | 21 Lamb's mother            |
| 14 Cooking fat                       | 40 Singly                    | 24 Napoleon, for one        |
| 15 Hair color that can be "platinum" | 41 Mysterious loch           | 25 Fish in a can            |
| 16 Mine yield                        | 42 Less common               | 27 Pro vote                 |
| 17 Distress signal                   | <b>DOWN</b>                  | 28 Wall art                 |
| 18 "Sure thing!"                     | 1 Ski event                  | 29 Washroom                 |
| 19 Say wrongly                       | 2 Quinine's target           | sight                       |
| 22 China setting                     | 3 Speech                     | 30 In agreement             |
| 23 Really impresses                  | 4 Iditarod item              | 31 Fancy buttons            |
| 26 Page in a U.S. atlas              | 5 Rooster's mate             | 35 Calls on                 |
| 29 Some univ. degrees                | 6 Timber wolf                | 36 Jazz banjoist            |
|                                      | 7 Heavy wood                 | Flack                       |
|                                      | 8 Unrefined                  | 38 Spoil                    |

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO [dsopinion@gmail.com](mailto:dsopinion@gmail.com).



## YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

M O R A L L O G I N  
 A L I C E O H A R E  
 N I C E A N D S L O W  
 E V E D I G A N Y  
 S E R V I C E H O E  
 I N K T A R A  
 S P A N S C I D E R  
 L A T E S H E  
 A L L S E E S R E D  
 S E A C A D O L E  
 H A R D A N D F A S T  
 E L G A R A R N I E  
 S E E M S R I S E R

## Bangabandhu

FROM PAGE 12  
until all UN resolutions on the Bangladesh-Pakistan War were implemented.  
**BAR ON TRANSFER OF PROPERTY LIKELY**  
The government is contemplating imposition of restrictions on the transfer of properties through sale, exchange or gift up to December, 1973, as it has come to the notice of the government that "persons inimical to Bangladesh have been disposing of their immovable properties and other assets in this country and transferring the sale proceeds elsewhere through invisible and illegal means."  
**TK 6 CR PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CTG PORT**  
Chittagong Port Authority has drawn up an ambitious development and reconstruction programme for the year 1972-73. An amount of more than taka six crore will be spent for the development and reconstruction of the port.  
SOURCES: August 24, 1972, issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla, and Dainik Ittefaq.

## Gandhi's glasses

FROM PAGE 12  
The non-violent protestor gave the glasses to the vendor's uncle while he was working for British Petroleum in South Africa during the 1920s or 30s, said the auction house.  
The sale price smashed the original estimate of around £15,000.  
Auctioneer Andrew Stowe told Sky News earlier this month that the vendor had told him: "If they're no good, just throw them away."  
When he suggested they might be worth £15,000, "I think he nearly fell off his chair."

## Rab takes

FROM PAGE 12  
said Jail Super Mozammel Hossain.  
First, they were taken to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital for medical check-up and later taken to Rab-15 office, said Rab officials.  
Rab arrested the three APBn members on August 17.  
Police superintendent Mohammad Hedayetul Islam, commander of APBn-16 in Cox's Bazar, said according to the service rule the three APBn members were suspended on August 18.

## Libya rivals take steps to end hostilities

REUTERS, Tripoli  
Libya's internationally recognised government in Tripoli announced a ceasefire on Friday and the leader of a rival parliament in eastern Libya also appealed for a halt to hostilities.  
The statements offered hope for a deescalation of a regionalised conflict that has wracked the country since a 2011 uprising, displacing hundreds of thousands, slashing oil production and opening space for migrant smugglers and militants.  
However, previous efforts to secure lasting truces and political settlements have stalled, and political leaders hold limited sway over armed groups in two broad factions that have been split between western and eastern Libya since 2014.  
The Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA) faces east-Libyan based forces led by veteran commander Khalifa Haftar, who launched a 14-month offensive on Tripoli before Turkish military support for the GNA forced him to retreat in June.  
Both sides and their foreign backers have been mobilising around the central city of Sirte, though there has been little fighting in recent weeks.  
Following international calls for a ceasefire and a demilitarised zone around Sirte, on Friday the GNA said its head Fayez al-Sarraj had "issued instructions to all military forces to immediately cease fire and all combat operations in all Libyan territories".  
There was no immediate comment from Haftar or his Libyan National Army (LNA), but the head of an eastern-based parliament aligned with Haftar issued a statement appealing for an end to hostilities across the country.  
The GNA and eastern parliament speaker Aguila Saleh both cited the spread of coronavirus as a reason for backing a ceasefire.  
Saleh is seen to have gained influence compared to Haftar since the LNA's retreat from Tripoli.  
International involvement has often swung the course of Libya's conflict since 2011, and has deepened since the LNA, which is backed by the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Russia, began its offensive on Tripoli in April 2019.  
Regional powers have long voiced support for a political solution while routinely violating an arms embargo on Libya, according to U.N. experts.  
On Friday, many welcomed the ceasefire push, including Egypt, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia. Qatar, which is aligned with Turkey and the GNA, also praised the move.  
The GNA called for the lifting of a seven-month blockade on oil facilities that has all but stopped the country's output, saying revenue should be held in a special account and only be released after a political deal was reached.



Demonstrators gather around a group of Malian soldiers during a protest to support the Malian army and the National Committee for the Salvation of the People (CNSP) at the Independence square in Bamako, on Friday, 3 days after the military overthrow of the President. The United States on Friday suspended military aid to Mali after the coup.

PHOTO: AFP

## Swept under the rug

FROM PAGE 12  
Since 2001, the Chattogram divisional forest office (South) has seen 19 elephant deaths -- the highest toll in the Chattogram Forest Circle -- among which six were electrocuted.  
However, this divisional forest office was only able to file one case so far.  
According to forest department data, 106 elephants died in the Chattogram Forest Circle -- which includes Cox's Bazar, parts of Bandarban, Chattogram city, and Rangamati -- in the last 19 years.  
During this period, forest departments across this region filed only two cases and 74 general diaries in relation to elephant deaths.  
Of these 106 elephants -- 32 died in accidents, 29 of sickness, 22 from old age complications, 15 of electrocution, and eight from gunshots.  
Banshkhali upazila alone saw the deaths of three elephants in two

months this summer.  
Locals in Sadhanpur village alleged that forest officials don't rush to the spot when they are informed of elephant deaths.  
In these three incidents, these officials only went to the spot when the carcass was already decomposing, Anwar Hossein, a resident of the village in Banshkhali upazila, told The Daily Star.  
Kamal Hossen, professor of the Institute of Forestry and Environmental Science at Chattogram University, told The Daily Star the forest department tries to avoid hassle by not going after the elephant killers.  
The data proves it, he said, with the low number of cases filed in relation to these killings -- indicating that the forest department doesn't want the hassle.  
"Until elephant killers are brought under the purview of law and given exemplary punishment, this crime

against wildlife will not decrease and there will be no awareness on the matter," he added.  
Mozammel Hoque Shah Chowdhury, divisional forest officer of Chattogram (South), did not respond to several calls and a text from this correspondent.  
Contacted, Abu Naser Md Nayaz Yeasin, divisional forest officer (wildlife and nature conservation), told The Daily Star that wildlife law is defective in many aspects -- the scope the law permits can't be fully utilised due to the negligence of forest officials.  
"In brief, that's the reason behind the low number of cases against elephant killings in the country," he said.  
As per the law, the concerned forest officials can file a case if any wildlife is killed within their jurisdiction in consultation with the warden of the wildlife divisional forest office.

Mihir Kumar Dey, conservator of forest for the wildlife and nature conservation circle of the forest department, claimed that in every incident where an elephant was killed, they filed cases.  
When asked how many cases had been filed so far, he was unable to give an exact number.  
Abu Naser added that actual natural deaths of wild elephants are also worrying for forest and wildlife conservation officials.  
Elephants falling down hills, those killed in fights with other elephants, and those dying of sickness count as natural deaths.  
"The number of natural deaths is also a great concern for us as the toll from natural death tops the list. It could be attributed to genetic change due to the loss of corridors and habitat. In fact, we need significant research to determine the root causes of this crisis," he said.

## Flood worsens in 6 southern districts

FROM PAGE 12  
flood situations.  
In Bagerhat, more areas have been inundated due to the water levels of adjacent rivers increasing following incessant rains for the last four days and tidal surges.  
Several thoroughfares and markets in the district headquarters have also been flooded. Many houses have been inundated and fish enclosures have been washed away.  
"The tidal water has been increasing with incessant rains. Over 100 fish enclosures, including ours, have been submerged," said Abdul Halim, a resident of Uttar Fulhata village in Morrelganj upazila.  
"We were cultivating fish in the pond covering around 22 bighas of land. I had to invest Tk 7 lakh for this purpose. But all the fish have gone

away as our pond has overflowed due to the flood," said Kaikobad Mridha, a resident of Ghashiakhali village, under the same upazila.  
Another flood victim Rabiul Sheikh, a resident of Chitalmari upazila, said many vegetable gardens have been damaged due to water-logging.  
Meanwhile, several thousand fishermen have been stranded in the Sundarbans due to rough weather.  
Contacted, Joyntal Abedin, assistant forest conservator of the Sharankhola Range in the East Sundarbans Division, said fishermen usually take shelter in forest canals when there is a storm at sea, and the same has happened this time. If any fisherman faces problems at sea, the forest department tries to rescue them.  
Local agriculture and fisheries officials could not tell the exact the

amount of damage and said it would take more time to estimate it.  
In Barishal division, water levels of most of the rivers, including Meghna, Tetulia, Bishkhali, Kocha, Bolehswar, Payra and Kirtankhola, have risen.  
The Meghna was flowing 74cm above danger level at Daulatkhan point of Bhola, Tetulia was flowing 40cm above danger level at Bhola Kheya Ghat point and Kirtankhola river was flowing above eight cm above danger level at Barishal town, said Water Development Board officials.  
Flood-affected people are enduring immense sufferings amid a crisis of food and shortage of drinking water.  
Local administrations have already taken necessary measures to protect embankments by dumping GEO bags

in different areas.  
At least 72 shoals have already been submerged by high tides in Bhola.  
"As we are residents of coastal areas, we are familiar with tides and waves. But I have not seen such severe high tides in my entire life," said Abdur Rakib, a resident of Manpura Beribandh area of Bhola.  
"I have a shop at Ulania Bazar in Mehendiganj upazila. It has been inundated by four to five feet of water. Many products of my shop has been damaged," said Saikat, a resident of the same area.  
In Manikganj, the Jamuna is swelling again but was still flowing 28 cm below danger level at Aricha point.  
(Our correspondents from Barishal, Bagerhat and Manikganj contributed to the story.)

## Poor testing, facilities result fewer cases

FROM PAGE 12  
Covid-19 testing in the district is currently in trouble as the Rajshahi testing lab hasn't been accepting samples from Pabna since early August.  
Rajshahi Covid-19 testing facilities have been burdened with samples from nearby smaller districts such as Pabna which have no or limited testing facilities.  
"The Rajshahi lab has stopped taking samples from us so we are having to send samples to government labs in Dhaka from the start of this month," Dr Rahim said.  
In the same period of time, a total of 1,711 and 2,193 Covid-19 patients have been identified in Sirajganj and Kushtia respectively as of August 15 -- both adjoining districts of Pabna -- according to data from their respective civil surgeon's offices.  
In both districts, the government and local health authorities had set up PCR labs in the early weeks of the outbreak -- meaning more suspected patients have come in to be tested at facilities in these districts, sources said.  
"It is true that we get very few patients, but that does not mean the disease has come under control," said Dr Saleh Mohammed, dedicated doctor for Covid-19 patients at the 250-bed Pabna General Hospital which has 100 beds allotted for coronavirus cases.  
Although over 900 patients have been infected in the district so far, only 20 patients have taken treatment at the dedicated Covid-19 hospital in Pabna in the last five months.  
"If we get testing facilities, we will get more patients. Unfortunately, we are depending on others for Covid-19 testing which might be the reason behind the poor numbers."  
Not just testing -- treatment facilities are lacking too. The facility has only been seeing patients presenting mild symptoms because it does not have the capacity to treat those with more severe symptoms, he said.

"Although we are running a 100-bed Covid hospital in Pabna General Hospital, there are no special arrangements for Covid patients. There is no central oxygen supply and no ICU unit has been installed in the last five months, so critical patients do not come to the Pabna Covid hospital," said Dr Saleh.  
Asked about poor treatment facilities in Pabna, the civil surgeon said the district is in a much better position than other districts pointing to the low number of cases and patients being treated in hospitals.  
"The situation is under control," said Pabna Civil Surgeon Dr Mehedi Iqbal.  
He also said though three PCR machines have been allotted for Pabna -- one from the health ministry and two from the science and technology ministry through the Rooppur nuclear power plant project -- the district is yet to receive a single one though his office has repeatedly submitted official letters to the authorities concerned.  
"A floor of the Pabna Medical College Hospital has been selected for setting up PCR machines. I have sent letters to the health ministry and Rooppur nuclear plant authorities to set up the PCR machines but neither of these authorities have taken steps in this regard till now," said the civil surgeon.  
He said that he is unable to say the reason for the delay as it is not at his end and he is in communication with the respective ministries.  
However, an official of the Rooppur nuclear power plant, seeking anonymity, said that the science and technology ministry is ready to send the two PCR machines but the local health authorities are stalling after receiving the high operating cost numbers and manpower requirements.  
So, administrative negligence means PCR labs are yet to be set up in Pabna five months into the outbreak although adjoining districts such as Kushtia and Sirajganj have received machines and set up labs by April.

## Weeks, months

FROM PAGE 12  
count of the votes the day after the November 3 election.  
While meddling by Russia, China, Iran and others in the run-up to the poll is a concern, "I'm worried about Election Day on," said Bill Evanina, director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center.  
He said external actors could use hacks like ransomware and other cyberattacks against the infrastructure for delivering, counting and transmitting the votes.  
"We need to prepare as a nation that the election will not be decided on November 3," he said.  
"I'm worried about ransomware attacks. I'm worried about cyberattacks. I'm worried about the inability of people to vote because of cyber penetrations and ransomware."  
"So for me I worry about not up to the election, from the influence perspective, I'm worried about the interference perspective come November 3, 4 and all the way through November," he said.


## Suspend postal

FROM PAGE 12  
day after he reportedly received his test reports from the IEDCR.  
According to the legal notice, Sudhangshu went to the Gono Bhaban for the inauguration of a special commemorative stamp and data card on August 14 marking the 45th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. During the event, he stood very close to the PM, it said.  
Based on media reports, it also said the IEDCR took samples from the DG on August 12 and handed the report stating he tested positive the next day.  
The lawyers also said what the DG did was a crime as per Section 26 of the Communicable Diseases (Prevention, Control, and Eradication) Act 2018. They also said concealing such information was a punishable offence under the law.  
"Sudhangshu concealed that information, went to the PMO and stood very close to the prime minister. It is not only illegal but it also posed a serious risk to the personal safety and health of the PM," they said in the notice.  
The two lawyers sent the notice through an email to the principal secretary to the Prime Minister's Office, secretaries to the ministries of home, public administration, and health, the director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), and the director of the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).  
They also urged them to conduct an inquiry into the incident and take necessary steps in 48 hours.  
Besides, the two demanded launching an inquiry into whether there was any loophole in ensuring the PM's security.

Talking to The Daily Star later in the day, Pallob said they would move a writ petition before the High Court seeking necessary directives if the respondents failed to act.  
Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not reach the DG for comments as his cell phone was found switched off.

## SI held

FROM PAGE 12  
2, said police.  
His brother Khorshed Alam filed a case accusing SI Ratan and 16 others with Rajarhat Police Station, police said.  
OC Raju said SI Ratan Mostaq was sent to Kurigram jail after his arrest.  
Police are conducting drives to arrest the other accused, he said.



**বাংলাদেশ নির্বাচন কমিশন**  
সিনিয়র জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসারের কার্যালয়  
পাবনা  
[www.ecs.gov.bd](http://www.ecs.gov.bd)  
নং-১৭.০৪.৭৬০০.০০০.৬৪.০২৬.১০৩-২৩৩  
তারিখঃ ২৯ শ্রাবণ ১৪২৭  
১৩ আশ্বিন ২০২০

### পুরাতন গাড়ি বিক্রয়ের নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সিনিয়র জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসারের কার্যালয়, পাবনাতে অকস্মেৎ ঘোড়ি ০১ (একটি) গাড়ি (যা বর্তমানে সিনিয়র জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসারের কার্যালয়, পাবনাতে সংরক্ষিত আছে) নিলামে বিক্রয়ের দক্ষা ইচ্ছুক ক্রেতাদের নিম্নে দ্রষ্টব্য নথি প্রস্তুত করা যাচ্ছে। উল্লেখ্য, দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্বে সিনিয়র জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসারের কার্যালয়, পাবনাতে সংরক্ষিত গাড়িটি প্রয়োজনে পরিদর্শন করতে পারবেন। দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করতে ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠান গাড়িটির অনুলে অক্ষেরতমোখ্য নম্বর ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা মুদ্রে আগামী ২৫-০৮-২০২০ইং তারিখ সকাল ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হতে ০৭-০৯-২০২০ তারিখ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত এ কার্যালয় হতে ক্রয় করতে পারবেন। দরপত্রের উদ্ধৃত দরের ১৫% টাকা জামানত/আর্গেন্টেমাধি হিসাবে যে কোন তরুণিগি ব্যাংক হতে পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট দরপত্রের সাথে সিনিয়র জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসার, পাবনা কার্যে অবশ্যই জমা দিতে হবে। আগামী ০৮-০৯-২০২০ইং তারিখ সকাল ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত সিনিয়র জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসার, পাবনা এর অফিস কক্ষের (৩য় তলা) সামনে সংরক্ষিত বাসে দরপত্রের কপি দাখিল করা যাবে এবং ঐদিনই দুপুর ৩.০০ ঘটিকার দরপত্রসমূহ খোলা হবে। দরপত্রের সিডিউল বিক্রয়যোগ্য গাড়িটির বিস্তারিত তথ্য ও দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী উল্লেখ করা রয়েছে। বিআরটিএ কর্তৃক বিক্রয়যোগ্য গাড়িটির নির্ধারিত দর নিম্নরূপ:

ক্রমিক নং	যানবাহন নং, সিসি ও তৈরির সন	যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে	বিআরটিএ কর্তৃক ধার্যকৃত মূল্য	যানবাহনের ধরণ
০১.	জেনারেল নম্বর ঢাকা মেট্রো-খ-১১-০৩৬০ সিসি ২০১০, তৈরির সন ১৯৯৫	সিনিয়র জেলা নির্বাচন অফিস, পাবনার গ্যারেজে।	৪,৯২,৯০০/- (চার লক্ষ বিরানব্বই হাজার নয়শত টাকা)	পাজেরো জীপ HARD JEEP MITSUBISHI M. CO. LTD. 2007

আব্দুল সত্যিক শেখ  
সিনিয়র জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসার  
পাবনা  
০৭১১-৬৬০০৯  
জিডি-১০০০  
Email: sdeopabna9@gmail.com



Paris are a great team, they fought their way into the semifinal and then reached the final. We will analyse some things, we know they have quick players. We will look to organise our defence, but we know our biggest strength is putting our opponents under pressure.

HANSI FLICK



We have a final to play in, which we absolutely want to win. Stay calm, stay cool, and try to prepare for it like any other game. Don't do special stuff; the game is special itself, so why should we overload it with videos, with speeches, with motivation?

THOMAS TUCHEL

2019-20 UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals
Bayern Munich	10	10	0	0	42/8
PSG	10	8	1	1	25/5

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals
PSG	8	5	0	3	12/11
Bayern	8	3	0	5	11/12

RECENT MATCHES

Bayern 3-1 PSG (6 Dec, 2017)  
PSG 3-0 Bayern (28 Sep, 2017)

PLAYER TO WATCH

Player	Matches	Goals	Assists	MoTM	Mins/Goal
Lewandowski	9	15	6	4	53
Neymar	6	3	4	2	165

# Ruthless Bavarians face clinical Parisiens

## BOISTEROUS BAYERN

Bayern have reached their 11th final in the competition, with a previous record of winning five and losing five on the biggest stage.

The Bundesliga champions are seeking to become the joint-third most successful club with Liverpool (6 titles) in the European Cup/UEFA Champions League history behind Real Madrid (13 titles) and AC Milan (7).

The Bavarians have the best goals-per-game ratio in a single season in the Champions League history (4.2). With 42 goals in only ten outings, they need three more goals to equal Barcelona's record of 45 strikes (16 matches) set in 1999-2000 season.

Bayern star Robert Lewandowski has scored in all nine matches that he played so far in this year's competition. Bagging 15 goals, the Polish striker is now just two goals away from matching Cristiano Ronaldo's record, which came in 2013-14 season, of most goals in a single Champions League campaign (17).

## PROFICIENT PSG

PSG are the 41st club to appear in the European Cup/UEFA Champions League final, with an opportunity to become the 23rd to win it.

Le Parisiens are the fifth French side to reach the final of Europe's elite club competition. Only one of the previous four has been victorious, as Marseille stunned AC Milan 1-0 in the 1992-93 final.

The Ligue 1 champions have reached only their third major European final, previously achieving the same feat in the 1995-96 and 1996-97 UEFA Cup Winners' Cup. They won the former 1-0 against Rapid Vienna and lost the latter 1-0 to Barcelona.

PSG coach Thomas Tuchel has lost more matches against Bayern Munich than any other team (9) in his managerial career.

AGENCIES, Lisbon



Bayern Munich can complete only the second treble in their proud history by beating Paris Saint Germain in Sunday's Champions League final to underline their status as Germany's super club.

Bayern have cruised to the Lisbon final, scoring 42 goals in their Champions League matches. In all competitions, they are on a 20-game winning streak stretching back to early February.

"We don't have to say anything more about Bayern Munich, because their opponents will no longer be beaten but destroyed," grumbled Borussia Dortmund chief executive Hans-Joachim Watzke in the wake of the 8-2 quarterfinal drubbing of Barcelona.

On the other side, Paris feature the best defence in the Champions League. But their attack, orchestrated by Neymar, is capable of damaging the German champions.

German great Lothar Matthaeus warned Bayern about 'stability' in defence, also encouraging them to dump the high line in defence that leaves spaces in behind for the pacy Kylian Mbappe to exploit, something Lyon did as well.

"In attack, Bayern still have their quality, but at the back they need to be more stable. Maybe against Paris they shouldn't defend so high, because Paris will use the speed of Neymar and Mbappe".

Bayern coach Hansi Flick agreed with that assessment, but was not willing to



change the high pressure system that Bayern have imbued with a ruthless streak.

"We were lucky to hold out in the first phase of the match (vs Lyon)," admitted Flick. "We'll have to see that we organise the defence a little differently. Our great strength is pressuring on the opponent and I think that we will succeed against Paris as well."

Even the great Franz Beckenbauer stepped in to caution the Germans, saying: "I've watched PSG's games, they're one heck of a team. It'll be the most difficult game of this Champions League season. I can't find any weak points in the team and I expect them to vary their playing style. I hope that both teams don't hold back too much,

don't show each other too much respect and play just as refreshingly and with a joie de vivre like they have done up to now. Then we can expect a wonderful final.

"It'll be a match played on equal terms. I'd say it's 50-50. Sometimes you need luck. If Bayern get that, they'll win the game."

Angel di Maria has been inspirational for Le Parisiens and he also sees the match as a finely balanced contest.

"They're tough, they're a really well-organised team, and I think this will be their 11th European Cup final," Di Maria said. "We know they have amazing players, players in incredible form, but we also have good players, our own system, our own way of playing, and I think we have a group that

deserves to win the Champions League." History is on PSG's side. The two sides have faced off on eight occasions, all of them Champions League encounters, and Munich have walked off as losers five times, although they won the last encounter.

The difference-maker for the French side could be Neymar, who scored in both legs against Borussia Dortmund in the last 16 and cried afterwards. He was excellent against Atalanta in the quarterfinals and magnificent against Leipzig in the semifinals, even if he did not score in either game.

PSG will hope the Brazilian -- who has scored 70 times altogether in 84 matches for them -- has been saving his next goal for the final. "I hope that the good lord will help him to score on Sunday and to win," said his compatriot Thiago Silva.

He added: "Speaking of Bayern Munich is easy. All of us who enjoy football see Bayern Munich as a role model in both the European and world stage. A team that plays with a high intensity and has a lot of quality."

"From their keeper, who is among the greatest in the world, to their striker who is the current top scorer in this season's [UEFA] Champions League, and has been putting in great performances. Bayern Munich must be regarded as one of the best teams in the world."

"We must respect their team, and try to play in our style, as we've been doing all season, to play at our highest level. And we're aware of all that comes along with a final, the motivation on the other side."



Inter Milan striker Romelu Lukaku was an unfortunate bystander, deflecting a brilliant overhead effort from Diego Carlos into the back of his own net in the 74th minute of the Europa League final against Sevilla. (R) Sevilla players celebrate with coach Julen Lopetegui after winning a record-extending sixth Europa League title.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



## Six in six for Sevilla

Lopetegui's side beat Conte's Inter 3-2 in rollercoaster final

AFP, Cologne



Julen Lopetegui said he does not look back at what might have been with Spain and Real Madrid after leading Sevilla to a sixth Europa League title thanks to a 3-2 win over Inter Milan in Cologne.

Lopetegui was sacked as Spain boss days before the start of the 2018 World Cup for accepting the role as Madrid coach and then also fired by Real just four months later.

Sevilla have a perfect record in UEFA Cup/UEFA Europa League finals: six games, six wins.

De Jong is the 12th player to score two goals in a one-off UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup final. Nobody has registered a hat-trick.

Lukaku scored for the 11th UEFA Europa League game running, extending his all-time competition record.

Sevilla centre-back Diego Carlos conceded penalties in the quarterfinals, semifinals and final.

Most successful clubs in UEFA Cup (1971/72-2008/09)/Europa League (2009/10-)

- Sevilla (Esp) -- 6 titles
- Inter Milan (Ita) -- 3 titles
- Juventus (Ita) -- 3 titles
- Liverpool (Eng) -- 3 titles
- Atletico Madrid (Esp) -- 3 titles

But in his first season in Seville, the former Madrid and Barcelona goalkeeper has restored his reputation with a fourth-placed finish in La Liga and seeing off European giants Inter, Manchester United and Roma in the latter stages of the Europa League.

"Fortunately I don't look back," said Lopetegui. "I have the luck to be in a club that has given me this chance to be with a real team with everything that word means."

By contrast, Inter coach Antonio Conte suggested his time in Milan might be over after just one season despite finishing second in Serie

A and leading the Italians to a first European final in 10 years.

"It is only right that we analyse the entire season, look at everything in a very calm way and try to plan the future of Inter, whether it's with or without me," said Conte. "This year will always have a place in my heart, it's been such a strange year and exhausting year. It's been a worthwhile and incredible experience."

The outcome could have been very different had match winner Diego Carlos been sent off inside three minutes for hauling down Romelu Lukaku in the area. Carlos was only shown a yellow card before Lukaku slotted home his 34th goal of the season to equal his idol Ronaldo's record in his first season at Inter, which ended in the club's last UEFA Cup win 1997/98.

Luuk De Jong hit form at the right time as he powered home from Jesus Navas's cross and then looped another header into the far corner from Ever Banega's free-kick to turn the game around.

"I dedicate this to the Sevilla fans," said De Jong. "I got the feeling, even in the group stages, how important this cup is for them and we knew if we win this trophy if it also for them."

## My career flashed before my eyes, says Crawley

REUTERS, Southampton



England batsman Zak Crawley had a nagging feeling early in his innings that a hundred was on the cards before he realised his dream of a first Test century with a sparkling unbeaten 171 against Pakistan at the Rose Bowl on Friday.

Crawley's career-best score led England to 332-4 at the close of the opening day of the third and final Test, as he put on an unbeaten 205 for the fifth wicket with Jos Buttler.

The 22-year-old had spoken in the second Test of targeting a maiden five-day hundred, but a lack of concentration saw him dismissed for 53 in England's only innings when the milestone had looked on as the game meandered to a draw.

There were no such lapses on Friday as he looked confident, organised and in

command from the moment he strode out at first wicket down and then, with Buttler, helped England recover from a precarious position at 127-4.

"It's the best feeling I've had on the cricket field by some way," Crawley told reporters at the close. "It's an unbelievable feeling, to see everybody on the balcony, it was almost like my whole career flashed before my eyes in that moment."

Asked about his toughest part of the day, Crawley says it was not getting carried away with the feeling that a hundred was there for the taking very early in his innings.

"I was trying to keep the hundred out of my head when I was on about 25, I just felt in such decent form that I couldn't stop thinking about it."

"When I was on around 91 I was really nervous. Jos didn't think I was, so I must have been hiding it pretty well."



England batsmen Zak Crawley brought up a double century while Jos Buttler also got in on the act with a hundred as the hosts powered to 401 for four on the second day of the third Test at the Ageas Bowl yesterday.

PHOTO: TWITTER

## ELEPHANT POACHING, KILLINGS Swept under the rug

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

To avoid animosity with locals responsible for the deaths of wild elephants in the Chattogram region, forest department officials manipulate autopsy reports by attributing the deaths to natural causes and rarely file cases, thus sparing the killers of a critically endangered species.

On June 28, a baby elephant was found dead within the periphery of a tea garden in Boilchari union of Banskhalhi upazila this year.

The tea garden authorities most likely installed the barbed wire fence to stop elephants entering the garden, according to villagers.

Though accounts of eyewitnesses and forest officers indicate that the elephant died of electrocution -- given the presence of metal wire and an electric pole nearby -- the autopsy report was inconclusive as to the cause of death.

Three elephants died in the last two months at the Kalipur range office of Banskhalhi upazila, which falls under the jurisdiction of Chattogram Divisional Forest Office (South).

They were all Asian elephants, which are classified as "critically endangered" in Bangladesh.

When a livestock official tries to portray the true cause of death in the autopsy, they come under pressure from forest department higher-ups, a livestock official who performs autopsies at the forest office, preferring anonymity, told The Daily Star.

In another autopsy of an elephant that died at Fasiakhali of Lama upazila in Bandarban, it was shown to be a natural death, though an electric metal wire was found close to the spot, according to eyewitnesses.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



A doctor at Labaid Specialized Hospital in the capital set up a glass wall in front of his table to keep both his patients and himself safe from the highly contagious coronavirus. The doctor behind the glass is also using two face masks. The photo was taken Thursday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

MAJ SINHA'S KILLING

## Rab takes 3 APBn men into custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Rab yesterday took three members of Armed Police Battalion (APBn) into custody for interrogation in a case filed over the killing of Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan.

They are Assistant Sub-inspector Md Shahjahan and constables Razib and Md Abdullah. They were the members of APBn-16.

Around 9:30pm of July 31, they were on duty at Shamlapur checkpoint, yards away from the spot where Maj (ret'd) Sinha was killed, said Rab Director (Legal and Media Wing) Lt Col Ashik Billah.

Their involvement was found in primary quizzing and they have been taken to the custody for extensive interrogation, Ashik said.

A Rab team, led by Senior Assistant Superintendent of Police Khairul Islam of Rab, also the investigation officer (IO) of the murder case, received them from Cox's Bazar prison around noon.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## COVID-19 IN PABNA Poor testing, facilities result fewer cases

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPLU, Pabna

Five months after Covid-19 cases first emerged in Pabna, the district health authorities say it is much better placed than other districts in terms of number of cases.

The reality, however, is that extremely limited testing and treatment facilities means low number of Covid-19 cases and patients seeking treatment in hospitals.

Though Pabna was allotted three PCR machines early into the outbreak, according to sources in the district health department and the respective ministries which allotted these, the machines are yet to be set up due to the local health authorities dragging their feet over lack of manpower and high operating costs to start testing.

The first Covid-19 patient was reported in the district on April 16 and since then, a total of 916 Covid-19 cases have been identified as of August 22, according to the Pabna civil surgeon's office.

Nine people have died while 804 of the infected patients have recovered, said Dr Abdur Rahim, Covid-19 control room in-charge of the civil surgeon's office.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

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

### Bangabandhu anxious to come back home

August 23, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

**BANGABANDHU INQUIRES ABOUT FOOD SITUATION**  
Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who is convalescing in Geneva had a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad the night before. He enquired about food and flood situation and the condition of the people in Bangladesh. Bangabandhu was very anxious to come back home early.

It is learnt that in view of the advice of the doctors for undisturbed rest during the period of Bangabandhu's convalescence in Geneva, the proposed conference of Bangladesh ambassadors in West and East European countries may be deferred for the time being.

Bangabandhu receives Dr Victor Umbricht, chief of the UN Relief Operations in Bangladesh, and his predecessors Tony Hagen today.

**4-POWER RESOLUTION URGES BANGLADESH ADMISSION IN UN**

A four-power resolution urged the UN Security Council to admit Bangladesh to the United Nations. The resolution backed by Britain, India, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia countered a Chinese motion yesterday which urged that Bangladesh's application to become the world body's member be shelved

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



## Flood worsens in 6 southern districts

STAR REPORT

The flood situation has worsened in at least six districts of the southern coastal region due to rainfall and high tide.

It may further deteriorate as rainfall is likely to continue.

"There is chance of moderate to heavy rainfall in the south-western and south-central coastal regions of the country in next 24 hours," said a bulletin of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC).

"Rivers in this region may rise rapidly during this time," said the bulletin that was released at 9:00am yesterday.

Around 50 lakhs people of 160 upazilas under 33 districts are still affected by flood, said a report National Disaster Response Coordination Centre (NDRCC).

Our correspondents from different districts reported on their respective

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

## Gandhi's glasses sell for \$340,000



AFP, London

A pair of gold-plated glasses worn by Indian independence hero Mahatma Gandhi has sold in Britain for £260,000 (about 288,000 euros, \$340,000), the auction house said.

"We found them just four weeks ago in our letterbox, left there by a gentleman whose uncle had been given them by Gandhi himself," East Bristol Auctions wrote on Instagram after the sale late Friday.

"An incredible result for an incredible item! Thanks to all those who bid."

Gandhi was known for giving out old or unwanted pairs to those in need or those who had helped him.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## SI held for murder in Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Police yesterday arrested a sub-inspector of police in a case filed over stabbing a man, who died the next day, in Kurigram's Rajarhat upazila on August 1.

Ratan Mostaq, the main accused in the killing, was arrested from Gaibandha police lines, said Raju Sarkar, officer-in-charge of Rajarhat Police Station.

Ratan was serving at Fulchhari Police Station before being closed and suspended, the OC said.

According to police, SI Ratan locked in an altercation with one Akkas Ali, 57, in Umar Majeed village following the Eid prayer.

Later in the evening, Ratan and his family members stabbed Akkas Ali and his niece Sumon Islam.

Locals rescued the two and took them to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where Akkas died on August

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

## Suspend postal DG

Lawyers serve legal notice for him visiting PM whilst infected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Supreme Court lawyers served a legal notice on the authorities concerned of the government yesterday, requesting them to suspend the director general of the postal directorate claiming that the DG met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina despite testing positive for Covid-19.

In the notice, the two lawyers -- Md Humayun Kabir Pallob and Md Kauser -- claimed DG Sudhangshu Shekhar Bhadra met the PM at her official residence the Gono Bhaban on August 14, a

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



A flood victim busy with handiwork on a sari in a makeshift flood shelter in Rupnagar area of Dhamrai on the outskirts of Dhaka. She earns Tk 150 for completing every sari. Several other female flood victims do the same to earn their bread in the area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## 'Weeks, months, maybe never'

Trump warns US vote count may be delayed as he doubles down on vote-by-mail fraud claims

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump warned Friday that the results of the November 3 presidential election could take weeks or months to determine.

Amid concerns that a wave of mail-in ballots could overwhelm the post office and local election bodies, Trump suggested the traditional election-night verdict could be delayed.

"You'll never have an election count on November 3," Trump said in a speech to the Council of National Policy, a conservative activist group.

"You're not going to be able to know the end of this election, in my opinion, for weeks, months, maybe never," he said.

The prospect of a slow count of an expected 50 million votes cast by mail -- one consequence of the coronavirus pandemic -- has raised concerns of political turmoil and mischief-making, and legal challenges that could further delay a result, for the presidential as well as congressional races.

Trump, who polls show is trailing challenger Joe Biden, alleged that Democrats were promoting universal mail-in voting to manipulate the results.

But he suggested a systemic problem as well. "We're not prepared for this, 51 million ballots. It will be a tremendous embarrassment for the country," he said.

"This is a very serious problem for a democracy."

On Wednesday, a top US official for election security said his biggest worry is of outside interference in a likely

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

**PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 23**

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:30	12:45	4:45	6:33	8:00
JAMAT	5:05	1:15	5:00	6:36
			8:30	

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION