



'BARCA'S DNA BEING LEFT BEHIND'
Midfielder Vidal says after recent debates and with Messi's exit looming.
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Your Right to Know

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BANGLADESH UPDATE



2,174
New cases in 24hrs



3,12,996
Total cases



4,281
Deaths

Curbs on public movement go

Govt decision comes amid soaring Covid deaths; buses to operate at full capacity from today

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY and WASIM BIN HABIB

Ignoring the risks of further spread of Covid-19, the government has lifted the restrictions on public movement and activities from today even though the coronavirus pandemic is showing no sign of abating.

The Cabinet Division, however, reminded the authorities yesterday to make sure that people wear face coverings, maintain distances and follow other health safety guidelines when they are outdoors.

In a circular, the cabinet division directed respective ministries, divisions and other authorities to take necessary measures for implementing the safety guidelines regarding public movement and other activities.

The circular follows the expiry of the previous order that slapped several restrictions on public movement, including a complete prohibition on staying outdoors from 10:00pm-5:00am, unless there is an emergency.

The previous order, effected from August 4 ordered closure of all shops, bazaars and malls after 8:00pm and prohibited all types of meetings, rallies and mass gatherings.

But there was no mention of such restrictions in yesterday's circular which said the local government division, information ministry, religious affairs ministry, health service division and district and upazila administrations will hold public awareness campaigns to stem the spread of the lethal virus.

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Without any sort of safety gear, two men work to repair a line from a 48-feet-high electric pole in Banda Road area of Barishal city. Such unsafe and dangerous acts go unabated due to weak enforcement of labour laws in the country. The photo was taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

'MURDERED' GIRL FOUND ALIVE

3 accused appeal for retracting confession

SI suspended

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Three accused, who confessed to raping and killing a class-V female student later found alive, yesterday appealed for withdrawing the confessional statements.

They made the appeal before the court of Narayanganj Judicial Magistrate Kawsar Alam.

In the appeal, the three alleged that they gave the confessional statement after being intimidated by police during remand, their lawyer Rokon Uddin told The Daily Star.

On August 25, the accused filed a bail petition with the court, which fixed yesterday a hearing. They

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PRANAB MUKHERJEE
1935-2020

A champion of our liberation no more

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Former Indian President Pranab Mukherjee, a dear friend of Bangladesh, is no more.

A scholar and a towering statesman loved and respected by everyone irrespective of political affiliation, the first Bengalee Indian president died at the Army Research and Referral Hospital in Delhi Cantonment yesterday. He was 84.

He died at Army's Research and Referral Hospital in Delhi Cantonment after battling various ailments for 20 days. He was admitted on August 10, and had been in coma and ventilator support since.

For Bangladesh he was more than just a statesman. Pranab Mukherjee

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Russia keen to provide vaccine

Says health minister; 33 more die from Covid, 2,174 infected in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Russia is keen to provide Bangladesh the Covid-19 vaccine under the government-to-government arrangement, said Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday.

"Russia wants to know whether Bangladesh is capable of manufacturing the vaccine. They will give approval," he told journalists following a bilateral meeting with South Korean Ambassador Lee Jang-keun.

Ambassador Lee expressed firm solidarity with the government and the people of Bangladesh in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic and his willingness to further strengthen the cooperation, reads an embassy press release.

During the meeting, Lee explained his government's plan to donate Covid-19 test kits, RNA equipment and related materials, and walk-through booths worth 1 million USD in the coming months through the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

ONLINE VERSIONS OF NEWSPAPERS, TV NEWS PORTALS

Separate registration made mandatory

RASHIDUL HASAN

From now on, a newspaper will need registration to run its online version if contents in the portal and the print edition are different.

Licensed television and radio channels will also require the registration to publish their news online.

The cabinet approved the draft National Online Media Policy, 2017 (Amendment 2020) yesterday at a virtual meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair,

bringing some amendments and keeping the provision.

The PM joined the meeting from her Gono Bhaban residence while her cabinet colleagues were connected from the secretariat.

"If contents of the print and online versions of a newspaper are the same, they won't need approval [registration]. If newspapers bring variation [to the contents] in the online version, they will require to get registered," Cabinet Secretary Khandker

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KHALEDA'S SENTENCE

Govt yet to decide on extending suspension

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is yet to make any decision about the application seeking extension of its order that released BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia from jail, Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star yesterday.

"I have heard that

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Devotees gather inside Old Dhaka's Hossaini Dalan to observe holy Ashura, commemorating the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), grandson of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM). Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Dhaka Metropolitan Police had banned all kinds of tazia, mourning and pike processions in the metropolitan areas this year. The photo was taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Kuwait CID summons MP Shahid's brother

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Kuwait's Criminal Investigation Department summoned Kazi Mohammad Badrul Alam alias Liton Chowdhury, younger brother of Lakshimpur-2 lawmaker Kazi Shahid Islam Papul.

The department gave the order after receiving new information that he was an associate of the main defendant Papul, his wife and others in human trafficking operations involving thousands of Bangladeshi workers,

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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Govt sits on UGC proposal for free Net

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government is dilly-dallying over a UGC proposal to introduce free internet packages for university students at a time when many pupils are suffering due to the increasing cost of mobile data packages.

Students who live in villages and who don't have broadband connections are completely depended on the mobile internet to connect the online classes.

The University Grants Commission in late June proposed that the government introduce free internet packages for university students to ease their pursuit of online education.

On June 15, the Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh in a letter to Posts and Telecommunications Minister Mustafa Jabbar demanded special internet packages for private university students at an affordable

price.

UGC acting secretary Ferdous Zaman estimated that about 10 lakh out of 39 lakh tertiary level students are facing difficulties in gaining access to online education due to the expense of internet.

"Students who are living in villages and remote areas are the worst sufferers. We are waiting for the government's decision regarding the free internet packages," he said.

The UGC is preparing a list of public university students who are in need of financial assistance to buy smartphones, Ferdous said, adding that it was being prepared based on the lists forwarded by universities.

Education of university students across the country has been affected due to the pandemic as they cannot attend in-person

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GlaxoSmithKline Bangladesh Ltd.

is now

Unilever

Consumer Care Limited

BNP can't deny Zia's involvement in 1975 carnage plot: PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said BNP couldn't deny the Ziaur Rahman's involvement in the August 15, 1975 carnage as the killers of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman confessed to have full support from Zia for the killing.

"BNP could not refuse that Ziaur Rahman was involved in the assassination of the Father of the Nation as the killers, (removed) Col Faruk and Rashid, in an interview with the BBC told that Zia was with them as he [Zia] instructed them to go ahead and he [Zia] extended all sorts of assistance in carrying out the August 15, 1975 carnage," she said.

The PM, who was speaking as the chief guest in a virtual discussion from Gono Bhaban through a video conference, said that truth can't be suppressed no matter how much BNP shouts defending their party leader.

The Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) organised the discussion marking the National Mourning Day and the 45th martyrdom anniversary

of Bangabandhu at the AL's central office at Bangabandhu Avenue.

Hasina said Zia did everything that required to destroy a nation, adding, "Zia had destroyed the student community as he pushed many meritorious students to different tracks with giving them arms and money. He took the students to a pleasure trip in the ship 'Hilful Fujul' which Bangabandhu brought for conducting Hajj."

Following the footprints of her husband, Khaleda Zia did the same thing in terms of using students for personal gain.

The PM urged BCL leaders and workers to follow the ideals and philosophy of Bangabandhu, saying: "The Father of the Nation never thought of his own personal wellbeing, but rather the welfare of the people and the country."

She asked BCL leaders and activists to read the three books written by Bangabandhu, namely "Amar Dekha Naya Chin" "Asamapta Atmajiboni" and "Karagarer Rojnamcha," saying, "If you want to be leaders, you should read these books to learn about good politics."

Govt sits on UGC proposal

FROM PAGE 1

classes since all the institutions were closed on March 17 to contain the spread of Covid-19 infection.

These institutions will remain closed till October 3.

As the universities are closed for a long time, students are facing immense academic losses. Many are fearing to face session jam if the situation continues for a few more months. The UGC has urged all universities to go for online classes to minimise the loss of the students.

Currently, private universities and most of the public universities are offering online classes.

Most of the major public universities are conducting online classes with only about half of the students as the rest cannot attend classes either due to poor internet coverage in their areas or their lack of access to the digital device.

The speed of mobile internet connection, while moderate in urban areas, is quite poor in most rural locations, where broadband providers have no presence.

Moreover, the additional Value Added Tax (VAT) on internet use has further increased the cost of the internet.

According to telecom insiders, students who used to pay Tk 1,000 for internet will now have to pay Tk 1,300-Tk1,400 for the same usage.

Vice-chancellors of most public universities demanded free internet packages for their students at a

meeting with the University Grants Commission on June 25.

Five days later, the UGC, in a letter to the education ministry, urged the government to introduce free internet packages for university students.

The regulatory body also sought grants or soft loans for students who would need to buy smartphones to get access to online classes, according to UGC Chairman Prof Kazi Shahidullah.

Copies of the letter were sent to the posts and telecommunications division and the ICT division.

On July 6, Education Minister Dipu Moni said, "Many educational institutions are conducting online academic activities due to the pandemic, but it has become difficult for many students to bear the internet expenses."

"Negotiations are on with the mobile operators so that they consider providing free internet services or low-cost internet packages for students," she said, while attending a webinar organised by the ruling Awami League.

Education ministry officials said they were working on the issue.

"We are working on how students can easily get digital device and internet at the lowest price. We hope that we will be able to update the details regarding the matter during the first week of September," Dipu Moni said on Thursday.

Kuwait CID summons

FROM PAGE 1

reported Kuwait Times on Sunday, quoting Arabic newspaper Al-Rai.

CID officials in Bangladesh said they are also looking for Badrul over similar charges.

Papul, who co-owns Marafie Kuwaitia Group with a Kuwaiti citizen, was arrested by Kuwait CID on June 6 and sent to jail after being interrogated by prosecutors.

He is accused of trafficking some 20,000 people, mostly Bangladeshis, in exchange for Tk 7-9 lakh each. Migrants alleged that many of them were not provided with jobs and wages as promised and were instead charged money for work permit renewal.

Papul also faces charges of bribing Kuwaiti officials for contracts for his company, the recruitment of foreign workers and laundering of millions of dollars.

Maj Gen Mazen Al-Jarrah, assistant undersecretary at Kuwait interior ministry, was suspended on June 30 for allegedly accepting bribes and making financial transactions linked to Papul's company.

Meanwhile, two Kuwaiti MPs -- Saadoun Hammad and Salah

Khorsheed -- who were detained and interrogated by prosecutors were released on Saturday on KD 10,000 (Tk 27.7 lakh) bail each, Al-Rai reported.

They were detained on allegations of their involvement with Shahid Islam Papul, but both the MPs denied abusing their power and knowing Papul or having any connections with him.

Bangladesh's CID, also probing human trafficking charges against Papul, has claimed to have gleaned important information from an employee of Job Bank International, a recruiting agency owned by Papul's brother Kazi Badrul Alam.

Golam Mostafa, accountant of the recruiting agency, was arrested on August 20 in a case filed by several trafficking victims with Motijheel Police Station on July 7. Mostafa on August 24 gave a confessional statement to a court.

"As Kazi Badrul's name has already surfaced in a confessional statement, we will bring trafficking charges against him," a CID official told The Daily Star, requesting anonymity.

3 accused appeal for retracting

FROM PAGE 1

appealed to withdraw their statements while the hearing was underway.

The court, however, did not grant them bail and sent them to jail.

Later, lawyer Rokon said they would file another bail petition with the district judges' court on Wednesday.

On August 27, the court asked OC of Narayanganj Sadar Police Station Asaduzzaman and closed sub-inspector Shamim Ala Mamun, who was also investing officer (IO) of the case, to appear before the court and explain the incident by Tuesday.

The class-five girl student went missing on July 4. Her father filed a case with the police station on August 6 over abduction of his daughter.

Later, police arrested three accused -- Md Abdullah, 22, Md Rakib, 19, and Khalilur Rahman, 36.

On August 9, the accused testified under section 164 in separate courts of Narayanganj Senior Judicial Magistrate

and Judicial Magistrate. In their confessional statements, the accused said they had killed the girl after raping her and dumped her body into the Shitalakkhya river, said police.

After their confessional statements, the accused were sent to jail.

On August 24, a police team, however, found the girl alive in Kushiara area of Narayanganj's Bandar upazila, 49 days after she had gone missing.

Later, the girl and her family members said she had no links with the three accused. Rather, she eloped with one of her friends named Iqbal willingly.

Meanwhile, police yesterday produced Iqbal before Narayanganj Judicial Magistrate with a five-day remand prayer. But the court rejected the prayer and sent him to jail.

In another development, SI Shamim was suspended yesterday over the incident, Jayedul Alam, superintendent of police in Narayanganj, told the media at his office last night.



Former president Zillur Rahman hands Bangladesh Liberation War Honour to Pranab Mukherjee at the Bangabhaban on March 4, 2013 in recognition of his contribution to this nation during its birth in 1971. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was present at the event.

FILE PHOTO

A champion of our liberation no more

FROM PAGE 1

was one of the true selfless friends and his role during the Liberation War in 1971 was the biggest statement of someone who always fought for humanity and against oppression.

He was the first foreign national who proposed recognition of the Bangladesh government in exile.

It was on June 15, 1971 during the budget session when he initiated a discussion on the floor of the Rajya Sabha, suggesting that India accord diplomatic recognition to the Government of Bangladesh in exile in Mujibnagar.

It will be probably fitting to reflect on, in his own words, how he rallied behind the oppressed people of Bangladesh in those turbulent days.

"When a member sought my suggestion on how to tackle the problem, I responded by saying: 'I am talking of a political solution which means categorically recognising the sovereign democratic Government of Bangladesh. Political solution means giving material help to the democratic, sovereign Government of Bangladesh...'

I reminded the House of the many instances in world history when intervention on similar grounds had taken place," Pranab Mukherjee wrote in his book "The Dramatic Decade: The Indira Gandhi Years".

This particular statement is in the chapter titled "Muktijuddho: The Making of Bangladesh".

Pranab Mukherjee made a brief visit in March 2013.

Then Bangladesh President Zillur Rahman conferred the Bangladesh Liberation War Honour on Mukherjee at a special ceremony at Bangabhaban on the evening of March 4.

"As I stand here tonight, I am filled with memories of the events of 1971. I was 36 years old and an MP when the people of Bangladesh engaged themselves in their liberation struggle," the former Indian president told BSS at that time.

He also said that he had the privilege to initiate a discussion at Rajya Sabha when he suggested that India should accord recognition to the Bangladesh government in exile.

"Your support towards our Liberation War in 1971 was for the cause of

humanity and justice... your support gave us courage and motivation," President Zillur Rahman said after handing over a crest of the award to his Indian counterpart.

He leaves behind his son Abhijit and daughter Shamistha who is the head of the opposition Congress party's women wing. Pranab's wife for 58 years Suvra Mukherjee, who was born in Bangladesh's Narail and spent her initial years there before shifting to Kolkata, died in 2015.

His Journey in politics

Sitting on the verandah of his home in New Delhi in the early 1970s, a young Indian lawmaker saw horses from the Rashtrapati Bhavan gallop past. He jokingly told his sister that he would like to be a presidential horse in his next life. An indulgent Annapurna Banerjee, older to the lawmaker by a decade, had predicted that he would be the president one day.

When he did occupy India's highest constitutional office as the 13th president of India on July 25, 2012, becoming the first Bangalee to do so, he could not but recall during a TV interview what Annapurna had told him. He served till 2017.

In half a century in politics he donned several roles -- as a Congress party politician rising from the ranks, cabinet minister, a trouble-shooter for the party-led government and above all a statesman and a man for all seasons.

But behind all the accolades (Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award and epithets like elder statesman) for Pranab is his realisation that in the final analysis, he was a Bangalee to the core. "Aami Bangalee chilam, aachi o thaakbo (I was a Bangalee, am one and will remain so)," he once said at a felicitation function in Kolkata some years ago.

Born in Mirati village in Birbhum district of West Bengal to freedom fighters Kamada Kinkar Mukherjee and Rajlakschmi on December 11, 1935, it was Mukherjee's search for his quintessentially Bangalee roots that made him a key figure in shaping India's Bangladesh policy since the 1970s.

Pranab's political journey started when Indira Gandhi spotted him during a by-election campaign in Midnapore in West Bengal where he was former

Defence Minister V K Krishna Menon's poll agent.

Impressed with his political acumen, Indira inducted Pranab into the Congress central leadership and he began his parliamentary journey through the Rajya Sabha in 1969.

He became India's youngest Finance Minister in 1982 at the age of 47. From 2004, he went on to head three crucial ministries -- external affairs, defence and finance. He will also go down in history as the only non-prime minister who was the leader of the Lok Sabha for eight years.

A man of unparalleled experience in governance with the rare distinction of having served at different times as foreign, defence, commerce and finance minister, Pranab was elected to Rajya Sabha five times from 1969 and twice to Lok Sabha from 2004. He was a member of the Congress Working Committee, the highest policy making body of the party, for 23 years.

The many awards and honours conferred on him include India's second highest civilian award, Padma Vibhushan in 2008, the Best Parliamentarian Award in 1997 and Best Administrator in India Award in 2011.

A few months before Pranab stepped down as president, he was asked what he would do. "I will melt into the masses," was his prompt response.

Tribute from president and PM

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of former Mukherjee.

The president said Pranab Mukherjee was a true friend of Bangladesh.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock and sorrow at his death, calling him a "true friend" of Bangladesh and guardian-like figure to her family.

"The news of Mr Pranab Mukherjee's demise deeply saddened her. . . she became emotional and nostalgic as she reminisced her many memories with him," PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told BSS.

Sheikh Hasina, he said, also described Mukherjee as Bangladesh's "true friend" and recalled his "outstanding and unforgettable" contributions to the country's 1971 Liberation War as a politician and real well-wisher.

Curbs on public movement go

FROM PAGE 1

Legal actions and operations of mobile courts will have to be ensured, it added.

The new decision coincides with the government move to allow the transport owners to carry passengers at capacity from today, reinstating the pre-pandemic fares.

On the other hand, Bangladesh Railway will start selling tickets for all local, mail and commuter trains at the stations from September 5 in a bid to normalise its service.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) is, meanwhile, considering whether to allow ride-hailing services to use the motorcycle soon. Currently, only those cars that are registered with the government to provide ride-hailing services are allowed to operate.

The moves come at a time when the number of new infections and deaths from Covid-19 are showing no signs of falling. Public health experts fear that the full-fledged operation of public transport might worsen the Covid-19 situation.

Thirty-three people were reported dead from Covid-19 in the country yesterday, taking the death toll to 4,281. The overall positivity rate stood at 20.19 percent, which is much higher than the global average.

The positivity rate was 24.98 percent on August 1 while it was 17.46 yesterday. and the rate has been hovering over 15 to 18 percent in the last few days.

After around three months, life in the capital and other major cities got back to normalcy. Traffic jams returned on Dhaka streets amid the old cacophony of cars honking and jingling of rickshaw bells as workers returned to their jobs after months of restrictions that have battered the economy.

But there has been a growing

unwillingness among the people to follow the hygiene rules, which gives an impression that everything has returned to normalcy.

"Bangladesh is still among the countries where transmission rate is high," said Prof Muzaherul Huq, a former adviser of World Health Organization's South East Asia region.

"So, lifting restrictions from public transport is risky as transmission has not come under control in Bangladesh," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

It cannot be said the Covid-19 situation has come under control until the positivity rate comes below 10 percent. But, the positivity rate in Bangladesh is still above 20 percent, he added.

"Therefore, the health safety guidelines, particularly the physical distancing, applied for public transport should not be relaxed right now," he said, adding, "If the physical distancing is relaxed in public transport, virus transmission would definitely increase."

"Moreover, the temporary trend of decline in positivity rate would stumble..."

As it is, when many bus operators are not following the government's directives to keep 50 seats vacant and to follow health safety guidelines.

Since the decisions have been made, the government should now ensure all health safety guidelines, especially the wearing of masks and the use of hand sanitisers, are abided by all. Legal actions have to be taken if anyone violates the guidelines, he added.

BUSES TO OPERATE AT CAPACITY

Public transport services, including buses and minibuses, resumed on June 1 after more than two months of suspension.

Following demands made by transport leaders, the government hiked

Russia keen to provide vaccine

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In the press briefing, the health minister said Bangladesh has been promised the vaccine by Oxford researchers.

A contract has been signed in this regard between India's Serum Institute and Beximco Pharmaceuticals, he said.

Replying to a question, the health minister said no other country except China has as yet applied for a trial of Covid-19 vaccine in Bangladesh.

On August 27, the government gave the nod to the icddr,b, to run the phase-III trial of the Chinese vaccine.

Yesterday, Director General of Directorate General of Health Services Prof Dr ABM Khurshid Alam said Bangladesh

would soon begin trial of novel coronavirus vaccine manufactured by China.

He said this at the inauguration of Breastfeeding Week-2020 at the 250-bed Sadar Hospital in Manikganj.

COVID-19 SITUATION

Thirty-three people died from Covid-19 in the country in 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday, according to a press release issued by the DGHS.

The total number of deaths from the highly transmissible virus has now reached 4,281.

Some 2,174 new infections were recorded in the meantime, taking the number of people infected to 3,12,996, reads the press release.

bus fares by 60 percent from June 1 on some conditions. But complaints on the breach of the conditions kept pouring in.

The bus owners on August 16 wrote to the Road Transport and Bridges Ministry and the BRTA to let them operate their vehicles at capacity, charging the previous fares.

The ministry on August 29 decided to reinstate the previous fares following the Cabinet Division's approval. Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader gave the announcement the same day.

Now, the authorities have set some conditions to operate bus services.

The conditions included -- no transport would be allowed to carry passengers beyond its seating capacity, all passengers, drivers, bus staffers have to wear masks; the transport companies must have hand sanitisers and other hand washing essentials, buses have to be disinfected before and after each trip.

BRTA Chairman Nur Mohammad Mazumder said their magistrates will conduct mobile courts in Dhaka and Chattogram to take punitive actions against the violators of the conditions.

"I also sent letters to all DCs so that their magistrates also conduct mobile courts in their districts. I personally talked with all divisional commissioners in this regard," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Besides, letters were also sent to the police headquarters, commissioners of metropolitan cities and SPs to intensify their vigil so that no one can violate the guidelines.

"I have also talked with the leaders of transport owners... We will strictly implement the law to ensure proper implementation of the health safety guidelines."

PDP chairman FA Qureshi passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Progressive Democratic Party Chairman Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi died yesterday at the age of 79.

He was suffering from different ailments since suffering a stroke in 2015, said MA Hossain, secretary general of PDP.

He breathed his last at his residence in the capital on Monday afternoon, Hossain said.

Ferdous left behind his wife, two daughters, a son and a host of relatives and well-wishers.

His first namaz-e-janaza will be held at the Jatiya Press Club at 10:00am today. He will be buried at his family graveyard in Feni's Dagonbhuiyan upazila following another namaz-e-janaza after Asr prayers.

Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi was a former Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) vice-president and Chhatra League president. He was one of the important student leaders at the forefront of the Six-point Movement in 1966 and the Mass Uprising in 1969.

He was also an organiser during the 1971 Liberation War and a journalist. He was the founding joint secretary-general of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and founded PDP during the caretaker government of 2007.

Govt yet to decide

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an application seeking extension of Khaleda Zia's release has been sent to the law ministry by the home ministry. The application has not yet reached me. I will make decision on the application when I get it," he said.

The minister did not give further details on this issue.

Khaleda, who has been convicted in two corruption cases, was freed from prison on March 25 after she had been spending there for 776 days.

The government through an executive order released her for six months on conditions that she will stay home in the capital and not leave the country. It suspended her sentence as per section 401 of the Criminal Code of Procedure on "humanitarian grounds".

Recently, family members of the BNP chief sought a six months' extension on the government order.

Her younger brother Shamim Iskandar applied to the home ministry seeking the extension, said the former prime minister's family members.

Seeking anonymity, a lawyer, who prepared the documents, said the letter that helped secure Khaleda's release earlier was submitted again this time from her family members.

On Friday, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said they received an application of Khaleda and it was forwarded to the law ministry. In the letter, it was mentioned that Khaleda could not take proper treatment because she had to stay home amid the pandemic.

The 75-year-old former prime minister has been suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, and ophthalmological and dental ailments, said Khaleda's physicians.

Separate registration

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Anwarul Islam said at a briefing at the secretariat after the meeting.

"Newspapers are usually doing this [changing contents in the online version from the printed one]," he said.

"Televisions and radios will also have to get registered if they want to run their online portals going beyond their 'own media character'," he said.

The cabinet secretary said there was no clear guideline on the registration criteria for such online news portals, their registration fees, running news portals by licensed television channels and radio, IPTV and Internet Radio in the previous policy.

"So, the draft amendment of the policy was placed at the cabinet meeting, incorporating these issues," he said.

Noting that there is a provision in the existing policy to form a commission for regulating online media, the cabinet secretary said the information ministry would choose an authority in this regard until the formation of the commission.

He said amendments were brought in nine sections of the existing online policy while five new sections were added to the draft of the National Online Media Policy, 2017 (amendment 2020).

Replying to a query, he said, "The licensed television channels and radios would have to take prior permission or get registered to operate their online news portals as those are not entitled to run news portals as per their license."

SHEIKH KAMAL'S BIRTHDAY

The cabinet cleared a proposal on celebrating August 5 every year as the birthday of Shaheed Captain Sheikh Kamal, the eldest son of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, at the state-level and include the day in the Ka Serial (list) of a gazette notification issued by the Cabinet Division.

The cabinet yesterday also gave its final nod to the draft Narcotics Control (Amendment) Bill, 2020, dropping a provision for forming a separate narcotic control tribunal to pave the way for competent courts to try drug-related cases and reduce the backlog of such cases.

Besides, it approved in principle the draft of Medical College (Governing Bodies) (Repeal) Bill, 2020.

It also granted a proposal to repeal the cabinet's decision taken on January 2, 2012 approving in principle the draft of Sonadia Deep Seaport Authority Bill 2012.



HC seeks info on state of Covid-19 testing in country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday wanted to know how many Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 hospitals are operating in the country.

During hearing of a writ petition, it asked authorities concerned of the government to inform by September 2 how many private hospitals are licensed to conduct Covid-19 tests, and whether citizens have the scope to raise allegations in case they face any irregularities.

The bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice SM Kuddus Zaman set September 2 for further hearing on the petition.

Rights organisation Children Charity Bangladesh Foundation (CCBF) submitted the writ petition to the HC as a public interest litigation on July 26. The petition sought necessary orders on the authorities to act on reported irregularities against some hospitals, including Regent Hospital.

It prayed to the court to order authorities to pay Tk 25,000 as interim relief to each patient victimised by Regent Hospital.

In the petition, the rights body prayed to the HC to ask the health and home secretaries, director general of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), and managing director of Regent Hospital to make a list of people who got fake reports from the hospital.



Despite already spending around half of the budget, commuters claim railway authorities have barely fixed Chattogram's Kalurghat bridge, after working at the site for ten days, from July 13 to 23. So, drivers still have to face the same old issues while crossing. This photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Technical courses at general stream to be delayed: Edu minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Introduction of technical and vocational courses at all general stream schools and madrasas for developing skilled and efficient human resources will be delayed by one year, due to the coronavirus situation.

The government primarily planned that they would make at least two technical and vocational trades mandatory for grades nine and ten from 2021. But now they are going to introduce the trades from 2022, education minister Dipu Moni said yesterday.

"We cannot complete the preparatory jobs due to prolonged coronavirus situation," she said while speaking at a webinar organised by Education Reporters Association, Bangladesh on technical and madrasa education.

Technical and Madrasah Education Division officials said they will also introduce a 100-mark compulsory technical course for all SSC students of science, humanities and business groups so that they have knowledge of at least one technical field.

Technical and vocational education would play an important role in creating more skilled manpower.

They said the country needs more skilled manpower, and technical education is important to meet that need. Many developed countries have over 50 percent students under technical education.

Madrasa and technical education officials have said that currently 17 percent students are availing technical and vocational education in the country; the ratio was one percent in 2009, said Dipu Moni.

She said that number of students in technical and vocational institution will increase significantly after technical institutions at each upazila are set up and teachers are appointed.

Dipu Moni said that linkage between industry and academia is a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

BANGLADESH-INDIA

Cooperation framework on education proposed

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury yesterday proposed for a cooperation framework on education between Bangladesh and India as part of a greater goal of building a knowledge-based and democratic society.

A cooperation framework on education and exchange of knowledge can help expand the two country's cooperation in human resources development, he said at a webinar titled "Bangabandhu, his message for the Post Liberation Generation" organised by the Indian High Commission in Bangladesh.

"India is recognised for its higher education globally. It's conducting advanced research on space. Regrettably, we have not made much-needed investments in our tertiary education for the last two decades," the deputy minister said.

The high commission organised it on the occasion of a book gifting ceremony

marking the Mujib Borsho. Several volumes of books on Liberation War, 1971 and Bangabandhu written by eminent writers and historians were gifted to each of 100 university and colleges across Bangladesh.

Mohibul Hasan said after the country's independence, Bangabandhu emphasised on knowledge-based society where all people will have education, technical and vocational training through which they can achieve socio-economic independence.

However, after the brutal killing of Bangabandhu and his family members in 1975, the anti-liberation forces wanted to turn the country into a militant state and eventually the nation lagged behind by many decades, the deputy minister said.

During the Awami League regimes, the country made huge strides in economic and social fronts and emerged as a surprise to the world. India has been a significant development partner in this march, he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Body of war hero CR Dutta reaches home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Body of war hero and commander of Sector-4 during the country's Liberation War, Maj Gen (ret'd) CR Dutta, Bir Uttam, reached the country yesterday morning from Florida, USA.

"Carrying his body, a passenger flight of Emirates Airlines landed at the Dhaka Airport at 8:40am. CR Dutta's younger daughter Chayanika Dutta and her husband were also on the flight," Rana Das Gupta, general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Oikya Parishad, told The Daily Star.

CR Dutta's body was kept at the mortuary of Dhaka CMH, he added.

His body will be kept at his Banani residence at 7am today for people to pay their respect.

"From there, his body will be taken to Dhakeswary Mondir at 8am. He will be given a state guard of honour there," said Rana Das.

Around 11, CR Dutta's body will be taken to Sabujbagh crematorium, where Bangladesh Army will present him a gun salute before his cremation.

On August 25, General CR Dutta Jatiya Committee in a press release said preparations were being taken to arrange the war hero's funeral with the highest military and state honour after bringing his body to Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

A boost to agro-transportation

Railway, Chinese firm ink deal for procurement of 125 luggage vans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway (BR) yesterday signed a contract with a Chinese joint-venture firm to procure 125 railway luggage vans to boost transportation of agro-based products.

Under the contract, the joint venture firm of CNTIC-RAIL TECO-JINXI will supply 75 meter-gauge and 50 broad-gauge luggage vans at the cost of Tk 358.39 crore.

The firm would complete supplying the luggage vans in between 20 months and 24 months from the effective date of the contract and commissioning works would be completed within 27 months.

The luggage vans are being procured under the project titled "Rolling Stock Operation Improvement Project (Rolling Stock Procurement)" assisted by Asian Development Bank.

Mizanur Rahman, the project director, and Yang Bing, deputy general manager of CNTIC, signed the contract on behalf of the respective sides at capital's Rail Bhawan, in

presence of Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan.

According to BR, although types and volumes of agro-based products like green vegetables, seasonal fruits, have tremendously increased in the last few decades, farmers are not getting due prices for the lack of proper transportation.

Transporting products like vegetables, fishes, milks and seasonal fruits by luggage vans or dedicated luggage trains will benefit both the farmers and consumers, which will create a positive impact in the growth of national economy, it said.

But BR has only 63 luggage vans, most of them have crossed their economic life of 35 years, and required services is not possible to get from the over aged luggage vans, BR said. So, it is going to procure 125 luggage vans to replace those overaged vans, it added.

Nurul Islam Sujan said the government is giving emphasis on the development of railway sector. BR is going to procure

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

'Bangabandhu an inspiration for all'

15-day webinar ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 15-day webinar on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, organised marking his birth centenary, concluded yesterday.

Bangladesh History Olympiad Committee under supervision of Mukto Asor, organised the seminar titled "Greatest Bengali of All time: Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Speaking at the closing session, eminent writer Selina Hossain said Bangabandhu is the architect of independent Bangladesh. "He has glorified our Bengali entity," said Selina, also president of Bangladesh History Olympiad National Committee.

Dr AKM Shah Nawaz, presidium member of the committee, said Bangabandhu's life and works have been narrated in different articles, presented by speakers of different languages in different countries.

Priyotit Debsarkar, author and UK-based researcher, said Bangabandhu was not only a great leader but also a role model and inspiration for all.

Twenty-one professors, writers, rights activists, researchers and artists from Bangladesh, Canada, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, the US and UK presented their articles in the programme.

Bullet removed from Lamia's leg after 60hrs

Conflicting reports arise over shooting

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Lamia Akhter, the sixth grader of Khulna city who got hit by a stray bullet on Friday, underwent successful surgery on her leg yesterday at Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH).

Dr Mehdi Newaz, head of KMCH's orthopedic department, told The Daily Star, "The surgery was quite complicated as the bullet went into Lamia's bone. It took an hour and a half of surgery to get it out."

Lamia's mother Reshma Mollah told The Daily Star, "Lamia has been in excruciating pain since the shooting. When doctors said they cannot operate before Monday, we thought it would be too late."

"Right now, we're just hoping that my daughter recovers soon," she added.

CONTROVERSY ARISES OVER DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT

Lamia got hit by the bullet when Sheikh Yusuf Ali, a contractor living in Mistripara under Khulna Sadar, was allegedly intruded on by four alleged extortionists.

At one point in the altercation, Yusuf fired shots from his licensed pistol, and one of the bullets hit Lamia.

On Saturday, Yusuf Ali filed a case with Khulna Sadar Police Station against four youths, alleging they wanted to extort him..

On Sunday, police arrested the four in connection with the case, following identification through video footage.

The arrestees are Mohammad Abu Sayeed (22), Ismail Mallick (26), Mehedi Hasan (21), and Saiful Islam (23). They are all third-year students at the zoology department of Khulna Government Adarsha College.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



When Shampa's husband died a year ago, she was left to fend for herself, her 13-year-old son and two-year-old daughter. All she had at her disposal was a rickshaw-van with which her husband used to sell seasonal fruits. As her son now pulls the rickshaw-van from the front, Shampa pushes from the back, sitting her infant daughter at the back of the van. It's not an easy life, but the family is back up on their feet selling fruits the way Shampa's husband used to do. The photo was taken yesterday from the capital's Tejgaon.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Four CCTV cameras were installed at the capital's Banglamotor footbridge for surveillance, but two have been stolen. One such black space left by a stolen camera is visible in the photo, with only the wires still remaining. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Five stabbed in Dhaka in a day

Two of them die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five persons were stabbed in four incidents in different areas of the capital on Sunday.

Two of them died from their injuries. They are: Nayan (20), a motorcycle mechanic, and Munna (17), a bus helper.

Three others -- Munna's cousin Shaheen, trader Mizanur Rahman Don (40), college student Bappy (20) -- were receiving treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital for their wounds, police said.

Nayan was stabbed in Bakshibazar area around 1pm while he and a friend were heading towards Lalabagh on a rickshaw after attending an event marking Ashura in Hossaini Dalan area, said his friend Sohan, who witnessed the attack.

Sohan claimed that the attackers were wearing black clothes normally worn by Ashura observers.

He was rushed to DMCH where doctors declared him dead.

Munna was killed and his cousin Shahin sustained injuries as some youths stabbed them near Borogram area in Wari in the afternoon.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

EC sues Sabrina for possessing two NIDs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission filed a case against JKG Health Care Chairman Dr Sabrina Arif Chowdhury on the charge of possessing two National ID cards with fake information.

Gulshan Thana Election Officer Abdul Momin Mia filed the case with Badda Police Station on Sunday night. Parvez Islam, officer-in-charge of the police Station, told The Daily Star.

According to the case statement and EC's NID division, detained Sabrina who is involved in Covid-19 test report forgery, became a voter for the first time in 2009.

At that time, she used her current and permanent address in Mohammadpur. She mentioned December 2, 1978 as her date of birth.

She enlisted her husband's name to be H Haque and educational qualification post-graduation.

But in her second NID issued in 2016, she mentioned her permanent and current address in Badda and her husband's name as Ariful Chowdhury. In that ID, she used December 2, 1983 as her date of birth.

She also changed her mother's name, as well as educational qualifications, declaring herself a graduate.

She has been possessing the two NID cards, said a police official.

According to Voter Talika Ain 2009, acquiring dual NID is a punishable offence, the minimum punishment being two years' jail or fine, or both.

Sabrina and her husband Ariful Haque Chowdhury are accused in a case filed over issuing fake Covid-19 reports.

Recently, ACC began an inquiry against their wealth. During the process, ACC Deputy Director Selina Akhter Moni found that Sabrina has dual NIDs.

On August 18, she wrote a letter to the EC about the offence. The EC has already blocked one NID issued under Sabrina's name.

RESHUFFLE IN POLICE ADMIN

Seven DIG-ranked officials transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a major reshuffle in Bangladesh Police, seven DIG level officials including two metropolitan police commissioners were transferred yesterday.

The home ministry in an order signed by Dhananjoy Kumar Das, deputy secretary of the Public Security Division, made the transfer, including that of Deputy Inspector General (Chattogram Range) Khandker Golam Faruq, under whose jurisdiction some police members in Cox's Bazar are facing trial in retired army major Sinha Md Rashed Khan murder case.

Md Anwar Hossain, Gazipur Metropolitan Police commissioner, will replace DIG Faruq. Faruq has been transferred to Bangladesh Police Academy, Rajshahi.

Since the Sinha murder on July 31, DIG Faruq has been stationed in Cox's Bazar to oversee the law and order situation of the district, sources said.

Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) Commissioner Md Mahabubor Rahman has also been transferred to Industrial Police in Dhaka as DIG. Saleh Mohammad Tanvir, additional police commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, has been made new CMP commissioner.

Among other officials, Md Abdullah Baqi, DIG at Bangladesh Police Academy in Rajshahi, has been transferred as DIG of criminal investigation department (CID); Jamil Ahmed, additional inspector general of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), has been transferred to CID; and Imtiaz Ahmed, DIG at the CID transferred, has been transferred to Rab.

Bullet removed

FROM PAGE 3

They have been sent to jail, said Ashraful Alam, officer-in-charge of Khulna Sadar Police Station.

"We have prayed for five-day remands for each. We will investigate the incident further," the official added.

According to the case statement, the four came to Yusuf's house and demanded Tk five lakh over a contract work. "They threatened to kill me if I didn't pay," Yusuf said.

However, relatives of the youths said the altercation did not take place over extortion, but due to a romantic complication involving Yusuf's daughter.

Asked, the OC said they are considering the matter in their investigation.

Md Sohel, uncle of accused Saiful Islam, said Yusuf provided false information in the case statement to conceal the real issue -- a love affair between one of the arrestees and Yusuf's daughter.

However, Yusuf Ali denied the allegations and termed them baseless.

SCHOOL DROPOUTS

Special funds needed to bring them back to classrooms: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has to allocate a special fund to bring children who have dropped out, back to the classroom as many of them have been involved in income-generating work to help their families during the pandemic, speakers said at a webinar yesterday.

Over the years, the government has achieved great success in enrolling almost 100 percent children in school. But now it is a big challenge for the government to maintain this, they told the event titled "Education Sector Plan of SDG", by Campaign for Mass Education (CAMPe) and Darpan.

Speakers said, as educational institutions remained closed during the pandemic, the government arranged online and television class for school students. But 100 percent children could not be brought under this system, especially children from rural and marginal areas.

The government has to arrange special funds and properly use it to provide incentive to underprivileged children to enrol in school, they added.

The speakers also said the government also has to train teachers to prepare them for better quality online classes.

Abul Fazal Mir, deputy commissioner of Cumilla participated in the programme as chief guest while Rasheda K Chowdhury, former adviser to the caretaker government and executive director of CAMPe was present there as guest of honour. Eminent educationist Dr Monzur Ahmed chaired the session.

Tk 80 LAKH RECOVERY

Charges against suspended DIG prisons accepted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday took cognisance of the charges against Partha Gopal Banik, a suspended deputy inspector general (prisons) of Sylhet division, in a case filed over the recovery of Tk 80 lakh from his capital's residence.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after scrutinising case dockets and other relevant documents.

The judge fixed October 29 for hearing on charge framing against the accused. The judge also transferred the case to the Special Judge Court-10 of Dhaka for trial.

On July 29 last year, ACC Director Mohammad Yousuf quizzed Partha over allegations that he committed irregularities and corruption as DIG (prisons) of Chattogram division.

ARMS CASE

Trial of Papia, her husband begins

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The trial of an arms case filed against expelled leader of Jubo Mohila League Shamima Nur Papia and her husband Mofizur Rahman began yesterday at a Dhaka tribunal with deposition of a prosecution witness.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Special Tribunal-1 of Dhaka recorded the statement of Sub-inspector Md Saiful Islam of Rapid Action Battalion-1, who prepared a seizure-list of the arms case.

After the court recorded his statement, defence lawyer sought time to cross-examine the witness. The tribunal then fixed today for cross-examination.

In his statement, the witness told the court that on February 23, a team of Rab including him raided Papia's Indira Road house in Farmgate and recovered a foreign pistol, two magazines, 20 bullets, five bottles of foreign liquor, Tk 58,41,000 in cash, and credit and debit cards of different banks.

Later, he prepared a seizure list in front of the witnesses, Saiful added.

Before that, Papia, her husband -- a former Chhatra League leader -- and their two accomplices were arrested from Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on February 22 when they were trying to leave the country.

Rab members recovered seven passports, Tk 2,12,270, fake notes worth Tk 25,600, \$11,481, 420 Sri Lankan rupees, 301 Indian rupees, and two debit cards from their possession.



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ASIA 2020

Vacancy for Board Secretary

The Board of Trustees of NSU is looking for an energetic, dynamic and competent **Board Secretary** for immediate appointment.

Duties and Responsibilities: Assisting the Chairman, Board of Trustees in finalizing the agenda items received from BOT members, preparing the working papers, sending agendas and working papers on time, recording and drafting meeting minutes correctly, and timely and communicating the meeting decisions to all relevant stakeholders. Being aware of and sensitive to any special or confidential information discussed at a meeting. Preserving and safe-keeping of both digital and manual archiving records, files, and similar confidential items. Collaborating internally with all concerned authorities of the university and externally with the relevant Government Offices and other concerned authorities when and as needed. Preparing the AGM report, speeches and messages pertaining to various programs, inter office memos and letters. Performing administrative and other secretarial works assigned by the Chairman, Board of Trustees.

Qualifications: Must have an MBA from a reputed university. Ten (10) years of experience as a Company Secretary, in the corporate sector/multinational company/bank or similar organizations. Familiarity with various relevant Laws and Acts, including the Private University Act, Society Registration Act, and Trust Act is a critical requirement. **Age:** 45+ years

Skills and attributes: Excellent organizational and verbal and written communication skills along with computer literacy. Strength of character, integrity and a professional approach are must.

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Only short-listed candidates will be called for interview

The NSU BOT reserves the right to relax the requisite qualifications in case of an extraordinary candidate. Expression of Interest from qualified candidates, with a complete hard copy of resume and all relevant documents, should reach the following address by 12 September, 2020:

Chairman
Board of Trustees
North South University - Bashundhara, Dhaka-1229
E-mail: chairman@northsouth.edu URL: www.northsouth.edu

A boost to

FROM PAGE 3

125 luggage vans after 40 years; it is not only giving important on passenger services but also on goods transport, he said.

During the pandemic, BR carried seasonal fruits, vegetables and cattle ahead of Eid. These luggage vans are being procured so that farmers can reach their products to the consumers directly and get due price of their projects, he added.

NO PLAN TO HIKE TRAIN FARE NOW

Meanwhile, the minister said they have not taken any decision to hike train fare as of now.

Several newspapers recently ran reports that BR is mulling hiking passenger and freight fares to improve service and minimise loss.

"There is a committee [to review train fare], which has placed their opinion before us. Some media ran report giving 'wrong explanation' of the meeting," Sujan said.

Cooperation

FROM PAGE 3

"Today, we are growing fast. In this journey, we can exchange our knowledge and India can do the same with us," Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury said.

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Riva Ganguly Das said Bangabandhu is the founder of modern Bangladesh and one of the most influential and courageous leaders of the 20th century.

Reflecting back on Bangabandhu's rich legacy and her childhood memories of his electrifying voice to mobilise the people for independence, she said that Bangabandhu also laid the foundations for India-Bangladesh relations.

She expressed hope that through the books gifted, young students of Bangladesh would better appreciate and understand Bangabandhu and help realise his dream of 'Sonar Bangla'. India will always stand beside Bangladesh in its march towards development, she said.

On Mohidul Hasan Chowdhury's proposal of having a cooperation framework on education, Riva Ganguly Das said she took note of it for further action.

Vice chancellors and principals of different universities and colleges who took part in the discussion highlighted Bangabandhu's qualities of boldness, love for Bangalees and unending trust on them.

They also expressed their gratitude to India for standing beside Bangladesh during the Liberation War.

Vice chancellors of select universities who participated in the discussion were Prof Satya Prasad Majumder (Buet); Prof Dr Mohammed Fayek Uzzaman (Khulna University); Prof Dr Mohammed Rafiqul Alam (Cuet); Farid Uddin Ahmed (Sust); Prof M Abdus Sobhan (RU); and Prof. Gautam Buddha Das (Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Sciences University).

Five stabbed


FROM PAGE 3

The two went outside for a motorcycle ride when some youths attacked them, said Munna's father Monirul Islam. The attackers fled with Munna's motorcycle, he said.

Bappy, along with two friends, went out on a bike around 12:30pm. As they were talking near Lalbagh Fort, parking the motorcycle nearby, 10 to 15 youths started beating up Bappy and his friends, said Sagar -- who witnessed the attack.

The attackers snatched their phones and wallets. Bappy resisted as they tried to take his camera. The youths then stabbed Bappy, leaving him critically injured, he said.

In Moghbazar, Mizanur was stabbed and injured by some persons following a quarrel over not paying for food at a shop, said Mahfuzul Haque, inspector (operations) of Ramna Police Station.




বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন

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তারিখঃ ১৬ ভাদ্র ১৪২৭
৩১ আগস্ট ২০২০

স্মারক নং-ইউজিসি/প্রশাঃ/১২১(পার্ট)/২০২০/৩৭৮৪

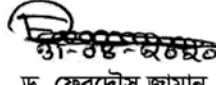
পুনঃ নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন এর নিম্নবর্ণিত শূন্য পদসমূহে নিয়োগের উদ্দেশ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী যোগ্য নাগরিকদের নিকট হইতে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে।

পদসমূহঃ

ক্র. নং	পদের নাম ও বেতন স্কেল	পদ সংখ্যা	বয়স
১।	পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব), বেতন স্কেলঃ ৬৬০০০-৭৬৪৯০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৫৫ বছর
২।	পরিচালক (জেনারেল সার্ভিসেস এন্ড এস্টেট), বেতন স্কেলঃ ৬৬০০০-৭৬৪৯০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৫৫ বছর
৩।	অতিরিক্ত পরিচালক/এডিশনাল চিফ রিসার্চ অফিসার, বেতন স্কেলঃ (৫৬৫০০-৭৪৪০০/-)	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৪৮ বছর
৪।	উপ-পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব), বেতন স্কেলঃ ৪৩০০০-৬৯৮৫০/-	৩ (তিন)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৪৫ বছর
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৭।	উপ-পরিচালক (জেনারেল সার্ভিসেস এন্ড এস্টেট), বেতন স্কেলঃ ৪৩০০০-৬৯৮৫০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৪৫ বছর
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১২।	সহকারী সচিব (লিগ্যাল), বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
১৩।	সহকারী পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব), বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	৩ (তিন)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
১৪।	সহকারী পরিচালক (পরিকল্পনা ও উন্নয়ন), বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	৩ (তিন)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
১৫।	সহকারী পরিচালক (পাবলিক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ম্যানেজমেন্ট), বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
১৬।	সহকারী পরিচালক (বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়), বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
১৭।	পাবলিকেশন অফিসার, বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
১৮।	ডকুমেন্টেশন/লাইব্রেরি অফিসার, বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
১৯।	স্টোর অফিসার (পাবলিকেশন) বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
২০।	রিসার্চ অফিসার, বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
২১।	সহকারী পরিচালক/সহকারী ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিস্ট্রেটর, বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
২২।	টেকনিক্যাল অফিসার (নেটওয়ার্ক এন্ড আইসিটি), বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
২৩।	কার্যসহকারী, বেতন স্কেলঃ ৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
২৪।	গাড়িচালক, বেতন স্কেলঃ ৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/-	৭ (সাত)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর
২৫।	ইলেকট্রিশিয়ান, বেতন স্কেলঃ ৯০০০-২১৮০০/-	১ (এক)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর

নির্ধারিত ছকে চাহিত তথ্য ও কাগজপত্র প্রদানসহ আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের পূর্ণাঙ্গ পৃথক আবেদনপত্রসহ সচিব-এর বরাবরে ডাকযোগে অথবা সরাসরি আগামী ১৫-০৯-২০২০ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস সময়ের মধ্যে বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন, আগারগাঁও, শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা- ১২০৭ ঠিকানায় পৌছাইতে হইবে। আবেদনপত্র দাখিল সঞ্চারিত তথ্য ছক, শর্তাবলী ও প্রয়োজনীয় বিস্তারিত নির্দেশনা সংবলিত পূর্ণাঙ্গ নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি কমিশনের ওয়েবসাইট www.ugc.gov.bd এর “ডাউনলোড” নামক সোবা বক্সের চাকুরি বিজ্ঞপ্তি লিংক থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাইবে। নির্ধারিত তারিখের পরে আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ করা হইবে না। বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন কর্তৃপক্ষ অসম্পূর্ণ/অসত্য তথ্য সংবলিত আবেদনপত্রসহ যে কোনো আবেদনপত্র বাতিল করিবার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। উল্লেখ্য যে, গত ২০-০৩-২০২০ তারিখে প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রাণঘাতী করোনা ভাইরাস (কোভিড-১৯) এর সংক্রমণ ব্যাপক বিস্তার লাভ করায় গত ০৫-০৫-২০২০ তারিখে স্থগিত করা হয়। স্থগিতকৃত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির উল্লিখিত পদসমূহে যাহারা আবেদন করিয়াছেন তাহাদের পুনরায় আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নাই।



ড. ফেরদৌস জামান
সচিব (অতিরিক্ত দায়িত্ব)
বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন

জিডি-১৩৬৪

Technical courses

FROM PAGE 3

really important matter. She also emphasised on the need for up-to-date curriculum for technical education.

The government has set up a target to have 20 percent students under technical education by 2020 and 30 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2050, said technical education board chairman Morad Hossain Mollah.

Many guardians are reluctant about their children receiving technical education as it was traditionally considered for academically weak students and there is a stigma associated with that.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics, there are 11,00,177 students enrolled in 16 types of 7,052 technical and vocational institutes in 2019.

The numbers of such educational institutions and their students are increasing steadily. The number of institutions were 1,137 in 2000; 2,317 in

2003; 5,790 in 2015 and 5,897 in 2017.

The total number of students were 1,16,055 in 2000; 1,88,686 in 2003; 8,72,658 in 2015; 8,75,270 in 2016 and 8,91,964 in 2017.

Mentionable, an overwhelming 95 percent of the institutions are privately managed.

At the webinar, madrasa teachers' leaders demanded the government to bring independent Ebtedayee madrasahs under monthly pay order (MPO) system as the teachers are facing hardship due to meagre amount of salary.

Dipu Moni said government is working on the issue.

Technical and Madrasah Education Division Secretary Aminul Islam Khan, Bangladesh University of Textiles Vice Chancellor Prof Abul Kashem; madrasa education board chairman Prof Kaiser Ahmed and Education Reporters Association leaders also spoke at the webinar.

Body of

FROM PAGE 3

A 1,001-member national citizens' committee has already been formed headed by Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiqullah, sector commander of the country's Liberation War, to show final respect to CR Dutta.

Maj Gen (ret'd) Chitta Ranjan Dutta, known better as CR Dutta, passed away in the US on August 25. He was 93.

He was the commander of Sector-4 during the Liberation War. He was awarded "Bir Uttam" for his gallantry.

He had been the founding president of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Oikya Parishad, a platform of different religious minority groups, until his death.

Dutta, who was the founding director general of Bangladesh Rifles in 1973, left behind two daughters, a son, and a host of relatives and well-wishers.

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Invitation for Vendor Enlistment - 2021

Enlistment Categories:

- Category – A : Food Item
- Category – B : General Materials & Other Supplies
- Category – C : Engineering Materials & Maintenance
- Category – D : Printing Materials & Supplies
- Category – E : Workshop for Maintenance of Vehicles/Car

Sealed applications are hereby invited from the bona-fide suppliers for Enlistment with Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel Dhaka for the period of **January 2021 to December 2021**.

Interested applicants may collect Category-Wise Enlistment Form from the Purchasing Department on submission of an application on their respective letterhead pad from **September 06, 2020 to October 06, 2020** on cash payment of Tk.500.00 (non-refundable) for each category. Applications will be received up to **October 07, 2020** during the office hours. Applicants will have to mark on the top of the envelope of the Category.

Existing vendors will be renewed for the period of **January 2021 to December 2021** upon submission of renewal fee of Tk.5000.00 (non-refundable) for each category and submission of up to date business related all documents along with an application. Applications for Renewal of Enlistment 2021 will be received up to **November 15, 2020** during the office hours.

Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel authority reserves the right to accept or reject any/all applications without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Applicants working with similar type of organizations or having experience in institutional supply will be given preference.



Purchase Manager, Tel (880) 2 9128008, Extn: 4164

TANGAIL MURDER
Husband
among 2
to die for
killing
housewife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A Tangail court yesterday sentenced two people, including the victim's husband, to death for killing a housewife for dowry in Bhuapur upazila in 2016.

The convicts are Jahirul Islam, and his father Mohammad Maznu, of Arjuna village in the upazila.

They were tried in absentia.

Tangail Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal Judge Khaleda Yasmin also fined them Tk 1 lakh each, Tangail Court Inspector Tanvir Ahmed said.

Quoting the case statement, Nasimul Akter, special public prosecutor of the tribunal, said, Taslima Akter, daughter of Khandakar Taslim Uddin of Kuthir Boyra village in the same upazila, was married to Jahirul in 2014.

But, after the marriage, Jahirul and his family members started torturing Taslima both physically and mentally for dowry.

As a sequel to the family feud, Jahirul and his father Maznu killed Taslima on November 28 in 2016 when others were not present at home.

They later dumped her body in the Jamuna river and fled the area.

The following day, locals spotted Taslima's body floating in the river and police, who recovered it and sent the body to the hospital for autopsy.

Later in the same day, victim's father filed a murder case with Bhuapur Police Station against Jahirul and his farther Maznu.

police said they were conducting drives to arrest the absconding accused.



Various types of hand-crafted baskets and containers are being made from bamboo at Baghar village of Barishal's Gournadi upazila.

PHOTO: SUSHANTA GHOSH

IMPACT OF COVID-19

Gournadi bamboo
artisans barely surviving

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

With sales dwindling over the past several months, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, bamboo artisans in Baghar village of Barishal's Gournadi upazila are still holding onto their profession that they mastered in almost half a century.

About 500 inhabitants, a majority of them women, of the village still earn a living by making around 200 different types of baskets, containers, trays and strainers.

Out of nearly 200 families involved in the trade, three families have so far been able to export some of the beautifully crafted items -- locally known as daala, kula and chaalon.

If the others in the village received proper training on how to make the items more attractive to international buyers and necessary support in exporting their goods, the entire village would be able to cope with the financial strain imposed by the pandemic, said many residents of Baghar village, under Mahilara union.

Villager Binay Bepari first took

on the trade some 40 years ago after learning the craft from another villager, Siddiqui Rahman. Binay's endeavour soon took off and he never had to look back.

His brother Bipul Bepari and their relative Nikunjo Bepari also found success in the craft.

A skilled artisan can make as high

Out of nearly 200 families, three families have so far been able to export some of the crafted items.

as Tk 15 thousand per month while a daily worker can earn up to Tk 200 each day, depending on the quantity of items produced.

Binay, who recently sent out a shipment of items made with bamboo, said it is possible to make a profit of Tk 30 to 40 thousand in one month from exporting one thousand of the items, worth approximately Tk 2 lakh.

Bipul said the main ingredient they use in their product is a bamboo variety known as 'Talla', which costs Tk 200 to Tk 300 each piece.

After slicing those up, they process the bamboo strips by first dipping those in hot water and then drying those up in the sun. Artisans later use the strips to make different items with intricate details.

As local demands for their bamboo goods continue to fall during the Covid-19 situation, government assistance in exporting the items overseas would enable the age-old craft to survive, he also said.

Echoing Bipul's views, Saikat Guha, chairman of Mahilara Union Parishad, said the government could also declare Baghar village as the 'village of artisans' and provide necessary training to the artisans in the village so they can make export quality bamboo goods according to international demands.

They could make higher profits if a system of direct sale could be established by eliminating intermediaries and interest-free loans were made available for them, said artisan Nikunjo Bepari.

Tourist spots in
Rangamati reopen
after 5 months

Sajek Valley to reopen today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

After five months of closure, the tourist spots in Rangamati have been reopened for the public.

The district administration on August 22 reopened the tourist spots including Shuvolong waterfall, Hanging Bridge and Polwell Park. Apart from this, all the hotels and motels in the tourist spot areas have been reopened.

Everyone is now trying to recover from the loss caused by lockdown after reopening of the tourist spots and hotels and motels.

However, visitors can visit the sites only on some conditions, which include maintaining health guidelines, hygiene, and social distancing, said Muhammad Mamunur Rashid, deputy commissioner (DC) of Rangamati.

Following the outbreak of the coronavirus, the recreation centres were closed from March 18 to contain the spread of the virus, he said.

Locals said visitors from different parts of the country have thronged the tourist spots during Friday, Saturday and Sunday as the three days were official holiday. At that time, the recreation centres have regained its life once again.

Srijan Bikash Barua, manager of Rangamati Parjatan Corporation, said they have incurred a loss of about Tk one crore in the last five months due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The tourists have started coming from different parts of the country again after reopening of the recreation centres, he said.

"Hopefully we will recover the financial losses caused by the shutdown in the next few months," said the manager.

All the tourist spots in the district have been reopened as per the government's decision, said the DC, adding that those who will visit Rangamati during the time will have to follow the health guidelines.

Meanwhile, the eye-catching Sajek Valley--where hills touch the sky--in Baghaichhari upazila will be reopened today. However, all the tourist spots in the district were reopened on August 22 after five months of closure.

Suparna Dev Barman, president of the Sajek Cottage Owners' Association, said the owners of all the resorts in Sajek are taking preparation to welcome the tourists.

However, everyone will have to maintain distance and follow health guidelines while visiting the resorts, he said.



Visitors throng Chillar Daak waterfall in Shuvolong area of Rangamati. The tourist spots have been reopened recently, after five months of closure.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

SUPPLEMENT

PRIORITISE HYGIENE IN LIGHT OF
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

NILIMA JAHAN

Md Sagor, 27, a bus conductor, has to go to work every day amid the COVID-19 pandemic to sustain his family of four people. Although at the beginning of the pandemic he was more aware and taking precautionary steps such as wearing a mask, washing and disinfecting his hands and feet regularly, with the passage of time, this awareness has only declined due to "pandemic fatigue", which occurs when people get tired of the pandemic measures and become less likely to follow precautionary hygiene practices.

Sagor adds, "It is annoying to prepare the disinfectant spray every day. Besides, as I have to stay outside the whole day and come into contact with a large number of commuters, it is extremely difficult to maintain maximum cleanliness all the time."

Tahmina Akter, a private service holder and a regular commuter by public transport, expressed a similar concern. "Many of us have been unable to maintain adequate precautions since normal operations have resumed after the shutdown without much precautionary measures in place," says Tahmina.

There are hardly any handwashing and hygiene facilities in crowded areas such as bus stops, markets and shopping malls, she adds.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Although investment in hygiene is a crucial factor in the fight against COVID-19, less than five percent of the total WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) budget in FY2020-21 has been allocated to the hygiene subsector. The overall budgetary allocation for the WASH sector is also far less than

adequate.

A study titled "WASH budget scenario in proposed National Budget FY 2020-21" jointly produced by PPRC, WaterAid and UNICEF, published on June 28, shows that despite the upward trend over the last decade in WASH allocation, the sector has not been able to attract sufficient attention and remains at the bottom in terms of allocation, when compared with the growth of GDP and development budget.

There is also huge spatial inequality between the urban and rural areas in terms of WASH allocation. In a five-year period, 2016-17 to 2020-21, there has been almost no change in the share of urban (80-83 percent) and rural (17-20 percent) WASH allocation, points out the study.

The study further reveals that among the WASH subsectors, hygiene remains the most neglected one.

Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of PPRC, says that in the proposed Budget, the hygiene agenda suffers both from lack of resources and the identification of specific activities. Terming the hygiene budget in both health and WASH sector as "extremely

inadequate", he stresses on identifying the hygiene activities first.

"Bangladesh now needs to develop a hygiene agenda, in terms of specific activities, covering services and awareness programmes. For example, installing handwashing stations in slums is one idea but the hygiene agenda as a whole needs to be detailed out," he urges.

Hasin Jahan, country director of WaterAid, shares that there is no proper physical intervention related to hygiene as well as no national level campaign, through which life-saving messages of maintaining hygiene can be reminded repeatedly to public by the government.

"In the beginning, although everyone took issues of hand and respiratory hygiene seriously, over time, the importance is declining both at the people's and government's end," adds Jahan.

The PPRC-WaterAid-UNICEF study recommends prioritising hygiene as a vital tool of public health and epidemic preparedness; investing in large-scale nationwide hygiene campaigns; and installation of handwashing

5 YEARS TREND IN HYGIENE
ALLOCATION (Tk in lac)

Revised Allocation of 2016-17: 52500

Revised Allocation of 2017-18: 70080

Revised Allocation of 2018-19: 37614

Revised Allocation of 2019-20: 184574

Allocation of 2020-21: 56988

the government to reopen the educational institutions with the current inadequate resources, since most schools have only one basin or tube well and the supplies of soap are inadequate.

"In accordance with the global guideline provided by World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF, every student must wash their hands with soap before entering the schools, and there must be proper

Figure-2: 5 Years Spatial Allocation by Urban and Rural (Taka in lac)

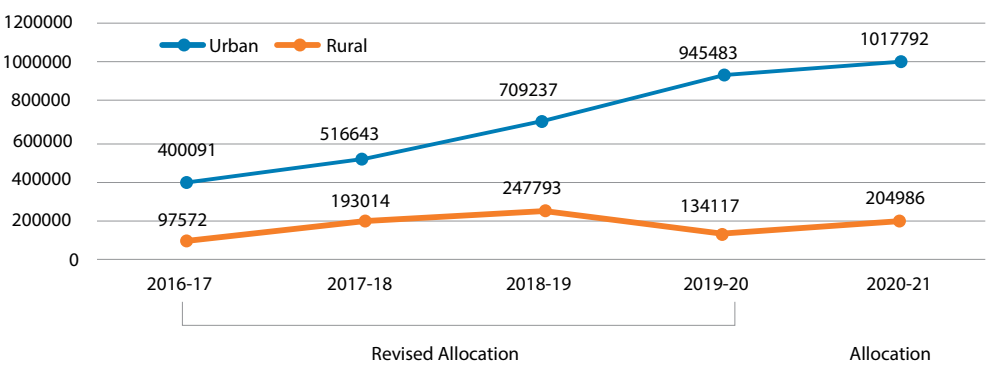
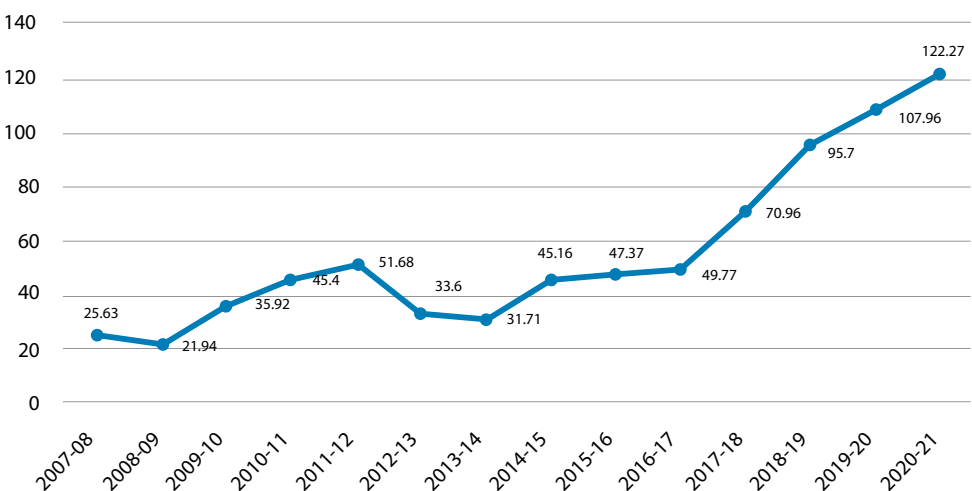


Figure-1: Long Term Trend in WASH Allocation Billion Taka (in Constant Price)



LANDSLIDE, FLOODS FROM RAINS 41 people killed in India, Nepal

REUTERS, KATHMANDU

A landslide and floods caused by heavy rains have killed at least 41 people in Nepal and India in the past week, officials said yesterday, as the annual monsoon season enters its final stretch after claiming hundreds of lives in South Asia.

Ten people, including four children, were killed after a landslide buried five houses in remote west Nepal on Sunday, a Home Ministry official said.

At least 269 people have died in mostly mountainous Nepal this year in landslides and floods, while another 76 people are missing. The monsoon season that began around June in South Asia ends in September.

In the western Indian state of Gujarat, 14 people have died in the last two days in various incidents related to heavy rains and flooding, said officials at the State Emergency Response Centre.

Rains in Gujarat are 20% higher than the long-period average, according to the local government.

The state's desert area of Kutch received rainfall that was 2.5 times higher than the average.

More heavy to very heavy rains are expected in several parts of the state over the next two days, according to the India Meteorological Department.

In Odisha state to the east, floods have killed at least 17 people in the past week, displaced thousands and affected more than half a million people, officials said.

Hundreds have died in the northeastern state of Assam and neighbouring Bangladesh this monsoon.



US President's senior adviser Jared Kushner, US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien and Israeli National Security Advisor Meir Ben-Shabbat disembark a plane upon landing at Abu Dhabi International Airport, in Abu Dhabi, UAE yesterday. The direct flight from Tel Aviv marks a major step in normalising ties between Israel and the Arab country.

PHOTO: REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Japan's ruling party to hold Sept 14 leadership vote

Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party plans to hold a leadership vote on September 14 to replace Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who is stepping down due to ill health, local media reported yesterday. The new party leader will become the country's next prime minister, due to the party's parliamentary majority, with four possible candidates vying for the position. Abe, Japan's longest-serving premier, told US President Donald Trump earlier yesterday that the strengthening of their two nations' alliance would be maintained even after he leaves office, a Japanese government spokesman said. In the race to succeed Abe as the next prime minister, former Defence Minister Shigeru Ishiba is the most popular choice among the public, media opinion polls showed.

WFP warns 2.2m more Syrians risk hunger

Around 2.2 million Syrians risk joining the fast swelling ranks of the hungry and poor in war-torn Syria, the World Food Programme warned yesterday. "Without urgent help 2.2 million more could slip further into hunger and poverty," WFP said in a statement on Twitter. The UN agency said in May that a record 9.3



million people in Syria were food insecure, as spiralling prices and the novel coronavirus pandemic compound the damage of the country's nine-year war. That figure had leapt from 7.9 million six months earlier. Most of Syria's population lives in poverty, according to the United Nations, and food prices have doubled over the past year.

Indian activist lawyer fined one rupee for tweets

India's top court yesterday imposed a symbolic fine of one rupee on a prominent lawyer found guilty of criminal contempt for posts on Twitter that were critical of senior judges, which he declined to apologise for. A three-member bench of the Supreme Court said that lawyer Prashant Bhushan must pay the fine by September 15, failing which he could be imprisoned for three months and barred from practice for three years. The case sparked a debate around free speech and the judiciary's openness to criticism, with thousands of lawyers backing Bhushan and arguing that the court was being too harsh.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

India cases top global rank

US infections surpass 6m as Midwest, schools face outbreaks

REUTERS, MUMBAI

India reported 78,512 novel coronavirus infections yesterday, more than any other country but fewer than the previous day when it posted the world's biggest, single-day tally, as authorities looked to open more sectors of the economy.

On Sunday, India's total of 78,761 new cases exceeded the previous global record of 77,299 in the United States on July 16, a Reuters tally of official data showed.

The world's second-most populous country has been posting the highest single-day caseload in the world since August 7. At 3.62 million cases, India is fast catching up to the United States and Brazil in terms of total cases but it has a lower death rate.

India's coronavirus deaths went up by 971 in the past 24 hours, taking the tally to 64,469, the health ministry said.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC



The huge numbers have got authorities worried, especially with people in rural areas largely abandoning rules aimed at stopping the spread, officials say.

Kumar Sanjay Krishna, the chief secretary of Assam, one of the worst-hit states, attributed the increasing cases to more testing, the opening of the economy and complacency.

Meanwhile, US cases of coronavirus

surpassed 6 million on Sunday as many states in the Midwest reported increasing infections, according to a Reuters tally.

Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota have recently reported record one-day increases in new cases while Montana and Idaho are seeing record numbers of currently hospitalized Covid-19 patients.

Nationally, metrics on new cases, deaths, hospitalizations and the positivity rates of tests are all declining, but there are emerging hotspots in the Midwest.

Many of the new cases in Iowa are in the counties that are home to the University of Iowa and Iowa State University, which are holding some in-person classes. Colleges and universities around the country have seen outbreaks after students returned to campus, forcing some to switch to online-only learning.

Qatar raises minimum wage for workers

Lifts curbs on changing jobs

REUTERS, DUBAI

Qatar announced changes to its labour laws on Sunday, raising the minimum wage by 25 percent to 1,000 riyals (\$275) a month and scrapping a requirement for workers to get permission from their employers to change jobs.

They are the latest in a series of labour reforms by the 2022 FIFA World Cup host which in the lead up to the tournament has faced accusations that migrant workers are exploited.

The new minimum wage, which comes into effect in six months and is 250 riyals more a month than the old one, is non-discriminatory and applies to all workers.

Companies must also provide accommodation and food or a combined monthly stipend of 800 riyals.

The removal of employer permission to change jobs is effective immediately.

"This is a huge step towards our labour reforms," labour ministry assistant undersecretary Mohammed Hassan al-Obaidly told Reuters.

"These reforms are in the best interest of Qatar, its guest workers and employers."

Companies who do not pay wages or provide adequate accommodation will face harsher penalties under the new reforms, the labour ministry said. The United Nation's labour agency hailed the changes.



People pose with a drawing depicting Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and balloons during an event to write a letter to the sky calling for tax return, created by a pro-democracy group, after the government decided to purchase controversial submarines worth 22.5 billion dollar from China, in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Fight 'splittism' in Tibet

China's Xi tells senior Communist Party officials

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

China must build an "impregnable fortress" to maintain stability in Tibet, protect national unity and educate the masses in the struggle against "splittism", President Xi Jinping told senior leaders, according to state media.

China seized control over Tibet in 1950 in what it describes as a "peaceful liberation" that helped the remote Himalayan region throw off its "feudalist" past.

But critics, led by exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, say Beijing's rule amounts to "cultural genocide".

At a senior Communist Party meeting on Tibet's future governance, Xi lauded achievements made and praised front-line officials but said more efforts were needed to enrich, rejuvenate and strengthen unity in the region.

Political and ideological education needed to be strengthened in Tibet's schools in order to "plant the seeds of loving China in the depths of the hearts of every youth", Xi said in remarks published by state news agency Xinhua on Saturday.

Pledging to build a "united, prosperous, civilised, harmonious and beautiful new,

modern, socialist Tibet", Xi said China needed to strengthen the role of the Communist Party in the territory and better integrate its ethnic groups.

Tibetan Buddhism also needed to adapt to socialism and Chinese conditions, he added.

Advocacy group the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) said Xi's remarks showed Chinese rule still needed to be imposed with an "iron fist".

In emailed comments, its president, Matteo Mecacci, said, "If Tibetans really benefitted as much from Chinese leadership as Xi and other officials claim, then China wouldn't have to fear separatism and wouldn't need to subject Tibetans to political re-education."

China's policies towards Tibet have come under the spotlight again this year amid worsening ties with the United States.

In July, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the US would restrict visas for some Chinese officials involved in blocking diplomatic access to Tibet and engaging in "human rights abuses", adding that Washington supported "meaningful autonomy" for Tibet.

Girl, 3, survives terrifying kite flight

AFP, TAIPEI

A three-year-old girl in Taiwan survived being launched into the air for a terrifying half-minute flight after she was ensnared in the tail of a kite at a weekend festival.


Dramatic footage captured the girl's ordeal in Hsinchu city.

Initial excited gasps of excitement as the large pink kite took flight turned to screams of horror as onlookers realised the toddler had become entangled in the tail, and taken along for the ride.

Strong wind propelled the kite for a 31-second flight as the girl bobbed and weaved in the air.


The kite eventually came down and crowds were able to free the girl unharmed.

Hsinchu mayor Lin Chih-chien said the girl suffered some scratches to her face and was terrified by the ordeal, but otherwise unharmed.



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LAW OPINION

The beauty of moot court lawyering

S M MASUM BILLAH

Empowerment through Law of the Common People (ELCOP) organised a virtual moot court competition on 20-23 August 2020, addressing the issue of constitutional law, dedicated after the name of none else than Prof Shah Alam, one of our greatest law teachers, a constitutionalist, and importantly a person *savant par excellence*, and a gentleman to the core. During the ongoing pandemic situation, ELCOP came up with the idea of moot court competition in order to show respect to its great friend Prof Alam in his life time to break the myth that Bangladesh has learned nothing to respect its fertile sons. With this essay too, we all wish an early recovery of Prof Alam.

To begin with an anecdotal mode, I was thinking about what moot court could mean in this disturbing time. Is it an emerging source of hope? Or could we say for an entrapped situation that moot court is a practice to prevent

the law students from “mottu”-ing(the tendency of gaining weight)! Jokes apart, moot court had been an integral part of instructions in the Inns and Oxbridge since early days. In that sense, ELCOP’s moot court venture is to *re-shine* this practice and make a *re-discovery* of this ancient treasure of legal education. Thus, you can catch the chord of the famous song from 3 *Idiots*: “Give me some sunshine, give me some rain, give me another chance, I wanna grow up once again”. Moot court is a practice of shadowing the court culture and growing up with the arts and styles of law. A moot court team consists of 3 *Idiots* by the way! The conception of moot court embraces some criticisms having valuable humility, yet if we want to see our law students grown up, we can hardly ignore its necessity as a mode of smart law teaching.

Law is a large canvass, full of mystery, controversy and contradiction. It often bewilders us. But the paradox is the beauty of the law. Remember Walt

Whitman: “Do I contradict myself? Very well then, I contradict myself, (I am large, I contain multitudes)” – replies the law.

Lawyers and law are actively rewriting our world. Our legal education defines the class of lawyers

To be a lawyer, we need to develop the discipline for reading the legal sources wisely. Moot court trains us how to formulate and present arguments. It makes us a better reader, a better writer and a better thinker.

shukh (includes peace) does not take place automatically. Bangabandhu, the greatest son of our soil, incidentally a law student at Dhaka University, had advocated for our nation’s emancipation. However, what suffering he had sustained and what a tragedy he had to embrace! He said once: “*ami mara gele amar kobore ekta tiner chonga rekhe dish, ei ekta lok ekta tin-er chonga haat-e niye rajnitite eshechilo, ebong sarajibon ei tin-er chongai Bangali, Bangali korei mara gelo*” (when I would die, place a tin-made mike beside my gravestone so that people could say that the man came to politics with a tin-made mike in hand, and even ended along with it advocating for the rights of the Bengalis). Can you imagine his level of dedication for the cause of the people, although he sounded a bit ironic!

I may sound unfocused. Even then, what I mean is studying, leading, moot court, lawyering and judging – all entail a beauty of performing and a promise for sacrifice. Being inspired by the idea of Prof Nicole Casarez, an US Attorney, I note three reasons for that:

Firstly, the law is an *enormous* world of intellectual hunt. You get to apply your mind every day. It asks us how to speak and read. I wonder whether at all we learned to read properly at our law schools. To be a lawyer, we need to develop the discipline for reading the legal sources wisely. Moot court trains us how to *formulate* and *present* arguments. It makes us a *better reader*, a *better writer* and a *better thinker*.

Secondly, if you are a mooter (a lawyer in a miniature form), law people will treat you with *respect*. It gives you an excuse to give a Facebook status, post a LinkedIn link, adds a point to your resume. It gives you a scope to say: “Alhamdulillah”, as I see the recent trend in heralding good news on Facebook. A successful mooter, however, may not end up becoming a good lawyer. You need to have passion, emotion and a “heart” that “bleeds for the people” – to use Justice BB Roy Chowdhury’s poignant phrase in the famous *Dr. Mohiuddin Farooque* (1997). Otherwise, after your death, people may write at your epitaph: “Here lies a lawyer who was also a good mooter, and probably an honest man!”

This takes us to my *third* point about

doing a bit *pro bono lawyering*. That’s the most important way that law makes us happy. American Justice Ginsburg once said: “I can say that in my life as a lawyer, I gained greater satisfaction from things I wasn’t paid to do than what I got a paycheck for.”

We have a legal system and many people cynically say that it is destined to penalise the poor. This is a crisis of our legal system. But what to do? It’s easy to talk about the need for law reform and to put a blame on the politicians. The government needs a reform proposal to the extent a fish needs a bi-cycle. But what about our individual responsibility to work for justice? We hardly can deny that lawyers, legal institutions, law schools run our justice system as public defenders, law technicians and law-graduate suppliers. To that end, ELCOP has not come to be a footnote to our law teaching, rather it has emerged as a caravan in advancing the idea of “lawyering *with* the poor is lawyering for justice”.

Lastly, I note that arguing before a virtual moot court may pose many challenges. We may not be able to see you physically but will feel you from the heart. It thus will also be a testing ground whether our *law* has been an *effective* instrument as a means of communication. I urge you to condone our possible pitfalls in organising the programme shaped by technological sophistication. We are still learning. I congratulate all the participating teams both of memorial and oral rounds. Moot court is not a replacement of vice with virtue, rather it’s a training of translating the legal-voices into common good. Prof Alam’s law teaching entwines moral heft and analytic clarity in that respect. Prof Alam’s vision of lawyering, therefore, inspires us pervasively. It prompts us to reinterpret our thoughts so that we can see the world’s dawn and dusk afresh. Let our moot court be a lovely pretext for our mental boosting.

THE WRITER TEACHES LAW AT JAGANNATH UNIVERSITY, DHAKA AND HOLDS A PHD FROM VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON. THE WRITE UP IS A MODIFIED VERSION OF THE WRITER’S ADDRESS AT THE 1ST PROFESSOR SHAH ALAM VIRTUAL CONSTITUTIONAL LAW MOOT COMPETITION, ELCOP, DHAKA, 21-23 AUGUST 2020.



and tests the merit of our laws. OW Holmes, a great American Judge pithily says that the role of legal education is not merely to teach law or make lawyers, it is to teach law grandly and to produce great lawyers. For a moment, let us take the term, “law and lawyering” and by that way, moot court (lawyering in a miniature form) as an all-embracing idea, where it includes, the judges, lawyers, academics, lawmakers, talk-showers and the like as characters. From this vantage point, even musicians are lawyers – *people’s advocate*, as coined by the US Folklorist Alan Lomax, who sees music as an instrument of fashioning *social justice*. Prof Mizanur Rahman would say that *moot court* is a rebellious lawyer in the making! I am indicating the need for lawyering for human dignity, instead of merely litigious lawyering.

Being a lawyer is a joy. We have many joys in life, being a mooter is an *immediate* joy, and being a lawyer is an *ultimate* joy. It gives you a great deal of happiness. When I say happiness, I remember the pledge of the US Declaration of Independence, “in pursuit of happiness”. I translate it as “*shukh dabrania*” (moving after happiness) and in Tagore’s world it’s known as “*shukher o shondhane jao*”. But

LAW VISION

Why Bangladesh should sign Mediation Convention

KHANDOKER M. S. KAWSAR

The United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements resulting from Mediation, also known as the “Singapore Convention on Mediation”, which was adopted on 20 December 2018, applies to international settlement agreements resulting from mediation. The Convention is an instrument to facilitate international trade and the promotion of mediation as an alternative and effective method of resolving trade disputes. It is also expected to bring certainty and stability to the international framework on mediation, thereby contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), mainly the SDG 16, i.e. peace, justice and strong institutions. Being a country with many economic and investment prospects, Bangladesh should sign this Convention to advance its mission to achieve SDG 16.

Signing the Convention will strategically encourage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country, as Foreign investors often will prefer more amicable methods of dispute resolution, such as mediation. Cancellations of RMG orders of Bangladesh by foreign buyers could have been resolved confidentially as well as could preserve commercial association, if Bangladesh would have been a signatory of the Convention on Mediation. The current pandemic made the necessity of signing the Convention more urgent.

The signing of the Convention would also come as a breathing space as it would enable the direct recognition and enforcement of the settlement agreement, thereby, saving the parties from the complications related to enforcement of the settlement agreements as arbitral awards or as judgements.

Furthermore, it would bring confidence for the foreign investors. The Convention places mediation in the same league as litigation and arbitration in the international dispute resolution arena. The Convention aims to support international trade and encourages the use of mediation when dealing with the resolution of cross-border commercial disputes. The Convention provides much more certainty when dealing with cross border mediation than has previously been the case. The nature of some disputes such as long-term investment and infrastructure projects involving cross border elements would benefit from the Convention which has a huge amount to offer in terms of time and cost efficiencies.

Therefore, Bangladesh should sign the Singapore Convention to help reducing the congestion of cases in courts and to attract more FDI. In India, active measures are being taken by different organs of the government to promote mediation as a means of dispute resolution. Three organs of the State, i.e. executive, legislature, and judiciary should also walk shoulder to shoulder to make mediation a popular way forward.



THE WRITER IS AN ADVOCATE, SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH.

RIGHTS WATCH

Labour relations during the pandemic

DR. UTTAM KUMAR DAS

The advantages to be a worker under the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 (as amended up to 2018) is that it allows one to be guided by the provisions of the Act, e.g., conditions of employment and services, right to form and join a trade union, access to labour courts etc. The Act prescribes that the provisions of the same shall be considered as the minimum standards. Any establishment may adopt its internal service rules, however, provisions of the same shall be in line with the Act. Even an establishment which is not listed under the Act shall not be able to provide any benefit which is lower than the standards already set by the Act (section 3).

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed serious challenges for the existing legal framework to deal with labour relations and labour rights. The Government, through an executive order dated 24 March 2020, has announced executive general holidays beginning from 26 March. It was aimed to contain and prevent spread of the virus. The general holidays were extended until 30 May in phases.

Confusions have been created over how the “general holidays” which were declared by the Government would be made applicable for privately-owned establishments and factories regulated under the Act. The Act is premised in the context of normal situation and did not take note of unprecedented situation like this pandemic. That has resulted in confusions among the owners and management of industries in few sectors which resulted in sufferings and financial losses of respective workers.

For example, although the owners have the liberty to lay-off workers, however, the criteria listed in the Act does not correspond with the prevailing situation. Section 12 of the Act listed causes like “epidemic” and “situation beyond control” which allows an owner to prefer stoppage of works in his/her establishment; if the same is for more than three working days, could be transformed to lay-off of workers. The COVID-19 is yet to be included in the Act as a disease connected to occupation; this requires an immediate and positive consideration or similar framework in the Act to keep it open to address situations like a pandemic in future. This could be done by amending section 28A.

Also, the Act is not clear on matters like the consideration of days “actually worked” in connection to the calculation of maternity benefits for woman workers, who are expecting and were out of work due to the “general holidays” or for health reasons or being advised by the management. Those leava



room for misinterpretation and vagueness, and deprivation from entitlements in many cases.

The COVID-19 situation has already brought “new normal” in the world of work. It has pushed for a new dimension in the typical working modalities – work from home. The UN agencies, international and national organisations, multinational corporations have allowed and designated their employees to be working from home. Few multinationals have introduced the same around mid of March amid spread of the coronavirus. However, such arrangements are linked to the particular nature of works of employees concerned and modalities thereof. For example, those who are working in the factory set-up or linked to productions, for them remote working is unlikely to take place.

The Act is silent about the modality of work from home; a worker is employed in connection to an establishment or industry. However, the particular location of work is designated by the employer concerned which is transferable as well. Given this situation, it can be said that the Act is silent on the concept of work from home – it neither prescribes for nor prohibits the same.

However, while introducing and implementing work from home modality, the respective employers might require certain steps to consider and be followed; for example, designation of a location as a workplace for an employee (e.g., one’s residence as per office record), issues related

to occupational health and issues involving potential accident, injury and death, coverage of insurance, sexual and other forms of harassments while communicating online (i.e., telecommunication, online meeting etc), cyber security etc. Also, related logistics such as required furniture for a workstation, computer or laptop, printer and scanner, internet connection, backup for power supply etc. are an issue. All those matters are required to be taken care of by respective employers in consultation with the employee concerned.

Furthermore, the determination and calculation of working hours, assessment and record of performance of employees etc. are important issues which deserve serious attention from labour law perspective. All those issues are to be determined and decided upon by the employer concerned. It could be done through adoption or modifications in the service rules of the establishment and issuance of internal memos and/or notifications as applicable. At the same time, required consultation and agreement need to be undertaken with workers and employees involved in consideration and appreciation of the situation emerged. Intimation to the respective regulatory authority may also be required.

THE WRITER IS AN ADVOCATE AT THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH AND A SPECIALIST LAWYER ON LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT MATTERS.

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2020, BHADRA 17, 1427 BS

The uncomfortable truth about enforced disappearances

How long will justice remain elusive?

WHEN we hear the law minister himself claiming ignorance of the meaning of the phrase “enforced disappearance,” it seems we are barking up the wrong tree in making so much noise about enforced disappearances, demanding a stop to the atrocious practice and legal remedy for the victims’ families. Contacted several days ago by this newspaper to comment on the issue of enforced disappearances, he said that he had no understanding of what enforced disappearance was and would comment only after he had grasped the meaning of the term. This is a cruel joke to those who are shedding tears every moment for their loved ones who have disappeared, most of them picked up by people claiming to belong to the law enforcing agencies.

The statistics related to enforced disappearances are a damning narrative of the country’s state of governance and rule of law, and perhaps even more so, of its legal justice system. According to a local leading human rights watchdog, as many as 553 people have become victims of enforced disappearance between 2009 and 2019. The eyewitness accounts and the circumstances of their disappearances point to the law enforcing agencies, sponsored by the state. We ought to remember that the practice predates 2009.

It is frustrating that we are still suffering the blatant practice of forced disappearance, which is a gross violation of human rights. It is even more frustrating that there seems to be no legal remedy. Law enforcers cannot get away by saying that so and so are not in their custody. It is the responsibility of the state to discover the whereabouts of those gone missing. And it is not just one or two persons, but more than 500 people who have gone missing, with the administration claiming no knowledge of where they were or might be.

We understand that there are limitations of the courts, but we believe it should take cognizance of the gravity of the issue and direct the government to take such steps as would ensure that the practice ceases immediately. But much would depend on the government’s sincerity to stop this and ensure justice for victims’ families.

Ministry okays buses to run at full capacity

Will they now take responsibility for negligent operators?

EVEN with the death and infection rates increasing at an alarming rate, the Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association recently wrote to the road transport and bridges ministry that all other modes of transport were carrying passengers at full capacity as the coronavirus situation was “gradually returning to normal” and that they should be allowed to do the same. Following this, what we dreaded has become a reality—the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges gave the nod to carrying passengers at full capacity, starting today. The government has also decided to slash the 60 percent hike in bus fares to the previous rates, but how much of it will be implemented by the operators remains to be seen.

The government allowed the move provided that no standing passengers would be allowed once all the seats were occupied, that all passengers, drivers and bus staffers would have to wear masks and that the transport must have hand sanitisers and other hand-washing essentials. Moreover, the buses have to be disinfected before and after each trip. We have witnessed the carelessness of the bus service providers in maintaining safety precautions when the buses were operating on a limited scale. At full capacity, one can only imagine the chaos that may ensue and the fatal effect it can have on the populace.

Even though the authorities state that the Highway Police, and district and police administration will take action against those who violate the directives set forth, we remain skeptical of the practicalities of ensuring proper implementation, given their previous track records. Earlier, we had warned about the risk of operating at full scale based on expert opinions—a warning which has clearly not been heeded. Now, the authorities must answer to the public if they fail to guarantee an end to negligence by operators and keep transmission of the deadly virus in check.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Help the university students

I am a student of one of the top private universities in the capital. Unfortunately, our institution is pressuring us continuously and giving everyone harsh grades so that we are bound to retake the courses. Given the financial constraints many of us are facing, it is impossible to retake a course. Many of us have to go through terrible hardships in order to continue our studies. University students have even committed suicide due to the pressure. I earnestly urge the concerned authorities to look into the matter with importance. Investigations will reveal the roots of such corrupt practices. Please put a stop to this to save the youth of our nation. This education business should be controlled. I strongly believe that the truth needs to be told.

Shams Ali, Dhaka



MACRO MIRROR



FAHMIDA KHATUN

ALL crises—natural disasters, wars, pandemics— affect different sections of people in different ways. Like any other crisis, Covid-19 has differing impacts on society. It has affected men and women, rich and poor, and adults and children differently. Since the ramifications of the coronavirus pandemic vary across people, measures towards the recovery from this crisis should also be focused towards each section of society distinctively.

Since the outbreak of coronavirus, several studies have revealed that the pandemic is not gender blind. They have indicated how the extent of women’s sufferings is more than that of men. Women have been the hardest hit both economically and socially. Women, being at the frontline of the crisis as healthcare workers, as caregivers at home, and as managers of the household, are having to bear the brunt of the coronavirus crisis more intensely than anyone else.

In Bangladesh, more than 85 percent of women are engaged in the informal sector to earn their livelihoods. Thus, a large number of women workers became unemployed overnight when the country went under lockdown. Most of them are yet to get back their jobs even though the economy has started to open up gradually. During the ongoing pandemic, domestic violence has also increased as economic stress and frustrations rose in the face of job losses. Girl children are being married off by poor parents as educational institutions are closed. Only a handful of urban schools can offer technology based online education to a privileged group of students. This could reduce the educational attainment of girls and reverse gender parity in primary education, which was achieved over the last few decades. Early marriage among girls will also increase their health risks, as they would become mothers at a very young age. Thus, the maternal mortality rate can rise too. While the wrath of the pandemic continued for the last six months, severe monsoon floods recently affected at least 50 million people’s lives and livelihoods in Bangladesh. Women and girls are again among the most vulnerable groups during such natural disasters.

In view of the negative impact of Covid-19, the government of Bangladesh has taken initiatives to support the affected sectors of the economy through various stimulus packages. It has announced a number of stimulus packages amounting to more than Taka one trillion, which is equivalent to about 3.7 percent of Bangladesh’s GDP. These packages, which are mainly credit facilities to businesses by banks, have been allocated for export-oriented sectors, the service sector, cottage, micro, small

and medium enterprises (CMSMEs), large businesses, the agriculture sector and pre-shipment loan refinancing.

The government has allocated a share from the stimulus for the CMSMEs (Tk 20,000 crore) of women entrepreneurs. They will receive five percent of the total CMSME allocation, which is equivalent to Taka 100 crore. The recognition of women entrepreneurs’ needs in the CMSME category is well appreciated, especially since women entrepreneurs have been demanding dedicated support for the revival of their businesses. However, the overall disbursement of most stimulus packages is still not encouraging. This is no different in the case of women entrepreneurs also—the majority of them have not been able to receive the benefits of the credit support provided to them. The central bank has advised banks to disburse loans to affected businesses on

collaterals to take loans. Fifth, access to information is limited to many women entrepreneurs outside big cities.

However, during the Covid-19 period, these small entrepreneurs will not be able to stay on course without government support. Except a handful of women entrepreneurs who have been fortunate to have their families support them, the others have been facing challenges throughout their journey. Barring a few in the urban areas, families take a skeptical view when a woman proposes to become an entrepreneur. Thus, many do not receive financial support from their families either. With limited financial and operational capacity, women entrepreneurs have fallen into a dire situation during the pandemic.

Banks are yet to appreciate the underlying challenges of small women-led enterprises. In this respect, the role



Women in the informal economy have been especially hard-hit by the pandemic.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

the basis of bank-client relationships.

This is not working. There are a number of issues attached to loan disbursement to women. First, many micro and small entrepreneurs do not have records of bank loans, and thus there is no record of loan servicing or relationships with banks on this ground. Despite several dedicated loan schemes for them from many commercial banks, many women still find the procedures complex and do not feel encouraged to go to banks for loans. Second, many banks are not interested to give loans to women entrepreneurs. Banks do not find women’s business proposals bankable as their ticket size is small, which will increase banks’ operational costs. Third, banks are also not sure whether their loans will be repaid in time. Fourth, a large number of women entrepreneurs do not have

of a number of organisations such as Microcredit Regulatory Authority (MRA), Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Foundation, and Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) is critical. These organisations can help identify women entrepreneurs across the country who are often outside the radar of financial institutions. Associations of women entrepreneurs can also facilitate the process and guide women entrepreneurs in accessing the stimulus package.

It is now well established that the recovery from the fallout of Covid-19 will be a long and arduous process. While the government has attempted to support the affected sectors through credit-based stimulus packages, its implementation will have to be monitored carefully so

poverty and has also contributed towards gender empowerment.

In order to protect the progress made so far and to reverse the damaging impact of the pandemic on gender equality, government policies should be crafted through a gender lens. The private sector and women entrepreneurs themselves should also be part of the recovery planning. Economic prosperity cannot be sustained by ignoring women’s problems and by keeping women outside the economy. Since the objective of the post-pandemic recovery plan is to “build back better”, policymakers will have to create more opportunities for women to regain the momentum on gender empowerment and gender equality that was created before the coronavirus pandemic.

Dr Fahmida Khatun is the Executive Director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue

Bangladesh is not a risky destination

US needs to reconsider its Level 4 risk advisory

AN OPEN DIALOGUE



ABDULLAH SHIBLI

MY heart sank when I saw the headline in *The Daily Star* on August 17, which reported that the US had updated its periodic travel advisory on August 6, 2020 and urged its citizens to exercise “increased caution in the country due to crime, terrorism, and kidnapping.” This news was particularly jaw-dropping for many of my fellow Bangladeshis. On the brighter side, Bangladesh is not alone in this roster of Red States since India, China and Bhutan are also in the Level 4 category. However, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka are in the Level 3 category which means that these countries are in the Orange rather than the Red Zone.

“J’accuse.” Emile Zola’s citizen’s protest was on my mind when I read about the travel advisory. As a US citizen, I question the justification for this decision and find that the State Department’s analysts used arbitrary standards and issued the advisory in haste. The US Government should reconsider and eventually revise the Travel Advisory issued earlier this month, which advises US citizens to abstain from visiting Bangladesh and slaps my birthplace with the label of a Level 4 (or “Red”) destination, putting it on a “do not travel” list.

The crimes of which Bangladeshis and the government are accused of in the advisory are all-inclusive catch-all offences such as muggings, traffic jams, poor infrastructure and terrorism.

The implication of this Advisory is that my government is now trying to steer me away from going back to Bangladesh, where I have an extended family, including my mother-in-law and a brother. Only a few airlines are flying to Bangladesh, and the other hurdles or roadblocks that stand in the way of

my travel plans are mind-boggling. We have to consider not only the known logistical challenges but also to factor in the uncertainties and make contingency plans in case of unexpected glitches, including illnesses, while in Bangladesh. A traveler has to get tests done and obtain certificates, plan for possible quarantines both in Bangladesh and the USA, and take leave from work. To be on the safe side, one also needs to apply for additional “Covid-19 sickness” sick-time.

If one exercises social distancing, keeps away from crowded bazaars and parties, and practices the health and safety protocols of CDC after you land in Bangladesh, there is no reason to consider the country any more dangerous than other South Asian countries.

My family in the USA have been waiting to go to Bangladesh for the last six months, but we are not alone in this situation. Between one and two million people of Bangladeshi origin live in the USA. A sizeable number of them travel to Bangladesh for multiple reasons: personal, business, tourism etc. This year, they have all been forced to constantly revise their future plans to travel to Bangladesh, and while Covid-19 is still raging in all countries, the Travel Advisory has also put students, non-residents and businessmen with ties to Bangladesh in limbo.

As I review the reasons for judging Bangladesh to be a risky place to visit, it

is evident that apart from the impact of Covid-19, the conditions on the ground have not gotten any worse in the last few months. If one exercises social distancing, keeps away from crowded bazaars and parties, and practices the health and safety protocols of CDC after you land in Bangladesh, there is no reason to consider the country any more dangerous than other South Asian countries.

I, therefore, feel like shouting at the top of my voice like Zola—“J’accuse”. The eminent French writer accused his own government of injustice against its citizens. The celebrated open letter from Emile Zola to the president of the French Republic was in defence of Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer who had been accused of treason by the French army. Zola pointed out judicial errors and lack of serious evidence. It was published in the newspaper *L’Aurore* on January 13, 1898.

If we take the most recent data from Johns Hopkins University, Bangladesh has the lowest per capita infection and death rate when compared with India and Pakistan. As of August 31, the numbers are as follows—India had more than 3.6 million confirmed cases and almost 65,000 deaths, and Pakistan had almost 300,000 confirmed cases and over 6,000 deaths. In Bangladesh, there were 312, 996 confirmed cases and 4,281 deaths. So, the numbers speak for themselves.

The warning against travelling to Bangladesh will be a big setback for many like me, who have been waiting since last year. I don’t care whether it is winter or summer, I want to go there whenever I desire. This freedom to visit Bangladesh eases the pain of living so far away, and of not seeing my family, friends, and near and dear ones. It cannot be taken away. I also need to visit the final resting place of my parents and brothers.

There is a song by Carol King where she croons—“Winter, spring, summer or fall, all you have to do is call, and I’ll be there”.

I have always said the magic words to my mother, and my three aunts—I’ll be

there. My youngest aunt, the eminent litterateur Asma Abbasi and her husband, Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, the scholar and musician, are homebound, and my aunt needs her dearest nephew to be near her.

It must be mentioned that the State Department’s website has some admirable suggestions for travellers and concedes that “In Bangladesh, the crime rate impacting foreigners is generally low... there are no indications foreigners are being targeted of their nationality.” However, it is off the mark when it also declares that “Terrorism events can happen with little or no warning, with terrorists targeting public areas such as tourist locations, transportation hubs, markets/shopping malls, restaurants, places of worship, school campuses, and government facilities.” Really?

My protest is not only against the US government but also some of its biases. A recent study shows that countries led by women had “systematically and significantly better” Covid-19 outcomes than those led by men. The analysis of 194 countries, published by the Centre for Economic Policy Research and the World Economic Forum, suggests the difference is real and “may be explained by the proactive and coordinated policy responses” adopted by the female leaders. And Bangladesh is one of them.

Crime rates are significantly lower in Bangladesh, in sharp contrast to the level of violence recorded in Pakistan. According to published data, the violent crime rate (intentional homicide) in Pakistan is three times more than in Bangladesh. Admittedly, some areas of Bangladesh might be considered risky for foreigners. The State Department Advisory warns, “Travel is dangerous to the Chattogram Hill Tracts due to occasional communal violence and other security risks”. However, that does not in any way imply that the country is unsafe!

Dr Abdullah Shibli is an economist and currently works in information technology. He is also Senior Research Fellow, International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI), a think-tank in Boston, USA.

Passing new laws is not enough for road safety

We must reform the entire system if we are to see any change



TWO years after the countrywide road safety movement, many of us feel a sense of frustration and disappointment as the much-expected changes are yet to occur. However, Shahidul Islam Apon, an activist of that movement, believes that changes are bound to happen. Speaking at a Star Forum webinar held on August 22, Apon reiterated his conviction that the movement for safe roads is not over yet—it has been going on and will continue until safe roads are ensured for all.

Apon and some other participants of the road safety movement went on to form Nirapod Sarak Andolon—an organisation that has been working relentlessly to make our roads safe. They have been campaigning about road safety in schools and colleges and trying to help the families of road crash victims. They have also been trying to identify the systemic flaws and corruption that have led to this anarchy in our transport sector.

So many lives are being lost on our roads every day, but the reasons for the accidents are not being investigated with due importance. While unfit vehicles, unskilled drivers and unhealthy competition among the drivers are the most commonly identified reasons for road accidents, the issues of faulty road designs and lack of capacity of the regulatory authorities are often neglected.

Thousands of students took to the streets demanding safe roads and seeking justice for the killing of two students of Shaheed Ramiz Uddin Cantonment College on July 29, 2018. A mad race between two buses claimed these two innocent lives.

However, deaths from road accidents have continued unabated. As recently as August 23, six people died in a road crash in Mymensingh's Bhaluka on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway as their car was hit by a speeding bus. The question that comes to mind after seeing the picture of the spot where the accident happened is, were there any speed breakers on the road (there was an educational institution across the road)

which could have prevented the crash?

On August 7, a mountaineer was killed in a road crash in the capital as a microbus hit her bicycle on Lake Road, adjacent to Chandrima Udyan in the capital. Had there been a separate cycle lane on the road, the heart-breaking accident could have been avoided.

These examples might give us some idea on the reasons behind road crashes, in which a staggering number of people lose their lives or get maimed every day.

Although the government passed the much-awaited Road Transport Act 2018 after the student movement for road safety, they could not enforce it due to protests from the transport owners and workers. When the government finally took the initiative to enforce the law in November last year, transport associations called strikes, demanding amendments to some sections of the law. As the government gave in to their demands, the law is now being enforced only partially, keeping some of the provisions ineffective.

The prime minister's 17-point directives and the observation of several police weeks also did little to ensure road safety. According to police data, 4,138 people were killed in 4,147 road accidents in 2019 while 2,635 lives were lost in 2,609 road crashes in 2018. Different private organisations, however, recorded a much higher number of deaths during the same time.

Now the question is, can our roads be made safe and the transport sector disciplined only by enforcing the law and other government directives? Or should we also look at other underlying factors that are hugely contributing to road accidents? Also, are only the transport workers responsible for these deaths? What are the owners' responsibilities in ensuring safe roads?

The absence of by-lanes or separate lanes for slow moving vehicles is a major reason for road accidents on our highways. If Nasiman, Kariman and Bhotbhoti (local passenger vehicles) continue to run on the highways, how can we reduce accidents there?

Moreover, according to research, there are 222 black spots on our highways where the majority of accidents take place. These points of the roads need to be redesigned to reduce

road accidents.

According to Osman Ali, General Secretary, Bangladesh Road Transport Workers' Federation, only Tk 200 to 500 crore is required to perform these redesigning. So, what is stopping the government from correcting these faulty road designs? Blaming the drivers for accidents without correcting these black spots is in no way acceptable.

At the Star Forum discussion, Osman Ali said, "if you make a law only to punish the

get proper training before they are given driving licenses and jobs in the sector.

Clearly, on top of enforcing the law, there is a lot more that needs to be done. We need urgent institutional reforms to discipline this sector, thereby making the roads safe for all. Without ensuring good governance, accountability and proper planning, no change will come.

BRTA does not have the capacity or manpower to perform its mandated duties.

be enforcement of the law. This system has been followed in the developed world and we should do it too."

Professor Hoque also emphasised on bus routes rationalisation and introduction of a bus franchise system in Dhaka to bring discipline to the public transport system.

Besides, if drivers are paid a monthly salary and contractual driving can be stopped, this would definitely stop reckless driving as buses won't race against one another to maximise their profit.

Coming back to the issues regarding the Road Transport Act, we hope there is still time to properly evaluate the law and bring the necessary amendments to it. The law should be such that it ensures everyone's safety and protection. While the legitimate concerns of the transport workers should be taken into consideration, the law should not also forget the concerns of the common people who are routinely falling victims to horrific road crashes.

While there was scope in the Motor Vehicles Ordinance 1983 for the road accident victims to get compensation, in the new law, this specific provision has been scrapped. Instead, a provision for creating a financial assistance fund for the victims has been kept in the RTA 2018.

According to Sara Hossain, Honourary Executive Director, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, there should be scope in the new law for the victims to seek compensation. For that, amendment is necessary.

And as filmmaker Catherine Masud puts it, getting compensation is a right of the victims and their families, it is not charity. Besides, through filing compensation cases, we can hold the owners of the vehicles as well as the insurance companies accountable because while the owners are employing the drivers without following due procedure, the insurance companies are also not following the rules in giving compensation.

Finally, we must include the issue of road safety in the school curriculum. If we can teach our children about the basics of road safety from early childhood, they will never forget the lessons in their lifetime.



A road block during the 2018 Road Safety Movement.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

drivers but do not protect their interests, why will the transport workers accept the law?"

Besides, providing training to the 70 lakh drivers and transport workers should be a priority for the government. Although the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) has 23 training institutes, only 14 of them are currently operating. And only one institute in Gazipur has been providing some sort of training to transport workers. BRTA must make all the training institutes operational and ensure that drivers and transport workers

The regulatory body must build its capacity to perform its job efficiently, and it needs the government's support to do so.

As Professor Shamsul Hoque, transport expert and former director of the Accident Research Institute at BUET, believes: "For a healthy transport system, we need to develop the 3E system—engineering and planning, education, and enforcement. We need to first focus on engineering and planning, then we should educate people and spread awareness, and at the third stage, there will

Israel will not be unhappy if the Democrats win

ANISUR RAHMAN

ISRAEL will undoubtedly enthusiastically welcome and celebrate the occasion if Donald Trump wins the US presidential elections. No other US president has done so much for the Zionist state since Harry S Truman. Truman was the first world leader to officially recognise Israel as a Jewish state on May 14, 1948, only 11 minutes after its emergence.

It may be mentioned that Truman was a Democrat and recognised Israel despite his internationally famous foreign secretary George Marshall recommending not to do so at the time. He opined that the Jewish state would create more conflicts in an already tumultuous region. He was proved right. However, Washington and its allies calculatedly preferred a troubled region so that they could maintain and expand their economic and strategic interests. It is important to note that the creation of Israel was an outcome of the Jewish opposition to Turkish involvement in the First World War against the British and its allies.

It has been described in the US archives, which states "In 1917 Chaim Weizmann, scientist, statesperson and Zionist, persuaded the British government to issue a statement favouring the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The statement, which became known as the Balfour Declaration, was, in part, payment to the Jews for their support of the British against the Turks during World War I. After the war, the League of Nations ratified the declaration and in 1922 appointed Britain to rule Palestine."

Those who are aware of the political history know very well that previously, the Democrats were more pro-Israeli than the Republicans. After the mid-sixties, the equation began to change. Now, the Republicans are considered more pro-Israeli, and since Donald Trump came to power, there have been no limits to



Joe Biden listens to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during joint statements in Jerusalem on March 9, 2016.

PHOTO: DEBBIE HILL/AFP

this support. Trump has given them almost unlimited blank cheques. Besides, Israel has got Kushner, the son-in-law of the president, who directly looks after the interests of the Zionist state. Kushner, both by faith and deed, is a Zionist. Hence, it is natural that Israel will prefer to see Trump and Pence in the White House for another four years. But will they be too unhappy if Joe Biden and Kamala Harris come to power instead? Definitely not.

First, we may come to Biden's standpoints. Even before he had secured his nomination as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate, as early as April 2020, he categorically declared that if elected, he would not put pressure on Israel to move its capital back from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv. When Israel and UAE signed an agreement where the Emirates officially established relations with the Zionist

state, Biden almost immediately welcomed it.

It seems the Democrats are happy that the Republicans, headed by Donald Trump, are making some unpleasant decisions that they tacitly support but could not take themselves because of diplomatic considerations. In other words, it demonstrates their opportunism in this regard. After the primaries, when it was clear that Joe Biden was going to be the nominee, the powerful pro-Israel US news outlet *The Hill* categorically wrote on July 29 that "Joe Biden is the candidate for Israel."

Then came the question of picking his running mate. Selecting Kamala Harris was an intelligent strategy on the part of Joe Biden—a multi-dimensional "checkmate", if you will. Demands were made from different quarters to nominate an African-American woman for the second most important post of the

administration. Harris is an African-American from her paternal side, but she is also an Indian-American and thereby an Asian-American, from her maternal side. There is a big Indian community in the US, most of whom are expected to vote for Kamala Harris.

Sensing the danger, the Trump camp has started using Trump-Modi posters in his election campaign. However, another very significant factor here is Kamala's Jewish connection. She is married to attorney Douglas Ehmhoff, who is Jewish by faith. After Joe Biden's formal announcement of his running mate, *The Times of Israel* wrote "In Harris, Biden chooses a traditionally pro-Israel Dem as his veep candidate." Similar statements have been seen in other Israeli media too.

Some observers have pointed out that Kamala Harris has expressed her support for the Kashmiri peoples' right to self-determination and has even spoken for the basic human rights of Palestinians, which caused concern in New Delhi and Tel Aviv (Jerusalem). But these are, at best, moral posturing. Even Trump has spoken for the Palestinian state! At the end of the day when crucial decisions are to be made, experts believe that the Biden-Kamala pair, if elected, will stand by Israel and India.

There is no doubt that Kamala, by her own individual merits, qualifies for the job more than many other aspirants. She is the daughter of two highly educated parents, both of them PhD holders. She herself is an excellent lawyer who served as the elected Attorney General of California. She made her mark on different aspects of the law, such as the death penalty, LGBT rights, environmental protection laws, sex crimes and immigrants' rights. In 2016, she was elected to the US Senate, securing around 60 percent of the vote. She has brilliant debating skills with to-the-point and thought-provoking

deliberations. Many Democrats consider her to be an asset.

But in addition to these factors, Biden found an extra treasure in her which is considered vital for his election winning calculations. This is her Jewish connection. Securing the African-American vote is not enough. Without Jewish endorsement, it is almost impossible to win the US presidential elections. Hence, both the Republicans and the Democrats want their endorsement, or at least, want no opposition. In the context of Trump's blank cheque to Israel, Biden had to select a running mate who would be looked upon favourably by the Jewish lobby.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is one of the strongest lobby groups in US politics, and Eric Cortellessa from *The Times of Israel* wrote on August 12 that Kamala Harris has a close relationship with AIPAC. Last year, she had a private meeting with AIPAC leaders and tweeted "Great to meet today in my office with California AIPAC leaders to discuss the need for a strong US-Israel alliance, the right of Israel to defend itself, and my commitment to combat antisemitism in our country and around the world." In November 2017, she visited Israel and met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In April 2019, the senator's then campaign communications director Lily Adams said that her "support for Israel is central to who she is." So in Kamala Harris, Israel can feel some sense of comfort.

At present, Israel prefers the Republican Trump-Pence pair. However, they do not plan to alienate the Democrats and the Joe Biden-Kamala Harris combination. Israel do not keep all their eggs in a single basket. They know that the election results can go either way. Whoever wins, Israel will gleefully tell the Palestinians "Heads we win, tails you lose this time too."

Anisur Rahman is a senior Bangladeshi journalist now living in Sweden.

QUOTABLE
Quote

LEO TOLSTOY
(1828-1910)
Russian author, a master of realistic fiction and one of the world's greatest novelists.

Truth, like gold, is to be obtained not by its growth, but by washing away from it all that is not gold.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Rube

5 Climb

11 Aspirin's target

12 Ford follower

13 Free of fat

14 Puts in office

15 Tobago's island neighbor

17 Game caller

18 Chopped up

22 Relates

24 Fancy wrap

25 "Exodus" character

26 Purpose

27 Biathlon need

30 Striped cat

32 Santa's reindeer, e.g.

33 Furniture wood

34 Scapula's place

38 Romantic song

41 Lake near Buffalo

42 Galahad's mother

43 Ripped

44 Conical abodes

45 Went fast

DOWN

1 Sentry's cry

2 Bakery worker

3 Ski resort sight

4 Pound's cousin

5 Served perfectly

6 Leafy lunches

7 College unit

8 Catchall abbr.

9 Catch

10 Hosp. workers

16 Conditions

19 Soothing

Lozenge

20 Otherwise

21 Some bucks

22 Poi source

23 Rock's Clapton

28 Caron of "Gigi"

29 Fuel gas

30 Letter after sigma

31 Keys

35 Lofty poems

36 Cork's country

37 Oboe need

38 Stake

39 Pub product

40 Racing circuit

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

F	A	C	T	B	E	S	T	O	W	
A	C	H	E	E	X	P	I	R	E	
I	R	O	N	G	A	I	N	E	D	
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T	R	E	A	T	A	C	O	O		
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Y	A	N	K	E	D		S	P	R	Y

BEETLE BAILEY

BY MORT WALKER

6/1/8

BABY BLUES

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

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Demonstrators wearing face masks due to the ongoing coronavirus disease outbreak march during a rally against racial inequality and to call for justice a week after Black man Jacob Blake was shot several times by police in Kenosha, in Boston, Massachusetts, US, on Saturday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Court records confessional statement

FROM PAGE 12
the case, said Nandadulal during interrogation on remand agreed to make confessional statement before the court. That's why his remand period was cut short, the IO added.

Yesterday was the third day of Nandadulal's four-day remand, granted earlier by Judge Tamanna Farah. He was remanded by Rab three times.

The court, meanwhile, granted Rab one more day's remand of OC Pradeep, said Khayrul.

Late last week, the three arrested Armed Police Battalion members ASI Shahjahan, constables Sajib and Abdullah had made their confessional statements before the court.

ANOTHER CASE FILED AGAINST PRADEEP

Yesterday, another case was filed against suspended Teknaf OC Pradeep Kumar Das and 40 others by the family of a "gunfight" victims with a Cox's Bazar court. Among the accused are 35 cops and six civilians.

Plaintiff Sultana Rabia Munni, 22, of Teknaf's Rongikhal area, stated in the first information report of the case that her husband Syed Alam, brother-in-law Nurul Alam and nephew Syed Hossain were picked up by Pradeep and several others from their home in Gazipara around 2:00am on May 6.

"After detaining them, Pradeep and Sub-Inspector Moshir Rahman demanded we pay them Tk 50 lakh. As we refused to give the money, they killed them in a 'gunfight' in a paddy field near the house around 4:40am. They then filed a case claiming it to be a 'gunfight'," adds the FIR.

Taking the case into cognisance, Judge Md Helal Uddin of Senior Judicial Magistrate Court-3 instructed the officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station to submit a report on the 'gunfight' to it, reports our Cox's Bazar correspondent quoting plaintiff's lawyer Md Kasem Ali.

The other accused in the case are sub-inspectors Moshir Rahman, Rasel Ahmed, Kamruzzaman, Jamshed Ahmed, Sujit Chandra Dey, Arun Kumar Chakma and Nazimuddin Bhuiyan, assistant sub-inspectors Kazi Saifuddin, Fakruzzaman, Md Jamal Ullah, Md Mazharul Islam, Main Uddin, Naimul Haq, Mishkat Uddin, Ramdhan Chandra Dash, Amir Hossain, Wahid Ullah, Sanjib Dutta and Mithun Kumar, constables Sagor Deb, Abu Hanif, Helal Uddin, Amjad Hossain, Md Mamun, Nazmul Hasan, Jashim Uddin, Md Amzad Hossain, Kamrul Hasan, Md Jahangir, Md Habib, Md Nur Nabi, Anwar Hossain, Saikat Barua and six civilians who are

supposedly police sources. All the police members were working at Teknaf Police Station when the incident took place.

Australia to probe foreign influence at univs

AFP, Sydney

Australia's parliament is set to probe alleged foreign interference at public universities, a government minister said yesterday, as concerns grow about Chinese influence.

A proposed inquiry by the security and intelligence committee follows a series of controversies over China's clout on Australian campuses, ranging from hacks of university data to questionable financial donations and intimidation of Beijing's critics.

Concerns have also been raised about the nature of research links between academics and scientists in the two countries.

Alan Tudge, the minister for population and cities, told Sky News the mooted inquiry was the latest government attempt to tackle spiralling foreign interference now at "levels not seen since World War II".

Ensure safety

FROM PAGE 12
recognition of Bangladesh. **CURB SMUGGLERS, HOARDERS**
The government directs the law-enforcement agencies throughout Bangladesh to take stringent measures against the anti-social elements indulging in smuggling, black-marketing, hoarding, profiteering and causing undue rise in the prices of food grains and other essential commodities, says a government handout today. The members of the public are requested to help the government by reporting to the authority specific cases of such anti-social acts.

SALES TAX ON CLOTH GOES
Acting Prime Minister Syed Nazrul Islam declares in a meeting at Laldighi Maidan, Chittagong today that the government has decided to withdraw sales tax and reduce import duty on cloth by 50 percent as a measure to give relief to consumers. **SOURCES:** September 2, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

BNP's 42nd

FROM PAGE 12
standing committee members will place wreaths and offer Fateha at Zia's grave in the city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar at 11:00am.

The leaders and activists of BNP Dhaka north and south units will also place wreaths at the grave at 11:00am and 12:00pm respectively.

The party will organise a virtual discussion at 3:00pm.

Meanwhile, BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir issued separate messages ahead of the party's founding anniversary. They greeted party leaders, activists, followers and people from all walks of life on the occasion.

After the assassination of Zia in Chattogram on May 30, 1981, his wife Khaleda Zia took over the party leadership.

Japan's

FROM PAGE 12
"I hope many people will want to ride it and feel safe."

The machine so far can fly for just five to 10 minutes but if that can become 30 minutes, it will have more potential, including exports to places like China, Fukuzawa said. Unlike airplanes and helicopters, eVTOL, or "electric vertical takeoff and landing," vehicles offer quick point-to-point personal travel, at least in principle.

They could do away with the hassle of airports and traffic jams and the cost of hiring pilots, they could fly automatically.

Battery sizes, air traffic control and other infrastructure issues are among the many potential challenges to commercializing them.

"Many things have to happen," said Sanjiv Singh, professor at the Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University, who co-founded Near Earth Autonomy, near Pittsburgh, which is also working on an eVTOL aircraft.

"If they cost \$10 million, no one is going to buy them. If they fly for 5 minutes, no one is going to buy them. If they fall out of the sky every so often, no one is going to buy them," Singh said in a telephone interview.

The SkyDrive project began humbly as a volunteer project called Cartivator in 2012, with funding by top Japanese companies including automaker Toyota Motor Corp., electronics company Panasonic Corp. and video-game developer Bandai Namco.

India slams China

FROM PAGE 12
but said Chinese border troops "have always strictly respected the Line of Actual Control and never crossed the line," referring to the unofficial border.

"Border troops from both sides have maintained communication over issues on the ground," foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said yesterday at a regular press briefing.

The latest border incident came two and half months after the clash between Indian and Chinese troops at Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh where 20 Indian soldiers were killed.

The Chinese side too had suffered casualties.

Last week, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had said in an interview to a news portal that the Sino-India face-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) this year was the "most serious situation since 1962 (when India and China had fought a war)."

India and China have so far held several rounds of military and diplomatic talks but not much headway has been made to resolve the standoff barring a limited disengagement in some parts of eastern Ladakh.

Key accused in the pillow

FROM PAGE 12
"The ACC head office is monitoring the graft cases. We have come to know that Shahadat has been freed from jail on bail, but we are yet to receive court documents. After receiving the documents, we will take steps according to directives of the ACC head office," Moyazzem told The Daily Star yesterday.

On December 12 last year, the ACC had filed two cases with its Pabna district office against Shahadat and several others on charges of irregularities involving supply of furniture and household items, worth Tk 16 crore, to the power plant project officials. Shahadat was arrested on the same day.

According to several reports, the prices of the various items used to furnish the project's 966 flats for Russian engineers and others were abnormally higher than market prices.

The reports claimed that each pillow was bought for Tk 5,957, and

the cost of carrying it to a flat was Tk 760. An electric stove cost Tk 7,747 and the cost of carrying it from the ground floor to the top floor was Tk 6,650. The price of an electric iron was Tk 4,154 and the carrying cost was Tk 2,945.

ACC Deputy Director Moyazzem said 14 people, including two contractors and 12 engineers of the Public Works Department, were accused in four cases in connection with the pillow scam.

All the accused but Shahadat are now behind bars, he added.

Advocate Obaidul Haq, who represented the ACC at the court during the hearing on Shahadat's bail prayer on Wednesday, said they opposed the petition, but the court granted it on health grounds.

Md Al Amim, jailor of Pabna District Jail, said they received the bail order via an e-mail on Thursday noon and forwarded it to the Khashimpur jail authorities the same day.

Act promptly to stop

FROM PAGE 12
Referring to Ain o Salish Kendra statistics, Tamanna Hoq of HRFB said from January to August 25 this year, some 210 people became victims of "gunfights".

Reading out the keynote paper, she said some 588 people were killed during the government's anti-narcotics crackdown between May 2018 and August 25 this year.

As per media reports, some 287 people were killed in "shootouts" in the name of anti-narcotics drive in the last two years in Cox's Bazar alone, she said.

Of them, 161 people were killed in Teknaf alone.

Tamanna said 110 people were killed in "gunfights" during police drives in Teknaf when Pradip Kumar Das, an accused in Maj Sinha murder, was the officer-in-charge of Teknaf police station.

Responding to a query, she said as per claims of family members and witnesses, some 604 people fell victims to enforced disappearance between 2007 and August 25 this year.

There is no sign of ending the extrajudicial killings in the country. Such incidents are taking place even amid the coronavirus pandemic, said Abu Ahmed Faijul Kabir of ASK.

Zakir Hossain, executive director of Nagorik Uddyog, said during Bangladesh's universal periodic review in 2009, the then foreign minister of Awami League government pledged before the international community that the government would show "zero tolerance" to such incidents.

However, there is no visible progress to this effect yet, he said.

Unfortunately, the government has increased the level of such torture and became "innovative" in doing so, he added.

Nijera Kori Coordinator Khushi Kabir said many people are hesitant to share their opinions even on social media out of fear.

"This is unacceptable," she said, stressing the need for upholding democratic values and practices in the society.

Sudan govt, rebel groups agree peace deal

AFP, Juba

Sudanese leaders and rebel commanders yesterday agreed on a historic peace deal, a crucial first step towards ending 17 years of conflict, an AFP correspondent said.

Leaders of the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella organisation of rebel groups from the western region of Darfur and the southern states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, raised their fists in celebration after inking the agreement.

The deal was "initialled" and not signed, as a way to leave the door open for two key holdout rebel groups to join in a "final" agreement, officials said.

Two rebel factions have refused to take part in the deal.

EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

AYSHA ZAHREEN

"Being a final year student, I am uncertain about how to prepare my thesis report as it requires a lot of field work. Hence, I am thinking of opting for an internship instead of writing a thesis paper as joining an internship will provide me with skills required to secure a good job in the future. However, I am not sure if any reputed organisation would offer internship opportunities amid the coronavirus pandemic," shares Khandaker Muhtasim Rafi, 24, a private university student.

Millions of young people like Rafi in Bangladesh are worried about continuing their regular educational activities as well as the long-term impact of the pandemic on their future education and career.

The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown measures in Bangladesh have led to the closure of most of the educational institutions including Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centres. Some educational institutions have introduced online learning but both teachers and students are having a hard time adapting to it. The worst sufferers are students who do not have access to internet and internet-enabled devices such as computers and smartphones and who do not have proper study space at home.

A global report issued on August 11, 2020 titled 'Youth and COVID-19: Impacts on jobs, education, rights and mental well-being' reveals that 65 percent of young people

reported having learned less since the beginning of the pandemic because of the transition from classroom to online and distance learning during the lockdown. The report also points out that 51 percent of young people believe their education will be delayed, and nine percent fear their education would suffer and that they might even fail.

More than five months into the closure of educational institutions in Bangladesh, the government is yet to come up with a concrete plan on how to address the issue of education and skill development during the pandemic and beyond. This indecisiveness is causing millions of students frustration regarding their education and career.

Education Minister Dipu Moni said on August 28, 2020 that the Ministry of Education was working on figuring out what kind of changes should be made in the education system during the pandemic, and after it is over. She, however, didn't commit herself to any specific deadline as to the outcome.

In a meeting with the senior officials of the Ministry of Education and heads of various departments and agencies under the ministry, the Minister instructed teachers of secondary, higher secondary, madrasa and technical schools to keep students motivated through direct communication in compliance with the hygiene rules or via social media during the pandemic. In the meeting they decided to extend the ongoing cancellation of in-person classes of all educational institutions in the country, except Qawmi

madrasas, till October 3, 2020. They also emphasised on making online educational activities more fruitful at the university level.

Another big concern is that in the post-Covid period, sustaining existing employment and creating jobs will be a big challenge.

Tahsinah Ahmed, Executive Director, UCEP Bangladesh shares that 30 percent of the graduates of the organisation have lost their jobs during the pandemic which clearly indicates that traditional skill and teaching method will not work anymore. The training institutions should come forward and analyse how they can be more competent and adaptable to the changes occurring, she emphasises.

As to the government's initiative to address this disruption in the job market, Anir Chowdhury, Policy Advisor, a2i (Access to Information), informed in a roundtable jointly organised by ActionAid Bangladesh and The Daily Star on July 19, 2020, that the government had identified five sectors through which around 40 lakh jobs can be created. The sectors are agro-food processing supply chain; healthcare; pharmaceuticals; creative media; and ICT, e-commerce, and digital credit.

He further emphasised on the need to create a top-notch brand for vocational education and training. "Otherwise, we won't be able to convince children's parents and the government will also refrain from providing adequate funding," he added.



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'Barcelona's DNA being left behind'

AGENCIES

Arturo Vidal said Barcelona have to "change a lot of things" as their DNA is being left behind amid the club's crisis, which could see Lionel Messi sensationally leave.

Messi has handed in a transfer request and the Barca captain is reportedly wanted by Pep Guardiola's Manchester City in the Premier League, while Paris Saint-Germain, Inter and Juventus have also been linked.

It comes after Barca were dethroned by bitter rivals Real Madrid in LaLiga and humiliated 8-2 by Bayern Munich in the 2019-20 Champions League quarter-finals, with Ronald Koeman replacing Quique Setien -- who was only appointed head coach in January.

And Barca midfielder Vidal has called on the embattled side to change their mindset as pressure mounts on president Josep Maria Bartomeu. "Barcelona have done things that don't fit with a team at the top level," Vidal said in an interview with Daniel Habif via Youtube.

"In the end, you realise this when you face an organised team, a team that has a winning mentality, with players that are physically prepared and that has a very strong game plan. That takes its toll when you're weak in the head and in energy - that happened to us. Barcea first have to change the way they think because football has evolved a lot.

"DNA is being left behind and other teams are improving in other aspects. Nowadays, football is more physical,



A young boy waited for hours in front of Camp Nou on Sunday, hoping to get a glimpse of his idol Lionel Messi. The Barcelona players turned up, one by one, to have medical tests ahead of the new season but there was no sign of the Argentine superstar, leaving the young boy heartbroken.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Smearing a giant the Barca way

NABID YEASIN

Barcelona and Lionel Messi -- the two names have always been synonymous and the 33-year-old left-footed genius had limitless moments of greatness with the Blaugrana.

And during the course of the 20 seasons that he played for Barcelona -- 17 of them in the first team -- Messi had scored 634 goals, winning a total of 34 trophies together with the Catalan club. But all of it now seems to have come to an end. At least from Messi's part. The Barcelona-Messi relation that had started when the 13-year-old prodigy signed a contract on a paper napkin, now ends in the form of a formal letter, a burofax, sent by the Argentine to Barcelona on Tuesday stating his intentions of leaving the club immediately triggering the clause on his contract that allows

him to walk out for free.

It has only turned uglier since then. Only a few hours left [at the time of writing this report] till Barcelona started their first training session under newly appointed head coach Ronald Koeman -- the Catalan side were supposed to train at 17:30 local time. And it is certain that Messi, the best player the club ever had, will not attend the training session as the Argentine as was apparent when he did not show up for Sunday's PCR tests -- a prerequisite for attending Monday's training session.

The fallout between Messi and Barcelona is not anything random but a result of a series of events that has happened over the years.

The bleak and humiliating nights at Rome, Liverpool had followed the most humiliating defeat in the club's history in the Champions League -- crashing out to eventual champions Bayern Munich after an 8-2

thumping at Lisbon this season. And Messi, who has been witnessing the cracks grow and without a shadow of a sporting project, has seen enough.

The 8-2 humiliation at the hands of Bayern could well be Messi's last ever game for Barcelona. But Messi, who has many a time single-handedly carried Barcelona to glory and has given his everything for the club as long as he wore the iconic number 10 shirt, deserves a better farewell off the pitch.

However, even that seems unlikely as Barcelona have rejected Messi's offer to sit and discuss the situation. And after all these years, what Messi is getting is Barcelona's consideration of meeting with him only to discuss terms of his contract renewal and nothing more.

For Messi, such attitude from the club he was always devoted to, is more humiliating than the 8-2 defeat in Lisbon.

Women's football returns in November

SPOTS REPORTER



While there is no clear guideline as yet regarding the start of the new season in men's domestic football, the women's wing of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has already started groundwork to start things off by resuming the women's football league

in early November.

The league rolled on to the ground in February this year after a gap of six years, but it had to be halted less than a month on as coronavirus spread throughout the country. Now that life is slowly getting back to normalcy and restrictions on sporting activities being eased off, the BFF wants to resume the league.

BFF's women's wing chairman Mahfuza Akter Kiran informed that they have corresponded with the clubs, informing about the plans to restart the league.

"We have sent letters to the participating clubs, informing them that we would start the league from the first week of November. The league will resume from where it had stopped," Kiran told The Daily Star yesterday. Kiran also informed that the residential camp of age-level women's players will resume in October.

"We will call players of the age-group level for the BFF residential camp from the first week of October. Due to Covid-19 precautions and physical distancing protocol, we will start the camp with 30 players, with an eye on assignments in 2021," Kiran said.



more about strength and speed, and technical ability can sometimes come second. Barcelona have to change lots of things. A club, which I think is the best in the world, can't have 13 professional players and the rest youngsters.

"Not because they don't deserve to be there, but they have to be competing with the best and with who has to play. Every club has 23 players fighting for a place, improving and getting better every day. But when they don't progress, when you think you can always win with your DNA, that's when you're mistaken."

"We have Messi, who is the number one and is an alien, but he needs help. He needs players that improve the team and that get better results."

President's emotional message to Messi

AGENCIES

Argentina's president Alberto Fernandez has called on Lionel Messi to return to his homeland and end his career with Newell's Old Boys.

"You are in our hearts and we have never seen you play in our country," Fernandez said in a message directed at Messi via C5N.

"Give us the pleasure of ending your career with Newell's Old Boys, your club. Fernandez, who supports Buenos Aires side Argentinos Juniors, went on to admit he remains a bigger fan of Diego Maradona.

"The great merit of Maradona is that he played alone against the world," Fernandez said. "I've never seen a player like Maradona. I admire him deeply -- more than Messi, to be honest, because he comes from the Argentinos' youth. He was a kind of gladiator, with incredible strength."

Federer, Nadal call for 'unity'

AFP, PARIS

Novak Djokovic shrugged off concerns of Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer and announced the formation of a new men's pro tennis players' association that promises to put him on a collision course with his two elite rivals.

Nadal and Federer called for "unity, not separation" after reports their longtime rival was spearheading a breakaway union.

SHORT CORNER

Russia, India joint champions in Online Chess Olympiad

India and Russia have been declared joint winners of the Online Chess Olympiad after two Indian players lost their internet connection during the final round.

India appealed after two of its players lost connection to their games and forfeited on time.

Officials said these were "unprecedented circumstances". "The Online Chess Olympiad has been impacted by a global internet outage, that severely affected several countries, including India. Two of the Indian players have been affected and lost connection, when the outcome of the match was still unclear," Arkady Dvorkovich, president of the International Chess Federation, said in a statement.

He said he decided to award both teams gold medals in the "absence of a unanimous decision" from the body's appeals committee. Teams from more than 160 countries participated in this year's online event, which began in July. --- BBC

Rahm secures BMW win with monster birdie

Spain's Jon Rahm sunk a breathtaking 66-foot (20 metre) putt to win the BMW Championship on Sunday in a thrilling playoff victory over American Dustin Johnson.

The 25-year-old, who recently spent two weeks as world number one, shot



a flawless six-under par 64 on Sunday, saving his best for last after carding a lacklustre five-over 75 in the first round.

Rocketing up the leaderboard on Sunday, Rahm then drained the long putt in the first hole of a playoff against Johnson, letting out an elated roar.

"Honestly I hoped it would be a decent putt for par coming back and have a chance to keep the playoff going. Luckily it looked really good on the way and when it had 10 feet to go it was tracking beautifully," Rahm said in a televised interview.

"I could hardly believe it." -- Reuters

Hamilton feels for F1 fans

Lewis Hamilton acknowledges that if he had been a Formula One fan watching the same man reel off one dominant win after another, it might even have sent him to sleep.

"Having been a fan growing up, having lived in different eras, watching the Schumacher era, of course I know what it's like," said the Briton, sympathising with fans after his fifth win in seven races at Sunday's Belgian Grand Prix.

With yet another pole-to-flag



procession in his Mercedes, even Hamilton was reminded of the days between 2000 and 2004 when he would watch Michael Schumacher dominate with Ferrari.

"I was a teenage kid. I would have woken up, had my bacon sarnie and probably watched the start and gone to sleep and then woken up to watch the end," he recalled.

"If I was watching today I would do the same most likely and watch the highlights, 'cause it's much shorter," Hamilton, who is now a vegan, added with a laugh. The 35-year-old has won five of the last six world championships and with a 47-point lead over Red Bull's Max Verstappen, is on course to equal Schumacher's record of seven titles this year.



PHOTO: STAR

ODI captain Tamim Iqbal had a lengthy conversation with selectors Minhajul Abedin and Habibur Bashar as Bangladesh players continued their individual training ahead of next month's Sri Lanka tour. Bangladesh are scheduled to leave for the island nation towards the end of September to play three Test matches and three T20Is.

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SHAH CEMENT

Act promptly to stop extra-judicial killings

Human Rights Forum urges govt; suggests judicial commission to probe allegations against agencies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB) yesterday called upon the government to take prompt actions for ending extrajudicial killings in the country.

It said the government needs to form a judicial commission to neutrally probe into allegations of such killings, as well as allegations of enforced disappearance and custodial torture against the law enforcement agencies.

At a virtual press conference, the forum members demanded the government should make public reports of the commission, ensure punishment of perpetrators as per the reports, and pay due compensation to the victims and their family members.

HRFB is a platform of 20 leading rights and development organisations of the country.

The forum members said state agencies should follow High Court directives while detaining or arresting any citizen of the country.

Besides, the government should ensure proper monitoring so that the directives are being followed at the field level accordingly, they added.

Moreover, the government has to take actions over incidents of rights violations like curb of freedom of expression, violence against children, and rights violation of ethnic and religious minorities, they said.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



Fishermen selling their catches to a wholesale fish trader at Baruni Ghat in Chattogram's Halishahar area. These fishermen make a living by netting in the shallow sea, but they don't know what would happen to them when the Bay Terminal of Chattogram Port is constructed. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Rooppur Power Plant Key accused in the pillow scam case freed on bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A contractor for the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant project has walked out of jail on bail in two cases filed over corruption in purchasing furniture and household items for project officials.

Shahdat Hossain, managing director of Sazin Construction, was freed by the Kashimpur jail authorities in Gazipur on Thursday, a day after Pabna District and Sessions Judge Md Mokbul Ahsan granted him bail on health grounds, said a lawyer of the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Journalists only came to know about his release yesterday.

Md Moyazzem Hossain, deputy director of Pabna ACC, said the case documents were sent to the jail authorities very promptly on Thursday and Shahadat was able to walk out of jail on the same day.

"The ACC head office is SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

LADAKH BORDER

India slams China over 'provocative' military movement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India yesterday accused China of "carrying out provocative military movements to change the status quo" along the tense border in eastern Ladakh two days ago, and said Indian troops "pre-empted" the Chinese troops' move on the southern banks of Pangong Tso lake.

The Indian Defence Ministry said that on the night of August 29, 2020, China's People's Liberation Army troops violated the previous consensus arrived at during military and diplomatic engagements amid the ongoing standoff in eastern Ladakh and carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo.

"The Indian troops pre-empted this PLA activity on the southern bank of Pangong Tso Lake, undertook measures to strengthen our positions and thwart Chinese intentions to unilaterally change facts on ground," the ministry said in a statement.

It said while "the Indian army is committed to maintaining peace and tranquility through dialogue, it is also equally determined to protect its territorial integrity."

A brigade commander-level flag meeting was on at Chushul to resolve the issues, the statement said.

Beijing did not confirm the incident,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Ensure safety of stranded Bangalees

September 1, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU'S CALL TO IRCs

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman tells Marcel Naville, president of the International Red Cross Societies, that Red Cross should take appropriate steps to deal with the question of physical safety, maintenance and repatriation of 5 lakh Bangalees trapped in Pakistan.

Bangabandhu raises the question of the Bangalees in Pakistan when Naville calls on the prime minister this morning at his suite in the Hotel La Reserve in Geneva. The meeting lasts an hour. The Bangladesh prime minister reminds the chief of the Red Cross that the organisation was allowed by the government of Bangladesh to meet the Biharis in Bangladesh. The Red Cross, therefore, has a moral responsibility to visit Bangalees in the so-called repatriation camps in Pakistan. CAIRO TALKS FRUITFUL, SAYS SAMAD

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad ends his two-day visit in Egypt today apparently without receiving any concrete assurance of formal recognition of Bangladesh by Egypt. However, the foreign minister describes his talks with Egyptian officials as "fruitful". He leaves for Damascus today.

It is believed that Egypt is still worried about the possible reaction of one of its confederation members, Libya, an ardent advocate of Pakistan, to any announcement by Cairo of formal



SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

SINHA MURDER

Court records confessional statement of SI Nandadulal

OC Pradeep sued for three more murders

STAR REPORT

As suspended Sub-Inspector Nandadulal Rakshit made his confessional statement before a Cox's Bazar court yesterday, it marked a month since Maj (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan was killed at a police check post in Teknaf.

Judge Tamanna Farah of Senior Judicial Magistrate Court-4 in Cox's Bazar started recording the statement around 10:30am and finished at 3:30pm, according to court sources.

In the afternoon, the cop was sent to the district jail in the murder case filed by the victim's sister.

On Sunday, the court recorded the confessional statement of suspended police Inspector Liaquat Ali under section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Rab Senior Assistant Superintendent Khayrul Islam, also the investigation officer of

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Japan's 'flying car' gets off ground with a person aboard



AP, Tokyo

The decades-old dream of zipping around in the sky as simply as driving on highways may be becoming less illusory.

Japan's SkyDrive Inc., among the myriads of "flying car" projects around the world, has carried out a successful though modest test flight with one person aboard.

In a video shown to reporters on Friday, a contraption that looked like a slick motorcycle with propellers lifted several feet (1-2 meters) off the ground, and hovered in a netted area for four minutes.

Tomohiro Fukuzawa, who heads the SkyDrive effort, said he hopes "the flying car" can be made into a real-life product by 2023, but he acknowledged that making it safe was critical.

"Of the world's more than 100 flying car projects, only a handful has succeeded with a person on board," he told The Associated Press.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

BNP's 42nd founding anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP is observing its 42nd founding anniversary today across the country. The party has drawn up several programmes to mark the day.

Late president Ziaur Rahman had founded the party on September 1, 1978 aiming to build a self-reliant Bangladesh.

The BNP said it would observe the day's programmes maintaining social distancing rules. At 6:00am today, the party flag will be hoisted atop its Nayapaltna central office in the capital and all other offices elsewhere in the country.

Besides, the party SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



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SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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