



# The Daily Star



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## Price hike heaps woes on people

Already grappling with pandemic fallout, middle and lower income groups struggle to get by

HELEMUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

For the last one month, Akbar Hossain has been torn between two difficult choices: send his wife and children to the village or reduce the amount of money he sends his elderly parents.

The continued rise in the prices of essentials have made it impossible for him to afford both. Besides, his earning is still significantly lower than what it was before the pandemic.

"Soaring vegetable prices are making it impossible for people like us to continue living as we used to," said Akbar who runs a small fruit store in the capital's Kazipara area.

There is a growing frustration among people whose earning fell drastically because of the coronavirus restrictions.

"It has become very difficult nowadays to make ends meet as the prices of everything continues to skyrocket," he said.

Acres of submerged farms have meant vegetable production took a major hit this year, which obviously impacted the retail prices.

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## Limits on domestic air travel ease

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) yesterday eased the restrictions on carriers over how many passengers an aircraft could carry on domestic routes effective today.

An aircraft will be able to carry passengers on every seat. However, the aft two rows would be kept aside for suspected Covid-19 patients.

Previously, planes on domestic routes were not allowed to seat passengers next to each other, unless they were related, and 25 percent of the seats were kept empty.

Speaking to The Daily Star, CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman said due to the growing demand for domestic routes, and since Covid-19 situation was improving, the restrictions on the number of passengers an aircraft could carry have been eased.

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<b>BANGLADESH UPDATE</b>	<b>1,282</b> New cases in 24hrs	<b>3,36,044</b> Total cases	<b>4,702</b> Deaths	<b>2,38,271</b> Recoveries	<b>GLOBAL UPDATE</b>	<b>921,153</b> Deaths	<b>28,741,245</b> Total cases
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### UNSTOPPABLE YABA

## New route, new colour

Rohingya camps on both sides of border remain key points of smuggling

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN, back from Cox's Bazar

The constantly evolving narcotics rackets in Cox's Bazar have been opening up new fronts to smuggle yaba pills into Bangladesh from Myanmar, largely avoiding Teknaf due to increased vigilance by law enforcers there.

These include establishing new routes, using Rohingyas more than locals as carriers, and trading in the easily recognisable bright red yaba tablets for more nondescript white pills to ensure a continuous inflow of the mad drug.

The new route for smuggling the drug into Bangladesh is through Ghumdhum border point in Naikhyangchhari upazila of Bandarban district.

The rackets based in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban receive yaba consignments from Rohingyas living in the bordering areas of Myanmar.

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### SOLVING ROHINGYA CRISIS

## Failure may dash hope for regional peace

FM tells ASEAN forum meet

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka fears Rohingya crisis can frustrate the hope for regional peace and stability if it is not solved at the earliest.

"Our fear is that, if this problem is not solved quickly, it may lead to pockets of radicalism, and since terrorists have no borders and faith, there's high possibility of creation of uncertainty in the region which may frustrate our hope for a peaceful, secure and stable region," Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said yesterday at the 27th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held online.

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### HAMMER ATTACK ON UNO

## Ex-govt staffer involved: police

Suspended gardener arrested, placed on 6-day remand; cops' claim contradicts Rab version linking Jubo League man

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Contradicting Rab claim that the Ghoraghat UNO and her father were attacked by a local Jubo League leader, police in Dinajpur yesterday said they arrested a suspended government staffer for his alleged involvement in the incident.

The arrestee is Rabiul Islam, 40, of Dhamahar of the district's Biral upazila, Debdas Bhattacharya, deputy inspector general (Rangpur), said at a press briefing at the SP office in Dinajpur around 3:40pm. The suspect was not paraded before the media.

In his 4:30-minute speech, the DIG did not mention when, how and where the arrest was made. Neither did he disclose details about the arrestee, but said investigation was an ongoing process. He only took three



Rabiul Islam

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Richard William Timm (1923-2020)

## A lifelong friend of Bangladesh passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Father Richard William Timm, an internationally-acclaimed scientist and humanist, who served most of his life serving the people in Bangladesh, passed away in a hospital

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## A lifelong friend

FROM PAGE 1  
in the US state of Indiana at 1:20pm on September 11.

He was 97.  
Father Timm, congregatio a sancta cruce (CSC), was a legend in Bangladesh, an internationally renowned zoologist, discoverer of at least 250 nematodes, an educationist, a human development worker, a friend of Bangladesh, author of many books and publications, Magsaysay winner, and so on. Most importantly, he was a Catholic priest and a member of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

Rosaline Costa, a long-time colleague of Father Timm at Hotline Bangladesh, a human rights organisation in Dhaka, said she was informed by a Holy Cross priest at the Notre Dame University in Indiana that Father Timm had gotten sick suddenly at the campus three days ago and was hospitalised.

"He went into a coma and died at 1:20pm [US time] at a hospital in South Bend. He suffered from a brain stroke before death," she told The Daily Star over phone from New York yesterday.

"He died very peacefully, just sleeping soundly," Rosaline quoted a priest as saying.

Father Timm, born on March 2, 1923, was ordained a Catholic priest of the Holy Cross Congregation in 1949 at the age of 26. After doing his PhD from the Catholic University in Washington, Father Timm moved to Bangladesh as a missionary.

Right after he joined, he opened the Science department at the college and immediately after that the Debating Club, for which he was called Father of the Debating Club.

His purpose was to help students digest their knowledge through debates. Then he established the Science Club. His textbook on biology was used all over the country for many years.

He was given a special award for taking part in the Liberation War of Bangladesh. He was principal of Notre Dame College for the terms between 1970-71.

During his time in the college, he discovered more than 250 nematodes. Among them, the Marine Nematode Timmia parva was named after Timm himself.

According to the Weekly Pratibeshi, a Catholic weekly in Bangladesh, Father Timm, in collaboration with Notre Dame College, The Christian Organization for Relief and Rehabilitation (now CARITAS Bangladesh) conducted massive relief operations after the 1970 cyclone.

He made significant contribution during the Liberation War of Bangladesh and was given a special award for it.

He secretly wrote to Washington about the atrocities by the Pakistani military and mobilised public opinion in the US against the genocide. After the war, Father Timm actively took part in the new-born country's reconstruction work together with the UN, USAID and CORR.

He spent many months in Manpura Island in order to save and protect poor and destitute human lives with his own abilities, rather than looking at bugs through microscopes, said Father Adam S Pereira, registrar of Notre Dame college.

That period totally changed his life. Timm returned to Dhaka but

never had he gone back to the formal education in the College. He rather got involved in Caritas Bangladesh and simultaneously worked for Human Rights, and Justice & Peace, Pereira said.

Realising the need for non-government organizations (NGOs), he formed an association -- Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB).

Establishing human rights of the people was another important factor for him; so he organised the Coordinating Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB). His opinions and articles were published in many places, both in Bangladesh and in other countries, Pereira added.

For international understanding, Father Timm was awarded Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1987, which is considered as Asia's Nobel Prize.

He also led Notre Dame College and CARITAS in disaster management activities in other disasters, including the flood of 1998.

Journalist and cultural activist Sagar Lohani in his facebook page wrote Father Timm was working at Manpura Island in the aftermath of 1970 cyclone. Meanwhile, as the Liberation War began, he took the responsibility to protect the people of the island.

After the war, Father Timm and Mother Teresa went to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to present a proposal for rehabilitation of the war babies and their mothers.

After approval, Father Timm assisted Mother Teresa in various ways in their rehabilitation activities, said Sagar Lohani.

As a zoologist, Father Timm's scientific expeditions involved a landscape spanning from Antarctica Penguin Colonies to the Mangrove of South Asia.

Many of his expeditions were confined in the area of the Sundarbans and other parts of South Asia but he covered many other parts of the world as well. His other expeditions include Africa, Europe, Antarctica and The Americas.

As a strong believer and a faithful Catholic priest, he served Bangladesh and the Church for as long as he was in the country.

He edited and published the Dhaka Letter throughout his life in Bangladesh and served as spiritual director, historian and chronicler writer of the Congregation of Holy Cross of which he was a member.

One of the buildings at Notre Dame College was named after Father Timm. He had written his own biography which works as a record of most of his life.

Rosaline said Father Timm went back to the US in 2016 and had been suffering from chronic typhoid during his final days.

Father Augustine Bulbul Rebeiro, director of the Christian Communications Centre, said though Father Timm was a US citizen, his love for the people of Bangladesh amazed all. He always tried to stand by the poor and helpless people of Bangladesh.

"Though he left the world, he will be in the hearts of millions of people in Bangladesh."

In memory of Father Timm, a prayer service will be held in St Mary's Cathedral at the city's Kakrail on September 16.

## Failure may dash hope

FROM PAGE 1  
He said Bangladesh sheltered some 1.1 million Rohingyas despite the threat to the country's economy and ecology, on humanitarian grounds and it was keen to solve the crisis through constructive diplomacy with good neighbourly spirit.

He said Bangladesh signed three instruments with Myanmar for Rohingya repatriation considering Myanmar a friend and Myanmar also agreed to take the refugees back and create a conducive environment for their voluntary repatriation, safety and security.

"But unfortunately till today, no one went back and instead of creating a conducive environment, fighting and shelling are going on in the Rakhine state."

Momen said Rohingyas are not returning to their homeland primarily because they do not trust their government regarding their safety and security. Dhaka had suggested Naypyidaw to engage non-military civilian observers from their friendly countries and organisations like ASEAN, China, Russia and India, saying it may reduce trust deficit for a sustainable return.

"We solicit support from our ARF partners so that these hapless Rohingyas can return to their home in safety, security and dignity, resettle there, and reintegrate in their society. Once they return to their homeland, they could be contributing members in the development of Myanmar."

He said Asia-Pacific is the most dynamic region in the world in terms of economic growth and the main challenge for the ARF is to sustain the growth momentum. But the coronavirus pandemic now has become a big challenge.

The pandemic also proved that accumulation of stockpiles of weapons cannot save human lives; rather

investment in medical and social areas can protect the mankind from Covid-19.

"May I draw your attention to the fact that once vaccine is developed, it must be available to all without discrimination?"

Momen also touched upon other challenges, including terrorism, climate change, irregular movement of people, drug trafficking, and transnational crimes, which can only be adequately and effectively addressed through mutual trust and cooperation underpinned by multilateral arrangements like ARE.

Bangladesh will always support the ARF initiatives regarding these issues, the foreign minister said.

"Let us work together to enhance the role of ARF in this trying time so that it can serve as the premier regional security forum in the Asia-Pacific region."

Meanwhile, the UN's eight Security Council members called on the Rohingyas, victims in 2017 of what the UN calls a "genocide," to participate in Myanmar's upcoming elections.

A statement in this regard, published after a closed-door video conference, was signed by Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Tunisia, Britain and the United States.

The signatories underlined their commitment to ensuring individuals from all communities, including the Rohingyas, were able to participate "safely, fully, and equally in credible and inclusive elections."

They expressed concern about continuing clashes in Myanmar's Rakhine and Chin States, calling for an "immediate cessation of hostilities."

The statement from the eight countries urges Myanmar "to accelerate its efforts to address the long-term causes of the crisis in Rakhine and create conditions conducive to the safe, voluntary, sustainable, and dignified return of refugees."



People form long queues to buy tickets at Kamalapur Railway Station as Bangladesh Railways yesterday started selling tickets of intercity trains at counters after more than five months.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## New route, new colour

FROM PAGE 1

From there, the pills speed to various districts, including Dhaka, using three different routes. Rohingyas, some of whom have been living in Cox's Bazar since 1990, play a role in sending these consignments to different destinations in the country.

The Daily Star got this picture from law enforcers and local sources recently during a week-long stay in Teknaf, known as the traditional gateway of yaba pills into Bangladesh from Myanmar.

Sources said smugglers have almost stopped using Teknaf due to intense vigilance of several law enforcement agencies there.

The rackets have also brought changes to the colour of the yaba pills. Now they are mainly smuggling in white pills, locally called "pepey" (papaya), sources told The Daily Star.

**NEW YABA ROUTES**  
According to local and law enforcement sources, 80 percent of yaba pills are now entering Bangladesh through Naikhyangchhari, 10 percent through different points of Teknaf, and the rest 10 percent via the Indian border.

The yaba pills are transported from Dekibunia -- a locality under Maungdaw city of Rakhine State in Myanmar -- to the Tombru border, where it melts into the Rohingya camps on the Myanmar side, situated just beside the zero line along Bangladesh.

From the camps on the other side of the border, yaba enters Bangladesh through the Ghumdhum border point and is sent on to Naikhyangchhari.

As Naikhyangchhari is relatively close to the Rohingya camps in Ukhiya, a large portion -- around 70 percent -- of the yaba consignments are temporarily stored in those camps and transported to various districts, depending on demand and opportunity, according to local sources with knowledge of the smuggling route.

A portion of the consignments is then sent to Cox's Bazar Sadar through the hilly areas -- the smugglers use Baishari road and Idgar union of Ramu for the journey. The consignments then head to Chattogram via the Cox's Bazar-Chattogram highway.

Another portion of the consignment reaches Chattogram via Bandarban Sadar.

The rest of the yaba coming in through the southern borders directly enters through three points -- Balukhali, Thaingkhali and Palongkhali -- in Ukhiya after crossing the Naf river and Rahmater Beel point.

These consignments are also kept inside the Rohingya camps and sent on

to different districts later.

Md Hemayetul Islam, commanding officer of Armed Police Battalion (APBn-16), told The Daily Star recently that smugglers consider the camps safe for hiding yaba pills.

"There are thousands of small houses inside the Rohingya camps and all of them look the same. For this reason, it becomes quite difficult to recover or trace the pills unless anyone has specific information," he said.

"Besides, if any law enforcer tries to enter these small houses in search of yaba without specific information, the Rohingyas women often react in a way which is tantamount to an embarrassing situation," he said without elaborating.

The remaining 10 percent of yaba make its way through India, according to sources.

The consignments first enter the north-eastern Indian state of Mizoram and are transported through other states before reaching border points in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj, Jashore and Chapainawabganj.

The inflow of yaba remains unstoppable though a massive anti-narcotics crackdown beginning in May 2018 left nearly 519 people killed in so-called gunfights, 223 of whom were from Cox's Bazar alone, as of June this year.

During this period, over one lakh people were arrested for their alleged involvement with the narcotics trade. In February last year, there was a "symbolic surrender" and arrest of 102 yaba godfathers and top dealers in Cox's Bazar.

In an April 2019 investigation by The Daily Star, it was revealed that these arrests did little to hinder the yaba trade -- with family members and agents continuing the smuggling on their behalf.

Officials, however, say they have undertaken a zero tolerance policy against narcotics trade and that drives are on to stop this.

Contacted, Alamgir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Naikhyangchhari Police Station, told The Daily Star on September 3 that they beefed up patrolling and deployed additional forces in all those points from where narcotics are smuggled into Bangladesh.

"We have adopted a zero-tolerance policy against narcotics," he said.

"It may not be possible to bring down narcotics smuggling to zero but we are doing our best and we managed to keep it under control."

**THE NEW PILL**  
While talking to The Daily Star, a yaba carrier said they are now smuggling in white pills, which have become quite popular now.

"Each of these pills sell inside the Rohingya camps for Tk 50 now. But you have to buy at least one box, containing around 10,000 pills, from the camps to get this rate," said the carrier.

If anyone tries to buy these pills outside the camps, the wholesale rate is Tk 80 in Teknaf and between Tk 100 and Tk 120 in Cox's Bazar Sadar.

The carrier, however, failed to give any specific idea of the retail price of the new pill.

Apart from the new white pill, three other types in different shades -- R7, WY, and Orange -- are also available.

Regarding the rate of these pills, a local source said R7 was available for Tk 40, WY for Tk 30, and Orange for Tk 20.

"You will also get the pills at retail price by adding Tk 20-30 to the existing wholesale price in the district," said the source.

**NEW CARRIERS, SHELTERS**

In a new practice, the smugglers are now using some groups in hilly areas as carriers, according to sources and law enforcers.

These remote areas are seven kilometres inside the Idgar union, they said.

For carrying the yaba consignments, smugglers usually pay between Tk 10,000 and Tk 30,000 to the carriers, depending on quantity.

The smugglers do not always transfer the consignments on the same day it reaches Naikhyangchhari.

They often need to hide these consignments for a while and mainly choose the homes of Rohingyas, some of whom have been living in Naikhyangchhari for the last 20 to 30 years.

For keeping yaba consignments for one night, they are often paid between Tk 20,000 to Tk 50,000, depending on quantity.

Bazlur Rahman, a majhi (community leader of a Rohingya camp), said they are taking information of those involved in the narcotics trade and working with law enforcers to take action against them.

Jahangir Kabir Chowdhury, chairman of Rajapalung union parishad, told The Daily Star recently that they have also learned that the smugglers are now mainly using Naikhyangchhari point to smuggle yaba inside Bangladesh.

Contacted, ABM Masud Hossain, superintendent of police of Cox's Bazar, said they always remain alert for any kind of narcotics smuggling and take action whenever they get any specific information.

[Our Cox's Bazar correspondent Mohammad Ali Jinnat contributed to the report]

MAJ SINHA MURDER

## Ex-Teknaf OC Pradeep moved to Ctg jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Former officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station Pradeep Kumar, also an accused in Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan murder case, was moved to Chattogram Central Jail from Cox's Bazar Jail yesterday.

Pradeep is set to be produced before a court in a case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission over accumulating wealth illegally.

Kamal Hossain, jail super of Chattogram Central Jail, told The Daily Star that he reached the jail around 12:50pm.

"He will be produced before court on September 14 in connection with a case filed by the ACC," he said.

## Maj Gen Md Main appointed to UN peacekeeping mission

UNB, Dhaka

Maj Gen Md Main Ullah Chowdhury of Bangladesh Army has been appointed as the deputy force commander of United Nations Peacekeeping Mission.

Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate confirmed the matter in a handout yesterday.

## UN chief 'deeply concerned' over Belarus

AFP, United Nations

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Friday he was "deeply concerned" over the use of force in Belarus against peaceful protesters, stressing that the country's crisis can only be resolved "by the Belarusian people."

He also expressed worry over "the detention of people exercising their legitimate democratic rights," in a statement that additionally touched on his concern over "reports of intimidation tactics against civil society, media and opposition figures."

## Price hike

FROM PAGE 1

At the same time, the prices of kitchen essentials like rice, onion, oil, chicken, potato, eggs and fish also leapt over the last week.

These correspondents visited four kitchen markets and one wholesale market in Dhupkhola, Sutrapur, Kazipara, Shyambazar and Bhashantek areas in the last few days and found that the prices of these items rose by Tk 5 to Tk 90 per kg.

Each kg of aubergine was being sold at Tk 80, a Tk 20 jump in a week. Green chillies were being sold at Tk 200 per kg while the prices of other vegetables rose by Tk 10 to Tk 15 per kg.

Local onions sold for Tk 60 to Tk 70 per kg, a hike of Tk 10 from a week ago and Tk 30 from a month ago. At the wholesale market, onions were sold for Tk 52-54 per kg.

The traders at Shyambazar said not enough onion was being imported from India.

"As the amount of imported onions dropped, the prices of the local variety increased. But the prices might fall by a little because the supply increased on Thursday," said Sazu Ahmed, a wholesale store keeper in Shyambazar.

The prices of tilapia, koi, carp fish increased by Tk 20 to 30. However, the price of hilsa has fallen by Tk 100 to 150 per kg.

The price of potatoes rose by Tk 5 per kg and soybean oil by Tk 5 to 7 per litre in the last one month.

The prices of broiler chicken rose to Tk 130 per kg from Tk 120. The price of a dozen eggs, which was sold for Tk 100 to 110 a month ago, was sold at Tk 108 to Tk 120.

"We have stopped eating fish, beef, and onions because it's impossible for us to afford them," said Phulbanu, a resident of Bhashantek slum.

"Our income has dropped to around Tk 200 a day," said Phulbanu who sells vegetables on footpaths.

Ismail, a shopkeeper in Bhashantek slum area, said the sales at his grocery store have halved after the pandemic hit the country.

"I could sell goods worth Tk 10,000 to Tk 8,000 every day before the pandemic, but now it's about Tk 3,000 on most days," said Ismail.

Golam Rahman, president of Consumer Association of Bangladesh, said the traders raised the prices of things like rice "without any reason."

"The government will have to reduce taxes and port charges or intervene in the import of essential goods," he said.

**TCB TO START SELLING FOUR ESSENTIALS**  
Trading Corporation of Bangladesh will start selling onion, lentil, sugar and soybean oil from 275 trucks at reasonable prices, said Mohammad Humayun Kabir, information officer at the TCB.

He said the sale will start today and continue until October 1.

Of the trucks, 40 will be in Dhaka, 10 in Chattogram, seven in Rangpur, five each in Mymensingh, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Bogura and Cumilla, three each in Jhenidah and Madaripur and two each in the other districts.

A kg of sugar would be sold at Tk 50, lentil at Tk 50, onion at Tk 30, and a litre of soybean oil at Tk 80.

## Limits on domestic

FROM PAGE 1

He said in addition to the existing health safety measures, operators shall provide face masks to all passengers occupying either an aisle seat on two-abreast rows or the centre seats in three-abreast rows. The carrier shall provide masks to any passenger who asked for it.

Biman Bangladesh, US-Bangla Airlines and Novo Air are now operating flights on different domestic routes.

Due to the pandemic, domestic air travel was suspended in mid March. It resumed on a limited scale on June 1.

From March 16 the government suspended passenger flight operations till June 16 with all countries, except for China, to contain the transmission of Covid-19 in Bangladesh.

From June 16, flight operations on international routes resumed on a limited scale.

## Ex-govt staffer involved: police

FROM PAGE 1

Replying to another query, the police official said a ladder and a hammer, used in the attack, have been seized. He, however, did not say where they were found.

The ladder and the hammer were not produced before journalists at the briefing yesterday.

Later in the afternoon, Dinajpur DB produced Rabiul and Nadim Hossain Polash, 26, of Zinnapara of Sadar upazila, before a court in the district.

Polash, a night guard at the UNO's residence, was picked up after the attack. He was shown arrested on Saturday.

After producing Rabiul before the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Ismail Hossain, police sought a 10-day remand for him. The court granted them six days of remand.

It sent Polash and Asadul to jail after the investigation officer did not file any prayer for them, said Israil Hossain, court inspector in Dinajpur.

Asadul was produced before the court after his seven-day remanded ended yesterday.

Asadul, a Jubo League leader in Ghoraghat Municipality, looked relaxed. He was brought to the court building in a microbus around 4:00pm and he went in smiling.

Two other accused in a case over the attack were sent to Dinajpur jail on Friday afternoon.

Wahida's elder brother Sheikh Farid Uddin, a police officer, had filed the case with Ghoraghat Police Station. Dinajpur DB is investigating it.

In another development, Amirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Ghoraghat police station, was withdrawn on

## ANTI-TORTURE ACT UN official, US envoy hail 'significant' verdict

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Resident Coordinator Mia Seppo has appreciated the first verdict under the Anti-Torture Act, saying it will pave the way for other victims to access justice.

"Significant 1st case under Anti-Torture Act which should pave the way for other victims and their families to access justice, and for further reforms to eradicate torture, extrajudicial killings and disappearances," she said in a tweet.

US Ambassador Earl R Miller, meanwhile, termed the verdict historic and significant.

"Historic and significant verdict with first sentencing under #Bangladesh Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act," he tweeted.

He said accountability for all persons is critical to any rule of law system and urged all saying, "Join UN in calling for end to torture, extrajudicial killings, and disappearances."

The comments came after a Dhaka court on September 9 sentenced three policemen including former sub-inspector of Pallabi Police Station, Jahidur Rahman, to life imprisonment and two other accused to seven years' jail in the case filed over the custodial death of Ishiaque

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



People from low-income families crowd the Open Market Sales of essentials by the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh in Mohammadpur Dhaka Udyan area of the capital. With many of their incomes taking a hit due to the Covid-19 pandemic and fluctuating market prices, the competition is tough to reach the front of the line, and wearing masks and social distancing practices are all but forgotten.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Sex traffickers active in myriad guises

Choreographers, actress' manager  
'involved' in sending girls to Dubai: CID

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Manager of a well-known film actress and at least couple of choreographers are allegedly involved in trafficking girls to Dubai.

They allegedly send girls aged between 18 and 20, who got in touch with them to pursue a dance carrier in the film industry, to Dubai with promise of a lucrative job.

The girls were later forced into sex trade, said officials of the Criminal Investigation Department.

CID claimed to have got the information after a broker, who worked closely with this trafficking racket, gave confessional statement before the court under section 164.

In the confessional statement, the broker -- Md Yeasin (33) -- mentioned that he has been involved in sending female artists abroad since 2015.

Yeasin said he met one Md Azam Khan, leader of the trafficking gang, in 2016 and started sending young female artists to his club in Dubai for Tk 10,000 commission, sources in court told this newspaper quoting Yeasin.

Asked about involvement of people from the film industry, Syeda Jannat Ara, special superintendent of CID, told The Daily Star on Friday, "We got some names from Yeasin's confessional statement. We are now verifying those. We will take action against those involved no matter who they are."

In the statement on August 20, Yeasin told the court that he had two dance academies -- Modern and Nirmal -- in Narayanganj.

From the academies, Yeasin said he used to take artists to different social events such as weddings or birthdays. Many of the girls often requested him to send them abroad, Yeasin told court.

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## Intercity tickets at counters till Sept 21 sold out

Railway starts selling 50pc of available train tickets at stations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railways (BR) started selling half the tickets of intercity trains through station counters from yesterday morning while the rest is being sold online.

However, as all the tickets of intercity trains till September 20 were already sold out via online, many people who came to the station to buy yesterday's tickets, returned with disappointment.

Tickets for September 21 were sold out yesterday, said Shawkat Zamil Mohsi, division commercial officer of BR.

However, they were selling tickets of all local, mail and commuter trains from the station yesterday, as they are not being sold online, he said.

Asked about people's sufferings, Masud Sarwar, Kamalapur Station manager, said as BR sells advance tickets of intercity trains 10

days before the journey date, all the tickets till September 20 were sold out.

After resumption of train services from May 31 on limited scale, BR has been selling all tickets of intercity trains through online and a mobile app.

Although authorities have started selling all tickets of local, mail and commuter trains at the stations from September 5, they started selling 50 percent tickets of the intercity trains from the counters yesterday.

However, BR will continue to operate trains at half capacity to ensure social distancing amid the coronavirus pandemic.

BR is gradually increasing trains in its fleet in a bid to normalise services. A total of 218 trains will come into operation by September 16. The remaining 144 mail and local trains will resume operation gradually.

## DHAKA-5, NAOGAON-6 JP selects candidates for two by-elections

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party yesterday nominated Mir Abdus Sabur Asud and Kazi Golam Kabir to contest the Dhaka-5 and Naogaon-6 by-elections. Asud is a presidium member of JP while Kabir is the president of Raninagar upazila unit of JP.



Mir Abdus Sabur Kazi Golam Kabir

JP Nomination Board, with its chairman GM Quader in the chair, selected the candidates after taking interviews of prospective candidates for the constituencies.

On September 7, Awami League nominated Monirul Islam Monu for Dhaka-5 and picked Mohammad Anwar Hossain Helal for Naogaon -6.

The by-elections to two parliamentary constituencies -- Dhaka-5 and Naogaon-6 -- will be held on October 17, according to a schedule declared by the Election Commission on September 3.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## BOOKS BRIEFING

## New beginnings for Bengal Boi, Charcha



Long-term visitors of Bengal Boi and Charcha are ecstatic that the popular book outlets are reopening and continuing operations online respectively.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

STAR BOOKS DESK

After remaining mostly closed since the lockdown begun in March, popular bookstores Bengal Boi and Charcha have started to continue operations at a new branch and online respectively.

Bengal Boi has moved from its original location in Lalmatia and reopened at Bengal Shilpalay on Dhanmondi (old) Road 27 while Charcha will move to a new location in the city's Bhatara area soon.

**BENGAL BOI**  
Popular for its range of books, the new brand has been stocked with Bengal Book's old collections, with new books on art and architecture on the way.

Visitors of its original location are nostalgic about the shift. In November 2017, Bengal Boi arrived with a unique offering of books, food, open space, and regular cultural events, and patrons of varying age soon started frequenting it for the cosy, spacious environment adjacent to the rush of Dhanmondi's busy main roads.

"It was a necessary change for Dhaka: people were starting to interact with books again, and that hadn't happened in a long time," said Qazi Mustabeen Noor,

a regular visitor.

Poet and essayist Piyash Major said, "The combination of books and stimulating conversations made Bengal Boi a unique institution in Dhaka city."

For Bengal boi, there were some difficulties in organising musical events inside a residential neighbourhood, Bengal Foundation told The Daily Star. With the shift to Bengal Shilpalay, the Foundation hopes to offer art, music, books, and events -- a "complete cultural experience".

The reopening comes with standard safety precautions. Sanitisers and face masks are mandated for all those who visit. Bengal Foundation is hopeful that the large space at the Shilpalay will deter close physical contact between visitors. Workshops, film screenings, and other literary programmes have already been scheduled for when the pandemic situation improves.

**CHARCHA**  
In the meantime, Charcha Publications will continue online before moving on to its new location in Bhatara. Having recently published the graphic novel series "Mujib" based on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the bookstore will not

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## AL not a house of cards Quader says replying to Mirza Fakhrul's remarks about party

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League is not a house of cards that it would get destroyed in a tap, said party General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday in reply to the remarks of BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir that the power of AL will be ruined like a house of cards.

Quader said AL remains in the hearts of people as it led every democratic movement, struggle, achievement and progress of the nation as well.

The AL leader said his party stayed beside the people in their weal and woe throughout the last seven decades since its inception.

The country's most glorious achievement, the great independence, was attained under the leadership of AL, he said, adding that those, who think that AL's position is as like as a house of cards, are living in a fool's paradise.

Quader, also minister for road transport and bridges, was addressing the inaugural ceremony of a representatives' conference of Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh (IDEB) at the institute at Kakrail, Dhaka.

He joined it through a videoconferencing from his official residence on parliament premises.

Obaidul Quader said his party is deeply rooted in the soil of this country, as people are the source of power of AL.

"Awami League's power does not grow out of the barrel of a gun. Rather, people are the source of its power. Awami League's root is very deep in this soil," he said.

The minister urged the engineers to play a significant role in implementing the government's mega plans in attaining the goal of building a prosperous Bangladesh by 2041.

He expressed his optimism that the engineers would take ahead the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Govt giving wrong info over Covid-19: BNP

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday alleged the government has been providing wrong information about coronavirus cases and fatalities.

"How many people are dying of coronavirus and what information is being given about it? Many people are dying after getting infected with the virus. As per a report, about 82,000 people have been left out in government data on coronavirus-infected patients," said BNP senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi.

He made the remarks while distributing relief among victims of riverbank erosion in Dohar-Nawabganj, arranged by the party's Dhaka district unit.

"This means the government is unable to take proper decisions to contain the virus. It has also failed to ensure necessary medicine and other facilities at hospitals for treatment, and work out health safety rules to control the virus. So, people are dying on the streets, on the verandas of hospitals or in ambulances without any treatment."

Rizvi alleged that people infected with coronavirus in rural and remote areas are facing difficulties in receiving treatment due to lack of proper arrangement in this regard.

"Had there been a pro-people government, it would have forced to ensure treatment for people thinking about people's voting power. But they don't need votes and elections as they don't care about people," he alleged.

The BNP leader said the government has resorted to extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and other "repressive and suppressive" acts to retain power and perpetuate it by "eliminating" its political opponents and dissidents.

"Retired Army Major Sinha was killed by a police station OC, but there's no justice and the rule of law... a UNO was hacked in the head, leaving her in a critical condition. The incidents of murder and enforced disappearance are now all around since it is a government programme," Rizvi added.

## Mirsarai waterfalls: Tourist spot or death trap?

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Mirsarai upazila in Chattogram is already a sought after place for tourists. It boasts natural waterfalls in at least 10 different spots. Everyday, hundreds of tourists from across the country come to the upazila to visit the waterfalls.

Waterfalls in the upazila include Khayachhara, Napittachhara, Sahasradhara, Rupasi, Baoachhara, Boalia, Harinakunda, Mahamaiya, Sonaichharai and Kamaldaha. Of them, there are 12 that fall on the hills at the Khayachhara spot alone.

However, an increasing number of accidents at the waterfalls over the last couple of years are starting to make tourists feel unsafe.

Since 2017, at least eight tourists were reportedly killed and some 50 were injured in different accidents at the falls, said sources.

The latest accident occurred in Khayachhara falls on September 4. Fayeze Ahmed, a 39-year-old tourist from Feni, died on the spot after falling down the top of the falls. It took fire service personnel around six hours to recover his body.

In another incident on July 12, a group of 15 tourists got stranded in Boalia falls. They were finally rescued by fire service personnel after four hours.

The Khayachhara falls is a hotspot for such incidents. On April 2 last year, tourist Ashraf Hossain died after falling down its slopes, with another three dying there throughout the year.

"I have recently visited the Khayachhara falls. There are 12 falls in the slope of the hills in that spot, but the slopes are too straight to climb up," said Md Abbas, a graduate from Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Chittagong University. "Many tourists slip on their way up or down as there are no staircases."

In Napittachhara and Rupasi falls, two tourists died in 2018, while one died in Napittachhara in 2017.

Concerned citizens and experts identified a few reasons behind the accidents. Firstly, they blamed tourists and their careless attitude regarding safety. Secondly, they said there is no official safety guideline for tourists from the government which is a crucial factor behind these accidents.

Md Tanvir Ahmed, station officer of Mirsarai Fire Service, said they reported 10 accidents in the last three years in different falls in the upazila. "Many tourists climb up the dangerously steep slopes, almost inviting accidents in some cases," he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



With verdant of hills and multiple waterfalls, Mirsarai upazila in Chattogram continues to attract visitors from all across the country. However, increasing number of accidents at the waterfalls due to lack of awareness and safety measures taken by the authorities concerned is making it unsafe for people to visit.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## Foreign minister set to leave for Turkey today

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen is scheduled to leave for Turkey today to attend the inauguration ceremony of the newly-constructed Bangladesh Chancery Complex, said a senior official of the ministry yesterday.

Dr Momen will join his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu at the ceremony, to be held in Ankara on September 14. He will also attend other bilateral engagements during his visit.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to virtually inaugurate the complex.

After this, the Foreign Minister will hold bilateral talks with his Turkish counterpart on September 15. Issues such as the Rohingya crisis, D-8 summit, trade and investment issues are expected to come up for

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



**For 50 years, Chattogram's Oziullah has been "treating" jaundice patients with cures and techniques found through dreams. Visit fees are Tk 55. The sum may not be much, but the price to pay amounts to a lot in the long run. As the premise of the method is unfounded, completely based on the lack of patients' knowledge, the treatment turns into mistreatment, which adds to long-term woes of the already ill visitors. The photos was taken last week from the port city's Fishery Ghat area.**



PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

## Keep multi-dimensional waterways active

Says state minister for shipping on Dhaka-Barishal river routes

Bss, Dhaka

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday called for keeping active multi-dimensional waterways between Dhaka and Barishal for using alternative routes while facing difficulties.

"We want to have multi-dimensional waterways on the Dhaka-Barishal river route. If obstacles are created for any reason, then we can use alternative routes. That's why I want to keep active all the possible ways," he said.

The state minister said this while inspecting the Laxmirchar-Alurbazar-Ishanbala-Hijla-Ulania-Miarchar waterway on the Dhaka-Barishal route in Chandpur.

He said the authorities concerned are considering to keep active all the routes including Miarchar Kaliganj and Alu Bazar channels of Dhaka-Barishal river route and will start dredging the waterway in Miarchar.

He hoped to launch all possible small links or waterways on the route so that alternative paths can be created.

"We have evicted illegal river grabbers.

It will not be acceptable if anyone wants to occupy river for business purpose," he added.

The state minister said high officials of the ministry held two meetings on whether it is possible to establish a river route from Alu Bazar via Hizla in Barishal river route.

"We have contacted the minister and secretary of the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges to solve problems in this regard," he said.

"Now the Padma Bridge authorities are doing dredging. We have 10 dredgers working, one dredger is being added today," he said.

The ferry service will be smooth on Shimulia-Kathbari route once the waterways are ready, he added.

About the Padma Bridge, he said it is the main challenge of the incumbent government to build the bridge first minimising all the upcoming risks in this regard for the overall development of the country.

The government is very sincere about constructing the bridge, the state minister said.

## UN official

FROM PAGE 3

Hossain Jonny in 2014.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order. The court fined the three policemen Tk 1 lakh each, in default of which they will have to serve six more months in jail. It also fined two other accused Tk 20,000 each, in default of which they will have to serve three more months in prison.

The court also asked the three police officers to pay Tk 2 lakh each to the plaintiff of the case as compensation. They will have to do so within 14 days, otherwise they will not be able to file appeal against the verdict with the High Court.

This was first verdict under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act, 2013.

According to the case statement, a group of 25-26 policemen -- including SI Jahid -- raided a house during a wedding ceremony in Pallabi's Irani camp area and arrested Jonny on February 8, 2014.

Informers Sumon and two of his friends including Russell called police after Jonny slapped him for harassing women at a programme. Police allegedly tortured Jonny at the police station.

After Jonny fell sick the next day, he was admitted to a local clinic. Later, he was transferred to Suhrawardy Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

In August last year, UN Committee Against Torture expressed concern at the consistent reports alleging widespread and routine torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement officials for the purpose of obtaining confessions or to solicit the payment of bribes, the lack of publicly available information on these cases, and failure to ensure accountability for law enforcement agencies.

## Health sector top priority of govt: DGHS DG

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

The government gives highest priority to the health sector, said Dr Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services, yesterday.

He was speaking at a views-exchange meeting at Cumilla Medical College Hospital as chief guest.

Praising the hospital for setting up its first ICU and treating coronavirus patients with sincerity, he said he will try his best to work for the betterment of the hospital.

Dr Mujibur Rahman, director of the hospital, was special guest at the event.

Yesterday, the DG started a Chattogram divisional tour after visiting Cumilla civil surgeon's office and Cumilla General Hospital.

## 38th Installation Ceremony of Rotary Club Dhaka today

CITY DESK

The annual installation ceremony of Rotary Club of Metropolitan Dhaka (RCMD) is set to be held today. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the ceremony will be held virtually on the Zoom platform.

Around 2,000 guests from home and abroad will attend the programme, according to a press release.

Omar Ishrak, Executive Chairman and Chairman of the Board of Directors at Medtronix, and Chairman of the Board of Directors at Intel, will address the installation ceremony as the chief guest.

He will speak on post-Covid-19 healthcare facility requirements for Bangladesh.

Rubayet Hossain, MPHEB District Governor, RI District 3281 Bangladesh, will grace the occasion as guest of honour, said the press release.

At the programme, RCMD will showcase some of its projects which have addressed Rotary's goals to promote peace, fight disease, provide clean water, sanitation, and hygiene and more, the press release said.

## MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

### Suspended Ctg jailer Soheli Rana seeks bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Suspended jailer of Chattogram Central Jail Soheli Rana Biswas again has sought bail from the High Court in a money laundering case.

He submitted a petition to the HC on August 24 through his lawyer Shalita Rawshan seeking bail in the case.

In the petition, he said he is not involved in any offence, but he is a victim of circumstances, Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik told The Daily Star yesterday.

Citing the petition, DAG Amin Uddin also said Soheli Rana in his petition told the HC that he is the only earning member of his family and he has been suffering in jail for a long period of time.

The virtual HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Ahmed Soheli may hold hearing on the petition today, he added.

On July 5, the bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder had rejected another bail petition of Soheli Rana in the case.

Law enforcers arrested him on October 27, 2018 with over Tk 44 lakh, fixed deposit receipts (FDRs) worth Tk 2.50 crore and Phensedyl from Kishoreganj.

Police filed two separate cases with Bhairab Railway Police Station against him on charges of money laundering and possessing drugs under the Narcotics Control Act.

ACC conducted investigation into the money laundering case.

## New beginnings

FROM PAGE 3

shutdown even though it has formally ended operations at its original location at Mohammadpur's Sher Shah Suri road.

Even after a stock-out sale, which took place over a week at the end of last month, around 10,000 to 12,000 books remain in Charcha's collections, which are available online along with home delivery services.

The shop was a niche favourite for dedicated readers.

"Although our store was wedged into an alley and one needed cautious eyes to find it, I felt wonderful discovering Charcha because they had all the latest titles along with other obscure books that one could not typically find anywhere else in Dhaka," says Shah Tazrian Ashrafi, a regular customer.

The store was known to host book discussions, readings, and unplugged musical evenings.

"We are working on updating our website to enhance the online order process, and once the pandemic subsides, Charcha will hopefully reopen at its new branch in Bhatara," Sabrina Islam, co-founder of the store, told The Daily Star.

Follow Daily Star Books on Facebook and @thedailystarbooks on Instagram.

## AL not

FROM PAGE 3

development programmes of the government with their merit and sincere efforts side by side with remaining alert against any corruption, irregularity and wastage of public money.

According to experts, the minister said, Bangladesh may witness the second wave of coronavirus outbreak in the upcoming winter so that everyone should adopt cautionary measures from now and wear facemask mandatorily.

IDEB President AKMA Hamid presided over the programme while its general secretary Md Shamsur Rahman also spoke on the occasion.

## Mirsarai waterfalls

FROM PAGE 3

Concerned tourist Md Abbas said, "There is no official guideline or instructions from the government for tourists' safety. We hire local guides, but they are not well-trained. The roads towards the falls are not in good shape, showing a clear sign of government's negligence."

Contacted, Jasim Uddin, a former member of Chattogram District Red Crescent Society and president of Mirsarai Education Society, said the waterfalls in Mirsarai could be the most sought after place for tourists if the government took a proper plan to develop the spots.

"The roads leading up to the falls are battered, there is no guideline, no staircase, not even sitting arrangements at the spots," he said.

"If steps are taken to address the issues, the number of accidents would decrease and more tourists would want to visit the area."

He also said number of accidents could be decreased to an extent if staircases are built and trained guides could be employed.

Asked, Ilias Hossain, deputy commissioner of Chattogram, said, "As the government has not taken over the spots, we do not encourage anybody to visit the falls. But if someone does want to visit, they have to take responsibility of their own safety."

However, if interested tourists contact the Mirsarai administration before visiting the falls, they can arrange a guided tour for them. "I have instructed the UNO to arrange proper safety for tourists if they visit the spots with permission," the DC said.



Garbage is spilling out on to the road from a trashcan near Malibagh Bazar area. In addition to the nuisance, the garbage is also taking up space from the road, making it harder for vehicular movement.

## Foreign minister

FROM PAGE 3

discussion at the bilateral meeting.

The construction of Bangladesh Chancery Complex in Ankara was successfully completed on September 3.

The main features of the Complex include a Chancery Building, an Embassy Residence, a 229 seat hi-tech auditorium named 'Victory 1971', automated mechanical and electrical systems, masjid, gymnasium, display centre for Bangladeshi memorabilia, a library for books on Bangladesh primarily on the Liberation War and socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

As a reflection of Bangladesh's history of independence, a bust of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and a Shaheed Minar were also installed at the Complex.

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**PAN PACIFIC SONARGAON DHAKA**  
The Oasis of Luxurious Hospitality and Tranquility  
**Invitation for Tender**  
Sealed tenders are invited from bona-fide contractors/manufacturers/dealers/distributors/suppliers for supply the following items. The detail Specifications, terms and conditions are mentioned in the Tender Schedule.

Sl. No.	Name of the Items	Quantity	Schedule Price (Non-refundable)
1	Electrostatic Backpack Sprayer	02 Nos	Tk. 1000
2	Thermal Imaging Camera	02 Nos	Tk. 1000

Interested bidders may obtain Tender Schedule from the Purchasing Department on submission of a letter on their respective letterhead up to **September 21, 2020** during the office hours. Tender will be received up to **02:30 pm** on **September 22, 2020** and will be opened on the same day at 03:00 pm in presence of bidders, if any.

Tender must be supported by an Earnest Money amounting to 5% of quoted price in the form of Bank Draft or Pay Order from any Scheduled Bank of Bangladesh in favor of Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel Dhaka.

Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel authority reserves the right to accept/reject any tender in part or in full or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

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

## Sex traffickers

FROM PAGE 3

He further said his close associate Nazim, who lives in Chattogram, visited one of his academies once and said the girls can get jobs at clubs in Dubai.

Nazim said his brother Azam Khan had four "dance clubs" there and can arrange work for them, said Yeasin in the statement.

Yeasin said Nazim then told him names of some choreographers and manager of a well-known actress and informed that they also provided him with artists for "jobs" in Dubai.

He said he recognised the names right away. Some people from the industry used to gather girls from across the country, promising them jobs in media and foreign countries, he added.

Though Yeasin mentioned the names, this newspaper is withholding those for the sake of investigation.

Yeasin said Nazim told him that each artist who wanted to go to Dubai will get Tk 50,000 monthly salary. Following the offer, Yeasin sent three girls to Dubai and received Tk 30,000 from Nazim as commission, he told in his statement.

Once there, Nazim's brother Azam Khan and Ershad forced the girls into sex trade. Yeasin claimed that he came to know about sex trafficking after he tried to check on the girls.

They also said they never received their salaries.

CID first came to know about the racket following arrest of Azam in early July. Azam gave his confessional statement on July 13 and said he has been involved in trafficking for last eight years.

CID has already arrested three associates of Azam, including Yeasin.

Two other arrestees also gave similar statements.

Syeda Jannat Ara of CID said they have already made some progress and identified Azam's cohorts. "We are now conducting drives to arrest them," she added.

**CHOREOGRAPHER SOHAG HELD**  
Meanwhile in another development, CID on Thursday night arrested dancer and choreographer Ivan Shahrir Sohag for his alleged involvement in trafficking girls to Dubai.

He was arrested from Niketan in the capital.

Yeasin, who was arrested in a trafficking case filed with Lalbagh Police Station on July 2, in his confessional statement disclosed involvement of Ivan, said CID officials.

In a media statement yesterday, CID said they are now interrogating Ivan. A total of six people were arrested in the case and four of them have already gave confessional statements in the court.

## JP selects

FROM PAGE 3

As per the schedule, the deadline for submission of nomination papers is September 17, the date for scrutiny of nomination papers is September 20 and the last date for withdrawal of candidature is September 27.

The by-elections will be held from 9am to 5pm through electronic voting machines.

The Dhaka-5 seat fell vacant following the death of Awami League MP Habibur Rahman Mollah on May 6 while the Naogaon-6 constituency became vacant after the demise of ruling party lawmaker Israfil Alam on July 27.

The EC has a legal obligation to arrange a parliamentary by-election within 90 days of the constituency concerned falling vacant.

**Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA)**  
BAU Campus, Mymensingh-2202.  
Memo No: BINA-PROC/e-GP/2020-21/3 Date: 11-09-2020

**Tender Notice: 02/2020-21**  
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of Equipment (Moisture Machine: Refrigerator -20 degree C).

Sl. No.	Package No.	Tender ID No	Name of goods	Publication date & time	Last selling date & time	Tender/ proposal closing date & time
1	Pro/BINA/egp/Char /2020-21/1	492659	Refrigerator (-20 degree C)	14 September 2020, 15:00	28 September 2020, 17:00	29 September 2020, 15:00
2	Pro/BINA/egp/Char /2020-21/2	492666	Moisture Machine	14 September 2020, 15:00	28 September 2020, 17:00	29 September 2020, 15:30

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

(Dr. Md. Habibur Rahman)  
Principal Scientific Officer  
BINA, Mymensingh.

GD-1446

AFTERMATH OF FLOODS IN SIRAJGANJ

# Floodwaters receded, but marks of wrath all over

3,259 people rendered homeless; overall damage estimated at Tk 300cr; urgent rehabilitation programmes absent

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPI, back from Sirajganj

Lal Banu Begum and her family decided to come home after the floodwaters started to recede, but only to find their house, made of corrugated iron sheets, in utter despair.

They came back a couple of weeks ago from the nearby flood protection embankment where they had been staying since June 2.

The flooding of their home, at Char Porjana village in Shahzadpur upazila of Sirajganj, had forced them to leave all their belongings behind and take shelter on the embankment.

By that time, the two money earners of the family, Lal Banu's two sons, had become jobless. The brothers, handloom artisans, have been victims of an abrupt fall in demands for handloom items during the rise of Covid-19 cases in the country over the past several months.

Then the floods came and destroyed the handlooms of the brothers -- the final nail in the coffin of their livelihood.

Sifting through the ruins, in their attempt to salvage any piece of their household items, the family is now baffled and bewildered as to how they would survive or repair their only house that they call home.

"Now I don't know how we'll stay alive, let alone fix the house," Lal Banu said.

Asked whether they received any assistance from the government, she replied in the negative.

In the same upazila, farmer Jalal Hossain from Jamirta village now pulls a rickshaw-van to make a living. He and his family also took shelter on the embankment during the flood and they returned home recently.

The flood destroyed all the Aman rice he planted as well as the earthen foundation of his tin-roofed house.

Jalal also said his family is yet to see any government effort to help flood victims get back on their feet.

Sahjahan Ali, a small-time trader from the same village, said that without finding any financial support from the government, he took a loan of Tk 1.3 lakh from a non-governmental organisation to rebuild his flood-damaged house.

Many other flood victims are also running around for loans from NGOs as the government is yet to come forward with any sort of



The skeleton of a road, a culvert, is what remains after floodwaters receded from Porjana village in Shahzadpur upazila of Sirajganj. The photo was taken on last Sunday. PHOTO: STAR

rehabilitation programme for the flood victims, he added.

Abdur Rahim, relief and rehabilitation officer in Sirajganj, said 3,259 people became homeless after the three-month-long flood that caused partial or full damage to nearly 1.3 lakh houses in the district.

He also said that they already sought Tk 53 crore from the ministry to rehabilitate the affected population.

Aside from homesteads, the floods wreaked havoc on all sorts of agriculture and infrastructure in the district.

The total estimation of the damage by the flood in Sirajganj stands at around Tk 300 crore, Abdur Rahim added.

During this flood, 2.24 lakh farmers have lost about Tk 212.46 crore worth of crops on 22,665 hectares of land in the district, said Shahid Nur Akbar, acting deputy director of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Sirajganj.

The DAE has started distributing seeds and saplings to affected farmers, he added.

Mizanur Rahman, executive engineer of Local Government Engineering Department in Sirajganj, said the district suffered about Tk 58

core in damage after the flood destroyed 274 kilometres of roads along with culverts.

The ministry has been informed of the situation and restoration work of the road network would start once the funding is allocated, he added.

According to Sirajganj Livestock Officer Akhtaruzzaman Bhuiyan, 770 tonnes of grass and 588 tonnes of straw were damaged, while 8,562 acres of grazing field was inundated during the flood.

The flood washed away an estimated 155 tonnes of fish, worth Tk 2.48 crore, in 778 ponds, according to data provided by Sirajganj Fisheries Officer Shaded Ali.

During a visit to Porjana village in Shahzadpur, this correspondent witnessed signs of devastation caused by the flood all around the village.

The inhabitants of the village were seen walking on foot for miles as the devastation on roads there has been so severe that those are no longer fit for vehicular movement.

"The floodwater has receded, but it has left marks of its wrath all over," said village doctor Abdur Rouf.

## Covid-19 forces indigenous women to change profession

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Before the coronavirus pandemic, Arpa Dewan, an honours 3rd year student of Rangamati Government College, taught at a local kindergarten school in the district town to support her family and her education.

She has become jobless after educational institutions across the country remained closed in March this year due to coronavirus outbreak.

Arpa is now making various kinds of snacks at home and selling them to customers through Facebook. To encourage customers, she is also providing home delivery service in different areas of the town. And she is now earning good profit from selling the homemade food.

Arpa said she does not know when the situation will improve. So, she has started the new venture without wasting the time.

Like Arpa, a number of women in three districts of Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT) have been compelled to change their profession due to the pandemic. Many are living a hard life in the challenging time. They have to go outside for work every day taking the risk of being infected by the coronavirus.

At present, around 40 women in Bilaichharipara area of Rangamati Sadar upazila sell different types of vegetables collected from Jhum farmers every day. Each of them earns Tk 500 to Tk 1000 from selling the vegetables daily.

Sushmita Chakma said she used to work at different places before the pandemic. But Covid-19 hit the job market badly. Many lost their jobs.

She further added that the relief given by the government and various organisations was not sufficient. Finding no other alternative, she was forced to sell vegetables to support her family.

Nuku Chakma, a development activist of Rangamati, said it is a good thing that indigenous women have come to different types of professions to make a living during the Covid-19 pandemic.

But in order to survive in the professions, it is necessary to help improve their skills, he said.

Nuku further added that at the same time, they have to give importance to various kinds of income-generating activities. So the government and different non-governmental organisations have to come forward to help the women of three hill districts in CHT.



The indigenous women, who remained jobless due to coronavirus outbreak, sell vegetables in Bilaichharipara area of Rangamati Sadar upazila to support their family. PHOTO: STAR

## BCL leader stabbed to death in Narail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Criminals stabbed a former leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) to death allegedly over previous enmity in Narail's Lohagara upazila on Friday.

The deceased, Zahirul Islam Rezwan, 30, son of late Saiful Islam of Dighalia village in the upazila, was general secretary of Dighalia union unit of BCL, Officer in Charge (OC) of Lohagara Police Station Syed Ashiqur Rahman said.

Quoting local people, police said criminals waylaid Rezwan near Dighalia

Intersection while he was returning home on Friday evening and stabbed him indiscriminately with sharp weapons, leaving him critically injured.

Hearing screams, people nearby rushed to the spot, rescued critically injured Rezwan and took him to Narail Sadar Hospital, where the doctors declared him dead.

Additional police have been deployed in the area to avert any untoward situation, the OC said, adding that no case has been filed in this regard as of filing this report around 7:30pm.

## Lawyer sent to jail on rape charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A Panchagarh court yesterday sent a lawyer to jail in connection with a case filed for raping a 10th-grader in Atwary upazila on Friday afternoon.

The arrestee, HM Habibur Rahman Habib, a lawyer and son of late Abdul Khalek of Baraogaon village in the upazila, is also known as a moneylender in his locality.

After the hearing of the case, Panchagarh Senior Judicial Magistrate Minhajur Rahman sent Habib to jail after police produced him before the court yesterday afternoon.

Quoting the case statement, Officer in Charge of Atwary Police Station Ezar Uddin said Habib, who used to lend money on high interest, gave a loan of Tk 15,000 to the girl's father a couple of months ago.

Besides, taking advantage of the situation, he used to talk to the victim girl over phone frequently since then.

On Friday, Habib met girl at her grandmother's house at Darimuni Barghati village and proposed her to visit Atwary upazila headquarters on his motorbike.

On their way to the upazila headquarters, Habib tactfully took the girl to one of his clients Shushil's house at Kallikapur village and forcibly raped her there.

On the other hand, seeing Habib's suspicious activity villagers encircled the house, caught the culprit and handed him over to police.

Being informed, police went to the spot and detained Habib. They also rescued the victim and took her to Atwary Upazila Health Complex for a medical test.

Later, father of the victim girl filed a rape case with Atwary Police Station, accusing three people, including Habib.

Meanwhile, protesting the heinous act, local people formed a human chain in front of Atwary Upazila Parishad on Atwary-Panchagarh road yesterday afternoon, demanding capital punishment of the culprit lawyer.

### STATE OF THE ART SHOPPING CUM COMMERCIAL COMPLEX

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
Health Engineering Department (HED)  
Sirajganj Division  
S. B Fazlul Haque Road, Sirajganj  
Email: hedsirajganj.015@gmail.com

Memo No. HED/SIRAJ.DIV/Repair/Tender/2020-21/548 Date: 10-09-2020

## e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for 04 No LTM packages under Sirajganj Division.

Sl No	Tender ID & Reference	Package & Name of Works	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing & Opening Date & Time
01	493979 45.02.0000.009.24.002.20-1732. Date-03/09/2020	HED/Siraj.Div/2020-21/GeneXpert/04 Repair & Maintenance works of GeneXpert Machine Room at Santhia Upazilla Health Complex under Pabna District	27-Sep-2020 Time: 17:00:00	28-Sep-2020 Time: 15:00:00
02	493972 45.02.0000.009.24.002.20-1732. Date-03/09/2020	HED/Siraj.Div/2020-21/GeneXpert/03 Repair & Maintenance works of GeneXpert Machine Room at Gurudaspur Upazilla Health Complex under Natore District.	27-Sep-2020 Time: 17:00:00	28-Sep-2020 Time: 15:00:00
03	493957 45.02.0000.009.24.002.20-1730. Date-03/09/2020	HED/Siraj.Div/2020-21/Digital X-Ray/02 Remodeling & Renovation works of Digital X-Ray Machine Room at Sadar Upazilla Chest Disease Clinic CDC in Natore District.	27-Sep-2020 Time: 17:00:00	28-Sep-2020 Time: 15:00:00
04	493879 45.02.0000.009.24.002.20-1730. Date-03/09/2020	HED/Siraj.Div/2020-21/Digital X-Ray/01 Repair & Maintenance Works of X-Ray Room for installation of Digital X-Ray Machine at Chest Disease Center CDC in Sirajganj District.	27-Sep-2020 Time: 17:00:00	28-Sep-2020 Time: 15:00:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.  
1. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.  
2. Detail about the tender have shown in e-Tender Notice and e-Tender Document.  
3. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd))

Md. Faruque Ahmed  
Executive Engineer  
Health Engineering Department (HED)  
Sirajganj Division  
(Phone No. 0751-64347)

GD-1447

রেজিস্ট্রার দপ্তর  
যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়  
যশোর-৭৪০৮, বাংলাদেশ।

স্মারক নং- যবপ্রবি/১০০২/রাজস্ব জনবল (নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি)/পাট-৫/১৯-১৬৯৭ তারিখঃ ০৯/০৯/২০২০খ্রি.

## নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নিম্নোক্ত পদগুলো পূরণের নিমিত্তে বর্ণিত শর্তনামপে কে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আবেদন করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রম নং	পদের নাম, পদসংখ্যা ও স্কেল	সর্বোচ্চ বয়স	শর্তাবলী
০১	সহকারী অধ্যাপক ক) কম্পিউটার বিজ্ঞান ও প্রকৌশল বিভাগ (০১টি স্থায়ী পদ) খ) মাসিক এড হেলথ সাইন্স বিভাগ (০১টি স্থায়ী পদ), (যেখা প্রার্থীর অযোগ্যতার ক্ষেত্রে সহকারী অধ্যাপক পদের বিপরীতে প্রত্যাহার করা হবে) বেতন স্কেল: ৩৫৫০০-৬৭০১০/-	.....	আবেদনকারীকে <a href="http://career.just.edu.bd">career.just.edu.bd</a> ওয়েব সাইটে গিয়ে প্রয়োজনীয় সকল কাগজপত্রের Scanned copy, আবেদন ফি ও প্রসেসিং ফি সহ আবেদনীয় ০৮/১০/২০২০খ্রি. তারিখ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে অনলাইনে আবেদন করতে হবে। অনলাইনে আবেদন করা ও ফি প্রদানের বিহীন নিয়মাবলী <a href="https://career.just.edu.bd/docs/how-to-apply.pdf">https://career.just.edu.bd/docs/how-to-apply.pdf</a> এই লিংক-এ পাওয়া যাবে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েব সাইটে <a href="http://www.just.edu.bd">www.just.edu.bd</a> হতে যোগ্যতার বিস্তারিত বিবরণ সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। প্রার্থীকে আবেদনের সাথে নিম্নলিখিত কাগজপত্রের Scanned copy সংযুক্ত করতে হবে- (ক) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, অভিজ্ঞতা (যদি থাকে), প্রশিক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত ও অন্যান্য সকল প্রকার মূল/সাময়িক সনদপত্র ও নম্বরপত্র (খ) সদ্য তোলা ৩০০x৩০০ পিঙ্গেল ও অর্ধ ২০০ কিলোবাইট সাইজের ছবি (গ) জাতীয় পরিচয় পত্র (ঘ) নিজ নিজ এলাকার ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/পৌর মেয়র/ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র। বয়স গণনার ক্ষেত্রে আবেদন জমার শেষ তারিখ পর্যন্ত হিসাব করতে হবে। চাকুরীতে নিয়োজিত প্রার্থীদের ব্যাখ্যাত কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে। হ্রাসিত/অসম্পূর্ণ এবং বিলম্বিত প্রার্থীদের (নির্ধারিত সময়ের পর) গ্রহণ করা হবে না। অনলাইনে আবেদন করার সময় ক্রমিক নং ০১ এর জন্য আবেদন ফি বাবদ ৫৫০/- ও তার সাথে প্রসেসিং ফি বাবদ ৪০০/- এবং ক্রমিক নং ০২ এর জন্য আবেদন ফি বাবদ ৫৫০/- টাকা ও তার সাথে প্রসেসিং ফি বাবদ ৩০০/- টাকাসহ সম্পূর্ণ টাকা ইন্টারনেটে ব্যাংকিং/মোবাইল ব্যাংকিং এর মাধ্যমে পরিশোধ করতে হবে।
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স্বা/  
(প্রকৌশলী মোঃ আফসান হাবীব)  
রেজিস্ট্রার  
যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।

ফিডি-১৪৪৫

## 50 feared dead in DR Congo mine collapse

AFP, Bukavu

About 50 people are feared dead after a gold mine collapsed in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo following torrential rain, local authorities said yesterday.

The accident in the makeshift mine occurred on Friday in the town of Kamituga, in South Kivu province.

Provincial governor Theo Ngwabidje Kasi deplored "the tragic deaths of 50 people, most of them young".

A local resident who was at the scene, Jean Nondo, told AFP that "according to witnesses, there are more than 50 dead. There is only one survivor."

He said a river close to the mine had flooded after torrential rain.

"Water went into the three tunnels. When people tried to get out, there was no way as the water was flowing strongly, with high pressure," he said.

The mayor decreed a two-day mourning period and called on local residents to help extract the bodies from the ground.



Woman and children react as refugees and migrants from the destroyed camp of Moria flee clash with riot police, on the island of Lesbos, Greece, yesterday. Greek riot police fired tear gas at protesting asylum seekers on Lesbos island yesterday as tensions simmered following the catastrophic fire that ripped through Europe's largest migrant camp this week.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Delhi summons top Indian Facebook official over content

Delhi summoned Facebook's India chief yesterday to answer allegations that the social media giant failed to remove dangerous content in its biggest market globally. Facebook has been embroiled in a huge row in India after the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported in August that the site failed to take down anti-Muslim comments by a politician from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in order to protect its business interests. The Delhi Assembly panel on peace and harmony said Saturday it would investigate evidence -- described by the committee as "incriminating material on record" -- submitted by four prominent journalists and digital rights activists. The committee has asked Ajit Mohan, the managing director of Facebook India, to appear before it on September 15 to determine the "veracity of allegations" made by the group.

### Liberia declares rape a national emergency

Liberian President George Weah has declared rape a national emergency and has ordered new measures to tackle the problem after a recent spike of cases in the poor West African state. The move comes after thousands of Liberians protested rising incidents of rape in the capital Monrovia last month, in a bid to draw attention to the country's alarming rate of sexual assault. Late on Friday, Weah said he would install a special prosecutor for rape in Liberia, as well as set up a national sex offender registry, a statement from his office said. A UN report in 2016 recorded 803 rape cases the previous year in the country of 4.5 million, and found that only two percent of sexual violence cases led to a conviction, for example, Margaret Taylor, the director of Liberia's Women Empowerment Network, told AFP last month that her NGO had recorded 600 cases of rape between June and August, for example.

### India sees record jump in coronavirus cases



Oxygen supply has grown scarce in some parts of India hard hit by coronavirus, hospital and local government officials said, as India reported a record daily jump in cases for a second consecutive day, logging 97,570 new infections yesterday. With total cases of more than 4.65 million, India is the world's second worst affected country, trailing only the United States, which has more than 6.4 million cases. Total COVID-19 deaths stood at 77,472, putting India in third place in a ranking of countries' fatalities. But the growth in infections in India is faster than anywhere else in the world, as cases surge through urban and rural areas.

SOURCE: AFP

## Wildfires continue to ravage US West Coast

At least 26 killed; many missing

AGENCIES

US officials yesterday warned of potential "mass" fatalities as more than 20,000 firefighters from across the country battled sprawling deadly wildfires up and down the West Coast.

A prediction of cooler weather offered some hope of respite in coming days, but the true scale of the destruction from dozens of massive blazes in California, Oregon and Washington states remained hard to gauge.

There were 16 deaths confirmed this week, with wide stretches of land still cut off by flames. CNN reported death of at least 26 people in the devastating fire season across the West Coast. Dozens more are missing, it added.

"We anticipate that number (of deaths) may potentially go up as we get back into areas that have been ravaged by flame and obviously, smoke begins to clear," warned California governor Gavin Newsom.

Ten people have been confirmed dead from that blaze in Butte County, which was driven at unprecedented pace toward the city of Oroville earlier in the week by strong, dry winds and soaring temperatures.

In neighboring Oregon, where one million acres (400,000 hectares) have burned and three people are reported dead with dozens still unaccounted for, governor Kate Brown also expressed hope a corner had been turned. More than 40,000 Oregonians have fled their homes so far, with around half a million under evacuation warnings, Brown told a press conference -- clarifying previous higher figures given by state officials.

## 'Momentous' breakthrough!

Afghan peace talks open with calls for ceasefire, women's rights

REUTERS, Doha

Peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government opened in Qatar yesterday, marking what US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo heralded as a "truly momentous" breakthrough in nearly two decades of relentless conflict.

Ahead of face-to-face negotiations in coming days, the warring sides were urged by various countries and groups to reach an immediate ceasefire and forge an agreement that upholds women's rights.

The government of US President Donald Trump, who is eager to claim an end to America's longest conflict as he seeks re-election, expressed its intention to use aid as leverage for a deal.

The opening ceremony came one day after the 19th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on the United States that triggered its military involvement in Afghanistan.

Pompeo urged the warring sides to seize the opportunity to strike a comprehensive peace deal, while acknowledging many challenges lay ahead.

"The choice of your political system is yours to make," he told the opening ceremony in the Qatari capital Doha. "We believe firmly that protecting the rights of all Afghans is the best way for you to break the cycle of violence."

The head of Afghanistan's peace council, Abdullah Abdullah, said that even if the two sides could not agree on all points, they should compromise.

Taliban leader Mullah Baradar Akhund said that Afghanistan should "have an Islamic system in which all tribes and ethnicities of the country find themselves without any discrimination and live their lives in love and brotherhood."

Pompeo warned that the size and scope of future US financial assistance

to the country, which relies heavily on international funding, would depend on their "choices and conduct".

US Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad told reporters that preventing terrorism was the chief condition but that protecting minority and women's rights would also influence any future decisions on Congress-allocated funding. "There is no blank check."

Officials, diplomats and analysts say that although getting both sides to the negotiating table was a major achievement, this does not mean the path to peace will be easy, especially with violence increasing around the country.

Negotiations to broker a comprehensive peace deal were a component of a troop withdrawal pact signed between the United States and the Taliban in February. After months of delay, a dispute over the Taliban's demand for the release of 5,000 prisoners was resolved this week.



The Bobcat Fire burns through the Angeles National Forest, north of Monrovia, California, on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

## EU plotting to tear apart UK with food 'blockade'

Says Johnson; Germany says UK to suffer if no deal

AFP, London

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has accused the European Union of threatening to tear the UK apart by imposing a food "blockade" between Britain and Northern Ireland, throwing new fuel on the fire of simmering Brexit talks.

Writing in Saturday's Daily Telegraph newspaper, Johnson said the EU's stance justified his government's introduction of new legislation to rewrite its Brexit withdrawal treaty -- a bill that is causing deep alarm among his own MPs.

Talks between London and Brussels on a future trading relationship are deadlocked as both sides struggle to prise apart nearly 50 years of economic integration, after British voters opted for a divorce.

"My assessment is that an unregulated situation (no deal) would have very significant consequences for the British economy," German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz warned yesterday after a meeting of EU finance ministers in Berlin.

But absent a deal by the end of this year, when the full force of Brexit kicks in, Johnson said the EU was bent on

an "extreme interpretation" of rules for Northern Ireland under the divorce treaty both sides signed in January.

"We are being told that the EU will not only impose tariffs on goods moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, but that they might actually stop the transport of food products from GB to NI," he wrote.

"I have to say that we never seriously believed that the EU would be willing to use a treaty, negotiated in good faith, to blockade one part of the UK, to cut it off, or that they would actually threaten to destroy the economic and territorial integrity of the UK."

Johnson said the EU's stance would "seriously endanger peace and stability in Northern Ireland", and stressed he remained committed to finding agreement with the EU by the end of the year, but the new UK Internal Market Bill was a "legal safety net".

The EU, however, has threatened Britain with legal action unless it withdraws its unilateral changes by the end of September, and leaders in the European Parliament on Friday threatened to veto any trade pact if London violates its promises.



## Attenborough warns against species extinction

AFP, London

Renowned TV naturalist David Attenborough, in a new documentary, gives his starkest warning yet for humanity to safeguard species from mass extinction for the sake of our own survival.

His one-hour film "Extinction: The Facts", airing today on the BBC in Britain, does not hold back in portraying the devastating consequences of mankind's encroachment on natural habitats -- and draws a clear link to pandemics such as the coronavirus crisis.

It comes after international experts warned in a report this week that global animal, bird and fish populations have plummeted more than two-thirds in less than 50 years due to humanity's rampant over-consumption.

There is hope, however, as Attenborough retraces an iconic film he made in the 1970s showing a fast-dwindling band of mountain gorillas on the border between Rwanda and the present-day Democratic Republic of Congo.

Their population has recovered from just 250 then to more than 1,000, thanks to a determined conservation campaign in Rwanda.

"I may not be here to see it, but if we make the right decisions at this critical moment, we can safeguard our planet's ecosystems, its extraordinary biodiversity and all its inhabitants," he concludes in the documentary.

## UN adopts Covid-19 response resolution

US, Israel vote against

AFP, United Nations

The United States was supported only by Israel Friday in a vote against a UN resolution for a "comprehensive and coordinated response" to the Covid-19 pandemic, a text that included recognition of the WHO's leadership role.

The measure, which has been negotiated since May, was adopted by an overwhelming majority of 169 countries out of 193, with Ukraine and Hungary abstaining.

The text, called an omnibus resolution because it covers multiple aspects of the pandemic, "acknowledges the key leadership role of WHO and the fundamental role of the United Nations system in catalyzing and coordinating the comprehensive global response to the Covid-19 pandemic."

The United States withdrew from the WHO this spring, accusing the body of mismanaging the coronavirus pandemic and delaying launch of a global alert.

The text additionally calls for "the urgent removal of unjustified obstacles," meaning sanctions, in order to create better access to products used in combating the virus.

It requests nations to maintain food and agricultural supply chains and encourages synchronizing economic recovery strategies to promote sustainable development and combat climate change.

## Isolated Palestinians in search of new allies

AFP, Jerusalem

The Palestinian cause has long cemented ties between Middle East nations with divergent interests, but amid shifting regional alliances they are increasingly isolated and in need of new friends, analysts say.

In the latest blow, Bahrain broke ranks and agreed on Friday to open diplomatic ties with Israel, in a deal announced in Washington by President Donald Trump.

Palestinian anger was swift. The deal was "a stab in the back of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people" like the UAE-Israel deal announced last month, a top official from the Palestinian Authority told AFP.

At a summit of the 22-member Arab League this week, foreign ministers failed to back a Palestinian push to condemn last month's US-brokered normalisation deal between Israel and the United Arab Emirates.

"May you never be sold out by your 'friends'," read one bitter tweet by senior Palestinian official Hanan Ashrawi after the UAE-Israel deal was announced in August.

The UAE has defended its move in part as a way of halting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's proposed annexation of settlements in parts of the occupied West Bank.

The Israel-UAE deal "suspended" those

annexation plans -- but Netanyahu has insisted they are not off the table in the long run.

Despite this, the Palestinians' traditional Arab allies have either welcomed or silently endorsed the normalisation agreement with the US and Israel voicing hope more Arab states would follow suit.

The Palestinian cause had already become less central as the region has been rocked by the Arab



Spring upheavals, the Syria war and the bloody reign of the Islamic State jihadist group.

At the same time, hostility has deepened between US ally Saudi Arabia and Iran, its Shia Muslim rival which supports proxy forces from Syria to Lebanon.

"There have been all kinds of problems in the

Arab world -- disputes, revolutions, civil wars, tensions between different Arab countries," said Palestinian analyst Ghassan Khatib.

"Palestinians are now paying the price for the deterioration in Arab unity."

Ramallah maintains the validity of the so-called "Arab consensus" and rejects the notion that it is isolated.

That consensus has long held that Arab states will only normalise ties if Israel meets a number of conditions. One demand is for Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupied in the Six-Day War of 1967. Another is to agree to a Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital, and a third to find a just solution for the millions of Palestinian refugees and their descendants.

One Western diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, shared the view that at the moment "the Palestinians don't really have a way out, they are stuck." "They are also stuck because of those who want to support their cause, whether it is Turkey or Iran."

But analyst Khatib argued the Palestinians should keep their distance from Turkey, Iran and also Qatar, which is deeply at odds with other major Gulf powers.

"It's not wise for the Palestinians to be caught within the regional tensions and competition between regional superpowers," he said.

# Combating the coming malnutrition crisis

SAIQA SIRAJ

COVID-19 has profoundly impacted all countries, with even the most prosperous nations overwhelmed by the pandemic. For low- and middle-income countries, the consequences are even more severe. With reduced purchasing power, interruptions in critical welfare programmes, and disruptions in global supply chains, many families no longer have access to adequate nutritious food. Shutdowns and fear of infection lead to reduced access to health systems and nutrition services. These factors may create a malnutrition crisis, with the potential to cause even more devastation than the pandemic itself.

While the provision of food may resolve the hunger issue, this does not guarantee people the nutrients their bodies need. Without access to proper nutrition, there will be long-term health impacts, including weaker immune system, lowered resilience to disease, and increased stunting and wasting. Addressing hunger and, more specifically, 'nutrition' need to be a key component of the global COVID-19 response.

Since 2010, Bangladesh has made immense progress in economic growth, food security, health and nutrition, and until COVID-19, the country was on track to achieve the child nutrition targets set in the second Bangladesh National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN2) by 2025.

The pandemic, however, threatens to reverse the gains made so far, especially for



children, pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls. A study to determine the impact of COVID-19 on nutrition, conducted by the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC), supported by Nutrition International and other partners, observed that the pandemic has disrupted most food commodity supply chains, causing high-quality protein and micronutrient-rich foods to become more expensive.

School closures have brought weekly iron-folate supplementation for adolescent girls to a halt. This severely impacts the 45 million people in the country who are extremely poor and already cannot afford the minimum food consumption basket. Compounded by food shortages and limited access to essential health services, malnutrition among the country's young children will become more pronounced in the long term, and chronic stunting may

return to the 2011 rate of 41%, up from the current 31%.

Pregnant women – and those who become pregnant during the pandemic – are being significantly affected by the disruptions resulting from the need for social distancing and overburdened health facilities. This is leading to decreased quality care visits, increased anxiety, contradictory messages and recommendations, and even increased home births without properly skilled birth attendants.

A timely, well-coordinated and preventive approach is critical to combat the malnutrition crisis. The NPAN2 and the 'Bangladesh Second Country Investment Plan for Nutrition' (CIP2) need to jointly focus on prioritising nutrition security interventions through various implementation platforms including digital platforms, Nutrition

Information Systems and multiple community platforms.

Supply chain disruptions of health and nutrition essentials including iron and folic acid, calcium, and vitamin A need to be streamlined urgently. Immunisation drives, which were suspended due to lockdowns, need to be revitalised. Bangladesh's inclusive social safety net programmes and uninterrupted food value chain system can be leveraged strategically to avoid any future crisis of food insecurity and malnutrition.

New plans and strategies for reopening health facilities, resuming school feeding programmes, and delivering nutrition-specific services and programmes must be developed. Home visits and counselling services by frontline workers can play an important role in reaching vulnerable populations with regular health and nutrition services, while dispelling myths and delivering verified facts about the disease and methods to control it.

COVID-19 has created a confluence of nutrition risks that endanger an entire cohort of women and children. Nutrition must be integrated into every phase of the pandemic response – the immediate response, the resilience-building, and the recovery. With nutrition as a key pillar of the response, nations will be able to build back better, healthier and strong enough to overcome the next challenge.

The author is the Country Director of Nutrition International, Bangladesh.  
E-mail: [ssiraj@nutritionintl.org](mailto:ssiraj@nutritionintl.org)

## DIABETES



### Insomnia identified as a new risk factor

A new 'global atlas' study published in *Diabetologia* (the journal of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes [EASD]) is the first to identify insomnia as a risk factor associated with increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes (T2D). The study identifies 34 risk factors that are thought to increase (19) or decrease risk (15), as well as a further 21 'suggestive' risk factors where evidence was not quite as strong.

Researchers found evidence of causal associations between 34 exposures (19 risk factors and 15 protective factors) and T2D. Insomnia was identified as a novel risk factor, with people with insomnia being 17% more likely to develop T2D than those without.

The other 18 risk factors for T2D were depression, systolic blood pressure, starting smoking, lifetime smoking, coffee (caffeine) consumption, blood plasma levels of the amino acids isoleucine, valine and leucine, liver enzyme alanine aminotransferase (a sign of liver function), childhood and adulthood body mass index (BMI), body fat percentage, internal fat mass, resting heart rate, and blood plasma levels of four fatty acids.

The study confirmed several previously established risk factors and identified novel potential risk factors for T2D. Findings should inform public health policies for the primary prevention of type 2 diabetes.

## HEALTH bulletin



### Healthcare cost of COVID-19 in LMICs at US\$52 billion every four weeks

Research published in *The Lancet Global Health* journal, estimates that it could cost low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) around US\$52 billion (equivalent to US\$ 8.60 per person) over four weeks to provide an effective health-care response to COVID-19, assuming each country's reproductive number remained unchanged.

However, the sizeable costs of a COVID-19 response in the health sector are likely to escalate if transmission increases – rising to as much as US\$62 billion (US\$ 10.15 per person) over four weeks under a scenario where current restrictions are relaxed and transmission increases by 50%. The main cost drivers were clinical case management (54% overall cost; e.g., field hospitals, biomedical equipment, drugs, safe burial teams), maintaining essential services (21%; e.g., coordination and outreach teams, salaries, rented ambulances), rapid response and case investigation (14%; e.g., contact-tracing teams), and infection prevention and control (9%; e.g., protective equipment, masks, hand-washing stations).

The results emphasise that critical components of health systems need to exist when an outbreak occurs – including healthcare staff, laboratories, and mechanisms for coordination – as these are essential to deliver an effective response.

## Antibody responses in COVID-19 patients could guide vaccine design

STAR HEALTH REPORT

A comprehensive analysis of antibody responses in coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) patients could inform the development of an effective vaccine, according to a study published recently in the open-access journal *PLOS Pathogens* by Chao Wu and Rui Huang of Nanjing University Medical School, and colleagues.

The results show that the neutralising activity of antibodies from recovered patients is typically not strong, and declines sharply within one month after hospital discharge.

The world is facing an unprecedented challenge with communities and economies affected by the growing COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, there is no vaccine or effective drugs approved to treat or prevent the disease. A better understanding of antibody responses against SARS-CoV-2 – the virus that causes COVID-19 – will provide fundamental information for developing effective treatments and a preventive vaccine. In the new study, researchers continuously monitored SARS-CoV-2-specific antibody responses in 19 non-severe and seven severe COVID-19 patients for seven weeks from disease onset.

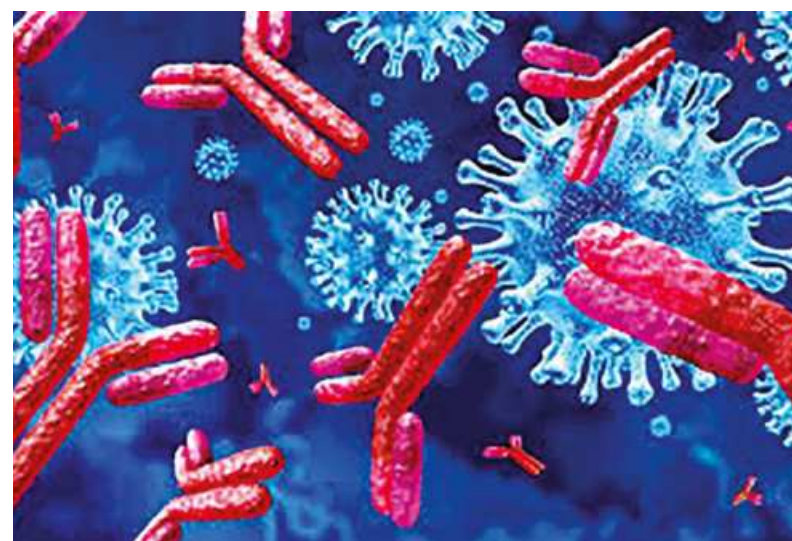
Most patients generated antibody responses against SARS-CoV-2,

including the viral nucleoprotein and three parts of the spike protein: the receptor-binding domain, S1 protein, and ectodomain. Although 80.7% of recovered COVID-19 patients had varying levels of antibody neutralisation activity against SARS-CoV-2, only a small portion of patients elicited a potent level of neutralisation activity.

This result highlights the importance of carefully selecting blood samples from recovered patients using antibody neutralisation assays prior to transfusion into other COVID-19 patients. Three to four weeks

after hospital discharge, the neutralising activity of antibodies from recovered patients declined significantly, suggesting that recovered COVID-19 patients might be susceptible to reinfection with SARS-CoV-2.

In addition, severe COVID-19 patients had a large amount of non-neutralising antibodies, which may contribute to the antibody-dependent enhancement of infection. According to the authors, the study provides important insights for serological testing, antibody-based intervention, and vaccine design.



### Bangladesh Army donated essential medical equipment for COVID-19 response at Evercare Hospital Dhaka

The Bangladesh Army recently has provided specialised trolleys and isolation beds for the COVID-19 patients at Evercare Hospital Dhaka to help combat the deadly pandemic, says a press release.

Dr Arif Mahmud, Head of Medical Services, Evercare Hospital Dhaka expressing his gratitude to the Bangladesh Army said, "It is a brilliant gesture of the Bangladesh Army to donate these apparatus that will provide us with enhanced capability to serve the sickest, thus helping the nation to tackle this unprecedented pandemic and national crisis."

This is the latest in a long line of efforts by the Bangladesh Army to help the people during the COVID-19 pandemic. This exemplary gesture by the Bangladesh Army will not only help combat the COVID-19 pandemic but will also inspire more institutions and organisations to help the frontline health care workers.

[f](#) [t](#) /StarHealthBD



## Rumors and Misconceptions Unveiled

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Public awareness by:



In Search of Excellence

#Coronavirus #COVID19



# The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR  
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13, 2020, BHADRA 29, 1427 BS

## Government functionaries in distress

### Hazards of doing one's duty

THE dastardly attack on Wahida Khanam, UNO of Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur, has brought to the fore the dangerous working environment that state functionaries at the ground level often find themselves in, especially when they abide by the rules. While their work should be supported by people irrespective of party affiliation, most of all by the ruling party members at the local level since it is the government policies undertaken in public interest that these officials are implementing, we find just the opposite.

It is no secret that local administration is often under pressure to entertain undue requests and even face intimidation to accede to demands in violation of rules and norms. Resisting such pressures incur the fate that befell Wahida Khanam. She is not even the first UNO in Dinajpur to have suffered at the hands of ruling party cadres for standing her ground. In October 2014, the Nawabganj UNO met the same fate for refusing to concede to undue demands. Five of the 13 UNOs in the district have reportedly expressed fear for their safety. This is entirely unwarranted and unacceptable. Ghoraghat is fairly representative of the situation in most parts of the country, regrettably.

The prevailing situation is a consequence of the criminalisation of politics, and the unbridled profligacy of the ruling party cadres at the district and upazila levels. A sense of immunity has helped in their ever-increasing recklessness. And the police, by their lack of proactive action, worsen the situation. In some cases, their apparent helplessness is stunning, which perhaps has to do with some police officials preferring to demonstrate their fealty more towards local politicians than to the public.

The leaders at the top are often heard announcing that criminal elements in the party would be purged, but nothing happens. The assurance of the ruling party general secretary that if any party member is faced with a charge-sheet, he or she will be expelled from the organisation, sounds hollow, since at the end of the day very few are.

It is imponderable that officials should have to risk their lives for going by the book, enforcing policies and ensuring law and order. This calls for a serious rethink by the ruling party leadership about the unlawful activities of party affiliates, whose unwarranted influence pervades all walks of life.

## Easing of entry ban for Bangladeshis

### A welcome move by Malaysian government

WE welcome the Malaysian government's decision to lift the entry ban that was imposed on citizens of Bangladesh and 22 other countries. In an attempt to curb the spread of Covid-19 in the country, the Malaysian government had earlier announced that people from countries with more than 150,000 Covid-19 cases would be barred from entering the country. The ban was imposed on residence pass holders, spouses or children to Malaysian citizens with long term visit passes, students and visit pass holders. A temporary ban was also imposed on permanent residents, Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) pass holders, and employment pass holders as well. The decision was criticised by Malaysian employers, who urged their government to continue to allow expatriates and professional pass holders to come in as their technical skills are needed for the economy.

Around 800,000 Bangladeshis live in Malaysia, many of whom work in construction and plantation sectors as low paid workers. Many of these workers came home on vacation before the outbreak of the pandemic and became stranded here as the pandemic got worse in the country. Although they have been eagerly waiting to return to their workplaces, they could not do so due to the travel ban imposed by their employer country. Now, as the Malaysian government has eased the entry ban, this is an opportunity for our workers to return to their workplaces.

However, our expatriate workers might face problems in submitting the documents required by the Malaysian authorities—they will be required to write an application for entry and will also need a supporting letter from the Malaysian Investment Development Authority or agencies concerned. They must also be approved by the Malaysian Immigration Department before they enter the country. Our expatriate welfare ministry and other agencies concerned must help them in submitting their documents properly and oversee the whole return process so that our workers are not exploited or harassed in any way. Also, before they submit their applications, their employers must assure them that they will rehire them and help them in the immigration process.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

### Traditional games in crisis

Games and sports are one of the main sources of entertainment as well as physical fitness for people of any age. It helps in mental development of children and adolescents alike. But with the advancement of technology, the traditional games of rural Bengal—*hadudu*, *ekka-dokka*, *kanamachhi*, *lathi khela*, *dariabanda*, *kutkut*, *gollachut*, *danguli*, among many more—are nearly extinct. There was a time when such games were an essential part of leisure activities and a source of unparalleled enjoyment. Due to the influence of TV, mobile phones and video games and inadequacy of playgrounds, today's children have lost touch with these games. These traditions that used to occupy an important place in our diverse culture are getting lost. I humbly urge all concerned to ensure the participation of the present generation by creating more opportunities to revive traditional games.

Abu Faruk, Bandarban

# Political contents of corruption and anti-corruption in Bangladesh



IFTEKHARUZZAMAN

THE coronavirus pandemic has been converted into a festival of corruption in the health sector in Bangladesh. Crises like these do increase the risk of corruption everywhere in the world. However,

there is perhaps no other country where corruption has been found to be as awkwardly pervasive as in Bangladesh.

The outrageous nature and dimensions of corruption of contractors and suppliers with real or manipulated political linkages, in collusion with a section of public officials in responsible positions, have been shocking for many. The scandal around N-95 mask supplies or fraudsters like Regent or JKG or the donor-funded Covid-19 Emergency Response and Pandemic Preparedness Project are but a few examples.

The list of such big-fish corruption is endless. Equally shocking has been the distressing instances of corruption in relief operations, including widespread allegations of misappropriation of relief goods for the worst affected and cash support to the ultra-poor, in which none other than the politically powerful, so-called public representatives reportedly played the dominant role. Corruption has been rife, from big procurement and supply related deals to the lowest level deliveries of services, including asking for bribes for the scheduling of Covid-19 tests and even a business of fake negative reports that has led several countries to close their doors to Bangladeshi nationals.

However, it will be naive to consider the health sector as the only villain. Put any other sector under similar stress as the health sector today and the scenario will be the same, if not worse. The financial sector for instance, has been pushed to the brink of collapse by the big shots who have captured the state to a level that among those who dictate terms for the banking and financial sector are the swindlers, launders and defaulters, not the laws, rules or regulations.

For those who are beneficiaries of it, corruption is a matter of narcotic dependence while for those who are victims—the common people—it is an extremely distressing experience in daily life, which is indeed hostage to it. According to the national household survey released by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) in June 2018, 89 percent of respondents who experienced corruption reported that they were forced to pay bribes in order to access public services. The experiences are more or less the same in every sector while law enforcement, land administration and justice are among the worst affected.

Another striking feature of corruption in Bangladesh is that those who are entrusted with the responsibility to control corruption, for instance the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), are ineffective and politically influenced. A section of ACC officials are reportedly corrupt, and it doesn't have enough courage to exercise the institutional and legal mandate entrusted to it. It seems to have drawn a line beyond which it doesn't find itself confident to go. As a result, at best only some small fries in the sea of corruption are chased while the big fish remain untouched.

Anti-corruption pledges are repeatedly made from the highest level of the government, including the call for zero tolerance against corruption. Soon after the onset of the coronavirus crisis, the pledge was repeated that no corruption would be tolerated in the Covid-19 response. However, precious little is done

the iceberg. At the core of it is bedevilled politics and its increasing criminalisation is the collusion with a section of the law enforcement agencies and administration. Add to this the vicious cycle of a set of dysfunctional institutions of integrity and accountability.

Bangladesh's commendable performance in growth and its socioeconomic transformation could have been much better if it could achieve higher standards of governance and effectively controlled corruption, the cost of which is considered to be at least two to three percent of GDP. The country has performed poorer than many of its peers in terms of nearly every important governance indicator. In terms of the Rule of Law Index, Bangladesh was only 112th out of 126 countries in 2019. Our performance is equally poor in the Regulatory Quality Index, Government Effectiveness

the appetite and capacity to enforce it are likely to remain low.

The infrastructural, systemic and resource deficits in the health system, as well as other related sectors like social protection and education, may not only continue to cause public sufferings but can create more opportunities for corruption and rent-seeking.

Because of political linkage and influence, larger business entities including export-oriented ones, in their leapfrog race to benefit more from the stimulus package and other government support, are likely to make the medium, small and the vast informal sector lag behind. In the process, business integrity will be further undermined. On the other hand, media and civil society spaces may shrink further, at a time when the need for civic mobilisation for voice and accountability is more than ever.

As challenging as the job of anti-corruption is in this context, it is still not an impossibility. Much would depend on the extent to which the importance of the political magic bullet is brought home. Our political leaders need to realise that it is only in their hands that the Frankenstein's monster they have created can be controlled.

Other crucial entry points include the abolition of the culture of impunity and bringing the corrupt, especially the big fish, to justice. Systemic improvements like more robust and rigorous application of the digitised procurement system, as well as public service delivery, are well within the capacity of the authorities, given political will.

A key catalyst rests in the introduction and enforcement of a robust law to manage conflicts of interest so that public representatives and public officials at all levels are barred from having any business relations with the state.

The 2012 Anti-money Laundering Act that has remained a paper tiger must be enforced, while the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit must be made effective. Professional skills and integrity of the law enforcement agencies and ACC that are mandated to control corruption and money laundering must be drastically reformed.

The National Board of Revenue should have long been able to control mis-invoicing, which is the dominant channel of illicit financial transfers. Bangladesh must adopt the global standard for automatic exchange of information on financial accounts that could facilitate robust tracking of financial flows within and across borders.

Over and above, effective delivery of anti-corruption demands a retransformation of values, norms and practices of political parties for public good and depoliticisation of the state institutions, without which there is no way corruption can be controlled.

Iftekharuzzaman is Executive Director, Transparency International Bangladesh.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

to enforce and implement such pledges. Nowhere in the world are such pledges translated into reality by the head of the government personally. Ironically for us, a section of the people who are supposed to be in charge of implementing this highest level pledge are reportedly among the stakeholders and kingpins of collusive corruption; they benefit from it, promote it, protect it and facilitate impunity.

Stories of some corrupt individuals widely reported in the media recently, like the procurement mafia, casino dons, pillow and kettle scamsters, land-grabbing brothers from Faridpur, or the MP arrested in Kuwait, have been shocking. But in reality, as invariably linked to criminalised politics, these are neither surprising nor isolated. All these are syndromes of a cancerous disease that has been allowed to spread deep and wide in the political space across the country. What we read, hear and thus get shocked and awed at are just the tip of

Index, Voice and Accountability Index, Press Freedom Index, Political Rights Index, Civil Liberties Index, and not least the Corruption Perception Index. Bangladesh is also among a few countries where corruption even costs lives, as experienced in the case of Rana Plaza, Spectrum Garments, and the Nimtoli and Churihata tragedies, just to mention a few.

Against this backdrop, the advent of coronavirus and its fallout have only accentuated the challenges. Politically, indications are in abundance of increased concentration of power, decreased space for political dissent and further politicised and weakened institutions. All these may cause lower levels of law enforcement, increased impunity, reduced access to justice and redress, and increased discrimination. High level political pronouncement against corruption is most likely to continue at least as a perceived means of legitimacy, though

## We must do more to deter custodial violence



MUHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

THE conviction of three police officers working in one of the police stations of Dhaka metropolitan area for a custodial death that occurred years ago should be a shining example

in an otherwise murky environment. For too long, errant policemen resorting to inhumane third degree methods that resulted in deaths and grievous physical injuries could not be brought under the clutches of the law. It is therefore heartening to know that these errant policemen have been found culpable and that the court has pronounced the guilty verdict.

Concerned quarters would like to ponder on whether there is a necessity of change in the law of evidence, throwing the onus on the police to explain as to how a prisoner in their custody came to meet their death under suspicious circumstances. There is perhaps a need to impress upon the government to amend the law appropriately so that policemen who commit atrocities on persons in their custody are not allowed to escape by reason of paucity or absence of evidence.

It is police officers alone and none else who can give evidence as regards the circumstances in which a person in their custody comes to bodily harm. Bound by ties of a kind of brotherhood, they at times prefer to remain silent in such situations and when they choose to speak, they pervert the truth. The result is that persons on whom atrocities are perpetrated by the police in the *sanctum sanctorum* of the police station are left without any evidence to prove who the offenders are.

The law as to the burden of proof in cases of custodial torture or death may be re-examined by the legislature so that law enforcers do not use their authority and abuse opportunities to oppress the innocent citizens who look to them for protection. It is unfortunate that more often than not, there is a misplaced sympathy even for the law violating officer and instead of making the administration

bring him to book, there is a tendency to save him instead.

Under the circumstances, it is time to consider if when there is evidence that the injury was caused during the period when the person was in police custody, the court may presume that the injury was caused by the police officer having custody of that person during that period, unless the police officer proves to the contrary. One has to remember that the various constitutional rights and the

For proper law enforcement, it needs to be noted that lawless police officers must not be in demand when lawlessness and disorder prevail in an area. In fact, officers who are believers in the rule of law and followers of straight legal methods should be deployed to deal with difficult situations. We must not give in to short-term illusory results in our desperation to achieve and impress.

When a policeman indulges in third degree methods, he not only brutalises

political levels of the government, to weed out officers who, in their blind faith in the efficacy of illegal and immoral methods, still continue to besmear the professional integrity of a vital organ of the state. The political executives and senior police officials have to demonstrate in their thought and action that their battle against unclear and inquisitorial methods of law enforcement is a real article of faith with them. Even for bringing known predators to book, the slightest deviation



PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO (STAGED)

human rights of the individual suspect come under the direct handling of police in all stages of criminal investigations—from arrest to imprisonment.

We should be able to agree that no arrest can be made merely because it is lawful for the police officer to make an arrest. The existence of power to arrest is one thing and justification for it is quite another. It has to be remembered that arrest and detention of a person can cause incalculable harm to the reputation and self-esteem of a person. Denying a person of their liberty is a serious matter.

himself but also degrades himself to the level of a criminal. In fact, he compares even less favourably than the criminal in his custody. Expediency, protection of society or the imperative need to bring an offender to justice are but poor arguments in favour of such a regressive action. The law does not approve of an investigator turning into another criminal in order to solve a crime.

The remedy for eradicating the evils of third degree methods and custodial violence is to organise determined efforts, both at the highest administrative and

from the lawful path will not be allowed to go unpunished.

Social control in the form of approval or disapproval of police action can motivate police to become just, fair and law abiding. If a society firmly refuses to condone or acquiesce policemen's unfair and illegal methods, such transgressions of law by law enforcement officers would be very few. The absence of so-called extrajudicial killings since August 1 is perhaps a point worth noticing.

Muhammad Nurul Huda is a former IGP.



# Vaccines for Covid-19 by US Election Day

Can we please get a straight answer?

AN OPEN DIALOGUE



ABDULLAH SHIBLI

FOR future historians, the most memorable event of the year 2020 is certainly likely to be the Covid-19 pandemic, followed by the US Presidential elections. One does not have to stretch one's imagination to see how intertwined these two phenomena

are since the question on everyone's mind is, "Are we getting the vaccine before Election Day?" This question, which epitomises the crux of the current national debate in the realms of politics, economics and social discourse, is also the trigger point for all sorts of uncertainty and hopelessness about the future.

The answer to the question I pose in the title of this commentary is not just a matter of speculative fantasy but will shape the future of both US politics as well as the path of the war against Covid-19.

If you were to ask, "When do we get the Covid-19 vaccine?", the average person might respond, "who knows?" However, most epidemiologists would say, "I am not sure we'll have one soon! But, before Election Day, November 3, it is possible but not likely." What does that mean? When I asked this question to Imran Hussain Chowdhury, MD, an infectious disease specialist, he was skeptical about the prospect of having a safe and proven vaccine before the end of the year. As a physician with the Infectious Disease Care Center, he is preoccupied with treating his patients in the Greater Washington DC area and is trying to focus on the job at hand: testing and treating the sick. Dr Chowdhury cautions that the vaccine development process takes time and while modern technology can help, the safety and efficacy of a vaccine must be given the highest priority.

The complexity surrounding the development and deployment of the

Covid-19 vaccine is quite significant and to make matters worse, the political leaders and policymakers have thrown in a mish-mash of terminology that baffles even the experts, not to speak of the non-specialists. Public officials are often reluctant to give straight answers and use words such as "likely", "possibly", and "probably", which are vague and not helpful.

There is already some bad news from the frontline. On September 8, AstraZeneca announced that it had temporarily stopped Covid-19 vaccine Phase III trials due to illness of one or more participants. The AstraZeneca vaccine, developed in conjunction with Oxford University, has been described by the World Health Organization as probably the world's leading candidate and the most advanced in terms of development. According to news sources, "The suspension dims prospects for an early rollout amid some reports that the United States was aiming for an October or November delivery."

In economics, which is adept with dealing with risk and uncertainty, we can handle any forthcoming event that has more than one possible outcome as long as we know the probability of the outcomes. However, for the man in the street, nothing is more baffling than the concept of probability. For example, if you know that the vaccine against flu is only 40 percent successful, would you take the flu shot? The answer is no, as reflected in the statistics for last year, which shows less than half the population in the USA got vaccinated. Nonetheless, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) strongly recommends that everyone should get a flu shot every year regardless of the statistics.

The CDC estimates the burden of flu and the impact of annual flu vaccination in the US using a model that estimates the numbers of flu illnesses, medical visits and hospitalisation prevented by vaccination. One control trial conducted with adults aged 60 years and older reported a vaccine efficacy of 58 percent. According to the latest data for the entire population, vaccine efficacy is 29 percent in 2018-2019.

Coming back to the topic of Covid-19 vaccines, President Trump officially launched Operation Warp Speed (OWS) on May 15, 2020 to develop and deliver 300 million doses of a vaccine for Covid-19 by January 2021. Dr Moncef Mohamed Slaoui, a Moroccan-born Belgian-American researcher, is the chief adviser for OWS. He called the time frame given for the vaccine development "very aggressive" but "achievable". On September 3, when asked if he thought that there would be a vaccine before Election Day, which was then less than

whatever tomorrow may bring. Is the weather tomorrow going to be good? No one can tell with certainty, but that does not prevent us from planning for our day tomorrow. Who could have predicted even six months ago that we would still be in the midst of the pandemic in mid-September? Therefore, the bottom line is, we manage to live with uncertainty.

As we navigate the Covid-19 quagmire, what can we expect tomorrow? We are all unanimous about our national goals: vaccine,



PHOTO: AFP

eight weeks away, he said, "I think it's extremely unlikely but not impossible, and therefore it's the right thing to do to be prepared in case." Slaoui's careful choice of words, "unlikely but not impossible" has added a lot of fire to the political debate on Trump's election strategy.

As expected, the Democrats are crying foul and taking all possible precautions for the three possible outcomes of the "vaccine lottery": an announcement in October that the vaccine is ready, an announcement that the vaccine is ready but not for immediate use, or that vaccination will proceed on a very limited scale. The future is always uncertain. You take

tests, therapeutics, jobs and income. If we do not have a vaccine that is 100 percent effective, we can't have faith in it. But can we be certain that even a simple test is 100 percent accurate? No drug company will claim that theirs is.

In any basic undergraduate class in statistics, we learn the concepts of false positive and false negative results. These terms have now become part of everyday lingo. Patients die even after testing negative (a case of false negative). And there is an abundance of false positive cases too. On September 8, my home state, Massachusetts, suspended a coronavirus testing lab after 400 false positive

# The pandemic cannot stop joint efforts for adaptation, resilient societies



YUHO HAYAKAWA

ON September 8, the South Asia regional office of Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) was inaugurated in Dhaka with the attendance of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the 8th Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon. This is

a milestone event to tackle climate change in the region, accomplished by GCA and the Government of Bangladesh, particularly the Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change, and various stakeholders, in spite of constraints caused by the spread of Covid-19. Participants attending the partnership forum held after the launching ceremony of this regional hub also acted as proof of the rich human networks that have been built among academics, governments, civil societies and development partners in the region.

Adaptation is one of the focal areas of cooperation of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) worldwide, as it is directly linked to its missions—human security and quality growth—and responses to climate change. Experiences and knowledge of Japan, a disaster-prone country, have effectively contributed to this approach. In addition, we have been urged on by a belief gained from evidence-based research as well as our own experiences—investment prior to calamities is usually much more cost-effective than emergency and recovery response after disasters. The importance of investment was also highlighted by the Sendai Framework 2015–2030, adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2015.

Challenges caused by different climate and geographic features, as well as

natural and socioeconomic conditions, are various in South Asia. Accordingly, in this region, JICA has tackled a variety of issues related to adaptation, together with relevant governments, academic researchers and development organisations, such as research and development of early warning mechanisms for glacial lake outburst floods in Bhutan, institutional strengthening of disaster management agencies and meteorological observations in Sri Lanka, a wide range of activities from

construction in Maldives and so forth.

For promoting adaptation in Bangladesh, JICA has closely collaborated with the government of Bangladesh mainly in three pillars: reduction of water-related disasters such as floods and waterlogging through strengthening of flood control and river management infrastructure and relevant capacity building; minimisation of damages caused by floods, cyclones and tidal surges, including development of meteorological radar systems for early warning and



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Looking for fodder from a raft made out of banana trees in Companiganj upazila of Sylhet.

urban sewerage to mangrove afforestation in India, digitalisation of geographic maps with accurate elevation data in Nepal, capacity building of relevant officials and awareness raising at the community-level in disaster management in Pakistan, sea wall

construction of 117 multipurpose evacuation shelters in the coastal areas; and agricultural responses, such as small-scale water management system and diversification of agriculture for farmers. During these collaborations, attention has been paid on

a combination of infrastructure investment, knowledge sharing and technological transfer; connecting policies, planning and practical actions on the ground; multi-tier partnership with central ministries, municipalities and communities; and utilisation of multiple instruments including grants, loans and technical cooperation. This is also our mutual-learning process together with Bangladeshi colleagues.

Looking ahead in Bangladesh, the government and development partners have a common platform to tackling climate change—a visionary long-term plan called Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP) 2100. JICA has decided to join with Bangladesh and other partners to materialise the BDP 2100. As the first response to this plan, the agency just initiated a technical cooperation project called NODI, which will promote a tailor-made river engineering methodology in Bangladesh for better control of ever-changing river flows by mobilising knowledge of domestic and international researchers and engineers.

Adaptation needs a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach. It is essential to mainstream adaptation elements into a broad range of activities, sectoral and spatial planning, and each investment. Education, academic research and technological development will be also key factors. It will be a long and difficult journey—to find out an optimal or better solution between calamity risks and economic burdens. Actually, this dilemma has a substantial similarity with the world's current struggle against the pandemic—to seek the delicate balance between health threats and pains of societies and individuals.

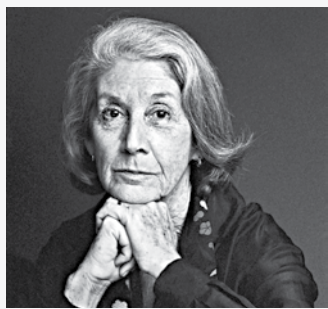
Global endeavours to combat the present health threats have made people worldwide vividly aware of important but oft neglected facts, such as technology and innovation really matter to save our own lives; education, and sharing and dissemination of correct

knowledge based on scientific evidence and analysis are essential for policymaking, research and development, and sustainable change of individual behaviours; risk reduction needs cost and burden-sharing; and policy decisions should be made through open, careful and participatory dialogue among not only policymakers and scientists but also with other broad stakeholders because *all of us*, more or less, shoulder risks as well as burdens such as tax and loss of income (the old slogan of "no taxation without representation" may be recalled). It seems all of these points are applicable to adaptation efforts as well. Of course, the spread of the novel coronavirus is a new and additional threat to people's lives and social safety, but the change in people's way of thinking under the pandemic might also become an opportunity to accelerate climate actions.

Bangladesh is a country on the largest river delta in the world, created by transborder river flows. The history of the country has been built on fights against natural disasters as well as on coexistence with them; it can be said that resilience and adaptation are national culture. And now, the government of Bangladesh is decisively committed to the climate issues and its role within the international community is remarkably expanding. Against this backdrop, the region welcomes the timely opening of the regional office of GCA in Dhaka—this is exactly the right place to be a great nexus for regional collaboration. This progress demonstrates that even the present health crisis cannot stop surging needs for knowledge sharing worldwide and joint endeavours for adaptation. Even amid the pandemic, we need to, and will, keep moving forward and faster together towards resilient societies.

Yuho Hayakawa is the Chief Representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Bangladesh Office.

QUOTABLE Quote

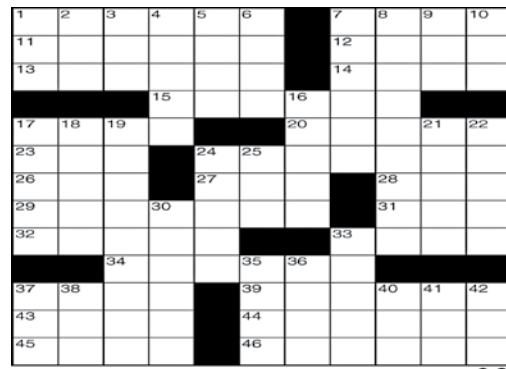


NADINE GORDIMER (1923-2014) South African novelist and short-story writer.

The truth isn't always beauty, but the hunger for it is.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Compass creation
  - 7 Capital on a fjord
  - 11 Cheering word
  - 12 Constellation part
  - 13 Consumption
  - 14 Refer to
  - 15 Chaos
  - 17 Pert talk
  - Curacao's neighbor
  - 23 Director's cry
  - 24 Olympics racer
  - 26 "Exodus" hero
  - 27 Lamb's mother
  - 28 Wisdom bringer
  - 29 "Sistine" artist
  - 31 Keg need
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- DOWN**
- 1 Greek X
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  - 4 Beach crawlers
  - 5 Huron or Erie
  - 6 Looked over
  - 7 Film awards
  - 8 Whip up
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  - 10 Lode material
  - 16 Clothing brand
  - 17 Muffler's kin
  - 18 Sound-based
  - 19 Accept as true
  - 21 Kicked off
  - 22 Skilled
  - 24 Abacus parts
  - 25 Need to pay
  - 30 Temporary break
  - 33 Singer Lauper
  - 35 Stumble
  - 36 TV's Jay
  - 37 Pod item
  - 38 Catchall abbr.
  - 40 Frank McCourt
  - 41 Sense of self
  - 42 Director Howard



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

G O F A R T I T A N  
 A G I L E E D U C E  
 B R A I N S T O R M S  
 S E T T O O N E T  
 C A R O L T A W N Y  
 A L A N S O L A R  
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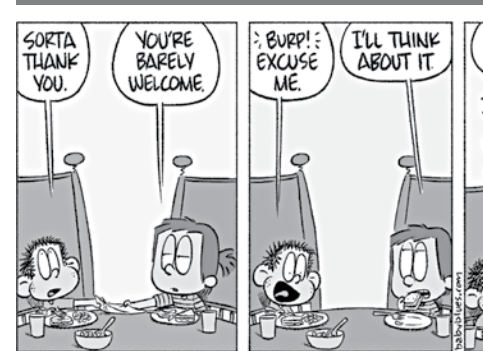
BEETLE BAILEY



BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES



BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



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

## Positively

FROM PAGE 12  
on the remaining two.

The under-construction rail link between Haldibari in West Bengal and Chilahati in Bangladesh would revive the old Siliguri-Sealdah rail route through Bangladesh, taken by the Darjeeling Mail, Shringla said.

The Indian foreign secretary highlighted the connectivity issues while delivering the keynote address at a webinar on "Self-reliant India: Reimagining the North East India in terms of Employment and Skill" recently.

He said a new railway link between Akhaura in Bangladesh and Agartala and Tripura was under construction.

Nationals of the two countries cannot only travel on board the Maitree and Bandhan express to each other's countries, but also on buses plying between Shillong and Dhaka and between Agartala and Kolkata via Dhaka, he added.

"We are upgrading the infrastructure of land customs stations for enabling smooth cross-border movement of goods and people," Shringla said.

He said the potential of mutually beneficial resources and of generating common economic spaces was evident in another area -- energy.

Bangladesh currently imports 1,160 MW power through adjoining states in India, the Indian foreign secretary added.

"We are also looking at exporting the surplus hydropower potential of the North East to Bangladesh and Myanmar."

Shringla said there has been considerable augmentation of the inland water transport that links India's North East to Bangladesh.

He said 20 port townships are planned along the Brahmaputra and Barak river systems to enhance inland water connectivity. "This could galvanise multimodal linkages in the entire region."

Goods are transhipped to the North East through Ashuganj inland river port in Bangladesh and further through Akhaura-Agartala by road.

Recently, the first container of goods was moved from Kolkata to Agartala, using the newly-established India-Bangladesh agreement permitting the use of Chattogram port for India to transport goods to and from North East India.

A new waterway connecting Tripura to Bangladesh was also operationalised recently with the first ever export consignment from Bangladesh reaching Tripura through the waterway.

The Indian foreign secretary said a strong, stable and prosperous North East is key to building a self-reliant India.

## Viking chess!

FROM PAGE 12  
The pieces were part of a strategic board game called Hnefatafl, which is similar to chess and was popular with the soldiers in teaching strategy on the battlefield.

The set is expected to sell for £1,000 when it goes up for auction at London-based Dix Noonan Webb (DNW) next Tuesday, September 15.

One of the experts at DNW said the detectorist brought the Viking gaming pieces into the auction house in a plastic bag, unsure of their significance.

Bott had been collecting items for two decades at the site, and had also found coins, strap ends, brooches, mounts and lead weights dating to the 9th century.

"He thought they were weights but I have been to Oslo Museum and seen examples of Viking games and these pieces resembled that," said Nigel Mills at DNW.

## Daily deaths

FROM PAGE 12  
death rate is 1.4 percent of all confirmed cases.

With the latest cases, the total number of confirmed cases rose to 336,044, said a press release from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Bangladesh is now at the 15th place in the world on coronavirus case count, according to worldometers.info. France, the UK and Saudi Arabia are in the 13th, 14th and 16th spots respectively.

A total of 10,723 tests were carried out during the same 24-hour period. The percentage of positive tests (positivity rate) was 11.96 percent.

During the same period, 2,247 patients recovered from novel coronavirus, taking the number of total recovery to 238,271. The recovery rate is nearly 71 percent of all confirmed cases in the country.

Among those who died in the 24-hour period were 23 males and 11 females. One of them passed away at home and the rest at hospitals, the press release said.

One of the dead was from Mymensingh division, four were from Khulna, five from Rajshahi, seven from Chattogram, and the highest 17 were from Dhaka division.

In 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday, a total of 1,153 Covid-19 patients were admitted to general beds while 286 to ICU beds in hospitals designated for coronavirus patients across the country.

With another 338 people taken to institutional isolation centres during the same 24-hour period, the total number of people in institutional isolation rose to 18,326, the DGHS said.



People reading books as they wait for their turn at a salon in Sarpukur village in Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat. Jamal Hossain, a student, supplies books to 30 such salon-based mini-libraries in the district with money earned from part-time jobs.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

## A beacon with books for all

FROM PAGE 12  
Now an honours student of history at Lalmonirhat Government College, he continues to supply books free of cost and monitor these salon-based libraries.

Each of the 30 salon-based libraries get 10 different books every week and there is clamour for more books as well as more of these mini-libraries in local salons.

Jamal is currently trying to buy more books and set up more of these mini-libraries but doesn't have the funds to do so right away.

"I have a plan to run at least 100 salon libraries in five upazilas in this district, but I need time as I don't have the ability right now," he said.

The son of a farmer, Jamal is doing all this with the money he earns from tuitions and the help of his friends in managing the libraries.

Choosing salons as the base for these libraries was also for a social good, as Jamal saw it.

"I saw people gathered in the salon all the time, spending their time idly, so I decided to set up a library in there where people can also learn something during that time," he said.

Salon owners seem to agree.

Sukumar Chandra Sharma, a salon owner in Tipar Bazar area carrying Jamal's library books, said that his establishment and customers both benefit.

"In the past, customers in my shop used to smoke to pass the time but now they spend time reading books instead," he said, adding it made for a better atmosphere inside. He himself also reads the books when at leisure.

"Customers in my salon are happy to have the opportunity to read books," said Sanjay Kumar Sharma, owner of another salon in the same area. "They want more."

Nando Kumar Shil, an owner of a salon at College Road in Lalmonirhat Sadar, said, "Now, we don't spend our leisure time doing nothing, but rather reading books which makes us knowledgeable."

"I told Jamal to set up a library in

my salon several times but I'm not getting the opportunity yet," said Bhabesh Chandra Sharma, a salon owner at Kakina village of Kaliganj upazila.

Schoolteacher Nur Islam of Bhadaï village said, "We benefit as the salon library provides us with different books, playing an important role in broadening our knowledge."

"I enjoy the opportunity of reading books while at the salon."

Delwar Hossain, a fellow college student, said he and several other friends help Jamal run the salon-based libraries. They also come together to read books and newspapers in the library at Tipar Bazar, Sarpukur, where this all began.

## Erosion halts ferry service in Shimulia

FROM PAGE 12  
Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), the government body to operate the services, then decided to operate five small ferries and shut down the operations of large RO-RO ferries due to navigability crisis.

Later at night, the ferry terminal saw havoc due to erosion, said government officials concerned.

"If this situation continues, it would be difficult to protect the terminal," said Harif Ahmed, deputy assistant engineer of BIWTA.

The government's other body, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC), responsible for maintenance of ferry terminals was contacted. Their assistant manager Prafulla Chauhan said operations of large RO-RO ferries have been shut

down due to navigability crisis and strong currents.

Meanwhile, around 50 vehicles are waiting at the Shimulia ferry terminal to cross the river. However, there is a huge flow of people, who were crossing the river by launches and speed boats.

However, ferry services on another major route Paturai-Daulatdia were normal yesterday, said officials concerned.

Abdus Sattar, assistant general manager (Marine) of BIWTC Aricha Regional Office, said 16 of the 19 ferries are in operation on this route.

"However, we are facing huge pressure of vehicles as ferry operations on the Shimulia-Kathalbari route is facing disruption," he told The Daily Star, yesterday afternoon.

(Our Manikganj correspondent contributed to the story.)

## Teargas fired during migrant protests on Greek island of Lesbos

AFP, Greece

Greek riot police fired tear gas at protesting asylum seekers on Lesbos island yesterday as tensions simmered following the catastrophic fire that ripped through Europe's largest migrant camp this week.

Thousands of asylum seekers have been sleeping rough on Lesbos since Wednesday when the Moria camp was destroyed in apparent arson attacks, with families huddling under blankets and sleeping in doorways or by roads.

Clashes occurred on Saturday near a new temporary camp built by Greek authorities where hundreds of young men gathered to protest, some throwing stones at riot police who responded with tear gas.

A fire set there earlier in the day near a police blockade had to be extinguished by the fire brigade.

"Freedom!" said one handwritten sign held up by a protester. "We want to leave Moria," said another.

"We were protesting peacefully against the new camp and the police threw tear gas against us. My baby had the gas in her eyes!", Zola, a Congolese woman carrying her 5-month-old baby, told AFP.

"In Moria we could come and go but this (new camp) will be like a prison".

Some people suffering from respiratory problems because of the tear gas were taken away in ambulances, according to the migrants.

"Three people have fainted and were taken to the hospital", Papouch, a Congolese man, told AFP.

- Tensions -  
Round-the-clock efforts to find temporary shelter for over 11,000 people made homeless by the destruction of the Moria camp were still inadequate, rights groups said.

"As thousands are now left sleeping rough in the hills around Moria or on the streets, tensions between local residents, asylum seekers, and police are increasing," Human Rights Watch warned in a statement on Saturday.

The Moria camp, which had been regularly criticised by the UN and rights groups for overcrowding and its dismal sanitary conditions, burned down in successive fires on Tuesday night and Wednesday.

Officials have blamed migrants for the blazes, the first breaking out

shortly after 35 people tested positive for coronavirus and were facing isolation measures.

Many of the mostly Afghan asylum seekers have spent months in desperate conditions on the island, hoping in vain to be allowed to cross tightly shut European borders.

Greek Migration Minister Notis Mitarachi on Saturday said the new camp, a few kilometres (miles) from Moria at a location near the sea, would open later on Saturday with capacity for 3,000 people.

"Rapid tests for coronavirus will be conducted at the entrance," Mitarachi told Skai TV.

Alexandros Ragavas, a spokesman for the migration ministry, said vulnerable asylum seekers would be the first to be housed.

"We will give priority to families. It will be tents of six and the camp will be separated by ethnicities. The process of moving people will start today," he told AFP.

- Local objections -

Local volunteer groups have faced difficulty in supplying asylum seekers with food and water.

"We are sleeping in the dirt or on the road under the open sky," a

group of migrants from the former camp said on Facebook, noting that some people had even found shelter under the trees of the local Greek cemetery.

Sleeping on the roadside and in parking lots, men, women and children have made use of whatever they can find in nearby fields, pinning tarpaulins on tree branches and reeds in a bid for privacy and protection from the beating sun.

The local mayor has rejected efforts to build new temporary camps as "unrealistic" and residents have tried to stop the construction of new camps by setting up roadblocks.

Army and fire service helicopters have been used to bypass the barriers.

"Any thought to rebuild this sort of thing should be forgotten," Mytilene Mayor Stratis Kytelis told Antenna TV on Friday.

"The island's society cannot take any more... for reasons of health, social cohesion, national security," Kytelis said.

The plight of the stranded families has prompted other European countries to offer to take in hundreds of asylum seekers, particularly unaccompanied youngsters.

## Four held in Monpura over rape of schoolgirl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Police have arrested four youths in Bhola's Monpura upazila over gang-raping a schoolgirl 10 days ago.

Law enforcers produced the four before a Bhola court yesterday seeking their remand for three days each in a case filed in this regard.

The arrestees -- Md Shakib, 18, A Karim, 19, Jobayer Hossain, 18, and Md Shamim, 19, -- are from Monpura union in the same upazila.

Police said the 15-year-old girl went to visit her aunt in Monpura from Dhaka's Keraniganj upazila during the Eid-ul-Azha holidays last month. The eighth grader had been staying there since then as her school was closed.

Around 10:00pm on September 7, the girl went out of her aunt's home to use the toilet. At that time, the four arrestees, along with six others, intercepted her and took her away on a motorcycle forcibly.

According to law enforcers, the accused first took the girl to the second floor of a newly constructed four-storey building of Monpura High School and gang-raped her.

As the daybreak was getting nearer, the accused took the girl to Andipar High School by a motorcycle. They again gang-raped the teenager there before fleeing.

Hearing her crying for help, some locals rescued the girl from the school premises on September 4 morning and sent her home.

The girl's aunt said they were under pressure from some local public representatives for "settling the matter locally". Police came to know about the incident from some locals on Thursday.

Monpura OC Shakhawat Hossain said they picked up the four youths from different places in Monpura upazila on Thursday and Friday.

The victim's aunt filed the rape case with Monpura Police Station on Friday, accusing some unidentified youths.

Police took the girl into custody on Friday. She was sent to Bhola Sadar Hospital yesterday for medical examinations.

## 7 saved

FROM PAGE 12  
Before joining as the Belkuchi UNO, he was the assistant commissioner of land in Sirajganj Sadar upazila where he also worked against the child marriage.

## N'ganj blast

FROM PAGE 12  
injured in the explosion and of them, 31 have died so far.

"On completion of the investigation, we will submit the report to a lower court," said the DIG, who along with his team visited the mosque around 11:00am.

Asked about primary findings of their investigation, he said it seems that the explosion occurred due to accumulated gas.

It can be confirmed after further investigation, he added.

Evidence are being collected from the spot, he said, adding that, "We will talk to the locals and the evidence will be examined at our forensic department. We will complete the investigation within the shortest possible time after examining the evidence and other probe reports."

It is suspected that the explosion was caused due to an accumulation of leaked gas from an underground Titas Gas pipeline after it came in contact with an electric spark.

Titas Gas has suspended eight of its officials and staffers in connection with the blast. During digging, officials noticed two holes in an underground gas pipe adjacent to the mosque.

Meanwhile, the condition of all five Narayanganj mosque explosion victims currently undergoing treatment in the ICU of Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery is somewhat better than before but still in danger, doctors said.

"Some of them have lesser burn injuries. But as all the five patients suffered inhalation burns, we can't consider them to be out of danger," Dr Partha Sankar Paul, resident surgeon of the institute, told reporters yesterday.

Of the five, Sheikh Farid suffered 50 percent burn injuries, Abdul Aziz 47 percent, Kenan Hossain Bappi 30 percent, Amzad 25 percent, and Sifat 25 percent, according to hospital sources.

## Mujib-Indira

FROM PAGE 12  
The Liberation War posed a major problem and the government allocated a Tk 25 crore for a massive test relief programme to provide easy employment to the rural people.

13 LAKH BIGHAS OF KHAS LAND IN PROCESS OF DISTRIBUTION

Thirteen lakh bighas of khas land available with the government are now in the process of distribution among the landless peasants of the country discloses Land Reforms and Revenue Minister Abdur Rab Seraniabab today. Each landless peasant family would be given four and a half bighas. In addition to this, another chunk up to three bighas might be allotted to deserving applicants in char areas where selected candidates should undertake cooperative farming and establish homestead by the farm, he adds.

SOURCES: September 14, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

## Five Indians detained near Tibet released

FROM PAGE 12

It reported that the men had trespassed and that Chinese officials had "detained, warned and educated" them.

Relations between China and India have been unusually tense since hand-to-hand fighting involving clubs and rocks at a disputed border area in June that killed 20 Indian soldiers, with an unknown number of Chinese casualties.

Tens of thousands of troops from each side have since amassed across the disputed border.

On Tuesday, following reports that five Indians from the state of Arunachal Pradesh, which borders China's Tibet, had gone missing, an Indian minister said that the Chinese People's Liberation Army confirmed they had been found in China.

Their disappearance coincided with a border confrontation in the western

Himalayas, during which both accused the other of firing in the air.

The nuclear-armed neighbours have long observed a protocol avoiding the use of firearms in the undemarcated frontier, though violence has erupted in the past.

On Thursday, Chinese State Councillor Wang Yi and Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar met in Moscow and agreed to de-escalate the border tensions.

"The two Foreign Ministers agreed that the current situation in the border areas is not in the interest of either side. They agreed therefore that the border troops of both sides should continue their dialogue, quickly disengage, maintain proper distance and ease tensions," a joint statement said.

Global Times editor-in-chief Hu Xijin said on the Chinese state network that China-India relations

were stabilising. Observers of China's foreign relations often watch Hu's messages on social media to gauge sentiment from Beijing policymakers.

"It seems that the successive meetings between the Chinese and Indian defence ministers and foreign ministers have played a positive role in cooling down the situation," Hu wrote.

"In addition, the People's Liberation Army defended every inch of the country's land, and the Indian Army ultimately failed to take advantage of it."

India and China have differing perceptions of what constitutes the Line of Actual Control - the de facto border - that runs through the disputed territory on their Himalayan border.

The disputed and undemarcated 3,500km (2,175-mile) border between India and China stretches

from the Ladakh region in the north to the Indian state of Sikkim.

The two nations fought a border war in 1962 that also spilled into Ladakh and ended in an uneasy truce. Since then, troops from opposing sides have guarded the undefined mountain border area, occasionally brawling.

India unilaterally declared Ladakh a federal territory and separated it from Indian-administered Kashmir in August 2019, ending its semi-autonomous status and straining the already prickly relationship between New Delhi and Beijing.

Prior to the latest diplomatic breakthrough between the two sides, India had banned dozens of Chinese apps, including popular video-sharing app TikTok, and has placed restrictions on Chinese investments amid the backlash against Beijing following the deadly border clashes.

WHAT TO WATCH

<b>SONY SIX</b> England v Australia Second ODI (D/N) Live from 6:00pm	Real Valladolid v Real Sociedad Live from 8:00pm Villarreal v SD Huesca Live from 10:30pm Valencia v Levante Live from 1:00am (Monday)	West Brom v Leicester Live from 7:00pm Tottenham v Everton Live from 9:30pm
FACEBOOK LIVE La Liga Alaves v Real Betis Live from 6:00pm	<b>STAR SPORTS SELECT 1</b> English Premier League	<b>STAR SPORTS SELECT 2</b> US Open Live from 2:00am (Monday)



Austria's Dominic Thiem flexes muscles after digging out a win over third seeded Russian Daniil Medvedev in the semifinal while his Sunday's opponent German Alexander Zverev smiles as he overcame a listless start to secure a thrilling semi-final win over Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta on Friday to reach first Grand Slam final.

PHOTO: US OPEN

## First-timers battle for glory

AGENCIES

For the first time in four years, a Grand Slam men's singles tournament will end without Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal or Novak Djokovic as the champion.

Dominic Thiem of Australia will face friend and first-time Grand Slam finalist Alexander Zverev of Germany for their first Grand Slam titles after they won their last-four matches in contrasting styles on Friday.

Sunday's final will see a first-time Grand Slam champion for the first time since Croatian Marin Cilic won at Flushing Meadows in 2014. It also means there will be a Grand Slam champion other than Djokovic, Nadal or Federer for the first time since Switzerland's Stan Wawrinka won the third of his tennis majors at the US Open in 2016.

One can expect some great

attacking tennis from both players. Zverev will, however, have to be cautious in the way he approached in the semifinal. The German simply cannot expect to get away with the several inconsistencies that he displayed against Carreno Busta.

The German will have to introduce a lot more variety into his game, especially from the mid-court area to try and close out the points against Thiem. Indulging in long, baseline rallies will only draw out more errors from his groundstrokes and thus tilt the balance in favor of Dominic Thiem.

Thiem will look to dominate the game from the baseline as he did so superbly against Medvedev in the semifinal. On return games especially one can find the Austrian displaying a touch of Rafael Nadal by standing several feet behind the baseline. This not only helps him take the pace off the ball but also affords him a bit more court length to execute his topspin induced groundstrokes.

Thiem hopes fourth time's the charm after seizing on yet another chance to win his first-ever Grand Slam title. The 27-year-old, who has reached a Grand Slam final three times - only to lose on each occasion, well aware of the heartbreak that could be in store

want to achieve."

Thiem lost to Rafa Nadal at Roland-Garros in 2018 and 2019. But his greatest disappointment came at the hands of world number one Novak Djokovic, who overcame Thiem's best efforts in a four-hour-long, five-set thriller at the Australian Open this year.

Thiem joked he will be giving Britain's Andy Murray a call if he suffers a fourth straight Grand Slam final defeat on Sunday.

Zverev becomes the first German man to reach the final of a tennis major since Rainer Schuttler at the 2003 and is bidding to become the first German men's Grand Slam champion since Boris Becker won the 1996 Australian Open.

"I'm through to my first Grand Slam final and that's all that matters. Sunday is going to be extremely difficult. But I'm looking forward to it. I'm in the final of a Grand Slam. The two best players in the world are going to be playing on court," said Zverev.

HIGHLIGHT

Thiem leads Zverev 7-2 in head to head, most recently defeating him at the Australian Open semifinals earlier this year.

should he once again be denied.

"It's the biggest goal and also the biggest dream I have in my tennis career since a few years," the world number three told reporters.

"Since the moment I realized that maybe one day I can make it, and especially since I played the first finals of the French Open (in 2018). This was the biggest goal I

## SLC 'unreachable'

Nizamuddin says after quarantine complications

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) are waiting for Sri Lanka Cricket to provide clear information regarding the health protocols in their country ahead of an upcoming three-match Test tour around which dark clouds are gathering quickly.

The Tigers are expected to travel Sri Lanka in late September ahead of the first Test on from October 23, but the latest complication is that visitors to the island nation will have to undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine, which would force players to isolate in their hotel room.

That would contradict previous assurances from Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) that visitors would get an opportunity to avail practise facilities during that period, a benefit that prompted the BCB to plan to take the High Performance squad.

BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told The Daily Star yesterday that the board was unable to communicate with its Sri Lankan counterparts.

"If we don't get information from them (SLC) then it will be difficult for us to prepare and plan accordingly. We are trying to communicate with Sri Lankan officials but are unable to reach them. The scenario is changing from time to time

across the world due to the pandemic, which forces health authorities of each country to act accordingly," Nizamuddin said.

"We are trying to solve this issue quickly as there are many things related to it. A few of our foreign staff were expected to arrive in Sri Lanka directly. A few internal issues need to be solved as well."

Although the 'Tigers' return to cricket seemed to be going smoothly at first, things have been getting complicated day-by-day in relation to health protocols and the creation of a bio-secure bubble for the visitors.

From the BCB's point of view, it is difficult to remain locked in a hotel room for 14 days without any activities because that would hamper players' preparation.

Allaying concerns that stemmed from the announcement of the team being delayed, Nizamuddin said that preparations would continue in full swing and selectors were expected to announce a preliminary squad soon. However, he added that it would be better if SLC announces a schedule quickly.

The BCB has already conducted coronavirus testing for cricketers and support staff and is planning a short residential camp before travelling to Sri Lanka, although the tour itself now seems in doubt.



## Roy 'pulls out' of BFF polls

SPORTS REPORTER

Day-long whispers about Badal Roy's withdrawal from the president candidature of Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF)'s upcoming elections became reality as his wife Madhuri Roy turned up at the BFF headquarters with a withdrawal letter at around 6:00pm, an hour after the deadline.

This could prove to be another big turning point in the much-hyped BFF polls after potential president candidate Tarafder Ruhul Amin, also chairman of Saif SC and vice-president of Chattogram Abahani, pulled out of the race due to 'alleged pressure from some quarters' even though he had claimed his business commitments to be the reason for his withdrawal.

Roy, who had earlier challenged to not leave incumbent president Kazi Salahuddin uncontested, was allegedly put under pressure by some quarters. The former national footballer was believed to be in hesitation regarding the decision before his wife tendered the withdrawal letter, citing Roy's illness as the reason.

"Badal has been sick for a long time. He wanted to do something for football but his health is not supporting him. His physical condition has been deteriorating, so we, the family members, decided to withdraw his nomination," said Madhuri, who denied facing any pressure from any quarters.

"As per law, 5:00pm today was the deadline for withdrawal of nomination. Any withdrawal after the deadline won't be counted and his name will come on the ballot paper," said BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag in the absence of the three-member election commission at the BFF House. Shohag later added that the commission will take a decision in this regard.

If the withdrawal of Roy is accepted, it is going to be two-horse race between Kazi Salahuddin and Shafiqul Islam Manik for the president's post.

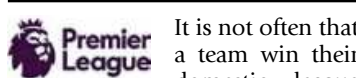
Meanwhile, two member candidates withdrew from the elections, leaving 34 candidates contesting 15 posts.

## Stamford Bridge flooded by intent



(L-R) Chelsea had one of the busiest breaks, ensuring that their first signing, Hakim Ziyech, would have similarly capable talent around him by adding Kai Havertz and Timo Werner. Meanwhile, Donnie van de Beek moved to Manchester United from Ajax and Fabio Silva became the latest Portuguese sensation to arrive at Wolves.

SAMAMA RAHMAN



It is not often that a team win their domestic league 18 points clear of their second-placed rival. It is rarer still that they do so by winning a staggering 26 of their first 27 matches and staying on top for 37 of the 38 rounds of matches. It is practically unheard of that the same team not be counted on to repeat the feat of at least retaining their crown in the coming season.

Nevertheless, that is the position Liverpool find themselves in.

Although they had wrapped a maiden Premier League crown with almost a quarter of the season to go and marked their first league title in 30 years in 2019/20, the Reds have been overshadowed by Manchester City as the bookmakers' favourite.

That is mainly attributed to a

string of below-par performances after the coronavirus enforced break that saw them exit the Champions League in the round of 16 after losing both legs to Atletico Madrid. But a lot of it also has to do with the manner in which Liverpool surged to the title. It is unfathomable that Juergen Klopp's men can repeat the dominance they had at the start of last season, even if they arguably have the most rested players following the extremely short pre-season.

There would be little room for debate about legitimacy had the already-impressive Citizens managed to sign a particular Argentine during the transfer window, but Pep Guardiola's side has an embarrassment of riches. He and his players will be eager to make up for 'only' winning the FA Cup last year.

Yet, both of these teams will be

acutely aware of the emergence of a third contender. In just one season, Chelsea have rubbished the notions that they would be just another vassal to the duopoly and Frank Lampard's rebellion at Stamford Bridge in full swing.

When Lampard took over at Stamford Bridge, he had to steer the Blues in a direction that they had not gone down in years. A transfer ban had been hanging overhead that disabled them from doing any business and, following a 4-0 loss to Manchester United on the opening matchday, many wrote off their season.

However, Lampard worked diligently and the first proof of his 150-plus IQ came when he decided to give Tammy Abraham a chance. The 22-year-old striker netted 15 times in the league and finished as the team's top-scorer. When things splintered, Christian Pulisic, brought in during the

January window, reinvigorated them. The American netted nine times as Chelsea finished fourth.

To that batch of youngsters, including Pulisic, Abraham, Mason Mount and Calum Hudson Odoi, Chelsea paid 53 million euros to add 24-year-old German striker Timo Werner, who decided after 95 goals in 159 appearances that it was time to move away from RB Leipzig. A further 100 million euros were spent on Kai Havertz, an attacking midfielder who stands at 6-foot 2-inches and has the intelligence to play across midfield without his game suffering.

Hakim Ziyech will be more than happy with his decision to leave Ajax after pledging to make the move to London last January.

A blend of youth and experience was also added at the heart of defence in the form of 21-year-old Malang Sarr and 35-year-

old Thiago Silva. Fullback Ben Chilwell, signed from Leicester City, adds to the backbone.

No team has improved as significantly, if at all. Chelsea's closest rivals last season, Manchester United who pipped them to third, have added only Donnie van de Beek, a player that they hope will harmonise the midfield and free Bruno Fernandes and Paul Pogba.

Liverpool have only added Kostas Tsimikas, while Manchester City picked up midfielder Ferran Torres and defender Nathan Ake.

These moves belie the state of the uncertainty that prevails in the world when it comes to making investments following the coronavirus pandemic. But in uncertain times, Chelsea have moved with certainty. They wrapped up their deals quickly, now the only price left to pay is that of expectation.



Arsenal got their Premier League season off to a comfortable start away at Craven Cottage, dispatching of newly-promoted Fulham 3-0 yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Gabriel and Willian shine on debuts

REUTERS, London

Arsenal got their Premier League campaign underway with a 3-0 win at promoted Fulham thanks to goals from Alexandre Lacazette, new signing Gabriel and captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang in the opening game of the season on Saturday.

Lacazette fired the Gunners ahead in the eighth minute after poor defending by the home side before new signing Gabriel made it 2-0 in the 49th and Aubameyang put the icing on the cake with a superb shot into the top corner.

## Smith doubtful starter for today's 2nd ODI

AGENCIES



Australia's stalwart Steve Smith will have to undergo a fresh concussion test before the second ODI against England today after being ruled out of Friday's opener at Old Trafford.

Smith was ruled out of the 1st ODI after being hit on the head during a throwdown session in the nets with Australia's coaching staff.

There is also doubt over left-arm seamer Mitchell Starc's availability for the second match of the series after having experienced some groin pain on Friday.

A century stand between Mitchell Marsh and Glenn Maxwell and four wickets for spinner Adam Zampa helped Australia down world champions England by 19 runs in the opening clash of the three-match



Australia's Adam Zampa celebrates after taking the wicket of England's Jonny Bairstow during first ODI on Friday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

ODI series at Old Trafford on Friday. Australia are in with a chance to claim a bilateral ODI series win over England for the first time since 2015 and end the recent dominance by Eoin Morgan's men in 50-over cricket. England have won 11 of their past 14 encounters against Australia.

Australia quick Josh Hazlewood produced a performance he ranked "right up there" in his one-day career to put the visitors' just one win away from becoming the first side to knock off England in a bilateral ODI series in almost four years.

Hazlewood, who was omitted from last year's World Cup squad as he recovered from injury and with an eye to the Ashes series that followed, was in scintillating touch with the new ball in helpful conditions at Old Trafford in Manchester, claiming 3-26 in a player-of-the-match performance.



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SHAH CEMENT

# A beacon with books for all

Student spends hard-earned money in new concept of library

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

A schoolboy who started a library in his village with only 10 books back in 2014 now supplies books to 30 salon-based mini-libraries in two upazilas with money earned from part-time jobs.

Jamal Hossain set up Sarpukur Jubo Forum Pathagar (Youth Forum Library) in the Tipar Bazar area of his village Sarpukur, in Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat.

CHANGE MAKER



In this remote village, books were few and far between.

The library, a tin-shed room measuring 10 feet by 12 feet, has now become a centre of learning for students and teachers, as well as for other villagers, with around 6,500 books.

It has books on science, history, agriculture, and technical matters, among others, as well as two national dailies, a regional daily, and a job magazine.

But Jamal did not just stop here and came up with the unique idea of salon-based libraries. What could be a better place for locals to have access to books than the salons which are often the liveliest spots of village markets?

Jamal's work has spread to other villages in Lalmonirhat Sadar and Aditmari upazilas this past year.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Nine-year-old Zinia smiles graciously as she gets back to selling flowers on the streets around Dhaka University's TSC. She went missing on September 1. Her disappearance caused quite a stir among hundreds of people, including students, who frequent the area and know her. Detectives found her nine days later in Narayanganj and arrested a woman on charges of abduction.

# N'ganj blast survivors improve

Docs say they're not out of danger; CID DIG promises thorough probe

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Deputy Inspector General of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Md Mainul Hasan has said everyone responsible for Narayanganj mosque blast will be brought under a speedy trial based on statements and evidence collected during the investigation.

"We will complete the investigation with the highest professionalism and skill," he said yesterday while talking to media after visiting Pashchim Talla Baitus Salat Mosque in Narayanganj where a deadly explosion took place on September 4.

At least 39 people were

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

# Erosion halts ferry service in Shimulia

STAR REPORT

Ferry services at the Shimulia ferry terminal point have completely been halted since Friday night as river erosion has taken a devastating turn.

At least 10 acres of land, a shop and some other structures were devoured by the Padma between Friday night and yesterday morning.

Villagers hit by erosion were seen moving to safe shelters for their survival.

Around 20 families, along with their belongings and valuables, have had to move said Hazrat Ali Sheikh, a resident of Shimulia village.

Locals and officials concerned said the ferry terminal is facing the risk of destruction due to erosion.

Normally, 15 ferries ply on Shimulia-Kathalbari route -- one of the major gateway of southern district. But the services were facing disruption over the last couple of months due to strong currents and navigability crisis.

Amid such a situation, authorities concerned were forced to shut down the services since September 3 for the same reason.

Later on Friday afternoon, the services were resumed but the ferries were facing difficulties while plying.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

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

### Mujib-Indira summit tomorrow

September 13, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

TALKS WITH INDIRA WILL COVER PAKISTAN AND CHINA ISSUES

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will arrive in New Delhi tomorrow morning and will leave for Dhaka after a three-hour stopover. Talks between the Bangladesh prime minister and the Indian prime minister will be held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan during the stopover. The talks according to Indian sources will be mainly related to political matters of mutual interest, Pakistan's attitude towards Bangladesh and the situation which has developed following the Chinese veto denying Bangladesh its place in the United Nations are likely to figure prominently in the talks between Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Indira Gandhi.

TK 72CR SPENT ON ECONOMIC REHABILITATION Relief and Rehabilitation Minister AHM Kamaruzzaman says in Dhaka today that the government has already spent Tk 72 crore for the economic rehabilitation of the people who had suffered badly during the days of occupation of Bangladesh. The money has been spent by way of house building grant, GR cash, and in education and housing programme.

Addressing a press conference, the minister says that the government has also allocated about Tk 1.43 crore maunds of foodgrains for free distribution among the affected people. He further says that the acute unemployment in rural areas just after

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



# 7 saved from child marriage in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The local administration has saved seven minor girls from being the victims of child marriage in Sirajganj's Belkuchi upazila.

A mobile court led by Belkuchi Upazila Nirbahi Officer Anisur Rahman conducted several drives in different parts of the upazila from Friday noon to night and aborted the marriages.

It fined a total of Tk 70,000 from the parents of the children and made them promise that they would not attempt to marry off their daughters until they reach the legal age.

Anisur has stopped more than 250 early marriages in Sirajganj in the last three to four years.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

# Viking chess!

Rare complete set of a 1,000-year old board game found in UK



MAIL ONLINE

A rare complete set of Viking gaming pieces has been put up for sale after being discovered in a field by a metal detectorist.

Retired miner Mick Bott, 73, made the find at a site in Torksey, Lincolnshire, where the Vikings formed a winter camp in AD 872.

The camp was used as the Vikings' defensive and strategic position during the winter months as they prepared to conquer England.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

# Daily deaths not dropping

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-four Covid-19 patients died and 1,282 more people tested positive for the virus in 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday.

The total number of deaths from the virus in the country rose to 4,702. The

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



## PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 13

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:35 12:45 4:30 6:14 7:45  
JAMAAT 5:10 1:15 4:45 6:17 8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



The Padma is rapidly eroding its banks near Shimulia ferry terminal in Munshiganj, devouring at least 10 acres of land in less than a day. Ferry services have completely stopped with residents scrambling to get their movable belongings to safety. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## INDIA-CHINA BORDER TENSIONS

# Five Indians detained near Tibet released

AGENCIES

China yesterday released five Indian nationals it detained in a region bordering Tibet, the Indian army said, days after the two sides agreed to dial down tensions on their disputed frontier.

The men, who the Indian side said had accidentally strayed into Chinese territory, were escorted back across the high-altitude frontier by the People's Liberation Army to the border town of Kibithu.

"After quarantine of 14 days for Covid-19 they will be handed over to family members," an Indian defence spokesman said on Twitter.

There was no official confirmation of the release from China, but the state run Global Times tabloid claimed the men were "Indian intelligence staff who had disguised themselves as hunters".

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

## DHAKA-DELHI CONNECTIVITY

# Positively impacts Bangladesh, North-East India

Says Indian foreign secy Shringla

UNB, DHAKA

Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla has said Bangladesh-India connectivity directly and positively impacts both India's North East and Bangladesh.

He said four of the six pre-1965 rail links between the two countries have been made operational, and work is underway on the remaining two.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

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