

Hijras to be included as separate gender in census: BBS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Hijra community will be included as a separate gender identity in the upcoming national census of January 2021, said Mohammad Tajul Islam, director general of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).
“Necessary preparations have been completed, and the census will start from the beginning of January,” Tajul said in a consultation meeting on “Inclusion of Hijra/Transgender Community in National Census 2021” yesterday, according to a press release of Bandhu Social Welfare Society.
Bandhu and National Human Rights Commission organised the event.
“As most of them live without family and are

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In adapting with the reality that classrooms may not open for students for quite some time, Willes Little Flower School has stepped up their online classes, where teachers are provided with full-fledged logistical and technical support to conduct lectures from classrooms smoothly to students' screens at home. Willes, one of the most reputed schools of the capital, claim to be pioneers in this form of “Smart Classroom” in the country. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SHIMULIA-KATHALBARI

Ferry services remain suspended for 4th day

STAR REPORT

Ferry services on Shimulia-Kathalbari route remained suspended for the fourth consecutive day yesterday due to navigability crisis, causing immense sufferings.
Authorities said they were working hard to restore navigability on this route, considered one of the major gateways to the southern districts.
“We have kept dredging the channel and hope that the crisis will be resolved soon,” Commodore Golam Sadeq, chairman of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), told The Daily Star yesterday.
Shimulia point is located in Munshiganj while Kathalbari in Madaripur.
On September 13, authorities suspended ferry service on this route. On September 15 and 16, two ferries operated in an alternative channel.
But in the process, the ferry took around seven to eight hours to cross the river Padma where it took around 1 hour through regular channel, so authorities stepped back from operating through the alternative route.
Normally, 15 ferries run on Shimulia-Kathalbari route. But the services

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MINOR TORTURED TO DEATH IN KSA

Rab arrests 2 including recruiting agency owner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday arrested two people including a recruiting agency owner from Dhaka's Fakirapool area in connection with the death of Umme Kulsum, who was sent to Saudi Arabia as a house help and tortured to death there.
The arrestees are Mokbul Hossain, owner of MH Trader International; and his associate Parvez, said Additional Superintendent of Police Bina Rani Das, of Rab-3. They were arrested during a drive at their office.
The recruiting agency last year sent Kulsum, a 14-year-girl from Brahmanbaria, to Saudia Arabia as house help, said Das.
“Even though the minimum legal age for

a female migrant worker [in Saudi Arabia] has to be 25, the agency hid her age and sent her to work abroad,” she said.
Kulsum was tortured by her employer there and subsequently died at a hospital on August 9 this year. Her body was brought back home on September 12.
“We will charge the agency with human trafficking, for knowingly sending a minor to be exploited,” said ASP Das. “We're also investigating the agency to see how many others they trafficked.”
As the drive went on, Manpower Recruiting Agencies Oikko Parishad convener Tipu Sultan staged a protest outside the agency's Fakirapool office. “We can't be culpable for crimes of employers. We want the law repealed,” he said.

ATTACK ON GHORAGHAT UNO

7hrs to process a remand!

No statement of suspect Rabiul recorded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, DINAJPUR

Rabiul Islam, the prime suspect of the hammer attack on the UNO of Ghoraghat Upazila of Dinajpur, was taken to fresh three-day remand yesterday, after seven hours at the judicial magistrate's court building.
Imam Zafar, investigation officer of the case, brought Rabiul to the court compound at around 11:30am, and produced him before the court of Anjuman Ara Begum. It could not be learnt when he was produced before the court, but at around 6:30pm, the IO said the court granted three-day remand for Rabiul after he appealed for a seven-day remand.
Asked whether Rabiul, a former staffer of Ghoraghat Upazila Parishad, was brought for a confessional statement under Section 164 before the court, he said they did not appeal for recording a confession.
However, sources at police and the Chief Judicial Magistrate's court building said they learned Rabiul's statement could not be recorded under 164 before the court in the seven hours.
Asgar Ali, court inspector-in-charge of police told this newspaper that Rabiul was taken to the courtroom immediately upon arrival, and he was taken away at 6:30pm.

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Pandemic threatens human capital gains of past decade

Says World Bank report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Covid-19 pandemic threatens hard-won gains in health and education over the past decade, especially in the poorest countries, a new World Bank Group analysis finds.
Investments in human capital -- the knowledge, skills, and health that people accumulate over their lives -- are key to unlocking a child's potential and to improving economic growth in every country, the Bank said in a news release issued from Washington on Wednesday (local time).
The World Bank Group's 2020 Human Capital Index includes health and education data for 174 countries -- covering 98 percent of the world's population -- up to March 2020, providing a pre-pandemic baseline on the health and education of children.
The analysis shows that pre-pandemic, most countries had made steady progress in building human capital of children, with the biggest strides made in low-income countries, said the release.
Despite this progress, and even before

the effects of the pandemic, a child born in a typical country could expect to achieve just 56 percent of their potential human capital, relative to a benchmark of complete education and full health, it said.
“The pandemic puts at risk the decade's progress in building human capital, including the improvements in health, survival rates, school enrollment, and reduced stunting. The economic impact of the pandemic has been particularly deep for women and for the most disadvantaged families, leaving many vulnerable to food insecurity and poverty,” said World Bank Group President David Malpass.
“Protecting and investing in people is vital as countries work to lay the foundation for sustainable, inclusive recoveries and future growth.”
Due to the pandemic's impact, most children -- more than 1 billion -- have been out of school and could lose out, on average, half a year of schooling, adjusted for learning, translating into considerable monetary losses.

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Jaya Ahsan, two orgs file petition against DSCC dog relocation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed with the High Court yesterday seeking its directives on the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) to stop its move to relocate stray dogs from the DSCC area and dump them in the Matuail landfill.
Celebrated actor Jaya Ahsan and animal welfare organisations -- Obhoyaronyo and People for Animal Welfare -- submitted the petition as a public interest litigation to the HC, requesting it to stay the DSCC decision.
In the petition, they also challenged the legality of the DSCC move and urged the HC to issue a rule asking the government and DSCC to explain why it should not be declared illegal.
Citing the petition, Barrister Saqeb Mahbub, lawyer for the petitioners, told The Daily Star that no animal including stray dogs can be removed, relocated and dumped as per section 7 of the Animal Welfare Act, 2019.
Dogs have reportedly been removed from TSC and Dhanmondi areas and relocated to the landfill under the verbal order from DSCC, he said.
The lawyer also said the HC may hold hearing on the petition next week.
DSCC veterinary officer Dr Shafiqul Islam reportedly said they removed some dogs from Dhanmondi and TSC areas from and left them in Matuail because they were creating “problems” and there were “objections” against them.

MINI BYTES

PS5, XBOX OR AN RTX 3080 GPU?

Everything going on with gaming hardware NOW

E. RAZA RONNY

The much anticipated PS5 received a price and release date this Wednesday. Prices have been set at \$499.99 for the standard edition \$399.99 for the Digital Edition that comes minus the Blu-Ray drive. These will release first in US and Japan on November 12. Rest of the world gets it on November 19. Pre-orders started early Thursday with a crazy rush online where many people have stated that their item has been 'virtually' snatched or emptied from their online cart while typing in payment details.

In Bangladesh we are always in waiting unless you have someone ready to buy and bring it to you by end of this year. One vendor estimated prices could be about 60-70k taka for first units which seems a bit steep. I would suggest we do what we do I traffic jams: curse, shout, huff and puff and wait. The world may or may not end before 2021 is upon us, so it is okay to not fret about a gaming console.

The pricing for Sony's Playstation is set against Microsoft's next gen consoles. An entry-level Xbox Series S is \$299 and the range-topping Xbox Series X is \$499 slated for a November 10th release.

Why are gamers excited about the new PS5? Why this huge rush for pre-orders when it is only launching with six titles on hand? Sony has confirmed that '99 percent of PS4 titles will be playable on the new device'. That's taking backward compatibility to a whole new level. Take that into that the PS4 couldn't play any of the previous titles unless you download the limited

number made available on their own streaming service 'PS Now'.

If you remember, or not, that the PS2 could play almost everything from the original PS1. In 2007, the PS3 could play most of the PS2 games.

What about Microsoft then? Xbox One can play many Xbox 360 games through emulation.They 'promised' thousands of older games from XboxOne to the original can be played on the new S and X. We'll wait to see that.

Which brings us to the other big player in the console market: Nintendo. What are they releasing? Nothing. Turns out, they have likely and finally put the nails on the 3DS coffin. The Japanese site states it is no longer available. After 75 million units sold worldwide, they have decided to pack it up and focus solely on the Switch.

Gaming could not be any bigger. Keep in mind the gaming industry has seen a surge in business during this pandemic like no other. Razer reported USD \$447.5m growth early this year. That's a 25.3% growth during the pandemic. As a result, everybody is overclocked to deliver more. For PC gamers,Nvidia'sRTX 3080 graphics card is a behemoth of a GPU that can deliver 4K 60fps or more. Which has resulted in gamers all over the world and in Bangladesh quickly trying to offload their previous gen graphics cards. A current RTX 2080ti goes for about 1-1.5 lakh taka. The RTX 3080 offering way more will go on sale this week at \$700 and will cost about the same here. Will update local prices as soon as we get them.



Everyone loves a nice daytime nap, whether you're a white-collar employee stressed out about deadlines, or a van-driver who is physically exhausted after transporting people's valuables. All it takes for some peaceful shut-eye is a kind tree to provide generous shade. This photo was taken from the capital's Mirpur on Wednesday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED